



The Great Allegheny Passage Trail Towns:
Rural Sustainable Economic Development

Overview

- ❑ Trail Video, description, and history
- ❑ Trail Town Program goals and history
- ❑ Partnership with Student Conservation Association
- ❑ Sustainable economic development
- ❑ Economic impact of the trail
- ❑ Case study: Confluence Cyclery

The Great Allegheny Passage



The Ride of Your Life

A trail that commands attention



- First trail named to “Rail-Trail Hall of Fame”
- Featured in:
 - *New York Times*
 - *USA Today*
 - *National Geographic Adventure*
 - *Washington Post*
 - *Adventure Cyclist*
 - *US Airways Magazine*
- Estimated 700,000 trips annually



About the Great Allegheny Passage



Overview

About the Trail

History

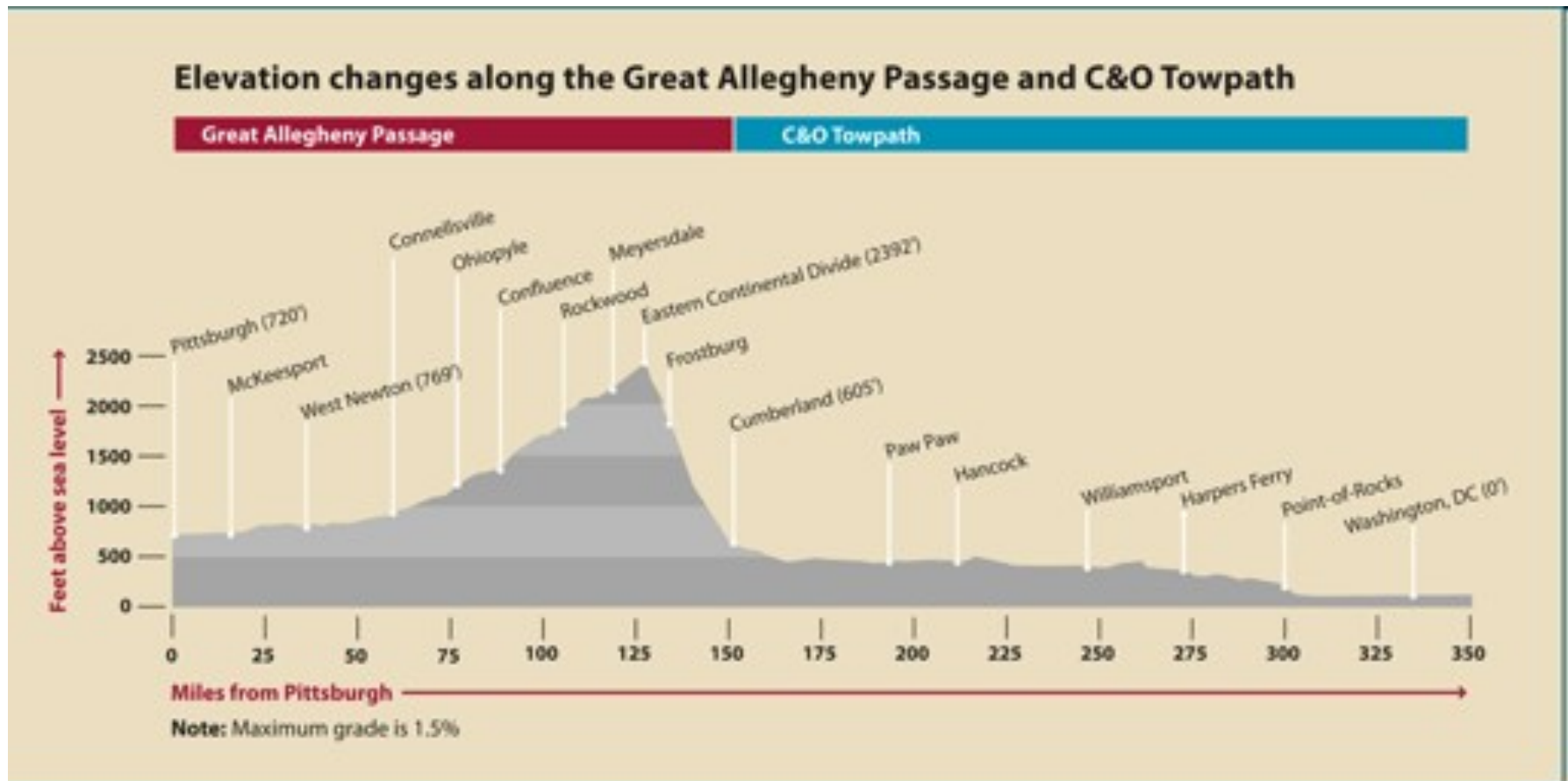
Trail Building

The Great Allegheny Passage



* map from gaptrail.org

The Great Allegheny Passage



History



Pittsburgh, PA to Connellsville, PA
58 Miles
Opened 1931
Abandoned 1976

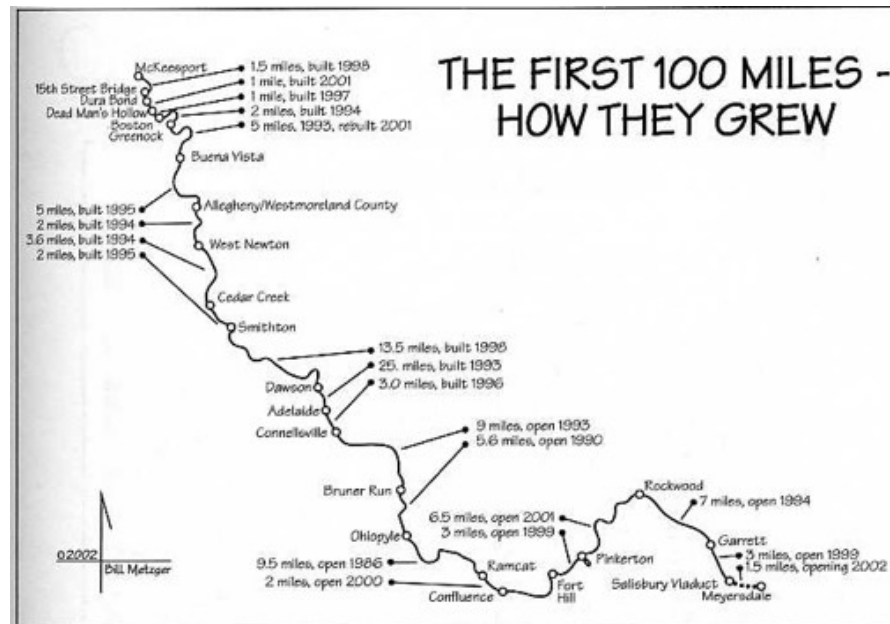


Connellsville, PA to Cumberland, MD
91 Miles
Opened 1912
Abandoned 1976

Trail Building Takes Time



First Section Completed in Ohiopyle State Park 9.5 Miles Ohiopyle to Ramcat 1986

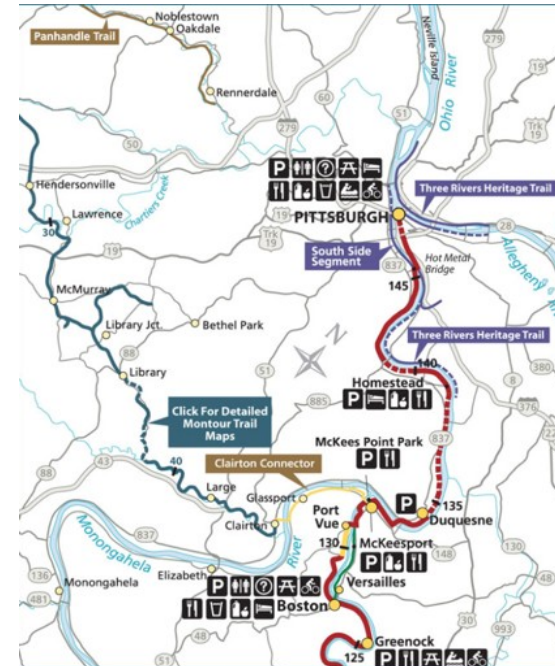


1.5 Miles Salisbury Viaduct to Meyersdale, PA 2002



26 Years to Complete

Big Savage Tunnel – Open May 26th 2006



**Goal for Completion
11 November 2011**



Allegheny Trail Alliance



- ❑ Friends of the Riverfront
- ❑ Steel Valley Trail Council
- ❑ Regional Trail Corporation
- ❑ Ohiopyle State Park
- ❑ Somerset County Rails to Trails Association
- ❑ Allegheny Highlands Trail in MD
- ❑ Montour Trail Council



Trail Town Program

Trail Town Program®



