Circuit Trails Semi-Annual Meeting
November 12, 2020

Welcome!
Circuit Trails Semi-Annual Agenda

• **1:00 - 1:05 Welcome** - Sarah Clark Stuart, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia

• **1:05 - 1:10 Trail mileage update and trail counts** - Shawn Megill Legendre, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

• **1:10 - 1:30 Strategic Plan update** - Sarah Clark Stuart, Bicycle Coalition of Greater Philadelphia
  • Advocate for Priority Trails to Ensure Region Completes 500
  • Promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within the Circuit Trails Coalition
  • Advocate for Diverse and Stable Trail Funding
  • Provide Guidance on Issues that Serve as Roadblocks to Trail Development

• **1:30 - 1:35 Moving the Circuit forward: exploring a right-of-way acquisition program** - Shawn Megill Legendre, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission

• **1:35 - 2:05 Marketing and communications update** - Brandi Horton, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

• **2:05 - 2:15 Trail damage from Hurricane Isaias round up** - Chris Dougherty, Delaware River Waterfront Corporation


• **2:25 - 2:35 Intersection of Circuit Trails and Vision Zero: Cobbs Creek** - Will Fraser, Clean Air Council

• **2:35 - 2:55 Circuit Project Showcase**
  • **Upper Bucks Rail Trail** - Paul Gordon, Bucks County Planning Commission
  • **Route 130 Bypass** - Matt Johnson, Burlington County Resource Conservation Department
Trail Mileage Update and User Counts
Trail Mileage

- 12.95 new miles added/to be added this year
- 5.6 miles to be improved this year
- There will be 353.4 miles complete in the DVRPC region by the end of the year
NJ Completions in 2020

• Delaware River Heritage Trail – Route 130 Bypass – 4.99 miles
PA Completions in 2020

• Upper Bucks Rail Trail – 3.19 miles
• ECG – Federal St to Near Cramer Dr (Bensalem) – 0.28 miles
• Neshaminy Creek Trail – Unami High School to Coleman Parcel and Upper State Road Side Path – 1.48 miles
PA Completions in 2020

- Chester Creek Trail – Eyre Park Trail and Levee Walk (City of Chester) – 0.58 miles
- Cross County Trail - 1100 Virginia Dr to Susquehanna Rd (Upper Dublin Twp.) – 0.69 miles
- Cobbs Creek Trail – Segment A – 0.51 miles
PA Completions in 2020

• Delaware River Trail – Penn Treaty Park Promenade – 0.22 miles
• Tacony- tookany-Frankford Trail – Adams Avenue Connector – 0.61 (+0.24*) miles
• Schuylkill River Trail – Route 29 Bridge – 0.17 miles

*scheduled
PA Improvements in 2020

- Schuylkill River Trail – Cromby to Parker Ford – 5.61 miles of crushed stone replaced by asphalt*

*scheduled
Upcoming in 2021

- Rancocas Creek Greenway – Amico Island to Pennington Park – 2.26 new miles and 1.2 improved miles
- Arney’s Mount Trail – Phase I – 1.49 miles
- Delaware River Heritage Trail – Cramer Hill Waterfront Park – 0.77 miles
- Lawrence-Hopewell Trail – Maidenhead Meadows Trail – 0.51 miles
Upcoming in 2021

- Schuylkill River Trail – Monocacy Bridge – 0.05 miles
- East Coast Greenway – PA-DE Border Bike Lanes – 0.3 miles
- Newtown Rail Trail - County Line Rd to Bristol Rd – 2.54 miles
- D&L Trail – Bridge Street Crossing – 0.08 miles
- Scudder Falls Bridge Side Path – 0.76 miles
Upcoming in 2021

• Chester Valley Trail – Segment 4A – 1.04 miles
• Schuylkill River Trail – Parker Ford to PA 422 – 3.69 miles
• Cross County Trail – PA 309 Overpass to Life Time/Trumark Entrance – 0.20 miles
• Pennypack Trail – Byberry Rd to County Line Rd – 0.83 miles
• Schuylkill River Trail – Grays Ferry Bridge – 0.10 miles
Upcoming in 2021

