Guide Book to the D & H Rail-Trail
Getting to the D&H Rail-Trail

From points south of Scranton:
Interstate 81N, Exit 187 (Route 84/380/6) to US Route 6 Carbondale (Lackawanna Valley Industrial Highway). Take the LVIH to Exit 7 (a left) to Business Route 6, Carbondale. Go down hill about 2 miles to Route 171. Take right on Route 171. Follow to Simpson or Forest City Trailhead (see below)

From points north of Scranton:
Interstate 81S, take Business Route 6, Exit 191A (Viewmont Mall). Follow Route 6 north into Carbondale. Turn left onto Rte 171 into Simpson. For Simpson Trailhead, turn right just before bridge on Reservoir St, then an immediate left, see army tank and trailhead sign ahead.

To Forest City Trailhead:
Follow above directions to Simpson, continue on Route 171 north to Forest City. Turn right past Kost Tire on to Route 247. Go about 1/3 mile to first right—Forest City Industrial Park Road. Trailhead on right.

To improved northern sections of trail from I-81 and Binghamton area:
Interstate 81, Lenoxville Exit 206, follow signs to Elk Mountain on Route 374. Past Elk, turn left at "T", then right at 4-way Stop. Go about 2 miles; trail crosses Route 374. Park along side of trail to south.

To unimproved northernmost trail sections and Starrucca Viaduct:
Great Bend, exit to Route 171 towards Susquehanna and Lanesboro, continue straight when Route 171 turns right to Thompson. Go through Lanesboro, at Y in road turn left. Take 2nd right to Luciana Park, under the viaduct.

Important Trail Information:
The Delaware & Hudson (D&H) Rail-Trail, is a 38-mile multi-recreational public trail under development. Ten miles have been improved and resurfaced from Vandling to Herrick Center. The next ten miles from Herrick Center to Thompson is scheduled for improvements as funds become available.

- No ATVs or dirt bikes are allowed on the trail. Snowmobiles require a trail pass, see www.nepsnotrails.snowclubs.com
- A mountain bike is suggested for unimproved sections of trail, while a hybrid is suitable for resurfaced sections.
- The trail is open dawn to dusk, closed at sunset. Advance written permission is required to be on or along the trail after dark.
- The trail is approximately 80 feet wide: please stay on the trail respecting adjoining private property.
- Please carry out any trash.
- There are port-a-lavs at the Forest City and Union Dale trailheads from May through November.
- For a detailed list of equestrian trail use concerns, call the office.
The Rail-Trail Council of NEPA is a non-profit, 1700 member organization begun in 1991 for the purpose of renewing NEPA’S historic pathways for all to enjoy.

The RTC has secured federal and state grants to acquire, design, and construct the D&H Rail-Trail. All grants must be matched by cash (20 to 50%) and/or donated services and materials. The RTC is attempting to secure more grant funds for trail side parks, additional trails, and necessary trail improvements.

Membership dollars and donations will help the RTC to maximize the potential of these old railroad beds into scenic historic trails!!

Please consider joining the RTC. Come to our monthly public meeting at area restaurants.

Call the office with any questions at 570-679-9300 or email us at trails@nep.net

**Membership Form**

YES!! I want to help!

Name ________________________________________

Address ..............................................................

City ___________________________ State_______

Phone ___________________________  

E-Mail ___________________________

$500-Lifetime  $250-Patron/Sponsor  $100 Club/Organization  
$35 Family  $20 Individual  $15 Student/Senior

Mail to:  Rail-Trail Council of Northeast PA  
PO Box 32  
Union Dale, PA 18470

Contributions are tax deductible. We are a 501 (c)(3) non-profit organization registered with the PA Bureau of Charitable Organizations.
Segment #1
Simpson to South Forest City
3.5 miles

General Trail Condition:
Rough but graded along D&H (2 miles). Smooth new stone dust trail surface on D&H (1.5 miles). O&W is rough but graded.

Access & Parking:
O&W (east side of river): Simpson Trailhead is just off Rte 171 (south of Simpson Viaduct), turn on to Reservoir Street, then immediate left onto Homestead Street. See army tank. Park along left side of Homestead Street. See large trailhead sign. Please do not park in front of gate.

