



News from your Township

Vol. 7 No. 1

Winter 2014

Franklin Township's New Supervisors Look toward the Future

On January 6, Franklin Township's newly-elected supervisors, Steffen Torres and David Snyder, took their oath of office and began their six-year term to uphold the health, safety, and welfare of the Township. Learn a little about them and their goals for the Township with their responses to three questions below.

Meet Steffen Torres

Steffen has enjoyed living in Franklin Township since August, 2006. For the past sixteen years, he has worked as an equity analyst/portfolio manager for an investment management firm specializing in small to mid-sized companies.

1. What do you hope to accomplish as a Supervisor?

I have many goals over my term as supervisor. Generally speaking, I hope that the Township administrators and supervisors will be viewed as a group working together for the community to make it a better place to live. We are employees or volunteers looking to provide support for the citizens of our Township.

A second, more specific goal, is to utilize my twenty plus years in the investment industry to bring increased attention to budgetary and fiscal planning matters. The idea would be for increased rationalization of all expenditures particularly those that are deemed non-essential.

2. What are Franklin Township's best assets?

Another way of asking the question might be "Why did I move here?" I enjoy the rural feel to our Township. It is still a great pleasure to drive or walk by creeks, trees, farms and see various animals. I did not have that experience in my previous town.

Also, it is a community small enough where you actually can make a difference and where your opinion counts.

3. What is Franklin Township's biggest challenge?

The answer ties to some of my goals over the next six years. We as a community need to manage the ever changing regulations passed down by federal and state authorities. Another challenge is to balance the Township's growth with its assets. While new home starts have slowed due to the recession there is a possibility that permits could once again increase. While more than just one, these are at the forefront of my thinking.



Meet David Snyder

David Snyder moved to Franklin Township in July of 2006 with his wife Patricia, and two sons Andrew and Evan. He has been an Airline Transport Flight Instructor and Designated Flight Examiner, for the last 15 years. Previously he worked as an airline pilot for Pan Am Express, and Trans World Express, at the Northeast Philadelphia Airport.

1. What do you hope to accomplish as a Supervisor?

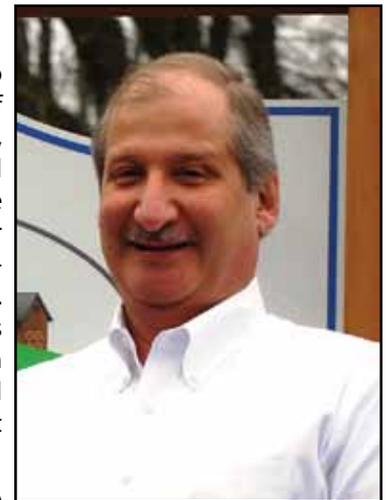
Like Steffen, I look forward to being a part of the Board, and administration, which will be working in harmony, to make Franklin a great place to live. Transparency, and openness will be a constant goal. I want every citizen to feel gratitude, when they bring issues to the board for its consideration. The board should react with answers or suggestions whenever a resident feels that something is wrong.

2. What are Franklin Township's best assets?

Along with the great natural assets in our Township, we are blessed with many intelligent residents with good hearts, who want to live in harmony. The folks around here are interested in good local government, good schools, and politicians who realize the need to keep taxes low.

3. What is Franklin Township's biggest challenge?

Balancing the needs of the community, against the need to keep taxes low, will be a big challenge. I have seen too many people throw money down bottomless pits, and never see results. All proposals will be looked at with great scrutiny before committing a single tax payer's dollar. A wise Board will make decisions based on real facts and data, and not emotions. Emotions have no place on a public Board.



A Message from the Chairman

New Supervisors

I am very pleased to have two new Supervisors on the Board. We have similar views regarding the growth of expenditures and keeping taxes low. I look forward to working with them and the entire Board on the challenges presented to the Township this year.

Reduced Taxes/Spending Reforms

The Real Estate tax has been reduced by 10%. Real spending reforms will be required to manage the reduced budget. The Township spends taxpayer resources over a wide range of expense categories ranging from absolutely essential to more discretionary. The task is to identify the opportunities for reduced spending without impacting the core functions. This task will require vigilance by the Board, the Committees, and the Staff over the course of the entire year.

