



The Mon Valley Trailblazers Club of SW Pennsylvania Welcomes You to the Year Round Bike on the Great Allegheny Passage Trail, Pittsburgh, PA-Cumberland, MD

Starting in [Downtown Pittsburgh](#) and ending in [Cumberland, Maryland](#) or starting at any of the trailheads on the GAP, the Great Allegheny Passage is a spectacular 150-mile nonmotorized path that soars over valleys, snakes around mountains, and skirts alongside the [Casselman River](#), [Youghiogheny River](#), and [Monongahela River](#) on a nearly-level, crushed-limestone surface. Tracing old footpaths and railroad corridors through the wilderness, it offers glimpses into the country's westward expansion and industrial might. When paired with the connecting C&O Canal Towpath bike and walk events as extensions of each other, the C&O Events are Y0699 (bike) and Y0747 (walk). It would make long-distance trail travel possible between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. A GAP App can be downloaded onto your cell phone.

Bike Registration:

Please use the online start box provided by AVA at website (<https://my.ava.org>). Follow the 'Online Start Box', and the instructions provided to sign a waiver and register for this event. Follow directions to make payments for event credit and directions. The directions and insert cards are PDFs that you can download and print as needed. The POC does not provide event directions or accept alternate payment methods. The entire online process should take less than 10 minutes for a first time user.

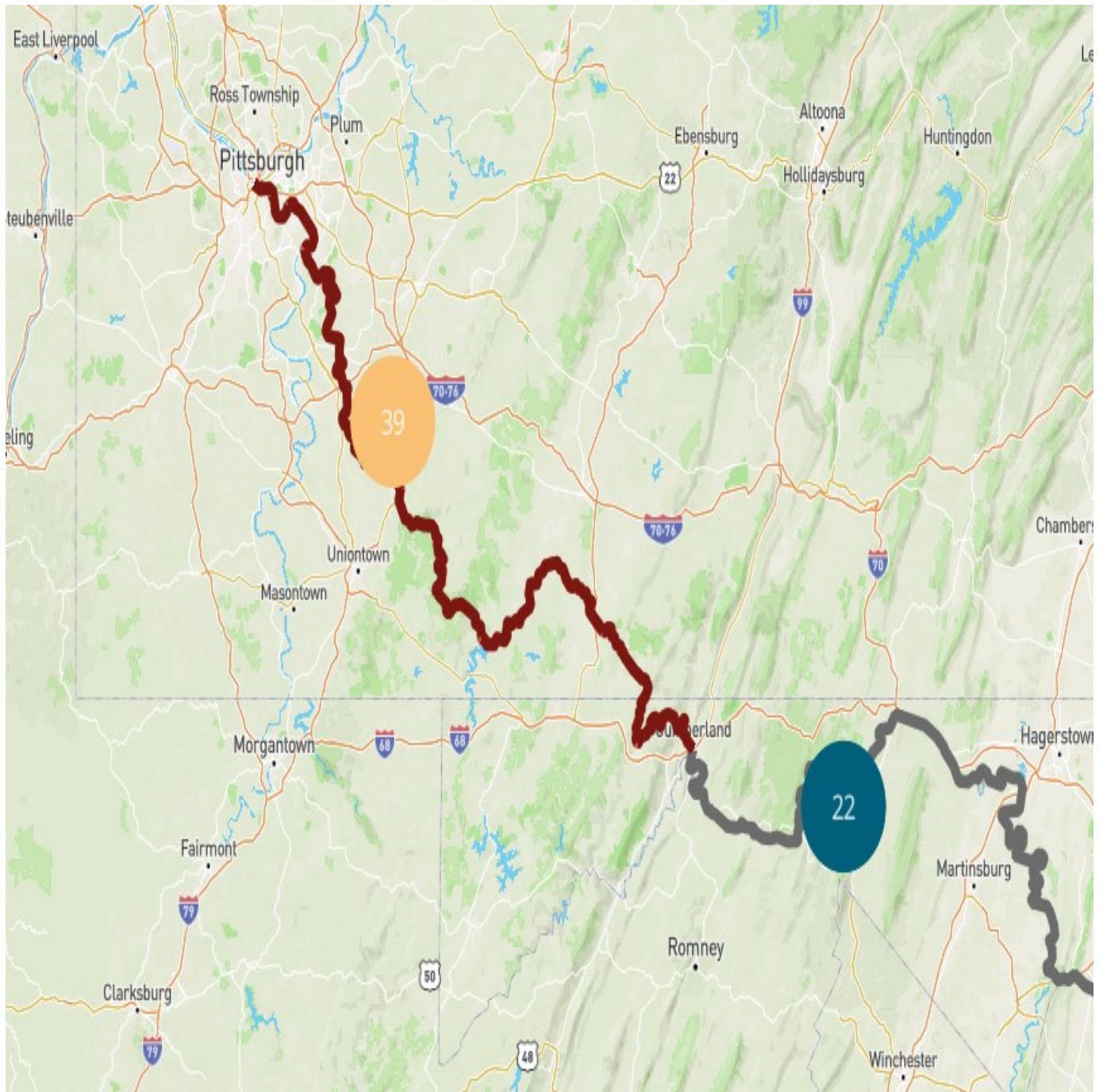
Bike Completion and Bike Credit:

Once you have physically completed the bike, please login to your Online Start Box account and select the "Finish Table" tab. Use the displayed entry form to submit the date and distance of your walk as well as select applicable AVA Special Programs to generate stamped "virtual" insert cards that you may later choose to print out.

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Great Allegheny Passage Map (Pittsburgh, PA to Cumberland,MD)



Driving Directions: Determined by choice of trailhead to start your adventure.

The Beginning: Point State Park: GAP Western Terminus Within The Point State Park is the GAP Western Terminus, the beginning stop along the Greater Allegheny Passage. The Terminus is located at the very tip of the park where the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers meet to form the Ohio River.