- An economic development and community revitalization initiative that engages and promotes trail communities along the Great Allegheny Passage
- Concept developed in 2001
 - ▣ 15 years after first section completed!
 - ▣ 25 years after last train ride!

Why the Trail Town Program®?



- Recognized that the trail's economic potential wouldn't be maximized without a concentrated effort
- Provide a rallying point and call to action for distressed, rural communities
- Reap the benefits of regional cooperation – “A rising tide lifts all boats.”

Program history



- Allegheny Trail Alliance convened regional and statewide stakeholders in 2001
 - State agencies
 - Trail builders
 - Economic and community developers
 - Tourism officials
- Fundraising started
- Trail Town Manual published in 2005
- Program staffed in 2007; expanded in 2009

Program goals



- Retain, expand and increase revenues of existing businesses
- Recruit sustainable new businesses
- Facilitate collective action by the Trail Towns to create a world class recreational destination
- Improve the buildings and infrastructure in each town to create a visitor friendly destination

Projects



- Connecting communities to the trail and each other
- Economic research
- Trail-wide marketing
- Direct business assistance and lending
- Real estate development
- Sustainable Business Network



Trail Town Outreach Corps [TTOC]

Overview

- The Student Conservation Association (SCA)
- SCA Trail Town Outreach Corps (TTOC)
- Pedal On
- Rural Sustainability Projects
- Sustainable Economic Development

Trail Town Outreach Corps

- **TTOC = Project Leader + 3 corps members**
- Partnership between the Student Conservation Association (SCA) and the Trail Town Program
- Started in January 2009



