



Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Fitzgerald Opens Montour Trail Connection to Pittsburgh International Airport

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald and officials from the Allegheny County Airport Authority, Montour Trail Council, and Allegheny Trail Alliance today celebrated the grand opening of a long-awaited connection between the Montour Trail and Pittsburgh International Airport.

"Today's event marks another critical step in our ongoing effort to build one of the finest trail networks in the world," said Fitzgerald. "Trails improve quality of life and provide transportation alternatives for residents, and they also bring tourism and economic vitality."

Allegheny County is the nexus of a number of popular trails, including the Great Allegheny Passage, Montour Trail, Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail, Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway, Panhandle Trail and Ohio River Trail.

"The Montour Trail Council is pleased to have helped Allegheny County and Pittsburgh take their place among major U.S. metropolitan areas that have a direct trail connection from an international airport to an extensive regional trail system," said Montour Trail Council President Ned Williams.

Linking Pittsburgh International Airport directly with the existing and expanding trail system is a major step in further promoting the region as a bicycling touring hub.

"This critical connection to the airport will boost our region's reputation as a world-class bike touring destination," said Allegheny Trail Alliance President Linda McKenna Boxx. "The Great Allegheny Passage should be finished this year, and making access to the trails to and from the Airport easy and safe really tells the world that Western Pennsylvania welcomes bicycle tourists with arms wide open."

The county is working with municipalities, businesses and groups throughout the region to build connections among existing trails, as well as developing new greenways and trails, including the Allegheny County Sports & Athletic Complex at Montour Junction, a new recreational facility located on a 78-acre brownfield in Coraopolis, Moon Township, and Robinson Township. The development plan includes a number of nontraditional athletic fields, such as rugby, soccer and lacrosse, as well as recreational programming, trout fishing, and an extension of the Montour Trail, ultimately linking to the Ohio River Trail.

Allegheny County, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and Friends of the Riverfront are working with 17 municipalities along the north bank of the Allegheny River to expand the Three Rivers Heritage Trail, create connections to communities along the way, and provide public access to recreational opportunities along the riverfront. This connection is an important part of the Allegheny County Riverfronts Project, Erie-to-Pittsburgh Trail, and Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway.

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