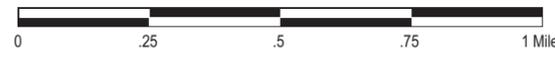
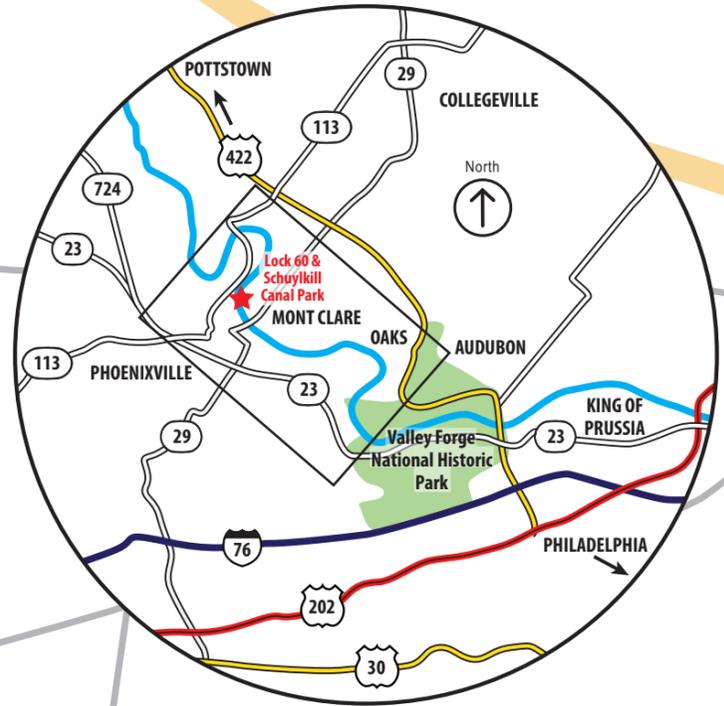
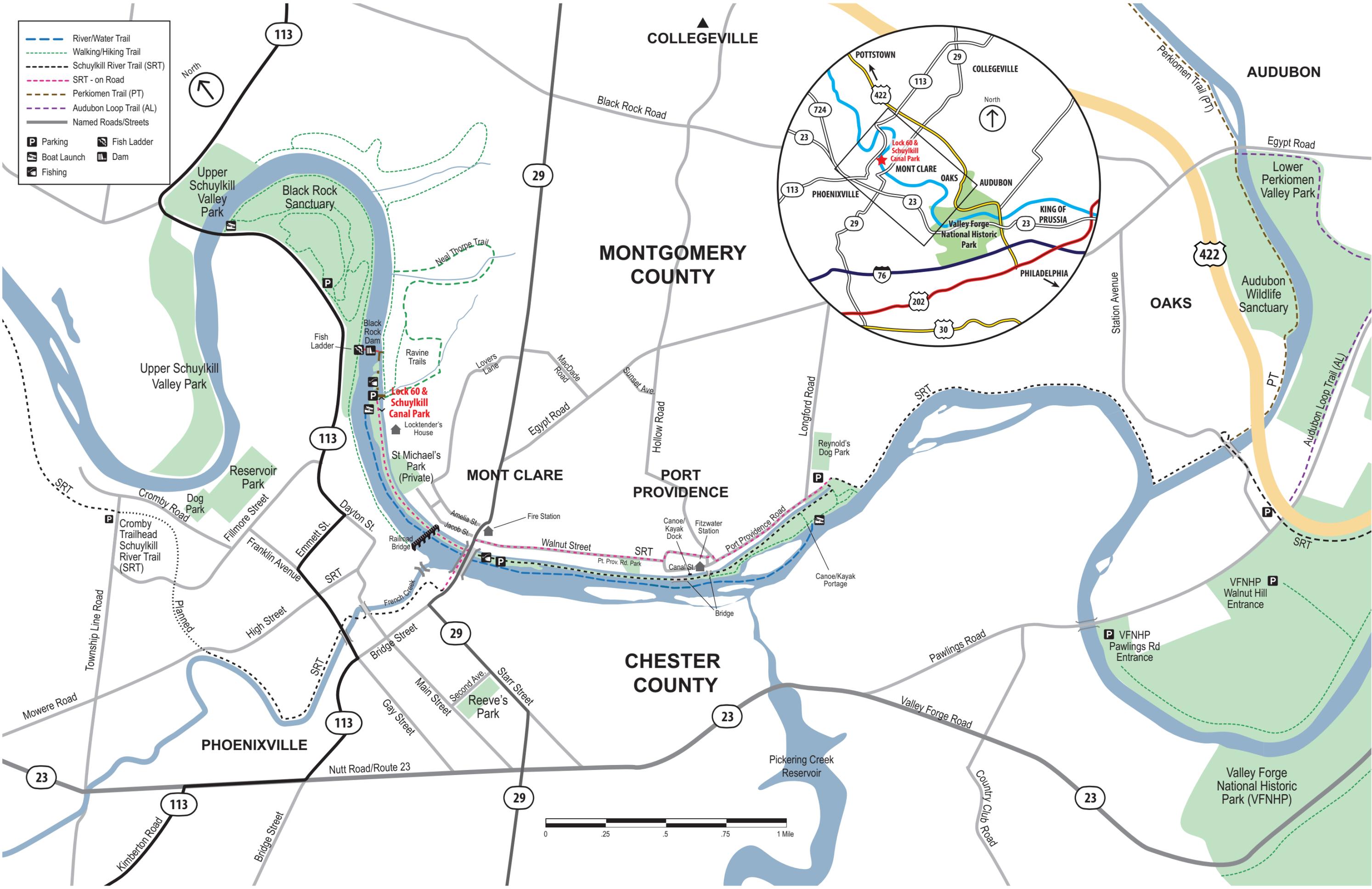


