



National Recreation Trails

NRT NEWS

FALL 2003

News and resources for National Recreation Trails managers

NRT photo contest winners show off America's trails

American Trails is proud to sponsor the first National Recreation Trails photo contest. See the winning photos as well as all 140 entries on the NRT website. Just go to www.AmericanTrails.org and click on the link to the NRT photo contest under the "What's Hot" header.

In this first photo contest we wanted to show the many different kinds of trail activities enjoyed on NRTs and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails. We've also made awards that recognize good trail management, trail sharing, and interesting facilities. Winners will receive a certificate to show off their accomplishment. Many of the photos entered will be used to illustrate pages on the NRT website and future publications.

Winning NRT Photos and Trails

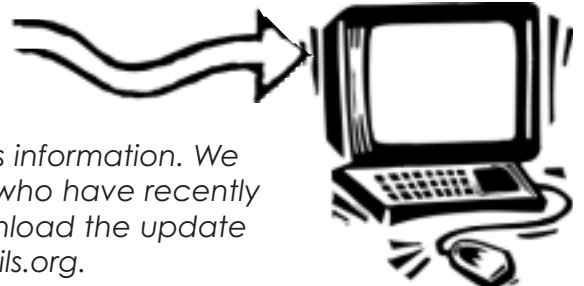
Following are the contest categories with the name (and State) of the **National Recreation Trail** where the photo was taken. See all the photos in living color on the NRT website: www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails.

- Backcountry Hiking Trails: **Tahoe Rim Trail** (California and Nevada) - *photo by Steve Anderson*
- Equestrian Trails: **Delaware & Raritan Canal Trail** (New Jersey) - *photo by Lillian Shupe*
- Water Trails: **New River Trail State Park** (Virginia) - *photo by Linda Richardson*
- Biking Trails: **Ghost Town Trail** (Pennsylvania) - *photo by Mary Shaw*
- Mountain Biking: **Maah Daah Hey Trail** (North Dakota) - *photo by Chuck Haney*
- Off-Highway Vehicle Trails: **Carson Emigrant Trail** (California) - *photo by Del Albright*
- Snowmobiling Trails - no entries in this category
- Trail Sharing: **Pioneer Trail** (California) - *photo by Steve Anderson*
- Urban Trails and Greenways: **Town Lake Trail** (Texas) - *photo by Butch Smith*
- Rail Trails: **New River Trail State Park** (Virginia) - *photo by Linda Richardson*
- Design and Engineering: **Three Rivers Heritage Trail** (Pennsylvania) - *photo by Mary Shaw*
- Historic Features: **Great Allegheny Passage** (Pennsylvania) - *photo by Mary Shaw*
- Training and Education: **Tahoe Rim Trail** (California and Nevada) - *Photo by Shannon Raborn*
- Scenery and Natural Features: **Maah Daah Hey Trail** (North Dakota) - *photo by Chuck Haney*
- Signs and Trailheads: **Suncoast Trail** (Florida) - *photo submitted by Hernando County, Florida*
- Trail Construction: **Vinal Creek Trail** (Montana) - *photo by Bill Fansler*
- Special Facilities: **Ernst Trail** (Pennsylvania) - *photo by Mary Shaw [see page 2]*
- Interpretive and Nature Trails: **Cherokee Nature Trail and Arboretum** - *photo by Margie E. Douthit*

Bring your NRT trail information up to date

All NRTs are listed along with facts and contact information online at: www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails.

Click on the link to the NRT database to search for your trail's information. We want to thank the many USDA Forest Service trail managers who have recently updated their entries. If you have any changes, please download the update form and fax to (530) 547-2035 or email to NRT@AmericanTrails.org.



Events showcase designations of

Events on the trails promote NRT designation

Many trail managers hold a dedication ceremony to announce their National Recreation Trail designation. National Trails Day has provided the date for many trail celebrations but the opening of a new section or other event of local significance is a great way to generate positive publicity for your trail.

