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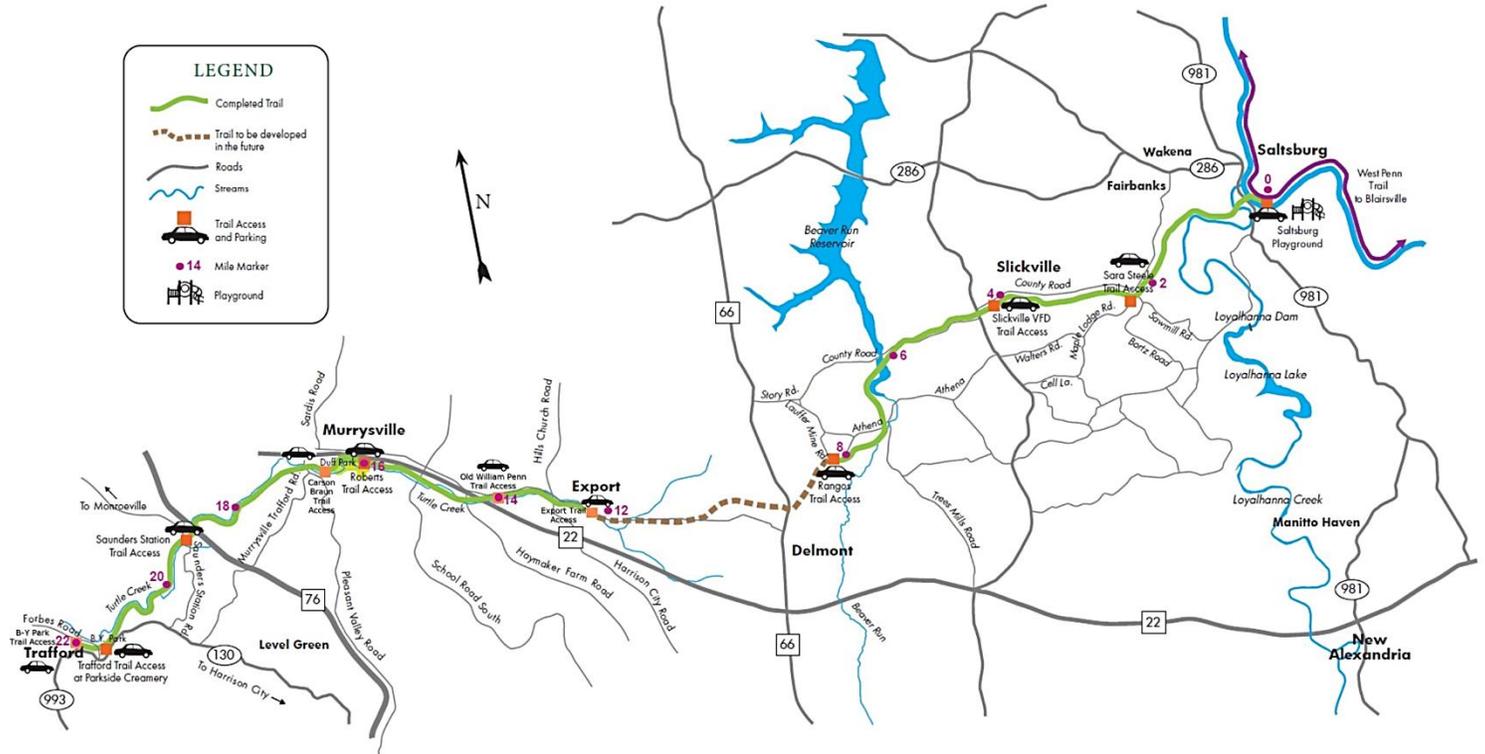
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Westmoreland Heritage Trail Winter 2026 Newsletter

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 500 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](#).



Westmoreland Heritage Trail Board of Directors

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Winter Trail Notes

Once again, a reminder that we do not groom our trails during the winter, because of the potential risk for damaging the trail's limestone surface. We ask our trail users to use caution, common sense and appropriate footwear when traveling the trail during periods of snow cover. Take your time and enjoy the quiet beauty of our winter landscapes - and the joy of finding occasional small snowmen on our trail bridges!



Photo of miniature snowmen on Export Trail Bridge and cover photo both courtesy of John Beale.

Two porta-johns have been kept open along the Westmoreland Heritage Trail again this winter - one at the Saunders Station trailhead and the other at the Sara Steel trailhead. The Roberts Parcel rest facilities in Murrysville will also be open and those at the Export Historical Society Visitor's Center are scheduled to open from 7 AM to 7 PM on winter weekends.

Save These 2026 Dates!



March 7, 2026 – Our most important fundraising event, the annual **Comedy Night**, will once again be held at the Westmoreland LIVE Casino at Westmoreland Mall. Please plan to attend. You can also support the trail by buying a pair of tickets to give as a gift for a loved one or friend. For details on how to get tickets, please see the flyer on Page 4.

