

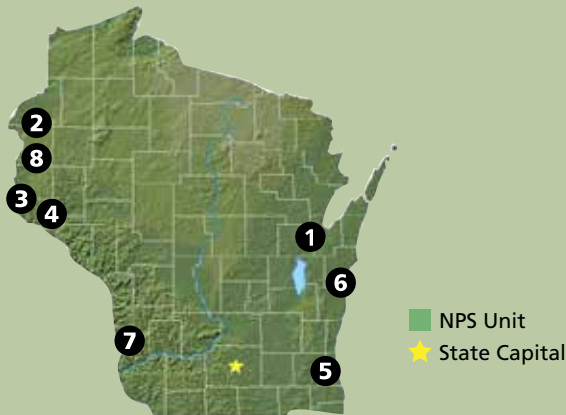


Wisconsin News



The sheer cliffs of Inspiration Point, Rock Island can be traced from Door County to Niagara Falls. Photo: Tim Sweet

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2014



CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Water Trail
Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway
2. Grantsburg Interconnected Trail System
Grantsburg Area Chamber of Commerce
3. Great Rivers Confluence Project - Phase II
Friends of Freedom Park
4. Great Rivers Confluence Project - Phase III
Friends of Freedom Park
5. Lake Michigan Trails Organizational Development
Lake Michigan Water Trail Association
6. Lake Michigan Water Trail, Wisconsin's Segment
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
7. Mississippi River Connections Collaborative/Mississippi River Trail
Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
8. St. Croix Falls River Walk and Mountain Bike Trails
City of St. Croix Falls

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

Niagara Escarpment Greenway

The link between land forms, natural resources, and culture remains strong along the Niagara Escarpment in northeast Wisconsin. The escarpment is an internationally recognized geologic formation that emerges in Wisconsin, continues into Upper Michigan, Ontario, and over its namesake falls into New York. High limestone cliffs in Wisconsin and their gently sloping backsides create unique ecosystems and living conditions that have attracted a diversity of cultures. Today's descendants of American Indian, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, Danish, and Belgian immigrants, along with more recent migrants, recognize the escarpment's role in their sense of place and seek to conserve it.

The Niagara Escarpment Resource Network is nearing completion of a master greenway plan for the 170-mile escarpment. It will include recommendations for conserving

“NPS’ leadership provided the ‘spark’ which ignited the collaborative work on this initiative. This greenway plan is the all-important stepping stone to improved conservation and recreation opportunities on the land. Thank you for your help!”

- Eric Fowle, Founding Co-Chair Niagara Escarpment Resource Network

Current Projects

1. Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Water Trail

Project Partner: Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway

NPS Contact: Angie Tornes

Location: Green Bay to Prairie du Chien
Congressional District: WI - 3, 8

Project Goal

Develop a well-marked accessible 280-mile water trail, easily portaged, along the historic Fox and Wisconsin Rivers connecting the Mississippi River with Green Bay in Lake Michigan. Outcomes include developing outreach materials for the entire trail as well as a signage plan and improved portages for safe paddling through a complex setting of hydropower dams, locks, canals, and other industrial land uses.

NPS Role

Assist Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway in developing outreach materials such as a map, brochure, and website; assist in addressing safety concerns around dams. Provide recommendations for the historic restoration, location, recognition, and interpretation of the historic Vulcan hydropower project.

2. Grantsburg Interconnected Trail System

Project Partner: Grantsburg Area Chamber of Commerce

NPS Contact: Randy Thoreson

Location: Grantsburg
Congressional District: WI - 7

Project Goal

A Grantsburg interconnected trail system used by citizens and visitors.

NPS Role

Assist the Grantsburg Area Chamber of Commerce in the planning, design, and implementation of an Interconnected trail system in Grantsburg, Wisconsin.



Fox-Wisconsin Heritage Parkway Water Trail - DePere Lock Photo: NPS

3. Great Rivers Confluence Project - Phase II

Project Partner: Friends of Freedom Park

NPS Contact: Randy Thoreson

Location: Prescott and River Falls
Congressional District: WI - 3

Project Goal

Continue the Great Rivers Confluence Project which intends to foster partnerships across national, state and local divisions through connections and partnerships; create and adopt a common vision of Great Rivers Preservation and management; and plan and implement land and water recreational opportunities within the Minnesota and Wisconsin confluence project area.

NPS Role

Provide continued technical assistance, coordination, and facilitation in the planning and development of recreational opportunities, tourism, mapping formulation, partnerships building and natural resources protection strategies as part of the Great Rivers Confluence Project.

4. Great Rivers Confluence Project - Phase III

Project Partner: Friends of Freedom Park

NPS Contact: Randy Thoreson

Location: Prescott and River Falls
Congressional District: WI - 3

Project Goal

Begin phase III of the Great River Confluence Project which builds on the many activities and work elements of the original project. The project (specifically phase III) will complete and serve an already successful outreach program to a wide variety of partnerships in river and water trails planning and development, natural resources protection, eco-tourism, educational systems, outreach, wayfinding, and mapping for citizens and visitors to the approximately 100 square mile area.