• Schuylkill River Trail – Grays Ferry Bridge – 0.10 miles
• Delaware River Trail – Christian St to near Spruce St – 0.58 miles
• Cobbs Creek Trail – Segment D – 0.32 miles
• Delaware River Trail – K&T Phase 2 – 0.63 miles

Over 15 miles of potential new trail in 2021!
User Counts in 2020

• From 12% (Schuylkill Banks) to 102% (Port Richmond Trail) increases

• Across these five locations alone, we saw 396,128 more uses in 2020 than in 2019
User Counts in 2020

[Graph showing Chester Valley Trail user counts from Q4 2018 to Q3 2020, with months labeled along the x-axis and user counts along the y-axis. The graph compares user counts for Q4 2018-Q3 2019 to Q4 2019-Q3 2020.]
User Counts in 2020

Chester Valley Trail

Pandemic Lockdowns Implemented

Q4 2018-Q3 2019
Q4 2019-Q3 2020
2019-2021 Strategic Goals for the Circuit Trails Coalition

Goal #1 - Advocate for Priority Trails to Ensure Region Completes 500

Goal #2 - Promote Diversity, Equity and Inclusion within the Circuit Trails Coalition

Goal #3 - Advocate for Diverse and Stable Trail Funding

Goal #4 - Promote the Circuit Trails through communications and marketing to increase public awareness and use of the trails

Goal #5 - Create a Strategy for Working with Regional and National Railroads

Goal #6 - Provide Guidance on Issues that Serve as Roadblocks to Trail Development
Goal #1 : Advocate for Priority Trails to Ensure Region Completes 500 miles by 2025
Established Nine Action Teams & Selected priority trail segments

- Delaware County – ECG – Route 291 (Daniel Paschall)
  - Find ROW solution with PennDOT, County and Municipalities
- Montgomery County - Cross County Trail (Lou Savistani & Bill Sabey)
  - Support County efforts to build multiple segments
- Bucks County – Neshaminy Greenway (Tom Kelso)
  - Support County efforts to build multiple segments
- Chester County – Chester Valley Trail West & Extension (Bob Dredge)
  - Support County efforts to advance two key segments
- Philadelphia County – Spring Garden Street Greenway (Lizzie Hesseck & D. Paschall)
  - Demonstrate public support for ideal design
County Level Campaign Goals

• Mercer County - Johnson Trolley Trail over I295 (Sonia Szczesna)
  • Convince NJDOT to support feasibility study
• Burlington County – County priorities (John Boyle)
  • Support County efforts to build 20 miles of new trails
• Camden County – Merchantville Trail (Tim Brill & Anya Saretzky)
  • Demonstrate public support for Pennsauken to build segment
• Gloucester County – Glassboro Elk Trail (John Boyle)
  • Secure municipal/county support to build the Glassoro Elk Trail
Attract Constituents to Become Part of the Campaigns

- Encouraged community members to become Circuit Citizens by sending a gratitude email to their County Commissioners (Summer-Fall 2020)
- Invited the public to attend a Facebook Live Circuit Rally to provide an update on the 500x2025 campaign (two rallies held week of Oct 19th)
- Set up Zoom Meetups for each county Action Team
- Promote Meetups; Invite anyone who signed up to be a Circuit Citizen to attend Zoom Meetup and join the Action Team
Attract Constituents to Become Part of the Campaigns

• Montgomery County Zoom Meetups held the week of October 26th
• Future Zoom Meetups
  • Burlington County – November 17th 6pm
  • Chester County – December 1st 6pm
  • Week of Dec. 7th – Mercer County
  • Week of Dec. 14 – Delaware County
  • Week of Jan 11 – Philadelphia
  • Week of Jan 18 – Camden
  • Week of Jan 25 - Bucks
  • Week of Feb 4 – Gloucester
Goal #2: Promote Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) within the Circuit Trails Coalition
Goal #2: JEDI Task Force

New Resources
• Translating Circuit Trails materials into Spanish

Communications
• Eastern PA Trails and Greenways Summit presentation
• Coordinating with Circuit communications team, elevating partners in newsletter and blog
• TrailOff: Promoting equitable trail usage through storytelling

