

# WORK to START on FIRST SEGMENT of D & H RAIL-TRAIL

*To Run Through Lackawanna, Wayne & Susquehanna Counties*

**NORTHEASTERN PENNSYLVANIA (October 19, 2005)** – A ceremony will mark the start of construction for the long-awaited, first 10-mile segment of the Delaware & Hudson Rail-Trail.

The Rail-Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania will hold a groundbreaking on Monday, October 24, at 2 p.m. at the Forest City trailhead, adjacent to the Greater Forest City Vision 2000 Industrial Park, Route 247. Congressman Don Sherwood will attend along with state and local officials, council members, friends, volunteers and trail enthusiasts.

“This is a great day for the northern tier of Pennsylvania,” said Joe Brophy, the council’s president. “Our trail will open up many economic and social opportunities for the people of our area.”

The much-anticipated start will mean improvements to the former D&H rail bed, which is being developed into a recreational trail for bikers, joggers, and walkers. Plans include extensive drainage improvements, trail grading and resurfacing, installation of access control gates, fences, road crossings and regulatory signage.

The trail begins in Vandling, Lackawanna County, and runs through Clinton Township, Wayne County, and continues into the Susquehanna County communities of Forest City, Clifford Township, Union Dale Borough and Herrick Center.

“This will absolutely add to the region’s quality of life and bring many other benefits to the area,” said April Hannon, Enhancement/Quality Coordinator for District 4 of PennDOT, which administers Federal Highway Administration funds for the program. In addition, matching funds come from the state Department of Conservation and Natural Resources.

“This will be a tremendous asset for Northeastern Pennsylvania and all of eastern Pennsylvania. It will not only boost the economy but have a positive impact from a health standpoint with the availability for walking and biking on the trail.”

According to officials, the first segment will ultimately be part of a larger trail connecting suburban Philadelphia to New York State through some of Pennsylvania’s most scenic territory.

Incorporated in 1991, the Rail-Trail Council is a non-profit grass roots organization with a mission to renew the region’s historic pathways as recreational trails for all to use. The Council has a 30-member local board representing many interest groups. It boasts the largest trail group membership in Pennsylvania with over 1670 members.

The 32-mile D&H was acquired with Transportation Enhancement funds in 1995, in conjunction with a Master Plan for trail development. An additional six miles were acquired on the northern D&H to the New York State border.

The Council has constructed trailheads along the right-of-way for trail access and parking. Historical signage has been installed in key communities detailing the railroad and coal-mining history. Railroad bridges have been decked, along with the addition of railings. Numerous volunteers contributed hours of time into trail cleanups along the entire 38-mile stretch.

Plans are to continue with trail improvements in ten-mile increments, with construction documents complete for the first 32 miles. Phase II will run from Herrick Center to Thompson. Phase III will take the trail through Starrucca to Stevens Point. Phase IV, which continues through Lanesboro and up to the NY state border, needs to be designed and engineered.

**More information on the council may be obtained by contacting:**

**Lynn Conrad, Project Manager**

**Phone: 570-785-7245**

**Email: [tcccrail@epix.net](mailto:tcccrail@epix.net)**

**Web: [www.nepa-rail-trails.org](http://www.nepa-rail-trails.org)**

**Rail Trail Council of Northeastern Pennsylvania**

**PO Box 123, Forest City, PA 18421**