

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL®

ROUTE ASSESSMENT REPORT
MAY 2026

RAILS TO
Trails
conservancy

Great American Rail-Trail

More Than 3,700 Miles Between Washington, D.C., and Washington State

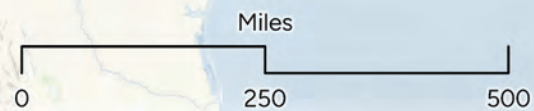


When Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) was founded in 1986, just a handful of rail-trails dotted the landscape. Today, there are nearly 25,000 miles of rail-trails crisscrossing the countryside and another 8,000 miles of rail-trails ready to be built—making the Great American Rail-Trail viable for the first time. Analyses implemented in the past few years of open rail-trails and out-of-service rail corridors show the potential to build a rail-trail that spans between Washington and Washington. Hundreds of conversations with state agencies and local trail managers confirm that this is a realistic pursuit.

This map shows the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail, including the 150+ rail-trails, greenways and other multiuse paths that make the route more than 55% complete. The trail gaps that will connect those existing trails are divided into two categories: planned segments, with specific routes that are already identified for completion; and unplanned segments, where potential routes are identified and planning work is ongoing to confirm specific routes.



- Existing Trails
- Planned Segments
- Unplanned Segments



For more information, visit: greatamericanrailtrail.org.

Powered by **Rails to Trails Conservancy**

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RTC staff and consultants who provided expertise and skills necessary to the production of this report include:

Amy Ahn, Kevin Belle, Ken Bryan, Sharon Congdon, Leah Gerber, Rachel Goff, Andrea Holliday, Brandi Horton, Amy Kapp, Joe LaCroix, Jacque Lavelle, Kevin Mills, Yvonne Mwangi, Eric Oberg, Kelly Pack, Aishwarya Shrestha, Laura Stark, Derek Strout, Liz Thorstensen and Marianne Wesley Fowler.

Cover Image: Iowa’s High Trestle Trail | Photo by Joe LaCroix



ABOUT RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY

RTC is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines. RTC serves as the national voice for the nation’s 40,000+ miles of rail-trails and multiuse trails, and 8,000+ miles of potential rail-trails ready to be built, with the goal of creating more walkable, bikeable communities in America. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and [@railstotrails](https://www.facebook.com/railstotrails) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

View the trails along the route at traillink.com/great-american-rail-trail and learn more about the Great American Rail-Trail at greatamericanrailtrail.org and RTC’s network-building initiative at trailnation.org. Follow the Great American Rail-Trail at [@greatamericanrailtrail](https://www.facebook.com/greatamericanrailtrail) on Facebook and Instagram.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

THE GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL VISION

Imagine pedaling across the entire country on a safe, seamless and scenic pathway—or walking a local trail that connects you to historic routes from across the country. You're enthralled in the experience of exploring America's heritage—its potential, its beauty and bounty, its people and places. Consider the intimacy of taking in all the country has to offer from the most personal vantage point: the trail.

Spanning more than 3,700 miles, the Great American Rail-Trail promises an all-new American experience. The trail travels through 12 states and the District of Columbia, connecting trail users and communities from Washington to Washington. As the first cross-country trail of its kind, the "Great American" will be hosted primarily by rail-trails—public paths created from former railroad corridors—as well as other multiuse trails, offering a route across the nation that is completely separated from vehicle traffic. Upon its completion, the Great American will serve more than 50 million people within 50 miles of its route, as well as the millions from across the country and the world who will explore America's diverse places via the trail.

The potential for a trail of this magnitude has been on Rails to Trails Conservancy's radar since the early days of RTC four decades ago, when co-founder David Burwell first dreamed of a trail for the nation. It would not be long before this dream would transform into vision, as RTC began to track rail-trail development in the 1980s, and the skeleton for a cross-country trail began to take shape. While the team at RTC "always knew" the potential for this trail, it also knew the significant undertaking and commitment required to get it done, thus setting two criteria for determining the trail's potential: a viable route that was more than 50% complete, and a pathway across the west.

Washington, D.C.—as the nation's capital and the home to RTC's national headquarters—had always been earmarked as the eastern terminus for a cross-country trail. In 2017, preliminary GIS analyses revealed multiple potential cross-country route options between Washington, D.C., and Washington State that were more than 50% complete. It was then that RTC knew the Great American Rail-Trail had the potential to become reality. Since then, the team at RTC has met with hundreds of trail partners along the preferred route for the trail as well as state agencies to align this vision with state and local trail priorities.

The Great American Rail-Trail marks RTC's most ambitious trail project to date and the single greatest trail project in the history of the country; its future is possible thanks to the hard work of the local trails community and countless volunteers, as well as the support and enthusiasm of each of the states it crosses.

THE "GREAT AMERICAN" IMPACT

Now—and at an even grander scale when complete—the Great American Rail-Trail will magnify the economic, social and community benefits that trails have delivered to people and places for decades. For example, a study produced by RTC in 2022 found that the Great American Rail-Trail has the potential to generate an estimated \$229.4 million annually in new visitor spending as a result of outdoor tourism and local business patronage. As a large-scale, cross-country trail network, the Great American has the potential to generate millions of new dollars a year for communities along its route by increasing trail connectivity between places, catalyzing new investment in trailside businesses and commercial opportunities, and enhancing tourism and outdoor recreation, which, according to a report by the Outdoor Recreation Roundtable, is one of the fastest growing industries in the country and a major economic driver.

As new trails and connecting corridors are developed, communities along the Great American route will also gain safer walking and biking access to the places they want to go—including jobs, public transportation and shopping centers. All who enjoy the Great American will have better access to the outdoors as the trail intersects green space within communities and connects to public lands along the route.

THE PREFERRED ROUTE OF THE “GREAT AMERICAN”

With RTC’s commitment to complete the Great American Rail-Trail, efforts have focused on working with trail partners and states to confirm a route across the country that would provide the highest-quality experience for all types of trail users—from bicyclists to hikers and everyone in between.

To this end, RTC embarked on a 12-month assessment of route options using its GIS database of more than 34,000 miles of existing, multiuse trails nationwide, and analyzing more than 300 state and local trail plans to identify planned future trails. RTC also met and worked with more than 200 local trail partners and more than 50 state agencies representing the trails along the route, shaping criteria to ensure safe, non-motorized travel on a route that is entirely walkable and bikeable.

These trail criteria specify that the Great American Rail-Trail be one contiguous route that is off-road and separated from vehicle traffic; include existing trails to the extent possible; be reasonably direct from Washington

to Washington; be amenable to the state and local jurisdictions through which it will cross; and serve as a catalyst for local economic development, including providing services for long-distance travelers.

Through the assessment, RTC and its partners have defined the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail as more than 3,700 miles—with approximately 2,085 miles of existing trails (trails along the route that are built and maintained by dedicated teams of local staff and volunteers) and approximately 1,670 miles of identified trail gaps (sections of trail that still need to be developed).

Each trail gap along the route of the Great American Rail-Trail has one or more future trail options identified as possible trail connections. Many of these gaps and proposed future trails are already identified in public plans that have been adopted at the state and local levels. Insight from local trail partners and states has helped to identify the preferred alignment that best corresponds with their priorities, with the intention of maximizing existing trail momentum as the Great American Rail-Trail is connected across the country.

TABLE 1: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE

| | <i>Total Miles</i> | <i>Existing Miles</i> | <i>Gap Miles</i> | <i>% Complete</i> | <i>Trail Gaps</i> |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| D.C. | 7.5 | 7.5 | 0 | 100% | 0 |
| Md. | 200.8 | 200.8 | 0 | 100% | 0 |
| Pa. | 172.5 | 162.7 | 9.8 | 94.3% | 1 |
| W.Va. | 8.7 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 52.9% | 1 |
| Ohio | 336.6 | 242.7 | 93.9 | 72.1% | 10 |
| Ind. | 217.6 | 128.3 | 89.3 | 59.0% | 9 |
| Ill. | 190.5 | 165.4 | 25.1 | 86.8% | 4 |
| Iowa | 459.7 | 256.5 | 203.2 | 55.8% | 18 |
| Neb. | 601.2 | 312.0 | 289.2 | 51.9% | 9 |
| Wyo. | 517.6 | 20.1 | 497.5 | 3.9% | 6 |
| Mont. | 436.1 | 113.0 | 323.1 | 25.9% | 12 |
| Idaho | 90.7 | 80.2 | 10.5 | 88.4% | 1 |
| Wash. | 520.5 | 392.4 | 128.1 | 75.4% | 10 |
| TOTAL | 3,760.0 | 2,086.2 | 1,673.8 | 55.5% | 81 |

STATE-BY-STATE SNAPSHOT



WASHINGTON, D.C., AND MARYLAND

The trail route through Washington, D.C., and Maryland is the only section of the Great American Rail-Trail that is currently 100% complete. The route begins at the steps of the U.S. Capitol and picks up at the Capital Crescent Trail in Georgetown, which flows into the towpath of the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal National Historical Park. With the C&O stretching from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland, the route then meets up with the Great Allegheny Passage (gaptrail.org).

PENNSYLVANIA

The route through Pennsylvania connects several existing trails and includes a gap of fewer than 10 miles between Pittsburgh and Coraopolis. By connecting the trail through Pittsburgh, the Great American Rail-Trail also connects to the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition (IHTC), a 1,500-mile network of trails that is part of RTC's TrailNation™ portfolio. The IHTC network will stretch across 51 counties in four states—Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and New York—from the shores of Lake Erie to the confluence of the three rivers in Pittsburgh and on to the Ohio River and Appalachian foothills.

WEST VIRGINIA

Traveling through the Northern Panhandle and along the Ohio River, the Great American Rail-Trail's path through West Virginia contains the least number of miles of any state across the route. As such, West Virginia has the smallest portion of trail to develop, with a 4.1-mile trail gap from the end of the Panhandle Trail in Weirton to the Market Street Bridge to cross the Ohio River into Steubenville, Ohio. Like Pennsylvania, the route through West Virginia is also along the Cleveland to Pittsburgh corridor of the proposed 1,500-mile IHTC trail network.

OHIO

Several iconic trails make up the route across Ohio, which is already more than 75% complete. The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail connects New Philadelphia to Cleveland, providing a rich history and unique experience along the way. Instead of following the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail all the way north to Cleveland, however, the Great American Rail-Trail will branch off at Clinton and head southwest on the Ohio to Erie Trail, which travels to Cincinnati through Columbus.

INDIANA

RTC met with Indiana state officials early in the Great American Rail-Trail process, recognizing that the route through Indiana would have a significant impact on the potential routes through its neighboring states. After analysis, two routes were presented: a shorter one across the north of the state and a longer diagonal one from Richmond, Indiana, toward the Chicago metropolitan area. State officials were excited about the potential of the Great American and asked RTC to consider including as many miles as possible in Indiana by using the longer diagonal route. To complete the preferred route through Indiana, about 89 miles of trail gaps will need to be addressed. With the state's commitment to its Next Level Connections program—a \$1 billion investment in infrastructure projects, including \$180 million for trails—there is great progress being made across the state.

ILLINOIS

The route through Illinois incorporates most of the northern leg of the Grand Illinois Trail between Lansing, Illinois, and the Quad Cities. The iconic Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail and Hennepin Canal Parkway make up almost 75% of the existing miles that the Great American Rail-Trail will use to cross the state. Strategic investments will be required to develop just over 25 miles of trail gaps and fully connect the Great American across Illinois.

IOWA

The Great American Rail-Trail travels through Iowa from Davenport to Council Bluffs at the western end of the state. Iowa has a rich network of trails, and on-the-ground trail partners are critical to its thriving trail culture and the development of the Great American in the state. While there are currently more than 200 miles of trail gaps to develop, support for the Great American is strong across Iowa, which branded itself as the "World Capital of Trails" in 2024.

NEBRASKA

The Great American Rail-Trail crosses into Nebraska on the iconic Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge before weaving through the urban areas of Omaha and Lincoln. The existing mileage of the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail (the "Cowboy Trail") takes trail users almost 40% of the way across the total planned mileage for Nebraska, with more miles set for the trail's construction in the near future. With over 289 miles of trail gaps to develop along the preferred route through Nebraska, completing the Cowboy Trail will go a long way toward making the Great American a reality.

WYOMING

Wyoming has the potential to be an incredible section of the Great American Rail-Trail, with its unique landscapes and outdoor recreation assets. However, because of Wyoming's topography, any route through the state will require sizable grade increases at several locations. Currently, there are not significant miles of multiuse trail available to route a trail across the state. As a result, Wyoming has more trail gaps to develop—at just under 500 miles—than any other state along the Great American route. RTC reviewed mapping data, as well as various plans in Wyoming, identifying potential routes through the state that could present opportunities for the Great American. In addition, Wyoming's Office of Outdoor Recreation has strong Outdoor Recreation Collaboratives that are poised to help the state realize its full potential along the Great American Rail-Trail.



Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail | Photo by Renee Rosensteel

MONTANA

The Great American Rail-Trail route through Montana will connect many of the state’s communities known for outdoor recreation assets—including Livingston, Bozeman, Three Forks, Butte and Missoula—which are all along the preferred Great American route. There are currently 323 miles of trail gaps to be developed in Montana, including an off-road 50-miles-plus multiuse trail option connecting Gardiner to Livingston in Park County. Montana received a significant grant in 2025 that will help escalate momentum for planning over 140 miles of trails along the Great American in the western part of the state.

IDAHO

The Great American Rail-Trail travels through the northern Panhandle of Idaho, primarily along developed rail-trails. Idaho has just one trail gap to complete, a connection from the city of Plummer to the Idaho–Washington state line. The state of Idaho and local officials will need to continue to work with landowners through the Lovell Valley to find an opportunity to complete the 10.5-mile connection between the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes and the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail.

WASHINGTON

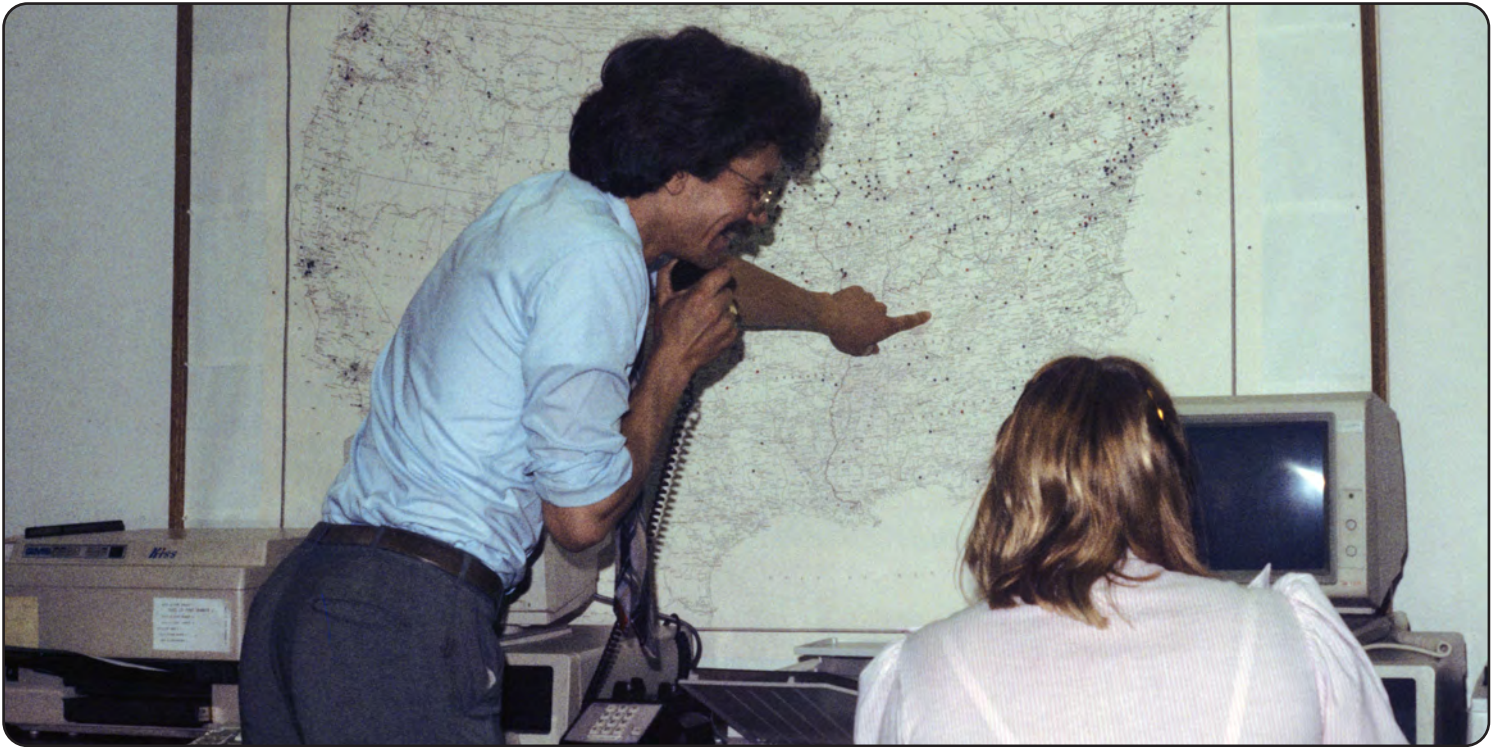
The Washington section of the Great American Rail-Trail begins with the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail, which travels approximately 250 miles from the Idaho–Washington state line to the community of Cedar Falls. The Great American will continue west through King County and Seattle, crossing Puget Sound via ferry to Bainbridge Island. The burgeoning Sound to Olympics Trail and Olympic Discovery Trail will complete a trip from Puget Sound to the Pacific Ocean at the town of La Push on the Quileute Reservation.

ABOUT RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY

Rails to Trails Conservancy is the nation’s largest trails organization—with a grassroots community more than 1 million strong—dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines. Founded in 1986, the organization currently serves as the national voice for the trails movement, advocating for the country’s 40,000+ miles of rail-trails and multiuse trails, and 8,000+ miles of potential rail-trails ready to be built, with a goal of creating more walkable, bikeable communities in America. Connect with RTC at railstotrails.org and [@railstotrails](https://www.facebook.com/railstotrails) on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Follow the Great American Rail-Trail at [@greatamericanrailtrail](https://www.facebook.com/greatamericanrailtrail) on Facebook and Instagram.

INTRODUCTION



A TRAIL FOR AMERICA

Picture yourself ... pedaling across the entire country on a safe, seamless and scenic pathway—or walking a local trail that connects along historic routes. The experience of exploring America's heritage, its potential, its beauty and bounty, its people and places.

This vision and these experiences will become a reality thanks to the Great American Rail-Trail, a signature project of Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) and our most ambitious venture yet.

IMAGINE WHAT'S POSSIBLE

A family takes their children out on their neighborhood trail every weekend. The youngest is learning how to ride his bicycle without training wheels so he can keep up with his big sister, who is always a few steps ahead. Imagine the wonder in their minds the first time they discover that the trail in their backyard connects to trails in the next town, the next county, the next state—and all the way across America.

A small industrial community once served by a booming railroad is looking for new economic development opportunities. Imagine the potential for commerce generated by the thousands of trail users who visit the town each year and spend money on food, lodging and the many charms offered in this revitalized trail town.

Imagine a cross-country trail that connects us all, highlighting the diverse history, geography and cultural treasures that make each community special.

The possibilities are endless.

THE STORY

IT BEGAN AS A DREAM

For more than 30 years, RTC has recognized the potential for a multiuse trail that connects the nation.

As railroads gave way to new forms of transportation in the mid-20th century, thousands of miles of rail lines were disused across the country—giving rise to the rail-trail movement and RTC’s formal establishment in 1986 to preserve these priceless corridors. The 1983 Railbanking Statute had helped lay a foundation for rail-trail development, and by 1989, an estimated 200 known rail-trails were on the ground in American communities.

As the movement took hold, RTC Co-Founder David Burwell dreamed of a trail that would connect the vast North American continent just as the railroads did—envisioning that rail-trails would one day be “America’s Main Street.”

Almost from its earliest beginnings, RTC would see the dream transform into possibility. Rail-trails—tracked on a large U.S. wall map at RTC’s headquarters in Washington, D.C.—began to hint at a single route forming from east to west as the 1980s gave way to the early 1990s. Using pins to mark new and completed rail-trail projects, the staff watched as more and more pins were added and the skeleton of a cross-country rail-trail slowly, but surely, began to take shape. The seeds of the Great American Rail-Trail had been planted.

The prospect of completing such an ambitious project was exciting in its possibilities, but daunting at a time when RTC was still in its infancy. Realizing the coordination and resources needed for such a massive effort, RTC focused efforts on strengthening the organization and the national trail movement, including: advocating for new funding streams for trails and walking and biking infrastructure; supporting trail development nationwide; and increasing public support for rail-trails—drawing attention to the health, transportation, economic, environmental and social benefits they provide for their communities and the people who use them.

As RTC moved forward, aspirations of completing the iconic American route became an internal drumbeat for the organization for the next three decades.

BUILDING A MOVEMENT—AND A VISION

RTC continued to monitor the route’s progress toward 50% completion—the milestone identified as the threshold for committing to the project as a national organization.

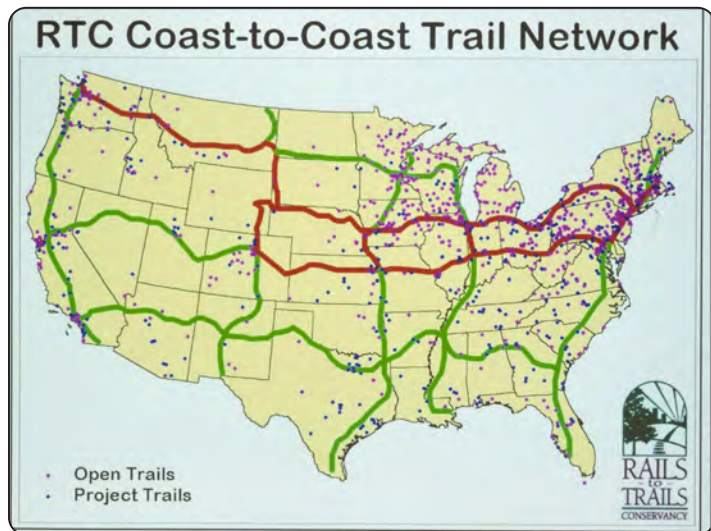
In 1991, the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) established two new federal programs for trails: Transportation Enhancements (known today as Transportation Alternatives) and the Recreational Trails Program. By October 1998, the United States reached 1,000 rail-trails, and that number continued to grow steadily as more communities demanded these vital assets.

Washington, D.C.—as our nation’s capital and the home of RTC’s national headquarters—had always been earmarked as the eastern terminus for a cross-country trail. A potential terminus in the West remained elusive, however, as RTC endeavored to find solutions for traversing the rugged mountains and vast open spaces without a density of multiuse trail connections.

As the eastern half of the United States was making rapid progress on trail development, the western half was challenged by multiple factors, including less density of railroads, a lower volume of rail line abandonments and lower population densities in communities along the corridors.

In 2007, with 15,000 miles of rail-trails on the ground in the United States, RTC commissioned a study of the old “Milwaukee Road” (Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad), a legendary line connecting Chicago and Seattle that had fallen entirely into disuse by 1980. In 1982, Washington State purchased a portion of the corridor to create the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail, which—at approximately 247 miles and growing—is now one of the longest rail-trails in the country.

Investments made by King County, Washington, and trail developers in the Seattle area would result in thriving trail networks just farther west of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail, making the state a viable western terminus for a cross-country rail-trail.



An undated map outlining RTC's early explorations of the feasibility of cross-country trails

In February 2017, RTC began a formal route assessment across 12 states and the District of Columbia (detailed in the Methods section of this report), which included meeting with hundreds of state and local officials, as well as local trail managers, and collecting mapping data and information for over 130 trails. The outcomes of this study are outlined in the State-by-State Route Analysis in this report. It's with pleasure that we invite you now to explore the preferred route of this iconic American trail in the making.

RTC revealed the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail in May 2019, celebrating the launch of this transformational project through a series of events with partner organizations across the country. RTC and our partners are tracking the march toward completion of the route by celebrating milestones large and small, including the completion of new trail segments, major maintenance efforts, new funding acquired and everything in between.

EXPLORING NEW POSSIBILITIES

Just west of the Mississippi River, Iowa built momentum early, becoming the first state in the nation to take advantage of the national Railbanking Statute in the early- to mid-1980s. Nearby in Nebraska, rail-trails would also begin to pop up in increasing numbers.

Because much of the Milwaukee Road outside of Washington State had been lost to private landowners, RTC began to explore other potential routes in Montana and Idaho, eventually completing two comprehensive corridor assessments and related feasibility studies that helped identify new trail opportunities across both states.

By early 2016, RTC had amassed more than 160,000 members and supporters and helped secure federal funding streams that supported thousands of trail projects nationwide. With more than 22,000 miles of rail-trails on the ground—just three decades after David Burwell first dreamed of a multiuse trail across the country, and with renewed enthusiasm—RTC was poised and ready to commit to making the Great American Rail-Trail a reality.

Under the leadership of then-president Keith Laughlin, RTC embarked on a new exploratory effort to determine the feasibility of the route, as it had evolved since the late 1980s. In December 2016, three staff members traveled to Wyoming and Montana to explore options for a rail-trail route through the mountains. In 2017, preliminary geographic information system (GIS) analyses revealed multiple potential routes that were more than 50% complete for a cross-country route connecting Washington, D.C., and Washington State.

GREAT AMERICAN BENEFITS

The creation of the Great American Rail-Trail will help amplify the benefits—on a mass scale—that trails have provided across the project footprint for decades. The cross-country route will serve as a catalyst for new investment in trailside businesses and commercial opportunities that have the potential to generate billions of dollars a year for communities through outdoor tourism and local business patronage.

As new trails and connecting corridors are developed, the Great American Rail-Trail will open up access to safe places for physical activity and outdoor recreation—promoting health and wellness and encouraging every American to make new authentic connections to their neighborhoods and environments. These connections will bridge the gaps within, and between, our diverse communities, creating safe walking and biking access to jobs, green space, transit, shopping centers and the cultural treasures that make each place unique.

The Great American Rail-Trail will encourage millions of people to form closer connections to nature and promote a sense of stewardship and conversation in their neighborhoods and beyond. And as people explore and discover the iconic places and diverse geographic beauty along this epic multiuse trail, they'll be joined together by a sense of pride and an understanding that out of many, we become one on the Great American Rail-Trail.

United, we trail.

USING THIS REPORT

This report serves as a snapshot in time on this exciting project to connect the country by trail. Routing choices are likely to change over time as new opportunities and challenges are presented.

This report is divided into two main sections.

1. The **Methods** section outlines the process used to arrive at a preferred route for the Great American Rail-Trail, including the various selection criteria, the state strategy, the plan review, the selection of existing trails along the route and an exploration of the trail gaps.
2. The **State-by-State Route Analysis** walks readers through the route of the Great American Rail-Trail from east to west—Washington, D.C., to Washington State. Each state chapter includes a discussion of the existing trails along the route and any trail gaps that need to be developed to create a contiguous trail.

Following these two main sections, you'll find an appendix that includes excerpts from an independent economic analysis of the Great American Rail-Trail from May 2022, as well as a glossary that defines important terminology used in this report.

It's important to note that RTC and our partner organizations are in the beginning stages of bringing the Great American to life. This report is intended to outline the preferred route as the next step toward completing this shared vision and is not intended as a final planning document.

In conversations with trail managers and state officials across the project footprint, several common challenges were identified related to funding, maintenance, signage and trail amenities. RTC looks forward to continued future dialogue about these important issues and the formulation of shared solutions to make the Great American Rail-Trail a reality.

This report is intended to be used as a high-level planning overview and is not intended for planning individual trips or navigating the route. More information on planning long-distance trips along the Great American Rail-Trail can be found at greatamericanrailtrail.org/experience.

PROJECT SUCCESS SINCE LAUNCH

There are many ways to measure the success of a transformative project of the scale of the Great American Rail-Trail. New mileage added to the route is an important factor to consider, but there are dozens of ways to tell the story of the hard work being undertaken by RTC and our hundreds of partners working on this project across the country.

MILEAGE

More than 124 miles of trails have been added to the route since the project was launched in May 2019. That is an incredible success for the first years of a project of this scale. Hundreds of partners across the route, from state and local governments to regional nonprofits and advocacy groups, are helping to bring this vision to reality. Since the project's launch, some highlights include:

- A long-awaited connection was made to complete a seamless transition between Iowa's iconic Raccoon River Valley Trail and High Trestle Trail.
- The Old Yellowstone Trail in Powell County, Montana, was completed, adding more than 10 miles of trail linking Deer Lodge to Garrison.
- A 10-miles-plus gap was filled in the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail between Marengo and Ralston in Washington on a single section of route provided by a local landowner.

There are an additional 161 miles of trails in the development pipeline that should be added to the route over the next few years. Highlights include:

- More than 23 miles are in development along the Iowa River's Edge Trail in Iowa, connecting about 7 miles of existing trail on both sides.
- Nebraska's Game and Parks Commission will also be adding more than 25 new miles of trail along the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail, helping one of the longest rail-trail conversions in the country live up to its potential.

FUNDING WINS

Over \$175 million in new funding has been contributed to projects along the Great American Rail-Trail since the project's launch, including over \$40 million in 2023, and another \$40 million in 2024. This kind of funding success can be attributed to the value that people place on a project that can reach so many communities across the country and beyond. Highlights include:

- A U.S. Department of Transportation Bridge Reinvestment Program grant for \$87.5 million to rebuild the Market Street Bridge over the Ohio River between West Virginia and Ohio, which will include an important bicycle and pedestrian element for trail users.
- A Next Level Trails grant—a statewide source of dedicated trail funding in Indiana—for over \$2.9 million to complete a trail connection in northwest Indiana between the Veterans Memorial Trail and the Penny Greenway.

PLANNING EFFORTS

With over 1,600 miles of trail gaps across the Great American Rail-Trail, partners around the country are leading planning efforts to identify opportunities to fill these gaps. Montana and Washington State are two examples of states with creative, collaborative planning efforts underway. Partners in Montana created the Parks to Passes project, an initiative of the various towns and four counties making up the Great American route across western Montana, to identify creative solutions to fill more than 157 miles of trail gaps between Butte and St. Regis.

A similar initiative is underway in western Washington State, where more than 20 partners are collaborating on the Puget Sound to Pacific (PS2P) project. The PS2P project aims to identify solutions to fill the remaining gaps in the trail network between Puget Sound and the western terminus of the Great American Rail-Trail in La Push, Washington.

These are only two examples of the large-scale regional efforts that would not be underway without the momentum of the Great American. There are countless other examples of localized planning efforts underway that are pushing the project forward. RTC hosts annual statewide stakeholder meetings, each attended by dozens of partners across the route, to help facilitate this collaboration.

RECONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE

When asked by the New York Times in 2024 when the Great American Rail-Trail will be finished, RTC's Vice President of Communications Brandi Horton said, "The answer is never. It's something that will always be evolving." Trails require ongoing maintenance and reconstruction, and weather and climate-related surprises demand frequent attention.

As just one example, weeks before RTC officially launched the Great American effort in May 2019, the Lied Platte River Bridge in Nebraska was critically damaged due to flooding and debris, necessitating a major reconstruction effort. Thankfully, the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District quickly took up the effort, reopening the bridge in 2021.

While weather and climate-related events cannot always be planned for, RTC continues to work with its partners on ongoing maintenance plans to emphasize the importance of regular trail upkeep that can lower the need for major reconstruction efforts.

TRAIL USE AND TOURISM

The Great American Rail-Trail was established for people to enjoy, whether embarking on evening walks with their families or setting out on long-distance, cross-country endeavors. Already, people are taking up the challenge. In 2020, Warrior Expeditions reached out to RTC about the nonprofit's annual Warrior Bike Program. The program helps veterans transition from their wartime experiences through long-distance outdoor expeditions. Previously, Warrior Expeditions was following an entirely on-road route for cross-country journeys, but the organization wanted to give its veterans a safer, calmer experience on trails. In 2024, RTC and Warrior Expeditions launched the fourth annual Warrior Bike along the Great American.

Dozens of people have reached out to RTC about embarking on their own adventures along the route, and undoubtedly many more have gone about it on their own. Towns along the route have reported seeing long-distance trail users in greater numbers since the launch of the Great American. The resulting trail tourism can bring new life to many of these small towns, a fact demonstrated in an independent economic analysis of the Great American Rail-Trail conducted in May 2022 (see the appendix).



Platte River Trail | Photo by Laura Stark

METHODS

After deciding to set our vision on completing the Great American Rail-Trail, RTC created a plan for success in the initial phase of the project. Our initial methodology identified five important preliminary steps, which are discussed in this section:

- Route Selection Criteria – making consistent routing decisions.
- State Strategy – gaining support and endorsement of the trail within each state by lead state officials, securing commitment to work collaboratively with RTC.
- Plan Review – reviewing the adopted state, county and local plans along the potential route across the country to understand current and future trail development.
- Existing Trails – identifying the existing trails that could create the spine of a fully protected multiuse trail across the country.
- Trail Gaps – identifying the gaps between the existing trails and exploring viable alternatives to fill the gaps with future trails.

ROUTE SELECTION CRITERIA

RTC determined the following route selection criteria to identify a feasible preferred route for the Great American Rail-Trail that ensures a high-quality experience for its users.

Provide for safe, non-motorized travel on a route that is entirely walkable and bikeable.

The Great American Rail-Trail shall be accessible to walk or bike along its entirety. Other types of uses are welcome and encouraged where local regulations allow, but this effort focuses on identifying a route that is entirely walkable and bikeable. The trails along the route do not need to be paved. However, the surface of the trails along the route should be smooth enough to accommodate trail users of all types, including asphalt, concrete, crushed stone and natural earth surfaces that are well maintained. Early railroad trains were capable of traveling at a maximum grade of 5%. The Great American Rail-Trail should stick to this maximum grade where possible to provide for a reasonable route for trail users. The average grade along the entire preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail is 5.1%, which includes several steep sections of Wyoming and Montana. Removing those aberrations, the average grade along the preferred route is 3.9%.

Create one contiguous route.

RTC will identify one contiguous spine of the Great American Rail-Trail. Trails should seamlessly connect to each other as well as connect at state borders. RTC will focus its energy on identifying and facilitating the completion of one contiguous route rather than attempting to connect various trail spurs into the main spine of the trail. However, towns, cities and counties are encouraged to create trail connections into the main spine of the Great American Rail-Trail.

Provide a route that is entirely off-road in the long-term, making short-term detours for on-road routes where an off-road route has not yet been identified but is still reasonably feasible in the long term.

The main goal of the Great American Rail-Trail is to provide an entirely off-road walking and bicycling experience to help alleviate the stress of interacting with automobile traffic. Unfortunately, there currently is no simple way to connect a trail across the country without sharing some right-of-way with roads. As the project is built out and gains momentum, additional trail opportunities will likely become viable to transition more of the route from road right-of-way to a more traditional trail experience.

Realistically, there are some places where an entirely off-street trail is unlikely in the near future due to the constraints of topography and land development. Where the trail must use roads open to vehicular traffic, the route needs to be as safe as possible, making use of such measures as low-volume or low-speed roads, wide shoulders and separated bike lanes. These roads are to be thought of as “interim on-road connections” with the goal of identifying and completing off-street trail opportunities as they become viable.

Utilize existing trails in the route to the extent possible.

RTC’s vision for the Great American Rail-Trail would not be possible without the hard work and dedication of planners, trail managers and volunteers who have developed and continue to maintain tens of thousands of miles of existing multiuse trails across the country. RTC wants to celebrate these existing trails by including as many of them in the route as possible. RTC initially identified 130 existing trails that made up the initial route of the Great American Rail-Trail, and the number has grown to more than 150.

Provide a route that is reasonably direct across the country.

RTC explored several route options to connect a trail across the country. The route that presented itself to us as the preferred route, as outlined in this report, was the most direct route to connect Washington, D.C., and Washington State that also included the greatest number of existing trails and future trail opportunities.

Follow a route amenable to the state and local jurisdictions through which it will cross.

State and local jurisdictions will be instrumental in completing the route across each state, so it is imperative that they are comfortable with and excited about the chosen route. It is also imperative that the states, counties and towns that currently are not connected by trail work together across boundaries to ensure greater connections with each other via trails.

Use the Great American Rail-Trail as a catalyst for local economic development, including providing services for long-distance travelers.

The trails along the Great American Rail-Trail are already great community assets. It is RTC’s vision that people will use the new and existing trails along the Great American Rail-Trail for a variety of purposes, from morning walks to weekend family excursions to once-in-a-lifetime cross-country journeys. Everyone using the route will require services to some degree, including water, restrooms, parking lots, food, lodging and camping, mail services and more. Route choices were made to include areas with either existing resources or the potential for the development of these services at reasonable intervals for travelers. That said, the Great American Rail-Trail traverses several areas where basic services are currently scarce, thus making the rail-trail a tremendous opportunity for local economic development. RTC will work with partners to fill trail gaps in ways that will route trails through populated areas to capitalize on the economic development opportunities of trail tourism.

In 2022, RTC completed an economic impact analysis of the Great American Rail-Trail. More information from this analysis can be found in the appendix.

