

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Fiscal Year 2016  
Handshake Program Application**

**Please review instructions before completing application!**

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Corps Lake/River Project Name: **Loyalhanna Lake**  
District / Division: **Pittsburgh District**  
Handshake Proposal Title: **Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Signage**  
Corps POC Name: April Richards  
Telephone: **(724) 639 - 9013 ext. 3**  
E-Mail: **april.l.richards@usace.army.mil**

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**A. Checklist:**

1. Will the Handshake funds be spent on Corps facilities and resources that are being fully maintained by the Corps?  Yes  No
  2. Will the Challenge Partnership agreement be with a non-federal public or private entity(ies)?  Yes  No
  3. Is the proposed activity within current authorities and contained in the annual or 5-year work plan in the approved lake project OMP?  Yes  No
  4. Have all of the NEPA requirements been considered for this project?  Yes  No
  5. Did you participate in a Handshake Webinar in 2015 or review a 2015 Handshake Webinar on the Gateway?  Yes  No
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**B. Handshake Funding Request (maximum \$30,000): \$5008**

**C. Cooperating Association Agreement Bonus:** Challenge Partnerships that include a Cooperating Association with which your project/district has entered into a Cooperating Association Agreement are eligible to compete for an additional \$5000. Do NOT include a copy of that agreement with this application. A copy may be requested if not already provided to the Partnership Team. (Reference Chapter 9 of ER and EP 1130-2-500 for information on cooperating associations).

This application qualifies for the Cooperating Association Bonus funding.

**D. Incentive Points Category:** Check the appropriate box if your application qualifies to receive bonus points on the evaluation score. The first category is for the partner contribution meeting or exceeding 70% of total project costs. A summary of the partners' contribution to the Handshake Project should be included in the financial worksheet below. The second category is for Lake or River Projects that have never been chosen as Handshake recipients.

Partner contribution total is 70% or greater (100 points).

This Lake/River Project has never received Handshake funding (100 points).

**E. Describe your partnership and the proposed project:**

Your project will be evaluated on the following categories: Sustainability, Partnership Value, Recreation Benefit, Environmental Stewardship Benefit, Communication and Education Value, and Innovativeness. Please address each in your description.

**Summary Statement of Handshake Project:**

The Pittsburgh District, Loyalhanna Lake Staff is proposing to enter into a Handshake Partnership with the Loyalhanna Watershed Association (LWA) as the prime partner, but will also include efforts from partners including: The Boy Scouts of America (BSA), Keystone State Park, and the Derry Area Revitalization Committee. The purpose of the partnership is to complete a project that directly benefits the Corps, the LWA, and the local community. The proposed project is to increase public safety along the established Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail thru the purchase and installation of mile markers and launch identification signs. The Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail is 36 miles long, 26 of which fall on Loyalhanna Lake property. The completion of this project will reduce instances of lost or misdirected boaters; reduce the costly search and rescue efforts frequently required on the Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail; and provide visitors a comfortable and reliable overall recreational experience.

**Longevity / Sustainability description:**

In 2014, the LWA along with many other public and private partners developed and published an official Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Map and Guide. This guide was created to assure that boaters are provided all of the basic information they need to not only enjoy the Water Trail, but to feel confident in their ability to navigate the Water Trail system safely. Basic information in this guide includes: where to park, where to launch, where to take out, and other graphic delineation of recreational opportunities located along the Water Trail system. In all, this guide is user friendly and sufficient to accommodate any recreational skill level. Moreover it is made to help visitors avoid potentially hazardous situations along the Water Trail system. The map has identified mile markers and access points which are meant to correspond to physical mile marker and access point signs along the Water Trail. However, due to the LWA's lack of funding to purchase the signs for the Water Trail, the signs for the mile markers and access points are not currently installed. This is a safety concern. Year after year, water rescue units or Loyalhanna Lake staff has to rescue boaters or paddlers that become lost on the water. Therefore, the staff at Loyalhanna Lake would like to partner with the LWA and several other community groups (including BSA) to procure the necessary signage, and help finalize this exceptional project. Not only will this effort foster a long lasting partnership, it will benefit the Corps in highlighting its commitment to safety.

As Discussed, the Loyalhanna Water Trail is an existing water trail system, which if managed properly will last for decades to come. Proper management includes planning and developing with foresight. The purchase and installation of aluminum signs, affixed with appropriate hardware along the Water Trail will ensure low maintenance costs in the future and less confusion for visitors relying on proper signage and demarcation. Our proposal includes the purchase of two sets of 4 launch identification signs and two sets of 13 mile marker signs, all compliant with Corps sign standards. The idea behind purchasing two sets of each sign is to ensure that if a sign needs replaced, it can be restored quickly without the trail losing integrity, and it will maintain consistency and predictability for visitors who will rely on consistent signage.

