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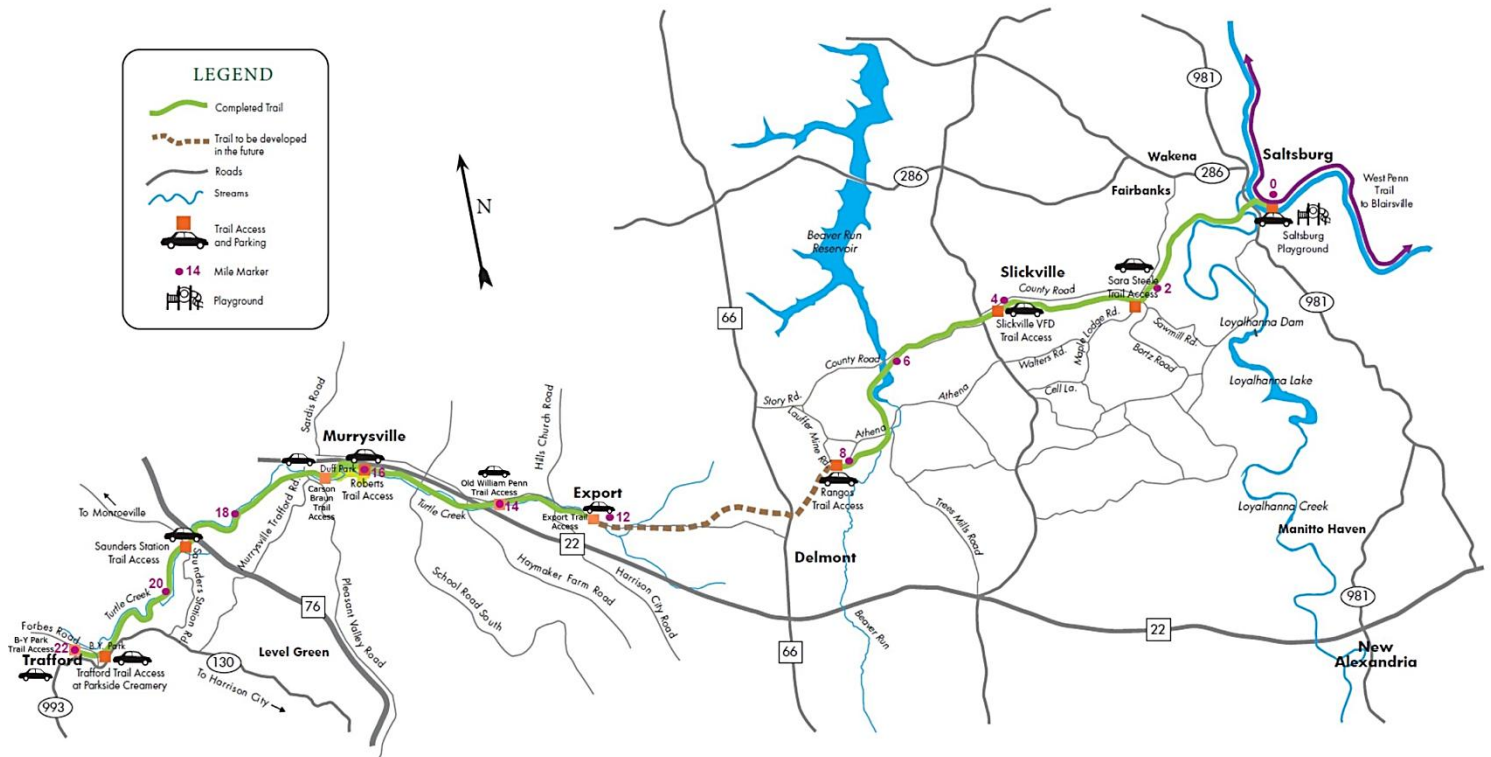
SUMMER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Vol. 5 No. 3

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The Westmoreland Heritage Trail is managed by the Westmoreland Heritage Trail Chapter of the Regional Trail Corporation, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization. Eight municipal partners (Trafford, Monroeville, Penn Township, Murrysville, Export, Delmont, Salem Township, and Loyalhanna Township) work with over 400 active chapter volunteers to maintain and monitor the trail. Other trail partners include the Westmoreland County Bureau of Parks & Recreation and the Westmoreland Conservation District.