Downtown Pittsburgh

GAP 147.7

40.441888 -80.013244

Three Rivers Heritage Trail, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

The End of the Great Allegheny Passage:

Cumberland, MD

GAP 0 GAP Trail Town

39.649318,-78.763004

Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath, Cumberland, MD 21502

During your quest you will enter many towns and cities in which you may enjoy the different amenities of each town. All participants must wear helmets, carry water, be safe and follow all bike safety rules.

The Great Allegheny Passage bike event is a 13K to 241.4K and rated a 1B. This is a Credit Only event. Credit Fee is \$3.00 for each day of participation. If you continue your journey onto the C & O Canal Towpath you will have completed 473K.

Great Allegheny Passage Biking Directions

Driving Directions to the Start point: See the above directions.

Start Point:

Pittsburgh, PA GPS: 40.44189, -80.01324 or

Cumberland, MD GPS: 39.64972, -78.76327

Restrooms:

Restrooms are available throughout the towns. Restrooms may not always be convenient and those that are available may be primitive pit toilets. Carry hand sanitizer with you.

Emergency Numbers:



These walk directions and maps may only be used in conjunction with a signed American Volkssport Association athletic waiver. All other uses are prohibited.

Suggestions for various ways to plan a walk or bike trip:

1. Out-and-back from any trailhead. In some cases, there are suggested trail directions for out-and-back walks or bikes (e.g., at West Newton, PA)
2. Organize a car shuttle system with a friend. For example, two walkers or cyclists drive to the destination trailhead. One parks there, then both drive in the other vehicle (with their bikes if cycling) to the starting trailhead. They walk or bike on the GAP to the destination, mount their bikes (if cycling) to that vehicle, and drive to the starting trailhead to retrieve the other vehicle.
3. Long-distance trips can take many forms. There are many types of campgrounds along the GAP. There are Bed and Breakfasts, Hotels, AirBnB, and other lodging along the GAP. There are several vendors who can provide partial or complete support for lodging, meals, guides, shuttle service, bike maintenance, etc.

Before You Go

Whether you're on the Great Allegheny Passage for the afternoon or completing a full 333-mile trip between Downtown Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C, being prepared is important. Planning your stops, finding the best restaurants and overnight lodging, and outlining your day by day trip using TrailGuide will ensure you enjoy your time even more.

Please note that the GAP's Big Savage Tunnel (between Meyersdale and Frostburg) is closed from early December to early April without an easy detour, so plan your thru-trip for other times of the year. Watch for annual updates specifying closing and opening dates.

Get the Official Guide to Traveling the C&O Canal Towpath and Great Allegheny Passage

Now in its 17th edition, TrailGuide is the official, authorized guidebook for traveling between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C on the Great Allegheny Passage and C&O Canal Towpath — two scenic trails and one amazing journey between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C. Pick up your copy for just \$10 plus postage.

The links below will help you prepare and guide you on your Great Allegheny Passage journey.

<https://www.trailink.com/trail-maps/great-allegheny-passage/> Map

<https://thegreatalleghenypassage.com/plan-your-ride>

thegreatalleghenypassage.com

[Bike the beautiful 150 mile Great Allegheny Passage and the 184.5 ...](#)

Information needed to embark on your cycling adventure on the Great Allegheny Passage

thegreatalleghenypassage.com/gap-trail

[GAP Trail - Great Allegheny Passage](https://thegreatalleghenypassage.com/gap-trail)

150 Miles of Continuous Trail .. The GAP winds 150 miles through the mountains of SW PA & connects Cumberland Maryland to ...

www.trailtowns.org/Great-Allegheny-Passage

[Great Allegheny Passage - Trail Town Program](http://www.trailtowns.org/Great-Allegheny-Passage)

The GAP was built on the abandoned rail beds of the West Maryland Railway and the...

gaptrail.org

[Great Allegheny Passage](https://gaptrail.org)

The Great Allegheny Passage® offers 150 miles of spectacular biking and hiking from Cumberland, Md. to Pittsburgh, through Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands.

gaptrail.org/map

[Interactive Map for planning your GAP trip - Great Allegheny Passage](https://gaptrail.org/map)

The Great Allegheny Passage® offers 150 miles of spectacular biking/hiking Pittsburgh, PA to Cumberland, Md.

gaptrail.org/before-you-go/how-to-prepare

[How To Prepare - Great Allegheny Passage](https://gaptrail.org/before-you-go/how-to-prepare)

The Great Allegheny Passage® offers 150 miles of spectacular biking and hiking from Cumberland, Md. to Pittsburgh, through Pennsylvania's Laurel Highlands.

gaptrail.org/before-you-go/trailguide

[TrailGuide - Great Allegheny Passage \\$10.00 plus tax](https://gaptrail.org/before-you-go/trailguide)

The Great Allegheny Passage® offers 150 miles of spectacular biking & hiking from Pittsburgh, PA to Cumberland, Md.

gaptrail.org

Daily weather and trail conditions.

<https://www.mtbproject.com/trail/7015081/great-allegheny-passage-gap>

<https://bikecando.com/c-o-weather.aspx>

GAP Trailheads and Parking

Trailheads indicate where you can hop on or off the Great Allegheny Passage to start or end your trip. Every trail town has a trailhead (and all but Pittsburgh's South Side and Downtown Pittsburgh have GAP-branded signage visible), and there are additional trailheads between some trail towns, some GAP-branded and some not.

GAP Trailhead Addresses

The Beginning: Point State Park: GAP Western Terminus Within The Point State Park is the GAP Western Terminus, the beginning stop along the Greater Allegheny Passage. The Terminus is located at the very tip of the park where the Monongahela and Allegheny Rivers meet to form the Ohio River.