As a local community involvement project, The Boy Scouts of America, Troop 47 agreed to help LWA install the proposed signs. While some of the signs can be installed via land, others must be installed by boat or canoe, which will be a great opportunity to discuss the Corps Water Safety commitment with Troop 47; thereby utilizing this effort as a dual purpose educational event nurturing water safety values. As for the sign installation process, the majority of the signs will be installed on 4X4 posts along the creek, but some will have to be hung by chain from tree branches to avoid damage during high water events.

All of our partners utilize the trail for sojourns and educational activities. They understand that long term maintenance of the trail system will be no small effort. Members of Keystone State Park, LWA, and the Derry

Area Revitalization Committee have all agreed to assist with the long term maintenance of the trail. Once the signs are installed, they will need to be inspected throughout the year. As discussed, when a sign needs replaced they can simply use the second set to replace it. Between the proper materials and assistance with future inspection, our partners and the Corps of Engineers will have a long lasting, well marked trail that requires little maintenance and stands as a commitment to safety and community.

#### **Partnership Value:**

The LWA is a non-profit 501-C-3 organization whose mission is to protect, conserve, and restore the natural resources of the Loyalhanna Creek Watershed, a 300 square mile watershed in Westmoreland County, Pennsylvania. The LWA was founded in 1971 to address the various pollution impacts throughout the watershed and to preserve natural areas. The Loyalhanna Watershed is impacted by a series of challenges including Acid Mine Drainage (AMD) from abandoned historic mining, and sedimentation as a result of erosion and nutrient loading. Since their inception, the LWA has worked towards remediating the effects of AMD throughout the watershed. As a result the water quality of Loyalhanna Lake has improved.

Their most recent project consisted of developing and publishing an official Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Map and Guide, at the expense of over \$30,000. The efforts of the LWA brought together a collaboration of several partners, including the City of Latrobe, Keystone State Park, Loyalhanna Watershed Association, Pennsylvania Environmental Council, and Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission (PFBC), to promote the Loyalhanna Creek and Lake as a destination for recreationalists across Pennsylvania. By publishing an official guide map, water trail users are now able to identify boat access points, and wildlife, fishing, scenic and historical features that are identified for trail users to view while on the water. In addition to the map and guide, the partners also have assisted with improvements of two launch access points, worth \$20,000.

Future projects of the LWA include cleaning the abandoned mine drainage in the Crabtree Creek and working with volunteer groups to “Adopt-A-Launch”. The “Adopt-A-Launch” program is an initiative to have community groups maintain and monitor a launch access site throughout the year. This initiative helps save operation and maintenance cost to the Corps, while additionally promoting active community involvement.

#### **Recreational Benefit:**

The Loyalhanna Water Trail is a unique water based trail that has begun to attract visitors and area residents to water activities that were once overlooked opportunities. Paddlers of all skill levels are attracted to this area of the Loyalhanna Creek Watershed because of what the Loyalhanna has to offer – three distinct types of boating; Class I and II through the Loyalhanna Gorge in the spring season, flat-water in moving stream sections, and lake paddling that can be enjoyed even in low-flow conditions. Although paddlers and boaters are the primary users, fishermen, hunters, birders and photographers have the opportunity to explore the Loyalhanna watershed as well. Visitors that use the trail and the guide map have the opportunity to view wildlife, scenic, and historical features while on the water. Further, the Loyalhanna Water Trail directly supports a fitness-oriented kind of recreation.

The only missing component of this Water Trail is improved mileage identification, which would provide critical safety information for recreationalists and first responders on the water. Between novice boaters and fluctuating pool levels, Loyalhanna Lake has a history of lost paddlers and boaters. The local water rescue teams and volunteer fire departments have rescued many confused boaters throughout the years. Visitors call 911 and are unable to tell the operator where they are located. They must use landmarks that are few and far apart. The installation of the mile markers would complete the Water Trail by making the trail a better experience for the recreationalist and increasing visitor safety.

#### **Environmental Stewardship Benefit:**

Water trails emphasize low impact use and promote stewardship of the natural resources. The Loyalhanna Water Trail Guide promotes stewardship of the land and water. It not only contains educational information about the natural environment and history in and along the Loyalhanna Creek, but it also has a stewardship section which includes information related to: water quality, wildlife and fisheries, outdoor ethics, and invasive species

management. Our involvement with this effort will further go to highlight the Corps ongoing commitment natural resource conservation.

**Communication & Education Value:**

As discussed, water rescue is an ongoing effort by Loyalhanna Lake staff; during high recreation seasons boaters and/or paddlers frequently lose their way on the water which requires the expenditure of resources via search and rescue efforts. Not only will this project help complete the established Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail by creating clearer direction on the trail, but it will reduce the instances of lost boaters. Clear communication is a key component to visitor safety; the map created for this trail system is largely ineffective if direction in the field cannot be clearly communicated. The installation of the mile markers, will allow paddlers and boaters to know their location out on the water. This project and partnership will finalize the established trail guide set out to provide educational information about the Loyalhanna Creek.