STATE STRATEGY

The Great American Rail-Trail should be viewed as 13 cross-state trails, each exploring unique landscapes, heritages and people, and each connecting at state lines to the trails of adjacent states. RTC's goal is to have each state embrace the Great American Rail-Trail and commit to working with RTC on its completion within its borders. To this end, during the initial planning process, RTC held meetings in each state with a range of public agencies, elected officials and advocacy organizations. Securing each state's support is an ongoing, increasingly successful process. The driving advocacy and resources that RTC brings to the project, as well as each state's self-interest and commitment, create the synergy necessary for the success of this great endeavor.

PLAN REVIEW

To better understand the existing and planned trails and goals for walking and bicycling in states and communities along the route, RTC initially reviewed more than 300 adopted state and local plans that pertained to the route across the 12 states and Washington, D.C.

The most common types of plans that came up during the plan review included:

- Bicycle and pedestrian plans
- Trail plans
- Comprehensive plans
- Transportation plans
- Park, recreation and open space plans
- Rail plans
- Economic development plans
- Master plans

Plans were not found for every community along the route, and many rural communities and counties did not always have applicable plans that were available to the public for review. However, RTC is confident that the plan review for this project was thorough and provides a solid background for understanding the active transportation and recreation goals of the communities along the route. RTC incorporated knowledge learned from the plan review to both the route and the discussion of existing trails and trail gaps in this report's State-by-State Route Analysis. RTC continues to advocate for the inclusion of the Great American Rail-Trail and policies that support its success in new and updated plans.

EXISTING/OPEN TRAILS

To identify the existing/open trails that host the Great American Rail-Trail, RTC applied the route selection criteria outlined above to all known existing trails across the country. Based on our review of existing long-distance trails, it became clear that Washington, D.C., and Washington State made the most sense as the eastern and western ends of the Great American. After deciding upon these two endpoints, RTC staff began narrowing down the route options to connect them.

The data behind RTC's TrailLink™ platform ([TrailLink.com](https://www.traillink.com)) helped form the basis for mapping existing trails for potential inclusion in the route. When we had identified what we believed to be all route options through each state that would fit the route selection criteria, RTC staff presented these ideas to state and local officials to explore their possibilities. These state and local officials were instrumental in helping identify the most viable route options.

After the route was narrowed down, RTC staff contacted trail managers representing each existing trail to partake in an introductory webinar, followed by individual interviews in the summer and fall of 2018. Through these interviews, RTC made connections with trail managers and gathered information on each trail. The information gleaned from these interviews is included in the discussion of each existing trail in the State-by-State Route Analysis.



A trail gap corridor near Logan, Montana | Photo by Kevin Belle

TRAIL GAPS

Approximately 2,085 miles of existing trails are identified in this report to form the Great American Rail-Trail. The remaining approximately 1,670 miles to connect these trails to each other and complete a cross-country trail have not yet been built. These trail gaps are equally as important to identify and explore as the existing trails.

Trail gaps were explored in great detail through the plan review and trail manager interviews. The plan review helped confirm trail gaps, while the interviews offered background on past, current and future efforts to fill these gaps.

Planned and proposed trails identified throughout our research played a large part in informing our final route decisions. Where no planned or proposed trails were identified in any given trail gap, RTC used additional information to explore other possibilities, including geographic information system (GIS) data from the Federal Railroad Administration to illustrate potential routes along abandoned and active rail corridors.

Only planned and proposed trails identified in approved planning documents are included in the mapping of the official Great American Rail-Trail route. Potential future trails that are not in approved public plans are discussed in the text of each trail gap, but not shown in the official Great American Rail-Trail route mapping. The trail gap distances included throughout this document are the result of either the actual planned trail distance or an on-street distance between two existing trails, which will be modified as actual trail projects are identified to fill the gaps.

STATE-BY-STATE ROUTE ANALYSIS



RTC staff meeting and discussing trail plans with local partners | Photo by Kevin Belle

As discussed in the Methods, until the Great American Rail-Trail is fully connected between Washington, D.C., and Washington State, discussion of the route is broken into two categories:

- “Existing Trails”— the trails already in existence that make up the route and are built and maintained by dedicated teams of local staff and volunteers.
- “Trail Gaps”— sections of trail that still need to be built to connect the existing trails in one contiguous route across the country.

This section of the report is broken into 13 chapters, one for each state or district that is part of the Great American Rail-Trail. Each chapter will outline details about each existing trail, including routing, detours and known maintenance needs. The chapters also will describe the history of each existing trail and accredit the organizations and jurisdictions that developed them and work to keep them maintained.

At this initial stage of the project, Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) has identified more than 150 existing trails that form the approximately 2,085 miles of trails along the route of the Great American Rail-Trail. RTC attempted to be as thorough as possible in identifying and crediting the trail managers listed for each of the existing trails.

Likewise, many of the existing trails have their own websites with more information. Where available, those links can be found at each trail’s TrailLink page and are provided in this report.

The trail gaps in each state are also detailed. One or more future trail options are presented to fill each gap. Where appropriate, a preferred alignment is recommended. RTC’s initial analysis identified 96 gaps (there are currently 81 as of May 2026) in the route across the country. Many of these gaps and proposed future trails are already identified in public plans that have been adopted at the state and local levels.

Some of these public plans also have incorporated some sort of public involvement process driven by the state or local government. Where that is the case, we have typically selected those future trails as the preferred alignment. Where there have been discussions on ways to fill a particular gap, but there has been no formal adoption of a proposed future trail project at a local level, RTC has opted to only describe these options in the text without showing them on a map. Each chapter's map shows existing trails, as well as gaps, which are either shown as planned segments or unplanned segments.

It is our hope that this State-by-State Route Analysis acts as a blueprint for completing the Great American Rail-Trail. With RTC's national vision and the hard work and dedication of trail developers across the country, we can work together to make a cross-country trail a reality.

Table 1 describes the preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail through mileage and completion status. The preferred route, as identified in this report, is approximately 3,760 miles long, with approximately 2,085 miles of existing trails to be connected by approximately 1,670 miles of trail gaps. The entire route is 55% complete. The routes through Washington, D.C., and Maryland are complete, and routes through several other states are over 70% complete (Pennsylvania, Ohio, Illinois, Idaho and Washington). Wyoming and Montana have the most trail gap mileage to be completed, while Iowa has the largest number of individual trail gaps to be completed to connect existing trails.

TABLE 1*: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE

| | Total Miles | Existing Miles | Gap Miles | % Complete | Trail Gaps |
|--------------|--------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| D.C. | 7.5 | 7.5 | 0 | 100% | 0 |
| Md. | 200.8 | 200.8 | 0 | 100% | 0 |
| Pa. | 172.5 | 162.7 | 9.8 | 94.3% | 1 |
| W.Va. | 8.7 | 4.6 | 4.1 | 52.9% | 1 |
| Ohio | 336.6 | 242.7 | 93.9 | 72.1% | 10 |
| Ind. | 217.6 | 128.3 | 89.3 | 59.0% | 9 |
| Ill. | 190.5 | 165.4 | 25.1 | 86.8% | 4 |
| Iowa | 459.7 | 256.5 | 203.2 | 55.8% | 18 |
| Neb. | 601.2 | 312.0 | 289.2 | 51.9% | 9 |
| Wyo. | 517.6 | 20.1 | 497.5 | 3.9% | 6 |
| Mont. | 436.1 | 113.0 | 323.1 | 25.9% | 12 |
| Idaho | 90.7 | 80.2 | 10.5 | 88.4% | 1 |
| Wash. | 520.5 | 392.4 | 128.1 | 75.4% | 10 |
| TOTAL | 3,760.0 | 2,086.2 | 1,673.8 | 55.5% | 81 |

* Table reprinted from page 2.

WASHINGTON, D.C.



RTC staff and members of the Warrior Expeditions team set out on a ride along the existing route of the Great American Rail-Trail in May 2024. | Photo by Mariah Miranda

A journey westward along the Great American Rail-Trail will begin at the steps of the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C. The trail will travel among some of the most iconic landmarks in the nation’s capital along the National Mall, including the Washington Monument and the Lincoln Memorial, where the trail heads north along the Rock Creek Park Trails. The route then picks up the Capital Crescent Trail in Georgetown, which flows into the towpath of the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal National Historical Park stretching from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland.

TABLE 2: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

| | |
|--|------------|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 7.5 (100%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in D.C. (% of Total State Mileage) | 0 (0%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in D.C. | 0 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in D.C. | 7.5 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 1: WASHINGTON, D.C.

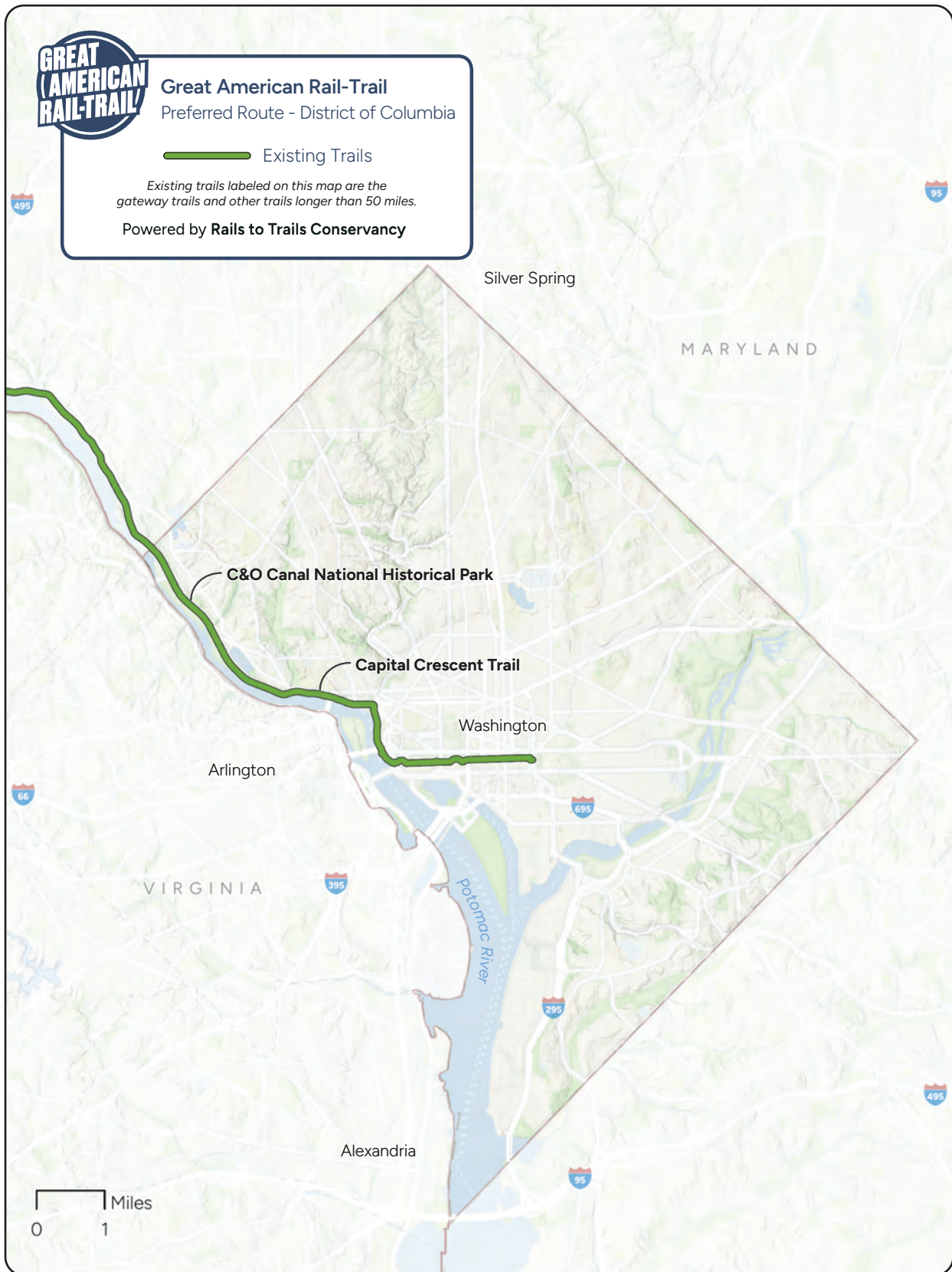


TABLE 3: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH WASHINGTON, D.C.

| Existing Trail Name | Length in D.C. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|------------------------------------|---|
| National Mall Trails | 2.4 |
| Rock Creek Park Trails | 0.7 |
| K Street/Water Street Cycle Track | 0.6 |
| Capital Crescent Trail | 2.3 |
| C&O Canal National Historical Park | 1.5 |
| Total Miles | 7.5 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 7.5 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 0.0 |



NATIONAL MALL TRAILS

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 5.0 / 2.4 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, dirt |
| Trail Manager | National Park Service |
| Website | nps.gov/nama/index.htm |

Beginning at the steps of the U.S. Capitol, the Great American Rail-Trail will travel west from this eastern extent along the National Mall. The National Mall has a series of trails owned and maintained by the National Park Service that are popular with tourists traveling around the monuments and museums. Bicycles are allowed on the trails, but because the trails are frequently crowded, cyclists should take caution and proceed through the National Mall Trails slowly. The trail crosses the Rock Creek and Potomac Parkway (also known as Rock Creek Parkway) before heading north along the Potomac River. The trail hugs the river, then merges with the Rock Creek Park Trails.

Guinness World Record holder Ian Mackay holds an event on the National Mall before beginning a 475-mile wheelchair trek on the Great American Rail-Trail in 2022. | Photo by Anthony Le

ROCK CREEK PARK TRAILS

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 8.5 / 0.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, dirt |
| Trail Manager | National Park Service |
| Website | nps.gov/rocr/planyourvisit/hiking.htm |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/rock-creek-park-trails |

Rock Creek Park is the oldest and largest urban park in the national park system. The portion of the Rock Creek Park Trails system through Rock Creek Park in Washington, D.C., is owned and maintained by the National Park Service. The Rock Creek Park Trails connect to the National Mall Trails along the banks of the Potomac River near the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. The Rock Creek Park Trails travel 8.5 miles in total in Washington, D.C. The Great American Rail-Trail utilizes the southernmost portion of these trails.

K STREET/WATER STREET CYCLE TRACK

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 0.6 / 0.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | District Department of Transportation (DDOT) |

The Rock Creek Park Trails create a connection to a protected bike lane, or cycle track, along K Street/Water Street in the Georgetown neighborhood of Washington, D.C. (accessible via a ramp from K Street Northwest to Rock Creek Parkway). The two-way protected bike lane travels the length of K Street/Water Street, underneath the elevated Whitehurst Freeway, to the entrance of the Capital Crescent Trail.

CAPITAL CRESCENT TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 11.0 / 2.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | DDOT, Montgomery County Department of Transportation, Montgomery Parks, National Park Service |
| Website | cctrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/capital-crescent-trail |

At the end of K Street/Water Street, the Great American Rail-Trail reaches the first rail-trail along the route as it heads west from Washington, D.C., onto the Capital Crescent Trail. This 11-mile trail uses the right-of-way of the former Georgetown Branch of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which was abandoned in the mid-1980s. The paved Capital Crescent Trail is sandwiched between the Potomac River and the C&O Canal. After about 2 miles, the Capital Crescent Trail arcs northward toward Bethesda, Maryland, and crosses over the C&O Canal Towpath at the Arizona Avenue Bridge. Trail users continuing on the Great American can find a connection to the historical C&O Canal Towpath at Fletcher's Cove Boathouse 0.5 mile before the Arizona Avenue Bridge.

C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in D.C. (in Miles) | 184.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone, dirt, gravel |
| Trail Manager | National Park Service |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> canaltrust.org nps.gov/choh/index.htm |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/chesapeake--ohio-canal-national-historical-park |

The majority of the C&O Canal National Historical Park, also known as the C&O Canal Towpath, is in Maryland and is addressed in the next chapter.

MARYLAND



C&O Canal National Historical Park | Photo by Suzanne Matyas

The Great American Rail-Trail route across Maryland consists of two key trails: the towpath of the C&O Canal National Historical Park and the Great Allegheny Passage. The two trails meet in Cumberland, Maryland, creating a well-used connection between Washington, D.C., and Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

TABLE 4: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN MARYLAND

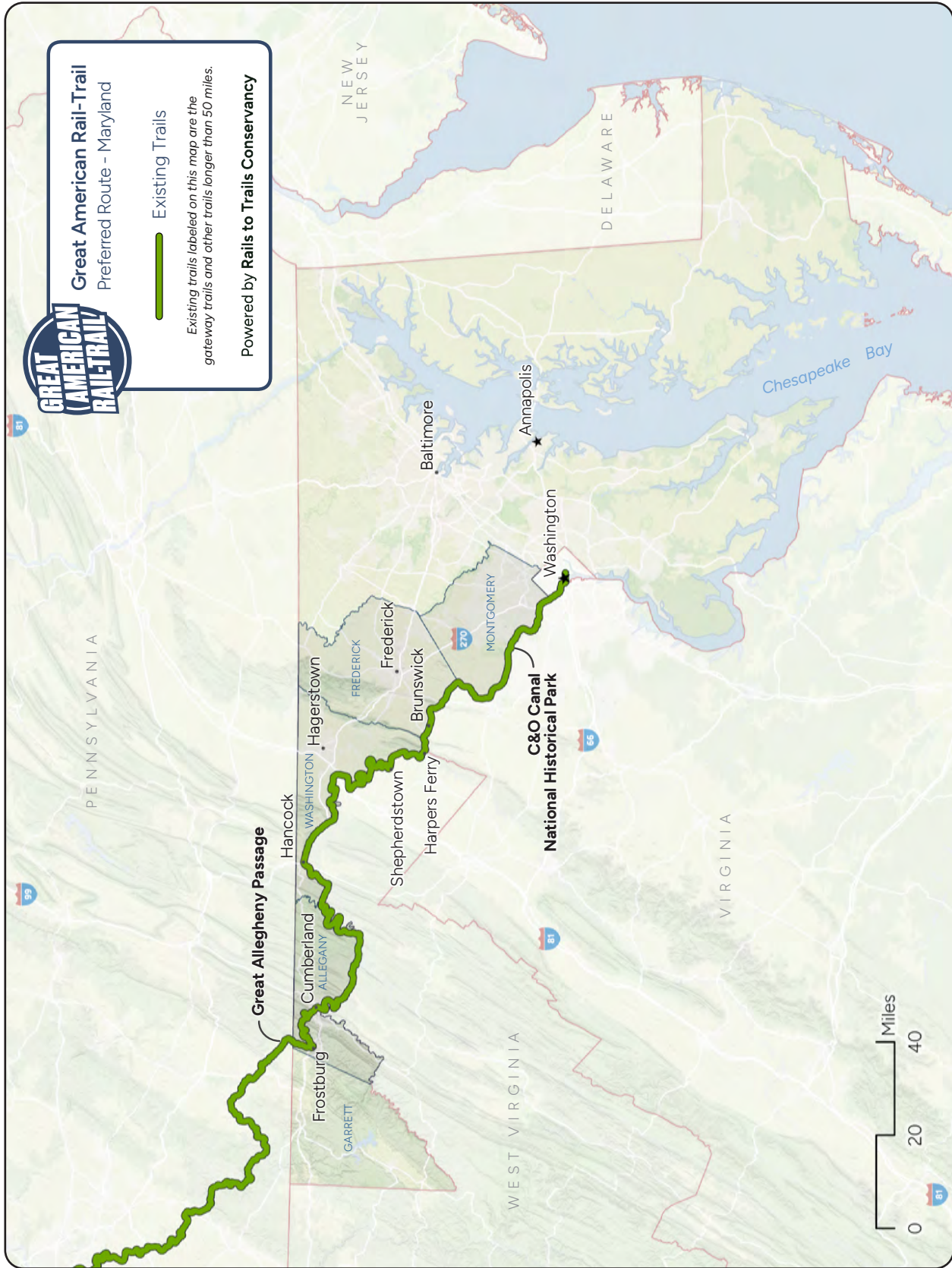
| | |
|---|--------------|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Md. (in Miles) | 200.8 (100%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Md. (% of Total State Mileage) | 0 (0%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Md. | 0 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Md. | 200.8 |

TABLE 5: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH MARYLAND

| Existing Trail Name | Length in Md. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|------------------------------------|--|
| C&O Canal National Historical Park | 180.3 |
| Great Allegheny Passage | 20.5 |
| Total Miles | 200.8 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 200.8 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 0.0 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026

MAP 2: MARYLAND





Great Allegheny Passage | Photo by Paul Ericson

C&O CANAL NATIONAL HISTORICAL PARK

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Md. (in Miles) | 184.5 / 180.3 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone, dirt, gravel |
| Trail Manager | National Park Service |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • canaltrust.org • nps.gov/choh/index.htm |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/chesapeake--ohio-canal-national-historical-park |

The C&O Canal National Historical Park, also known as the C&O Canal Towpath, follows the route of the Potomac River for 184.5 miles between Washington, D.C., and Cumberland, Maryland. The canal, which operated for more than 100 years, transported ships carrying various goods down the waterway to market. Today, visitors can still see the rich history of the canal through many of its original features, including locks, lockhouses and aqueducts. The towpath itself was historically used to assist ships as they floated down the canal. Now, the towpath is a well-used trail that sees more than 5 million visitors annually (compared to 1 million in 1996).

GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Md. (in Miles) | 145.2 / 20.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Allegheny County, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, Mountain Maryland Trails |
| Website | gaptrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/great-allegheny-passage |

The Great Allegheny Passage (GAP) is an iconic trail that runs nearly 150 miles from Cumberland, Maryland, to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The trail was built by a mix of private and public partners, nonprofit entities, and local trail groups and volunteers working in concert as the Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy. RTC selected the GAP for the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame in 2007.

Cumberland and Frostburg are the major towns along the Maryland portion of the GAP. For much of the 16 miles of trail between Cumberland and Frostburg, the trail parallels the active Western Maryland Scenic Railroad, making this the first rail-with-trail section of the Great American Rail-Trail. This section of the GAP itself was constructed on the former Western Maryland Railway, which began operations between Cumberland, Maryland, and Connellsville, Pennsylvania, in 1912.

PENNSYLVANIA



Three Rivers Heritage Trail | Photo by Renee Rosensteel

The Great American Rail-Trail route through Pennsylvania connects several existing trails with one trail gap just west of Pittsburgh. By connecting the trail through Pittsburgh, the Great American Rail-Trail also connects to the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition (IHTC), a vision for a 1,500-mile network of trails that is part of RTC's TrailNation™ portfolio. The IHTC network will stretch across 51 counties in four states—Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio and New York—from the shores of Lake Erie to the confluence of the three rivers in Pittsburgh and on to the Ohio River and Appalachian foothills.

TABLE 6: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN PENNSYLVANIA

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Pa. (% of Total State Mileage) | 162.7 (94.3%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Pa. (% of Total State Mileage) | 9.8 (5.7%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Pa. | 1 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Pa. | 172.5 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 3: PENNSYLVANIA

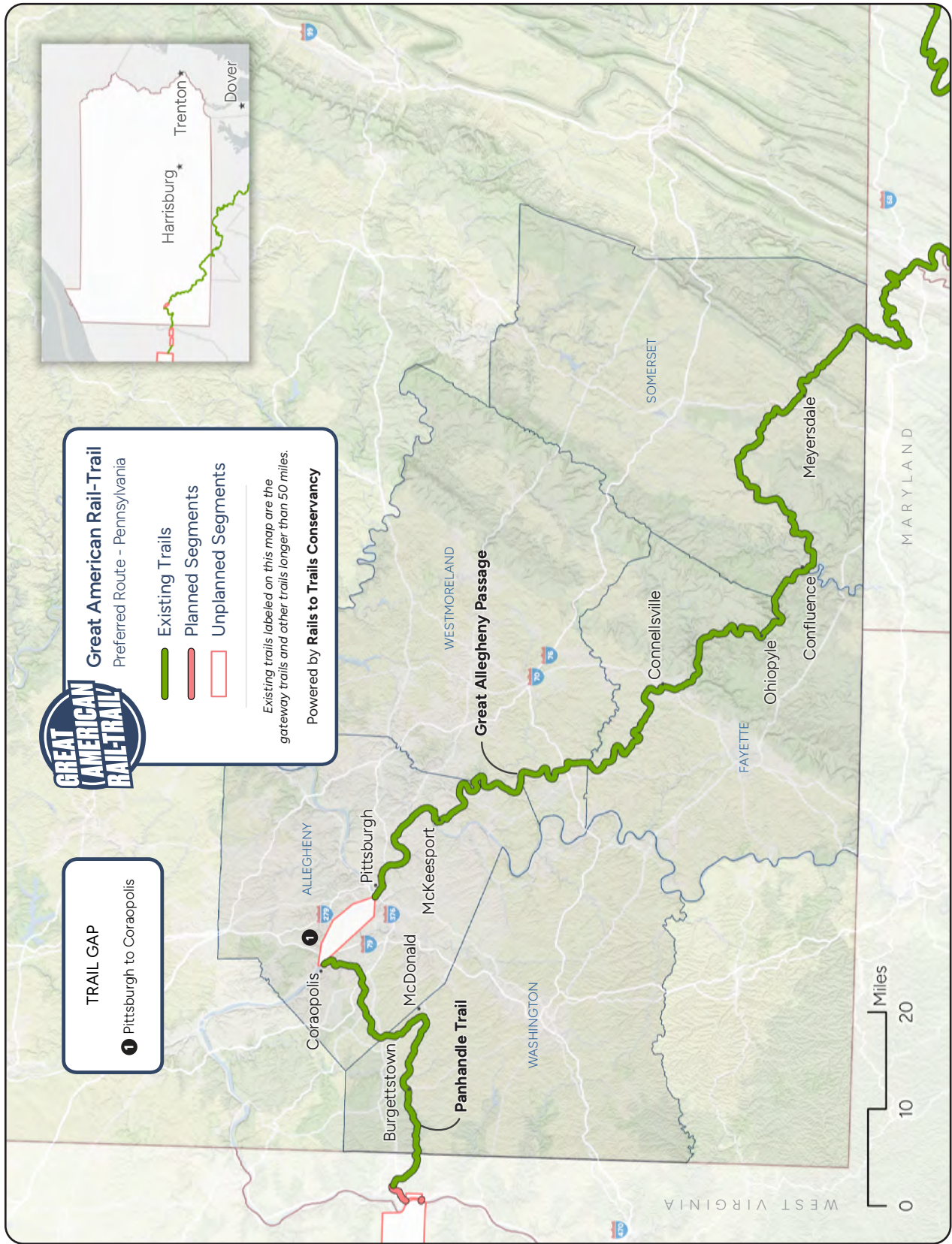


TABLE 7: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH PENNSYLVANIA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Pa. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|---|
| Great Allegheny Passage | 124.7 |
| Three Rivers Heritage Trail | 3.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 1 – Pittsburgh to Coraopolis | 9.8 |
| Montour Trail | 18.4 |
| Panhandle Trail | 16.0 |
| Total Miles | 172.5 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 162.7 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 9.8 |

GREAT ALLEGHENY PASSAGE

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Pa. (in Miles) | 145.2 / 124.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Allegheny County, City of Pittsburgh, Friends of the Riverfront, Great Allegheny Passage Conservancy, Ohiopyle State Park, Point State Park, Regional Trail Corporation (Yough Trail Council, Whitsett-Fayette Yough Trail Council, McKeesport Trail Commission and Steel Valley Trail Council), Somerset County, Somerset County Rails-to-Trails Association |
| Website | gaptrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/great-allegheny-passage |

Just after crossing into Pennsylvania from Maryland, the GAP reaches the Eastern Continental Divide at 2,392 feet above sea level. The GAP features several great engineering feats, including the newly restored 849-foot-long Pinkerton Tunnel; the 101-foot-high Salisbury Viaduct, which spans more than 1,900 feet; and the 3,294-foot-long Big Savage Tunnel, and passes through the trail towns of Meyersdale, Rockwood, Confluence, Ohiopyle, Connellsville, West Newton and Boston.

THREE RIVERS HERITAGE TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Pa. (in Miles) | 25.0 / 3.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | Friends of the Riverfront |
| Website | friendsoftheriverfront.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/three-rivers-heritage-trail |

Since its inception in 1991, Friends of the Riverfront has been a pioneering organization working to protect and restore the Pittsburgh region’s rivers and riverfronts after decades of legacy pollution. The Three Rivers Heritage Trail now encompasses 25 miles of urban riverfront trails along both banks of the mighty Allegheny, Monongahela and Ohio rivers.

The Three Rivers Heritage Trail connects to the GAP at the Hot Metal Bridge and continues northwest through Riverfront Park along the Monongahela River. The trail then travels through Station Square, a shopping and entertainment complex occupying buildings once used by the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad. From where the GAP ends at Point State Park, the Three Rivers Heritage Trail continues across the Fort Pitt Bridge to the North Shore Trail and continues down the Chateau Trail.

**TRAIL GAP 1 –
PITTSBURGH TO CORAOPOLIS**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Friends of the Riverfront, the Pennsylvania Environmental Council and Allegheny County, along with its partner organizations, have explored various options to connect the Three Rivers Heritage Trail to the Montour Trail between Pittsburgh and Coraopolis. Options to complete the trail connection along the southern shore of the Ohio River are in the planning stages. Currently, signs mark the route along Neville Road as an on-road portion of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail. In the fall of 2020, Trail Gap 1 was shortened by a 0.8-mile extension of the Montour Trail into Coraopolis. Riverlife, a nonprofit organization working to redevelop Pittsburgh’s downtown riverfronts, is leading planning efforts for a trail extension from Station Square northwest to the West End Bridge, which would close this gap by about a half-mile.

MONTOUR TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail- Trail in Pa.(in Miles) | 46.0 / 18.4 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Montour Trail Council, Peters Township Parks & Recreation |
| Website | montourtrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/montour-trail |

The Montour Trail follows a portion of the old Montour Railroad, which was built between 1877 and 1914 to link the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad with the region’s many coal mines. Forming a semicircle around Pittsburgh, the Montour Railroad also connected to other railroads, including the Pennsylvania Railroad, Pittsburgh and West Virginia Railway, Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and Union Railroad. Both the trail and railroad are named for the creek that runs alongside them. Highlights of the trail include the 500-foot Enlow Tunnel in Findlay Township and the 900-foot-plus McDonald Trestle. In the fall of 2020, the Montour Trail was extended by 0.8 mile into Coraopolis.

PANHANDLE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail- Trail in Pa. (in Miles) | 28.3 / 16.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Collier Friends of the Panhandle Trail, Montour Trail Council, Washington County Parks & Recreation Department |
| Website | panhandletrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/panhandle-trail |

A Conrail line known as the Panhandle Railroad once connected Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to Cincinnati, Ohio; Chicago, Illinois; and St. Louis, Missouri. The portion of the rail corridor between Carnegie, Pennsylvania, and Weirton, West Virginia, is now a 29.2-mile multiuse trail known as the Panhandle Trail, which connects with the Montour Trail in McDonald, Pennsylvania. The Panhandle Trail features many small bridge crossings as it cuts through the rolling and occasionally rocky hillside.

WEST VIRGINIA



Panhandle Trail | Photo by TrailLink user ejbeckl

The Great American Rail-Trail travels through the Northern Panhandle of West Virginia through the town of Weirton along the Ohio River. One gap remains in West Virginia, connecting Weirton to the Ohio state line. The West Virginia section is located along the Cleveland to Pittsburgh corridor of the proposed 1,500-mile Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition (IHTC) network.

TABLE 8: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN WEST VIRGINIA

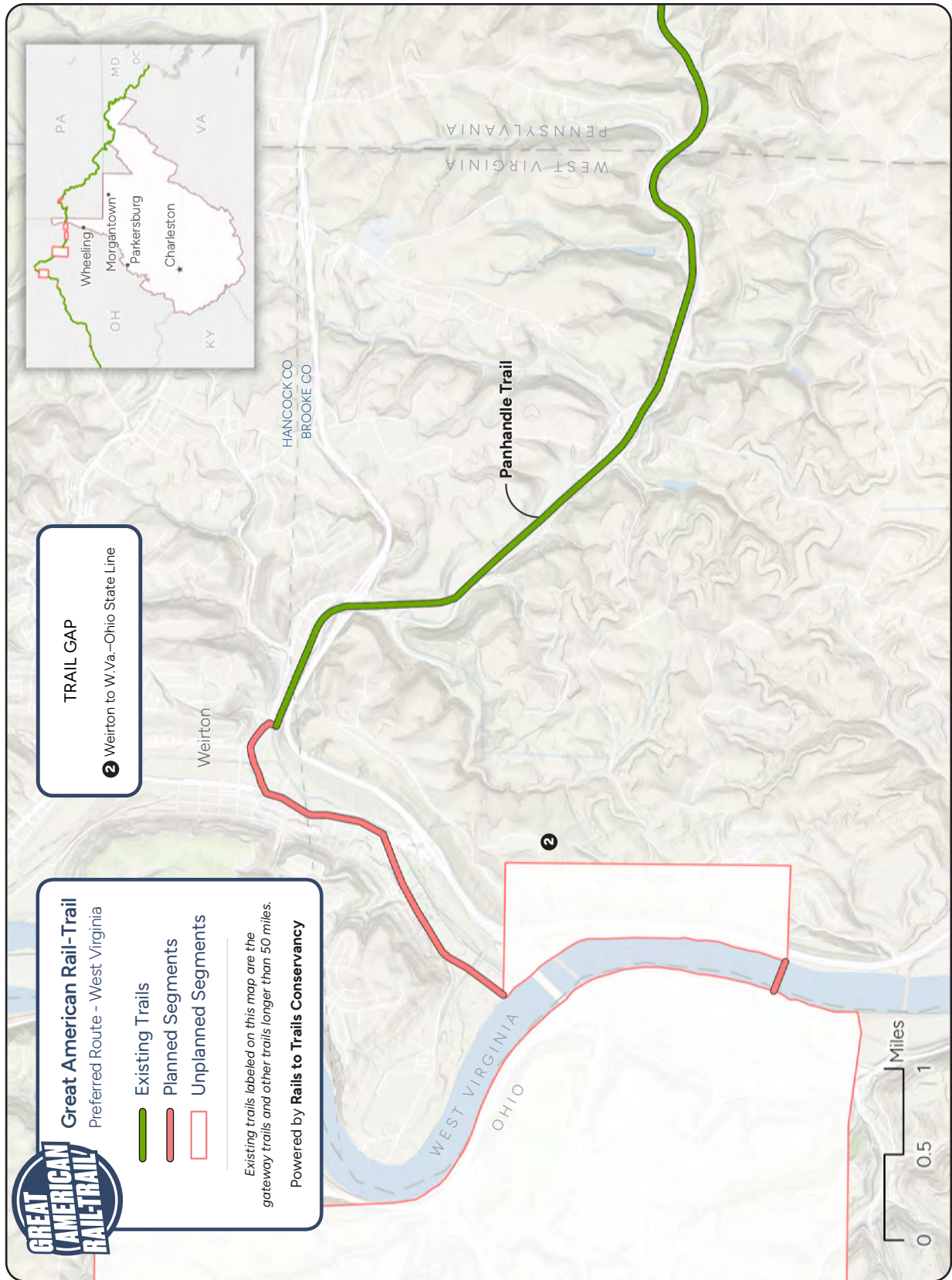
| | |
|--|-------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in W.Va. (% of Total State Mileage) | 4.6 (52.9%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in W.Va. (% of Total State Mileage) | 4.1 (47.1%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in W.Va. | 1 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in W.Va. | 8.7 |

TABLE 9: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH WEST VIRGINIA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in W.Va. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|---|
| Panhandle Trail | 4.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 2 – Weirton to W.Va.–Ohio State Line | 4.1 |
| Total Miles | 8.7 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 4.6 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 4.1 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026

MAP 4: WEST VIRGINIA





Panhandle Trail | Photo by TrailLink user stache21

PANHANDLE TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in W.Va. (in Miles) | 28.3 / 4.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Collier Friends of the Panhandle Trail, Montour Trail Council, Washington County Parks & Recreation Department |
| Website | panhandletrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/panhandle-trail |

Most of the Panhandle Trail is in Pennsylvania and is addressed in that chapter.

TRAIL GAP 2 – WEIRTON TO WEST VIRGINIA–OHIO STATE LINE

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The city of Weirton has plans to extend the Panhandle Trail about 0.75 mile into Weirton from its current terminus and awaits notice of Transportation Alternatives funding to complete the new paving, construct a bicycle and pedestrian bridge crossing Harmon Creek near Overbrook Towers and build a new trailhead in Hancock County. From this trail extension, two trail options are proposed that could form a loop in Weirton and then head south parallel to the Ohio River.

Just south of Weirton, the Great American Rail-Trail could travel across the Ohio River to Steubenville, Ohio, via the Market Street Bridge. The bridge, which is an aging, open-decked bridge, was abruptly closed to all traffic in late 2023 after it was deemed unsafe. Funding was awarded in 2024 via the U.S. Department of Transportation Bridge Investment Program to rebuild the Market Street Bridge, including appropriate bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and will help facilitate the trail crossing of the Ohio River.