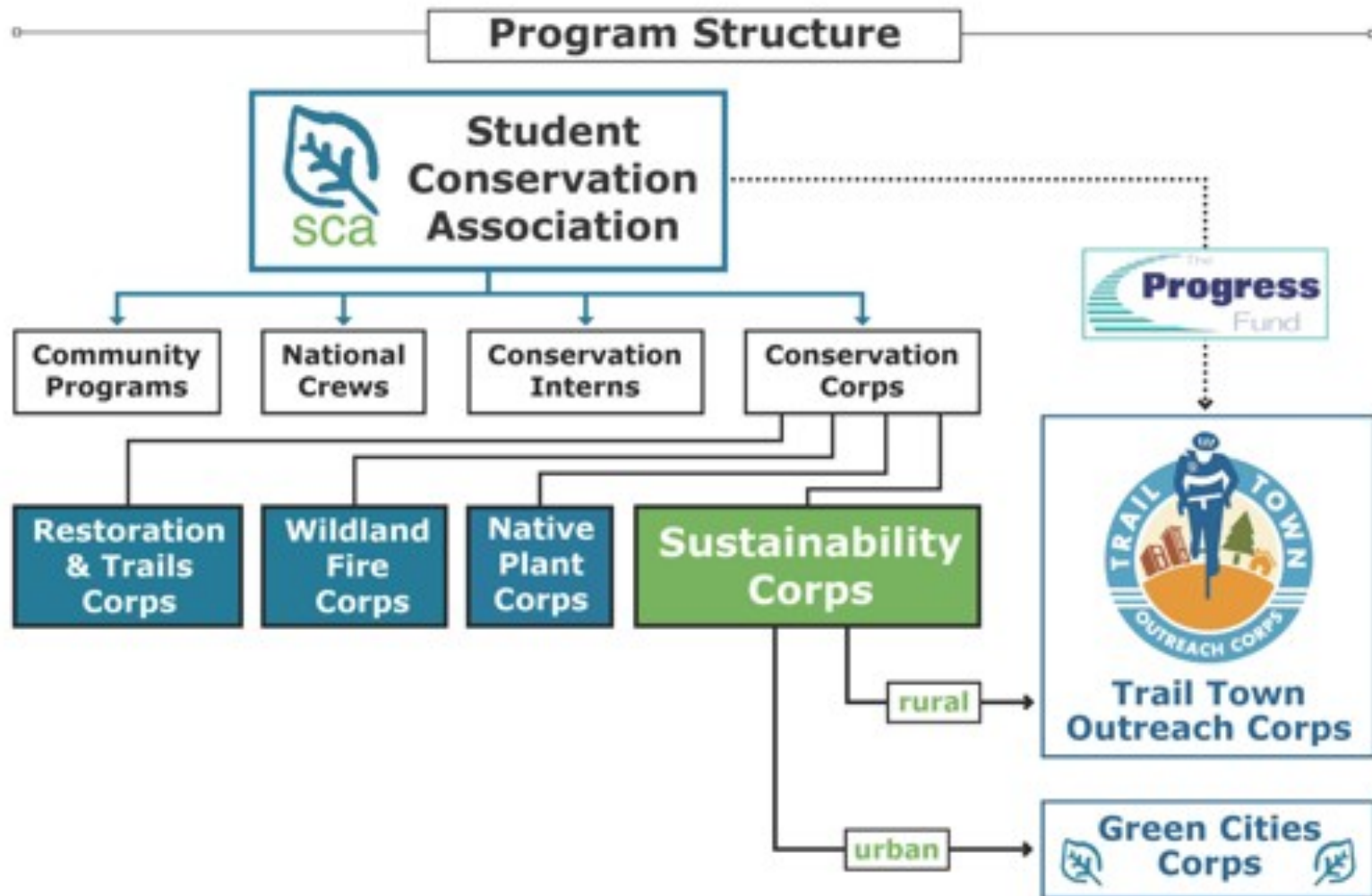
SCA: Summary

□ SCA Mission:

*“To build the **next generation** of conservation leaders and inspire lifelong **stewardship** of our environment by engaging young people in hands-on **service to the land and communities.**”*



SCA: Program Structure



Trail Town Outreach Corps



□ 2010 Outreach Corps Members

□ Elisa Mayes [Project Leader]

□ Asheville NC

□ Adam Flett

□ Minneapolis MN

□ Stephanie Campbell

□ Pendleton IN

□ Lara Nagle

□ Pittsburgh PA





Trail Town Outreach Corps

□ Geographical Location in PA



Trail Town Outreach Corps



□ TTOC Mission:

“To foster economic revitalization and sustainable redevelopment in the Great Allegheny Passage Trail Towns through minds-on and hands-on community service.”