Winter Road Maintenance / New Salt Storage Facility

Winter road maintenance provides many challenges for the Township. The unpredictability of weather is the key factor. The past few winters have not been severe and the cost for these years was significantly under the annual budget of \$145,000. The excess funds were applied to the capital road program. This past December and early January may challenge our budget allowance if the trend continues. Our Township Staff does an excellent job in managing winter weather events. We welcome suggestions, so please feel free to contact us.

The Township does have a problem with salt and anti-skid material storage that needs attention.

The 250 ton capacity of our current facility is insufficient to assure reliable availability of salt during periods of high consumption. Our average annual consumption of salt is 600 tons. On many occasions, we have just been able to receive timely deliveries. In one extreme case, the

State of Maryland commandeered the entire salt supply from our supplier.

Salt is currently stored in two open-end sheds. One of the sheds is an integral part of the Township Office Building. Salt stored in this shed is degrading the building and seeping through the adjacent wall into a records storage area. Eventually structural damage to the building will require repair and disrupt our storage area. Additionally, the open-end sheds do not protect the dry salt from weather, creating a hard crust that needs to be broken up to facilitate flow through salt distributors.

The Township Staff and I are developing the basic data to define a design for a new salt storage facility. I expect the Board and the Committees to be involved in the design development.

Township Cooperation

I am pleased to say that we have been able to establish a working relationship with our surrounding Townships and Borough. The initial objective was to develop agreement for the allocation of costs for Emergency Services (EMS). This work is in progress. The increasing cost of ambulance service is a major concern. Any decisions developed will be brought back to the individual Boards for public discussion and potential approval. Congratulations to the West Grove Fire Company for developing a real auditable budget for 2014.

Stormwater

Under the direction of an unfunded mandate from PA Dept. of Environmental Protection (PADEP), the Township adopted a Stormwater Management Ordinance 2013-04 compliant with Act 167. The structure of the ordinance was prepared by Chester County with technical direction from PADEP. Although the Township was presented with very few choices, the Planning Commission and Board put forth a major effort requiring 9 evening meetings in August and September to

integrate the structure into the Franklin Township ordinance system.

The new ordinance requires additional stormwater control features for projects that add impervious surfaces (roof, concrete, gravel, etc). In some cases, an engineer may be required to develop the design.

The ordinance is complex and is defined in a large document. The Planning Commission, Board, and Building Inspector will work this year to develop a simplified interface to assist residents with new projects that are impacted by the new ordinance.

A full text of the ordinance may be found with the following link:

http://franklintownship.us/uploads/Ord._2013-04.Stormwater.Enacted_12.18.13.pdf

J. G. West Barn

In March of 2012, the Township was served with a lawsuit by a resident objecting to the removal of the barn. This legal action has not been resolved; however, the lawsuit did not contain a stay for removal and as a result, Township contractors have removed the barn. The Township Attorney has advised that Township Officials and Staff avoid any public discussion regarding this legal action until it has been settled by the courts. The inability to communicate details of this action is frustrating, but necessary to avoid extending the legal action and increasing our costs. Once the legal action is settled, I assure you that the entire story will be provided on the Township website. Some information is currently available from the minutes of various meetings beginning in November 2011.

Please free to contact me. My e-mail and phone: jauerbach@franklintownship.us, 610-420-4369.

Sincerely,

John Auerbach, Chairman

RECYCLING TIP

Don't Recycle used motor oil containers

Plastic motor oil bottles are often marked with a recycling triangle. However the residue in the empty bottles means that consumers of recycled plastic don't want them.

So please don't recycle them. Instead, these bottles should be disposed of in the trash by the homeowner or business that empties them. If they do go into recycling, sorting facilities will pull them out and put them into the trash.

TAX QUESTIONS?

Franklin Township residents receive tax bills that are generated from multiple sources. Please contact the appropriate source with questions about specific taxes.

