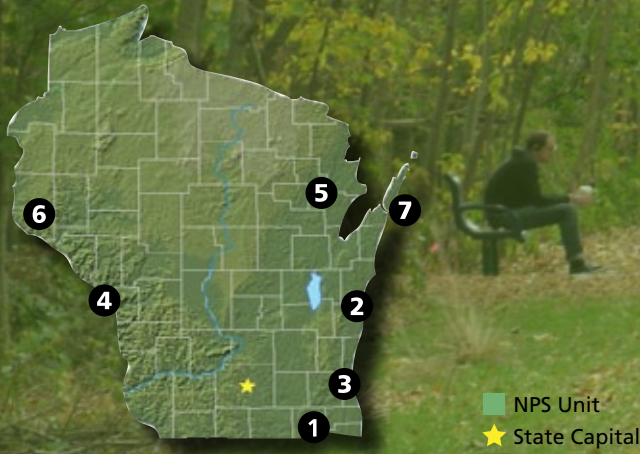




Wisconsin News



Enjoying Milwaukee's Beerline Trail

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

Current Projects

1. Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge
McHenry County Conservation District
2. Lake Michigan Water Trail Organizational Development
Illinois Paddling Council
3. Master Trail Plan for Milwaukee County Grounds
Village of Wauwatosa
4. Mississippi River Trail & Collaborative Support
Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
5. Niagara Escarpment Greenway Plan
Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN)
6. The Great Rivers Confluence
Friends of Freedom Park
7. Wisconsin Lake Michigan Water Trail
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA staff provides technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.

Recent Successes

The Beerline Trail

Ein prosit! The official opening of Milwaukee's Beerline Trail was celebrated October 13th, giving a simultaneous nod to the former rail line's storied past providing raw ingredients for production of the city's favorite beverage and to its future—a much anticipated pedestrian and bicycle trail. This 4,000' riverside trail links the Riverwest Neighborhood with downtown Milwaukee to provide a safe, attractive transportation route for commuters, festival attendees, and others wishing to enjoy downtown and the lakefront without the burden of a car.

The impetus for this trail rose from the Riverwest Neighborhood Association and was given credibility as a feasible project by involving the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program in 2000. RTCA assisted the River Revitalization Foundation's efforts to develop the trail by including elected officials, public land managers, managers of funding sources, and private landowners in the process. In 10 years time, much has transpired since RTCA's initial involvement: a federal highway grant was obtained, matching funds raised, a complex 3-way urban land swap executed, and landscaping for a new University of Wisconsin dormitory adjacent to the trail was coordinated. Lesson learned: urban trails take patience but are well worth the wait.

"It is largely due to the assistance and support received from the NPS RTCA program that we were able to complete the Beerline Trail project in Milwaukee's Riverwest neighborhood. This trail is an amenity to be enjoyed by all for generations to come."

-Kimberly Gleffe, Executive Director,
River Revitalization Foundation,

Current Projects

1. Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge

Project Partner: McHenry County Conservation District

RTCA Contact: Diane Banta

Location: Lake Geneva

Congressional District(s): WI-1

Project Goal

Preserve ecologically important lands totaling approximately 5,000 acres in NE Illinois and SE Wisconsin as a National Wildlife Refuge with an established Friends Group which oversees the work process and partnership.

NPS Role

Guide Friends of Hack-ma-tack through the process of defining the potential National Wildlife Refuge, defining acres to be protected, partnership building and public involvement opportunities while building a sustainable non-profit organization.

2. Lake Michigan Water Trail Organizational Development

Project Partner: Illinois Paddling Council

RTCA Contact: Diane Banta

Location: IL, IN, MI, WI

Congressional District(s): WI-2



Hiking the East Bank Trail

Project Goal

Build a partnership organization to work on the Lake Michigan Water Trail which will provide access to Lake Michigan in four states through numerous landings and access points while marketing the trail for increased tourism and economic development opportunities.

NPS Role

Convene quad-state paddler organizations, local governments and state governments to set vision, mission and goals/outcomes leading to the designation of the 200 mile Lake Michigan Water Trail as a National Recreational Trail.

3. Master Trail Plan for Milwaukee County Grounds

Project Partner: Village of Wauwatosa

RTCA Contact: Angie Tornes

Location: Wauwatosa

Congressional District(s): WI-5

Project Goal

An updated concept plan for an interconnected trail system on the county grounds. Active engagement of the various facility managers and advocacy groups in the trail planning process



Celebrating the Beer Line Trail Opening with the Cutting of the Bike Chain!

Current Projects cont.

NPS Role

Assist in coordinating the various entities located on the county grounds, leveraging their resources to update a concept plan for a trail system, and developing a trail system master plan; identify a public involvement work plan; and help develop an action plan for implementation.

