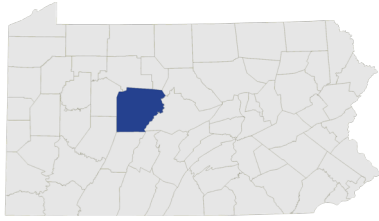


My Story



Memorable Miles

David S. Ammerman Trail

By Skip Cleaver, CoolRunning.com

"Probably because of the surroundings, the miles went by quickly. Rarely are long runs as enjoyable--so easy on the body, and so refreshing for the spirit."



If we are fortunate, sometimes we go for a run in a wonderful location, and everything just feels right. I went for such a run recently on the David S. Ammerman Trail in Clearfield County, and was treated with a tranquil, relaxing, scenic, and overall tremendously enjoyable experience.



Keystone Fund Investment: \$131,700

Total Public/Private Investment: \$263,400

railroading, trains rolled along this route, taking students to school and soldiers to war. Millions of tons of coal were pulled along this route, and stone quarried for bridges and buildings throughout the east. Clay was also extracted, with brickyards all along

The trail provides an excellent surface, completely traffic-free. It traverses a region of unusual natural beauty. The trail tracks through forests along Kratzer Run, Anderson Creek, and the Susquehanna River. Running on this trail evoked the history of the region—especially that of the Susquehannock native people, who lived in villages along these streams, and traveled the rivers and pathways of the area for centuries.

The area is also rich in history from more recent times. During the Golden Age of

the tracks. Raftsmen plied the Susquehanna, riding logs to market hundreds of miles downstream. The resources helped fuel the industrial might of the nation. This trail today is a resource as precious as the coal, timber, stone, and clay carried on the rails along this corridor. Memorable miles, they were—and are.

Distance rolled by as I ran along the 10.5-mile length of the trail. Kratzer Run roared at times, often visible through the trees as it plummeted over falls and rapids toward Anderson Creek and the Susquehanna. It paralleled the trail throughout the first four

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miles until emptying into Anderson Creek, a major tributary of the West Branch of the Susquehanna.

I ignored my watch most of the time as I strode the trail, content just to take in the natural beauty. Whispering Hemlocks clung to the hillsides above and below the trail, often standing behind walls of rhododendrons and mountain laurel, which were especially prominent between one and four miles from Grampian. The calls of birds echoed through the trees, and scurrying wild critters joined in my exercise along the trail. White tail deer are about as plentiful here as anywhere in the country, and are especially active and visible in the late afternoon and early evening. Chances of seeing them were extremely high, and I did.

This is a trail for all seasons, but is especially beautiful during the rhododendron and mountain laurel blooms of July, and of course during the fall foliage season.

As I ran along the sound of rushing water echoed from the mountainside, and provided an audible backdrop for the exceptional scenery, which seemed to get better around every curve. The crushed limestone surface was soft underfoot.

The trail was nearly flat, rolling through farmlands and forests. I was running—almost effortlessly--east from Curwensville to Clearfield, alongside the Susquehanna River. Its silvery waters glide alongside the trail and



cut through the Alleghenies in search of the Chesapeake Bay.

This eastern-most trailhead for this rail-trail run was at 10.5 miles, but my memorable trek was only half over at this juncture. I turned and headed west again, and was surprised at

the incredible scenic beauty and wildlife activity on the return to Curwensville and Grampian. There was so much to see and experience in both directions.

Probably because of the surroundings, the miles went quickly, even on a run of such distance. Rarely are long runs as enjoyable—so easy on the body, and so refreshing for the spirit. What a tremendous resource; it is a remarkable trail, and exceptionally well-maintained. Once used for heavy transport, this trail now provides healthy recreation and enjoyment for locals and visitors alike.

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