All of the partnering organizations, including the PFBC, are promoting the Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Map and Guide on their websites, as well as distributing the guides to organizations, businesses and boating venues. The official Water Trail Maps and Guides adhere to a standard format that assures boaters have all of the basic information they need to enjoy the water – where to park, where to launch, where to take out, and how to enjoy themselves within their skill level and avoid potentially hazardous situations. The Corps actively promotes the use of it. Therefore it should also meet the high standards and professionalism that the Corps promotes. The Loyalhanna Lake staff sees this as an opportunity to further enhance and utilize this effective means of communication and education, and aid in the Corps commitment to water safety.

**Innovativeness:**

There are very few water trail systems established on Corps property. This is what makes our proposal unique. The Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail is a water based trail that spans 36 miles long in Westmoreland County Pennsylvania. Water trails are recreational waterways on a lake or river between specific points, containing access points along the way for the public to utilize, and truly experience the natural environment first hand. They promote recreation, fitness, and environmental stewardship. Our proposed project to purchase and install mile marker and identification signs is a key component in aiding our partners and finalizing the project.

Also, the overall creation of the water trail is significant to our region. It has brought township, state, and federal agencies together along with non-profit organizations and private businesses. Finding opportunities to bring all of these groups and agencies to the table is not common. However, this project has given these partners a common goal and interest. The Corps is in a valuable position to help further strengthen the common bond between these groups.

**Concluding statement:**

The benefits to be gained by this partnership will be realized for years to come. The addition of mile marker signs will help finalize an exceptional community project. It will effectively strengthen the common bond between multiple entities. The partnership project will support the Corps recreation and environmental stewardship missions and will aid in Loyalhanna's commitment to safety. The addition of proper signage and completion of the Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail will enhance our visitor's overall experience. As a result, the Loyalhanna Creek Trail will serve as a model for future water trails across the nation.

## Challenge Partnership Financial Work Sheet

Corps Project Name: Loyalhanna Lake

Work Project Title: Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Signage

POC Name: April Richards, Park Ranger

Address: 440 Loyalhanna Dam Road                      City: Saltsburg                      State: PA      Zip Code: 15681

Telephone: 724 - 639 - 9013 x3

Location of Project: Loyalhanna Lake

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Partner Organization 1: Loyalhanna Watershed Association

POC Name: Susan Huba, Executive Director

Address: 110 Andi Lane                                      City: Ligonier                                      State: PA      Zip Code: 15658

Telephone: 724 - 238 - 7560

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Partner Organization 2: Pennsylvania DCNR, Keystone State Park

POC Name: Kris Baker, Superintendent

Address: 1150 Keystone Park Road                      City: Derry                                      State: PA      Zip Code: 15627

Telephone: 724 - 668 - 2485

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Partner Organization 3: Derry Area Revitalization Corporation

POC Name:

Address: 116 East First Ave                                      City: Derry                                      State: PA      Zip Code: 15627

Telephone: 724 - 689 - 7266 x

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Partner Organization 4: Boy Scouts of America, Troop 47

POC Name: Kevin Brunner

Address: Calvary Church 125 Shaw Ave                      City: Turtle Creek                                      State: PA      Zip Code: 15145

Telephone: 412 -287 - 5970 x

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Partner Organization 5:

POC Name:

Address:    City:    State:                      Zip Code:

