



The Sullivan County Design Charette
The Pennsylvania State University
Landscape Architecture
2013

Preserving by Design

By: Nicole Carros



"I felt my lungs inflate with the onrush of scenery—air, mountains, trees, people. I thought, "This is what it is to be happy." -Sylvia Plath

Problem Statement:

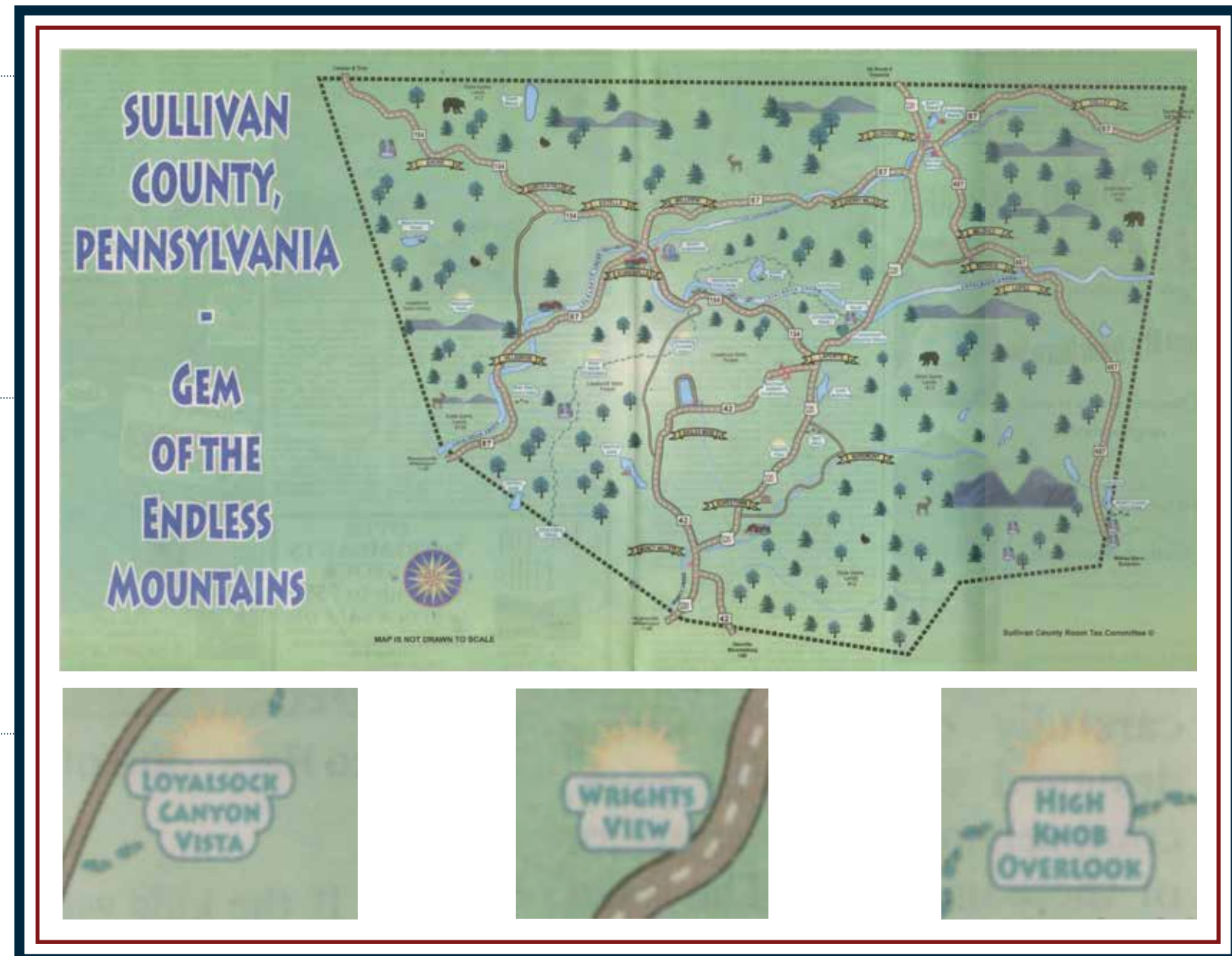
The process of Natural Gas Development leaves massive holes in the landscape often resulting in contrasting lines that have huge visual impacts on how people experience an area, which can ultimately lead to a detachment of man from nature.