Because the potential trail along the Ohio River would be well below the surface of the Market Street Bridge, a structure would need to be built to bring trail users down from the bridge to the riverbank while also clearing the active Norfolk Southern rail line that runs along the Ohio River.

OHIO



Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail | Photo by Jay LaPrete

Several iconic trails make possible the route across Ohio, which is already more than two-thirds complete. The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail connects New Philadelphia north to Cleveland, providing a rich history and unique experience along the way. Instead of following the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail to Cleveland, however, the Great American Rail-Trail will branch off at Clinton, Ohio, to head more than 150 miles southwest on the developing Ohio to Erie Trail, which travels to Cincinnati through Columbus.

TABLE 10: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN OHIO

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Ohio (% of Total State Mileage) | 242.7 (72.1%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Ohio (% of Total State Mileage) | 93.9 (27.9%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Ohio | 10 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Ohio | 336.6 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 5: OHIO



TABLE 11: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH OHIO

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Ohio Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| TRAIL GAP 3a – W.Va.–Ohio State Line to Unionport | 18.5 |
| Hellbender Preserve Trail | 0.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 3b – Unionport to Jewett | 7.8 |
| Conotton Creek Trail | 11.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 4 – Bowerston to Dover Dam | 17.4 |
| Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail | 37.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 5 – Bolivar COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 6a – Heartland Trail Extension (Clinton to Marshallville) | 5.6 |
| Heartland Trail (Marshallville to Orrville) | 2.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 6b – Heartland Trail Extension (Orrville) | 1.3 |
| Heartland Trail – Orrville | 1.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 7 – Orrville to Fredericksburg | 14.1 |
| Holmes County Trail (Fredericksburg to Killbuck; Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 15.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 8 – Holmes County Trail Extension (Killbuck to State Route 520) | 2.8 |
| Holmes County Trail (Glenmont to Brinkhaven; Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 11.3 |
| Mohican Valley Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 4.5 |
| Kokosing Gap Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 13.5 |
| Downtown Connector Trail (Mount Vernon; Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 1.0 |
| Heart of Ohio Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 18.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 9 – Centerburg to Licking–Delaware County Line COMPLETED | - |
| Sandel Legacy Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 1.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 10 – Condit to Sunbury | 0.5 |

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Ohio Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| Sandel Legacy Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 6.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 11 – Sunbury to Galena COMPLETED | - |
| Thomas W. Hopper Legacy Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 1.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 12 – Galena | 0.3 |
| Hoover Scenic Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 0.8 |
| Genoa Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 4.0 |
| Westerville B&W (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 2.5 |
| Alum Creek Greenway Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 12.0 |
| Downtown Connector Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 5.0 |
| Scioto Greenway Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 3.9 |
| Camp Chase Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 15.9 |
| Roberts Pass Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 6.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 13 – London | 0.8 |
| Prairie Grass Trail (Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail) | 27.8 |
| Creekside Trail | 15.1 |
| Mad River Trail | 3.2 |
| Great Miami River Trail | 4.3 |
| Wolf Creek Trail (Dayton) | 2.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 14 – Wolf Creek Trail Extension (Dayton to Trotwood) | 5.0 |
| Wolf Creek Trail (Trotwood to Preble County Line) | 10.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 15 – Preble County Line to Ohio–Ind. State Line | 19.8 |
| Total Miles | 336.6 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 242.7 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 93.9 |

TRAIL GAP 3A – WEST VIRGINIA–OHIO STATE LINE TO UNIONPORT

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

As discussed earlier in Trail Gap 2, a trail could cross over the Ohio River into Steubenville, Ohio, on the Market Street Bridge. Once in Steubenville, a trail could head north and skirt the Ohio River or travel through downtown Steubenville on a proposed protected bike lane. From Steubenville, plans are in the works to connect to the newly opened Hellbender Preserve Trail in Jefferson County, including the next proposed section of the Hellbender Preserve Trail between Alikanna and state Route 43.

HELLBENDER PRESERVE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 0.8 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Gravel |
| Trail Manager | Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District |
| Website | jeffersonswcd.org/ hellbender-preserve |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/ hellbender-preserve-trail |

In 2025, the Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District opened a 3-mile section of trail through the developing Hellbender Preserve. The trail and preserve will bring attention to the hellbender salamander, an endangered species native to Ohio and the eastern United States. The greatest population of hellbenders in the country is found in Jefferson County. The Hellbender Preserve Trail, which hosts the Great American Rail-Trail for 0.8 mile, follows an abandoned rail line through preserve lands and includes several beautiful bridges and tunnels with rich histories.

TRAIL GAP 3B – UNIONPORT TO JEWETT

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Jefferson County Soil and Water Conservation District is looking to extend the Hellbender Preserve Trail west, including adding a tunnel under a road to eliminate a dangerous at-grade road crossing. Long-term plans are still needed to fully connect the Hellbender Preserve Trail to the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail to the west.

CONOTTON CREEK TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 11.2 / 11.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Friends of the Conotton Creek Trail, Harrison County |
| Website | harrisoncountyohio.org/ trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/ conotton-creek-trail |

The Conotton Creek Trail features 11.2 miles of rail-trail traveling from Jewett to Bowerston, Ohio. Once the corridor of the Wheeling & Lake Erie Railway, the trail now travels across Ohio's countryside and includes five covered bridge crossings over the Conotton Creek. The trail was repaved in 2021, which will make this popular trail more accessible for the many seniors who are part of the surrounding community.

TRAIL GAP 4 – BOWERSTON TO DOVER DAM

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From the western end of the Conotton Creek Trail in Bowerston, Ohio, the Tuscarawas County Trail and Green Space Master Plan illustrates a plan to complete this gap as part of a countywide network of trails, but it does not discuss exact routing or project timeline plans. The Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District owns significant land between Harrison, Carroll and Tuscarawas counties and is a willing and eager partner on trail development in the area.

In February 2025, a regional partnership of communities in Harrison, Carroll and Tuscarawas counties received notice of the successful procurement of Active Transportation Plan Development Assistance from the Ohio Department of Transportation. Part of this assistance will include identifying a connection that could help fill Trail Gap 4 between Bowerston all the way to New Philadelphia.

OHIO & ERIE CANAL TOWPATH TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 80.9 / 37.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, boardwalk, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Canalway Partners, City of Akron, Cleveland Metroparks, Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition, Stark County Park District, Summit Metro Parks, Tuscarawas County Park Department |
| Website | ohioanderiecanalway.com |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/ohio--erie-canal-towpath-trail |

The nearly 81-mile Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail follows a historical canal where mules pulled boats from New Philadelphia to Lake Erie in Cleveland from 1827 to 1913. When the full towpath trail is completed, it will be 101 miles long and incorporate several trails, including the Zoar Valley Trail. The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail hosts the Great American Rail-Trail for 37.7 miles between the Dover Dam and Clinton.

The Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail is managed by various jurisdictions, including the county park districts in Cuyahoga, Summit, Stark and Tuscarawas counties, as well as the National Park Service via Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The Ohio & Erie Canalway Coalition is the active nonprofit organization that leads many initiatives in support of the towpath trail. A 2-mile segment of the towpath trail through Bolivar was completed in 2021, connecting the trail from the south side of Bolivar to the Bolivar Aqueduct McDonnell Towpath Trailhead. Another 2 miles were added in 2025, extending the trail to the Dover Dam.

TRAIL GAP 5 – BOLIVAR COMPLETED

Trail Gap 5 (Bolivar) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail.

TRAIL GAP 6A – HEARTLAND TRAIL EXTENSION (CLINTON TO MARSHALLVILLE)

| | |
|--|---|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some sections under construction and expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Rails to Trails of Wayne County owns the right-of-way of an abandoned Cleveland, Akron and Columbus (CA&C) rail line from Clinton to Orrville and is working on converting it into a trail called the Heartland Trail. The group completed a feasibility study of Trail Gap 6a in 2020 and is currently raising project construction funds. Funding is already in place to complete about 2 miles of the trail from Black Diamond Road toward Marshallville, which is expected to be completed in 2026. An additional 1 mile between Warwick Road and Black Diamond Road is funded and scheduled for construction in 2028.

HEARTLAND TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 4.3 / 4.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Rails to Trails of Wayne County |
| Website | waynecountytrails.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/ohio--erie-canal-towpath-trail |

Two portions of the Heartland Trail have been completed. In September 2019, Phase 1—a 2.7-mile segment of trail—was opened between Marshallville and Forrer Road in Orrville. Another 1.6-mile trail segment, Phase 2, is open in Orrville. Phase 2 makes use of city sidewalks and multiuse trail to travel through the center of Orrville, connecting parks, local businesses and homes.

TRAIL GAP 6B – HEARTLAND TRAIL EXTENSION (ORRVILLE)

| | |
|--|---|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Under construction and expected in 2026 |

In the spring of 2021, Rails to Trails of Wayne County and the city of Orrville received a \$947,972 grant through the TA Program via the Ohio Department of Transportation. The grant will complete the 1.3-mile gap in the Heartland Trail between Forrer Road and Allen Avenue. Construction is anticipated in 2026.

TRAIL GAP 7 – ORRVILLE TO FREDERICKSBURG

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unplanned |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The southern terminus of the existing portion of the Heartland Trail is located at West Market and North Ella streets in Orrville. An abandoned rail line runs from just south of Orrville for more than 13 miles to Fredericksburg, but unfortunately, much of the right-of-way from Orrville south to Fredericksburg has been sold to private landowners. Rails to Trails of Wayne County has a long-term vision to connect a future trail between the communities of Orrville and Fredericksburg, and the organization is exploring all options.

OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 270.0 / 148.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Multiple; see separate trail sections below (coordination provided by Ohio to Erie Trail Fund) |
| Website | ohioerietrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/ohio-to-erie-trail |

Starting at Fredericksburg, the Ohio to Erie Trail hosts the Great American Rail-Trail for more than 150 miles across the state, winding southwest through Ohio's scenic countryside and bustling midwestern towns. The Ohio to Erie Trail is planned to span the state, eventually reaching a total of 326 miles.

The Ohio to Erie Trail is formed by a collection of regional trails traveling across Ohio between Cleveland and Cincinnati. Included in the Great American Rail-Trail route are 16 uniquely named trails that fall within the Ohio to Erie Trail footprint but are often operated independently. Each of the 16 trails will be discussed in the following pages.



Ohio to Erie Trail | Photo by Eric Oberg

HOLMES COUNTY TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 27.1 / 27.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Holmes County Park District, Holmes County Rails to Trails Coalition Inc. |
| Website | holmescountychamber.com/recreation/holmes-county-rails-trails-coalition |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/holmes-county-trail |

The Holmes County Trail, part of the Ohio to Erie Trail, is currently open in two disconnected segments, connecting Fredericksburg to Killbuck and Glenmont to Brinkhaven. Located in the heart of Amish Country, the Holmes County Trail was the first recreational trail in the country designed to accommodate Amish buggies. Holmes County Rails to Trails Coalition Inc. and the Holmes County Park District maintain and develop the trail.

TRAIL GAP 8 – HOLMES COUNTY TRAIL EXTENSION (KILLBUCK TO STATE ROUTE 520)

| | |
|---|---------------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Phase II expected in 2027 |

Holmes County Rails to Trails Coalition Inc., with the Holmes County Park District, completed the first half of Trail Gap 8 in 2025 and expect to complete the remaining 2.8 miles of Trail Gap 8 in 2027.

MOHICAN VALLEY TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 4.5 / 4.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Knox County Park District |
| Website | knoxcountyparks.org/trails/bike-trails/mohican-valley-bike-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/mohican-valley-trail |

From the western terminus of the Holmes County Trail in Brinkhaven (also known as Gann), the Mohican Valley Trail travels 4.5 miles west to Danville. Part of the Ohio to Erie Trail, the Mohican Valley Trail follows an abandoned right-of-way of the old Penn Central Transportation Company on the eastern edge of Knox County. The Mohican Valley Trail features the Bridge of Dreams, a 370-foot covered bridge over the Mohican State Scenic River.

KOKOSING GAP TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 13.5 / 13.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Knox County Park District, Kokosing Gap Trail Board |
| Website | kokosinggaptrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/kokosing-gap-trail |

The Kokosing Gap Trail travels 13.5 miles from Danville to Mount Vernon. The trail is rich in railroad history, which is displayed throughout the route. Once the corridor of the Pennsylvania Railroad, the rail-trail features two railroad bridges, each more than 250 feet long, over the Kokosing State Scenic River, as well as restored train cars in Gambier.

DOWNTOWN CONNECTOR TRAIL (MOUNT VERNON; PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 1.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Mount Vernon, Knox County Park District |
| Website | knoxcountyparks.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/downtown-connector-trail |

The 1-mile Downtown Connector Trail connects the Kokosing Gap Trail to the Heart of Ohio Trail through Mount Vernon. The trail begins at the western terminus of the Kokosing Gap Trail on Mt. Vernon Avenue. The trail travels west along the Kokosing River to the restored CA&C Railroad Depot, where it connects to the Heart of Ohio Trail.

HEART OF OHIO TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 18.5 / 18.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, ballast |
| Trail Managers | Heart of Ohio Trail Inc., Knox County Park District |
| Website | heartofohiotrail.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/heart-of-ohio-trail |

The Heart of Ohio Trail travels 18.5 miles from Mount Vernon to Centerburg. Along the trail in Mount Vernon, Ariel-Foundation Park proudly displays Ohio's industrial past in the form of a 250-acre adaptive reuse project. Once the site of a glass-making factory, this space now features sculptures, lakes, an observation tower and walking trails. The western terminus of the Heart of Ohio Trail was extended 1.3 miles in 2022 to connect with the Meredith State Road Trail at the Knox–Licking county line.

TRAIL GAP 9 — CENTERBURG TO LICKING-DELAWARE COUNTY LINE COMPLETED

Trail Gap 9 (from Centerburg to the Licking–Delaware county line) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Heart of Ohio Trail.

SANDEL LEGACY TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 7.8 / 7.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Delaware County Friends of the Trail, Preservation Parks of Delaware County |
| Website | preservationparks.com/parks/ohio-to-erie-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/sandel-legacy-trail- |

The Sandel Legacy Trail consists of two trail sections totaling 7.8 miles of trail. The first section, formerly known as the Meredith State Road Trail, travels from the Licking–Delaware county line to the unincorporated community of Condit. The second section travels through the village of Sunbury. Once an abandoned railroad bed, the trail was donated by Walter and Kathy Sandel with funding for trail conversion provided by a NatureWorks grant. The trail is formerly known as the Big Walnut Community Trail, and it continues to serve as a community hub, with a picnic area and former depot that houses the Delaware County Model Railroaders Group.

TRAIL GAP 10 – CONDIT TO SUNBURY

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The bridge over Big Walnut Creek was rehabilitated in 2023, reducing the remaining amount of trail left to complete Trail Gap 10. Preliminary engineering was completed in 2022 for the final segment between East Cherry and South Columbus streets. Preservation Parks of Delaware County and the city of Sunbury are working to acquire the necessary property. Once that is complete, funding can be acquired for construction.

TRAIL GAP 11 – SUNBURY TO GALENA COMPLETED

Trail Gap 11 (Sunbury to Galena) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Thomas W. Hopper Legacy Trail.

THOMAS W. HOPPER LEGACY TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Village of Galena |
| Website | galenaohio.gov/resident_resources |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/thomas-w-hopper-legacy-trail |

The 1.5-mile Thomas W. Hopper Legacy Trail, formerly known as the Galena Brick Trail, is the section of the Ohio to Erie Trail that goes through the village of Galena. The latest section of the trail, which opened in late 2019, begins at County Road 104/Dustin Road and follows a former railbed northward to Sunbury. Largely wooded, it includes a bridge over Little Walnut Creek and travels through Miller Park, which contains a small playground.

TRAIL GAP 12 – GALENA

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The former rail corridor that now houses the Thomas W. Hopper Legacy Trail continues south from Galena; however, it was developed as part of the Blackhawk Golf Course. There is now a 0.3-mile gap between the Thomas W. Hopper Legacy Trail and the Hoover Scenic Trail along the Hoover Reservoir. An on-road route is signed along County Road 104/Dustin Road and County Road 24/West Columbus Street to support travelers currently looking to fill this gap while work continues to identify the best option to complete the trail.

HOOVER SCENIC TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 0.8 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Delaware County Friends of the Trail, Preservation Parks of Delaware County |
| Website | preservationparks.com/parks/ohio-to-erie-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/hoover-scenic-trail |

The Hoover Scenic Trail winds 0.8 mile through the Hoover Nature Preserve area. The trail begins south of the village of Galena and runs along the shore of the Hoover Reservoir within the Hoover Nature Preserve. The trail heads west to cross South Old 3C Road via a bicycle and pedestrian bridge. Trail users continue west for a short way on Plumb Road to connect to the Genoa Trail.

GENOA TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 4.0 / 4.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Delaware County Friends of the Trail, Preservation Parks of Delaware County |
| Website | genoatwp.com/departments/parks/trails.php |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/genoa-trail |

The 4-mile Genoa Trail parallels state Route 3 from south of Galena to Westerville, Ohio, but is separated from the highway by trees and vegetation. Once an abandoned railroad, the corridor now features a multiuse asphalt trail and amenities for trail users, including benches and a bicycle repair station.

WESTERVILLE B&W (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 23.0 / 2.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Delaware County Friends of the Trail, Westerville Parks & Recreation |
| Website | parks.westerville.org/parks-trails/trails/ohio-to-erie-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/westerville-bw |

The Westerville B&W (Bike & Walk Route) is an extensive system of paved multiuse trails forming many loops throughout the city of Westerville, a suburb of Columbus. The Westerville B&W will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 2.5 miles. The spine of the Westerville B&W was built on a former rail corridor and connects 23 miles of trail throughout the city.

ALUM CREEK GREENWAY TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 25.2 / 12.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, Columbus Recreation & Parks Department |
| Website | columbusrecparks.com/facilities/trails/greenways/alum-creek-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/alum-creek-greenway-trail |

The Alum Creek Greenway Trail winds alongside the picturesque Alum Creek for 25.2 miles and hosts the Great American Rail-Trail for 12 miles between Westerville and downtown Columbus. The Alum Creek Greenway Trail celebrates active transportation by honoring important figures with plaques and bridges along the trail.



Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail | Photo by Jason Cohn

**DOWNTOWN CONNECTOR TRAIL
(PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)**

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 5.0 / 5.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, Columbus Recreation & Parks Department |
| Website | columbusrecparks.com/facilities/trails/greenways/downtown-connector-trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/downtown-connector-trail-(columbus) |

The Downtown Connector Trail parallels I-670 for 3.5 miles from Ohio Dominican University to Clinton Middle School and Columbus State Community College. The fully paved Downtown Connector Trail serves as an important link between neighborhoods on the city’s east side and downtown Columbus. A 1.5-mile segment of the Downtown Connector Trail is largely on road, utilizing lower-volume roads and bike lanes with clear signage, and is described as “easily navigable.”

**SCIOTO GREENWAY TRAIL
(PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)**

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 12.2 / 3.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, Columbus Recreation & Parks Department |
| Website | columbusrecparks.com/facilities/trails/greenways/scioto-trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/scioto-greenway-trail |

The Scioto Greenway Trail is a 12.2-mile trail that traverses the banks of the Scioto River, connecting several parks and offering scenic views of downtown Columbus along the way. The first greenway built in Columbus, the Scioto Greenway Trail serves as the spine of the Scioto Mile, a string of prominent parks and landmarks in downtown Columbus.

CAMP CHASE TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 15.9 / 15.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks, Columbus Recreation & Parks Department, Friends of the Camp Chase Trail |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • columbusrecparks.com/facilities/trails/greenways/camp-chase-trail • fmcpt.com/camp-chase-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/camp-chase-trail |

The Camp Chase Trail travels 15.9 miles from Columbus to West Jefferson, Ohio. The trail, named after the railroad with which it shares a corridor, serves as a shining example of a well-constructed rail-with-trail. The trail was built by Columbus & Franklin County Metro Parks and the Columbus Recreation & Parks Department.

ROBERTS PASS TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 6.5 / 6.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Friends of Madison County Parks & Trails, Madison County Park Board |
| Website | fmcpt.com/roberts-pass |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/roberts-pass-trail |

The Roberts Pass Trail runs 6.5 miles from Wilson Road in rural Fairfield Township to London, Ohio. The paved trail passes through farmland for its entirety and is shaded by tree canopy throughout. Local volunteers secured the right-of-way and a work lane for construction of the trail.

The Roberts Pass Trail is named after Wayne Roberts and Gene Pass, the leaders of Friends of Madison County Parks & Trails. A memorial plaque near Maple Street in London records the history of the Roberts Pass Trail.

TRAIL GAP 13 – LONDON

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The 0.8-mile gap in London begins at South Walnut Street near the western terminus of the Roberts Pass Trail and continues to Midway Street, the eastern terminus of the Prairie Grass Trail. There is currently an interim on-road connector through London's segment of the Ohio to Erie Trail. An off-road trail through London is currently being explored in more detail.

PRAIRIE GRASS TRAIL (PART OF THE OHIO TO ERIE TRAIL)

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 27.8 / 27.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Clark County Park District, Friends of Madison County Parks & Trails, Greene County Parks & Trails, Madison County Park Board |
| Website | fmcpt.com/prairie-grass-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/prairie-grass-trail |

The Prairie Grass Trail travels 27.8 miles from London to Xenia, Ohio, and is one of four rail-trails that radiate from Xenia Station. Once a Baltimore and Ohio Railroad freight yard, Xenia Station now includes a local history museum that features information about the three railroads that once ran through the town: the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Wellston Subdivision and two lines of the Pennsylvania Railroad. The Prairie Grass Trail marks the western end of the Great American Rail-Trail's journey along the Ohio to Erie Trail.



Great Miami River Trail | Photo by Tom Bilcze

CREEKSIDE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 15.1 / 15.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Five Rivers MetroParks, Greene County Parks & Trails |
| Website | metroparks.org/places-to-go/paved-trails/#creekside-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/creekside-trail |

The Creekside Trail travels 15.1 miles northwest to Dayton through the town of Beavercreek, Ohio. The Creekside Trail is a rail-trail and is part of Miami Valley Trails—a network of more than 340 miles of trails that travel throughout Ohio’s scenic Miami Valley. The Creekside Trail is also one of several trails that radiate from Xenia Station.

MAD RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 7.1 / 3.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Five Rivers MetroParks, Miami Conservancy District |
| Website | metroparks.org/places-to-go/paved-trails/#mad-river-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/mad-river-trail |

The scenic 7.1-mile Mad River Trail follows the Mad River into downtown Dayton. The Mad River Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for a 3.2-mile section that begins in Dayton’s Eastwood MetroPark and travels to RiverScape MetroPark. The paved trail is relatively flat and is accessible for cyclists, skaters and pedestrians of all ages.

GREAT MIAMI RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 86.2 / 4.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Five Rivers MetroParks, Miami Conservancy District |
| Website | metroparks.org/places-to-go/paved-trails/#great-miami-river-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/great-miami-river-trail |

The Great Miami River Trail runs alongside the Great Miami River for 86.2 miles from Piqua down to Fairfield. The Great Miami River Trail is the backbone of Ohio's paved Miami Valley Trails network, spanning 340 miles throughout Ohio's Miami Valley. There is a 7.6-mile loop around downtown Dayton on both sides of the Great Miami River. From the connection to the Mad River Trail, the Great Miami River Trail breaks off in two directions, giving trail users two options to cross the Great Miami River. Both trail options meet up at the Wolf Creek Trail.

WOLF CREEK TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ohio (in Miles) | 16.2 / 13.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Dayton, Five Rivers MetroParks |
| Website | metroparks.org/places-to-go/paved-trails/#wolf-creek-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/wolf-creek-trail-(oh) |

The Wolf Creek Trail is currently open in two disconnected segments and travels northwest for 13.8 miles from Dayton to the Montgomery–Preble county line. Part of the Ohio Miami Valley's 340 miles of off-road trails, the Wolf Creek Trail is a well-maintained asphalt route that winds alongside Wolf Creek. The Wolf Creek Trail is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap (Trail Gap 14) between them:

Segment 1 – 2.9 miles of trail heading west from Dayton to the unincorporated community of Stillwater Junction.

Segment 2 – 10.9 miles of trail between Trotwood and Preble County Line Road in Brookville.

TRAIL GAP 14 – WOLF CREEK TRAIL EXTENSION (DAYTON TO TROTWOOD)

| | |
|--|--|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some sections expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Five Rivers MetroParks is actively working to complete the 5-mile gap in the Wolf Creek Trail. The route to complete this gap has been determined and funding for construction is anticipated to be secured in the next few years. The first section of trail to be constructed in this gap will consist of approximately 2 miles between Wesleyan MetroPark and Hickorydale Park, expected to begin construction in the spring of 2026. Funding was recently awarded to begin design of Phase 2, extending the trail toward Trotwood.

TRAIL GAP 15 – PREBLE COUNTY LINE TO OHIO–INDIANA STATE LINE

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Wolf Creek Trail currently ends at the Preble County line. The Ohio Department of Transportation initiated a study in 2023 to develop a planning-level cost estimate for the design and construction of a multiuse path along U.S. 40 from Preble County Line Road to state Route 320. The feasibility assessment was completed in 2024 and suggests three phases to complete this gap. Further design and fundraising are underway to begin the first phase of construction.

INDIANA



Cardinal Greenway | Photo by Tony Valainis

RTC met with Indiana state officials early in the Great American Rail-Trail process, recognizing that the route through Indiana would have a significant impact on the potential routes through its neighboring states. Two routes were presented: a shorter one across the north of the state and a longer diagonal one from Richmond, Indiana, toward the Chicago metropolitan area. Officials from the Indiana Department of Transportation were so excited about the potential of the Great American Rail-Trail that they asked RTC to consider including as many miles as possible in Indiana by using the longer diagonal route. In September 2018, Governor Holcomb announced the Next Level Connections program, a \$1 billion investment in infrastructure projects including trails. The program provided funding for several projects along the Great American Rail-Trail, some of which are still being completed.

TABLE 12: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN INDIANA

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Ind. (% of Total State Mileage) | 128.3 (59.0%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Ind. (% of Total State Mileage) | 89.3 (41.0%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Ind. | 9 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Ind. | 217.6 |

**GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 6: INDIANA**



TABLE 13: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH INDIANA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Ind. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|--|
| TRAIL GAP 16 – Ohio–Ind. State Line to Richmond | 4.5 |
| Cardinal Greenway (Richmond to Gaston) | 51.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 17 – Cardinal Greenway Extension (Gaston to Gas City) | 18.1 |
| Cardinal Greenway (Gas City to Sweetser) | 10.6 |
| Sweetser Switch Trail | 4.0 |
| Converse Junction Trail | 2.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 18 – Converse to McGrawsville | 8.1 |
| Nickel Plate Trail (McGrawsville to Peru) | 11.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 19 – Nickel Plate Trail Extension (Peru) | 2.6 |
| Nickel Plate Trail (Peru to Rochester) | 22.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 20 – Rochester to Monterey | 15.8 |
| Monterey Erie Trail | 0.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 21 – Monterey to Bass Station | 4.2 |
| Erie Trail | 11.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 22 – North Judson to Hebron | 25.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 23a – Veterans Memorial Trail Extension (Hebron) | 1.1 |
| Veterans Memorial Trail (Hebron) | 1.0 |

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Ind. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| TRAIL GAP 23b – Veterans Memorial Trail Extension (Porter–Lake County Line to Crown Point) | 8.5 |
| Veterans Memorial Trail (Crown Point) | 0.6 |
| Great American Rail-Trail (Crown Point) | 1.0 |
| Erie Lackawanna Trail | 2.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 24 – Erie Lackawanna Trail to Pennsy Greenway | 1.1 |
| Pennsy Greenway (Schererville to Ind.–Ill. State Line) | 10.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 25 – Pennsy Greenway Extension (Schererville to Munster) COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 26 – Pennsy Greenway Extension (Munster) COMPLETED | - |
| Total Miles | 217.6 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 128.3 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 89.3 |

TRAIL GAP 16 – OHIO–INDIANA STATE LINE TO RICHMOND

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Picking up from Trail Gap 15 at the Ohio–Indiana border, Trail Gap 16 encompasses the 4.5 miles from the state line to Richmond in Wayne County, Indiana. The city of Richmond’s 2015 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan illustrates a proposed greenway connecting Richmond to the Ohio border. The proposed greenway parallels the East Fork Whitewater River and connects to downtown Richmond through an unnamed existing trail.

An important east-west connection to the adjacent county land and eventually to the state of Ohio is a proposed greenway along the East Fork of the White River. Although only a small portion of the greenway lies within the city limits, constructing this portion of the greenway could provide the catalyst needed to spur construction of the greenway to the state line. Building the greenway in this eastern direction will also provide connections to both Glen Miller Park and Hayes Arboretum on a more scenic route than the one proposed along U.S. 40 to fill Trail Gap 15.

CARDINAL GREENWAY

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 62.0 / 61.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Cardinal Greenways |
| Website | cardinalgreenways.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/cardinal-greenway |

The Cardinal Greenway, the longest rail-trail in Indiana, stretches 62 miles along a former CSX Transportation railroad corridor. The Cardinal Greenway was the 2018 inductee into RTC’s Rail-Trail Hall of Fame. The trail is named after the Cardinal, a passenger train that once ran the length of the greenway. The Cardinal Greenway is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap between them:



Indiana State Representative Carrie Hamilton talks about the importance of trails in Muncie. | Photo by Brandi Horton

Segment 1 – 51 miles of trail between Richmond and Gaston.

Segment 2 – 10.6 miles of trail between Gas City and Sweetser.

The gap between the two segments of the Cardinal Greenway is discussed in Trail Gap 17, below.

TRAIL GAP 17 – CARDINAL GREENWAY EXTENSION (GASTON TO GAS CITY)

| | |
|--|---|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some sections under construction and expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Cardinal Greenways is actively working on opportunities to complete the approximately 18-mile gap in the Cardinal Greenway between Gaston and Gas City. A 2-mile section of trail near Taylor University in Upland is slated for construction in 2026, thanks in part to funding from the Lilly Endowment. This construction is expected to jump-start fundraising and construction efforts for the remainder of Trail Gap 17.

SWEETSER SWITCH TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 4.0 / 4.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Cardinal Greenways, Town of Sweetser |
| Website | indianatrails.com/sweetser-switch-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/sweetser-switch-trail |

The 4-mile Sweetser Switch Trail is an important regional connector that follows the original corridor of the Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Chicago and St. Louis Railroad. The paved rail-trail connects to the Cardinal Greenway at County Road 400 West/North 400 West in Sweetser and joins the 2.6-mile Converse Junction Trail in Converse, making the Sweetser Switch Trail a key piece of north-central Indiana’s trail system.

CONVERSE JUNCTION TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 2.6 / 2.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Town of Converse |
| Website | in.gov/towns/converse/play/parks-and-recreation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/converse-junction-trail |

The Converse Junction Trail provides around 2.6 miles of smooth asphalt along a former Penn Central Transportation Company line, linking the small Indiana communities of Mier and Converse. The Converse Junction Trail travels northwest across Pipe and Taylor creeks to reach downtown Converse.

TRAIL GAP 18 – CONVERSE TO McGRAWSVILLE

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In 2025, Nickel Plate Trail Inc. completed a 5.2-mile extension of the Nickel Plate Trail between McGrawsville and Bunker Hill, with a ribbon cutting in the spring of 2026. Property acquisition is underway for the remaining 8 miles of Trail Gap 18 between Converse and McGrawsville.

NICKEL PLATE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 36.9 / 33.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Nickel Plate Trail Inc. |
| Website | nickelplatetrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/nickel-plate-trail |

The Nickel Plate Trail is currently divided into two segments of existing trail with one gap between them:

Segment 1 – About 15.6 miles of trail from Kokomo to Peru.

Segment 2 – About 22 miles of trail from Peru to Rochester.

The Nickel Plate Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail using 11.6 miles of Segment 1 (between McGrawsville and Peru) and all of Segment 2 (between Peru and Rochester). A 0.7-mile extension of the Nickel Plate Trail into Rochester was completed in 2025. The gap in the Nickel Plate Trail is discussed in Trail Gap 19.

TRAIL GAP 19 – NICKEL PLATE TRAIL EXTENSION (PERU)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A 2.6-mile trail gap in Peru utilizes an interim on-road connector. The interim connector heads east into downtown Peru before connecting back to Segment 2 of the Nickel Plate Trail. Nickel Plate Trail Inc. is leading efforts to complete this gap, including working to purchase the land between West 7th Street and East 100 North/East Lovers Lane Road. Fundraising is almost complete to finish this trail gap.

TRAIL GAP 20 – ROCHESTER TO MONTEREY

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The remaining 15.8-mile gap to complete Trail Gap 20 from downtown Rochester west to Monterey has not been discussed in depth. There is an abandoned rail corridor that begins north of Rochester and travels south of Leiters Ford that could form a potential route. More research needs to be done to develop a viable gap-filling strategy for Trail Gap 20.

MONTEREY ERIE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 0.6 / 0.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, Prairie Trails Club, Inc. |
| Website | hoosiervalley.org/explore/trails-and-recreation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/monterey-erie-trail |

The 0.6-mile Monterey Erie Trail occupies the same railbanked corridor as the Erie Trail (described on page 51) to its west, and the two rail-trails are planned to be linked in the future. The towns of Monterey and North Judson once saw frequent freight service between the two communities, first by the Erie Lackawanna Railway and, later, by the Erie Western Railway, Tippecanoe Railroad and JK Lines. The 16-mile corridor was put up for abandonment in 2003, and the Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum stepped in to preserve the corridor for public use.

TRAIL GAP 21 – MONTEREY TO BASS STATION

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is an approximately 4.2-mile gap between the western terminus of the Monterey Erie Trail in Monterey and the eastern terminus of the Erie Trail in the town of Ora. The Prairie Trails Club Inc., a volunteer group that oversees the Erie Trail, mentioned filling the gap in its 2016 Future Vision Phase Plan.

ERIE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 11.1 / 11.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Hoosier Valley Railroad Museum, Prairie Trails Club Inc. |
| Website | hoosiervalley.org/visit/trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/north-judson-erie-trail |

The 11-mile Erie Trail occupies the railbanked right-of-way of the former JK Line Railroad. In May 2019, the Prairie Trails Club Inc. was awarded an Indiana Department of Natural Resources Next Level Trails program grant from the first round of applications to construct 2.1 miles of trail beginning at the eastern terminus of the Erie Trail at U.S. 35 in Bass Station and stretching toward Ora. The group completed this extension in 2021.

TRAIL GAP 22 – NORTH JUDSON TO HEBRON

| | |
|---|---|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some sections under construction and expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Various efforts are underway to complete Trail Gap 22. Most recently, a Next Level Trails program grant was awarded in December 2023 to complete 3.1 miles of this gap. The trail will be called the Grand Kankakee Marsh Trail, and will encompass a paved trail from the public library in LaCrosse to County Road 2200 along the former railroad corridor. Construction is slated to begin in the next few years.

In addition, the Prairie Trails Club Inc. received an Indiana Trails Program grant in 2023 for a 1-mile section of trail in North Judson that will help fill in other parts of Trail Gap 22. The extension will continue the trail from Main Street in North Judson and extend northwest of town on the west side of South English Lake Road. Construction on this section is expected in 2026.

TRAIL GAP 23A – VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL EXTENSION (HEBRON)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Veterans Memorial Trail is currently under development in northwest Indiana. The trail will begin in Hebron just west of Cobb Creek and will travel 1.1 miles through Hebron until reaching its first open section.

VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 1.6 / 1.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Crown Point, Friends of the Veterans Memorial Parkway, Lake County Parks, Town of Hebron |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/veterans-memorial-trail-(in) |

The Veterans Memorial Trail will connect Hebron to the Erie Lackawanna Trail in Crown Point. The trail is being developed in phases, with acquisition and construction underway. The two open sections of trail encompass:

Segment 1 – 1.0 mile in Hebron that was completed in 2020, using a grant from Indiana’s Next Level Trails program.

Segment 2 – 0.6 mile in Crown Point.

Trail Gap 23b currently separates Segments 1 and 2 with an 8.5-mile gap.

The Veterans Memorial Trail will connect a series of memorials dedicated to those who have served our country in times of war and peace. Currently one memorial—the Lake County Korean Veterans Memorial—has been completed, with two more under development. These include the Lake County World War I & II Veterans and Holocaust Memorial in Crown Point and the Northwest Indiana Middle East Veterans Memorial in Hebron.

TRAIL GAP 23B – VETERANS MEMORIAL TRAIL EXTENSION (PORTER–LAKE COUNTY LINE TO CROWN POINT)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Plans to fill Trail Gap 23b, the largest gap in the Veterans Memorial Trail—at 8.5 miles—are progressing. Traveling west from Hebron to Crown Point, the development of the Veterans Memorial Trail is anticipated to be as follows:

Porter–Lake county line to Iowa Street: The section of future trail from the Porter–Lake county line to Iowa Street is in the acquisition and funding stage. It is anticipated that the trail will be surfaced with asphalt and will include an adjacent equestrian trail.

Iowa Street to East 113th Avenue: Lake County Parks is actively working to complete right-of-way acquisition in this section.

