

# PENNSYLVANIA TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Western terminus of the recently completed Great Allegheny Passage, Pittsburgh

February 2014

## Year 2013 Annual Report



This Annual Report documents the accomplishments of Pennsylvania trail groups in 2013 as described by the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee and its partners. It showcases successes and illustrates progress toward developing a statewide network of land and water trails.

# Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee

## 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee is pleased to present its 2013 Annual Report. The report details significant accomplishments throughout the state and describes trail projects large and small. We've been inspired by trail builders, stewards, planners, and educators. We've traveled the trails on foot, bike, canoe, horse, snowmobile, wheelchair, and off-highway vehicle in all kinds of weather.

Looking back on 2013, there are various ways to evaluate progress. One is by the numbers: How many miles were built? How many volunteer hours were logged? And how many critical gaps were filled?

But the goal of the Committee, to advance the overall development of a statewide network of trails, is a complex undertaking. And we are only beginning to see the enormous potential trails can offer our citizens, neighborhoods, and communities.

Measurable results are, without a doubt, crucial. But the greatest successes are more personal: People – no matter how many – provide the immeasurable energy, leadership, and passion that drives Pennsylvania's trails success story.



Tim Karr, Chair



### 2013 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Tim Karr, Chair, Snowmobiling  
Jeffrey Cernic, Vice Chair, Off Highway Motorcycling  
Thomas E. Baxter, Secretary, Bicycling  
Cheryl J. Allerton, Horseback Riding  
Eric Bruggeman, All Terrain Vehicles  
Silas Chamberlin, Trail Walking  
Scott J. Cope, Member-at-Large  
James H. Foster, Hiking  
Jodi Foster, Member-at-Large  
Andrew Hamilton, Member-at-Large  
Eryn Hughes, Mountain Bicycling  
Larry Knutson, Trail Building  
Phil McGrath, Physically Challenged  
James McNulty, Water Trails  
Steve Risk, Four-Wheel Driving  
Jane Sheffield, Member-at-Large  
Michael Stokes, Trail Planning  
Patricia Tomes, Trail Advocates  
Robert A. Watts, Cross Country Skiing  
Gwen Wills, Trail Training

### STAFF

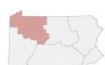
Matthew Beaver, DCNR  
Kathy Dimpsey, Federal Highway Administration  
Jason Hall, DCNR  
Mark Hansford, DCNR  
Jeffrey Johns, DCNR  
Jacqueline Koons-Felion, PennDOT  
Jackie Kramer, Pa. Fish and Boat Commission  
Diane Kripas, DCNR  
Alexander MacDonald, DCNR  
Kent Taylor, editor, DCNR  
Vanyla Tierney, DCNR

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### Northwestern Region

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### North Central Region

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### Southeastern Region

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### Statewide

BuildPAtrails Website • Keystone Trails Association – Trail Care Events • Pennsylvania Equine Council Trail Stewardship Program • 9/11 Trail Story Map • Trail Assistance Mini-Grant Program • Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails Summit • Trail of the Year • Trails to Watch in 2014 • 2014 Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee

## 2013 SUMMARY STATISTICS

New trail miles added	83 miles
DCNR trail grant projects completed	71 projects
DCNR and local expenditures on completed trail grant projects	\$28 million
Counties with DCNR trail grant projects completed	36 of 67 counties
Volunteer hours reported	More than 5,500 hours
Unique visitors to ExplorePAtrails.com	56,396 visitors

## INTRODUCTION

From ground-breakings to ribbon-cuttings, 2013 was a banner year for trails. These trails bring health and economic benefits, invigorated communities, improved quality of life, and make Pennsylvania a better place to live, work and play for citizens, visitors and future generations.

In 2013, trails were built, restored, celebrated, and reimagined by hundreds of volunteers, stakeholders and user groups who share the grand vision of a seamless, statewide network of trails and work tirelessly to make this vision a reality. Countless hours of dedicated work by trail crews, planners, funding agencies, local project sponsors, trail users and volunteers were logged during 2013. Under DCNR's Community Conservation Partnership Program 71 trail projects, representing more than \$28 million in state and local grant funds were completed.

## A STATEWIDE NETWORK OF TRAILS

In 2013, teams of trail builders across Pennsylvania added more than 83 new miles of trail, gaining on an ambitious goal set forth in the state's 2001 *Greenways Action Plan* to connect every community to a trail. Some of these notable accomplishments are described in the following pages.



### Montour Trail

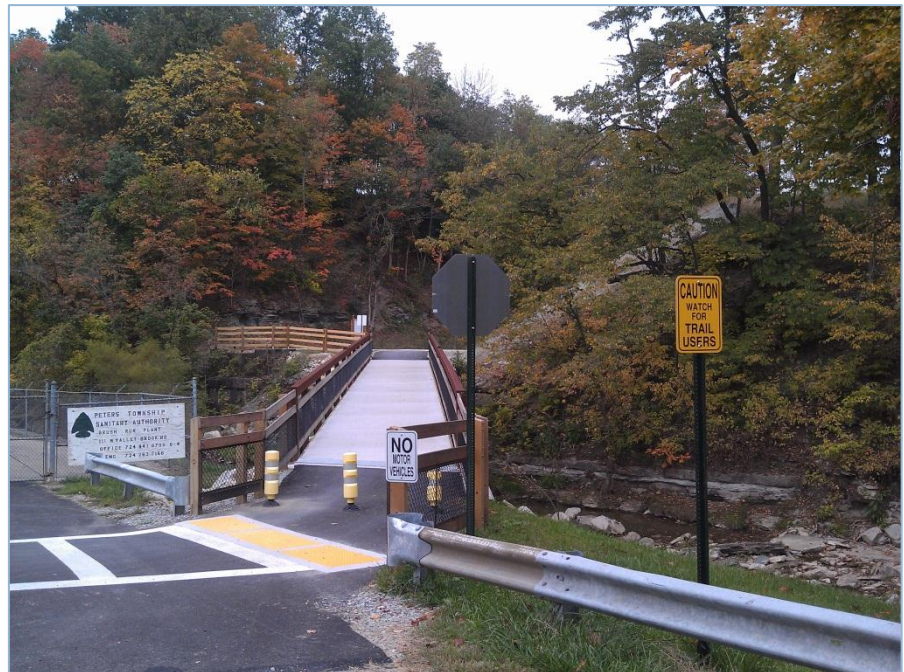
**Project Location:** Allegheny County, Peters Township

**Description:** Walkers, runners and cyclists along the Montour Trail's Arrowhead Trail section in Peters Township will no longer have to contend with the potentially dangerous Valley Brook Road curve.

A new bridge was installed over Brush Run Creek that connects two other finished sections of the trail. More than a half-million people use the trail each year.

**Sponsor:** Montour Trail Council

**Submitted by:** David Oyler,  
Montour Trail Council



A new 98-foot trail bridge was installed over Brush Run Creek to eliminate a dangerous crossing of Valley Brook Road.

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## Great Allegheny Passage

**Project Location:** Allegheny County, Pa. to Allegany County, Md.

**Description:** The Allegheny Trail Alliance and the Regional Trail Corporation worked together to complete this Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) trail system, which has been 35 years in the making. The final mile passed through a metal recycling operation and a waterpark, each with their own safety issues to incorporate into the design and costing about \$3.4 million. The project also included creating a marker at the western terminus at Point State Park where travelers can culminate their journey with a great photo. Both non-profit organizations have been working together since 1995 to complete the GAP, along with several other trail organizations that govern and maintain the corridor.

The completion of the trail opened Pittsburgh to the vast number of recreational trail users who have been using the GAP for many years. It greatly enhanced the biking and walking opportunities in the Mon Valley communities of McKeesport, Duquesne, Whitaker, Munhall, Homestead, and West Homestead. Local residents have a wonderful facility that is accessible and safe for all ages and fitness levels. The once smoky Mon Valley, known for its steel production a century ago, is now a tourist destination because of the trail.

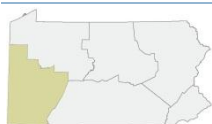
**Sponsors:** Allegheny Trail Alliance and Regional Trail Corporation

**Submitted by:** Linda McKenna Boxx, Allegheny Trail Alliance



Young riders celebrate the completion of the 141-mile Great Allegheny Passage on June 15, 2013.

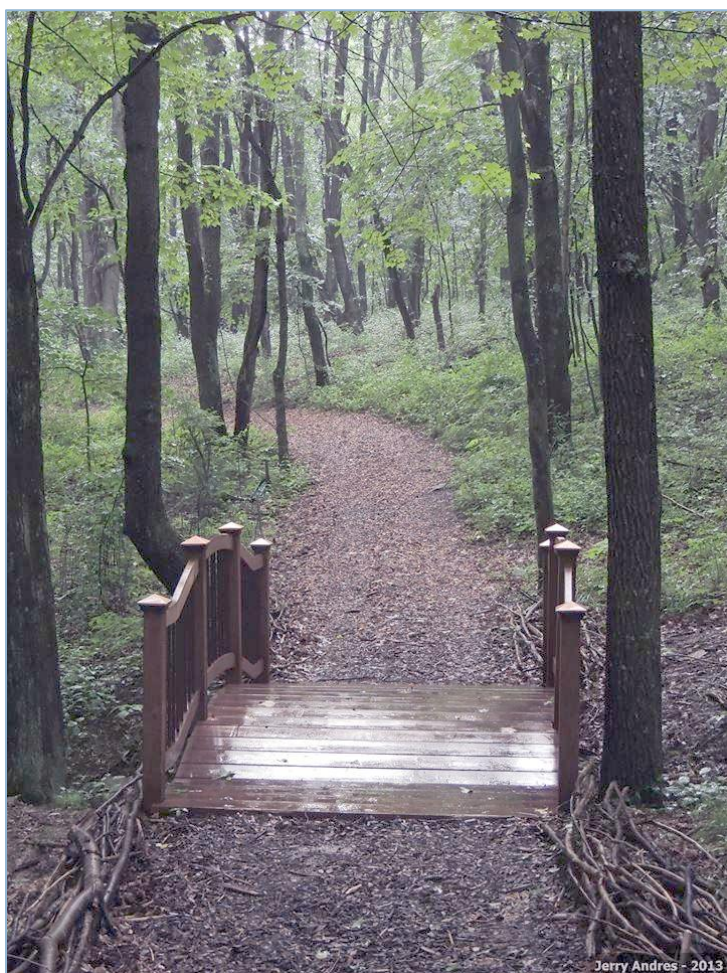
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## Pittsburgh Botanic Garden Trails

**Project Location:** Allegheny County, North Fayette Township. The Pittsburgh Botanic Garden is 5 minutes from Settlers Ridge and 7 miles west of the city, on Pinkerton Run Road, next door to Settler's Cabin Park.

**Description:** The Pittsburgh Botanic Garden has been developing its first garden, the Woodlands of the World Garden on the northern 60 acres of its 460-acre site as part of the transformation of abandoned coal-mining land into the region's first outdoor comprehensive botanic garden.



More than 3 miles of trails have been built including one mile of ADA accessible trails. The trails take visitors to select Family Moments which are play and discovery areas for children such as a Storybook House and a Meadow Maze. Trails lead to a woodland pond that has been restored using an acid mine drainage treatment system. Trails lead to the Dogwood Meadow where over 500 dogwoods display their white finery in the spring.

The project included trail work as well as clearing invasive plant species and native plantings. Thus far, over 20 acres has been cleared and over 5,000 native trees shrubs and herbaceous perennials have been established. A solar powered irrigation system helps the young plants thrive. In 2013, over 3,000 visitors enjoyed the Garden, and it is not yet open to the public. The Garden is available for tours, and it will open to the general public in the summer of 2014.

**Sponsor:** Pittsburgh Botanic Garden

**Submitted by:** Kitty Vagley, Pittsburgh Botanic Garden

Woodland trail and bridge at the Pittsburgh Botanic Garden

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## Three Rivers Water Trail – Natrona Landing

**Project Location:** Allegheny County, Natrona Heights

**Description:** Friends of the Riverfront (FOR) constructed the Three Rivers Water Trail access point in Natrona, including an ADA-complaint concrete ramp and a canoe and kayak rack for storing non-motorized watercraft. In addition, FOR established a riparian restoration area to improve the environment at the site, remove invasive species, and plant native species. Members of the community, through Natrona Comes Together, provided several hundred hours of volunteer time to help make the project a success.

FOR worked closely with Natrona to gather community input, develop strong partnerships, and ensure timely completion of the project. The placement of native plants was accomplished largely by volunteers who were generous with their time and expertise. The site was once a very popular, yet unofficial, river access nearly 50 years ago. Local residents were pleased to reclaim their connection with the Allegheny River. This project and several other key revitalization efforts have helped bring a sense of pride to Natrona. This is the 19th completed site that is dedicated to non-motorized public riverfront access and recreation. These efforts provide safe access to the river, renovating once-dangerous locations that are now a source of beauty and pride in the community.

**Sponsor:** Friends of the Riverfront, Natrona Comes Together

**Submitted by:** Thomas Baxter, Friends of the Riverfront



Natrona Landing on the Allegheny River

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## Mingo Creek Park Pedestrian Trail

**Project Location:** Washington County, Nottingham

**Description:** A new trail was constructed through Mingo Park, including several creek and stream crossings using pre-fabricated bridges and other structures designed and built by county staff.

Washington County was a leader in addressing new accessibility guidelines for outdoor developed areas. New signs alert users about sections of the trail that may be too steep for physically challenged people or those in wheel chairs.

**Sponsor:** Washington County

**Submitted by:** Lisa Cessna, Washington County Planning



Mingo Creek Park Pedestrian Trail

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## Blairsville River Trail

**Project Location:** Indiana County, Blairsville Borough

**Description:** The 1.7 mile Blairsville River Trail project included construction of the trail along the Conemaugh River on the Army Corps of Engineers property in the Borough of Blairsville.

Two rest shelters, five benches, trail signs at each end of the trail, mile markers along the trail, two ADA parking areas at each end of the trail, and guard rail fencing were added to several sections of the trail.



