

***THE  
ALLEGHENY  
HIGHLANDS  
TRAIL STUDY***

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**This report was cooperatively prepared by the Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force and the National Park Service. The findings and recommendations in this report do not reflect the official positions of the National Park Service or the Department of the Interior.**

# **The Allegheny Highlands Trail**

## **Feasibility Study**



**Prepared by:**

**The Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force**

**and**

**The National Park Service**

**Trails Conservation Assistance Program**

**Mid-Atlantic Region**

**Environment and Recreation Assistance Division**

**Robert F. Gift,**

**Division Chief**

**Paul R. Labovitz,**

**Outdoor Recreation Planner**

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## **Executive Summary**

This report is the product of a feasibility study conducted by the Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force. The purpose of this study is to determine the feasibility of the development of a multi-use recreation trail between Confluence, Pennsylvania and Cumberland, Maryland, and if feasible, provide an action plan to provide the initial guidance needed to develop the trail.

In August 1988, the Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force was formed to examine the feasibility of the trail. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was developed and signed to formalize the agreement between the project cooperators. The National Park Service was asked to provide technical assistance through the Trails Conservation Assistance Program. State and local governments and organizations from Pennsylvania and Maryland along with the National Park Service have organized to explore the possibilities of this project. This report was prepared by the National Park Service's Trails Conservation Assistance Program at the request of the Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force.

### **The Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force**

- \*Rails-To-Trails Conservancy
- \*Somerset Conservation District
- \*Somerset County Chamber of Commerce
- \*Casselman River Watershed Association
- \*Somerset County Planning Commission
- \*Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, Bureau of State Parks
- \*Western Pennsylvania Conservancy
- Tri-County Council for Western Maryland
- Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Land Planning Division
- Appalachian Bicycle Club
- Trail Riders of Today
- Potomac Ridge Development Corporation
- City of Cumberland
- City of Frostburg
- Maryland Department of State Planning
- \*National Park Service

### **\*MOU Participants**

The study consisted of three phases. The initial stage was the organization of the task force and the preliminary collection of data. The second phase was to develop a public involvement process to provide opportunities for all interested in the study to identify the

issues related to the proposed trail. The third phase is the assembly of all information into the final study document. This report contains the findings and recommendations of the study task force.

Following several task force meetings and a series of public involvement workshops, (October 12, 1989 - Salisbury, PA; November 16, 1989 - Cumberland, MD; December 14, 1989 - Somerset, PA), designed to identify and address the issues associated with the proposed trail concept, the Allegheny Highlands Trail Study Task Force recommends that the concept of developing a multi-use recreation trail along the unused Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way between Confluence, Pennsylvania and Cumberland, Maryland, approximately fifty-seven miles, is feasible. Potential benefits associated with the development of the Allegheny Highlands Trail outweigh the associated costs. The conversion of this right-of-way into a linear park will benefit the communities along the trail, the county, and the region.

By increasing recreation opportunities and stimulating economic growth, the proposed trail would preserve important historic and natural resources and improve the quality of life in the communities surrounding the trail. Several trails in other states have become welcome additions to the communities through which they travel. The Elroy - Sparta State Trail in Wisconsin, The Burke - Gilman Trail in Washington, The Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Railroad Park in Virginia, and The Youghiogheny River Trail in Pennsylvania are just a few of the over 200 rail-trails used by over 27 million people in America last year.

Connecting to the C & O Canal National Historic Park in Cumberland, Maryland, the Allegheny Highlands Trail would offer hiking, bicycling, cross-county skiing, horse back riding, and other, non-motorized activities from the Laurel Highlands to the nation's capital. Linkage with the C & O Canal would also provide access to the Appalachian Trail. The Allegheny Highlands Trail would become an important link in a nationwide network of recreation trails. Families, handicapped, and elderly users would be able to enjoy a walk or ride through some of the most beautiful scenery in the east.

Pennsylvania's Recreation Plan 1986 - 1990 (SCORP) outlines the regional recreation needs for Region 7 containing Somerset County. The plan states, "This region indicated that playgrounds, hiking trails, picnic areas, historical areas, and community centers represent the greatest need for rehabilitation." Respondents from this region indicated that "bicycle paths, community centers, and hiking trails represented recreational resources which should be acquired and/or developed first."

The Maryland Land Preservation and Recreation Plan states under Policy H, Develop and Maintain Recreation Facilities To Satisfy Growing Demands; "Additional recreation facilities must be made available to meet the needs of a diverse and rapidly expanding population." Policy H specifically refers to trails by stating "Enlarge trail systems and interconnecting greenways across the State."

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources could assume legal ownership of the railroad property. The property might be acquired through the receipt of an outright gift from the CSX Corporation or through direct purchase by a public land trust such as the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy or the Trust For Public Lands and then donated to or purchased by the two State agencies. Access to segments already in private ownership would be negotiated through easements, leases, or purchase. State ownership of the trail right-of-way would minimize liability concerns.

Operation and maintenance of the trail should be a public - private cooperative effort. State agencies could assume legal ownership and a private organization could operate and manage the trail. A two-state trail advisory council composed of all interested parties should be organized to assist in the development of trail management guidelines and policy. A strong and well-organized volunteer trail support group should be organized to assist in trail maintenance and operation. Assistance can be requested from organized, potential trail user groups such as the Boy Scouts of America and the Girl Scouts. A trail manager and small support staff would oversee the trail and the volunteer staff and provide the technical expertise to effectively preserve and manage this valuable resource.

The organization of a trail advisory council will be important to the future success of the Allegheny Highlands Trail. All groups and individuals affected by the trail should be represented on this council. Landowners, sportsmen, trail users, resource management agencies, township officials, borough council representatives, environmental groups, chambers of commerce, tourism bureaus, State and County planning boards, County Commissioners, recreation planners, and business owners are just some of the groups that should be represented.

The initial cost of developing the Allegheny Highlands Trail is estimated at approximately \$ 2,600,000. Land acquisition costs are not included in this estimate. The development of the trail is divided into three phases. Cost associated with these phases are \$765,000 for Phase One (Confluence - Rockwood, PA), \$463,000 for Phase Two (PA/MD State Line to Cumberland, MD), and \$1,372,000 for Phase



Three (Rockwood, PA - PA/MD State Line). Actual costs could be considerably less depending on the amount of materials and labor obtained through donations.

Funding might come from Federal sources such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund, America's Industrial Heritage Project, State sources, county funds, private foundations, and donations from organizations and individuals. An alternative funding source might be the royalty or easement income realized by allowing a utility such as a natural gas producer or a communications company to utilize the trail right-of-way subsurface. A trail support group would continuously plan fund raising activities to help finance the development and management of the trail.

Management of a trail involves a long-term commitment in both capital and human resources. Trail maintenance and operating expenses on the existing Youghiogheny River Trail are approximately \$2,000 per mile. The bridges and tunnels along the Allegheny Highlands Trail will require periodic maintenance. Taking this into account, annual maintenance expenses for the Allegheny Highlands Trail are estimated at \$4,000 per mile. Using this figure as a guide, the cost of operating the Allegheny Highlands Trail is estimated at \$228,000 annually. Operating costs would vary directly with the chosen level of development and operation.



## Introduction

In 1986, Joe Kupec, a student at The Pennsylvania State University, wrote a paper describing a hike he had taken during the summer along the Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way between Confluence, Pennsylvania, and Cumberland, Maryland. At the invitation of the Somerset County Chamber of Commerce, Kupec made a presentation in April, 1987 to a group of people in Somerset, Pennsylvania. Interest generated at that presentation led to the creation of an ad hoc committee. This trail feasibility study and concept plan are products of that group's initiative.

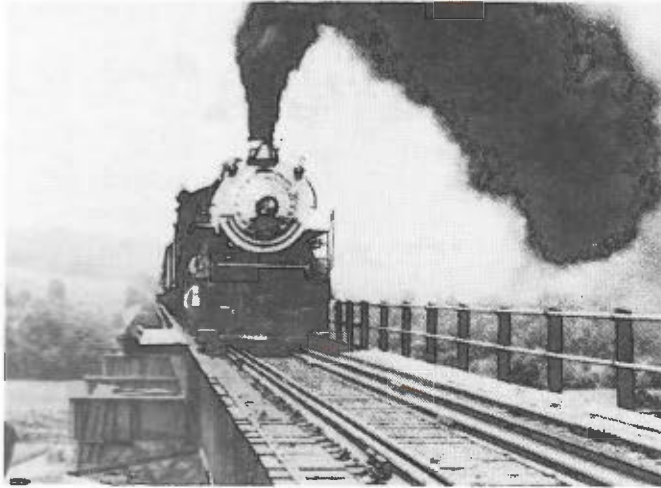
## Potential Benefits

The Allegheny Highlands Trail has the potential to become a premier trail, to attract users from all over the world, and to provide the residents of the region with tremendous outdoor recreation opportunities. Positive impact created by the trail should help improve the economic climate of the region.



The benefits of a multi-use trail connecting Confluence and Cumberland are many. The Allegheny Highlands Trail would provide a high-quality recreation experience for residents of the region and tourists who will be attracted to the area. The success of the Youghiogheny River Trail has shown the positive impact associated with a high-quality recreation trail. The Youghiogheny River Trail is already attracting well over one hundred thousand users after only three years. Certain times of the year find the Youghiogheny River Trail filled to capacity with trail enthusiasts. This proven success makes the extension to Cumberland a logical step.

Other benefits of the trail include the preservation of an important historical railroad right-of-way that played a major role in the settlement and development of the



region. The trail would link up with the C & O National Historic Park which travels from Cumberland, Maryland, to Washington, DC. Possible westward extension from Ohiopyle to Pittsburgh make this trail a link in a 300-plus-mile corridor connecting Pittsburgh with the Nation's capital. Construction began on the seventeen-mile segment between Ohiopyle and Connellsville in Spring of 1989. Linkage with the C & O Canal also provides access to the Appalachian Trail, a National Scenic Trail that travels from Maine to Georgia. The Allegheny Highlands Trail will become a part of an internationally significant trail network traversing some of the most historic and scenic areas in America.

