



Features in this Issue:

TEA21	1	The U.S. Congress appears to be on the verge of passing a multi-year reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21 st Century (TEA21). Even within the parks and recreation profession, few people know that this federal Act that provides funds to the states for highway construction, transit, and other surface transportation needs is also an important source of funds for park and recreation related projects, but most importantly, the Transportation Equity Act has been the single most important source of funds for trails for virtually every state in the nation.
Curosities along PA's		
Rails Trails	2	The most important of these programs for trails funding is the Transportation Enhancements program. The Transportation Enhancements program (TE) contains twelve categories of eligible projects and includes bike-ped and rail-trail projects, landscaping, restoration of historic transportation facilities, wetland mitigation, and a number of other project categories that are intended to create alternative transportation systems and to make intermodal transportation connections.
PRPS Educational		
Opportunities	3	The TE program is funded by a dedicated 10% set-aside of the federal fuel tax revenues, and can only be used for the categories of eligible projects under TE. To give an idea of how important that dedicated, restricted funding source is to trails nationwide, in the period from 1974 to 1991 before states were required to set the funds aside for only TE projects, about \$20 million was spent on trails projects nationwide. Since 1991, when the states were required to use the set-aside only on TE projects or lose it, over \$3.3 billion has been spent on Transportation Enhancement projects, of which \$2.2 billion was spent on bike-ped or rail-trail projects. In Pennsylvania, approximately \$21.5 million has been allotted for TE projects annually for a total of \$128.5 million over the six-year life of TEA21. Nationally, about 55% of TE projects are trail related.
York County's Heritage		
Rail Trail	4	Another important trails related program of TEA21 has been the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). Off-road vehicle use accounts for a significant portion of the total federal fuel excise tax revenue. As a result, Congress directs that a portion of these revenues are to be distributed back to the states in a proportional formula for

construction and maintenance of recreational trails for all trail users, motorized, equestrian, and non-motorized. For Pennsylvania, this has meant \$1.1 million per year, totaling \$7 million over the life of TEA21.

A coalition of national trails advocacy groups called the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), of which NRPA is a member, has urged Congress to consider granting a higher proportion of these off-road revenues to be allocated to the Recreational Trails Program. Presently, Congress only allocates \$50 million per year to the RTP. However, that portion of the 18.5 cents per gallon that is collected from every gallon of fuel sold that can be attributed to off-road use generates a whopping \$286 million per year. Clearly, there is a discrepancy in the formula for returning the benefits of this excise tax to the users who pay it.

The Coalition for Recreational Trails has advocated that 50% of these revenues should be the benchmark for funding the Recreational Trails Program. It should be noted that both the Senate version and the House version of the reauthorization bills do propose to return a significantly higher proportion of these revenues to the RTP—the House bill is preferable—but trails advocates should let their U.S. Senators and Representatives know that they support the position of the Coalition for Recreational Trails as it pertains to the Recreational Trails Program.

There is one additional significant
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Upcoming PRPS Trail Training:

- * **September 27, 2004**
Lightly on the Land
Grantville, PA
- * **September 28, 2004**
Risk and Trails
Grantville, PA
- * **October 26, 2004**
Historical Trail
Valley Forge, PA
- * **October 28, 2004**
Historical Trail
Altoona, PA

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

Special Thanks

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Supported by the Park Resources Branch of PRPS

Curiosities Along Pennsylvania's Rail Trails

by Gwen Loose, project coordinator for the York County Rail Trail Authority

Pennsylvania boasts over 100 rail trails that create a ribbon of approximately 1200 miles of trails across the commonwealth. They all have a common offering for the outdoor enthusiasts: an opportunity to bike, hike, horseback ride, cross-country ski or engage in many other forms of non-motorized "motion" on a pathway separated from motorized traffic. Visitors to rail trails also enjoy the gradual grade that these trails have inherited from the railroad builders. In fact, frequent visits to a local rail trail often include a careful selection of starting and ending points to take advantage of a gradual uphill or downhill slope.

But beyond these two common traits, each of our state's rail trails offer a unique glimpse into the railroad history of Pennsylvania. They send us over rivers on stone-arch

bridges, through mountains in mysteriously dim tunnels, and across deep valleys on magnificent trestle bridges. Trails built within rail corridors benefit from the engineering marvels of this by-gone era, a time when steam locomotives ruled the nation's transportation network and set the pace for the settling of the west. The brute strength of pick, shovel and black powder combined with the best engineering minds of the time to conquer a wild landscape that featured mountains, ravines, and rivers.

