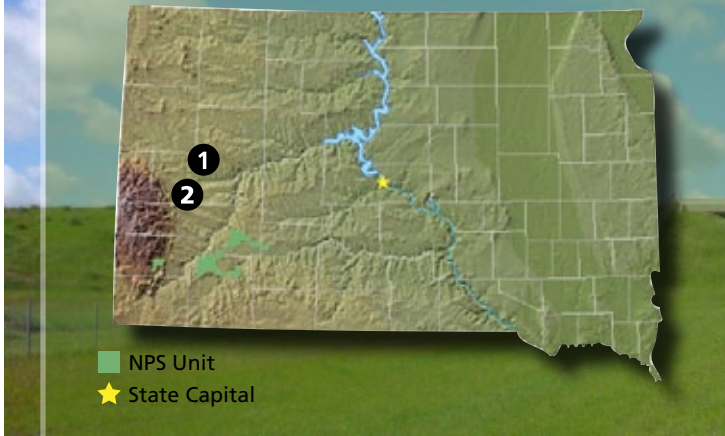




South Dakota News



Site of Box Elder Safe Routes to School Project

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2011

Current Projects:

1. **Box Elder Community Trail**
City of Box Elder
2. **Rapid City to Badlands Rail Trail**
Black Hills Mountain Bike Association

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

Box Elder Community Trail

Box Elder, a town of less than 3,000, is the gateway community to Ellsworth Air Force Base. Located 10 miles from Rapid City, it is subject to the typical pressures of any bedroom community. During the peak traffic times, the highway that bisects the community and leads workers to the base is dangerous to walk along or cross.

Unfortunately, this route is where many school children must walk daily to school. The City requested assistance from the RTCA program to develop a trails plan. They not only wanted safe routes to school, but trails that would educate the users while enroute to school.

Currently, the City has a grant for 6,000 feet of trail to the Douglas Middle School Arboretum, which borders a small area of wetlands. The City would also like to continue the trail further and expand the educational impact of this area with illustrations of flora and fauna that are native to the area. This trail and related interpretive materials would provide protection to the wildlife and create outdoor recreation that is educational, healthy, and a safe way for students to travel to school.

The proposed trail plan would connect and expand these so that the few existing trails and sidewalks would reach into the nearby subdivisions and the newly annexed homes from Ellsworth Air Force Base. Ultimately, once the key connections are made in Box Elder, the City would like to link to the biking and hiking trails in Rapid City and to the Mickelson Trail.

We're Here For You.

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



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2010 Nationwide Partnership Success

1,251 Miles of Trail Developed

1,694 Miles of River Conserved

25,370 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. Box Elder Community Trail

Project Partner: City of Box Elder
RTCA Contact: Karen Anderson
Location: Box Elder
Congressional District(s): SD-1

Project Goal

A trail system will be planned and developed. Currently, children must walk in the ditches alongside a major highway. This highway is the gateway to Ellsworth AFB and carries thousands of cars, especially when the children are walking to and from school.

NPS Role:

Develop an alternate route for students to access their schools.

Project Goal:

Establish a trail on an abandoned rail corridor of approximately 40 miles in length.

NPS Role:

Notification, education, and coordination of the groups who will play an integral role in this trail's development. Assist with the search for funding sources.

2. Rapid City to Badlands Rail Trail

Project Partner: Black Hills Mountain Bike Association
RTCA Contact: Karen Anderson
Location: Rapid City to Badlands National Park.
Congressional District(s): SD-1

"The Rivers & Trails program keeps vibrant by adapting and re-focusing efforts in response to the needs of the communities served."

- Terry Eastin, Executive Director, Mississippi River Trail, Inc.



Another opportunity for developing Safe Routes to School