Data and Research
• Community + trail surveys and focus groups; Circuit Coalition survey; RTC National Survey
Community + Trail Focus Areas

Norristown + SRT

Trenton + D&R

Camden + Waterfront, Cooper River Trail

Southwest Philly + Cobbs Creek Trail
Goal #3 Advocate for Diverse & Stable Trail Funding
Goal #3: New Jersey

- NJDOT
  - Increase in Staff Capacity
  - Include trails in Complete Streets Checklists (policy has been changed)
  - Flex Federal Funding

- NJDEP
  - New/Increased Funding for Trails
  - New Staff Capacity
Goal #3: Pennsylvania

- Multi-Modal Funds – created by Act 89
- DCNR Grant Funds - Keystone & Act 13
- Redevelopment Assistance Capital Program (RACP)
Goal #6: Provide Guidance on Issues that Serve as Roadblocks to Trail Development

• Concerns re: safety ID’d by Coalition as #1 roadblock
• Webinar: Redefining Safety on Trails: Creating Safe, Inviting and Inclusive Spaces for All
• Wednesday, Dec. 9, 1 - 2 p.m.
• Register here: https://tinyurl.com/trailsafetywebinar
Exploring a Right-of-Way Acquisition Assistance Program
Background

• Acquisition of right-of-way is an essential step in trail development
• Acquisition of right-of-way can be challenging and stall progress
• Implementing an assistance program was one of three recommendations for DVRPC in Moving the Circuit Forward
So far...

- Two fact-finding discussions with members of the Circuit Trails Coalition active in trail development across the region
- One discussion also included design consultants active in trail development
- One discussion with DVRPC’s Office of Project Implementation
Next Steps...

• Additional discussions with DVRPC’s member governments, including county and city governments

• Please fill out the survey for Circuit Trails Coalition members: https://forms.gle/3UYiAchQYQBVtavh7
THE CIRCUIT TRAILS

2020 Trail Season Marketing Campaign Recap + Look Ahead

Nov. 12, 2020
Objectives

• Raise awareness and increase use of Circuit Trails vision among avid + interested trail users

• Build trail-segment-level grassroots for priority projects to drive forward "500 Miles by 2025" advocacy campaign

• Drive support for Circuit Trails Pipeline recommendations among influencers + elected officials

• Recognize accomplishments: trail mileage, funding, political support, IRL engagement
2020: What Worked

• Audience growth + relevance with strategic messaging through omni-channel media frequency

• Targeted digital for more efficient paid media investment

• Immediate positioning of message in the wake of COVID
PROUD TO TRAIL  THE CIRCUIT TRAILS

Share the Trail, Safely

#OnTheCircuit, Safe Social Distancing + Good Trail Etiquette Matter.
Get tips at circuittrails.org/sharethetrail.
Trails throughout Philadelphia region expecting heavy crowds as the summer winds down

The Philadelphia Inquirer

Peak foliage is arriving in Philly, and it could linger into November

The coronavirus that has affected about every aspect of our lives has generated such a stampede on local trails that some state parks have asked people to please, please, go somewhere else.

Fortunately, with the Fairmount Park System, the sprawling Circuit Trails network, and the legions of woods, forests, and byways, the region is generously veined with more than enough trails to accommodate those heading outdoors for a sanity break.
Key Web Metrics

- Organic search up 10%
- Share the Trail landing page: 57K Users
500 Miles x 2025: Circuit Citizens

- Goal: Cultivate grassroots to localize/grow advocacy
- Embedded in campaign across channels and activities
- Emphasis of Circuit “Call to Action”
- Build real-people “influencer” base
- Create pathway to action teams for all levels of engagement
How you can help

Share your love for trails

Become a circuit citizen

Join a county action team
Circuit Trails to rally on Facebook Live for missing South Jersey rails-to-trails link

Carol Comegno Cherry Hill Courier-Post
Published 12:26 p.m. ET Oct. 20, 2020

PENNSAUKEN — New connections to help complete the Circuit Trails network in South Jersey are under development, but the largest single project will close major missing rails-to-trails links between Camden and Burlington counties.