40.211381,-79.770056

Great Allegheny Passage (North), West Newton, PA 15089

Downtown Pittsburgh

GAP 147.7 GAP Trail Town

40.441888 -80.013244

Three Rivers Heritage Trail, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Pittsburgh's South Side

GAP 144.2 GAP Trail Town

40.427314,-79.962513

9 Hot Metal St, Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Homestead

GAP 140.5 GAP Trail Town

40.411311,-79.91529

Steel Valley Trail, Homestead, PA 15120

McKeesport

GAP 132.5 GAP Trail Town

40.350461,-79.869171

Great Allegheny Passage, McKeesport, PA 15132

Parking – Boston

GAP 128.2

40.311415,-79.827683

1912 Donner Street

McKeesport, PA 15135

Parking – Buena Vista

GAP 120.9

40.277449,-79.797682

3498 Wood Street

Buena Vista, PA 15018

West Newton

GAP 114.1 GAP Trail Town

Parking – Cedar Creek Park

GAP 110.3

40.176728,-79.768215

453 Evergreen Drive

Belle Vernon, PA 15012

Parking – Whitsett

GAP 104.1

40.107092,-79.755549

Township Road 515

Perryopolis, PA 15473

Connellsville

GAP 88.8 GAP Trail Town

40.017176,-79.595532

505 PA-711, Connellsville, PA 15425

Ohiopyle

GAP 71.9 GAP Trail Town

39.869903,-79.491888

Great Allegheny Passage, Ohiopyle, PA 15470

Parking – Ramcat

GAP 63.3

39.826251,-79.378702

Ram Cat Access Road

Confluence, PA 15424

Confluence

GAP 61.6 GAP Trail Town

39.807376,-79.364652
Great Allegheny Passage
Confluence, PA 15424

GAP 36.5
39.861041,-79.063349
1787 Berlin Street
Garrett, PA 15542

Parking – Fort Hill

GAP 54.3
39.826078,-79.276336
700 Fort Hill Road
Fort Hill, PA 15540

Meyersdale

GAP 31.9 GAP Trail Town
39.816451,-79.020364
Great Allegheny Passage, Meyersdale, PA
15552

Parking – Markleton

GAP 50.0
39.859965,-79.227624
1130 Markleton School Road
Markleton, PA 15551

Frostburg

GAP 15.5 GAP Trail Town
39.659476,-78.921821
Great Allegheny Passage, Frostburg,
MD 21532

Rockwood

GAP 43.8 GAP Trail Town
39.911028,-79.160444
Rockwood Station, Black Township, PA
15557

Cumberland, MD

GAP 0 GAP Trail Town
39.649318,-78.763004
Chesapeake and Ohio Canal Towpath,
Cumberland, MD 21502

Parking – Garrett

General Information

Protect Yourself and Others <https://gaptrail.org/before-you-go/>

We recommend planning your trip in advance, preparing for various weather and trail conditions, and practicing common trail etiquette to create a safe and enjoyable trip. The Great Allegheny Passage is a beautiful outdoor space freely open for public enjoyment and the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy cannot and does not guarantee your safety while you're traveling.

Hours The Great Allegheny Passage is open from dawn to dusk. You may want a flashlight, headlamp, or bike light for tunnels, but you should plan on daylight travel only. While most of the Great Allegheny Passage is open year-round, the [Big Savage Tunnel](#) is completely closed from late November to early April. There is no detour.

Speed Limit: The speed limit on the GAP is 15 miles per hour. Please travel single file and stay to the right. Give an audible signal when passing, pass on the left, and only when it is safe to do so.

Take extra caution and slow down when trail surface is slippery or when crowded. Give extra space to younger or older travelers.

By Pennsylvania state law, bicyclists under the age of 12 (and under age 15 in Maryland) must wear helmets, and we recommend them for everyone.

Stay on trail and please respect private property. Most land adjacent to the GAP is privately-owned.

Stop at all railroad and street crossings, and watch for bollards, vehicles and uneven trail surfaces. Take extra care along the short and infrequent sections of the GAP that follow shared roadways.

Wheelchairs Wheelchairs and similar devices built specifically for mobility disabilities are allowed on the GAP.

E-Bikes No vehicles powered by internal combustion are permitted on the GAP, except those authorized for maintenance and emergency purposes. Other power-driven mobility devices, not specifically designed for disabilities, may be used in Pennsylvania, provided:

- Motors on electric vehicles are 750 watts or less
- Devices weigh less than 100 lbs.
- Device are no more than 36" wide
- Devices have fully operating pedals

Camping and Fires No fires or camping are allowed, except in designated [hiker-biker campgrounds](#).

Alcohol No alcohol is permitted.

Animals Please leash and control your pet, and remove pet waste. Pay special attention to other travelers, especially those approaching on bikes, to avoid injury. Horseback riding is permitted along designated sections of the GAP, and only adjacent to trail surface.

No Trace Dispose of your waste properly, respect wildlife, leave what you find, and be considerate of other visitors.

Groups and Events Advanced permission, a paid permit, and a certificate of commercial liability insurance are required for any commercial activity along the GAP. Advanced permission, a paid permit, and a certificate of commercial liability insurance are also required for any organized for-profit or nonprofit group event (ride, run, walk, or gathering) in which participants pay to register or if the event will include more than 25 people. Additional permits may be required depending on which sections of the GAP your group or event would like to use. Please contact the Regional Trail Corporation at 724-872-5586 or regionaltrails@comcast.net to request a permit.

We encourage your group to spend money locally in trail towns rather than bringing in mobile food trailers. Keep in mind that most trail town lodging and restaurants appreciate advance notice or reservations for large groups, and that you may need to split up among several lodging partners or restaurants.

Emergencies Call 911 in case of emergency, and always alert a friend to your intended plans.

Where to Start: Links to various Trailheads <https://gaptrail.org/map/>

With dozens of [trail towns](#) and scores of [great destinations](#) along the Great Allegheny Passage — and the adjoining C&O Canal Towpath — there are plenty of places to begin your adventure. You can start a day trip from any [trailhead](#) or [parking](#) area. If driving isn't an option, you can also fly to a nearby airport or arrive by train. In some locations, shuttle services are available to transport you and your gear. If you're considering an [overnight](#) ride or hike, pick a few [trail towns](#) you'd like to visit and center your travels among them. Here are some of our [recommended trips](#).