Blairsville River Trail and Bairdstown Bridge, Indiana County

The trail loops through wooded acres along the Conemaugh River, connecting Blairsville to the scenic Kiski-Conemaugh Water Trail. The trail links users to downtown businesses, historic sites, the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway and the Trans Allegheny Trails network.

Blairsville Borough is making good progress on its effort to connect this trail to the 15-mile West Penn Trail and the 47-mile Hoodlebug and Ghost Town Trail system.

**Sponsor:** Blairsville Borough and Blairsville Community Development Authority.

**Submitted by:** Tim Evans, Blairsville Borough

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## Westmoreland Heritage Trail

**Project Location:** Westmoreland County, between Slickville and Delmont in Salem Township

**Description:** This project entailed the construction of 3.7 miles of new rail-trail along a former Pennsylvania Railroad corridor. It was undertaken by the Regional Trail Corporation, working in partnership with



Westmoreland Heritage Trail Grand Opening in Slickville, Pa.

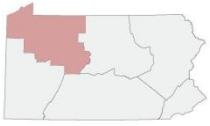
the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation, the County Engineer, the Westmoreland Heritage Trail Chapter of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation - District 12, and the municipalities of Salem, Penn and Loyallhanna townships; and Delmont, Murrys ville, Monroeville, Trafford and Export Boroughs.

The trail is envisioned as a 26-mile, cross-county, multi-use trail. Phase II was formally dedicated on October 5, 2013. Combined with Phase I, which opened in 2008, the Westmoreland Heritage Trail (WHT) is now a 9-mile route, and it connects with the West Penn Trail in Saltsburg. It provides direct recreational access for residents of a rural and small town portion of Westmoreland County where no close-to-home trail opportunity had existed.

**Sponsor:** Regional Trails Corporation, Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, PennDOT

**Submitted by:** Jeff Richards, Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks and Recreation

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## Allegheny River Trail

**Project Location:** Venango and Clarion counties, Foxburg to Parker

**Description:** Two Allegheny River Trail (ART) projects were completed in 2013. Three miles of paved trail were constructed from Foxburg to Parker, including the decking of a 900-foot bridge over the Clarion River and an overlook that was constructed near the bridge. In addition, 3 miles of the ART were repaved near Franklin.

The Allegheny River Trail is part of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and connects with the North Country Trail (a long-distance trail from Minnesota to Maine), Sandy Creek Trail (14 miles in Pennsylvania) and eventually the Armstrong Trail in Armstrong County and the Redbank Trail on the southern edge of Clarion County.

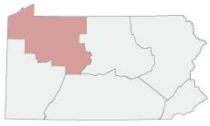
**Sponsor:** Allegheny Valley Trails Association, Richland Township, Cranberry Township and Perry Township

**Submitted by:** James Holden, Allegheny Valley Trails Association



Allegheny River Trail near Emlenton, Pa. Photo by: [axsdeny@gmail.com](mailto:axsdeny@gmail.com)

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## Redbank Valley Trail

**Project Location:** Clarion, Armstrong and Jefferson counties, parallel to Redbank Creek from the Allegheny River to Brookville, near I-80 in Jefferson County.

**Description:** The Redbank Valley Trails Association (RVTA) formed in 2010 to improve and maintain 51 miles of scenic railroad corridor acquired by Allegheny Valley Land Trust. The four-season non-motorized trail follows Redbank Creek and connects with the Armstrong Trail and the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail. An additional 9-mile branch extends from Lawsonham to Sligo in Clarion County.

Logging thousands of hours in 2013, Redbank Valley Trails Association volunteers made great progress improving the trail. With funding from the North Central Regional Planning Commission and the Greenways Block Grant Program, 11 miles of trail were graded, rolled and surfaced with crushed limestone. Bridges were decked, railings constructed and approaches installed.

Mile 17 near Climax to Mile 11 was graded and rolled by volunteers using donated equipment from Rosebud Mining. Decking and railings were installed on the 13th and final bridge over Mortimer's Run at Mile 1 on the main 41-mile trail. The remaining 3 miles in Jefferson County from Baxter Mile 36 to Coder's Run Mile 39 is slated for completion in the spring of 2014.

The 3rd Annual Kessa's Blessings in the Valley 5K Turkey Trot took place on the trail on Thanksgiving morning and sponsors raised over \$4,600 for local families in need of assistance. RVTA partnered with the Brookville YMCA and C.R.E.A.T.E. Brookville to host the first annual *Run the Redbank*. Over 130 racers participated in the 1 mile, 5K, 10K and half-marathon. For more information, visit [www.redbankvalleytrails.org](http://www.redbankvalleytrails.org).

**Sponsor:** Redbank Valley Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Darla Kirkpatrick, President, Redbank Valley Trails Association

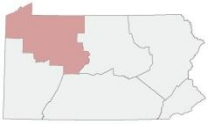
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The Redbank Valley Trail was surfaced with equipment donated by Rosebud Mining Company.



Volunteers install the approaches to the Rachel Carson Bridge near Mile 36 on the Redbank Valley Trail.



## McClintock Trail

**Project Location:** Venango County

**Description:** Bicyclists and pedestrians are now able to travel through the Oil Region on an uninterrupted trail from the northwestern reaches of Pennsylvania south to Emlenton and Foxburg.



McClintock Trail

The Pennsylvania DCNR and the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism completed work on the southern portion of the McClintock Trail running from McClintock Well Number One at Waitz Road and Route 8 in Cornplanter Township, Venango County, 1.8 miles south to Oil City's bike trail. The trail fills in the final gap in the central portion of a bike trail connecting Erie with Pittsburgh.

The McClintock Trail connects to the Justus Trail, which spans from Franklin to Oil City, then to the northern segment of McClintock Trail and Oil Creek State Park.

DCNR invested over \$200,000 in this part of the trail through its Community Conservation Partnerships Program. The DCNR grant to the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism was funded through the Environmental Stewardship Fund generated from landfill and natural gas impact fees.

Work included an eight-foot paved trail surface and interpretive panels along the trail. The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation provided \$1.2 million in Transportation Enhancement funds for the southern trail segment. Other partners included Oil City, Cornplanter Township, the National Park Service, OMG Americas, and the Western New York & Pennsylvania Railroad.

**Sponsor:** Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism

**Submitted by:** Kim Harris, Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism

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## Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area Trailhead

**Project Location:** Northumberland County, Coal Township

**Description:** In 2013, Northumberland County Commissioners appointed a five-member authority that began the task of building the Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area (AOAA) trailhead, parking area, and access road. Several off-highway vehicle clubs and other organizations now use the access to ride nearly 80 miles of trails on the eastern portion of the property. A grand opening is anticipated in 2014.

The county-owned, 6,500-acre property is gradually developing into a premiere, actively managed trail destination. The AOAA Authority has created unique partnerships among local police, municipalities, conservation departments, county and state agencies. In addition, the Authority has forged strong relationships with adjacent landowners who have participated in planning. The AOAA project has become a source of pride for the state, the county, and the local economy. Hundreds of users have already participated in sponsored trails events, and the property hasn't even officially opened.

Related activities on the property included:

- AOAA worked with DCNR to develop a preliminary web map; the final version will be published on ExplorePATrails.com.
- Northumberland County, along with the AOAA Authority, helped coordinate a tour group of retired U.S. and Canadian geology professors to view the Whaleback Anticline, a unique geologic feature on the property.
- The AOAA is a member of the Susquehanna Valley Visitors Bureau, an organization helping to promote the AOAA as an outdoor destination.
- The AOAA has begun signing and marking the property for improved navigation.

The AOAA is a prime example of an abused and underused piece of property turned into a regional (and eventually national) attraction for outdoor recreation.

**Sponsors:** Northumberland County, Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area

**Submitted by:** Patrick Mack, Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area



AOAA trailhead, Coal Township, Northumberland County

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## Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve Middle Creek Accessible Trail

**Project Location:** Adams County

**Description:** Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve and Environmental Center is a non-profit education and conservation organization located on 609 acres in the foothills of the South Mountain Range.

Located 30 minutes from Gettysburg National Military Park, the Preserve's mission is to protect the Swamp Creek and Middle Creek watersheds. There are 10 miles of trails on the property that lead to unique rock formations, scenic vistas, and hidden glades. Hiking is a popular activity at the Preserve.

In 2013, with assistance from Penn Trails LLC and the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program, Strawberry Hill completed the installation of a 600-linear-foot ADA accessible trail. The Middle Creek Accessible Trail was constructed in the heart of the Preserve's educational campus. Designed and constructed by members of the Professional Trail Builders Association, this natural surface trail was built to meet U.S. Access Board standards for people with disabilities.

The goal of the project was to create a new recreation and education asset that allows visitors of all physical abilities to experience the preserve. The project included new self-guided interpretive stations and habitat plantings. The trail connects the educational components of the preserve and minimizes impacts to sensitive wetlands.

**Sponsors:** Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve

**Submitted by:** Chuck Reid, Strawberry Hill Nature Preserve



Middle Creek Accessible Trail at Strawberry Hill Preserve



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## Hanover Trolley Trail

**Project Location:** York County, Hanover Borough to Penn Township

**Description:** Through a long-standing license agreement with Met Ed, the County of York developed a recreational rail trail within the utility corridor that stretches from Hanover to West York. The York County Rail Trail Authority, the trail development agency for the county, has been developing the Hanover Trolley Trail in phases. In 2013, using a DCNR grant to purchase materials and assist with engineering and design, Penn Township offered its public works crewmen and equipment to build a 0.9-mile section that extends across the township. The project was a partnership between York County Rail Trail Authority, DCNR and Penn Township. The township's donation was valued at more than \$70,000, and the quality of the work was excellent. This section of trail opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on November 20, 2013.

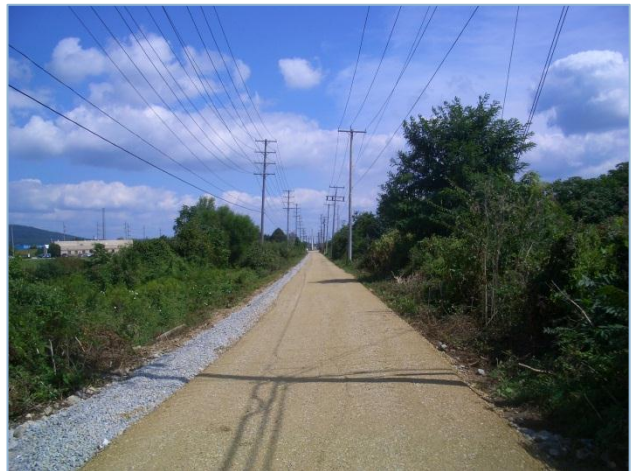
The Penn Township section links directly to a 1-mile section completed in 2008 by Hanover Borough that begins at Moul Field, a borough-managed recreational complex. Newly constructed townhomes line this portion of the trail which passes into a wooded area, then links with a variety of medical facilities in Cherry Tree Court. The new section in Penn Township passes through the Penn Township Industrial Park, linking many industries. The project provides health, fitness and recreational opportunities to many nearby residents, medical facilities and industries.

**Sponsors:** York County Rail Trail Authority

**Submitted by:** Gwen Loose, York County Rail Trail Authority



Hanover Trolley Trail, Penn Township section, before construction.



Hanover Trolley Trail, Penn Township section, after construction.

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## Path of the Flood Trail

**Project Location:** Cambria County, Franklin Borough to Conemaugh Township

**Description:** Locally known as the Coy/McCombie Link, this project connected two previously completed trail sections of the Path of the Flood Trail. It is a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile segment that connects to the National Park Service's Staple Bend Tunnel, the oldest railroad tunnel in the country.

Equipment and labor for the project was donated by several local companies with engineering services provided by Keller Engineers of Altoona, Pa. Steve Coy and Rob McCombie coordinated the volunteers. Funding was provided by Cambria County and a DCNR mini-grant administered by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority (CCCRA) formed a strong partnership with the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy which contributed funds toward fencing and the purchase of a tractor used for the project.

This link is a vital connector in the Path of the Flood Trail. It provides trail users with a continuous 10 miles of recreational trail that connects trail towns to the City of Johnstown. The Path of the Flood Trail is also an integral part of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway, opening up the region for increased economic and tourism development. The trail provides educational and health benefits as well as opportunities for alternative transportation to work, school, shopping and play. This link provides connections to federal, state and local heritage and cultural sites, including the Johnstown Flood Museum.

This link trail officially opened on October 10, 2013.

**Sponsor:** Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority

**Submitted by:** Delores J. Columbus, Cambria County Conservation & Recreation Authority



One of many scenic sections of the new Coy/McCombie link in the Path of the Flood Trail

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## Enola Low Grade Trail

**Project Location:** Lancaster County, Manor Township, Washington Borough

**Description:** Manor Township purchased 5.25 miles of abandoned Norfolk Southern Railroad property, and with its own public works employees, built a 14-foot-wide trail surfaced with 4 inches of an aggregate mix specially developed for multi-use trails. This created an ideal surface for walkers, runners, and bicyclists. Historic structures and environmental features were carefully preserved adding to the unique character of the trail.

The trail opened August 22, 2013. The number of users quickly exceeded expectations. Each weekend since opening day, several thousand visitors use the trail. Repeat visitors from central Pennsylvania are common. Visitors from Maryland, New Jersey, New York, Wisconsin, North Carolina, California, Florida, and Ohio have given the trail excellent reviews. Within months of opening, the trail became one of the more popular destinations in the region.

**Sponsor:** Manor Township

**Submitted by:** Barry L. Smith, Manor Township



The Manor Township section of the Enola Low Grade Trail offers sweeping views of the Susquehanna River near Washington Borough.

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## Swatara Creek State Park Multi-Use Trail

**Project Location:** Lebanon County, between Fredericksburg and Sudesburg

**Description:** Four volunteers, with an average age of 75, started building the multi-use trail in 2009. The heavily wooded trail is a 7.5-mile loop near Swatara Creek, about a three hour ride on horse-back.



Volunteers clear debris and install a drainage culvert in Swatara Creek State Park.

