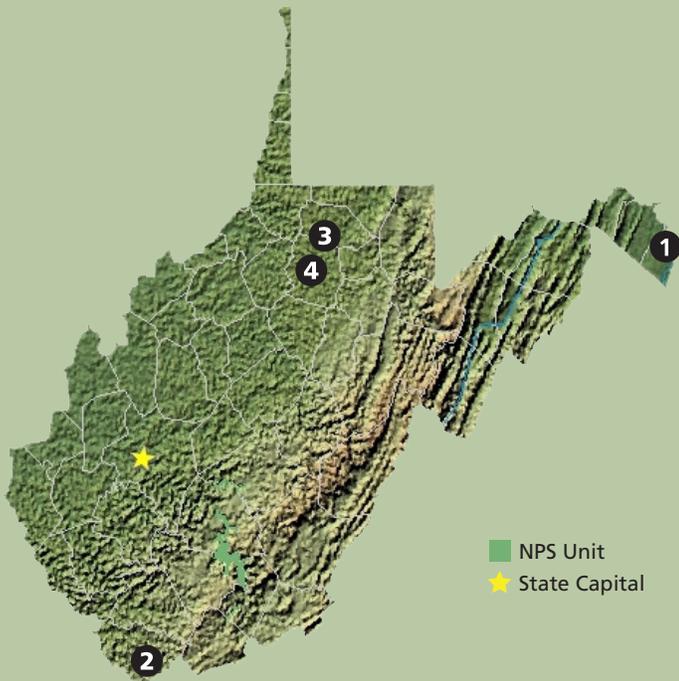




West Virginia News

A group of over 25 paddlers on the Cheat River pass through the Seven Islands area, June, 2014. Photo: © Kent Mason

PROJECTS AND PARTNERS 2015



CURRENT PROJECTS

1. Harpers Ferry Area River Access
American Whitewater
2. North Welch Indian Ridge Recreational Trails
City of Welch
3. Power of 32+ Regional Trails Network
Pennsylvania Environmental Council
4. West Fork River Water Trail
Guardians of the West Fork

Find out more about each project starting on page 2.

Recent Successes

Cheat River Water Trail: A Happening!

Since the Upper Cheat River Water Trail officially opened on National Trails Day in 2013, it has been A Happening! Friends of the Cheat and the Water Trail Committee coordinated a “Meet the Cheat” event on National Trails Day in June of 2014, with over 50 paddlers enjoying the river together. Base camp was at Blackwater Outdoor Adventures property in St. George and food, drinks, music, door prizes, gear, and fun were had by all.

Back at the office, another Happening was underway. The 50-page Cheat River Water Trail River Access Management Plan (RAMP) has been completed. The plan documents all nine existing and eight proposed access sites with development recommendations and suggestions for sustainability and community involvement. This effort was coordinated by the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program and a RAMP subcommittee and included group site visits to assess the major access sites and a paddle trip to see the shore from the river.

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ABOUT US

The Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program is the community assistance arm of the National Park Service. Program staff provide technical assistance to community groups and local, state, and federal government agencies working to protect natural areas and water resources and enhance close-to-home outdoor recreation opportunities. We help communities plan, organize partnerships, and achieve on-the-ground success on projects they initiate.



Over 45 people attend the first PA/WV/OH Corridor Working Group meeting, held in Clarksburg WV. Photo: NPS/Peggy Pings

Current Projects

1. Harpers Ferry Area River Access

Project Partner: American Whitewater
 NPS Contact: Anne O'Neill
 Location: Harpers Ferry
 Congressional Districts: WV - 2, MD - 6

Project Goal

Strategically select and develop safe, high-quality, public river access to the Shenandoah and Potomac Rivers in the vicinity of Harpers Ferry. Create a river access plan with consultation from all stakeholders, an inventory and assessment of river access options, and recommendations for the development of river access areas.

NPS Role

Convene stakeholders, identify roles and responsibilities, and facilitate the process of engaging and retaining the interest of key stakeholders.

2. Indian Ridge Recreational Trails

Project Partner: City of Welch
 NPS Contact: Peggy Pings
 Location: Welch
 Congressional District: WV - 3

Project Goal

Develop 12 miles of recreational trails on 6,000 acres of publicly-owned mountainous land in McDowell County.

NPS Role

Assist with identifying and engaging stakeholders, building public support, and developing a trail plan.

3. Power of 32+ Regional Trails Network

Project Partner: Pennsylvania Environmental Council
 NPS Contact: Peggy Pings
 Location: Southwestern PA, north central WV, eastern OH
 Congressional District: PA - 9, WV - 1, OH - 6

Project Goal

Develop 800 miles of trails to complete a 1,600-mile connected shared-use trail system in 53 counties and 5 states.

