



Texas News



Members of the Bike Share Expansion Project Team with B-Cycles at San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. Photo: NPS

Recent Successes

B-Cycle Bike Share Expansion to San Antonio Missions National Historical Park

RTCA is providing support to enhance bike and pedestrian connections between San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and the surrounding urban community.

Most recent RTCA project involvement successes include the City of San Antonio's award of a federal grant to expand the municipal bike share system, further south of downtown, to connect to the National Park.

The San Antonio B-Cycle Mission Reach Expansion Project is a partnership effort between the City of San Antonio, San Antonio Bike Share, the National Park Service, and the San Antonio River Authority. Funded through a \$324,000 grant from the Federal Transit Authority's Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks program, the effort aims to provide enhanced alternative transportation options for visitors of the National Park. The bike share expansion will provide eight additional bike stations at or near the four missions which are protected by the National Park Service.

In addition, RTCA helped the Park receive an award from the National Park Foundation for a Transportation Scholar to assist in the effort to identify and pursue alternative transportation opportunities.

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.

PROJECTS & PARTNERS 2013

- 1. Aransas Pathways**
Aransas Pathways Steering Committee
- 2. Bosque River Trails**
Keep Stephenville Beautiful
- 3. Brazos River Recreation Master Plan**
Fort Bend Green
- 4. Brooks City-Base Connections**
Brooks Development Authority
- 5. Connecting Brownsville's Historical Trail**
City of Brownsville, Palo Alto Battlefield NHP
- 6. Connect Trails to Parks: SAAN Feasibility Study**
San Antonio Missions NHP, El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT, San Antonio River Authority
- 7. Corpus Christi Trails**
City of Corpus Christi
- 8. Franklin Mountains Landscape Conservation**
Frontera Land Alliance
- 9. Greens Bayou Paddle Trail**
Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition
- 10. The Green Classroom**
The Green Classroom Organization
- 11. Llano River Biodiversity Trails**
Texas Tech University's Llano River Field Station
- 12. Turkey Creek Corridor**
Turkey Creek Recreation & Conservation Corridor Coalition

Find out more about each project starting on page 3.

Current Projects

1. Aransas Pathways

Partner: Aransas Pathways Steering Committee

RTCA Contact: Hugh Osborne

Location: Aransas County, Rockport, and Fulton

Congressional Districts: TX - 22, 27

Project Goal

A trail system that connects a variety of local resources in an integrated manner along with additional and upgraded birding sites. Trails, sidewalks, pathways and water routes linking birding sites to recognized historic sites and to other recreational sites around the community.

NPS Role

Assist in capacity-building of the newly created organization; facilitate the prioritization of potential project and allocation of resources to the selected projects; provide information on potential funding sources and on grant-writing.

2. Bosque River Trails

Partner: Keep Stephenville Beautiful

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: Stephenville

Congressional District: TX - 11

Project Goal

Development of a new 6.7-mile land trail along the Bosque River, 2 miles of paddling trail, 20 acres of created wetlands, and educational programs.

NPS Role

Convene partners and facilitate a workshop to develop a concept plan for the land and water trails. Assist the partners in formulating decision-making structures and strategies to move concepts to implementation, including identifying funding opportunities. Help craft operations strategies for educational programming, maintenance and management. Assist the partners in incorporating decisions into a master plan for the Bosque River Trails.



Aransas Trails will showcase birding opportunities. Photo: FeatherFest

3. Brazos River Recreation - Fort Bend Green

Partner: Fort Bend Green

RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk

Location: Fort Bend County, Southwest Metropolitan Houston

Congressional Districts: TX - 18, 22

Project Goal

A stakeholder-based Recreation Master Plan for a 90-mile stretch of the Brazos River to recommend water and land trails and recreation improvements.

NPS Role

Assist partner communities in identifying recreation and conservation opportunities along the Brazos River in Fort Bend County and help develop implementation plans for the highest priority recreation and conservation projects. Conduct public outreach



Paddlers on the Brazos. Photo: Steve Killian

events, surveys, and community workshops to determine priority actions for improving recreational access to the river.