Our fundraising chair Rob Cronauer would also be delighted to welcome any company or organization that would like to sponsor our Comedy Night. He also would love to have members of the trail donate raffle baskets for that night. You can [contact Rob](#) if you have any questions or need sponsorship forms.

June 6, 2026 – Our Poker Run Festival moves back to B-Y Park in Trafford this year. We will have a Blessing of the Bikes, several children's activities, food trucks, a craft beer vendor, music, and even more of our awesome raffle baskets. We plan to offer a discounted family rate for the Poker Run so plan to come celebrate National Trail Day with us!

December 10, 2026 – Volunteer Appreciation Night will again be held at the Westmoreland Conservation District to thank all of our amazing and hard-working volunteers.



Comedy Night!

*A fun evening with good food, cash bar,
basket auctions, 50/50s, and lots of laughs!*

Saturday, March 7, 2026

Benefits the Westmoreland Heritage & Five Star Trails



Live! Casino
Westmoreland Mall
Greensburg

Doors open @ 6:00 p.m.

Tickets \$40 Each

Buffet Dinner & \$10 in Free Play* included!

**Must register as a Live! Casino Rewards Member; 1 voucher per card.
Tickets must be purchased in advance - No tickets will be sold at the door.
Recommended for ages 21 & up.*

Purchase Tickets at:

Westmoreland County Parks Office - Greensburg,
The Lamplighter Restaurant - Delmont,
or call (724) 830-3959

(cash or check only)

Entertainment
provided by:



Hosted by:



Spring Membership Drive Kicks off in February!

If you renew your WHT annual membership during the month of February by check (check must be dated in February and received by February 28) or by using our website PayPal app on any day in February, you will automatically be entered into a drawing for the following prizes:



1st Prize - two tickets to Comedy Night

2nd Prize – \$50 Cash

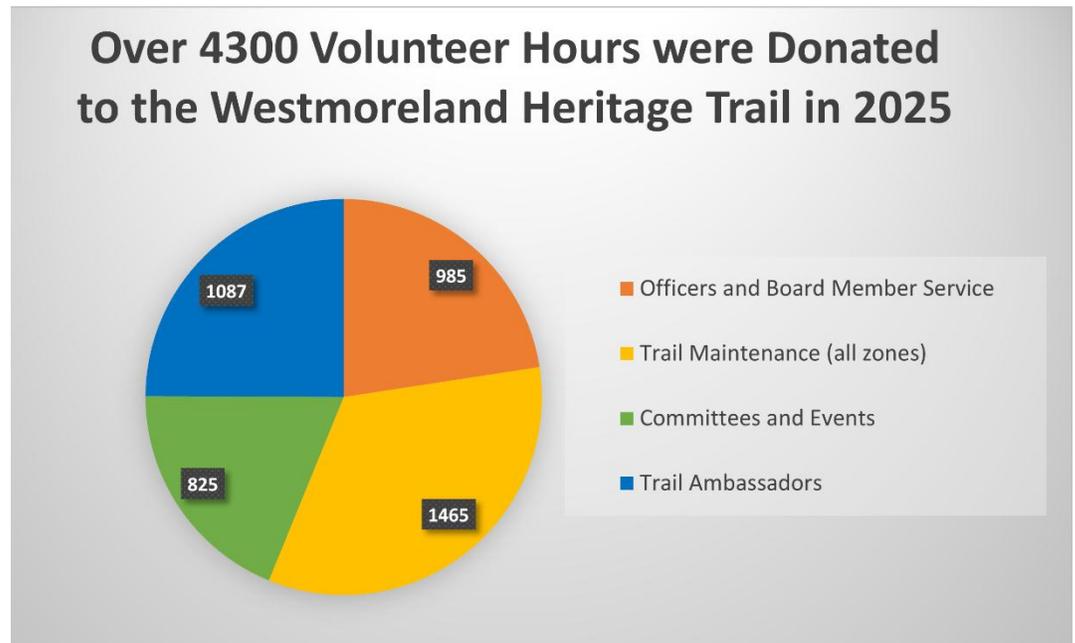
3rd Prize – one free Poker Run registration



You don't need to have a PayPal account to use the website app. Simply select "Pay with a Credit Card" and enter the card details, then select "No, I don't want an account" when asked.

WHT Volunteers Break the Record Again!

Our all-volunteer trail chapter once again broke the record for hours donated to trail work over the past year. Whether it was board members organizing events and outreach; maintenance volunteers keeping the trail in great shape; trail chapter members helping out with events like Comedy Night and the Poker Run; or our friendly Trail Ambassadors chatting with users of the trail – we cannot thank you enough for all that you did in 2025 to make our trail great!



If you are a new trail member or have new availability for volunteering, we would welcome your help! Find out more and fill out our easy volunteering form at

<https://westmorelandheritagetrail.com/volunteers/>

White Valley Stream Cleanup Project Will Help the Trail

Closing the WHT Middle Gap will require Partnerships and Collaborations

The Westmoreland Heritage Trail (WHT) seeks to celebrate the special history and heritage of our region and the communities in which the WHT is located. Just as the growth of Murrysville and the Turtle Creek Valley Railroad was driven by the extraction of natural gas, the growth of Export and White Valley involved mining coal. Tons of it! In 1904, the two drift-entry coal mines in Export extracted the most coal of any mine in the world, almost three-quarters of a million tons of bituminous coal. The legacy of this extensive mining, unfortunately, is extensive discharge of acidic mine water into the headwaters of Turtle Creek. In Export and White Valley (right), the stream turns red and has a pH of 3, instead of the more typical 6-7.



While the re-purposing of legacy resources such as the former Turtle Creek Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad into a Rail Trail is a relatively straight-forward proposition, the work to address the associated legacy of acid mine drainage and restore the Turtle Creek watershed as a healthier ecosystem is a difficult and daunting task. It has taken a long time to remove piles of coal waste left behind in Export and White Valley so that remediation efforts can proceed, but thanks to the work by the [Murrysville Area Watershed Association \(MAWA\)](#), the final phase of stream cleanup is now underway in White Valley.

To the west of Borland Farm Road, in a large parcel owned by Export Borough, the Municipalities of Murrysville and Export are working to develop an active Acid Mine Drainage Remediation Facility in



conjunction with the Murrysville Area Watershed Association (MAWA). A grant of over two million dollars from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection will fund the research and design of this active treatment plant, which will remove iron contamination from Turtle Creek and bring its pH back into a healthy range for recreation and fishing.

Fortunately for us, MAWA's treatment facility masterplan also includes the proposal to dedicate land within the Treatment Facility parcel for developing a section of the Westmoreland Heritage Trail. This will add another piece of the puzzle and help us to fill in the 'Middle Gap' of the trail between Export and Delmont. Three cheers for the work of the MAWA and the Municipalities!!!

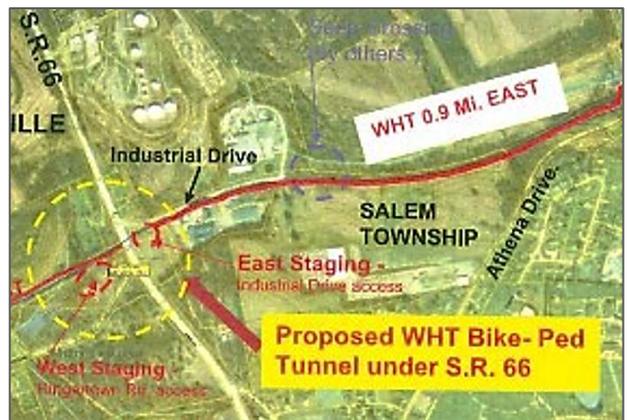
Tunnel Vision – What Lies Ahead

One of the most frequent questions we get asked on the trail is “When are you going to connect the two parts of the trail?” [Answer – probably in the early 2030’s.] The most common follow-up question to that is “How the heck are you going to get across Route 66?”



Starting with this issue, we hope to keep our members updated on our progress toward the goal of uniting the two halves of our trail by constructing a tunnel beneath Route 66. Other trails in our region, notably the Hoodlebug Trail in Indiana County (left), have constructed similar trail tunnels with great success.

Since our trail follows the original route of the Westinghouse Industrial Railway from Trafford to Saltsburg, the most obvious site for placing a tunnel would be where the original railroad tunnel once existed beneath that highway, near Ringertown Road about a mile north of Delmont. This is adjacent to the parcel of land along Industrial Drive that the Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) purchased last Spring from Kacin Companies. Along with installing the tunnel itself, we hope that the tunnel project will also lay the groundwork for a new trailhead parking area and rest facilities for trail users, and a maintenance building for our volunteers.



The Tunnel project will include construction of a staging and lay-down area within the RTC parcel to support tunnel construction. A Steering Committee led by the RTC and the WHT is now working to develop a plan for the trailhead site. The coordination of the tunnel project and the RTC Trailhead project has the potential to result in the development of a key WHT hub, in much the same manner as was achieved by our trail chapter’s coordination with PennDOT and Murrysville when we designed and constructed the Roberts Trail Access in 2017.

Keep an eye on the light that you see in the tunnel graphic above – it should get bigger and bigger as we raise funds and make progress toward our long-time goal of ‘closing the Middle Gap’.

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 Council, the Westmoreland Yough Trail Chapter, the Whitsett-Fayette Yough Trail Chapter and the Yough River Trail Council. Also included are the Five Star Trail Chapter, the Coal and Coke Trail Chapter, the Little Crabtree Creek Trail Chapter and the St. Vincent Trail Chapter.



Westmoreland Heritage Trail Winter 2026 Newsletter

The Westmoreland Heritage Trail has a new mailing address!

P. O. Box 184
Claridge, PA 15623

Follow us on social media:



Upcoming WHT Board Meetings

Feb 12, 2026 – Remote Via Zoom

Mar 12, 2026 – Remote Via Zoom

Apr 9, 2026 – Lamplighter in Delmont

Members and guests are always welcome to attend our board meetings! Contact whtsecretary@gmail.com for the link.

Our 2026 Corporate Sponsors



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.