



SCHUYLKILL RIVER TRAIL, PHASE 1 AND 2, CHESTER COUNTY
ENVIRONMENTAL PROJECT SUMMARY
PUBLIC MEETING OCTOBER 17, 2018

Overall Project Description

Phase 1 of the Schuylkill River Trail was constructed in 2012 with a stone surface. This project will **resurface** this 5.75 mile section with bituminous pavement.

Phase 2 of the Schuylkill River Trail project is the construction of a **new shared use path** (trail) between Linfield Road and the US 422 bridge over the Schuylkill River. Much of this 4.00 mile section will be built on former railbed and towpath. The 10-foot wide path will be paved with no grades greater than 5%. The proposed facility will be fully accessible per ADA criteria.

Environmental Due Diligence and Permitting

NEPA Approval

- Due to the funding sources for the trail project, the project required National Environmental Policy Administration (NEPA) clearances and approval. The County completed the necessary Environmental Documentation (Level 1b CE) and conducted coordination activities with various partners including PennDOT District 6-0, DVRPC as well as various federal and state jurisdictional agencies.

Natural Resource Coordination

- Several streams and watercourses are located in the project area including Stony Run, Pigeon Creek, and seven (7) Unnamed tributaries (UNTs) to the Schuylkill River.
- A wetland Identification and Delineation was completed between May and July, 2016 and three (3) wetlands were delineated along the trail corridor. Design avoided the wetlands.
- Scenic River coordination was completed with the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) for the nearby Schuylkill River.

Agricultural Resources

- Coordination was conducted with various agencies to determine the agricultural resources present in the project area including Chester County Department of Facilities and Parks, Chester County Department of Open Space Preservation, North Coventry and East Coventry Township, Chester County Tax Assessor, and the USDA-NRCS. The project will not impact Ag. Resources.

Section 4(f) Coordination

- The Section 4(f) process as described in 49 U.S.C 303 states that a special effort must be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites. Two (2) Section 4(f) resources are located within the trail corridor.
 - Towpath Park - A Section 4(f) Non-Applicability/No Use Form for Bikeway/Walkway was completed.
 - Schuylkill Navigation Company Canal - A Section 4(f) De Minimis Use/Section 2002 No Adverse Use Historic Properties was completed.

Section 6(f)/Recreational Grant properties

- Towpath Park has received Recreational Grant funds. A trail easement is required for the length of the trail through Towpath Park. Per coordination with the DCNR, the project will result in a non-conversion of a recreational grant property. No further coordination is required.

Cultural Resource Coordination

- Aboveground Resources: No above ground historic structure survey was needed. However, two above ground historic properties are present (Fricks Lock Village and the Canal Towpath). An Effect Finding of “No Effect” was made by the PennDOT District Cultural Resource Professional (CRP). No Consulting Party coordination was required.
- Archeology: A Phase I-II Archaeological survey was completed in the trail corridor between Linfield Road and SR 422 Bridge. Two archaeological sites were determined eligible for listing on the National Register. A Memorandum of Agreement has been prepared. A Phase III archaeology survey will mitigate project effects to the two archaeological sites.

Hazardous and Residual Wastes

- The County completed PennDOT’s Environmental Due Diligence (EDD) Form, in accordance with The Transportation Project Development Process (Publication No. 281, December 2012) for the proposed trail corridor. Soil testing was also completed in select locations. Construction activities will be performed in accordance with the site Health and Safety Plan and all applicable local, state, and federal regulations and guidelines. Due diligence indicates that no hazardous waste mitigation is required.

Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Coordination

- T&E Species coordination was conducted with the PA Game Commission (PGC) regarding the Peregrine Falcon, *Falco peregrinus* - Endangered, PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) regarding the Eastern Redbelly Turtle, *Pseudemys rubriventris* - Threatened, and the DCNR regarding Toothcup, *Rotala ramosior* - Special Concern Species. No mitigation measures are required.

Environmental Permitting

- Per coordination with the PA DEP, the trail project will be permitted with a major amendment to the standard Joint Permit Application (JPA) already obtained for the initial project (Phase 1). Permits have been submitted and currently under review by Township(s) (stormwater), County Conservation District (earth disturbance) and PA DEP (stream encroachment).