Telephone:                      -                      -                      x

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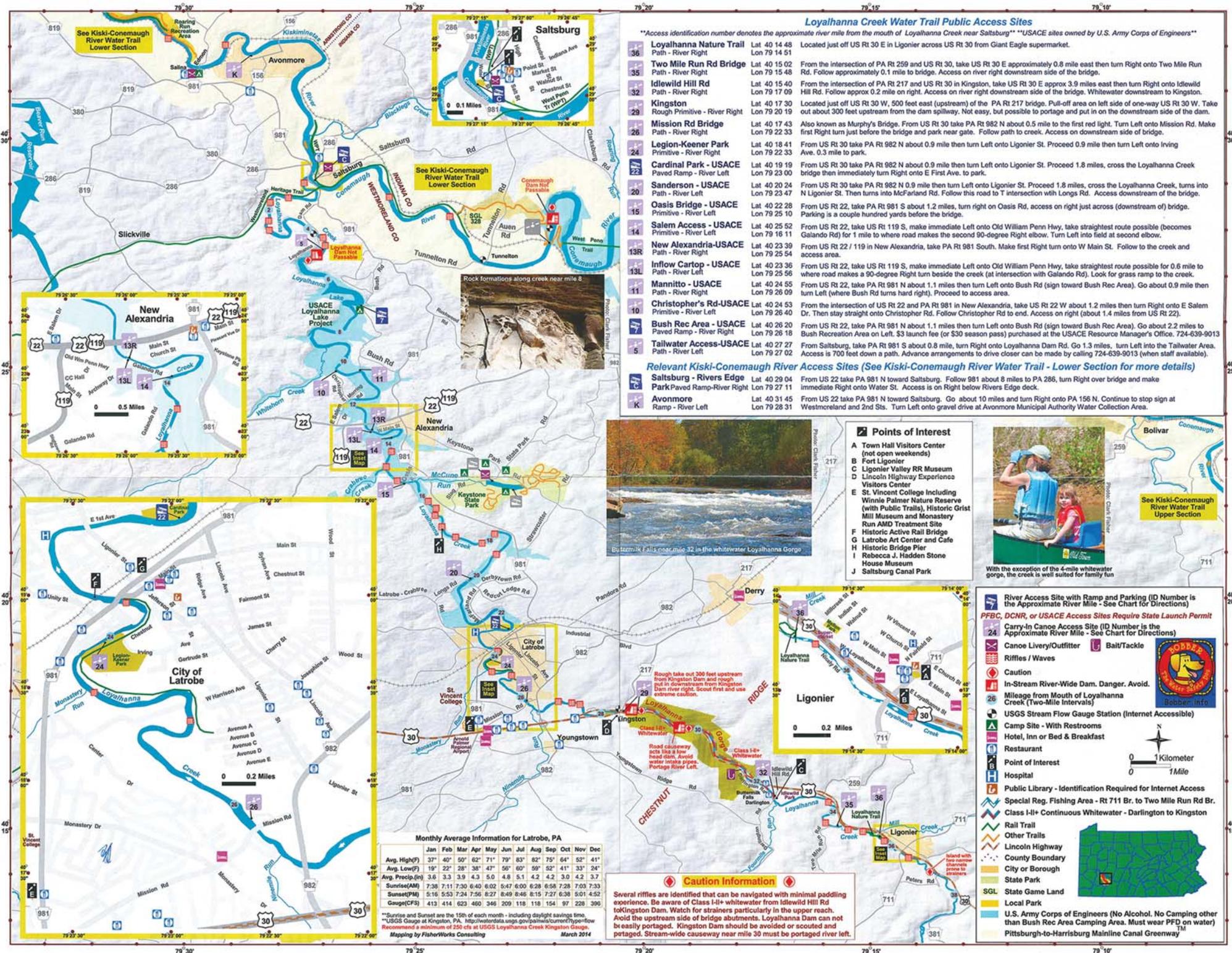
Double click on spreadsheet to access data entry fields and to enter Partner names:

	<b>Local Corps Office</b>	<b>Handshake Funds</b>	<b>Partner 1</b>	<b>Partner 2</b>	<b>Partner 3</b>	<b>Partner 4</b>
Salaries	\$1,000	N/A	\$500	\$500	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	N/A	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$5,008	\$500	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funds Contributed	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$500	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$750	\$2,500
In-Kind Services	N/A	N/A	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$5,008</b>	<b>\$1,500</b>	<b>\$1,000</b>	<b>\$750</b>	<b>\$2,500</b>
<b>Share of Total Cost</b>	8.5%	42.6%	12.8%	8.5%	6.4%	21.3%

	<b>Partner 5</b>	<b>Partner 6</b>	<b>Partner 7</b>	<b>Partner 8</b>	<b>Partner 9</b>	<b>Partner 10</b>
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funds Contributed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Volunteer	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
In-Kind Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>
<b>Share of Total Cost</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0

	<b>Partner 11</b>	<b>Partner 12</b>	<b>Partner 13</b>	<b>Partner 14</b>	<b>Partner 15</b>	<b>Total</b>
Salaries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$2,000
Travel	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
Materials and Supplies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$5,508
Equipment Use	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Funds Contributed	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Personal Property	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$500
Volunteer	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,250
In-Kind Services	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other (explain below)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$11,758</b>
<b>Share of Total Cost</b>	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%

Explanations: Loyalhanna Lake expects to spend 40 hours working on the project. The handshake agreement would cover the cost to purchase the signs from Unicorn for \$5008. The LWA is planning on spending 25 hours installing a number of signs, which would include travel and they are supplying the hardware. Keystone is willing to provide canoes for the BSA to utilize during installation, worth \$500. We are estimating that the BSA will have 100 hours of volunteer work for installing signs either by boat or by foot.