4. Brooks City-Base Connections

Partner: Brooks Development Authority

RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood

Location: San Antonio

Congressional District: TX - 35

Project Goal

A new bike/pedestrian trail connecting the Brooks City-Base community in south San Antonio, the San Antonio River Trail, and the nearby San Antonio Missions National Historical Park; overcoming the barriers of crossing a busy roadway and an active railroad corridor.

NPS Role

Provide assistance to identify a viable trail route, provide guidance on developing a strategic plan, identify and recruit additional project partners, and provide available resources and funding sources for pursuing development of the trail.

Current Projects cont.

5. Connecting Brownsville's Historical Trail

Partners: City of Brownsville, Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park
RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood
Location: Brownsville
Congressional District: TX - 34

Project Goal

Expansion and enhancement of the Historic Battlefield Hike/Bike Trail to connect four key historic sites in Brownsville including the Palo Alto Battlefield National Historical Park.

NPS Role

Provide continued guidance in the stakeholder participation and civic engagement process, provide support in the overall trail development process, assist with incorporating public policy initiatives and local jurisdictional planning processes, assist in identifying potential funding sources, and provide support in partnership development and coordination.

6. Connect Trails to Parks: San Antonio Missions National Historical Park Feasibility Study

Partners: San Antonio Missions National Historical Park, El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail, and the San Antonio River Authority
RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood
Location: Bexar and Wilson County
Congressional Districts: TX - 1, 20, 28

Project Goal

Development of a feasibility study with clear alternatives to connect identified sites and routes associated with El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail to San Antonio Missions National Historical Park at Mission San Francisco de la Espada in San Antonio and Rancho de las Cabras in Floresville.

NPS Role

Provide project management, planning development, public outreach and civic engagement, partner coordination, and study development.

7. Corpus Christi Trails

Partner: City of Corpus Christi
RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk
Location: Corpus Christi, Robstown, Nueces County
Congressional District: TX - 27

Project Goal

A network of trails from Corpus Christi to Oso Bay (Gulf of Mexico) proposed along Oso Creek, totaling 14 miles on land and 17 miles on water. A large-scale outdoor learning center at the confluence of Oso Creek with Oso Bay with programming and exhibits, and various outdoor recreational opportunities, including kayaking, hiking, walking, biking and horse-back riding.

NPS Role

Develop a process to broaden and expand diverse stakeholder participation. Coordinate partnership activities, identify financial needs and funding sources, build collaboration between parties, and submit completed funding applications. Assist project partners with the development of a Paddle Trail Plan for Oso Creek.



Kayakers on Greens Bayou. Photo: Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition

8. Franklin Mountains Landscape Conservation

Project Partners: Frontera Land Alliance
RTCA Contact: Attila Bality
Location: El Paso
Congressional District: TX - 16

Project Goal

Preservation of the fragile lands at the urban fringe of El Paso and Franklin Mountains State Park.

NPS Role

Assist the Frontera Land Alliance in developing a green infrastructure network to enhance Franklin Mountains State Park. Support visioning workshops, project mapping strategies, development of a five-year action plan, and communications strategies for private landowners.



Franklin Mountains State Park. Photo: Frontera Land Alliance

Current Projects cont.

9. Greens Bayou Paddle Trail

Project Partner: Greens Bayou Corridor Coalition

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: Harris County, North & East Houston, Galena Park, Jacinto City

Congressional District: TX - 29

Project Goal

Develop a 20-mile paddling trail with suitable access sites, best management practices and designations as a Texas Paddle Trail and National Water Trail.

NPS Role

Develop community engagement opportunities in the planning process, identify additional stakeholders, build partner relationships (including landowners willing to allow access), help develop a strategic plan for implementation and management of the paddle trail, identify potential funding sources and assist with designation processes.

