

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL™ CRITERIA



Key to the process of defining the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail with states and trail partners was confirming a route across the country that would provide the highest-quality experience for all types of trail users—from long-distance cyclists and runners to casual daily explorers and everyone in between.

Trail criteria were developed to ensure the Great American Rail-Trail would provide safe, nonmotorized travel on a route that is entirely walkable and bikeable.

These trail criteria specify that:

- The Great America Rail-Trail be one contiguous route that is reasonably direct between Washington, D.C., and Washington State, and across each of the states it traverses.
- It will be separated from vehicle traffic—a minimum of 80 percent initially and ultimately entirely separated when the trail is complete.
- It will comprise existing trails to the extent possible and will represent trail priorities of the states and local jurisdictions that will host it.
- It will follow the most feasible route with regards to topography, geography and political priorities.
- It will serve as a catalyst for local economic development, including providing services for long-distance travelers.

View the preferred route of the Great American and learn more about the trail at greatamericanrailtrail.org.