



National Recreation Trails

NRT NEWS Summer 2001

News and resources for National Recreation Trails managers

National Recreation Trails database to be online

This past year a variety of trail groups and agencies has worked together to redesign and revitalize the **National Recreation Trails (NRT)** Program of the National Park Service. The big news item is that the first draft of the searchable database of NRTs is now available online at www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails.

The database includes information on all 800+ National Recreation Trails, with details provided by the trail managers. Trail users, activists, and land managers can all get the information they need via the American Trails website. The online functions are in the development stage, so please keep checking the site as we continue building it.

Here are some examples of how the online database can be used:

- Search for a particular NRT by name
- Get a list of all the NRTs in any state or county or even Congressional District, or search for a particular trail type, such as rail trails or backcountry trails
- Search for trails by activity type such as hiking, snowmobiling, mountain bicycling, or canoeing
- Find data such as trail length, accessibility, contacts, fees, dates and times of operation, and Internet links

See page 2 for more on the NRT Online Database

Ceremony marks approval of new NRTs for 2001

On National Trails Day, June 2, 2001, a new group of 15 trails and greenways received official designation as National Recreation Trails by Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton:

- **Bluff Trail:** South Carolina
- **Buffalo Creek Nature Area:** Virginia
- **Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail:** Nebraska
- **Great Allegheny Passage:** Maryland-Pennsylvania
- **Grand Trunk Trail:** Massachusetts
- **Keel Spring Nature Trail:** Tennessee
- **Marjorie Harris Carr Cross-Florida Greenway:** Florida
- **Mary Ingles Trail System:** Kentucky
- **Metacomet-Monadnock Trail:** Massachusetts
- **Muddy Mountain Interpretive Nature Trail:** Wyoming
- **Paseo del Morro:** Puerto Rico
- **Pigeon Creek Trail System:** Arkansas
- **Prescott Peavine Trail:** Arizona
- **Princeville Heritage Trail:** North Carolina
- **Weston & Gauley Bridge Turnpike:** West Virginia

The Grand Trunk Trail

begins in the Town of Southbridge, Massachusetts and follows the old Grand Trunk Railroad bed through a variety of spectacular landscapes. Upon completion, the 5-mile trail will connect to historic Old Sturbridge village via a bicycle trail along the Quinebaug River. This new NRT is a link in the growing east-west greenways system taking shape in southern New England. It will connect with trails in nearby states and provide access to the Westville Recreation Area.



National Recreation Trails...

What are the benefits of NRT designation?

National Recreation Trails benefit from the **prestige and increased visibility** of being a part of the National Trails System. The National Park Service provides the local trail manager with a **press kit** to facilitate publicity and build support for the trail and its designation as an NRT.

Successful applicants receive a **letter and certificate** signed by the Secretary of the Interior, designating their trail as an NRT. Trail managers are entitled to use the **NRT logo** in appropriate settings and trail publications. New 4" x 4" and 8"x 8" **NRT logo signs** will be available at a nominal cost from American Trails. For information contact American Trails (amtrails@futureone.com).

All NRTs will be listed on the **NRT National Registry of Trails website** being developed by Ridley Solutions (ridleysol@qwest.net), with descriptive information, maps, and pictures for trail users. Trail managers provide information about their NRTs for the site to keep it up to date.

Other benefits include:

- Access to **technical assistance** from NRT Partners
- An **NRT newsletter** with program updates, newsworthy activities, technical information, and innovative solutions to trail issues from around the country
- Access to an **e-mail news group** for NRT managers only to receive updates on funding, resources, and technical assistance opportunities
- **Networking and training** opportunities
- Assistance with **recognition and special events** highlighting the trail
- **Letters of support** for funding and trail protection
- **Eligibility for funding** from the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and USDA Forest Service Challenge Cost Share Programs
- Some states also consider NRT designation as a factor in applying for Transportation Enhancements and Recreational Trails Program **funds administered by states** through the Federal Highway Administration.

Help us improve the NRT database

The NRT database is a compilation of records from a period of some years. As you can imagine, the data varies considerably in quantity and quality. One important way you can help trail enthusiasts and the general public is to help us improve the information available.

So please take a look at your trail in the database at **www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails**. As we develop the database we're counting on NRT managers to provide updated information and descriptions. Send updates and new items to American Trails, PO Box 11046, Prescott AZ 86304 or amtrails@futureone.com.