- **SCHOOL REAL ESTATE TAX:** Avon Grove School District's Office: 610-869-2441
- **FT EARNED INCOME TAX:** Keystone Collections Group, 610-269-4402
- **FT REAL ESTATE TAX:** Berkheimer Associates, 610-599-3143
- **CHESTER COUNTY REAL ESTATE TAX,** Treasurer's Office, (610) 344-6370

The Alexanders: one of FT's first settlers

Until 1767 the land south of Stricklersville Road was claimed by both the Penn and Calvert families. King James I granted land (Maryland) to Sir George Calvert in 1632. In 1681 William Penn received a great deal of land (Pennsylvania and Delaware) from King Charles II to satisfy a debt that the King owed to Penn's father. This created a dispute over the border between Maryland and Pennsylvania as both of the land charters overlapped.



The remains of the original Alexander homestead can be seen in Fair Hill Natural Resources Area.

The Calvert family encouraged settlement of their lands and solicited colonists to come and settle in the new world. In 1676, a Scotch Irish family, with seven brothers and two sisters, by the name of Alexander came from Donegal, Ireland. Some settled in Cecil County others further south in Somerset, Pocomoke and in Virginia. They were farmers, weavers, tanners and blacksmiths. Several Alexanders located just south of Stricklersville Road (now in Fairhill) as they received a 2000 acre land grant in 1717 and 1718. These land grants included the land in Franklin from the Maryland border to Stricklersville Road to Tweeds Mill on the Big Elk Creek. A petition was signed by the Alexander's in 1722 attesting to the fact that they believed this land was in Maryland.

This started a 50-year dispute and long process over which government – the Calverts/Maryland or the Penns/Pennsylvania - owned this piece of land. In 1732 an agreement was signed by Lord Baltimore to accept a still undefined, but designated

border, which the Mason-Dixon survey settled in 1767. Some of the land granted to the Alexanders was indeed in Pennsylvania.

By this time all the original seven Alexander brothers and two sisters had passed away. They never learned the outcome of this disagreement.

The Alexander family was a hardy family and had many children. Soon there was not enough land for all of them to continue to live here and through the years the family expanded to Tennessee, North Carolina and up the Susquehanna River to York and other surrounding areas. However, many of our many-generation township residents' ancestors more than likely were an Alexander.

Alexander family members were the founders of both Head of the Christiana Presbyterian Church on Rt. 273 in Delaware and the Rock Church on Rt. 273 in Maryland. Many of them are buried there.

Obtaining Dog Licenses in Chester County

All dogs, three months of age and older, must be licensed in the State of Pennsylvania. Owners can be fined for not licensing their dogs.

The County Treasurer's office is responsible for collecting the applications and fees and issuing the dog license. Yearly regular fees are \$6.45 for spayed and neutered dogs and \$8.45 if not. Persons with disabilities and senior citizens receive a \$2 discount. Licenses are based on a calendar year and must be renewed annually.

There is an option for a lifetime license. The cost is \$51.45 (\$31.45 for seniors) and involves tattooing or microchipping your dog. Call the Country Treasurer's Office for details. 610-344-6370.

Dog licenses can now be obtained online at www.padoglicense.com. In addition they can be purchased at the Chester County Treasurer's Office (by mail or in person) and at West Grove and Oxford Borough offices.

Township Directory

Board of Supervisors

John Auerbach, Chair
David Snyder, Vice Chair
Eric Brindle, Member
Penny Schenk, Member
Steffen Torres, Member

Administration

Joan McVaugh, *TOWNSHIP MANAGER/TREASURER*
Jeffrey Eastburn, *ASSISTANT TOWNSHIP MANAGER*
Sharon Norris, *SECRETARY*
Eileen Rembecki, *SECRETARY (PART-TIME)*
Duane Brady, *BUILDING INSPECTOR AND ZONING OFFICER*

Contact Information

In person: 20 Municipal Lane
Kemblesville, Pa. 19347

Office Hours: M-F, 8 am-4 pm

By Phone: 610-255-5212

By Fax: 610-255-0659

By Mail: P. O. Box 118
Kemblesville, PA 19347

Email: info@franklintownship.us

On the web: www.franklintownship.us

Township Meetings

ALL MEETINGS ARE HELD IN THE MEETING ROOM AT THE TOWNSHIP OFFICE.

