

**THE
CIRCUIT
TRAILS**

2021

ANNUAL REPORT



Scudder Falls Bridge Shared Use Path

2021 in Review

In 2021, several decades-long gaps were completed throughout and beyond the Greater Philadelphia region that now bring new connections to communities within the growing network of The Circuit Trails. Thanks to your on-going support and advocacy for the trails, these key connections have paved the way for the Circuit Trails that are expected to be completed in 2022.

In Pennsylvania, New Segments Open Along the Schuylkill River



Schuylkill River Trail - Whittaker Bridge

The Whittaker Bridge now allows for the Schuylkill River Trail to cross over Route 724 in Union Township, Berks County, just north of Pottstown. The gentle grade of the \$1.15 million dollar bridge was funded through DCNR, DVRPC, and private funding.

The trail allows users to avoid any switchbacks and smoothly climb and descend over route 724. The bridge is named after a Pottstown orthopedic surgeon, Richard P. Whittaker. There are now 75 completed miles of the planned 120 miles from Frackville



in Schuylkill County to Philadelphia. Below is the new segment along the Schuylkill River in southwest Philadelphia that provides views of the skyline and the river, including a new fishing pier and overlook that is shown on the bottom right.



Schuylkill Banks - 56th St to 61st St

In New Jersey, the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park Opens in the City of Camden

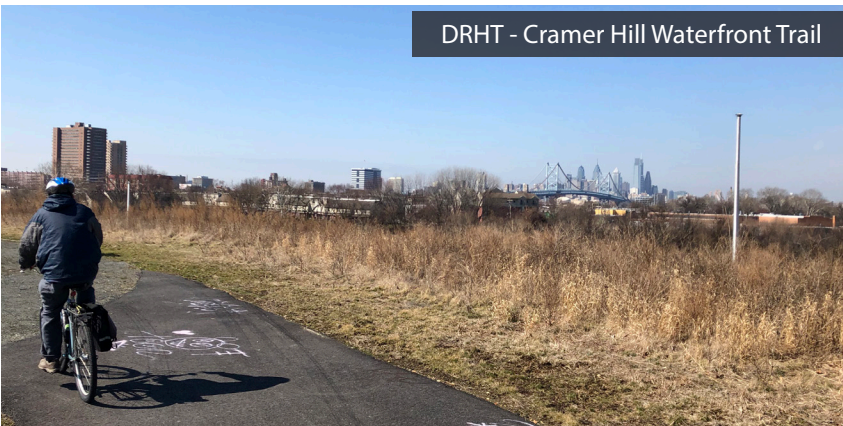
Site Visit at Cramer Hill from 2018



Back in 2018, members of the Circuit Trails Coalition, DVRPC, NJDEP, and Camden Community Partnership which was formerly known as Cooper's Ferry Partnership gathered as site preparation shifted focus to performing earthworks activities (Photo from the site visit shown to the left).

In November of 2021, the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park opened with the official ribbon cutting ceremony bringing 0.77 miles into the network. The park is host to the Circuit as well as other trails that help you explore the park and surrounding waterways. This multi-million dollar project transformed the former Harrison Avenue landfill into a 62-acre waterfront park, making it the largest park in the City of Camden and providing amazing views of the city of Philadelphia that connects trail users to Cooper River, Petty's Island and High Point Park. Additionally, the trails through the Cramer Hill Waterfront Park are part of the Delaware River Heritage Trail in development between Camden and Trenton, along with the East Coast Greenway.

DRHT - Cramer Hill Waterfront Trail



The Delaware River Heritage Trail Extends from Bordentown to Roebling

Burlington County officially opened the Delaware River Heritage Trail (130 Bypass Section) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

The 5.5-mile trail begins at the Crystal Lake Dam, travels through Crystal Lake Park and ends in Roebling waterfront park. In addition to being a part of the Circuit Trails it is also a segment of the East Coast Greenway.

In addition to the rail tunnel, bicyclists can take in vast fields and farmland along the nearby waterway.