The trail was completed on July 29, 2013. It's a popular horseback riding destination with many riders returning multiple times throughout the year, some on a weekly basis. Volunteers maintain the trail, keeping it clear of obstacles, cutting the grass and weeds, and cleaning the trailhead parking lot on a monthly basis. The success of the trail is symbolic of the strong partnership among volunteers and staff at Swatara Creek State Park.

**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Equine Council and Friends of Swatara Creek State Park

**Submitted by:** Edith and John Ryan, Pennsylvania Equine Council and Friends of Swatara Creek State Park



## Gifford Pinchot State Park Trails

**Project Location:** York County, near Lewisberry

**Description:** Volunteers re-routed, re-surfaced, improved and stabilized the Lakeside Trail near the campground and the dam at Gifford Pinchot State Park. Girl scouts worked to resurface a section of trail that was poorly drained and in need of repair. Other groups such as a local church, Keystone Trails Association, the Friends of Gifford Pinchot, campground hosts, and state park staff worked to construct and improve 1,800 feet of trail. In addition, a 37-foot bridge was constructed to help complete the connection between the Beaver Creek Trail and the Mason-Dixon Trail, a long distance trail that spans from Delaware to the Appalachian Trail.

**Sponsor:** DCNR and Keystone Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Genny Volgstadt, DCNR State Parks Region 3



Volunteers spread stone over a geo-cell trail base at Gifford Pinchot State Park.

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## Northwest Lancaster County River Trail

**Project Location:** Lancaster County, Conoy Township, East Donegal Township, Marietta Borough, West Hempfield Township, Columbia Borough, parallel to the Susquehanna River.

**Description:** The Northwest Lancaster County River Trail (NWLCRT) is located in Lancaster County, Pa., and spans five municipalities along the Susquehanna River: Conoy Township, East Donegal Township, Marietta Borough, West Hempfield Township, and Columbia Borough. Running parallel to PA Route 441, the NWLCRT follows the shoreline along the lower Susquehanna River.

The NWLCRT is a collaborative effort among various partners to develop a 14-mile, multi-use recreational trail that will link multiple communities and help connect people to the outdoors.



New East Donegal Township section of the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail

In 2013, construction was completed on a pedestrian bridge over Conoy Creek that now enables hikers and bikers to travel safely to and from the village of Bainbridge.

Once the entire trail is complete, it will feature scenic views of the river corridor and highlight various natural, cultural, and historic resources through interpretation and educational opportunities, thereby fostering stewardship ethic for trail users. The leading project partners include DCNR, Lancaster County Planning Commission, Lancaster County Parks Department, LCSWMA, Conoy Township, East Donegal Township, Marietta Borough, West Hempfield Township, and Columbia Borough. Additionally, the Susquehanna Gateway Heritage Area, Lancaster County Conservancy, Lancaster Bicycle Club, Kodak American Greenways, Rivertownes PA, PA Fish and Boat Commission, PA DEP, DCED, and PennDOT are also partners in the project.

**Sponsors:** Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority, Conoy and East Donegal townships, PennDOT, DCNR, Lancaster County

**Submitted by:** Michelle Marsh, Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority

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## Somerset Lake Trail

**Project Location:** Somerset County

**Description:** Somerset County Conservancy constructed a 1.5- mile walking and birding trail along the western side of Somerset Lake with viewing areas at strategic locations along the trail. The trail is constructed on the uplands along the western shore to avoid disturbance of the wetlands and marsh areas.

The trail passes through diverse habitats including alders, hardwoods, planted spruce and pines as well as open areas creating viewing access to migrating and breeding warblers, sparrows, thrushes and orioles as well as views of the water. The addition of this trail has increased low impact access to this valuable resource and enhances the experience of birders and others who wish to hike through this varied woodland. The trail complements the property's existing fishing resource and attracts visitors to one of the crown jewels of the Laurel Highlands.

The trail begins at the parking area off Wood Duck Road by the cove nearest to and just north of the Southwest Regional Headquarters Building. It runs north along the side of Wood Duck Road crossing three drainage ditches to avoid construction in the wetlands. The trail proceeds around the curve in Wood Duck Road to a point beyond the wetlands where it turns into the forested scrub brush and continues until it meets up with the existing mowed grassy path that follows the lake's edge around to the South Boat Launch. After passing the boat launch the trail enters the upland scrub forest and remains in the forest until approaching the wetland at the northern end of Wood Duck Road.



Somerset Lake

The trail surface along the lakeshore is a grass surface with an occasional marker indicating the trail direction. The trail surface in the wooded scrub forest area is a coarse mulch-like substance. The trail is intended to be a low impact, low maintenance, walking path used to observe wildlife and access the lake for fishing.

**Sponsors:** Somerset County, PA Fish & Boat Commission, Somerset Lake

**Submitted by:** Jim Moses, Somerset County Conservancy

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## Lebanon Valley Rail-Trail

**Project Location:** Lebanon County, City of Lebanon

**Description:** The Lebanon Valley Rail-Trail (LVRT) Phase 5 is located in the City of Lebanon and starts at S. 8th Street near the City/County Municipal Building and ends at Chestnut Street, a distance of 0.80 miles.

The LVRT begins at the Lebanon/Lancaster County line and runs northward past Mt. Gretna for 15 miles into the City of Lebanon. In the coming years, this north – south running trail will reach Swatara State Park and connect with the Appalachian Trail and trails in Schuylkill County. LVRT Inc. and the Lebanon County Planning Department are presently studying how to complete the rail-trail through the remainder of the urbanized area. From there the preferred alignment of LVRT is fairly well established based upon a past Lebanon County Metropolitan Planning Organization (LEBCO MPO) LVRT Northern Feasibility Study.

One east – west connection (South Lebanon Township Trail) is already in place and several more are in the planning stages and will be implemented with private and/or public funds.



Celebrating Lebanon Valley Rail-Trail intersection and sidewalk improvements

In general, the existing LVRT has become widely successful based upon its ridership, amenities including several key trailheads, safety and security, and economic spin-offs. This is well documented in the LVRT and Conewago Recreation Trail 2011 User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy.

The LVRT Phase 5 connects with many key destinations in the City of Lebanon and broadens the reach and influence of the rail-trail.

Key destinations include the City/County Municipal

Building, Lebanon Catholic Middle School and High School and numerous businesses in downtown Lebanon. As the LVRT is completed through the urbanized area, walking, bicycling, skate boarding, jogging, etc. will increase. The LVRT is often cited as a major quality of life initiative in Lebanon County.

**Sponsor:** Lebanon County Planning Department

**Submitted by:** Tom Kotay, Consultant to Lebanon County Planning Department

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## Huntingdon & Broad Top Rail Trail

**Project Location:** Bedford County, Broad Top Township

**Description:** This second phase of the Huntingdon & Broad Top (H&BT) Rail Trail project started at the intersection of State Route 915 and Saw Mill Road, and ended at the trail's intersection with Cypher Beach Road.

This project was a continuation of the design and construction of a former railroad right-of-way and rail trail that included the rehabilitation of a 350-foot trestle bridge spanning the Raystown Branch Juniata River. Phase 2 added an additional 4 miles to the already completed 2 miles making 6 miles of the 10.6 total available to the public.

**Sponsors:** Bedford County, Broad Top Township

**Submitted by:** David S. Thomas, Broad Top Township

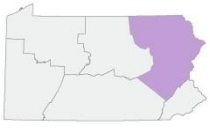


H&BT Rail Trail bridge rehabilitation project



Grand Opening celebration of the H&BT Rail Trail

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## Lackawanna River Heritage Trail

**Project Location:** Lackawanna County, City of Scranton, Taylor Borough, Archbald Borough, Jermyn Borough, Fell Township

**Description:** The Lackawanna River Heritage Trail, in conjunction with the Delaware and Hudson (D&H) Rail-Trail, forms a  $\pm 70$  mile trail system from Pittston, Pennsylvania to the New York State border, north of Lanesboro. Lackawanna Heritage Valley (LHV) develops and manages the trail system from Simpson south through the Lackawanna Valley. The Rail-Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania is responsible for the D&H Rail-Trail to the north. The trail is popular with walkers, runners, bicyclists, cross country skiers, snowmobilers, and equestrians.



Lackawanna River Heritage Trail ribbon cutting ceremony near Archbald

**Scranton to Taylor -** Lackawanna Heritage Valley developed 2 miles of trail between the City of Scranton and the Borough of Taylor, adding to the popular 6-mile contiguous section in Scranton. The new trail offers multi-use dual surfacing, an amphitheater, lacrosse fields, and art installations along the route.

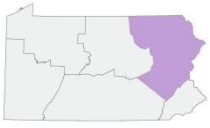
**Archbald to Jermyn -** Lackawanna Heritage Valley developed 3 miles of trail between the Boroughs of Archbald and Jermyn, expanding the popular Mid Valley Trail. This new section offers a combination of improved sidewalks, dual surfacing trail, and a shared-use road. Users can travel from Condella Park in Olyphant through Jessup to Archbald.

**Fell Township Bridge Redecking Project -** Lackawanna Heritage Valley acquired a 1-mile gap in the D&H Rail-Trail that contained three old railroad bridges. The bridge decks were in poor condition and needed to be replaced. The one mile of trail corridor was narrowing due to overgrowth of vegetation. The bridges were re-decked with concrete, and railings, seating, and gates were added. Lackawanna Heritage Valley and Rail-Trail Council of NEPA partnered with the local snowmobile club, PA Sno Trails, who provided volunteer labor to clear the overgrowth and open the trail corridor.

**Sponsors:** Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority

**Submitted by:** Natalie Gelb, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority

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## West End Regional Park

**Project Location:** Monroe County, Chestnuthill Township

**Description:** The West End Park and Open Space Commission completed a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -mile shared-use trail at the new West End Regional Park. The trail, parking lot and pavilion is the first phase of a multiphase project to develop the 244-acre park.

Completion of phase one is an important step in raising awareness and building support for phase two which includes athletic fields and additional parking.

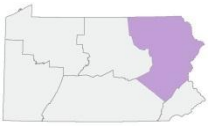
**Sponsors:** West End Park and Open Space Commission

**Submitted by:** Bernie Kozen, West End Park and Open Space Commission



Ribbon cutting ceremony for the West End Regional Park Trail

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## D&L Trail – Black Diamond Section

**Project Locations:** Luzerne County, Middleburg Road to Black Diamond Trailhead

**Description:** The 9.7 miles of the Black Diamond section of the Delaware and Lehigh (D&L) Trail along with the new Black Diamond Trailhead and connector trail near White Haven in Luzerne County is the D&L's largest trail project to date. This section of D&L Trail is not adjacent to the Lehigh or Delaware rivers. Built on the old Lehigh Valley Railroad bed, it meanders through the woods, passing wildlife, lakes, ponds and overlooks into the Wyoming Valley.

During the 2013 construction season, an 8.1-mile section of trail from Middleburg Road to the new Black Diamond Trailhead was led by the Anthracite Scenic Trails Association and the DCNR Bureau of Forestry.

Projects planned for the next two to three years include the Middleburg Road pedestrian crossing and several miles of trail between Allentown and Northampton, all of which are gaps identified in the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan.

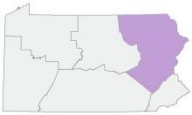
**Sponsors:** Anthracite Scenic Trails Association, DCNR Bureau of Forestry, PennDOT, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor

**Submitted by:** H. Scott Everett, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor



New markers were installed on a recently constructed Black Diamond section of the D & L Trail.

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## Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails

**Project Locations:** Luzerne County, Stockton

**Description:** This video shows the placement of the Ashmore Pedestrian Bridge over the Norfolk Southern Railroad outside Stockton, Pa. on mile 4 of the Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails. The bridge opened an additional 3 miles of trail.

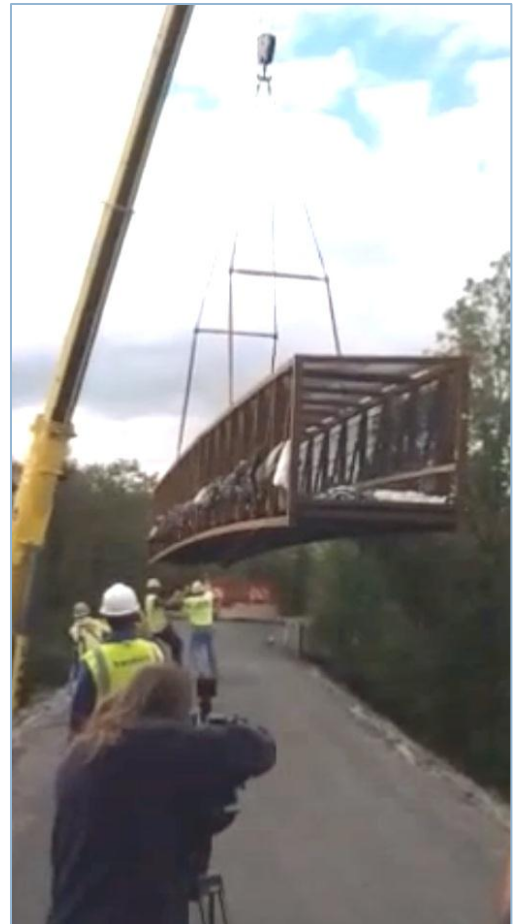
**Sponsors:** Luzerne County

**Submitted by:** Lorne Possinger, DCNR

Use the following link to see the video:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QmGZfmHnz7w>

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Ashmore Pedestrian Bridge was installed on the Greater Hazleton Rails to Trails.



## Chester Valley Trail – Phase 2

**Project Location:** Chester County, East Whiteland and Tredyffrin townships; Montgomery County, Upper Merion Township

**Description:** Chester County constructed a 7-mile Phase 2 section of the Chester Valley Trail from Route 29 in Malvern east into Montgomery County, Pa. The multi-use rail to trail project was constructed with Federal Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Funding and connects to the 4-mile Chester Valley Trail Phase 1 project, which was opened in the fall of 2010.