SPECIAL REPORT ON JUNE 6 FLASH FLOOD



As many of our trail members know, on Friday June 6, a slow-moving thunderstorm parked itself over the the headwaters of Turtle Creek and dropped almost four inches of rain in just a few hours. Both Steele Run and Turtle Creek overflowed their banks, flooding many homes and businesses in Export and Murrysville. The section of trail near Ginny's Restaurant was severaly eroded and over a mile of crushed limestone was washed away in multiple places between Export and Trafford. Damage estimates could reach as high as \$25,000 by the time all of the needed repairs are completed.



Photo at top and on left from TribLive Westmoreland news report; photo on right by John Beale.

Emergency repairs to make the trail usable again began three days after the flood occurred. A private contractor, Nick Eremic of Eveready Contracting in Trafford, was called in to begin filling deep ruts in the trail and to clear out smaller culverts blocked by flood debris. Meanwhile, the Municipality of Monroeville Public Works Department tackled the emergency situation at Simpson Run, where flood debris had piled up and was threatening to destabilize the trail bridge if another storm occurred.



The washout of the trail near Ginny's Restaurant presented the largest problem of all. When the trail was completed here in 2018, there was some discussion about how to design this culvert to be sure it was large enough to carry the expected flow. Since there had not been any flooding in this area since the Export flooding project was completed in 2008, the engineers recommended leaving in place the 24" concrete pipe that was already installed under the former railroad bed, approximately 10 feet below the rail surface. To be safe, another 24" pipe was installed above the existing pipe to double its capacity in case of severe weather.

Unfortunately, the June 6 flood event overwhelmed our double pipe culvert, washed out the top pipe and opened a ditch across our trail corridor that was about 6' deep and 10' wide at the surface. The Westmoreland County Road Crew was chosen to replace the culvert as they were experienced in this type of work. We upsized the pipe to 60" in diameter. By doing so we increased the capacity by a factor of 8 times.



Trail damage photos from TribLive Westmoreland news report; photos of Westmoreland Road Crew taken by Malcolm Sias

The speed of our trail repairs was amazing. Just one week after the flood, most of the trail between Export and Trafford was safe for use again, and on the 19th day after the flood the entire trail was once again open for business! The photo on the right shows the first biker crossing the new trail over the replaced culvert near Ginny's Restaurant, while road crew workers were still installing the fences there.



The costs of repair are not completely tallied yet. For the repair at Ginny's alone, the new culvert pipe cost \$8,000, a large excavator was rented and approximately 200 tons of stone was purchased. In total the project cost for materials and rental equipment was about \$14,000. This does not include costs incurred by our private contractor, and it also does not include the additional resurfacing work still to come. The crushed limestone that gives our trail its smooth biking and walking surface has washed away in places throughout the eight miles of trail from Export to Trafford. That project might need to wait until funding is secured to pay for it.

In the meantime, here are some things you can do to support trail recovery:

- Donate to the trail, or purchase some of our awesome new merchandise.
- Buy a ticket for our summer bike raffle. We will be selling them at Ginni's CarnivAlz festival on **Sunday, July 29 from noon to 4 PM.**
- Renew your WHT membership early for next year. You can renew online at: <https://westmorelandheritagetrail.com/become-a-member/> or download a membership form there to mail in with a check.
- When on the trail, give contractors and workers enough room to do their jobs.
- Don't forget to thank any workers that you see on the trail, if it is safe to do so.

The board and officers of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail are immensely grateful to the staff of Westmoreland County's Department of Public Works, Bureau of Parks and Recreation, and Road Crew as well as members of the Westmoreland Conservation District, who surveyed the flood damage and initiated trail repairs in record time. We are also grateful to our friends at the Murrys ville Rotary Club, who have contributed \$1000 toward our trail repair fund, and to everyone who has recently donated.

Fifth Annual Poker Run a Success Despite Floods

Our Community Festival and Poker Run moved to Export in 2025, following our events in Trafford (2023) and Murrys ville (2024). Unfortunately, National Trail Day (June 7, 2025) fell just one day after the devastating flash floods in this area. The festival committee considered postponing or moving the event, but although the skies were gray and some parts of the trail were rough, the flood waters had receded enough that our participants could reach the event site and receive their t-shirts and poker cards under the shelter of the Export Fireman's Pavillion.

