



The Official Publication of the Montour Trail Council

MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

Volume 23 Issue 3

May-June 2012

A Month of Bridges



Georgetown Road

Friday, April 13 was a lucky day for the Montour Trail as two brand-spanking-new bridges were erected at Hendersonville. The bridges cross Morganza and Georgetown Roads and will allow trail users to avoid two very hazardous and dangerous road crossings. Beech Construction, the prime contractor for the project, was working under time-line pressures to avoid closing either road for an extended period. The first bridge to be erected was Georgetown Road. This job was a little tricky because of the sharp ascending curve the road makes under the bridge. Placing the crane and the beams was a challenge. The Friday the 13th jinx hit when the back wheels of the truck carrying the bridge would not steer, and this delayed the lift by about an hour. Once everything was placed, the 30-something ton structure was lifted into place, and it was time for lunch (left). Note: the bridges came already pre-assembled from the fabricator, American Bridge.

For those who could not see the morning lift, a repeat performance was held in the afternoon at Morganza Road (above right).



Morganza Road



Southview Road

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A third trail bridge was erected the following week at Southview Road. This bridge replaces the former bridge which was removed to make room for this bridge and the railroad bridge. This bridge is three concrete box beams rather than steel beams. A girder from the original bridge has been saved for a future display. (right)

On April 26, the Peters Township Website announced that construction was complete and the bridge over Bebout Road was open. The bridge replaces the tunnel that took the road under Arrowhead Trail and improves the sight distance at this very busy intersection with Valleybrook Road (right, photo by Paul Everson).



Bebout Road

Cecil Park Ramp Gets New Surface

Frank Ludwin, aka Mr. Fixit, Cecil Township Supervisor and Roadmaster, as well as a Montour Trail Board Member oversees the paving of the ramp that connects the Montour Trail to Cecil Park. Originally, paved with crushed limestone, the surface would erode from the rainfall and snowmelt and would require resurfacing and grading each spring before the Burgh Event. Cecil Township Department of Public Works graded the surface, placed millings and laid the asphalt purchased by the Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail. Proceeds earned from the Tails to Trails Dog Walk made this possible. They had some asphalt leftover, so the bump was smoothed over on the west side of the Glass Hill Bridge and the remainder of the asphalt was laid on the east side approach to the bridge.



Visit the Montour Trail Web Site at:
www.montourtrail.org

To Converse, join the Yahoo Group at:
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Montour-Trail/>



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The Prez Sez: Bridges

Back in 2008, we completed three bridges in one year, and figured that was a high mark that would never be exceeded.

How about five bridges in just over one month?

I'm not kidding. There were actually five new bridges substantially completed along the Montour Trail in late April and May of this year. This is truly an unprecedented burst of construction activity. Begging the question: how was all this brought about? The key has been working together, not only within Montour, but also with our partners, in aligning common goals and setting ourselves to achieving them.

One very valuable partner is Peters Township, who for over 25 years has owned and maintained the Arrowhead portion of the Montour. They have now outdone themselves with the beautiful Bebout Bridge, opened to trail users at the end of April. Like all of these bridges over roads, they have greatly improved safety for motorists on the busy lanes beneath. Peters is to be commended for persevering through significant difficulties over many years to bring to reality this true eye-catcher of a trail bridge near the middle of the Montour system.

A newer partner is rising energy star MarkWest, who is constructing a railroad for their use, and an adjacent branch trail for us, stretching from Southview to Westland in northern Washington County. In addition to the branch, a half-mile section of Montour's main line, now completely rebuilt, closely parallels the new railroad. Where trail and rail cross over Southview Road, two bridges were built: a steel girder railroad bridge in April and, right next to it, our trail bridge. The latter, our first concrete box beam bridge, was just completed in early May. The two bridges are offset lengthwise to enhance sight distance on the road as it curves underneath. Our new Southview trail bridge is just one early facet of what we foresee as a long term partnership with MarkWest that will bring significant benefits to the local communities and to trail users.

Rounding out the five are our Georgetown and Morganza Bridges in Cecil Township. Less than a half mile apart, these will eliminate a pair of road crossings long deemed to be among the most dangerous on the entire Montour. Our trail users can hardly wait. Lucky for them, it's pretty close. Steel girders for both were set in mid April, and concrete decks placed in late May. They're expected to be open in early July; the celebration's already set for Saturday, July 28.