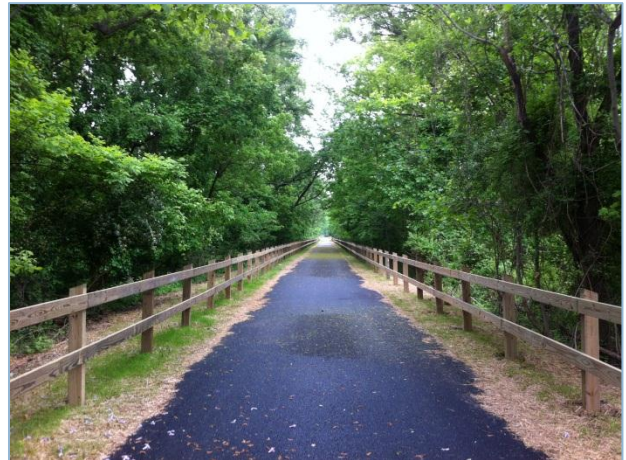
This trail construction project included the installation of two new pedestrian bridges over state roadways, a pedestrian culvert under a township road, the rehabilitation of a stone arch stream culvert, the replacement of a failing stone arch culvert with a pre-cast concrete box culvert, and a new trailhead parking area off of Warner Road in Upper Merion Township, Montgomery County.

**Sponsors:** Chester County

**Submitted by:** David T. Stauffer, Chester County Department of Facilities and Parks



Installation of the trail bridge over Valley Forge Road



Chester Valley Trail at Cedar Hollow

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## Delaware & Lehigh Canal Trail - Route 13 Passageways

**Project Location:** Bucks County, Tullytown

**Description:** The Delaware and Lehigh Canal trail is planned as a continuous trail from Bristol to Morrisville. In 2013, one of the five major gaps in the trail was filled when safe passage was constructed at a dangerous crossing on PA Route 13, a limited access highway that created a difficult barrier for people using the trail. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) completed the installation of two tunnels, a section of trail linking the two tunnels, drainage improvements, and landscaping.

Elissa Garofalo, president of the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, said, “The passageway resolves one of the most critical gaps for long-distance travel on the D&L Trail and Philadelphia’s regional trail network.” When the four remaining obstacles or impediments are removed, the finished trail will connect Bristol Borough to the rest of the towpath.

**Sponsors:** PennDOT

**Submitted by:** Silas Chamberlin, Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor and Andy Hamilton, East Coast Greenway Alliance



The D&L Canal Trail at Route 13



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## French Creek Heritage Trail

**Project Location:** Chester County, East Pikeland Township

**Description:** In 1982, French Creek was designated a Scenic River in East Pikeland Township and five other townships upstream. The creation of a 2 mile trail along French Creek showcases the natural beauty of the corridor. Historic features enhance its scenic quality, most notably at Rapps Dam and Hares Hill historic bridges and at Snyder's Mill. Ruins of buildings, walls and mill races lend interest to the area near Rapps Dam, and historic archways can be viewed in three places along the former Pickering Valley Railroad grade. Long and scenic views of the creek are common along the trail.

The trail provides a safe location for families, fitness enthusiasts and those seeking a connection with nature. Walkers and bikers are separated from vehicular traffic. French Creek is designated a trout fishing area; it is a popular destination, stocked during the fishing season, and access is easy.



French Creek Heritage Trail pedestrian bridge near Rapp's Dam

The trail reconnects people to the outdoors, facilitates a healthy lifestyle, and provides an economic benefit to the area. The historic aspects of the trail draw tourism to the region and link to historic Kimberton Village. Additionally, open space was acquired and preserved as part of the trail initiative.

The French Creek Heritage Trail is managed by East Pikeland Township and made possible through grants from DCNR and Chester County. The township's Historical Commission and Park & Recreation Board played significant roles in development of the trail. Portions of the trail have been blazed as Eagle Scout projects. In addition to the recreational opportunities available to trail users, the historic significance of the area is highlighted through a series of interpretive signs placed along the trail. The two historic bridges serve as the trailheads. The trail can be accessed from Rapps Dam Road, at the covered bridge, where parking is available.

**Sponsor:** East Pikeland Township, Chester County and DCNR

**Submitted by:** Kim Moretti, Township Manager

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## 202 Parkway

**Project Location:** Bucks and Montgomery counties, between Montgomeryville and Doylestown

**Description:** The Route 202 Parkway is a new roadway with a separate 12-foot-wide paved trail. It greatly enhances travel between Montgomeryville and Doylestown. It replaces the existing Route 202 alignment which experienced congestion for decades.

The project extends over 8 miles (partially in Bucks County and Montgomery County). This \$200 million state-funded project is maintained by PennDOT.

The Parkway project is unique in that it includes the trail, extensive split rail fencing, landscaping, park and ride lots and other aesthetic elements. It contains limited access to the roadway with a few overpasses, though most intersections along it are signalized at grade crossings.

The alignment of the road was established to provide scenic vistas and minimize the impact to the local communities and natural environment.



202 Parkway Trail in Montgomery Township

Montgomery County Planning Commission was involved in the various aspects of the design of the road and trail system. The roadway alignment is depicted in the county comprehensive plan. The 202 trail is also considered as part of the county trail system endorsed by the comprehensive plan, though the county has no maintenance or monitoring responsibilities for it.

**Sponsor:** Montgomery County and PennDOT

**Submitted by:** Leo Bagley, Montgomery County Planning Commission

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## Connect the Circuit

**Project Location:** Philadelphia, Montgomery, Chester and Delaware counties

**Description:** The Circuit is Greater Philadelphia's multi-use, regional trail network, covering five counties in Pennsylvania and four in New Jersey. When completed, the Circuit will comprise 750 miles of trails.

Currently, 283 miles of trails are built and in use. Thirty-three miles were added between May 2012 and November 2013. Currently, a number of projects within the nine counties have 29 additional miles of trails under construction.

The Circuit will help connect people to jobs, recreational opportunities, public transportation and other neighborhoods, and will serve as a gateway to open green space. Support of The Circuit is being led by The Circuit Coalition, a group of over 30 nonprofit organizations, foundations and agencies working together to raise the profile of this regional trail network, and educate people about the benefits an increased trail network will bring to the region.

The Circuit Coalition is working to secure funding from both the Commonwealth and New Jersey to replenish the Regional Trail Fund to continue making progress toward building out at least 20 miles of trails annually. Currently, the Circuit Coalition is running the Circuit Commitment campaign to secure \$10 million in dedicated funding for the Regional Trail Fund for the years 2014-2016. The Circuit is listed as a major regional Bicycle Pedestrian project in the 2040 Connections Plan recently developed by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

**Sponsor:** The Circuit Coalition

**Submitted by:** Sarah Clark Stuart, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

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Pennsylvania Caucus for the Circuit. On June 17, 2013, 60 trail enthusiasts attended a workshop to learn about the Circuit Commitment Campaign



## Port Richmond Trail – North Delaware Riverfront Greenway

**Project Location:** Philadelphia

**Description:** The 1.6-mile Port Richmond Trail extends from Monkiewicz Playground at Richmond Street and Allegheny Avenue to Delaware Avenue at Lewis Street in the City of Philadelphia.

The Port Richmond Trail is the second section of the 11-mile North Delaware Riverfront Greenway Trail to be constructed as part of the East Coast Greenway. The Delaware River City Corporation (DRCC) worked with the City of Philadelphia Department of Parks and Recreation, Department of Streets and others to design and construct the Port Richmond Trail. DRCC envisions a revitalized riverfront with a broad diversity of uses, including a prominent greenway with publicly accessible parks and open space, a continuous recreational trail, thriving businesses and industry, new residential communities, green connector streets to the adjacent neighborhoods, and an ecologically restored riverbank.

The trail traverses a working waterfront. Up to 25 feet of paving was removed from the cartways of Delaware and Allegheny avenues to accommodate the multi-use trail and landscape, resulting in a net reduction of 2 acres of impervious surfaces and the installation of over 200 trees, 250 shrubs and 1,500 native grasses. The Port Richmond Trail is a local trail segment of the Circuit, greater Philadelphia's regional trail network. It provides connection from the Port Richmond neighborhood west of I-95 to the only local access point on the Delaware River, Pulaski Park. Response to the trail has been very positive. An unsafe environment for bicycles and pedestrians has been transformed to an inviting landscaped trail corridor.

**Sponsors:** DCNR, Delaware River City Corporation, East Coast Greenway, City of Philadelphia, William Penn Foundation and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

**Submitted by:** Jim Fries, Project Manager, Delaware River City Corporation



Bicyclists heading to Port Richmond from Pulaski Park

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## Darby Creek Trail

**Project Location:** Delaware County, Haverford Township

**Description:** The Darby Creek Trail follows the creek from Merry Place, a handicapped-accessible park, to West Chester Pike in Delaware County. The portion in Haverford Township is 3 miles, running along the western edge of the township. The trail connects Merry Place to Haverford Reserve, a 169-acre community park where the former Haverford State Hospital was located. The trail is included in the Delaware County Bike Plan. In 2013 Haverford Township constructed a 10-foot-wide hard surface along the center 1-mile portion of the trail, using a grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

The trail is hugely popular. It allows greater access to the area along the creek, and residents of all ages and abilities enjoy the trail. In addition, the trail has generated interest in the creek and awareness of the importance of the watershed. Dog walkers, bike riders, joggers, anglers, bird watchers and hikers have come to enjoy the benefits of this valuable resource.

**Sponsors:** Haverford Township and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

**Submitted by:** Tim Denny, Haverford Township



People of all ages and abilities enjoy using the Darby Creek Trail

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## Regional Trails Program

**Project Location:** Berks, Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery, and Philadelphia counties

**Description:** In November 2013, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Greater Philadelphia's metropolitan planning organization, announced the third round of funding of the agency's Regional Trails Program. Since 2011, The Regional Trails Program, administered by the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, with funding from the William Penn Foundation, has provided over \$9 million in grants for targeted, priority trail design, construction, and planning projects to promote a truly connected, regional network of multi-use trails in Greater Philadelphia.

In 2013, DVRPC awarded \$3,988,608 to trail developers, including \$2,838,608 for 10 projects in Pennsylvania. These included the Schuylkill River Trail in Phoenixville Borough, the Neshaminy Creek Greenway in Chalfont Borough, Tookany/Tacony-Frankford Creek Watershed in Cheltenham Township, and Cobbs Creek Trail in Philadelphia.

Through three rounds of funding, DVRPC's Regional Trails Program has supported construction of about 20 miles of trails and planning or design of approximately 32 miles. Some projects are already complete, with others scheduled to open soon. The Regional Trails Program connects neighborhoods and communities to the regional multi-use trail network. It expands and enhances outdoor recreational opportunities for residents and visitors to Greater Philadelphia.

The Regional Trails Program has provided direct funding for projects which fill trail gaps identified in the 2009-2013 Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan. Funded privately, the Regional Trails Program successfully augmented existing public funding and leveraged new funding to implement a regional plan for trail development generated under the auspices of the regional planning agency, DVRPC. This is consistent with the Outdoor Recreation Plan's funding recommendations which call for cultivating private sources of funding for activities with effects across Pennsylvania.

**Sponsors:** Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission and the William Penn Foundation

**Submitted by:** Chris Linn, DVRPC



Walkers enjoy a recently completed section of the Tacony Creek Trail.

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## Penn Street Trail

**Project Location:** Philadelphia, Between Spring Garden Street and Ellen Street along Delaware Avenue and Penn Street

**Description:** The Delaware River Waterfront Corporation (DRWC) was created in January 2009 for the purposes of designing, developing and managing the central Delaware River waterfront in Philadelphia. DRWC is transforming the waterfront into a vibrant destination for recreational, cultural, and commercial activities for the residents and visitors of Philadelphia.

The Penn Street Trail is the first of its kind in the City of Philadelphia. Running 1,400 linear feet along Delaware Avenue and Penn Street in the Northern Liberties section of the



Mayor Michael Nutter cuts the ribbon at the opening of the Penn Street Trail.

city, the trail provides a 12-foot bi-directional bikeway separated from a 10-foot pedestrian walkway, all buffered from the street traffic by plantings and a curb. Other key elements of the trail include rain gardens that help collect storm water runoff, beautiful street furniture, and innovative solar lighting. This short segment of trail demonstrates standard trail building practices that the Delaware River Waterfront Corporation plans to use as it builds out the rest of the 6 mile trail along the riverfront. This trail was funded by a Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) grant received by the City of Philadelphia with the assistance of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia.

Since opening in June 2013, the Penn Street Trail has provided runners, cyclists, and other waterfront visitors a safe, beautiful experience along the river. Both residents and business owners whose properties border the trail have expressed excitement about the value it provides to their properties. As part of the East Coast Greenway, the trail forms a key connection between Spring Garden Street and Delaware Avenue.

**Sponsors:** Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

**Submitted by:** Lizzie Woods, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation

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## Green Ribbon Trail

**Project Location:** Montgomery County, Whitpain Township, Railroad Avenue and Mather Road

**Description:** The Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association (WVWA) has been creating and maintaining the Green Ribbon Trail (GRT) for over 30 years. In 2013, it established sections of riparian buffer along Wissahickon Creek. The trail is now a 12.6-mile grassy trail that stretches from Upper Gwynedd Township almost to the Philadelphia city line. There was one last section of trail that WVWA needed to complete; WVWA received trail and conservation easements from the Cedarbrook Country Club that not only completed the GRT, but protected 6.2 acres of wooded wetlands. Users can now walk the trail from end to end without any obstacles.



Hikers cross Wissahickon Creek on the Green Ribbon Trail. Photo by Montgomery County Planning Commission.

Now that the GRT is complete, WVWA expects trail use to increase significantly. WVWA has installed seven stepping stone crossings (poured concrete stones that help get walkers safely across the creek). These improvements, in combination with the new Cedarbrook trail section, make the trail very walkable.

**Sponsors:** Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association

**Submitted by:** Bob Adams, Wissahickon Valley Watershed Association

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## HEALTHY, SAFE AND ACCESSIBLE TRAILS

Pennsylvania trail partners organized and carried out many needed trail maintenance and improvement projects in 2013. The following section describes several of these trail rehabilitation projects conducted over the past year.



