Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee

Annual Trails Report

2014
Dear Trail Community:

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee is pleased to collaborate with the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and trail stakeholders throughout the commonwealth to present the Annual Trails Report for 2014.

The Annual Trails Report promotes the accomplishments of the Pennsylvania trail community and documents progress toward developing a statewide network of land and water trails. Today, more Pennsylvanians have access to trails than ever before. The vision of a statewide network of trails is becoming a reality because of the sustained efforts of dedicated and skilled trail planners, builders, volunteers, advocates and financial partners.

Trail advocate and enthusiast Tim Karr has been involved from the start. After 22 years of service as a member of the Recreational Trails Advisory Board and chair of the Trails Advisory Committee, Tim retired at the end of 2014. The committee extends its gratitude for his dedication and many contributions to the Pennsylvania trail community and wishes him well.

Sincerely,

Andrew Hamilton
Chair
PA Trails Advisory Committee

Tim Karr and Alex MacDonald hold the 2014 Trail of the Year commemorative poster, June 2015.

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2014 Highlights

2015 Trails Advisory Committee
Introduction

From grant awards to groundbreakings to ribbon-cuttings, 2014 was a banner year for trails. Throughout the year, 26 trail projects were completed in 28 of Pennsylvania’s 67 counties in addition to several statewide projects. Nearly $4 million in state grant funds were expended which leveraged approximately $8 million through local and private expenditures. And more than 14,600 volunteer hours were reported to the Keystone Trails Association. Certainly, these numbers are low and do not reflect the breadth of completed trail projects, true time commitment of volunteers, or expenditures throughout the commonwealth.

Because of these accomplishments, citizens have greater access to trails. As of December 2014, approximately 29 percent of Pennsylvanians lived within one mile of an open trail and approximately 39 percent lived within one mile of an open or planned trail.

Developing a statewide trail network would not be possible without the time commitment from enthusiastic and skilled volunteers and significant financial and technical assistance from various local, regional, and state partners. In 2014, more than $34 million from state funding programs was awarded to trail and trail-related projects.

The Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT) administers the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and awarded over $21 million to 30 trail projects in 2014. The TAP was authorized under the federal Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) and provides funding for on-road and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving access to public transportation and enhanced mobility, community improvement, and environmental mitigation; and safe routes to school projects.

The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) administers the Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program (GTRP) and awarded over $5 million to 38 trail projects in 2014. PA Act 13 established the Marcellus Legacy Fund, consisting of impact fees and natural gas royalties, and allocates a percentage to the CFA for grants through the GTRP. Eligible projects include planning, acquisition, development, rehabilitation and repair of greenways, recreational trails, open space, parks and beautification projects.

The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) Bureau of Recreation and Conservation (BRC) administers the Community Conservation Partnerships Program and awarded over $8 million in state and federal funds to 53 trail projects in 2014. The program consists of several state and federal funding sources including the Keystone Recreation, Park, and Conservation Fund; Environmental Stewardship Fund; Snowmobile & ATV Fund; Land and Water Conservation Fund; and Recreational Trails Program. The program provides grants for recreation, park, trail and conservation projects.

These investments will help trail stakeholders advance the statewide trail network and propel Pennsylvania closer to the goal of connecting every community to a trail.
SOUTHWEST REGION

Baker Trail - Animal Farm Bridge

Project Location: Armstrong County, Gilpin Township

Description: The second phase of the Animal Farm Bridge project took place on Saturday, May 10, 2014 along the 132-mile Baker Trail at Coal Bank Road in Gilpin Township, Armstrong County. The Baker Trail is a 132-mile state designated hiking trail in Western Pennsylvania. The trail extends from the east shore of the Allegheny River in Freeport northward into the Allegheny National Forest.

Led by bridge designer, engineer and project manager Keith W. Klos, a volunteer group consisting of Joyce Appel, Joe Kulbacki, Patti Huston, Joe Kostka, Dwight Fox, Donna Stolz, Tom Tefft, Kay Thompson, Dave Galbreath, Dewaine Beard, Steve Mentzer, and Patty Brunner constructed what is known as the “animal farm bridge” due to the impressive amount of wildlife encountered in this area. The volunteers, including some who traveled from Ohio and Pittsburgh, endured muddy, rainy conditions to complete the project.

When completely aligned, the bridge spanned 36 feet. Railings and a center span tension cable were added. While the crew assembled the spans, others stabilized the stream bed using a gabion basket to divert water away from a retaining wall. To reduce creek erosion and add support, the crew stabilized the hillside with tamped stones. Finally, the finished handrails, foot-tread and deck boards were installed.

The Harmony Trails Council formally adopted the Baker Trail and the Rachel Carson Trail, thereby expanding its mission. At the same time, the Council voted to change its name to the Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy to better reflect its broader mission. The Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy is a nonprofit, volunteer-based organization dedicated to the development, protection, and promotion of trails throughout western Pennsylvania.

Volunteers working on the Baker Trail Animal Farm Bridge.

Sponsor: Rachel Carson Trails Conservancy and Keystone Trails Association

Submitted by: Karen Klos, Keystone Trails Association

Butler-Freeport Community Trail

Project Location: Allegheny River crossing near the junction of Westmoreland, Armstrong, Butler and Allegheny counties.

Description: The completion of the Freeport Bridge brought the Butler-Freeport Community Trail one step closer to connecting with proposed links into Pittsburgh and Armstrong County. As part of the bridge project, a large new trail head was created where three trails merge.

The link allows Butler-Freeport trail users to travel the 20 miles from Father Marinaro Park in the City of Butler through Freeport on a proposed link toward the Armstrong County Trail or continue south on a planned extension of the Rachel Carson Trail to Harrison Hills Park.

The connection is part of the Community Trails Initiative, introduced four years ago. The 22-mile...
system of trails involves 17 communities along the Allegheny River. The project is a missing link for regional trails such as the Three Rivers Heritage Trail to the Armstrong Trail, the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway.

It has been four years since an engineering firm conducted a feasibility study and Friends of the Riverfront held informational meetings. The communities involved are committed and working on completing their portions.

Trails like this often take many years to complete because of extensive planning and fundraising.

Butler-Freeport Community Trail. Photo by J. Michael Krivyanski.

**Sponsor:** Butler-Freeport Community Trail Council

**Submitted by:** Jodi Weigand, Trib Total Media

### Collier Discovery Path

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

**Description:** On Friday, October 10, 2014, the Collier Township Board of Commissioners, members of the Friends of Collier Parks and Recreation, Parks & Recreation Board, and State Senator Matt Smith took part in the official groundbreaking of the new Collier Discovery Path. The ceremony took place at the “Meadow Path” section of the trail at Collier’s Hilltop Park.

The Collier Discovery Path is a 2.1-mile pedestrian and bicycle trail located in Collier Township, Allegheny County. The trail starts at the intersection of Thoms Run Road and PA Route 50 near the historic Neville House, continues through the Neville Park neighborhood and a township-owned property behind the PennDOT District 11 offices, ending at Hilltop Park.

The Collier Discovery Path is an initiative of the Friends of Collier Parks and Recreation. Their goal is to connect the many places in the community, including residential areas, the business district, schools and historic places to township parks and other existing trails, including the Panhandle Trail.

Future phases of the Collier Discovery Path development will extend it to connect to the Panhandle Trail, Montour Trail, the Botanic Garden, and Settlers Cabin Park.

Meadow Path section of the Collier Discovery Path.

