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Upcoming PRPS Trail Training:

- **April 22, 2004**
Trail 101
Harrisburg
- **April 23, 2004**
Trail 101
Valley Forge
- **May 13-14, 2004**
Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP)
Kings Gap
- **May 26, 2004**
Statewide Water Trail Workshop
Harrisburg
- **October 26, 2004**
Historical Trail
Valley Forge
- **October 28, 2004**
Historical Trail
Altoona

To register or for more information on these workshops, please phone the PRPS Office at: 814-234-4272



Trails To You

Rails-To-Trails Conservancy-Here For You

by Tim Poole
Field Representative
Northeast Regional Office
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is a national non-profit organization. Contrary to a common misperception, we are not a state or federal government agency, although we do work very closely with many of those. The purpose of Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is to enrich America's communities and countryside by creating a nationwide network of public trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors.

We carry out this purpose from our national office in Washington, DC, and from six field offices, including one in Harrisburg, PA. At the national level, much of our work focuses on affecting federal legislation and policy, especially Railbanking and Transportation Enhancements. While protection of these legacy rail-trail programs requires constant vigilance, we are also at the forefront of new movements integrating trails into smart growth, healthy communities, and safe routes to school.

This role is expanded at the state level, where we are involved in both shaping and implementing these policies. We have worked to enact and

protect Pennsylvania's own Rail-Trail Act, Keystone grants, and Growing Greener program. Aided by RTC, an incredibly supportive state government spanning several administrations, and grassroots organizations of unmatched vision and dedication, PA has become a leader in the number and miles of rail-trails both open and under development. Yet much remains to be done, and RTC is here to help you finish the job.

At both the state and national level, we offer a wide array of technical assistance services. Our national office operates the Trails and Greenways Clearinghouse (www.trailsandgreenways.org), which houses white papers, fact sheets, how-to, resources, links, and a wealth of technical assistance information. As an adjunct to this, we also operate the Trails and Greenways listserv. This is an internet group that you can join free of charge, then you can ask and answer questions from colleagues across the nation and around the world, or just sit back and learn from the dialogue.

Our staff of four in Harrisburg pursues a wide variety of projects. We annually publish and distribute several thousand copies of *Pennsylvania's Rail-Trails*, a comprehensive guide to the

over 1200 miles of open rail-trails in PA, making them more accessible to local residents and visitors. To further highlight the economic and tourism benefits of trails, we conduct the PA Greenway Sojourn (more information can be found elsewhere in this newsletter). We conduct research into topics of interest to trail developers and managers. For example, a new study of rail-trail maintenance practices and costs will soon be released. And we provide technical assistance to trail projects big and small. Many questions can be answered through a phone call or by using the internet resources described above. Sometimes, travel to meet with your organization can be arranged. However, due to financial constraints, it may be necessary for us to ask for a nominal reimbursement of our expenses. We are also available for a limited number of paid engagements such as participating in a feasibility study, regional bike/ped plan, or greenway plan.

If RTC can help get your project off the ground, clear a major hurdle, or just iron out that last wrinkle, please contact us (you can call 717-238-1717 or email rtctim@transact.org). We're here to help!

Special Thanks

This newsletter and the Trail Training PRPS provides is funded by a grant from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

Supported by the Park Resources Branch of PRPS

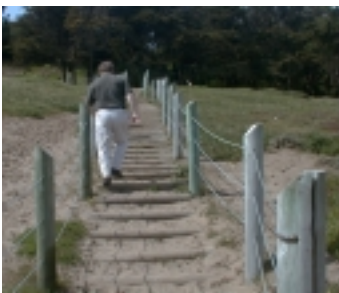
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Cable Stairs

By Don Clymer
Trails Specialist

Have you ever had a trail that went down a steep sandy slope, or a steep rocky slope, and you didn't know how you were going to install stairs that would last? Or, that wouldn't be so expensive they'd bust your budget? Here is a nifty solution to this problem:



Although you can't see the cables in the picture above each stair tread is connected to the next one with cables.

Clymer's Trail Works



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Here is another picture of the same kind of cable stair, on rocks, so you can see the construction of the stairs:



See how the cables just go through drilled holes in each step with a cable clamp under each step to keep the spacing even. The steps are also cut in an octagon so that there is a flat surface to step on when the stair is lying on an approximately 45' slope, as shown below:



The stairs are installed and anchored by burying the top step or top 2 steps in a trench at the top. The length, and therefore the weight of the stair, and the stability of the soil beneath the stairs determine the depth of the trench.