Connellsville Trailhead, Earth Day 2010

Trail Town Outreach Corps



□ TTOC Goals:

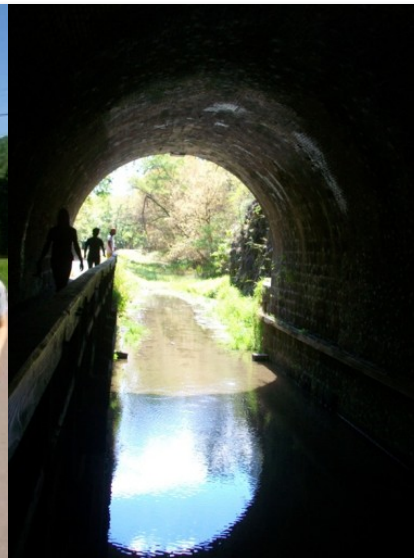
- Coordinate and increase reliance on **local economies**
- Promote appreciation of rich **cultural heritage** of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- Be an **integrated resource** and asset to the Trail Town communities
- Communicate **sustainable economic development** opportunities



Confluence House B&B Sustainability Assessment

Pedal On

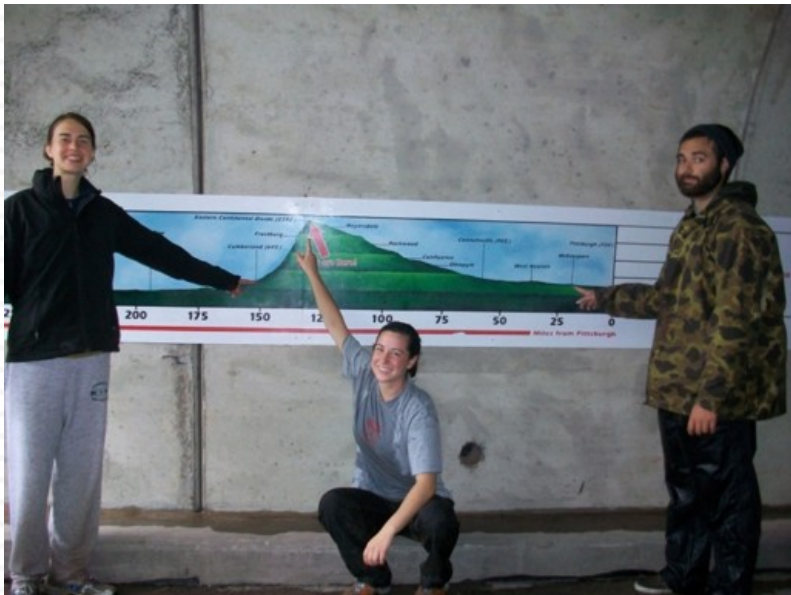
220 miles pedaled + 14 town assessments + plethora of flora and fauna



Pedal On



Pedal On



Pedal On



Pedal On



Chesapeake & Ohio Canal
National Historical Park

THE CANAL AND TOWPATH ARE DEDICATED TO
JUSTICE WILLIAM O. DOUGLAS

OLDTOWN

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

SCHOOL HOUSE
Cafe & Kitchen

OPEN

C & O CANAL NHP
REGULATIONS

Park Closed Subject to Reaction
Leaving and Fines in Designated Area
Fishing is Restricted with State License

Prohibited:
Fire Off Limits
Alcoholic Beverages
Baiting and Weapons
Digging, Staking, Removing any Natural
or Cultural Resources

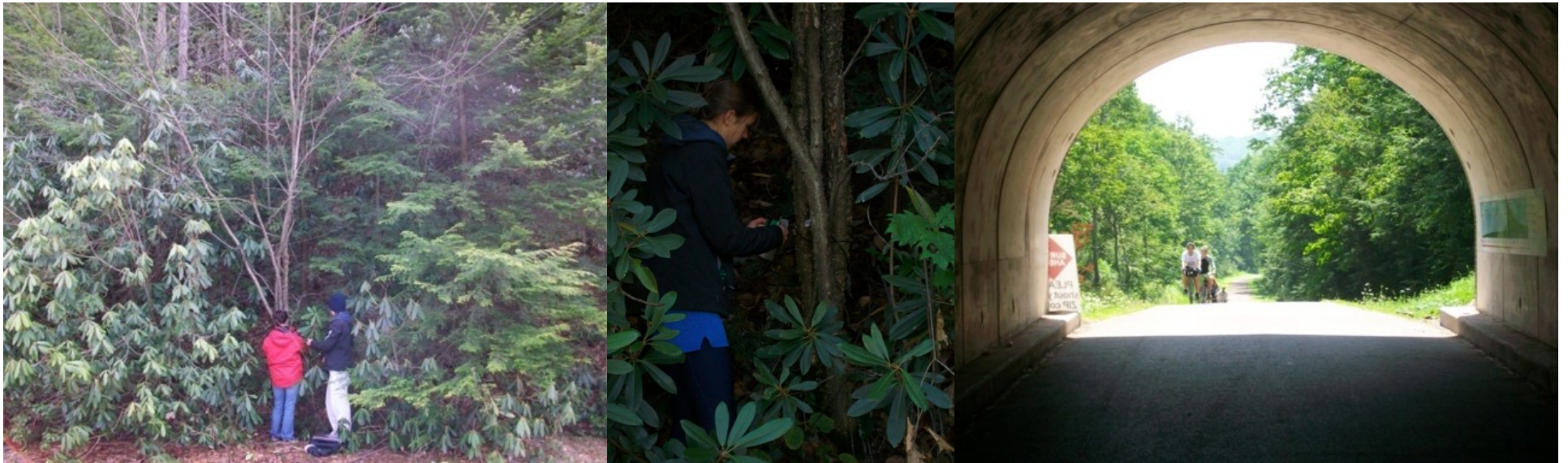
Report Suspicious Activity to any Park
Employee or call 1-800-368-6842
EMERGENCY DIAL 911