The Allegheny Highlands Trail will provide trail users with a safe and enjoyable outdoor recreation experience. Activities such as hiking, jogging, bicycling, cross-country skiing, horse-back riding, and bird watching can be enjoyed by all persons. The level nature of the right-of-way will make the trail easily accessible to family groups, the elderly, and the physically handicapped.

The trail will also provide access to remote stretches of the Casselman River Valley for fishermen and hunters. The Casselman River Watershed Association is planning to develop several boating and fishing access areas along the Casselman River. These areas would also provide access to the proposed trail from several towns along the route.



An important benefit of the proposed trail is the potential economic impact that will be enjoyed by the adjacent properties and communities. By attracting tourists to the region, many businesses will spring up to provide goods and services to the visiting trail users.

Opportunities for the development of locations as country inns, bed and breakfasts, bait and tackle shops, bicycle rental and sales

shops, restaurants, grocery stores, and other uses are enhanced. The ripple-effect created by these businesses will improve the economic situation in the region and improve the quality of life.

## **Background**

### **Historic Resources**



The Somerset County, Pennsylvania, and the Allegany County, Maryland area has a rich cultural and historic past. Many stories exist describing events as far back as when Indian tribes inhabited the region. A fascinating archeological find is located in the Fort Hill area where the top of the mountain has been leveled and cleared by an unknown group of people possibly several hundred years before the arrival of Columbus.

Many Indian trails existed through the region and some of the better known trails such as Nemacolin's Trail and the Forbes Trail became travel routes for the armies of the French and Indian War. Famous names from history, including that of General George Washington, frequently appear in historical accounts.

The abundant natural resources of this region have helped to shape its history. Timber and mineral resources attracted people to the region. Railroads were constructed to bring these raw materials to the rest of the country. Construction of a vast network of railroads provided access to many remote parts of the region. Many of today's communities can trace their origin to railroad, timber cutting, and coal mining settlements.

### **Natural, Recreational, and Scenic Resources**

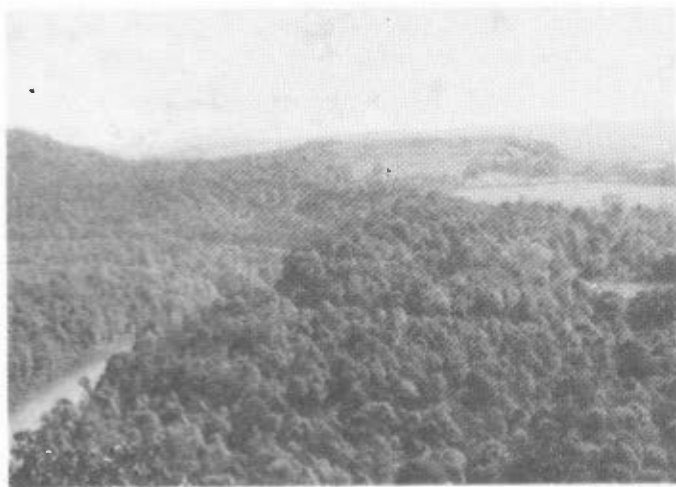
The natural beauty of the region has an international reputation. People travel





great distances to observe the many colors displayed by spectacular fall foliage. Forests of mixed hardwoods and hemlock cover a large portion of the region. Large, forested areas and well-maintained farms are scattered throughout. Mountain views and rolling farmland, rhododendron-lined streams and fast moving white water rivers are abundant. Amish and Mennonite settlements in the southern Somerset County and Garrett County area provide a glimpse into the past.

The historic Potomac River begins in the Allegheny Mountains and flows to the Chesapeake Bay. The Casselman River joins the Youghiogheny River and eventually meets the Ohio River to travel on to the Mississippi. The Eastern Continental Divide bisects the region dividing the Chesapeake and the Mississippi watersheds. Many pristine streams feed these rivers. A variety of wetlands provide abundant wildlife habitat. Rich, natural diversity exists throughout the region.



The geology of the region has been of great importance to the development of the economy. Coal, fire clay, and natural gas have been actively mined and extracted since before the Civil War. Topography, slope, and soil characteristics have also influenced development in the region.

The region is located on the eastern edge of the Allegheny Plateau and consists of gently rolling hills and stream-dissected valleys. To the east is the Ridge and Valley Province with abrupt elevation changes along sharp ridges spaced between spreading valleys. Mount Davis, with an elevation of 3213 feet, is the highest point in Pennsylvania. There are over fifty types of soils in the region making up five soil associations. Forestry and farming are two major land uses.

The natural resources of the region provide many outdoor recreation opportunities for visitors. Excellent hunting, fishing, trapping, hiking, boating, skiing, and many other activities are available on publicly and privately owned land. Many different species of wildlife are common throughout the region. White-tailed Deer, Ruffed Grouse, and the Eastern Wild Turkey are popular game animals.

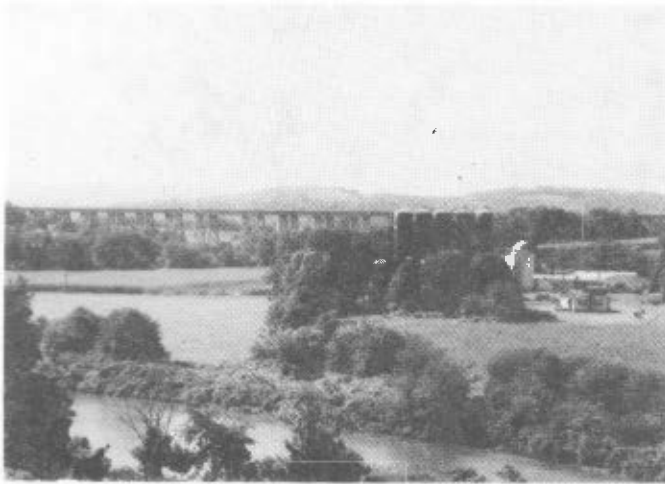


Many species of birds can be observed during the migration seasons in spring and fall. Waterfowl from the Atlantic and Mississippi flyways pass through and on their flights to both North and South. Abundant wildflowers and plants add to the natural diversity of the region. The Mount Davis area is noted for several, rare and endangered species of plants. The variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, insects, and plant species provide unique study opportunities in a natural environment.

The Savage River on the Allegany/Garrett County border was the site of Whitewater Festival '89. People from all over the world were in Western Maryland for the 1989 World Whitewater Championships, a series of wildwater and slalom kayak events held in the US for the first time. The river and facilities will be used for future Olympic training and trials adding another feature to the list of recreation opportunities in this region.

### **Economic Features**

The economic base of the region is a mix of manufacturing, mining, agricultural, and service industries. Changes over the past decade have had a negative impact on the mining and agricultural industries. Several large manufacturers have closed their plants resulting in high unemployment. The region is improving it's condition by responding to



the increase demand for recreation and tourism by increasing this segment's contribution to the economy.

Much of the raw materials that were used in building America's industrial heritage had their origin in this region. Large and small sawmills produce hardwood lumber that is eventually processed into fine furniture and panelling for use all over the world. In addition to the timber resources harvested, maple syrup production is an important segment of the local economy. Meyersdale, Pennsylvania is host to the annual Pennsylvania Maple Festival.

### **Land Use/Ownership Patterns**

Many different land use practices occur along the proposed trail route. These land use classifications include; agricultural, commercial, industrial, mineral, recreational, and residential. Ownership of the various tracts along the trail route is dominated by individual and family property owners. The dominant land use type along the trail is undeveloped forested land in private ownership. The railroad has been a part of the landscape for almost ninety years.

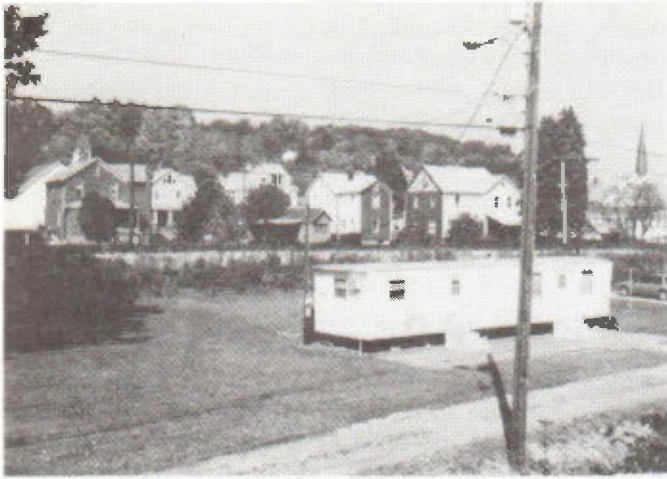
### **The Trail Corridor**



The Western Maryland Railroad was constructed around the turn of the century. The railroad carried passengers and freight, mostly coal and timber, to other parts of the region. The route was a primary route between the east and the west and was abandoned in the 1970's. Left behind were many bridges and tunnels necessary to cross a landscape dotted with rivers, streams, and mountains.