D&H (west side of river): Park along Homestead Street go south, on Main (SR171) to Morse Ave (right turn over bridge). Turn right on to D&H trail.

Trail information:
The O&W (New York, Ontario & Western) is used for 2 miles along the east side of the Lackawanna River. There are tall green mile post markers at Mile 1 & 2. Just past Mile 2 on the left is the “crossover” to the improved D&H marked with a sign. Caution: it is a rocky path. The D&H improved trail begins at this point and heads north. The D&H to the south is now open but not improved except for 3 new bridge decks.

Linkages:
You can continue along the O&W Trail north of the “crossover”. The trail is rough and not graded, but suitable for mountain biking. The trail goes into Browndale, crosses Route 247 and continues to a “yellow gate” where it comes out on SR 171. There is one unimproved railroad bridge to cross (not suitable for equestrian crossing - see ‘loop’ in next section).

Points of Interest:
There is a historical interpretive sign at the trailhead with railroad, mining and Fell Township history.

The trail runs along the scenic Lackawanna River, lined with native rhododendron. The Lackawanna River is stocked with trout; popular spots are at the concrete bridge crossing the river. This section of trail is open for vehicle access from the opening day of trout season to the Friday evening before Memorial Day.

Just north of Milepost 1 along the O&W, Panther’s Creek crosses under the trail. The mountain to the east is part of the Wildlands Conservancy’s 1500 acre property and the state’s first Native Plant Sanctuary. On the Mountain are remnants of the D&H Gravity Railroad and Shepard’s Crook, a tourist attraction via open air railcars in the late 1800’s. The Council typically has a guided hike here in the Spring.
Segment #2
Forest City South to River Bridge
3.0 miles

General Trail Condition:
Good, smooth & wide, stone dust surface.

Access & Parking:
The Forest City Trailhead is located off of Route 247 between FC and Browndale. Turn on to the Greater Forest City Area Industries Commerce Boulevard; trailhead sign marks entrance to parking. A port-a-lav is on site from May through November.

Park along Erie St, down off Railroad St, 2 blocks east of Main St. Forest City. This is an access point and a good place to get off the trail and head to Forest City merchants via side streets.

Babe Ruth Park (north end of Railroad St.) links to D&H and has limited parking.

The Pennsylvania American Water Company (PAW) Road crosses the trail on the north end of Forest City.

Linkages:
A 9 mile loop is possible suitable for mountain bikes (rough in places)—start on O&W in Simpson, crossover to D&H at Mile 2, continue to FC Trailhead. Exit out Commerce Blvd. to Rte 247, turn right (east), go along Rte 247 approx. 200 yards to O&W (see yellow gate to north), turn right (south), take back to Simpson. There is one unimproved RR bridge to walk over.

You can crossover from D&H to O&W at Rte 171 underpass – see Segment 3 for details.

Points of Interest:
This is the most urban section of the trail; you can easily access the Main St. downtown area of Forest City (Use Erie St). Here you can find a grocery, restaurants, drug store, gas station, hardware store, banks, ATM etc.

A Tree Trail can be found along this section from the trailhead north for ½ mile. Approximately 60 trees are labeled along with numbered ‘mystery’ trees to be identified. A map of the Tree Trail is available on our website or by calling the office. Educational tours can be arranged, for all ages groups.

The Lackawanna River is visible along the trail from the PAW Road north; it is also stocked with trout along this section.

Stillwater Cliffs, tower above this area, which is at the Lackawanna River Gap between the West and Moosic Mountain ranges. The Council typically has a hike here in the Summer, during FC Old Home Week.
Lackawanna River Bridge #1 to Union Dale
3.0 miles

General Trail Condition:
Good, smooth and wide, stone dust surface.

Access & Parking:
Access this segment from Union Dale or Forest City Trailhead.
Access the D&H or O&W at Route 171 overpass at “yellow gate”, but there is limited parking (do not park in front of gate).
Access O&W across from Stillwater Dam, Rte 171. Stillwater Dam has an overlook and parking area.