**Sponsors:** Collier Township

**Submitted by:** Salvatore Sirabella, Township Manager, Collier Township

### Montour Trail

**Project Location:** Allegheny County, South Park Township

**Description:** Groundbreaking on the 506-foot Library Viaduct targeted the last major gap in the 47-mile rails-to-trails conversion between Coraopolis and Clairton. The new construction eliminates the need for walkers and cyclists to detour onto heavily traveled Route 88 and Brownsville Road. Users of the trail will no
longer be forced to share a two-lane road with cars, trucks and motorcycles.

Because the bridge is 47 feet above Route 88, engineering costs, construction, and inspection have totaled $2.6 million. The original 1918 structure, which includes 20 steel columns, is still in good condition and supports a 12-foot-wide concrete deck, crossing the Piney Fork Valley. An observation area stands above Piney Fork Creek. A $1.5 million grant from PennDOT funded a large part of the “linear park” project in Washington and Allegheny counties.

East of the viaduct, construction by volunteers began on a 900-foot connection to Pleasant Street near the Port Authority’s southernmost stop on the Library light-rail line known as the “T.” Consol Energy signed an easement agreement with the Montour Trail Council that permits the trail to cross a 0.7-mile segment of the land in its South Park Research Facility, eliminating most of a detour on Brownsville Road. Twenty-nine volunteers worked on that stretch, devoting more than 400 hours of their time.

The 100-year-old Library Viaduct in South Park Township.

**Sponsor:** Montour Trail Council

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

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**NORTHWEST REGION**

**West Creek Recreational Trail**

**Project Location:** Cameron County, Emporium Borough

**Description:** The West Creek Recreational Trails Association is working to develop approximately 17 miles of trail on the abandoned rail corridor between St. Mary’s and Emporium Borough. After a decade of groundwork, construction is underway. The first phase of the project extended the trail six miles, from the end of Second Street in Emporium Borough westward to Howard Siding.

A 5.5-mile stretch from the caboose on Emporium’s east end to Howard Siding was completed by fall. Work included grading and surfacing of the trail with a compacted aggregate, installation of split rail fencing from Second to Maple Streets, construction of a parking area between Chestnut and Walnut streets, placement of guardrails in select areas, and signs directing visitors to nearby businesses and services.

St. Mary’s Snowmobile Association and local volunteers kicked off the trail project last spring by rebuilding the bridge at Emporium’s west end with new decking and safety walls.

The trail offers opportunities to snowmobilers, cross-country skiers, hikers, bicyclists and runners and is a critical component of Cameron County’s mission to attract eco-tourists.

**Sponsor:** West Creek Recreational Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Tom Wagner, president, West Creek Recreational Trails Association
NORTHCENTRAL REGION

Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area

Project Location: Northumberland County, Coal Township

Description: The Northumberland County Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area (AOAA) is a 6,500 acre motorized and non-motorized recreation facility located at 4100 State Route 125, Coal Township, Northumberland County.

On May 17, 2014 the ribbon was officially cut for the opening of the AOAA. The facility operates for several types of motorized vehicles as well as non-motorized users. The 3,000-acre Eastern Reserve was opened for riding with mapped and signed intersections for safe navigation. The 3,500-acre Western Reserve was opened for guided tours.

The AOAA Authority celebrated the opening after five years of planning and construction. The Authority thanked the Northumberland County Commissioners for all their support and for recognizing the need for this type of facility.

The AOAA is a prime example of an abused and underused piece of property turned into a regional attraction for outdoor recreation, producing an economic engine. On average, the income has been more than enough to sustain the park’s day-to-day operations with the surplus going toward investments in equipment.

Sponsors: Northumberland County, Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area

Submitted by: Patrick Mack, Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area

Black Forest Trail Pedestrian Bridge

Project Location: Lycoming County, Tiadaghton State Forest

Description: DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti joined state and local officials and hiking enthusiasts on the Black Forest Trail to dedicate a new bridge spanning Slate Run in the village of Slate Run, Lycoming County.

“For all of you who patiently awaited this new, beautiful structure, today is indeed a day for celebration,” Ferretti told the gathering. “Once again the Black Forest Trail invites you to strike out in long, uninterrupted forays through some of the most scenic and wild sections of our bountiful state.”

A bridge had been a missing vital link in this very popular state forest trail that annually draws thousands of hikers to the Lycoming County area of the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Noting that since 1996 a 7.5-mile segment of Black Forest Trail had been inaccessible to those not wishing to ford the stream, Ferretti said hikers were faced with sometimes dangerous and uncomfortable options.

“This span affords hikers safer passage and the opportunity to hike the Black Forest Trail as it was meant to be traveled,” Ferretti said. “Circling almost 42 miles through deep hollows of the Allegheny Plateau, the Black Forest Trail is intended to be hiked as a loop. When that loop could not be completed, quality was diminished.”

The span replaces former area crossings that were washed out by Slate Run flood waters or dismantled, and offers year-round, safe passage across the Pine Creek tributary.

Ferretti was joined at the October 29, 2014 dedication by state Sen. Gene Yaw (R-Lycoming), Rep. Garth Everett (R-Lycoming), and representatives of hiking groups and local businesses.
Black Forest Trail Pedestrian Bridge.

Built by nearby Lycoming Supply of Williamsport, the 102-foot, prefabricated, steel truss, pedestrian bridge cost $204,000. The project received a $150,000 grant from the Community Conservation Partnerships Program, overseen by DCNR’s Bureau of Recreation and Conservation.

**Sponsors:** DCNR Bureau of Forestry

**Submitted by:** Gretchen Leslie, DCNR

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Five Bridges Rail Trail under construction.

Volunteers installed decks on two of the trail’s five bridges; trimmed the trees, which had overgrown the trail; cleared the clogged drainage ditches; removed landslides; and installed new culverts.

Apple Tractor donated the use and transportation of an excavating machine which allowed volunteers to complete work that would have otherwise taken weeks. In one section of the trail, the railroad blasted a narrow cut through a hillside. In the years since the tracks were removed, the hillside eroded and landslides filled in the drainage ditches, forcing rainwater to run onto the trail, causing extensive damage. Volunteers removed the landslides and restored the ditches in a quarter-mile section of the trail in two days.

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**Five Bridges Rail Trail**

**Project Location:** Elk County, west of Brockway Borough

**Description:** Tri-County Rails to Trails continued to progress with the development of the new Five Bridges Trail in 2014.

The rail trail project runs from Brockway Borough to Brookville Borough in Elk County. When complete, the trail will connect to the Clarion/Little Toby Trail, which runs from Ridgway to Brockway, and the Redbank Valley Trails, which run west from Brookville to join the Armstrong Trail. This will create an 80-mile trail connecting Ridgway with Brockway, Brookville, Summerville and New Bethlehem boroughs.

Tri-County Rails to Trails volunteers secured the right-of-way for eight miles of the new trail, which follows the Pittsburgh and Shawmut Railroad that was built along Mill Creek in the early 1900s. The trail starts just outside of Brockway and ends in Allens Mills.

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Tri-County Rails to Trails is a volunteer organization incorporated in 1992 to promote the conversion of abandoned railroad rights-of-ways located in Clearfield, Jefferson and Elk counties into non-motorized, public use trails. The association’s volunteers maintain three trails, which total more than 31 miles.

While grant funding is occasionally available for the construction of new trails, maintenance and upkeep is completed by volunteers and funded by donations from members, local businesses and other organizations.