The proposed Allegheny Highlands Trail is an abandoned railroad right-of-way connecting Confluence, Pennsylvania and Cumberland, Maryland. The width of the

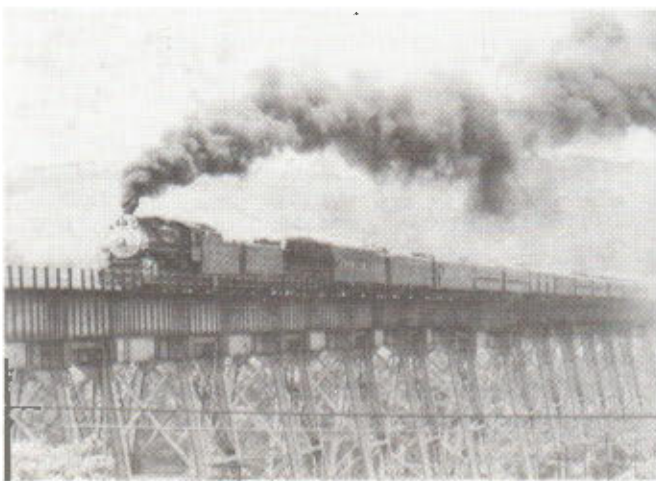




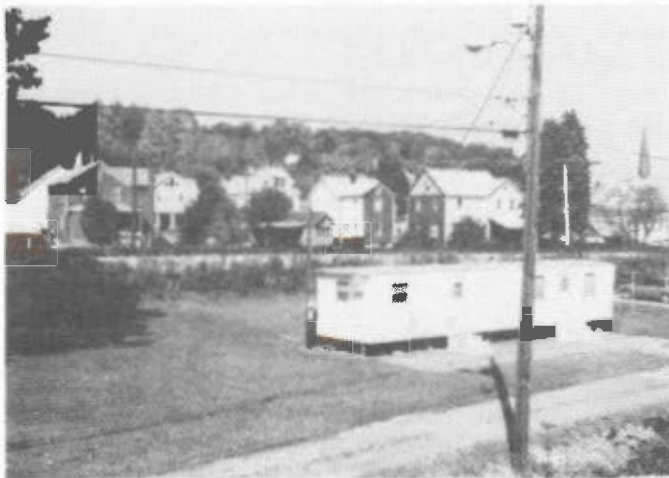
right-of-way varies from a minimum of 66 feet to over 200 feet where sidings and other support areas were once located. Almost forty miles of the proposed trail would be in Pennsylvania and about twenty miles are found in Maryland. The map in Appendix 1 shows the location of the proposed trail route in relation to Somerset and Allegany Counties.

The proposed trail travels through several towns and cities. Following the Casselman River east, the trail travels through the towns of Confluence, Harnedsville, Fort Hill, Markleton, Casselman, Rockwood, Garrett, and Meyersdale in Pennsylvania. The trail route then follows the Flaugherty Creek and on to Frostburg, Maryland. From Frostburg, the trail travels to Cumberland where the connection is made with the C & O Canal National Historic Park.

In addition to the potential trail use of this corridor, other considerations have been given to a scenic railroad development and fiber optic and natural gas transmission use. A scenic railroad excursion line is currently operating between Cumberland and Frostburg, in Maryland. The train is scheduled to run this route twice daily on weekdays and four times daily on weekends. Possible conflict may exist regarding the use of the right-of-way for scenic railroad and trail use.



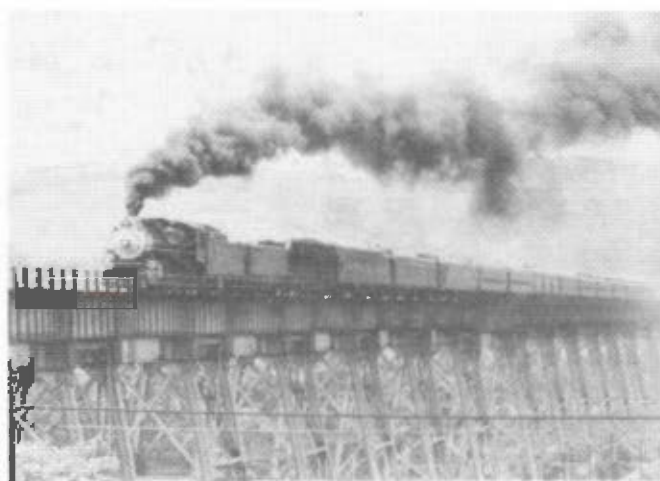
Western Maryland scenic railroad and trail interests have identified an alternate route for the proposed trail to avoid potential conflict. This suggested alternative would utilize the abandoned Cumberland and Pennsylvania Railroad right-of-way. The C & P line parallels the Western Maryland from Frostburg, down the mountain through Mt. Savage, and on to Corrigansville. From Corrigansville to the Narrows, the trail alternate route would follow Route 36. The connection to the C & O Canal at the



right-of-way varies from a minimum of 66 feet to over 200 feet where sidings and other support areas where once located. Almost forty miles of the proposed trail would be in Pennsylvania and about twenty miles are found in Maryland. The map in Appendix 1 shows the location of the proposed trail route in relation to Somerset and Allegany Counties.

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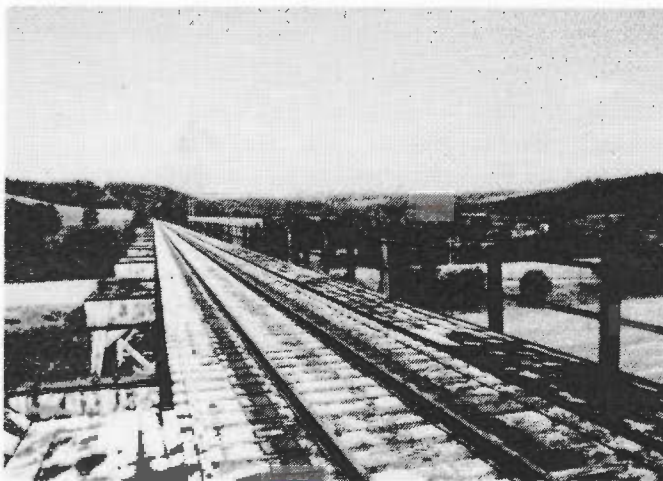
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Railroad Station by way of the Narrows poses a few design problems and requires further study.

For a more detailed description of the right-of way, Appendix 2 includes a report prepared by David Steele and Tony Martinelli of the Somerset Conservation District. Their report outlines the physical right-of-way and describes the animals, plants, and insects found there. Further information can be obtained by examining the citations contained in the reference section.

## **Acquisition of the Corridor**

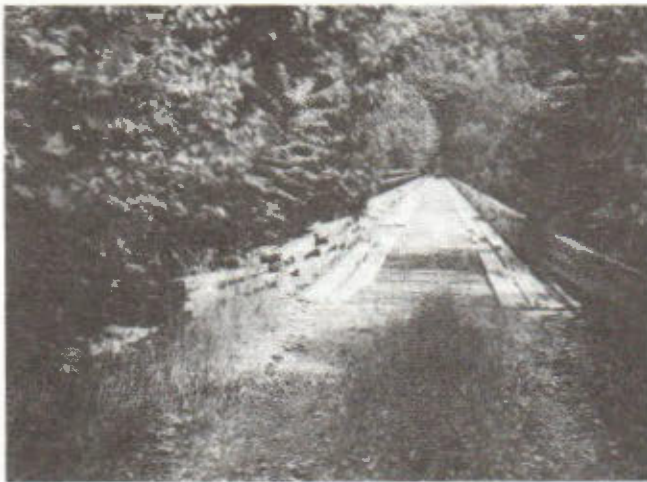


Prior to the investment of large amounts of money in planning and development, the right-of-way must be acquired through easements or outright purchase. Much of the right-of-way is owned with fee simple title by the CSX Corporation. Other specific segments of the right-of-way are privately owned. A six-mile section from the PA/MD line to the City of Frostburg has been recently acquired by the Moran Coal Company. The City of Cumberland owns an approximately fourteen-mile long segment between Frostburg and Cumberland. Several adjacent property owners have also claimed reversionary rights to portions of the right-of-way.

Securing title or access to the right-of-way can take place several ways. Outright purchase of a fee simple title for all railroad-owned interests would secure most of the right-of-way. Remaining segments could be accessed through easements or outright purchase. CSX might consider donating the right-of-way for trail development. CSX had offered to donate the corridor to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy in the late 1970's.

Today, several problems exist along the right-of-way. A walking assessment of the





right-of-way identified many problems. Pollution and environmental hazards such as acid mine seeps, garbage dumps, and unauthorized usage plague the right-of-way. These and other concerns were identified to the CSX Corporation in a letter from the Somerset Conservation District. Costs to repair, minimize, or remove these problems far exceed the expense associated with maintaining ownership for the railroad. By donating or selling the right-of-way, CSX would release a potentially troublesome property and enjoy a tremendous amount of positive publicity.

Regardless of how the right-of-way is acquired, a solid, legal description must be constructed. A title search of all deeds that include the right-of-way should be done to prevent any challenge to legal ownership. A preliminary title search has been done on Confluence-Rockwood segment of the Allegheny Highlands Trail. Findings indicate that most of the right-of-way included in this phase was acquired fee-simple by the Western Maryland Railroad. Several deeds may show some sort of reversionary clause and will require closer examination. Each parcel should be legally secure before any development occurs. An updated survey should be performed to provide a drawing and description of all property associated with the right-of-way.

Local trail proponents should begin developing a fund-raising strategy in the event that CSX decides not to donate all or part of the right-of-way. CSX has appraised the right-of-way considered as Phase One (17.3 miles) at \$800,000 or over \$46,000 per mile. At that per mile rate, a 57-mile long right-of-way would carry an appraised value of over \$2,600,000. Surrounding land values vary between \$100 - \$2,000 per acre. Assuming an average right-of-way width of 100 feet, 57 miles of ROW includes 690 acres. Using an estimated per acre value of \$1,100, the ROW

value can be estimated at \$724,500. Some rail and ties are present and may have some salvage value. Sidings and other large parcels adjacent to the right-of-way owned by CSX must be identified and considered. The actual selling price will be the subject of much discussion and negotiation between trail organizers and the CSX Corporation.

## **Trail Development**



Actual costs for building a multi-use trail along the abandoned Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way vary according to the trail width and surface desired. Initial development of the Allegheny Highlands Trail should be limited to grading and compacting the existing right-of-way surface. Original ballast can be graded, crowned, and compacted, and any potholes or rough areas filled and leveled smooth.

This type of trail surface would be suitable for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding. The ultimate goal for development of the Allegheny Highlands Trail would be to provide a smoother surface similar to the Youghiogheny River Trail in areas where demand for this type of trail surface is greatest. Assuming this, the following description and cost estimates are recommended for the construction of the Allegheny Highlands Trail.

## **Trail Description**

The Allegheny Highlands Trail improved surface should be as wide as possible. The trail surface should consist of the original ballast—graded, crowned, and compacted. This will provide a smooth surface for mountain biking, walking, hiking, and horse-back riding.

