

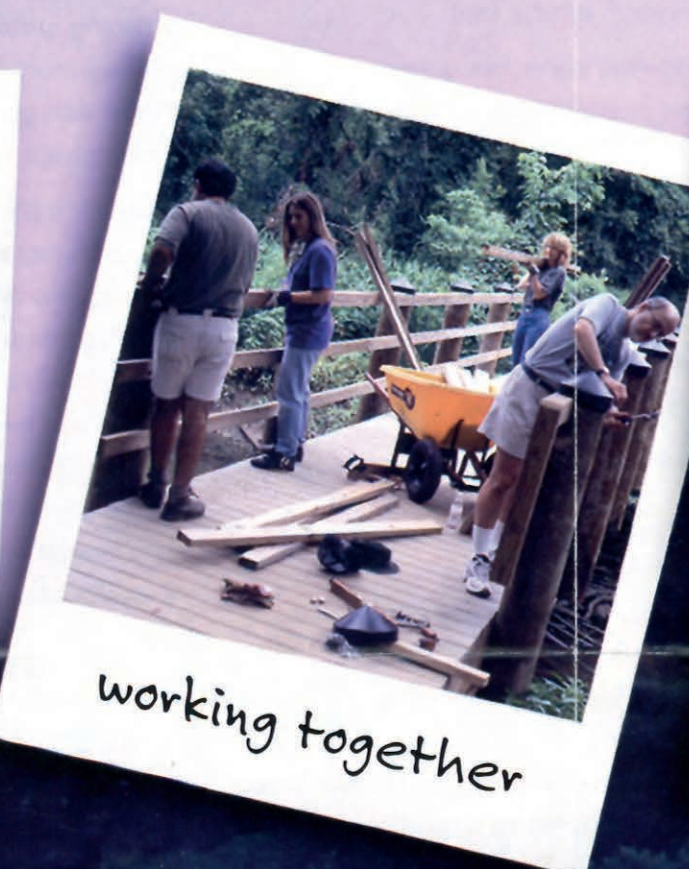
Imagine.



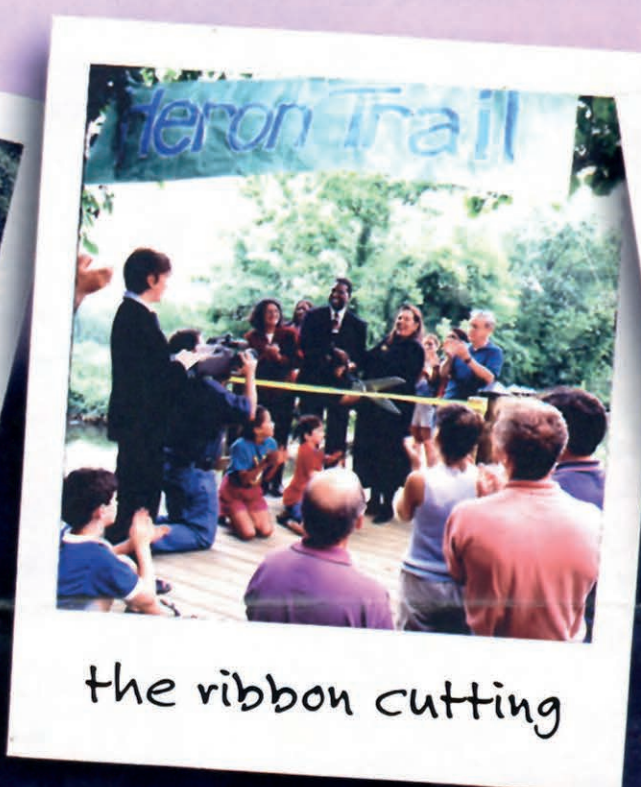
creating the vision



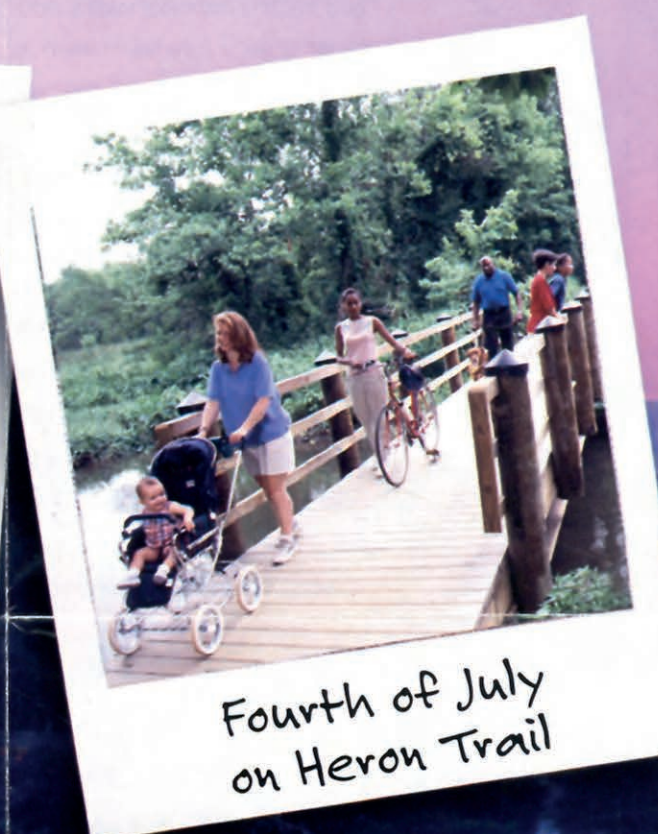
taking action



working together



the ribbon cutting



Fourth of July
on Heron Trail

Moving From Vision to Reality

Tips For Your Locally Led Conservation Efforts

Conserving natural, cultural and historic resources takes the imagination, commitment and hard work of a whole community. Partners have different priorities, varying resources and have used different methods to achieve their goals. But a few tips are universal...