Parking There is [parking](#) in every trail town and canal town, but overnight parking is limited to certain locations, and you'll likely pay for a parking garage in [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), on [Pittsburgh's South Side](#), and in [Georgetown](#) (or anywhere around Washington, D.C.), whether you're parking for the day or overnight. Some lodging properties may offer guests overnight parking, after which you can retrieve your car upon return.

If you plan to park overnight or arrive back after dark, we suggest notifying local police or a nearby visitor center to provide them with vehicle information. This may prevent them from starting a search-and-rescue operation or towing your car. For fee-based parking garages or lots, you may need to complete a form showing your intended return date.

Frequently Asked Questions

Here's a brief list of answers to questions commonly asked by folks planning an outing on the Great Allegheny Passage or C&O Canal Towpath. For a comprehensive resource, pick up a copy of [TrailGuide](#) and the official trip-planning map it contains for \$10.00.

What's the best method of travel? Cyclists, runners, walkers and hikers enjoy both trails (they can connect to the [Appalachian Trail](#) and [Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail](#), for example). Horseback riders can pick from selected sections of the GAP, rollerbladers excel on paved sections near [Pittsburgh](#) and [Washington, D.C.](#), and cross-country skiers often take advantage of winter snow at higher elevations. Amtrak train service: Amtrak link: <https://gaptrail.org/amtrak-to-resume-daily-service-along-gap/>

What's the distance between towns? **Trail towns:** <https://gaptrail.org/where-to-go/trail-towns/> On the GAP, you're never more than nine miles from a [trail town](#), putting overnight lodging, dining, and outfitters within a easy ride or hike. On the C&O Canal Towpath, which is within a [National Historic Park](#), you're in the woods for stretches of nearly 30 miles at a time, with abundant opportunities for camping. While some hamlets provide services, canal towns are spaced apart, so scheduling your stops takes some advance planning.

What is the surface like? What about elevation changes? Nearly all of the Great Allegheny Passage is evenly-topped with crushed limestone, although there are some short paved sections in [Connellsville](#) and [Cumberland](#), and a 19-mile stretch paved between [McKeesport](#), and [Downtown Pittsburgh](#). It is relatively smooth and easy to pedal, run, or hike. Over the 23.7 miles from [Cumberland](#) to the [Eastern Continental Divide](#), it rises 1,767 feet steadily (about 1.5 percent on average), enough to notice, but not so much to detract from the winding mountain views. From the [Eastern Continental Divide](#), 125.1 miles to [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), the GAP

drops 1,680 feet imperceptibly (about 0.25 percent on average), making it feel like a light tailwind at times. At road crossings, watch for temporary changes of surface.

Where can I park? There is plenty of [parking](#) along the Great Allegheny Passage and along the C&O Canal Towpath, typically in [trail towns](#) but also at other [trailheads](#) in between. Overnight parking is limited to certain locations, and you'll likely pay for parking in [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), on [Pittsburgh's South Side](#), and in [Georgetown](#) (or anywhere around Washington, D.C.), whether you're parking for the day or overnight.

Are the GAP or C&O Canal Towpath ever closed? Both trails are open year-round, and you'll find busy sections during spring, summer, and fall, often on the weekends near [Washington, D.C.](#) (and nearby [Great Falls](#)), between [Homestead](#) and [Pittsburgh](#), and near favorite trail towns like [Harpers Ferry](#), [Cumberland](#) and [Ohiopyle](#).

While there's [camping](#) available along both trails, the GAP and C&O Canal Towpath are only open for travel from dawn to dusk. You may want a flashlight, headlamp, or bike light for tunnels, but you should plan on daylight travel only.

Please note that the GAP's [Big Savage Tunnel](#) (between [Meyersdale](#) and [Frostburg](#)) is open for a specific season, due to weather conditions.

Is there cell coverage? While cell coverage is improving along both the Great Allegheny Passage and the C&O Canal Towpath, you may find yourself without service between [trail towns](#), and even available service can be spotty. Call 911 in case of emergency, and always alert a friend to your intended plans.

Where can I charge my phone? Take advantage of lunch and dinner stops to recharge your cell phone, and make sure it is ready to go when you are. Don't rely on USB-only cords, either; bring a cord with a complete wall plug. [Hiker-biker campgrounds](#) typically do not have electrical hookups, although some private campgrounds do.

Where can I fill up water bottles? Most [trail town](#) businesses will allow customers to fill their water bottles, and most (but not all) [campgrounds](#) have potable water available seasonally. Still, it's best to carry two bottles and to top them off whenever possible to stay hydrated and prepared. Thru-travelers may wish to carry a water filter or pump, especially on the C&O Canal Towpath.

Where are the restrooms? Along the Great Allegheny Passage, aside from [trail town](#) businesses, and friendly stops like the [West Newton Visitor Center](#), Ohiopyle State Park Visitor Center, [Meyersdale Area Historical Society](#), or [Canal Place](#), you may be limited to chemical toilets at [campgrounds](#). Restrooms may not always be convenient and those that are available may be primitive pit toilets. You may wish to carry hand sanitizer in case options are limited.

Where can I stay overnight? There are many options for overnight [lodging](#) along the trail. The GAP is known for [trail towns](#) with B&B's, guesthouses, hostels, inns, and hotels, from fancy to modest. Much of the GAP is along private land, so you cannot camp "just anywhere." However, there are [hiker-biker, public, and private campgrounds](#) along the way to make camping easy for bicyclists. Hikers will need to blend indoor and outdoor lodging to avoid long days.

If you're planning to stay at hotels, inns, B&B's, or hostels, you'll want to make reservations in advance to make sure you've got a roof over your head.

Hiker-biker campgrounds are first-come, first-served, and seldom full, but be prepared to travel a little further in case all sites are taken. Note that hiker-biker campgrounds often limit group sizes to six per campsite.

Where are the best spots for breakfast, lunch, or dinner? [Trail towns](#) along both the GAP feature a mix of [dining](#) options, including restaurants, cafes, diners, and specialty shops like distilleries and breweries. Ice cream is always popular! Some towns will have one or two dining options, but most will have several to choose from. You can often pick up snacks and groceries in towns, as well. Please note that some restaurants have limited hours on Sundays and Mondays, and during the winter months, so it's best to call ahead for hours. If you're camping and handling your own meals, packing a small cooking set and propane stove is a foolproof way to make sure you have a hot meal.