- River/Water Trail
 - Walking/Hiking Trail
 - Schuylkill River Trail (SRT)
 - SRT - on Road
 - Perkiomen Trail (PT)
 - Audubon Loop Trail (AL)
 - Named Roads/Streets
-
- P Parking
 - F Fish Ladder
 - B Boat Launch
 - D Dam
 - F Fishing



A Guide to the LOCK 60 & SCHUYLKILL CANAL PARK AND RECREATION AREA



LOCATION

Lock 60 at the Schuylkill Canal Park
400 Towpath Road
Mont Clare, PA 19453

www.schuylkillcanal.org
e-mail: info@schuylkillcanal.com
610-917-0021

AREA MANAGED BY

Montgomery County Division of Parks, Trails
and Historic Sites
610-278-3555

Schuylkill Canal Association
610-917-0021

Upper Providence Township
610-565-4944

IN AN EMERGENCY

Dial 911 or notify a park ranger

Nearest Hospital:
Phoenixville Hospital
140 Nutt Road
Phoenixville, PA 19460
610-983-1000

This project was funded in part by a grant from Community Conservation Partnerships Program, under the administration of the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation, and the William Penn Foundation in support of the Schuylkill Highlands Mini-Grant Program administered jointly by Natural Lands Trust and Schuylkill River Heritage Association.



DIRECTIONS

Lock 60 is located just off of Route 29 in Mont Clare, Pennsylvania. The park is easily reached from major roadways including State Routes 23, 29, 76, 113, 276, 422, and 476. Detailed directions are available at www.schuylkillcanal.org

LOCAL SERVICES

The Schuylkill Canal Park is located walking distance from numerous restaurants, cafes, and shops in downtown Phoenixville. Additional shopping and dining experiences, as well as overnight accommodations, are located a short drive away in Collegeville, King of Prussia, and other nearby Philadelphia suburbs.

ACCESSIBILITY

Most of the Canal Park is easily accessible for all abilities. Hiking trails range from easy to moderately steep with some water crossings. The towpath is flat with paved and non-paved sections.

OUR HISTORY

The Schuylkill Navigation System was incorporated during 1815 to establish an industrial transportation route along the Schuylkill River. Dams and canals were constructed to provide navigable routes around shallow stretches of the river. Each section of canal was known as a reach and varied in length from less than 1 to 22 miles. Upon completion, the navigation system was approximately 110 miles long with 62 miles of hand dug canals. Additional man-made structures included 120 locks, 18 dams, 17 aqueducts and 1 tunnel.

The Schuylkill Navigation System functioned as one of our nation's most important industrial highways until being replaced by the railroads. After the 1920s, the canal reaches were used mostly for recreation. Pleasure boats took people on excursions and almost every back yard along the canals had a small dock and canoe or rowboat. Today many of the canal reaches have been filled in with coal silt that has been dredged from the Schuylkill River during the 1950s.

