



2026 Summer

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*Vice-chairman*

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*Secretary*

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 Ann Yost

Gwenyth Loose, CPRP  
*Executive Director*

Karen Kuhn  
*Executive Assistant*

**Trails Start With Us.**

## *Going to the Birds on the Hanover Trolley Trail*

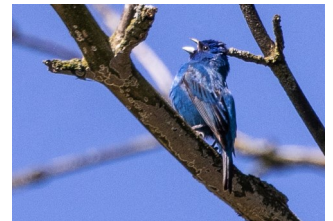
On Saturday, May 30, expert “birders” from York Audubon Society joined supporters of the York County Rail Trail Authority (YCARTA) to study the wildlife that has found a home in the recently restored Oil Creek wetlands adjacent to the Hanover Trolley Trail in Heidelberg Township.

On this beautiful spring morning, thirty-three species of birds were identified, despite their ability to camouflage within the green grasses, like this Great Egret, and against the blue skies, like this Indigo Bunting. Painted turtles were also spotted sunning on the many logs, while frogs “chirruped” from their hiding places.



York Audubon Society offers these tips for trail visitors interested in birdwatching:

- ➡ Early morning and evening are the best times for birdwatching since birds are most active at these times.
- ➡ Practice basic observation skills such as noting the bird’s size, shape, coloring, and behavior.
- ➡ Don’t forget your Smart Phone! Not only is it great for taking photos, but you can download valuable identification apps such as the Merlin App and Audubon Bird Guide App (both free!).



(Continued on page 3)

