

Board Members, Chapter Officers, Liaisons,

I am writing to share an important update regarding the Great Allegheny Passage (GAP). To ensure public safety, a critical segment of the trail in West Mifflin (near milepost 137, below Kennywood) will temporarily close for 28 days starting the evening of Thursday, July 9, for safety scaling.

While this periodic maintenance is necessary to mitigate immediate rockfall hazards, it underscores a much larger, structural challenge. Comprehensive, long-term remediation for this vulnerable hillside is estimated to be approximately \$8 million.

To date, the Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) has aggressively pursued funding and successfully secured \$4.3 million to date for the landslide project. This funding has enabled RTC to perform 2025 safety scaling as well as planning, engineering, and permitting for the long-term remediation solution. These public and private funds will also be meeting the cost of the current scaling project. Remaining funds will be utilized to address Phase 1 of remediation. However, a significant funding gap remains in the long-term remediation..

As you know, the GAP is a vital economic engine for southwestern Pennsylvania, drawing more than a million visitors annually from all 50 states and 40 countries, deeply benefiting our local trail towns and small businesses. We look forward to partnering with your office to identify infrastructure funds to secure the remaining dollars needed for a permanent engineering solution.

I will keep your staff updated as the immediate scaling work progresses. Please let me know if you would like further information on the full engineering scope and funding breakdown.

Sincerely,

Mark Place, President

Regional Trail Corporation

Trail Groups & Partners

We are reaching out to give your organizations and riders advance notice regarding an upcoming, temporary closure on the GAP so you can adjust trip planning, itineraries, and web alerts accordingly.

The Details:

- **What:** Full trail closure for safety scaling (removing loose rock/unstable slope material).
- **Where:** The West Mifflin segment between the Whitaker flyover and the Port Perry flyover (near milepost 137, below Kennywood).
- **When:** Closing the evening of **Thursday, July 9**. Contractors begin work Friday, July 10 and Shuttle Service launches (first come, first served).
- **Duration:** Approximately 28 days.

We know there is never a good time to close a section of the GAP, especially during peak riding season. This hillside has been prone to landslides and rockfalls, and this scaling is an urgent, non-negotiable step to protect riders.

The Regional Trail Corporation (RTC) is taking the following steps to minimize that impact:

- We are announcing this well ahead of the July 9 start date to help through-bikers, tour groups, and local riders adjust their plans.
- We are working closely with the contractors to ensure work begins immediately on July 10, with the goal of safely reopening the trail as fast as humanly possible.
- This scaling buys us safe operational time while we move toward the deployment of funding for Phase 1 of a permanent, approximately \$8M engineering solution.

We have also worked with the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy to arrange for a licensed shuttle service to provide transportation between Homestead and Duquesne, starting on July 10.

- The service will operate from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, seven days a week, until August 6 (that's 28 days) or earlier, if the project is completed earlier. The shuttle fee is \$20/person fee (cash is preferred but credit cards are accepted). The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy will subsidize additional costs incurred.
- Bill's Car Service, based in Allegheny County, will provide this service, which will be first-come, first-served. We may need to deviate slightly to accommodate families traveling together.

- On the eastern end, the shuttle service will use the [official, GAP-branded trail access area in Duquesne](#), which is at 20 Library Place, Duquesne, PA 15110, and approximately mile marker 135.3.
- On the western end, the shuttle service will use the [official, GAP-branded trail access area at the Waterfront](#), which is at 191 East Waterfront Drive, Homestead, PA 15120, and approximately mile marker 140.5.
- A one-way shuttle ride is anticipated to be approximately 16-20 minutes.

Please share this information with your members. We will provide updates on progress and reopening timelines as they become available.

Best regards,

The Regional Trail Corporation Team

Social Media

Facebook/Instagram

TRAIL UPDATE: To keep our riders safe, a segment of the GAP in West Mifflin (between the Whitaker flyover and Port Perry flyover, near milepost 137) will temporarily close for slope maintenance starting the evening of Thursday, July 9.

Contractors will be performing safety scaling to remove loose rock and prevent potential rockfalls on this historically vulnerable hillside below SR 837. The work is expected to take approximately 28 days.

We know the GAP is a beloved daily resource and a bucket-list destination for visitors worldwide, and we never take closures lightly. This active maintenance is crucial to protect everyone on the trail.

The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy has arranged for a licensed shuttle service to provide transportation for GAP travelers between Homestead and Duquesne, starting on July 10. The service will operate from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, seven days a week, until August 6 (that's 28 days) or earlier, if the project is completed earlier. The shuttle fee is \$20/person fee (cash is preferred but credit cards are accepted). The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy will subsidize additional costs incurred.

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A one-way shuttle ride is anticipated to be approximately 16-20 minutes.

Plan ahead, spread the word to fellow riders, and watch for further information on timing and long-term repair plans.

LinkedIn/X

The Great Allegheny Passage drives regional tourism, welcoming over 1M visitors annually from all 50 states and 40 countries. But maintaining world-class trail infrastructure requires serious investment.

To address ongoing landslide risks in West Mifflin, a permanent engineering fix will cost approximately \$8M, but could exceed that cost depending upon the number of phases needed to complete the full remediation project. RTC has secured \$4.3 million to date that has enabled the organization to perform safety scaling in 2025, as well as planning, engineering, and permitting for the long-term remediation solution. These public and private funds will also be meeting the cost of the current scaling project. Remaining funds will be utilized to address Phase 1 of remediation.

While we undergo a temporary 28-day safety closure starting July 9 for immediate rock scaling, we are actively working with leaders to bridge the funding gap for a permanent solution.

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A one-way shuttle ride is anticipated to be approximately 16-20 minutes.

Want to support our infrastructure fund? Consider making a donation or reaching out about corporate partnership opportunities directly to RTC.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Exactly when and where is the closure?

A: The closure is located on the West Mifflin segment of the GAP trail between the Whitaker flyover and the Port Perry flyover (near milepost 137, below Kennywood Park and SR 837). The trail will close the evening of Thursday, July 9, 2026, and work will begin the morning of Friday, July 10.

Q: How long will it last?

A: The safety scaling work is expected to take approximately 28 days. We are working closely with contractors to ensure the project moves quickly and safely so we can reopen the trail to public use as soon as possible.

Q: What is "safety scaling" and why is it happening now?

A: Scaling is a standard, periodic maintenance process for steep hillsides. Contractors manually or mechanically remove loose, unstable rocks and debris that pose a landslide or rockfall hazard to the trail below. Because this specific hillside has experienced multiple rockfalls over the years, this work is critical to prevent immediate safety risks to trail users.

Q: Is there a detour available?

A: Due to the constraints of the surrounding geography and busy roadways like SR 837, there is no official, dedicated trail detour. Thru-riders should plan their itineraries accordingly around the West Mifflin segment.

Q: How can riders get around the closure?

A: The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy has arranged for a licensed shuttle service to provide transportation for GAP travelers between Homestead and Duquesne, starting on July 10. The service is intended to assist those seeking to safely bypass the segment closure under Kennywood. The service will operate from 8:30 am to 4:30 pm, seven days a week, until August 6 (that's 28 days) or earlier, if the project is completed earlier. The shuttle fee is \$20/person fee (cash is preferred but credit cards are accepted). The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy will subsidize additional costs incurred.

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A one-way shuttle ride is anticipated to be approximately 16-20 minutes.

Q: Why not just fix it permanently right now?

A: A permanent engineering solution to fully stabilize this hillside is a massive undertaking, estimated to cost between \$8 million and \$10 million. RTC has successfully secured approximately \$4.3 million to date in grants. It has allowed us to perform safety scaling in 2025 as well as planning, engineering, and permitting for the long-term remediation solution. These public and private funds will also be meeting the cost of the current scaling project. Remaining funds will be utilized to address Phase 1 of remediation. The 28-day scaling project is an intermediate step to keep the trail safe for users today while we continue to aggressively pursue the remaining funding needed for the long-term fix.

Q: How can individuals or organizations help?

A: Maintaining a world-class trail requires community support. Individuals looking to support our ongoing maintenance and advocacy efforts can contact RTC for donation opportunities. Organizations, corporations, or foundations interested in financially supporting the long-term stabilization project are encouraged to contact us directly at rtcslideproject@gmail.com.