



TRAIL NEWS

York County Rail Trail Authority Newsletter

2025 –2026 Fall & Winter

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Executive Director

Meet the Big Combo Project!



When York County Rail Trail Authority purchased 8.5 miles of dormant rail line in December 2020, their 10 volunteer directors knew they were about to step well outside their conventional role as trail developers. To be expected, many sections of the rail corridor were overgrown to the point of being impassable. But also, nearby stretches of Oil Creek had seriously undermined the rails. Building trail was not feasible without a stream restoration. The authority questioned, “How do we begin?”

Now almost five years later, with over \$4.5 million in grants and nearly as many hours of expert assistance, the authority has completed an expansion of the Hanover Trolley Trail and a restoration of Oil Creek in Heidelberg Township. (Photo above by Kinsley Construction.) While more trail is to be built within the rail corridor and an additional section of Oil Creek remains to be restored, the authority is pleased to announce that the trail section to Jacobs Mill Road, Heidelberg Township, will officially open to the public later this fall. ***Come and enjoy!***

(See page 2 for more details..)

Trails Start With Us.

VISIT THESE TRAIL-FRIENDLY BUSINESSES & THANK THEM FOR SUPPORTING YORK COUNTY RAIL TRAILS!

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York, PA 17403
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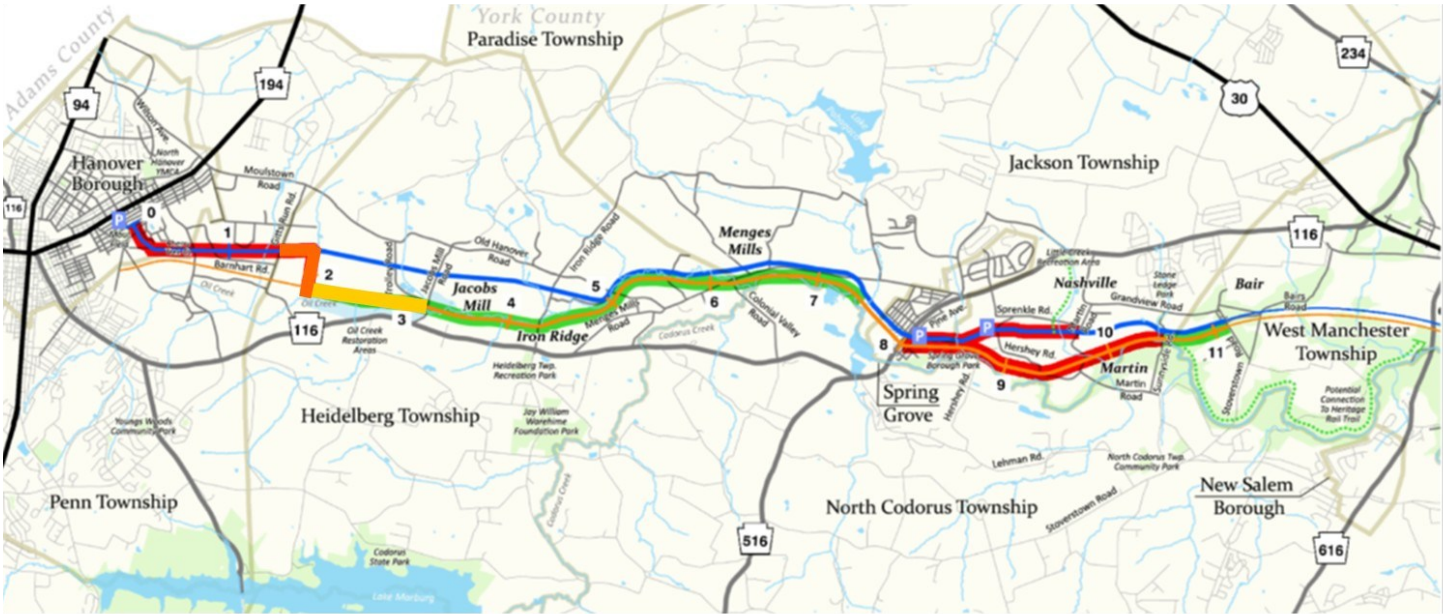


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Project Updates

Hanover Trolley Trail



Gitts Run Connector to Jacobs Mill Road

Later this fall, Hanover Trolley Trail's western section will officially be opened to Jacobs Mill Road. (top photo on right) This expansion began in 2024 with construction of a connector trail from Gitts Run Road to the rail corridor purchased in 2020, (orange line on map) and was immediately followed in 2025 with trail construction to Jacobs Mill Road (yellow line on map). From the trailhead at Hanover Borough's Moul Field, the western section offers approximately 3 miles of off-road, recreational travel.

