



TRAIL NEWS

York County Rail Trail Authority Newsletter

2024 –2025 Fall & Winter

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Trails start with us.

Welcoming you to a world of water.

*Hanover Trolley Trail will soon be welcoming trail visitors into a very special environment—
—the new wetlands of Oil Creek.*

by Ben Uhler, LandStudies Geomorphologist

On a summer evening in August 2021, York County Rail Trail Authority (YCRTA) opened the doors of Nixon County Park's nature center to the public for a special presentation by LandStudies, Inc. of Lititz, PA. As part of the team that had been studying Oil Creek for several months, I was there to help present our findings on the current conditions of this 16.8 square mile watershed and propose strategies to halt decades of erosion to the adjacent rail corridor. YCRTA had recently purchased 8.5 mile of the rail corridor with the goal of converting it into rail trail as part of an expansion of the Hanover Trolley Trail. Our task was to keep the purchased corridor from washing into the Chesapeake Bay.

Fast forward to October 2024. Phase one of the restoration is now complete. The power of stormwater rushing through the creek channel has now been diverted into over 6 acres of new wetlands.

The restored floodplain is now a sustainable, low-energy system in which stream base flow is re-connected to the groundwater. Stream bank heights were also lowered to allow flood flows to access the floodplain more frequently. Woody material and rocks were buried throughout the floodplain and within the channel to increase floodplain

(Continued on page 3.)



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

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*Proud to have been a part of this community,
1975 to 2024. It's been a good long run!*



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www.gunghobikes.com

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Project Updates

Hanover Trolley Trail

Growing longer every year!

On April 26, 2024, crowds gathered in Spring Grove to celebrate the opening of an additional 2.1 miles of the Hanover Trolley Trail. (top photo) Funded through the PA Department of Conservation & Natural Resource's Keystone Fund and the Department of Community & Economic Development's Local Share Account with matching local funds from Memorial Health Fund and Explore York, this \$1.78 million project represents the first significant section to be built on the rail corridor purchased in 2020. (second photo)

April 2024 also marked the start of a \$1.56 million stream restoration project on Oil Creek in Heidelberg Township. (third photo) This project is made possible through a generous grant from the J. William Warehime Foundation and an easement from Warehime Enterprises, Inc. York County Conservation District and Planning Commission, as well as PA DEP, PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, and National Fish & Wildlife Foundation grants support this project.

With the completion of phase one stabilization of Oil Creek, York County Rail Trail Authority continued to expand the Hanover Trolley Trail, this time to the west. Work began in August 2024 to create a 1-mile Gitts Run Road Connector to connect the existing Hanover-Penn Township section to the rail corridor. (fourth photo) This work will continue into 2025.

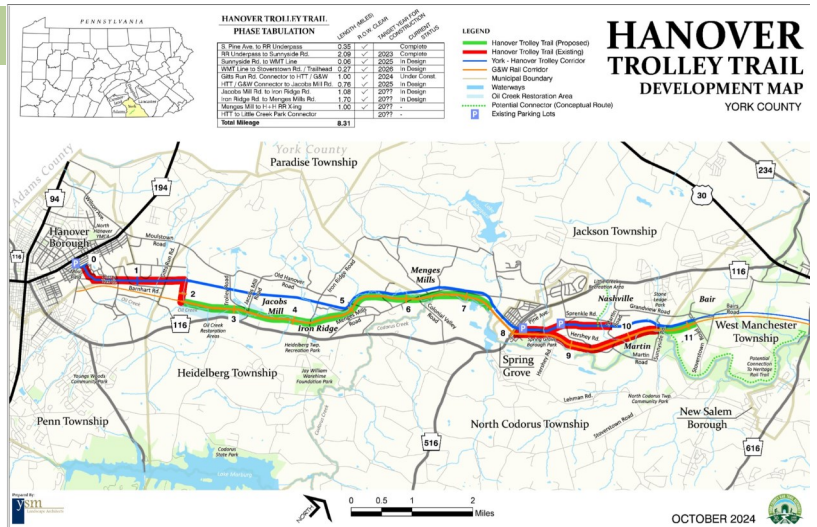
It takes a team.

The "York County rail trail team" begins with ten volunteers who serve on the York County Rail Trail Authority. Formed in 1990 by the York County Board of Commissioners, this authority built the popular Heritage Rail Trail and is now developing the Hanover Trolley Trail. Additional volunteers serve on committees and staff information tables at events across the county. The team also includes consultants, legal counsel, engineers, and contractors who advise and guide us through land acquisitions, trail design, and construction. Working together, this team provides York County residents and visitors with exceptional rail trail experiences!



What's ahead for 2025?

Design and environmental permitting are already well underway to construct an additional 0.76 miles of trail – extending the Hanover Trolley Trail to Jacobs Mill Road in Heidelberg Township – and restore nearly another 0.5 miles of Oil Creek. The year 2025 will begin with soliciting bids from contractors for construction of these two projects. Planning and acquisition will continue for a parking lot along RT 116 and a bridge connecting the future lot to the Hanover Trolley Trail.



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! Use the enclosed envelope or give online at www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org/donate.

PURCHASE a 2025 York County Rail Trail Calendar & Hanover Trolley Trail Ball Cap.

Order your rail trail merchandise at www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org. Sponsored this year by York County Trail Towns, the 2025 calendar is sure to keep you exploring sections of the Heritage Rail Trail and Hanover Trolley Trail, bringing you joy and good health! And you will look your coolest in a Hanover Trolley Trail ball cap. At just \$16 for the calendar and \$30 for the cap, these items make great holiday gifts for your rail trail friends.

Welcoming you to a world of water. (Continued from page 1.)

roughness that breaks up the energy of flood flows. The stream channel now meanders through the wetlands with alternating riffles and pools dispersing the flow across the full width of the floodplain. Lastly, the area was planted with native woody and herbaceous vegetation to provide additional soil stabilization and cover for wildlife. The result is a highly functional, wetland system that provides a complex, in-stream and terrestrial habitat.

Maximizing the connectivity between the stream channel and floodplain and reducing/eliminating bank erosion sets the stage for the development of a robust, riparian ecosystem. The restored condition will reduce sediment and nutrient export and encourage the retention of organic carbon within the floodplain and stream channel, which is a key component of freshwater ecosystems.

As the wetlands mature, they will provide numerous benefits including improved water quality, long-term stability, and habitat as well as increased flood storage, infiltration, and nutrient uptake. And as the Hanover Trolley Trail expands east to Spring Grove, trail travelers will be offered a view into this “wet world.”



Restoration project made possible through grants from PA Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, York County Planning Commission's Chesapeake Bay Countywide Action Plan, PA Department of Environmental Protection, York County Conservation District, J William Warehime Foundation, and Powder Mill Foundation.



PO Box 335
 Seven Valleys, PA 17360
www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org

Building multi-use trails to connect our communities.

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

2025 Rail Trail Calendar York County
*On sale now for just \$16 plus \$4 shipping.
 Visit www.yorkcountyrailtrails.org for details.
 Quantities are limited!*

Want more rail trails? Become a FRIEND of YCRTA.

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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 may be made using PayPal or Credit Card
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- | | | | |
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Name _____ E-mail address _____
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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.