



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**April 3, 2015**

## **Construction to begin at Poe Paddy Tunnel along Penns Creek**

**Harrisburg, PA** – Anglers, hikers and other outdoors enthusiasts are reminded repair work soon will be starting in the area of the now-barricaded Poe Paddy Tunnel along Penn Creek in a wide-ranging rehabilitation project that will require the temporary closing of a section of the Mid-State Trail on Monday, April 6, Department of Conservation and Natural Resources Acting Secretary Cindy Adams Dunn announced today.

“Construction crews already have begun assembling equipment and supplies at the site in anticipation of a Monday, April 6, start of construction on the former rail trestle bridge spanning Penns Creek,” Dunn said. “The safety of state forest visitors in this area is paramount, and we apologize for any inconvenience as the first phase of a three-part project gets under way to repair the bridge, Poe Paddy Tunnel and portions of the popular rail trail leading to both.”

Bridge work will require the immediate closing of the bridge and trail section crossing Penns Creek for at least one month. The trail on the south side of the tunnel, from the tunnel to the Hartley Township road, eventually will be closed temporarily, as it will be used for hauling and resurfaced with stone as part of the project. This phase is not expected to begin for at least two weeks.

Closed since early February 2013 because of deteriorating conditions, the tunnel passes through West Paddy Mountain. Mid-State Trail users had been re-routed over the ridge and to and from the trestle bridge since the tunnel’s closing.

Straddling the Centre-Mifflin county line, the tunnel, trestle and rail trail all are located within Bald Eagle State Forest District. The entire project is expected to be completed by late October.

After tunnel deficiencies were discovered, the repair project was broadened to include decking replacement on the railroad trestle bridge leading to one side of the tunnel. On the other side, more than two miles of rail trail will have to be shored and resurfaced to facilitate heavy construction trucks reaching the site.

DCNR’s construction timeframe was limited as bat hibernation in the tunnel precluded any tunnel work between Oct. 1, 2014, and May 1. Project construction will be suspended on Memorial Day weekend, May 23-26, and Fourth of July weekend, July 3-6.

A \$1.2 million contract with Jay Fulkroad and Sons of McAlisterville, calls for the entire three-phase project to be completed by Oct. 31, 2015.

“When this wide-ranging project is completed, the increasing numbers of visitors drawn to the rugged beauty of that area will appreciate the improvements,” Dunn said. “Anglers and hunters, hikers and bikers, they all use that trail, tunnel and trestle span. Late next fall they’ll all be able to travel more safely in pursuit of their outdoors adventures.”

After closing the tunnel Feb. 5, 2013, DCNR's Bureau of Forestry posted notices at parking areas affording access to the Penns Creek Path rail trail, which also doubles as a section of the very popular Mid-State Trail. Popularly known as "The Wildest Trail in Pennsylvania," the trail snakes 325 miles through the heart of Pennsylvania's remote interior, stretching from the New York to Maryland borders.

Visitors to the area also should be aware there will be heavy truck traffic on the rail trail between the tunnel and the Cherry Run parking lot while tunnel stabilization work is under way. Concrete, stone, and other materials will be brought in via Weikert Road and Winter Road throughout this project.

Stretching along and through West Paddy Mountain, the tunnel, bridge and trail are popular with visitors to Poe Paddy State Park and the surrounding Bald Eagle State Forest. Just a stream's width away from White Mountain Wild Area in Mifflin County, the Poe Paddy tunnel is used frequently by hikers and biking enthusiasts as well as anglers who use the tunnel to access two different stretches of Penns Creek, a premier trout fishing destination.

For more information, contact Bald Eagle State Forest District Office at 570-922-3344, or by email at [fd07@psa.gov](mailto:fd07@psa.gov). For details on Poe Paddy and Pennsylvania's other 119 state parks, call 1-888-PA-PARKS between 7 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday; or visit [www.dcnr.state.pa.us](http://www.dcnr.state.pa.us) (select "Find a Park").

**MEDIA CONTACT:** Terry Brady, (717) 772-9101

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