- **Build a large tent.** Recruit a strong local advisory committee that represents a cross-section of community interests – at the beginning of the project.
- **Get on the same page.** Establish a group

mission and community vision by consensus.

- **Play fair.** Identify your group decision-making process up-front.
- **Create allies.** Get out and talk with those who might not be supportive at first glance. They can become your strongest allies if you ask about their concerns early on and address them sincerely.
- **Do a demo.** A small-scale but highly visible demonstration effort will help make the larger project feel real and doable.
- **Achieve the possible.** Set achievable goals, record progress and build momentum by

celebrating the small steps along the way.

- **Get on-site.** Organize events on-site to help people see, feel and touch the vision.
- **Be graphic.** People respond to images that help them visualize what you're proposing – use maps, drawings, photographs, websites, brochures, slides, video and models.
- **Anticipate challenges.** Consider how the project might be impacted by needs and concerns of various landowners and by other community priorities. Do your homework. Meet challenges with workable solutions.

- **Mobilize citizen power.** Area colleges, schools and community service groups all have committed volunteers looking for projects to tackle. But use their time well, show your appreciation and make it fun for them.
- **Evolve.** Renew the group with new participants and local expertise as the project grows and changes.
- **Share success.** Let everyone claim ownership of your idea.
- **Be passionate.** You are improving the quality of life in your community and conserving natural treasures for future generations!



National
Park Service
Assistance for
Community
Conservation

Community Resource

Bringing Park Service expertise to locally led conservation efforts.



American Treasures

Since 1916, the National Park Service has helped show the world the value of the parks and preservation ethic by identifying and maintaining national treasures.

Through the years, countless families have vacationed at Yellowstone, marveled at Yosemite and visited national parks and preserves nationwide. More than a few have wondered what it would be like to bring a little of that experience back home.

And today, some are doing just that. You can join them.

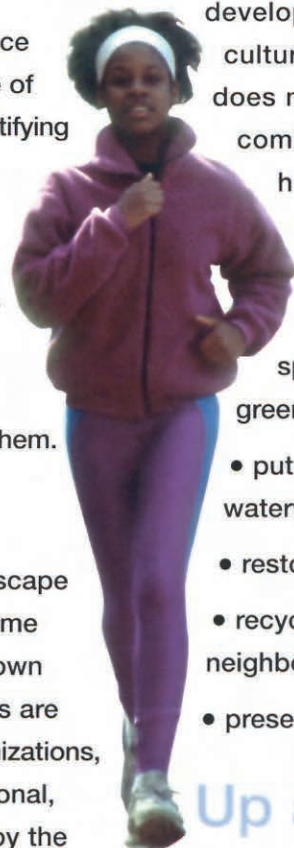
In Your Own Backyard

Connecting with the beauty of the American landscape need not be a once-in-a-lifetime occurrence in some far-off place. Today, conservation begins at your own back door and in your local community. Neighbors are joining together with grassroots groups, civic organizations, business leaders, elected officials, and local, regional, tribal and state governments to preserve and enjoy the special places in their midst.

We Can Help

The Park Service – through the Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program – can help.

Rivers & Trails is a national network of conservation and recreation-planning professionals who assist



interested communities with nature-based recreation development and environmental, historic and cultural conservation projects. Rivers & Trails does not direct or fund projects, but when a community has decided to conserve close-to-home landscapes, we can help it get started. Rivers & Trails assists locally led conservation efforts that:

- link together parks, schoolyards, open spaces and residential areas with safe, quiet greenways;
- put the natural sparkle back into neglected waterways;
- restore significant cultural and historic assets;
- recycle abandoned railways into trails that link neighborhoods and communities;
- preserve open spaces for generations to come.

Up and Running

Our premise is simple. Rivers & Trails is a national resource for locally led conservation efforts. Citizens with an idea for a project first discuss it with other community members to see if there is common interest. They bring the idea to their nearby Rivers & Trails professionals who help determine the best course of action and the appropriate level of Rivers & Trails involvement. All Rivers & Trails-assisted projects are founded on

four principles: community initiative; cost-sharing; cooperation; and results-orientation.

Rivers & Trails can help communities achieve their conservation goals in a variety of ways. From resource assessment and mapping, development of promotional brochures and events, planning, public meeting facilitation, project management and coordination, to serving as a liaison with government and non-profit agencies... we can help.

