

Trails to You



2007 3rd Annual PA Greenways & Trails Summit

May 3-5, 2007

Mountain View Inn, Greensburg, PA

One of the highlights of 2007 for those of us in the trails community will surely be the 2007 PA Greenways and Trails Summit being held May 3-5 at the Mountain View Inn near Greensburg. The Summit is shaping up to be a must-see for anyone with any interest in trails and greenways – from planning and design to construction and maintenance to advocacy and promotion. The theme of this year's event is "Community Connections Through Greenways and Trails". As such, the Summit will highlight the many ways that greenways and trails are helping to revitalize and reconnect communities, many of which have suffered as rail transportation, natural resource extraction, and heavy industry have declined in our state's economy.

Pennsylvania has long been a leader in the development of trails and greenways, and has extended that leadership by recognizing the key role these amenities play in making our communities more livable and more attractive to business, tourism, and other economic activity. The Summit will provide an opportunity to learn about communities that have embraced their greenways and trails – be they land or water, hiking or motorized – in

such a way. These communities have converted rail stations into trailheads, proactively sought trail-friendly businesses for lodging, food, and other services, established Safe Routes to School using their trail corridors, and implemented many other ideas to make their greenways and trails an integral part of the community. You will not only hear about these outstanding communities in the classroom, you will be able to visit them, view their facilities, and use their trails as part of mobile workshops taking place Friday evening and Saturday morning.

Needless to say, these activities and ideas aren't exclusive to PA. So the Summit will also bring you speakers of national and international acclaim including Gil Penalosa, former Commissioner of Parks and Recreation in Bogota, Colombia, and Chuck Flink, President of Greenways Incorporated, along with representatives of the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, and other national organizations.

This year's Summit has also made every effort to recognize and include the entirety of our greenways and trails community. Whether you prefer land or water, motor, pedal, hoof, or boot, our common interests, needs, and

goals are many. Issues such as membership, funding, advocacy and promotion are much the same regardless of a trail's type, location, or intended uses. The Summit will provide both sessions that are specific to a trail's type or use as well as sessions that address a common issue from a number of different perspectives.

The 2007 PA Greenways and Trails Summit will feature two days at the beautiful Mountain View Inn, nationally and internally acclaimed speakers, over 25 breakout sessions where you can learn first-hand from the leaders of the greenways and trails movement, exhibits and networking opportunities, and a number of mobile workshops where you will be able to learn and recreate on some of the area's outstanding land and water trails. For more information or to register, please visit www.prps.org.

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STAFF CHANGES AND OPENINGS

Keystone Trails Association has elected a new president and hired its first executive director. Incoming president Thyra Sperry has been a member of the Endangered Hiking Trails and Bylaws Revision Committees, and chaired the Nominating, and Executive Director Search Committees. Sperry previously served as a Council Representative at Large and was elected to the Board last year. Sperry is also well known in the hiking community, having served on the Appalachian Trail Conference Board of Managers for ten years, including six years as Mid-Atlantic Vice Chair. In 2001 she chaired the ATC Biennial Conference held at Shippensburg University. She also served as both Chair and Secretary of the Pennsylvania Appalachian Trail Committee.

Paul Shaw, the new ED, has been charged with establishing an office for KTA in the metropolitan

Harrisburg area; securing stable funding by responding to requests for proposals, submitting grant proposals, and contacting potential business sponsors; establishing working relationships with governing agencies and member clubs; monitoring and responding to legislative and regulatory initiatives with potential impact on Pennsylvania's hiking trails; providing staff support for the Board of Directors; and developing the infrastructure for a fully-funded permanent professional staff. Shaw is a Penn State grad, who began his working career as an environmental planner with SEDA-COG in Lewisburg, managed a camp and conference center near Philadelphia, and most recently worked in the natural foods industry at Walnut Acres and Bell & Evans. He has worked for and served on several Boards of Directors including the Ned Smith Center for Nature and Art and Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture.

Catherine McCollom has been hired as regional director of the Great Allegheny Passage Trail Town Initiative. The position was funded by grants from five Pittsburgh area foundations along

with the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development in partnership with Somerset County and will be housed at the Progress Fund. McCollom, formerly chief programs officer for Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation, brings over 25 years of experience in heritage tourism and economic development to this new initiative, which will promote regional business development and cooperative marketing along the 150-mile Great Allegheny Passage.

In accordance with recent federal transportation legislation and increased federal funding for Safe Routes to School, PennDOT has hired a statewide SRTS coordinator, Chris Metka. Chris will be at the 2007 Summit to provide an SRTS update. In the meantime, he may be contacted at 717-787-8065 or cmetka@state.pa.us for your SRTS questions.