10. The Green Classroom

Project Partner: The Green Classroom Organization

RTCA Contact: Krista Sherwood

Location: San Antonio

Congressional District: TX - 35

Project Goal

Development of an organizational framework to further support environmental learning and recreational opportunities in south



Partners view Llano River from Texas Tech University's Field Station. Photo: NPS

San Antonio using the area's unique natural, cultural, and historical resources.

NPS Role

Provide guidance in organizational development, assistance in identifying and coordinating project partners, establishing bench marks, providing guidance for potential funding sources, and providing guidance in programming best practices.

11. Llano River Biodiversity Trail

Project Partner: Texas Tech

University's Llano River Field Station

RTCA Contact: Marta Newkirk

Location: Junction

Congressional District: TX - 11

Project Goal

Develop 3.2 miles of land trails which connect with a newly designated 4.4 mile paddle trail along the Llano River. Development of six demonstration areas of Best Management Practices for native plant gardens, rainwater harvesting systems, mesquite brush control, wildlife guzzlers with game cameras, invasive species management, and instream fish habitat improvement structures.

NPS Role

Develop a trail plan that allows the trails to serve as self-guided educational experiences through

various resource conservation demonstrations. Work with key partners to develop an appropriate public access plan for the trails on University property. Assist the University in engaging youth in natural resource planning.

12. Turkey Creek Corridor

Project Partner: Turkey Creek Recreation and Conservation Corridor Coalition

RTCA Contact: Kathryn Nichols

Location: City of Bryan, Brazos County

Congressional District: TX - 17

Project Goal

A protected, 485-acre greenbelt for recreation and conservation in the 7.8-mile floodplain of Turkey Creek, from downtown Bryan to the Brazos River.

NPS Role

Facilitate a decision-making process for the coalition to create a protected zone along Turkey Creek. Develop a vision plan for the greenbelt to guide future public access facilities and management policies based on an assessment of the conservation and recreation needs in urban, suburban and rural zones. Structure public processes to refine and support the greenbelt protection plan. Help create the legal mechanism for protecting the greenbelt and encouraging landowner participation in implementation and management.

“They are an invaluable source of inspiration, insight and practical guidance on trails, stakeholder engagement and effective planning.”

- Tom Arsuffi, Director – Texas Tech University, Llano River Field Station

We're Here For You.

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

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2012 Nationwide Partnership Success

2,154 Miles of Trail Developed

1,074 Miles of River Conserved

70,385 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.

Austin's Montopolis Neighborhood Enjoys New Trail

On National Public Lands Day in October, 2012, the Montopolis Greenbelt Association celebrated the opening of a long-awaited one-mile trail that the Association and their City and non-profit partners made happen with the help of RTCA. The natural surfaced and crushed granite trail provides users access to the woods and tributary creeks of a 24-acre tract donated to the Austin Watershed Protection Department by an area family. Montopolis Greenbelt Association obtained trail-building funds from the National Recreation Trail Fund, the Austin Parks Foundation, and other donors, allowing them to hire the highly-skilled local youth corps, American YouthWorks Environmental Corps, to build the trail.

Neighbors had their eye on a neglected greenspace in their urban area and believed it was suitable for trails. They sought RTCA assistance with the complex coordination effort between three different City of Austin departments, neighborhood associations, and a variety of stakeholders. As a result of a day-long community workshop that included field trips, walking assessments, mapping and photo documentation, the group submitted to the City three trail proposals – a through trail to link a transit stop to downtown; a combination network of sidewalks, on-street bike routes, and off-street trails linking parks; and a loop nature trail in the greenspace. The nature trail is the first to be implemented on the site.

“Fort Bend Green has been fortunate to be the recipient of RTCA program assistance. RTCA has undertaken our very large project and has been instrumental in each step of the process.”

- Kim Icenhower, Community Liaison, Fort Bend Green



Youth Corps proud of their Montopolis trail work. Photo: American Youthworks