

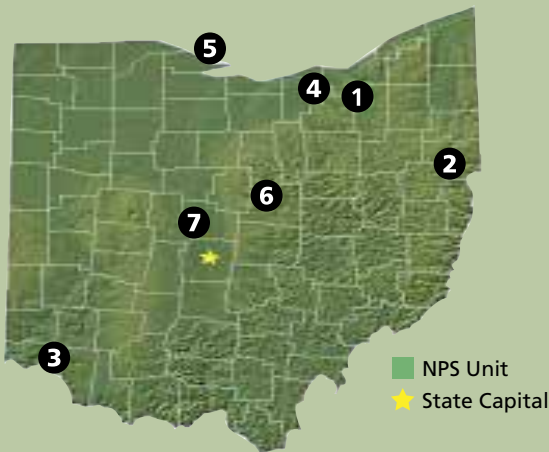


Ohio News



Greater Cincinnati Trails planners, users, and advocates pledging to move trails forward! Photo: Brewster Rhoads

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2014



CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Cuyahoga River Water Trail
Friends of the Crooked River
2. Friends of the Mahoning River
Friends of the Mahoning River
3. Greater Cincinnati Regional Trails
Green Umbrella Sustainability Alliance
4. Greater Cleveland Trails and Greenways
West Creek Conservancy
5. Lake Erie Islands Water Trails
Put-in-Bay Township Park District
6. Ohio Statewide Trails
Ohio Trails Partnership
7. Richwood Lake Trail
Richwood Civic Center

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

Trails Summit Leads to Health Funding for a Greater Cincinnati Regional Trails Plan

The first Green Umbrella Regional Trails Summit in the spring of 2013 brought together nearly 130 trail advocates representing more than 70 trail groups from across 3 states and 11 counties

“We are focused on maximizing the collective impact of individuals and organizations to develop a regional trails vision.”

- Brewster Rhoads, Executive Director of Green Umbrella

to discuss the current state of trails and the role of trails in the future of the region. The success of the Summit led to the creation of the Regional Trails Alliance (RTA) to bring together trail advocates, planners, and users for the common goal of connecting the extensive system of existing trails, moving Greater Cincinnati to a top 50

bike friendly destination, and for increasing public support for walking/biking facilities.

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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.

Current Projects

1. Cuyahoga River Water Trail

Project Partner: Friends of the Crooked River

NPS Contact: Andrea Irland

Location: Northeast Ohio

Congressional Districts: OH - 11, 12, 13, 16

Project Goal

Establish over 100 miles of water trail on the Cuyahoga River, taking what was once known only for being so polluted that it caught on fire and promoting it for improved water quality, recreational opportunities, economic development, and a regional asset.

NPS Role

Assist in stakeholder engagement, identify funding and assistance resources, develop partnerships, develop a plan, and facilitation of community and management entities engagement. Working with multiple partners to designate route, develop access points, and create educational and promotional materials.



The Mahoning River - awaiting improved water quality, increased recreation, and greater appreciation. Photo: NPS

2. Friends of the Mahoning River

Project Partner: Friends of the Mahoning River

NPS Contact: Andrea Irland

Location: Youngstown, Mahoning County, Mahoning River Watershed

Congressional District: OH - 4

Project Goal

Friends of the Mahoning River would like to be a strong community organization that collaborates to improve environmental quality, develop recreational opportunities, and build support for this neglected river.

NPS Role

Assist this grassroots group with organizational development and engagement of community partners to advocate for the Mahoning River in Youngstown. Help to set goals, develop programs and projects, and create an action plan.

3. Greater Cincinnati Regional Trails

Project Partner: Green Umbrella Regional Sustainability Alliance

NPS Contact: Andrea Irland

Location: Greater Cincinnati in the 9 counties of Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana

Congressional Districts: OH - 1, 2; KY - 4; IN - 6

Project Goal

Develop the capacity of the Green Umbrella Regional Trails Alliance, work with partners to create a regional trails plan, and convene a second regional trails summit to highlight the regional trails vision and nexus of health and trails.

NPS Role

Continue to engage trail partners, gather input in the development of a regional trails strategy and to strengthen the Regional Trails Alliance.



First clean up on the Cuyahoga River after dams removed in Cuyahoga Falls. Photo: NPS



Members of the trails community sign onto a vision statement to connect trails. Photo: Brewster Rhoads

Current Projects cont.

4. Greater Cleveland Trails and Greenways

Project Partner: West Creek Conservancy

NPS Contact: Rory Robinson

Location: Cleveland, Cuyahoga, Lorain, Medina, Summit and Lake Counties

Congressional Districts: OH - 9, 10, 11, 13, 17

Project Goal

Make Greater Cleveland a place of diverse and balanced transportation, recreation and fitness options; connect the major unconnected trail pieces; and make the network accessible to persons of all socioeconomic levels.

NPS Role

Continue to work with West Creek Conservancy and other regional partners to convene and facilitate discussions leading to the formation of a regional consortium focused on trail and greenway development in the Greater Cleveland area.

