



THE GHOST OF A TRAIN

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Learn more about the Mon River and Deckers Creek Rail-Trails at the Mon River Trails Conservancy website: www.montrails.org.

The rail-trail you are standing on today exists not only because trains rumbled through here in the past, but because this corridor may be needed for trains in the future. In 1983, the U.S. Congress amended the National Trails System Act due to concern about the rapid disappearance of America's rail network. Railroad corridors can become rail-trails through a legislative process called railbanking when rail transportation is no longer needed. Although a railroad company no longer owns the corridor, the property is legally protected for return to railroad service if trains are needed in the future to transport goods or people.

The Morgantown and Kingwood Railroad (now the Deckers Creek Trail) was built in the early 1900s and completed in 1907. In 1907, Senator Stephen B. Elkins bought the railroad to connect the Baltimore and Ohio (B&O) line in Morgantown with the B&O main stem in Rowlesburg. It was used to haul enormous quantities of coal that were mined between Rowlesburg to the east and Morgantown to the west. Trains carried coal, coke (produced from coal and used to make iron), sand for glass-making, limestone, and other items to Bethlehem's steel mills and distant markets in eastern Pennsylvania and beyond. At the height of the Morgantown and Kingwood Railroad, it would transport over 1 million tons of coal and coke and would have 24 passenger runs daily. Remnants of former railroad structures, such as whistle posts, trestles, and telegraph poles, as well as mine portals, stone quarries, and coke ovens, are still evident in the landscape you pass on the trail.

Working on a Rail-Trail

In 1996, this 51-mile railroad corridor was acquired from CSX to be railbanked as a non-motorized trail system thanks to the joint efforts of the nonprofit Mon River Trails Conservancy and the city of Morgantown. In 2006, the Mon River and Deckers Creek Rail-Trail System was designated as a National Recreation Trail for its exemplary qualities.

Become a Mon River Trails Conservancy (MRTC) member and help the rail-trails! MRTC manages these trails primarily for walking, jogging, cycling, and cross-country skiing. MRTC also creates and promotes opportunities for recreation, alternative transportation, tourism, economic development, historic preservation, healthy lifestyles, and environmental conservation.



www.montrails.org



www.wvdnr.gov