The $5 million, 10-mile plan, now in its early stages, would allow bicyclists and pedestrians to use an abandoned Chestnut Street rail line and a rail bridge in Pennsauken to connect with Camden to the south and then in the opposite direction to Merchantville, Maple Shade and beyond in Burlington County.
Overall Reach

- Paid: 128.5 million (20% more reach per dollar)
- Social: 22,868 (27% growth)
- Earned: 111 media hits (on par)
- Web: 79,157 (22%)
Looking Ahead—2021 Priorities

Big Goal: Increase understanding and awareness of the Circuit Trails among targeted audiences, including individuals new to trails as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and BIPOC audiences

Other priorities:
• Continue to amplify, grow grassroots for 500 Miles X 2025 agenda
• Assess messaging and content following JEDI market research
• Website revamp
• Spanish-language content and editorial style guide
• Increased community engagement
Discussion Groups Questions

- How do we inspire and amplify meaningful and authentic representation of diverse trail users?
- To increase engagement with direct audiences, what channels will be most useful—let’s get creative!
- What information and resources do we need to generate to improve our engagement with diverse audiences and encourage trail use?
Your Action Plan!

- Training and Tools: tinyurl.com/CircuitSocialTools
- Engage with the Circuit on social media:
  - #onthecircuit
  - FB/Insta @thecircuittrails
  - Twitter @circuittrails
- Share content (blog, COVID-19 resources, advocacy needs, opportunities)
- Use and submit photos: tinyurl.com/circuitphotofolder
- Email updates, questions, swag and resources: anya@railstotrails.org
Signage Options  – email anya@railstotrails.org for more info
Assessing the Impact: Hurricane Isaias & Circuit Trails
12 November 2020
Circuit Trails Coalition Semi-Annual Meeting
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"Our weather monitoring station in Haverford Reserve, just above Darby Creek, recorded a record 5.93 inches of rain on 8/13/2018 (a Darby Creek watershed-specific storm that caused Gov. Wolf to visit Darby and declare a disaster area; reading confirmed within 0.1” by 6 Action News that night for Wayne, PA). The recent Isaias-related storm on 8/4/2020 was even much higher than that, at 9.53 inches of rain for that day. The flooding was estimated to be about 3 ft. above the level of the trail surface in both cases."
Schuylkill Banks Boardwalk
• Most respondents indicated damage was slight many utilized some combination of local municipal support and volunteers, underscoring both the importance of public stewardship and the need to maintain public protocols while doing so.

• Areas of grass, public plazas and other hardscape features may accumulate substantial silt requiring removal.
• Coordination volunteer labor and local municipal support is critical. Repeated floodings may inform standard response protocols. Here, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation leaves a dumpbody for volunteer use for later pick-up and disposal.

• Ensure you are ready for clean up by elevating all machines, tools and equipment prior to flooding.
Hydraulic strain on trail subbase materials and drainage structures comprised the bulk of damage reported by Circuit members. In flood-prone areas cross slope protection of subbase materials may be required or the bolstering drainage capacity needed.

Friends of Haverford Trails, along Darby Creek Trail: We also had to fill about 75' of wash out along the side of the trail to a depth of about 18".
• **NFWS employs a Maintenance Action Team (MAT)** to rapidly deploy trained personnel and equipment to critical assets. Here they work on stabilization around an outfall at the Impoundment. The Circuit is a system across boundaries—trail managers and local governments should think about planning to assist adjacent local municipalities during emergencies with equipment or technical assistance.

• **Your overall visibility as vital public infrastructure matters** when advocating for recovery resources, as evidenced by the quick response mustered for the nation’s first urban refuge and beloved community treasure, Heinz NWR at Tinicum.
Trail designers should continue to explore ways trails—and their adjacent landscapes—can mitigate overall flooding or assist with recovery. Here an invasive removal project at Heinz helps to stabilize recent temporary berm stabilization. At Heinz, the long-term strategies for managing the Darby and the ecology of the Refuge de-emphasize the constant rebuilding and reinforcement of containment structures in favor of linking the Darby to the Impoundment.

