

Council on Greenways & Trails

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Moving Forward...

Included in both the challenges and opportunities categories, the Coordinator is being asked to be involved in many projects and planning efforts beyond the original concept of this position. The Coordinator is either a stakeholder interviewee or committee member to many projects such as Comprehensive Plan updates, a Main Street program, Complete Streets/Smart Transportation projects, park planning efforts, etc.

Opportunities are that greenways and related concepts are being incorporated into local and regional efforts. Local and regional municipalities and organizations are recognizing the assets they have in trails, waterways and natural resources and using them as one piece of the puzzle to bring growth back to this area. This annual report is a sampling of things accomplished so far.

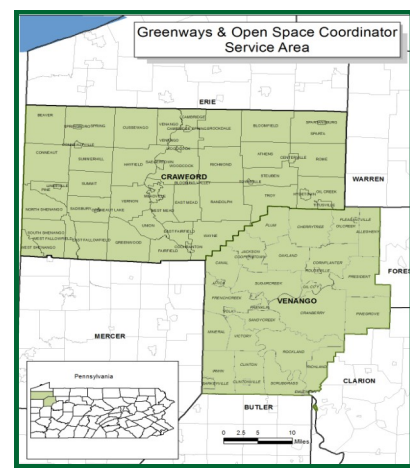
2011-2012

- ◆ Construction of McClintock Trail phase II
- ◆ Construction of Queen City Trail extension (pending funding)
- ◆ Re-opening of Oil City bike/ped walkway over Oil Creek
- ◆ Improved and repaved connector between trailhead and downtown Franklin
- ◆ Construction of scenic overlook and educational signage at Mill Creek
- ◆ Construction of canoe/kayak access area at Dotter
- ◆ Engineering of ART extension through Emlenton Borough
- ◆ Complete Streets planning and implementation in Oil City, Franklin and Titusville
- ◆ Trail Town and Creek Town planning and implementation

Regional Assets (cont.)

Unexpected Partnerships

- ◆ Some trail segments are now being promoted by Walk Works, a new initiative by the PA Dept. of Health and the University of Pittsburgh that encourages people to get out and walk. The promoters of the health initiative also hope to influence local policy to use Complete Streets concepts. The Coordinator provided technical assistance, mapping services and introductions to local officials and Planning Commissions.
- ◆ A meeting was held to discuss opportunities between the Western PA Conservancy, the North Country Trail Association and local non-profits.
- ◆ A Tri-State Trails meeting was held in March to discuss connecting the trail systems across state lines in 18 counties in Pennsylvania, Ohio and West Virginia.



Allegheny Valley Conservancy
Allegheny Valley Trails Association
City of Franklin
City of Oil City
City of Titusville
Clear Lake Authority
Cornplanter Township
Cranberry Township
Crawford County
Emlenton Borough
Foxburg Borough
Franklin Industrial & Commercial Development Authority
Friends of Oil Creek State Park
Oil Creek State Park
Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism
Venango County

Each partner contributes funding for operation and administration of the office and staffing with the Coordinator.

This project is sponsored in part by funding from the PA Dept of Conservation & Natural Resources, Bureau of Recreation & Conservation through their Circuit Rider program.



What we are doing	
◆ Trail development & operation	◆ Encouraging Economic & Community Development
◆ Land and water conservation & restoration	◆ Connecting Communities, parks and open space
◆ Recreation & Smart Transportation	◆ Connecting people to places
◆ Maintenance & Enhancement	◆ Encouraging healthy outdoor recreation

August 2011

Council on Greenways & Trails

Recognizing the worth of natural, heritage and recreational resources...
planning now, enjoying forever.

2010-2011 Annual Report

Individual member projects...adding to the regional picture

Many Council on Greenways & Trails members have been studying their assets and what can be done with them. At the same time, they are learning and gathering tools to maintain what they have already built. Members are getting projects "ready to go"...