Arrowhead Trail

(Washington County, Pennsylvania) Peters Township held a Community Day on June 28, 2003, which included a trail spur opening, guided rides, and a celebration of the trail's National Recreation Trail designation. Over 2,000 people were in attendance. For further information, contact Eddie Figas at 724-942-5000.

Big Dry Creek Trail

(Adams & Jefferson Counties, Colorado) The City of Westminster celebrated National Trails Day with several projects on the trail. Volunteers along the trail received waves and thanks from many trail users. The volunteers planted and mulched trees around a pond, revegetated wetlands, planted native plants to replace plants lost to the drought, cleaned up trash, and removed old open space wire fencing.

Participants celebrated with a barbeque along the trail. Volunteers have been working for several years to enhance and restore the trail and surrounding open space, and therefore enjoyed this opportunity to celebrate the trail's recent NRT designation. For further information, contact Patti Wright at 303-430-2400, ext. 2201.

Cattail Trail & Northwest Greenway

(Tippecanoe County, Indiana) A ceremony was held on October 15, at the Celery Bog Nature Area, to celebrate the dedication and NRT designation of the Cattail and Northwest Greenway trails network. National Park Service and Purdue University officials, along with area residents, joined Mayor Sonya Margerum in dedicating the new trails network. The event also included the unveiling of trails orientation signs. For further information, contact Joe Payne at 765-775-5110.



Covered bridge on the Ernst Trail: a winner in the 2003 NRT Photo Contest. Photo by Mary Shaw.

Ernst Recreational Trail

(Crawford County, Pennsylvania) On June 7, an event was held to celebrate the trail's NRT designation and National Trails Day. Congressman Phil English presented the NRT plaque to the Ernst Trail Committee. For further information, contact Tom McNally at 814-724-6073.

Galloway Creek Greenway

(Greene County, Missouri) On August 5, officials held an unveiling ceremony and announced the trail's NRT designation. Participants enjoyed watermelon at the celebration. For further information, contact Lori Tack at 417-864-2015.



Lake Wobegon Trail

(Stearns County, Minnesota) On July 22, a groundbreaking ceremony was held for a 9-mile section of the trail from Avon to St. Joseph. This section opened on October 17, with 4 miles of corridor donated from the Burlington Northern Santa Fee Railroad.

A dedication is planned for next April. A dedication of the paved Albany to Holdingford section of the trail was held on October 21. Attendees included children, a former trail opponent, the Mayor, the retired sheriff, and others. This 9-mile section of trail originally opened as a gravel trail in 2001.

NRT NEWS is the publication for managers and supporters of National Recreation Trails, published by American Trails in partnership with the National Park Service, USDA Forest Service, and partner groups. 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.

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new National Recreation Trails

The Lake Wobegon Trail is now 46 miles long. The trail is open to bicycles, snowmobiles without studs, in-line skaters, and hikers. Some folks say the trail goes by Lake Wobegon. The Caramel Roll Bike Ride is scheduled for May 1, 2004. For further information, contact Pete Theismann at 320-255-6172.

Luzerne County Rail-Trail

(Pennsylvania) A presentation celebrating the trail's NRT designation and National Trails Day was held at Cooper's Restaurant on June 7. A planned canoe trip and outdoor event at Pittston Riverfront Park had to be cancelled due to inclement weather. For further information, contact Charles Urban at 570-829-2841.

Smith's Island Nature Trail

(Scott County, Iowa) The Mississippi River Project, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hosted an event on September 20 (National Public Lands Day), to celebrate the trail's recent NRT designation. Park rangers conducted guided trail hikes and explained the island's unique upland habitat and history. A new brochure is now available. For further information, contact C. Leon Hodges: 309-794-4527.



Wood duck nesting box on Smith's Island Nature Trail, managed by Army Corps of Engineers. Photo by Steven Vacek.

Indiana trail partners make an event of dedication

A trail celebration is the kind of good news that makes the local papers. It also gets the elected officials out to actually see the project and make some memorable comments on the value of trails and greenways. One good example was the dedication of the Cattail, Northwest Greenway trails network in West Lafayette, Indiana.

"I thought the new police station and the reopening of Lindberg Road were our biggest accomplishments this year, but this trails network is tough to beat, isn't it," Mayor Sonya Margerum said.