- **Build things to break. Make fixing these systems easy.**
More flood resilient landscape information

- ASLA Guidance on Flooding: [https://www.asla.org/flooding.aspx](https://www.asla.org/flooding.aspx)
- Great Rivers Greenway, Standard Cross Section for Flood-Prone Areas: [https://greatriversgreenway.org/design-guidelines/trail-design/wet-flood/](https://greatriversgreenway.org/design-guidelines/trail-design/wet-flood/)
- Designing and Planning for Flood Resilency, Guidelines For NYC Parks: [https://www.nycgovparks.org/pagefiles/128/NYCP-Design-and-Planning-Flood-Zone__5b0f0f5da8144.pdf](https://www.nycgovparks.org/pagefiles/128/NYCP-Design-and-Planning-Flood-Zone__5b0f0f5da8144.pdf)
Special Thanks:

- Lamar B. Gore, Refuge Manager, John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge at Tinicum
- Taylor Long, Transportation Planning Intern, NFWS
- Joseph Syrnick, President, Schuylkill River Development Corporation
- Julia Farrell Hurle, Trail Program Director, Schuylkill River Greenways
- Gwen McCauley, Executive Director, Manayunk Development Corporation
- Ira Joseph, Vice President, Friends of Chester Creek Branch Rail Trail
- Richard Kerr, Co-Founder, Friends of Haverford Trails

Questions:

- Chris Dougherty, cdougherty(at)drwc.org, Circuit Steering Committee Member
DOWNLOAD AVAILABLE FOR IPHONES

EXPERIENCES OFF THE BEATEN PATH

TrailOff features 10 original audio dramas, totally free to download through a cutting-edge app, that unfold on trails across the Circuit Trail Network. Each story features a local author who brings a new and diverse perspective to getting out into nature.
STILL IN THE BETA TESTING PHASE

EXPERIENCES OFF THE BEATEN PATH

TrailOff features 10 original audio dramas, totally free to download through a cutting-edge app, that unfold on trails across the Circuit Trail Network. Each story features a local author who brings a new and diverse perspective to getting out into nature.
ANDROID COMING SOON

EXPERIENCES OFF THE BEATEN PATH

TrailOff features 10 original audio dramas, totally free to download through a cutting-edge app, that unfold on trails across the Circuit Trail Network. Each story features a local author who brings a new and diverse perspective to getting out into nature.
651 TOTAL DOWNLOADS
FOR NOW: WEBSITE.TRAILOFF.ORG
SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT

- 384 Instagram followers
- 624 Facebook followers
- 523 Zoom and YouTube views of FringeArts launch events
DEEPLY ROUTED – DENISE VALENTINE
QUESTIONS?
Cobbs Creek Trail and Vision Zero
Cobbs Creek Trail

Home to Rec. & Environmental Centers, Skating Rink, Health Center, Libraries, Ball Fields & Courts

East Coast Greenway, Forge-to-Refuge Trail, and other regional transportation connections

Connection into Delaware County
Cobbs Creek Connector Trail

Will connect entire length of Cobbs Creek Park to John Heinz National Wildlife Refuge

New trail segments creates momentum to support and improve the existing trail

Segment A opened Spring 2020

Segment D in construction 2021
Cobbs Creek Connector Trail - Segment A
Cobbs Creek Quality of Life Issues

A 2019 DVRPC survey showed the majority of residents felt unsafe walking and driving near Cobbs Creek Parkway and extremely unsafe biking near the Parkway.
Cobbs Creek Community Concerns

The most agreed-upon issue was speeding traffic, followed by the guiderail.

Other issues include:

- Lack of crosswalks
- Flooding
- Lack of lights
- Trash, litter, & short dumping

*Figure 5: Ranked List of Biggest Issues Near Cobbs Creek Parkway*

*Survey respondents ranked the biggest issues in the study area.*
*Source: DVRPC, 2018*
Cobbs Creek Parkway Studies

Studies found the parkway dangerous to navigate & the trail difficult to access

- The **2015** Phila. 2035 Lower SW District plan called out vehicle and pedestrian crash concentration intersections along the parkway
- The **2016** PCPC Lower SW District Plan recommended for traffic calming measures, reduction of crossing distances, and creating better gateways
- The **2018** PCPC West District plan recommended safer crossings through bumpouts, lane configuration changes, adding ped. lighting/signage
- A **2019** DVRPC safety study recommended enforcing the no trucks and buses rule, installing reflective centerlines, maintaining sidewalks, installing speed cameras, and conducting a lighting study
Preventable Crashes & Deaths

Between 2012-2016, there were **155 crashes** on Cobbs Creek Parkway.

