

Agencies partner on trail expansion

By SHANNON NASS, [Post-Gazette](#)

January 01, 2012 MONACA — Interagency partnering has become a walk in the park, even if it sometimes sounds like alphabet soup. Collaboration between the Ohio River Trail Council and the National Park Service is set to continue for another year. The park service recently approved the trail council's application for a second year of technical assistance from its Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program. "I am delighted that the ORTC-NPS relationship will continue for a second year. **The collaboration is facilitating the Ohio River Trail Council's vision for the Ohio River Trail partner communities and the Tri-State region,"** said Vincent Troia, executive chairman and CEO of the trail council, in a prepared statement.

Considered the community assistance arm of the park service, the assistance program supports community-led natural resource conservation and outdoor recreation projects.

The park service selected the trail council last year to receive technical assistance from the RTCA to develop a 41-mile multiuse land and water trail system along the Ohio River. The trail is part of a larger vision to develop a Tri-State greenway system of connecting trails in Ohio, Pennsylvania and West Virginia.

Last year, the RTCA assisted the trail council with the development of the Ohio River Water Trail and the Ohio River Land Trail Feasibility Studies. In addition, the RTCA helped coordinate the Tri-State Trail Alliance meeting in March that drew approximately 80 trail advocates, and a regional trails meeting in October.

Park service representatives from these states also have been provided to oversee the project and help with administration and organization.

In 2012, the park service Rivers and Trails staff will focus on identifying an on-the-ground section of the Ohio River Land-Water Trail to develop. They will also continue to oversee the Tri-State Trail Initiative, a multistate effort that includes 18 counties in three states. The Pennsylvania counties are Beaver, Crawford, Erie, Greene, Lawrence, Mercer and Washington.

"The Ohio River Trail Project will ultimately foster further recreation and cultural-based economic development through the expansion of the recreation and parks system in the Ohio River Valley," said Troia.

For more information, visit www.ohiorivertrail.org.

Source: <http://www.post-gazette.com/sports/outdoors/2012/01/01/Agencies-partner-on-trail-expansion/stories/201201010298>