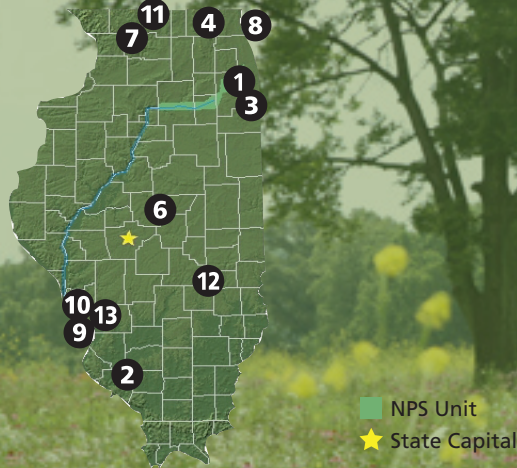




Illinois News



Forest Preserve District of Will County Nature Preserve

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2010

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Calumet Corridor Public Openspace Development
Town Builders Studios
2. Confluence Water Trails
Confluence Partnership
3. Grand Illinois Trail - Chicago Heights Gap
City of Chicago Heights
4. Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge
McHenry County Conservation District
5. Illinois Trail Vision
Illinois Trails Conservancy
6. Illinois Route 66 Trail
Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources
7. Lake Le-Aqua-Na Trail
Lena Park District
8. Lake Michigan Watertrail Organizational Development
Illinois Paddling Council
9. Mississippi River Connections
Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
10. Mounds Heritage Trail
The Confluence Partnership
11. Pecatonica River Blueway Plan
Friends of the Pecatonica River Foundation
12. TREC Trails
Friends of the Trail
13. UGRR Bike Route, Midwest Spur
Adventure Cycling Association

Recent Successes

Calumet- Sag Trail Selected as Green Legacy Project

Federal, state and local inter-governmental collaboration and community support crystallized for the 26-mile Calumet-Sag Trail during the Burnham Plan Centennial. The trail will run through 14 communities in Chicago's south suburbs following the Cal-Sag Channel. Like other Centennial Green Legacy Projects, the completed trail will link a number of local trails, as well as major regional and national

trails. From the Burnham Greenway and the Chicago Lakefront Trail on the east and to the Centennial and I & M Canal trails on the west, this trail will ultimately serve as the connector between two major federal lands – the I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor and the Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore.

Providing new recreational potential unequaled in the southland, this trail will also create an alternative transportation route to train stations along six suburban commuter rail lines to

over 200,000 residents. Trail engineering and corridor master planning are moving ahead and public and private fund raising efforts are underway for construction and implementation of the master plan.

The trail is being sponsored by many agencies and organizations that form the Calumet-Sag Trail Coalition with additional public support from the Friends of the Calumet-Sag Trail.

“RTCA helped us recognize the value of working with EVERY community along our trail”

- Mike Leonard,
Palos Heights, Park & Rec

Current Projects

1. Calumet Corridor Public Openspace Development

Project Partner: Town Builders Studios
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Lemont to Burnham
Congressional District(s): 1, 2

Project Goal:

Outreach and communications with local communities to build additional support for the Calumet-Sag Trail, leading to additional financial support for the construction of the project as well as building trail links to this backbone trail.

RTCA Role:

Facilitate the master planning process leading to the implementation and enhancement of over 32 miles of trail.

2. Confluence Water Trails

Project Partner: Confluence Partnership
RTCA Contact: Diana Allen
Location: St. Louis metropolitan region
Congressional District(s): 12, 19

Project Goal:

Develop 70 miles of water trails on the great rivers within The Confluence project area (30 miles of the Lewis & Clark Water Trail on the Missouri River and 40 miles on the Mississippi River Water Trail).

RTCA Role:

Convene stakeholders to look at opportunities for coordinated marketing, programming signage and continued trail development.

3. Grand Illinois Trail - Chicago Heights Gap

Project Partner: City of Chicago Heights
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Chicago Heights
Congressional District(s): 2

Project Goal:

Complete the one-mile gap in the Grand Illinois Trail in Chicago Heights, IL. Finish Phase 1 engineering, begin Phase 2 engineering and construction, and work in the community to build a trail support organization.

RTCA Role:

Bring success to Chicago Heights efforts that create a quality of life amenity in an area where residents are last to receive help due to perceived neighborhood problems. The City is working on transportation-oriented development and landlord training, which are linked to the improvement of this neighborhood. RTCA will enhance these outcomes by assisting with the development of a trail support organization to define community needs (bike programs for children, walking clubs, maintenance issues and security).

4. Hack-ma-tack National Wildlife Refuge

Project Partner: McHenry County Conservation District
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Bi-State region from Lake Geneva Wisconsin to McHenry County Illinois
Congressional District(s): 8, 16

Project Goal:

Preserve ecologically important lands totaling approximately 5,000 acres in northeastern Illinois and southeastern Wisconsin as a National Wildlife Refuge with an established friends group that oversees the work process and partnership.

RTCA 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.

