

EPTA Trail Connections Committee Report

It should be noted information in this report is only for use by the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail Alliance, and is not permitted to be share with others, without the consent of the individual trail organizations/municipalities/owners. Some quick updates

- Courtney is making lots of progress in Allegheny County. Some progress is bringing forward new problems. That happens.
 - Brackenridge has submitted a TASA application for the construction of the half a mile section of trail in the borough
 - Springdale has kicked off their design for the trail. We have already received great feedback from the power plant and the community as that progresses.
- Courtney is setting up some key public officials to attend our Quarterly Meeting in Aspinwall. I suggest we cater to the public officials and tour the nearby project area early in the Meeting and reconvene if needed after the tour. The area is a crucial connection in an urban area bounded by the river, railroads, highways, and steep river slopes. Courtney will be in Ireland at the time of the meeting, but the connection is time sensitive and needs to be promoted.
- Bob Jennings is progressing forward with ownership rights in the Foxburg area. He is taking actions to claim ARTinC is the legal owner of specific areas.
- The Ritchie Run Bridge that is located on the downstream area of Emlenton received a \$136,000 Greenways, Trail, and Recreation (GWTR) CFA Grant. This is an important connection in the Emlenton to Foxburg Connection. The Allegheny Valley Trail Association was the applicant with help from the Oil Region Alliance and especially Kim Harris. Bob Jennings was a key promoter of the project to the local elected state officials.
- Crawford County Planning Department has offered Clear Lake Authority Act 13 funding to pay for 50% of the inspection with options and estimates for bridge improvements. The inspection is to be by a qualified engineer and estimates will be used for future grant funding for construction. Clear Lake Authority has received two proposals for engineering firms. Kim Harris has been a vital cog to make this happen.
- The Northwest PA Trail Association is clearing both vegetation and drains from the Erie County Line to the Black Bridge. This is through private property where they have a verbal agreement to use the land. They are trying to show that they are responsible trail stewards and are asking others to help them with administration and capacity.
- The recent buy out of the Genesee and Wyoming Railroad is slowing talks with the rail with trail from Corry and going west. Several governmental agencies including the Committee on Foreign Investment and the Surface Transportation Board are involved in the approval process.
- Marty Raddock is doing remarkable work with a variety of organizations. The planned October 4th event is an example.
- The Bayfront is gaining some spotlight. Hopefully meetings between now and mid-October will better define opportunities in both the short- and long-range plans. This is an area where we need to have a “Splash Event” for the PA Greenways and Trail Summit in Erie in 2021.
- Mercer County Trails Association also received funding from CFA GWTR Grant for \$75,000 for a trail connection from Shenango Trail to Soccer Field Extension.
- Mike Baker has provided great insights on northwest PA conditions and helping to move projects forward.
- Thanks to all on the committee. We are making a difference and gaining traction in making trail connections in areas that have slipped by for decades.

Submitted by Ron Steffey, Chairman

Put your efforts into getting the train to move. Once the train starts to move, others will hop onboard.