**Sponsors:** Tri-County Rails to Trails

**Submitted by:** Dave Leske, Tri-County Rails to Trails
**The Trails at Jakes Rocks**

**Project Location:** Warren County, near the Allegheny Reservoir in the Allegheny National Forest

**Description:** The Trails at Jakes Rocks is a planned 30 to 40-mile system of mountain biking trails designed by Trail Solutions, a company affiliated with the International Mountain Biking Association. This impressive initiative is spearheaded by Pennsylvania Kinzua Pathways with the goal of increasing tourism in the region. It is designed to be a stacked loop mountain biking system to appeal to users of all ages and skill levels. The trail will follow along the shoreline of the Allegheny Reservoir, with more advanced trails extending into the nearby forest. It is estimated that this system, once complete, will generate more than 10,000 visitors to the Warren area, as well as add more than $1.5 million to the area’s local economy.

The environmental review of the proposed trail system was completed early in the year in 2014. Public interest and input was requested throughout the first phase of the project in 2014. Two public meetings were held in March in Warren and Bradford Counties after the environmental review was completed. The Forest Service accepted public comments on the project’s environmental assessment until early December 2014. A ground breaking for the project is planned for 2015.

**Sponsors:** Allegheny National Forest, Warren County Chamber of Business and Industry, Northern Alleghenies Mountain Biking Association, International Mountain Bicycling Association, PennSoil RC&D, Pennsylvania Wilds, DCNR, University of Pittsburgh at Bradford, Indiana University of Pennsylvania, and Clarion University

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

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**Sand Mountain Trail**

**Project Location:** Centre County, Bald Eagle State Forest

**Description:** Comprised of over 193,400 acres, Bald Eagle State Forest offers many recreational opportunities for outdoor enthusiasts. Those opportunities increased in 2014 with the construction of the Sand Mountain Trail. Consisting of the rehab of 0.9 miles of existing trail, and the addition of 6.3 miles of new trail, this project now provides more than seven miles of recreational trails.

Some trail segments that were abandoned or unauthorized were removed from the trail system and prepared for natural regeneration into forested land. Along the designated trail, large rocks and boulders were removed to improve stability and safety. A native shale base material was laid to create a user-friendly trail surface.

Getting equipment and materials into remote sections of the forest, while trying to minimize disturbance to the forest’s natural setting, was challenging. Small capacity track trucks were utilized to “float” and haul the shale material for the trail surface, which took longer than using conventional heavy equipment such as dump trucks, dozers and track hoes.

![Approximately 7 miles of enhanced and new trail construction created the new Sand Mountain Trail.](image)
After the roadways dried out and soils were stabilized, construction began in the summer of 2013. The project was completed in June of 2014.

The project incorporated unique control gates with tapered access “leaves” that accommodate passage of the horses, bikes and dual sport motorcycles. In the winter months the gates can be opened to allow the passage of snowmobiles. However, ATVs are not permitted on the trail.

Sponsors: DCNR Bureau of Facility Design and Construction

Submitted by: Jim Sowerbrower and James Kalp, DCNR

Susquehanna Greenway - River Access

Project Location: Lycoming County, West Branch of the Susquehanna in Jersey Shore Borough

Description: Jersey Shore Borough is located in the scenic Pennsylvania Wilds. It has a rich shared history with the Susquehanna River, yet prior to the completion of this project, the borough lacked public access to the river.

Through several years of hard work, determination and the aid of many sponsors, including national entities such as the National Park Service as well as local businesses and individual donors, the Jersey Shore Public River Access Project came to fruition. In October of 2014, a groundbreaking ceremony for Phase I was conducted at the access site.

This project was designed to attain several different goals and benefits for the Borough. Establishment of public access to the West Branch of the Susquehanna River has great tourism potential. In 2012, National Geographic included the West Branch of the Susquehanna in its list of Best Adventure Destinations and recently the Pine Creek Rail Trail, which has now been extended into downtown Jersey Shore, was named by USA Today as one of the top 10 hiking and biking trails in the world.

The confluence of the River, the rail trail and Jersey Shore’s location within the PA Wilds, boasts numerous opportunities for increased tourism to the area. Additionally, the project aims to provide greater opportunity for outdoor recreation for Jersey Shore’s citizens as well as foster ideals of environmental stewardship by strengthening citizens’ connections to the waterfront.

Susquehanna Greenway - River Access

The groundbreaking ceremony for Jersey Shore’s Public River Access Project was celebrated on October 3, 2014.

Sponsors: Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, Jersey Shore Borough, National Park Service, Chesapeake Bay Gateways Network, PA DCNR, First Community Foundation Partnership of PA, Lycoming County visitors Bureau, Chesapeake Conservancy, and many local individuals and business donors

Submitted by: Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

SOUTHCENTRAL REGION

Enola Low Grade Trail

Project Location: Lancaster County, Providence Township

Description: Providence Township finished putting down a compacted hard surface on the 8.27 miles that run through the township and Quarryville Borough. It is the first trail-worthy hard surface on the trail since the abandoned rail corridor was turned over to six townships in 2008.
For the first few years, stone ballast made the trail almost unusable. Then the stones were removed but the surface was still rough and trail users had to dodge puddles of stormwater. In 2011, Amtrak installed a 16-foot-wide stone corridor on the 23 miles that enabled better foot passage and those with mountain bikes, but not touring bikes or baby carriages.

Now, Providence Township is the first to cover the trail with a porous, hard surface for multiple uses. Already, township officials have seen an uptick in trail use, including those in wheelchairs. The resurfacing project was made possible by a $408,400 grant from DCNR.

The grant also paid for a new pedestrian bridge over Sigman Road. Trail users now will no longer have to go downhill, stop at the road crossing,dash across and climb back uphill. Also completed was a project to add more than 20 paved parking spaces at the main trail access in Providence Township on Fairview Road, west of Quarryville.

**Heritage Rail Trail County Park**

**Project Location:** York County

**Description:** Work on Phase II of the Heritage Rail Trail extension, which includes a bridge over Codorus Creek at Emig Road, 2.5 miles of trail and a parking lot along Route 30, was carried out in 2014. With funds awarded by DCNR and a $150,000 contribution from York County commissioners, the county was also able to break ground on Phase III of the project.

A portion of the trail was developed through North York to Willis Run, which abuts Small Athletic Field. A prefabricated bridge was installed at Willis Run, as well.

State Rep. Kevin Schreiber, D-York, said he expects that the project will help to bring new businesses to the borough in addition to improving the quality of life for residents. "We often overlook our environment as an economic generator," he said.

With three of the four phases of the project now funded, the focus will shift toward financing a linear park along a bend in the Codorus Creek that runs through the Northwest Triangle, said Sonia Huntzinger, executive director of Downtown Inc., a group that promotes revitalization in York.

*Photos* courtesy of EnolaLowGradeTrail.com.

**Sponsor:** Providence Township

**Excerpt from an article by:** Ad Crable, Staff Writer, LNP – Lancaster Online

*Downtown Inc. will work in conjunction with the York County Rail Trail Authority to plan the final project, which will connect the 21 miles of established trails to the northern extension.*
Completion of the project will give York "a competitive advantage" — one that shows the community’s investment in building a healthy, thriving city, Schreiber said.

**Sponsors:** York County Rail Trail Authority

**Submitted by:** Hannah Sawyer, York Daily Record

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**Huntington & Broad Top Rail Trail**

**Project Location:** Bedford County, Broad Top and Hopewell townships

**Description:** In April 2014, DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti joined state and local officials in celebrating the groundbreaking for a 2-mile stretch of the Huntingdon & Broad Top Rail Trail in Broad Top and Hopewell townships, Bedford County.