What about traveling among large groups? Groups are welcome. For groups over 25, please contact the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy at admin@gaptrail.org for permits. Keep in mind that most trail town [lodging](#) and [dining](#) options aren't accustomed to large groups without reservations. You may need to split up among several lodging partners or restaurants. We encourage you to spend your money in [trail towns](#) rather than bringing in mobile food trailers. Also, please be respectful of the speed of your slowest traveler, so you don't drop someone inadvertently. It's best to travel in duos or trios. Lastly, please do take caution at road and railroad crossings.

What about dogs? The GAP is dog-friendly. Please keep your dog on a leash at all times, and be mindful not to have the leash cross over the width of the trail. Pay special attention to other travelers, especially those approaching on bikes from behind, to avoid injury. If you're camping, please leash your dog so it doesn't disturb other travelers. It should go without saying that you must clean up after your dog and pack out waste.

What are some common precautions? When you're traveling, use common sense, stay hydrated, and keep alert to puddles, rocks, and other trail users. Watch for younger or older travelers. Take a break when you get tired.

Be alert for cars and uneven surfaces at road and railroad crossings. Watch for groundhogs, deer, pheasants, or snakes that may be crossing the trail surface, and give them plenty of space. Some additional advice for bicyclists: Don't use your cell phone while riding. Call out "biker passing on your left" or use a bike bell, and slow down when coming up on dog walkers, runners, or hikers. Walk your bike in the [Pinkerton Tunnel](#) or [Paw Paw Tunnel](#), which are unlit.

Lastly, if you are biking, you should wear a helmet to avoid injury in case you take an unexpected spill. In Pennsylvania, children (under age 12) must wear helmets, as must children (under age 15) in Maryland. Make sure your helmet fits properly. Check out a full list of [rules and safety](#).

What's the weather like? The mid-Atlantic

region features humid, warm summers and cold winters. Spring and autumn are more temperate. Check the forecast ahead of your trip. If you're out for a weekend or week-long adventure, you might find yourself traveling in a rain shower. A rain jacket will help keep you

dry, but puddles or standing water (primarily on the C&O Canal Towpath) will splash your legs and “stripe” your back while on a bicycle. Fenders can prevent this, of course, but they can also fill with caked-on mud after heavier rains.

How do I get back to my car? [Amtrak’s Capitol Limited](#) provides one-way train service among [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), [Connellsville](#), [Cumberland](#), [Harpers Ferry](#), and [Washington, D.C.](#) For an extra \$20, you can reserve a place to transport your bike to get back to your starting spot. Bicycle spots are limited, so make a reservation well in advance of your trip.

If you’re starting or finishing outside a [trail town](#) not served by Amtrak train service, consider hiring a private [shuttle service](#) or [outfitter](#) to take you from your endpoint back to your car. Of course, you can hire a service to provide just the shuttle or to take care of planning the entire trip. There are several outfitters and [tour operators](#) who offer a variety of packaged or flexible trips on both trails.

Consider renting a minivan or SUV for a one-way return trip. Your best options are the major car rental companies in [Pittsburgh](#), [Cumberland](#), and [Washington, D.C.](#) Alternatively, you might plan to be retrieved by a friend, or have someone drive a support vehicle from town to town to mirror your itinerary and pick you up at the end.

What kind of bike is best? Many types of bicycles work well on the Great Allegheny Passage, including touring bikes, hybrids, mountain bikes, cyclocross bikes, urban commuters, and department store specials. Even a road bike might work during dry weather. Fixed-gear bikes work okay, but most travelers prefer being able to change gears in trail towns. Tandems, trikes, and recumbents are quite popular. Fat bikes are unnecessary unless there’s deep snow. A 28 mm tire or larger is your best bet. Road bikes are inadequate and trikes are cumbersome; neither are recommended.

Make sure your bike is in good condition before you start, and know how to fix a flat tire (bring a hand-pump and some spare tubes even on a day ride), repair a broken chain, or tighten a loose seatpost. A roll of duct tape and some zip ties can provide a temporary fix to other issues. There are fix-it stations with pumps and tools, placed strategically, along the GAP. Of course, make sure your bike fits you properly, whether it is yours or a rental, by having a bike shop representative adjust the seat, tire pressure, handlebars, and brakes to your liking. There are [outfitters](#) that rent, sell, or repair bikes in many [trail towns](#).

How far can I bike or hike? Most cyclists can average eight to ten miles per hour, but it depends on how many stops you would like to make for snacks, photo ops, and greeting other travelers. Day-trippers with no gear or lighter loads can often move more quickly. If you’re carrying gear for overnight travel and/or camping, you may travel more slowly. For hikers, about three miles per hour is a reasonable pace. Most overnight and thru-riders tackle between 35 and 60 miles a day — half before lunch and half after lunch — depending on their destination. Along the GAP, trail towns are between 10 and 20 miles apart, so there are places to stop, refuel, explore, and enjoy. On the C&O Canal Towpath, you’ll need to be able to ride 30 miles between some towns.

What kind of gear do I need? If you’re a bicyclist heading out for a [day trip](#), you’ll likely want to pack a trunk bag for a hand pump, spare tube, bike tools, snacks, perhaps a jacket, and your phone and keys. Carry at least one water bottle, or two just in case. You’ll be fine with a pair of sneakers, or whatever shoes you normally ride in. Hikers ought to carry a day pack and have

comfortable footwear. For [overnight](#) and [thru trips](#), it all depends on how much gear you have, and whether you're camping or staying in overnight lodging. Do bring an extra pair of "town shoes" or "camp shoes" for once you're off the trail.