How? Again, partnering. Over the last fifteen years, successive waves of dedicated Montour Trail folks have been working to get this two-bridge project going. They carefully nurtured a complex interlocking of five sets of partners. Federal, State, County, Local and Trail Council technical and financial resources were painstakingly woven together to enable Georgetown and Morganza to carry us all safely over those bustling roads. Internal partnering, too; some construction tasks were actually carried out by Montour's cadre of volunteer work crews. In addition, the time devoted by volunteers in traveling to, working on, and meeting about a wide range of aspects of this project represents a staggeringly large number of hours. It's all worth it, though, to make the heart of the Montour so much safer and more enjoyable for the tens of thousands of people who'll be traveling the trail there.

So, five bridges up in a single month. Like five raised fingers that are of course all part of one hand. It's all about working together with the arms and legs and the other hands and heads, that something extraordinarily worthwhile can be accomplished. From the bottom of my heart, thank you one and all for being a part of the Montour.

Ned Williams

Friends' Meetings and Work Parties

MTC Board Meeting:

Every third Monday of the month - 6:00 p.m. at 304 Hickman St., Suite 3, Bridgeville, PA. Turn right off of the Bridgeville exit of I-79. Turn left at the next light, go straight at next light and make left turn onto Hickman St. just after the Post Office. Call Ned at 724-225-9856 for more information or to get on the agenda.

Cecil Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every fourth Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. From May-August, meetings are held at the Kurnick Access area along the trail off Cecil Henderson Road; other months (with the exception of November and December) meet at the MTC Offices. Work and cleanup parties are scheduled as needed. Call 412-496-4308 for more information, or email densimwx@comcast.net

Airport Area Friends:

Friends of the Trail meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7:00 p.m. at the Forest Grove Fire Hall, 2044 Ewings Mill Road, Coraopolis, PA 15108. Anyone from the Airport Area is encouraged to attend. Contact Phyllis McChesney at 412 264-6303 for more information. A "work party" is held the second Saturday of the month and more are scheduled when working on special projects. Please call 412 262-3748 to lend a hand.

Bethel Park Friends:

Friends of the Trail meeting, every first Tuesday of the month at 7:30 p.m. in the Bethel Park Municipal Building Council Chambers. Anyone interested in the Bethel Park Trail segment is encouraged to come. Work and cleanup party, every second and fourth Saturday of the month - 8:30 a.m. Call Bob O'Connell at 412-833-6259 for location and information.

South Hills Friends:

Meeting second Tuesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. at South Park Township Community Room, located behind the Township Building at 2675 Brownsville Road, South Park, 15129. Work and cleanup parties scheduled and advertised as needed. For more information, contact David Oyler at 412-831-9288, davidoyler@verizon.net, or Paul McKeown at 412-835-6692, mckeownp@comcast.net

Fort Cherry Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, second Wednesday of the month at McDonald Borough Building, Council chambers at 7:00 p.m. Work and cleanup parties, scheduled as needed. For more information, contact Ray Johnston at 724-356-2621.

Peters Township Friends:

Friends of the Trail Meeting, first non-holiday Monday of the month at Peters Township Parks and Recreation Center at 7:00 p.m. For more information on work and cleanup parties, please contact Jim Robbins at 724-941-6132, or for monthly meetings, Mark Imgrund at 724-941-6351 or by e-mail at markimgrund@comcast.net.

The Montour Railroad Historical Society:

The newest Friends group. For more information send email to mrhs@montourrr.com.



In Memoriam

Hoyt G. Hall

1926-2012

"The Cecil Trail Ambassador"

Shortly after dad retired in 1989, he bought a bicycle at a garage sale. The Montour Trail is only about a mile from his house. He started riding the trail with a passion. For the first few years he was logging over 2,000

miles per year. My mother would get upset with him riding so much, but that didn't seem to deter him. He soon joined the Cecil Friends Group and became their treasurer. Dad loved to talk and he loved being on the trail and meeting people. I am sure if you ran into Dad on the trail, your visit was extended by talking with him. His trail friends gave him the nickname "The Ambassador". He made banks using the doors of post office boxes from the old



Cecil Post Office and made walking sticks out of Sumac trees to be given away as premiums when people made monetary donations to the trail. He participated enthusiastically in the trail's work parties, Rails to Trails Day, Cecil Indian Summer Festivals, Burgh