Linkages:
Just past the first railroad bridge crossing the Lackawanna River and before the Rte 171 underpass is a path on the right that leads up to the O&W Trail (yellow gate). You can access SR171 here, get on the O&W and head north or south. (12 mile loop trip possible from Simpson O&W, to D&H at ‘crossover’, north on D&H, to O&W at Rte 171 underpass and back to Simpson via O&W).

O&W South – rough in places, but suitable for a mountain bike. Leads to Browndale, crosses Rte 247 (turn right to get back to FC Trailhead). Continue south to go back to Simpson. You’ll cross one unimproved RR bridge; dismount bikes.

O&W North runs along Rte 171 for ½ mile then the railbed continues –see snowmobile signs. The railbed was taken in part to build part of this road. Use caution on Rte 171.

You can also link from the D&H to the O&W in Herrick Center (see loop in Segment 4)

Points of Interest:
The upper reaches of the Lackawanna River can be seen. The US Geological Survey maintains a river level gage just north of the bridge crossing.

Old Stillwater Dam remnants can be seen.

Great views of Stillwater Lake, Stillwater Dam and Reservoir. Good lookouts for waterfowl. The PA Fish Commission has a boat access to Stillwater Lake off of Route 171.

Stillwater Dam was built by the Army Corp of Engineers in 1960 as a flood control dam for the Lackawanna River valley.

The O&W North to Poyntelle is open for ATV use with a trail pass. Northern Wayne Outdoor Recreation Club (PO Box 290, Lakewood, PA 18439 570-727-2097 www.nworc.org)
Segment #4
Union Dale to Burnwood
5.0 miles

General Trail Condition:
Good, smooth and wide, stone dust surface to Herrick at Route 374. Unimproved trail north (graded, with original surface)

Access & Parking:
Park behind Cables Store in Union Dale.
Park along the trail sides in Herrick – north or south of Route 374. Do not park in front of gate.

Linkages:
18 mile loop (Simpson to Union Dale & back): turn off D&H along Skyline Drive (first paved road crossing from FC), cross Route 171 to Church Street. Continue past ball field (turns into East Mountain Road) uphill to O&W crossing. Turn right onto O&W (headed south). Take O&W all the way back to Simpson. Note the O&W is rough in places, suitable for a mountain bike. The O&W disappears below Stillwater for ½ mile (use Rte 171) back to “yellow gate”.

At Herrick Center go up Route 374 West taking side road to right. This will link to SR 2023 – Quigley Road (dirt) and takes you back to Union Dale past State Gamelands.

24 mile loop (Simpson to Herrick Center & back): Turn off trail (at end of improved trail) to east, go along SR374 towards Pleasant Mount. Route changes to SR371 (Wayne County) when you cross SR 171. Go uphill to old Agway (on left), turn right and head south back to Simpson.

Points of Interest:
Cables’ Store is now the Rail-Trail office—stop in to pick up a brochure or to say hello. Cables Deli now open for sandwiches, drinks, homemade bakegoods and staples.

Cables’s building was erected in 1898-9 to store wool for the Spanish-American War, the war ended before it was completed and was converted to a meat market and hardwood store. The post office was originally next to Cables, foundation still visible.

There is a picnic table and historical interpretive sign at the Union Dale Trailhead. Great place for a rest or to eat lunch along the ravine and waterfalls behind Cables Store.

The railroad track visible was a spur to the mill along the stream; Entrot’s Mill was a 3 story building which burned down in 1958.

Port-a-lav at Union Dale Trailhead available May through November.

Note that the D&H Rail-Trail parallels Pa Bike Route “L” (road bike touring)
Segment #5
Burnwood to Thompson
7.5 Miles

General Trail Condition:
Original railbed surface, graded. Fair, some minor wash-outs, but passable with a mountain bike. Ararat Road crossing is a short steep up & down—walk bikes here. Thompson ramp has been improved.

Access & Parking:
Park along sides of railbed in Burnwood (SR 2046 - Fiddle Lake Rd).
Park along trail in Thompson - north or south of SR 171 (near Jefferson Inn or Rooney's Ice Cream).
There are numerous dirt road crossings (township roads) that can be used as access points to the trail.