NPS Role

Participate as regional core team member and assist with the organizational development of the "PA/WV/OH corridor working group" to fill on-the-ground gaps.

Current Projects cont.

4. West Fork River Water Trail

Project Partner: Guardians of the West Fork
NPS Contact: Peggy Pings
Location: Weston to Fairmont WV
Congressional District: WV - 1, WV - 2

Project Goal

Develop and promote the 75-mile West Fork River Water Trail from Weston to Fairmont.

NPS Role

Assist Water Trail Committee with West Virginia designation process, public involvement, map/guide preparation, and location of funding.



West Fork River Water Trail Committee at their first work planning meeting at the Lost Creek Library. Photo: NPS/Peggy Pings

“The vision and flexibility of NPS staff proved invaluable in the development of West Virginia’s newest rail-trail, the Meadow River Rail-Trail.”

- Bill Robinson, State Trails Coordinator, West Virginia Division of Highways



A young paddler on the Cheat River is part of a day trip with Friends of the Cheat and West Virginia Land Trust, June, 2014. Photo: © Kent Mason

We're Here For You.

Could your project benefit from NPS Staff Assistance? Contact us to find out.



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2014 Nationwide Partnership Success

3,278.74 Miles of Trail Developed

2,046.25 Miles of River Conserved

9,411.06 Acres of Open Space and Parkland Protected

Find more information online at
www.nps.gov/rtca



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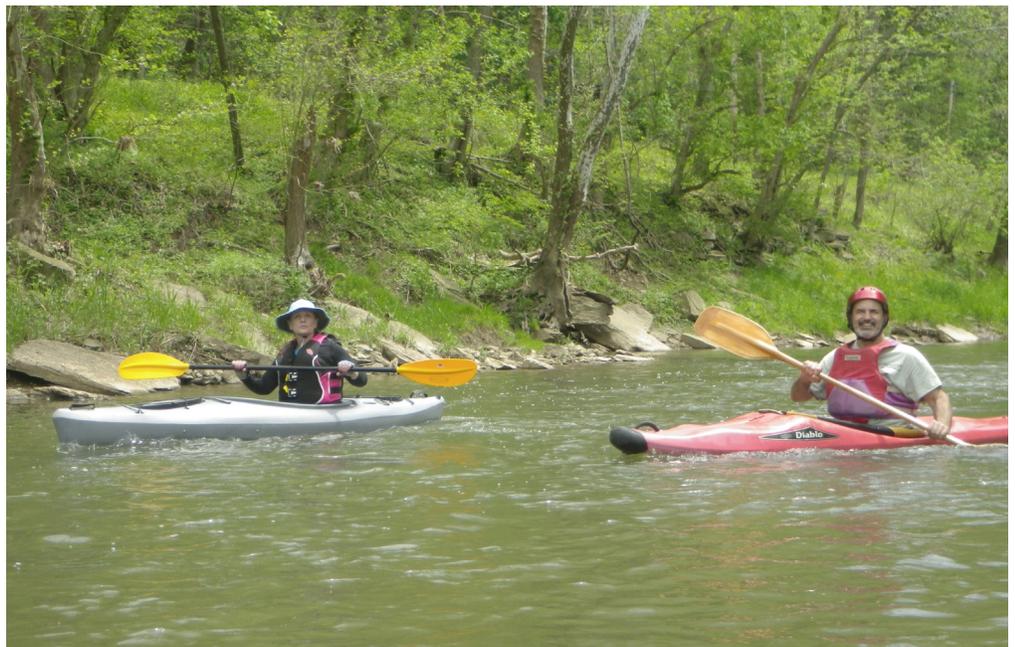
Recent Successes cont.

Efforts are underway to improve the access sites, and engage additional user groups. A \$25,000 Recreational Trails grant was received to improve the mobility accessibility of a launch site. A new website is being developed, but till then, visit CheatRiverWaterTrail.org.

Finally, 3,836 acres of the downstream Cheat Canyon were acquired by The Conservation Fund and The Nature Conservancy for preservation and public use after 20 years and a few unsuccessful attempts. Now this 7-mile whitewater stretch of the Cheat River will be managed by West Virginia Division of Natural Resources. Over \$7,000,000 was raised for this purchase. A celebration was held September 12, 2014 to dedicate the canyon to the people of West Virginia. It is clear the community loves the Cheat River!

“The NPS has helped bring together key players in trail development to create a 5 state vision for rail-trail connections and linkages. Their knowledge of successful models and co-facilitating vision and mapping workshops has been a great asset to this multi-state, multi-agency collaboration for long-distance trails.”

- Ella Belling, Executive Director, Monongahela River Trails Conservancy.



Two kayakers enjoy Dunkard Creek on Mother's Day, 2014. Photo: NPS/Peggy Pings