New National Water Trails: Exemplary Places to Get Outside

Island Loop, Missouri River and Red Rock are newest National Water Trails

WASHINGTON – A water trail that flows above abandoned frontier towns, waters that Lewis and Clark traveled, and a popular water trail that follows an international border were added to the National Water Trails System today.

“These national water trails provide exemplary close-to-home places for people to explore and enjoy,” said National Park Service Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. “And I am particularly happy to have these trails added to the system. They are cooperatively supported and sustained through the efforts of community, state and federal partners.”

The three newest additions to the national system are:

- The Island Loop Route Water Trail in Michigan
- The Red Rock Water Trail in Iowa
- The Missouri National Recreation River Water Trail that flows through South Dakota, Nebraska and Iowa.

The newly designated national water trails join a system of 11 locally managed water trails throughout the country. The trails increase access to water-based outdoor recreation and contribute to the livability and economic vitality of local communities.

More about the new trails:

- The Island Loop Route, the most popular water trail in St. Clair County, Michigan, provides a unique recreational experience for residents and visitors of all abilities as they navigate the trail, which includes part of Lake Huron, a canal, and two rivers. Boaters and paddlers pass
Michigan’s oldest lighthouse, drift over rare sturgeon spawning habitat, and glide under the Blue Water Bridge that connects to Ontario, Canada.

- The Missouri National Recreation River Water Trail carries visitors through some of the last natural stretches of America’s longest river. Paddlers and boaters have the chance to explore more than 147 miles, including wild and scenic stretches of the Missouri River, and view scenery that Lewis and Clark recorded in their journals more than 200 years ago.
- The Red Rock Water Trail is a 36-mile loop on scenic Lake Red Rock. Boaters and paddlers of all skill levels can see magnificent sandstone bluffs, watch birds and other wildlife, explore the trail by moonlight, and discover stories about historic frontier towns below the river’s banks.

National Water Trails are designated by the Secretary of the Interior and are part of the National Trails System, administered by the National Park Service in partnership with a wide range of federal agencies. Designation of national water trails helps to strengthen local efforts for recreation, conservation and restoration of America’s waterways and surrounding lands.

National water trails are the pathways of rivers, lakes and bays, providing a connection for current and future generations to the nature, history and adventure that can be found on the water.

Explore the entire National Water Trails System online through a dynamic collection of videos, stories and pictures at www.nps.gov/watertrails. While you’re there, check out the online toolbox to learn more about best management practices from national water trails across the country.

www.nps.gov

About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America’s 401 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Visit us at www.nps.gov, on Facebook www.facebook.com/nationalparkservice, Twitter www.twitter.com/natlparkservice, and YouTube www.youtube.com/nationalparkservice.