Our section of canal was known as the Oakes Reach, named after Thomas Oakes the Schuylkill Navigation System's first principal engineer. The Oakes Reach originally consisted of three and a half miles of flat water between Lock 60 (Dougherty's Lock) and Lock 61 (Brower's Lock). Lock 60 still stands today and is the only functioning lock on the Schuylkill River. Lock 61 was located just upstream from the confluence of the Schuylkill River and Perkiomen Creek.

Lock 60 and the Schuylkill Canal, as it is known today, remains thanks to the dedication and hard work of local residents and Upper Providence Township. The Locktender's House was constructed during 1836 and remained inhabited until the 1950s. Over the next few decades the area was used as a dumping ground and heavily vandalized. During 1982 the state agency that held the title to the property (Bureau of Abandoned Mine Reclamation) was prepared to backfill the remaining watered portion of the canal. Local residents opposed the plan and worked with Upper Providence Township to create the Schuylkill Canal Advisory Committee to preserve their local historic and recreational resource.

During 1985 the Schuylkill Canal Advisory Committee incorporated as the Schuylkill Canal Association (SCA), a volunteer run non-profit organization. The area was listed on the National Register of Historic Places by 1988. Remaining significant historic features include: the remaining 2.6-mile stretch of watered canal, the Locktender's House, the original earthen berm towpath, the concrete remains of a 1914 hydro-electric plant, the Port Providence Chapel, the Muletender's House, and a general store/village inn (Fitzwater Station).

The SCA created and maintained a safe and attractive recreation area for the public and raised over 1 million dollars for restoration of historic structures. Major accomplishments include the establishment of a park at Lock 60, repair and restoration of the exterior surfaces of the Locktender's House, construction of river and canal access points, construction of a spillway to re-establish water flow to the canal, and the restoration of an operational lock chamber. The SCA continues to be caretakers for approximately 60 acres of property that is currently owned by Montgomery County.



RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Participants are required to comply with all local, state, and federal regulations when using the area. The below list is presented to give park users an idea of what opportunities and resources are available in the area. Recreational opportunities are not limited to the below list or to the Schuylkill Canal Park.

Boating: Canoeing and kayaking are some of the most popular uses of our area. "The Loop" is a 5 mile paddle on the river and canal that does not require a shuttle. The portage from the river to canal is a 200 yard walk up a gently inclining mowed path. The portage from the canal to the river goes up a few stairs and across a flat grassy field and parking area and is less than 100 yards.

A boat ramp for motorized fishing boats to access the river is located at the gravel parking lot across from the Locktender's House. Please be aware that motorized and non-motorized boats share this access point and the river is very shallow at this location.

Canoe and Kayak Rental: Rentals are available through Port Providence Paddle located along the canal at the 264 Canal Street (Fitzwater Station) in Port Providence, PA. 610-935-2570 or www.canoeandkayak.biz

Fishing: The entire 2.5 miles of the canal is easily accessible by the adjacent towpath. Please be aware that the towpath is a multi-use trail and can be quite busy at times.

The river is accessible at many locations along the canal. Motorized fishing boats are permitted in the river; however the river can be very shallow and rocky during much of the year.

Picnicking: The Schuylkill Canal Park consists of approximately 60 acres of land ideal for picnicking. Open fields are located at Lock 60 and many scenic overlooks are located along our hiking trails. Please dispose of all waste in proper waste disposal containers.

Bicycling: The Schuylkill River Trail runs along part of the towpath and crosses over into Phoenixville via the Route 29 Bridge across the river.

Hiking/Walking: The towpath upriver from Route 29 is a wheelchair accessible asphalt surface and a popular easy walk in virtually any weather. There are numerous hiking trails to explore in the ravines and along the bluffs upriver from the Lock 60. Downriver of Route 29, the towpath is an alternate connector to the Schuylkill River Trail, linking to the Longford Road parking lot and Reynolds Dog Park.

Jogging/Running: The area offers a surface and degree of difficulty to satisfy all runners. The Towpath offers a flat smooth surface perfect for groups or families. The river trail upriver of Lock 60 offers more varied terrain with a few water crossings on a well-used but non-manicured surface for those looking to get off the road. The network of trails located throughout in the wooded ravines upriver of Lock 60 are unimproved, steep, rugged earth and stone perfect for trail runners.

Wildlife Watching: The river/canal corridor and rocky upland forest with swift streams contained within the park provide for an uncommon diversity of birds, reptiles and amphibians within a small area. Wildlife identification brochures are available in the Locktender's House and the informational kiosk located at Lock 60.

