

Working to connect, revitalize communities

Sun Gazette 11/20/12
By **MIKE REUTHER**
mreuther@sungazette.com

Communities such as Williamsport and Jersey Shore are examples of work being done in river towns through the Susquehanna Greenway Partnership, according to an official with the organization.

Trish Carothers, Susquehanna Greenway program director, spoke to Williamsport Rotary Monday about the mission of the nonprofit group, which works to improve economic development, community revitalization, environmental stewardship and recreation.

"We are seeing that in Jersey Shore," she said.

The rail trail recently was extended north along Pine Creek to the Pennsylvania Grand Canyon near Wellsboro.

In time, officials hope to link it to Williamsport's pathway to help achieve an interconnective corridor of trails through the state.

The Greenway Partnership has worked with a number of communities along the Susquehanna River.

But to make it work, partnerships are formed with groups within communities that will realize the benefits of the program.

Carothers noted that the Susquehanna River watershed

brings 50 percent of all the water going to the Chesapeake Bay.

Because it links so many communities, encompasses a wealth of natural resources and beauty, it is important to promote the river's benefits and make it more accessible to greater numbers of people.

It means creating riverfront parks and trails and linking them to downtown businesses.

Many communities along the river, Carothers said, have in place a waterfront and historic buildings, but lack a viable daytime workforce.

"Creating riverwalks re-connects communities to the river," she said.

By contrast, development for the sake of development can have a negative effect.

For example, the state has one of the nation's worst records in recent years for sprawl development.

"That is not a sustainable way to grow," she said.

Susquehanna Greenway Board of Directors Chairman Jerry Walls noted that the bike path in Williamsport is receiving its share of users.

On many days, he said, 10 to 15 bicyclists are using the trail at any one time. *Just Bikerhood*

"One of the focuses of this (Susquehanna Greenway) is to get people out," he said.



CAROTHERS

©

Corrections

An estimated 150 to 300 bikers use the bike path in Williamsport daily, according to Susquehanna Greenway Board Chairman Jerry Walls. An article in Tuesday's edition of the Sun-Gazette stating 10 to 15 bicyclists are using the trail at any one time was referring just to the Williamsport Rotary Club's bike loan program.

The Williamsport Sun-Gazette strives for accurate reporting. If an error is made, we want to correct it. Call 326-1551 or 800-339-0289, or fax 326-0314.

Sun Gazette 11/21/12
P A 2