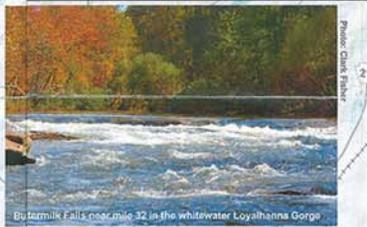


**Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail Public Access Sites**

- \*\*Access identification number denotes the approximate river mile from the mouth of Loyalhanna Creek near Saltsburg\*\*** **\*\*USACE sites owned by U.S. Army Corps of Engineers\*\***
- Located just off US Rt 30 E in Ligonier across US Rt 30 from Giant Eagle supermarket.
- 36 Loyalhanna Nature Trail** Path - River Right Lat 40 14 48 Lon 79 14 51
  - 35 Two Mile Run Rd Bridge** Path - River Right Lat 40 15 02 Lon 79 15 48
  - 32 Idlewild Hill Rd** Path - River Right Lat 40 15 40 Lon 79 17 09
  - 29 Kingston** Rough Primitive - River Right Lat 40 17 30 Lon 79 20 19
  - 26 Mission Rd Bridge** Path - River Right Lat 40 17 43 Lon 79 22 33
  - 24 Legion-Keener Park** Primitive - River Right Lat 40 18 41 Lon 79 22 33
  - 22 Cardinal Park - USACE** Paved Ramp - River Left Lat 40 19 19 Lon 79 23 00
  - 20 Sanderson - USACE** Path - River Left Lat 40 20 24 Lon 79 23 47
  - 15 Oasis Bridge - USACE** Primitive - River Left Lat 40 22 28 Lon 79 25 10
  - 14 Salem Access - USACE** Primitive - River Left Lat 40 25 52 Lon 79 16 11
  - 13R New Alexandria-USACE** Path - River Right Lat 40 23 39 Lon 79 25 54
  - 13L Inflow Cartop - USACE** Path - River Left Lat 40 23 36 Lon 79 25 18
  - 11 Mannitto - USACE** Path - River Right Lat 40 24 55 Lon 79 26 09
  - 10 Christopher's Rd-USACE** Primitive - River Left Lat 40 24 53 Lon 79 26 40
  - 7 Bush Rec Area - USACE** Paved Ramp - River Right Lat 40 26 20 Lon 79 26 18
  - 5 Tailwater Access-USACE** Path - River Left Lat 40 27 27 Lon 79 27 02
- Relevant Kiski-Conemaugh River Water Trail - Lower Section for more details)**
- Saltsburg - Rivers Edge** Park/Paved Ramp-River Right Lat 40 29 04 Lon 79 27 11
  - Avonmore** Ramp - River Left Lat 40 31 45 Lon 79 28 31

**Points of Interest**

- A Town Hall Visitors Center (not open weekends)
- B Fort Ligonier
- C Ligonier Valley RR Museum
- D Lincoln Highway Experience Visitors Center
- E St. Vincent College Including Winnie Palmer Nature Reserve (with Public Trails), Historic Grist Mill Museum and Monastery Run AMD Treatment Site
- F Historic Active Rail Bridge
- G Latrobe Art Center and Cafe
- H Historic Bridge Pier
- I Rebecca J. Hadden Stone House Museum
- J Saltsburg Canal Park



Bearmill Falls near mile 32 in the whitewater Loyalhanna Gorge



With the exception of the 4-mile whitewater gorge, the creek is well suited for family fun

**Monthly Average Information for Latrobe, PA**

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Avg. High(F)	37	40	50	62	71	79	83	82	75	64	52	41
Avg. Low(F)	19	22	28	38	47	56	60	59	52	41	33	24
Avg. Precip.(in)	3.6	3.3	3.9	4.3	5.0	4.8	5.1	4.2	4.2	3.0	4.2	3.7
Sunrise(AM)	7:38	7:11	7:30	6:40	6:02	5:47	6:00	6:28	6:58	7:28	7:03	7:33
Sunset(PM)	5:16	5:53	7:24	7:56	8:27	8:49	8:46	8:15	7:27	6:38	5:01	4:52
Gauge(CFS)	413	414	623	460	346	209	118	118	154	97	228	395

\*Sunrise and Sunset are the 15th of each month - including daylight savings time.  
 \*\*USGS Gauge at Kingston, PA. <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/pennsylvania/current/gauge-flow>  
 Recommended a minimum of 200 cfs at USGS Loyalhanna Creek Kingston Gauge.  
 Mapping by FisherWorks Consulting March 2014

**Caution Information**

Several riffles are identified that can be navigated with minimal paddling experience. Be aware of Class II+ whitewater from Idlewild Hill Rd to Kingston Dam. Watch for strainers particularly in the upper reach. Avoid the upstream side of bridge abutments. Loyalhanna Dam can not be easily portaged. Kingston Dam should be avoided or scouted and portaged. Stream-wide causeway near mile 30 must be portaged river left.

**River Access Site with Ramp and Parking (ID Number is the Approximate River Mile - See Chart for Directions)**

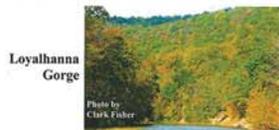
- FFBC, DCNR, or USACE Access Sites Require State Launch Permit**
- 24 Carry-In Canoe Access Site (ID Number is the Approximate River Mile - See Chart for Directions)**
- Canoe Livery/Outfitter**
- Rifles / Waves**
- Caution**
- In-Stream River-Wide Dam. Danger. Avoid.**
- 26 Mileage from Mouth of Loyalhanna Creek (Two-Mile Intervals)**
- USGS Stream Flow Gauge Station (Internet Accessible)**
- Camp Site - With Restrooms**
- Hotel, Inn or Bed & Breakfast**
- Restaurant**
- Point of Interest**
- Hospital**
- Public Library - Identification Required for Internet Access**
- Special Reg. Fishing Area - Rt 711 Br. to Two Mile Run Br.**
- Class II+ Continuous Whitewater - Darlington to Kingston**
- Rail Trail**
- Other Trails**
- Lincoln Highway**
- County Boundary**
- City or Borough**
- State Park**
- SGL State Game Land**
- Local Park**
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (No Alcohol. No Camping other than Bush Rec Area Camping Area. Must wear PFD on water)**
- Pittsburgh-to-Harrisburg Mainline Canal Greenway**

# Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail

## Ligonier to Saltsburg

### Map & Guide

Water trails are recreational waterways on a lake, river, or ocean between specific points, containing access points and day-use and/or camping sites for the boating public. Water trails emphasize low-impact use and promote stewardship of the resources. Explore this unique Pennsylvania water trail.