Future demand should identify segments of the trail where a more improved surface is desirable. Trail segments located





near towns will probably receive more use. Family use, use by handicapped persons, and the elderly should also be concentrated around more settled areas. These segments of the trail could be further improved to include a 8-10 foot-wide improved walking and bicycling path. This improved surface should be slightly elevated and could consist of crushed and compacted limestone screenings. Alternatively, the improved trail surface could also be paved.

Trail design should provide access for trail users and trail neighbors to features within the right-of-way. Adequate crossovers need to be provided for trail neighbors to access lands on the either side of the right-of-way.

A service road should be incorporated into the trail design to allow emergency and maintenance vehicles to have complete access to the trail along the entire length. The service road surface can provide a surface compatible for equestrian use.

Proper drainage, signs, rest areas, stream and road crossings, barriers, and interpretive sites should be installed where necessary and appropriate. Consideration should be given to all potential trail user groups in all planning and design activities.

#### **Trail Construction**



Members of the Task Force gathered data regarding development of the corridor for recreational use. This information includes cost estimates for trail surface improvements and bridge and tunnel renovations.



**Trail Surface  
and Landscape**

Construction costs associated with the building of the Youghiogheny River Trail within Ohiopyle State Park were approximately \$10,000 per mile. Initial development of the Allegheny Highlands Trail would not require the substantial expense associated with the purchase and installation of a raised crushed limestone trail surface. Construction initially will require the cutting and clearing of vegetation, rough grading and drainage, and final grading and landscaping. These cost estimates are outlined below on a cost per mile basis.

**TRAIL SURFACE CONSTRUCTION**

CUTTING AND CLEARING OF VEGETATION	\$ 2,640.
ROUGH GRADING AND DRAINAGE	2,500.
FINAL GRADING AND LANDSCAPING	8,500.
<b><u>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS PER MILE</u></b>	<b>\$13,640.</b>

An estimate for the trail surface construction costs are outlined in the following table. These costs are expanded to show the estimated cost by phase.

<b><u>TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE SUMMARY</u></b>	
<b>PHASE ONE (CONFLUENCE - ROCKWOOD, PA - 17 MILES)</b>	<b>\$231,880</b>
<b>PHASE TWO (STATE LINE - CUMBERLAND, MD - 20.5 MILES)</b>	<b>279,620</b>
<b>PHASE THREE (ROCKWOOD - PA/MD STATE LINE - 20.5 MILES)</b>	<b>279,620</b>
<b><u>ESTIMATED TRAIL CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE</u></b>	<b>\$791,120</b>

### **Tunnel Renovation**

Four tunnels exist on the Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way being considered for the Allegheny Highlands Trail. These tunnels are named as follows: Pinkerton, Savage Mountain, Borden, and Brush. All four tunnels are similar in construction. The condition of the tunnels varies. The Borden and Brush tunnels are in excellent shape and can be driven through with a car. The Pinkerton and Savage Mountain tunnels have both suffered from weathering and lack of maintenance and would require substantial engineering and renovation to make them acceptable for trail use.

Detailed engineering studies by tunnel experts should be obtained for an evaluation of tunnel conditions. Phase One of trail construction contains the Pinkerton Tunnel. Vehicular traffic is sporadic through the Pinkerton Tunnel as a nearby coal mine periodically ships coal utilizing the right-of-way as a haul road. Occasional fall-ins occur due to deteriorated ceiling sections breaking

free. Poor drainage is accelerating the tunnel's decay. A convenient alternate route exists around the Pinkerton Tunnel. The alternate route travels along the Casselman River and utilizes a level grade used early in the century by a small feeder railroad to transport logs to the Western Maryland Railroad.



The Somerset County Rails-To-Trails Association has contracted Transmark Associates to conduct an engineering inspection of the Pinkerton and Savage Mountain Tunnels and two railroad bridges located adjacent to the Pinkerton Tunnel. Preliminary examinations have yielded repair estimates from \$ 50,000 to \$ 60,000 for the Pinkerton Tunnel. The Savage Mountain Tunnel has similar drainage and ceiling problems. Since the Savage Mountain Tunnel is over six times the length of the Pinkerton Tunnel, cost estimates for repair will vary accordingly. Cost estimates for the Savage Mountain Tunnel have been approximated at \$500,000. Recent inspection of both the Pinkerton and Savage Mountain tunnels suggests that most structural damage is concentrated in the portal areas where weathering is most severe. Lighting for the longer tunnels might be considered in the future.

Renovation of the Borden and Brush Tunnels would involve some cosmetic work to improve their appearance and perhaps some drainage and road surface improvement. Cost estimates for both of these tunnels should amount to no more than \$40,000 .

The Transmark Associates study also recommends that further engineering studies be conducted to provide more accurate repair estimates for the Pinkerton and Savage Mountain Tunnels. Engineering studies should commence as soon as possible to allow trail planners plenty of time to decide



whether the tunnel should be renovated or avoided and the trail re-routed.

A convenient alternate route does not exist around the Savage Mountain Tunnel. Funding availability will influence the decision making process concerning renovation or re-routing.

<b>TUNNEL RENOVATION SUMMARY</b>			
<b>NAME</b>	<b>LENGTH (FT)</b>	<b>PHASE</b>	<b>ESTIMATED COST</b>
Pinkerton	850	One	\$ 60,000
Borden	1000	Two	\$ 20,000
Brush	1100	Two	\$ 20,000
Savage Mountain	3000	Three	\$500,000
<b>ESTIMATED TUNNEL RENOVATION COST</b>			<b>\$600,000</b>

#### **Bridge Decking & Safety Railing Installation**

Several bridges exist along the Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way. These bridges vary in size from short twenty-foot spans crossing small streams to the 1960-foot long trestle crossing the Casselman River and Route 219 north of Meyersdale. Transforming these structures into safe and aesthetically pleasing trail components will require some modifications. Surface decking and safety railing should be installed to provide a safe, smooth riding and walking surface. General cleaning and painting are also needed to minimize weathering and improve



appearances. All original railroad markings should be re-painted to preserve the identity and character of the Western Maryland Railroad.

Cost estimates for surface and railing improvements were obtained using information obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources Bureau of State Parks. Bridge improvement costs were examined describing work that was done at Ohiopyle State Park. Information was also received from the North Fayette Chamber of Commerce outlining plans to extend the existing Youghiogheny River Trail to Connellsville, Pennsylvania.

The following cost estimates can be used to gauge the expense of decking the bridges with treated lumber and installing safety railing on the structures along the proposed Allegheny Highlands Trail. Pressure treated 2-inch thick (nominal) decking on existing trestle structures creating a decked surface, eight-feet wide and safety railing on both sides of trail path. Estimates are expressed in a cost per lineal foot.

**ESTIMATED COST OF DECKING AND RAILING**  
**\$ 76.50/LINEAL FOOT**



The Transmark Associates study looked at the two bridges located at the east and west entrances to the Pinkerton Tunnel. The study recommends that each bridge be sand-blasted and sealed with two coats of paint. All concrete spalling should be repaired. Any faulty timbers in the deck or walkway should be repaired or replaced. Both bridges are in good condition. Transmark Associates estimates that the above mentioned work would cost approximately \$ 80,000 for each bridge. The large trestle outside of Meyersdale would need similar attention at an appropriately higher cost. Several smaller bridges along the right-of-way would require similar treatment and this cost needs to be better defines through further engineering



analysis. The following table summarizes the cost estimates to clean and repair the major bridge structures along the proposed trail route.

<b>BRIDGE RENOVATION SUMMARY</b>				
<b>PHASE</b>	<b># OF BRIDGES</b>	<b>LENGTH/FT</b>	<b>EST. COST DECK/RAIL</b>	<b>EST. COST REPAIRS</b>
<b>ONE</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>\$153,000</b>	<b>\$320,000</b>
<b>TWO</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>22,950</b>	<b>120,000</b>
<b>THREE</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>2500</b>	<b>191,250</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>ESTIMATED BRIDGE RENOVATION COSTS</b>			<b>\$367,200</b>	<b>\$840,000</b>

These structures were engineered to carry the weight of heavy trains and should pose no problem for trail use. Bridges are popular attractions on other rail-trails across the country.

<b>CONSTRUCTION ESTIMATE SUMMARY</b>			
	<b>PHASE ONE</b>	<b>PHASE TWO</b>	<b>PHASE THREE</b>
<b>CONSTRUCTION</b>	<b>231,880</b>	<b>279,620</b>	<b>279,620</b>
<b>DECK/RAILING</b>	<b>153,000</b>	<b>22,950</b>	<b>191,250</b>
<b>BRIDGE REPAIR</b>	<b>320,000</b>	<b>120,000</b>	<b>400,000</b>
<b>TUNNEL REPAIR</b>	<b>60,000</b>	<b>40,000</b>	<b>500,000</b>
<b>SUBTOTALS</b>	<b>764,880</b>	<b>462,570</b>	<b>1,370,870</b>
<b>ESTIMATED CONSTRUCTION COSTS</b>			<b>\$2,598,320</b>



These cost estimates do not include access barriers, signs, portable toilet facilities, and initial setup for the managing agency. Actual costs on some items may change after more in-depth studies undertaken. Some costs can be reduced by utilizing donated materials and volunteer labor. Locally obtained materials and expertise should be sought for any trail related project. The incorporation of volunteers into the trail development and management plan is encouraged. Strong commitment from trail users and neighbors in the design, development, and upkeep of the trail will insure long-term success and enjoyment and minimize conflicts. These costs are provided as a guide.

## **Public Involvement**



The Allegheny Highlands Trail proposal has increased public awareness about the existence of the railroad right-of-way and any future use. Trail support and opposition exist in the local community. Opposition is confined to some of the landowners with property adjacent to the right-of-way. Trail opponents circulated a petition to voice their resistance to the trail proposal. The Somerset Conservation District conducted an informal survey to assess public opinion about the trail at the 1988 Somerset County Fair. An overwhelming majority of respondents (92% versus 8%) favored the trail idea. A segment of the feasibility study included a public involvement process to document and address the issues relating to the proposed trail.

