



National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior

Valley Forge National Historical  
Park

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## Valley Forge National Historical Park - News Release

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### Valley Forge NHP and Partners Invest over \$235,000 into Trails Parkwide

**VALLEY FORGE, PA** – Valley Forge National Historical Park (VFNHP) is collaborating with the Friends of Valley Forge Park, Unilever Corporation, Appalachian Mountain Club, Sierra Club and others to enhance and improve the popular network of trails throughout the park. “Through the just-completed General Management Plan, the public made it very clear that the park’s trails are one of its most important features,” stated Superintendent Mike Caldwell. “The trails network serves visitors in many ways, whether they are exploring the history of the park, exercising or simply relaxing.”

Through a combination of direct funding and volunteer labor, the park will invest \$235,000 into the 30-mile system of trails in 2007. The funding comprises \$120,000 in federal funds, \$50,000 in donations from several organizations including the Friends of Valley Forge Park, the Encampment Store, Unilever Corporation’s Healthy Parks / Healthy Living initiative, Valley Forge Convention and Visitors Bureau, O’Neill Properties, and participants of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Revolutionary Run, plus an estimated \$65,000 in volunteer hours which are provided by park volunteers and partner groups such as the Appalachian Mountain Club and the National Sierra Club. A significant portion of the funding will be targeted to the restoration and rehabilitation of some of the park’s most heavily used trails– Mount Joy Trail, Horse Shoe Trail, Chapel Trail, River Trail, and the Joseph Plumb Martin Trail. \$20,000 of the federal funding will be used to hire a Public Lands crew of eight people. The crew will work with park employees to restore the River Trail on the north side of the park and to develop a **new hiking trail** that will lead visitors from the huts at the Muhlenberg Brigade out to the Grand Parade and eventually meet up with the Joseph Plumb Martin Trail. These funds represent the first year of a three-year federal grant won by the park.

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The park also will participate in a new Trails Ambassador program being developed by the Schuylkill River National Heritage Area for the Schuylkill River Trail, in which the park will recruit volunteers who will walk the trail to provide information to visitors and promote safe use. College students participating in a new park Natural Resources / Law Enforcement intern program will study and document the use and impact of unauthorized personal trails throughout the park.

The contributions of volunteers are the foundation of improvements to the trail system. “All the trail work planned for this summer and fall would not be possible without the dedication and devotion of the volunteers,” stated Superintendent Mike Caldwell. Volunteers provide over 3,500 hours annually toward the maintenance and upkeep of our trails.” The park will sign an agreement on June 2<sup>nd</sup> with the Appalachian Mountain Club to further solidify that important partnership and the joint commitment to preservation of the trail system at the park.

#### **About Valley Forge National Historical Park**

Valley Forge National Historical Park educates present and future generations of Americans about one of the most defining events in our nation's history by preserving the natural and cultural resources that commemorate the encampment of the Continental Army at Valley Forge in 1777-78. To learn more visit [www.nps.gov/vafo](http://www.nps.gov/vafo).

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