DRHT - NJ Transit River Line Crossing

Events with the Circuit Action Team



In Philadelphia, members of the Coalition and the Circuit Action Team joined their partners at the event, Rediscover Cobbs Creek with a day of outdoor fun at the Cobbs Creek Community Environmental Center. The event had a lot to do including birding, archery and walks along the creek to highlight all there is to do along the trails.



In Mercer County, the Circuit Action Team leader held a combination event of Ciclovía: Open Streets Trenton & Art All Day which closed multiple streets to cars and opened them to people - including one the Wellness Loop. The event had art tours around the city as well as a bike ride visiting all the sites that used the Circuit Trails to get around.



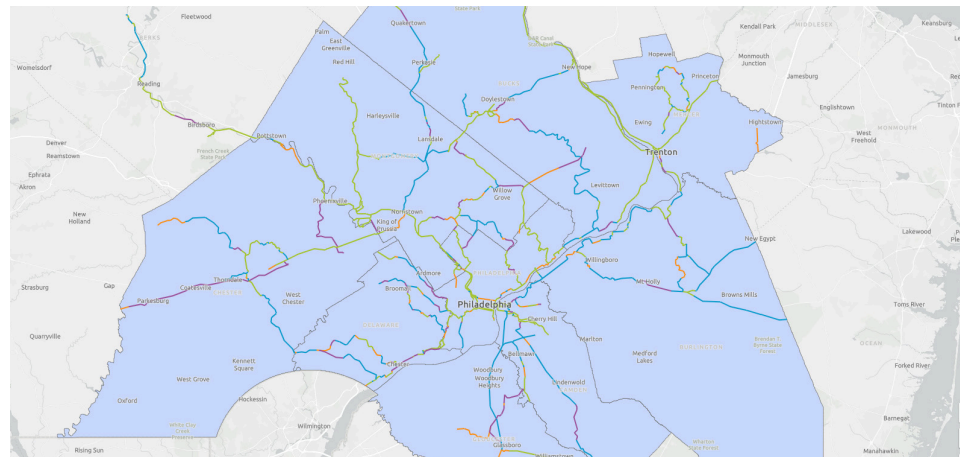
The Camden County Action Team hosted a trail fun night which had around 50 people join to enjoy games, a food truck, prizes, along with a walk and bike ride along the Merchantville Trail mile in Pennsauken Township. Additionally, the future connections from the Merchantville Trail over route 130 were shown on a large map.

Increasing Circuit Trails Access and Equity

In 2021, the Circuit Coalition developed a team who began the process of creating the 2021-2025 Strategic Plan with support from the OpinionWorks study for the 65+ organizations to reach the goal of 500 completed miles by 2025. In order to reach the goal, the coalition developed a refined mission, values and goals as we look ahead to 2025.

Each year, the Circuit Trails trail season marketing campaign reaches millions of people in the Greater Philadelphia and South Jersey region to build awareness of the trail network, encourage trail use and generate support to complete the Circuit Trails.

In 2020 and 2021, the Circuit Trails Steering Committee and JEDI Working Group partnered with OpinionWorks to better understand



the awareness and participation of neighborhoods near the Circuit Trails to develop recommendations for creating an equitable and inclusive trail system that reflects the diversity of the communities it serves.

The study revealed several recommendations that could be immediately addressed through

communications and marketing:

- Inviting everyone to have their fun on the trail;
- Extending an overt welcome;
- Hosting organized group activities;
- Showing people enjoying the trail; and
- Leveraging local social media and traditional door-to-door to engage community members.