Linkages:
At SR 2046—Fiddle Lake Road (paved road with ‘dogleg’ turn), turn right (east) and go about 2 miles to SR 171. Use for return trip south on paved road to Union Dale, Forest City or Simpson (PA Bike Route “L”). OR Turn north on SR 171 to access Arlo’s –grocery, ice cream, deli.
At Fiddle Lake Road, turn left (west), at first dirt road turn left on Creek Road for a return trip to Herrick Center.
At Perry Road (last road crossing before Thompson Bridge & Curve, access Ridge Road for return trip & great panoramic views. Ridge Road goes past Fiddle Lake on the west, ends on SR374 (4-way stop), west of Herrick.

Points of Interest:
Burnwood was named for the large quantity of wood that was burned in the acid factory here that produced charcoal, acetate of lime and wood alcohol.

The trail parallels the West Branch of the Lackawanna River, where there is a large swamp and wetlands to the east of the trail.

Numerous lakes, ponds and swamps are visible from the trail. State Game lands nearby.

Ararat Summit is the highest elevation on the trail: trail grade does downhill to Thompson and downhill to Forest City. Ararat Road used to cross the railroad via bridge. It was dropped onto the railroad and used as fill when railroad operations ceased. *Caution, walk bikes. The Ararat Wye was used to turn engines around.

A sectional toolhouse (concrete building) can be seen just north of Ararat ramp (see next section).

The Thompson Curve is a mile-long horseshoe curve of the railbed designed to keep the grade level into Thompson. The fill used was coal refuse which was mined out at the close of the railroad. Much work has been done over the years to keep this section passable.
Segment #6
Thompson to Starrucca North
5.0 miles

General Trail Condition:
Fair, gravel in many places for rough rides. There is a ra-
vine where a long bridge span has been removed.

Access & Parking:
Park on railroad sides in Thompson, at the Jefferson Inn or
at Rooney’s ice cream.

Park along railbed sides north side of Little Ireland Rd (SR
1004) just uphill (west) from Starrucca.

Linkages:
Return to Thompson along SR 1005. Turn off trail to right
(east), go down Little Ireland Road to Starrucca. Turn right
along SR 1005 (PA Bike Route L)

Go up Little Ireland Rd (hill-west on SR 1004) to Florence
Shelly Nature Preserve. This road links to Rte 171 (left)
goes back to Thompson.

Points of Interest:
Thompson has an ice cream store right on the trail (in the
only remaining railroad station).

The Thompson sectional toolhouse (‘paddy shack’) is
seen just before Thompson. These concrete buildings
were used to store tools and the railcart for railroad main-
tenance. The larger one at Thompson also had a coal
stove for the workers. Others can be seen north of Ararat
and in Starrucca.

Behind the Thompson sectional toolhouse, is an old his-
toric mill in excellent condition. The railroad had a siding
here to pick up and drop off grains.

Note the original railroad mile markers A158, A157 which
indicate miles to Albany.

The bridge span has been removed at mile 26 (see old
piers). Make way carefully downhill to right (dismount
bikes) to small bridge to cross stream; turn left along dirt
road (Bucks Falls Rd) to trail leading up other side.

Bucks Falls is located just below stream crossing in ravine
(site of former mill).

Great views of the quaint village of Starrucca below as trail
hugs side hill. Starrucca has a post office (no stores) and a
working organic farm (June 2011).

Go to overlook at Florence Shelly Nature Preserve to view
waterfowl—turn uphill (west) Little Ireland Road.
Segment #7
Starrucca to Steven’s Point
5.0 Miles

General Trail Condition:
Fair, some gravel with occasional washouts

Access & Parking:
Park at Starrucca Trailhead (north side of Little Ireland Road)
Park on railbed in Steven’s Point where railbed crosses road at acute angle. (SR 1009-PA Bike Route L).

Linkages:
Return via SR 1009 or SR 1011 to Township road T765.
The only road crossing is Melrose Road, a dirt township road which connects to SR 1009.

