



Mississippi News



Hiking the Natches Trace Parkway. Photo courtesy of Dan Rogers



■ NPS Unit
★ State Capital

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2012

CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Junior Partnerships
Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership
2. Pascagoula River Recreation Corridor Trails
Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain
3. Mississippi River Trail Project
Mississippi River Trail, Inc.

ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) Program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. RTCA 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.

Recent Successes

From 2009-2011, NPS River, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program worked with Pinebelt Pathways, Forrest County, Mississippi, and other local officials to complete a conceptual network of trails and greenways throughout Forrest and Lamar counties. The plan links parks, schools, businesses, and other areas within the two counties. In May of 2011, Pinebelt Pathways, kicked off the “National Bike to Work Week” with festivities throughout the city, including a dedication of the last 2 miles of the Long Leaf Trace Rails to Trails. These last 2 miles will complete the 41-mile rail trail from the city of Prentiss to downtown Hattiesburg.



Hattiesburg Mayor, Johnnie Dupree (in white shirt and red tie) rides down Front Street for “Bike to Work Week.” Photo courtesy of WLOX TV

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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Current Projects

1. Gulf Coast Trails Junior Partnership

Location: Harrison, Jackson and Hancock Counties, Mississippi
Congressional District: 4
Project Partner: Gulf Coast Heritage Trails Partnership
NPS Contact: Liz Smith-Incer

Project Goal

Develop a junior trails partnership program focused on youth groups in the gulf coast area of Mississippi. The organized youth groups will gather knowledge from their peers and others to help develop, plan, and implement strategies for the development of trails, greenways, and nature based recreation along the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

RTCA Role

For 2012, RTCA will again assist with coordinating efforts between national, state, and local contacts to develop and implement the Junior Trails Partnership Program. RTCA will help identify potential youth partners from schools, youth organizations, and other similar groups.

2. Pascagoula River Recreation Corridor Trails

Project Partner: Land Trust for the Mississippi Coastal Plain
NPS Contact: Liz Smith-Incer
Location: Beginning at the confluence of the Leaf River and Chickasawhay River, south to the Gulf of Mexico
Congressional District: 4

Project Goal

Develop a work plan for the creation of a recreation corridor which will include blueways and walking trails that connect natural, cultural, and historical sites along the upper Pascagoula River.

RTCA Role

RTCA staff will assist in conducting workshops that will identify specific site and management issues and goals for areas within the river corridor.

3. Mississippi River Trail

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

Congressional Districts: AR - 1, 4; IO - 2, 4; IL - 4, 12, 16, 17, 19; KY - 1; LA - 1, 2, 3, 5, 6; MN - 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 8; MO - 1, 2, 3, 8, 9; MS - 1, 2, 3; TN - 7, 8, 9; WI - 3

Project Partner: Mississippi River Trail, Inc.

NPS Contact: Liz Smith-Incer

Project Goal

The Mississippi River Trail (MRT), once completed, will provide a 3,000-mile system of bicycle-friendly roads and multi-use pathways, including a paddling trail the entire length of the Mississippi River. The project will impact 20 million residents, connecting 400 communities in 123 counties in 10 states. Locally, RTCA will help develop 71 miles of trail from Vicksburg, Mississippi to Natchez.

RTCA Role

RTCA is convening federal, state, and local agencies and organizations for the project through the development of the Mississippi River Connections Collaborative (MRCC). MRCC seeks to provide people with physical and thematic connections to the river, thereby tapping unrealized potential to restore and protect this nationally significant resource.



Map of proposed Mississippi River Trail