

Pocono Forest & Waters Conservation Landscape SUCCESS STORY

By: Wayne County Historical Society

Towpath to Trail Project, Phase 4A: Signage & Benches

SUMMARY

The Wayne County Historical Society's Towpath to Trail Phase 4 project included adding the following to the Delaware & Hudson Canal Park at Lock 31: permanent park entryway signage, an orientation kiosk, three interpretive wayside panels and eight benches in the society's 16 acre park. The park contains many remnants of the historic Delaware and Hudson Canal including Lock #31 and a lock house.



CHALLENGE

On November 5, 1998 one hundred years had passed since the last boat of anthracite floated down the D & H Canal from the coalfields of northeast Pennsylvania to the Hudson River. The canal and the gravity railroads that fed it, with all their picturesque vitality, have receded beyond living memory. Year by year nature and human activities erase this 124 mile long, civil engineering achievement, built over three years largely by hand. Despite its National Historic Landmark status, the rate at which it is being destroyed increases due to the uncontrolled commercial development along Pennsylvania Traffic Route 6, which follows the canal's former route in Wayne County.

Responding to the public's interest in the canal's physical remains and recreational trails, the Wayne County Historical Society (WCHS) formed the Towpath to Trail Committee in 1997. The committee's goal was to establish the first public greenway on a section of the former D & H Canal. Since then WCHS has acquired a mile of canal/towpath including Lock 31, Lock 31 House, and the adjoining 16 acres.

PARTNERSHIP IS KEY

To complete this phase of the project, Wayne County Historical Society partnered with a local boy scout, whose Eagle Project was to build the park's orientation kiosk and eight benches.

Our county prison's Work Release Program supplied the laborers to dig the holes and mix cement for the posts of the three interpretive panels.



Committed to the future of rural communities.

SOLUTION

Park's Street Sign helps the public locate the park and its entrance.

Parking Lot's Orientation Kiosk is the location of the park's map, log book, rules, safety notice, calendar of events, list of volunteer jobs needed, list of funding sources, and brochures of other related sites to visit on the D & H Canal.

Trail's Wayside/Interpretive Panels help park visitors learn about the Delaware & Hudson Canal and where it is in relationship to where they are standing; Daniels' Farmhouse at Lock 31 and how it relates to the nearby canal; and Lock 31 and its purpose and mechanical operation.

Trail's Benches provide the public with places to sit, rest, take in the "power of the place", and enjoy nature.

All the above was accomplished in time for the canal park's grand opening on August 24, 2013.

RESULTS

The Towpath to Trail project is another link connecting Pennsylvania's public land in the Pocono region to communities from west to east. Our trail, when extended west to White Mills on the towpath, would link up with the White Mills lock tender's house, White Mills section of the towpath, White Mills Community Trail and the Dorflinger-Suydam Wildlife Sanctuary. Our trail, when extended east will connect to Hawley's Bingham and Riverside Park.

Our Towpath to Trail project will provide programs and information through interpretive signage and guided walks to increase community awareness of and engagement in conservation, restoration and use of natural resources.

Contact

Janet Sweeney, Coordinator

Pocono Forest & Waters
Conservation Landscape
Pennsylvania Environmental Council
175 Main Street
Luzerne, PA 18709
570-718-6507
jsweeney@pecpa.org

Dan Devlin, State Forester

PA DCNR Bureau of Forestry
RCSOB, 6th Floor
PO Box 8552
Harrisburg, PA 17105-8552
717-787-2703
ddevlin@pa.gov