Food trucks had to be canceled, but the basket raffle was very popular, and many bikers participated in the Blessing of the Bikes by Father Jay Jacinto of St. Johns, Delmont and St. Mary's, Export.

As always, we thank our generous sponsors for their support and our amazing volunteers for their willingness to help with the event and survey the trail for safety issues despite the morning rain.

Here's hoping for better weather at next year's Poker Run event!





June 7, 2025
Export 9a-2p

WESTMORELAND HERITAGE TRAIL

COMMUNITY FESTIVAL

and Poker Run

THANK YOU
to our
Sponsors & Donors











































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News from Other Trails – Five Star Trail Poker Run

If you missed our Poker Run due to the weather emergency, our sister trail in Greensburg is holding their own version of this popular fundraiser on July 19. To find out more or download a registration form, visit: <https://www.westmorelandcountypa.gov/763/Five-Star-Trail-Poker-Run>

Saturday, July 19

8:00 a.m. Registration Begins • 9:00 a.m. Event Start • 10:45 a.m. Trophies & Door Prizes

Support the Five Star Trail

The Five Star Trail connects the communities of The City of Greensburg, Southwest Greensburg, South Greensburg, Hempfield Township and Youngwood. This trail is a unique because it is one of Pennsylvania's few "rail-with-trails", a trail adjacent to, or within an active railroad corridor.

Every day, spring, summer, fall and winter, people enjoy using this important recreational resource on a daily basis. The Five Star Trail also attracts users from far and wide, making it a fun tourism destination.

The trail is managed and maintained by volunteers with the support of its members, partners, donors and sponsors.

Participation

This is not a race. You can choose a 12 mile bicycle ride OR a 4 mile walk/jog. The starting and ending point will be Lynch Field in The City of Greensburg. You can also adjust the distance you go according to your needs.

Each participant will stop at five check points along the Five Star Trail and choose a playing card from the deck. At the end of the event, each participant will have a complete poker hand. The best hands will receive a trophy and prizes.

Registration

Pre-register with this form for a discount rate of \$25 each OR register on site at Lynch Field the day of the event at \$30 each. All those registered will receive a 2025 T-Shirt.

2025 Poker Run Selfie Photo Prizes

Stop and take selfie photos during the Poker Run. Email them to litteri@westmorelandcountypa.gov so we can post it in the 2025 Poker Run Album on the Five Star Trail website. Each Poker Run participant who submits a selfie photo will earn a chance to win fun prizes.

The selfie photo prize winners will be drawn a week after the event. Winners will be notified by email or phone. Prizes can then be picked up at the Westmoreland County Parks Office, 194 Donohoe Road, Greensburg.

More Fun During the Run...

- Basket Raffle
- Historic Poker Run T-shirt display
- Day of the event door prize drawings and 50/50. (Must be present to win.)
- Light refreshments
- Fun Activities - Children and adults do not have to register to enjoy the activities.

The Westmoreland Heritage Trail is an all-volunteer chapter of the [Regional Trail Corporation](#), a non-profit 501(c)(3) entity which promotes the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to recreational trails across Westmoreland, Fayette, and Allegheny Counties. Other RTC trails on the Great Allegheny Passage include the Steel Valley Trail Council, the Mon/Yough Trail Council, the Westmoreland Yough Trail Chapter, the Whitsett-Fayette Yough Trail Chapter and the Yough River Trail Council. Also included under the RTC are the Five Star Trail Chapter, the Coal and Coke Trail Chapter, the Little Crabtree Creek Trail Chapter and the St. Vincent Trail Chapter.

The mission of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail is to manage and maintain the trail from Saltsburg to Trafford, in partnership with like-minded groups, Westmoreland County Parks, and the associated municipalities the trail passes through. The trail will be promoted for walking and biking activities and for recreation, education, volunteerism, tourism, and historic and environmental conservation.

Westmoreland Heritage Trail Corporate Sponsors



The Westmoreland Heritage Trail

**194 Donohoe Road
Greensburg, PA 15601**

<https://westmorelandheritagetrail.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/WestmorelandHeritageTrail>

Upcoming WHT Board Meetings

July 10, 2025 – Pedora Park in Export

August 14, 2025 – Pedora Park in Export

September 11, 2025 – Pedora Park in Export

Members and guests are always welcome!