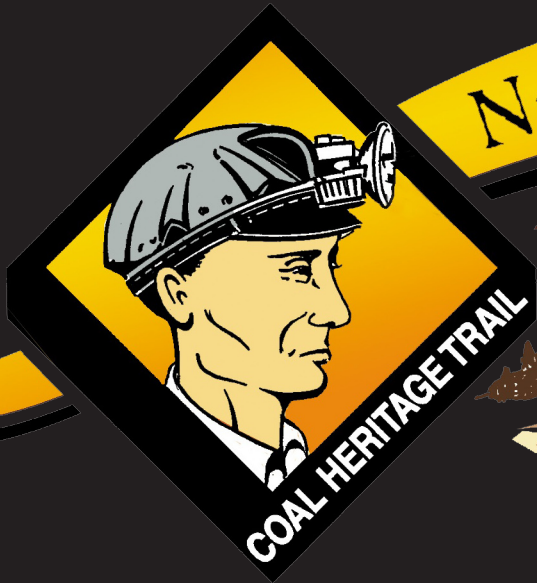


National Coal Heritage Area



National Coal Heritage Area, West Virginia: Trail Plan for Greenways and Blueways





Welcome to the first National Coal Heritage Area Trail Plan for Greenways & Blueways!

We are pleased to present this trail assessment and plan for the National Coal Heritage Area, covering the thirteen West Virginia counties that are in the National Coal Heritage Area (NCHA). We undertook this project as a way to assess the current inventory of trails available within the area and to gain information from the community about sites for potential trails and linkages.

While the National Coal Heritage Area's primary focus is on preservation of historic resources and development of cultural heritage tourism, we know that cultural heritage tourists also appreciate opportunities to explore the landscape through hiking/biking activities and to get to know small towns through walking tours and in-town interpretive trails.

Through our partnership with the National Park Service's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA), all of the current trails within the region - both motorized and non-motorized - were identified and mapped. A series of public meetings were held to gain information from the communities, and to identify potential trail corridors and linkages between existing trails and between trails and communities. Rich discussions and significant input from community members resulted in a map locating existing trails and proposed / potential trails to be considered for development.

These maps and this report will be used as a tool for the NCHA Authority and other public agencies and community groups in creating plans for the expansion of existing trails and the development of new ones.

It is our hope that this plan and the resource information within will create new energy around hiking and biking and encourage community groups, with technical assistance and support of the National Coal Heritage Area Authority, to include trails as a part of their efforts to expand the tourism offerings in their area and to enhance the quality of life for residents.

Special thanks go to Peggy Pings of the National Park Service RTCA Program, members of the steering committee who provided valuable guidance, and to Joshua and Candice Chastain of Cornerstone GIS for their outstanding technical work. Also thanks go to Debby Spencer of WMT Corporation, who brought her considerable knowledge of trail development to the task of writing and designing the final document. We also appreciate the assistance of the many public land managers throughout the region and State Trails Coordinator, Bill Robinson, who provided us with information regarding existing trails.

The plan could not have been completed without the input of all of the community members who attended the meetings and filled out trail survey forms indicating potential trail corridors that could be developed. These folks all have a passion, as well as great ideas, for improving their communities and are the ones we will depend on in implementing the recommendations in this plan.

We look forward to working with our friends and partners throughout the National Coal Heritage Area to expand the offering of trails in the region as we all continue to add activities for tourists to engage in, and to make all of our communities a better place to live, work, and play.