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Local Economies

▣ Trail Counts Data

- Accurate counts for businesses, boroughs, and grant applications; zipcode data for marketing
- 10 counters: 7 managed by TTOC, 90+ hours of counts



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Local Economies

■ e-Marketing Coordination and Assistance

- Formal organization messages, informal dialogue, GAP gear, posting of community events, and photographs
- Facebook fans (10.11.10): 2740
- Twitter followers: 362



GAP facebook page

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Local Economies

▣ Multi-Modal Transportation Networks

- Roll-on, roll-off bicycle service on the Amtrak Capital Limited route
 - Elected officials contacted, letters at bicycle stores, call-to-action posted on gaptrail.org website, and continuous e-media updates
 - Tentative service for Summer 2011
- Bicycle-pedestrian town loops for users to feel comfortable leaving the trail and entering the towns

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Local and Regional Economies

- ▣ Workforce development: education about emerging “green-collar job opportunities”
- ▣ Youth Action Crew (YAC):
 - ▣ 20 Connellsville High School students
 - ▣ 5 community clean-ups this summer



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Local Economies

▣ Community Gardens

- ▣ Connecting the trail, business district, and neighborhoods
- ▣ 7 plots, donations from
- ▣ 20 regular volunteers



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



Goal: Local Economies

- ▣ Trail Town Farmers' Markets
 - ▣ Increase direct markets for local producers
 - ▣ Art classes
 - ▣ Local artisans
 - ▣ Markets in Ohiopyle, Connellsville, and Meyersdale
 - ▣ Coordination of 10 Saturday markets in Connellsville
- ▣ 29 food bank donations

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



Fayette County Buy Local Farmers Markets

Buy Local Farmers Markets will be run in four different communities in Fayette County this summer!

2010 Summer Farmers Markets

Uniontown - Main St. & Arch St.	4pm-7pm	July 1 st - Sept. 2 nd
Masontown - German-Masontown Park	3pm-7pm	June 25 th - Sept. 3 rd <small>*Special Memorial Day market - Monday May 31st, 8am-12pm - corner of Main St. and Church St.</small>
Ohioyle - Ohioyle State Park	2pm-6pm	May 29 th - Sept. 4 th
Connellsville - Yough River Park	8am-1pm	July 3 rd - Sept. 4 th

Savor the Flavor of Fayette - Buy Local

Fresh Local Yummy

Don't Forget get your Buy Local Community Discount Savings Card!

2010 - 2011
Community Discount Savings Card

The first 25 people that show their Community Discount Savings Card at the information table of each market will receive \$5 to spend that day at the farmers market.

For more information contact: 724-437-7913, buylocal@faypenn.org or visit www.buylocaffayette.org



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



Goal: Cultural Heritage

▣ Trail Town Ice Creams

- Trail Town Flavors based upon each town's history and culture
 - Yough Ness Monster, Youghioghenny Mud, Cherry Rapid Delight, Gobble Berry, Rockwood, Maple City Marvel, Bobcat Blast, Lover's Leap
- 35 community members involved in selection process
- 8 business vendors

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects



Connellsville:

*What flavor
will your
Trail Town be?*

What will be the signature ice cream flavor for Connellsville?

Join all the Trail Towns along the Great Allegheny Passage as each community develops a signature ice cream flavor.

Share with us your best suggestions for names and ingredients!



trailtown@thesca.org / (724)-603-3151



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Integrated Resource and Asset to Communities

- ▣ Community Outreach: local youth, civic, school groups
 - ▣ Share ideas and shift words to actions



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Integrated Resource and Asset to Communities



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Integrated Resource and Asset to Communities

- ▣ **Satellite Offices:** each team member assigned specific towns
 - ▣ Attend council and-or merchant association meetings, check-in with businesses, check trailheads, and volunteer at events
 - ▣ 72 town meetings (May – October)
 - ▣ 6 green articles published

- ▣ Adam: West Newton and Rockwood
- ▣ Elisa: Connellsville
- ▣ Lara: Ohiopyle and Confluence
- ▣ Stephanie: Meyersdale

TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Integrated Resource and Asset to Communities



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Integrated Resource and Asset to Communities

- ▣ Sustainability Assessments for local businesses
 - ▣ Reduce operating costs through structural and behavior changes



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Sustainable Economic Development

- ▣ Sustainable Business Network

- ▣ Blog: gaptrailsbn.wordpress.com

- ▣ Website: coming Jan. 2011



TTOC: Rural Sustainability Projects

Goal: Sustainable Economic Development

- ▣ Sustainable Business Network

- ▣ Annual Sustainability Summit

- ▣ 17 member businesses, 15 assessments complete



Sustainable Economic Development



- ▣ Sustainability = Buzzword
 - ▣ How does buzzword become a common action?
- ▣ Catalysts
 - ▣ Neighboring businesses sharing actual dollar amounts
 - ▣ Consumers asking about practices
- ▣ Reactions
 - ▣ Awareness of merging of dollar sense and ability to reduce, re-use, and recycle
 - ▣ Dialogue, internally and externally

