

## **Conemaugh River Greenway Concept Plan....**

**....A part of the Conemaugh River Basin Reconnaissance Study**

### **TIMELINE:**

#### **April 25, 1978**

Congressional Resolution adopted by the US House of Representatives, Committee on Public Works & Transportation, giving authority to US Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) to undertake Allegheny River Basin Studies. The Conemaugh River is in the Allegheny River Basin.

#### **Fiscal Year 1993**

Congressman John P. Murtha added \$500K funds to Energy & Water Development Appropriations Act to develop the Conemaugh River Basin Comprehensive Reconnaissance Study (Basin Study).

Southwestern Pennsylvania Heritage Preservation Commission Director, Randy Cooley, helped the Corps develop a partnership, and get a priority project, with National Park Service's Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (NPS-RTCA), Mid-Atlantic Office, Philadelphia PA.

USACOE issued a \$40K Military Interdepartmental Purchase Request (MIPR) to NPS to develop a Conemaugh River Greenway Concept Plan (Greenway Plan) from Johnstown to Saltsburg PA. Dr. Ed Smith, USACOE, led the project. Outdoor Rec Planner Dave Wood and Peggy Pings were the NPS-RTCA staff & field liaison, with mapping assistance from Hugh Duffy, NPS-Denver Service Center.

#### **February 1994**

Basin Study completed by USACOE, Pittsburgh District.

#### **March 1994**

Greenway Plan completed, and placed in its entirety as an Appendix to the Basin Study.

### **RESULTS:**

- Greenway Plan:
  - Partial trail segment is built along the Johnstown Local Flood Protection Project (LFPP) trail project.
  - USACOE couldn't proceed with development of the trail without specific authority from Congress.
- Basin Study:
  - 1 of 5 acid mine drainage (AMD) treatment projects recommended to proceed into Feasibility is under construction at Nanty Glo, PA.
- 1994. Conemaugh Valley Conservancy formed to advocate and lead the development of a greenway system.
- 1996. Congressman Murtha provided a Congressional "add" to complete a subsequent "Conemaugh River Scenic Corridor Special Project Report & Master Plan, LFPP, Johnstown Urban Greenway," Jan 1996. USACOE worked with a local Steering Committee and consultant GAI to develop a preliminary design for a pedestrian walkway in conjunction with the LFPP rehabilitation project. Project was very expensive to build (about \$13M), and needed a 50% local cost share, so to date, project has not been implemented.

### **LESSONS LEARNED:**

- Very good working relationship between USACOE and NPS-RTCA. Would do it again if opportunity arose.
- Desires of people in Johnstown for a greenway weren't compatible with the LFPP. The community liked the Concept Plan and hoped a trail could be built down in & out of the LFPP concrete channel, but were disappointed because of the safety and liability issues prohibiting the USACOE from allowing the public to place themselves in harms way down in the flood channel.

### **OTHER SIMILAR STUDIES:**

- Lackawanna River Corridor Greenway Study. 10-1-1986-- Resolution adopted by Committee of Public Works & Transportation, giving USACOE, Baltimore District, authority to do study. 8-17-91-- Energy & Water Development Appropriation Act provides \$700K funds to Secretary of Army & Chief of Engineers.

## **“No Partner Left Behind”**

### **Key Concepts To Take Home**

1. You can accomplish more with partners than alone. Partnership means developing personal relationships. It is a two-way give & take. Help each other, create synergy, through organizational relationships, sharing data, linking and leveraging resources.
2. The trails and greenways process is long term effort. Pay attention to sustaining the organization, managing the structure, and juggling match moneys.
3. Develop a concise vision and mission. Communicate your project succinctly so that a potential partner or funder wants to be a part of it.
4. It’s all about improving the quality of life. As one piece of a derelict area is improved, a domino effect is created, with private landowners re-investing in their adjacent properties.