



Keystone Recreation, Park & Conservation Fund

D&L Trail

History and Nature Interwoven

Visitors witness the interwoven facets of history and nature when traveling the D&L Trail; the path traverses mountains and follows rivers, tracing a route once designated for 19th century commerce.

In the 1800s, the Delaware and Lehigh Canals were engineered and built to transport coal and other goods to southern markets. These canals helped grow many small towns and businesses along the way. Massive flooding in 1862 caused significant damage to the canal system. At this time, railroad lines began to predominantly move timber, coal, iron and steel through Pennsylvania to larger markets.

The canals, which were used until the 1940s, were later sold to public and private entities for recreational use. The main line railroad, which navigated across the Lehigh Gorge, was abandoned in 1972, providing the impetus to advance recreational opportunities in the region.

Today, the D&L Trail is the recreational lifeline of the region, connecting visitors to the Lehigh Gorge State Park and to points of interest throughout the Delaware and Lehigh Canals National Heritage Area.

Thanks to the Keystone Recreation, Park & Conservation Fund, this route is a beautiful destination for outdoor enthusiasts and boasts one of the most impressive rail-trails in Pennsylvania. The 165-mile trail cuts through 4,500 acres of river gorge parkland along the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers, weaving past stunning landscapes, historic towns, dramatic waterfalls and the remnants of the Lehigh and Delaware canals.

The D&L Trail also contributes to the vitality of the region's economy. A 2012 survey recorded 282,796 annual visits, resulting in a total annual economic impact of \$19M. Of this, \$16M is estimated to have been directly injected into the local economy.

The Keystone Fund has enabled local and regional partners to create a tourist destination, focus on the region's heritage and promote the natural resources that abound just beyond the trail. 



Project Spotlight

Keystone investment: \$1.4M

Total project cost: \$5.1M

Project leader:

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor, Inc.

Key local partners: National Park Service, William Penn Foundation

County: Carbon, Lehigh, Luzerne, Northampton

Fun fact: In 1829, naturalist and painter John Audubon traveled to the region to search for new varieties of birds to paint. There, he found and painted dozens of birds and described in his journal the natural beauty of wetlands, woods and mountains. The area is referred to as Audubon's Lehigh Reach.



The Keystone Recreation, Park and Conservation Fund was established in 1993 with overwhelming bipartisan support both in the General Assembly and through a voter referendum. A portion of the state Realty Transfer Tax has been dedicated to the Keystone Fund for more than two decades. Each dollar of Keystone Fund investment typically leverages three dollars or more in direct local investments in our parks, trails, community green spaces and libraries.

[Read more about the Keystone Fund at KeystoneFund.org](http://KeystoneFund.org)