“Rail trails go beyond generating dollars for nearby towns,” Ferretti said at the groundbreaking. “In an area like this they connect so many natural resources: Raystown Branch of the Juniata River Water Trail, two state parks, Lake Raystown, state game lands, and the heavily traveled Mid-State Trail.

“These are just some of the area’s natural resources that help draw hikers and bikers to the trail and the boroughs, towns and townships. Trails are all about connections and we know users that come will be making those connections -- recent survey data shows trails ranked as the number one recreational interest among Pennsylvanians right now, and people want them close to home.”

DCNR invested $80,000 through its Community Conservation Partnerships Program in this section of a trail that eventually will extend 10.6 miles. The rail trail project is the first in Bedford County.

Work at the Broad Top Township site included trail construction from the Cooper Recreation Area to the Juniata River bridge, fencing, ADA-accessible features, landscaping, signage and other related site improvements. To contain costs, the township supplied project labor.

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**Lebanon Valley Rail Trail**

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

**Description:** The Lebanon Valley Rail Trail (LVRT) extends from the Lebanon-Lancaster County line in the south for 15 miles through Mt. Gretna and into the city of Lebanon. Phase 5 of the project was completed in late summer of 2014 and consisted of an extension through Lebanon City. This phase included the development of one mile of shared use path through the city, along with development at six intersections with curbs, sidewalks, ADA accommodations and warning signals. In total,
Phase 5 cost $695,000; which included the design, inspection and construction of the trail addition.

**Sponsors:** Lebanon County Planning Department  
**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

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**Northwest Lancaster County River Trail – Shock’s Mill Bridge**

**Project Location:** Lancaster County, Conoy Township, parallel to the Susquehanna River

**Description:** Lancaster County Solid Waste Management Authority (LCSWMA) and Conoy Township officially opened the walkway under Shock’s Mill Bridge on November 1, 2014.

In partnership with Conoy Township, LCSWMA took the lead with this project, investing more than four years on planning, design, permitting and construction efforts. The walkway cost $425,000, with LCSWMA investing $325,000 and DCNR providing a $100,000 grant.

“Conoy Township has been a tremendous host community for our Waste-to-Energy Facility,” says Jim Warner, LCSWMA’s CEO, “and this walkway was an opportunity for us to enhance the lives of those who live, work and visit the area with a unique trail experience that features the Susquehanna River and its beautiful corridor.”

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**Countryside Conservancy Trolley Trail**

**Project Location:** Lackawanna County, South Abington Township

**Description:** On October 10, 2014, the Countryside Conservancy cut the ribbon on 2.8 miles of the Trolley Trail from South Turnpike Road in Dalton to Route 6 in South Abington Township, Lackawanna County.

This first phase, which included design and construction, fencing, ADA access, trailhead...
facilities, signage and more, was funded in part by a $556,000 DCNR grant.

When complete, the trail will extend north to Factoryville via La Plume and Dalton using a mix of rail trail, roadside paths, and shared-use sidewalks.

![Countryside Conservancy Trolley Trail.](image)

**Sponsors:** Countryside Conservancy

**Submitted by:** Countryside Conservancy

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**Darling Preserve Trail**

**Project Location:** Monroe County, near Blakeslee Borough

**Description:** The Nature Conservancy dedicated a new 2.2-mile trail and boardwalk on August 2, 2014, at a 2,500-acre-tract which DCNR helped protect through early Keystone funding grants. Cooperation has been the keystone of the Thomas Darling Preserve’s success, DCNR Secretary Ferretti noted, and the public will reap the benefits of DCNR, The Nature Conservancy, Wildlands and Tobyhanna Township all working together.

“In this trail and boardwalk system we are celebrating today, I see something else—a standing invitation to families and their little ones to reconnect with nature,” Ferretti said. “That is the principal of my recently announced Kids in Nature program—to combat a growing disconnect with the outdoors.”

The Nature Conservancy manages the preserve and co-owns it with Wildlands Conservancy and Tobyhanna Township. Visitors to the preserve can see an extensive mosaic of glacial wetlands; this is made possible via two new boardwalks that traverse wet meadows and a vast shrub swamp. The trail system is a loop that begins in a parking area on Burger Road about a mile from Route 115.

The preserve hosts two rare plant species as well as one of Pennsylvania’s largest native spruce forests. A small stream, Two Mile Run, emerges from underground springs and seeps, feeding into Tobyhanna Creek on its way to the Lehigh River. The area teems with wildlife typical of the Pocono Plateau, including black bears, river otters and snowshoe hares. Wildflowers abound, as do blueberry bushes and nesting songbirds.

Several partners made the new trail system possible: Pocono Lake resident Matt Planer earned his Eagle Scout Award from Troop 94 for work laying out the trail, a task complicated by the numerous wetlands on the property. Girl Scout Cadet Troop 50108 from Gouldsboro/Moscow has been marking the trail, a project to earn their Silver Award. Students from Saul High School in Philadelphia also worked on developing the trail system. The students are participating in The Nature Conservancy’s Leaders in Environmental Action for the Future (LEAF) program, which helps connect youths from an urban environment with nature.

A group tour at the Darling Preserve property. Photo courtesy of Megan Sciarrino, Wildlands Conservancy.

**Sponsors:** The Nature Conservancy, Wildlands Conservancy, Tobyhanna Township

**Submitted by:** Gretchen Leslie, DCNR
**D&L Trail – Lehighton Trailhead**

**Project Location:** Carbon County, Lehighton Borough

**Description:** Lehighton Borough and the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor created a new access point to the D&L Trail. Located adjacent to downtown Lehighton businesses and fully accessible, the trailhead is already a popular spot to launch a 20-mile journey southward to Northampton or across the river to Weissport. This project was funded in part by a mini-grant from the Lehigh Valley Greenways Conservation Landscape, D&L National Heritage Corridor, and local matching funds in cash and in-kind services.

Through these grants and local funds, the Borough was able to construct the parking lot, a pavilion and amenities, lighting and signage. ADA sidewalks and curbing upgrades have also been installed. The trailhead and adjoining parking can hold approximately 70 vehicles.

The trailhead serves as a link for local residents and visitors to downtown businesses. Whether by foot or by bike, visitors to the trailhead are sure to enjoy the recently constructed trail which follows the Lehigh River. It also serves as a connection point to the Lehigh Canal Park in Weissport.

![Ribbon cutting at Lehighton on the D&L Trail.](image)

The trailhead was dedicated on April 26, 2014 in coordination with a 5K Walk/Run hosted by Leadership Carbon Class of 2014. Leadership Carbon assisted the Borough with the beautification of the area by contributing planters, tables and bulletin boards to support the local businesses. The Woman's Club of Lehighton donated the funds for the completion of the Historic Lehigh Valley Railroad mural on the front of the pavilion.

**Sponsor:** Lehighton Borough

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

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**Lehigh Gap Nature Center Trailhead**

**Project Location:** Carbon County, East Penn Township

**Description:** Lehigh Gap Nature Center dedicated a new arboretum and trailhead in East Penn Township, Carbon County on September 12, 2014. The new trailhead provides easy access to the Nature Center's trails at the western end of the refuge and much improved access to the property for residents of the county and points north of the refuge.

While the trailhead provides access to the paths, the mostly barren 1.6 acres also offered another opportunity – to create a native tree and shrub arboretum on the property for educational use. The plants are all native to this region of Pennsylvania and are labeled so visitors can learn about these species. While many people know some of our native trees, few know the shrubs that are native to the Appalachians in Pennsylvania. The arboretum currently features 54 labeled species, including 22 shrub and small tree species and 32 larger trees.