A public workshop was held to identify the issues, both positive and negative, associated with the trail. A follow-up workshop was held to list alternatives to address the issues that received a higher priority in a voting process. The list in Appendix 3 displays these issues which have



been sorted into issue groups along with a number showing the votes that issue received in an effort to prioritize the list. The results of the follow-up workshop are also included to provide the reader with the range of alternatives generated by the public.

Examination of the issues revealed the need for the task force to provide advice on several aspects of the impact of a proposed trail on the adjacent landowners. An information workshop was held on December 14, 1988, in Somerset, PA. A panel of specialists consisting of an attorney, an insurance professional, a trail manager, and a Rails-To-Trails Conservancy staff person answered specific questions posed by workshop participants. Issues concerning liability, trespass, potential user problems, and trail management were discussed and honest answers were provided.

The following section provides some analysis of the issues that were prioritized by the participants of the public workshops. The complete list of issues documented at the public workshop is included as an appendix. Future planning activities associated with the trail development should adequately address these and any other issues that surface throughout the planning and development process. The issues are in **BOLD** print.

**What kind of trail uses and consequently what kind of trail users are desirable on the proposed trail?**

One of the many benefits envisioned for this trail is the opportunity to quietly enjoy the sights and sounds of the trail and the surrounding environment. Trail use should be limited to non-motorized use. The only exceptions would include battery operated wheelchairs/carts used by the handicapped, maintenance vehicles of the operating agency, and emergency vehicles for



police, fire, and rescue operations. Trail uses encouraged would include biking, hiking, horse back riding, walking, running, jogging, cross-country skiing, and snow shoeing.

Access to the trail should be strictly controlled at the various points of entry. Locked gates will prevent unauthorized vehicular use. Obstacles designed to allow for bicycle, equestrian, and foot passage will be installed at all appropriate entrances. User education and strict regulation enforcement will effectively communicate to lawful and unlawful users, the policy of the trail management group.

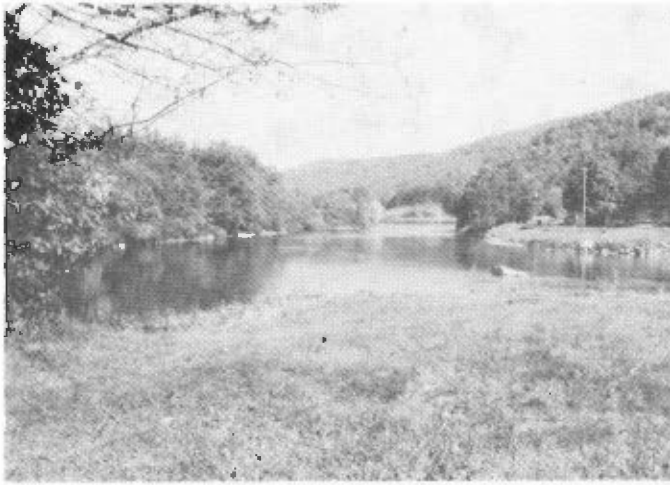
The trail will also provide access for fishermen and hunters. Hunting is an important recreation activity in this region. Potential conflict between hunters and other trail users may arise. A policy should be developed to minimize potential problems with hunting interests. User education for all trail users will provide safe recreation and minimize conflicts. All trail users should be educated to respect the needs of others.

In areas of high use, horse back riding should be accommodated on a separate parallel path to minimize conflict with bicyclists and hikers. Policy needs to be developed concerning the allowance of unleashed pets on the trail. Existing laws should be clarified and user education implemented to avoid conflict.

**How will access to private lands adjacent to or landlocked by the trail right-of-way be handled?**

The organizers and planners of the trail have no intention to prohibit or restrict access to public or private lands along the trail corridor. Trail developers should work with each landowner along the corridor to resolve all access arrangements on a case-by-





**Who will assume the liability and be responsible for safety along the trail?**

case basis. Alternate access routes should be explored to minimize trail crossings. An Advisory Board should be formed to work with landowners concerning any problems that arise in connection with the trail. Landowners need to continue to work with trail planners to insure that their needs are addressed. The trail management group will work towards allowing any access that does not block, damage, or obstruct the trail. All trail accesses and crossings will be designed to minimize erosion and sedimentation.

Long-term, permanent protection of the trail is desirable. Ownership of the right-of-way would protect the physical trail corridor. Developmental encroachment along the trail may need to be controlled in the future. County and township zoning and sub-division ordinances should be developed to preserve the aesthetic and environmental quality of the trail corridor. The trail management council should encourage appropriate small business development to service the trail and trail users. Assistance may be available under existing programs such as the Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D) Program or the Rural Regeneration Project. Regional programs administered by the Southern Alleghenies Planning and Development Council may also be able to provide assistance. Local banks and foundations are yet another source of assistance.

The owners and/or operators of the proposed trail should be willing to assume all legal liability associated with such ownership. The liability risks for landowners along the proposed trail should not increase due to the development of a trail. Landowner liability should actually decrease due to the control of unauthorized access to



**Who will own and/or  
manage the trail?**

the right-of-way. Both Pennsylvania and Maryland have laws concerning liability and public recreation on private land.

Landowners and trail managers should work together to resolve any questions concerning liability. Trail user education will minimize accidents and conflicts with adjacent landowners. Landowners interested in developing a business to provide goods or services to trail users should consult their insurance agent as their liability assessment may change.

Safety along the proposed trail rests ultimately with the trail users. User education and cooperation will create a safe trail environment. The trail managing agency will be responsible for developing and implementing a safety policy. Proper signage along the trail route should be an integral part of safety planning. Local fire, rescue, police, and conservation agencies need to be included in all safety planning. Volunteer assistance should be encouraged and developed.

Ownership of the trail right-of-way will vary according to location. The initial acquisition may take the form of an outright gift from the CSX Corporation to the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy or the Trust For Public Lands. Alternatively, ownership might take the form of an outright purchase from CSX. Ultimate ownership should lie with a stable state organization such as the Pennsylvania Dept. of Environmental Resources and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. Some portions of the right-of-way may have already reverted back to the original landowner. Those parcels need to be identified and a right-of-way acquired either through donation, purchase, or easement negotiation. If these methods

fail, an alternative route would need to be identified.



Management of the trail is a complex issue. The task of managing and operating a fifty-seven mile trail that travels through two states is a large undertaking. A trail of this magnitude needs daily attention. A trail advisory board should be formed to assist the trail managing agency. The board should include representatives from both Pennsylvania and Maryland. All groups interested in the trail should be allowed to participate on this committee. Advisory board members would include people from user groups, hikers, cyclists, horse back riders, cross-country skiers, and bird watchers. Landowners also need representation on the advisory board. People interested in developing support businesses along the trail should be provided with an opportunity to participate.

Trail management possibilities include the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources Bureau of State Parks, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, The National Park Service, the Somerset Conservation District, the Somerset Rails-to-Trails Association, a new county park management agency, or any other interested organization willing to devote considerable resources to the management of a premier recreation resource.

#### **Who pays for the trail and how?**

One of the most important and intriguing aspects of trail planning is identifying funding sources to pay for the design and development of the trail. Financing is needed for three distinct phases. First is all promotion, planning, and development of the trail concept. This feasibility study is a product of these initial processes. The next step is actual development or construction of the trail. The





third phase in the financial implementation of this concept is the operation and maintenance of the trail. Funding for the feasibility study has been provided by the National Park Service through the Trails Conservation Assistance Program and the America's Industrial Heritage Project. Cooperating agencies and organizations involved in the study share the costs and provide support and in-kind services.

Funding sources for the acquisition, development, and operation of the trail should consist of a combination of creative methods and sources. All potential funding sources should be explored, from local sources to federal assistance. Diverse funding sources improve the chances for success and lessen the possibility of failure due to the loss of any one source.

Local funding can take on many forms. The establishment of the Somerset County Rails-To-Trails Association creates a vehicle for funding efforts to channel community interest into the trail. The local trail organization has already started a recycling program. Recent changes in state laws requiring communities to recycle have added to the success of this particular funding effort. Membership dues and donations have also raised some money. As this organization matures, their fund raising expertise will improve and the trail will benefit. Special events can be scheduled to increase public awareness of the trail and raise operating funds. A donation system to solicit funds from trail users can be developed in lieu of a user fee arrangement.

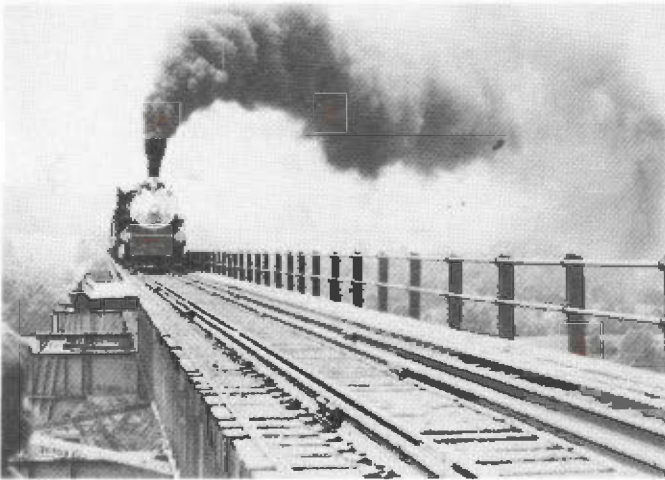


Contacts with the existing land conservation organizations should be maintained. The Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, the Trust For Public Lands, and the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy can provide assistance. These organizations can act as a liaison with foundations, state, and

government agencies that can potentially provide financial assistance.

There are several state programs that can potentially benefit the trail through monetary contributions or labor and materials for construction and maintenance. Sources of possible funding have been identified within various state agencies and are included as Appendix 4.

Since program status and application criteria are subject to change, the agencies listed for information should be contacted to determine the most current application requirements. In addition, state funding sources in Maryland should be identified and utilized. Foundations in other states should also be contacted as many times they will consider funding requests for nationally and internationally significant projects.