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL (CROWN POINT)

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 1.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Crown Point |
| Website | crownpoint.in.gov/490/Bike-Trail |

In 2025, a connection between the Veterans Memorial Trail and the Erie Lackawanna Trail through Crown Point was completed. The locals have declared it a piece of the Great American Rail-Trail and refer to it by this name.

ERIE LACKAWANNA TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 17.7 / 2.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Hammond, Lake County Parks, Town of Schererville |
| Website | rtc.li/erie-lackawanna-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/erie-lackawanna-trail |

The Erie Lackawanna Trail travels 17.7 miles between Crown Point and Hammond—two former rail junctions along a route that carried goods and people in and out of Chicago for nearly a century. The paved trail is bordered by green space and crosses wetlands and parks along the way. The Erie Lackawanna Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 2 miles in Crown Point, starting from its southern terminus at West Summit and North Court streets and ending at Veterans Lane.

TRAIL GAP 24 – ERIE LACKAWANNA TRAIL TO PENNSY GREENWAY

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

About 2 miles of Trail Gap 24 were completed and opened in 2023, reducing the remaining length of this gap to about 1 mile. The remaining mile to be completed is expected to follow West 91st Avenue, and will be eligible for funding soon. Local partners will reapply for the remaining funding that is needed for this project.

PENNSY GREENWAY (SCHERERVILLE TO INDIANA-ILLINOIS STATE LINE)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ind. (in Miles) | 14.4 / 10.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Forest Preserve District of Cook County, Lake County Parks, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Schererville Parks & Recreation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/pennsy-greenway |

The Pennsy Greenway is currently open between Schererville, Indiana, and Calumet City, Illinois. The 14.4-mile paved trail runs along the former Penn Central Transportation Company rail line and is planned to travel a total of 15 miles once complete. The Pennsy Greenway will host the Great American Rail-Trail from Schererville, Indiana, to Lansing, Illinois, totaling 10.7 miles (10.2 of which are in Indiana, and 0.5 of which is in Illinois).



Pennsy Greenway | Photo by TrailLink user tommyspan

~~TRAIL GAP 25 – PENNSY GREENWAY EXTENSION (SCHERERVILLE TO MUNSTER) COMPLETED~~

Trail Gap 25 (Pennsy Greenway Extension – Schererville to Munster) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Pennsy Greenway.

~~TRAIL GAP 26 – PENNSY GREENWAY EXTENSION (MUNSTER) COMPLETED~~

Trail Gap 26 (Pennsy Greenway Extension – Munster) is now a completed trail segment as part of the Pennsy Greenway.

ILLINOIS



Hennepin Canal Parkway | Photo by TrailLink user jfahler

The Great American Rail-Trail route across Illinois incorporates the majority of the northern leg of the Grand Illinois Trail between Lansing, Illinois, and the Quad Cities along the Mississippi River. The iconic Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail and Hennepin Canal Parkway make up almost 75% of the existing miles that the Great American Rail-Trail route will use to cross Illinois. Some strategic investments can help complete the roughly 25 miles of trail remaining to be built to fully connect the Great American Rail-Trail across Illinois.

TABLE 14: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN ILLINOIS

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Ill. (% of Total State Mileage) | 165.4 (86.8%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Ill. (% of Total State Mileage) | 25.1 (13.2%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Ill. | 4 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Ill. | 190.5 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 7: ILLINOIS





Great River Trail | Photo by TrailLink user Ikgatu

TABLE 15: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH ILLINOIS

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Ill. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|--|
| Pennsy Greenway (Ind.-Ill. State Line to Lansing) | 0.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 27 – Lansing Greenway | 2.2 |
| Thorn Creek Trail | 10.4 |
| Old Plank Road Trail | 21.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 28 – Joliet | 3.5 |
| Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail | 60.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 29 – LaSalle to Bureau Junction | 14.6 |
| Hennepin Canal Parkway | 59.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 30 – Colona to Silvis | 4.8 |
| Grand Illinois Trail (East Moline) | 2.9 |
| Beacon Harbor Parkway Trail | 1.1 |
| Great River Trail | 7.7 |
| Crossing the Mississippi River | 0.6 |
| Total Miles | 190.5 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 165.4 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 25.1 |

PENNSY GREENWAY (INDIANA-ILLINOIS STATE LINE TO LANSING)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 14.4 / 0.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Forest Preserves of Cook County, Lake County Parks, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Schererville Parks & Recreation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/pennsy-greenway |

The Pennsy Greenway is currently open between Schererville, Indiana, and Calumet City, Illinois. The existing sections of trail in Indiana are discussed in more detail in the Indiana chapter of this report.

TRAIL GAP 27 – LANSING GREENWAY

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 2.2-mile gap in the Lansing trail network between the Pennsy Greenway and the Thorn Creek Trail. The Village of Lansing confirmed a trail routing to complete this gap, which will be called the Lansing Greenway. In 2020, Lansing received a grant from the Invest in Cook program for \$155,000 to complete the preliminary engineering to close this gap. The village is currently working to implement the grant and will turn its attention to trail construction once the preliminary engineering is completed.

A feasibility study was completed in 2025 to review an extension of the Old Plank Road Trail that would consider a more direct connection to complete Trail Gap 27. If this project moves forward, RTC will discuss with local partners if and how the Great American Rail-Trail should be rerouted across the Indiana-Illinois border.

THORN CREEK TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 17.7 / 10.4 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Forest Preserves of Cook County |
| Website | fpdcc.com/places/trails/thorn-creek-trail-system |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/thorn-creek-trail |

The Thorn Creek Trail offers a paved 17-mile route traveling through woodlands and several communities on the southern outskirts of Chicago. The Forest Preserves of Cook County championed and currently maintains the Thorn Creek Trail. The Thorn Creek Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 10.4 miles, connecting Thornton south to Chicago Heights. The Thorn Creek Trail is part of the Grand Illinois Trail system.

OLD PLANK ROAD TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 21.7 / 21.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Forest Preserve District of Will County, Old Plank Road Trail Management Commission, Rich Township, Village of Frankfort, Village of Matteson, Village of Park Forest |
| Website | opr.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/old-plank-road-trail |

The Old Plank Road Trail travels 21.7 miles west from Chicago Heights to Joliet across a densely populated suburban landscape. The trail follows what was once a trail created and used by indigenous peoples around Lake Michigan that was later used by fur trappers and early settlers. Business interests eventually acquired the trail for the old Michigan Central Railroad line. The Old Plank Road Trail is part of the Grand Illinois Trail system.

TRAIL GAP 28 – JOLIET

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 3.5-mile gap through Joliet between the Old Plank Road Trail and the Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail. The city of Joliet and the Forest Preserve District of Will County have identified three potential routes to complete this gap through the city. All three options require further study, including solutions for crossing the Des Plaines River.

ILLINOIS & MICHIGAN CANAL STATE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 79.5 / 60.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone, grass, gravel |
| Trail Managers | Forest Preserve District of Will County, Illinois Department of Natural Resources |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dnr.illinois.gov/parks/park.imcanal.html • iandmcanal.org |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/illinois--michigan-canal-state-trail/ |

The 79.5-mile Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail follows the Illinois and Michigan Canal alongside the Illinois River. The trail traverses the I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor, designated in 1984 as the first National Heritage Area in the United States. Along the trail are multiple state parks, historical sites and opportunities to observe wildlife. The Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 60.8 miles to connect the village of Rockdale, southwest of Joliet, to LaSalle at the Illinois River.



Old Plank Road Trail | Photo by TrailLink user antonlove1

TRAIL GAP 29 – LaSALLE TO BUREAU JUNCTION

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A 14.6-mile gap exists between the western terminus of the Illinois & Michigan Canal State Trail in LaSalle and the eastern terminus of the Hennepin Canal Parkway in Bureau Junction. A study was conducted in 2013 to review alternatives for filling this gap, which included a circuitous trail route and a signed, on-street route. It was determined that neither option would move forward.

A separate study was completed in 2024 to assess the feasibility of completing a rail-with-trail along the active rail corridor that parallels the Illinois River. The route was determined to be largely feasible given several statewide criteria, and work is underway to align the political and funding interests for further design and potential project construction. Supporting this effort is Canal Trail Connector, Inc., a local committee of engaged and well-connected members.



Hennepin Canal Parkway | Photo by Ryan Cree

HENNEPIN CANAL PARKWAY

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 104.5 / 59.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Illinois Department of Natural Resources |
| Website | dnr.illinois.gov/parks/park/hennepincanal.html |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/hennepin-canal-parkway |

The 104.5-mile Hennepin Canal Parkway, administered by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources as a state park, follows an old towpath along the Hennepin Canal, first opened in 1907. The canal was originally built to link the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. Most of the various locks and aqueducts necessary to span the 105-mile distance are still in place, and the entire canal is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Hennepin Canal Parkway will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 59.7 miles, connecting Bureau Junction to Colona, the western terminus of the Hennepin Canal Parkway.

TRAIL GAP 30 – COLONA TO SILVIS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In 2022, the city of East Moline completed a 2.9-mile portion of Trail Gap 30 between the town of Silvis and the Mississippi River, described below as the Grand Illinois Trail (East Moline). This was part of a years-long plan to fill the gap in the Grand Illinois Trail network between the Hennepin Canal Parkway and the Mississippi River, also known as the Critical Gap Connector. The towns of Carbon Cliff and Silvis are coordinating to determine the best route to complete the remaining 4.8 miles of this gap, and progress should be forthcoming.

GRAND ILLINOIS TRAIL (EAST MOLINE)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 2.9 / 2.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of East Moline |
| Website | www2.illinois.gov/dnr/recreation/greenway-sandtrails/Pages/GrandIllinoisTrail.aspx |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/grand-illinois-trail-(east-moline-to-silvis) |

The city of East Moline opened a roughly 3-mile section of the Grand Illinois Trail in the fall of 2022. It is a part of the regional trail system and connects the town of Silvis to the Mississippi River.

BEACON HARBOR PARKWAY TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 1.1 / 1.1 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of East Moline |
| Website | qctrails.org/trails/trail/7th-street-the-quarter-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/beacon-harbor-parkway-trail |

The Great American Rail-Trail will utilize 1.1 miles of an existing trail that heads west along 13th Avenue in East Moline. The trail leads to the East Moline City Office on Beacon Harbor Parkway. Near the Beacon Harbor welcome center, which faces the Mississippi River, the city recently invested in benches and upgrades to the trail. A large development is planned for this area, including a hotel that could increase the desire for trails and act as a logical trailhead for visitors.

GREAT RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Ill. (in Miles) | 62.5 / 7.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of East Moline, City of Moline, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, Rock Island County Forest Preserve District, Village of Hampton, Village of Port Byron, Village of Rapids City |
| Website | qctrails.org/trails/trail/great-river-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/great-river-trail |

The Great River Trail is a 62.5-mile trail that travels along the banks of the Mississippi River between Savanna and Rock Island, Illinois. The Great River Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 7.7 miles, heading southwest from East Moline to Rock Island.

CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

The Quad Cities provide two trail crossings of the Mississippi River from which Great American Rail-Trail users can choose. The Government/Arsenal Bridge is a multimodal bridge that contains a bicycle and pedestrian element and crosses between Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa. In 2021, the Iowa-Illinois Memorial Bridge (I-74 Bridge) was completed, providing a new multimodal crossing of the Mississippi River between East Moline, Illinois, and Bettendorf, Iowa. Both bridges are about the same length and accommodate trail users.

IOWA



High Trestle Trail | Photo by TrailLink user dj123

The Great American Rail-Trail travels through Iowa from Davenport to Council Bluffs at the western end of the state. Iowa has a rich network of trails, and support for the Great American Rail-Trail was mentioned in the Iowa Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan adopted in December 2018. The Iowa Department of Transportation’s Bicycle and Pedestrian Long-Range Plan also acknowledges the hard work of the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in “securing and initiating recreational trails across Iowa.” Many of Iowa’s most significant trails are thriving today because of the guidance and coordination the foundation provides to the state.

TABLE 16: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN IOWA

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Iowa (% of Total State Mileage) | 256.5 (55.8%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Iowa (% of Total State Mileage) | 203.2 (44.2%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Iowa | 18 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Iowa | 459.7 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 8: IOWA

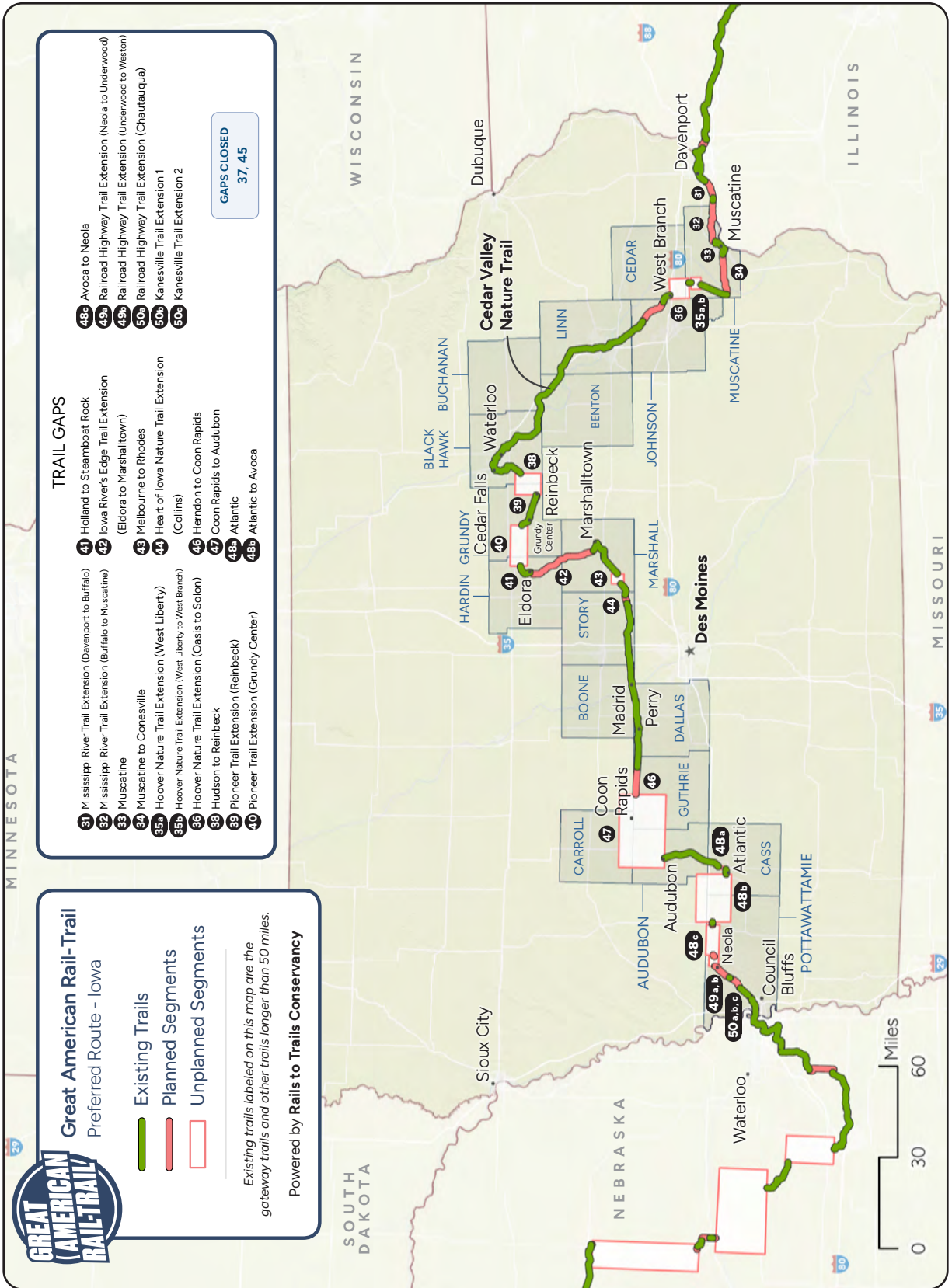


TABLE 17: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH IOWA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Iowa Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|--|
| Crossing the Mississippi River | 0.3 |
| Mississippi River Trail (Riverfront Trail) | 7.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 31 – Mississippi River Trail Extension (Davenport to Buffalo) | 6.7 |
| Mississippi River Trail | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 32 – Mississippi River Trail Extension (Buffalo to Muscatine) | 15.6 |
| Running River Trail System (Riverside Park) | 5.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 33 – Muscatine | 0.3 |
| Running River Trail System (Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail) | 0.8 |
| Running River Trail System | 1.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 34 – Muscatine to Conesville | 13.7 |
| Hoover Nature Trail (Conesville to West Liberty) | 8.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 35a – Hoover Nature Trail Extension (West Liberty) | 3.4 |
| Hoover Nature Trail (West Liberty) | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 35b – Hoover Nature Trail Extension (West Liberty to West Branch) | 7.6 |
| Hoover Nature Trail (West Branch to Oasis) | 3.4 |
| TRAIL GAP 36 – Hoover Nature Trail Extension (Oasis to Solon) | 9.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 37 – Hoover Nature Trail Extension (Solon) COMPLETED | - |
| Hoover Nature Trail (Solon to Johnson–Linn County Line) | 6.1 |
| Cedar Valley Nature Trail | 68.7 |
| Evansdale Nature Trail | 1.0 |
| Gilbert Drive Trail | 0.2 |
| Cedar Valley Lakes Trail | 11.2 |
| South Riverside Trail | 0.7 |
| Cedar Prairie Trail | 8.2 |
| Sergeant Road Trail | 4.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 38 – Hudson to Reinbeck | 13.2 |
| Pioneer Trail (Reinbeck) | 0.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 39 – Pioneer Trail Extension (Reinbeck) | 1.4 |
| Pioneer Trail (Reinbeck to Grundy Center) | 5.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 40 – Pioneer Trail Extension (Grundy Center) | 0.8 |
| Pioneer Trail (Grundy Center to Holland) | 3.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 41 – Holland to Steamboat Rock | 17.7 |
| Iowa River’s Edge Trail (Steamboat Rock) | 5.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 42 – Iowa River’s Edge Trail Extension (Eldora to Marshalltown) | 23.6 |

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Iowa Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| Iowa River's Edge Trail (Marshalltown) | 2.9 |
| Linn Creek Recreational Trail | 3.2 |
| Iowa 330/US 30 Trail | 11.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 43 – Melbourne to Rhodes | 3.5 |
| Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (Rhodes to Collins) | 4.4 |
| TRAIL GAP 44 – Heart of Iowa Nature Trail Extension (Collins) | 3.1 |
| Heart of Iowa Nature Trail (Collins to Slater) | 21.6 |
| High Trestle Trail | 14.9 |
| Raccoon River Valley Trail to High Trestle Trail Connector (formerly Trail Gap 45) | 6.7 |
| Hiawatha Trail | 1.7 |
| Raccoon River Valley Trail | 12.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 46 – Herndon to Coon Rapids | 9.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 47 – Coon Rapids to Audubon | 24.0 |
| T-Bone Trail | 19.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 48a – Atlantic | 3.1 |
| North Atlantic Trails System | 2.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 48b – Atlantic to Avoca | 19.2 |
| Avoca Trails | 0.4 |
| TRAIL GAP 48c – Avoca to Neola | 14.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 49a – Railroad Highway Trail Extension (Neola to Underwood) | 6.1 |
| Railroad Highway Trail | 0.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 49b – Railroad Highway Trail Extension (Underwood to Weston) | 4.9 |
| Railroad Highway Trail | 3.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 50a – Railroad Highway Trail Extension (Chautauqua) | 1.8 |
| Kanesville Trail | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 50b – Kanesville Trail Extension 1 | 0.5 |
| Kanesville Trail | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 50c – Kanesville Trail Extension 2 | 0.1 |
| Kanesville Trail | 1.1 |
| First Avenue Trail | 3.2 |
| Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge | 0.2 |
| Total Miles | 459.7 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 256.5 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 203.2 |

CROSSING THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the Quad Cities provide two trail crossings of the Mississippi River from which trail users along the Great American Rail-Trail can choose. The Government/Arsenal Bridge is a multimodal bridge that contains a bicycle and pedestrian element and crosses between Rock Island, Illinois, and Davenport, Iowa. In 2021, the Iowa-Illinois Memorial Bridge (I-74 Bridge) was completed, providing a new multimodal crossing of the Mississippi River between East Moline, Illinois, and Bettendorf, Iowa. Both bridges are about the same length and accommodate trail users.

MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 12.7 / 8.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Davenport Parks & Recreation, Scott County Conservation Board |
| Website | nps.gov/miss/learn/news/mississippi-river-trail.htm |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/riverfront-trail-(ia) |

The long-planned Mississippi River Trail (MRT) travels through Bettendorf and Davenport, Iowa. The Great American Rail-Trail uses two segments of the MRT:

Segment 1 – a 7.3-mile section of Iowa’s Riverfront Trail heading southwest along the Mississippi River from the Government/Arsenal Bridge.

Segment 2 – a 1-mile section of the trail along state Route 22 in Buffalo.

Segment 1 currently ends with a loop around Credit Island Park, which was the site of a battle during the War of 1812 led by future president Zachary Taylor. Segment 2 travels adjacent to the Buffalo Shores State Recreation Area between Elm Street and 40th Avenue in the city of Buffalo, Iowa. Trail users can cross state Route 22 to access the recreation area, which provides overnight camping at the 65-site campground, as well as publicly accessible restrooms and water.

TRAIL GAP 31 – MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION (DAVENPORT TO BUFFALO)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 6.7-mile gap in the MRT between the western end of Iowa’s Riverfront Trail and the state Route 22 shared-use path in Buffalo (Segment 2, described above). Quad Cities Trails, a regional authority on mapping trails in the Quad Cities area, identifies a 3.1-mile route from the end of the Riverfront Trail along South Concord Street to state Route 22 as an open portion of trail. The route follows South Concord Street, a low-volume, low-speed section of road. A separated trail route should still be considered for this section.

From this point, there are 3.5 miles to connect between the end of South Concord Street and the next section of MRT open trail along state Route 22 in Buffalo. State Route 22 is a four-lane highway with a narrow, intermittent shoulder that is partially paved, narrowing to two lanes once it enters the city of Buffalo. An active Canadian Pacific Railway corridor runs along the river south of state Route 22, with roughly 10 to 35 feet of separation between the road and the train tracks. An existing shared-use path connects at Elm Street in Buffalo. Iowa’s MRT Plan identifies this section as a candidate for on-street bike lanes, which could be accommodated by widening the paved section of roadway, removing a lane or narrowing lanes. Local representatives should continue to review options to complete a separated trail between Davenport and Buffalo.

TRAIL GAP 32 – MISSISSIPPI RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION (BUFFALO TO MUSCATINE)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 15.6-mile gap in the MRT between the end of the state Route 22 shared-use path and the Running River Trail System in Muscatine, Iowa. As part of a project to connect the MRT between the cities of Buffalo and Muscatine, the Bi-State Regional Commission—an organization covering five counties in western Illinois and eastern Iowa—helped complete designs for a separated trail to complete this gap, dedicating funding to this project from various grant sources. Due to timing and local match funding, the 0.8 mile of shared-use path through Buffalo (described earlier as Segment 2 of the MRT) was the only section that was completed. The Bi-State Regional Commission still holds the designs for the potential trail connection west to Muscatine, which could get revived if there is sufficient funding.

Iowa's MRT Plan identifies the 6-mile section of state Route 22 between 40th Avenue in Buffalo and Wildcat Den Road in Muscatine as a candidate for on-street bike lanes. As the plan states, from this point, the MRT "can take advantage of Wildcat Den State Park by turning north onto state Route 77 E1/Wildcat Den [Road] in Muscatine County." After Wildcat Den State Park, the Great American Rail-Trail route can follow a low-volume and low-speed section of road that is already well-used by cyclists. However, a separate multiuse trail will be difficult to establish in this section.

The Muscatine Countywide Trails Plan identifies another corridor to complete a connection between Buffalo and Muscatine. In addition to the Wildcat Den Road route, the plan also identifies the section of state Route 22 that is bypassed by the route described above. According to the plan, "since this portion of Highway 22 is also Iowa's Great River Road, a designated National Scenic Byway..., aligning the [Mississippi River Trail] in close proximity to Iowa's Great River Road allows scenic byway discretionary program funds to be sought for implementing components of the MRT." A separated multiuse trail has more potential along state Route 22 given the existing highway and railroad rights-of-way.

RUNNING RIVER TRAIL SYSTEM

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 10.0 / 7.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | City of Muscatine |
| Website | visitmuscatine.com/257/running-river-trail-system |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/running-river-trail-system-(riverside-park) |

The Running River Trail System is a network of trails around Muscatine, including three segments hosting the Great American Rail-Trail:

Segment 1 (Riverside Park) – 5.5 miles from Solomon Avenue and Keener Road to Musser Park.

Segment 2 (Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail) – 0.8 mile from the northern terminus of the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail to South Houser Street.

Segment 3 – 1.2 miles from the western terminus of the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail to the area near the Lutheran Homes on 231st Street.

Segment 1 travels through Muscatine, becoming a rail-with-trail for approximately 2.3 miles along the Canadian Pacific Railway line that follows the shores of the Mississippi River to Riverside Park in downtown Muscatine. Trail Gap 33, described on page 67, separates Segments 1 and 2.

Segment 2 starts at the northern terminus of the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail, a part of the Running River Trail System that opened in 2017. The 4.9-mile trail originates at a trailhead on Roby Avenue before traveling west through Kent Stein Park and south to Deep Lakes Park. The Great American Rail-Trail route will use 0.8 mile of the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail.

Segment 3 begins at South Houser Street, where the Great American Rail-Trail will diverge from the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail and head north on an existing path along Houser Street. The path along Houser Street is currently a narrow sidewalk, but it is not busy and is passable by people on bicycles moving carefully. At Hershey Avenue/231st Street, the Great American Rail-Trail will continue west through Trail Gap 34 to connect to the Hoover Nature Trail.

TRAIL GAP 33 – MUSCATINE

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is approximately 0.3 mile between Musser Park—the western terminus of the Running River Trail System’s Riverside Park section—and Kent Stein Park—the northern endpoint of the Running River Trail System’s Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail section. Trail users wanting to connect to the Kent Stein to Deep Lakes Park Trail can travel on-road from Musser Park following Oregon Street. An off-street trail is unlikely to be developed between these two trails due to physical constraints. The streets are relatively safe and provide a short on-street trip between the two trails. If the interim on-road connector itself is determined to be unsafe, an off-street corridor should be explored more carefully.

TRAIL GAP 34 – MUSCATINE TO CONESVILLE

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 13.7-mile gap between South Houser Street and the Hoover Nature Trail in Conesville, Iowa. The Muscatine Countywide Trails Plan identified Hershey Avenue/231st Street/County Highway 28 as the best route between Muscatine and the Hoover Nature Trail. Starting at South Houser Street, there is a brief 0.75-mile section of trail along 231st Street between Houser Street and Lutheran Drive near Muscatine. The shoulder on 231st Street is minimal and in poor condition, but current traffic volumes are relatively low. The county trail plan notes that, “at a minimum, widened, paved shoulders should be added to this roadway.” A separated corridor trail may be warranted or necessary in the future depending upon use and demand.

There is also an existing bridge crossing the Cedar River along 231st Street. It is currently closed to all users, but reopening it for walking and bicycling could be explored to make a safer crossing at the river. After the Cedar River, the Great American Rail-Trail could continue along 231st Street, where it would intersect the Hoover Nature Trail just north of Conesville.

Muscatine has a trail committee staffed by city and county staff and local volunteers. This group has significant local knowledge that could be used to confirm whether 231st Street is a viable off-street trail option to connect the Great American Rail-Trail through western Muscatine County.

HOOVER NATURE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 19.4 / 19.4 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone, grass |
| Trail Managers | Cedar County Conservation Board, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, Johnson County Conservation Board, Linn County Conservation Board, West Branch Parks & Recreation, West Liberty Parks & Recreation |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> linncountytrails.org/hoover nps.gov/places/hoover-nature-trail.htm |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/hoover-nature-trail |

The Hoover Nature Trail currently exists in four non-contiguous segments between Conesville and Ely, Iowa, where it connects to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail. When the Hoover Nature Trail is connected between Conesville and Ely, it will extend approximately 42 miles. The trail corridor lies on a former Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad corridor, and eventually could connect Cedar Rapids to Burlington, Iowa. The Hoover Nature Trail is named for former President Herbert Hoover, who was born in West Branch—one of the many towns through which the abandoned corridor passes.

The four existing segments of the Hoover Nature Trail along the Great American Rail-Trail are laid out as follows (totaling 19.4 miles of open trail):

Segment 1 – About 8.9 miles of trail between Conesville and West Liberty. This segment requires significant maintenance to bring it up to the standard of the other segments of the Hoover Nature Trail.

Segment 2 – About 1 mile of trail in West Liberty.

Segment 3 – About 3.4 miles of trail between West Branch and Oasis.

Segment 4 – About 6.1 miles of trail between Solon and the Johnson–Linn county line (connecting to the Cedar Valley Nature Trail).

The gaps currently separating these segments are described below.

TRAIL GAP 35A – HOOVER NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (WEST LIBERTY)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The 3.4-mile gap in the Hoover Nature Trail in and around West Liberty travels through predominantly agricultural landscapes. The former rail corridor is visible in some places and has been plowed over in several spots. A combination of rail-trail and trail built along roadways could help fill this gap. More work is needed to identify a corridor to complete this trail gap.

TRAIL GAP 35B – HOOVER NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (WEST LIBERTY TO WEST BRANCH)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The largely agricultural landscape of the 7.6-mile gap in the Hoover Nature Trail between West Liberty and West Branch looks similar to that of Trail Gap 35a. Here, too, the former rail corridor is still visible in several spots. A combination of rail-trail and interim on-road connector trail built along roadways could help fill this trail gap, and Muscatine and Cedar counties should work together to identify a corridor to complete it.

TRAIL GAP 36 – HOOVER NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (OASIS TO SOLON)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Johnson County Conservation Board intends to complete the approximately 9.8-mile gap in the Hoover Nature Trail between Oasis and Solon. The board is working to acquire an abandoned rail corridor to complete this gap, though the exact routing may change if the rail corridor is not available and an alternate route has to be acquired. There have been land donations in this segment, and a land agent working for Johnson County is working with landowners to acquire additional parcels.

TRAIL GAP 37 – HOOVER NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (SOLON) COMPLETED

Trail Gap 37 is now a completed trail segment as part of the Hoover Nature Trail.

CEDAR VALLEY NATURE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 68.7 / 68.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Black Hawk County Conservation Board, Cedar Rapids Parks & Recreation, City of Ely, City of Hiawatha, Hickory Hills Park, Linn County Conservation Board |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • linncountyiowa.gov/967/Cedar-Valley-Nature-Trail • linncountytrails.org/cedar-valley-nature |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/cedar-valley-nature-trail |

The 68.7-mile Cedar Valley Nature Trail comprises three former trails—the Cedar Valley Nature Trail, Cedar River Trail and parts of the Hoover Nature Trail—which merged under one name in 2017. The trail was named in 1980 after the creation of the original 52-mile section running from Hiawatha to Evansdale.

Among the first rail-trail conversions in the state, the original northern portion of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail traces the former corridor of the Waterloo, Cedar Falls and Northern Railway. As the trail travels through Cedar Rapids, it parallels an active Union Pacific Railroad corridor for several blocks until it reaches Cedar Lake. The entire Cedar Valley Nature Trail is paved, thanks to a \$3.5 million grant from the Destination Iowa program to pave the final 16 miles between Hiawatha and Evansdale in 2024.

EVANSDALE NATURE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 1.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Evansdale |
| Website | cedarvalleytrails.org/trails/evansdale-nature-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/evansdale-nature-trail |

The Cedar Valley Nature Trail ends at River Road in Evansdale, where trail users can follow the Evansdale Nature Trail west at Arbutus Avenue. The Evansdale Nature Trail offers a scenic ride along Meyers Lake and through Angels Park, which features picnic shelters, water and modern restrooms.

GILBERT DRIVE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 1.0 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Evansdale |
| Website | evansdale.gov/office.com/?SEC=8EF62527-035A-4C03-B1B3-D588CCFD5E5E |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/gilbert-drive-trail |

The Great American Rail-Trail will follow a side path along Gilbert Drive for a brief section between the Evansdale Nature Trail and the Cedar Valley Lakes Trail.



Cedar Valley Nature Trail | Photo by John Riley

CEDAR VALLEY LAKES TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 12.8 / 11.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Cedar Falls Public Works, Cedar Valley Trails Partnership, George Wyth Memorial State Park, Waterloo Leisure Services |
| Website | cedarvalleytrails.org/trails/cedar-valley-lakes-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/cedar-valley-lakes-trail |

The Cedar Valley Lakes Trail originates in Evansdale, where it was constructed atop the town's Cedar River levee. After the trail enters the city of Waterloo, it briefly parallels an active section of Canadian National Railway corridor before traveling through downtown Waterloo. The Cedar Valley Lakes Trail travels through George Wyth Memorial State Park, a 1,200-acre park on the north side of the Cedar River containing various lakes and an extensive trail system.

SOUTH RIVERSIDE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 3.5 / 0.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Cedar Falls Public Works, George Wyth Memorial State Park, Waterloo Leisure Services |
| Website | cedarvalleytrails.org/trails/south-riverside-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/south-riverside-trail |

The South Riverside Trail is one in a series of trail systems throughout the city of Cedar Falls, Iowa. The South Riverside Trail connects to the Cedar Valley Lakes Trail at the western end of George Wyth Memorial State Park and crosses the Cedar River on a dedicated bicycle and pedestrian bridge. The trail continues back to the east along the south side of the Cedar River, then stretches another 2.4 miles west across state Route 58 to the Cedar Falls Recreation Area.

CEDAR PRAIRIE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 8.2 / 8.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Cedar Falls Public Works, Waterloo Leisure Services |
| Website | cedarvalleytrails.org/cedar-valley-trails/trail-loops/cedar-prairie-loop |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/cedar-prairie-trail |

The Cedar Prairie Trail extends 8.2 miles between the South Riverside Trail and the Sergeant Road Trail, following the course of state Route 27. The path travels over gently rolling hills and follows the grade of the Chicago Great Western Railway’s Cedar Falls branch. The Cedar Prairie Trail passes suburban neighborhoods and light industrial areas before entering the Katoski Greenbelt, a tree-lined path beside Black Hawk Creek.

SERGEANT ROAD TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 9.9 / 4.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Waterloo Leisure Services |
| Website | cedarvalleytrails.org/trails/sergeant-road-trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/sergeant-road-trail |

The Sergeant Road Trail travels 9.9 miles along Sergeant Road between downtown Waterloo and the city of Hudson along Black Hawk Creek. The trail is built on a railroad corridor originally constructed by the Wisconsin, Iowa & Nebraska Railway (also known as “The Old Diagonal”) in the late 19th century. There is a short on-road section in Hudson from Dale Drive to 5th Street.

TRAIL GAP 38 – HUDSON TO REINBECK

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A rail corridor once connected Hudson southwest to the city of Marshalltown, Iowa, spanning about 35 miles and providing an ideal corridor for a trail to connect the Sergeant Road Trail to the Linn Creek Recreational Trail in Marshalltown. However, this corridor has long since been abandoned, and adjacent landowners now own the property of the former rail line. According to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, initial conversations about providing easements along the former rail corridor for future trail use have not been successful. As such, an alternative route has been identified that connects the Sergeant Road Trail to the Linn Creek Recreational Trail in Marshalltown via the Pioneer Trail and future trail building in Grundy and Hardin counties.

A Black Hawk County Metropolitan Area Transportation Policy Board 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan notes that a future regional connection should be made from Hudson to points south and west of the town, though specifics on where and how are not elaborated upon. There are several low-volume rural roads that connect the towns of Hudson and Reinbeck. Many of these roads are two-lane rural roads with minimal shoulders. Further work should be conducted to identify a potential off-street trail option or locations where a shoulder could be widened for bicycle and pedestrian use.



Pioneer Trail | Photo by Milo Bateman

PIONEER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 10.0 / 10.0 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Grundy County Conservation Board |
| Website | grundycountyiowa.gov/departments/conservation/trails/pioneer-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/pioneer-trail-(ia) |

The 10-mile Pioneer Trail—which gets its name from the early settlers in Grundy County—is built on a former rail line that once connected the towns of Reinbeck and Holland and the communities in between. The Pioneer Trail exists in three existing segments that are laid out as follows:

Segment 1 (Reinbeck) –

0.3 mile between the trailhead at the Grundy County Greenbelt to V Avenue in Reinbeck.

Segment 2 (Reinbeck to Grundy Center) –

5.9 miles between U Avenue in Reinbeck and the Wolfe Family Preserve on Diagonal Road in Grundy Center.

Segment 3 (Grundy Center to Holland) –

3.8 miles between 235th Street in Grundy Center and Main Street in Holland.

The flat trail parallels Black Hawk Creek for most of its route and features several commemorative plaques with tributes to trail supporters. There are two short gaps in the Pioneer Trail (discussed in Trail Gaps 39–40).

TRAIL GAP 39 – PIONEER TRAIL EXTENSION (REINBECK)

| | |
|--|-----------------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Completion expected in 2026 |

A 1.4-mile gap exists in the Pioneer Trail just west of Reinbeck. The Grundy County Conservation Board has recently received several significant state grants to complete Trail Gap 39. The conservation board is working through final trail designs and expects to see trail construction in 2026 to complete this gap.

