

**Memorandum of Understanding between the Allegheny Trail Alliance  
and the Trail Organizations and Owners that Partner  
in the Management and Operations of the Great Allegheny Passage**

**Whereas**, the Allegheny Trail Alliance was formed in 1995 by seven trail organizations located between Pittsburgh, PA and Cumberland, MD to formalize their working relationships, develop system-wide guidelines, raise funds for construction and market the 150 mile world-class trail that was being constructed to connect Point State Park in Pittsburgh, PA and Canal Place in Cumberland, MD; and

**Whereas**, these seven trail organizations were the Regional Trail Corporation, the Somerset County Rails-Trails Association, the Friends of the Riverfront, the Steel Valley Trail Council, Mountain Maryland Trails, Ohio State Park, and the Montour Trail Council; and

**Whereas**, the Steel Valley Trail Council has now become a Chapter of the Regional Trail Corporation and the Montour Trail Council manages the Montour Trail, which is not part of the 150 mile Great Allegheny Passage; and

**Whereas**, the Regional Trail Corporation, Somerset County, the Friends of the Riverfront, the City of Pittsburgh, Allegany County, MD, and Ohio State Park are now the five trail entities that are responsible for the maintenance and management of one or more sections of the 150 mile long trail; and

**Whereas**, the land owners of the 150 mile long trail include each of the following: Allegany County, MD; Somerset County, PA; the Commonwealth of PA; the Regional Trail Corporation; the City of McKeesport; the City of Pittsburgh; the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation; and Allegheny County, PA; and

**Whereas**, nearly \$80 million was raised to construct the trail, which in 2001, was named the Great Allegheny Passage, after a long and thoughtful process in which the trail groups worked together to choose a name for the entire trail system; and

**Whereas**, the Great Allegheny Passage is now widely recognized as one of the premier tourist attractions in southwestern PA and creates a huge economic impact each year with hundreds of thousands of visitors that spend millions of dollars annually throughout the region and has been recognized by numerous organizations such as the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, the Conservation Fund, the National Geographic Society, the Adventure Cycling Association, and the U.S. Forest Service, as well as many local and regional organizations for its impact on greenway development, cycling, tourism, and community revitalization; and

**Whereas**, construction of the 150 mile Great Allegheny Passage was completed in 2013, and the partners involved wish to clarify and further define their on-going relationships and commitments to the Great Allegheny Passage; and

**Whereas**, the Allegheny Trail Alliance and those entities that own, operate, manage and maintain the Great Allegheny Passage are completely dedicated and committed to continuing and strengthening the partnerships which have formed and continuing to work

together to make the GAP an even more important travel destination and local recreational jewel; and

**Whereas**, at this point in time, with construction of the 150 mile trail totally complete, the ATA, the trail entities and the land owners wish to outline the roles and responsibilities that are assigned to and accepted by each of the partners in order to create a clear understanding relative to the roles and responsibilities of each group to assure the continued excellent operations and management of the Great Allegheny Passage moving forward.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, the parties here to, intending to reaffirm and clarify each group's responsibilities for the on-going management, preservation, and promotion of the GAP, covenant and agree as follows:

**The Allegheny Trail Alliance (ATA)** will be responsible for:

- Marketing and promoting the GAP regionally, nationally and internationally.
- Working with trail-side businesses and trail towns along the GAP to maximize the value of the trail for all.
- Maintaining the ATA website [www.gaptrail.org](http://www.gaptrail.org) and applications and updating it regularly.
- Preparing and publishing the annual **Trail-Guide**, the official guide to the C&O Canal and the Great Allegheny Passage along with the official trail map. This includes fundraising as necessary.
- Developing and sharing Best Management Practices and system-wide guidelines.
- Management of any employees or consultants, hired by the organization.
- Assisting in fundraising for emergencies, trail infrastructure repairs and renovations and major trail reconstruction as needed.

**The Trail Entities and Trail Owners**, dependent upon and as it pertains to their management structure within their specific section of the Great Allegheny Passage, will be responsible for:

- Every day management and maintenance of their trail sections within the guidelines established by and/or with the owner of the trail property, parking areas, facilities, road crossings, trail structures, maintenance equipment and trail amenities such as restrooms, drinking fountains, camping areas, and pavilions. Management and maintenance should occur in accordance with adopted ATA guidelines, in the areas where guidelines have been written and accepted.
- Fundraising and budgeting for these items.
- Recruiting and training the organization's members and volunteers.
- Management of trail volunteers, trail monitors and trail events.
- Management of any employees, consultants, or contractors hired by the organization.
- Local promotions of the trail.
- Relationships with adjacent land owners.

- Implementing Best Management Practices and system-wide guidelines including trail signage and the use of the GAP name and logo.
- Fundraising for emergencies, everyday operations, trail infrastructure repairs and renovations and major trail reconstruction as needed.
- Purchasing and providing liability insurance for the facilities, events, Directors, Officers and volunteers within their area of management.
- Purchasing and providing liability insurance for the land under their ownership.
- Agreeing to use the GAP name, helping to promote the trail and protecting the intellectual property associated with it.

**IN WITNESS WHEREOF** and intending to be committed hereby, the parties have hereunto set their hands and seals the day and year first above written.

Name of Trail Group/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Trail Group/Organization Representative

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Please print name & title of the representative

Organization's Seal, if available:

Signers would be:

- Allegheny Trail Alliance
- Trail Entities: Somerset County, the Friends of the Riverfront, Mountain Maryland Trails, Ohiopyle State Park, the Yough River Trail Council, the Whitsett Fayette Trail Chapter, the Westmoreland Yough Trail Chapter, the Mon Yough Trail Council; the McKeesport Trail Commission, and the Steel Valley Trail Council.
- Trail Owners: Allegany County, MD; Somerset County; the Commonwealth of PA; the Regional Trail Corporation; the City of McKeesport; the City of Pittsburgh; Allegheny County, PA; and the Steel Industry Heritage Corporation.