Direct federal assistance can be in the form of direct appropriations approved through Congress. Support can also be channeled through a program such as the America's Industrial Heritage Project. Most federal assistance is indirect through state programs such as the Land and Water Conservation Fund. National Park Service involvement is primarily through the Trails Conservation Assistance Program and assists with initial planning. National Park Service involvement could increase if the trail were incorporated into the National Park System.



## **Conclusion**

The Allegheny Highlands Trail has the potential to become a major link in a network of trails providing access to the entire United States. Proper planning will insure that the needs of the local citizens and the general public are met. Trails help get people out and noticing our natural resources. Increased exposure to the environment makes people aware of the issues and pressures affecting these resources. This increased awareness creates a more sensitive public. Long-term environmental improvements are the potential benefits. We can conserve our resources, use them wisely, and provide benefits for everyone to enjoy.

The next step for the individuals and organizations interested in the Allegheny Highlands Trail is to secure the trail right-of-way and begin design and planning for the development of Phase One. Title search, surveying, and engineering tasks should be arranged and completed and extensive fund-raising efforts organized. Production and distribution of a public information brochure will help keep public interest high and momentum moving forward. A well-organized trail management agency should be established to begin the process of developing appropriate policy to insure success when the trail is on the ground. Controlled growth and development of both the trail and the communities that will benefit are important to maintain the environmental, historic, and aesthetic qualities that justify creation of the trail.

Future consideration may be given to having the Allegheny Highlands Trail recognized and designated as a component in the National Trails System as defined by the National Trails System Act. Designation as a National Recreation Trail, a National Historic Trail, a National Scenic Trail, or a connecting or side trail would provide additional recognition for the trail in these National Park Service administered programs. Program requirements would need to be checked when additional designation is desired. Trail designation under one of these programs would add the Allegheny Highlands Trail to the long list of historic and scenic trails located across America.



## Acknowledgements

In addition to the members of the task force, certain individuals should be recognized for their special contributions to this study. The Trails Conservation Assistance Program depends on the assistance provided by the project sponsors and cooperators.

Congressman John Murtha and his Somerset, Johnstown, and Washington staff continue to be very supportive of this project.

State Representative William Lloyd and his staff also continue to contribute and support this project.

The Somerset County Commissioners, Brad Cober, Greg Chiappelli, and Bob Will, continue to offer support both personally and through the Somerset Conservation District.

The Somerset Chamber of Commerce has provided much of the support services needed throughout this project.

The Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen provided funding and support to promote this project.

Larry Adams, Park Manager at Ohiopyle State Park, provided guidance and advice based on his experiences managing the Youghiogheny River Trail within Ohiopyle State Park, at the public workshops.

Mike Fetchero supplied expertise relating to insurance matters at the information workshop.

Richard Wilson, Esq. provided legal information to participants of the information workshop.

David Steele and Tony Martinelli of the Somerset Conservation District walked the entire trail to provide a summary of the resources along the corridor. Dave also researched much of the historic, cultural, and natural resource information associated with the right-of-way. The Conservation District has developed a slide show that has revealed the proposed Allegheny Highlands Trail to many people.

Boy Scout Troop 35, New Creek, West Virginia, has completed a photographic inventory of the Maryland segment of the proposed trail.

Walt Bowen has provided many photographs and slides for newsletters, brochures, and everyone's enjoyment. Walt is truly an artist, and his contribution is appreciated.

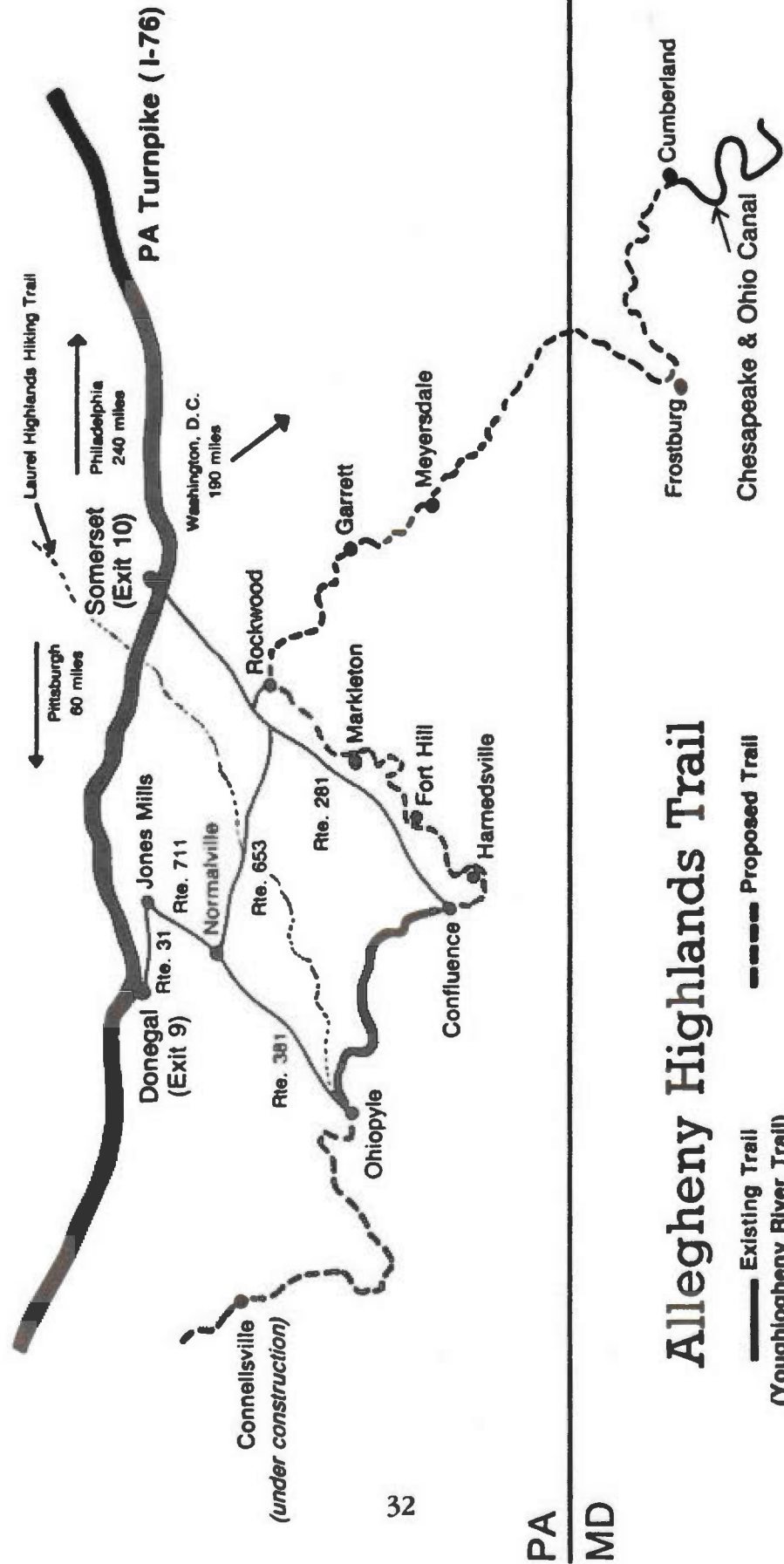
Robert Kulp, a biology student at The University of Pittsburgh at Johnstown, provided a detailed account of the geology of the trail corridor as an intern working with the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy.

Bill Lehman of the Somerset Planning Commission provided expertise and offered his assistance with a variety of tasks. Bill's knowledge of surveying and the history of Somerset County provided some interesting information.

Deb Bennett, the Rails-To-Trails Project Coordinator, provided information and actions, on site, and handled many critical situations.

To the participants of the workshops for providing their unique perspective and input.

Bob Gift, Jerry Pendleton, and Scott Hall, National Park Service, provided assistance and expertise during the public workshops and support throughout the project.



## Appendix 2

### Connellsville - Cumberland Hiking/Biking Trail Summary

by Tony Martinelli

This is a summary of the visual analysis Dave Steele and I made while working on the feasibility study to convert the Western Maryland Railroad right-of-way, in Somerset County, to a hiking/biking trail. This trail would connect to the existing trail, in Confluence, and eventually link with trails onward to Washington, DC.

Our initial hike began in Confluence where the existing trail ends. The Somerset County right-of-way runs through seven towns: Confluence, Harnedsville, Fort Hill, Markleton, Casselman, Rockwood, Garrett, and Meyersdale. From Meyersdale, the trail leads to the Maryland border where we concluded our study. Approximately 40 miles comprises the overall length of the proposed trail.

There are many beautiful sights along the trail, including the Casselman River Valley, trestle supported bridges, masterfully engineered tunnels, and the only original train station still standing. We encountered 16 bridges varying in size and condition: one crossing the Youghiogheny River, five crossing the Casselman River, seven crossing Flaugherty Creek, and three crossing other obstacles. This section of the right-of-way has two tunnels, the Pinkerton and the Big Savage.

The bridges and train station are some of the man-made sights along the trail. However, some of the most beautiful sights are the ones that nature provides. The trail is diverse in many ways. Some sections of the trail are in complete seclusion, high in the mountains with no access for up to five miles; some conveniently follow along a road or pass through a town; and still other sections idle through rolling green farmland. These areas are abundant with visual and audible sounds of wildlife and colorful arrays of plant life. Most of the trail follows the Casselman River and then the Flaugherty Creek. The seclusion of these places will entice any fisherman or outdoor enthusiast. Some of the outlooks of the Casselman River and the ruggedness of the surrounding ridges and mountains are breathtaking. There is enough space on the right-of-way to develop occasional rest stops at reasonably close intervals. There are also areas on adjoining land for campsites. Along the trail there is an abundance of mountain streams and freshwater springs that will produce an adequate supply of drinking water. Along the trail we saw old logging roads and separate trails crisscrossing the unrefined mountainsides.

The trail offers a variety of scenery with every step a new adventure into the historic past, and opens the opportunity to preserve it's natural resources for future utilization.