Project Description:

The intent of this project is to create design solutions for potential disturbance in valuable landscapes using basic design principles such as line and form, disruption of these valuable landscapes can be diverted and their peaceful harmonizing characteristics can stay intact.

Benefits / Goals of Project:

- Present design solutions in response to natural gas development
- Preserve valuable landscape views
- Keep these important landscapes sense of peace and tranquil atmosphere intact



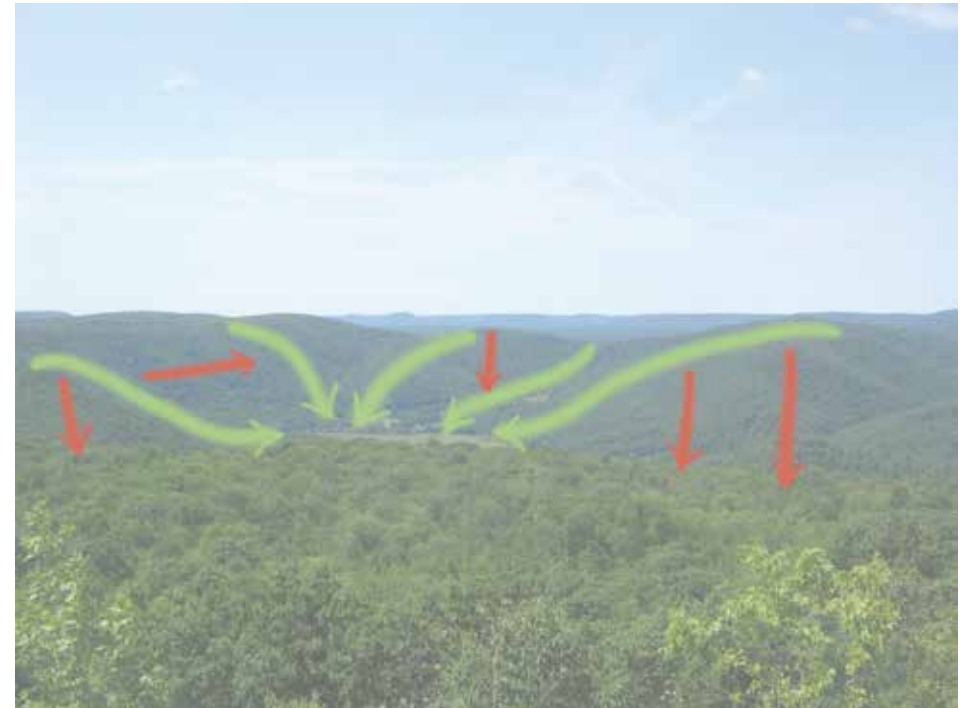
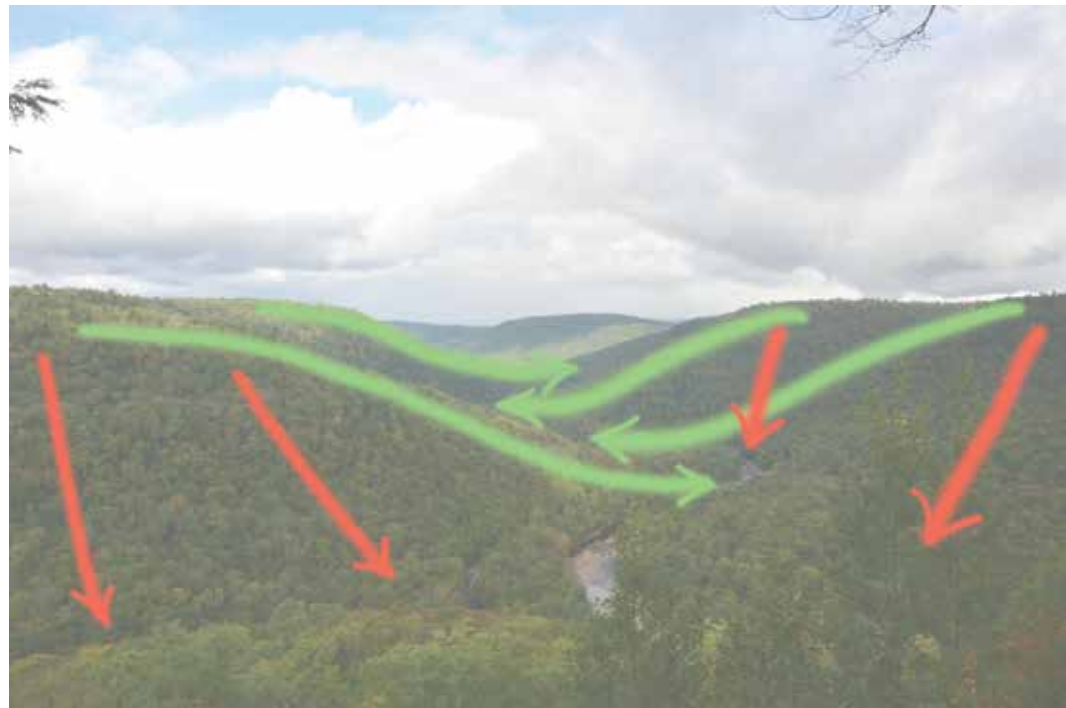


