

Trails, Parks & Open Space

Overview

The Greater Philadelphia / Lower Delaware River Urban Waters region is fortunate to have a variety of opportunities to create a connected network of multi-use trails, including both right-of-ways (ROWs) from the area's long history as a hub of railroad activity, and greenway corridors that follow the region's creek and park systems. Some of these opportunities have been capitalized upon – a number of significant trail segments already exist or are moving toward construction – but gaps still exist.

Some Trail Systems

- **“The Circuit”** is a vision of a 750-mile interconnected network of multi-use trails announced in May 2012. A coalition of foundations, governments, non-profits, economic development professionals, and numerous other groups are working together to realize this vision for the Greater Philadelphia Region (including Philadelphia, Delaware, and Chester counties in Pennsylvania, and Camden and Burlington counties in New Jersey). To date, 250+ miles have been built. (<http://connectthecircuit.org>)
- **The East Coast Greenway** is a long-distance, urban, shared-use trail system that will ultimately link 25 major cities along the eastern seaboard from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida. In Pennsylvania, the East Coast Greenway enters Morrisville from Trenton, NJ and follows PA Bike Route E for much of its 55-mile route, passing through lower Bucks County, Philadelphia, and Delaware County. Crossing into Delaware near Marcus Hook, the trail then travels 38 miles through the state, including 19 miles of completed trail. (www.greenway.org)
- **The Northern Delaware Greenway Trail** spans 9 miles of northern New Castle County from Fox Point State Park on the Delaware River to the Brandywine Creek and the City of Wilmington. This urban trail connects with Wilmington's Walkway System and links together residential communities, schools, businesses, parks, and cultural sites. (www.trailink.com/trail/northern-delaware-greenway.aspx)
- **The Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail** is a 680-mile-long land and water route followed by U.S. Continental Army troops under George Washington and French troops under Jean-Baptiste de Rochambeau during their march from Newport, Rhode Island to Yorktown, Virginia in 1781 and their victorious return. The route was designated a National Historic Trail in 2009 and passes through Trenton, Philadelphia, Chester, and Wilmington, following a route similar to the East Coast Greenway. (www.nps.gov/waro)

Federal Sources of Technical and Financial Assistance for Trails, Parks & Open Space Projects

➤ U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Highway Administration:

- **Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)** – Provides funding for programs and projects defined as “transportation alternatives,” including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities, infrastructure projects for improving non-driver access to public transportation, and enhanced mobility, community improvement activities, and environmental mitigation; recreational trail projects; safe routes to school projects.
 - PA & NJ – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (www.dvrpc.org/)
 - DE – Wilmington Area Planning Council (www.wilmapco.org)

- **Recreational Trails Program (RTP)** – Provides funds to states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses.
 - PA – Vanyla Tierney (717-783-2654) vtierney@state.pa.us | Jeff Knowles, Regional Advisor (215-560-1182) jeknowles@pa.gov
 - NJ – John Flynn (609-984-1014) john.flynn@dep.state.nj.us | (www.state.nj.us/dep/parksandforests/natural/trail_grants.htm)
 - DE – Susan Moerschel (302-739-9235) susan.moerschel@state.de.us | David Bartoo, Trail Specialist david.bartoo@state.de.us
- **Federal Lands Access Program (FLAP)** – Program funds transportation planning, research, engineering, preventative maintenance, restoration, construction, and reconstruction of Federal Lands Access Transportation Facilities located on or adjacent to, or that provide access to Federal land. (www.efl.fhwa.dot.gov/files/programs/Access-Program-Application.pdf)
 - David Payne, FHWA-EFLHD Access Program Manager (571- 434-1543) David.Payne@dot.gov

➤ **Department of Interior – National Park Service:**

- **Land and Water Conservation Fund, State Assistance Program** (www.nps.gov/lwcf)
LWCF provides grant funding to states and through states to their local units of government to help plan, acquire land, and develop high-quality outdoor recreation facilities and protect these areas forever.
 - State contacts: www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/lwcf/contact_list.html
- **National Recreation Trails Program** (www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails)
Nationally recognizes local and regional trails in or easily accessible to urban areas, acknowledging local and state efforts to build and maintain valuable trails and trail systems.
- **National Water Trails System Program** (www.nps.gov/watertrails)
Launched in 2012, this program connects Americans to and strengthens support for local waterways among federal, state, local, and non-profit organizations. A National Water Trail is a type of National Recreation Trail that improves public access to waters and promotes recreation, conservation, and restoration.
 - Corita Waters (202-354-6900) NWTS@nps.gov
- **Connect Trails to Parks Program** (www.nps.gov/nts)
Funds facilities and projects where components of the National Trails System cross or touch units of the National Park System, links to other Federal facilities or programs associated with NPS-administered national trails, and places where the entire National Trails System is presented or interpreted.
- **Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program** (www.nps.gov/rtca)
Assists community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives. RTCA staff provides guidance to communities so they can conserve waterways, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways.
 - Northeast Region: Dave Lange (215-597-6477) david_a_lange@nps.gov
- **Groundwork USA** (www.groundworkusa.org)
Locally organized and controlled, Groundwork Trusts provide cost effective project development services focused on improving their communities' environment, economy, and quality of life.

Each Trust represents a strong partnership between government, business, foundations, community groups, and residents.

- Douglas Evans (617/223-5124) douglas_evans@nps.gov
- **Federal Lands to Parks Program** (www.nps.gov/ncrc/programs/flp)
Conveys surplus federal land to communities, usually at no cost, for public park and recreation.
 - John Barrett (404-507-5689) nps_flpsouth@nps.gov

Other Programs and Opportunities

- **Let's Move Outside Initiative** (www.letsmove.gov)
As the outdoor recreation component of the First Lady's *Let's Move!* campaign, this program provides information and opportunities for families to get active in nature – from neighborhood parks and open spaces, to national seashores, parks, and forests.
- **National Trails Day** [first Saturday in June] (www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-day)
On this day, hundreds of individuals and organizations arrange local recreational events to celebrate America's magnificent trail system. Events include hikes, biking and horseback rides, paddling trips, birdwatching, geocaching, gear demonstrations, stewardship projects, and more.
- **National Public Lands Day** [last Saturday in September] (www.publiclandsday.org)
The purpose is to promote volunteerism across the nation to work on projects that improve and restore the lands and increases public use for recreation, education, exercise and connecting with nature.

Other State and Local Programs

- **Regional Trail Program - Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission**
(www.dvrpc.org/RegionalTrailsProgram)
- **Pennsylvania:**
 - **Community Conservation Partnership Program (C2P2) – PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources** (www.dcnr.state.pa.us/brc/grants/index.aspx)
 - **Build PA Trails** (<http://maps.dcnr.pa.gov/BuildPATrails>) – a trail planning visualization website
 - **Transportation and Community Development Initiative – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission** (www.dvrpc.org/TCDI)
 - **Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative – PennDOT**
(www.smart-transportation.com/)
 - **Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) – Department of Community and Economic Development** (www.newpa.com/find-and-apply-for-funding/funding-and-program-finder/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp)
 - **Coastal Resource Management Program Grants – PA Department of Environmental Protection**
(<https://www.dep.state.pa.us/river/grants/grants.htm>)
 - **Keystone Preservation Projects & Construction Grants** (www.phmc.state.pa.us – see “Grants & Funding”)

➤ **New Jersey:**

- **Local Aid Bikeways Program** (www.state.nj.us/transportation/business/localaid/bikewaysf.shtm)
The NJ Department of Transportation's (NJDOT) Bikeway Grant Program provides funds to counties and municipalities to promote bicycling as an alternate mode of transportation.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Local Planning Assistance Program**
Administered by the State DOT, this program assists counties and municipalities in the development of bicycle and pedestrian plans. To apply, a municipality can contact DOT Bicycle and Pedestrian office directly; may require a resolution by the municipal council. State absorbs 100% of the planning costs.
- **Camden County Open Space Grants**
(<http://www.camdencounty.com/county-news/freeholders-award-municipal-recreation-grants-0>)
- **Camden County Open Space Trust**
(www.camdencounty.com/parks/going-green/open-space-farmland-preservation)
- **Green Acres – NJ Department of Environmental Protection**
(www.nj.gov/dep/greenacres/pdflaunch.html#applications)

➤ **Delaware:**

- **Trails and Pathways Initiative** (<http://trails.delaware.gov>)
- **Delaware Land & Water Conservation Trust Fund (DTF)**
(www.dnrec.delaware.gov/parks/Services/Documents/grants/DTF%20Trail%20Guidance.pdf)
Matching grants for the planning, acquisition, and development of parks, greenways, and trails.
- **Delaware Open Space Program**
(<http://www.dnrec.delaware.gov/openspaces/Pages/OpenSpaces.aspx>)