

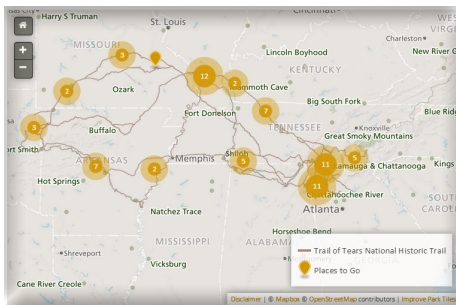


# Trail of Tears National Historic Trail

## Project Updates - Protection, Development, and Promotion

### GIS Update

National Trails Intermountain Region (NTIR) recently finalized and launched a series of interactive maps highlighting places along the trail for the public to visit. The maps are featured on Places to Go and Passport Stamp web pages. Each state page on Places to Go also has a map. These custom maps have been designed so that Trail of Tears partners can reuse the maps on their websites. Funded through NPS Connect Trails to Parks program. For questions on the use of the maps, please contact: [ntir\\_rim\\_team@nps.gov](mailto:ntir_rim_team@nps.gov)



[www.nps.gov/trte/playyourvisit/placestogo.htm](http://www.nps.gov/trte/playyourvisit/placestogo.htm)

### Exhibits

Island Town

**Persistence in Chaos**

By 1819, America's thirst for land had forced the Cherokee from their homelands, until only 10 percent remained of their original territory. Amidst this chaos, the Cherokee need for continuity propelled them to keep their communities together. Forced to relocate several times, neighbors, families, tribal elders, and the town council remained a unit as they moved from state to state.

The history of Island Town begins with Kituwah refugees. When General James Grant destroyed the mother town of Kituwah near Cherokee, North Carolina in July 1761, survivors sought refuge in Big Island Town 47 miles to the west in Monroe County, Tennessee. During the American Revolution, the people advanced to newly formed Island Town in

northwest Georgia, 94 miles southwest of the original settlement.

At last, in 1838 the US Army forced every Cherokee they could find to round-up camps. All Cherokee would soon be ferried or marched along the Trail of Tears to Indian Territory. Even so, the original Kituwah citizens stayed together in detachments and resettled as town communities.

Sometime in 1838... word was brought that a white man had taken possession of his (Cricket Sockiller's) house. I went with him to the house and found said Walker Thornton with his family and furniture in the house, and part of Cricket Sockiller's things moved out into the Entry. We had a long talk with him but failed to get him to give up the house.

-Savans to and subscribed before David M. Foreman on March 5, 1842 by Six Killer

Rasmusen Cherokee by Cherokee National Museum

**Forced to Move**

Federal Indian removal policy aroused fierce and bitter debate. Supporters of the policy claimed it was a benevolent action to save the tribes out of the Mississippi River from being overwhelmed and lost in an expanding American population. Opponents decried its inhumanity and the tragic consequences it had for the Indian peoples. One thing was certain: removal freed millions of acres of desired Indian lands for use by white settlers.

The Indian Removal Act of 1830 resulted in the removal of thousands of American Indians from their ancestral lands for new homes in Indian Territory (present-day Oklahoma). They traveled by existing roads and rivers. Many groups left in the fall, hoping to avoid the disease and heat of summer travel, and instead faced treacherous winter weather. Many died during the ordeal of the Trail of Tears.

In the 1830s, the federal government forcibly removed approximately 16,000 Cherokee, 21,000 Muscogee Creek, 9,000 Choctaw, 6,000 Chickasaw, and 4,000 Seminole from their ancestral homes in the southeastern United States.

**New Nations**

Despite the hardships of the journey, members of the five removed tribes established new lives in the West. They stand as successful sovereign nations, proudly preserving cultural traditions, while adapting to the challenges of the 21st century.

Cherokee who survived the Trail of Tears created a new sovereign nation in present-day Oklahoma. Some Cherokee remained in North Carolina and, due to a special exemption, formed the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians.

**Trail of Tears National Historic Trail**

You can visit sites along the Trail of Tears National Historic Trail. By helping to preserve historic sites and trail segments, and developing areas for public use, the story of the forced removal of the Cherokee people and other American Indian tribes is remembered and told by the National Park Service and its partners.

Learn more at [www.nps.gov/trte](http://www.nps.gov/trte)

- Waysides covering the Georgia historic towns of Dirt Town, Island Town (see above), and Chattooga Town have been designed and passed onto the Georgia chapter for fabrication.
- New waysides are being developed in Missouri for three sites. Their stories include (1) how geography impacted route choices at Belmont (on the Mississippi River), (2) how detachments acquired supplies along the route at Bollinger Mill, and (3) a description of the scene of removal in Jackson.