Supervisors' Board Meeting-

*2nd Wednesday of the month, 7 pm
3rd Wednesday of the month, 7pm

Planning Commission-

1st Thursday of the month, 7pm

Historical Commission-

1st Wednesday of the month, 7 pm

Historical Architectural Review Board-

Immediately following the Historical Commission Meeting

Emergency Mgt. - 1st Monday, 7 pm

**(When the monthly agenda is light or there is no mandatory business that must be concluded this meeting will not take place.)*

Real Estate Tax Collector:

Berkheimer Associates, 610-599-3143
www.hab-inc.com

Earned Income Tax Collectors:

Keystone Collections Group
144 Wallace Avenue
Downingtown, PA 19335
610-269-4402 (Customer Service)
888-328-0558 (Employer Hotline)
www.keystonecollects.com

The Franklin Township Newsletter is published by the Franklin Township Board of Supervisors and produced by Lucas Communications and Publications.

Pump Your Sewage System Every Three Years

Consistent with Department of Environmental Protection regulations, Franklin Township requires all on-lot septic systems to be pumped at least every three years by a licensed contractor. It is the responsibility of the homeowner to have this completed.

As required by the DEP, the Township maintains a database for each property as to the date of the last regular septic system pumping. Letters were sent to homeowners who were out of compliance with the pumping requirement. Thanks to those homeowners who have since had their systems pumped. Remaining properties should be pumped ASAP or the Township will be forced to assess penalties against property owners.

It is the responsibility of the homeowner to notify the Township when you pump your system either by mailing, faxing or emailing a copy of your pumping record to the Township. Thank you for your cooperation! Please call the Township Office (610-255-5212) if you have questions about your property.

Franklin Township's On-lot Sewage Management Program

Most homes in Franklin Township are served by an on-lot sewage system, often called a septic system or, in some cases, a cess-pool. While the particular designs may vary, all have one thing in common: regular maintenance is essential to keep the system working properly. On-lot sewage systems simply aren't meant to work in the long term without some maintenance, much like your car isn't meant to run forever without regular oil changes. By maintaining your sewage system correctly you will avoid unnecessary groundwater pollution, minimize health risks from polluted water and sewage discharges to the ground surface, and save yourself money in the long run by helping to avoid installing a new (and very expensive) sewage system.

There are six basic things homeowners can do to keep your on-lot sewage system working properly:

1. Pump Your Tank Regularly
2. Use Water Wisely
3. Know what to Flush
4. Avoid Hazardous Chemicals
5. Consider Septic System Additives Carefully
6. Protect Your Sewage System

Further suggestions and details on the six basic steps to proper on-lot sewage management are on the Township's website at: http://www.franklintownship.us/On-Lot_Sewage_Management.html

Finding Your House in an Emergency

The West Grove Fire Company reminds residents of the importance of making their homes visible to emergency responders, especially at night. Displaying house numbers with reflective numbers visible in both directions at the ends of driveways speeds emergency response, especially at night and in poor weather. Similarly, visible house numbers by the front door help avoid confusion when homes share driveways, and please keep house numbers clear of snow.

Snow/Ice and the Roads in Franklin Township

This winter is turning out to be one for the records with one winter weather event after another.

This year, as much of the Country experiences unusual winter storms, salt is at a premium and in scarce supply. As our Chairman pointed out in his message, the Township does not have a facility to store large amounts of salt; therefore, during these consecutive winter storms, we find ourselves struggling to maintain a salt supply with timely deliveries.

The contracted salt supplier quotes a delivery time of 7 days in "normal" winter events to 14 days during these consecutive storms. Once the salt arrives, our contractor then must not only deal with the weather event, he must also figure out when he can get the newly delivered salt mixed and stored while still clearing the Township roads.

"We need the cooperation of our residents to make sure all 37.5 miles of Township roads can be plowed correctly, says Eastburn. Thoroughfare roads, such as South Guernsey, Hess Mill, or Peacedale Roads, have the first priority for plowing in the Township. Development roads and cul-de-sacs are plowed next.

Please remove everything-- cars, boats, basketball hoops from the roadway and cul-de-sacs before a storm as they are a hindrance to snow removal efforts. The circular design of cul-de-sacs makes it difficult to equally distribute the snow along the curb line.