NPS Role

Support the Great Rivers Confluence vision: "Recognize and appreciate the confluence of the Mississippi and St. Croix Rivers and its people, places and stories through connections, partnerships, and recreational opportunities."

Current Projects cont.

5. Lake Michigan Trails Organizational Development

Project Partner: Lake Michigan Water Trail Association
NPS Contact: Diane Banta
Location: Lake Michigan Shoreline
Congressional District: WI - 1, 4, 5, 6, 8

Project Goal

Build a partnership organization to work on the Lake Michigan trails which will provide access to Lake Michigan in four states. Assist in planning three recreation travel modes and marketing the trail for increased tourism and economic development opportunities.

NPS Role

Convene quad state organizations, local governments, and state governments to set vision, mission, and goals/outcomes leading to the development of land and water trails, US bike routes and enhancing the Lake Michigan Circle Route.

6. Lake Michigan Water Trail, Wisconsin's Segment

Project Partner: Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
NPS Contact: Angie Tornes
Location: Eastern Wisconsin
Congressional District: WI - 1, 4, 5, 6, 8

Project Goal

Develop physical and digital outreach materials for the 533-mile water trail along the Wisconsin shorelines of Lake Michigan and Green Bay including maps, brochures, signs, logo, and website to foster greater access to and stewardship of Lake Michigan.

NPS Role

Work with a team of designers, interpreters, land managers, historians, and a sculptural art student to develop artistic interpretive panels. Assist in developing a user friendly map, brochure, and website; help complete a National Water Trail System application.



Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Water Trail - Beach Access. Photo: Ken Braband

7. Mississippi River Connections Collaborative/Mississippi River Trail

Project Partner: Mississippi River Trail, Inc.
NPS Contact: Rory Robinson
Location: Mississippi River, source to mouth
Congressional District: WI - 3, 7

Project Goal

Outreach to local communities to encourage improvements to the Mississippi River Trail (MRT) for recreation, tourism, and community development; continued technical assistance in the development of the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (MRCC) and increased long-term organizational viability; further develop the Mississippi River blueway portion of the trail system; and develop a geotourism initiative with the National Geographic Society.

NPS Role

Assist the MRCC with organizational development, outreach to other organizations and agencies, and development and implementation of their strategic and operations plans. Increase the MRT's capacity to help develop water and land-based trails

along the Mississippi River. Specifically, over the next year, assist the MRCC with the development of a sustainable destination tourism (geotourism) initiative in partnership with the National Geographic Society.

8. St. Croix Falls River Walk and Mountain Bike Trails

Project Partner: City of St. Croix Falls
NPS Contact: Randy Thoreson
Location: St. Croix Falls
Congressional District: WI - 7

Project Goal

Plan and complete St. Croix Falls Riverwalk Trail and a system of mountain bike trails within the community.

NPS Role

Assist the City of St. Croix Falls in the planning, design, and implementation of a river walk along the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. Assist the City of St. Croix Falls in the planning, design, and implementation of mountain bike trail projects within the community and linking to area wide recreational trails opportunities.

We're Here For You!

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



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2013 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,357 Miles of Trail Developed

736 Miles of River Conserved

20,270 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

Find more information online at

www.nps.gov/rtca



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Recent Successes cont.

contiguous open space, trail locations and development, collaborations, and funding sources. Agritourism, including vineyards, is a key plan component; the escarpment's terroir (unique set of geology, geography, and climate) was recently designated an American Viticultural Area.

The NPS assisted with defining goals and objectives for the greenway plan; developing public involvement; facilitating regional workshops; and formulating the plan's structure and content.



Island off the tip of Door County peninsula and part of the Lake Michigan Water Trail.
Photo: Ken Braband

Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Water Trail: Plum Island

Several lovely islands comprise part of the 533-mile Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Water Trail, a designated America's Great Outdoors Project. One island, Plum Island, is a 291-acre outpost once occupied by the U.S. Life Saving Service and U.S. Coast Guard. These residents left behind a cluster of Victorian buildings which serve as quiet sentinels over the bird sanctuary managed by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and its partner, The Friends of Plum and Pilot Island.

Plum Island's combination of scenic, historic, and unique natural assets inevitably lead to a request for paddler access and ways to explore the island, previously closed to the public. The NPS responded by confirming sustainable paddler access points that allow connections to historic buildings and navigational structures. The NPS identified trail alignments throughout the island, reviewed the trail and interpretive plans, facilitated connections between managers and NPS historic architecture staff, and identified funding sources for historic maritime highway access and building preservation.

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. Program staff provide 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.