

ANTHRACITE SCENIC TRAILS ASSOCIATION

SUMMER, 2023



The Anthracite Scenic Trails Association (ASTA) works to build, maintain, and connect trails in our area for free public use and enjoyment. Our two main trails are the Back Mountain Trail (currently extends from Luzerne to Dallas) and the Black Diamond Trail (currently begins in Mountain Top and ends just outside of White Haven). We firmly believe in the health, entertainment, outdoor recreation and economic benefits trails provide and we want you to share in those benefits. We need support from our community as we pursue our goal of extending the trail and connecting communities along its path and we also want to encourage you, your friends, family, neighbors and children to get out and use the trails. Please visit our website www.anthracitescenictrails.org



A new memorial bench in honor of Cosmo D. Zipeto, Jr. was installed on the Rimple Loop section of the Back Mountain Trail. On April 6, 2019, Mr. Zipeto walked the entire loop using his walker - he was 82 years old at the time! The bench was donated by his wife, Lisa Lindquist and was installed with help from Mohegan Sun employees working on the United Way Day of Caring.



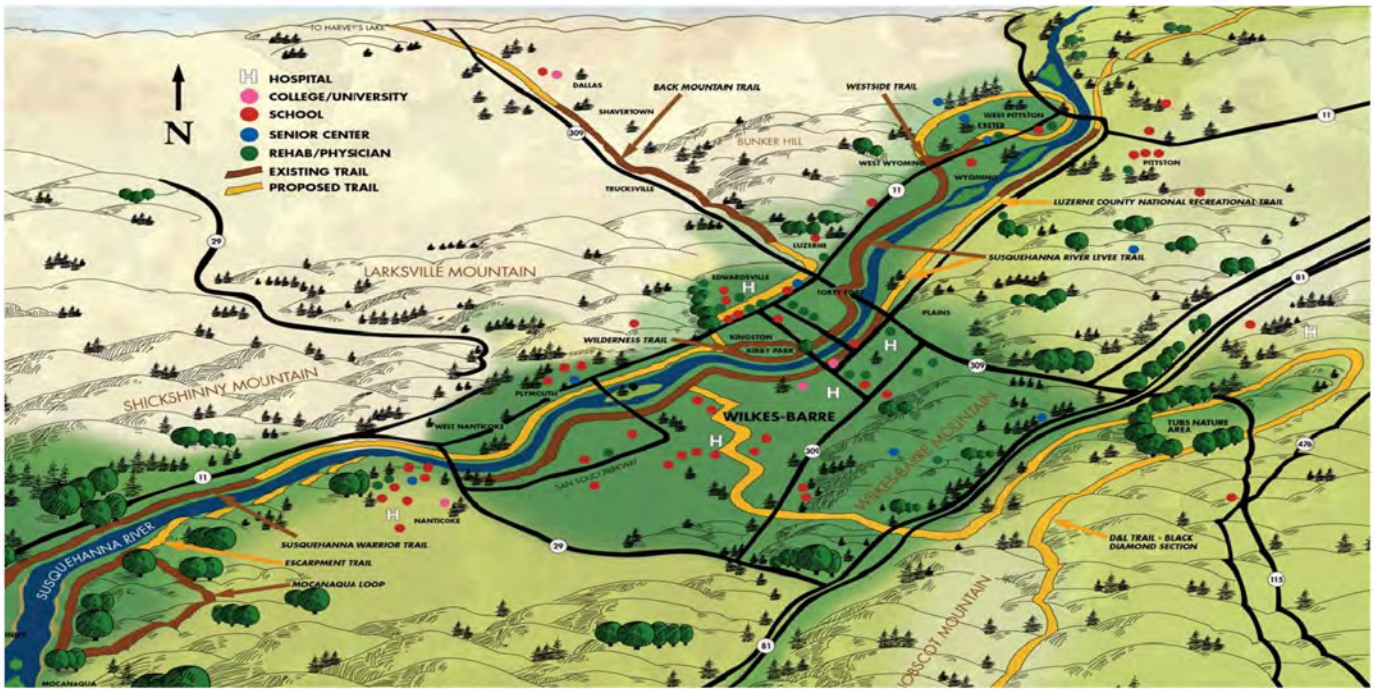
The Back Mountain Trail Council and the Mountaintop Trail Council regularly maintain the trails for the public.

But more volunteers are needed!

Photos from the Back Mountain Trail Earth Day Cleanup on April 22nd. The next Cleanup will take place in November: dates to be announced on the website, facebook page, and fall newsletter.



TRAIL UPDATES



HARRIS HILL ROAD

The Harris Hill Road bridge will be replaced by Luzerne County in mid- to late- 2024, closing the trail for a period of time. The County has committed to early notification for trail users as the project schedule is further developed.