Funding was provided by PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources' Growing Greener Grant, PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, and local grants from the J William Warehime Foundation, Powder Mill Foundation, and Explore York.

Oil Creek Wetlands Restoration

Also in October, restoration of Oil Creek Wetlands Phase 2 will be complete. (middle photo) Combined with Phase 1, completed in 2024, the restoration offers visitors exceptional views of over ten acres of wetland habitat. Two viewing areas built along the Hanover Trolley Trail offer visitors the opportunity to view the plants and animals making their home within the new wetlands. (bottom photo)

Stream restoration was funded by grants from National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, Susquehanna River Basin Commission, PA Department of Environmental Protection, PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, York County Planning Commission's Countywide Action Plan and Marcellus Shale Fund, York County Conservation District, and J William Warehime Foundation.

Access to these projects is available at Moul Field, 151-153 Moul Avenue, Hanover, PA 17331, where visitors will find an information kiosk, parking, and the public pathway.



Reminders to Recreate Safely. Visitors to the newest section of the Hanover Trolley Trail are reminded to use caution when crossing busy highways such as Gitts Run Road. Roadway signs are installed at all trail crossings; however, motorists may be unfamiliar with the increase in pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Signs on the trail gates request that cyclists dismount and all visitors proceed safely into the intersection. Also, visitors to the newest section of trail are reminded to stay to the public pathway. The surrounding wetlands are **not open** to the public. Leaving the pathway is trespassing into private property. And lastly, as PA hunting season begins, remember to “**Wear Orange. Be Seen.**”

Support the building of your rail trails!



Purchase a 2026 York County Rail Trails Calendar

Sponsored once again by York County Trail Towns, the 2026 calendar is sure to keep you exploring sections of the Heritage Rail Trail and Hanover Trolley Trail, bringing you joy and good health! At \$16 plus \$4 for shipping, the calendar also makes a great gift for your rail trail friends. Available online at www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org/donate or at the York County Rail Trail Authority office. Call (717) 428-0999 to pick up.



New this year—prizes to the top three photographers who submitted trail images for the calendar! Many thanks to York’s White Rose Bar & Grill, Railroad’s Captain Bob’s Crabs, and New Freedom’s Departure Coffee for providing gift certificates. And thanks to the 25 photographers who submitted their fantastic rail trail images!



Give a year-end, charitable gift.

Celebrate the holidays by making a special contribution to the York County Rail Trail Authority to support the building of the rail trails you love and enjoy all year long! Scan the QR code, use the enclosed envelope, or visit www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org/donate to make a charitable gift.



Saying “Good-bye” is hard.



In October 2025, YCRTA said “good-by” to its executive assistant, Denise Tushingham (pictured on the right in photograph). While some of us may tread more carefully, Denise was always one to step right up with a can-do attitude, big smile, and arms raised.

Denise quickly became a real asset to our organization and an important part of our trail successes. She will be missed!

What's ahead for 2026?

Design and permitting for a trailhead along RT 116 on a parcel donated by Heidelberg Township to the York County Rail Trail Authority will be complete by the end of 2025, setting the stage for 2026 construction. Bridge piers and an abutment were installed this year in preparation for a new bridge that will span Oil Creek wetlands and connect the trailhead to the Hanover Trolley Trail (photo on right).

The trailhead is being designed for 20 parking spaces, 3 handicap spaces, a boardwalk and bridge to connect to the trail, an information kiosk, and amenities such as interpretive signs and benches.

*Funding is provided by PA Local Share Grant Program and Powder Mill Foundation.
Additional funding is being sought from PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources.*





Trails start
with us.

York County Rail Trail Authority
PO Box 335
Seven Valleys, PA 17360

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Want more rail trails? Become a FRIEND of YCRTA.

Memberships begin at just \$25 for an individual and \$35 for a family.

Your annual membership contribution supports the work of the York County Rail Trail Authority (YCRTA) to build new miles of rail trail across York County, PA, and provides these benefits:

- ***Trail News***, our semi-annual newsletter, delivered to your inbox or mailbox.
- Notice of special events marking new miles of rail trail.
- Knowledge of your donation at work each time you visit a York County rail trail

3 WAYS TO JOIN

SCAN



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YCRTA
Box 335
Seven Valleys, PA 17360

Name _____ E-mail address _____

Address _____ City, State, and Zip code _____

The York County Rail Trail Authority is organized under the Pennsylvania Municipality Authorities Act of 1945. Contributions are used exclusively for the development of public trails and, as such, may be fully tax deductible pursuant to the Internal Revenue Code. Official registration and financial information may be obtained by contacting the Authority at (717) 428-0999.