Trails Completed and Coming Soon

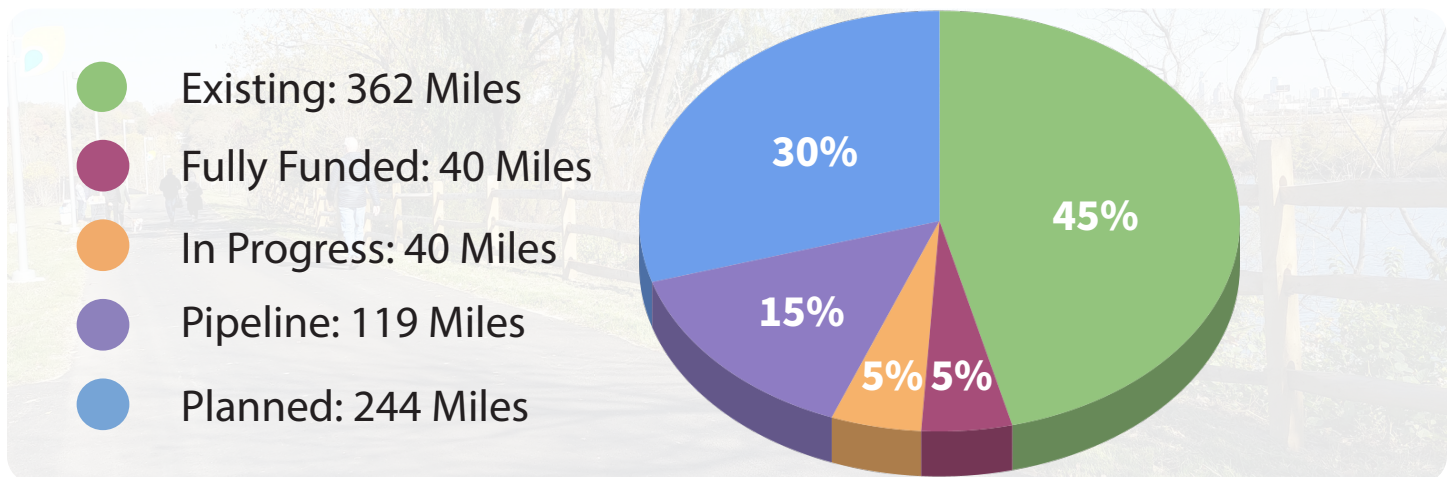
In 2021, the Circuit Trails completed 8.77 miles in the Greater Philadelphia area, not counting an additional 17 miles in Berks County and 3.5 miles of trail improvement to the network. This brings the total to 362 miles. When complete, the Circuit Trails will consist of 827 miles. Looking ahead, 2022 will bring 13 miles and is shaping up to be an exciting year!

Circuit Trails Completed in 2021

State	County	Trail	Mileage
NJ	Burlington	Delaware River Heritage Trail	4.99
NJ	Burlington	Delaware River Heritage Trail: NJ Transit Riverline Crossing	0.05
NJ	Camden	Delaware River Heritage Trail: Cramer Hill Waterfront Park	0.77
NJ & PA	Mercer & Bucks	Scudder Falls Shared Use Path	0.76
PA	Montgomery	Cross County Trail: Near St. George's Road to Dryden	0.53
PA	Philadelphia	Tacony-Tookany-Frankford Trail: Adam's Avenue Connector	0.24
PA	Montgomery	Liberty Bell Trail: Stony Creek Park to Andale Section	0.28
PA	Montgomery	Cross County Trail: PA 309 Overpass to Life Time / TruMark Entrance	0.17
PA	Philadelphia	Schuylkill River Trail: 56th St to near 61st St	0.35
PA	Delaware	Chester Creek Trail: Eyre Park Levvee Walk	0.58
PA	Berks	Schuylkill River Trail: Whittaker Bridge	0.05
Total Miles:			8.77

Circuit Trails Openings Coming Soon

State	County	Trail	Mileage
NJ	Burlington	Rancocas Creek Greenway - Amico Island to Pennington Park	2.26
NJ	Burlington	Arney's Mount Trail - Phase 1	1.49
PA	Chester	Schuylkill River Trail: Parker Ford to PA 422	3.69
PA	Bucks/Montco	Newtown Rail Trail: County Line Road to Bristol Road	2.54
PA	Montgomery	Pennypack Trail - Byberry Road to County Line Road	0.83
PA	Philadelphia	Central Delaware River Trail	1.9
PA	Philadelphia	Cobbs Creek Trail: Segment D	0.32
Total Coming Soon:			13.03



