



South Dakota News



Site of Oak Park Nature Trail

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2012

Current Projects:

1. Murdo Park Dam Recreational Trail
Town of Murdo
2. Oak Park Nature Trail Expansion
City of Whitewood

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

RTCA selects Oak Park Nature Trail Project

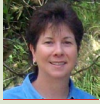
From June to September, 2011, Ace Crawford worked for RTCA in the Black Hills region. Her detail was an effort to create awareness of the RTCA program and to research outdoor recreation groups and projects. Crawford met with community/tribal officials, with Congressional staff, SD Tourism, SD Game, Fish & Parks, Forest Service, City Parks Departments, Chambers of Commerce, Mayors, Black Hills Council of Local Governments, and Economic Development officials to discuss the RTCA program and learn about their trail projects and plans. From this outreach the City of Whitewood applied for RTCA assistance and was selected as a 2012 project.

Whitewood, in the northern Black Hills, has a population of approximately 860 people. The city's Oak Park is well-maintained and has been an integral part of the community for over 100 years. Generations of Whitewood residents have used the park for community gatherings, family reunions, and weddings. There is a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walking/biking trail around the park that provides some great views of the surrounding hills. The park area is 40 acres, and of that, 5 to 8 acres are currently used by the public.

The proposed trail expansion is $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, and officials envision it being handicapped accessible to allow more people to enjoy the trail. In the proposed location are two rare species of plants that have been identified by horticulturists, which would add to the educational component of the trail. The existing trail is frequently used by the local grade school for class nature walks, in addition to other user groups. Trail expansion would provide additional healthy outdoor recreation opportunities at Oak Park.

We're Here For You.

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



Ace Crawford
605-574-3185
aileen_crawford@nps.gov



David Thomson
402-661-1570
dave_thomson@nps.gov

2011 Nationwide Partnership Success

- 1,991 Miles of Trail Developed
- 1,925 Miles of River Conserved
- 33,320 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. Murdo Park Dam Recreational Trail

Project Partner: South Central Resource, Conservation, & Development and the Town of Murdo
RTCA Contact: Ace Crawford
Location: Murdo, South Dakota
Congressional District: 1

Project Goal

A one-mile trail will be constructed around the perimeter of a lake on the outskirts of town.

NPS Role

Funds will be sought for the construction of an exercise trail. Assistance will be provided in the designing of the trail.

2. Oak Park Nature Trail Expansion

Project partner: City of Whitewood
RTCA Contact: Ace Crawford
Location: Whitewood, SD
Congressional District - 1

Project Goal

The City has a goal to expand the existing trail in Oak Park to include a 1/2 to 3/4-mile handicapped accessible trail.

NPS Role

RTCA will assist with project guidance and identifying funding strategies for the trail expansion.

“The Rivers & Trails is helping us navigate funding opportunities for our trail while working with partners to accomplish our goals.”

Jewell Bork, Program Assistant,
South Central Resource, Conservation & Development



Whitewood's Historic Oak Park Trail Expansion Project