



# Bicycle Access Council News & Digest

[www.BicycleAccess-PA.org](http://www.BicycleAccess-PA.org)

March 2014

Hello Members and Supporters of the Bicycle Access Council.

It's a beautiful day in Pennsylvania!

## **SCOTUS SAYS NO TO TRAILS...**

In a March 10 decision involving a private land owner in Wyoming. The national Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) was disappointed in the US Supreme Court 8-1 ruling that basically says, "easements" granted to railroads cease when the railroads are no longer in business, and the right-of-way reverts to the landowner. *Yikes!* The justices relied on an 1875 Act of Congress and 1942 Supreme Court decision. Justice Sotomayor, in her dissent, was concerned about the legality of former rights-of-way that the public uses for transportation and recreation.

Trail developers have often relied on the 1983 federal rails-to-trails program that "rail-banked" many corridors until such time that a railroad would return to service — hopefully, never. Here in Pennsylvania, the ruling will have little or no effect according to representatives of DCNR. The future of trails in the Commonwealth, as is the case everywhere else, may still rely on the use of eminent domain and fair market purchase of land from current landowners.

## **2014 PROWALK-PROBIKE...**

'Pro Place' Conference is being held in Pittsburgh, September 8-11. This biennial meeting and workshop series chose the Steel City to host this professional event for an estimated 1,000 attendees. It's always a learning and networking experience for state and city transportation planners, architects, advocates and more. PWPB will take place at the David L. Lawrence Conference center with many optional mobile workshops and tours. Full conference cost is \$535 (does not include lodging) until May 16. To register, web search for ProWalk/ProBike.

## **FINANCIAL SUPPORT IS NEEDED...**

For the *BICYCLE ACCESS COUNCIL*. Like national public radio and TV, BAC depends on bicyclists who receive the benefits of having a statewide advocate, but needs a reminder that it takes memberships and donations to carry on the mission to be an effective voice for all. Please take time to do your part in becoming a member, get a new member and help out with a meaningful donation from your bike club, bike shop, employer and friends. BAC is a 501(c)3 charitable organization and memberships and donations are deductible as allowed by tax law.

## **BIKE SHARE IN YOUR HOME TOWN...**

May be the vision of a few. As always, the most important considerations are: who funds it; who manages it; and who uses it? Oh, and is it profitable or needs to be subsidized? Here's a smaller town view with lots of bicycle activity — Lancaster, PA. <http://tinyurl.com/l3748ls>

**BAC GRASSROOTS CAMPAIGN IS STILL ON...**

For a Share-The-Road vehicle license plate to continue through 2014 or until passed. Bicycle clubs and bicycle retailers will be critical partners for BAC's effort to get the General Assembly to send a bill to the Governor allowing PennDOT to issue STR plates. Now that the House has passed HB 1415, it's time to ask your state senator for their support and advice on how to get this passed quickly by the Senate. Please contact BAC with any feedback received.

**THE FIRST BOOST OF MOTOR VEHICLE FEES...**

Will be increasing April 1. Several other categories will go into effect July 1. Fees to operate a bicycle on Pennsylvania roadways remain fixed — at **ZERO**. *ed note: just couldn't resist that one!*

**A FUTURE WEEKEND 'BIKE TRAIN'...**

Is part of planning efforts for the revitalized Colebrookdale Railroad (Montgomery, Schuylkill and Berks counties) according to state Rep. Dave Maloney. Organizers expect a for-profit freight line operating on weekdays with a not-for-profit organization that operates an excursion train on weekends. Bicycles will be allowed to load on weekend runs to access some trails or complete a loop ride. See: <http://tinyurl.com/nxx6zol>

**IF LIFE GIVES YOU POTHOLE, ...**

Recycle them. Much like, "If life gives you lemons, make lemonade" thinking, here's an idea: <http://bit.ly/1ni8Zuz> or search for MyPotholes.com

**2014 Dates to remember...**

May 8 PPAC meeting, 12-3 PM, Harrisburg. Open to the public. **Note new start time.**  
May 16 Bike to Work Day, Spoke-n-Gear Expo, Keystone Bldg, Harrisburg

**Mission Statement...**

The Bicycle Access Council is a non-profit advocacy organization that serves as a forum for Pennsylvania bicyclists and as an ombudsman for bicycling issues.

It is the objective of the Bicycle Access Council to make bicycling on roads throughout the Commonwealth safe, respectable and a transportation choice by educating its members and the motoring public.

**All funding for the Bicycle Access Council comes from memberships and donations. Annual membership is \$20 per year. BAC does not share membership information.**

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