



April 10, 2017

**Re: Report to Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance**

**Debra Frawley – At-Large Board Member**

### **Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition**

The IHTC met at its quarterly meeting in Lisbon, Ohio in February. We reviewed the feedback received from participants in the IHTC Summit held in November 2016 and the discussions held during the Corridor Working Group meetings held in December for the Ohio and WV corridors and January for PA corridors. Some new items of note include:

- Cleveland received an \$8.5 million TIGER grant in 2016 to complete sections of the trails included in the Cleveland to Pittsburgh Corridor.
- The MetroParks Districts in Ohio are helping a great deal in completing sections of trail especially on the Ashtabula to Pittsburgh Corridor.
- Erie to Pittsburgh Trail representatives reported on the Oil Region Cycling Classic, the strategic plan and signage guidelines processes and new community and river connections in FOR's area.
- Feasibility studies to be completed for the gaps in the Sheepskin Trail in both PA and WV this year along the Parkersburg to Pittsburgh Corridor.
- The Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Corridor proposed route will most likely be changed due to acquisition issues. Existing trails in Westmoreland County may be considered.

There will be more Community Chats conducted this year. There were four in towns in 2016. This year there will be an application process for towns that want to hold a chat. There will also be four more Trail Trips (itineraries) completed within the IHTC region in 2017.

The trail count project has been completed and the Trail Counter "Library" will be available starting this spring. A trail group will be able to "sign out" five counters for a six week period. The group will collect the data and send it to RTC for a report and year data extrapolation.

A private Facebook group has been created for IHTC participants. It is a closed group which means only those who join it and are approved (IHTC participants not the general public) can see what is posted there. This is for internal communication, networking, problem solving, etc. Search for IHTC Community Network on Facebook and request to join. The IHTC already has a Facebook page for the public to see updates and stories.

### **Go To Trails**

The IHTC Project Support Team continues to update the inventory of recent projects and the status of the gaps in the system as well as needed updates and corrections to the Go To Trails web tool. Not all of the numbers are calculated yet, but in 2016 there were over 9 miles of new trail segments completed in Pennsylvania and Ohio. Not all of these are filling gaps but some took trail off-road or quieted discussions about ownership of the property and solved other issues. Connections are being made to communities and the river. Please continue to keep us informed of new projects and new problems.

### **EPT Signage Committee**

The signage committee sent notification of the approved draft guidelines to municipalities and other stakeholders requesting feedback.

### **Pennsylvania Environmental Council**

The PEC staff made a presentation to many of the state agencies, including DCNR and DEP officials describing the many projects and programs the organization is involved in across the state. This includes the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition, the Circuit and other state-wide trail projects.

Debra Frawley  
PEC Program Coordinator Trails & Recreation  
814-657-5242  
dfrawley@pecpa.org