If you're carrying baggage on your bike, you may consider a trunk bag and a handlebar bag, and/or saddlebags on your rear or front racks. Some bicyclists use trailers, although the bumpier and narrower C&O Canal Towpath can be a challenge for trailers with two wheels. Hikers will want a backpack that can carry between 30 and 65 liters of gear, and you'll want boots or trail shoes that fit well. Here are some recommended items for overnight or thru trips:

Outerwear	Camping Supplies	Tools and Bike Parts
Warm shirt or windbreaker Clothes for lodging or camping Rain jacket, fleece hat Long-sleeved shirt and pants Padded cycling shorts Wicking-fabric t-shirts or jerseys with pockets Cycling gloves and helmet Synthetic or wool socks (2-3 pairs) Extra pair of "town" shoes or sandals	Tent or bivy with tarp/rainfly Sleeping pad (closed cell are lighter) Sleeping bag (down is best) Ground cover Backpacking stove with fuel Matches or lighter Cooking kit, utensils Sheet or sleeping bag liner Water filter or iodine Extra Ziploc bags Food (carry an extra meal) Clothesline or nylon rope	Mini-pump Spare tube and spokes for your wheel Tire levers and patch kit Screwdriver Headlamp or flashlight Leatherman or pocket knife Small set of Allen wrenches Chain tool Bungee cords Duct tape, zip ties, and rubber bands

For a complete list of recommended gear for overnight and thru-trips on the Great Allegheny Passage, pick up a copy of [TrailGuide](#). If you would like to travel light, you can hire a [shuttle service](#), trip planner, or [outfitter](#) to haul your luggage among [trail towns](#). Or you can arrange a friend to transport your gear and meet you at your next [lodging](#) location. (If you're [camping](#), keep in mind that most hiker-biker campgrounds are not accessible by shuttle service or car.) There are a number of [outfitters](#) that arrange self-guided tours and shuttle services for you, ahead of time.

Do I need a bike lock? Most, but not all, [lodging](#) properties will have secure storage for your bike or backpack. Ask ahead of time. Most travelers at hiker-biker campgrounds are "trail-friendly" and honor one another's property, but you may wish to bring a cable lock for peace of mind.

Great Accommodations in Beautiful Settings The Great Allegheny Passage is known for trail towns with welcoming accommodations, from fancy to modest. You can book a room at a charming bed and breakfast, cozy guesthouse, or luxury resort, and make a perfect recovery from a long day on the GAP. You can find a modest hotel, quiet cabin, or historic inn and experience a well-deserved getaway. Most [lodging](#) properties cater to bicyclists and hikers with secure storage for gear or bike-wash stations. The most savvy proprietors recognize that you may need a flexible arrival time, and they often have suggestions for local flavors or your next day's itinerary. While in a [trail town](#), tour public art, shuttle to a nearby museum, explore a hiking trail, or visit a memorial.

Camping The Great Allegheny Passage offers a selection of free, first-come, first-served hiker-biker campgrounds, a handful of fee-based reservation-only public campgrounds, and several fee-based private campgrounds to make overnight camping possible for travelers. Camping offers beautiful sights, proximity to nearby rivers, and social opportunities among others on the same route. Keep in mind that both trails are bordered by privately-owned land from end to end, and you must camp in designated areas.

Hiker-Biker Campgrounds (Free, First-Come, First-Served) Dozens of free, first-come, first-served hiker-biker campgrounds dot the Great Allegheny Passage and C&O Canal Towpath. These contain primitive sites, and offer nearby pit toilets, picnic tables, and grills. Some have Adirondack-style shelters. None are accessible by car. Stays are limited to one night per site, per trip. Potable water is often available from April 15 to October 31, but is not guaranteed at each location. These sites are seldom full, but you must be prepared to travel a little further in case all sites are taken. Note that hiker-biker campgrounds often limit group sizes to six per campsite. See the table below.

Public Campgrounds (Fee-Based, Reserve in Advance) The Great Allegheny Passage also features larger public campgrounds operated by public entities. Typically, you must reserve and pay for your site ahead of time. These campgrounds are often more developed, with most offering pit toilets, picnic tables, grills and some adding showers and fire rings. Potable water is often available from April 15 to October 31, but is not guaranteed at each location. Most are accessible by car and are near towns, making it easier to find nearby groceries and services. Some have sections reserved for large groups. See the table below.

Commercial Campgrounds (Fee-Based, Reserve in Advance) Travelers on the Great Allegheny Passage can also find excellent camping at a number of private campgrounds that cater to long-distance travelers. They usually require advance (but inexpensive) registration, and while some are primitive in nature, others offer a full range of services, including developed sites, fire rings, picnic tables, bathrooms, and showers. Some provide laundry facilities or groceries on site. Some are accessible by car and others are only reachable on foot or by bicycle. Most are close to nearby towns and their restaurants and services. See the table below.

Mile Marker	Campground Name	Campground Type
GAP Mile 0.0	Cumberland YMCA	Commercial
GAP Mile 15.5	Trail Inn Lodging and Campground	Commercial
GAP Mile 31.9	Maple Festival Park Primitive Campground	Commercial
GAP Mile 43.8	Husky Haven Campground and Guesthouse	Commercial
GAP Mile 61.4	Youghiogheny Dam Outflow Campground	Public
GAP Mile 61.4	Paddler's Lane Campground	Commercial
GAP Mile 72.6	Kentuck	Public
GAP Mile 89.4	Connellsville Hiker-Biker	Hiker-Biker
GAP Mile 92.0	KOA at River's Edge	Commercial
GAP Mile 99.6	Roundbottom Hiker-Biker	Hiker-Biker
GAP Mile 110.2	Cedar Creek Hiker-Biker	Hiker-Biker
GAP Mile 110.3	Cedar Creek Park	Public
GAP Mile 114.1	GAP Trail Campground	Commercial
GAP Mile 122.6	Dravo Hiker-Biker	Hiker-Biker

History of the Great Allegheny Passage

It was in 1978 that the [Western Pennsylvania Conservancy](#) handed the deed for 26.75 miles of the [Western Maryland Railway's](#) abandoned corridor to the Pennsylvania Bureau of State Parks, and the first section of what would become the Great Allegheny Passage was laid down between [Ohiopyle](#) and [Confluence](#). Over the next 35 years, volunteers in nearby small towns — [West Newton](#), [Connellsville](#), [Rockwood](#), and [Meyersdale](#), in Pennsylvania's [Laurel Highlands](#), and both [Frostburg](#) and [Cumberland](#) in Maryland's mountains, among others — began constructing similar segments of trail for neighbors to enjoy. Trail-building also began in [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), along [Pittsburgh's South Side](#), around [McKeesport](#), and in [Homestead](#).

The Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, then known as the Allegheny Trail Alliance, took a coordinating and fundraising role to renovate and convert iconic former railroad structures and to complete missing links in what would become the Great Allegheny Passage, a whole greater than the sum of its parts. Completed in 2013, thanks to many volunteers and the work of advocates like Linda McKenna Boxx, the Great Allegheny Passage is a world-class path for all kinds of adventures, winding through some of the most spectacular, challenging topography in the eastern United States. For a detailed look at the building of the Great Allegheny Passage, visit a [new dedicated website](#) celebrating the champions who made it happen.

Today, the GAP carries a lengthy portion of the [Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail](#), hosts a segment of the September 11 National Memorial Trail, and is a founding member of the Great American Rail Trail preferred route.

Starting in [Cumberland, Maryland](#) and ending in [Downtown Pittsburgh](#), the Great Allegheny Passage is a spectacular 150-mile nonmotorized path that soars over valleys, snakes around mountains, and skirts alongside the [Casselman River](#), [Youghiogheny River](#), and [Monongahela River](#) on a nearly-level, crushed-limestone surface. Tracing old footpaths and railroad corridors through the wilderness, it offers glimpses into the country's westward expansion and industrial might. When paired with the connecting C&O Canal Towpath, it makes long-distance trail travel possible between Pittsburgh and Washington, D.C.

Along its route, the Great Allegheny Passage squeezes through the Cumberland Narrows, crosses the [Mason & Dixon Line](#), tops the 2,392-foot [Eastern Continental Divide](#), weaves through the breathtaking Laurel Highlands, bisects lovely [Ohiopyle State Park](#), journeys through the region's coke, coal, mining, and steel-making corridor, and ends at majestic [Point State Park](#). It yields stunning views of waterfalls, gorges, river valleys, and farmland, especially from sweeping [Helmstetter's Curve](#) and outside [Big Savage Tunnel](#), near the delightful [Bollman Bridge](#) and within the imposing [Keystone Viaduct](#), at both ends of the [Pinkerton Tunnel](#), and via the soaring [Ohiopyle Low and High Bridges](#).

The Great Allegheny Passage passes through a dozen welcoming [trail towns](#), where [overnight accommodations](#) range from lovely bed-and-breakfasts to comfortable guesthouses, and from campgrounds to hotels. [Local flavors](#) abound at restaurants, bars and grills, creameries, and cafés, and festivals and celebrations take place throughout the seasons.

[Outfitters](#), [tour operators](#), and [shuttle services](#) abound, making it possible for bicyclists and hikers of all ages to travel easily. Parking and branded wayfinding signage is ample from end to end.

Because of its easy access and many amenities, traveling the Great Allegheny Passage is a sought-after, “bucket list” adventure that delights local users as well as tourists from all 50 states and over 40 countries annually. It receives around a million visits every year, and tourists drive tens of millions of dollars into the local economy. Upon its completion, the GAP was the first path inducted into the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s Rail-Trail Hall of Fame.

**The End of your journey on the Great Allegheny Passage
in
Cumberland - The Queen City of Maryland**

Snug between the [Potomac River](#) and the rising Appalachian Plateau, Cumberland has long been a gateway for westward expansion. It marked the beginning of Delaware chief Nemacolin’s Path, an ancient corridor through the rugged mountains, the eventual Braddock Road, a pre-Revolutionary path to move soldiers and goods to Fort Duquesne (now Pittsburgh), and its 19th century successor, the [National Road](#). The railroads eventually gathered at Cumberland, and today, both Amtrak’s Capitol Limited and freight trains sound their horns before heading west.

The C&O Canal and Towpath terminate with a granite marker across a small section of restored canal from [Canal Place](#), home to the preserved [Western Maryland Railway Station](#) and the [C&O Canal National Historical Park’s Cumberland Visitor Center](#). Stop in for great exhibits, advice, and photos. Mile Zero of the Great Allegheny Passage is located under the arch.

Cumberland’s vibrant brick pedestrian mall along Baltimore Street boasts restaurants, art galleries, and gardens. Several hotels and B&B’s make for excellent accommodations, and a nearby bike shop, outfitter, and several brew pubs add to the mix. The Emmanuel Episcopal Church, with its Tiffany stained-glass windows, sits on the site of the former Fort Cumberland and anchors the residential Washington Street Historic District. [The Allegany Museum](#) occupies the beautifully-renovated former post office and courthouse, and is open March through December.

Along the Great Allegheny Passage, you can peer into the opening to the [Cumberland Bone Cave](#). The Western Maryland Railway Bridge over U.S. Route 40 is a truss bridge constructed around 1910 and consists of two spans, each 150 feet in length. [Helmstetter’s Curve](#) is a widely-sweeping arc well-known among railfans throughout the eastern United States. The 914-foot [Brush Tunnel](#), shared by the Great Allegheny Passage and Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, is about five miles west of Cumberland. Dans Mountain, part of Dans Mountain State Park, is the highest point in Allegany County, and its peak (driveable by car) is a popular lookout point. Rocky Gap State Park features the bright blue water of 243-acre Lake Habeeb, supplied by Rocky Gap Run, which winds through an mile-long gorge edged by sharp cliffs, steep overlooks and a dense hemlock forest crowded with rhododendron and mountain laurel.

Want to continue your Quest?