Rory Robinson of the NPS Rivers and Trails Program delivered the NRT designation of the trails from Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton: "The National Recreation Trails program is designed to recognize the efforts of local communities working to develop trails for health, conservation, transportation, and recreation."

Superintendent Joe Payne said: "The trails network provides wonderful opportunities for exercise, enjoying nature, family recreation and quiet reflection. Looking ahead, our goal is to have a network that encircles the city and links to neighborhoods and the Wabash Heritage Trail. We'll get there, but it will take time."

Mayor Margerum credited Purdue University with providing some of the trails easements and a four-acre parcel of land for a trailhead park. "The city of West Lafayette and Purdue University are working together on meaningful quality of life improvements and economic development. We recognize that when young professionals, families and companies are looking to relocate, they search for vibrant communities with amenities such as these trails."

City Council president Jan Mills, who chaired the Strategic Plan steering committee, said: "To maintain our progress, we must make sure we're investing in meaningful improvements, like these trails, that link our neighborhoods and bring people together."

For more information: www.city.west-lafayette.in.us.

Are trails in your state featured on the NRT Website?

The NRT website has many pages of featured National Recreation Trails. Our goal is to highlight several trails per state, and to include photos and detailed descriptions of many of these trails. We'll be happy to make a page for your trail linked from the NRT State-by-State Index. All we need is a few paragraphs of text about your trail along with three or more good quality digitized photos. Contact Stuart Macdonald at mactrail@aol.com for details.

The Featured NRT pages are at: www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails—click on "Trails."

Federal officials announce

New NRTs announced by Department of Agriculture

Agriculture Secretary **Ann M. Veneman** announced the designation of four new National Recreation Trails in forests located in California, Nevada, North Dakota and Virginia— adding 288 miles to the system of nationally significant and recognized trails.

“These designations contribute to President Bush’s Healthier US Initiative by providing more opportunities for the public to exercise in the great outdoors,” said Veneman. “America’s national forests and grasslands offer a wide range of recreation opportunities, including more than 133,000 miles of trails for hiking.”

Veneman said that some of the new trails are available today due to the important work of volunteers. “The President’s USA Freedom Corps encourages every American to get involved in strengthening America’s communities. Providing more opportunities for the public to enjoy our Nation’s forests is a great example of what can be accomplished by volunteers.”

Along with inclusion in the National Recreation Trails System, each of the four trails will receive a certificate of designation and National Recreation Trail markers. Throughout the country there are now more than 800 National Recreation Trails throughout the United States, totaling more than 9,000 miles.

These four new National Recreation Trails were selected based on their historic value and the way they have enriched the public’s lives. The four newly designated trails (all non-motorized) are:

Tahoe Rim Trail (Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, Calif. and Nev.) The Tahoe Rim Trail makes up 96 miles of the 165-mile trail along the ridges and mountain tops that encircle the Lake Tahoe Basin. Partners include Nevada State Parks and Tahoe Rim Trail Association.

Maah Daah Hey Trail (Dakota Prairie Grasslands, N.D.) Winding its way through the rugged badlands and rolling prairies of western North Dakota is the 96-mile Maah Daah Hey Trail. Partners include Maah Daah Hey Trail Association, North Dakota State Park and Recreation and Theodore Roosevelt National Park.

Massanutten Trail (George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, Va.) The 71-mile trail offers overlooks with vistas that peer into the Blue Ridge Mountains and the Great North Mountain area. Partners include Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts, Old Dominion 100-Mile Ride Club, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and Virginia Happy Trails Running Club.

Pioneer Trail (Tahoe National Forest, Calif.)

Volunteers constructed all but two miles of the 25-mile Pioneer Trail, which follows one of several emigrant trails that were used to travel to California following the discovery of gold. Historic uses of the land are evident throughout it, including mining areas, logging railroads and wagon roads.

The Forest Service has plans to connect the trail with the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. Partners include Bicyclists of Nevada County, CalTrans, Folsom-Auburn Trail Riders Action Coalition, Gold Country Trails Council, Nevada Irrigation District and Pacific Gas & Electric.