DCNR Secretary Ellen Ferretti attended the dedication along with other DCNR personnel and other project partners including Janet Sweeney (PA Environmental Council) and Elissa Garafalo (D&L Heritage Corridor) and State Representative Doyle Heffley. The arboretum and trailhead is located at
226 VanMan Lane in East Penn Township near Bowmanstown.

The Lehigh Gap Nature Center is a member-supported, wildlife conservation and environmental education organization with its office located at the Osprey House in Lehigh Gap.

Five years in the making, the Saucon Rail Trail is a joint effort of the municipalities it meanders through. The trail runs along the former path of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority rail line.

Sponsor: Lehigh Gap Nature Center

Submitted by: Dan Kunkle, Lehigh Gap Nature Center

**Saucon Rail Trail**

**Project Location:** Lehigh County, Upper Saucon Township

**Description:** The Saucon Rail Trail, a path for hikers and bicyclists that runs from Hellertown to Coopersburg Borough, was completed in 2014. Upper Saucon Township completed the two-mile section between the Upper Saucon Township Community Park on Preston Lane and Southern Lehigh Living Memorial Park in Coopersburg Borough.

The new section links to the five-mile trail constructed in 2011. Upper Saucon was able to move the project forward when it received grants from DCNR and Lehigh County. The Lehigh County Green Futures Fund awarded the project $232,000.

View of the Saucon Rail Trail toward the newly completed section at Upper Saucon Township Community Park. Photo courtesy of ExplorePAtrails website user.

**Sponsor:** Upper Saucon Township

**Submitted by:** Saucon Rail Trail

**SOUTHEAST REGION**

**Baxter Trail**

**Project Location:** Philadelphia County, East Torresdale

**Description:** Work on a key link in Philadelphia’s system of hiking, jogging and biking trails started on October 14, 2014 with ceremonies at Pleasant Hill Park in East Torresdale. As Mayor Michael Nutter and other public officials spoke about the trail’s benefits to the city’s economy and the health of Philadelphians, the real work on the trail had already started.

Construction workers were on the job, grading some ground off Linden Avenue. The Baxter Trail, which includes a bridge across Pennypack Creek, is expected to be finished by March, 2015. It will connect the Pennypack trails to one next to the Delaware River. It also connects people to jobs, recreation and public transportation, and links
neighborhoods as well. It will, the mayor said, “bring new life to the Philadelphia waterfront.”

Nutter said the new path will become part of the Circuit, which will be a network of 300 miles of trails in Greater Philadelphia. When the Circuit is completed, “it will be unlike any other trail network in the United States.” The Circuit will also be a part of the 2,900 miles of the traffic-free East Coast Greenway from Key West, Florida to Maine’s border with Canada.

The city trail along the Delaware is being built up from Port Richmond into Bridesburg and will go along an unused railroad bed in Tacony.

Nutter praised the work of former U.S. Representative Bob Borski, now chairman of the Delaware River City Corporation, and U.S. Representative Allyson Schwartz (D-13th dist.) in securing funds for the Circuit. The mayor also thanked Councilman Bobby Henon (D-6th dist.) and other public officials.

Also at the ceremonial groundbreaking were Parks and Recreation Commissioner Michael DiBerardinis, former Congressman Bob Borski, and Patrick Starr, executive vice president of the Pennsylvania Environmental Council.

Groundbreaking for the Baxter Trail.

Sponsor: Delaware River City Corporation

Adaptation of an article by: John Loftus, Northeast Times

Chester Valley Trail – Phase III

Project Location: Chester County, Exton

Description: The Chester Valley Trail is a multi-use, rail-to-trail facility that roughly follows U.S. Routes 30 and 202 through central Chester County and is planned to provide a connection between the Struble Trail in Downingtown and the Schuylkill River Trail in Norristown.

This 1.2-mile section of the Chester Valley Trail between Iron Lake Boulevard in Exton and the County’s Exton Park Site was opened to public use in September 2014. The Chester County Department of Facilities and Parks completed the project with construction funding provided by a $500,000 DCNR grant and a $500,000 grant from the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission’s Regional Trails Program. The project scope of work included reconstruction and paving of an existing section of gravel trail between the county’s Exton Park Site Trailhead and Ship Road.

Completion of the project closed a trail gap in Exton that existed between sections of the regional trail that were previously constructed and open to public use. The project improves access to numerous commercial, residential and public park
facilities and provides trail users with a continuous trail facility between Exton and King of Prussia, PA, a length of approximately 14.7 miles.

**Sponsor:** Chester County

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

### Destination Peace Valley Trail

**Project Location:** Bucks County, Doylestown Township, New Britain Township, New Britain and Chalfont boroughs

**Description:** This project was planned and implemented by the Doylestown Community Bike/Hike Committee along with New Britain Borough, New Britain Township and Chalfont Borough. The Committee has been in existence for 22 years and has developed a network of trails throughout the community totaling 26 miles.

New Britain Borough, New Britain Township and Chalfont Borough developed the Tri-Municipal Trail Plan, and all are working to connect the trails to enlarge the system.

This new section of trail provides access to the Pine Run Reservoir, a county-owned natural area covering 100 acres. In addition, the trail connects to Covered Bridge Park in New Britain Borough.

People were using the trail even before it was completed. It represents an important step toward the goal of a regional trail connection to Bucks County’s Peace Valley Park.

With grant assistance from the County of Bucks Open Space Program, DVRPC, the William Penn Foundation and with the support of the Circuit, volunteers were able to connect several trails in 2014, including adding two miles to existing trail systems and the Neshaminy Greenway.

**Sponsors:** Doylestown Township

**Submitted by:** Stephanie J. Mason, Doylestown Township

### Pennypack Trail Extension

**Project Location:** Montgomery County, Lower Moreland Township, Abington, Rockledge

**Description:** The Pennypack Trail, located along the former Newtown Branch of Reading Railroad, was extended north to Route 63 in Lower Moreland Township and south into Rockledge where it connects into Rockledge Park, lengthening the trail by approximately 0.7 miles.

A new 40-car parking lot was constructed along the trail at Route 63. A 143-foot bridge was constructed to make the trail connection into Rockledge. Three former railroad bridges were repurposed for the trail. SEPTA developed a gated at grade rail crossing along the trail at the West Trenton Regional Rail Line.

The trail extension was opened on November 14, 2014. This project has enhanced access to the existing 2-mile trail and has provided views of the Bethayres Swamp, one of the largest wetlands in Montgomery County. An additional 3-mile
Poquessing Creek Trail

**Project Location:** Philadelphia County, Northeast Philadelphia, Parkwood and Mechanicsville neighborhoods

**Description:** This 1.5-mile paved, multi-use trail now connects Junod Playground and the Parkwood neighborhood of Northeast Philadelphia to the 32-acre, wooded Poquessing Creek Park, a watershed park in Philadelphia Parks & Recreation’s system and the 500+ acre Benjamin Rush State Park, the only state park in Philadelphia.

In addition, this 12-foot wide trail provides a connection to Bensalem Township, Bucks County, furthering inter-county cooperation and allowing regional usage of the City’s trail network. The trail also utilizes two easements on properties of Origlio Beverage and the Philadelphia Industrial Development Corporation.

The $1M project was constructed using Philadelphia Capital Program funds to match a DCNR grant for $500,000. The trail includes a bridge over Black Lake Run, a small tributary of Poquessing Creek. The project also includes extensive tree planting along the trail corridor and provides ability for area residents to access acres of natural, public areas which previously had been relatively inaccessible due to private property ownership.

