
8. Recommendations and Implementation Plan

a. Recommendations

(1) Complete an agreement to have the Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) assume ownership, manage and maintain the proposed trail. The RTC has the experience to do this in an effective manner, as it currently owns and manages the Youghiogheny River Trail and the Five Star Trail. The RTC is an established 501 (c) (3) organization and can accept charitable donations.

(2) Create an identity for the proposed trail by establishing a name and logo so that the trail will become easily recognized throughout the region. This can be done through the trail committee or by utilizing the local school districts through a trail name and logo contest.

The creation of an identity will allow the trail to be marketed and recognized by a wider variety of people and potential funding sources. It is important to name the proposed trail early so that the project can gain momentum and support as it moves forward.

(3) Organize a publicity campaign to promote the trail, educate the public, and help to recruit volunteers. Develop a brochure and utilize the local media through press releases to publicize the proposed trail. Schedule a community walk on the section of the trail that is under RTC ownership as a way to gain support and additional press coverage.

(4) Develop this trail for non-motorized uses (walking, hiking, biking, etc.) and allow horses only where there is enough room within the right-of-way and where there will not be a conflict with the primary users. The tread width for horses should be between two and six feet (depending on one-way or two-way traffic) and the clearing widths (eight to twelve feet) and clearing height (twelve feet) should be accounted for in the design of the trail. A natural surface should be used to avoid injury to the horses' hooves. Any parking areas for the sections of the proposed trail that accommodate horseback riding should include enough space for trailers, hitching posts and corrals.

(5) Pursue funding for the portion of the trail from Saltsburg to Old William Penn Highway near Export (the abandoned portion of the trail).

(6) Enter into discussions / negotiations with the property owners of the parcels needed to make the trail a continuous right-of-way between Saltsburg and Export.

(7) Formalize an agreement with the Municipal Authority of Westmoreland County to develop the portion of the abandoned right-of-way across the Beaver Run Reservoir.

(8) Continue to discuss the donation of property (with adjacent property owners such as Houston Starr Corporation and Gregory Shaffer) along the section of trail from Saunders Station Road to Trafford Borough. The potential exists to construct a trail that is not impacted by the active Turtle Creek Industrial Railroad.

(9) Ensure that the trail on the westernmost terminus extends through Trafford Borough and ends on borough property in South Trafford as supported by Trafford Borough Council, Trafford Economic and Community Development Corporation, and the Trafford Recreation Board. The Trafford Economic and Community Development Corporation completed a survey that indicated a strong desire by the residents to see the trail connect the municipality to the county trail system. This will provide the residents in that area with a safe place to walk, jog and bicycle.

(10) Contact the Franklin Township Municipal Sanitary Authority (Jim Brucker, Manager, 724-327-1950) regarding the opportunity for shared use of the abandoned railroad right-of-way. Killam Associates (Steve Polen, Project Manager, 412-497-2950) has indicated their willingness to coordinate efforts with the developers of the trail to ensure that the proposed sewer lines can be constructed within the railroad right of way and the trail can be constructed above this sewer line. This would help to eliminate the present sewage situation in the Slickville area (sewage seeping onto the right of way).

(11) At this time, both the Penn DOT and Mackin engineers' opinion is that an at-grade crossing at SR 0066 is not feasible due to the high volume and speed of the traffic on this roadway. The trail owner should work with Penn DOT District 12-0 to establish the best alternative to cross over, or travel under, SR 0066 near Delmont. A detailed study of this crossing and alternative crossing points along SR 0066 will need to be completed.

(12) Establish trailheads once the necessary agreements have been reached at the following locations: Saltsburg, the Salem Township Volunteer Fire Department # 1 in Slickville, the industrial park on SR 0066 near Delmont, the community of Export, the present parking facility at Saunders Station Road, and Trafford Borough.

(13) The trail owner should pursue the first phase of construction for the trail between Saltsburg and the Salem Township Volunteer Fire Department #1 in Slickville. Construction of the remaining trail segments should be pursued as outlined in Chapter 6 – Conceptual Design and Cost Estimates.

(14) Continue discussions with the Municipality of Monroeville to determine if connections can be made to their proposed trail system from this corridor.