If the stair is installed on sand, and it becomes covered with sand, it can be lifted up, the sand leveled, and the stair re-laid on the freshly leveled surface. The stair can also be turned over, or switched end for end to present new wear surfaces on the octagon shaped treads. It is inexpensive to construct and install, and very maintenance free.

Use pressure treated wood and stainless steel cable and fittings (AISI 316 Stainless, available from Jacob Inc., Delray Beach, FL 866/525-6226).



Stair concept and pictures courtesy of Karl Knapp, California State Parks, Tahoma, CA.

Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society, Inc.

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 e-mail to:

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2004 PA Greenway Soujourn

The Greenway Sojourn is a three- or six-day bi-cycle tour on the fabulous rail-trails of Pa's Oil Heritage country. Featured trails will include the E. Branch, Oil Creek, Samuel Justus, Sandy Creek, and Allegheny River trails. This family friendly tour boasts relatively short, 30-mile days on mostly flat, paved rail-trails. Your luggage will be transported to each night's camp site, and most meals are provided. This is a great way to experience Pa's rich history, spell-binding natural beauty, impressive trail network, and unmatched hospitality. For more info. please call 717-238-1717 or visit http://www.railtrails.org/field/pennsylvania/active_pages/sojourn/splash.asp.

Letters to the editor...

Used Steel Culverts (Trails To You-Issue 1 Volume 1)

Congratulations on your inaugural issue of "Trails to You". After reading Don Clymer's article "Used Steel Culverts", I couldn't help but wonder whether your readers already know of other issues related to setting culverts. There are environmental and legal concerns that surely the PA Recreation and Park Society support, and these may be worthy of at least a follow-up note in a future issue.

Without going into an explanation here, let me suggest that you contact the Soils and Waterways staff of PADEP at Williamsport or Meadville and/or the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's Division of Environmental Services for a short list of caveats.

Best of luck to the PA Recreation and Park Society with your new publication and thanks for including us on your mailing list.

Brian B. Burger, Manager

My name is David Spotts and I work in the Division of Environmental Services. If you do a "follow-up note" as Brian suggested, I would simply inform your constituents that they need to contact their respective County Conservation District Office or regional DEP office prior to installing any culvert that would convey a watercourse in Pennsylvania.

Dave

As a follow-up to Don Clymer's article "Used Steel Culverts", I would like to pass along additional parallel information to the newsletter readers of the rules and regulations governing waterways and wetland encroachments, such as culvert placement in a perennial or intermittent stream, in Pennsylvania. NOTE: This response is not all-inclusive of all permit conditions, including Federal regulations, nor does it cover all obligations in the construction, operation or maintenance of encroachments and obstructions.

If your trail project involves installation or placement, you should contact your local County Conservation District (<http://pacd.org/districts/directory.htm>) or a DEP Regional Office (<http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/deputate/fieldops/default.htm>) to determine which permit is required for your structure.

25 Pennsylvania Code, Chapter 105, Dam Safety and Waterway Management, are the regulations that provide for the supervision of water obstructions to protect the health, safety, welfare and property of the citizens. Chapter 105 is administered by the PA Department of Environmental Protection (DEP). Twenty-eight County Conservation Districts have delegation agreements with the DEP for Chapter 105 *General Permit* (GP) processing. Some information needed for the permit application consist of the size of the watershed above the point of the encroachment. If the watershed is less than 100 acres and there are no wetland impacts, a permit waiver can be issued by the conservation district or the DEP Regional Office - no matter the stream rating noted in 25 Pennsylvania Code, Chapter 93, Water Quality Standards. If the watershed is between 100 - 640 acres (1 sq. mi.), a GP is required. General permits

may not apply to special protection watersheds per Chapter 93. If the watershed size is greater than 640 acres, a Standard or a Small Project (insignificant AND no wetland impacts) permit is needed. To identify the waterway / wetlands classification (high quality, exceptional value, cold water fishery, etc...), refer to Chapter 93. The above referenced chapters may be accessed electronically at <http://www.pacode.com>.