Races, Ikea Christmas Tree Sales, and Ikea Races. The Ikea Race was always held on or close to his birthday. He was surprised one year when he worked the turnaround for the race; a lot of the runners were wishing him happy birthday as they passed him. He couldn't understand how all of these people knew that it was his birthday. He found out after the race when he got back to Ikea. The runners were told to wish Hoyt a "Happy Birthday" as they passed him. He enjoyed the birthday cake also! He received various awards and recognitions for his time spent on the trail. Dad met a lot of nice people and made some great friends. You see, he told us many stories about the people and happenings on the trail. Dad really loved The Montour Trail and the wonderful people that he became friends with. As a side note, he has gone through 5 bicycles during his years on the trail and is an ex-employee of The Montour Railroad.

We thank everyone who is involved with the Montour Trail, especially those people who have become friends of Dad's.

The Hall Family

Pittsburgh Cycling Expo

by Don Thobaben

On March 25, 2012, the first Pittsburgh Cycling Expo was held at the Airport Marriott with all proceeds benefitting the Montour Trail. The event featured a bike ride on the new Airport Connector, 53 vendors representing 15 regional trail groups, charity bike rides, bike shops, trail related businesses and a silent auction. Sixty three baskets of prizes were donated by many trail supporters. A cycling fashion show/luncheon including tubular fashion designs and a talk by Mary Shaw and Roy Weil of the Trail Volunteer Fund concluded the event.

Attendance for the event exceeded 1000 and was received enthusiastically by the cycling public and vendors in attendance. The proceeds from the event will be used for trail development and maintenance.

The event was promoted by Cathy Rogers, a cycling enthusiast and owner of Aerotech Designs, a cycling clothing manufacturer in Coraopolis. Cathy and Steve Ewing along with MTC Board members Phyllis McChesney, Don Thobaben and trail friends Kathy Hoover, Terry Craig, Jackie Wesche-Thobaben, Kevin Craig and John Staufer worked for 7 months to organize this first time event.

Thank you to all who attended. Get out and ride. Support your local trail by becoming a member. Sign up for a charity bike ride and most of all volunteer.

Stay tuned for details on next year's event.

Standing left to right in their tubular fashions: Terry Craig, Kevin Craig, Steve Ewing, Sue Kikel, John Staufer, Cathy Rogers, Phyllis McChesney, Jackie Wesche-Thobaben and sitting Kathy Hoover and Don Thobaben



Twilight Trail Walk

On Friday July 27 from 8:30 to 10:30 p.m., The Friends of the Montour Trail in Peters Township will be hosting a Twilight Trail Walk along Arrowhead Trail. Once again this year we will have 2 starting locations: Farmhouse Coffee/My Big Fat Greek Gyro located at 502 Valleybrook Road, and St. Petersburg Center located at 210 Valleybrook Road, McMurray, PA 15317. For a \$7.00 donation, participants can walk along the luminaria-lit trail. Participants will also receive a glow necklace to light their way, and an entry into a raffle for great prizes from local businesses. Participants are encouraged to bring a chair and stay for the refreshments and music. Children under 5 and pets are free. **Registration will be at the event only.** In the event of a downpour, the walk will be rescheduled to Saturday July 28. All proceeds will benefit maintenance and expansion of the Montour Trail in Peters Township. Contact sueheadley@comcast.net or call 412-835-3011 for additional information.

Earth Day Cleanup



Twenty six employees of Kurt J. Lesker Co. participated in an Earth Day lunchtime cleanup of the Montour Trail from Route 51 (MP43.8) to the Clairton trailhead (MP46.2) on April 25, 2012. The employees picked up 415 pounds of trash. The Lesker Com-

pany employees have adopted this section of the trail, and are also regular trail users during their lunch hours. The Lesker Company is a Montour Trail member and this year donated \$1,000 for trail construction currently going on between Triphammer and Piney Fork Roads. A fall trail cleanup day is also planned.

The Light At The End Of The Tunnel

by Doug Ettinger, photos by Bill Capp

Actually it's the light in the tunnel. The National Tunnel at milepost 25 has lights. High efficiency induction lighting fixtures manufactured by NSI Industries supplied by Cary Caspersen of Gemco Sales and Graybar Electric were installed in the 625 foot long National Tunnel to provide a safe and secure passage



Frank Ludwin, Doug Ettinger, and John Kozak check the installation of a light fixture.

for our trail users. Dave Fike of Synergy Electrical Sales and Alan Weyland of Alcan Cable donated 300 feet of power cable installed in a trench down a very steep hillside. Gary Robinson of Hubbell Wiring Devices donated the wire pulling grips.