You can highlight your trail on the NRT website

The NRT database can provide links to your trail's website or to your organization. Visitors who find a trail they are interested in can click their mouse button to link to it directly. In addition to the searchable database, American Trails will be developing a series of web pages for every State to showcase selected NRTs. We would like to provide some good examples of user diversity, unusual routes, and photogenic trails. If your trail would be a good candidate to highlight on www.AmericanTrails.org, here are some suggestions on what we could use:

- Good photos (digital or film) of trails or events

- Maps
- Logos and graphics
- Website addresses of supporting groups
- Stories about the trail
- Problems solved

You can send materials for the website to Stuart Macdonald, Web Manager, at American Trails, PO Box 11046, Prescott AZ 86304 or by e-mail to amtrails@futureone.com



National Recreation Trails DATABASE

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...America's GREAT Trails

Publicizing America's National Recreation Trails

Do you have a creative way to publicize your trail? In future issues of NRT NEWS we'll highlight more of the ways that supporters are sharing their trails with the public and making the most of National Recreation Trail designation

Superior Hiking Trail leads guided tours

The Superior Hiking Trail is an NRT along the ridgeline overlooking Lake Superior, characterized by ascents to rock outcroppings and cliffs, and descents into numerous river and creek valleys crossed by attractive and functional bridges. This year, to increase public support for the trail, the Superior Hiking Trail Association is leading 15 tours of various stretches of the trail.

National Trails Day in Francis Beidler Forest

Tie into National Trails Day! Many NRTs are taking advantage of the publicity to sponsor a trail event, such as the Francis Beidler Forest trail system in South Carolina. Visitors to this National Audubon Society area are invited to wander along an elevated boardwalk past ancient trees, blackwater swamps, and clear pools.

Cliff Walk visitors find books & maps

Cliff Walk in Newport, RI, is an NRT in a National Historic District. Guides for the visitor include: *The Cliff Walk Book, a Walking Tour Guide for the Cliff Walk*, and a *Guide to Newport's Cliff Walk*. A printed Map/Poster of the Cliff Walk with the mansions and sites in the National Historic Area is also available. See www.cliffwalk.com for more information.



Share the benefits of National Recreation Trails!

Online tools for trails

Conservation Assistance Tools is a searchable database of grants, cost sharing, and technical assistance for natural resource projects in the western United States. It was



designed by the Rivers & Trails Conservation Assistance Program of the NPS to help local communities reach the information, potential partners, and financial support needed to accomplish grassroots conservation projects.

Visit the CAT at www.Sonoran.org/cat. More resources for NRT managers are at www.AmericanTrails.org (click on "Resources & Library.")

American Trails is lead partner for NRTs

American Trails, the only national nonprofit organization working for the benefit of all trails interests, is the lead nonprofit working in collaboration with National Park Service and the NRT Partners (see NRT Website for a listing). Responsibilities include:

- Increase public awareness of the NRT program and its associated benefits
- Encourage the nomination of new NRTs
- Develop and maintain a searchable online database for public information and trail promotion
- Provide *NRT News*, NRT e-mail newsgroup, and other communication with NRT managers
- Research funding & technical assistance opportunities

Visit us at www.AmericanTrails.org or (520) 632-1140!

This is our first issue of NRT NEWS, the publication for managers and supporters of National Recreation Trails. In upcoming issues, every few months, we'll be highlighting some interesting NRTs, interviewing NRT managers, providing information on trail funding and management, giving updates on the website and database project, and suggesting ways to share your trails with the public. **If you have an interesting story about your NRT, good photos to share, or volunteers to praise, please let us know.** Thanks! — Stuart Macdonald, NRT NEWS editor

American Trails, PO Box 11046, Prescott AZ 86304 • amtrails@futureone.com



How do I apply for NRT designation for my trail?

Applications for NRT designation are available at www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails. The trail managing agency submits the application along with supporting letters, maps, photos, and other documentation. Trails on National Forests, National Grasslands, and National Recreation Area go through the USFS; other trails go through the NPS.

NRT Applications must be submitted by November 1 each year to the appropriate NRT Program contact for the designation to be announced during the following National Trails Day celebration. It is recommended that interested trail managers begin the application process by September 1 to be sure to meet the November 1 deadline.

Executive Order lauds NRT designations

On January 18, 2001, President Bill Clinton signed an Executive Order titled "Trails for America in the 21st Century" to further the purposes of the National Trails System Act. It orders Federal agencies to cooperate with groups and agencies to "protect, connect, promote, and assist trails of all types throughout the United States."

The order states that one of the ways to accomplish these goals for trails is "promoting and registering National Recreation Trails, as authorized in the National Trails System Act, by incorporating where possible the commitments and partners active with Millennium Trails."

For more info on the National Recreation Trails Program

Current NRT program information can be found at: www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails
American Trails serves as the lead nonprofit in collaboration with the National Park Service and partner groups.

American Trails, PO Box 11046, Prescott AZ 86304 • amtrails@futureone.com

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