4. Mississippi River Trail & Collaborative Support

Project Partner: Mississippi River Trail, Inc.

RTCA Contact: David Thomson

Location: Headwaters of Mississippi River in Minnesota to Gulf of Mexico, New Orleans.

Congressional District(s): AR-1,4, IA-2,4, IL-4,12,16,17,19, MN-2,3,4,5,6,8, MO-1,2,3,8,9, WI-3

Project Goal:

Locally: Develop 71 miles of trail from Vicksburg, MS to Natchez, MS. Nationally: Create a network of 3,000 miles of trail from Minnesota to Louisiana.

NPS Role

Provide facilitation assistance in support of the development of segments of the MRT in Mississippi through outreach and MRT Workshop Planning. Provide facilitation assistance towards developing framework for Mississippi River Connections Collaborative as outlined in a Memorandum of Understanding, by and between, the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Mississippi River Trail, Inc.

5. Niagara Escarpment Greenway Plan

Project Partner: Niagara Escarpment Resource Network (NERN)

RTCA Contact: Angie Tornes

Location: Six counties (Door, Kewaunee, Brown, Calumet, Fond du Lac, and Dodge)

Congressional District(s): WI-6, 8

Project Goal:

The project will identify and map a

170-mile greenway corridor associated with the Niagara Escarpment geological formation. Existing resource and recreation-based nodes will be identified in order to develop a connected network of regional and local sites which may include off-road and on-road walking and bike trails/routes as well as driving routes.

NPS Role

Assist with revising goals and objectives for the draft greenway plan; assist in the assessment of resources, particularly aesthetics; and assist in the development of a concept plan with broad indications of 1) greenways which incorporate priority conservation areas and 2) a wide main corridor and side trail connectors. Assist in developing public involvement and media relations. Assist in identifying potential funding sources and strategies for implementation.

6. The Great Rivers Confluence

Project Partner: Friends of Freedom Park

RTCA Contact: Randy Thoreson

Location: Prescott

Congressional District(s): WI-3

Project Goal

Through collaborative efforts, establish/create multi-state partnerships for the planning and implementation of a 17 mile trail (land and water) connecting the communities of Prescott, Wisconsin and Hastings, Minnesota (including Pierce County, Wisconsin and Dakota and Washington County, Minnesota).

NPS Role:

The Great Rivers Confluence Project intends, through connection and education, to : 1) foster partnerships across national, state, and local divisions; 2) create and adopt a common vision of Great Rivers preservation, management, and recreational experiences; and 3) plan and construct new trails in

the existing 17 mile trail gap (Eastern Minnesota and Western Wisconsin) within the Mississippi River and St. Croix River Confluence area.

7. Wisconsin Lake Michigan Water Trail

Project Partner: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

RTCA Contact: Angie Tornes

Location: Greenbay

Congressional District(s): WI-1,4,5,6,8

Project Goal

Develop a 450-mile water trail along the Wisconsin Shorelines of Lake Michigan and Green Bay. Conduct a gap analysis identifying zones where public access is needed; these would be targeted for future land acquisition. Develop a branding strategy and logo and provide educational opportunities to encourage better understanding of the need to help protect the lake's ecosystem.

NPS Role

Contribute expertise from previous large water trail projects (e.g., Lake Superior Water Trail). Lead public participation efforts. Facilitate future partnerships with organizations that can help implement and build the water trail.



We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from RTCA Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.



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2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251 Miles of Trail Developed

1,694 Miles of River Conserved

25,370 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

Find more information online at
www.nps.gov/rtca



EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

Recent Successes

Milwaukee River Urban Corridor Protection

In summer, a lush, green corridor unexpectedly parallels the Milwaukee River and creeps up and over the valley walls immediately north of urbanized downtown Milwaukee. Now that protective measures are in place, it's assured that the corridor will continue to provide a respite for humans and wildlife as well as contribute to the area's attractiveness. Thanks to the diligence and tenacity over four years of a broad coalition of interested organizations, agencies, landowners, and individuals a vision of long term protection was translated into reality.

The zoning overlay district to protect viewshed, riparian buffers, and sensitive slopes along the river in an urbanized setting is one of the most protective of its kind in the country; it is accompanied by a stormwater district and strict design guidelines for development outside of the buffer.

A master plan was developed for the river corridor to guide coordinated restoration efforts and recreation trail

management. Lastly, the Milwaukee River Greenway Coalition was created to execute the newly developed Memoranda of Understanding that establishes a framework for multi-party collaboration on corridor management. RTCA staff contributed technical assistance in the development of each of these protection measures and helped plan and coordinate public involvement.

"Thanks to the RTCA Program for their assistance in master planning, organizational development, and trail planning for the Milwaukee River Greenway. Their assistance was invaluable in making this effort a success."

-Ann Brummit, Director
Milwaukee River Work Group



Art along the Beer Line Trails