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Design Principles By: Nicole Carros

Line & Form

Instead of the usual pipeline construction, a straight cut down the side of mountains, usually where ever is most efficient, careful placement using the lines and forms of the landscape can lead to a better visual outcome in these preservation of these valuable areas.



desirable lines



undesirable lines



What to preserve?

Crowd Sourced Data:

Instead of picking photos at random, bringing them to a workshop and asking those in the county, and/or tourists who visit, which views they thought were most valuable, I used a a method called, crowd sourced data to figure out which areas would be in most threat if natural gas development were to occur within them. I used a series of online resrouces to choose the best examples of what the public deemed the most valuable views in order to reinforce the relevance of this project to Sullivan County.

Resources



Google Search



Facebook



Google Earth + Panoramio



Flickr



Studio Photos



I started out with the basic search engine (I prefer Google because when you click on a photo more photos pop up when you view it, providing you with more top photos) typing in searches for the web such as:

- Sullivan County
- Endless Mountains

resulting in Sullivan County page and the Endless Mountains Visitor Website where I came across photo contests but didn't find any scenic view winners.

After finding the photo competitions I looked to see if Sullivan County developed an Endless Mountains Facebook page since it's the "hip" thing nowadays and there are people posting on it every day I would have thought it would generate a lot of photos specific to preserving their landscape. I did indeed find beautiful landscape photos, but non that really helped in my fight to advocate the importance of preserving these valuable vistas and mountains.

This was one of the most helpful resources in helping find the most valuable landscapes in Sullivan County. If you go to google maps, turn on Satellite and then make sure photos from the drop down is selected, like the picture above, photos will pop up all over the map. When you click on these photos they will take you to the profile of the person who took the photo on a photo viewing site called Panoramio. It is set up so that you can see how many people have viewed it. This really helps in finding what the public is most interested in resulting in giving me an educated assumption that the more views the more popular.

I proceeded to think of all the photo viewing webpages and I found on Flickr that Sullivan County has a group where many photos taken of the mountains and scenic mountains were posted. A lot of them were taken of the beautiful waterfalls inside Sullivan County, but in this project I wanted to focus on the preservation of the bigger picture which then, in itself, preserve the smaller picture.

In the Marcellus Shale studio course included several visits to Sullivan County by me, my professor, and other classmates. We set up a system where everyone could download their photos and then would be able to be accessed by anyone who wanted to look at them. Here I found my classmates had actually captured the same views that Sullivan County has deemed most valuable that I found in my previous Resources.