Christy Bailey, Executive Director
National Coal Heritage Area Authority
Beckley, West Virginia



TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACRONYMS	iii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1 - 6
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	7 - 8
INTRODUCTION	9
CHAPTER 1: Creating the Plan	10 - 13
CHAPTER 2: Trail Surveys	14 - 19
CHAPTER 3: Workshops	20 - 38
CHAPTER 4: Overview & Benefits of Trails	39 - 51
CHAPTER 5: Trail Inventory by County	52 - 76
CHAPTER 6: Recommendations	77 - 100
APPENDIX A: Survey Instruments	101 - 110
APPENDIX B: Survey Results	111 - 125
APPENDIX C: NCHA Companion Trail Map Publication	126 - 128
APPENDIX D: Overview Maps of NCHA Region	129 - 130
APPENDIX E: Inventory of Trails in alphabetical order	131 - 157
APPENDIX F: List of Trail Maps featured on the Internet	158 - 165
APPENDIX G: Resources	166 - 192
APPENDIX H: Participant Contacts	193 - 198

DISCLAIMER: Any incorrect or missing information in the Plan or companion maps is unintentional, and can be corrected over time in the online version of the Plan.
Please provide your corrections to the NCHA Trail Committee or Executive Director.

Acronyms

AASHTO - American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
ACA – American Canoe Association
AHS – American Hiking Society
ARC – Appalachian Regional Commission
ASLA – American Society of Landscape Architects
BLUE – Bluestone National Scenic River
CCI – Community Collaborative Incorporated
CCCWV – Citizens Conservation Corps of WV
CDBG – Community Development Block Grant Program
CDP – Community Development Partnership of WV
CED – Center for Excellence in Disabilities
CHT – Coal Heritage Trail (National Scenic Byway)
CHHA – Coal Heritage Highway Authority
CNCS – Corporation for National & Community Service
CSS – Context Sensitive Solutions
CVB – Convention & Visitors Bureau
EDC – Economic Development Corporation
EZ-EC - Empowerment Zones and Enterprise Communities
FHWA – Federal Highways Administration
FRN – Family Resource Network
GARI – Gauley River National Recreation Area
GET – Great Eastern Trail
GIS – Geographic Information Systems
GPS – Global Positioning System
HMRA – Hatfield-McCoy Regional Recreation Authority
HUD – US Department of Housing & Urban Development
IMBA – International Mountain Biking Association
ISTEA – Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (1991)
LAB – League of American Bicyclists
LDD – Local Development District
LEED – Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LNT – Leave No Trace
LWCF – Land & Water Conservation Fund
MDIT – Mary Draper Ingles Trail
MPO – Metropolitan Planning Organization
NCCC – National Civilian Conservation Corps
NCHA – National Coal Heritage Area
NCHAA – National Coal Heritage Area Authority
NERI – New River Gorge National River

NPS– National Park Service
NRT – National Recreation Trail
OCCD – WV Office of Coalfield Community Development
RC&D – Resource Conservation & Development
RSVP – Retired Seniors Volunteer Program
RTI – Rahall Appalachian Transportation Institute
RTC – Rails to Trails Conservancy
RTCA – Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program
SAFETEA-LU - Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act (2005)
SCORP – Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
SR2S – Safe Routes To School
SSI – Sustainable Sites Initiative
STB – Surface Transportation Board
STIP – State Transportation Improvement Plan
TE – Transportation Enhancement Program
TEA-21 - Transportation Equity Act for 21st Century (1998)
TIP- Transportation Improvement Plan
USACOE – US Army Corps of Engineers
VISTA – Volunteers In Service To America
WMA - Wildlife Management Area
WVCF – WV Cycling Foundation
WV-CNCS – WV Commission for National & Community Service
WVDO – WV Development Office
WVDNR – WV Division of Natural Resources
WVDOT – WV Department of Transportation
WVDOH – WV Division of Highways
WVHC – WV Horse Council
WVLMOA – WV Land & Mineral Owners Association
WVLT – WV Land Trust
WVMBA – WV Mountain Bike Association
WVOM – WV On the Move
WVRC – WV Rivers Coalition
WVRTC – WV Rails-to-Trails Council
WVRPA – WV Recreation & Park Association
WVSORO – WV Surface Owners Rights Organization
WVSTA – WV Scenic Trails Association
WVTRA - WV Therapeutic Recreation Association
WVWA – WV Wildwater Association
WV-WSA – WV Watershed Association