

2008 STATE TRAIL WORKER AWARD WINNERS

For successful efforts to influence public policy relating to trail planning, trail protection, trail development, or maintenance (one award per State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico):



Jim Holden of Pennsylvania

PENNSYLVANIA: Jim Holden

Jim Holden is the President of the Allegheny Valley Trails Association, an all volunteer, non-profit organization, whose mission is: "the acquisition of abandoned railways in the Allegheny River watershed and their rehabilitation into multipurpose, non-motorized recreational trails." Jim has been involved in the AVTA as a volunteer since its founding in 1990. In that time, he has administered about \$7 Million of grants for trail acquisition and construction, which has resulted in acquisition of 55 miles and construction of 46 miles of the Allegheny River Trail and the adjacent Sandy Creek Trail.

Jim personally helps to maintain the trails and keep the corridors mowed. Using creativity, vision, and comradery, Jim has what it takes to plan, acquire, build, maintain and promote trails and partnerships in his region. Jim is also the President of the newly-formed Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance, which is working to advocate and promote the completion of a mega-greenway system of over 200 miles of linking trails. Over the years, Jim has successfully engaged a multitude of partners, including the NPS Rivers & Trails Program, who assisted with the development of a Trail Feasibility Study in the 1980's, Trail Town public workshops in 2006, and creation of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance in 2007. Jim truly has a big vision, and is making the vision a reality, mile by mile.

2008 STATE TRAIL ADVOCACY AWARD WINNERS

For successful efforts to influence public policy relating to trail planning, trail protection, trail development, or maintenance (one award per State, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico):



Ron Steffey of Pennsylvania

PENNSYLVANIA: Ron Steffey

Ron Steffey is Executive Director of the Allegheny Valley Land Trust, whose mission is to "protect and convert railroad corridors into trails for public use, thereby providing opportunities for commuters and outdoor recreational activities. Our projects will maintain the integrity of these corridors for future transportation use while acting as an economic stimulus for the area communities."

A few years ago, Ron was using the Armstrong Trail a lot, while he was on Workers Compensation and trying to heal his foot injury from working in the coal mines. After a number of complaints to a trail volunteer about how the trail was being built, Ron was invited to get involved and fix it. He started out as an Americorps position with the Allegheny Valley Land Trust, and is now their full-time Executive Director. Ron has been working tirelessly to build public awareness and support for the Armstrong Trail and to initiate other nearby rail-trail projects. Ron has also

been a leader in advocating for the formation of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, of which the Armstrong Trail would be one segment.