Traveling along a remote section of rail trail today, the visitor finds solitude in quiet streams, bird songs, and grazing cows. But the reminders of a busier time are all along the trail. Tunnels and bridges are obvious features that cause us to pause in our journey to enjoy their uniqueness. Less noticed are a variety of posts, towers, and railroading "hardware".

The two most often seen are whistle signs and mileposts. Both were typically cast iron, painted white, and installed along the rail line to give notice to the engineer.

Whistle signs, with their boldly painted black "W", were placed at the approach to road crossings to remind the engineer to blow the whistle in warning of the approaching locomotive.



Mileposts were placed at measured intervals along the route to indicate distance from specific endpoints. The number on the marker indicated the total miles a locomotive would have traveled from the point of origination on that rail line to the point of the marker. Mileposts that displayed different numbers on each side of the post indicated miles from point of origination as well as miles to travel to the other end of the rail line.



Occasionally seen along rail trails are signal towers and private crossing signs. Signal towers consisted of light signaling devices placed atop a pole and an attached ladder. A certain pattern of lights, set from a control tower, was read by the engineer and indicated rail conditions ahead. The ladder was used by the switchman to perform maintenance to



the signals. Private crossing signs warned trespassers of unauthorized entry across the rail line.

Switches and rail sidings are features seen on rail trails whose rail lines remain intact.

The switch is the mechanism used to redirect a train to a parallel set of tracks, a diverging rail line, or a siding. The siding is a relatively short section of rail that gently curves away from the main line and is used for "parking". In this way, the main rail line is kept open for use by other trains.

The next time you find yourself in motion along a rail trail, take a look around. What do you see that recalls the time when steam ruled? And as you move quietly along with the click of the bicycle gears or the tap of your hiking boot, what else do you hear? Perhaps something from a bygone era.

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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American Trails Photo Contest

American Trails is sponsoring the 2004 contest for photographs of National Recreation Trails across the country. This second annual contest provides awards in several categories and shows off entries on the NRT Web site. The goal is to highlight the diversity of the NRT's and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails. Photos can be of trail users as well as features of interest, signs, special facilities, mgmt. issues, construction, and volunteers. We also want to see entries that cover the many types of NRT's: greenways, backcountry hiking, water, motorized, rail, interpretive, historic, urban, bicycling and horse trails. For info phone (530) 547-2060 www.americantrails.org

PRPS Educational Opportunities

Two completely new, fast-paced, interactive trail workshops will be offered as part of the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society's Mini-Conference in Grantville, PA on September 27th and 28th, 2004.

To register or for more info, phone Lisa at 814-234-4272 or email llitz@prps.org

Sept. 27th: **Lightly on the Land** (8:30am- 4 pm) Sept. 28th: **Risk and Trails** (9:00a.m.- 12 p.m.)

The Student Conservation Association (SCA) is a nation-wide organization that takes student volunteers into our Nation's parks and forests to build and maintain trails. *Lightly on the Land* is the trail manual that SCA uses to teach and train it's many crew leaders every summer. This workshop will show how to use *Lightly on the Land* and will discuss SCA's trail building and maintenance philosophies.

Topics:

A: Trails; Safety and Tools

B: Measuring Distances+Grades; Survey and Design; Trail Construction; Trail Drainage; and Trail Maintenance

C: Building with Rock; Building with Timber + Felling and Bucking (some chainsaw/crosscut talk); and Revegetation and Restoration

D: Section D will cover topics specifically picked by the class participants: (specific structures, working with volunteers/kids, any review)

This workshop will be part classroom and part observing some practical applications on a nearby trail. Please come dressed for the weather.

Tom Moutsos started with SCA in the summer of 2000. Since then, he has led many crews and trainings for SCA. He has worked on trails in PA, West Virginia, Maryland, Virginia, New Hampshire, Maine and California. He graduated from the University of Pittsburgh with a degree in Environmental Studies in the spring of 2002. Tom currently works on the trail crew in Point Reyes National Seashore in California.

Rick D'Enbeau is a 2001 National Outdoor Leadership School graduate. He has been involved with the SCA since 2001 as an intern on the trail crew in Shenandoah National Park and a crew leader and Trail Skills Instructor for SCA's Urban Youth Corps in Pittsburgh. Rick has a US History degree from the University of Pittsburgh and is currently employed by Davey Tree as a tree climber.