Have a staff change or open position that you'd like us to include in a future newsletter? Please email the details to info@greendiamondtrails.com.

This newsletter is published 4 times a year as a service to its members and other interested persons. Opinions expressed are those of the listed authors. The editors encourage submissions reflecting on educational information for Trails. You are encouraged to submit your article for review on disc or by email to:

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TRAIL AND GREENWAY EVENTS OF INTEREST

2007 PA Greenways and Trails Summit – May 3-5, 2007
Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society – www.prps.org

PRPS 60th Annual Conference - March 24-28, 2007
Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation Society – www.prps.org

Have an event that you'd like us to include in a future newsletter? Please email the details to info@greendiamondtrails.com.

JUNIATA RIVER WATER TRAILS - Newest to the PA Water Trails

(This article was prepared with input from Clark Fisher, Hannah Hardy, and Daniel Martin)

A water trail is a trail for boating. Water trails are made up of public access points, local attractions, map and guides and signage to direct and promote use of aquatic resources. They provide “where-to” information that shows boaters and anglers exactly where they can go to enjoy themselves safely. The PA Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC) manages the PA Water Trails Program with the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources and the PA Environmental Council. There are currently 19 separate water trails built or under construction in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. The newest members of the PA Water Trails System are in the Juniata River Watershed. The Raystown Branch of the Juniata River Water Trail Map & Guide was published by the PFBC and the Juniata Clean

Water Partnership. This guide provides information for roughly 90 river miles starting upstream of Bedford to just downstream of Saxton into Raystown Lake.



“Rail bridge near Ryde, PA on the Juniata River” (Clark Fisher)

The Raystown Branch is a great water trail for novices or families who are looking for an enjoyable afternoon on the water. The Juniata River Water Trail Guide was published in two segments. The upper portion provides information for 50 miles

of the main stem of the Juniata from Petersburg to Lewistown including information about major tributaries. The lower section maps the final 50 miles from Lewistown to the mouth of the river in Duncannon. At mile 0 the water trail connects to the existing Susquehanna River Water Trail (Middle Section).

Water trails are relatively new in Pennsylvania but they are here to stay. The best thing about this project is its future. Hopefully soon the entire state will be linked with a system of interconnected water trails. For users of the Juniata River Water Trail including the Raystown Branch, we are closer to completing that goal.

PUBLICATIONS AND RESOURCES

The following recent publications provide valuable information about trail development, funding, and management. In most cases, the publication can be found online at the link provided and/or hard copies may be obtained by calling the number listed. Additional publications are referenced at <http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/publications/>

Please note that the main web site for Rails-to-Trails Conservancy has changed to <http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html>. Trail-building resources, including a wealth of manuals, reports, and fact sheets can now be obtained more easily from this site. From “I

want to:” in the left-hand column, select “build a trail”. Then select “Resources” from the left-hand column of the next screen.

Have a new publication or technical assistance resource that you’d like us to include in a future newsletter? Please email the details to info@greendiamondtrails.com.

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WESTERN PA TRAILS SYMPOSIUM A HUGE SUCCESS

Thanks to the outstanding efforts of organizers, two excellent facilities, and a great turnout, the Western PA Trails Symposium was a huge success. Over 130 people attended one or both days of the two-day event, which covered a Friday and Saturday in an effort to accommodate both trail professionals and volunteers. Friday's sessions were primarily organized by the PA Environmental Council (PEC) and held at the Regional Learning Alliance in Butler County. Many of the sessions, along with the luncheon keynote by David Kahley of the Progress Fund, focused on the next steps in the evolution of the trail movement, including the development of long-distance networks, marketing and promotion of said networks, and better integration of trails into communities. Saturday's sessions were primarily organized by PRPS and held at McKeever Environmental Center in Mercer County. This day was designed more for volunteer organizations in earlier stages of development, and focused on traditional nuts-and-bolts topics like organization, corridor acquisition, and maintenance. Both days included a mapping room hosted by DCNR and the PA Fish and Boat Commission. A tremendous amount of GIS data was collected, with dozens of trails being added or updated in state trail inventories. Along with the organizations mentioned above, other partners in the Symposium included PennDOT, the National Park Service, and Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. The organizing committee consisted of Christine Boyer-Krantz, Beth Brennan, Hannah Hardy, Carl Knoch, Peggy Pings, Rory Robinson, Bob Griffith, Vanyla Tierney and Tim Poole.