TRAIL GAP 40 – PIONEER TRAIL EXTENSION (GRUNDY CENTER)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A short, 0.8-mile gap exists in the Pioneer Trail just east of the city of Grundy Center. The gap travels through the Wolfe Family Preserve and causes the trail to make a detour along Diagonal Road to 235th Street, where the trail is reconnected. Options to close this gap include completing the trail along the former rail line or widening the shoulder on Diagonal Road to provide an on-road connector with further separation for trail users.

The Grundy County 2021 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) Plan notes in Appendix 11 that completing this connection is a project the county should focus on. If Diagonal Road remains the most viable option in the short term, signage should be added to note that it is part of the trail and to warn drivers to be cautious of cyclists and pedestrians.

TRAIL GAP 41 – HOLLAND TO STEAMBOAT ROCK

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A 17.7-mile gap exists between the end of the Pioneer Trail in Holland and the beginning of the Iowa River’s Edge Trail in the city of Steamboat Rock, Iowa. Appendix 12 of the Grundy County 2021 REAP Plan shows a concept plan for bicycle wayfinding on county roads. At the end of the Pioneer Trail in Holland, the county proposes to sign a route to the city of Wellsburg. The county plan identifies several locations along this route for decision signs (showing directions and mileage to nearby towns), turn signs and confirmation signs.

Hardin County does not identify any on- or off-street trail connections from the Grundy–Hardin county line to Steamboat Rock. Various low-volume county roads could help make this connection via a side path, widened shoulders or, at minimum, signage.

IOWA RIVER’S EDGE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 7.9 / 7.9 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Managers | Hardin County Board of Supervisors Trail Commission, Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, TRAILS Inc. (Marshall County) |
| Website | riversedgetrail.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/rivers-edge-trail-(ia) |

The first sections of the Iowa River’s Edge Trail are complete and are laid out as follows:

Segment 1 – A 5-mile section of the trail is now complete between Steamboat Rock and Eldora, 4.4 miles of which were completed in the fall of 2022.

Segment 2 – In Marshalltown, the trail is open for 2.9 miles extending from the Keyser Street Trailhead at Wilson Circle to Radio Tower Road. Trail Gap 42, below, discusses plans to connect the Iowa River’s Edge Trail for 23.6 miles between Eldora and Marshalltown.

TRAIL GAP 42 – IOWA RIVER’S EDGE TRAIL EXTENSION (ELDORA TO MARSHALLTOWN)

| | |
|--|---|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some sections under construction and expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

The Iowa River Railroad formerly connected towns along the Iowa River in Hardin and Marshall counties. The railroad filed for abandonment in 2012, and a process to convert it into a trail between Steamboat Rock and Marshalltown began soon thereafter. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation is spearheading the project with local organizations in Hardin County, Marshall County and the city of Marshalltown. The Iowa River’s Edge Trail will also connect the small towns of Eldora, Gifford, Union, Liscomb and Albion, bringing the potential of economic opportunities from trail tourism.

The former rail corridor has been secured, and the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation and local partners are continuing fundraising to complete this section of trail in the near future.

On the southern end, the project was awarded \$300,000 in federal Recreational Trails Program funding in 2020 to complete an additional 1.8 miles from Radio Tower Road in Marshalltown toward the Iowa River, which is slated for construction in 2026.

The trail also was awarded several million dollars from the Iowa Recreational Trails Program, the federal Transportation Alternatives program and Iowa’s Community Attraction and Tourism program to construct the next 8.1 miles of trail between Union and Eldora. Construction is expected in 2027.

LINN CREEK RECREATIONAL TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 10.1 / 3.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Marshall County Conservation Board, Marshalltown Parks and Recreation |
| Website | marshalltown-ia.gov/291/trails |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/linn-creek-recreational-trail |

The Linn Creek Recreational Trail is approximately 10 miles in total and runs through the center of Marshalltown, Iowa. The Linn Creek Recreational Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 3.2 miles, connecting to the Iowa River's Edge Trail near Legion Memorial Park and heading west to connect to the Iowa 330/US 30 Trail. Most of this 3.2-mile section is a rail-with-trail, running within highway right-of-way alongside an active Union Pacific Railroad corridor, often separated by vegetation.

IOWA 330/US 30 TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 11.1 / 11.1 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Marshall County Conservation Board |
| Website | marshallcountyiowa.gov/501/conservation |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/iowa-330us-30-trail |

The Iowa 330/US 30 Trail stretches from the outskirts of Marshalltown to just west of the town of Melbourne, close to the geographic center of Iowa. The 11.1-mile trail parallels either state Route 330 or U.S. 30 for the majority of its length, providing a non-motorized option along a major thoroughfare. The trail connects to the Linn Creek Recreational Trail at the Grimes Farm & Conservation Center in Marshalltown. The trail currently ends at Gerhart Avenue, just north of U.S. 30.

TRAIL GAP 43 – MELBOURNE TO RHODES

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Marshall County intends to extend the length of the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail an additional 3.5 miles from its current endpoint in Rhodes to the beginning of the Iowa 330/US 30 Trail in Melbourne. This extension will allow for an uninterrupted trip on off-road trails from Marshalltown to Woodward in Dallas County and to points south of there, including Ankeny and Des Moines. The project is identified in the Central Iowa Regional Transportation Planning Alliance's Horizon Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan. Only a portion of the old railroad right-of-way is in public ownership. The majority of the former rail corridor, still visible from aerial photography as it travels through the agricultural area between Melbourne and Rhodes, has the potential to be a future rail-trail.

HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 26.0 / 26.0 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone, dirt, grass |
| Trail Managers | Marshall County Conservation Board, Story County Conservation Board |
| Website | storycountyiowa.gov/1500/Heart-of-Iowa-Nature-Trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/heart-of-iowa-nature-trail |

The Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, currently in two segments, traverses farmland along the former route of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, also known as the Milwaukee Road. The two segments include:



High Trestle Trail | Photo by Joe LaCroix

Segment 1 (Rhodes to Collins) – The trail begins on East Jefferson Street in Rhodes and continues west 4.4 miles through agricultural areas to a short gap in the trail between 730th Avenue and U.S. 65/1st Avenue in Collins (as described in Trail Gap 44, below).

Segment 2 (Collins to Slater) – The trail picks back up at U.S. 65/1st Avenue in Collins and, for the next 21.6 miles, connects the depot towns of Maxwell, Cambridge, Huxley and Slater. At Slater, the trail connects seamlessly to the High Trestle Trail.

The Marshall and Story county conservation boards are in the process of resurfacing the entire Heart of Iowa Nature Trail, and are close to meeting their goal.

TRAIL GAP 44 – HEART OF IOWA NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (COLLINS)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a 3.1-mile gap in the Heart of Iowa Nature Trail in Story County between 730th Avenue and U.S. 65/1st Avenue in Collins. Story County is actively working to acquire land to support the closure of this gap. In the meantime, trail users can use an interim on-road connector through Collins.

HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 25.6 / 14.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Ankeny Parks & Recreation, Boone County Conservation Board, City of Madrid, City of Slater, City of Woodward, Dallas County Conservation Board, Polk County Conservation Board |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dallascountyiowa.gov/330/High-Trestle-Trail • inhf.org/what-we-do/protection/high-trestle-trail • polkcountyiowa.gov/conservation/parks-trails/high-trestle-trail/ |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/high-trestle-trail |

The High Trestle Trail is a nearly 26-mile trail that extends from the cities of Ankeny to Perry using a former Union Pacific Railroad corridor. The corridor was discontinued in 2003 and sold to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in 2005 with a generous donation of land value. The High Trestle Trail is famous for its 130-foot-tall High Trestle Bridge, which boasts an art installation wrapped in 43 twisting, diamond-shaped steel ribs lined with LED lights. The Boone County Conservation Board owns and operates the bridge.

RACCOON RIVER VALLEY TRAIL TO HIGH TRESTLE TRAIL CONNECTOR (FORMERLY TRAIL GAP 45)

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 6.7 / 6.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | Dallas County Conservation Board |
| Website | dallascountyiowa.gov/330/High-Trestle-Trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/high-trestle-trail-to-raccoon-river-valley-trail-connector |

For many years, a gap existed between the High Trestle Trail and the Raccoon River Valley Trail through the town of Bouton. The Dallas County Conservation Board invested significant time and resources to close this gap, which was finally opened in 2024 with much excitement. There is now a seamless trail connection between these two iconic Iowa trails.

HIAWATHA TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 2.5 / 1.7 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Perry |
| Website | perryia.org/trails.html |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/hiawatha-trail-(ia) |

The Hiawatha Trail travels across Perry's northeastern neighborhoods and provides a connection between the High Trestle Trail on its eastern end and the Raccoon River Valley Trail on its western end.

RACCOON RIVER VALLEY TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 89.0 / 12.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Dallas County Conservation Board, Greene County Conservation Board, Guthrie County Conservation Board |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> dallascountyiowa.gov/335/Raccoon-River-Valley-Trail raccoonrivervalleytrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/raccoon-river-valley-trail |

The Raccoon River Valley Trail runs 89 miles in total between Dallas, Greene and Guthrie counties, and its northern leg will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 12.8 miles. The trail provides a loop between just outside of the Des Moines area to the town of Jefferson in Greene County, connecting through several rural communities. The Raccoon River Valley Trail runs along a former Milwaukee Road corridor that was first built in the 1870s to carry rail traffic between Des Moines and the Great Lakes region.

TRAIL GAP 46 – HERNDON TO COON RAPIDS

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The city of Coon Rapids has a plan to extend the Raccoon River Valley Trail approximately 17 miles west. Coon Rapids holds a grant from the Iowa Department of Transportation to complete the 9 miles between the unincorporated community of Herndon—one of the trail junctions along the Raccoon River Valley Trail—and the end of an abandoned rail corridor just east of the city of Bayard. There are three ongoing negotiations with private landowners who own portions of this corridor. The remainder of the corridor is in public ownership and ready for trail development.

The remaining 8 miles between Bayard and Coon Rapids could run adjacent to an active BNSF Railway line to create a rail-with-trail. If this option is not feasible, a different corridor will need to be identified. There is currently an on-street signed route along 330th Street between Herndon and Coon Rapids, which can act as an interim on-road connector while this portion of the gap is being completed.

TRAIL GAP 47 – COON RAPIDS TO AUDUBON

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From Coon Rapids, the route will head south 24 miles to the T-Bone Trail in Audubon. The Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation shows an interim on-road connector that could be made from Coon Rapids to Audubon. These roads are paved, low-volume roads with small spikes in traffic during the harvesting season in the fall, but there is no shoulder for traffic-separated travel. A safer, long-term off-road connection will need to be identified to connect the cities of Coon Rapids and Audubon.

T-BONE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 19.8 / 19.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | Audubon County Conservation Board, Cass County Conservation Board |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • auduboncountyiowa.gov/webres/File/tbone-trail-brochure.pdf • mycountyparks.com/county/audubon/park/t-bone-recreational-trail-audubon-trailhead.aspx |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/t-bone-trail |

The 19.8-mile T-Bone Trail was named for an event called Operation T-Bone Days originating in the town of Audubon, and it is a joint project of the Audubon and Cass county conservation boards. The trail was constructed on the former railbed of a spur of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad that extended from Atlantic to Audubon to carry cattle to the stockyards of Chicago. The northern terminus of the T-Bone Trail is in Albert the Bull Park in Audubon, featuring a 30-foot-tall cow sculpture.

TRAIL GAP 48A – ATLANTIC

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Cass County Conservation Board is reviewing opportunities to extend the southern terminus of the T-Bone Trail at Dunbar Road 3.1 miles south into the city of Atlantic. Nishna Valley Trails is working with engineers to review two route alternatives to connect the T-Bone Trail into Atlantic and has secured dedicated funding to complete this trail connection from a private donor.

NORTH ATLANTIC TRAILS SYSTEM

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 6.0 / 2.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Atlantic |
| Website | cityofatlantic.com/parks-recreation/parks/schildberg-recreation-area |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/northern-atlantic-trails-system |

The North Atlantic Trails System connects two major recreation sites in Atlantic. On its western end is the Schildberg Recreation Area, where 1.3 miles of pathway wrap around three lakes. Heading east across Troublesome Creek, the trail system connects to the Atlantic Municipal Utilities Well Field, where a combination of gravel and paved trails crisscross the open space.

TRAIL GAP 48B – ATLANTIC TO AVOCA

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A clear path does not currently exist to connect Atlantic 19.2 miles to Avoca. Cass County completed a trail plan in 2021 that shows two route proposals to connect a trail west from Atlantic, including an option that connects into Avoca. Further work is needed to identify the best trail connection.

AVOCA TRAILS

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 0.4 / 0.4 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Avoca |
| Website | wattaway.com/trails/ avoca_city_trails |

A short section of trail connects through Avoca along East High Street.

TRAIL GAP 48C – AVOCA TO NEOLA

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A clear path does not currently exist to connect Avoca approximately 14 miles to Neola. Pottawattamie County's Comprehensive Plan 2030 identifies potential corridors to make this trail connection, which should continue to be reviewed. The City of Minden, situated between Avoca and Neola, is actively working on a section of trail through town as part of their recovery from a devastating tornado in 2024. This trail section could potentially be a hub for the Great American Rail-Trail.

TRAIL GAP 49A – RAILROAD HIGHWAY TRAIL EXTENSION (NEOLA TO UNDERWOOD)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Pottawattamie County Conservation Board is partnering with several local organizations to complete the Railroad Highway Trail. Construction is underway toward the southern end, with the northern end (Trail Gap 49a) to follow.

TRAIL GAP 49B – RAILROAD HIGHWAY TRAIL EXTENSION (UNDERWOOD TO WESTON)

| | |
|--|----------------------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Construction expected in 2027 |

Significant funding was awarded in 2025 to complete Trail Gap 49b between Underwood and Weston. In early 2026, Pottawattamie County issued a request for proposals to complete final engineering designs and construction-ready plans for this nearly 5-mile section of trail, with construction slated to follow.

RAILROAD HIGHWAY TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 3.8 / 3.8 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Pottawattamie County Conservation Board |
| Website | wattaway.com/trails/railroad_highway_multiuse_trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/railroad-highway-trail- |

The Railroad Highway Trail will eventually be a 16.7-mile trail extending from Neola south to Council Bluffs. The existing portions of the trail parallel Railroad Highway briefly through Underwood as well as between Idlewood Road and the Smith Wildlife Refuge Area. An additional 13 miles—in the form of several extensions, discussed in Trail Gaps 49 and 50a—are planned for construction in the near future.

TRAIL GAP 50A – RAILROAD HIGHWAY TRAIL EXTENSION (CHAUTAUQUA)

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Construction expected in 2026 |

An additional 1.8 miles of trail are expected to be developed along Railroad Highway between Kaneshville Boulevard and the existing trail around the Smith Wildlife Refuge Area. Construction is slated for 2026.

KANESVILLE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 3.1 / 3.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Council Bluffs |
| Website | councilbluffs-ia.gov/2166/Trails |

The Kaneshville Trail follows East Kaneshville Boulevard as it enters Council Bluffs from the east. Several gaps in the Kaneshville Trail are described below.

TRAIL GAP 50B – KANESVILLE TRAIL EXTENSION 1

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The City of Council Bluffs intends to complete this half-mile gap in the Kaneshville Trail to create a seamless entry into Council Bluffs from the east.

TRAIL GAP 50C – KANESVILLE TRAIL EXTENSION 2

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The City of Council Bluffs intends to complete this 0.1-mile gap in the Kaneshville Trail to create a seamless entry into Council Bluffs from the east.

FIRST AVENUE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 3.2 / 3.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Council Bluffs |
| Website | councilbluffs-ia.gov/2347/FIRST-AVE |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/first-ave-trail |

The First Avenue Trail follows a former rail corridor through downtown Council Bluffs, running parallel to West Broadway. The trail is part of a larger revitalization project that includes trails, transit and redevelopment.

The wide, paved pathway has a 10- to 12-foot-wide asphalt middle section with 2-foot-wide concrete shoulders on either side. The First Avenue Trail is similar to a linear park. Along the 3.2-mile trail, you can enjoy multiple public green spaces, shared seating and trail plazas located every few blocks.

BOB KERREY PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Iowa (in Miles) | 0.4 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Managers | Council Bluffs Parks & Recreation, Omaha Parks & Recreation, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • councilbluffs-ia.gov/2178/bob-kerrey-pedestrian-bridge • visitomaha.com/bob |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/bob-kerrey-pedestrian-bridge |

The Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge spans the Missouri River and connects the communities of Council Bluffs, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska. The main span of the bridge was opened in 2008. It extends more than 1,000 feet and runs 50 feet above the Missouri River.

The Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge also has the distinction of being the longest bridge to span two states that is dedicated solely to non-motorized transportation. On the Iowa side of the Missouri River, the bridge originates in Tom Hanafan River's Edge Park and connects to the Iowa Riverfront Trail, which follows the Missouri River for 6.5 miles.

NEBRASKA



Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail | Photo by TrailLink user lisa.jarnigan

The Great American Rail-Trail crosses from Iowa into Nebraska on the iconic Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge. The route weaves through the urban areas of Omaha and Lincoln, connecting these population centers to the more rural western part of the state. The open sections of the Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail take trail users almost 40% of the way across the total planned mileage for Nebraska, with more miles set for construction in the near future.

TABLE 18: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN NEBRASKA

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Neb. (% of Total State Mileage) | 312.0 (51.9%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Neb. (% of Total State Mileage) | 289.2 (48.1%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Neb. | 9 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Neb. | 601.2 |

**GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 9: NEBRASKA**

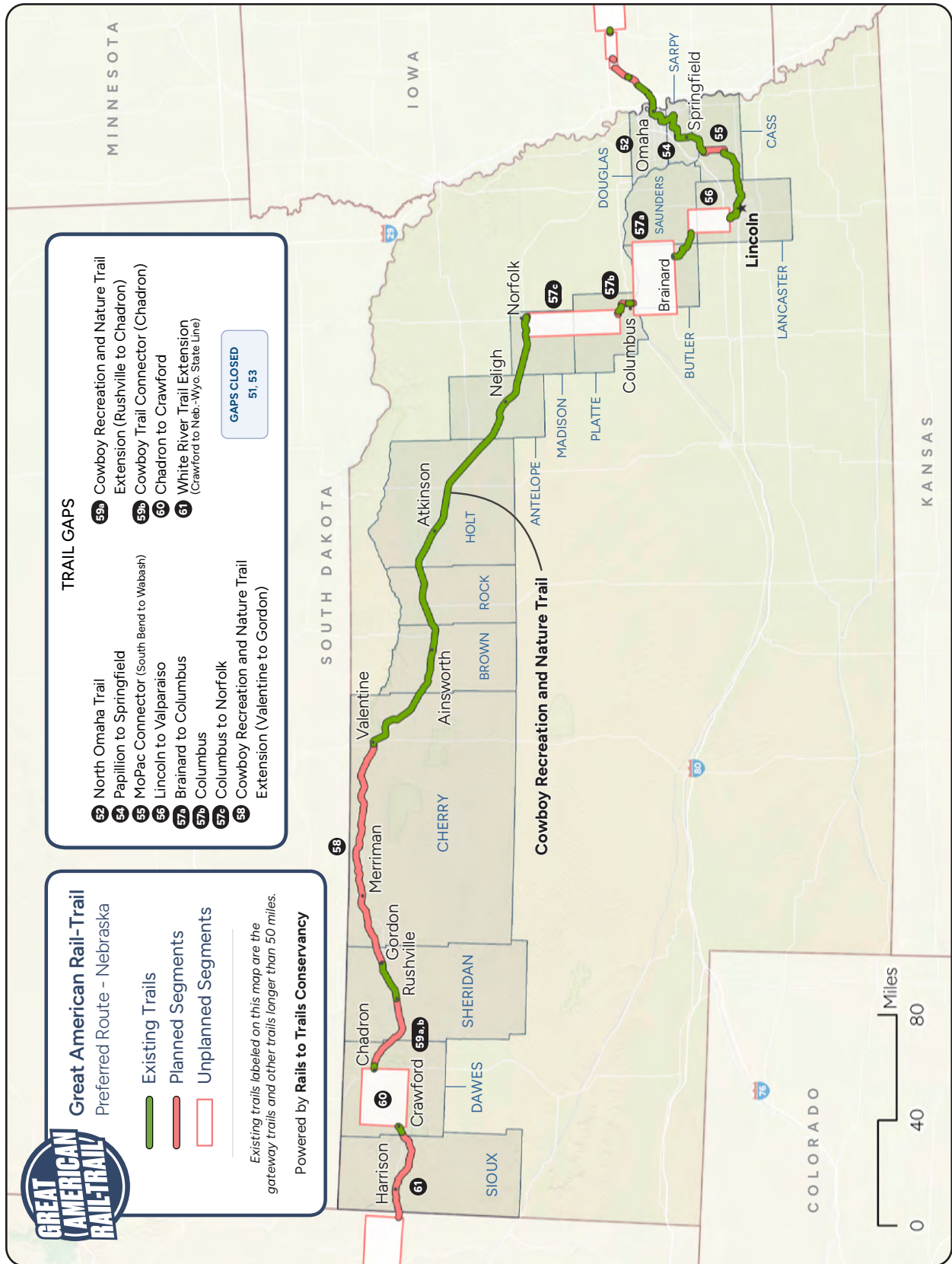


TABLE 19: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH NEBRASKA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Neb. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge | 0.2 |
| North Downtown Pedestrian Bridge/"Baby Bob" Bridge (formerly Trail Gap 51) | 0.2 |
| Mike Fahey Street Shared-Use Path | 0.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 52 – North Omaha Trail | 0.6 |
| Burt Street Trail | 0.8 |
| Turner Boulevard Trail | 2.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 53 – Turner Boulevard Trail Extension (Omaha) COMPLETED | - |
| Field Club Trail | 1.4 |
| South Omaha Trail | 3.7 |
| Keystone Trail | 5.6 |
| West Papio Trail | 5.7 |
| Walnut Creek Lake Trail | 2.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 54 – Papillion to Springfield 1 | 0.2 |
| Schram Road Trail | 0.8 |
| Trail Gap 54 – Papillion to Springfield 2 | 0.5 |
| Schram Road Trail | 0.3 |
| Trail Gap 54 – Papillion to Springfield 3 | 1.7 |
| MoPac Trail (Springfield) | 13.2 |
| Platte River Connection | 1.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 55 – MoPac Connector (South Bend to Wabash) | 10.1 |
| MoPac Trail East | 20.7 |
| MoPac Trail West | 6.2 |
| Antelope Valley Trail | 1.0 |
| Salt Creek Levee Trail | 1.0 |
| Oak Lake Connector Trail | 0.8 |
| North 1st Street Trail | 1.5 |
| Superior Street Trail | 0.2 |
| Highlands Trail | 1.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 56 – Lincoln to Valparaiso | 16.8 |
| Oak Creek Trail | 13.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 57a – Brainard to Columbus | 28.1 |
| Third Avenue Viaduct Trail | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 57b – Columbus | 3.7 |



Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail | Photo courtesy Visit Norfolk, Nebraska

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Neb. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|--|
| Robert White Trail | 1.5 |
| Bob Lake Trail | 1.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 57c – Columbus to Norfolk | 46.8 |
| Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail (Norfolk to Valentine) | 203.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 58 – Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail Extension (Valentine to Gordon) | 90.2 |
| Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail (Gordon to Rushville) | 16.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 59a – Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail Extension (Rushville to Chadron) | 25.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 59b – Cowboy Trail Connector (Chadron) | 4.2 |
| Cowboy Trail Connector | 1.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 60 – Chadron to Crawford | 26.3 |
| White River Trail | 2.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 61 – White River Trail Extension (Crawford to Neb.–Wyo. State Line) | 34.1 |
| Total Miles | 601.2 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 312.0 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 289.2 |

BOB KERREY PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 0.4 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Managers | Council Bluffs Parks & Recreation, Omaha Parks & Recreation, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • councilbluffs-ia.gov/2178/bob-kerrey-pedestrian-bridge • visitomaha.com/bob |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/bob-kerrey-pedestrian-bridge |

The Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge, discussed in more detail in the Iowa chapter of this report, has become a major community landmark. The bridge is lit at night to provide a safe and attractive connection throughout the day and night. Visitors taking the bridge into Omaha can travel about a half-mile south along the Omaha Riverfront Trail to the Omaha Visitors Center to learn more about Omaha and what it has to offer. People continuing along the Great American Rail-Trail will head west into Omaha along the recently completed “Baby Bob” bridge extension, described below.

NORTH DOWNTOWN PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE/“BABY BOB” BRIDGE (FORMERLY TRAIL GAP 51)

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 0.2 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Omaha |
| Website | visitomaha.com/bob |

In early 2025, a long-planned extension of the Bob Kerrey Pedestrian Bridge opened to facilitate an easier trail connection into downtown Omaha. Called the North Downtown Pedestrian Bridge (or “Baby Bob” Bridge), the bridge helps trail users cross the configuration of roads and railroads along the Missouri River frontage and connects to the Mike Fahey Street Shared-Use Path at North 10th Street.

MIKE FAHEY STREET SHARED-USE PATH

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 0.2 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Omaha |
| Website | parks.cityofomaha.org/parks/trails |

With the opening of the Baby Bob Bridge in 2025, the shared-use path along Mike Fahey Street has become an important connection. The path travels for three blocks and passes by Charles Schwab Field Omaha, home to the NCAA Men’s College World Series annually.

TRAIL GAP 52 – NORTH OMAHA TRAIL

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Construction expected in 2027 |

The North Omaha Trail is a developing trail in downtown Omaha and its northern neighborhoods. Spark CDI, an Omaha-based nonprofit, received a grant from the Nebraska Department of Economic Development in 2024 for the expansion of the North Omaha Trail. A short section of the Great American Rail-Trail will follow the North Omaha Trail along Burt Street. Plans are in place to complete this connection, with construction expected in 2027.

BURT STREET TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 0.8 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Omaha Parks & Recreation |
| Website | parks.cityofomaha.org/parks/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/burt-street-trail- |

The existing Burt Street Trail runs 0.8 mile between North 20th and North 30th streets in Omaha. The trail is a shared-use path that parallels Burt Street on the south side of the road. It is largely wide enough to accommodate both bicycle and pedestrian traffic, though there are small sections that narrow to a normal sidewalk width. This pathway provides a connection on the north side of the Creighton University campus.

TURNER BOULEVARD TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 2.1 / 2.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | Omaha Parks & Recreation |
| Website | parks.cityofomaha.org/parks/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/turner-boulevard-trail |

The Turner Boulevard Trail connects to the Burt Street Trail at North 30th Street in Omaha. The trail is a shared-use path that runs along the west side of North 30th Street and Turner Boulevard, winding past several parks and neighborhoods and ending at the Field Club of Omaha.

~~TRAIL GAP 53 – TURNER BOULEVARD TRAIL EXTENSION (OMAHA) - COMPLETED~~

A 0.3-mile extension of the Turner Boulevard Trail was completed in 2021 along Pacific Street to connect to the Field Club Trail.

FIELD CLUB TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.8 / 1.4 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Omaha Parks & Recreation |
| Website | parks.cityofomaha.org/parks/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/field-club-trail |

The Field Club Trail travels 1.8 miles from the intersection of South 39th and Leavenworth streets south to the northern terminus of the South Omaha Trail. Of this trail, 1.4 miles beginning at the end of the Turner Boulevard Trail Extension will provide a connection through Omaha and the Hanscom Park neighborhood for the Great American Rail-Trail. The Field Club Trail occupies an old railroad bed that lies 30 feet below grade.

SOUTH OMAHA TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 3.7 / 3.7 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Omaha Parks & Recreation |
| Website | pacionrd.org/recreation/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/south-omaha-trail |

The South Omaha Trail connects the Field Club Trail to the Keystone Trail at its crossing of Little Papillion Creek. The South Omaha Trail is built on a former Chicago and North Western Transportation Company corridor with an old trestle crossing South 60th Street.

KEYSTONE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 15.0 / 5.6 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Managers | Bellevue Parks Department, Omaha Parks & Recreation, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | papionrd.org/recreation/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/keystone-trail |

The South Omaha Trail connects to the Keystone Trail at its crossing of Little Papillion Creek, though the Keystone Trail continues several miles north through much of western Omaha. The Keystone Trail partially follows the banks of Papillion Creek atop the flood control levees, while the remaining 2.3 miles are along an old rail corridor. The Great American Rail-Trail turns west once the Keystone Trail intersects the West Papio Trail near South 36th Street at its crossing of Big Papillion Creek in Bellevue.

WEST PAPIO TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 22.9 / 5.7 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Managers | Omaha Parks & Recreation, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | papionrd.org/recreation/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/west-papio-trail |

The West Papio Trail connects at its eastern end to the Keystone Trail and continues west toward the city of Elkhorn through the city of Papillion, following West Papillion Creek. At the western edge of Papillion, the Great American Rail-Trail heads south along South 96th Street toward the Walnut Creek Lake and Recreation Area to eventually connect to the MoPac Trail. The Great American Rail-Trail makes a brief on-street jog westward along Santa Fe Circle to access a trail underpass and safely cross underneath the busy state Route 370.

WALNUT CREEK LAKE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 3.3 / 2.6 |
| Surface Type | Boardwalk, concrete |
| Trail Managers | City of Papillion, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | papillion.org/facilities/facility/details/walnut-creekrecreationarea-14 |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/walnut-creek-lake-trail |

The West Papio Trail connects to a trail system at Walnut Creek Lake, a 105-acre reservoir and mixed-use recreation area in Papillion. The lake and recreation area are under the management of the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District. The paved loop around Walnut Creek Lake is 3.3 miles and is complete with amenities including a campground, restrooms, water fountains and an equestrian trail.

TRAIL GAP 54 – PAPILLION TO SPRINGFIELD

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Omaha metropolitan area has long been interested in completing a trail connection between the Walnut Creek Lake Trail and the MoPac Trail. As the area around Papillion continues to develop, a trail is being developed along Schram Road. Portions of it are already in place, with three gaps remaining to complete this connection.

SCHRAM ROAD TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.1 / 1.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | City of Papillion, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |

A shared-use path is being built along Schram Road as the area develops into a residential community in the western Omaha suburbs. Just over 1 mile currently exists, though new sections will become active as the area continues developing.

MoPac TRAIL (SPRINGFIELD)

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 13.2 / 13.2 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | papionrd.org/recreation/trails |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/mopac-trail-(springfield) |

The MoPac Trail exists in three segments, starting just north of Springfield to the north and ending in Lincoln to the south and west. Nearly the entire route rests on an abandoned Missouri Pacific Railroad corridor (the MoPac).

Segment 1 – MoPac Trail (Springfield):

Beginning at Schram Road in Omaha, the MoPac Trail heads south along state Route 50 through the town of Springfield, where a former gap in the route between Platteview Road and Main Street was recently completed slightly away from the former MoPac rail line, allowing for uninterrupted off-road travel through Springfield. The MoPac Trail continues along the old rail corridor south of the Platte River, just north of the city of Louisville, where the trail heads west to parallel state Route 31. Once the trail reaches the Platte River at South Bend, there is a trailhead with parking as the trail continues to cross the Platte River over the Lied Platte River Bridge.

Segments 2 (MoPac Trail East) and 3 (MoPac Trail West) are discussed on the following pages.

PLATTE RIVER CONNECTION

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Managers | Lower Platte South Natural Resources District, Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District |
| Website | lpsnrd.org/ried-bridge-platte-river-connection |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/platte-river-connection |

A connection across the Platte River at the village of South Bend, Nebraska, was completed in 2002, using an abandoned Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad bridge. The bridge across the river is now known as the Lied Platte River Bridge, named after the Lied Foundation, a major contributor to the project. The bridge was heavily damaged by flooding in March 2019. The Lower Platte South Natural Resources District and the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District collaborated to repair and reopen the bridge to the public in July 2021.

TRAIL GAP 55 – MoPac CONNECTOR (SOUTH BEND TO WABASH)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Completing Trail Gap 55 will close the last substantial trail gap between Nebraska’s two largest cities—Omaha and Lincoln—and will go a long way to helping the state realize its trail tourism potential along the Great American Rail-Trail. The Nebraska Legislature appropriated \$8.3 million in 2022 to help close this gap. Planning and design have been underway utilizing those funds through the Lower Platte South Natural Resources District (NRD). The route of the trail gap closure has been reviewed at length and was approved in 2024, though the approval was rescinded by Cass County in 2025. Efforts are underway to use the state funding to complete the portion of the trail currently owned by the Lower Platte South NRD while the remaining route is reevaluated.

MoPac TRAIL EAST

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 20.7 / 20.7 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Lower Platte South Natural Resources District |
| Website | lpsnrd.org/mopac-east-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/mopac-trail-east |

The second segment of the MoPac Trail, following the old corridor of the Missouri Pacific Railroad’s Omaha Belt Line, travels 20.7 miles between Wabash and Lincoln. This eastern segment of the MoPac Trail is very rural and travels on a crushed stone path through prairie, woodland and farmland. A separate equestrian trail, the Charles L. Warner Equestrian Trail, is provided along the majority of the trail. Here, the MoPac Trail East connects to the MoPac Trail West to make the rest of the voyage into Lincoln.

MoPac TRAIL WEST

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 6.2 / 6.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/mopac-trail-west |

The third segment of the MoPac Trail starts at South 84th Street, east of Lincoln, and travels 6.2 miles into downtown Lincoln. The MoPac Trail West travels through many neighborhoods in Lincoln and helps connect the two campuses of the University of Nebraska–Lincoln.

ANTELOPE VALLEY TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 2.1 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/antelope-valley-trail |

The Antelope Valley Trail runs roughly south to north through downtown Lincoln, with Lincoln High School to the south and Salt Creek to the north. The trail passes Trago Park, Union Park Plaza and the Bob Devaney Center.

SALT CREEK LEVEE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 4.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/salt-creek-levee-trail |

The Salt Creek Levee Trail connects a trail along the levee of Salt Creek from its confluence with Oak Creek down to the Jamaica North Trail. The Great American Rail-Trail will utilize the northern mile of the Salt Creek Levee Trail connecting the Antelope Valley Trail to the Oak Lake Connector Trail at a bridge crossing Salt Creek.

OAK LAKE CONNECTOR TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.4 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/oak-lake-connector-trail- |

The Oak Lake Connector Trail travels around Oak Lake Park along Charleston and North 1st streets in Lincoln, connecting to a shared-use path along North 1st Street at U.S. 6/Cornhusker Highway.

NORTH 1ST STREET TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/north-1st-street-trail- |

A shared-use path runs along the length of North 1st Street from U.S. 6/Cornhusker Highway northwest to Superior Street. The trail is made of concrete and is approximately 10 feet wide, running along the northbound lane of North 1st Street.

SUPERIOR STREET TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 4.4 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/superior-street-trail |

A 0.2-mile section of the Superior Street Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail between North 1st Street and a connection to the Highlands Trail at Technology Drive in Lincoln. The Superior Street Trail is primarily a commuter route following its namesake thoroughfare from U.S. 6/ Cornhusker Highway to the Highlands neighborhood at the western edge of the city.

HIGHLANDS TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 2.6 / 1.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Lincoln Parks & Recreation |
| Website | lincoln.ne.gov/city/departments/parks-and-recreation/parks-facilities/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/highlands-trail-(ne) |

The Highlands Trail offers a pleasant 2.6-mile loop through Lincoln's Highlands neighborhood, providing the western link of the series of trails that travels through Lincoln. Those following the Great American Rail-Trail can follow the trail 1.3 miles along West Highland Boulevard and connect north along NW 12th Street to the Highlands Trail's terminus near NW 10th Street.

TRAIL GAP 56 – LINCOLN TO VALPARAISO

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In 2024, a local committee formed to identify potential corridors to fill the gap between the Highlands Trail in Lincoln and the Oak Creek Trail in Valparaiso. One such potential corridor would be to develop a rail-with-trail along the active Union Pacific Railroad corridor connecting Lincoln north to Valparaiso. The corridor has a low traffic density, according to data from the Federal Railroad Administration in 2014.

The next step is to complete a feasibility study for this rail-with-trail alignment. Fundraising is underway to support this next step. The Lower Platte South NRD recently approved a letter of support for considering a rail-with-trail opportunity on this section of active rail line between Lincoln and Valparaiso.

OAK CREEK TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 13.0 / 13.0 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Lower Platte South Natural Resources District |
| Website | lpsnrd.org/oak-creek-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/oak-creek-trail |

The Oak Creek Trail occupies a former Union Pacific Railroad corridor between the Nebraska villages of Valparaiso and Brainard. The trail travels 13 miles through Saunders and Butler counties. Across the county line is the tiny community of Loma, where restrooms are located just off the trail near the St. Luke Czech Catholic Shrine in the center of town. An equestrian trail runs adjacent to the Oak Creek Trail for its entire route, and horse trailer parking can be found at the trailheads in Valparaiso and Loma.

