



NEWS

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Secretary Kempthorne Announces Designation of 36 New National Recreation Trails in 24 States

WASHINGTON—Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne today designated 36 trails in 24 states as new National Recreation Trails, adding more than 800 miles of trails to the National Trails System.

“The new trails joining the National Recreation Trail System illustrate the diversity of the country’s pathways,” Kempthorne said. “These remarkable resources provide outdoor recreational opportunities that include the chance to hike the rolling tundra of Alaska’s backcountry, paddle an urban waterway in Milwaukee, bike an abandoned railway in Utah, ride an equestrian trail in Virginia, or wander along a nature loop in Oklahoma.”

The announcement coincides with the 14th annual celebration of National Trails Day on Saturday, June 3, 2006. The theme for this year’s event, “Experience your Outdoors”, encourages people to use trails for exercise and exploration. More than 1,100 locally organized activities will take place throughout all 50 states including hikes, educational programs, bike rides, volunteer repair projects, festivals, paddle trips, and trail dedications. A complete schedule of activities is available at www.NationalTrailsDay.org.

Each of the trails inducted into the National Recreation Trails System will receive a certificate of designation and trail markers. They join a network of more than 900 trails encompassing more than 10,000 miles.

The National Recreation Trails Program is jointly administered by the National Park Service’s Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program and the U.S. Forest Service in conjunction with a number of other federal and nonprofit partners, notably American Trails, which hosts the National Recreation Trail website at www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails.

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) is a community resource of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies so they can conserve rivers, preserve open space, and develop trails and greenways. More information is available online at <http://www.nps.gov/rtca>.

Secretary Kempthorne designated the following 36 trails as National Recreation Trails:

Alaska

Bird to Gird Pathway – This 13-mile scenic rail-trail connects the communities of Girdwood, Bird, and Indian, and offers views of the ocean, mountains, and glaciers.

St. Paul Island High Bluffs Trail – Located in the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge, this 6-mile backcountry trail takes visitors through a landscape of coastal cliffs, rolling tundra, windswept beaches, and the Bering Sea.

Arkansas

Josh Park Memorial Trail - Located along the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' scenic Greers Ferry Lake, this 1.9-mile fitness and walking trail offers an array of experiences for hikers, runners, bicyclists, and nature enthusiasts.

California

Mountains to Sea Trail – This 22-mile urban nature reserve and bikeway starts in Weir Canyon and travels through six jurisdictions, providing trail users of all ages the opportunity to experience the diversity of the 50,000-acre Irvine Ranch Land Reserve.

District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia

Potomac River Water Trail – This water trail and greenway traverses over 300 miles, offering diverse experiences and exciting opportunities to view the varied landscapes and rich history of the Potomac River.

Illinois

Sam Vadalabene Great River Road Bike Trail – Known as one of the oldest trails in St. Louis and a key connector, this 21.5-mile scenic rail-trail offers visitors a variety of recreational experiences along the Mississippi and Illinois Rivers.

Iowa

Raccoon River Valley Trail – This 56-mile rail-trail is the backbone of the Central Iowa Trails Plan, linking numerous trails within the region and offering recreational opportunities to more than half a million people.

Maine

The Carson Trail – Located in the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge, this 1-mile interpretive trail and greenway traverses three natural habitats and offers numerous opportunities to view wildlife.

Maryland

Sligo Creek Parkway Trail – This popular 10.2-mile urban trail/bikeway connects Prince George's and Montgomery Counties, providing not only recreational and educational opportunities for local residents, but alternative transportation options as well.

Michigan

Paint Creek Trail – This 8.9-mile rail-trail, identified as the first rail-trail in Michigan, is an integral part of the extensive Oakland Trail Network and follows the Paint Creek as it flows through diverse natural habitats, offering nature lovers the opportunity to observe a variety of wildlife.

Missouri

Frisco Highline Trail – Known as the second longest rail-trail in Missouri, this 36-mile historic scenic corridor connects several railroad towns from Springfield to Bolivar and provides close-to-home opportunities for bicycling, horseback riding, and more.

Smithville Lake Trail – Located near Kansas City, this 20-mile multi-use trail provides a natural haven where visitors can enjoy an array of recreational activities, such as hiking and biking.

New Hampshire

Little Cherry Pond – Located at the heart of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, this one-mile backcountry and birding trail winds through six different forest communities and offers views of the Presidential Range of the White Mountains.

New York

Cunningham Park Southeast Preserve Trail – This 2-mile urban trail/bikeway takes the visitor through one of the most undisturbed natural areas in New York City, abundant with oaks, native wildflowers, flowering dogwood, and ferns.

Genesee Riverway Trail – This 15-mile urban trail/bikeway takes trail users through the scenic, historic, and cultural heart of Rochester, linking parks, historic districts, waterfalls, and more.