Trail maintenance and operations are the responsibility of Philadelphia Parks & Recreation. The trail was designated as a high priority in Philadelphia City Planning Commission’s Trail Master Plan, Green2015, Phila2035, and GreenPlan.

Red Clay Greenway Trail – Phase I

**Project Location:** Chester County, Kenneth Borough

**Description:** To complement their land conservation efforts, The Land Conservancy for Southern Chester County (TLC) collaborated with Kennett Trails Alliance to launch Phase I of the Red Clay Greenway, a Walkable Communities Project.

This ambitious 10-mile trail project connects TLC conserved lands with other trail networks, scenic roadways, and access points to and from Kennett Borough. The trail currently begins at the Pennock Ball Fields Trail, a trail loop of four miles, and then meanders south for another four miles along the west branch of Red Clay Creek, crossing Hillendale.
Road Bridge to Chandler Mill Road. There is a small parking area and kiosk on South Street. The next trail phase will connect the trail northward into the Borough through Magnolia Place.

When completed, the Red Clay Greenway will help reduce vehicular traffic, allow children to walk or ride their bikes to school and local ball fields, and provide runners, equestrians, and walkers a more extensive trails system. Since a good portion of the trails will be through TLC preserved lands, the public will also have more opportunities to enjoy the natural beauty of TLC lands.

The Ringing Rocks Trail is a section of trail (former logging path) that had remained virtually unused for a hundred years. The trail offers additional access to Ringing Rocks County Park (which has limited parking) and is a highly scenic, secluded footpath.

**Sponsors:** Appalachian Mountain Club and Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network

**Submitted by:** John Brunner, Appalachian Mountain Club

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**Schuylkill River Trail – Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk**

**Project Location:** Philadelphia County, Schuylkill River

**Description:** The City of Philadelphia and the Schuylkill River Development Corporation built a 2,000 foot long concrete path over the river, running parallel to its eastern shore from Locust Street to a new stair-tower at the South Street Bridge. A 460-foot long ramp also links the boardwalk to the north side of the South Street Bridge, providing ADA access and an easier connection for people with bicycles.

This project provides an important link to the Schuylkill River Trail and Center City from University City and West Philadelphia. The boardwalk’s 15-foot wide pathway was enhanced with four widened overlooks that allow people to rest and enjoy the views along the boardwalk without blocking the trail. The ramp and boardwalk were also designed to accommodate emergency and maintenance vehicles.

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**Ringing Rocks Trail**

**Project Location:** Bucks County, Bridgeton Township, between Delaware Canal State Park and Ringing Rocks County Park

**Description:** The Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) is working with multiple municipal, county and state agencies and non-profit partners to develop the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network. AMC has identified a system of interconnected trails that span the entire length of the Pennsylvania Highlands region.

The AMC Professional Trail Crew cleared a 1.3-mile section of an historic logging road to open a new section of trail, connecting the Delaware Canal State Park and D&L Trail with the popular Ringing Rocks County Park.
The Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk was an instant success. Not only was it positively reviewed by a variety of local, regional, and national news organizations, it immediately improved pedestrian and bicycle traffic in the area. Commuters and recreational trail users now have more direct access to preferred routes of travel. The Boardwalk has also drawn visitors from around the region who want to experience this popular new trail destination.

**Sponsor:** City of Philadelphia

**Submitted by:** Danielle Gray, Schuylkill River Development Corporation

### STATEWIDE

#### PA State Snowmobile Association

**Location:** Statewide

**Description:** The Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association (PSSA) has administered a robust mini-grant program since 2010 with funding obtained through DCNR’s Recreational Trails Program. This mini-grant program has enabled the PSSA to maintain and improve upon Pennsylvania’s growing snowmobile trail network. These funds primarily go to the purchase and maintenance of grooming and other necessary equipment as much of the time and labor is donated by the numerous volunteers associated with the PSSA.

Many projects were possible due to this mini-grant program. For example, stone for the Trail 12 Reroute, Marienville Bypass, was purchased and delivered with funding assistance through this program, thus alleviating much of the watershed damage associated with the previous trail. Volunteers from the Forest County Snowmobile Club used their own vehicles to remove large rocks and spread an even coating of stone purchased through the mini-grant program to provide safer and more accessible trails.

The PSSA also has an ongoing project to install signage and collect GPS coordinates of important intersections for use in emergencies. The Navigational Signage and GPS project is currently in Phase III, expanding the project into 14 additional counties, including trails within the Allegheny National Forest. This project aims to provide a clear, easily interpretable navigational system to encourage safe and enjoyable use of the trails.

**Sponsors:** Pennsylvania State Snowmobile Association (PSSA), DCNR

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

### September 11th National Memorial Trail

**Location:** Pentagon Memorial Trail Circuit Map, Online

**Description:** The September 11th National Memorial Trail is a network of trails that connects the Pentagon Memorial in Washington D.C., the National September 11th Memorial in New York City, and the Flight 93 National Memorial near Shanksville, PA. This trail network is being developed to primarily use existing and planned trails and greenways, with the use of roadways in a few necessary locations.

In March of 2014, the Pentagon Memorial Trail Circuit map was announced by the September 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance. The map is a walking and cycling guide to the numerous memorials located in Virginia and Washington D.C., all within a short distance of the Pentagon Memorial in Arlington, Virginia. The map includes walking and cycling paths for a variety of ages and skill levels.

**Sponsors:** Dominion Foundation, September 11th National Memorial Trail Alliance

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR
Promoting PA Trails

The following section describes activities that drew public attention to Pennsylvania’s trails in 2014, appealing to people of all ages and abilities, demonstrating the economic and health benefits of trails, and building local support and capacity.

2014 Trail of the Year
Redbank Valley Trails

Project Location: Statewide

Description: The Redbank Valley Trails in Armstrong, Clarion and Jefferson counties was named the inaugural 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.

Redbank Valley Trails stood out because of the dedicated work of volunteers; its scenic beauty; connection to other trail systems; and quick and efficient pace of development.

Much of the 51-mile non-motorized trail runs parallel along the 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.

On August 9, 2014 the Clarion County Trails Association hosted a celebration of the Trail of the Year designation in Gumtown Memorial Park on Water Street in New Bethlehem, PA.

2014 Greenway Sojourn

Project Location: Wierton, West Virginia through Southwestern Pennsylvania to Cumberland, Maryland

Description: In June 2014, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) sponsored the 12th annual Greenway Sojourn, a multi-day heritage bicycle tour. Participants cycled an average of 38 miles a day while their luggage was transported to the next town where camping, catered meals and special activities awaited.

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 2014 event, 300 sojourners pedaled 191 miles over six days. Some were seasoned sojourn veterans; others were taking part in their first multi-day ride. All had a passion for being out on the trail.

Bicyclists participate in the Trans Allegheny Trails' ‘ribbon-joining’ ceremony. Photo by Bruce Siskawicz, Trib Total Media.

300 riders participated in the 2014 Greenway Sojourn.

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

**Submitted by:** Katie Harris, RTC

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**Trans Allegheny Trails**

**Project Location:** Westmoreland County, Saltsburg

**Description:** On June 20, 2014, the Allegheny Ridge Corporation invited bicyclists of all ages and abilities to join a rail trail ride, beginning at River’s Edge Park in Saltsburg near the trailheads of the West Penn and Westmoreland Heritage trails. Representatives of the trails announced the formation of a network of 13 biking/hiking trails, and they displayed signs that would mark all the trails that form the complete system. The event, punctuated by a “ribbon joining,” was symbolic of the joining of the trails into a continuous trail system.