Bikes yielding to equestrians on the Pioneer Trail: a winner in the 2003 NRT Photo Contest. Photo by Steve Anderson.

The national trail designation is part of a continuing campaign to promote community partnerships and to foster innovative ways to encourage physical fitness. The National Trails System Act of 1968 allows the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to recognize existing community trails that qualify as additions to the National Trails System. The Act promotes enjoyment and appreciation of trails and greater public access.

For more information on President Bush’s Healthier US Initiative and the USA Freedom Corp, visit www.whitehouse.gov.

2003 National Recreation Trails

Secretary of Interior Norton designates 23 NRTs in 2003

Secretary of the Interior Gale A. Norton announced the designation of 23 recreation trails in 12 states, as part of the National Recreation Trails System. Norton's announcement coincided with the celebration of National Trails Day, June 7, 2003.

"Our aggressiveness in promoting trails for health and recreation is part of a larger partnership effort by President Bush," Norton said. "These partnerships build trails and trails help to build healthy Americans. It is through these partnerships and recreation trails that we are encouraging a variety of activities to keep our citizens healthy and physically fit."

The 2003 announcement of 23 National Recreation Trails in 12 states, totals about 492 miles. Last year Secretary Norton designated 26 national recreation trails in 16 states for 836 miles. And in 2001, she designated 15 trails in 13 states for 512 miles. Along with inclusion in the National Recreation Trails System, each trail will receive a certificate of designation and NRT markers.

The National Recreation Trail program provides technical assistance and support for outreach efforts. The National Park Service and the USDA Forest Service administer the program with help from a number of other federal and nonprofit partners, notably American Trails, which hosts the National Recreation Trails website at www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails.

Following are descriptions of the 2003 NRT designations:

Central Arizona Project (CAP) Trail — Arizona

The 32-mile shared-use trail (currently under construction) is part of a larger vision to create a recreational trail along the entire 336 miles of the Central Arizona Project canal. The trail serves a broad population and represents a key link to major trails in Pima County and the Tucson metro area. Residents enjoy close-to-home outdoor activities such as hiking, mountain biking and horseback riding. The trails will be constructed to current state-of-the-art standards, and the landscaping to be installed will use native species with very low water requirements.

Big Dry Creek Trail — Colorado

This 10-mile trail is considered a haven for the residents of Westminster, a highly urbanized part of the Denver Metro area. The trail has been integrated into the community using a number of bridges and underpasses, providing users with safe connections to local schools, shopping centers and recreational facilities. In addition to abundant wildlife (including a pair of bald eagles) and

native vegetation, the trail corridor includes interpretive signs explaining the area's Native American history. Bicyclists, equestrians, and wildlife enthusiasts are just some of the groups who enjoy what this trail has to offer in a densely populated setting.

Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail — Florida

This 47-mile multi-use rail trail is seen as a green jewel in the midst of the state's most highly urbanized county. The trail traverses the entire western length of Pinellas County linking a number of cities and providing a greenway corridor for both residents and urban wildlife. This trail plays a significant role in assisting with downtown redevelopment efforts, and is known for its high levels of recreational use, natural features, and links to area parks. The average annual attendance on the trail since 1992 is 977,241 users, indicating the trail is a welcomed and integral part of Pinellas County.



On Florida's Fred Marquis Pinellas Trail

Peghorn Nature Park and Trails — Florida

The project features a 58-acre park and trail system that gets its name from the distinctive cattle that were raised in the area in the early 1900's. The park is located on a wetland site and hosts a variety of native birds and wildlife, as well as migratory birds during the winter. In addition to its many natural and historic features, the trail allows for recreational activities such as hiking and wildlife viewing in close proximity to downtown St. Cloud.

Great River Trail — Illinois

This 60-mile trail is part of a larger regional trail network, including the 500-mile Grand Illinois Trail and proposed 10-state Mississippi River Trail. The route includes a variety of attractions and natural features including spectacular views of the Mississippi River, Native American mounds, and rookeries of the Great Blue Heron.

