



Ohio to Erie Trail

Spring 2016

Newsletter #53

Great Changes for Holmes & Knox County Trails

Late spring or early summer this year our partners Holmes County Trail (HCT) & Heart of Ohio Trail (HOOT) in Knox County will have some of the most significant changes impacting the Ohio to Erie Trail this year. An additional ten miles of newly paved recreational trails will enable the OTET Route 1 to leave the current street routes in those two areas.

In Holmes County, the current Ohio to Erie Trail route travels a half mile past the Bridge of Dreams on the newly paved Mohican Valley Trail at Brinkhaven. From here, travelers must to on Route 62 and other county roads for 15 miles to Killbuck.

Late this spring or early summer, the Brinkhaven to Glenmont section of the Holmes County Trail will be paved eliminating these 15 miles of street route. Trail users will take the new 8 mile section of the Holmes County Trail to Glen-

mont, then rolling county road 520 into Killbuck. In 2017, the already acquired right of way from Glenmont to Killbuck is scheduled to be paved and to connect with the current Holmes County Trail. A total of 15 street miles will be eliminated, reducing the overall distance of the OTET by a few miles.

According to Jen Halverson, Director of Holmes County Park District, this new section of trail will cost close to \$4 million when completed. Design and engineering costs were an earmark sponsored by Sherrod Brown and Zach Space; \$2.9 million was funded through ODOT; a half million from ODNR Clean Ohio Trail Fund and the rest from Holmes County Park District and Holmes County Rails to Trails Coalition. A great effort by all who were involved.

In Knox County the Heart of Ohio Trail is being paved this spring/summer another 2.24 miles south



Lori Totman, Knox County Park Director points out the about-to-be-paved section of the Heart of Ohio Trail with Ohio To Erie Trail Executive Coordinator Lisa Daris. The large photo is of the Heart of Ohio Trail north of Centerburg.

from Centerburg. This extension, complete with a pedestrian bridge over SR 3/36, will be just about one mile shy of the Delaware County line. This newly paved section will remove over five miles of the current OTET street route.

The trail extension is funded by ODOT's Transportation Alternative Program with the local match paid by the Knox County Commissioners' Park District according to Lori Totman, Park Director.

Alum Creek Trail Update

Ohio to Erie Trail signs have been installed on the Alum Creek Trail, making this section the official OTET Route 1 through Columbus. A round of applause to the City of Columbus for installing the way marker signs in time for the start of the season.

This section removes a significant portion of roadway on the north end

of Columbus. The route now utilizes a 3.5 mile Downtown Connector Trail between the Scioto Greenway Trail and the Alum Creek Trail.

The Alum Creek Trail follows the beautiful Alum Creek over many bridges and boardwalks, highlighting the best of the urban biking experience!



Sunshine on the Trail

Long-distance Runner Training on the Ohio to Erie Trail

On April 2, supporters along the trail welcomed a special guest, Sunshine Sung, as she ran from Battelle Darby Park to her home town of Xenia. High winds met her every step of the way, but Sunshine's determination, fueled by supporters' cheers, accompanied her for every 51 miles of her journey.

Sunshine is training for The Spartathlon, a 153-

mile, point-to-point race that runs from Athens to Sparta. "I could not think of a better way to celebrate than to run a gorgeous stretch of the Ohio to Erie Trail from Columbus, my hometown, to Xenia, a city that I REALLY enjoy running through," said Sunshine.

Running, biking, walking, hiking...whatever activity you love, the Ohio to Erie Trail is the trail for it!



Ohio to Erie Trail Designated as Bicycle Route 1 in Ohio

The Ohio Department of Transportation has officially recognized the Ohio to Erie Trail as Bicycle Route 1 in the state. Later in 2016 it is expected that the federal bicycle route numbering program will take effect. In addition to Ohio Route 1, the OTET will then also be referred to as US Bicycle Route 21.

The familiar bicycle sign seen here also has *Ohio to Erie Trail* in letters across the bottom on most signs. The OTET is 300+ miles end to end making it the longest paved trail in Ohio.

On the Trail with Sean

Sean McEleney, a Centerburg resident, doesn't mind being called weird by family and friends who view his love for the Ohio to Erie Trail a bit obsessive. Sparked by a purchase of a used bicycle at a garage sale a few years ago, Sean became motivated to start riding 30 miles round trip to work each day. He's ridden through rain, snow, and heavy winds. "The only thing I won't ride in is lightning," he said.