The project was funded by the Washington County Tourism Agency through a grant of \$11,000. Labor was provided by Montour Trail Council volunteers and the project took in excess of 550 hours to complete. Frank Ludwin (aka Mr. Fixit) a long time trail volunteer, board member and Cecil Township supervisor designed and engineered the project. He and his intrepid band of tunnel workers; Bill Capp,



Lighting check

Doug Ettinger, John Kozak, Ralph Donovan, Charlie Beaumarrige and Shaun McCusker drilled over 400 holes in the tunnel wall to hang the fixtures and hand dug a 250 foot trench on the hillside for the power cable. The power feed comes from Klinger Road above the tunnel.

The lights will be on a astronomical timer so they will turn on before sunrise and turn off after sunset. A big thank you to this group for bringing light to the tunnel.

The Burgh's Race Report

Results courtesy of www.runhigh.com, photos by Dennis Sims

Burgh 5K

Open Men

Place	Name	Age	Home Town	Time
1	Ron Ferrie	22	Coraopolis, PA	17:40
2	Alphonsus Suravicz	29	Pittsburgh, PA	18:26
3	Josh Pusateri	15	Washington, PA	18:34

Open Women

1	Caroline Richards	29	Pittsburgh, PA	22:12
2	Margaret Simonis	32	Pittsburgh, PA	22:35
3	Jennifer Yanni	42	Washington, PA	22:48

Burgh 10K

Open Men

1	Jeff Weiss	25	Avella, PA	32:04
2	Trent Binford	23	Bethlehem, PA	32:54
3	Steve Stredlick	29	Pittsburgh, PA	34:03

Open Women

1	Anna Beck	27	Washington, PA	37:01
2	Heather Clear	28	Morgantown, WV	37:06
3	Michelle Corkum	27	Pittsburgh, PA	38:14

Over 725 participants took part in the 12th Burgh's Pizza and Wings 10K/5K runs and 2-Mile Family Walk. This established a new record for the event. A cloudy and cool morning with a few spits of rain provided the participants of all ages comfortable conditions. As always following the runs and walk, everyone is treated to a great lunch of hoagies, wings, pasta and beverages of your choice at the shelter in Cecil Park. With this year's event, the eatery will have raised nearly a quarter of a million dollars for the Trail.

Double Dippers (ran both events)

Place	Name	Age	Home Town	5K Time	10K Time	Total
1	Ron Mauro	36	Venetia, PA	18:43	39:39	58:22
2	Mike Romzy	50	Moon Twp, PA	20:32	43:46	1:04:18
3	Rich Sandala	50	Venetia, PA	21:03	43:21	1:04:23
4	Stephen Wells	15	Pittsburgh, PA	26:57	42:06	1:09:03
5	Robert Mason	42	Pittsburgh, PA	22:01	47:43	1:09:44
6	Youssef Mekaoui	28	Pittsburgh, PA	22:09	47:48	1:09:56
7	Jason Krut	33	McDonald, PA	22:26	48:28	1:10:54
8	Caroline Richards	29	Pittsburgh, PA	22:28	48:52	1:11:20
9	Lindsey Mizenko	35	McDonald, PA	23:28	48:25	1:11:53
10	Keith Bailey	45	Venetia, PA	23:00	49:29	1:12:28



The Airport Connector Officially Opens



Allegheny County Executive Rich Fitzgerald addresses the audience.

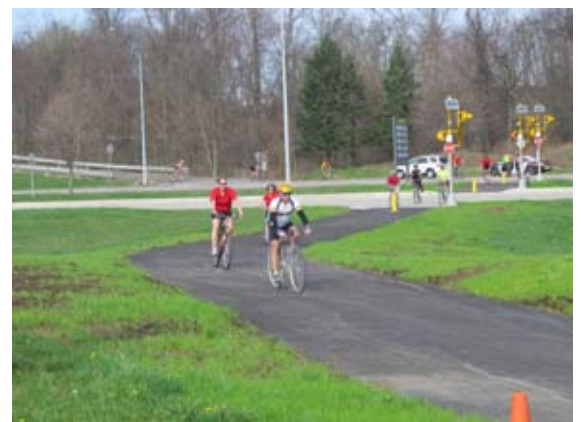
Enlow Tunnel and Milepost 8. Airplane signs, Bike Route signs, and arrows at the intersection direct riders up Enlow and around a gate on airport property to a right turn on Clinton Road, up a hill and through a fence, once again on airport property. There are lots of signs to direct first time users.