Cross-Country Skiing: A snow fall of about 3 inches will typically provide a skiable surface on the towpath and a snow fall of about 6 inches will provide a skiable surface on the river trail and ravine trails. A frozen canal, with an ice thickness of 5 inches or greater, provides a very fast skiable surface.

Ice Skating: Ice skating is probably one of the most consistent continuing uses of the canal. People have been ice skating for as long as the canal has been freezing. A minimum of 5 inches of ice is generally considered safe for ice skating, it is recommended that ice thickness be confirmed before skating on the canal. Rocks and other debris are common on the frozen surface of the canal.

ADDITIONAL RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

The Schuylkill Canal Park is located within the Schuylkill Highlands, which is one of 7 Conservation Landscape Initiative regions in Pennsylvania. The Schuylkill Highlands includes a large portion of the Schuylkill River Watershed and the Hopewell Big Woods (the largest remaining unbroken forest in southeastern Pennsylvania). See below and visit www.schuylkillhighlands.org for additional information

Schuylkill River Trail (SRT): The SRT is a multi-use trail that will run a distance of approximately 130 miles from Pottsville to Philadelphia. Local trail head parking lots are located at 1000 Longford Road in Port Providence and 829 Township Line Road in Phoenixville. Additional information at www.schuylkillrivertrail.com



Bike Schuylkill is a free bike share program managed by the Schuylkill River Heritage Area (www.schuylkillriver.org). Bikes are free to use up to an entire day with a valid driver's license or a state identification card. Additional information at www.bikeschuylkill.org. Bikes can be picked up at Phoenix Cycles located at 165 Bridge Street in Phoenixville www.phoenix-cycles.com.

Schuylkill River Water Trail (SRWT): A SRWT guidebook is available through the Schuylkill River Heritage Area at www.schuylkillriver.org. The guide provides maps, travel tips, and checklists for paddlers to enjoy a safe and informed trip on the river. Guides are available for purchase online and at various locations, including the Locktender's House at the Schuylkill Canal Park.



Perkiomen Trail (PT): The PT is a 19-mile, multi-use trail that runs along the Perkiomen Creek from Green Lane Park to the SRT. The PT connects multiple parks and is linked to Valley Forge National Park through the SRT. Additional information at www.montcopa.org.

Upper Schuylkill Valley Park (USVP): The USVP is located approximately 1.5 miles upstream from Lock 60 and consists of a 15 acre wildlife center. Additional information at www.montcopa.org.

Lower Perkiomen Valley Park (LPVP): The LPVP consists of 107 acres of natural areas, picnic pavilions, and recreational sports fields. Additional information at www.montcopa.org.

Black Rock Sanctuary (BRS): The BRS is a 119 acre wildlife sanctuary located in Chester County across the Schuylkill River from the Schuylkill Canal Park. Additional information at www.chesco.org.

John James Audubon Center at Mill Grove Wildlife Sanctuary: Mill Grove is the first home of John James Audubon in America. The estate consists of 175 acres of land and contains approximately 7 miles of trails and fronts Perkiomen Creek opposite of LPVP. Additional information at www.audubon.org.

Valley Forge National Park (VFNP): VFNP was the site of the 1777-78 winter encampment of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War. Today VFNP contains over 28 miles of authorized walking, hiking, biking, and horseback riding trails. Additional information at www.nps.gov/vafo.

Hopewell Furnace National Historic Site (HFNHS): HFNHS is one of the finest examples of a rural American 19th century iron plantation, showcasing an early American industrial landscape from natural resource extraction to enlightened conservation. Additional information at www.nps.gov/hofu.

French Creek State Park (FCSP): FCSP is made up of hardwood forests that once provided fuel to the furnaces at HFNHS. The 7,730 acre park is the largest block of contiguous forest between Washington D.C. and New York City. Additional information at www.dcnr.state.pa.us.

Evansburg State Park (ESP): ESP is a linear park along the Skippack Creek. The ridges and valleys that make up the park give the feeling of enclosure as well as offering scenic views. Additional information at www.dcnr.state.pa.us.

Natural Lands Trust Sites: Natural Lands Trust is a non-profit land conservation organization that currently owns and manages 41 nature preserves spanning over 21,000 acres throughout eastern Pennsylvania and southern New Jersey. Additional information at www.natlands.org.