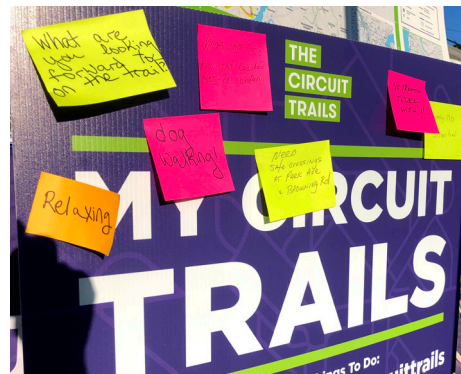
Building Awareness and Support for the Circuit Trails

In 2021, advocates for the Circuit Trails generated over 3,100 engagements through various action alerts, petitions and projects to raise awareness and to prioritize available funding resources for the regional trail network. Each month, the Circuit Trails Action Team crafted alerts to the Action Team members at a regional and local level with opportunities to move the Circuit forward.

Online engagement included hundreds of letters written to Members of Congress, County Commissioners, DVRPC and the PA Department of Transportation with the message to prioritize the Circuit Trails and support the interim goal to completing 500 miles by 2025. Additionally, over 1,000 advocates signed the petition to fully fund the Spring Garden Street Greenway for completion in Philadelphia to significantly improve accessibility and safety for all users. In New Jersey, advocates amplified safety concerns in Mercer County by asking for improvements along the D&R Canal crossing which resulted in changes to the design of the project that fills a dangerous gap.

To amplify the priority Circuit Trails projects in the 9 counties, the

Circuit Trails video campaign was created to meet with trail advocates outside of the many online calls held throughout the year. The video campaign reached hundreds of viewers region-wide and provided an opportunity to capture the voice of those who support the Circuit Trails in their communities and the connections that the network would bring to the region as more miles of trail are completed.



The 2021 trail season marketing effort was reimagined to promote an inclusive environment for trail users from across lived experiences. The campaign centered on the “My Circuit Trails” framing, which put the trail user at the center of the story and allowed individuals from all backgrounds to put themselves on the trail.

The campaign was designed to create space to align the trail network with audience priorities around fun, leisure time, wellness and mobility. Messaging that elevated the Circuit Trails not just as a route to somewhere else, but as the destination—the close-to-home access point to nature and the outdoors—was elevated. Resources were provided to make it easy for people who were new to trails to explore their neighborhood segments and we tried new approaches to connect with new and diverse trail users on- and off-trail, using temporary “yard signage” to visibly position the Circuit in places that are relevant to the communities we were trying to reach; prioritized investment in paid media reaching under-represented groups; partnered with the urban radio station WDAS to build brand affinity between a beloved local radio station and the Circuit Trails experience; and coordinated street team efforts to market the trails in highly trafficked neighborhood locations (like strip malls) within a mile or so of the trail, and to organize on-trail summer celebrations that positioned the trail as the destination for music, ice cream and neighborhood connections.

Evidence of the effectiveness of the campaign strategies can be seen in the metrics:

- Web Engagement: 154,500 upv (year to date)
- Video Reach: 52K views
- Social Community: 25,846
- Paid Media Reach: 3.24+ million (print, digital, radio)
- Earned Media: 190 media mentions (through 11/2021 – 53% growth)