TRAIL GAP 57A – BRAINARD TO COLUMBUS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A 28-mile gap exists between Brainard and Columbus. The rail line on which the Oak Creek Trail was constructed between Valparaiso and Brainard extends northwest for an additional 10.5 miles to David City. The rail line is not officially abandoned and is currently under Nebraska Central Railroad Company ownership, though Federal Railroad Administration data from 2014 shows no rail traffic along this corridor. If this section is ever officially abandoned, Butler County and the local natural resource districts should seek to extend the Oak Creek Trail northwest to David City. As the rail line to David City crosses through the jurisdiction of three natural resource districts (Lower Platte South, Upper Big Blue and Lower Platte North, respectively), a trail development and management partnership could be pursued.

From David City, an active BNSF Railway line continues north through Columbus, Nebraska, and has a traffic density of two out of five, according to 2014 Federal Railroad Administration data. The Lower Platte North Natural Resources District recently approved a letter of support for considering a rail-with-trail opportunity on this section of active rail line between David City and Columbus.

THIRD AVENUE VIADUCT TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Columbus |
| Website | columbusnetrails.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/third-avenue-viaduct-trail |

The 3rd Avenue viaduct was an infrastructure project decades in the making. Prior to its completion, travelers heading north or south along 3rd Avenue between 8th Street and U.S. 30 were forced to cross a tangle of Union Pacific Railroad tracks at street level. The finished viaduct, which opened in August 2018, includes a concrete path between 8th and 19th streets (just south of U.S. 30), ensuring safe passage over the tracks for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians. The trail is part of a trail network in Columbus known as CART (Columbus Area Recreational Trails).

TRAIL GAP 57B – COLUMBUS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The city of Columbus and CART are working together to complete a network of trails through Columbus, including an approximately 4-mile connection between the Third Avenue Viaduct Trail and the Robert White Trail. The new connection would follow 3rd Avenue north and the existing canal northwest before intersecting the Robert White Trail at the Lake Babcock Reservoir.

ROBERT WHITE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | City of Columbus |
| Website | columbusnetrails.com |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/robert-white-trail |

In Columbus, the Robert White Trail runs 1.5 miles between 18th Avenue/Monastery Road and the start of the Bob Lake Trail at the intersection of 65th and 68th streets. The trail follows the southern shore of Lake Babcock for its duration.

BOB LAKE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.2 / 1.2 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | City of Columbus |
| Website | columbusnetrails.com |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/bob-lake-trail |

The Bob Lake Trail runs 1.2 miles between the northern terminus of the Robert White Trail at 65th and 68th streets, south of 83rd Street. The trail follows the southwestern shore of Lake Babcock for part of its route.

TRAIL GAP 57C – COLUMBUS TO NORFOLK

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The city of Columbus plans to construct a trail extending from the Bob Lake Trail westward along the canal to at least 63rd Avenue. From 63rd Avenue, the trail would continue north toward Norfolk. 2014 data from the Federal Railroad Administration lists a local Nebraska Central Railroad Company rail line to Norfolk as active, but shows no rail traffic along the corridor. If this section is ever officially abandoned, local natural resource districts should seek to transform it into a trail as well. Alternative options, including low-volume county roads, should be explored in the meantime to make this 46-mile connection in the interim.

COWBOY RECREATION AND NATURE TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 220.3 / 220.3 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Nebraska Game and Parks Commission |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • bikecowboytrail.com • outdoornebraska.gov/cowboytrail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/cowboy-recreation-and-nature-trail |

The Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail (“Cowboy Trail”) is one of the country’s longest rail-trails. The Cowboy Trail was designated as a National Recreational Trail as part of the National Park Service’s National Trails System in 2001. When it is fully complete, the trail will extend more than 300 miles between the cities of Norfolk and Chadron. Two segments of the Cowboy Trail are currently complete: 203.7 miles between Norfolk and Valentine, and 16.6 miles between Gordon and Rushville.

The Cowboy Trail was created when a major corridor of the Chicago and North Western Transportation Company (originally part of the Fremont, Elkhorn and Missouri Valley Railroad) was abandoned in 1992. RTC purchased the railroad right-of-way and donated it to the state of Nebraska. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission now owns the entire corridor between Norfolk and mile marker 400, about 5 miles east of downtown Chadron.

Maintenance of the Cowboy Trail has historically been underfunded at the state level. This situation leaves parts of the Cowboy Trail in rough but passable shape, particularly as the trail passes through the more remote sections of completed trail on the western end. The trail has not been entirely resurfaced since it was first completed in the late 1990s, and short sections could be rough from washboarding. Flooding in the spring of 2019 severely damaged portions of the Cowboy Trail, with repair costs estimated to top \$7.7 million. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is currently completing those repairs using funding from the state and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

TRAIL GAP 58 – COWBOY RECREATION AND NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (VALENTINE TO GORDON)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission owns a former rail corridor between the existing trailheads in Valentine and Gordon that was never officially surfaced as part of the Cowboy Trail. The commission has been hesitant to complete construction on this 90-mile section of trail until dedicated and stable funding is made available by the Nebraska Legislature for ongoing operations and maintenance of the entire Cowboy Trail.

Between Valentine and Merriman (approximately 61 miles), the bridges are decked and the remaining activities to open the trail include mowing, grading and surfacing with crushed stone. Ballast and railroad ties are still present on the remaining 30 miles between Merriman and Gordon, and the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission is preparing to remove the ballast when resources allow. The bridges along the section between Merriman and Gordon still need to be decked as well. Completing the entire Cowboy Trail will go a long way toward making the Great American Rail-Trail a reality and providing economic development assistance to the small towns that settled along the former rail corridor.

TRAIL GAP 59A – COWBOY RECREATION AND NATURE TRAIL EXTENSION (RUSHVILLE TO CHADRON)

| | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Construction expected in 2026 |

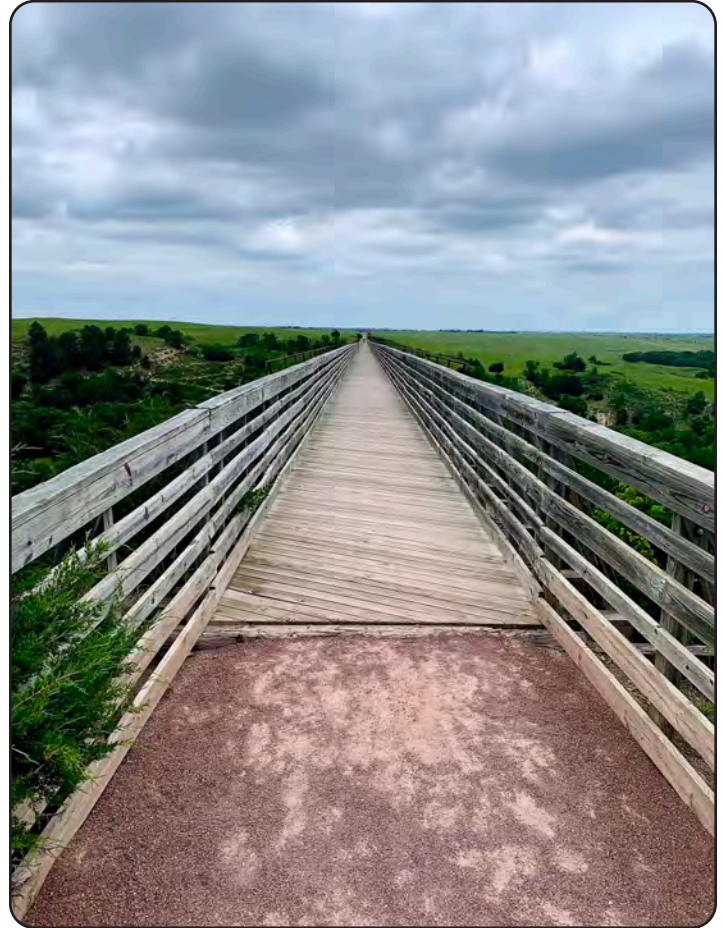
Cowboy Trail West Inc. is working to support the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission to complete the western 25.9 miles of the Cowboy Trail from Rushville to mile marker 400, east of Chadron. Cowboy Trail West completed and maintains the existing western section of the Cowboy Trail between Gordon and Rushville in Sheridan County.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission recently rehabilitated the bridges along the Cowboy Trail between Rushville and mile marker 400. The commission also obtained a Transportation Alternatives grant to complete surfacing of this section, which is expected to be completed in 2026.

TRAIL GAP 59B – COWBOY TRAIL CONNECTOR (CHADRON)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Northwest Nebraska Trails Association (NNTA) is working closely with the city of Chadron and Nebraska Northwestern Railroad to complete the roughly 4 remaining miles of trail to connect the end of the Cowboy Trail at mile marker 400 into downtown Chadron. Nebraska Northwestern Railroad has issued an easement for a rail-with-trail along the active rail line to complete this gap, and NNTA and the city of Chadron have entered into a memorandum of understanding agreement for the eventual completion and management of the trail. Partial engineering documents were completed in 2021, and NNTA and the city of Chadron are currently raising funds for trail construction.



Cowboy Recreation and Nature Trail | Photo by TrailLink user lisa.jarnigan

COWBOY TRAIL CONNECTOR

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 1.2 / 1.2 |
| Surface Type | Gravel |
| Trail Manager | City of Chadron |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/cowboy-trail-connector |

In 2025, NNTA and the city of Chadron completed the first section of the Cowboy Trail Connector. The trail eventually will connect to the portion of the Cowboy Trail under the ownership of the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission. The first completed section runs roughly 1.2 miles along an active Nebraska Northwestern Railroad line into downtown Chadron.

TRAIL GAP 60 – CHADRON TO CRAWFORD

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

An active Canadian Pacific Railway corridor runs between the cities of Chadron and Crawford. The line has a low traffic density, according to data from the Federal Railroad Administration in 2014. There is no abandoned rail option to complete an off-road trail between Chadron and the existing White River Trail in Crawford. While a feasible off-road multiuse trail option connecting this 26.3-mile gap continues to be explored, a temporary interim on-road connector can be made using various low-volume county roads in Dawes County.

WHITE RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Neb. (in Miles) | 2.8 / 2.8 |
| Surface Type | Ballast |
| Trail Managers | City of Crawford, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission |
| Website | outdoornebraska.gov/fortrobinson |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/white-river-trail |

The White River Trail runs along a former Chicago and North Western Transportation Company corridor for 2.8 miles, starting in Crawford and ending at Fort Robinson State Park. Fort Robinson encompasses the fort and military camp that was home to the Red Cloud Agency in the 1870s. The agency served as an issuing point for supplies to the Oglala Lakota tribe of the Great Sioux Nation, as well as the Northern Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes, authorized in exchange for land ceded to the United States in 1868.

Fort Robinson is also the site of Crazy Horse’s surrender and death in 1877, and visitors can find a historical plaque that marks the location. The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission handles the ongoing operations and maintenance of the White River Trail, while the city of Crawford maintains the portion of the trail outside of Fort Robinson State Park.

TRAIL GAP 61 – WHITE RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION (CRAWFORD TO NEBRASKA–WYOMING STATE LINE)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The former Chicago and North Western Transportation Company corridor that traveled along the White River in Nebraska and Niobrara River in Wyoming was severely damaged in a flood in 1991. Twenty miles of track and 45 bridges were destroyed along the corridor, and rail service never recovered after the storm. Local rail advocates were insistent upon the railbed being turned into a trail once it was no longer viable for rail traffic. The existing 3 miles of the White River Trail are the result of those efforts.

The remainder of the rail corridor between Fort Robinson State Park and Van Tassell, Wyoming, is under the ownership of the Friends of the White River Trail, Inc., which includes 34 miles in Nebraska. The friends group intends to hold on to the ownership of the rail corridor until resources become available to complete construction of the trail and keep it maintained.

Representatives from Chief Dull Knife College are currently working with the Northern Cheyenne tribe to develop a 3-mile trail from the Cheyenne Breakout barracks at Fort Robinson to the monument created to commemorate the Cheyenne Breakout of January 1879. It will be called the Healing Trail and will incorporate about 2 to 2.5 miles of the railbed west of Fort Robinson. In 2021, the Northern Cheyenne Breakout Committee received a grant from the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Protection Program to support the development of the Northern Cheyenne Healing Trail. Funding from the Mellon Foundation is supporting current design efforts, which are expected to be completed in 2026. Following these efforts, fundraising can occur for final project construction.

Any future trail connecting the 34.1-mile gap from Crawford to the Nebraska–Wyoming border needs to connect to a trail on the Wyoming side. Potential trail connections in Wyoming are discussed in Trail Gap 62a in the Wyoming chapter of this report.

WYOMING



Casper Rail Trail | Photo by Laura Stark

Wyoming has the potential to be an incredible section of the Great American Rail-Trail. Its landscapes are unique in the United States, and Wyoming is already known for its outdoor recreation assets. Wyoming does not have as many miles of multiuse trails as other states due to its sparse population, active railroads and topography. Trails in Casper and Cody provide excellent examples of multiuse trails along the route of the Great American Rail-Trail from which other Wyoming communities can learn. The Great American Rail-Trail is a viable project to help Wyoming with its outdoor recreation and tourism economy, especially considering Wyoming’s exceptional landscapes and statewide commitment to the project.

TABLE 20: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN WYOMING

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Wyo. (% of Total State Mileage) | 20.1 (3.9%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Wyo. (% of Total State Mileage) | 517.6 (96.1%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Wyo. | 6 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Wyo. | 517.6 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 10: WYOMING

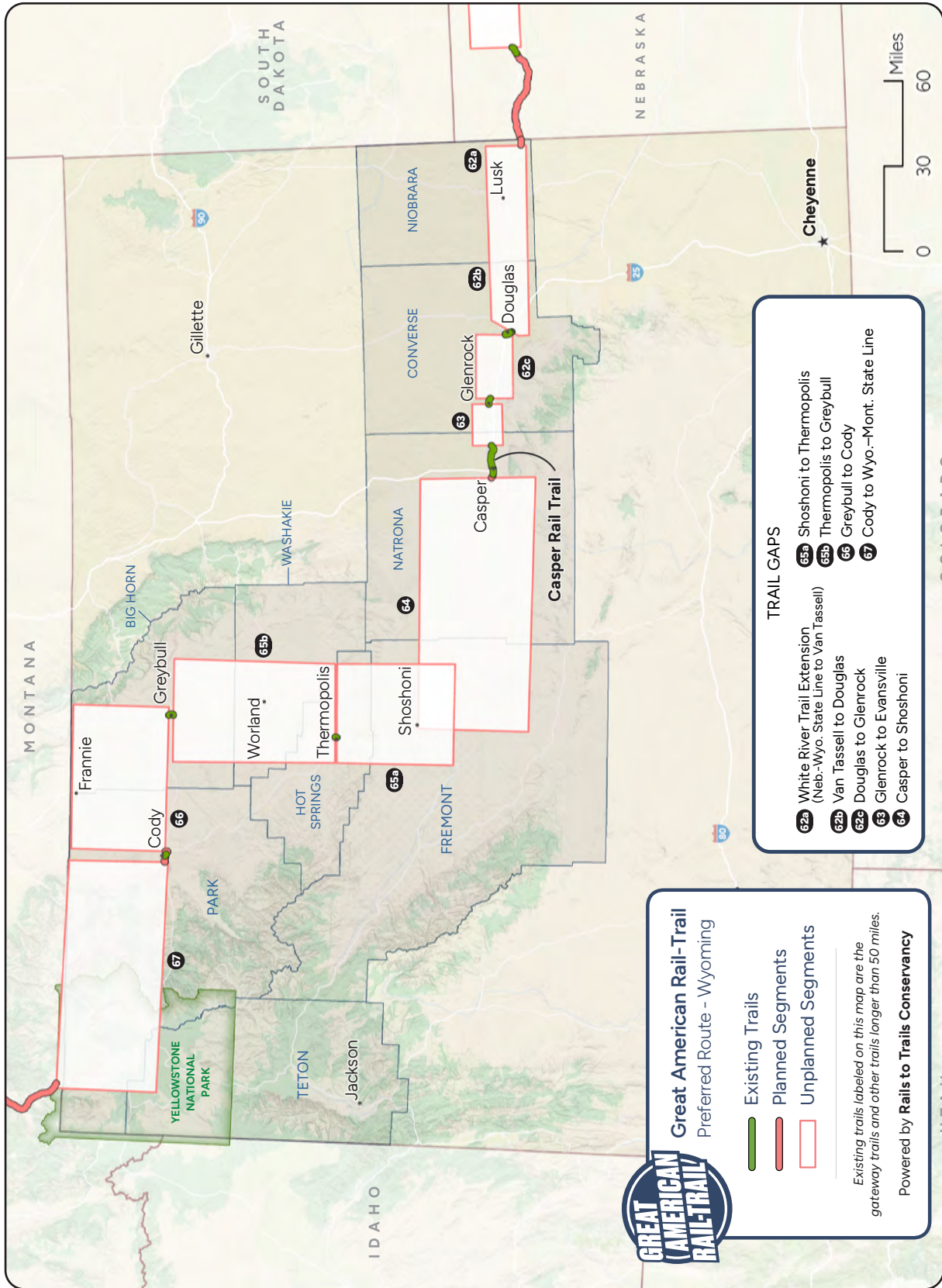


TABLE 21: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH WYOMING

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Wyo. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|--|
| TRAIL GAP 62a – White River Trail Extension (Neb.–Wyo. State Line to Van Tassell) | 2.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 62b – Van Tassell to Douglas | 73.4 |
| Douglas Trail System | 3.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 62c – Douglas to Glenrock | 25.9 |
| Al's Way | 2.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 63 – Glenrock to Evansville | 15.5 |
| Casper Rail Trail | 9.4 |
| Platte River Trail | 1.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 64 – Casper to Shoshoni | 98.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 65a – Shoshoni to Thermopolis | 33.0 |
| East Bighorn River Trail | 0.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 65b – Thermopolis to Greybull | 68.3 |
| Greybull Riverwalk | 1.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 66 – Greybull to Cody | 52.3 |
| Beck Lake Park Bike Trail | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 67 – Cody to Wyo.–Mont. State Line | 128.4 |
| Total Miles | 517.6 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 20.1 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 497.5 |

TRAIL GAP 62A – WHITE RIVER TRAIL EXTENSION (NEBRASKA–WYOMING STATE LINE TO VAN TASSELL)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In addition to 34 miles of the future White River Trail in Nebraska, the Friends of the White River Trail, Inc., also maintains ownership over 2 miles of abandoned rail corridor from the Nebraska–Wyoming state line west to the small town of Van Tassell. The group intends to hold onto ownership of the rail corridor until resources become available to complete construction of the trail and keep it maintained.

TRAIL GAP 62B – VAN TASSELL TO DOUGLAS

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From Van Tassell, a trail would extend west approximately 70 miles to the city of Douglas. U.S. 18/20 connects Lusk and Douglas, and while there are no confirmed abandoned rail corridors between Lusk and just east of Orin, Wyoming, there are several active rail lines adjacent to the highway that could potentially be available for rail-with-trail construction.

There is a very active Union Pacific Railroad corridor that extends approximately 45 miles between Lusk and Shawnee, a less active 6.2-mile section of Union Pacific Railroad corridor between Shawnee and Orin, and approximately 15 miles of two parallel active tracks between Orin and Douglas—one owned by Union Pacific Railroad and one owned by BNSF Railway. Also, there are documents that describe an abandoned rail line between Shawnee and Orin. Further research should be conducted in Converse County, Wyoming, on the status of this potential corridor for future trail development.

Between Orin and Douglas, the active Union Pacific Railroad line becomes abandoned for approximately 7 miles into Douglas, following Irvine Road. This abandoned line travels a total of approximately 76 miles to a point northeast of the Casper/Natrona County International Airport, roughly paralleling U.S. 20/26/Yellowstone Highway, where it converges with the active BNSF Railway line. A trail heading west could converge with the existing Douglas Trail System. Douglas plans to extend the existing trail system about 0.2 mile from its current southern terminus at Robin Lane to I-25 along the remainder of the abandoned railway portion that the city owns.

DOUGLAS TRAIL SYSTEM

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 3.3 / 3.3 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Douglas |
| Website | cityofdouglas.org/192/city-parks-trails |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/douglas-bike-path |

The Douglas Trail System traces the North Platte River north and south. In 2019, Douglas extended the trail system from Richards Street south to Robin Lane along an abandoned rail corridor using grant funding from the Wyoming Department of Transportation.

TRAIL GAP 62C – DOUGLAS TO GLENROCK

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The abandoned line continues 25.9 miles into Glenrock, where Al's Way was constructed along the corridor in the 1990s. Work remains to determine ownership of the former Chicago and North Western Transportation Company's railroad corridor connecting Douglas to Glenrock and its potential for a rail-to-trail conversion. A group of local partners is currently strategizing on fundraising efforts to support planning work to identify a corridor and the necessary stakeholders to complete the trail gap between Douglas and Casper.

AL'S WAY

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 2.1 / 2.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Town of Glenrock |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conversecountytourism.com/plan/glenrock-trail • glenrock.org/?SEC=CA1DCD8A-8CDA-%20489B-B420-F2D593DAD24E |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/als-way |

The 2.1-mile Al's Way was named after Glenrock High School track coach Al Finch, who has since retired but is well-known in the community. The rail corridor was purchased in 1990, and a trail was initially constructed in 1994. In 2020, Al's Way was extended to the eastern and western limits of Glenrock with the assistance of grant funding from the Wyoming Department of Transportation and the Wyoming Business Council.

TRAIL GAP 63 – GLENROCK TO EVANSVILLE

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The abandoned rail corridor continues nearly 20 miles west from Glenrock to Evansville, a small town just east of Casper, where the trail intersects the existing Casper Rail Trail. An extension of the Casper Rail Trail in 2025 added 3 miles to the trail and extended it closer to Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park. Discussions can now begin on the best ways to connect the trail eastward to Glenrock to fill this 15.5-mile gap.

CASPER RAIL TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 9.4 / 9.4 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Casper Parks Department |
| Website | platterivertrails.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/casper-rail-trail |

The Casper Rail Trail begins near Pou Road south of Edness Kimball Wilkins State Park and continues over 9 miles through the center of Casper, from state Route 256/Hat 6 Road and U.S. 20/26 west to South Spruce Street. The first section of the Casper Rail Trail was constructed in 1998, and 3 new miles were added in 2025 with a grant from the Wyoming Outdoor Recreation Collaborative Grant Program. The city of Casper was granted a Certificate of Interim Trail Use by the Surface Transportation Board to permit trail development. Platte River Trails was the entity created to develop the trail since 2002, while operations and maintenance of the trail are the responsibilities of the city of Casper.

PLATTE RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 10.0 / 1.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | Platte River Trails |
| Website | platterivertrails.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/platte-river-trail-(wy) |

Platte River Trails owns and maintains this 10-mile concrete trail that follows the North Platte River through Casper. The Platte River Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 1.7 miles, crossing the North Platte River and heading further west into Natrona County. This portion of the trail crosses the Platte River at the Tate Pumphouse, a restored historical building that now houses the offices of Platte River Trails.

TRAIL GAP 64 – CASPER TO SHOSHONI

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is an approximately 98-mile gap between the end of the Platte River Trail and Shoshoni, Wyoming. U.S. 20/26/Yellowstone Highway, a two-lane high-speed road with relatively low volume, connects Casper west to Shoshoni through the small community of Powder River. U.S. 20/26/Yellowstone Highway has wide shoulders that could accommodate bicycle travel while a fully separated trail is explored in more detail.

The Casper Area Metropolitan Planning Organization is considering a study of an extension of U.S. 20/26/ Yellowstone Highway that could include a trail connection heading west out of Casper. An abandoned rail corridor connects the end of the Platte River Trail approximately 14 miles northwest past the Casper/Natrona County International Airport. An active BNSF Railway corridor connects from there into Shoshoni with a medium traffic density. The rail corridor travels through a very remote area of Natrona and Fremont counties that is not ideal for a trail route. A fully separated trail should be explored in more detail to connect Casper and Shoshoni.

TRAIL GAP 65A – SHOSHONI TO THERMOPOLIS

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From Shoshoni, the trail will continue 33 miles north to Thermopolis, Wyoming, to connect to the existing East Bighorn River Trail. The gap follows U.S. 20, as well as an active BNSF Railway line with a medium traffic density.

This gap holds the challenge of traveling through the beautiful Wind River Canyon. Heading north out of Shoshoni, Wind River Canyon begins just north of Boysen State Park and travels 14 miles. The canyon is heavily constricted by the Wind River, the topography of the canyon, the existing highway and an active BNSF Railway line. Both the highway and rail line are funneled through tunnels cut into the adjacent rock with minimal room for further expansion to accommodate a trail. Innovative solutions could include signalization to alert drivers of cyclists traveling through the tunnels, as well as a shuttle service connecting Shoshoni to Thermopolis, which lies just north of Wind River Canyon.

In 2026, the Wyoming Department of Transportation is undertaking a study looking at alternative routes for frequent closures that stop traffic through the Wind River Canyon.

Trail Gap 65a travels through the eastern portion of the Wind River Reservation. RTC and local partners should collaborate with the Eastern Shoshone and Northern Arapaho tribes to explore the potential economic development opportunities of a cross-country trail in this area.

EAST BIGHORN RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|--|---------------------|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 0.7 / 0.7 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Thermopolis |

A trail follows the Bighorn River through Thermopolis and provides access to Hot Springs State Park, a major attraction in the Bighorn Basin.

TRAIL GAP 65B – THERMOPOLIS TO GREYBULL

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A trail is needed to connect the roughly 68 miles between Thermopolis and Greybull. The trail could follow the active BNSF Railway line, U.S. 20 or another linear feature to be determined. The Bureau of Land Management owns a significant portion of land in the Bighorn Basin that should be explored for additional trail development opportunities. Likewise, a group of public and private citizens, in conjunction with the Wyoming Office of Outdoor Recreation, launched the Bighorn Basin Outdoor Recreation Collaborative (BBORC) to promote, enhance and develop sustainable outdoor recreation that encourages responsible use, personal well-being and economic benefit in the Bighorn Basin. BBORC has expressed interest in the Great American Rail-Trail and will be instrumental in helping identify and complete the route through the basin.

Trail Gap 65b also travels through a string of small towns. If a trail route is identified apart from U.S. 20 or the rail line, spurs should be created to take trail users into these towns for food, water and lodging support.

In 2024, RTC partnered with the city of Worland to conduct an analysis of the Great American Rail-Trail route through Worland. The analysis identified a preferred alignment for a trail through Worland, which sits roughly halfway between Thermopolis and Greybull. RTC continues to work with the city to raise funds for design and construction of a trail through town.

GREYBULL RIVERWALK

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 1.9 / 1.9 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | Town of Greybull |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/greybull-riverwalk- |

The Greybull Riverwalk travels south to north through the town of Greybull, Wyoming, for 1.9 miles. The trail travels on the east side of Greybull along the Bighorn River. The trail is accessible every five blocks or so throughout town, with a safe crossing provided underneath U.S. 14/Greybull Avenue. The Greybull Riverwalk ends to the north on U.S. 20/U.S. 14/ state Route 789/U.S. 16, just north of 13th Avenue.

TRAIL GAP 66 – GREYBULL TO CODY

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From the northern end of the Greybull Riverwalk, the Great American Rail-Trail will continue approximately 52 miles west to the city of Cody, Wyoming. The trail could continue north from Greybull to the town of Frannie, following the same highway and rail options as Trail Gaps 65a and 65b. From Frannie, the route could then head southwest into Cody, following U.S. 14 ALT or an active BNSF Railway corridor with light traffic that parallels the highway.

There is also enthusiasm in the city of Powell for a trail that could connect into Cody. RTC began working with Powell in 2025 on a study of a potential rail-with-trail alignment that also parallels an irrigation canal. In early 2024, RTC partnered with the Powell Economic Partnership to create a petition to show public interest in developing a multiuse trail between Powell and Cody. The petition had over 1,000 signatures as of the end of 2024, which is a powerful showing for local elected officials.

In 2025, the Environmental Protection Agency awarded a Recreation Economy for Rural Communities grant to Park County, home to both Powell and Cody. This technical assistance program coordinates collaboration among partners and stakeholders to develop a vision for outdoor recreation. Multiple convenings will happen in 2026, with a final community action plan expected in 2027.

Similar to BBORC in the Bighorn Basin, the Park County Outdoor Recreation Collaborative (PCORC) was created in 2022 and has expressed interest in helping to identify and complete the route in Park County, Wyoming.

BECK LAKE PARK BIKE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wyo. (in Miles) | 1.0 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Cody |
| Website | codywy.gov/facilities/facility/details/beck-lake-park-10 |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/beck-lake-park-bike-trail |

Just minutes from downtown Cody, the Beck Lake Park Bike Trail wraps around the perimeter of Beck Lake Park’s two reservoir lakes and also parallels a portion of the Cody Canal.

TRAIL GAP 67 – CODY TO WYOMING–MONTANA STATE LINE

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In Cody, the trail would travel through town to continue west along U.S. 14 for approximately 128 miles toward Yellowstone National Park and the Wyoming–Montana state line. There are various existing trails and bike lanes in Cody that could help make this transition through town, and additional options should be explored. U.S. 14 outside of Cody is a two-lane highway with a decent shoulder that can accommodate interim bicycle travel while an off-street trail option is being reviewed further.

Yellowstone National Park presents a unique situation along the Great American Rail-Trail. It is an iconic national park that trail users would be excited to visit along a journey across the country. However, the road system through the park is not accommodating for trail users due to its lack of shoulders, high traffic volumes in the summer and distracted drivers. RTC is working with its local and federal partners and the administration of Yellowstone National Park to discuss potential options for multiuse trail development through the park.

Yellowstone National Park also has a network of existing trails, service roads and sections of historical carriage roads that could potentially be restored and connected to provide a feasible through-route for the Great American Rail-Trail. Further evaluation and research are needed.

In January 2026, Yellowstone National Park released the North Entrance Road Reconstruction Project Environmental Assessment for public comment. After a record-breaking flood in the summer of 2022 along the Yellowstone River, Gardner River and tributaries in Park County, Wyoming, and Park County, Montana, the national park closed the North Entrance Road. The national park used funding from the Federal Highway Administration’s Emergency Relief for Federally Owned Roads to construct a temporary entrance via the gravel Old Gardiner Road. This temporary entrance was opened to the public in October of 2022.

The North Entrance Road Reconstruction Project Environmental Assessment presents four options for a permanent entrance. The preferred option includes constructing a new road and redesigning Old Gardiner Road as a multiuse trail. RTC submitted comments supporting this option, which would add 5 trail miles from Mammoth, Wyoming, to Gardiner, Montana. A final decision will be issued in 2026, with construction estimated to begin in 2027.

The nearby Grand Teton National Park provides a wonderful example of building a successful multiuse trail to accommodate non-motorized visitors. Yellowstone presents unique topographical constraints that may prohibit the construction of a multiuse trail adjacent to the entire road system through the park, but given the well-documented effects of increased automobile travel through the park, a trail could help ameliorate some of those concerns.

Another option to consider in the interim period while an off-street trail through Yellowstone National Park is being explored is a shuttle service. Such a service could shuttle trail users (and their bicycles, if applicable) between Cody, Wyoming, and Gardiner, Montana, through Yellowstone. Tour services already exist in those communities, and future services could be tailored explicitly to travelers along the Great American Rail-Trail.

MONTANA



Milwaukee Trail | Photo courtesy Missoula in Motion

The Great American Rail-Trail route through Montana will connect many of the communities known for their outdoor recreation opportunities throughout the state. Trails are popular assets in such Montana communities as Livingston, Bozeman, Three Forks, Butte and Missoula, which are all along the route of the cross-country trail. The Great American Rail-Trail will travel through many iconic Montana landscapes and enter Idaho through the beautiful Lolo National Forest.

TABLE 22: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN MONTANA

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Mont. (% of Total State Mileage) | 113.0 (25.9%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Mont. (% of Total State Mileage) | 323.1 (74.1%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Mont. | 12 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Mont. | 436.1 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 11: MONTANA

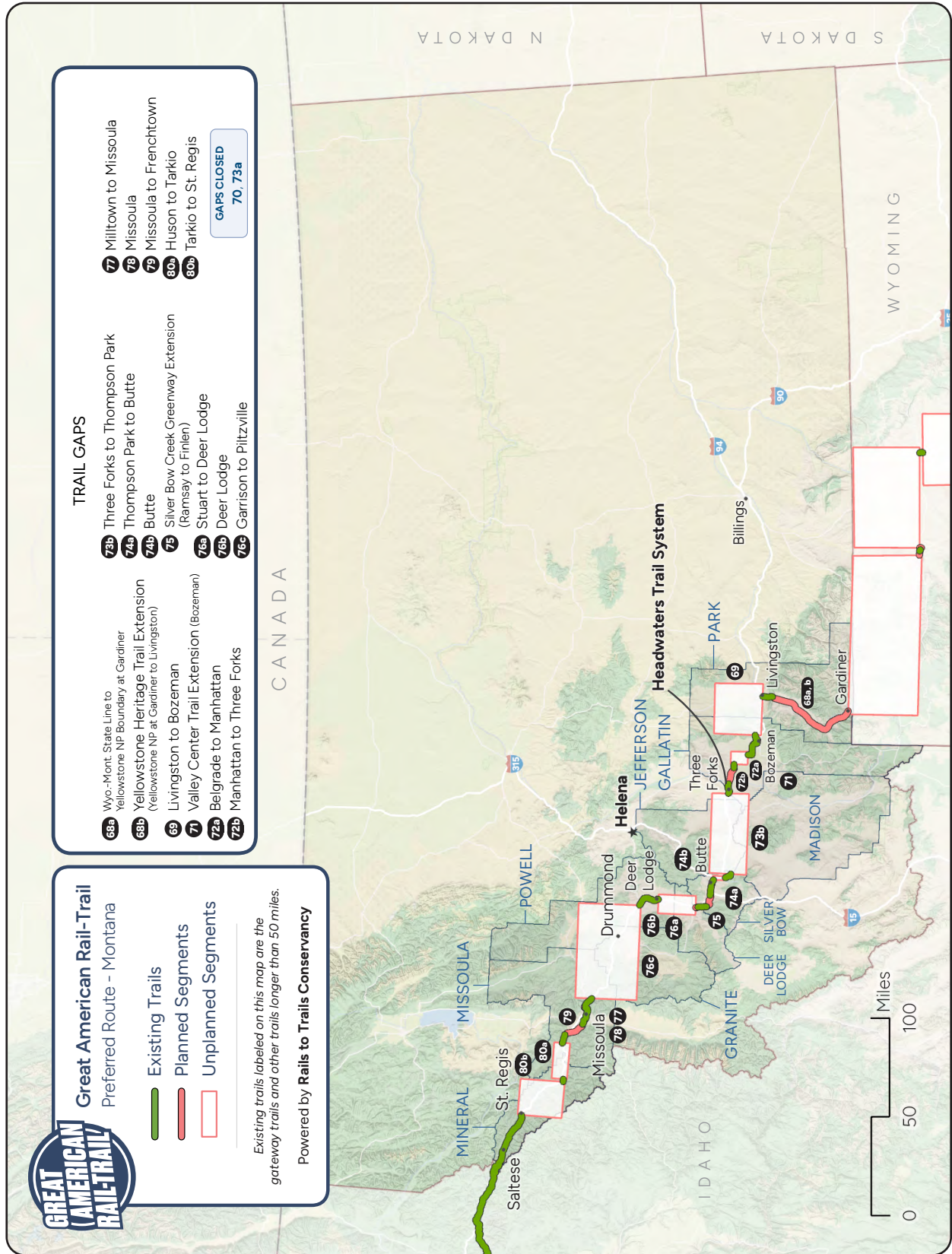


TABLE 23: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH MONTANA

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Mont. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|---|
| TRAIL GAP 68a – Wyo.–Mont. State Line to Yellowstone National Park Boundary at Gardiner | 2.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 68b – Yellowstone Heritage Trail Extension (Yellowstone National Park Boundary at Gardiner to Livingston) | 49.6 |
| Highway 89 South Pedestrian Trail | 4.3 |
| Livingston Depot Center Trail | 0.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 69 – Livingston to Bozeman | 26.2 |
| Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail/Path to the “M” and Drinking Horse | 2.3 |
| Story Mill Spur | 1.0 |
| Front Street Connector (formerly Trail Gap 70) | 0.3 |
| Oak Street Pathway | 1.5 |
| North 19th Avenue Trail | 1.3 |
| Valley Center Trail (North 19th Avenue to Catamount Street) | 0.3 |
| TRAIL GAP 71 – Valley Center Trail Extension (Bozeman) | 1.4 |
| Valley Center Trail (East Valley Center Spur to State Route 85/ Jackrabbit Lane) | 4.6 |
| Jackrabbit Lane Shared-Use Path | 2.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 72a – Belgrade to Manhattan | 15.5 |
| Manhattan to the Gallatin River Trail | 1.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 72b – Manhattan to Three Forks | 9.2 |
| Headwaters Trail System | 5.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 73a – Headwaters Trail System Extension COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 73b – Three Forks to Thompson Park | 56.8 |
| Milwaukee Road Rail-Trail (Thompson Park) | 4.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 74a – Thompson Park to Butte | 9.4 |

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Mont. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|---|---|
| Ulrich-Schotte Nature Trail (Blacktail Creek Trail) | 1.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 74b – Butte | 2.0 |
| Silver Bow Creek Greenway (Butte to Ramsay) | 5.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 75 – Silver Bow Creek Greenway Extension (Ramsay to Finlen) | 7.6 |
| Silver Bow Creek Greenway (Finlen to Stuart) | 4.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 76a – Stuart to Deer Lodge | 21.9 |
| Arrow Stone Park Trail | 0.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 76b – Deer Lodge | 0.7 |
| Old Yellowstone Trail | 10.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 76c – Garrison to Piltzville | 59.8 |
| Piltzville Trail | 3.3 |
| Bonner Streetcar Trail | 1.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 77 – Milltown to Missoula | 2.0 |
| Canyon River Trail | 0.8 |
| Milwaukee Trail | 5.9 |
| TRAIL GAP 78 – Missoula | 1.8 |
| Mullan Road Trail | 2.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 79 – Missoula to Frenchtown | 11.5 |
| A.J. Hoyt Memorial Trail | 4.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 80a – Huson to Tarkio | 13.7 |
| Tarkio Flats Trail | 1.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 80b – Tarkio to St. Regis | 31.3 |
| Route of the Olympian | 23.3 |
| NorPac Trail | 15.8 |
| Total Miles | 436.1 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 113.0 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 323.1 |

TRAIL GAP 68A – WYOMING–MONTANA STATE LINE TO YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY AT GARDINER

| | |
|--|--|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some construction expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Work is underway to reconstruct a permanent entrance to Yellowstone National Park at Gardiner, Montana. See Trail Gap 67 for more information about how a trail could be aligned with construction to help fill this gap.

