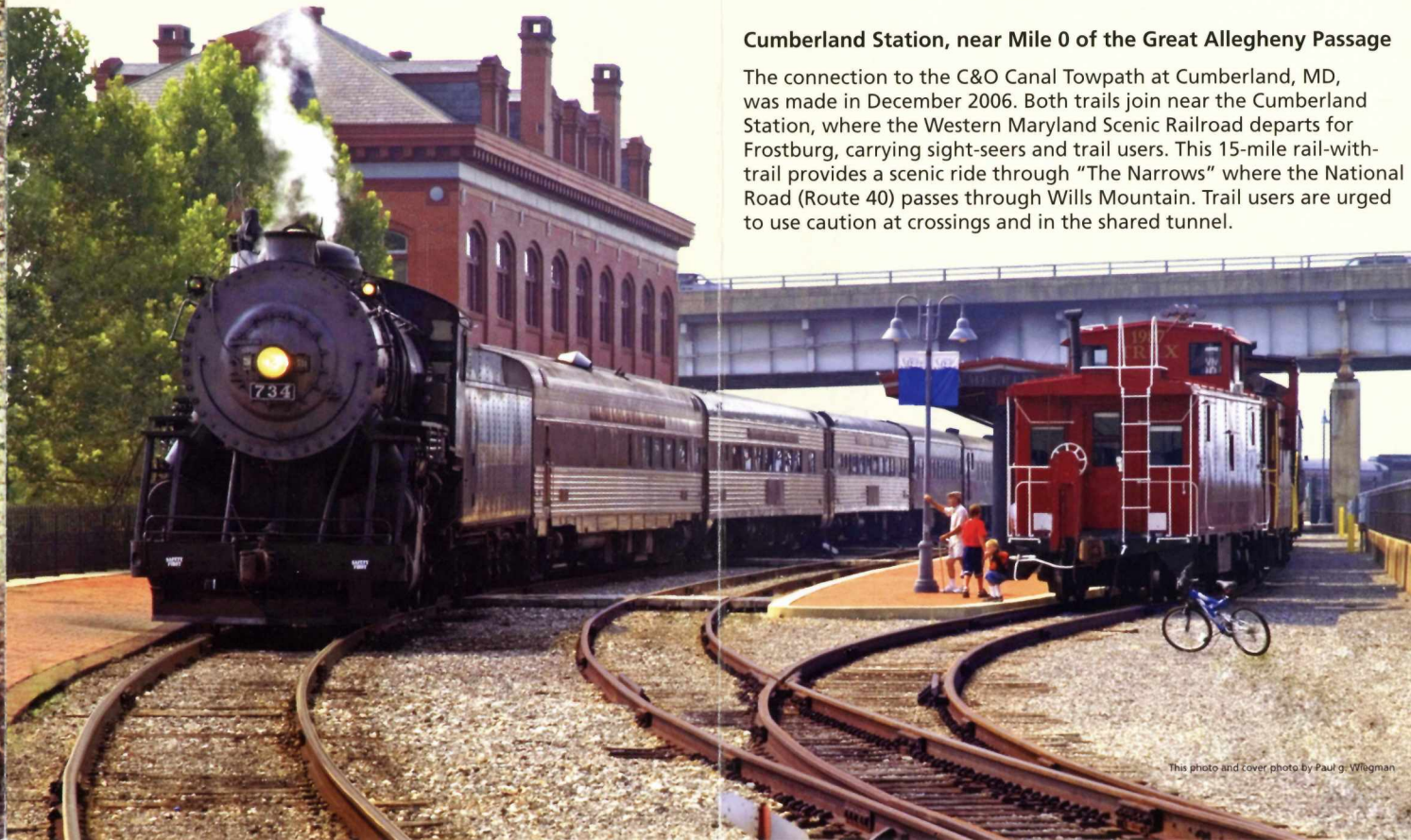


A Passage to the West

A great life is one whose early dreams carry you through to old age. As a young Virginia colonist, George Washington dreamed of the Potomac River as “an easy communication” between the Chesapeake Bay and the Forks of the Ohio River, a pathway for commerce and industry. To venture along today’s Great Allegheny Passage—its historic towns, parks, rivers, and scenic natural beauty—is to share Washington’s dream.

The Passage fulfills Washington’s vision to connect—for trade then, for heritage tourism and recreation now—the eastern seaboard via the Chesapeake Bay to the Ohio River. This first-ever, seamless connection from Potomac tidewater at Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Mile 0, through Cumberland, MD, and on to Pittsburgh, PA, completes the promise of the C&O Canal.