### Montour Trail – Repairs and Drainage Improvements

**Project Location:** Allegheny County, North Fayette Township, Findlay Township; Washington County, Robinson Township, Noblestown Road to North Star Road.

**Description:** This project included drainage improvement to 7.7 miles of existing trail, including installation of five pipe culverts and a relocation of the trail around a parking area.

**Sponsor:** Montour Trail Council

**Submitted by:** Dave Wright, Allegheny County Public Works Department



Volunteer work crews help repair the Montour Trail in Allegheny County.

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## Ligonier Valley Trail Pedestrian Bridge

**Project Location:** Westmoreland County, Ligonier

**Description:** The Ligonier Valley Trail links the town's popular attractions: Fort Ligonier from the days of George Washington and the French and Indian War; the historic Compass Inn for stagecoach travelers; the Ligonier Valley Railroad Museum; and the Southern Alleghenies Art Museum. In Ligonier Borough the trail gives bikers a safe route to restaurants, stores and further afield the trail leads to the countryside of Ligonier Township with its hills and farms. The bike route uses the original Lincoln Highway and extends to a nature trail at the Ligonier Township Municipal Center.

Now, two beautifully crafted arches stand on each side of a new trail bridge over Mill Creek, welcoming those who cross from both sides. On April 27, 2013 the community was invited by the Ligonier Township Recreation Board to the cutting at the new pedestrian and biking bridge. The event celebrated a cooperative effort between Ligonier Township, Ligonier Borough and the Loyalhanna Watershed Association to bring the Ligonier Valley Trail and the Mill Creek Bridge to fruition.

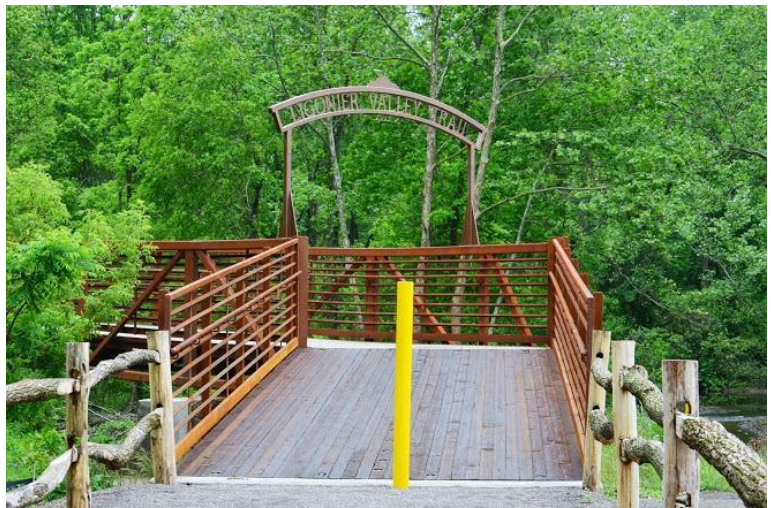
The bridge is located behind Weller Field and can be accessed from Boquet Street in Ligonier Borough.

**Sponsor:** Ligonier Township, Ligonier Borough and the Loyalhanna Watershed Association

**Submitted by:** Rose Stepnick, Ligonier Township Recreation Board



Workers install a new bridge over Mill Creek on the Ligonier Valley Trail.



An arch stands at each end of the new Mill Creek Bridge.

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## Ghost Town Trail – Site Amenities

**Project Location:** Indiana County

**Description:** To improve visitor services, Indiana Parks and Trails used \$30,280 from Indiana County's Marcellus Shale Legacy Fund to add two restrooms and a trail shelter along the Ghost Town Trail. All facilities installed are ADA accessible which improves opportunities for people with mobility challenges.

Visitor support services and facilities like restrooms and shelters are important components for making the Ghost Town Trail a popular attraction for local trail users and tourists who come from outside the region. Having appropriate support facilities encourages more people to use the trail for outdoor recreation and supports the health benefits that the trail provides. It also makes the trail more attractive for tourists and enhances the regional economic impacts of the trail.

**Sponsor:** Indiana County Parks and Trails

**Submitted by:** Ed Patterson, Indiana County Parks and Trails



Ghost Town Trail Site Amenities Project

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## Stavich Bicycle Trail Rehabilitation

**Project Location:** Lawrence County, Mahoning and Union townships

**Description:** The Stavich Bicycle Trail, running from New Castle to Lowellville, Ohio was completed in 1984 and resurfaced in 1998. In 2013, crews removed some of the old trail surface material, installed new drainage pipes, added erosion and sediment controls, replaced three bridges, constructed a second trailhead with parking, and installed ADA accessible parking spaces. The main trailhead was enhanced with a new native species interpretative garden. Finally, all 7 miles in Pennsylvania were resurfaced with base, binder and topcoat.

The main trailhead is located on West Washington Street in Union Township near State Routes 224, 422 and Interstate 376. The trail is connected to the Great Lake to River Trail in Ohio and is a critical link in the Ohio River Trail Century Loop through Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Click on the photo or on the link below to see a video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RiJRMtdYgjY>

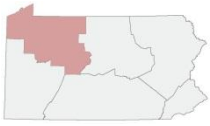
**Sponsor:** Lawrence County

**Submitted by:** Doniele Russell, Lawrence County Planning Department



Stavich Bicycle Trail

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## Upper Shenango River Water Trail

**Project Location:** Mercer and Crawford counties, Jamestown and Greenville

**Description:** Work continued in 2013 to remove deadfall, debris, and downed trees from 23 river miles of the Upper Shenango River Water Trail. Reducing the blockages in the river allowed canoe and kayak users safe and easy access the river. Prior to this project, safe paddling of the river was either impossible or severely limited. Now paddlers enjoy its entire length without any obstructions.

As a result of this work, the river was transformed from an impassable and dangerous nuisance to a first-class recreational amenity. Previously, paddling clubs advised members to avoid the river entirely. Now, it is regularly used by clubs, families, scouts, and church groups. A new kayak outfitting business opened. Tourism in the area increased. A geocaching route was established along the river. The river was officially designated a water trail by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, and the Shenango River Watchers were awarded a Western Pennsylvania Environmental Award by Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

**Sponsors:** Shenango River Watchers, Lions Clubs of Greenville and Jamestown, Northwest Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission

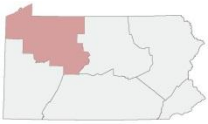
**Submitted by:** Hugh Clark, Shenango River Watchers



Upper Shenango River Water Trail clean-up and restoration



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## Clear Creek State Forest – Kennerdale Trail

**Project Location:** Venango County, Kennerdale

**Description:** Pennsylvania Equine Council volunteers worked with a forest technician in Clear Creek State Forest to divert water away from a multi-use trail, improving drainage and preventing trail erosion. The results were better footing and improved access to the trails, leading to greater usage by bikers, horseback riders, hunters and hikers.

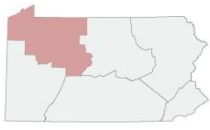
**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Equine Council

**Submitted by:** Judy Cole, Trail Stewardship Coordinator, Pennsylvania Equine Council



Water bars were installed to improve drainage on the trail at Clear Creek State Forest.

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## Shawmut Trail Resurfacing

**Project Location:** McKean County, Borough of Smethport, northwest side of the Marvin Creek Bridge

**Description:** After resurfacing the Blacksmith Brook Bridge in 2012, the Potato Creek Trail Association took on the task of improving the surface of the Shawmut Trail. The trail starts on the northwest side of the Marvin Creek Bridge on Smethport's Route 6. The ADA compliant parking area has a trail head kiosk stocked with trail maps and visitor's guides.

From the trail head, hikers, bikers, and skiers cross the Blacksmith Brook Bridge to reach the ¾-mile long flat trail which ends at McKean County's fully functional 'Historic Poor Farm', one of the last Poor Farms in all of Pennsylvania. A culvert was installed there and fencing removed to facilitate access.

The Shawmut Trail was then cleared of brush and prepared for resurfacing. About 530 tons of TSA (2A limestone) for an 8 foot wide path was put on top of landscaping cloth to prevent weed growth.

The newly resurfaced Shawmut Trail is now a popular destination due to its easy access and proximity to downtown as well as the flat surface, which facilitates the use of strollers and bikes.

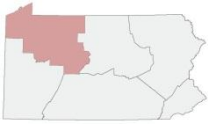
**Sponsor:** Potato Creek Trail Association

**Submitted by:** Claudia Caminite, Potato Creek Trail Association



Shawmut Trail during resurfacing (above) and post-construction (below)

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## Riverfront Park Bike Trail Improvements

**Project Location:** Venango County, City of Franklin

**Description:** This project consisted of upgrading the existing bike path that meanders through Riverfront Park, which is located across the bridge from the Franklin Trailhead of the Samuel Justus Recreation Trail and the Allegheny River Trail. The work resulted in widening the trail from 5-feet to 8-feet-wide and included resurfacing of the entire 620 linear feet. The work also included a newly paved handicapped accessible parking space, an entry garden, and two new signs with wayfinding information.

The improved trail forms a key connection from downtown Franklin and a riverfront neighborhood playground to the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway trail system.

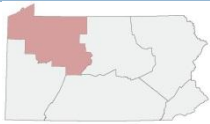
**Sponsor:** City of Franklin

**Submitted by:** Tracy Jamieson,  
Franklin Community Development  
Department

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Riverfront Park, Franklin, Pa. Photo by Felicia Kiefer



## Samuel Justus and Allegheny River Trails

**Project Location:** Venango County, Oil City, Franklin, Cranberry Township

**Description:** The Samuel Justus Trail (SJT) and the Allegheny River Trail (ART) are the oldest, completed sections of the Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail. These local trails were showing signs of deterioration. The Allegheny Valley Trails Association, in partnership with Cranberry Township which owns and operates the SJT, rehabilitated 7 miles of trail surface. A request was made to PennDOT District 1-0 for advice. The pavement experts agreed that the useful life of the surface was nearing its end, but there was still a good base. They recommended a topcoat and assisted with planning documents. With local and state grant funding, a new surface was constructed. Allegheny Valley Trails Association (AVTA) continued the improvements in 2013 for a total of 10 miles of new surface.

These sections of trail will have a lifespan of 10 to 20 years. Trail users have commented on the high quality of the trails, and these sections of trail are often used for community events and fundraisers.

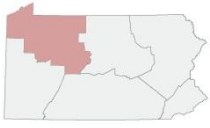
**Sponsor:** Allegheny Valley Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Debra Frawley,  
Council on Greenways and Trails

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Bicyclists on repaved sections of the Allegheny River Trail



## Oil Creek Footbridge

**Project Location:** Venango County, Oil City, between Relief Street and Seneca Street

**Description:** This project included rehabilitating a footbridge on an existing railroad bridge over Oil Creek, which is part of the Oil City and Erie to Pittsburgh Trail networks. Twelve galvanized steel cantilever trusses were installed to replace deteriorated trusses, along with other structural components. Deteriorated wooden deck boards were replaced. The deck slopes were modified to be ADA compliant, and a non-slip coating was applied to the deck surface. The hand railing was then reattached, and a permanent project sign was installed.

This bridge is part of the Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail and connects the two downtown business districts to the trail. This project prompted the Main Street Committee to consider requirements for Trail Town designation.

**Sponsors:** Oil City, DCNR, Venango Area Chamber of Commerce, Allegheny Valley Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Debra Frawley, Council on Greenways and Trails

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Bridges over Oil Creek in Oil City, Pa. Photo by Mark Plummer at [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)



## Game Lands Number 226 Trail Stewardship

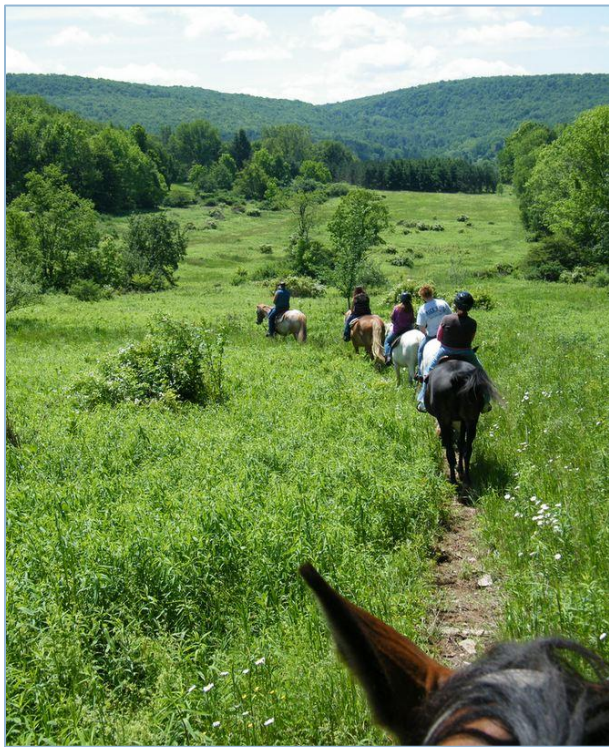
**Project Location:** Columbia County, Pennsylvania Game Lands 226

**Description:** Riding to the work sites on horseback, teams of two to three people trimmed brush, cleaned ditches, and removed trees from a trail that meanders through Game Lands 226. Crews re-opened sections of the trail that had been temporarily closed during logging operations. Workers used a variety of trimming tools, some battery-powered, that could be transported to the site on horses.

The results were impressive: open, well-maintained trails with head room for riders. With fewer obstacles and improved drainage, the trail is now drier, safer, and is open for business.

**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Equine Council

**Submitted by:** Lynette J. Fisk, Pennsylvania Equine Council



Trail ride near Wellsboro, Pa. Photo by katiemetz at [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com)

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## Mid State Trail – Yellow Creek Bridge

**Project Location:** Bedford County, South Woodbury Township, beside State Route 36 in Loysburg Gap

**Description:** For many years access to State Game Lands 73 used a cable supported swinging bridge over Yellow Creek, a well-known high quality trout stream. The bridge was damaged during a severe flood in 1996, and it became unsafe to cross.