Loyalhanna Gorge  
Photo by Clark Fisher

#### For your safety and enjoyment:

- Always wear a life jacket.
- Obtain proper instruction in boating skills.
- Know fishing and boating regulations.
- Be prepared for river hazards.
- Carry proper equipment.

**On-water activities** are inherently dangerous. Loyalhanna Creek Water Trail users are advised to follow recommended routes and be informed that river conditions vary and can change rapidly based on weather events. Trail users are reminded that they are responsible for their own safety and must follow Pennsylvania boating regulations.

**Access Areas:** Loyalhanna Watershed Association sponsors Loyalhanna Water Trail. LWA can inform the owners of access areas about maintenance, litter or other issues. Please call (724) 238-7560 to report such issues.

#### Stream Gauge Readings

Generally the Loyalhanna should be at least 250 cubic feet per second (cfs) to be a fun paddle. Only highly skilled paddlers should run it at 500 cfs. To check the USGS gauge: <http://waterdata.usgs.gov/uswa/mwla/703045000>.

#### Outfitters Serving the Loyalhanna Creek Area

Saltsburg River & Trail	(724) 639-1314	<a href="http://www.rivratr.com">www.rivratr.com</a>
Northwest Boat Rentals, Keystone State Park	(724) 668-0044	<a href="http://www.northwestkayakandcanoe.com">www.northwestkayakandcanoe.com</a>

### NATURE AND HISTORY IN AND ALONG THE LOYALHANNA CREEK

The name Loyalhanna comes from the Delaware Indian village of Loyalhanning, which was settled in 1727. It means "middle stream," an apparent reference to the fact that Conemaugh Gorge is to the north and Youghiogheny Gorge is to the south of Loyalhanna Gorge.

When white men first crossed the Alleghenies, they found chestnut and oak forests, and lots of game and fish. Few people settled here before 1769. By 1800, the surrounding area was farms with a few grist mills and saw mills.

Loyalhanna Creek originates on Laurel and Chestnut ridges near Donegal, flowing north toward Ligonier. Below Ligonier, the stream passes Idlewild Park and Soak Zone, cuts a beautiful, deep gorge through Chestnut Ridge and passes through the City of Latrobe. Then it passes Keystone State Park and enters Loyalhanna Lake, a large flood-control reservoir that, like Keystone, offers boating, camping and hiking. It meets the Conemaugh River at Saltsburg to form the Kiskiminetus River, which flows into the Allegheny River north of Pittsburgh.

The 295-square-mile watershed has 2,500 miles of stream with tributaries of various size and quality. It has mostly forested headwaters and natural areas throughout its middle section, but is impacted by abandoned mine drainage (AMD), sedimentation from erosion, acid precipitation, and nutrient loading. Historic coal mining, farming, and development threaten the water quality. Loyalhanna Watershed Association was founded in 1971 to address these pollution impacts and preserve natural areas.

Loyalhanna Creek offers an exceptional array of fishing opportunities. Some headwaters streams flowing off the ridges contain native brook, brown and rainbow trout. Feeders include Linn Run flowing from a state park of the same name, and Powdermill Run, around which Powdermill Nature Reserve

conducts research and provides education on wildlife, especially birds and bird migration, as an arm of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History.

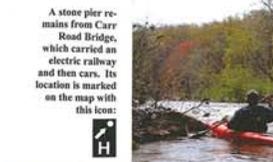
The upper end of Loyalhanna Creek is too small for boating as it flows north along Route 381 toward Laughlintown, but anglers are attracted by the delayed-harvest, artificial-lures only section from Route 711 near Ligonier downstream to just above Two Mile Run Road Bridge. Mill Creek enters here. Anglers report occasionally catching tiger trout, which were bred for a country club upstream or stocked by a local group. The lower reaches offer pike and muskie, which migrate from Donegal, Keystone or Loyalhanna Lake.

The stream is heavily stocked with trout from Ligonier to Latrobe and heavily fished through the Gorge as the divided section of Route 30 provides access to both sides of the water. This area is also fun for white-water boaters and extremely scenic.

Kayaking and trout fishing decline by mid-summer as water levels drop and temperature rise, but smallmouth bass and other warm-water species keep anglers active. Boulders and long riffles occasionally give way to surprisingly deep pools, which are popular for swimming on hot summer days.