Points of Interest:
A sectional toolhouse (‘paddy shack’) has been cleaned up and painted here. The trailhead area is the site of the former rail station and water tower (foundation still visible on east side of trail)

There is a depressed, eroded area in the trail that requires caution.

At Melrose Road, you can turn downhill (east) to access SR 1009, passing Melrose Falls.

Trail hugs mountain side, allowing views to the east of Starrucca Creek and rolling hills.

Note old concrete railroad mileage posts.

At Stevens Point, the trail appears to end. It actually continues across SR 1009 at an acute angle. Stay on SR 1009 to cross Starrucca Creek (railroad bridge removed); pick up trail again, just past SR bridge.

Mileage markers approximate.
Segment #8  
Stevens Point to NY State Border  
6.0 miles

**General Trail Condition:**
Fair, some gravel areas with occasional washouts. The bridge at Lanesboro is not improved (walk bikes over).

**Access & Parking:**
Park along trail on SR 1009 Stevens Point (large rocks on trail).

Park in Brandt along side of trail where it crosses SR 1009.

Park in Luciana Park, off Main Street in Lanesboro ‘under’ the Starrucca Viaduct, the historic “bridge of stone”. The park has ample parking, picnic tables, outhouses & old BBQ grills.

Access trail at Riverside Drive, just north of Cascade Creek Bridge, near NY State border.

**Linkages:**
Return via SR 1009 (PA Bike Route L) to Stevens Point from Lanesboro.

Return along Damascus Road to Lanesboro.

Access goods & services in Susquehanna Depot: Follow Main Street west in Lanesboro to Susquehanna - caution road is narrow. Main Street intersects with SR 171 at Viaduct Inn. Take SR 171 North to Susquehanna or return to Thompson on SR 171 South.

**Points of Interest:**
Brandt was once the site of a chair factory and two brickyards; it had the northernmost railroad station on the D&H.

The Starrucca Creek has changed course and caused much damage to the railbed over the past few years. A turntable was unearthed with flood waters, near Jefferson Junction (a large railyard connecting to the Erie mainline). You can see part of it in the stream and part on the bank (large circular stones).

At Jefferson Junction, there is an upper right-of-way that climbs the hillside for about 1 mile to the active railbed. Cross the active railbed and continue down Jefferson Street to Main Street Lanesboro.

The historic “Bridge of Stone”—the Starrucca Viaduct is a truly awesome sight. Seventeen perfect arches of bluestone spanning nearly ¼ mile and 100 feet above the valley floor. Built in 1848, it is the oldest railroad bridge still in operation in PA.

The northernmost 3 miles of the D&H parallels the mighty North Branch of the Susquehanna River. There is a primitive campsite for thru-paddlers at the Cascade Wye.

Barnes-Kasson Hospital is on Turnpike Street in Susquehanna.
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<th>Area</th>
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<tr>
<td>Best Western Pioneer Plaza, Carbondale</td>
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<td>536-6020</td>
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<td>Fern Hall Inn, Route 247 Crystal Lake, RD Carbondale</td>
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<td>Crystal Lake Hotel &amp; Restaurant, RD Carbondale</td>
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<td>Elegante Restaurant, 315 Main St. Forest City</td>
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<td>Railway Café, 438 Main St. Forest City</td>
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<td>All in a Basket, 519 Main St. Forest City</td>
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<td>Cables Deli (on the trail) Union Dale</td>
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<td>Stonebridge Inn &amp; Restaurant, off Route 374, Union Dale</td>
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<td>Candlelight Motel &amp; Restaurant, Rte 374, Herrick</td>
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<td>Chet’s Place, off Rte 374, Union Dale</td>
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<td>Elk Mountain Ski Resort, Route 374 East, Union Dale</td>
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<td>Herrick Lodge, Route 171, Herrick</td>
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<td>Fiddle Lake Farm B&amp;B, 4003 Fiddle Lake Road, Thompson</td>
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<td>The Jeffers Homestead, 1187 Jeffers Road, Kingsley</td>
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<td>Six Pack Shack, Rte 106, West Clifford</td>
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<td><strong>Waymart Area</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Gravity Inn, Waymart</td>
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<td>Waymart Hotel 205 Carbondale Road, Waymart</td>
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Need a Place to Stay or Eat???