**Take this next challenge and continue onto the
C & O Canal Towpath!**

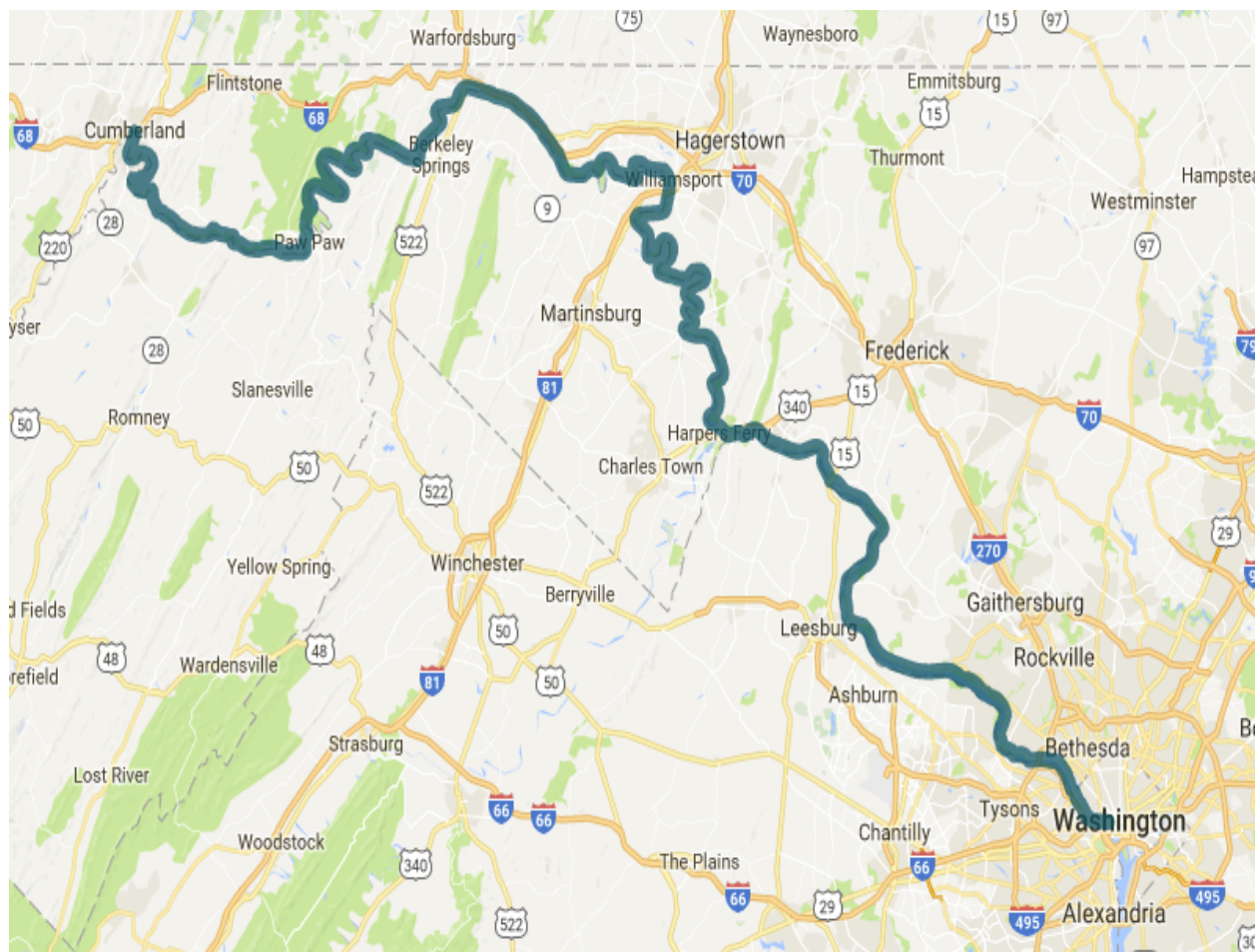


Continue your journey onto the C & O Canal Towpath

C&O Canal Towpath

Many people refer to the towpath, but what is it exactly? The towpath is the dirt and stone path that runs 184.5 miles along the C&O Canal, where visitors can walk, run, or bike the distance between Georgetown and Cumberland, MD. It was originally built for the canal mules to walk beside the canal as they “towed” the canal boats through the waterway. Today, it is a popular recreational trail. The towpath is highlighted below in blue or [you can click here to see a more detailed map](#). You can visit our [Plan Your Visit](#) website to learn more about the C&O Canal National Historical Park and the many access points to the Park and the towpath. The C&O Canal Towpath AVA Event Y0699 (bike) is also OSB-only and is sponsored by the Maryland Volkssport Association.

C & O Canal Towpath Map (Cumberland, MD to Washington, D.C.)



Special Programs: Border Crossings, Rockin' Around the Clock, Walking with America's Veterans, Walking the United States (50 States/51 Capitals, Walking the USA A-Z.

Mon Valley Trailblazer's Events:

Ohiopyle Ferncliff and GAP (Fayette County) Y2726	- YRE	OSB	1B
Three Rivers Heritage Trails (Allegheny County) Y2291	- YRE		1B
Zelienople/Harmony Walk (Butler County) Y2309	- Seasonal	OSB	1B
Meadville Ernst Trail (Crawford County) Y2724	- YRE		1B
Linesville, Pymatuning Spillway (Crawford County) Y2725	- YRE	OSB	1B
Wheeling, WV & Oglebay Park (Ohio County) Y2881	- YRE	OSB	1A
Finleyville, Mingo Ck Pk (Washington County) Y2727	- YRE	OSB	2B
Confluence Walk (Fayette & Somerset Counties) Y2275	- YRE		1B
Twin Lakes, Latrobe (Westmoreland County)	- YRE	OSB	1B
Raccoon Creek State Pk. – Wildflower Reserve Walk (Beaver Cty) Y2332	- YRE		2C
West Newton GAP/Town Walk (Westmoreland County) Y2230	- YRE		1B
Cedar Creek Park, Belle Vernon, PA (- YRE		
Great Allegheny Passage Bike/Walk (Multi-Counties)	- YRE	OSB	1B
Erie Presque Isle Park (Erie County) Y1537	- YRE		1B
Stoystown Flight 93 Memorial Walk (Somerset County) Y2350	- YRE	OSB	2B