The Mid State Trail, Pennsylvania's longest footpath, was routed over the bridge during the early 1990s. Mid State Trail Association (MSTA) volunteers led the effort to identify a safer crossing. A new bridge site was identified at a more accessible and stable location. Two private landowners granted an easement to MSTA to allow the bridge construction.

DCNR awarded a PA Recreational Trails grant of \$178,800 toward the \$223,500 project cost. Numerous Bedford County area individuals and organizations contributed matching funds as did hikers from around Pennsylvania. A contract for the work was bid June 2013 and awarded August 2013 for completion before the end of 2013.

**Sponsor:** Mid State Trail Association

**Submitted by:** Peter Fleszar, Mid State Trail Association



Yellow Creek bridge after flooding in 1996 (above) and after replacement in 2013 (below)



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## Laurel Run Trail

**Project Location:** Union County, west of Laurelton, Bald Eagle State Park

**Description:** The purpose of this project was to create access for horses and other non-motorized users by re-establishing and re-locating the trail on the north side of Paddy Mountain and away from low lying areas and stream banks. The Circle M Saddle Club, in cooperation with the Bald Eagle State Forest, re-located about a ½-mile section of trail on its east end and built a stream bank stabilization crossing with the help of the Pennsylvania Equine Council Trail Stewardship Program.

Stable treads were re-established to protect stream crossings and highly erodible areas on the trail. This trail and others like it require regular care and maintenance to sustain long term horse traffic.

**Sponsors:** Circle M Saddle Club, Pennsylvania Equine Council and DCNR Bald Eagle State Forest

**Submitted by:** Roger Baker, Circle M Saddle Club



Steps were re-established to protect stream crossings and highly erodible areas on the Laurel Run Trail.

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## Reeds Gap Spur Trail

**Project Location:** Mifflin and Centre counties, between Reeds Gaps State Park and Poe Paddy State Park

**Description:** 8 new sign posts, provided by Bald Eagle State Forest were installed between Reeds Gap State Park and the junction with the Long Path section of the spur east of the Bear Gap Picnic Area. Deadfall branches were also cut and removed on this section of the trail. Volunteers continued the clearing and blazing of the remote White Mountain Ridge Trail.

Fourteen Keystone Trails Association (KTA) Trail Care volunteers contributed 163 hours of work on the project in September 2013

**Sponsors:** Keystone Trails Association, DCNR Bureau of Forestry

**Submitted by:** Edward Lawrence, KTA



Panoramic view from Bald Eagle State Forest

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## Great Allegheny Passage – Garrett Underpass

**Project Locations:** Somerset County, Garrett Borough

**Description:** This project involved the installation of a concrete arch culvert to allow the trail to pass below grade of a State Route 2037, a trailhead parking area with ADA parking, and about 1,800 feet of trail construction.



**Sponsors:** Somerset County

**Submitted by:** Brett Hollern,  
Somerset County

Great Allegheny Passage Garrett Underpass Construction

Click on the photo or on the link below to see the video.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EbB3sSNtGIM>

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## D&H Rail-Trail

**Project Location:** Susquehanna County, Clifford Township, north of Forest City, parallel to State Route 171.

**Description:** The Rail-Trail Council is a non-profit organization working to establish public rights-of-way in northeast Pennsylvania. The Council owns the 38-mile D&H Rail-Trail and is making improvements as funds become available.

To date, the Council has worked to improve 10 miles of trail with Pennsylvania Transportation Enhancement and DCNR funding.

In 2013, the Clifford Township cleanup took place on Saturday, April 20 with 20 volunteers including machinery and manpower from JS Wright Excavating, Carbondale. The area is east of the D&H Rail-Trail on a steep bank bounded by a little used road. Dumping had been occurring there for almost 50 years according to locals. Over 100 tires and almost seven tons of trash were collected. The area was later seeded and mulched and “No dumping” signs were installed.



D&H Rail-Trail illegal dump site cleanup project crew

The Harmony Township cleanup was conducted on April 20 and 21 by a newly formed group “Friends of the Starrucca Creek” along the northern section of D&H Rail-Trail that parallels the Starrucca Creek. Over 70 participants removed 36 tons of trash and 1800 tires from the trail and the creek.

Both cleanups were sponsored by Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), USDA and Pennsylvania American Water Company.

The Council is also developing the Endless Mountains Trail in Montrose and the O&W Rail-Trail in Simpson and is working to make the D&H connect to the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail to the south and the Susquehanna River Trail to the north. In addition, there are possible connections to the D&H Gravity Railroad system towards Waymart.

**Sponsors:** Rail-Trail Council of Northeast Pennsylvania

**Submitted by:** Lynn M. Conrad, Rail-Trail Council of Northeast Pennsylvania

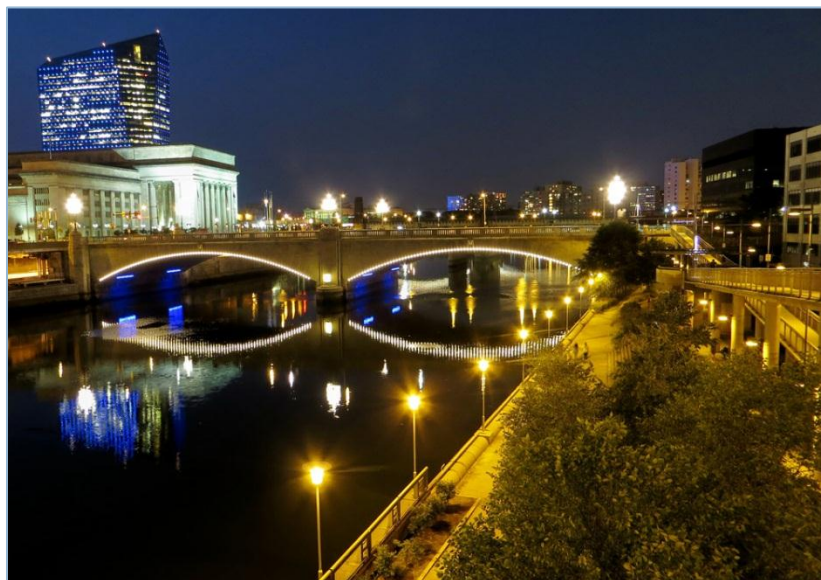
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## Schuylkill Banks Bridge Lighting Project

**Project Location:** Philadelphia, several bridges crossing the Schuylkill River

**Description:** The Schuylkill Banks Bridge Lighting project upgraded and restored lighting that was originally installed as part of the City's Millennium Celebration in 1999. This includes flood lighting, LED string lighting and pier lights. The Walnut Street, Market Street, JFK Boulevard, and SEPTA Bridge fixtures were refurbished to provide dependable and energy efficient service. Design was provided by Burris Engineers. Work was performed by Carr & Duff, Inc. The project was funded by a Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP) grant.



Market Street Bridge and Schuylkill Banks Greenway

The Bridge Lighting project has enhanced users' night time experience of the Schuylkill Banks trail and greenway. The re-lighting of the bridges draws greater attention to these historically significant structures. Impressive reflections on the water also add to the greenway's aesthetics. A dedication ceremony for the re-lighting was held on the evening of September 26, 2013.

**Sponsor:** City of Philadelphia

**Submitted by:** Zoe Axelrod, Schuylkill River Development Corporation

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## Keystone Trails Association—Trail Care Events

**Project Locations:** Statewide

**Description:** One of the most important and rewarding aspects of involvement with KTA is volunteering to help maintain Pennsylvania's extensive system of hiking trails. Each year, on designated weekends between March and November, dedicated trail care volunteers gather, and, equipped with blaze paint, limb loppers, pulaskis and brush cutters, clear and upgrade hiking trail corridors and pathways. Many participants choose to camp on Friday and Saturday evenings and work on Saturdays and Sundays.

In 2013, 16 Keystone Trail Association trail care events were held with 130 total participants who contributed 3,456 hours of labor.

Long distance hiking trails that benefited from KTA's Trail Care programs included the Mid State Trail, Thunder Swamp Trail System, Susquehannock Trail System, Long Branch Trail, Reeds Gap Spur, Bucktail Path, North Country Trail, and Standing Stone Trail.

State forest and state park staff that worked with KTA's Trail Care program in 2013 included staff at Cowans Gap State Park, Gifford Pinchot State Park, French Creek State Park, Moraine State Park, Sproul State Forest, Little Pine State Park, Ole Bull State Park, and Hills Creek State Park.

In other more extensive trail care activities, volunteers chose one or more of five trail crew opportunities in June, spending a full week doing trail work. The trail care program is for all ages and abilities, with no prior experience or special skills necessary, and participants are welcome to sign up for the days and times their schedules allow. Most trail care events have camping or cabin facilities available.



Trail Care volunteers logged 3,456 hours in 2013.

**Sponsors:** Keystone Trails Association, DCNR Bureaus of State Parks and Forestry

**Submitted by:** Curt Ashenfelter, Keystone Trails Association

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## Trail Assistance Mini-Grant Program

**Project Location:** Cambria, Blair, Montgomery, Washington, and Jefferson counties

**Description:** The mini-grant program managed by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) was begun as a way to assist trail organizations and municipalities who need to make small repairs and improvements to their trails outside of the regular DCNR grant schedule and well below the higher dollar amounts usually requested for major grants. Beginning in 2013 a competitive application process was developed by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. Applications were accepted in January and February for projects that were to be completed by September 2013.

In 2013, the following trail mini-grants were awarded:

### **Path of the Flood—Cambria County Conservation and Recreation Authority:**

Volunteers created a new trail surface and installed fencing and signage on a ¾-mile section of trail to connect to the National Park Service Staple Bend Tunnel.

**Bells Gap Rail Trail:** Volunteers installed drainage pipe and fencing along five sections of the trail to improve the surface and enhance the safety of the trail.

**Pennypack Trail:** Staff of Montgomery County Parks repaired I-beams, and installed new wood decking and railings on an existing railroad bridge of the trail adjacent to Lorimer Park.

**Montour Trail:** Volunteers from the Montour Trail Council installed signage, approach markings, bollards and fencing for the 100-foot Brush Run Bridge.

**Five Bridges Trail (formerly Mill Creek Trail):** Volunteers rebuilt five existing railroad bridges along the trail by replacing all ties and installing treated wood decking and railing.

**Path of the Flood Trail – Woodvale:** One volunteer and one township supervisor established a new 20-foot x ¾-mile trail surface, replaced bridge decking and installed fencing in East Conemaugh Twp.

**Sponsor:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

**Submitted by:** Pat Tomes, RTC



Mini-Grant Program volunteers make safety improvements to the Montour Trail

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## PROMOTING PENNSYLVANIA'S TRAILS

The following section describes activities that drew public attention to Pennsylvania's trails in 2013, appealing to people of all ages and abilities, demonstrating the economic and health benefits of trails, and building local support and capacity.



### 2013 Greenway Sojourn

**Project Location:** Pittsburgh to Cumberland, Maryland

**Description:** In June 2013, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) sponsored the 11th annual Greenway Sojourn, a multi-day heritage bicycle tour. Participants cycled an average of 45 miles daily while their luggage was transported to the next town where camping, catered meals and special activities awaited.



300 people participated in the 2013 Greenway Sojourn.

Part bicycle ride, part trail building program, the annual Greenway Sojourn celebrates newly opened trails and promotes the completion of others to create regional trail systems. Those who take part in the Sojourn not only enjoy the rail-trails, they actually help build them. By participating in this event, sojourners celebrate the successes of open rail-trails and

call attention to the missing links in large regional trail systems. When a trail is designated as part of the Sojourn route, RTC works behind the scenes to provide technical assistance to local trail communities, promotes the trail in the media, brings new and lasting economic benefits to the region, and helps establish a sustained trail-building effort to further develop the trail system after the Sojourn has ended.

At the 2013 event, 300 sojourners represented 25 U.S. states and Canada. Eighty percent said they would return to the area to visit towns or attractions along the trail.

**Sponsor:** Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

**Submitted by:** Pat Tomes, RTC





## River Town Program – Mon River

**Project Location:** Southwestern Pennsylvania: Allegheny, Washington, Fayette, Greene and Westmoreland counties

**Description:** The River Town Program, a project of Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC), helps communities recognize the river as an asset around which potential community and economic development can occur, and thus a resource worthy of protection. For PEC, this program serves as a model for implementing collaborative solutions to environmental protection and restoration. Success is built from the work of partners that recognize the inextricable links between the environment, the economy, and quality of life.

The Mon River Town Program builds on the successes and lessons learned. More rural in nature than the Allegheny River Towns, these communities have the potential to draw visitors from the Morgantown and Pittsburgh regions. Historic buildings, dating back to the Revolutionary War, and remnants of the region's historic key industries—glass and clay making, as well as ship building and river navigation—attract historians, while canoeing and kayaking opportunities, hiking and biking trails, and a vibrant boating culture satisfy outdoors lovers.

### Examples of Projects:

- Educational workshops on topics such as effective marketing for leasing or selling a building, websites and social media for small businesses, and financing opportunities for new or expanding businesses.
- Branding and promotion, including design of a River Town logo, creation of gateway signage for each community, production of window clings for vacant buildings to improve street level appearance, and creation of a website.
- Assessment of existing attitudes towards the river, via a professional survey of residents before River Town activities began. A follow-up survey will help us to gauge how effective the program has been.



River Town Program - Mon River Sojourn

The program was initially funded through a grant from the Claude Worthington Benedum Foundation. The Student Conservation Association, a national non-profit organization providing internships in conservation, established a River Town Outreach Corps to assist the program. For more information, including events listings, visit <http://www.monrivertowns.com>.

**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Environmental Council

**Submitted by:** Cathy McCollom, McCollom Development Strategies, LLC

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## Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Logo

**Project Location:** Seven western Pennsylvania and New York counties: Chautauqua County, New York; Erie, Crawford, Venango, Clarion, Armstrong, Allegheny counties

**Description:** The Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance adopted a logo for the regional trail system. As the system links each of the individual trail segments between the two major cities, a unifying brand guides trail users to the various destinations along the route. The logo is used on signs and other promotional materials. The logo is now being used consistently by each of the member groups in identifying with the regional trail on their websites and other materials.

Twenty blue, green and white Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail signs were installed along the Queen City Trail this fall, the first segment to complete the installation. Also, new mile markers along the Allegheny River Trail now showcase the logo. Thirty four logo signs were placed along the McClintock Trail.

This project unified the regional trail system and made the trail users' experience easier. It also began the process of developing the Trail Town concept along the corridor. Many non-local trail users that use the parking area at the northern end of Oil Creek State Park did not realize that the Queen City Trail segment continued north into the city of Titusville. The new signage helps to direct trail users into town. In the same way, the regional signage aids long distance or multi-day trail users who continue to other trail towns like Oil City and Franklin.

**Sponsor:** Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance

**Submitted by:** Debra M. Frawley, Council on Greenways and Trails



Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Logo

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## West Penn Trail Triathlon

**Project Location:** Westmoreland County, Saltsburg and the Conemaugh River

**Description:** Organized by the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, the first ever West Penn Trail Triathlon was held on Saturday, October 12, 2013. The boat-bike-run event showcased the unique natural features and design of the West Penn Trail. The first leg was a 7-mile flat paddle from the Conemaugh Dam to Saltsburg, the second leg was a 14-mile bike over flat and hilly sections of the West Penn Trail, and the third leg was a 3.2-mile (5-km) run on flat portions of the West Penn Trail along the Kiskiminetas River.

For its inaugural event, the West Penn Trail Triathlon was extremely successful. Registration reached capacity with more than 100 participants. One of the goals of the event was to showcase the terrific biking and boating opportunities in the corridor. This event gave the Kiski-Conemaugh River, West Penn Trail and historic Saltsburg great visibility. Organizers were pleased by the number of local participants as well as the number of visitors from outside of the area. Verbal feedback and written evaluations were all very positive, and participants requested that more than one such event be held each year. Local civic and school groups sold refreshments to participants after the event, benefiting the groups and the participants, and making the event more of a community effort. While most proceeds are being put toward trail maintenance, some funds were redistributed to local groups and services. The 2014 West Penn Trail Triathlon is already being planned for Saturday, October 11, 2014 with even more plans to engage and benefit local businesses.



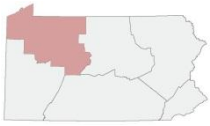
Boaters complete the first leg of the West Penn Trail Triathlon on the Conemaugh River.

This triathlon addressed several of the goals of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Recreation Plan, namely to develop support networks to engage new and diverse audiences in outdoor recreation; package and publicize outdoor recreation events as service learning opportunities; maximize outdoor recreation and tourism potential of Heritage Areas; develop marketing packages that connect and build upon relationships between recreation, tourism, and businesses; identify and implement projects linking historic and cultural features with trails and other recreation amenities; and develop trail events and other recreation features within conservation landscape regions highlighting different local economies.

**Sponsor:** Allegheny Ridge Corporation - Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal Greenway

**Submitted by:** Laura Hawkins, Allegheny Ridge Corporation

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## Clearfield County Geo Trail

**Project Location:** Clearfield County

**Description:** The Kinzua Valley Trail Club created the Kinzua Cache Quest in an effort to highlight the trail's natural beauty and diversity. The Kinzua Cache Quest involves having participants find four caches hidden along the trail and record a secret code contained in each cache. The participants then send the codes to the trail club and are rewarded with a "geocoin." The program gives participants an incentive to explore the entire length of the trail and gives them a connection to the trail and the trail organization. You can find more information at <http://kinzuavalleytrail.org/geocache>.



**Sponsor:** Visit Clearfield County

**Submitted by:** Holly Komoncz, Visit Clearfield County

Clearfield County Geo Trail "geocoin"

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## Buffalo Creek Water Trail Guide

**Project Location:** Union County, west of Lewisburg

**Description:** Buffalo Creek winds, twists, and meanders across much of Union County until it meets the West Branch of the Susquehanna at Lewisburg. For many local residents it has always been a favorite paddling destination, but outside local circles it has remained relatively unknown.

With assistance from a Susquehanna Greenway Partnership (SGP) mini-grant, the Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance (BCWA) wants to increase awareness of the water trail.

BCWA developed a two-sided, full-color Buffalo Creek Water Trail Guide that helps paddlers safely navigate and enjoy this special resource. The brochure includes maps of Buffalo Creek as well as information about its natural and human history.

The water trail guides are available at different outdoor and tourism agencies throughout Union County. You can also access a digital version of the guide at <http://www.susquehannagreenway.org/water-trail-guide-published>. To learn more about BCWA, visit: [www.buffalocreek.org](http://www.buffalocreek.org)



Kayaker on the Buffalo Creek Water Trail. Photo by Canoe Susquehanna

**Sponsor:** Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance, Susquehanna Greenway Partnership

**Submitted by:** Allan Grundstrom, Buffalo Creek Watershed Alliance

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## Appalachian Trail Visitor Center

**Project Location:** Cumberland County, Boiling Springs

**Description:** The Appalachian Trail Conservancy's (ATC) Mid-Atlantic Regional Office celebrated the unveiling of its redesigned visitor center on Friday, April 12, 2013 in Boiling Springs.

This updated space was made possible by a grant provided by the Cumberland Valley Visitors Bureau. It features a series of new informational panels, which provide visitors a comprehensive overview of the Appalachian Trail (A.T.) and the ATC.

Visitors can learn about the trail's history, volunteerism, and the ATC's work with conservation, trail management, community engagement, and youth outreach. The visitor center also features an oversize strip map of the A.T.



Appalachian Trail Visitors Center in Boiling Springs, Pa.

"The Appalachian Trail Conservancy is proud to showcase the beauty and splendor of the Appalachian Trail with our new exhibits," said Karen Lutz, Mid-Atlantic Regional Director of the ATC. "Our hope is that these renovations will provide the public with excitement and inspiration about the trail and get them out and active."

The center is open year-round on weekdays from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. It is closed on weekends and federal holidays, though volunteers may be on-site during summer weekends. An information desk is available where visitors can find answers about hiking the A.T. and other trails in the area. A gift shop is also onsite where people can purchase postcards, maps, guidebooks, and souvenirs. Services to hikers are also available, such as fuel for stoves and running water. Last year the center attracted over 4,500 visitors.

The ATC was founded in 1925 by volunteers and federal officials working to build a continuous footpath along the Appalachian Mountains. The A.T. is a unit of the National Park System, stretching from Georgia to Maine, at approximately 2,180 miles in length. It is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world. Volunteers typically donate more than 220,000 hours of their time doing trail-related work each year and about 2 to 3 million visitors walk a portion of the A.T. each year.

For more information, visit [www.appalachiantrail.org](http://www.appalachiantrail.org).

**Sponsor:** Appalachian Trail Conservancy

**Submitted by:** Javier Folgar, Appalachian Trail Conservancy

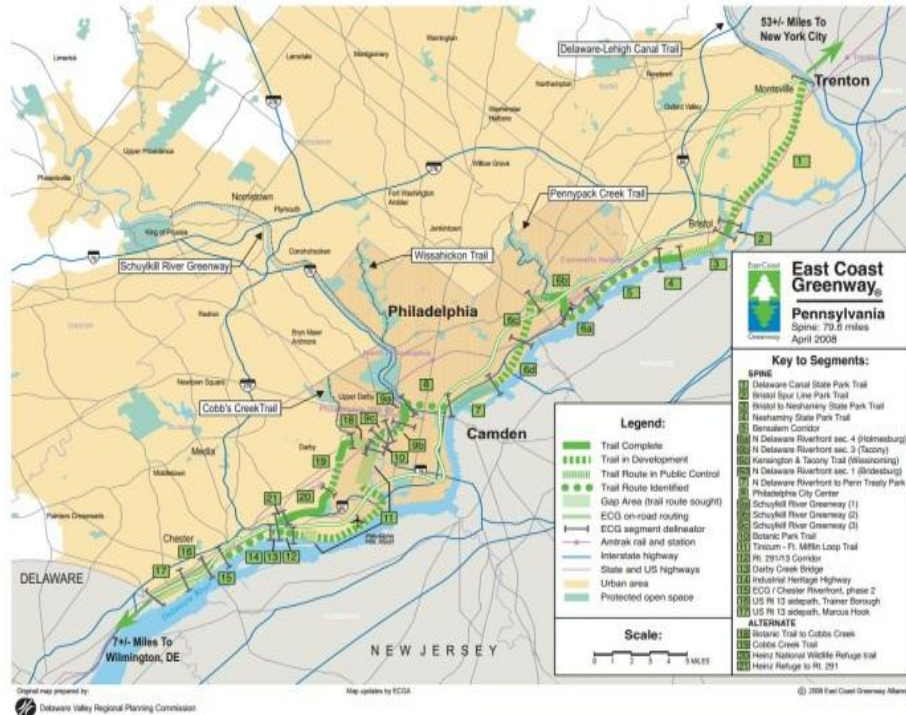
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## East Coast Greenway Guide to Bicycling and Walking

**Project Location:** Philadelphia, Delaware, and Bucks counties

**Description:** 2013 was a great year for the East Coast Greenway mid-Atlantic region. In addition to four new trails completed in Pennsylvania and one in Maryland, the entire route from the Potomac River in Washington DC to the Hudson River in New Jersey had new Guidebooks printed. Grants for future design and implementation continue to be received by East Coast Greenway partners, including \$2,275,000 in Pennsylvania in one month!



2014 is forecast to be a banner year as well. The goal by the end of 2014 is to sign the entire Mid-Atlantic with East Coast Greenway signs. There will also be six or seven groundbreakings in Pennsylvania thanks to partners, including the William Penn Foundation and the Pennsylvania Environmental Council. Stay tuned for another exciting year!

**Sponsor:** East Coast Greenway Alliance

**Submitted by:** Andy Hamilton, East Coast Greenway Alliance

Pennsylvania East Cast Greenway map

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## Pennsylvania Equine Council Trail Stewardship Program

**Project Locations:** Statewide

**Description:** The Pennsylvania Equine Council's Trail Stewardship Program promotes sustainable trails by conducting trails stewardship meetings and workshops. Topics include trail layout, construction, and maintenance. Participants learn hands-on techniques for making shared use trails environmentally friendly.

Workshops and meetings are free to volunteers and very affordable for agency participants. Workshops cover volunteer labor policies and procedures as well as how to build effective working teams and relationships.

The first day in the classroom covers fundamental topics such as how to design, construct and maintain sustainable trails; best management practices (BMPs) to create sustainable trail surfaces; and proper and safe use of tools for trail work.

The second day is in the field, putting into practice what was discussed in the classroom. The third day covers additional BMPs that agency staff and volunteers will use, as well as how to organize a trail project from start to finish.

There are also night classes, outlining Leave No Trace techniques and other BMPs for trail building. These workshops are great opportunities for volunteers to learn skills that can help protect access for equestrian and shared use trails.

The three-day Trail Stewardship Workshops are conducted in State College. One to three-hour programs as well as one-day Trail Stewardship Workshops are conducted statewide anywhere in Pennsylvania. In addition, two-day Packing Clinics are conducted.

The Trail Stewardship Program has educated equestrians and other non-motorized trail users to be aware of the different land management agencies, how the agencies work, as well as environmental laws and regulations. The program has educated volunteers and agency personnel to work together to keep trails sustainable and safe which encourages increased trail use.

**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Equine Council

**Submitted by:** Gwen and Bud Wills, Pennsylvania Equine Council

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Pennsylvania Equine Council Trail Stewardship Program volunteers work to improve Wissahickon Valley trails.



## Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails Summit

**Project Location:** Franklin, Pennsylvania. The Summit encompassed trails organizations statewide.

**Description:** The 2013 Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit was a three-day trails conference that attracted more than 150 trail planners, trail advocates, trail users, and municipal officials to Franklin, Venango County in western Pa. The Summit was organized by the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism and the Council on Greenways and Trails, along with Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and DCNR.



Mobile workshop participants on the Allegheny River Water Trail at the 2013 Pennsylvania Greenways and Trails Summit

The Summit featured keynote addresses by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Northeast Region Director Tom Sexton; Greenways Team, Inc.'s Robert Searns; and Texas A&M University Presidential Professor for Teaching Excellence John Crompton.

Participants engaged in dozens of breakout sessions on a variety of trail development, management, and promotion topics. Seven mobile workshops highlighted regional trail projects.

The Summit inspired participants who represented the entire spectrum of Pennsylvania's trails advocates. The Summit also highlighted the extensive trail network that is emerging in the Erie to Pittsburgh Greenway.

**Sponsor:** Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism and the Council on Greenways and Trails, Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society and DCNR

**Submitted by:** Kent Taylor, DCNR and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

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## September 11<sup>th</sup> National Memorial Trail Story Map

**Project Location:** On-line

**Description:** Getting the word out about the 9/11 Trail and gathering supporters for the trail are important goals of the September 11<sup>th</sup> National Memorial Trail Alliance. Sponsors of the multi-use trail, which connects the three 9/11 national memorials, are continually looking for ways to demonstrate the benefits of the trail and spur others to support it with planning and funding. Many sections of the trail have been completed while some parts need additional involvement from citizens in communities where the trail needs work.