5. Lake Erie Islands Water Trails

Project Partner: Put-In-Bay Township Park District

NPS Contact: Andrea Irland

Location: Ottawa County

Congressional District: OH - 9



Ohio Trails Partnership logo representing different trail user groups statewide.
Photo: NPS

Project Goal

Establish an identified water trail with specific access points, signage, cultural/natural interpretation, and safety information.

NPS Role

Engage the community in development of water trails around the Lake Erie Islands with special attention to safety and natural resources.

6. Ohio Statewide Trails

Project Partner: Ohio Trails Partnership

NPS Contact: Rory Robinson

Location: Ohio, Statewide

Congressional District: Statewide

Project Goal

The Ohio Trails Partnership is an innovative collaboration working proactively to develop and maintain the nation's best close-to-home, non-motorized statewide trails system through a strong partnership between land managers and trail user groups.

NPS Role

Help revitalize the Ohio Trails Partnership to be the voice for non-motorized trail opportunities throughout Ohio. The assistance from NPS will focus on increasing the Ohio Trails Partnership's recognition, acceptance, and capacity. Help the Ohio Trails Partnership define outreach strategies to organizations and individuals leading to strong support of trails from state and local government, regional agencies, and the private sector.

7. Richwood Lake Trail

Project Partner: Richwood Civic Center

NPS Contact: Andrea Irland

Location: Richwood

Congressional District: OH - 15

Project Goal

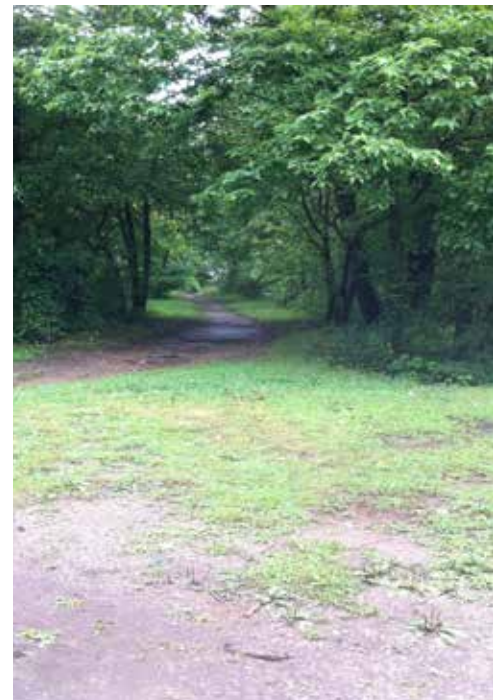
Develop a one-mile multi-purpose trail connected to and embraced by the community.



Beautiful Richwood Lake. Photo: NPS

NPS Role

Assist small community in building support for a multi-purpose path around the lake in a village park that connects schools, senior center, and downtown while realizing a host of other benefits.



The primitive trail around beautiful Richwood Lake. Photo: NPS

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.

One of the organizations attending the Regional Trails Summit was The Health Foundation of Greater Cincinnati - now Interact for Health - which has recently shifted its focus from healthcare access to health promotion and awarded its first two signature grants to community organizations to promote health. Green Umbrella received a \$70,000 grant to develop a Regional Trails Master Plan to connect walking and bicycle trails throughout the Greater Cincinnati region. Groundwork Cincinnati was also awarded \$80,000 to expand a multi-purpose trail while creating green space along Mill Creek. Health partnerships and impacts will be an important component of the regional trails master plan, and the connected system of trails envisioned will provide greater access to active living and healthy recreation.

Further regional community engagement meetings were held to gather information for the development of a trails master plan and map that will be adopted by jurisdictions, trail planners, and trail users. This plan and map will serve as the common vision for future planning and funding, and will allow RTA members access to continually updated trail information. The GIS map(s) will include important destinations, major missing connections, and planned future trails. The RTA will also create a user-friendly interface for trail users integrating trail information into the expansion of Green Umbrella's Meet Me Outdoors website which will connect kids to the abundance of parks, trails and programs. Many RTA partners already have successful parks, trails, and programs of their own. Developing connections regionally will strengthen the network of parks and access to area facilities, and provide more opportunities for outdoor recreation and education for Cincinnati youth.

Building upon the success of the first annual Regional Trails Summit, plans are being made for the second annual Summit in spring 2014, to highlight the regional master plan and the nexus between public health and trails.

Dam removals build enthusiasm for water trail

In Cuyahoga Falls, the Cuyahoga River is flowing more freely with the removal of two dams during the summer of 2013. The dam removal not only improved water quality and wildlife habitat but also created a more narrow and natural river flow. The River now provides some of the best water for kayaking within 250 miles, including Class III to V rapids for improved whitewater recreation. The City of Cuyahoga Falls is very excited about the many benefits the dam removal has brought to the region and the Cuyahoga River Water Trail. City officials are working with the Cuyahoga River Water Trail Partners to plan new access points to the river and the extension of their current boardwalk.



The Cuyahoga River before and after removal of the Sheraton Dam. Photos: David Hill and NPS