Remove large rocks from the right-of way. A snow plow truck can be damaged (and unable to continue plowing until repairs are made) and its driver injured by hitting these hidden objects buried under the snow.

The Township is not responsible for damage from plowing to any objects that are placed within the legal road right-of-way. This includes mailboxes and landscaping. One way to limit landscaping damage by snowplows is to define the edge of the landscaping with flexible reflective markings.

Access to your mailbox for the US Postal Service to deliver your mail is the responsibility of the resident.

We ask that residents remember that someone is always first when it comes to snow removal, and unfortunately, someone needs to be last, but our road crew will stay at it until all of our roads are as safe as possible. It is a constant struggle for our guys and we appreciate residents' patience and consideration as we do our best to keep our roads clear.

"Our truck operators are human, and during a storm they work long hours doing their best for the benefit of all," says Eastburn. "When you see a snowplow, give them room to work. Stay at least 100 feet away from the truck. Also help them by not putting your plowed driveway snow into the roadway."

We hope Punxsutawney Phil is wrong and that Spring will come early this year!

All questions and complaints about snow plowing should be directed to the Township Office at 610-255-5212, or emailed to info@franklintownship.us.

Experience Banffshire Preserve's New Trail System

Within the approximately 62 acre Banffshire Preserve one can experience nature at its best. Here flows the Middle Branch of the White Clay Creek bubbling over rocks and slowly flowing through deeper waters. Rock outcroppings along the steep slopes highlight the region's geological beginnings and are great places to sit, contemplate life, or fish. The wetlands and floodplains in the lower elevations sustain their own varieties of flora and fauna. Uphill and away from the Creek, a stand of mature woodlands containing trees hundreds of years old sway in the breeze and provide a shady canopy for a hot summer's day. A vista of meadows, farmlands and the famous rolling countryside of southern Chester County reward the visitor at the highest elevations in the Preserve.

With the effort of many groups and individuals a series of looping trails now gives visitors the opportunity to experience this Franklin Township treasure. The map, right, highlights the trails. A full page map is included with the electronic version of this newsletter, downloadable from the Township's website.

In 2009 the trail system was planned utilizing the expertise of Brandywine Conservancy and the Franklin Township Open Space Committee. Over several years, the plan was tweaked with input from Natural Lands Trust, The Trail Spinners of Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania and two botanists to identify

rare and endangered plants.

Throughout 2013 Paul Overton organized a dozen or so work events to build the trails. Volunteers who donated labor equipment and material include Franklin residents, Wilmington Trail Club members and the Trail Spinners of Delaware, Maryland, and Pennsylvania.

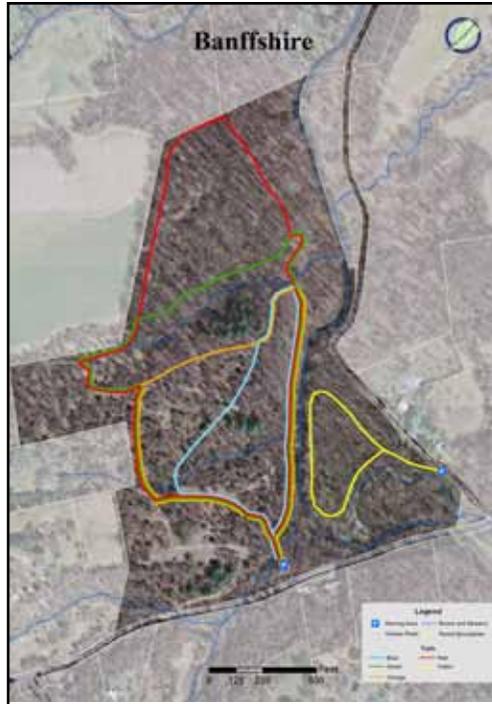
Also, employees of W.L. Gore Inc. cleared a section of new trail as a community service project. To access the preserve, the township constructed a parking lot off of Chesterville Road in April of 2013.

To keep visitors from getting lost on the trails, trail markers were installed (see story below).

"The looping trails are stacked so that visitors can choose their own experience," says Paul. There is a short loop of approximately 1/3 mile, a long walk of 1.5 miles or visitors can crisscross between trails to extend their time in Banffshire. The trails are open to hiking, biking and equestrian uses; no motorized vehicles are allowed.