## Cultural Resource Update: Historic Building Survey and Assessment

The Center for Historic Preservation, Middle Tennessee State University, continues to collaborate with NTIR and various Trail of Tears chapters to compile information on historic buildings and structures that date to the trail's period of significance. Most recently, Center Director Dr. Carroll Van West and Trail

of Tears Project Historian Amy Kostine have been (1) preparing documentation of the extensive inventory in Georgia, (2) writing preservation booklets for owners of historic masonry and log buildings, and (3) revising the Trail of Tears National Register Multiple Property Documentation Form. Plans for fiscal year 2015

include (1) finalizing the historic building inventory, (2) revisiting preservation priorities drafted by the various chapters during the preservation workshops held in Cleveland, Tennessee and Fayetteville, Arkansas in 2013, and (3) planning for two more preservation workshops to be tentatively held in 2016.

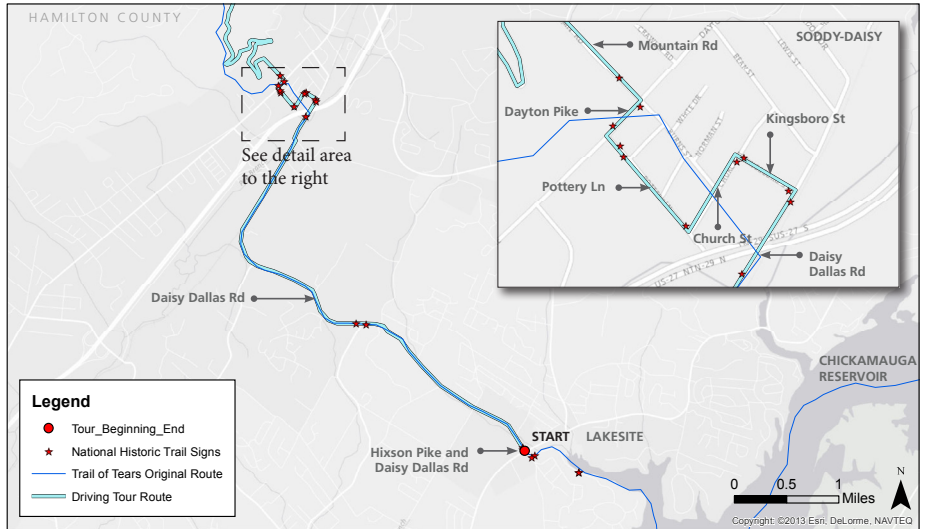
## Design & Development Projects

### Trail of Tears

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
Trail of Tears National Historic Trail  
Hamilton County, Tennessee



#### Driving Tour: Retracing the Trail of Tears through Hamilton County, Tennessee



- Chattanooga, Tennessee: A sign unveiling event was held on March 12, dedicating 92 newly installed signs in Hamilton County, Tennessee, along the Taylor Route.
- Ozark Greenways, Missouri: Eighteen original route pedestrian signs were installed/ along a newly developed one-mile section of retracement trail in Greene County, Missouri.
- Shawnee National Forest, Illinois: The Hamburg Hill retracement trail, trailhead, and development concept plan has been funded through NPS Connect Trails to Parks program for approximately \$99,000. The project is set to begin this spring.
- Charleston and Calhoun, Tennessee: A sign plan marking the original route of the trail and entry points into Historic Fort Cass is in progress.
- Charleston, Tennessee: A \$200,000 grant was received to move forward with development of a section of the Charleston/Fort Cass Development Concept Plan titled "Voices of the Past." The project includes a new trail that will feature historic images and quotes, a community parking lot, and a trailhead.
- Cherokee County, Alabama: A sign plan is in progress for 10 original route signs across 10 miles.
- Old Federal Road, Georgia: A sign plan is underway, which will include installation of 14 original route signs across eight miles.
- Fort Armistead, Tennessee: A design charette is tentatively scheduled for this summer.

## Staff News

Several staff members have recently moved on or retired from NTIR. Tribal Liaison Otis Halfmoon retired in October. After 37 years with the NPS, Chief of Trail Operations Sharon Brown retired in January. Historian Susan Boyle retired in February. All three were well known to TOTA and will be missed. On the other hand, expect to see some new faces in NTIR in the coming year! New Chief of Interpretation Carole Wendler joins our staff in March.

## New Certification

- Cherokee Garden at Green Meadows, Powder Springs, Georgia (2/23/15)

## Plan Your Visit

Every park/trail website under nps.gov is being revamped for the 2016 centennial. Revisit the Trail of Tears' Plan Your Visit page plus check out the navigation underneath. It's all spruced up. Go to: <http://www.nps.gov/trte/planyourvisit/index.htm>

To date, 210 known/possible structures have been added to the Historic Buildings Survey.

### National Trails Intermountain Region

The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

#### Comments? Write to:

Lynne Mager  
Interpretive Specialist  
National Trails Intermountain Region  
P.O. Box 728  
Santa Fe, NM 87504  
[Lynne\\_Mager@nps.gov](mailto:Lynne_Mager@nps.gov)