Hudson River School Art Trail – This 3-mile historic theme trail is part of a larger network comprised of seven sites linking the home of Thomas Cole, founder of the Hudson River School, with painting sites that inspired the work of many artists in the nineteenth century.

Hyde Park Heritage Greenway Trail System – This 14-mile interpretive, community trail system connects downtown Hyde Park with nearby residential neighborhoods, four National Park sites, three town parks, and a nonprofit nature preserve.

North Carolina

W. Kerr Scott Trails: Fish Dam Creek Gorge to Bandit's Roost - This valued 9-mile multi-use trail and bikeway connects trails and recreational facilities at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' W. Kerr Scott Reservoir with facilities along the Yadkin River Greenway.

House Creek Greenway – This 3.2-mile urban trail/bikeway is a vital link in the State's greenway system and features the Reedy Creek Pedestrian Bridge, the longest pedestrian bridge in North Carolina.

Mountains-to-Sea Trail – Falls Lake South Shore - This 26-mile scenic hiking trail is part of a larger trail system that will eventually connect 37 counties on the East Coast, including numerous cities, state parks, and federal lands.

North Dakota

Fort Mandan Nature & History Trail - This 1.1-mile interpretive trail is located at the replica of Fort Mandan (Lewis and Clark's wintering post in 1804-1805) and offers visitors an ideal opportunity to view wildlife along the Missouri River.

Washburn Discovery Trail - This 2.2-mile multi-use trail connects Harmony Park (on the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail) with Riverside Park and provides scenic vistas of the Missouri River.

Oklahoma

Centennial Trail – Located in Washita National Wildlife Refuge, this .3-mile nature trail loops through a variety of diverse habitats and allows visitors to observe numerous plant and animal species.

Eagle Roost Nature Trail – Located in Salt Plains National Wildlife Refuge, this 1.25-mile interpretive nature trail forms a loop through a diversity of habitats and provides opportunities to view bald eagles, whooping cranes and other waterfowl.

Oregon

Ankeny Rail Trail – Located in Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge, this 1-mile rail-trail takes visitors through a seasonally flooded Oregon ash wetland where various wildlife (such as tree frogs, rough-skinned newts, and black-capped chickadees) can be seen and heard year round.

Ridgeline Trail – This 14-mile urban trail/bikeway provides an extensive opportunity for recreation and nature appreciation just a few miles from downtown Eugene and features Spencer Butte, the highest and most prominent landmark at the southern end of the Willamette Valley.

Pennsylvania

Mahoning Shadow Trail – This 15-mile rail-trail follows the path of the Mahoning Creek in Jefferson County and provides views of the area’s historic coke ovens and opportunities to observe a variety of flora and fauna, such as the rare pink lady-slipper.

Tennessee

Tennessee River Blueway – This 50-mile scenic water trail offers distinct sights and sounds of the area’s diverse natural environment, culture, and history; and serves as a connector to Chattanooga’s renowned greenways system.

Texas

San Gabriel River Trails – This 6.5-mile urban trail/bikeway follows Georgetown’s scenic North and South San Gabriel Rivers, featuring natural springs, wetlands, a star gazing and bird watching area, and the historic Blue Hole Park.

Utah

Gooseberry Mesa Trail – This 13.5-mile backcountry loop trail was dedicated as the Bureau of Land Management’s first official mountain bike trail in Washington County and is now known as one of the State’s supreme riding opportunities, offering a 360-degree view of spectacular landmarks such as Zion National Park and Smithsonian Butte.

Historic Union Pacific Rail Trail – This 28-mile rail-trail and bikeway traverses areas rich in cultural history, such as the Wasatch Mountains near Park City and the wetland meadows in Silver Creek Canyon, providing not only recreational opportunities for local residents, but alternative transportation options as well.

Virginia

Bull Run - Occoquan Trail - This 18-mile hiking and equestrian trail passes through 5,000 acres of Occoquan shoreline parklands, accessing four regional parks and providing shelter for a profusion of birds and other native wildlife.

Washington

Pine Lake Loop Trail – Located in Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, this 1.25-mile loop trail offers an array of opportunities to view 26 species of waterfowl, in addition to moose, elk, and other wildlife.

West Virginia

Mon River/Caperton/Deckers Creek Trails – This 46-mile rail-trail system links urban and rural communities in three counties and acts as a low-impact recreation corridor, alternative transportation route, community green space, outdoor classroom, and natural and cultural heritage park.

Wisconsin

Jacobus Park Nature Trail – This .9-mile hiking and biking loop trail takes visitors through a woodland island in Metropolitan Milwaukee and provides a unique natural outdoor classroom for area school children.

Milwaukee Urban Water Trail – This 35-mile water trail flows through urban portions of the Milwaukee, Menomonee, and Kinnickinnic Rivers, providing miles of access and paddling to the 1.5 million people in the Greater Milwaukee metropolitan area.