Thanks to all who helped with this 11 year project, to the Allegheny County Airport Authority for allowing us to use their property, and to the Allegheny County Regional Asset District (your 1% sales tax at work!) for the grant we needed to see it through.

The long awaited, official opening of the Montour Trail Airport Connector was a huge success and the featured speaker, County Executive Rich Fitzgerald, opined that it was a big link in making Pittsburgh the bicycling hub of the East Coast.

Many in attendance, though, were just happy to have a new place to ride. Of the 130 or so attendees, about 80 were cyclists who had ridden the route to the event in the Pittsburgh International Airport long-term parking lot behind ride leaders from Pittsburgh's Major Taylor Cycling Club. Being the first day of Spring with temperatures in the high 70's, it was a beautiful day to ride.

The 6.3 mile connector consists of short stretches of public road and secure roads through airport property and starts at the five point intersection between the



MONTOUR RAILROAD HISTORY

The Junkyard (Bob Ciminel ©2012)

You would never know it today, but the two buildings nestled between the Montour Trail and Cliff Mine Road at the Montour Exit on the Penn-Lincoln Parkway are located on what used to be a railroad scrap yard operated by the Briggs & Turivas Company, a railroad equipment dealer and steel producer headquartered in Chicago.



This is an aerial photograph of the B&T scrapyard taken in 1973. Photo courtesy of Greg Corcoran (©2012)

B&T opened its new scrap yard on the Montour in the 1920s at Lotus Station, between Scott Siding and Cliff Mine Siding (Trail Milepost 5.5). Many of the original coal cars on the Montour Railroad and other equipment were purchased from B&T, and it was an active shipper and receiver on the Montour, with derelict cars coming in and refurbished cars going out.

Besides its scrapping operations, B&T also repaired and sold rail equipment to other railroads, as well as industrial and commercial enterprises. Purchasing reconditioned railroad equipment was an inexpensive option in times of tight money. In most cases, car bodies were replaced or repaired, brake riggings inspected, new springs, axles and wheels installed, couplers and draft gear replaced, and a new paint job were all that were needed to produce a car that could run for another 20 years.

With B&T located on the Montour main track, the company had multiple shipping options available. Cars could be interchanged with the following railroads along the Montour and its branches:

- Pittsburgh & Lake Erie Railroad at Montour Junction
- Pittsburgh & West Virginia Railway at Southview and Salida
- Pennsylvania Railroad at McDonald, Hills and Pennmont
- Union Railroad and the Bessemer & Lake Erie Railroad at Mifflin Junction
- B&O Railroad at Snowden.

The B&T scrapyard was in operation until 1977, but was closed as the Montour approached abandonment. The Montour's X-1 railroad crane, located along the Trail at the former site of Montour No. 4 mine at Hills, was sold to B&T as part of the railroad's shutdown. The crane eventually ended up in Dennison, Ohio when B&T terminated its operations on the Montour.

Former Montour Railroad employee Gene P. Schaeffer provides a short synopsis of the final days of the B&T scrapyard:

"During June & July 1977 B&T began shipping their cranes out. I remember the B&T crane that was painted Red, White & Blue for the Bicentennial kept derailing en route to McDonald. I was working Section Gang #1 but wasn't able to take any photos of the cranes moving. However, crane "B&T" #76 on June 10, 1977, derailed on McDonald Transfer. It had to go back to B&T for work and on June 16, 1977 it again derailed on the main track at the East end of Boggs. Then in July 6, 1977, B&T cranes #7003 and #1776 derailed at Champion with a notation in the derailment ledger "not enough weight on front of crane with the boom disconnected".

Many would agree that the old B&T scrapyard looks much better now than it did in those halcyon days when the Montour was an operating railroad, and many others (myself included) would say all things have beauty in them, even junkyards; you simply have to look for it, as illustrated by this 1975 photograph by Gene Schaeffer.