In Latrobe, the stream corridor is surprisingly green. Latrobe Hospital, a brewery and other buildings add interest, although aesthetics deteriorate in an area on earthen flood-control channels.

At the end of Latrobe, Saxman Run enters with water turned orange from abandoned-mine drainage, and the highly oxygenated outflow from the sewage-treatment plant makes the water murky, so it is difficult to see the bottom and the fish. That's not to say there are no fish, because the presence of great blue herons and wading birds indicate it's still a viable fishery. In addition, red tail hawks and snapping turtles are often spotted in this corridor.



### ALONG THE WAY: WHAT TO SEE ALONG THE LOYALHANNA

**Ligonier, RM 36-34:** Fort Ligonier, built on a Native American village, supplied British and Colonial troops in 1758 seeking to force the French from the strategic Forks of the Ohio, now Pittsburgh. The fort held out two attacks. The town was bypassed by the Pennsylvania Turnpike, but reconnected in 1877 by Ligonier Valley Railroad, which survives as a museum near Idlewild Park. The timber-hauling Pittsburgh, Westmoreland and Somerset Railroad survives as trails in Forbes State Forest and Linn Run State Park. Loyalhanna Watershed Association maintains a 1-mile nature trail with boat access along Route 30.

**Idlewild Park and Soak Zone, RM 33:** Old Idlewild includes a merry-go-round listed on the National Register of Historic Places, a wooden roller-coaster and other rides. Mister Rogers' Neighborhood of Make Believe, Story Book Forest and Soak Zone are major attractions. See [www.idlewild.com](http://www.idlewild.com).

**Battermill Falls, RM 32:** Kayakers call this pretty little waterfall a Class II rapid just below Darlington.

**Loyalhanna Gorge, RM 32-29:** This beautiful gorge through Chestnut Ridge is 900 feet deep. The river gradient drops 100 feet in 3 miles. Lodges and boulders offer highly oxygenated water that fish like and Class I and II whitewater for boating when flow is sufficient. Massive sandstone and limestone layers form the gorge's ribs. Sandy shales are exposed at the base, where the geologic record of hundreds of millions of years is recorded in the rocks.

**Casewar and Kingstons Dam, RM 30-29:** two potentially hazardous features must be avoided in high flows and can be portaged with prior scouting in low or moderate flow.

**Lincoln Highway Experience, RM 29:** This center in an old stone mission on Route 30 interprets the historic Lincoln Highway, the nation's first coast-to-coast highway.

**Latrobe, RM 26-21:** Latrobe was incorporated in 1854. Pennsylvania Railroad and the creek spawned a paper mill, tanneries and breweries. Cool though not industry, stonies and immigrants followed. Constructed wetlands treat old mine

discharges at Saint Vincent College and in the heart of the city, improving the water quality.

**Keystone State Park, RM 15:** The park is not accessible from the stream, but its lake is another place to paddle. Boats can be rented here. The 78-acre lake is stocked all season with trout and holds bass, muskie, pike and other warm-water fish. The park has camping, cabins, yurts, trails and wildlife. Executives of Keystone Coal & Coke Co. enjoyed the company-built lake and stone lodge that now are central to the park. Treatment of mine drainage restores life to McCane Run before it enters Loyalhanna Creek; a self-guided tour explains how it works.

**New Alexandria, RM 14-13:** Trappers and traders settled here before 1740 and fought in the Revolutionary War. Elizabeth Craig, daughter of one of them, designed the coiled rattlesnake striking the British Union Jack on this flag, which was carried in a confederate at Haines Town, a nearby historic site.

**Loyalhanna Lake, RM 13-5:** Loyalhanna Dam rises 114 feet above the stream to hold water to reduce flooding in Pittsburgh and other areas down stream. Lake elevation is normally 915 feet, but openings are closed at 927 feet, and water rises to 975 feet at flood stage as a six-foot at flood stage as a six-foot

cent Army Corps of Engineers land floods. The lake has fishing, boating and camping. Plus, hunting on 3,200 acres leased to the Pennsylvania Game Commission. No alcohol allowed. Speedboats pulling skiers are common, but inflers, coxes and backwaters offer quiet to anglers, paddlers and birders. Platforms attract osprey. Many birds migrate through in spring and fall. The lake holds bluegill, largemouth bass, trophy-sized musky, tiger musky, walleye and a small but established population of northern pike.

**Saltsburg, RM 6:** This town produced salt on the Conemaugh River at the Loyalhanna's mouth. Canal Park interprets the Pennsylvania Main Line Canal. The West Penn and Westmoreland Heritage rail-trails, and the Kiski-Conemaugh Water Trail all meet here.

### PENNSYLVANIA BOATING REGULATIONS, SAFETY, STEWARDSHIP AND RESPECT

- A U.S. Coast Guard-approved wearable personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket) is required for each person on board. In addition, one throwable device (ring buoy or ring buoy) is required on boats 16 feet in length or longer. Canoes and kayaks, regardless of length, are not required to carry a throwable device.
- From November 1 through April 30, boaters must wear a life jacket on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak during these cold weather months.
- Life jackets must be the appropriate size for the person intended and must be in good, serviceable condition.
- Life jackets must be worn by all children 12 years old and younger on all boats 20 feet or less in length while on water, and on all canoes and kayaks. Others are strongly encouraged to wear a PFD at all times on the water.
- All boats must display an anchor light (a white light visible 360 degrees) when at anchor between sunset and sunrise. Boats can use a lantern or clip-on battery-powered unit to meet this requirement.
- Unpowered boats must carry a white light, either hand-held or installed, to be displayed in time to avoid a collision between sunset and sunrise and during restricted visibility.
- All powered boats must show running lights between sunset and sunrise. All boats are required to carry a sound-producing device. Motorboats less than 40 feet in length must carry some mechanical means of making a sound signal. This device may be hand-, mouth- or power-operated. An athletic coach's whistle is an acceptable device. Operator of an unpowered boat (canoes, kayaks, rowing clubs, etc.) are required to carry a device capable of sounding a prolonged blast for 4-6 seconds that can be heard by another boat operator in time to avoid a collision. An athletic coach's whistle is acceptable.
- All motorboats must be registered, regardless of where they launch.
- Unpowered boats (canoes, kayaks, rowboats) using Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission or State Park or Forest access areas must either be registered OR display a valid launch permit. Launch permits can be purchased through the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission's website ([www.pennfishandboat.com](http://www.pennfishandboat.com)) (Click the "Outdoor Shop" icon) or at many state park offices.
- Operating watercraft, including canoes and kayaks, under the influence of alcohol or drugs is illegal. This law is strongly enforced for user safety. For further information on boating regulations, contact the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission at [www.fishandboat.com](http://www.fishandboat.com).



- #### Paddling Safety Tips
- Wear your life jacket! 80 percent of all recreational boating fatalities happen to people who are not wearing a life jacket.
  - Expect to get wet. Even the best paddlers sometimes capsize or swamp their boats. Bring extra clothing in a waterproof bag.
  - Be prepared to swim. If the water looks too hazardous to swim in, don't go paddling.
  - If you capsize, hold on to your boat, unless it presents a life-threatening situation. If floating in current, position yourself on the upstream side of the capsized boat.
  - Scout ahead whenever possible. Know the river. Avoid surprises.
  - Be prepared for the weather. Get a forecast before you

- go. Sudden winds and rain are common and can turn a pleasant trip into a risky, unpleasant venture.
- Wear wading shoes or tennis shoes with wool, polypropylene, pile or neoprene socks.
- Never take your boat over a low-head dam.
- Portage (carry) your boat around any section of water about which you feel uncertain.
- Never boat alone. Boating safety increases with numbers.
- Keep painter lines (ropes tied to the bow) and any other ropes coiled and secured.
- Never tie a rope to yourself or to another paddler, especially a child.
- Kneel to increase your stability before entering rougher water, like a rapid.
- If you collide with an obstruction, lean toward it. This will usually prevent capsizing or flooding the boat.
- File a float plan with a reliable person, indicating where you are going and when you will return. Remember to contact the person when you have returned safely.

- #### Stewardship
- Care for the land, water and cultural resources along the stream. Respect wildlife, nature and other recreationists. Wash footwear, boats and vehicles to minimize the spread of invasive species to other waterways. Review the "Leave No Trace" outdoor ethics guidelines at [www.lnt.org](http://www.lnt.org) to minimize your impact. These include:
    1. Plan and prepare
    2. Travel and camp on durable surfaces
    3. Dispose of waste properly
    4. Leave what you find
    5. Minimize campfires
    6. Respect wildlife
    7. Be considerate of other visitors

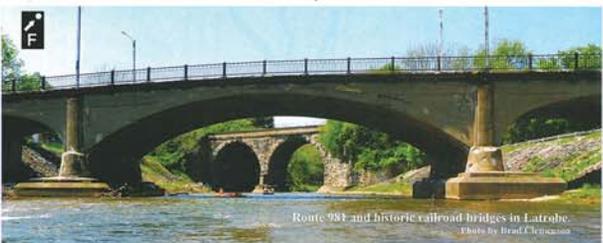
#### Respect Landowners Privacy and Rights

Plan and make stops on shorelines open to the public. From Latrobe to Loyalhanna Lake, most shorelines are owned by the Army Corps of Engineers, but above and below here, all areas are privately owned. Respect the privacy and rights of landowners by obtaining permission before entering any privately owned land. Avoid boisterous behavior and making loud noises. Share the same courtesy that you would want.

#### Our Partners and Funders

Loyalhanna Watershed Association is the official trail sponsor. This map & guide was developed by Pennsylvania Environmental Council in partnership with LWA, Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, the Department of Conservation & Natural Resources, and the Army Corps of Engineers.

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Route 981 and historic railroad bridges in Latrobe.  
Photo by Brad Clemons