

## **ARMSTRONG TRAIL RECEIVES DCNR GRANTS**

Christmas came early for the Armstrong Rails to Trails Association (ARTA) and the Allegheny Valley Land Trust (AVLT). On Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup> The AVLT was notified that applications for 2 separate grants were approved and funding will be available for both projects.

The first project involves the rehabilitation of the Armstrong Trail from mile 61 in Madison Township, Armstrong County to mile 66, Brady Township, Clarion County – approximately 5 miles of trail. The project includes trail grading and surfacing, ADA access, landscaping and the construction of a pedestrian/bicycle lane across the Redbank Bridge. This grant award was for \$293,000.00 with the bulk of the funds being dedicated to materials and equipment. A 20% match was provided by AVLT in the way of donated services and cash. Much of the labor for this project will be provided by trail volunteers. When this project is completed only 2 miles of unfinished trail will remain (Rimer to Lock and Dam 9) on the 30 mile trail. The trail organization is optimistic that this work can be performed within the next year utilizing Chip N Trail funds and volunteers.

The second grant for \$70,000.00 will be used for a feasibility study for rehabilitating the one half mile Brady Tunnel for the Armstrong Trail and for providing camping facilities around Phillipston. Opening the tunnel will allow for a connection to the Allegheny River Trail. Both trail systems are a part of the much longer Erie To Pittsburgh Trail which is under development.

AVLT is currently working to prepare a DCNR grant application to be submitted in April of 2012. Items targeted for this round of grants include upgrading underdeveloped trail sections between Rosston and Rimer with priority on improving road crossings and trail surface.

In conjunction with these projects volunteers are currently working on uncovering the train turntable outside of Phillipston and clearing out the area around the coaling tower near the Redbank Creek Bridge. Funding is being sought for trail town, historical and interpretive signage.

If you are interested in donating time or funds towards this or other trail projects please contact the trail office at 724- 543-4478 or email the office at [armtrail@windstream.net](mailto:armtrail@windstream.net). Regular monthly meetings are open to the public and

are held the second Monday of each month at the County Commissioner's Office on the second floor of the Courthouse Annex in Kittanning.