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Valuable Landscapes By: Nicole Carros

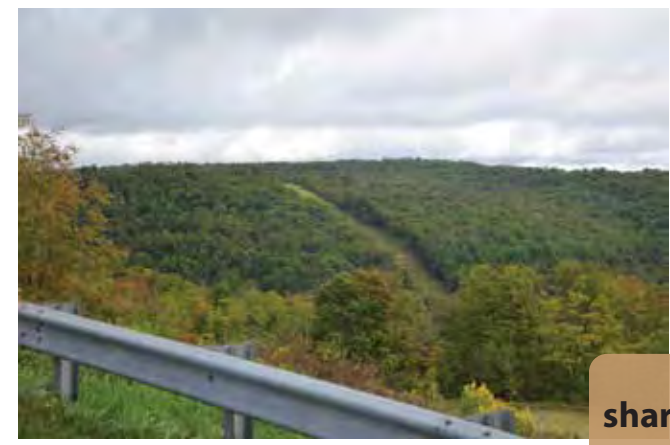
Results: 3 Major Views + 2 Road Views

Based on the crowd sourced data there were three major vistas and two landscapes I found to be good examples to use in this project for preserving valuable landscapes. These I found were very helpful in making a different point in why it is important, for Sullivan County's Views and for the landscape in general to preserve the land and not let the construction of natural gas development take away from these scenic areas. Ahead you will see different scenerios for each landscape and how siple design solutions can effectively minimize the disturbrance thee gas companies bring with them.



shares

Canyon Vista



shares

Wright's View



High Knob Vista



Pa Route 154



Bahr Road (Bird Song Winery)



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Design Solutions

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Canyon Vista

Perhaps the most significant view in Sullivan County, this majestic scene should not be compromised for Natural Gas Development. In this example the potential gas developers have cut a path right down the front view of the mountain. In the design solution by using the deep swooping form of the mountain the potential threat to this view can be minimized by just moving the pipeline corridor behind the highest elevation of the mountain. Natural gas development should not just be “tucked” away but in this example it provides the most minimal disturbance. This solution combined with [pipeline restoration](#) after the gas companies move out can provide even more effectiveness in preserving this scenery.



Potential Gas Development



Design Solution



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Wrights View

In this example the basic design principles play more of a role in the construction process. The gas development on the left is what has already happened to this view, but by using the form and lines that the vegetation have made the design solution depicts only a little disturbance where the corridor ends at the bottom of the mountain. This example can pave way for a better awareness of the simple things gas companies should take into account if approaching such fragile scenic parts of Sullivan County, or any county for that matter.



Potential Gas Development



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High Knob Vista

In addition to using the design approach of using line and form, using lines and form that have already disturbed the landscape can aid in preserving the landscape as well. In this example the development has gone completely in the opposite direction of the line of the mountains creating contrasting lines present and for future restoration of the site. By using the lines that have already been used to cut a path in the mountain that follow the forms of the mountain, it can be utilized for this development if it ever encroaches this beautiful scene and also help keep the form of the mountains once it has left and can be restored.



Potential Gas Development



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Pa Route 154

Scenic vista destinations are not the only views that should be taken in to consideration when talking about preserving these Endless Mountains in the process of natural gas development. Views from roads are just as important to the area. You wouldn't tile a floor and only do a beautiful pattern in a couple areas and then leave the other spots for random tiles you leave up to the contractor that may or may not go with the others. In this sense all views in Sullivan County are valuable and should be treated as such, not some given concern and the others up for chance. In this example the solution is a drastic change from the potential development and is almost nonexistent to the view from the road.



Potential Gas Development



Design Solution



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Bahr Road

Another approach to designing for minimal disturbance of the eye sores natural gas development presents and leaves behind is by using colors and textures in the surrounding context of it. This example can aid in preserving the landscape around residential home and when development is in close context. Two design theories are presented 1. The drilling pad doesn't need to be a square block cut out. If it took more natural forms and curves it could blend and potentially minimize the creation of forest edges. 2. Shown in this design solution visual, **camouflaging** the structures with colors and texture from the land around it can help in keeping the impact of the development low.



Potential Gas Development



Design Solution