- ◆ The Allegheny Valley Conservancy's Mill Creek Restoration and Enhancement project now has a stabilized streambank and over 300 trees and shrubs planted in the riparian corridor. A contractor has been hired and the new scenic overlook is scheduled for construction in August/September 2011. The engineering for a canoe/kayak access for the Dotter area, is also nearing completion.
- ◆ The Allegheny Valley Trails Association has completed an inventory and construction history of their trail system. Spreadsheets contain costs, dates of acquisition and/or construction, funding sources and replacement costs. This inventory will be developed into a template for the other organizations.
- ◆ The Clear Lake Authority is putting some finishing touches on the new East Branch Trail and starting conversations toward connecting to nearby towns.
- ◆ Cornplanter Township Supervisors are seeking funding to repair Russell's Corners Road which is a share-the-road segment of the Oil Creek State Park Bike Trail. This section can be a demonstration site for share-the-road signage and practices.
- ◆ Cranberry Township has leased the Saltbox to AVTA to continue running as a visitor's center. The Township and AVTA repaved (topped) half of the Samuel Justus Trail. They plan to continue to the trailhead at Franklin later this year.
- ◆ The Friends of Oil Creek State Park is a very active group with cross country skiing in the winter, trail work in the summer and several events including the Oil Creek



Comments on Facebook...

"Family from Pensacola Florida were here recently and loved the bike trails."

"These wonderful trails were a major incentive for my husband & I to retire in this area."

"So many incredibly beautiful miles to explore and enjoy...we are blessed!"



100 Trail Run which draws runners from throughout the country.

- ◆ Oil City completed a Comprehensive Waterways Study that will assist the city in taking advantage of the assets of the Allegheny River and Oil Creek. Concepts include river access, fishing access and trail connectors.
- ◆ The McClintock Trail will be this area's first rail-with-trail (the trail alongside the active rail line). The Oil Region Alliance has negotiated the lease agreement with the railroad, completed engineering and construction is expected in the fall of 2012.
- ◆ The Queen City Trail Extension in Titusville has been designed through town and five more miles through Oil Creek Township to near Hydetown Borough. Right-of-way agreements are being negotiated. Construction funding is needed.
- ◆ Venango County also has an active County Park at Two Mile Run. Park personnel and volunteers have been very active at improving the trail system and lake access and are now holding mountain bike races that are on a national racing circuit attracting people from several states.



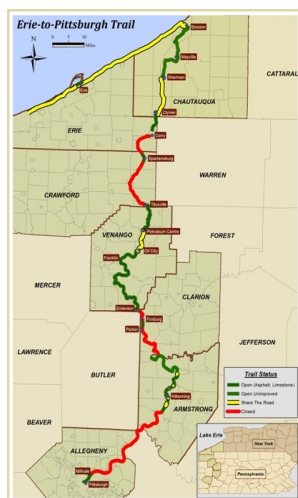
Regional Assets are drawing attention

Trails-based tourism is one of the fastest growth sectors within the tourism industry, from hard adventure hiking to birding to resort getaways. A recent tour exposed **Atlantic Canadian** trails-based tourism operators and stakeholders to destinations that have recognized the value of trails and collectively have developed their region as a trails destination. It demonstrated how to develop trail towns that encourage the trail user to get off the trail to enjoy the scenery, services, and heritage of the community. They chose our area as one of their stops in April 2011.



Some of their learning objectives included:

- ◆ Gain insight into what trail users expect in regards to standards, price and length; learn about the profile of trail users and what services and experiences these users are most interested in.
- ◆ How creating a high quality, all season trail system contributes to the area's development as a world-class tourist destination.
- ◆ How to work with neighboring communities to promote the entire trail corridor as a tourist destination.



The Council provided speakers to the **Western PA Trails Symposium** which brought together the leaders in land and water trail development from Western PA. The symposium stemmed from the desire to capitalize on our increasingly connected trail system. Trail maintenance and connecting trails via organizations such as the Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail Alliance were subjects contributed.

The **Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail** is continuing to grow and connect individual segments and those segments to nearby towns. The Alliance has begun the process of developing a unifying logo that will be used on signage along the trail and in marketing media.

Asset-based development (ABD) focuses on developing homegrown, custom-fit solutions from within the region by identifying what is working well and what brings value and identity to a place. The trail system and the river and streams in our area are tremendous assets.

- ◆ A recent graduate student of the University of Virginia and native born Tim Padalino, is using the Oil Heritage Region as a case study for this method and has done an asset inventory and development strategy. Funding for some projects is a possibility.
- ◆ Oil City is beginning a Main Street program that began by drawing attention to the trail and waterways through town and how businesses can attract related clientele.
- ◆ Franklin is striving to improve its Bicycle Friendly status with concepts of a Trail Town and Creek Town capitalizing on the land-based trail system and existing and proposed water trails.



◆ Titusville is seeking funding for the Trail Town

program, has completed design for the trail extension through town and did a Walkability Assessment with PennDOT and the Council on Greenways & Trails.