Sustainable Economic Development



- ▣ Sustainability = Common Action
 - ▣ Awareness of local resources for services and products that fulfill triple bottom line
- ▣ Community Reactions
 - ▣ Follow example set by community-minded businesses
 - ▣ Create entrepreneurial environment
- ▣ Economic Reactions
 - ▣ Real estate turnover and renovations
 - ▣ Savings re-invested into infrastructure
 - ▣ Attracts more visitors



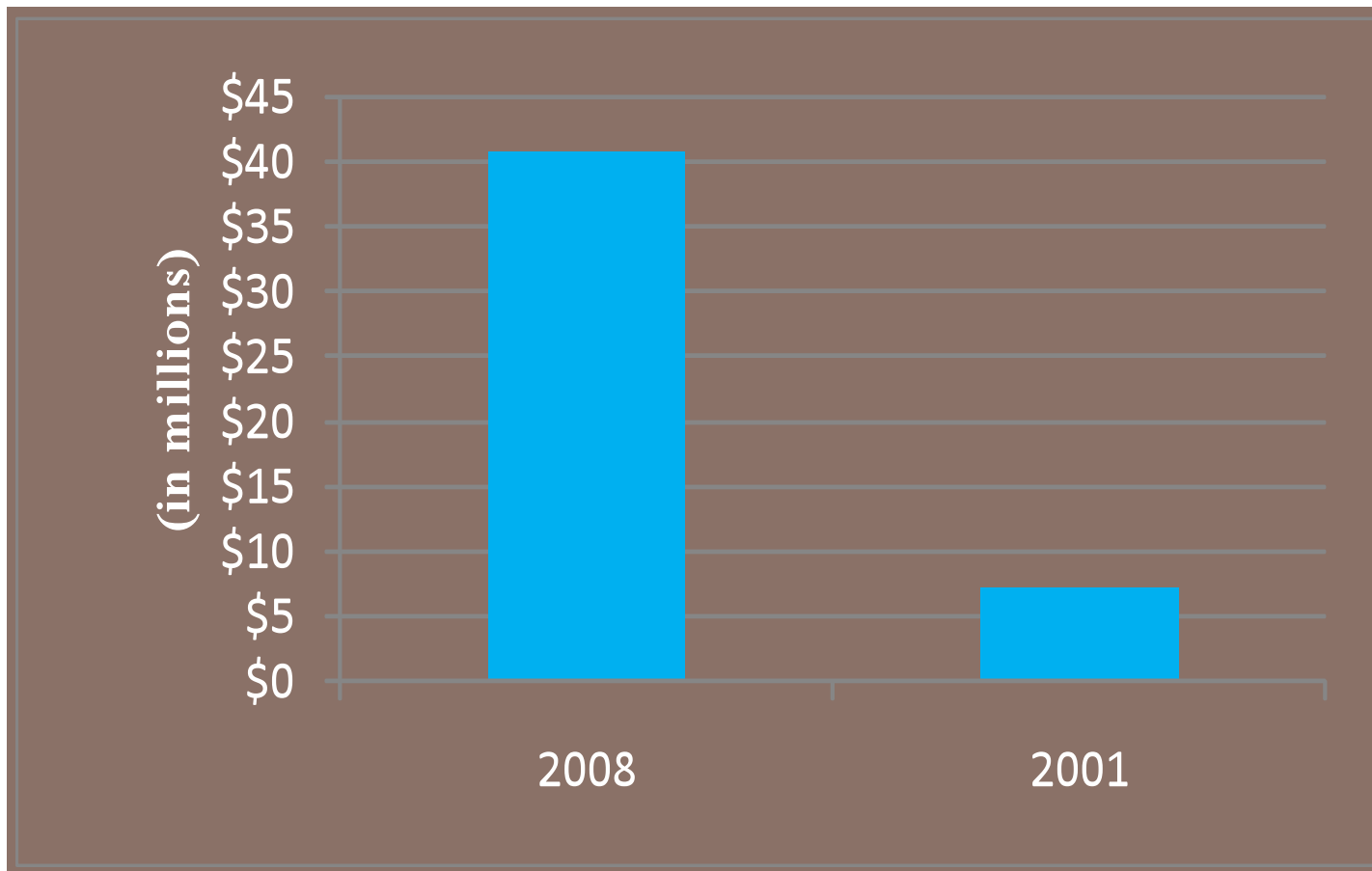
Trail Town Economic Impact Study

Total direct spending, 2008

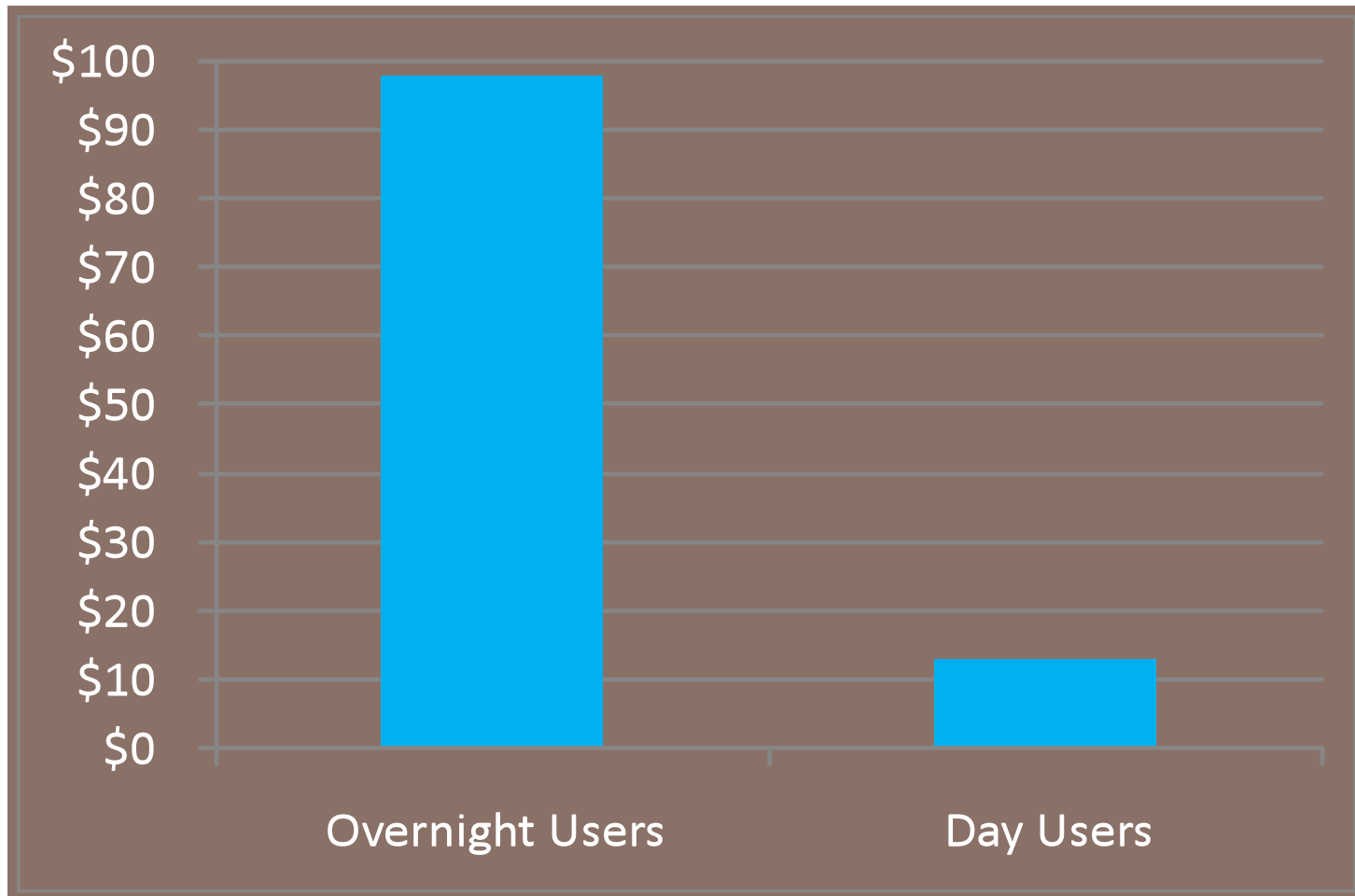


- Over \$40 million in annual direct spending attributed to GAP trail user spending in 2008
- Plus another \$7.5 million in annual wages attributed to trail business