The Scudder Falls Shared Use Path Brings New Connections to the Region



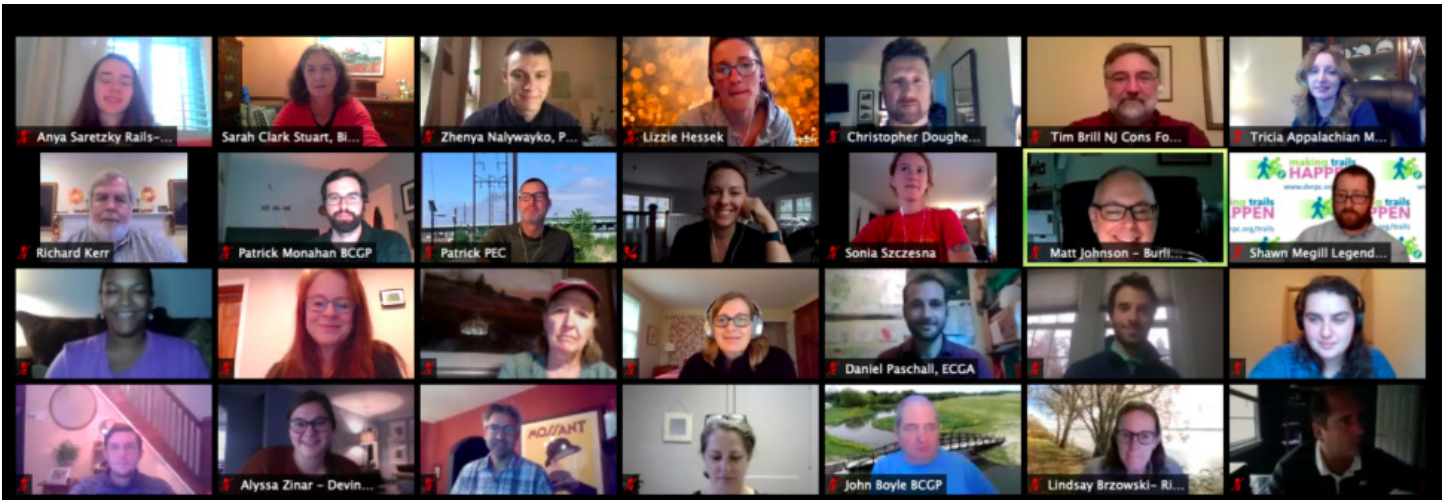
After 18 years of advocacy, planning, and construction, the Delaware River Joint Toll Bridge Commission officially opened the Scudder Falls Shared Use Path. This project is a critical addition to the direct connections between Pennsylvania and New Jersey that are a part of the Circuit Trails.

The path is about 1,500 feet in length and was a major part of the I-295 Scudder Falls Bridge project. It is the first interstate highway bridge project in the region built specifically to include a bicycle and pedestrian path. This path directly connects two sides of the Circuit - from the Delaware & Leigh Towpath to the Delaware & Raritan Towpath.



The Bicycle Coalition initiated and led the effort to get the pathway built back in 2003. This project had been a parallel effort to the construction of the Ben Franklin Bridge Walkway. It took several years to build the political will to include the path. In 2010, the Commission approved the inclusion of the walkway into the design of the bridge.

Numerous organizations joined the Bicycle Coalition's campaign including Tri-State Transportation Campaign, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, Trenton Cycling Revolution, NJ Bike and Walk Coalition, the East Coast Greenway Alliance and others. Many of these groups continue to collaborate today as part of the Circuit Trails Coalition.



The Circuit Trails Coalition is a collaboration of nonprofit organizations, foundations, and agencies working to advance completion of a connected network of trails – The Circuit Trails – in the Greater Philadelphia region. Its goal is to raise the profile of bicycle and pedestrian trails and their public benefits so that building the Circuit Trails becomes a significant regional priority. Since its May 2012 launch, the Circuit Trails Coalition has brought together dozens of organizations to advocate for completing The Circuit Trails network, with an eye toward raising the profile of trails and their many public benefits.

Circuit Trails Coalition Members

Circuit Trails Coalition Public Partners

Circuit Trails Coalition “Circuit Citizens”

Members of the Circuit Trails Coalition are a diverse group of nonprofits working in the fields of transportation, recreation, health, environmental sustainability, and economic development.

The Circuit Trails Coalition is governed by a steering committee that is comprised of elected representatives from the 65+ member organizations.

The Circuit Trails Coalition has formed active partnerships with governmental agencies that work to provide support and resources for Circuit Trails development and management.

Local, county, state and regional organizations are involved, representing interests such as planning, transportation management, parks, and conservation.

The Circuit Citizens community is a growing, interconnected, multi-county network of people who are interested in supporting and advocating for the advancement of the Circuit Trails network.

Circuit Citizens are the grassroots of the trail movement, who take action at the local level to increase support for trails.

Want your business or organization to become involved? Visit circuittrails.org for more information.

This work of The Circuit Coalition is made possible with the generous support of:

