**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**October 6, 2021**

**Public Meetings and Online Survey Planned to Gather Community Input for Proposed Northumberland County Rail Trail.**

**Northumberland County, PA** – The Northumberland County Anthracite Outdoor Adventure Area Authority (AOAA) is conducting two public meetings during the month of October to gather community input for the Northumberland County Rail Trail Master Plan. The planning document will outline the feasibility of converting a 36-mile out-of-service railroad line into a non-motorized rail trail for walking and biking. As proposed, the rail trail will connect Sunbury with Mount Carmel, traveling through Sunbury, Upper Augusta, Snydertown, Shamokin Twp, Coal, City of Shamokin, Mount Carmel Twp, and Mount Carmel Borough. To determine feasibility, the Master Plan will:

* Evaluate existing infrastructure including bridges
* Consider potential trailhead locations and roadway crossings
* Review impacts to environmental resources
* Estimate construction costs
* Outline options for operations and maintenance

The two public meetings will be an open house format with a number of stations to collect public input and answer questions. In addition, there will be a brief presentation at 5:30pm both days. Members of the public are encouraged to attend and take an online survey, available at [www.surveymonkey.com/r/northumberlandrailtrail](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/northumberlandrailtrail).

**Public Meeting #1**

When: Tuesday, October 26, 2021

 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Where: Northumberland County Career and Arts Center

 2 East Arch Street, Shamokin, PA 17872

**Public Meeting #2**

When: Wednesday, October 27, 2021

 5:00pm – 6:30pm

Where: Northumberland County Administration Center

 399 Stadium Drive, Sunbury, PA 17801

**Online Survey**

When: Open now through November 5, 2021

 [www.surveymonkey.com/r/northumberlandrailtrail](http://www.surveymonkey.com/r/northumberlandrailtrail)

The Master Plan, funded by the AOAA along with a Community Conservation Partnerships Program grant from the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, began in April 2021 and will be complete by the end of 2021. The planning process is being overseen by the AOAA, County, and a 26-member Steering Committee comprised of local representatives. The public planning process also included focus groups with local residents and stakeholders and coordination with the host municipalities this summer to ensure the draft concept plan for public comment is based on the community’s vision.

Please contact Justin Skavery at Justin.Skavery@norrycopa.net for questions. Email is preferred so answers can become part of a question and answer document.