The idea for the network originated when hundreds of bicyclists converged on the region for the Rails-to-Trails Greenway Sojourn in 2011. Participating trail operators met with Rails-to-Trails Conservancy representatives to plan and execute the sojourn; working together they discovered that bicyclists were willing to come here from distant places for a multiple-day bicycling experience.

The system includes Apollo’s Kiski Riverfront Trail, the Bells Gap Trail, Blairsville Riverfront Trail, Ghost Town Trail, Hoodlebug Trail, Jim Mayer Riverwalk, Lower Trail, Path of the Flood, Roaring Run Trail, 6 to 10 Trail, Staple Bend Tunnel Trail, West Penn Trail and the Westmoreland Heritage Trail. Many of these trails are part of the Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Main Line Canal, a 320-mile corridor of heritage sites and hub communities linked by land and water trails, including the Kiski-Conemaugh Water Trail.

All of the trails reflect the historic character of the Allegheny Mountains, including the oldest railroad tunnel in America, a flood-control dam, iron furnaces, picturesque bridges, amazing stonework, old towpaths and the watercourse of a historic flood.

A major volunteer effort by 11 rail-trail organizations kept the cost to less than $30,000. The monetary resources came from the
Pennsylvania Wilds Artisan Trail Story Map

Project Location: 13 Counties in Northcentral PA

Description: The PA Wilds Artisan Trail Advisory Committee worked with the North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission to create the online PA Wilds Artisan Trail Story Map. It is a great promotional tool that allows the traveling public to access information about the trail from their smart phones and other mobile devices. The story map includes pictures of each trail site, hours of operation, and a short description. Once downloaded, story-maps can be used in places without cell phone coverage, a great feature for the rural PA Wilds landscape.

Public art is featured on the Artisan Trail Story Map, including murals and other artistic works that have been installed in communities in the PA Wilds in recent years, and the story map is a great way to expose the public to these attractions.

Restaurant, lodges, shops, galleries and other retail establishments are able to join the trail and be featured on the story map as well.

In 2014, the Artisan Trail Advisory Committee expanded its mission to include a larger presence. The committee has drafted guidelines to allow non-retail establishments with a significant arts story to join the trail, including theaters, dance studios and other creative space, all combining to generate considerable buzz about the PA Wilds.

Sponsor: PA Wilds Artisan Trail Advisory Committee and North Central Regional Planning & Development Commission

Submitted by: Meredith Hill, DCNR

Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Celebration

Project Location: Cumberland County, Boiling Springs

Description: The fourth annual Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame Banquet was held on the evening of June 6th, 2014, at the Allenberry Resort in Boiling Springs, Pennsylvania. Approximately 90 friends of the Museum attended the event. The highlight of the gala was the induction of the 2014 class of the Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame. The honorees were: A. Rufus Morgan of Franklin, North Carolina; Charles R. Rinaldi of Boca Raton, Florida; Clarence S. Stein of New York City, New York; and Pamela Underhill of Harpers Ferry, West Virginia.

The Museum gave two additional awards, which were not announced prior to the event. Robert Croyle of Savannah, Georgia, known as “Red Wolf”, was honored for his many years of support to the Museum. Red Wolf serves as Membership Secretary of the Museum and is a board member. Larry Luxenberg, Museum founder and President, said: “Red Wolf was involved from the beginning with the movement to start the Museum. He plays an important role in keeping track of our members, sending out communications and getting donations.”
Master carver John “Bodacious” Beaudet was also honored. Beaudet, of Flag Pond, Tennessee, has carved the custom made hiking stick awarded to every person inducted into the A.T. Hall of Fame since it began in 2011. During the Banquet reception, author Richard Judy signed copies of his book “Thru: An Appalachian Trail Love Story”. Judy's book is the first one to be published by the Appalachian Trail Museum. All profits from the book will go to the Museum.

2014 Appalachian Trail Hall of Fame honorees and representatives. From left, Ronald J. Tipton, representing Clarence S. Stein; Larry and Doris Jelley, representing A. Rufus Morgan; Pamela Underhill; and Donald Owen, representing Charles R. Rinaldi. Photo courtesy of Dan Innamorato.

**Sponsor:** Appalachian Trail Conservancy

**Submitted by:** Jim Foster, Appalachian Trail Conservancy

### D&H Rail Trail Half Marathon

**Project Location:** Forest City, Wayne County to Union Dale Borough, Susquehanna County

**Description:** 2014 marked the 7th annual Half Marathon Distance Run and 5K on the D&H Rail-Trail. This annual race is a 13.1 mile stretch from Forest City to Union Dale on an improved stretch of the D&H Rail-Trail. The D&H Distance Run is a primary method for the Rail-Trail Council of NEPA to raise funds for improvements to the abandoned stretches of rail-trails that the non-profit organization is able to acquire. The distance run is a vital fundraising opportunity as much of the funding obtained through State and Federal agencies requires a 20-50% match from the Rail-Trail Council.

The D&H Rail Trail is a 38-mile trail that begins in Simpson, PA and extends north to follow the Upper Lackawanna River. It eventually connects with and follows the Starrucca Creek until it reaches the New York border. It has several connections at its southern end as well, making the D&H an important link in a master plan connecting a series of trails from Washington Crossing, PA into upstate New York.

**Sponsor:** Rail Trail Council of NEPA

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

### 2014 Eastern Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit

**Project Location:** Lehigh County, Center Valley

**Description:** The 2014 Pennsylvania Greenways & Trails Summit was a two-day trails conference that attracted more than 130 trail planners, trail advocates, trail users, and municipal officials to Desales University, Center Valley, Lehigh County in Eastern Pennsylvania. The Summit was organized by the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, D&L Trail Alliance, and Lackawanna Heritage Valley, along with Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and DCNR.

The Summit featured keynote addresses by architect and planner Jeff Olson and Senior Director of Health and Fitness at Rodale, Budd Coates. Participants engaged in more than a dozen breakout sessions on a variety of trail development, management, and promotion topics. Three mobile workshops highlighted regional trail projects.

**Sponsor:** Lehigh Valley Planning Commission, D&L Trail Alliance, and Lackawanna Heritage Valley, Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and DCNR.

**Submitted by:** Kent Taylor, DCNR and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
Lackawanna Heritage Explorer Bike Tour

**Project Location:** Lackawanna County, Peckville

**Description:** Cyclists enjoyed six new miles of trail at the 5th Annual Heritage Explorer Bike Tour and Festival. Hosted by the Lackawanna Heritage Valley National and State Heritage Area (LHV) and Heritage Valley Partners, Inc., the event was held on Saturday, June 14, 2014 at Blakely Borough Park in Peckville, PA.

This non-competitive, family-friendly event has grown into an annual tradition, marking the start of Father’s Day weekend for many families in Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Heritage Explorer Bike Tour offered four out-and-back routes that extended from Blakely Borough Park north on the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail and in quiet neighborhood streets through 17 municipalities. Each route had station stops along the course with complimentary water, snacks and fun activities. Keystone College provided a complimentary lunch to all riders. Approximately 500 riders and 150 volunteers participated in the bike tour.

In conjunction with the bike tour, a festival was held at Mellow Park. All in the community were invited to attend the event featuring music by Asialena Bonitz, demonstrations, vendors and exhibits, and a raffle.

A special kid’s area offered family-friendly entertainment, including two free activities for children age ten and under — the Blakely Lokie Bike Rally and the Heritage Explorer Festival Youth Run. Both events offered prizes for the participants. The youth run, sponsored by Scranton Running Company, followed a course through Blakely Borough Recreations Park.