New NRTs for 2003 celebrate

Rock Island State Trail — Illinois

Named after the abandoned Rock Island Railroad line, the 27-mile rail trail traverses central Illinois farmland through a variety of natural settings. The trail corridor preserves a piece of history amidst prairie grasses, wildflowers and trestle bridges. In addition to its natural and historic features, trail users can enjoy hiking, mountain biking and wildlife viewing.

Cattail Trail — Indiana *[see article on page 3]*

This four-mile urban trail and greenway (currently under construction) connects West Lafayette residents with the Northwest Greenway Trail, Celery Bog Nature Area, and Purdue University's Pickett Park. In addition to its natural features, the trail allows for recreational opportunities including biking, skiing, and skateboarding.

Cardinal Greenway — Indiana

This 30-mile rail trail spans five counties and three major cities. It is the state's longest linear park and serves all of East-Central Indiana. The multi-use greenway is part of a 60-mile project that provides a key community connection to area schools, parks, and local cultural and historic resources. Trail users enjoy a number of activities including jogging, biking and wildlife viewing. This greenway is a fine example of what is possible through volunteers and a successful partnership.

Monon Greenway — Indiana

This five-mile rail trail and greenway links Carmel's suburban neighborhoods with area businesses, the civic square and a planned Central Park. The greenway is a key part of a regional trail system and connects with the Monon Rail-Trail (a NRT) in Indianapolis. The trail has brought with it a sense of community and provides a peaceful setting in which residents can explore their surroundings while enjoying a walk or bike ride.

Northwest Greenway Trail — Indiana

This five-mile trail (currently under construction) that connects with a local trail system and on-road bicycle lanes, providing West Lafayette residents with a variety of recreational opportunities as well as a means of alternative transportation to locations throughout the city, including Purdue University. In addition to its natural features, the trail provides recreational opportunities including biking, skiing, and wildlife observation.

Smith's Island Nature Trail — Iowa

This one-mile trail located near Pleasant Valley is considered a natural treasure and haven for area residents and visitors alike. The trail is a naturalist's paradise, hosting oaks, woodland wildflowers and Sugar Maple,

as well as herons, osprey and pelicans. Annual bald eagle watches attract thousands of birding enthusiasts from across the Midwest. In addition to its scenic features, this trail is valued for its historic resources and natural history interpretation, which draw school children from throughout the region.

Cross Island Trail — Maryland

This six-mile linear park is considered a gem of Queen Anne's County. It provides a number of recreational opportunities within a variety of natural settings. Trail users enjoy scenic vistas, wildlife observation under a forest canopy, and connections to area businesses, parks, and schools. The trail is not only valued for its natural features but for its achievement in reconnecting the communities of Kent Island.



The Cross Island Trail on Maryland's Eastern Shore.

Galloway Creek Greenway — Missouri

Running six miles through southeast Springfield, this greenway includes pedestrian underpasses to provide a safe environment for walking, biking and wheelchair use. The greenway is a valued part of this high-traffic area, linking neighborhoods with historic Sequiota Park, Springfield Lake, the nature center's trails, area schools and churches. This trail has been such a success that public demand for more greenways has increased.

The Village of Bluffton Pathway — Ohio

This almost three mile rail trail and greenway spans the entire town connecting local parks and recreational facilities. The trail enables area residents of all ages to enjoy a scenic stroll or bike ride through wooded lots and along two quarries. In addition to its many natural features, trail users can participate in a number of outdoor recreation activities, such as horseback riding, fishing, and kayaking

partnerships and volunteerism

Stavich Bike Trail — Ohio & Pennsylvania

Beginning in Struthers, Ohio and extending into New Castle, Pennsylvania, the 12-mile trail follows the former Youngstown-New Castle streetcar line. It takes riders through wooded countryside and over gentle hills, providing scenic views of the Mahoning River. In addition to bicycling, trail users are welcome to go hiking and even cross-country skiing in the winter [see photo at right].

Arrowhead Trail — Pennsylvania

This four-mile rail-trail allows the residents of Peters Township to enjoy recreational opportunities as well as the natural beauty of the area. In addition to preserving native plants, the trail allows for recreational activities such as hiking, biking, and wildlife observation.