(15) If, in the future, the active railroad (owned by Turtle Creek Industrial Railroad) were to be abandoned or put for sale, Westmoreland County should investigate the option of either purchasing the rail line (through the Westmoreland County IDC) or rail banking the line. A more detailed study would need to be completed to identify the potential for using the corridor as a rail with trail or as a hiking / biking trail.

(16) If the present use of the rail line changes in the future to a tourism rail line in the Turtle Creek Valley, Westmoreland County should work with the rail owner to incorporate the possibility of creating a trail along the rail line. This would be similar to the rail (tourism train) with trail facility in Frostburg, Maryland.

(17) The trail should be constructed in the communities who show an interest and are willing to work to support this project. This can be accomplished through providing funding, political support, volunteers, etc.

(18) Upon the adoption of this Feasibility Study, all of the implementation strategies should originate from the combined efforts of the Westmoreland County Parks and Recreation Department and the Regional Trail Corporation.

b. Funding Sources

There are numerous funding opportunities and sources available for the development of trails. These sources, both public and private, can be easily tapped into and have been used to create many of the nation's rail trails (Ryan & Winterich, 1993) The following is a list of potential funding sources for both the engineering and construction costs of the trail. Names and contact information are included for each source.

❖ **DCNR – Community Conservation Partnerships Grant Program**

Community Grant Program – awarded for local recreation, park and conservation projects. These include the rehabilitation of and the development of parks and recreation facilities; acquisition of land for park and conservation purposes; and technical assistance for feasibility studies, trails studies, and site development planning. Grants require a 50% match except for some technical assistance grants and projects eligible as small community projects. Applicants may submit one application per project type per funding period.

Rails-to-Trails Grant Program – provide up to 50% funding for the planning, acquisition or development of rail-trail corridors. Applicants may submit one application per project type per funding period.

Municipalities, municipal agencies, appropriate / authorized organizations and pre-qualified land trust organizations interested in applying for a grant may obtain a copy of the new grant application manual and forms by: (1) completing an order form and returning it to the Bureau; (2) by going to www.DCNR.State.PA.US/Grants on the web; or, (3) by emailing the Bureau at rec&con@state.pa.us.

Applications usually have an October deadline for completion.

Contact Information: DCNR Southwest Field Office
Kathy Frankel and Tracy Robinson
1405 State Office Building
300 Liberty Avenue
Pittsburgh, Pa 15222
Email: kfrankel@state.pa.us or trrobinson@state.pa.us
Phone: (412) 880-0486
Fax: (412) 565-2635

❖ **DCNR – Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program**

Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program (PRTP) - provides funds to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail use. Federal funding for

the program is through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21).

In Pennsylvania, the RTP is administered by the DCNR, Bureau of Recreation & Conservation (BRC) in consultation with the Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Advisory Board (PARTAB), which is composed of both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail users.

The Department has approximately \$1 million available for grants. This funding is distributed as follows: 40% minimum for diverse trail use; 30% minimum for motorized recreation; and 30% minimum for non-motorized recreation. Match requirements for Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program Grants are 80% grant money, up to a maximum of \$100,000, and 20% project applicant money. "Soft match" (credit for donations of funds, materials, services, or new right-of-way) is permitted from any project sponsor, whether a private organization or public agency.

Eligible applicants include federal and state agencies, local governments and private organizations.

Eligible project categories are: maintenance and restoration of existing recreational trails; development and rehabilitation of trailside and trailhead facilities and trail linkages; purchase and lease of recreational trail construction and maintenance equipment; construction of new recreational trails (with restrictions on new trails on Federal land); and the acquisition of easements or property for recreational trails or recreational trail corridors.

The Commonwealth may also use up to 5 percent of its funds for the operation of educational programs to promote safety and environmental protection related to the use of recreational trails. The Department will also give consideration to projects that provide for the redesign, reconstruction, non-routine maintenance, or relocation of recreational trails to benefit the natural environment. Project sponsors are encouraged to enter into contracts and cooperative agreements with qualified youth conservation or service corps to perform trail construction and maintenance.

❖ **DCNR – Pennsylvania Recreational Trails Program**

Grants available from Snowmobile / ATV fund allows DCNR to award grants to municipalities and profit and nonprofit organizations for trail development on county, municipal, non-profit and private lands. Previously, the law restricted the funds to be used solely on state-controlled lands.