Before railroads, canals best carried goods long distances over rugged country. Just think: George Washington could travel no faster than Julius Caesar. But on the same day in 1828 that the C&O Canal broke ground—as successor to Washington’s vision—the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad broke ground, too. In the race westward the iron horse would beat the mule.

The B&O Railroad, today’s CSX, not only bested the canal but beat out its Western Maryland Railway competitor, making recreational reuse of these transportation corridors possible now. Seen and heard along the way today, CSX parallels the trails from Washington, D.C., to Pittsburgh.

Rich in history and natural beauty, this is your passage through time and the timeless mountains.

Cumberland Station, near Mile 0 of the Great Allegheny Passage

The connection to the C&O Canal Towpath at Cumberland, MD, was made in December 2006. Both trails join near the Cumberland Station, where the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad departs for Frostburg, carrying sight-seers and trail users. This 15-mile rail-with-trail provides a scenic ride through “The Narrows” where the National Road (Route 40) passes through Wills Mountain. Trail users are urged to use caution at crossings and in the shared tunnel.

Planning Your Visit

Now complete from McKeesport, PA to Cumberland, MD, the Passage offers 132 continuous, nearly-level miles over abandoned rail lines smoothly surfaced with crushed limestone. At Cumberland it joins the 184.5-mile C&O Canal Towpath. In Ohiopyle State Park the Youghiogheny River cuts two gorges, through Laurel Hill—Pennsylvania’s deepest water gap—and Chestnut Ridge.

The Passage celebrates rail-road engineers who built tunnels, bridges, and viaducts to cross the Allegheny Mountains. Climbing gently, its rise never exceeds one percent eastbound from Pittsburgh or two percent westbound from Cumberland. Its high point is the Eastern Continental Divide near milepost 23.

Volunteer organizations locally own and maintain the trail—and welcome your support. To learn about the trail or how to volunteer or to support trail organizations, contact the Allegheny Trail Alliance:

atamail@atatrail.org
888-ATA-BIKE
(888-282-2453)
GreatAlleghenyPassage.org



The Great Allegheny Passage is a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, a partnership to establish a continuous trail network between the Potomac River mouth and Allegheny Highlands. Other segments include the Laurel Highlands Hiking Trail and Chesapeake & Ohio Canal Towpath. For more information visit www.nps.gov/pohe.

Published by the Allegheny Trail Alliance, 2007



Follow these wayfinder signs to major trailheads between McKeesport and Meyersdale.

It took three years and \$12 million to reconstruct the Big Savage Tunnel. Originally built by the Western Maryland Railway in 1911, it was plagued from the start by water problems. Essential for connecting the trails in Pennsylvania and Maryland, the tunnel is lighted for safety. **Closed for winter from late November to April (near right).**

Tourism is revitalizing communities that once relied on coal, coke, steel, and the railroads that moved on them. New businesses that cater to the trail tourists have sprung up in towns along the Passage (far right).



TrailBook



TrailBook

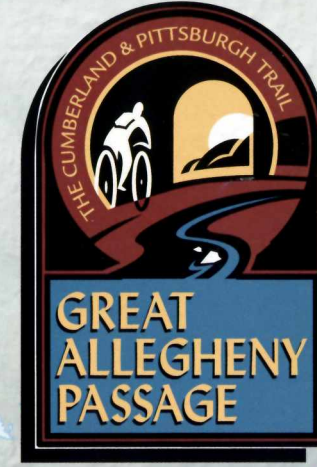


TrailBook

Mileage Table															
GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE															
Pittsburgh	McKeesport	Boston	West Newton	Connellsville	Ohiopyle	Confluence	Rockwood	Meyersdale	Frostburg	Cumberland	Hancock	Harpers Ferry	Washington, DC	C&O CANAL TOWPATH	
16	4														
20	18	14													
34	43	39	25												
59	61	56	42	17											
76	71	67	53	28	11										
87	90	86	72	47	30	19									
106	119	114	101	75	58	47	28	16							
135	150	135	116	91	74	63	44	32	16						
211	219	191	177	152	135	124	105	93	77	61					
274	259	254	240	215	198	187	168	156	140	124	63				
335	320	315	301	276	259	248	229	217	201	185	124	61			

To find the distance for your trip: Select your starting and ending points. Read down from northern end and left from southern end. Example: Between McKeesport and Meyersdale is 103 miles

Trail Map & Guide



GreatAlleghenyPassage.org

Great Allegheny Passage and connecting trails