- ◆ Emlenton is awaiting the release of funding to begin design of the Allegheny River Trail extension through town connecting to local businesses and other amenities.
- ◆ Crawford County is creating a strategic plan to enhance and promote Colonel Crawford Park, the county park.
- ◆ Both Venango and Crawford Counties are updating their comprehensive plans to include recreation, alternative transportation and Complete Streets concepts.
- ◆ Foxburg is looking to their riverfront for more development opportunities.

Several other initiatives are starting in the area that will have a brand and tell the world what we have here in both natural and recreational resources. We can shape what that will be.

If you could put a brand or logo on our area and regional efforts, what would it be?

Grants, Awards & Other Announcements

AVTA was given a 2011 Western PA Environmental Award. Presented by PEC and Dominion, the award highlights the environmental innovators of Western Pennsylvania.

"Oil Heritage Region Rails to Trails Guide" and "Allegheny River Rails to Trails Guide" by C.J. Grant are new trail guide books published by the author, available locally and online.

Grants awarded:

√ Crawford County received Greenways Implementation funding for municipal education and outreach concerning water quality regulations.

√ Emlenton Borough assisted by the Oil Region Alliance and funding through the NPS and CDBG will complete an engineering study to route the Allegheny River Trail through town.

√ Franklin and Sugarcreek Borough began a Complete Streets Study of State Rt. 8 connecting the two municipalities. A PCTI grant was received by Venango County for the project. Recommendations will include those for biking, walking and public transportation, safety and connectivity.

√ Venango County received both PA Fish & Boat Commission and DCNR funding for an ADA accessible boat dock and fishing pier at Two Mile Run County Park.

√ Venango County received Greenways Implementation funding for rain garden demonstration areas and wildlife habitat improvement in Two Mile Run County Park.

Grant proposals pending:

Cornplanter Twp. for repairs to Russell's Corners Road, a share-the-road section of the Oil Creek State Park Trail, and the streambank - DCED.

Oil Region Alliance for a trail and creek access known as Oil Creek Memorial Landing in Oil City - DCNR C2P2 and Kodak American Greenways.

Clear Lake Authority for trail maintenance equipment - Crawford Heritage Community Foundation.

Annual Budget	Year 3 Actual 7/2010 - 6/2011	Proposed Year 4 7/2011 - 6/2012
Revenue		
DCNR Circuit Rider Grant	19,583.00	9,834.75
Non-Profits (AVTA-2,000) (AVC-500) (FOCSP-500) (Clear Lake Auth. - \$500) (ORA - \$5000)	8,750.00	8,500.00
Counties (Venango-3,000) (Crawford-2,000)	5,000.00	5,000.00
Cities (Oil City, Franklin, Titusville - 2,000 each)	6,000.00	6,000.00
Boros (Emlenton-1,000 + 250/yr) (Foxburg- 100)	2,000.00	1,850.00
Townships (Cranberry, Cornplanter - 2,000 each)	4,000.00	4,000.00
In-Kind (FICDA office space & resources)	12,000.00	12,000.00
Other		
Technical Assistance & other grant sources	999.46	
Total Revenue	\$55,935.46	\$47,184.75
Expenses		
Coordinator	38,149.65	39,339.00
Payroll Costs	6,273.59	6,452.00
Travel-Local	1,623.53	2,000.00
Travel-State	0.00	0.00
Training-Local	0.00	2,000.00
Training-State	508.26	0.00
Mentoring State	0.00	0.00
Office Space	12,000.00	12,000.00
Postage	120.82	1,000.00
Office Supplies	1,301.88	1,500.00
Telephone & Communications	504.86	800.00
Start-up Costs	0.00	0.00
Memberships, Dues, Licenses	436.00	500.00
Professional Services	0.00	0.00
Contingency	159.46	500.00
Total Expenses	\$61,078.05	\$66,091.00

Previous years' carry over as of July 13, 2011 = \$11,718.36

DCNR is providing funding for the salary of the Coordinator in descending amounts over a four-year period. The member organizations of the Council are contributing funding and support for benefits and operating costs. The Franklin Industrial and Commercial Development Authority has donated office space and resources for the Coordinator.

The Council has just started the fourth year. By the **fifth year the position must have dedicated funding sources**. In order to continue to build on the successful projects done so far, new or increased funding must be contributed. Each member share is a small amount, together creating a regional success story.