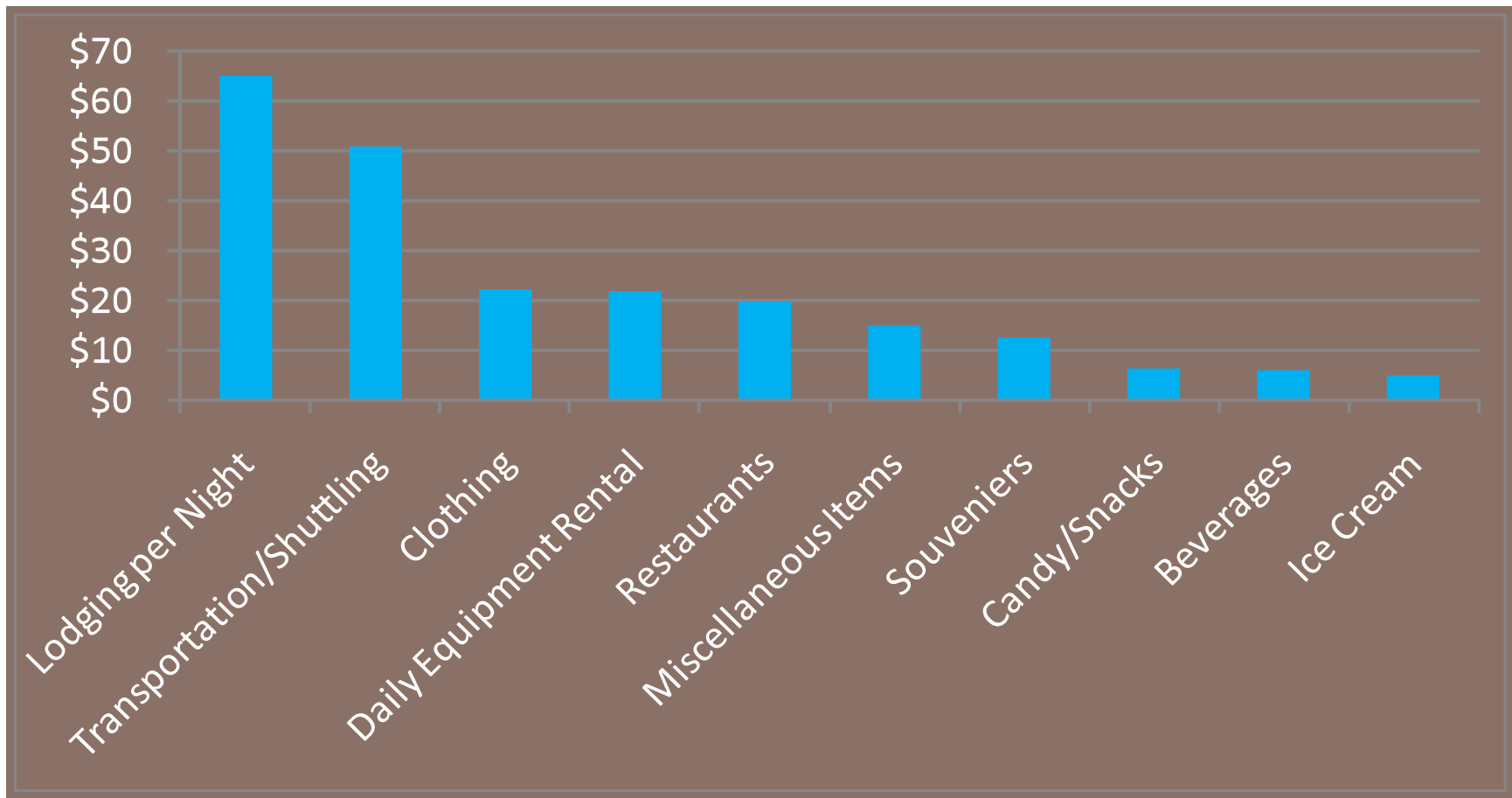
Direct spending increase, 2001-08



Daily spending per person



What people are spending on



Business growth, 2007-10



- 61 new businesses, 19 closings
 - ▣ Net 42 new businesses
 - ▣ 83 FTE new jobs created
- 12 expansions
- 5 businesses changed hands
- 77% of new businesses remain open
- Progress Fund loans to 20% of new businesses
- \$2.7M in loans + \$4M in private investment

Overall economic impact?



- \$40 million direct annual spending
- \$7.5 million in wages attributed to the trail
- \$2.7 million in Progress Fund loans + \$4 million in business owner investment
 - ▣ Assume another \$20 million+ in business investment since 2007



Confluence Cyclery

The Confluence Cyclery Story

In the Beginning...



**Kurtz's Department Store
1905**

**Chubb's Video Store
2006**



Transformation



Today



Business Reality

- 70% of New Bike Shops Fold in the First 3 Years
- Somerset County, PA
 - Population: 76,953 and Falling
 - Median Household Income: \$37,893; Per Capita: \$15,178
- 80+% of Business Comes from the Trail
- Cater to Cyclists Needs
 - Restrooms
 - Internet Terminal and WiFi
 - Comprehensive Repair Capability

Critical Elements



- Restoration of a Historic Building on the Town Square
- Utilizing Local Labor / Contractors
- Patronizing Local Businesses
- Living in the Community
- Becoming Active in the Community
- Hiring Local Teens

Sustainable Practices



Sealing the Envelope



Insulation

High Performance Glass



Sustainable Practices

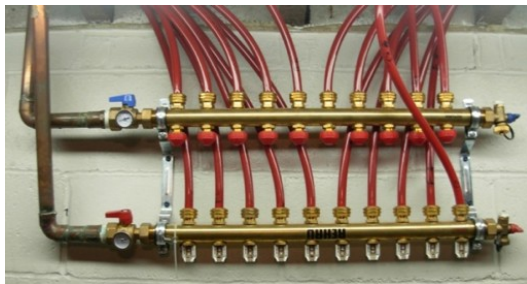
Radiant Floor Heating



**Floor Tubing
And Panels**



Staged Boilers



Floor Loop Manifold



Tankless Water Heating



Waterless Urinal

Happy Visitors



Resources

- **Trail Town Program (Greensburg, PA)**
 - www.trailtowns.org
 - acamp@progressfund.org (Program Manager)
- **Trail Town Outreach Corps (Connellsville, PA)**
 - www.thesca.org
 - emayes@thesca.org (Project Leader)
- **Confluence Cyclery (Confluence, PA)**
 - www.confluencecyclery.com
 - bpsmtih50@gmail.com (Owner)
- **Great Allegheny Passage**
 - www.gaptrail.org