The trail would not be the only source of recreation for those who use it. The surrounding towns have many points of interest. Confluence already has outfitters for hiking, biking, and boating; many of which could be developed in nearby towns. For additional fishing, streams, lakes, or ponds can be found in many areas adjacent to the trail. A few are Elk Lick Creek, High Point Lake, Isers Run, McClintock-Glade Run, the Youghiogheny, and many, many more. Each town holds a claim to a different and exciting historic past and cultures.

Fort Hill is a good example with it's fascinating, ancient Algonquin Indians' encampment. It appears the existing mountain ranging 3100 feet high, was truncated and planed to form an area of approximately 5 1/2 acres which slopes gradually towards the center. The south side of Fort Hill summit was excavated by archaeologists in the summer of 1939 and the north side in the spring of 1940. A large number of artifacts were found. The most important ones were: pottery, tobacco pipes, an axe, flint knives, drills, scrapers, and jewelry made from animal



## **Appendix 2**

bones. Also found were needles, fishhooks, and bobbins made out of teeth, antlers, and shells. A few graves and the outline of two fortifications and 65 houses were uncovered. Rockwood and Garrett hold two fine golf courses for as slow paced break from the trail. Meyersdale is whirling with the maple festival in the spring for both a fun and educational experience.

You would never have to look for a pleasant campsite or park. The Youghiogheny River Lake has three camping areas. Also, in close proximity are three state parks, Kooser, Laurel Ridge, and Laurel Hill. The Laurel Highlands is home to two nationally known ski areas. Anyone can pick up a map of the area and be overwhelmed by the recreation, historic sights, and the overall beauty of the county.

### **Confluence to Harnedsville: 3 miles**

Confluence is where we began our hike for the proposed hiking/biking trail. It starts where the existing trail between Ohioyle and Confluence ends. After crossing the first half mile, the trail comes to the first bridge. This bridge crosses the Youghiogheny River in an area heavily stocked with trout, bass, and walleye that supplies great fishing. Also close by is an existing campsite. One mile further down the trail is the second bridge that crosses the Casselman River. This bridge provides a good view of Confluence. The trail then leads to Harnedsville. The trail is easily accessible from four areas and runs along a road for some time which could be used for access. There are several places for campsites and a few for rest stops. Another asset along the trail is a spring just before Harnedsville that could provide a good source of drinking water, but it will need some maintenance and repairs to make it accessible.

### **Harnedsville to Fort Hill: 4 3/4 miles**

The Harnedsville access begins immediately with a bridge over the Casselman. From the bridge, numerous Smallmouth Bass can be seen. Once off the bridge, the trail is bordered on both sides by meadows. Shortly afterwards, the trail enters into one of the most secluded areas of the right-of-way with no access in between. The Casselman River accompanies the right-of-way most of the way; however, a few accesses may have to be put in to make the river more convenient for fisherman. The trail leads high into the mountains but like the rest of the trail, there are no steep grades to climb. It remains virtually flat. There are two natural views of the Casselman River which can be used as rest stops. These areas could compare with any man-made outlooks. This part of the trail exemplifies the natural beauty that enhances the trail. Crystal clear mountain streams, wildlife, plants, and trees are just a few of the natural resources that can be found.

### **Fort Hill to Markleton: 4 1/4 miles**

This part of the trail is very interesting not only due to its natural resources but also because of its man-made resources. Between Fort Hill and Markleton is a long stretch of secluded trail with no highway accesses. It follows the Casselman River with two natural accesses to the river and many areas for possible rest stops. This section includes the first tunnel on the Western Maryland right-of-way. The Pinkerton Tunnel was built in 1911 and is bordered by bridges on both sides due to the fact that the Casselman River makes a horseshoe loop around the mountain; the highest bridge towers 85 feet above the Casselman. These bridges give a view of the Casselman River which appears virtually untouched.

### **Markleton to Rockwood: 5 1/2 miles**



## **Appendix 2**

This section of the trail portrays exceptional landscaping with brilliant flora and fauna and the Casselman River flowing close by. However, the view is partially obscured by dense foliage. The nearby village of Casselman is not directly accessible from the trail. These are ideal locations for rest stops and a potential campsite. Old logging roads can provide for additional hiking trails off of the right-of-way and mountain streams to offer a source of fresh water. We also saw an abandoned mine sight approximately one-half of a mile southwest of Rockwood that could pose a safety hazard. If reclaimed, it could also be a point of interest.

### **Rockwood to Garrett: 4 3/4 miles**

The trail from Rockwood to Garrett parallels the Casselman. Along the trail we encountered several access areas to the Casselman River and also some springs and streams. One spring is already nicely set up for drinking. We also counted ten possible locations for rest areas. An old spoil pile from a mine could be converted into a nice overnight camping site. This portion of the trail is prosperous with wildlife and scenic views.

### **Garrett to Meyersdale: 4 3/4 miles**

The portion of the trail From Garrett to Meyersdale takes on a completely different character. The trail is bordered on both sides by rolling green farmland, pastures, and fields. There are many domestic animals along the trail; horses, cattle, and one farm has domestic turkeys, rabbits, and peacocks.

There is place for one possible rest stop. An overgrown meadow at Garrett is ideal for a potential campsite. Just north of Meyersdale is the last bridge that crosses the Casselman River. It is also the longest and highest of any we had crossed, spanning the Casselman approximately 1940 feet long and 106 feet high. After crossing the Casselman, the trail continues into the northern portion of Meyersdale.

### **Meyersdale to Warren Mills: 4 miles**

The Meyersdale to Warren Mills section is very interesting. There are access bridges and foot bridges going over the right-of-way. Right inside Meyersdale is one of the most unique features of the right-of-way and a potential source of income. It is the only original train station still standing on the Somerset County section of the right-of-way. A little restoration can make this a thriving restaurant, bicycle outfitter, or convenience store. As the right-of-way continues to Warren Mills, the trail departs from the Casselman River and finds a new companion with the Flaugherty Creek. Just above Sand Patch, the trail crosses over the B&O rails and Flaugherty Creek. This is the last of the major bridges. The trail crosses the meandering Flaugherty Creek four more times, but these bridges are only 20 - 30 feet long. There are five possible access areas from Meyersdale to Warren Mills, five potential rest stops, one potential camp site, and two springs.

### **Warren Mills to Deal: 2 3/4 miles**

Warren Mills to Deal is a short distance in comparison to the other sections. We actually hiked approximately 3/4 of a mile below Deal. This is a very flat section and is bordered by large wetland areas. Between Warren Mills and Deal, the trail crosses Flaugherty Creek twice. There are a potential rest stop and a place for a camping site. This section has no towns in the near vicinity. Meyersdale is the last town on the trail in Somerset County's right-of-way.

### **Deal to the Pennsylvania/Maryland State Line**

From Deal to the state line, the right-of-way becomes remote again. There is only one

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small bridge crossing a ravine in this area. The big attraction on this portion is the Big Savage Tunnel. The Big Savage is the second and longest tunnel along the entire right-of-way penetrating through the Big Savage Mountain approximately 3500 feet. From the south side of the tunnel you can see a picturesque view of Maryland. The trail runs for another mile before entering Maryland and provides several potential rest areas and overnight camping areas.

### Pennsylvania State Line to Frostburg, Maryland: 5 1/2 miles

Paul Labovitz, from the National Park Service, and I walked this section of the trail south of Big Savage Mountain to see how it differed from the Somerset County sections we had already covered. The trail had a more noticeable grade than the rest of the right-of-way. Aside from this, it was very much like other sections we had hiked previously. This section of the trail included the Borden Tunnel, the shortest and the best preserved of the tunnels along the right-of-way. There are several reclaimed mine sites along this section of the trail. One of these sites had a sediment pond teeming with wildlife including a Green Heron.

### Frostburg to Cumberland: 15 miles

On this final section of trail, Dave Steele and I were accompanied by Mike Wagoner and Mark Middleton from the Tri-County Council For Western Maryland, and Ben Sansom and Dave Dorsey from the Allegany County Planning and Zoning Commission. In order to cover the entire 15 mile section in one day, we drove along most of the right-of-way stopping for pictures and to take a closer look at the bridges and other points of interest. We began in Cumberland where the C & O Canal Trail would connect with the proposed Connellsville - Cumberland Trail. After leaving Cumberland, the trail becomes fairly secluded. One section, "The Narrows", with it's steep ridges towering above Will's Creek, is unequaled in scenic beauty. The rugged terrain along this southern end of the Western Maryland right-of-way is characterized by three horseshoe curves bypassing the predominantly north-south ridges.

This section also includes Bone Cave, one of the most significant archeological discoveries in the eastern United States. Bone Cave was accidentally discovered when railroad construction crews were making a cut through a ridge approximately three miles northwest of Cumberland. Here, they unearthed an old, limestone cavern with a narrow, vertical shaft opening at the top of the ridge. Archaeologists eventually identified the well-preserved remains of at least thirty-three different animal species. Apparently these unfortunate creatures stumbled into the open vertical shaft of the cavern and were unable to get out. This section of the trail also includes the Brush Tunnel, one of the shorter tunnels along the right-of-way and still in good condition.

Another interesting aspect of this section of the corridor is the scenic railroad operated by the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. This project is a joint effort between the State of Maryland, Allegany County, and the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad. A steam locomotive and train travel between the Western Maryland Station in Cumberland to Frostburg, Maryland, approximately 15 miles away. The Western Maryland Station houses the National Park Service C & O Canal Interpretive Museum, the Allegany County Tourism Bureau, Western Maryland Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society, and the Allegany Arts Council. This section of the scenic railroad incorporates a portion of the old C & P Railroad which was in operation many years before the Western Maryland.

It is hoped that visitors to Cumberland's scenic railroad will see it not as an independent entity, but as the beginning of a multi-use recreational corridor ending in Connellsville and maybe eventually Pittsburgh.