SAVE THESE DATES!
MARCH 19-23, 2005
PRPS 58TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE
HERSHEY LODGE & CONVENTION CENTER

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

Earth Conservancy

Rails To Trails-Northeast Regional Office

Valley Forge National Historic Park

For information on becoming a partner,

email Lisa at llitz@prps.org

Risk & Trails examines issues and challenges created through the development of multi-use trails and provides easy to follow steps to deal with concerns.

With the development of trails systems across the U.S., public and private landowners are being asked to allow the development of trails on their property. With these new trails comes the growing demand from a multitude of users to access the trails to enjoy the many benefits they provide.

The Risk and Trails workshop examines the challenges created through multi-use trails and provides a thorough understanding of liabilities associated with trails while providing various tactics and resources available to minimize these risks. This workshop will benefit public owners of trails, trail associations, conservation authorities and private trail operators. A workbook is provided to all participants.

Participants will:

1. Learn of risks associated with multi-use trails
2. Be provided with sample policies and forms required to manage risks
3. Learn easy to follow steps to implement effective risk management for trails

Doug Wyseman has been involved in risk management since 1973. Doug has worked in the public sector as risk manager for a large municipality and in the private sector for insurers of public entities. He also works in cooperation with Canada Parks and Recreation Association in presenting a risk mgmt. training program for parks and recreation volunteers and professionals, based on his text "Risk and Recreation." Doug has extensive experience in public sector risk management. Doug has lectured throughout North America on all areas of public entity Risk Management.

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funding source for recreation related programs authorized under the Transportation Equity Act, the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund. This is a separate authorization in TEA21 which utilizes the revenues from boat fuel excise taxes. For Pennsylvania, this translates to about \$6.6 million per year to fund boating safety and fishing education programs as well as wetland restoration projects and other conservation, safety, and education related projects.

So the reauthorization of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century is vitally important to trails advocates nationwide, and especially in Pennsylvania. The progress of the bill is uncertain at this writing because the Administration and Congress cannot agree on a total spending limit for the projected six-year authorization.

Trail advocates and park and recreation supporters should follow the progress of the reauthorization carefully. Powerful highway construction interests, as well as the Federal Highway Administration, would like to make significant changes to the Act, particularly to the bedrock protections known as Section 4(f) which protect parks, historic sites, and wildlife areas from damage during highway construction. It is entirely likely that trails would be some of the most threatened park resources if the Administration's changes to Section 4(f) were to be adopted.

To see more information on Section 4(f) issues, including a sign-on letter from a national coalition of groups including Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society, visit the NRPA webpage www.nrpa.org or contact Rich Dolesh at NRPA in the Public Policy Office in Washington, DC at rdolesh@nrpa.org or call at 202-887-0290

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

York County's Heritage Rail Trail and Beyond

To travel along the Heritage Rail Trail is to step back in time to the mid-1800s and the heyday of the Northern Central Railway. Rails that once carried mile after mile of freight cars loaded with coal and timber from northern Pennsylvania and New York to the port city of Baltimore, MD are visited today by hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians from across Pennsylvania and beyond.

Rail service was discontinued in 1972 following the devastation caused by Hurricane Agnes, and PennDOT assumed ownership of the line following the declared bankruptcy of the Penn Central. In response to a growing vision to convert the line into a rails-to-trails pathway, York County entered into an agreement with PennDOT and formed the York County Rail Trail Authority in 1990.

The Authority completed the development of the trail in 1999 and transferred its management to the York County Parks Department. Today the vision continues as the Authority explores two possible expansions of the Heritage Rail Trail: a trolley corridor that once connected York to Hanover and a northern route along the Codorus Creek to connect to John Rudy County Park.

Visitors to the Heritage Rail Trail enjoy the following features:

- 21-miles of trail with a crushed stone surface and moderate grades
- a link to the Maryland NCR Trail that provides an additional 21-miles of trail
- non-motorized, multi-use along a 10-foot wide path paralleling the rails
- trail-side museums in restored train stations located in New Freedom and Hanover Junction
- 350-foot long, stone-arch Howard Tunnel
- Eight trailheads featuring parking and information boards
- Benches, picnic tables, mile-markers, and restrooms

Information on the Heritage Rail Trail is available by contacting the York County Department of Parks and Recreation at (717) 840-7440 or parcs@york-county.org.



The York County Rail Trail Authority meets the 3rd Monday of each month at various York County locations. Public input is always welcome. Contact the Rail Trail Authority at (717) 428-0999 or info@yorkcountyrails.org.