



July 2019

Re: Report to Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance
Debra Frawley – At-Large Board Member

Recent meetings and outreach

The Northwest Regional Planning and Development Commission is updating the region's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). I attended a public meeting to discuss and add trail projects to the list for the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the PA Wilds Loop corridor. These must be on the LRTP in order to receive funding through transportation related grant sources. When the draft summary was published, not all of the trail projects were included. Kim Harris and I again sent them information to try to make sure the projects are included.

The Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) and Dominion Energy presented the Western Pennsylvania Environmental Awards in May. The award winners included:

- Troy Firth, founder Foundation for Sustainable Forests and active with trails in Crawford County
- Lucas DeGroote, Powdermill Nature Reserve
- Aspinwall Riverfront Park which includes a section of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail
- Pennsylvania Outdoor Corps
- Ron Steffey who received a lifetime achievement award

The dinner and social is also a time to network and talk with funders, state agency representatives and other trail groups.

The PEC Water Team has been meeting with the Trails Team to determine where the programs overlap and can assist each other. For example, the watershed groups that Tali is working with may be able to help trail groups with stormwater/drainage issues and rain garden maintenance. I also attended the French Creek Watershed Improvement Needs coalition meeting.

Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition

The IHTC met through a webinar on May 15. After the business meeting and updates along the corridors, guest speakers focused on event planning. Examples of successful events using trails were given with the hope that they can be adapted for other trail groups. Meeting notes and a Coalition Catch-up newsletter were sent out.

The IHTC Project Support Team (PST) met in person to plan for future meetings and technical assistance requests. Throughout the IHTC footprint there are current and upcoming projects:

- Conducting corridor-wide studies for development and maintenance
- Developing an image gallery that will be available for websites, etc.

- Providing assistance with acquisition
- Open Trails Story Map
- More Trail Trip itineraries in Story Map format
- Third annual Coalition of Regional Trail Initiatives – gathering of coalitions such as the IHTC from across the country sharing successes and challenges
- Corridor group meeting assistance
- Pipeline tool for project management for the EPT and PA Wilds Loop

IHTC meetings:

August 7, 2019 – Cuyahoga Valley National Park, OH
Hines Hill conference center
1403 W. Hines Hill Rd. Peninsula, OH 44264

November – REI store near Robinson
600 Settlers Ridge Center Drive, Pittsburgh

The PEC corridor feasibility study looking at the gaps in the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the PA Wilds Loop corridor funded through the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) continues. PEC staff are physically looking at gaps on property onto which we have permission to enter. The current conditions, challenges, existing or missing infrastructure, etc. are all being recorded and the mapping system will be updated.