TRAIL GAP 68B – YELLOWSTONE HERITAGE TRAIL EXTENSION (YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK BOUNDARY AT GARDINER TO LIVINGSTON)

| | |
|--|--|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some construction expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Near the Wyoming–Montana state line, a trail can be connected to the north entrance of Yellowstone National Park at Gardiner, Montana. Park County, Montana, has long-term goals that include completing a trail along an abandoned rail line and Old Yellowstone Trail North Road north into Livingston to connect to the Highway 89 South Pedestrian Trail. (Please note that the road in Park County called Old Yellowstone Trail North Road is separate from the Old Yellowstone Trail, a trail recently completed in Powell County that is discussed later in this chapter.)

Park County intends to complete the trail from Gardiner north to Livingston by either acquiring easements along the abandoned rail corridor where property owners are amenable or, where easements cannot be obtained, building trail along U.S. 89 or Old Yellowstone Trail North Road.

In early 2020, Park County completed the Old Yellowstone Trail South Corridor Study, a planning-level review of safety, operational and geometric conditions, and environmental resources to identify needs and constraints along a portion of the corridor. The study reviewed approximately 21 miles of the old road and trail of the same name adjacent to U.S. 89 from Roosevelt Arch in Gardiner north to the landform referred to as Point of Rocks. The report includes several options for filling this gap, all of which include some type of separated trail spanning the length of the corridor.

RTC and Park County partnered on a similar study for the remaining length of the corridor from Point of Rocks north to the current terminus of the Highway 89 South Pedestrian Trail, just south of Livingston. The study resulted in a proposed route that can be developed in stages, starting with a 3-mile section currently under development in Emigrant in partnership with the Trust for Public Land.

HIGHWAY 89 SOUTH PEDESTRIAN TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 4.3 / 4.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Livingston, Park County |
| Website | livingstonmontana.org/community/page/livingston-area-trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/highway-89-south-pedestrian-trail |

The Highway 89 South Pedestrian Trail begins at the northern terminus of Old Yellowstone Trail North Road and continues about 4 miles into Livingston to connect to the Livingston Depot Center Trail. The trail is a combination of rail-trail, rail-with-trail and trail built into the shoulder of U.S. 89 where space is constrained. The trail follows the initial Northern Pacific Railway corridor between Gardiner and Livingston that served agricultural communities in Paradise Valley and brought tourists south into Yellowstone National Park.

LIVINGSTON DEPOT CENTER TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 3.0 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Livingston |
| Website | livingstondepot.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/livingston-depot-center-trail |

The Livingston Depot Center Trail will host a 0.8-mile section of the Great American Rail-Trail from the connection of the Highway 89 South Pedestrian Trail to Highway 10 West/I-90 in Livingston. The trail continues east toward Livingston Depot Center, a former train station that now houses a railroad museum open in the summer.

TRAIL GAP 69 – LIVINGSTON TO BOZEMAN

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Heading 26 miles west from Livingston, a trail could be constructed toward the city of Bozeman following an active rail corridor or various low-volume rural roads. The valley that contains the active rail line and I-90 is narrow in many spots and likely requires a detour to enter Bozeman. An option to head north toward the small community of Wilsall along an abandoned rail corridor and then southwest toward Bozeman is also being discussed.

BOZEMAN TO BRIDGER MOUNTAINS TRAIL/PATH TO THE "M" AND DRINKING HORSE

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 2.3 / 2.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Managers | City of Bozeman, Gallatin Valley Land Trust |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/bozeman-to-bridger-mountains-trail |

The Bozeman to Bridger Mountains Trail (also known as the Path to the "M" and Drinking Horse) was completed in the fall of 2019, making an important connection for pedestrians and cyclists between the city of Bozeman and the Bridger Mountains. In the east, the trail begins near the College M Trailhead and Picnic Area off of state Route 86/Bridger Canyon Road. Just 0.3 mile southwest of the picnic area is the Drinking Horse Mountain Trailhead. The "M" Trail and Drinking Horse Mountain Trail are two of the easier and more popular out-and-back hiking trails in the Bridger Mountain foothills.

STORY MILL SPUR

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.7 / 1.0 |
| Surface Type | Dirt, gravel |
| Trail Manager | City of Bozeman |
| Website | gvlt.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/story-mill-spur |

The preferred route of the Great American Rail-Trail enters Bozeman on state Route 86/Bridger Drive, which intersects the Story Mill Spur trail on Story Mill Road. The Story Mill Spur is named for Nelson Story, who, in the 1880s, built a flour mill near the East Gallatin River. As mayor of Bozeman, Story was instrumental in convincing the first railroad through Montana to route through Bozeman. The short rail line was the Gallatin Valley's largest and most used industrial rail spur until the flour mill's decline in the 1960s. The trail is 1.7 miles long and begins to the north at the decaying Story Mill flour mill.

FRONT STREET CONNECTOR (FORMERLY TRAIL GAP 70)

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 0.3 / 0.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Bozeman |
| Website | gvlt.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/front-street-connector-(bozeman) |

In late 2021, the Gallatin Valley Land Trust and the city of Bozeman completed a 0.3-mile connection along Front Street between L Street and state Route 86/North Rouse Avenue. The Front Street Connector briefly runs between an active railroad line and a lumber yard and forms an important connection between the Story Mill Spur and the Oak Street Pathway.

OAK STREET PATHWAY

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Bozeman |
| Website | gvlt.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/oak-street-trail- |

In Bozeman, the Oak Street Pathway follows Oak Street 1.5 miles west from state Route 86/North Rouse Avenue to North 19th Avenue. The trail begins on the south side of Oak Street at state Route 86/North Rouse Avenue and crosses to the north side of the street at North 7th Avenue.

NORTH 19TH AVENUE TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.3 / 1.3 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Bozeman |
| Website | gvlt.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/north-19th-avenue-trail- |

The North 19th Avenue Trail connects to the Oak Street Pathway at West Oak Street and continues north along North 19th Avenue for 1.3 miles. There is a small, 250-foot gap in the trail along North 19th Avenue between Baxter Lane and Rawhide Ridge Road. The trail switches from the east to the west side of North 19th Avenue at Cattail Street.

VALLEY CENTER TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 4.9 / 4.9 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Bozeman |
| Website | gvlt.org/trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/valley-center-trail- |

The North 19th Avenue Trail ends at East Valley Center Road, where a trail begins about 500 feet to the northwest along the northeast side of the road. The Valley Center Trail is open in two segments that are separated by Trail Gap 71, described below.

TRAIL GAP 71 – VALLEY CENTER TRAIL EXTENSION (BOZEMAN)

| | |
|--|------------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a roughly 1.4-mile gap in the Valley Center Trail along East Valley Center Road in Bozeman between Catamount Street and East Valley Center Spur. The city of Bozeman is committed to completing this trail gap in pieces as the area continues to develop.

JACKRABBIT LANE SHARED-USE PATH

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 5.7 / 2.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Belgrade |
| Website | belgrademt.gov/441/Belgrade-Urban-Jackrabbit-Lane---Madison |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/jackrabbit-lane-shared-use-path- |

There is a 5.7-mile-long section of trail along state Route 85/Jackrabbit Lane connecting Four Corners north to the area just south of Belgrade. The Jackrabbit Lane Shared-Use Path will host the Great American Rail-Trail for 2 miles, heading north onto state Route 85/Jackrabbit Lane from East Valley Center Road. The trail was completed from the community of Cowan north to Frank Road in the summer of 2018. A future extension could take the trail all the way into Belgrade.

TRAIL GAP 72A – BELGRADE TO MANHATTAN

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

From Belgrade, loose plans exist to follow Dry Creek Road/West Dry Creek Road about 15 miles through town to connect to the Manhattan to the Gallatin River Trail. Further exploration is needed to confirm if that is a viable trail route to fill Trail Gap 72a.

MANHATTAN TO THE GALLATIN RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.8 / 1.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Town of Manhattan |
| Website | townofmanhattan.com |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/manhattan-to-the-gallatin-river-trail- |

A straight shot along West Dry Creek Road, the Manhattan to the Gallatin River Trail provides separated access from the center of Manhattan east to the recreation opportunities along the Gallatin River.

TRAIL GAP 72B – MANHATTAN TO THREE FORKS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In 2025, Gallatin County completed a feasibility study for the location of a trail connecting Manhattan to Logan and Three Forks, with funding from a Reconnecting Communities grant. The study found a feasible route and identified bridges over waterways and a spur of the BNSF rail line. With this study in hand, the next step is to apply for grants for trail design and construction.

HEADWATERS TRAIL SYSTEM

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 11.8 / 5.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Three Forks |
| Website | threeforksmontana.us/headwaters-trail |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/headwaters-trail-system |

The Headwaters Trail System is a paved network of trails, portions of which run along the former corridor of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (also known as the Milwaukee Road) and through the city of Three Forks to Missouri Headwaters State Park, where the Missouri River originates at the confluence of the Jefferson, Madison and Gallatin rivers.

The portion of the Headwaters Trail System that will host the Great American Rail-Trail runs between Madison Road and Drouillard Fishing Access on state Route 2 (which also serves as the westernmost endpoint of the nearly 12-mile Headwaters Trail System).

TRAIL GAP 73A – HEADWATERS TRAIL SYSTEM EXTENSION COMPLETED

The city of Three Forks completed a small gap in the Headwaters Trail System in 2021.

TRAIL GAP 73B – THREE FORKS TO THOMPSON PARK

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The former Milwaukee Road corridor connects Three Forks to the existing Milwaukee Road Rail-Trail in Thompson Park in the city of Butte. However, the rail corridor is now primarily in private ownership. For long stretches, the former Milwaukee Road rail corridor follows state and county highways as well as the path of an active Montana Rail Link line. The rail corridor remains visible in aerial photography for the majority of its route.

While a feasible, off-road multiuse trail option connecting Three Forks about 56 miles west to Thompson Park continues to be explored, an interim on-road connector can be made using various low-volume county roads in Gallatin, Madison, Jefferson and Silver Bow counties.

**MILWAUKEE ROAD RAIL-TRAIL
(THOMPSON PARK)**

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 4.1 / 4.1 |
| Surface Type | Grass, gravel, sand |
| Trail Managers | Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest – Butte Ranger District, Butte-Silver Bow Parks & Recreation |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • co.silverbow.mt.us/453/thompson-park • fs.usda.gov/bdnf |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/milwaukee-road-rail-trail-(thompson-park) |

This section of railroad was one of the first in the country to be electrified—Thomas Edison even came out to Butte to ride the Milwaukee Road. The trail currently ends just 100 yards from the 2,300-foot-long Pipestone Pass tunnel. While the tunnel is closed to the public, trail users can walk up to its entrance. The trail runs through Thompson Park, a Congressionally Designated Area managed by the City and County of Butte-Silver Bow. In addition to enjoying the other trails that connect through Thompson Park, trail users can also connect to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, a rugged trail connecting Canada to Mexico along the Western Continental Divide.

**TRAIL GAP 74A –
THOMPSON PARK TO BUTTE**

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Milwaukee Road Rail-Trail turns into Janney Road at the northern end of Thompson Park, and the abandoned Milwaukee Road corridor continues west toward Basin Creek. Just north of Basin Creek, the rail corridor becomes active again through the city of Butte. BNSF Railway maintains infrequent service on this corridor. Further work is needed to identify a viable corridor to fill this gap.

**ULRICH-SCHOTTE NATURE TRAIL
(BLACKTAIL CREEK TRAIL)**

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 3.2 / 1.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City-County of Butte-Silver Bow |
| Website | co.silverbow.mt.us/454/Trails-Outdoor-Recreation |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/ulrich-schotte-nature-trail-(blacktail-creek-trail) |

The Blacktail Creek Trail was renamed the Ulrich-Schotte Nature Trail in honor of local residents who championed the restoration of the creek and other civic projects in the community. A portion of trail can host the Great American Rail-Trail as it travels through the center of Butte.

TRAIL GAP 74B – BUTTE

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A connection is currently planned to complete the 2-mile gap between the Ulrich-Schotte Nature Trail and the Silver Bow Creek Greenway, which would be an important section of trail connectivity through Butte.

SILVER BOW CREEK GREENWAY

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 10.2 / 10.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Silver Bow Creek Greenway Service District |
| Website | co.silverbow.mt.us/433/silver-bow-creek-greenway-trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/silver-bow-creek-greenway |

The Silver Bow Creek Greenway runs 10.2 miles through Silver Bow and Deer Lodge counties. It is currently built in two separate segments: 5.7 miles between Butte and Ramsay, a settlement west of Butte; and 4.5 miles from Durant Canyon Road near Finlen to the Highway 1 Rest Area in Stuart.

Silver Bow Creek was heavily contaminated after decades of mining and smelting in the area. The state settled with Atlantic Richfield Company for statewide Natural Resource Damage grant funds of \$23 million, which have paid for restoration work along the creek as well as trail construction, access features and easements. Construction on the trail began in 2005 and continues today.

The Greenway Service District, which oversees the trail, is a multijurisdictional service district with representatives from both Silver Bow and Deer Lodge counties. In 2022, an additional mile of trail was added to the Silver Bow Creek Greenway between Fairmont Road and the community of Hackney, and in 2023, an additional 2 miles were added to connect to the Montana Highway 1/Pintler Veterans Memorial Scenic Highway rest area.

TRAIL GAP 75 – SILVER BOW CREEK GREENWAY EXTENSION (RAMSAY TO FINLEN)

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Planning Status | Fully planned |
| Funding Status | Fully funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The City and County of Butte-Silver Bow plans to complete this 7.6-mile gap in the Silver Bow Creek Greenway gradually over time. The first section of this extension heading west from Ramsay will continue to follow Silver Bow Creek until it reaches Durant Canyon. There, the trail will veer away from the creek and follow the former Milwaukee Road corridor along a bench in the canyon for the remaining miles to Segment 2 of the existing Silver Bow Creek Greenway trail starting at Fairmont Road.

The entirety of the Silver Bow Creek corridor is a Superfund site. The Montana Department of Environmental Quality completed remediation work within Durant Canyon. This trail gap parallels a section of active rail line currently operated by Patriot Rail. Funding is in place to complete this segment of the Silver Bow Creek Greenway, but negotiations with the rail company need to be completed prior to completing this section of trail and opening it to the public.

TRAIL GAP 76A – STUART TO DEER LODGE

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

In 2023, an additional 2 miles of trail were constructed heading north from the former northern end of the Silver Bow Creek Greenway in Crackerville toward the community of Opportunity at the Montana Highway 1/Pintler Veterans Memorial Scenic Highway rest area. An additional 1.5 miles have been identified for completion in 2027 to cross over state Route 1. From Opportunity, a trail could connect north roughly 21 miles toward the Arrow Stone Park Trail in Deer Lodge using various alignments along the I-90 corridor.

In early 2025, a \$6.3 million Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant was awarded to communities in western Montana to help plan the remaining 140+ miles of trails between Butte and St. Regis. This encompasses all of Trail Gaps 76–80, and it marks tremendous progress for the trail route through western Montana.

ARROW STONE PARK TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 0.9 / 0.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Powell County |
| Website | powellcountymt.gov/parks-and-trails-board/ |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/arrow-stone-park-trail- |

The Arrow Stone Park Trail travels north/south through Deer Lodge, following Cottonwood Creek and paralleling Main Street for about 1 mile.

TRAIL GAP 76B – DEER LODGE

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is a small, missing trail connection between the Arrow Stone Park Trail and the southern end of the Old Yellowstone Trail in Deer Lodge. Trail users can currently travel on the street grid of Deer Lodge to make this 0.7-mile connection.

OLD YELLOWSTONE TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 10.9 / 10.9 |
| Surface Type | Crushed stone, dirt |
| Trail Manager | Powell County |
| Website | powellcountymt.gov/parks-and-trails-board/page/trail-maps |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/old-yellowstone-trail |

The Old Yellowstone Trail follows the right-of-way of the Milwaukee Road, traveling through two active cattle ranches. Powell County purchased this section of corridor in 2017 using funds from Montana’s Natural Resource Damage Program to build a trail from Deer Lodge north to Garrison. Washington Street provides parking access in Deer Lodge, and two additional parking lots with restrooms are available at the junction of Rock Creek Cattle Company and Garrison. Walk-through gates provide pedestrian and bicycle access to the trail and to state game lands for hunting.

TRAIL GAP 76C – GARRISON TO PILTZVILLE

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There are no immediate plans to head west from the northern end of the Old Yellowstone Trail at Garrison, which is just about 60 miles from Piltzville. From the small community of Clinton, a trail could travel west from the northeastern side of the Clark Fork River to the eastern terminus of the Piltzville Trail.

PILTZVILLE TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 3.3 / 3.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Missoula County |
| Website | friendsof2rivers.org/index.php/the-piltzville-trail.html |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/piltzville-trail- |

The 3.3-mile Piltzville Trail connects Piltzville to Bonner-West Riverside at Milltown State Park. The trail parallels U.S. Highway 10 East and provides a separated trail connection for travel east of the city of Missoula.

BONNER STREETCAR TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.8 / 1.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Missoula County |
| Website | missoulacounty.gov/departments/parks-trails-recreation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/bonner-streetcar-trail |

The Bonner Streetcar Trail follows a former electric streetcar line of the Missoula Street Railway Company, which ran between Milltown and Missoula from 1910 to 1932. The Bonner Streetcar Trail begins just south of the Blackfoot River, loosely paralleling state Route 200 from Laguna Street to Tamarack Road.

**TRAIL GAP 77 –
MILLTOWN TO MISSOULA**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Missoula County has completed significant engineering designs for a 2-mile trail alignment that would close Trail Gap 77 following state Route 200 around the bend in the Clark Fork River to County Road 533/Deer Creek Road. Plans for highway redevelopment show that the trail will need to be on the mountain side of the highway. Missoula County is raising funds to finalize designs and construct a trail along this section of road.

CANYON RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.9 / 0.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | Canyon River Golf Club |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/canyon-river-trail- |

The Canyon River Trail travels roughly along the banks of the Clark Fork River through the Canyon River Golf Club. The trail is open to the public. There are safe crossings beneath I-90 on both ends and beneath an active Montana Rail Link line on the western end. Missoula spent \$355,000 in 2016 to complete a 1,300-foot connection between the Canyon River Trail and the eastern terminus of the Milwaukee Trail (described below) beneath I-90. The project was completed in 2018 and provides a seamless transition between the two trails.

MILWAUKEE TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 5.9 / 5.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | City of Missoula |
| Website | ci.missoula.mt.us/183/Milwaukee-Trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/milwaukee-trail |

The Milwaukee Trail travels approximately 5.9 miles through Missoula along the former Milwaukee Road rail corridor. The Milwaukee Trail is the combined name of the Milwaukee Trail and the former Kim Williams Nature Trail. The trail travels from just south of the Canyon River Golf Club, following the banks of the Clark Fork River and passing the University of Montana campus, downtown Missoula and several public parks. Near downtown Missoula, the Milwaukee Trail intersects the Bitterroot Trail, which offers trail users an approximately 50-mile continuous paved path south through the Bitterroot Valley to the city of Hamilton. The Milwaukee Trail continues westward through Missoula, mostly along the historical Milwaukee Road route.

Missoula is currently constructing a separate grade crossing at a portion of North Russell Street. The reconstruction project will elevate North Russell Street and allow the trail to cross underneath, providing a safer, grade-separated crossing.

TRAIL GAP 78 – MISSOULA

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Missoula County's Long-Range Transportation Plan (2016) lists extending the Milwaukee Trail westward as a priority. From the western end of the Milwaukee Trail at North Grove Street, the trail is intended to continue 1.8 miles along the former Milwaukee Road corridor west toward Mullan Road. The trail will cross over the Clark Fork River and continue west to Mullan and Schmidt roads. From here, the Milwaukee Trail may continue to follow the former rail corridor or head north to connect to the existing Mullan Road Trail.

The city of Missoula and Missoula County continue to work together to acquire property and finalize plans to make this connection possible. Plans exist for a series of bridges that will span the Clark Fork River, which await funding in the next several years.

MULLAN ROAD TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 2.7 / 2.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Missoula County Parks, Trails, and Open Lands Program |
| Website | gis.missoulacounty.us/caps/parksandtrails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/mullan-road-trail |

A trail was constructed on the north side of Mullan Road in 2010. The trail heads west from Flynn to Cote lanes and provides for safe, separated walking and biking along a busy two-lane county road. The Mullan Road Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for approximately 2.2 miles, traveling westward toward Frenchtown.

**TRAIL GAP 79 –
MISSOULA TO FRENCHTOWN**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The preferred option to continue the trail 11.5 miles westward from the Mullan Road Trail to Frenchtown is to link up with the Milwaukee Road corridor. That may not be possible in several places, so completing a trail in the existing right-of-way of Mullan Road may be the necessary compromise until the trail would reach the A.J. Hoyt Memorial Trail in Frenchtown. The Missoula Airport owns a 3-mile stretch of the former Milwaukee Road corridor, and has been in talks with the city of Missoula to transfer that into public ownership. This land transfer could help to complete Trail Gap 79.

In 2022, Missoula County allocated \$250,000 in funding from its 2014 Parks and Trails Bond to support 30% design plans on two sections of trail that would develop 4.5 miles of trail, including 2.3 miles directly on the Great American Rail-Trail route along Mullan Road between Cote and Deschamps lanes, and an overpass over I-90 that would connect into the A.J. Hoyt Memorial Trail in Frenchtown.

A.J. HOYT MEMORIAL TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 5.3 / 4.7 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Missoula County Parks, Trails, and Open Lands Program |
| Website | gis.missoulacounty.us/ caps/parksandtrails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/ aj-hoyt- memorial-trail- |

A side path runs along Frenchtown Frontage Road for about 5 miles: the A.J. Hoyt Memorial Trail. This trail provides a crucial trail connection outside of Missoula. Frenchtown Frontage Road parallels I-90, traveling around Frenchtown Pond State Park and ending in the community of Huson.

TRAIL GAP 80A – HUSON TO TARKIO

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Several trail advocates in Mineral County recently formed the nonprofit group Mineral County MT Rails to Trails to help support the completion of the Great American Rail-Trail through Mineral County. Representatives are in discussions with the nearby Lolo National Forest and other organizations to support completing the gap between Huson and Tarkio (an unincorporated community in Mineral County).

TARKIO FLATS TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Mineral County MT Rails to Trails, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/ tarkio-flats-trail |

In 2024, a section of the Tarkio Flats Trail opened through a portion of forest owned by the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. Championed by Mineral County MT Rails to Trails, the trail is the first phase of a project that provides trail users a safe alternative to cycling along the nearby I-90.

TRAIL GAP 80B – TARKIO TO ST. REGIS

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Several trail advocates in Mineral County recently formed the nonprofit group Mineral County MT Rails to Trails to help support the completion of the Great American Rail-Trail through Mineral County. Representatives are in discussions with the nearby Lolo National Forest and other organizations to support completing the gap between Tarkio and St. Regis (an unincorporated community in Mineral County).



NorPac Trail | Photo by TrailLink user railtrailingblog

ROUTE OF THE OLYMPIAN

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 31.0 / 23.3 |
| Surface Type | Gravel |
| Trail Manager | U.S. Forest Service (Lolo National Forest – Superior Ranger District) |
| Website | friendsofcdatrails.org/ route-of-the-olympian |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/route-of- the-olympian |

The 31-mile-long Route of the Olympian, heading west from St. Regis and following the St. Regis River for most of its length, was constructed on the former Milwaukee Road corridor through the Lolo National Forest. At its western terminus, the route directly connects to the Route of the Hiawatha to the south and the NorPac Trail to the north.

One of the first goals of Mineral County MT Rails to Trails is to rehabilitate the Saltese Trestle in the town of Saltese, Montana. In 2021, an anonymous donor gave \$25,000 to support engineering work on rehabilitation of the trestle, which the group hopes to leverage into construction funding for bridge rehabilitation.

NORPAC TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Mont. (in Miles) | 25.0 / 15.8 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, dirt, gravel |
| Trail Manager | U.S. Forest Service (Lolo National Forest – Superior Ranger District) |
| Website | friendsofcdatrails.org/ northern-pacific-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/norpac- trail |

The 25-mile-long NorPac Trail follows the old right-of-way of the Northern Pacific Railway in western Montana and the Idaho Panhandle, crossing Lookout Pass. The trail runs from the town of Saltese past the East Portal of the Route of the Hiawatha (south of Taft), connecting to the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes in the city of Mullan, Idaho. The U.S. Forest Service owns and maintains this trail. The NorPac Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for its entirety, including the 15.8 miles of the trail in Montana. The remaining 9.2 miles of the NorPac Trail are discussed in more detail in the Idaho chapter of this report.

IDAHO



NorPac Trail | Photo by TrailLink user acewickwire

The Great American Rail-Trail travels through the northern Panhandle of Idaho along primarily developed rail-trails. The NorPac Trail and Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes are in RTC’s Rail-Trail Hall of Fame for their exceptional views of the rugged Idaho landscape.

TABLE 24: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN IDAHO

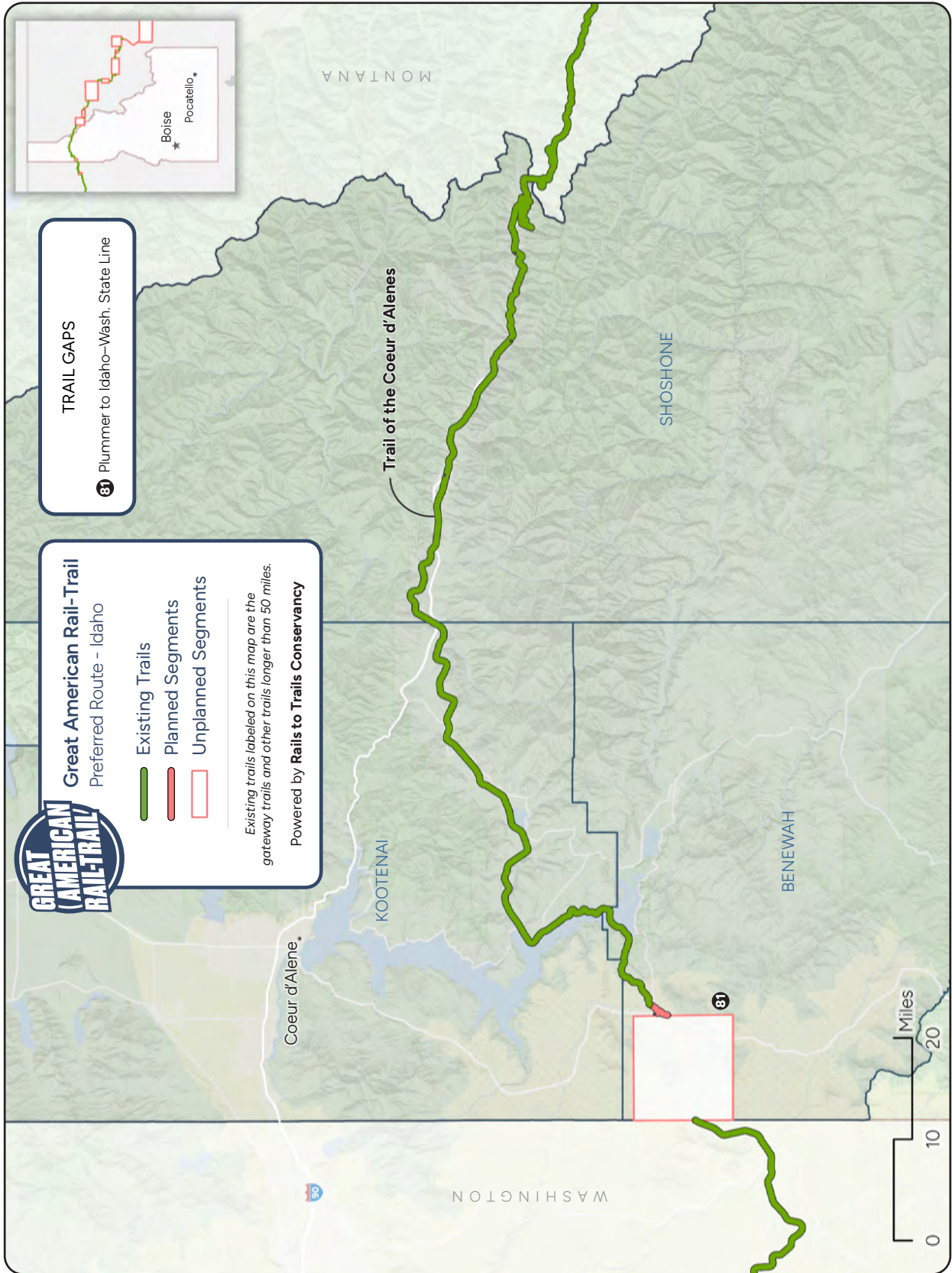
| | |
|--|--------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Idaho (% of Total State Mileage) | 80.2 (88.4%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Idaho (% of Total State Mileage) | 10.5 (11.6%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Idaho | 1 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Idaho | 90.7 |

TABLE 25: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH IDAHO

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Idaho Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|--|
| NorPac Trail | 9.2 |
| Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes | 71.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 81 – Plummer to Idaho–Wash. State Line | 10.5 |
| Total Miles | 90.7 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 80.2 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 10.5 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026

MAP 12: IDAHO



NORPAC TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Idaho (in Miles) | 25.0 / 9.2 |
| Surface Type | Concrete, dirt, gravel |
| Trail Manager | U.S. Forest Service (Lolo National Forest – Superior Ranger District) |
| Website | friendsofcdatrails.org/northern-pacific-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/norpac-trail |

The Idaho portion of the NorPac Trail runs 9.2 miles through the state, heading west from the Montana–Idaho state line. The separated trail ends at Beacon Light Road, about 4 miles from the eastern endpoint of the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes in Mullan. Trail users can follow the low-volume Larson Road/Friday Avenue west into Mullan, where a separated trail picks up along Earle Street and connects to the Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes trailhead at 2nd and River streets.

TRAIL OF THE COEUR D’ALENES

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Idaho (in Miles) | 71.0 / 71.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | Coeur d’Alene Tribe, Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Old Mission State Park |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • friendsofcdatrails.org/trail-of-the-coeur-dalenes • parksandrecreation.idaho.gov/state-park/trail-of-the-coeur-dalenes |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/trail-of-the-coeur-dalenes |

The Trail of the Coeur d’Alenes, inducted into RTC’s Rail-Trail Hall of Fame in 2010 (with the Route of the Hiawatha, also in Idaho), covers 71 miles of paved rail-trail through Idaho’s scenic mountains and valleys. The area has a rich mining, railroading and Native American history, and the Coeur d’Alene tribe was instrumental in the development of the trail. The trail originates in Mullan at 2nd and River streets and terminates in the west at the city of Plummer in a public park with interpretive signage on tribal history.

TRAIL GAP 81 – PLUMMER TO IDAHO–WASHINGTON STATE LINE

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The abandoned Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (Milwaukee Road) corridor continues from Plummer to the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail at the Idaho–Washington border in Tekoa, Washington. However, this line is in private ownership and is unlikely to become available for trail development. RTC is actively building relationships with local and state leaders to explore alternative routes to connect the 10.5-mile gap.

WASHINGTON



Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail | Photo courtesy Palouse to Cascades Trail Coalition

The Washington section of the Great American Rail-Trail begins with the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail, which travels more than 247 miles from the Idaho–Washington state line west to the community of Cedar Falls, Washington. The Great American Rail-Trail will connect into King County’s extensive trail network. The trail will continue across Puget Sound via ferry to connect to the Sound to Olympics Trail and Olympic Discovery Trail on the Olympic Peninsula.