The work on the trail system is almost complete. Paul is working to find the funding necessary to complete two bridges. Residents interested in volunteering for future workdays should contact the Township Office.

Banffshire Preserve is located at the corner of Chesterville and Creek roads.



Banffshire Preserve's Trail System. A full-size version of this map is available on FT's Website.

Marking Banffshire's Trails

With four looping trails crisscrossing at various points, a trail marking system was needed at Banffshire Preserve for people to easily enjoy their time in the Preserve. For his Eagle Scout community service project, Sean Smith, of Troop 191, chose to build and install the trail markers.

"I wanted to help people navigate through the trail system at Banffshire Preserve," says Sean about the purpose of marking the trails. Sean says he learned many things by leading this effort, such as how important it is to be organized, to plan ahead, and

to communicate with everyone involved.

A map will be installed at the parking area to show the trail layout and approximate trail lengths with walking time. All trails begin and end at the parking lot, pick the trail you want and by following the newly installed markers of the same color you will return to the parking lot where you started.

He wishes to thank those organizations and people that helped him complete this project including DuPont Company for donating the colored Corian markers, Bill Skalish, Paul Overton, Franklin Township, Esch Fencing and the 15 scouts plus adult volunteers who helped him install the posts over three workdays.

Sean, from London Grove Township, is the son of Christine and Bob Smith. He is a junior at Avon Grove High School and plans on attending college for engineering after graduation next year.



Sean Smith (left) works with volunteers to install a trail marker in Banffshire Preserve.



Members of Troop 191 and former FT Supervisor Paul Overton (right, second row) before starting work on installing trail posts at Banffshire Preserve.



Franklin Township
P. O. Box 118
Kemblesville, PA 19347

Helping the Community Communicate



Jonathan Markowski, of Troop 10 Chester County Boy Scouts of America built a community bulletin board and a drop box as his community service project for his Eagle Scout rank. The drop box is located near the entrance to Franklin Township's office. The bulletin board is located near the gravel parking lot between FT's office and the Kemblesville Post Office. The bulletin board will hold Township announcements, maps of Franklin Township trails, and residents will be able to add their own announcements. The drop box is for people to securely leave documents for the Township during off hours.

He says he chose these projects because they seemed different and he liked the idea of creating a bulletin board for the community to use.

The drop box was built with the help of younger scouts from his troop. Markowski managed the construction of the bulletin board with volunteers from the Franklin Sportsman's Club. In total over 200 hours of volunteer time was needed to complete the projects.

"The project went well," says Jonathan. "It was a lot of fun. I learned how important communication is for a project."

Jonathan would like to thank the Franklin Township supervisors, Lowes, Oxford Feed and Lumber, and the Franklin Sportsman's Club for their support.

Jonathan is the son of Mike Markowski and Alice Hsi. He is a senior at Avon Grove High School and hopes to attend the University of Delaware and study mechanical engineering next year.

Agricultural Highlight

North Creek Nursery Celebrates Silver Anniversary

Twenty-five years ago a wholesale plant nursery with an emphasis on sustainable ecological practices began growing starter plant plugs for retail and wholesale nurseries, garden centers, mail order markets and landscape professionals on North Creek Road, in Franklin Township. Today, as North Creek Nursery celebrates its 25th anniversary, the company has gained a reputation as a leader in the cultivation of the native perennials, ornamental grasses, ferns and vines. Their emphasis is on Eastern United States native plants and plant cultivars.



North Creek Nursery's greenhouses on North Creek Road.

Steve Castorani is the owner and Tim McGinty is the general manager of North Creek Nursery. The company's corporate headquarters remains on the original 17-acre site on North Creek Road, in Franklin

Township. They've expanded to a second farm in Oxford. North Creek Nursery employs 50 people, with some seasonal variations.