All wetland crossings require a wetland delineation. Wetlands identification must meet the 3 Parameter Approach, which are the following elements:

- hydric soil**;
- 50% of dominant **hydrophytic vegetation** is obligate, facultative-wet, or facultative; and,
- hydrology** (periodically inundated or saturated during the growing season)

The most commonly used general permits for trails are the GP-7 and GP-8. A GP-7 is authorized for a permanent crossing but not applicable on exceptional value waters; used for bridges and culverts; and, up to a 100' wetland crossing. A GP-8 is authorized for a temporary crossing and may remain installed up to 1 year; same uses as GP-7; and, up to 200' wetland crossing. An applicant must notify the PA Fish and Boat Commission Regional Office closest to the project site 10 days prior to construction. Among some of the specific areas where either of these GP's do not apply nor are valid: fords are prohibited on high quality and exceptional value waters and 2,000 feet above drinking water intakes or reservoirs for public water supply users. Other specific areas where the GP does not apply such as stocked trout streams from March 1 - June 15, wild trout streams from October 1 - December 31, and Lake Erie tributaries from September 1 through December 1.

Waterways encroachment work must be done in compliance with 25 Pennsylvania Code, Chapter 102, Erosion and Sediment (E&S) Control. An E&S Control Plan must be reviewed and determined adequate by the County Conservation District in which the activity is proposed.

This response is not all-inclusive of all permit conditions, including Federal regulations, nor does it cover all obligations in the construction, operation or maintenance of encroachments and obstructions. Additional information on waterways or wetland encroachments may be obtained at DEP Permits / Authorizations, <http://www.dep.state.pa.us/dep/efacts/in> in addition to you County Conservation District or a DEP Regional Office.

Submitted by: Matt Beaver, Recreation Specialist, Bureau of Forestry, Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, 400 Market Street, 6th Floor, RCSOB, Harrisburg, PA 17101, 717-783-7941.

Hiking and Birdwatching Top List of Nature-Based Tourism

In an era where America seems on its way to terminal laziness, Hiking and Wildlife-watching headed the list of the nature-based tourism activities that have witnessed skyrocketing participation rates over the past five years. Rural Pennsylvania has a unique opportunity to capitalize on the growing national interest in Nature-Based Tourism. The Center for Rural Pennsylvania issued a report on NBT (Nature-Based Tourism), which listed hiking (up 93.55%) and bird watching (up 155%) at the top of the list in increases in the percentage of participants.

The research included a survey of public and private agency staff and provides a number of recommendations that address specific barriers or opportunities related to the funding, development, and management of sustainable NBT for rural Pennsylvania. More information can be found at: http://www.ruralpa.org/nature_based_tourism.pdf

**PRPS would like to thank
our Trail Training Partners:**

Earth Conservancy

Dick To Trails Northeast Regional Office

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!
WWW.PRPS.ORG

Clarion-Little Toby Creek Trail

The original rail line was built by the Clearfield to Ridgway Rail Company in 1886 to transport lumber and coal from mills to markets but it also included a busy passenger service between Ridgway and Falls Creek. Abandoned in the 1960s, the corridor remained fairly intact under the ownership of Penn Central Corporation.

The trail meanders along the wild and scenic Clarion River and Little Toby Creek through Elk and Jefferson Counties, between the charming small towns of Ridgway and Brockway. Spectacular mountain river vistas, mountain scenery, wildlife, historical signage and a swinging bridge across Little Toby Creek enhance the user's experience.

Eighteen miles of the trail are surfaced with crushed limestone. A 1.8 mile section of trail runs adjacent to a live railroad line making the Clarion-Little Toby Creek Trail one of Pennsylvania's Rails with Trails.

The trail might also soon form the hub of a major regional trail network with possible connections to St Mary's and Emporium to the northeast, Dubois and Clearfield to the southeast, and Brookville and Clarion to the southwest.

To reach the Brockway trailhead from I-80 take Route 219 North into Brockway, turn left onto Main St, then right onto 7th Avenue. The trailhead is just past the community pool.

To reach the Ridgway trailhead from I-80, take SR 219 North to RT 948 (Main St.) in Ridgway. Follow 948 through town and turn left onto Water Street, just before Love's Canoe and Keystone Hardware. Continue one block to the trailhead.

Location: Elk and Jefferson Counties

Miles: 18

Endpoints: Ridgway to Brockway

Surface: Crushed limestone

Contact: Tri-County Rails to Trails

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