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

**FLEET FEET**  
 1511 Mt. Rose Ave.  
 York, PA 17403  
 (717) 845-2833  
[www.fleetfeet.com](http://www.fleetfeet.com)

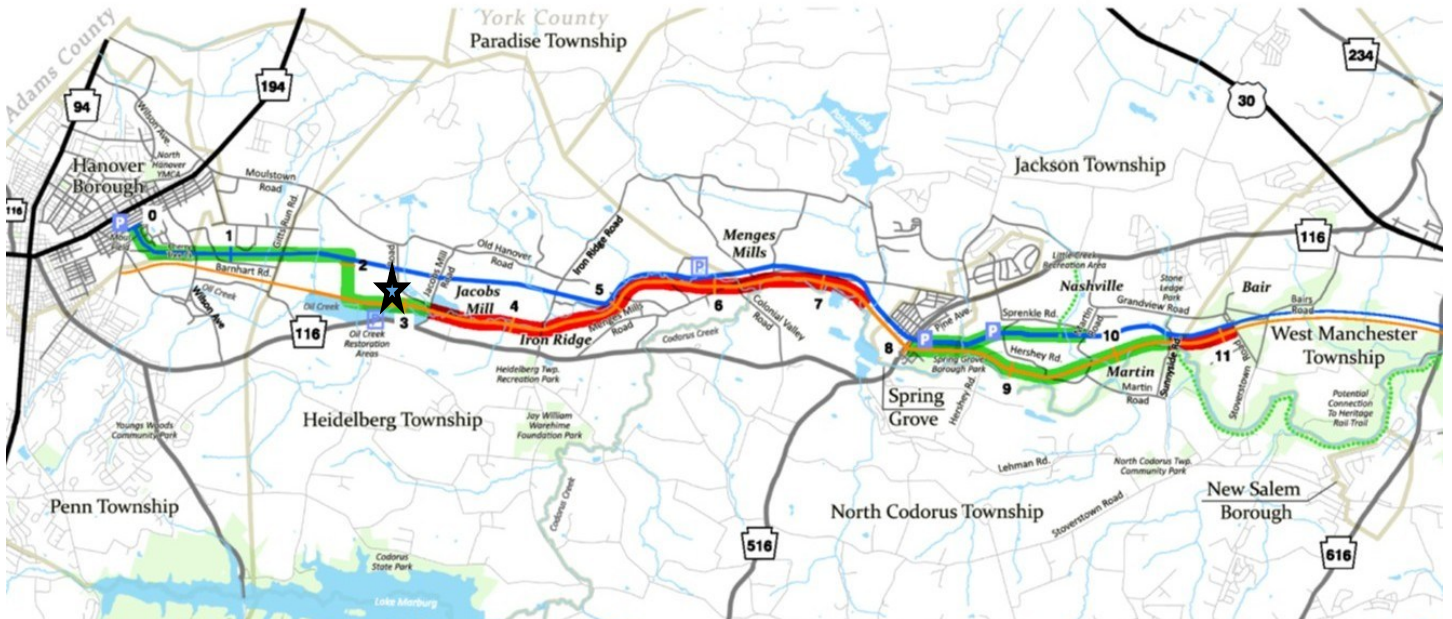


**GUNG HO BIKES**  
 1815 Susquehanna Trail N  
 York, PA 17404  
 (717) 852-9553  
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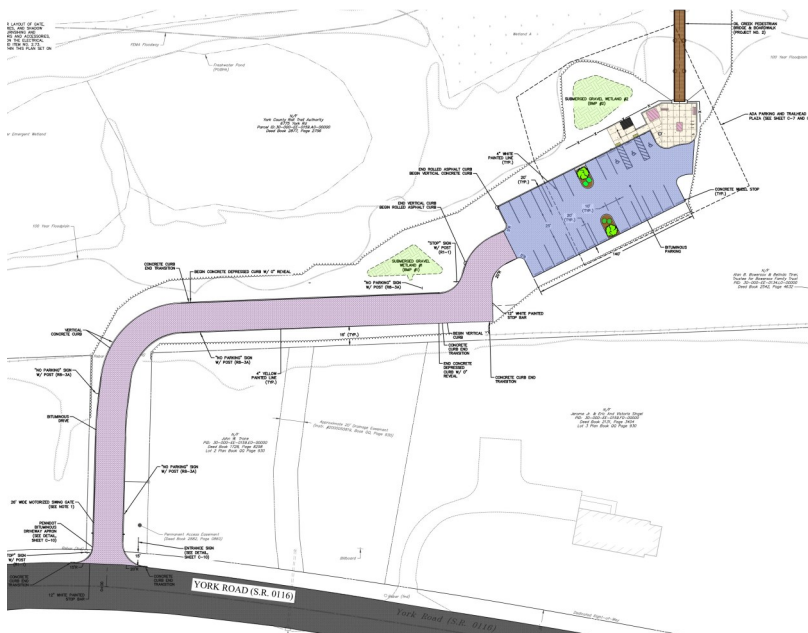
**WHISTLE STOP BIKE SHOP**  
 2 East Franklin St.  
 New Freedom, PA 17349  
 (717) 227-0727

# Project Updates



## Oil Creek Trailhead coming soon!

Two events in 2025 – Heidelberg Township’s donation of a 12-acre parcel along RT 116 (at star on map above) and construction of the Hanover Trolley Trail’s western section from Gitts Run Road to Jacobs Mill Road (first photo) – were followed in January 2026 with a \$700,000 Keystone Grant award from PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resources. YCRTA was then able to complete the design and permitting for a new trailhead.



Bidding was completed in May, and Conewago Enterprises, Inc. was awarded the construction contract in early June.

Bridge piers, constructed in 2025 (2nd photo), await the placement of a bridge and boardwalk that will connect to 23 parking spaces and visitor amenities, with an entrance off York Road (S.R.116). See drawing above.

Construction of the trailhead is scheduled for completion in October 2026, and will be followed with a public ceremony.

## *Oil Creek Floodplain Restoration: Studied & Celebrated.*

In March 2026, staff and students from Dickinson College's Alliance for Aquatic Resource Monitoring conducted their second annual visit to Oil Creek wetlands. Oil Creek is one of fifteen sites being monitored by the Alliance. Their study, to collect data on changing conditions and life in the stream following the 2025 restoration, will continue through 2029.

And, on June 25, 2026, at Harrisburg's Hilton Hotel, YCRTA accepted a Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence for the Oil Creek Floodplain Restoration. In presenting the award, Department of Environmental Protection's Secretary Jessica Shirley noted that the award honors the Authority's work to solve environmental challenges and inspire the next generation of environmental stewards.



## *How does this happen?*

### **Trees fall. Fence is repaired. Flowers grow.**

Behind the scenes, volunteers such as gardener Susan Harcourt, tree removers Kev & Faye Hawn and Kevin Shenk, and fence repairer Dan Schmidt are working to keep the Hanover Trolley Trail open and beautiful. If you're looking for a rewarding volunteer opportunity, contact YCRTA at (717) 428-0999 or [info@yorkcountytails.org](mailto:info@yorkcountytails.org).



## *Welcome, Karen!*

In May, YCRTA welcomed Karen Kuhn as Executive Assistant. Karen retired from Leonhardt Manufacturing Company in 2024 and immediately became interested in the Hanover Trolley Trail development occurring within sight of her Heidelberg Township home.

With husband Al, who was already serving on the trail's operating committee, Karen began regularly walking the trail and soon decided to also get involved. Her professional accounting skills will greatly assist in the financial management of YCRTA's trail construction projects.

## *Going to the Birds* (Continued from page 1.)

- ⇒ The Sound ID feature of the Merlin App is great for beginners and it works offline.
- ⇒ Your Smart Phone is also a great way to discover what others have sighted at your location. Just click on [eBirds.com](http://eBirds.com) and use the Explore section to find hot spots and bird sightings nearby.
- ⇒ And when you begin to get into this new hobby, invest in binoculars, scopes, and other birding gear. Visit [Audubon.org/gear/binocular-guide](http://Audubon.org/gear/binocular-guide) for some great advice.



Two viewing areas are located between Gitts Run Road and Jacobs Mill Road that allow wildlife observers to step off the trail and away from walkers, cyclists, and other trail travelers. Benches invite people to stay a while. Currently, parking is only available at Hanover's Moul Field, 3.4 miles to the west via trail. In October 2026, the Oil Creek Trailhead will be completed, offering a parking area off RT 116 and a boardwalk and bridge connecting directly to the wetlands.



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.

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

**Sustainable Memberships** are also available for you to choose the amount to automatically contribute each month.

Your 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 the completion of 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**



**VISIT**

**ON-LINE MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS**

Use PayPal or Credit Card at  
[www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org/donate](http://www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org/donate)

**MAIL**

**COMPLETE THE FORM BELOW**

Mail with your contribution to  
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.