Sean set a goal of purchasing a new bike if he could commit to riding his garage sale treasure, so he made the small-framed bike fit his 6'2" body by maximizing the seat height. Riding on the OTET every day, he grew to love it and added cycling to his already-active lifestyle that includes hiking and running. On December 18, 2014, Sean set off from Centerburg on the Trail that took him through Cin-



Sean McEleney

cinnati, where he gave his bike to a homeless person. He purchased a new bike and from there, he rode to just outside of Knoxville, Tennessee!

Today, Sean still rides to work and back home every day, but took this past winter off on most cold and snowy days.

Warmer spring weather means Sean is back on the OTET. When he's not riding or working, you can find him volunteering for the Heart of Ohio Trail, an OTET partner that is making much progress in Knox County.

What Does it Cost?



It is not unusual for members of the Ohio to Erie Trail Foundation to be asked, "What does it cost a mile to build a recreational trail and what about maintenance costs?" Jim Schneider of Trail-works in Beavercreek, an advisory board member for our organization, tells us that the expense of building a mile of trail varies greatly and is determined significantly by the terrain. That is why the least expensive trails are built on abandoned railroads where minimal grading is needed.

Add a bridge over a river, a road, or an interstate and the cost per mile increases exponentially, as it does when moving a lot of earth. Urban verses rural construction costs also vary considerably. Schneider, who has overseen the construction of hundreds of miles of recreation trails and consults on many such projects, says, "The minimum construction of

asphalt trail per mile would be about \$133,000 but I have seen it as high as \$450,000 with no bridges, etc."

With the expansion of so many trail miles, maintenance is becoming a major issue for our trail partners who actually oversee the day-to-day needs of their sections of the Ohio to Erie Trail. "A regularly scheduled preventative maintenance program can to extend the life of a trail 20-25 years," says Schneider.

Volunteer organizations like the Friends of Madison County Parks & Trails, the Friends of the Little Miami State Park and Delaware County Friends of Trails, as well as county and city park divisions, and the Ohio Department of Natural Resources as well as the National Park Service (Cuyahoga National Park), must plan in their budgets to cut grass along the trails, remove trees, repair fences, fix cracks, seal-

coat, and replace pavement as needed.

A 6.5 mile asphalt seal-coat project on the OTET/Madison County Trail was just awarded to Duraseal of Columbus for \$25,234 or \$3,882 per mile. The two-day project on the 10 foot wide trail west of London will be done in August. Madison County Parks District received an ODNR Recreational Trails Program grant to pay \$23,216 of the project. The County is responsible for the remaining 20% (\$5,047).

The Ohio to Erie Trail Fund assists our trail partners when we can. The OTETF Board donated \$15,000 to Delaware County for a new paving project earlier in 2016 and then pledged another \$13,000 to the Village of Galena as part of a local share towards an ODNR Recreational Trail Program grant application to construct what is known as the Brick Trail just north of the town.



Supporting the local trail organizations with donations goes a long way in helping maintain the 300 plus miles of the Ohio to Erie Trail that traverses 15 counties with 18 separately managed but connected trails! Donations to OTET are put towards building and maintaining the trail in all parts of Ohio.

#OH2ERIE

This year, visitors of the Trail are encouraged to post their photos along the trail on social media channels, along with the hashtag #OH2ERIE so the community of trail users can all find one another easily. A few well-liked posts will be published in our upcoming newsletters. So don't forget to use #OH2ERIE and let the world know you are enjoying the Trail!



118 Graceland Blvd. #146
 Columbus, Ohio 43214
www.ohioerietrail.org

A network of trails from Cincinnati to Cleveland, using lands formerly occupied by railroads and canals.

Non-Profit
 Organization
 U. S. Postage
 PAID
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 Permit 5466

Address Changes:

E-mail changes to: ohioerietrail@gmail.com

Telephone Number changes to: 614-918-3636



OTET Maps Selling Wide

Orders for the set of four Ohio to Erie Trail maps are coming in steadily from all across the United States. The \$10 set of four maps in a waterproof, sealable pouch have been sold to hundreds of people in 28 states including as far away as Washington, California, New

York and Florida. Our border states of Michigan, Indiana, Kentucky and Pennsylvania lead in shipments.

Each set arrives within a few days after the order is placed. Included is a listing of the most up to date changes and detours. Ordering is easy. Go to the web site and visit the store. PayPal and credit cards are accepted.

With the addition of several miles of new Trail pavement, removing OTET from street routes in several areas, a new OTET Map Edition will be available in spring of 2017.



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