EDWARDSVILLE CONNECTOR

This short trail will, when complete, connect the Creekside Trail in Luzerne Borough to the extended Levee Trail in Edwardsville. ASTA has a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Luzerne County Flood Protection Authority which allows ASTA to develop the trail, situated on the surface above a large pipe culvert taking flow from a detention basin on Toby's Creek to the Susquehanna River. The current "trail" is a worn path in undeveloped condition, with encroachment by adjacent property owners.

ASTA has secured a grant from the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) to fund a design for this trail. It is anticipated that it will lead to a PennDOT Transportation Alternative Set Aside (TASA) award project in the future. This will complete the connection between the Back Mountain Trail and the Susquehanna River Levee Trail system. By the end of July, we expect to have a design consultant on board and design underway.



LEHIGH GORGE STATE PARK

The northern end of the Lehigh Gorge State Park trail is now open, including the new connection from White Haven to the Middleburg Road trailhead of the Black Diamond Trail! The section was closed for several years for major rehabilitation.

MOUNTAIN TOP TO OLIVER MILLS

This trail, owned by ASTA is about five miles long. It is currently undeveloped, but it is walkable and rideable (with suitable tires). This segment dead-ends near Laurel Run and is an out-and-back trail.

ASTA and Hanover Township have put together a funding package of nearly \$2 million for the construction of this project using TASA, PA Department of Community & Economic Development (DCED) and DCNR funds. Design is underway, and should be completed by the end of 2023.

This project will end at the southern limits of Laurel Run Borough, with a cul-de-sac, as the crossing of Northhampton Street and the RBM&N RR is a difficult issue. Ultimately, this trail is expected to connect with a nearly-completed trail from Laurel Run Borough to Wilkes-Barre.

FUNDRAISING UPDATES AND VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES



A group of locals is bringing triathlon back to the Back Mountain on **August 20, 2023**. The Back Mountain Triathlon follows in the footsteps of the former Greater Wilkes Barre Triathlon, which was held for 35 consecutive years in the Back Mountain, with the last race held in 2016. According to race director Dave Bass “Our goal is to make the event fun and safe for all the athletes and participants while limiting any intrusions or interruptions of Lake life on the morning of the race.”

The triathlon will be non-profit with a considerable portion of revenues going to local charities, including The Back Mountain Trail. Much of the leadership involved in this race are also involved with the Back Mountain Trail 5K on New Year’s Eve. Both events make ASTA and trail development a priority for fundraising support.

backmountaintriathlon.com or visit their facebook and instagram pages for more info or to volunteer.



BMT NYE 5K RAISES \$20,500

The 2022 Back Mountain 5K run / walk was a huge success! Over 550 participants ran for fun and for medals. They also ran to raise money for local charities. The funds raised went to The Anthracite Scenic Trails Association (ASTA), the Dallas Rotary, Verve Vertu, the North Branch Land Trust, and Sleep in Heavenly Peace (Luzerne Co.).



LEHMAN-JACKSON 5TH AND 6TH GRADES DONATE TO ASTA

The students of Lehman-Jackson Elementary School and Mr. Adamshick donated \$205 at the end of 2022. Donations like this are critical for maintaining, expanding and keeping the trail open for public use.

How can your school or business get involved?

UPCOMING AREA TRAIL EVENTS



BIG DAY OUT

Pocono Whitewater Excursions
June 17, July 1, 9, 15, 29, and 30
More info:
<https://www.poonowhitewater.com/big-day-out/>

Bike, Hike, & Raft



Wyoming Valley RiverFest- June 23-25
more info:
<https://riverfrontparks.org/wyoming-valley-riverfest-june-23-25/>



ASTA
105 Lt. Michael Cleary Dr.
Suite 104
Dallas, PA 18612

Membership Form

ANTHRACITE SCENIC TRAILS ASSOCIATION and the BACK MOUNTAIN TRAIL ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Please Join or Renew Your Membership!

- Benefactor \$ 500
- Small Business \$ 250
- Organization \$ 100
- Family/Household \$ 50
- Individual \$ 30
- Student/Senior \$ 25

Please let us know if you are interested in:

- I am interested in joining the Back Mountain Trail Council
- I am interested in joining the Mountain Top Trail Council
- I am interested in volunteering in leaf cleanups
- I am interested in volunteering in trail project activities
- I am interested in becoming an ASTA Board Member

Name

Phone Number

Street Address

E-Mail Address

City

State

Zip

Please make checks payable to **ASTA** and mail to 105 Lt. Michael Cleary Dr. Suite 104, Dallas PA 18612. Donations can also be made on our website www.anthracitescenictrails.org. Questions, call: Angela Vitkoski 570-718-6507