Cobbs Creek Parkway is on Philadelphia’s **Vision Zero High Injury Network**.

July 31st, 2020 - **Two people were killed and three others injured** after a crash on Cobbs Creek Parkway.

August 23rd, 2020 - **Avante Reynolds**, a 25 year old mother, was struck and killed by a hit and run driver.
Calls for Action

Alicia Burbage, a local community activist, Tracey Gordon, Block Captain Dr. Deborah Roebuck, Leonard Bonarek and others organized a press conference to demand change. Petitions and requests for residents to contact electeds followed.

Representative response

City and State elected officials responded by contacting Philadelphia Streets Department and PennDOT calling for immediate improvements to Cobbs Creek Parkway.
City and State Action

Over the next month PennDOT will fund and install:

- **Rumble strips** along the center lanes, Girard Avenue to Baltimore Avenue
- **Lane separators** at locations between Delancey Street and Florence Avenue (slightly-raised blocks shaped like curbs with plastic delineators)
- **Reduce lane widths**, add pedestrian **crossing markings**, and install **safety signage**
- Enforcement of illegal truck travel along the Parkway
More improvements on the way

In Spring 2021:

- Upgrade safety warning signage and install a high-friction surface treatment up and down the Parkway

Longer term:

- The agency has also committed to work with the Streets Department to redesign the current guiderail system
- Begin planning for more permanent traffic calming solutions
Trail engagement

Cleanups along the trail include organized Parks and Rec days as well as smaller resident-led efforts

WeWalk, GirlTrek, Bird Walks

CCCEC offers a variety of education and recreation opportunities year round from art and nature classes to Zumba
PROJECT SPECIFICS

Location: Springfield and Richland Townships

Length: 3.2 miles

Surface: 12’ wide Crushed Stone

Connections: Saucon Rail Trail with future connectivity to Bethlehem

Veterans Park Richland Township with additional connectivity into Quakertown Borough

Liberty Bell Trail in development

Trailheads: Veterans Park
Richland Township Fire Company
PROJECT BACKGROUND

2013  Identified as a potential trail in the Pennsylvania Highlands Trail Network Feasibility Study for the Quakertown Region

2015  Bucks County, Appalachian Mountain Club, Springfield Township and Richland Township partner to begin development of the trail

2019  SEPTA Leases signed

2019  Aug - Groundbreaking

2020  Ribbon cutting and opening of trail
PROJECT FUNDING

Project fully funded by the Bucks County Commissioners

- Design and Engineering $ 77,500
- Construction * $1,430,700

Total $1,508,200

* Includes construction administration
PROJECT CHALLENGES

- Water, Water, Water!!!
PROJECT CHALLENGES

• Adjacent Land Uses

• Easement Acquisition
PROJECT CHALLENGES

• Aging Infrastructure

• Road Crossings (3)
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

• 800’ Tropical Hardwood (Cumaru) Boardwalk
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

• Natural features
PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS
PARTNERSHIPS

• Springfield Township

• Richland Township

• Richland Township Fire & Rescue

• SEPTA

• Appalachian Mountain Club
THANK YOU!

Contact:

Paul Gordon
pwgordon@buckscounty.org
(215) 345-3884

Very happy future trail user!
THE CIRCUIT TRAILS SEMI-ANNUAL MEETING

Burlington County Update
November 12, 2020

Matthew J. Johnson, P.P., A.I.C.P.
Coordinator, Open Space Acquisition & Park Development
Burlington County Resource Conservation Department
TRAIL ALIGNMENT
ROUTE 130 TO ROEBLING
KINKORA R.R. R.O.W. & OLD YORK ROAD
TRANSIT RIVERLINE, AT-GRADE TRAIL CROSSING