Ernst Recreational Trail — Pennsylvania

This five-mile rail trail allows users to enjoy a wealth of natural treasures in the French Creek Valley, home to the state's most biologically diverse body of water. This multi-use trail meanders through a variety of settings along Conneaut Marsh, which hosts bald eagles and migrating waterfowl. In addition to its many natural features, the trail includes a unique covered bridge [see photo, page 2].

Ghost Town Trail — Pennsylvania

A multi-use rail trail, it spans 24 miles and connects two counties. The limestone trail allows visitors a glimpse back in time as it travels through several abandoned coal mining towns dating back to the early 1900's. In addition to its abundant wildlife, natural features and human history interpretation, trail users enjoy activities such as hiking, biking, horseback riding and cross-country skiing.

Houtzdale Line Trail — Pennsylvania

The rail trail extends over 10 miles through the rolling meadows and mountains of the Moshannon Valley. The rail line dates back to the late 1800's, and trail users can visit many of the trail's historic features as well as enjoy the area's wildlife, wetlands and even waterfalls. In addition to its natural features, the trail provides access to mountain biking, horseback riding, and fishing.

Luzerne County Rail-Trail — Pennsylvania

This 13-mile rail trail offers residents a host of recreational opportunities and will eventually connect to a larger trail network in New York State. Trail users enjoy outdoor activities such as biking, fishing, hiking, and wildlife observation.

Samuel Justus Trail — Pennsylvania

This eight-mile rail trail offers visitors easily accessible scenic views of the Allegheny River. The trail draws walkers and bikers from nearby cities and states, who come to enjoy the natural and cultural resources of this region.



Beaver pond along the Stavich Bike Trail; an entry in the 2003 NRT Photo Contest: photo by Mary Shaw.

Native American carvings dating back to 1200 AD, the spectacular Belmar Bridge built in 1907, and the Kennerdell Tunnel also make this trail system unique.

Cross Vermont Trail — Vermont

The 75-mile trail and greenway will span the entire state from Burlington to Newbury, Vermont. In addition to opportunities for biking, hiking, snowmobiling and horseback riding, this trail attracts tourist dollars and provides economic benefits for local communities. Half of the trail is completed, with a diverse partnership making progress towards connecting the state.

Pacific Northwest Trail, Olympic National Park Segment — Washington

The 103-mile trail segment is part of a 1,200-mile trail route that links the Continental Divide and Pacific Crest National Scenic Trails with the Pacific Ocean. It provides diverse trail experiences through a variety of ecosystems. The trail also provides stunning views as it travels through the Olympic, Cascade, and Selkirk mountain ranges.

See more on the new 2003 NRTs with photos, trail descriptions, and contact information at: www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails.



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National Trails Symposium: Oct. 21-24, 2004 in Austin

The National Trails Symposium is one of the best opportunities for trail managers to learn from the full spectrum of trails interests from across America and beyond. Join us October 21-24, 2004, in historic downtown Austin along the 11-mile Town Lake Trail. Symposium partners include Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, Austin Parks and Recreation Department, and the Texas Trails Network, as well as federal land management agencies.

For more information on the 17th National Trails Symposium, see www.AmericanTrails.org. Details of the 2002 Symposium in Orlando, Florida, are also available to give you an idea of the kinds of programs, mobile workshops, and events that are part of every National Trails Symposium.

Two NRT websites win Trails Website Awards

The second annual **American Trails Website Contest** winners for 2003 included two National Recreation Trails. The contest includes a category for Designated National Recreation Trail websites, and the winners for 2003 are:

- The **Poudre River Trail Corridor**, Colorado:
www.poudretrail.org
- Honorable Mention: **Pigeon Creek Trail System**:
hosted by Twin Lakes Bicycle Club
www.norfork.com/cycling

We encourage NRT supporters and managers to view the contest winners for ideas for your own website. To see links to all of the contest winners visit the American Trails site at www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon03.html.

For more 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, USDA Forest Service, and partner groups.

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