



# Conservation

Lake Red Rock Water Trail

*Best Management Practice Goal: The water trail provides opportunities for communities to develop and implement strategies that enhance and restore the health of the local waterways and surrounding lands.*

## Key Questions

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### Cleanups and Invasive Removal

- Have there been community trash cleanups?
- Have any invasive species been removed by partner groups, as part of a community outreach, or by staff?

### Restoration

- Have habitat restoration projects been accomplished on land or in the river?
- Is the organization engaged with local, state and federal agencies and conservation groups for major waterway protection and rehabilitation activities?
- Have degraded lands such as brownfields been restored for habitat or recreational use?
- Have fish ladders or natural fish passages been installed at dams?
- Have any tributary streams been daylighted (if formerly covered)?
- Have any natural flood-storage-and-protection projects been completed (i.e. constructing wetlands)?

### Conservation

- Have priority river conservation areas been identified?
- Is there a strategy for protecting priority conservation areas (buffers) along the river?
- Have local or state river and wetland protection laws been passed?
- Does zoning promote protection of natural areas

where resources are sensitive and concentrate development in less sensitive or already-developed areas?

### Green Infrastructure

- Have rain gardens been installed at access or launch sites? Are there signs explaining their function?
- Have launch areas been designed with green infrastructure including permeable pavement, green roofs, infiltration planters, bioswales, rain barrels, etc? Is there educational material about these practices?
- Have impermeable surfaces been replaced with permeable and semi-permeable surfaces in specific locations or throughout the watershed?
- Is there an informational or incentive program for developers and homeowners about the value of green infrastructure?

### Monitoring, Inventory, and Mapping

- Is there a program for water quality testing and monitoring?
- Is there a program to communicate weather conditions?
- Is there a map of existing vegetation types or natural communities? Has a natural resource or open space inventory been completed?
- Are there programs for citizens to get involved with water quality testing or monitoring?
- Is anyone working to enforce water quality standards?
- Is anyone working to improve water quality?

## Examples

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- American Rivers lists many conservation strategies related to water trail conservation at [www.bluetrailsguide.org/funding-resources/](http://www.bluetrailsguide.org/funding-resources/)

### Water Quality, Cleanups, and Invasives

- The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area partners with the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeepers on a number of conservation strategies, including a yearly clean-up of the river called “Sweep the Hooch.”
- The Chattahoochee water trail provides information on bacteria count, flow, and water quality through model partnerships.
- Northern Forest Canoe Trail created a “Clean Drain Dry” video for paddlers that shows simple steps to help protect water quality and prevent the spread of aquatic invasives.
- The Anacostia Watershed Society operates a trash trap on Nash Run. The trash is sorted into several categories, allowing staff to study its characteristics by volume.

### Restoration

- In 2010, partner groups worked together to construct an oyster reef in the Bronx River. Oysters filter large amounts of water, cleaning it and creating a better habitat for fish, crabs, worms and barnacles.
- The Rock River Trail Initiative has distributed 40,000 oak trees to be planted within sight of the Rock River to improve the health of rivers in the Midwest by re-

establishing hardwoods.

- Originating in Europe, “nature-like” fishways are now being constructed on some U.S. rivers where removing dams is not an option. Unlike traditional fish ladders, these passages use a natural approach.
- The Middle Channel Reef Project on the Island Loop Water Trail worked to enhance fish reproduction and help rebuild native fish populations. Project partners restored an acre of fish spawning habitat by constructing nine rock reefs in the Middle Channel of the St. Clair River.

### Conservation

- The Chattahoochee National River and Recreation Area partnered with the Trust for Public Land to help protect land along the river.

### Green Infrastructure

- The Friends of the Kaw built a rain garden at the boat ramp in De Soto, Kansas in order to improve water quality and reduce runoff into the Kansas River.
- The St. Clair county health department sold rain barrels to homeowners in the community around the Island Loop Water Trail.