These grants can be used to help to buy land; develop plans and surveys; construct and maintain ATV and snowmobile trails; buy equipment; and conduct training relating to ATV and snowmobile use. Grants can fund up to 80 percent of a project.

❖ **Transportation Equity Act for the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21)**

There are 12 funding programs for trails, bicycle and pedestrian facilities under TEA-21 including Transportation Enhancement Activities (TEAs) and the Recreational Trails Program (Rec. Trails).

The Enhancements program is not a grant program. It is a reimbursement program where the project sponsor provides a minimum of 20 percent of the project's total cost and the remaining 80 percent is paid out of Federal Highway Trust Funds.

Contact Information: Pennsylvania Enhancements Program
PENNDOT Central Office
Keystone Building
400 North Street
Harrisburg, PA 17120
General Information: 717-787-2838
FAX: 717-787-1738

Penn DOT District 12-5
P.O. Box 189
Greensburg, PA 15601
General Information: 724-832-5387
FAX: 724-830-2083

❖ **Kodak American Greenways Awards Program**

Grants may be used for all appropriate expenses needed to complete a greenway project including planning, technical assistance, legal and other costs. Grants may not be used for academic research, general institutional support, lobbying, or political activities.

Eligible applicants include local, regional, or statewide nonprofit organizations. Although public agencies may also apply, community organizations will receive preference.

The maximum grant is \$2,500. However, most grants range from \$500 to \$1,000. Applications may be submitted from March 1 to June 1 of each calendar year. The final deadline for submitting applications and other required materials is June 1. The announcement of awards will be made in early fall.

Contact Information: American Greenways Program
Leigh Anne McDonald, American Greenways Coordinator
The Conservation Fund
1800 North Kent Street, Ste. 1120
Arlington, VA 222009
Phone: (703) 525-6300
Email: lmcdonald@conservationfund.org

❖ **The Land and Water Conservation Fund**

Created by Congress in 1964, the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) provides money to federal, state and local governments to purchase land, water and wetlands for the benefit of all Americans by providing recreational opportunities, among others.

Contact Information: Forest Service Contacts
All States National Program
Brent Handley
Washington Office
Washington, DC
Phone: (202) 205-1248
Email: bhandley/wo@fs.fed.us

Eastern Region, R-9
Cindy Swanson
Milwaukee, MN
Phone: (414) 297-3087
Email: cswanson/r9@fs.fed.us

❖ **Bikes Belong Grants**

Bikes Belong Coalition will consider grants from local organizations, agencies, and communities in developing bicycle facilities projects. Bikes Belong Coalition will accept applications for grants of up to \$10,000 each, and will consider successor grants for continuing projects, subject to our policy guidelines. Funding decisions will be made on a rolling basis.

Contact Information: Bikes Belong
Tim Baldwin, Grants Program Administrator
Phone: 617-734-2111
Email: tim@bikesbelong.org

❖ **Direct Impact on Rivers and Trails Program (D.I.R.T.)**

PowerBar created the D.I.R.T. Program to help grassroots groups across the country make a difference at the local level. Projects should endeavor to increase or maintain access to the outdoors or the size of an outdoor recreational resource, have a regional or local focus,

identify a specific land area or waterway that it will benefit, have real potential for success or significant measurable progress over a short term, and be quantifiable (i.e. have specific goals, objectives, and action plans) and include a measure for evaluating success.

Applications should include a one-page executive summary of your project. A copy of your organization's Internal Revenue Service determination letter (or equivalent), the Project budget, and A letter that outlines the threat to your area, your campaign strategy, proposed action steps and a brief description of your organization.

PowerBar D.I.R.T. Program grants range from \$1,000 - \$5,000 and are only available for United States based projects.

Contact Information: PowerBar
PowerBar
Attn.: D.I.R.T. Program
2150 Shattuck Avenue
Berkeley, CA 94704

❖ **Other sources of funding include:**

- ISTEA Funds (Now TEA-21, last year for it, new program next year)
- The National Recreational Trails Fund
- Land and Water Conservation Funds
- Scenic Byways Program Funds
- The Wallop-Breaux Fund
- The Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG)
- Trust for Public Land Mill Work to purchase open space for recreation
- Lease a portion of the corridor for utility use
- Local foundations
- Private donations