



THE GHOST OF A TRAIN

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Learn more about the Mon River and Deckers Creek
Rail-Trails at the Mon River Trails Conservancy
website: www.montrails.org.

The rail-trail you are standing on today exists not only because trains rumbled through here in the past, but because this corridor may be needed for trains in the future. In 1983, the U.S. Congress amended the National Trails System Act due to concern about the rapid disappearance of America's rail network. Railroad corridors can become rail-trails through a legislative process called railbanking when rail transportation is no longer needed. Although a railroad company no longer owns the corridor, the property is legally protected for return to railroad service if trains are needed in the future to transport goods or people.

The Fairmont, Morgantown, and Pittsburgh Branch of the Baltimore & Ohio (B&O) Railroad (now the Mon River Trail) was built in the late 1880s primarily to transport the high-quality bituminous coal found throughout North Central West Virginia. The Mon River and Deckers Creek Rail-Trails were once the region's busiest highways. Their trains carried coal, coke (produced from coal used to make iron), sand for glass-making, limestone, and other items to distant markets in Pittsburgh and beyond. Remnants of former railroad structures such as signal boxes, trestles, and telegraph poles, as well as homestead foundations, mine portals, stone quarries, and coke ovens, are still evident in the landscape you pass on the trail.

Working on a Rail-Trail

In 1996, this 51-mile railroad corridor was acquired from CSX to be railbanked as a non-motorized trail system thanks to the joint efforts of the nonprofit Mon River Trails Conservancy and the city of Morgantown. In 2006, the Mon River and Deckers Creek Rail-Trail System was designated as a National Recreation Trail for its exemplary qualities.

Become a Mon River Trails Conservancy (MRTC) member and help the rail-trails! MRTC manages these trails primarily for walking, jogging, cycling, and cross-country skiing. MRTC also creates and promotes opportunities for recreation, alternative transportation, tourism, economic development, historic preservation, healthy lifestyles, and environmental conservation.



Whistle posts mark where the locomotive engineer sounded the whistle in advance of a road crossing.



www.montrails.org



www.wvdnr.gov