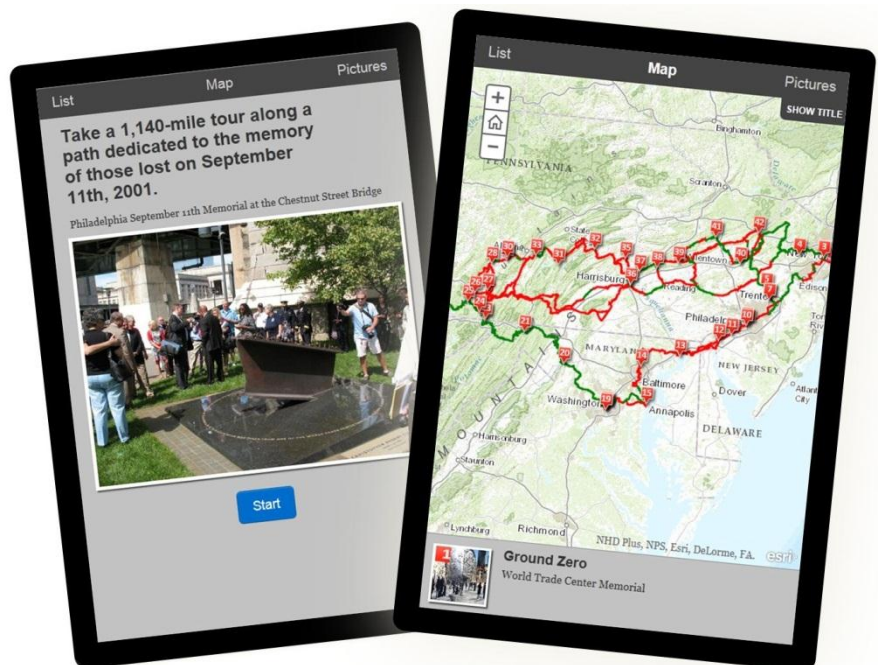
Now a new online tool makes it possible for people to see what the trail is like and how it's taking shape. Called a "story map", this new tool does more than just highlight tangible successes. Story maps draw attention to events, people and perspectives that educate and inspire. They are windows into explanations and descriptions of important places and experiences along the way.

The story map is an interactive web map that places supporting information in and around the map for additional context. Photos, videos, information windows, and text are all integrated with the map. The story map becomes a virtual tour of the sightings, people, and places where important things are happening. For more information, visit <http://911memorialtrail.org/> or <http://goo.gl/QDaQv9>.

**Sponsor:** September 11<sup>th</sup> National Trail Alliance and DCNR

**Submitted by:** David Brickley, September 11<sup>th</sup> National Memorial Trail Alliance

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The 9/11 Trail Story Map web application works on any type of device that can connect with the internet.



## BuildPAtrails – <http://maps.dcnr.pa.gov/BuildPAtrails>

**Project Location:** Statewide

**Description:** Trail planning professionals need simple web-based tools to accurately visualize locations and attributes of trails and greenway projects, plans, and trail gaps.

BuildPAtrails is a new trail planning visualization tool. It helps answer questions about existing and planned trails, their status, gaps, key partners, nearby grant projects, and other public and roadway projects affecting trails. Users can determine the status of a trail project, draw on the map, edit data, and take a snapshot of the map to share with others. The site is open only to registered users.

Within three months of the launch, 53 professional trail planners had signed up to use the online tools at BuildPAtrails. Some of the tasks performed included:

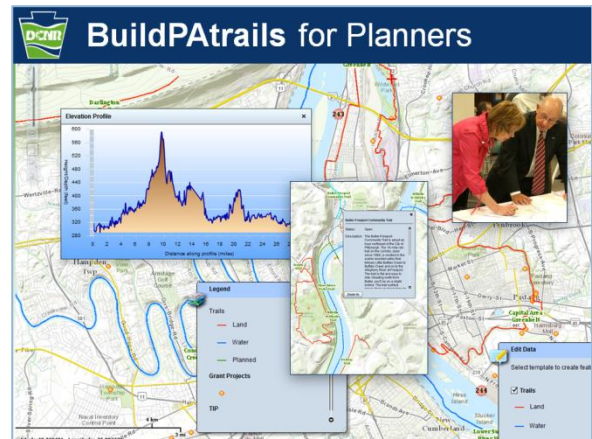
- Find a trail project
- Map a new trail
- Check trail status
- Search for trail gaps
- Measure distances
- Plot elevations
- Download maps and GIS data

Join other trail planners and learn more about BuildPAtrails by registering at

<http://maps.dcnr.pa.gov/BuildPAtrails>. Or for general information about trails, visit [ExplorePAtrails.com](http://ExplorePAtrails.com) to view and share maps, photos, tweets, Facebook posts, calendar events and YouTube videos. To find out more, visit the site or contact [NR-ExplorePAtrails@pa.gov](mailto:NR-ExplorePAtrails@pa.gov).

**Sponsor:** DCNR Bureau of Recreation and Conservation

**Submitted by:** Kent Taylor, DCNR



BuildPAtrails is a new online tool for trail planners.

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## Trail of the Year

**Project Location:** Statewide

**Description:** Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Secretary Ellen Ferretti recently announced that Redbank Valley Trails in Armstrong, Clarion and Jefferson counties is the 2014 Trail of the Year in Pennsylvania. This new designation is coordinated by the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee to elevate public awareness of the thousands of miles of trails available for public enjoyment in Pennsylvania.

“Eighteen fantastic trails were nominated during this inaugural year for this designation,” Ferretti said. “Redbank Valley Trails stood out because of the dedicated work of tremendous volunteers; its scenic beauty; connection to other trail systems; and quick and efficient pace of development.”



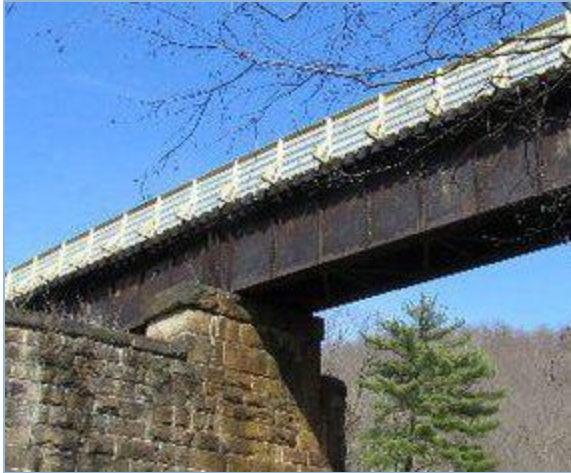
Redbank Valley Trails is Pennsylvania's 2014 Trail of the Year

Much of the 51-mile Redbank Valley Trails runs along Redbank Creek and includes many bridges and beautiful stone arches. The trail connects schools, playing fields, and rural areas to commercial and residential centers.

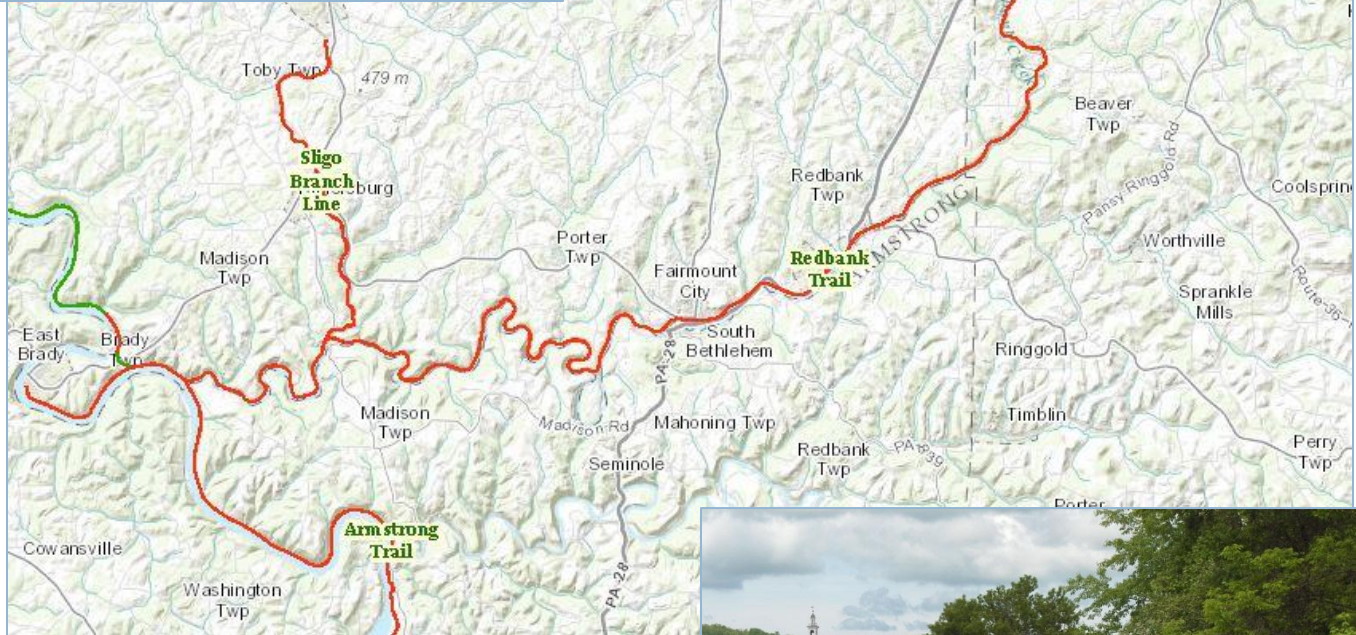
Redbank Valley Trails connects to the Armstrong Trail and from there to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the Great Allegheny Passage to Washington, D.C. It is also part of an initiative to connect Pittsburgh to Ridgway in the heart of the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Darla Kirkpatrick, Redbank Valley Trails Association President added, “The Trail of the Year designation will help us garner more support so we can improve and open the Climax Tunnel; finish surfacing more miles; add amenities; attract more businesses for needed economic development in the region and make more people aware of this truly beautiful recreational asset.”

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee includes different types of trail users, builders and advocates, and people with disabilities. The committee's responsibilities are to advise DCNR on the use of trail funding in Pennsylvania; review and rank trail project applications; and present an annual report (this report) to the DCNR Secretary on trails activities and accomplishments.



For more information about the Trail of the Year, the Trails Advisory Committee, or to submit your trail group's accomplishments for the 2014 annual report, please visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/patrailsadvisory/](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/patrailsadvisory/)



**Sponsor:** Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee and DCNR

**Submitted by:** Vanyla Tierney, DCNR

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## LEADING THE WAY

As has been described in this report, much work is being done to develop, maintain and promote trails under the leadership of the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee. These actions include organizing trail work crews, constructing additional trail miles, improving trail access, leading trail sojourns, building useful trail websites and mobile apps, and posting signage for trail users. Trail projects will continue to build on connections, lessons learned, and ideas shared at summits, workshops, and volunteer trainings in 2014.

In 2013, trail leaders came together to form the Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee, helping to guide the future of trails in the state. Trail experts and decision-makers will continue to support the process, and together will achieve the vision of a trail in every community throughout the Commonwealth.



Paddlers explore French Creek on the newly designated water trail.

For more information, visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/index.htm](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/index.htm) or [www.paoutdoorrecplan.com](http://www.paoutdoorrecplan.com).  
For free information about trails in Pennsylvania, visit [www.ExplorePATrails.com](http://www.ExplorePATrails.com).

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## TRAILS TO WATCH IN 2014

Trail	County(s)
Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area	Northumberland
Bensalem Greenway - Delaware River Trail	Bucks
Capital Area Greenbelt	Dauphin
Chester Valley Trail, Bridgeport	Chester
D & L Trail, Mountain Top to White Haven	Luzerne
Delaware Water Gap to Portland	Monroe and Northampton
East Branch Trail	Crawford
Enola Low Grade Trail	Lancaster
Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, Spartansburg to Corry	Crawford, Erie
Five Bridges Trail	Jefferson
Jordan Creek Greenway, South Whitehall and Whitehall townships	Lehigh
Lackawanna River Heritage Trail	Lackawanna
Lebanon Valley Rail Trail	Lebanon
Northwest Lancaster County River Trail, Shocks Mill Bridge	Lancaster
Panhandle Trail	Allegheny and Washington
Redbank Valley Rail Trail	Clarion and Armstrong
Rock Run Recreation Area	Cambria and Clearfield
Schuylkill River Trail and Cynwyd Trail, Manayunk Bridge Extension	Philadelphia and Montgomery
Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk	Chester
Seaway Trail Extension	Erie
Spring Garden Street Greenway	Philadelphia
Warwick to Ephrata Rail Trail, Akron East	Lancaster

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## 2014 PENNSYLVANIA TRAILS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Name	Home Town	Trail User Group	Year Appointed	Termination Date
Thomas Baxter	Monongahela	Bicycling	2006	31-Dec-15
Eric Bruggeman	Dover	All-Terrain Vehicle Riding	2012	31-Dec-14
Kyle Buchter	Pine Grove	4-Wheel Driving	2014	31-Dec-16
Jeffrey Cernic	Johnstown	Off-Highway Motorcycling	1997	31-Dec-15
Silas Chamberlin	Allentown	Trail Walkers	2012	31-Dec-16
Janet Citron	Reading	Horseback Riding	2014	31-Dec-16
James Foster	Mechanicsburg	Hiking	2009	31-Dec-15
Jodi Foster	Ridgway	Members at Large	2012	31-Dec-14
Andrew Hamilton	Doylestown	Members at Large	2012	31-Dec-15
Eryn Hughes	Pittsburgh	Mountain Biking	2012	31-Dec-15
Timothy S. Karr	Danville	Snowmobiling	1993	31-Dec-14
Larry Knutson	Newville	Trail Builders	2012	31-Dec-15
Philip J. McGrath	Pottstown	Persons with Disabilities	2002	31-Dec-14
Shawn McLaughlin	Lewisburg	Members at Large	2014	31-Dec-16
Jane Sheffield	Hollidaysburg	Members at Large	2012	31-Dec-15
Michael M. Stokes	Royersford	Trail Planners	2012	31-Dec-16
Patricia A. Tomes	Dover	Trail Advocates	2012	31-Dec-14
David Washousky	Cambridge Springs	Water Trail Users	2014	31-Dec-16
Michael White	Brookville	Cross-Country Skiing	2014	31-Dec-16
Gwen Wills	Summerville	Trail Trainers	2012	31-Dec-14

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***“Successful greenways grow out of the grassroots. They depend on local enthusiasm, local money, local leaders, local priorities, local agreements and local governments. They depend on highly motivated volunteers including individuals, groups and businesses. They are dependent, in short, on a strong sense of community responsibility and on the willingness of each community to link its destiny to that of its neighbors.”***

*-David Burwell, former president, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy*