



THE TRAIL-LETTER

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION OF THE MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL

VOLUME #2 ***** WINTER 1992 ***** ISSUE #6

WE 'VE BOUGHT IT !!

Thanks to the financial, political, and moral support of many individuals and organizations, we have been able to secure the use of 38 miles of the abandoned Montour Railroad right-of-way for the Montour Trail.

On December 23, the Montour Trail Council acquired title to 21 miles of the right-of-way in Washington County. Allegheny County received the title for 8 miles in Allegheny county, as well as a perpetual easement for an additional nine miles of trail.

Along with the excitement of ownership comes the responsibility for the actual development of the Trail on the right-of-way in both counties. By the terms of the public private partnership agreement with Allegheny County, MTC will develop, operate and maintain those sections in Allegheny County. The development tasks will be accomplished by a combination of volunteer and contracted efforts including improvements such as parking, access and safety features, the actual grading and surfacing of the Trail and determinations of those portions of the right-of-way that can accommodate a separate horse trail alongside the main recreational trail.

Development of the Trail will be undertaken in sections. An initial section will extend from Cecil Park to Hendersonville in Cecil Township, Washington County. Other sections being considered for development initially would lie within Robinson Township, Washington County and in Within Findlay Township, Allegheny County. We are targeting completion of the initial section(s) for October, 1992.

Ways in which you can become involved in building the trail will be discussed at a special meeting to be held on January 27 at the Cecil Township #3 Fire Hall on Route 50 in Cecil.

NOW LET'S BUILD IT !!

At a special meeting to be held on January 27, you will have the opportunity to learn about the things you will be able to do to help build the Montour Trail.

Our successes to date have been almost totally brought about volunteer efforts and there will be an even greater need for volunteer support as we enter the development phase of our project. With the increased level of volunteerism, it will be especially important for us to maintain a high degree of organization and coordination throughout this phase.

The January 27 meeting will be held to provide prospective volunteers with:

- an overview of the entire development phase.
- distinctions between volunteer and contracted tasks.
- job descriptions for tasks that will need to be accomplished by volunteers.
- opportunities to volunteer for specific jobs.

Examples of the kinds of volunteer help that will be needed include:

- good-neighbor contacts with adjacent landowners.
 - engineering and landscaping design.
 - manual labor including posting, securing and staking-out property, removing trash, light grading, etc.
 - phone chain to help coordinate volunteer teams.
 - crafts and trades including welding and carpentry.
- These tasks will be discussed at the meeting.

Details on the time and location of the meeting are given in the enclosed flier. If you cannot attend, but would want to become involved in these volunteer efforts, please let Membership Chair Jerry Agin know. Jerry can be reached at 642-6900 - ext 213 (daytime) or 343 -1425 (evenings).

TESTIMONY PREPARED FOR MARCH PUC HEARINGS ON BRIDGES

As reported on the previous Trail-Letter issue, the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission has remanded the case on dismantlement of the Montour Railroad/highway bridges for further hearings to consider public recreational uses and historic preservation issues. This decision gives us another chance to make a convincing case for the preservation of the bridges for Montour Trail use.

MTC Right-of-Way Committee Chair Dave Wright with help from MTC Counsel Dick Wilson, has assembled large volumes of testimony for this purpose. Dave has used the large compilation of traffic counts, accident reports and dimensional surveys he had earlier assembled on each bridge.

Our message will be that these Trail crossings over highways can be made safe and that it will be in the public interest to preserve them for recreational purposes.

This is but one example of this "extra mile" that the Trail Council has gone on its efforts to make the Trail happen. The follow-on PUC hearings are scheduled for March 13, 1992.

MTC SAYS THANKS

The Montour Trail Council wishes to acknowledge and thank the following foundations for their generosity in providing grants towards the Montour Trail:

Deluxe Check Printers Foundation	\$2000
H. M. Bitner Charitable Trust	\$500

This money will be added to the construction funds.

THE MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH, PA 15228-0866
PHONE : (412) - 831 - 2030

STAN SATTINGER	PRESIDENT
DINO ANGELICI	VICE-PRESIDENT
PETER KOHNKE	SECRETARY
JACK SWISHER	TREASURER
DENNIS SIMS	NEW-LETTER EDITOR
BILL METZGER	PHOTOGRAPHER

LET'S GET READY TO WORK.

The next meeting of the Montour Trail Council will be held on January 27, 1992 at 7:30 p.m. at the Cecil Township #3 Fire Hall on Route 50 in Cecil Township in the upstairs meeting room. The purpose of the meeting will be to discuss construction plans for 1992 and to encourage citizens to think about getting their "hands dirty" in actually constructing the Trail.

DONATIONS OF MATERIAL AND SERVICES SOUGHT

In addition to volunteer labor, MTC is seeking donations of materials and services for the development of the Montour Trail. Our 501 (c)(3) status entitles any contributor to a tax write-off. We are already promised sufficient steel for approximately 80 pivoting gates by USX/Kobe Steel.

Examples of material that will be needed include:

- Stone or concrete for rip-rap
- Lumber for railings and bridge decks
- Nursery stock for screen plantings
- Crushed stone for the pathway
- Signs
- Concrete for bridge abutments

Examples of needed services include:

- Grading
- Power post-hole digging
- Backhoe and dump truck
- Jack hammers to dismantle unwanted bridge abutments

If you could either donate items or know of a likely donor please attend the January 27 meeting in Cecil Township. If you cannot attend this meeting please contact Tim Gerhart at 267 - 4856 (evenings) or Dave Wright at 746 - 2517 (evenings).