TABLE 26: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL MILEAGE IN WASHINGTON

| | |
|---|---------------|
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Existing Trail Miles in Wash. (% of Total State Mileage) | 392.4 (75.4%) |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Gap Miles in Wash. (% of Total State Mileage) | 128.1 (24.6%) |
| Total Trail Gaps in Wash. | 10 |
| Total Great American Rail-Trail Miles in Wash. | 520.5 |

GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE ASSESSMENT 2026
MAP 13: WASHINGTON

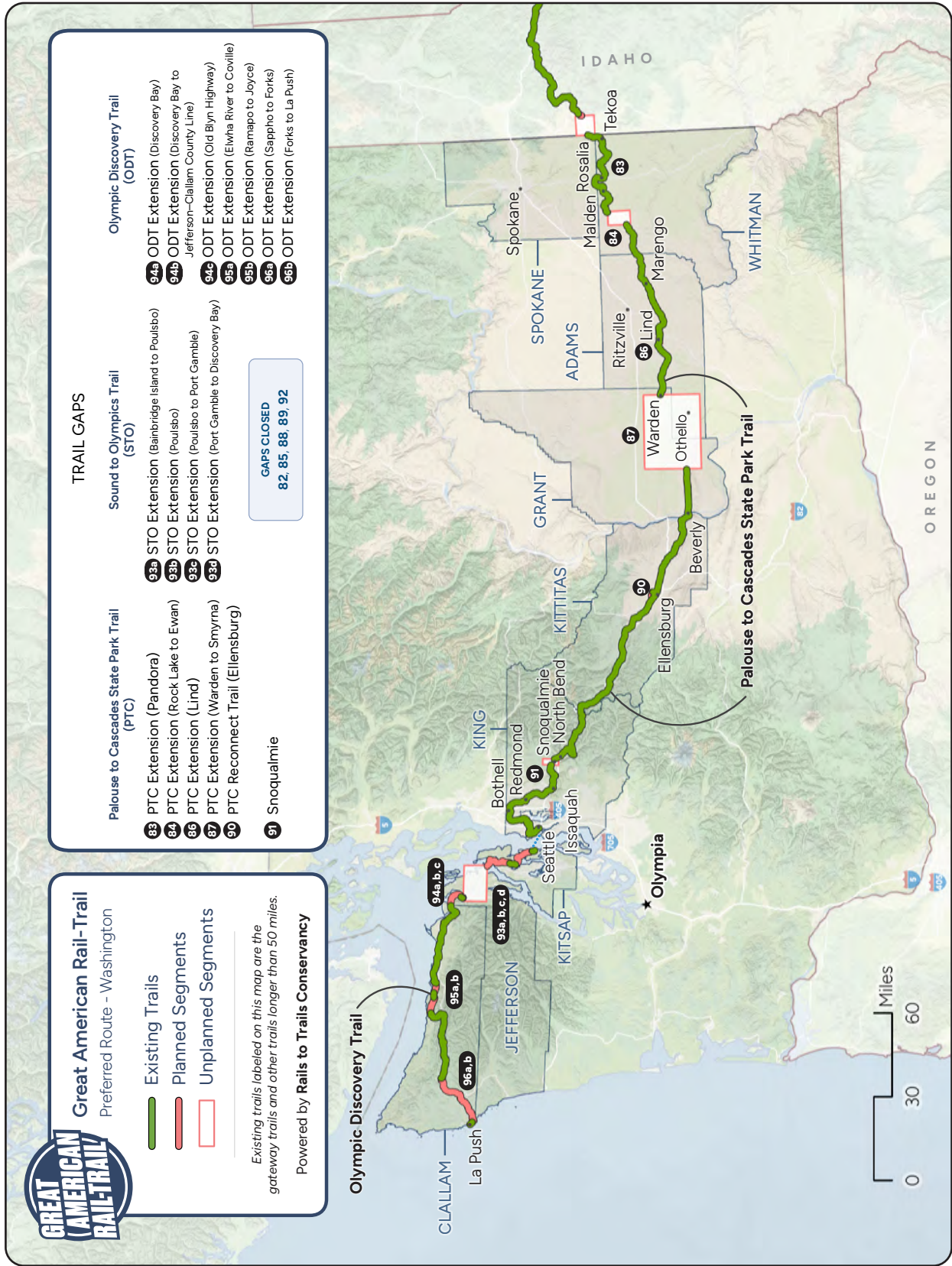


TABLE 27: GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL ROUTE THROUGH WASHINGTON

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Wash. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|---|
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Idaho–Wash. State Line to Pandora) | 17.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 82 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Tekoa) COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 83 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Pandora) | 0.3 |
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Pandora to Rock Lake) | 28.1 |
| TRAIL GAP 84 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Rock Lake to Ewan) | 8.2 |
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Ewan to Lind) | 49.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 85 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Marengo to Ralston) COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 86 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Lind) | 0.4 |
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Lind to Warden) | 20.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 87 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Warden to Smyrna) | 35.4 |
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Smyrna to Ellensburg) | 50.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 88 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Beverly) COMPLETED | - |
| TRAIL GAP 89 – Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail Extension (Renslow) COMPLETED | - |
| PTC Reconnect Trail | 1.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 90 – PTC Reconnect Trail (Ellensburg) | 3.0 |
| Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail (Ellensburg to Cedar Falls) | 81.5 |
| Snoqualmie Valley Trail | 10.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 91 – Snoqualmie | 2.4 |
| Preston-Snoqualmie Trail | 6.8 |
| Issaquah-Preston Trail | 5.4 |
| East Lake Sammamish Trail | 10.4 |
| Redmond Central Connector (Eastrail) | 1.5 |
| Sammamish River Trail | 8.9 |
| Burke-Gilman Trail | 15.0 |
| 34th Street Protected Bike Lane (formerly Trail Gap 92) | 0.3 |
| Fremont Bridge | 0.2 |
| Ship Canal Trail | 1.9 |
| Interbay Protected Bike Lane | 1.2 |
| Elliott Bay Trail | 2.5 |
| Seattle Waterfront Pathway | 1.3 |

| Existing Trail or Trail Gap Name | Length in Wash. Along Great American Rail-Trail (in Miles) |
|--|---|
| Ferry Across Puget Sound | - |
| Sound to Olympics Trail (Bainbridge Island) | 1.0 |
| TRAIL GAP 93a – Sound to Olympics Trail Extension (Bainbridge Island to Poulsbo) | 9.1 |
| Sound to Olympics Trail (Poulsbo 1) | 1.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 93b – Sound to Olympics Trail Extension (Poulsbo) | 0.8 |
| Sound to Olympics Trail (Poulsbo 2) | 0.4 |
| TRAIL GAP 93c – Sound to Olympics Trail Extension (Poulsbo to Port Gamble) | 12.2 |
| TRAIL GAP 93d – Sound to Olympics Trail Extension (Port Gamble to Discovery Bay) | 14.5 |
| TRAIL GAP 94a – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Discovery Bay) | 0.4 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (Discovery Bay) | 0.7 |
| TRAIL GAP 94b – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Discovery Bay to Jefferson–Clallam County Line) | 7.2 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (Jefferson–Clallam County Line to Old Blyn Highway) | 1.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 94c – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Old Blyn Highway) | 0.8 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (Blyn Road to Elwha River) | 34.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 95a – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Elwha River to Coville) | 4.0 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (Coville to Ramapo) | 1.8 |
| TRAIL GAP 95b – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Ramapo to Joyce) | 6.5 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (Joyce to Sappho) | 34.6 |
| TRAIL GAP 96a – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Sappho to Forks) | 10.4 |
| TRAIL GAP 96b – Olympic Discovery Trail Extension (Forks to La Push) | 12.5 |
| Olympic Discovery Trail (La Push) | 1.4 |
| Total Miles | 520.5 |
| Existing Trail Miles | 392.4 |
| Trail Gap Miles | 128.1 |

PALOUSE TO CASCADES STATE PARK TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 247.6 / 247.6 |
| Surface Type | Ballast, crushed stone, sand |
| Trail Managers | Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission (Washington State Parks) |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • palousetocascades-trail.org • parks.wa.gov/find-parks/state-parks/palouse-cascades-state-park-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/palouse-to-cascades-state-park-trail |

The Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail travels across Washington from the Idaho–Washington state line to Cedar Falls, Washington, and is one of the longest rail-trail conversions in the United States. The trail follows the corridor of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad (the Milwaukee Road), which was completed in 1909. By 1980, the railroad had ceased operations on the right-of-way. The state of Washington acquired most of the corridor and has developed it into the nearly 250-mile trail that exists today.

The Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail is currently divided into six segments of existing trail. There are several small gaps in Washington State Parks ownership along the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail that are not identified in the trail gaps noted below. Trail users should be aware and follow all signage and use appropriate detours where provided.

~~TRAIL GAP 82 – PALOUSE TO CASCADES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (TEKOA) COMPLETED~~

Trail Gap 82 is now a completed trail segment as part of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail with the opening of the Tekoa Trestle to trail users in 2022.

TRAIL GAP 83 – PALOUSE TO CASCADES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (PANDORA)

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The Milwaukee Road formerly crossed Wilhelm Road around the community of Pandora at a bridge that has since been removed. Trail users currently need to take a brief 0.3-mile on-road detour from Wilhelm Road to Pandora Road, where the trail reconnects and continues westward. The state should consider rebuilding this bridge in the future, though this should remain a low priority compared to other more significant gaps in the trail system. In the meantime, signage should be added at the detour to confirm that the trail continues along Pandora Road and reconnects on the western side.

TRAIL GAP 84 – PALOUSE TO CASCADES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (ROCK LAKE TO EWAN)

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The former Milwaukee Road corridor traveled southwest between the Washington communities of Pine City and Ewan via the shores of Rock Lake. The state owns the northern section of the former rail line, but when the rail line was abandoned, private property owners purchased some mileage of the former rail line that abutted Rock Lake along a section that provides the only direct beach access to the lake. Initial discussions on continuing the trail along Rock Lake were not successful, and currently, the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail has an 8.2-mile gap between Rock Lake and Ewan. The state of Washington should continue negotiating with private landowners to find ways to reconnect the trail along Rock Lake to provide a safe, off-street trail opportunity.

**~~TRAIL GAP 85 – PALOUSE TO CASCADDES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (MARENGO TO RALSTON)~~
COMPLETED**

Trail Gap 85 is now a completed trail segment as part of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail with the 2023 opening of a trail bypass around the former Cow Creek Trestle.

TRAIL GAP 86 – PALOUSE TO CASCADDES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (LIND)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A missing bridge over a creek and an active BNSF Railway line just west of the town of Lind created a brief gap along the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail. There is an on-road detour that travels through the center of Lind, allowing trail users to experience the town and visit its stores and restaurants. Rebuilding this bridge is not high on the list of priorities for Washington State Parks given the reasonably direct detour through Lind, though this missing bridge should be revisited once the higher priority items are completed and trail usage picks up in this part of Washington.

TRAIL GAP 87 – PALOUSE TO CASCADDES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (WARDEN TO SMYRNA)

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The largest gap in the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail—35.4 miles—lies between the city of Warden and the unincorporated community of Smyrna. This section skirts the Columbia National Wildlife Refuge and travels through the city of Othello. The section of rail line between Warden and Othello remains active, providing train car storage for the Columbia Basin Railroad. The remainder of the section is part of the abandoned Milwaukee Road corridor and could be completed to help reduce the gap. Creative solutions that include the rail line and highway rights-of-way between Warden and Othello should be considered to help fully close this large gap in the trail.

~~TRAIL GAP 88 – PALOUSE TO CASCADDES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (BEVERLY)~~ COMPLETED

Trail Gap 88 is now a completed trail segment as part of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail with the opening of the Beverly Bridge to trail users in 2022.

~~TRAIL GAP 89 – PALOUSE TO CASCADDES STATE PARK TRAIL EXTENSION (RENSLOW)~~ COMPLETED

Trail Gap 89 is now a completed trail segment as part of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail with the opening of the Renslow Trestle to trail users in 2021.

PTC RECONNECT TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 1.7 / 1.7 |
| Surface Type | Concrete |
| Trail Manager | City of Ellensburg |
| Website | ci.ellensburg.wa.us/768/Parks-Recreation |

The city of Ellensburg is working to complete a long-standing gap in the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail through town. Currently, 1.7 miles of trail already exist through town, heading north from the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail trailhead at North Alder Street.

**TRAIL GAP 90 – PTC
RECONNECT TRAIL (ELLENSBURG)**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

As the Milwaukee Road continued westward, it passed through the city of Ellensburg, which is now home to the westernmost trail gap in the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail. In 2024, the city of Ellensburg applied for a significant Environmental Protection Agency Community Change grant to complete this gap, though funding was unsuccessful.

SNOQUALMIE VALLEY TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail- Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 31.3 / 10.0 |
| Surface Type | Ballast, gravel |
| Trail Manager | King County Parks & Recreation |
| Website | kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/nature-recreation/parks-recreation/king-county-parks/trails/leafline-trails/snoqualmie-valley-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/snoqualmie-valley-trail |

The 31.3-mile, packed gravel Snoqualmie Valley Trail follows an extension of the Milwaukee Road that linked the city of Everett in the north to the main line heading from east to west over the Cascades, where the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail lies today. The western extent of the Palouse to Cascades State Park Trail connects to the Snoqualmie Valley Trail in Cedar Falls at the Rattlesnake Lake Recreation Area, where there is a well-used trailhead that accommodates trail users and visitors at Rattlesnake Lake. The Snoqualmie Valley Trail will host the Great American Rail-Trail for approximately 10 miles between Cedar Falls and Snoqualmie, from which point the trail will head northwest toward Seattle.

TRAIL GAP 91 – SNOQUALMIE

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Planning Status | Unplanned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Two options take trail users in and around the city of Snoqualmie, one on each side of the Snoqualmie River. The Snoqualmie Valley Trail continues north on the east side of the Snoqualmie River. However, the Great American Rail-Trail will need to head west from Snoqualmie toward the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail. There is not a perfect connection into the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail heading westward from Snoqualmie due to the mighty Snoqualmie Falls and the presence of the origin lands of the Snoqualmie Tribe.

The city of Snoqualmie is working on the Snoqualmie Riverwalk on the banks of the river, which would connect people into town on the west side of the river, while the Snoqualmie Ridge trail along the Snoqualmie Parkway could take users westward. However, a 2.4-mile connection is needed to meet with the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail. Local officials have pursued a connection through Snoqualmie for many years. Hopefully, the momentum behind the Great American Rail-Trail can help King County and the city of Snoqualmie find a creative solution.

PRESTON-SNOQUALMIE TRAIL

| | |
|--|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail- Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 6.8 / 6.8 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | King County Parks & Recreation, Snoqualmie Parks & Recreation |
| Website | kingcountyparks.org/2017/02/17/trail-spotlight-preston-snoqualmie |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/preston-snoqualmie-trail |

The Preston-Snoqualmie Trail follows a former Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway line through the Snoqualmie Valley from Snoqualmie west to Preston. The trail is 6.8 miles long and is paved for its entirety. Its eastern end is near Snoqualmie Falls, but the trail does not extend to or across the falls. The trail snakes through the forest until it reaches the Raging River Valley, where the trail follows a slight detour down into the valley along Preston-Fall City Road and climbs back up again, due to the loss of a historical trestle bridge that once spanned this valley.

ISSAQUAH-PRESTON TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 5.4 / 5.4 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, gravel |
| Trail Managers | City of Issaquah Parks and Recreation, King County Parks & Recreation, Washington State Department of Transportation Pedestrian/ Bicyclist Program |
| Website | mtsgreenway.org/location/issaquah-preston-snoqualmie-trail/ |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/issaquah-preston-trail |

The Issaquah-Preston Trail roughly follows the original route of the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway that was purchased by Northern Pacific Railway in the late 1800s and became inactive in the early 1980s. The trail connects to the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail at the intersection of 300th Avenue Southeast and Southeast High Point Way, just north of Preston.

EAST LAKE SAMMAMISH TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 11.0 / 10.4 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone |
| Trail Manager | King County Parks & Recreation |
| Website | kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/nature-recreation/parks-recreation/king-county-parks/trails/leafline-trails/east-lake-sammamish |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/east-lake-sammamish-trail |

The East Lake Sammamish Trail follows the corridor of a former BNSF Railway line that ceased operations in 1996. The trail was originally opened as a soft-surface interim trail and has been paved and redeveloped in segments over the years.

REDMOND CENTRAL CONNECTOR (EASTRAIL)

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 1.5 / 1.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Redmond |
| Website | redmond.gov/186/Parks-Trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/redmond-central-connector |

The 1.5-mile Redmond Central Connector (Eastrail) opened to the public in 2025. This paved trail bridges East Lake Sammamish Trail to the Sammamish River Trail through Redmond Town Center. The route offers shopping, dining, lodging and local sightseeing options, as well as bicycle support services. The trail parallels Sound Transit’s 2 Line light rail. Currently, the light rail connects Redmond and Bellevue; eventually, it will connect to Seattle.

SAMMAMISH RIVER TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 10.1 / 8.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | King County Parks & Recreation |
| Website | kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/nature-recreation/parks-recreation/king-county-parks/trails/leafline-trails/sammamish-river-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/sammamish-river-trail |

The Sammamish River Trail is the center link of the Seattle area’s locks-to-lakes corridor, which connects lakes Sammamish and Washington to the Ballard Locks. The majority of the Sammamish River Trail runs along a levee that was created in the 1960s when crews drained the swamps and completed the second rechanneling of the once-meandering Sammamish River.

The Sammamish River Trail provides 10.1 miles of paved trail, beginning at its connection with the Marymoor Connector Trail in Marymoor Park. The trail continues north following the Sammamish River through the cities of Redmond, Woodinville and Bothell, where it connects to the Burke-Gilman Trail.

BURKE-GILMAN TRAIL

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 18.8 / 15.0 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | King County Parks & Recreation, Seattle Parks and Recreation, University of Washington |
| Website | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • kingcounty.gov/en/dept/dnrp/nature-recreation/parks-recreation/king-county-parks/trails/leafline-trails/burke-gilman • seattle.gov/parks/find/parks/burke-gilman-trail |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/burke-gilman-trail |

The Great American Rail-Trail picks up the Burke-Gilman Trail in Bothell. The Burke-Gilman Trail was one of the first rail-trails in the country and is a popular commuting and recreation route through Seattle. The trail was selected for RTC’s Rail-Trail Hall of Fame in 2008. The trail was once part of a line of the Seattle, Lake Shore and Eastern Railway, and gets its name from the two founders of the rail line, Thomas Burke and Daniel Gilman.

34TH STREET PROTECTED BIKE LANE (FORMERLY TRAIL GAP 92)

| | |
|---|--|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 0.3 / 0.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | Seattle Department of Transportation |
| Website | seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/programs/bike-program/protected-bike-lanes/n-34th-st-mobility-improvements |

The Seattle Department of Transportation upgraded the existing bike lanes along North 34th Street to protected paint-and-post bike lanes in the summer of 2021. These improvements provide a safer passage between the Burke-Gilman Trail and the Fremont Bridge.

FREMONT BRIDGE

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 0.2 / 0.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Seattle |
| Website | seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/programs/bridges-stairs-and-other-structures/bridges |

The Fremont Bridge was opened in 1917 over the Lake Washington Ship Canal. Non-motorized users can travel on separated sidewalks on either side of the bridge, which is also a drawbridge that frequently opens to accommodate vessels underneath.

SHIP CANAL TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 1.9 / 1.9 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Seattle |
| Website | seattle.gov/parks/find/hiking-and-trails |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/ship-canal-trail |

Across the waterway from the Burke-Gilman Trail, the Ship Canal Trail runs along the southern edge of the Lake Washington Ship Canal near Seattle Pacific University.

INTERBAY PROTECTED BIKE LANE

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 1.2 / 1.2 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Seattle |
| Website | seattle.gov/transportation/projects-and-programs/programs/bike-program/trails-upgrade-plan/interbay-trail-connections-project |

The Interbay Protected Bike Lane project redesigned West Emerson Place, Gilman Avenue West and 20th Avenue West to include protected bike lanes and more intuitive and comfortable intersections. The project added bike lanes on the north and east sides of the streets, creating a protected connection between the Ship Canal Trail and the Elliott Bay Trail.

ELLIOTT BAY TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 3.4 / 2.5 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Seattle |
| Website | downtownseattle.org/programs-services/parks-and-public-spaces/elliott-bay-connections |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/elliott-bay-trail-(terminal-91-bike-path) |

The Elliott Bay Trail, also known as the Terminal 91 Bike Path, connects the Interbay Protected Bike Lane to the Seattle Waterfront Pathway. The western portion of trail skirts a rail yard and crosses under the Magnolia Bridge in two places to reach Elliott Bay. Heading east, the trail follows Elliott Bay to its terminus at Alaskan Way.

SEATTLE WATERFRONT PATHWAY

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 2.0 / 1.3 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Manager | City of Seattle |
| Website | seattle.gov/waterfront |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/seattle-waterfront-pathway |

The highly urban Seattle Waterfront Pathway is a continuation of the Elliott Bay Trail that heads south on a route connecting Broad Street and South Royal Brougham Way. The trail parallels Alaskan Way along Elliott Bay. Those following the Great American Rail-Trail will continue to the Seattle to Bainbridge ferry at the Seattle Ferry Terminal.

FERRY ACROSS PUGET SOUND

The Seattle to Bainbridge ferry, provided by the Washington State Department of Transportation, departs roughly 20 times per day, connecting Seattle and Bainbridge Island across Puget Sound. While there is a fee for walk-on passengers and bicycle riders from Seattle to Bainbridge Island (with an additional \$1 bicycle surcharge), the route from Bainbridge Island to Seattle only charges for automobiles (walk-on passengers and bicycle riders can ride for free).

SOUND TO OLYMPICS TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 2.6 / 2.6 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt |
| Trail Managers | City of Bainbridge Island, Kitsap County |
| Website | northkitsaptrailsassociation.org/sto |
| TrailLink Map | traillink.com/trail/sound-to-olympics-trail- |

When complete, the Sound to Olympics Trail will extend across Kitsap County to link two Washington State regional trail systems: the Mountains to Sound Greenway and the Olympic Discovery Trail. Today, three disconnected segments exist. One follows the first mile of state Route 305 in Bainbridge Island, stretching from the tip of the Winslow Ferry Terminal, which was completed in 2018, up to High School Road Northeast. Two smaller segments totaling 1.6 miles can be found in the city of Poulsbo. Trail gaps along these developed segments total 36.6 miles, and are described in Trail Gaps 93a–93d.

TRAIL GAP 93A – SOUND TO OLYMPICS TRAIL EXTENSION (BAINBRIDGE ISLAND TO POULSBO)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Plans are in place to extend the Sound to Olympics Trail 9.1 miles north from its current northern terminus at High School Road Northeast. Some funding has already been acquired for this portion of the project. The trail will follow state Route 305 to the extent possible along a parallel path. A separated crossing at the Agate Pass Bridge, which connects Bainbridge Island to the Kitsap Peninsula, should also be considered to accommodate the narrow passage.

New funding was dedicated in 2022 to complete the next section of trail in Bainbridge Island, including \$215,000 from the Bainbridge Island Capital Improvement Plan and \$50,000 from the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation.

The route of the Sound to Olympics Trail will continue to follow state Route 305 to the first roundabout in Poulsbo at Johnson Road Northeast, where an underpass was completed in 2023 to help trail users safely navigate the interchange. At Johnson Road Northeast, the trail will head north along Noll Road Northeast, where an existing portion of the trail adjacent to Poulsbo Elementary and Poulsbo Middle School has already been completed.

The Peninsula Trails Coalition, the Sound to Olympics Trail and the Bainbridge Island Parks & Trails Foundation have partnered on an application for the 2023 Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) program with a focus on preparing planning and engineering documents and constructing portions of the remaining gaps in the Great American between Puget Sound and the Pacific Ocean. This application was successful and infuses the project with \$16.13 million, which will be transformative for western Washington and will accelerate the development of Trail Gaps 93–96.

TRAIL GAP 93B – SOUND TO OLYMPICS TRAIL EXTENSION (POULSBO)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A proposed extension of the Sound to Olympics Trail would connect the two existing sections in Poulsbo along Noll Road Northeast and Langaunet Lane Northeast to Northeast Lincoln Road for approximately 0.8 mile.

TRAIL GAP 93C – SOUND TO OLYMPICS TRAIL EXTENSION (POULSBO TO PORT GAMBLE)

| | |
|--|--|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some construction expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

A proposed extension of the Sound to Olympics Trail would continue 12.2 miles north to and through the town of Port Gamble. The trail would travel north along Stottlemeyer Road Northeast until Port Gamble Forest Heritage Park and a recently announced planned expansion (the Port Gamble Upland Block). Several routes through the Upland Block along existing roads and trails have been considered, and a preferred route connects to the historic Port Gamble site just east of the Hood Canal Floating Bridge.

Kitsap Public Facilities District allocated \$1.7 million in 2020 for several park and trail development projects, including engineering for the northern sections of the Sound to Olympics Trail in Port Gamble and for the design, permitting and construction of a trailhead at a southern park entrance on Stottlemeyer Road Northeast. This portion of the project is planned to be completed in 2026 and can set the stage for future funding and work to be completed.

TRAIL GAP 93D – SOUND TO OLYMPICS TRAIL EXTENSION (PORT GAMBLE TO DISCOVERY BAY)

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Unfunded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

On the northwestern side of the Hood Canal Floating Bridge, an exact trail alignment is not yet determined through Jefferson County to connect the 14.5-mile gap to the Olympic Discovery Trail at Discovery Bay. Jefferson County has large swaths of timberland owned by one large company, which could be instrumental in providing a scenic route to make this trail connection. Several groups are collaborating on an economic development study of the area, and a trail concept is on the agenda for review.

OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Total Length / Total Length Along Great American Rail-Trail in Wash. (in Miles) | 82.8 / 75.1 |
| Surface Type | Asphalt, crushed stone, dirt |
| Trail Managers | City of Port Angeles, City of Port Townsend, City of Sequim, Clallam County, Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, Jefferson County, Olympic National Forest, Olympic National Park, Peninsula Trails Coalition, Washington Department of Transportation, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, Washington State Parks |
| Website | olympicdiscoverytrail.org |
| TrailLink Map | trailink.com/trail/olympic-discovery-trail |

The developing Olympic Discovery Trail (ODT) is locally regarded to have four segments between Port Townsend and La Push on the Pacific Coast. The first of these ODT segments, between Port Townsend and Discovery Bay, is part of the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail. While not an official portion of the Great American Rail-Trail, it provides a valuable connection to the city of Port Townsend. For the purposes of this assessment, three ODT segments are incorporated to the Great American Rail-Trail. Collectively, these segments start at Discovery Bay, travel across Jefferson and Clallam counties, and end in the community of La Push at the Pacific Ocean. Highlights along the ODT include bridge crossings over the Dungeness and Elwha rivers and views of Lake Crescent through Olympic National Park.

TRAIL GAP 94A – OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION (DISCOVERY BAY)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

The ODT will connect 0.4 mile to the Sound to Olympics Trail roughly at the junction of state Route 20 and U.S. 101/Olympic Highway at Fairmount Road at the head of Discovery Bay. A short section of trail will follow U.S. 101/Olympic Highway to connect to the existing portion of the ODT at Discovery Bay.

TRAIL GAP 94B – OLYMPIC DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION (DISCOVERY BAY TO JEFFERSON-CLALLAM COUNTY LINE)

| | |
|---|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

There is technically some existing ODT trail across this segment marked along Old Gardiner Road and the shoulder of U.S. 101/Olympic Highway. The planned trail segment is about 7.2 miles, and within this current plan, Jefferson County’s priority is to achieve an alternative to the 1.6-mile section currently on the shoulder of U.S. 101/Olympic Highway. Negotiations are underway with all key property interests. Once this piece is completed, the foreseeable alignment for the ODT will be shared use of the low-volume Old Gardiner Road in combination with the new off-highway section.

**TRAIL GAP 94C – OLYMPIC
DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION
(OLD BLYN HIGHWAY)**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

A brief 0.8-mile gap exists in the ODT along Old Blyn Highway between U.S. 101 and Blyn Road. Trail users can currently follow the road while the gap undergoes planning for completion.

**TRAIL GAP 95A – OLYMPIC
DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION
(ELWHA RIVER TO COVILLE)**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Clallam County is working to connect the approximately 4-mile ODT gap between the Elwha River trail crossing and the community of Coville (not to be confused with the Washington city of Colville) to the west. The county continues to look for opportunities and funding to acquire additional lands to close this gap.

**TRAIL GAP 95B – OLYMPIC
DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION
(RAMAPO TO JOYCE)**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Clallam County is working to connect the approximately 6.5-mile ODT gap between the communities of Ramapo and Joyce. The county continues to look for opportunities and funding to acquire additional lands to close this gap.

Acquisition in this gap is challenging, given the topography constraints and the significant number of landowners along potential routes.

**TRAIL GAP 96A – OLYMPIC
DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION
(SAPPHO TO FORKS)**

| | |
|--|-------------------|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | TBD |

Clallam County has been working to identify a corridor to complete the trail between Sappho and Forks. Completing this trail connection has been a lower priority while trails connecting on each end are in the planning and construction stages. Completion of Trail Gap 96b, below, is becoming a catalyst to spark the development of this approximately 11- to 14-mile section of trail, with the route still to be determined.

**TRAIL GAP 96B – OLYMPIC
DISCOVERY TRAIL EXTENSION
(FORKS TO LA PUSH)**

| | |
|--|--|
| Planning Status | Partially planned |
| Funding Status | Partially funded |
| Construction Status/ Expected Completion Date | Some construction expected in 2026; remaining sections TBD |

Clallam County and the National Park Service jointly were selected for a \$6 million grant through the Federal Lands Access Program for the design and construction of this approximately 12-mile segment. The county is responsible for first securing trail right-of-way along most of this corridor. Much of the corridor is owned by a private timber company that has expressed interest as a willing seller.

In 2021, Clallam County approved the necessary funds to acquire 9.7 miles of this gap, with the remainder of the trail gap on existing public roadway or tribal land. The Quileute Tribe is located in and around La Push and has been an active partner in the process of completing the ODT.

APPENDIX

EXCERPTS FROM ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL, MAY 2022

HOW WE MEASURE ECONOMIC IMPACT

Headwaters Economics partnered with Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to conduct an independent economic impact analysis of the Great American Rail-Trail®. Economic impact analyses are based on the idea that something—whether a new trail, new business, or a new policy—can attract new money by enticing visitors who otherwise would not have come to the area. This new money, in turn, supports local businesses that employ residents, pay taxes, and support other businesses. These analyses require measuring the number of visitors drawn to the area and how much they spend.

The analysis was conducted in 2021-2022 using four data elements: 1) existing trail count data; 2) original statistical models to estimate trail users; 3) a literature review of spending estimates and trail use characteristics; and 4) economic impact estimates from the IMPLAN economic modeling program. The economic benefits presented in this report rely on three underlying assumptions. First, we assume that communities will capitalize on the trail with businesses like gear shops, restaurants, and lodging; signage directing users to these local businesses; and marketing the community as a welcoming stop for trail users. Second, we assume that the increase in outdoor recreation observed during the pandemic will persist. This assumption is supported by data from Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's [national network](#) of trail counters and the Outdoor Industry Association's [national survey](#) on participation in outdoor recreation. Finally, we assume that the route in this assessment will be built and maintained at a level of quality that is connected to other segments; has a safe separation from vehicles; and has a surface that is sufficiently maintained to allow most skills and abilities to walk, bike, and roll. This analysis does not assume that all segments would be paved.

The statistical modeling to estimate the number of trail users was conducted at the county level, using trail counter data from 57 locations across the U.S. to calibrate the model. In counties where trail counter data were available, we used the actual trail use. Where counter data were not available, we built on a statistical model developed by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to predict use. The model uses communities of a similar size, climate, wealth, and population density. Due to the inherent variability and uncertainty underlying statistical modeling, we calculated the likely range of predicted use, and throughout the report provide the mid-point. The numbers provided in this analysis report the impact of a trail that is 100% complete. In states where the Great American Rail-Trail is not yet completed, the benefits today are proportional to the percentage of trail that is complete.

We relied on 30 existing studies of long-distance trails across the U.S. to estimate the share of users that are visitors versus locals, the share of visitors who are overnight versus day users, and spending profiles for overnight and day visitors. Where recent data were available for a specific trail segment we used segment-specific data. Otherwise, we applied averages from the literature.

The spending and visitation estimates were input into IMPLAN, a regional economic modeling software, to estimate the jobs, income, tax revenue, and contributions to GDP likely from the completion of the Great American Rail-Trail.

For complete methods and definitions, see <https://headwaterseconomics.org/outdoor-recreation/great-american-rail-trail>.



Olympic Discovery Trail, Photo courtesy TrailLink user stevelee73

EXCERPTS FROM ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL, MAY 2022

ECONOMIC POTENTIAL

The completion of the Great American Rail-Trail® will help amplify the benefits—on a mass scale—that trails provide. In addition to offering places for physical activity and recreation, connecting diverse communities with safe walking and biking routes, and promoting a closer connection to nature, the Great American will help communities along the route realize new economic potential.

The cross-country route will serve as a catalyst for economic growth. Hundreds of communities along the route will experience new opportunities for business development and tourism thanks to the Great American Rail-Trail, all while

contributing to the growth of the country’s burgeoning outdoor economy—one of the fastest-growing sectors in the United States.

To fully realize the economic opportunity of the Great American Rail-Trail, communities will need to plan for and invest in the trail. Eighty-eight gaps remain to be completed and infrastructure like trailheads and signage are needed. States and communities can support tourism-ready businesses along the route. Such investments could generate more than \$229.4 million in visitor spending, \$104 million in labor income, and \$22.8 million in new tax revenue.

This independent economic analysis finds that the Great American Rail-Trail® could generate annually:

 **256M TRIPS**

 **\$229.4M**
IN VISITOR SPENDING

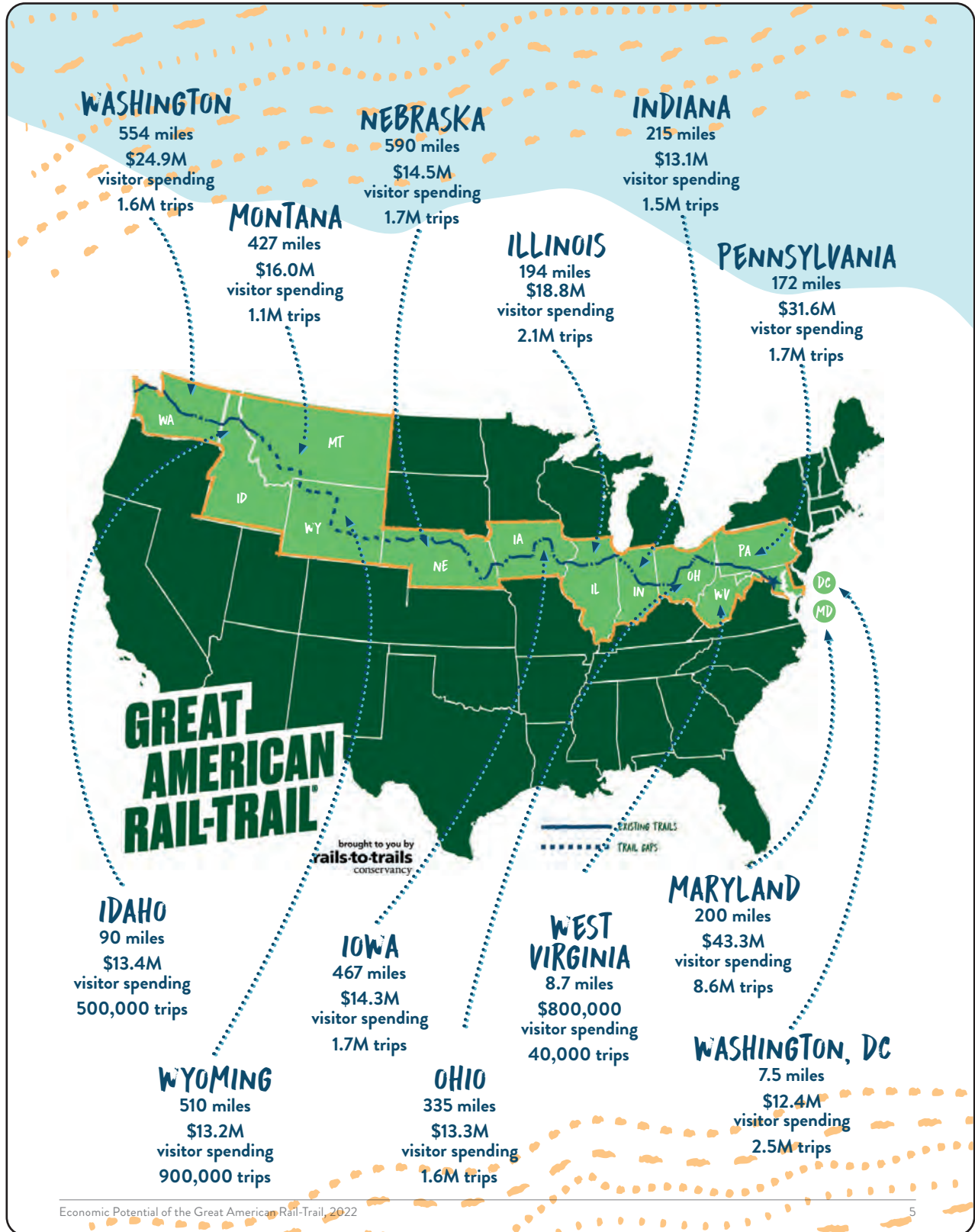
 **2,500**
NEW JOBS

 **\$22.8M**
IN NEW TAX REVENUE

 **\$104M**
IN LABOR INCOME

 **\$161M**
GDP CONTRIBUTION

EXCERPTS FROM ECONOMIC POTENTIAL OF THE GREAT AMERICAN RAIL-TRAIL, MAY 2022



APPENDIX: GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Abandoned rail corridor – When a railroad company ceases operations on a line or terminates the line itself. Abandonment is official when the Surface Transportation Board has issued an order authorizing abandonment of the line and the railroad has notified the board that it has consummated the abandonment authorization.

Active rail corridor – Any rail corridor that has not been formally abandoned through the process identified by the Surface Transportation Board.

Ballast – The trackbed upon which railroad ties are laid, often composed of crushed stone.

Bike lane – A portion of the roadway that has been designated by striping, signage and pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bicyclists.

Bike route – On-street routes that are signed for bicycle travel but do not provide any physical or visual separation from automobile traffic.

Contiguous – Sharing a common border; touching.

Decking – The surface of a bridge.

Federal Railroad Administration – An agency within the U.S. Department of Transportation that handles matters related to the railroad industry.

Geographic Information System (GIS) – A system designed to capture, store, manipulate, analyze, manage and present spatial or geographic data.

Greenway – A strip of undeveloped land set aside for recreational use or environmental protection.

Interim on-road connector – An on-road segment that is to be used temporarily while a trail is being planned or built.

Multiuse trails – Trails that are designed to accommodate more than one type of use (e.g., walking, bicycling, horseback riding, etc.).

Non-motorized trails – Trails that do not allow travel using vehicles with motors.

Off-road trails – Trails that are outside of a roadbed for motorized vehicles.

Protected bike lane (cycle track) – A bikeway that is at street level and uses a variety of methods for physical protection from passing traffic. Protected bike lanes (cycle tracks) can allow bicycle movement in one or both directions on one side of a road.

Railbanked/railbanking – Condition allowing a railroad to “bank” a corridor for future rail use. During the interim, alternative trail use is a viable option.

Railbed – The roadbed of a railroad track.

Rail corridor – The tracks and railroad right-of-way (generally 50 to 100 feet wide, though it varies widely by geography).

Rail-trail – The conversion of a disused railway track into a multiuse trail. The characteristics of abandoned railways—flat, long, frequently running through historical areas—are appealing for various developments.

Rail-with-trail – A trail located adjacent to an active rail line.

Rail yard – A complex series of railroad tracks for storing, sorting, loading and unloading railroad cars.

Recreational Trails Program – A competitive grant program managed by state trail administrators; therefore, only projects that meet certain criteria may be funded. Its funds are drawn from the larger Transportation Alternatives Program.

Right-of-way – The land on which a railroad line, road or utility is built.

Roadway – The strip of land over which a road passes.

Shared-use path – A form of infrastructure that supports multiple recreation and transportation opportunities (a common synonym for “trail”).

Shoulder (road) – A strip of land adjacent to the traffic lane of a road, often used as an emergency stopping lane.

Surface Transportation Board (STB) – The federal agency that oversees changes made by railroad companies. Formerly the Interstate Commerce Commission.

Towpath – A road or trail on the bank of a river, canal or other inland waterway.

Trailbed – The roadbed of a trail.

Trail gap – Section of trail that still needs to be built to connect existing trails.

Transportation Alternatives Program – A program administered by the Federal Highway Administration to authorize funding for programs and projects defined as “transportation alternatives,” including on- and off-road pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The Transportation Alternatives Program is the largest federal source for trail funding.

Waterway – A river, canal or other route for travel by water.



UNITED WE
TRAIL



At Rails to Trails Conservancy, we are building a nation connected by trails. We reimagine public spaces to create safe ways for everyone to walk, bike and be active outdoors.