5. Illinois Route 66 Trail Southern Route Development

Project Partner: IL DNR
RTCA Contact: Jeff Obirek
Location: Springfield to Alton
Congressional District(s): 17, 18, 19

Project Goal:

Complete off-road trail connections between Springfield and Alton, IL along the historic Route 66 roadway, totaling approximately 130 miles of improved trails.

RTCA Role:

Work with communities to plan and develop local sections of the Route 66 Trail in conjunction with local connecting trail systems.

6. Illinois Trail Vision

Project Partner: IL Trails Conservancy
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta



Calumet-Sag Trail Burnham Centennial Dedication

Current Projects cont.

Location: Statewide
Congressional District(s): Statewide

Project Goal:

Define a new vision and strategic plan for the statewide trail organization that defines the next steps for Conservancy leadership and action items for the organization and its members. The process will be geared toward identifying statewide trail opportunities, inventorying and mapping existing trails and prioritizing the development of trail networks.

RTCA Role:

Facilitate the process of organizational review and generation of statewide trail goals.

7. Lake Le-Aqua-Na Trail

Project Partner: Lena Park District
RTCA Contact: Jeff Obirek
Location: Lena
Congressional District(s): 16

Project Goal:

To build a trail coalition engaged in strategic planning and building a trail that links the Lena to Lake Le-Aqua-Na State Park.

RTCA Role:

Build sustainable partnerships with local governments to acquire land or easements for a five-mile trail linking the village of Lena to Lake Le-Aqua-Na state Park.

8. Lake Michigan Watertrail

Project Partner: Illinois Paddling Council
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Lake Michigan communities in IL, IN, MI, WI
Congressional District: 2

Project Goal:

Build a partnership organization to work on the Lake Michigan Water Trail that will work to provide access to Lake Michigan in four states through numerous landings and access points



Planning a watertrail

while marketing the trail for increased tourism and economic development opportunities.

RTCA Role:

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

9. Mississippi River Connections

Project Partner: Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
RTCA Contacts: Diana Allen, Randy Thoreson
Location: Headwaters of Mississippi River in Minnesota to Gulf of Mexico, New Orleans
Congressional Districts: 4, 12, 16, 17, 19

Project Goal:

Through connections with 18 National Parks and Trails, build a collaborative partnership that highlights and enhances 3,000 miles of trail (land and water) and 30,000 acres of open space along the entire Mississippi River corridor.

RTCA Role:

Provide support and services, including facilitation, research and coordination to the Mississippi River Parks and Trails Collaboration to help partners show-

case the Mississippi River as a valuable national natural resource and recreation corridor. RTCA services will enhance local, state, regional and national efforts to: 1) protect and preserve the Mississippi River and the Mississippi River Trail as a national landscape; 2) demonstrate the impact of partnership development by and between National Park Service superintendents and other public and private partners, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service refuge managers, Departments of Natural Resources in the ten-state region, as well as organizations such as the Mississippi River Network Biodiversity Project, The Conservation Fund, and Confluence Greenway.

10. Mounds Heritage Trail

The Confluence Partnership
RTCA Contact: Diana Allen
Location: City of St. Louis, Missouri; St. Clair and Madison Counties, Illinois
Congressional District(s): 12

Project Goal:

Develop a nine-mile on-road interpretive trail, with links to two miles of off-road interpretive trails at Cahokia Mounds that will focus visitors' attention on the rich cultural and natural attributes of the area.

RTCA Role:

Assist with community outreach efforts, build project support in a number of jurisdictions and provide insights

We're Here For You.

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



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2009 Nationwide Partnership Success

3,441 Miles of Trail Developed

2,664 Miles of River Conserved

87,385 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

97% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

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



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Current Projects cont.

from comparable heritage trail projects nationally that could be used as models.

11. Pecatonica River Blueway Plan

Project Partner: Friends of the Pecatonica River Foundation
RTCA Contact: Jeff Obirek
Location: Stevenson County
Congressional District(s): 16

Project Goal:

Complete three new access sites along 58 miles of waterways.

RTCA Role:

Work with the Pecatonica River Foundation and other interested individuals to create trail access sites and to complete habitat restoration in areas surrounding these sites. Help to locate funding sources, leadership building for the organization and training in natural resources conservation.

12. TREC Trails

Project Partner: Friends of the Trail
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Effingham
Congressional District(s): 19

Project Goal:

Develop a 3-mile trail linking downtown streets to an off-road trail which will link to a local State Park.

RTCA Role:

Work with trail organization and community to complete the three-mile trail and to plan to implement other trail opportunities within the county.

13. UGRR Bike Route, Midwest Spur

Project Partner: Adventure Cycling Association
RTCA Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Alton, Illinois to Detroit, Michigan
Congressional District(s): 1, 2, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19

Project Goal:

Develop a bike route that follows the journey of C. Quarles, an escaping slave, through Illinois and Michigan into Canada. The trail will cover approximately 400 miles.

RTCA Role:

Work with multi-state group to find appropriate bike route through Illinois, both on road and off.



Route 66 Publicity Bike Ride, September 2009