All Area Code 570
Gibney's Restaurant, Route 6 Waymart                    488-6636
Valley View Campground, Route 296, Waymart       448-2268
Leaping Rabbit Farm B&B, off Route 296, Waymart 937-3389
Keen Lake Camping, Waymart                           488-6161
The Lodge at Keen Lake, Waymart                     488-9300

Ararat-Thompson-Starrucca Area
Arlo's Country Store & Lodging, Route 171, Ararat 727-2970
Hadnagy's Mountain Hideaway, Stack Road, Thompson 727-3441
The King’s Barn, Thompson                           727-3070
Green Meadows Farm, Brown Hill Road, Thompson      727-3496
Maple Hill Farm, Pleasant Valley Rd., Starrucca    798-2753

Susquehanna-Lanesboro Area
Viaduct Inn 93 Main St. Lanesboro                  853-3400
Main Street Café 1252 Main St. Susq.              853-4828
Depot Restaurant 1260 Main St. Susq.              853-4644
Town Restaurant 1328 Main St. Susq.               853-4291
Olivo’s Pizza 1338 Main St. Susq.                 853-3500
PJ O’Hare’s SR 171 Riverside Drive Susq.          853-3347
Orient Star Erie Blvd. Susq.                      853-2019
Jamie’s Place Erie Blvd Susq.                     853-4074
Lakey’s 317 Front St Susq.                        853-4142
Oakland Corner Pub 2 River Street, Oakland        853-5057
Skoloff Valley Farm 1944 Stevens Pt Rd.           727-3046

In the O&W Trail Area:
Cribbs Country B&B, Cribbs Road, Pleasant Mount  448-4109
Orson County Inn, Orson Four Corners, Rte 670     727-2097
Legend’s Restaurant on Lake Lorain, Rte 370, Poyntelle 448-2232
Poyntelle Inn, Route 370, Poyntelle               448-3090
Lakewood Lodge & Restaurant, Rte 370, Lakewood    798-2565
Villa Como Restaurant & Rooms, Lake Como          798-2761
Preston County Market, Route 370, Preston Park    798-2871
The Inn at Starlight Lake, off Route 370, Starlight 798-2350

Nearby:
Lynn-Lee House B&B, 143 Main Street, New Milford 465-3505

Area Information:
Endless Mountains Visitors Bureau
www.endlessmountains.org                             1-800-769-8999
Northeast PA Convention & Visitors Bureau
www.visitnepa.org                                      1-800-229-3526
PA Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
www.railtrails.org                                     1-717-238-1717
Lackawanna River Heritage Trail
www.lhva.org                                            1-570-963-6730
Elk Mountain Area Directory
www.elkmountainarea.com                                1-570-679-9679
Trail Etiquette

All users of trails
Show courtesy to other trail users at all times. Use the right side of the trail except when otherwise designated. Always pass on the left. Alert the person you are passing (“on your left”)

Bicyclists
Yield to pedestrians. Give audible warning when passing. Ride at a safe speed. Slow down and form a single file in congested conditions, reduced visibility, and other hazardous conditions.

Pedestrians
Stay to the right side of the trail except when otherwise designated. Watch for other trail users. Be especially alert when running. Listen for audible signals and allow faster trail users (runners and bicyclists) to pass safely.

Who yields the trail?
Before passing another trail user, be courteous and make your approach known well in advance. A friendly greeting, “Hello, passing on your left,” or ringing a bell is considerate and works well. All trail users (bicyclists, walkers or others) yield to equestrians. Stop and wait for the horse rider to indicate its okay to continue. Bicyclists yield to walkers. “Wheels Yield to Heels”

General
• Respect the rights of property owners; stay on trail, don’t create any new ones.
• Keep dogs on leash (maximum length 8 feet) and remove pet feces from trail.
• Leave no trace. Be sure to pack out at least as much as you can pack in.