



Michigan News



Iron Ore Heritage Trail and Fish Pier

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2012

1. **Building Better Resources for North Country Trail Association**
North Country Trail Association
2. **Copper Heritage Trail - Houghton-Keweenaw Trails**
Western Upper Peninsula Health Department
3. **Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails**
Friends of the Fred Meijer River Valley Rail-Trail
4. **Lake Michigan Watertrail Organizational Development**
Lake Michigan Water Trail Association
5. **Michigan Equestrian Trails and Facilities Plan**
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
6. **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail**
The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments

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 Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail

The groundbreaking celebrated the construction of the first 5 miles of the 27 mile trail which will wind through Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The trail will provide a safe, non-motorized, multi-use transportation alternative connecting the Lakeshore's main visitor destinations with the gateway communities of Glen Arbor and Empire, giving people of all levels of physical ability the opportunity to get "off the beaten track" to experience and explore the Lakeshore's beautiful natural areas, scenic landscapes, and historic districts.

Tom Nixon who chairs The Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route said, "this is truly a partnership project which involves the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCG), National Park Service, Michigan Department of Transportation, TART Trails, and the local municipalities. I'd like to recognize Barbara Nelson-Jameson with the NPS - RTCA and Patty O'Donnell with the NWMCG for their project leadership and successful grant writing skills which has captured over \$5 million in Federal Transportation grants and making this amazing trail possible."



Breaking ground on the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail, Superintendent Dusty Shultz and Senator Carl Levin

Current Projects

1. Building Better Resources for North Country Trail Association

Project Partner: North Country Trail Association

RTCA Contact: Barb Nelson-Jameson

Location: Lowell

Congressional Districts: MI- 1,2,4,6

Project Goal

Provide better resources and access to training so NCTA volunteers can effectively help build and maintain the North Country National Scenic Trail. Better education on land management issues, appropriate trail use, and resource impacts will provide volunteers with the knowledge they need to work successfully on the trail as well as with land owners and land managers.

NPS Role

Asses the current chapter capacity and identify needed resources, assistance, and training. Gather current resources (internal and external) to build the NCTA website chapter resources section and promote it. Develop new needed training materials (manuals, forms, presentations, online tutorials, and videos). Build a plan for on-the-ground trainings.

2. Copper Heritage Trail - Houghton-Keweenaw Trails

Project Partner: Western Upper Peninsula Health Department

RTCA Contact: Barb Nelson-Jameson

Location: cities of Houghton, Hancock, and Calumet

Congressional District: MI - 1

Project Goal

The Copper Heritage Trail is a 40-mile motorized and non-motorized multiple use rail corridor that connects the historic communities of the Copper Country, the area served by Keweenaw National Historical Park (KNHP) and numerous historic and cultural sites along the proposed route. The Trail parallels the Copper Country National



New Stretch of Iron Ore Heritage Trail in Marquette

Scenic Byway and will provide alternative transportation opportunities for residents and visitors to the region.

NPS Role

Assist in the development of the 40-mile Copper Heritage Trail (CHT) in Houghton County, connecting the historic copper mining towns of Chassell, Houghton, Hancock, Dollar Bay, Tamarack City, Hubbell, Lake Linden, Laurium and Calumet, to provide a venue for alternative transportation, recreation, and interpretation of historic and cultural sites.

3. Fred Meijer River Valley Rail Trails

Project Partner: Friends of the Fred Meijer River Valley Rail-Trail

RTCA Contact: Barb Nelson-Jameson

Location: Kent County, Montcalm County, City of Lowell, City of Greenville

Congressional Districts: MI - 3,4

Project Goal

A pedal and paddle trail - 37 miles of non-motorized multi-use trail and 40+ miles of adjacent water trail on the Flat and Grand Rivers.

NPS Role

Create planning team, planning committee, and facilitate the master planning process for the River Valley Rail Trail. Assist with the drafting of the master plan and action plan which will lead to funding and development of the trailway. In conjunction promote and facilitate the planning process for the Flat and Grand River water trails.

4. Lake Michigan Watertrail Organizational Development

Project Partner: Lake Michigan Water Trail Association

RTCA Contact: Diane Banta

Location: IL, IN, MI, WI

Congressional District: Illinois -2

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.

Current Projects cont.

NPS Role

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

5. Michigan Equestrian Trails and Facilities Plan

Project Partner: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
RTCA Contact: Mary Hanson
Location: Statewide
Congressional Districts: All

Project Goal

A statewide plan for equestrian trails and facilities on all DNR lands. The plan will define user supply and demand and appropriate trail and facility development objectives that are sustainable and protect natural resources while enhancing equestrian opportunities on MDNR lands.

NPS Role

Assist with the design and development of the planning and public engagement process. Conduct resource inventory of existing trails and facilities.

Plan and facilitate stakeholder meeting around the State, compile and analyze input/data, and participate on core planning team. Provide expertise on equestrian use, user conflicts, and trail/facilities development.

6. The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail

Project Partner: The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments
RTCA Contact: Barb Nelson-Jameson
Location: Empire
Congressional District: MI - 1

Project Goal

The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail (SBHT) is a 27 mile non-motorized, ADA accessible, multi-use trail through Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore connecting primary visitor destinations with the two gateway communities of Glen Arbor and Empire.

NPS Role

To assist with the planning and development of the 27 mile Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail, a non-motorized multi use trailway along the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route through Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.



Annual river clean-up on Cass River

We're Here For You.

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



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2011 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,991 Miles of Trail Developed

1,925 Miles of River Conserved

33,230 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

94% Percentage of Community Partners Satisfied

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



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Recent Successes cont.

Another 13 miles of the Iron Ore Heritage Trail completed

Two Grants have been awarded to the Iron Ore Heritage Trail to help with the construction of the 13 mile stretch from Negaunee to Marquette, MI. Good news for all trails users!

The Iron Ore Heritage Trail is a 48-mile, multi-use, year round trail that connects communities and people to the region's historic sites, museums, and human stories. Through multiple interpretation methods, the trail shares the story of the Marquette Iron Range and 160+ years of mining ore that changed the landscape of Marquette County and the United States.

“NPS-RTCA really helped us understand the importance of heritage tourism and how we can incorporate the iron ore heritage story into our trail through art and interpretation.”

- Carol Fulsher, Coordinator,
Iron Ore Heritage Trail Authority



“Double Jacking” for Ore sculpture along Iron Ore Heritage Trail