Photo by Gene P. Schaeffer (©2012)

Bob Ciminel is the founder of the Montour Railroad Yahoo group http://finance.groups.yahoo.com/group/montour_rr/ There are currently 307 members from across the country. You are encouraged to join. There is a wealth of information about the Montour Railroad at this location and you can pose questions of its membership, from whom you are sure to get an answer.

Welcome New Members

The Montour Trail Council welcomes these new members and thanks them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have recently renewed their membership and to remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when we apply for grants.

New Members

Greg & Christy Alexander
Deborah P. Andrus
Gary Bauer
Roxanne Carrol
Craig Carter
George H. Counihan
Andrew Flemm
Carolyn Freeman
Adrienne & Bill Gerber
Charmaine Holt
Pamela Hrabak
Ralston S. Jackson
Owen James
Joan (Reggie) Jennison
Mary Jo Jindra
Donald LaJevic
James McCardle
Greg Nissly

Fred Pappas

T.J. Pynos

Mary P. Rickerd

Joseph Rudinsky

Jack Schmidt

Carol Schuler

Jim Shore

Dave Smith

John Wright

Benefactors

Dennis J. Lesko

Rolf Otterness

Lawrence Sheets

Andrew & Ming Tung

Leaders

Roger Hindenlang

Thomas Levine

Donations received in memory of Hoyt Hall made by :

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Mark and Patricia Hyman

Catharine Litvak

Richard and Jo Ann Rehak

Alma and William Woodhall

Russell and Rosemary

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William & Jean Supan

Melanie Lattimer

Duane and Amy Hall

Bernard Marin

Ed and Kathie Kovacic

The Barton Family

Hedy and Shirley Burns

The John Cushma Family

Dorothy Kerr

Walter and Patricia Schaller

John Natale

Robert and Nancy Krek

Trail Dust

On Tuesday, June 5, the Washington County Board of Commissioners will host a ribbon cutting ceremony at Burgettstown to celebrate the completion of the Panhandle Trail. It takes place at 11:00 a.m. at the Industrial Safety Consultants Building at 1802 Main Street.

Deadline for submissions for the next issue (July-August 2012) will be Thursday, July 12. Information regarding the Half Marathon and the Tour the Montour will be featured. Mailing date will be August 4.

Apologies to Montour Railroad Historian Gene Schaeffer (*Great Westland Coupler Caper March-April 2012*) for not providing credit where credit was due. He was the discoverer of the Coupler.

I want to help complete the Montour Trail!

I want to join the Montour Trail Council at this level:

<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior	\$15
<input type="checkbox"/> Individual	\$25
<input type="checkbox"/> Family	\$35
<input type="checkbox"/> Supporting	\$50
<input type="checkbox"/> Sustaining	\$100
<input type="checkbox"/> Benefactor	\$250
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Montour Trail Head at Mile “0” to Close

Because of two major construction projects occurring near Mile 0 of the Montour Trail, on Montour Road off Route 51 near Coraopolis, users are strongly encouraged to access their favorite recreational trail at some other point from late May until late October.

In the first project, PennDOT is rehabbing the Route 51 bridge that goes over the top of mile “0” and the Montour Run stream. This project started in April and the trail is open, but there are periodic weekend closings of the bridge and there is one lane traffic during the week causing traffic tie-ups. There also will be a complete two week shutdown of the bridge in the near future as they replace the concrete deck of the bridge. Please review the PennDOT District 11 web site or other media sites for information on this Route, 51 Montour Run bridge project. <http://www.dot.state.pa.us/pennDOT/districts/district11.nsf/D11Roadwork>

The second project is much more disruptive. Due to an environmental remediation project adjacent to and under portions of the trail between milepost 0.2 and 0.4, full CLOSURE of the trail in this area is necessary for the public’s safety. The project is called the Breslube-Penn Superfund Site Remediation and is under the jurisdiction of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). During this closure, trail users will not be able to get through or go around the construction area. The parking lot will be closed. Periodic closure of Montour Road is also expected.

The MTC was just informed that there has been a delay in the start of the remediation project. The length of delay and impact on the operations of the trail near mile 0 are unknown. We will keep you updated in future newsletters and on the MTC web site. Until further information becomes available the trail will be open.

Please see www.montourtrail.org for directions to all of the trail heads and under “construction alerts” for updates to these projects.