



## **News for Immediate Release**

**Jan. 27, 2014**

### **Redbank Valley in Western Pa. is 2014 Trail of the Year**

**Harrisburg** – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Secretary Ellen Ferretti today announced that Redbank Valley Trails in Armstrong, Clarion and Jefferson counties is the 2014 Trail of the Year in Pennsylvania.

This new designation is coordinated by DCNR's Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee to elevate public awareness of the thousands of miles of trails available for public enjoyment in Pennsylvania.

"Eighteen fantastic trails were nominated during this inaugural year for this designation," Ferretti said. "Redbank Valley Trails stood out because of the dedicated work of tremendous volunteers; its scenic beauty; connection to other trail systems; and quick and efficient pace of development."

Much of the 51-mile Redbank Valley Trails runs along Redbank Creek and includes many bridges and beautiful stone arches. The trail connects schools, soccer fields and rural areas to commercial and residential centers.

The trail network is a former railroad line. Allegheny Valley Land Trust has title to the corridor and works with the Redbank Valley Trails Association to make improvements for trail use. Volunteers have contributed more than 3,000 hours per year since 2010 to trail development.

Redbank Valley Trails connects to the Armstrong Trail and from there to the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail and the Great Allegheny Passage to Washington, D.C. It is also part of an initiative to connect Pittsburgh to Ridgway in the heart of the Pennsylvania Wilds.

Darla Kirkpatrick, Redbank Valley Trails Association President thanked DCNR upon learning of the award and commented, "This honor belongs to all of our amazing, dedicated volunteers and our community, local government and business supporters who have committed so much of their time, energy, equipment and money. The Trail of the Year designation will help us garner more support so we can improve and open the Climax Tunnel; finish surfacing more miles; add amenities; attract more businesses for needed economic development in the region and make more people aware of this truly beautiful recreational asset."

The trail association engages the community through events, Facebook and a website at [www.redbankvalleytrails.org](http://www.redbankvalleytrails.org).

To honor the Trail of the Year, the advisory committee and DCNR will create a commemorative poster for statewide distribution.

For more information visit [www.explorePAtrails.com](http://www.explorePAtrails.com) and choose the 2014 Trail of the Year slide. Featured on the site are 476 trails covering more than 10,000 miles in Pennsylvania.

The Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee includes different types of trail users, builders and advocates, and people with disabilities.

The committee's responsibilities are to advise DCNR on the use of trail funding in Pennsylvania; review and rank trail project applications; and present an annual report to the secretary on trail activities.

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