Proceeds from the Heritage Explorer Bike Tour and Festival benefitted the continuing development of the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail, a rail trail system over 70 miles long from the New York State border to the Susquehanna River in Pittston.

The Lackawanna Heritage Valley National and State Heritage Area is based in Scranton. It works with community partners on projects that conserve, preserve, and educate the public about the region’s historic, cultural, economic and natural resources.

**Sponsor:** Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority

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

East Coast Greenway

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

**Description:** The East Coast Greenway is a collaboration of local communities, counties and states working together to link existing trails with new ones to make a complete trail connecting the entire East Coast. It connects 15 of America’s most densely populated states, the District of Columbia and virtually all major cities along the eastern seaboard, serving more than 45 million people.

Pennsylvania’s portion of the trail, a 55-mile route connecting Trenton to Philadelphia and Wilmington, is being built with the help of several groups and communities. The state’s many partnerships are cited as a reason that the East Coast Greenway Alliance will be hosting its National State of the Greenway Summit in Philadelphia in 2015.
Some projects that are underway include:

- Expanding the 250 miles of completed trails in the Philadelphia region through the efforts of the William Penn Foundation and the Circuit, aiming to connect all of the region’s trails;
- Re-opening the Delaware and Lehigh Towpath from Bristol Borough to the Calhoun Street bridge in Morrisville, listed on the National Register of Historic Places and owned by the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission that carries the greenway across the Delaware River from Trenton; and
- Five trail projects from the Bucks County border to the center of Philadelphia that, when complete, will be named the North Delaware River Greenway.

Principal partners include the Delaware River City Corporation, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, the Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia, and the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission.

**Sponsor:** East Coast Greenway Alliance

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

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**ExplorePAtrails**

**Project Location:** Online resource, Statewide

**Description:** ExplorePAtrails serves as an integral resource for users of Pennsylvania’s statewide trail system. It was designed so that users can search and view trails throughout the state to choose the best trail to match their needs and location. Additionally, this interactive site enables users to submit updates, photographs and reviews to aid in keeping the site up to date on a continuous basis. In this way, the ExplorePAtrails site has been promoted as “powered by you,” as it is a public-friendly and public-enhanced resource for trail information throughout Pennsylvania.

In 2014, the website eclipsed one million page views since its launch in September of 2009. There have been over 270,000 users to the website and, in 2014 alone, 63,500 new visitors.

![Graph showing users and pageviews](image)

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources developed a survey in 2014 to collect feedback on the current site as well as ideas for future enhancements. The feedback will be analyzed in 2015 to make key decisions as to the future direction of the ExplorePAtrails website.

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

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

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**Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition**

**Project Location:** Regional network of trails conceptualized to connect across five states and 52 counties

**Description:** This regional trail network originally included 32 counties and was known as P32+, but is now comprised of 52 counties throughout five states and the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition has been formally adopted as the organizational name. The initiative is comprised of counties in Pennsylvania, New York, Ohio, West Virginia and Maryland.

![Map of industrial heartland trails coalition](image)

The network builds upon current coalition’s initiatives as well as regional trail coalitions and collaborations already in place. The network is mainly comprised of constructed trails and in 2014, 60% of the trail’s 1,400 total mileage was already complete.
While the network is subdivided into eight “destination corridors”, to describe the major urban centers being connected, the trail coalition states that the network is valuable for small rural communities as well. By connecting these large urban centers, smaller communities and rural areas are also gaining valuable connections.

The application submitted in 2014 was for various projects for the regional trail network in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia. These projects were to complete trail gaps that would best accelerate the development of a regional trail network. The Coalition requested a grant through TIGER for $1.6 million to complete 15 projects, 85% of which specifically linked to rural communities.

**Sponsor:** Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR

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**Keystone Trails Association Trail Care Events**

**Project Location:** Statewide

**Description:** The Keystone Trails Association (KTA) was established in 1956 and has since served as a statewide advocate for Pennsylvania’s trails. While KTA is well-known for its advocacy efforts, the organization is also responsible for promoting stewardship of Pennsylvania trails through its excellent trail care programs.

Between October 2013 and October 2014, 115 volunteers donated their time and energy to caring for Pennsylvania’s trails through KTA’s Trail Care Events. This amounted to 2,990 volunteer hours dedicated to trail maintenance throughout the state. KTA organized thirteen Trail Care Events in 2014, which included seven Trail Care Weekends, one Code Orange Event, and five Trail Crew Weeks. This included a first-ever workday at Cowans Gap State Park as well as a project that completed maintenance along the entire T-Squared Trail in Sproul State Forest. The 2014 Care Weekend at White Mountain Ridge Trail was part of a three year long project but KTA can now proudly claim to have reconstructed a navigable trail.

These were only a few of the wide variety of maintenance events that KTA organized, supported and promoted throughout 2014, with many more events planned for 2015.

**Sponsor:** Keystone Trails Association

**Submitted by:** Hannah Greenberg, DCNR
# 2014 Highlights

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>14,622</td>
<td>Volunteer hours logged and reported to the Keystone Trails Association for trail maintenance activities throughout Pennsylvania in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Land and water trail projects completed in 2014 that were partially funded by DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program grants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$4M+</td>
<td>Grant funding and total project costs for DCNR Community Conservation Partnerships Program land and water trail projects completed in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8M+</td>
<td>Pennsylvania counties in which land and water trail projects were completed in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Land and water trail projects awarded funding through PA Department of Conservation &amp; Natural Resources (DCNR) Community Conservation Partnerships Program in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$8M+</td>
<td>Land and water trail projects awarded funding through PA Department of Transportation (PennDOT) Transportation Alternatives Program in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Land and water trail projects awarded funding through PA Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) Greenways, Trails, and Recreation Program in 2014</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29%</td>
<td>Percentage of Pennsylvanians living within one mile of an open trail</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39%</td>
<td>Percentage of Pennsylvanians living within one mile of an open or planned trail</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

With numerous land and water trails in the planning phase, over $24 million in federal and state funding committed to new projects, and enthusiastic and skilled volunteers and partners, the goal of developing a statewide trail network for all Pennsylvanians is being realized.

For more information, please visit:

**DCNR Bureau of Recreation & Conservation:**
www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/recreation/trails/index.htm

**2014-2019 Pennsylvania Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan:**
www.paoutdoorrecplan.com/

**ExplorePAtrails:**
www.explorepatrails.com/
## 2015 Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Trail User Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Betsy Aiken</td>
<td>Trail Trainers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thomas Baxter</td>
<td>Bicycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eric Bruggeman</td>
<td>All-Terrain Vehicle Riding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kyle Buchter</td>
<td>4-Wheel Driving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janet Citron</td>
<td>Horseback Riding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Confer</td>
<td>Trail Advocates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Janie French</td>
<td>Snowmobiling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James Foster</td>
<td>Hiking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dan Glass</td>
<td>Trail Walkers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Hamilton</td>
<td>Members at Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Carl Kelemen</td>
<td>Members at Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larry Knutson</td>
<td>Trail Builders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Laird</td>
<td>Off-Highway Motorcycling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nick Loftus</td>
<td>Mountain Biking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawn McLaughlin</td>
<td>Members at Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Ritting III</td>
<td>Persons with Disabilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Sheffield</td>
<td>Members at Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael Stokes</td>
<td>Trail Planners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Washousky</td>
<td>Water Trail Users</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Michael White</td>
<td>Cross-Country Skiing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>