

Ohio River Trail study nears end

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By Brian David, Pittsburgh Post-Gazette

The Ohio River Trail Council is "a couple of weeks away" from finishing a feasibility study that will cost about \$6 million for a bike trail connecting the Montour Trail and Monaca, council CEO Vincent Troia said.

The council ultimately wants to extend the trail across the Ohio River to Rochester, across the Beaver River to Bridgewater, then up the north bank of the Ohio to the Ohio state line.

Dr. Troia, a Monaca optometrist and cycling enthusiast, is pursuing public and private grants to build the trail, believing that it will help Beaver County take advantage of its natural beauty.

"We don't take advantage of the river like we should," Dr. Troia said. "They do a better job in Pittsburgh."

To that end, the council also is pursuing something it calls the Ohio River Water Trail, which would establish four access points for canoes and kayaks: One on the Ohio in Monaca, two into the Beaver in Rochester and Bridgewater, and one into Little Beaver Creek at Lock 57 Community Park in Ohioville.

All the sites could tie into the bike trail, creating extra recreational possibilities. The Lock 57 site also would tie in with Little Beaver Creek State Park in Ohio, which lies along the creek's upper reaches and is popular with kayakers.

"We'd like to put in kayak and canoe racks and picnic tables," Dr. Troia said.

The council has applied for a \$20,000 grant from the Port of Pittsburgh Commission to fund the water access points.

Dr. Troia said he was hoping for word from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources in the fall about grants for the bike trail.

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