Rivers & Trails personnel help local coalitions develop strategic plans, bring together neighbors and other stakeholders, identify potential sources of funding, engage the public's imagination and build partnerships to achieve community-set goals. Rivers & Trails personnel conduct workshops and give advice on conservation techniques, recreation development, public engagement and consensus-building. We help evaluate significant natural, cultural and recreational resources, and help our partners tap into a wealth of expertise, both at home and nationwide.

An Innovative Model

Rivers & Trails is an innovative way to help communities help themselves. By leveraging expertise and experience from local efforts around the country, we can help communities set their own conservation priorities and achieve their goals. Local decision-



making means that neighbors help neighbors save places they care about and build nature-based recreation opportunities they deem important for the future.

Rivers & Trails is an extremely cost-effective program. With an annual outlay that's well under one percent of the National Park Service budget, our professionals help hundreds of local communities develop over seven hundred miles of trail, protect over a thousand miles of waterways, and preserve over thirty-thousand acres of open space every year.

Then the Magic Happens

Because of our unique approach, we do more than help local groups conserve natural resources...we serve as community builders. The Rivers & Trails mission is to leverage expertise and experience to help local groups get their projects underway. In doing so, we count on the drive, commitment and enthusiasm of community citizens we have brought together to carry the project through to completion. By building the capacity of local communities, Rivers & Trails helps strengthen the conservation and preservation movement for generations to come. Because, ultimately, it's up to all of us!

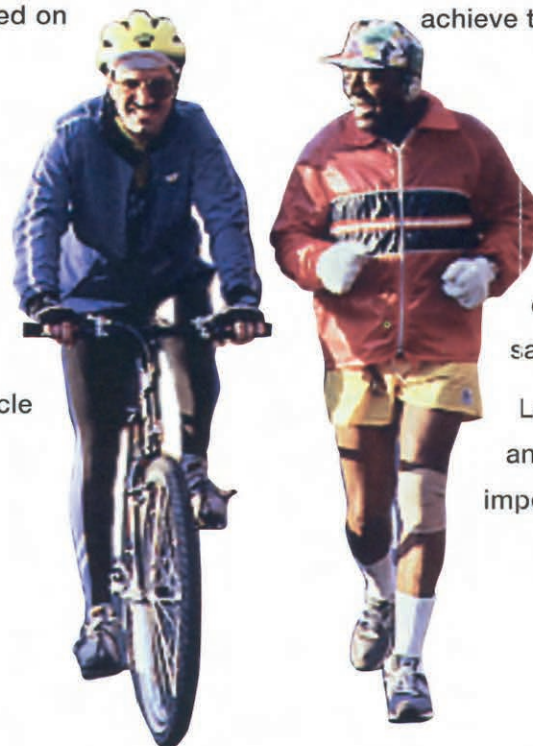


Building Healthy Communities

As urban and suburban areas expand, there is a growing awareness that the establishment and maintenance of green spaces is an integral part of healthy, more livable communities.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that 60 percent of our population is not getting enough

physical activity. Rivers & Trails helps local communities provide inviting environments close to home to encourage regular exercise and neighborly interaction. Walking trails, bicycle paths, preserved greenways and revitalized waterways provide an abundance of



opportunities for healthy and fun activities that can improve health and save lives.

Locally led conservation is an investment that produces important economic benefits as

well. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods, accessible greenways, nearby trails and clean rivers contribute to a high quality of life that attracts tax-paying businesses and residents.

An improved environment abounding with natural recreational opportunities adds value to the community, enriches family life and strengthens local economies.

Where to Find Us

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program

If you would like more information about Rivers & Trails, visit our web page at www.nps.gov/rtca or contact the Rivers & Trails office for your region.

Alaska Region

National Park Service
240 West 5th Avenue
Room 114
Anchorage, AK 99501
(907) 644-3586

Midwest Region

IA, IL, IN, KS, MI,
MN, MO, NE, ND,
OH, SD, WI

National Park Service
1709 Jackson Street
Omaha, NE 68102
(402) 221-3483

Intermountain Region

CO, MT, UT, WY
National Park Service
P.O. Box 25287
Denver, CO
80225-0287
(303) 969-2855

AZ, NM, OK, TX
National Park Service
P.O. Box 728
Santa Fe, NM
87504-0728
(505) 988-6090

Northeast Region

DC, DE, MD, NJ,
PA, VA, WV
National Park Service
200 Chestnut Street
Third Floor
Philadelphia, PA 19106
(215) 597-1787

CT, ME, MA, NH,
NY, RI, VT
National Park Service
15 State Street
Boston, MA 02109
(617) 223-5051

Pacific West Region

CA, HI, NV
National Park Service
1111 Jackson Street
Suite 700
Oakland, CA 94607
(510) 817-1449

ID, OR, WA
National Park Service
909 First Avenue
Seattle, WA
98104-1060
(206) 220-4113

Southeast Region

AL, AR, FL, GA, KY,
LA, MS, NC, SC, TN
National Park Service
Atlanta Federal Center
1924 Building
100 Alabama Street, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303
(404) 562-3175

National Office

National Park Service
1849 C Street, NW
Mail Stop 2235
Washington, DC 20240
(202) 354-6900

