



Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative

A Community-Driven Project for Conservation & Engagement



Community Application

The Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative (ATCCC) is a new initiative led by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) to empower Pennsylvanian communities near the Appalachian Trail and across the greater landscape to lead local conservation efforts while strengthening their economies and sense of place. This initiative seeks to bring together community teams made up of local leaders representing a diversity of community expertise from conservation, agriculture, tourism, government agencies, and humanities (to name a few) to work together and co-create solutions that address a community need while also producing a conservation benefit such as the protection of natural resources, the support for outdoor recreation economies, and ultimately help sustain the Appalachian Trail Landscape for future generations.

Instructions:

All communities interested in joining the Appalachian Trail Community Conservation Collaborative must submit a community application. The purpose of this application is to provide an opportunity to share more about your community and your motivations to joining the Collaborative and to help us be better prepared to meet your expectations.

It is recommended that once your community team is formed, that you fill this [ONLINE APPLICATION](#) out in coordination with one another. As applications are accepted on a rolling basis, we recommend completing at your earliest ability. For more details about eligibility, commitment, and frequently asked questions, please see the ATCCC Community Information Packet: [\[link\]](#)

Application Deadline:

All applications should be submitted on or before October 31, 2025.

Applications will be reviewed on a rolling basis and acceptance into the Collaborative will remain open until 15 communities are committed to the project. Community teams are encouraged to apply early to secure their spot in the Collaborative!

Application Support:

For more detailed guidance on the ATCCC, please review the [General Information](#) and [Frequently Ask Questions](#) documents found on the ATCCC's website. If you have any questions or need assistance

regarding your community's eligibility, team formation, the application materials, or the submission process, please contact Katie Allen at kallen@appalachiantrail.org.

Section I: Contact & Community Information

1. Team point of contact:
2. Community Name:
3. Government type (*select all that apply*):
 - Municipality – borough
 - Municipality – township
 - Municipality – city
 - County

4. Community Location

Please place a pin where your community is located.

To be eligible to participate in the 2025 ATCCC cohort, your community must fully or partially be found within the black lines illustrated in the map below.

Pennsylvania's A.T. Landscape – [ATCCC Boundary](#)

[In Survey123, this map will be provided allowing for easy pinpoint of community on the map]

Section II: Team Representatives

To be eligible to join the ATCCC, all communities must form a team of 5 - 8 individuals, with the requirement that there is an elected official, government staff person, and a conservation organization representative on each team. Please see the Community Packet for more guidance. If you cannot meet the minimum required representation, please reach out to Katie Allen (kallen@appalachiantrail.org) to discuss.

5. How many people will make up your team? [fill in the blank, up to 8]

List of Team Representatives*

Name

Position

Affiliation/Organization

Email

*This information will be captured for each of the up to 8 team members. Requirement for elected official, government staff, and conservation organization to be represented.

The following sections will help us better understand your community. Please feel free to answer in brief and informal sentence format. Approximately 3 sentences per question (no more than 100 words), as needed.

Section III: Community Identity & Motivation

6. What motivates your community team to participate in the Collaborative?

Select all that apply. Please elaborate if 'Other' is selected.

- Preserving and/or restoring natural resources
- Enhancing outdoor recreation opportunities
- Building community resilience against natural disasters
- Strengthening local identity and pride
- Stimulating local economic development
- Learning from peer communities
- Other (please specify):

7. Please describe one aspect of your community that your team would like to highlight as part of this project (ex. new park, stream restoration, flood management, etc.)

[Open text field]

Section IV: Support for Conservation & Recreation

8. How would your team describe your community's overall support for local conservation initiatives? *Select one.*

- Very strong support
- Strong support
- Moderate support
- Minimal support
- No support

If minimal to no support is selected, please briefly explain what could improve support.

9. What is one long-term conservation aspiration your team hopes your community can achieve (regardless of feasibility)?

[Open Text Field]

10. Does your community currently plan for conservation and open space?

[Select Yes or No]

- [If yes, open text] Please briefly describe the types of planning documents and processes that have informed your most recent conservation/open space planning. Please provide the url link to a recent example of plans or documents supporting conservation/open space in your community.

11. In your team’s opinion, how engaged are community members in outdoor recreation activities? *(Includes: hiking, outdoor sports, birdwatching, community gardening, etc. – all forms of outdoor activity)* Select one.

- Very engaged (regular participation in multiple activities)
- Moderately engaged (occasional participation)
- Limited engagement (few activities, participation is uncommon)
- Not engaged

12. In your team’s opinion, what are the main barriers your community faces in supporting conservation or engaging in outdoor recreation?

Select all that apply. Please elaborate if ‘Other’ is selected.

- Lack of funding/resources
- Limited access to natural spaces
- Competing land use priorities
- Limited community interest
- Policy/regulatory constraints
- Other (please specify):

Section V: Economic & Development Drivers:

13. What are the current, primary sectors driving your community’s local economy?

[Open Text Field]

14. Is outdoor recreation integrated into your community’s economic development strategy? *Select one.*

- Yes, fully integrated into plans
- Yes, in active discussion
- Somewhat, limited consideration
- No, not considered

[If yes, open text] If yes, please describe or provide a URL link to current efforts or plans

15. Is land development pressure a concern for your community? *Select one.*

- A significant concern
- Somewhat of a concern
- Minimal concern
- Not a concern

16. How would you characterize the rate of land development in your community: *Select one.*

- Nonexistent
- Very slow
- Slow
- Moderate
- Fast
- Very fast

17. Please describe specific pressures related to land use, if any:

[Open Text Field]

Section VI: Environmental Risks

18. In your team's opinion, which environmental hazards are of greatest threat locally?

Rank in order of greatest to lowest threat.

- Inland flooding
- Heavy precipitation
- Wildfire
- Drought
- Invasive species
- Increase in pest populations (ticks/mosquitos)
- Severe storms (hurricanes/tropical storms)
- Landslides
- Air quality
- Water Quality
- Heat waves/extreme heat
- Extreme cold
- Other (please specify):

19. In your team’s opinion, how concerned is your community about the local impacts of climate change?

Select one.

- Not at all concerned
- Slightly concerned
- Moderately concerned
- Very concerned
- Extremely concerned

20. Please briefly describe your community’s experience or concerns regarding these environmental hazards:

[Open text]

Section VII: Interest in the Appalachian Trail Community Program

It is not a requirement to be a designated Appalachian Trail Community to join the ATCCC, however let us know if you would like to learn more about pursuing a designation. See www.appalachiantrail.com/explore/communities to learn more.

21. Is your community currently designated as an A.T. Community?

[Yes or No]

22. If not, would your community be interested in becoming an A.T. Community?

[Yes, No, or Unsure]

Section VIII: Confirm Your Team’s Commitment:

23. Upload Letter of support from local government leadership

24. By checking this box and submitting this application, your team is committing fully to all of the Collaboratives planned events and technical support services:

- Participation in a community survey/interview
- One regional in-person workshop (up to 2 days)
- Development of a minimum of 1 action plan with commitment towards implementation
- Six months of customized technical assistance inclusive of check-in calls, peer learning meetings, and one-on-one coaching to activate your community’s action plan
- One 1-day Summit in a central PA location to celebrate all the work of the Collaborative

Our team is fully committed to all of the planned events and technical support services of the ATCCC.

25. Will you need travel support for any of your team members to attend Collaborative events? (Workshops are planned to be within 60 miles of your community.)
[Yes, No, or Unsure]