## **Appendix 3**

### **ALLEGHENY HIGHLANDS TRAIL STUDY ISSUE LIST RESULTING FROM PUBLIC WORKSHOP OF 10/12/88**

#### **votes**

- 22: How much will trail cost, who pays, how?
- 21: What type of trail users, will it be limited?
- 20: Protection of historical & cultural attributes along the trail for future generations (bridges, engineering, transportation, technology)
- 18: Enhanced opportunity for biking, hiking, cross-country skiing on trail
- 17: Opportunities for families and special interest groups to have recreational and educational activities at the same time
- 17: Concern about lands that will become landlocked as a result of the trail
- 15: Liability (landowners) insurance rates
- 13: Fire hazard
- 12: What is the National Park Service's role after the study, continue the C & O Canal with NPS management or who else?
- 11: Economic benefits, new commercial opportunities
- 11: Promote the link/network between Pittsburgh - Washington DC and the Appalachian Trail
- 10: Concern that private landowners will not have access to cross trail with machinery and/or cattle
- 10: Positive environmental impact, beautification, clean-up, restoration
- 9: What is the railroads position about the ROW?
- 9: Opportunity for trail to become the best bicycle trail in the U.S.
- 8: How will safety & liability and other concerns be addressed on the trail section between Frostburg and Cumberland (scenic railroad)
- 7: Trespass - recourse of landowners for damages
- 7: Concern that future users of the trail are not sensitive to/aware of private landowner problems (they don't live there)
- 6: Security
- 6: Ownership of the ROW (surveys)
- 6: Concern about private landowners rights and guarantees to seclusion, private use, etc
- 6: Safety factors of the bridges and tunnels
- 6: Concern about need for multiple use of right-of-way for purposes other than the trail (business, industry, transportation, motorized recreation)
- 6: Responsibility, maintenance
- 5: Who protects private landowners from liability/lawsuits?
- 5: How do we best develop small business opportunities along the trail (bed/breakfast, equipment rental)

## Appendix 3

- 5: Land not owned by the railroad, will it be purchased, leased, or taken?
- 5: Current lease agreements which are conditions of the right-of-way, who picks them up?
- 5: Need for access to cross right-of-way and cut timber on private land
- 4: Promote community involvement, pride in community
- 4: Concern to use the trail for horse and wagon use one (1) day every five years
- 3: The trail will promote the recreational resources of the areas
- 3: Pollution of water supply
- 3: Restriction of resource development such as coal and timber
- 3: Can a private landowner put in an overnight campsite along the trail?
- 3: Trail creates opportunity to restrict illegal garbage dumping & unwanted vehicular traffic on existing ROW
- 2: Are there alternative routes or is a partial trail desirable?
- 2: Coordinated activities; River and Trail
- 1: Concern about how trail will affect future development/use of adjacent land
- 1: Interstate trail system Washington - Pittsburgh - Canada
- 1: How will utility crossings be managed
- 1: Concern about what will happen to active coal tipples/loading facilities on the ROW in Meyersdale/Rockwood
- 1: Future agreements/easements with local governments and private landowners
- 0: Who will construct/maintain hiker/biker campsites?
- 0: How will the trail be divided into Boy Scout Historic Trail designations
- 0: Will snowmaking equipment be allowed on the trail?
- 0: More coordination/involvement with Allegany County groups
- 0: Who will be responsible for public health concerns along the trail (water, sewer, garbage, etc.)
- 0: Opportunity for access for fishing
- 0: Continuity of trail, access
- 0: Property values
- 0: Will over-development be a problem?
- 0: Will rest stops be public/private managed?
- 0: Is the bridge below Meyersdale on the trail?
- 0: Limitation of other forms of recreation
- 0: Conflict with existing plans/zoning

### **Appendix 3**

- 0: How will the trail cross any roads/highways?
- 0: Where will access areas to the trail be located
- 0: Hunting season and the use of the trail(safety, etc)
- 0: Opportunity that trail will generate increased social interchange
- 0: Who makes the final decision?
- 0: Will the bridges/trail be fenced in?
- 0: Region wide involvement, uniqueness, cooperation
- 0: There is an existing private haul road/coal trucks between Frostburg and the Pa state line
- 0: Who will the trail be available to?
- 0: Opportunity for recreation for the elderly and the handicapped
- 0: Concern about who currently owns the R-O-W
- 0: Will the Railroad turn ownership over to the National Park Service?
- 0: Concern about condemnation or restriction of private landowners use of land along the trail



## **Appendix 3**

### **Alternatives Identified at November 16, 1988 Workshop**

#### **Issue: Liability/Safety on the trail**

1. Exonerate landowners of liability by the trail owner/manager
2. State laws for landowner liability exemption
3. Liability risks to landowners in writing
4. Liability decrease with the trail being installed
5. Will insurance go up?
6. Insurance information is needed
7. Educate the insurers i.e. trail exemption as per state law
8. Check liability insurance story on other trails
9. Liability is tied to trail ownership

#### **Issue: Who would own or manage the trail?**

1. National Park Service
2. Private property owners along the trail
3. Different local governments along the trail would own the property, the trail would be managed by a trail council composed of local government representatives and user groups
4. Recreational authority
5. Local interests/governments own but National Park Service set guidelines for management
6. Non-profit agency, secondary organization - National Park Service acquires the land and turns it over

#### **Issue: Who pays for the trail and how?**

1. US Sprint/optic fiber companies pay royalties
2. Licenses to those who would benefit
3. Bicycle permit/user fees
4. Private organization such as Rails-To-Trails
5. National Park Service
6. Private foundations
7. Quasi-governmental organization such as Port Authority
8. Contact similar projects to find answers
9. Subcontract to user group for maintenance
10. State
11. Corporate sponsors, equipment manufacturers (camping, etc.), local businesses

### **Appendix 3**

12. Penalty taxes to mineral extractors and food manufactures

13. Recycling cans, local fundraising

14. Check off on tax returns

15. United Way listing

**Issue: Concern that future users of the trail are not sensitive to/aware of private landowner problems(they don't live there)**

1. Rules, regulation, and strict enforcement

2. May not be a big problem on this type of trail

3. Need to educate users as to rules of use

4. Need to educate absentee landowners about potential benefits of the trail

5. Trail users should not be able to dictate adjacent landowners management of land

6. Future use of the right-of-way as trail may solve existing problems that landowners have

7. Need for trail council or some organization as forum for landowners and trail users

8. Need to educate trail users to respect private property

9. Restrict hours of use, permits for overnight use with rules and regulations

10. Need to educate the landowners

**Issue: Concern about lands that will become landlocked, need for landowners to have access to their property**

1. State law that prohibits denial of access

2. Utility roads can be used for access

3. Ohlpyle trail allows access across trail

4. Honor right-of-way at 90 degrees to landowners if a need is demonstrated

5. Do not lock in to 90 degrees for environmental purposes

6. C & O allows "grandfather" use of the right-of-way

7. Allow any access that does not block, damage, or obstruct the trail

8. How will existing access agreements with the Railroad be enforced or changed with the trail?

**Issue: What type of trail users, will it be limited?**

1. Foot traffic

2. Bicycles

3. Winter skiing

4. Hiking/backpacking

### **Appendix 3**

5. Limit vehicular use
6. Passive use
7. No motorized traffic except wheelchairs
8. Horseback riding
9. No animals
10. Survey adjacent landowners about user types
11. Separation of different trail users (design)
12. Trail use should be consistent with trail use in Ohlerville (hiking/biking)
13. Trail should be open to hunting and fishing access
14. No guns or loaded weapons on the trail
15. Accommodate broadest recreational use
16. Consider use on the C & O Canal
17. Possible to segment trail, different uses on different segments
18. Parallel trails for different uses on the right-of-way
19. Possible extension of scenic railroad excursion
20. Horse-drawn wagons and sleds



## **Appendix 4**

### **Potential State Funding Sources**

**1. Pennsylvania Department of Transportation - federal funds administered by PENNDOT for development/construction of destination bicycle trails**

**Information: PENNDOT Program Center  
917 Transportation and Safety Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**2. Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources - Funds available to Commonwealth or local agencies for development through use of the Pennsylvania Conservation Corps**

**Information: PA DER Pennsylvania Conservation Corps Program  
P.O. Box 1467  
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**3. Pennsylvania Department of Community Affairs - A 50% reimbursable matching grant program (Land and Water Conservation Fund) and a 50% reimbursable program (Recreation Improvement and Rehabilitation Act) are available to Commonwealth and local agencies for acquisition and development**

**Information: PA Department of Community Affairs  
Bureau of Recreation and Conservation  
Room 552, Forum Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

**4. Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission - A 50% reimbursable matching grant program (Historic Preservation Pre-development Grant) is available to Commonwealth and local agencies to assist in the preservation of National Register listed properties in Pennsylvania. This program may at some point be applicable to the bridges and tunnels along the trail as it allows for funding to prepare historic structure reports, architectural plans and specifications, feasibility, and engineering studies.**

**Information: PA Historical and Museum Commission  
Bureau For Historic Preservation  
Box 1026  
Harrisburg, PA 17108-1026**

## **Appendix 4**

5. Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry - A labor intensive work program (Job Training Partnership Act) provides funding for on-the-job training programs.

Information: PA Department of Labor and Industry  
Labor and Industry Building  
Harrisburg, PA 17120

6. A potential source of funds are Pennsylvania foundations. A 300+ page book costing approximately \$40.00 and entitled "Directory of Pennsylvania Foundations" is available from:

Information: Triadvocates Associated  
P.O. Box 336  
Springfield, PA 19064

Almost 1,000 profiles are listed for foundations in Pennsylvania and a number of these should be of prime consideration when looking at funding for the various stages of the Allegheny Highlands Trail Project.

#### ADDITIONAL REFERENCES

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**EQUESTRIAN TRAILS**, Howard County Equestrian Advisory Committee on Trails and The Trail Riders Of Today (TROT), 8945 Gue Road, Damascus, MD 20872

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**INSPECTION REPORT OF CERTAIN FORMER WESTERN MARYLAND RAILROAD TUNNELS AND BRIDGES**, November 1988, Transmark Associates, 2310 Grant Building, Pittsburgh, PA 15219

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**THE NONPROFIT PRIMER, A GUIDE BOOK FOR LAND TRUSTS**, The State Coastal Conservancy, 1330 Broadway, Suite 1100, Oakland, CA 94612