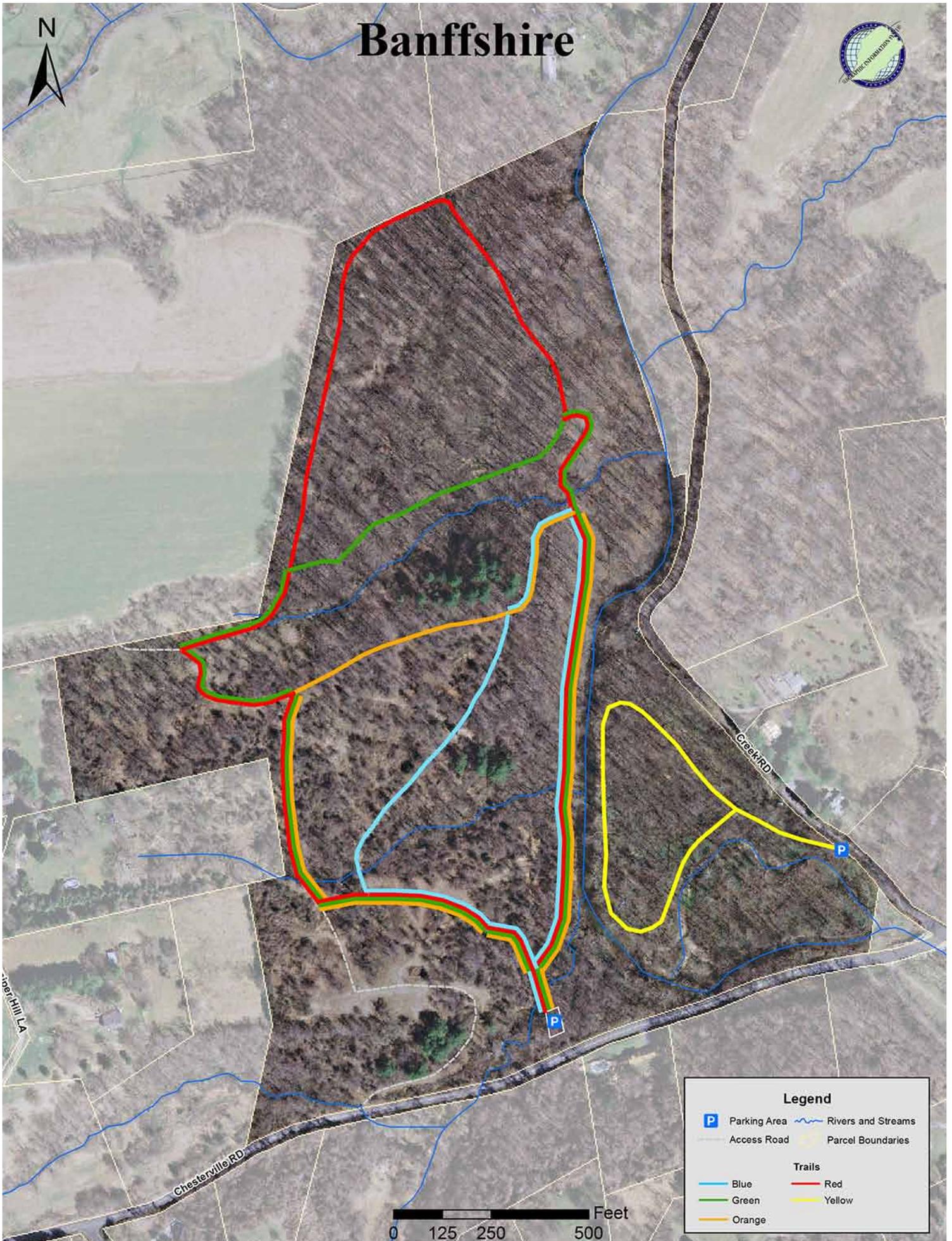
North Creek Nursery grows starter plugs in large trays that are shipped 52 weeks a year to its wholesale clients. Because the plants are grown and shipped in large quantities, it is unable to sell to local homeowners. However, Gateway Garden Center, in Hockessin, Delaware, is also owned by Castorani and residents can purchase North Creek's products there.

The company's website: north-creeknurseries.com provides ideas and resources for the home gardener, as well as plant information.



Starter plugs in trays are North Creek Nursery's specialty.

Banffshire



Legend

- Parking Area
- Rivers and Streams
- Access Road
- Parcel Boundaries
- Blue
- Green
- Orange
- Red
- Yellow

0 125 250 500 Feet