

Trails Master Plan and Environmental Assessment

Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites



**JUNE 2012
UPDATE**

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites Trails Master Plan is to develop a plan for a comprehensive, well-designed, sustainable trail system that provides a variety of visitor experiences uniquely suited to the parks' resources. The plan will be used to guide trail development on lands in Hyde Park, New York, and it will address a range of outdoor experiences, including hiking, birding, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and orienteering. The planning process will engage trail users, partners, and surrounding land owners in how best to develop trail use and design guidelines that support interpretive programming, offer a range of touring and recreational choices, protect park resources, and encourage car-free access among sites. The plan will also identify opportunities for making the trails system more usable to those with mobility impairments, older visitors, and other potential user groups presently under-represented on the trails system, as well as how the trails system could better serve the local community.

At present, the vast majority of park visitors access the park sites by private vehicle. Many see several park sites in one visit. The primary access routes to the parks (US Route 9 and Route 9G) are heavily congested. Expanding multi-site touring opportunities via trails will reduce safety risks and traffic-related stress associated with driving to and from the park sites. Reducing auto traffic will minimize the travel-related carbon footprint and environmental effects. It will also enhance the visitor understanding of the relationship between the sites (the three Roosevelt sites were part of a single estate). The

plan will complement phased implementation of an Alternate Transportation System (ATS) by providing visitors with a range of new, healthy, car-free options for touring the Hyde Park area. For all of these reasons, development of the trails system was a management objective in the General Management Plan for the national historic sites, adopted in 2010.



PUBLIC MEETING

**Thursday,
June 28, 2012**

**The Henry A. Wallace Center
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

*Please Plan to Attend and
Provide Your Input*

...on the Draft Trails Master Plan
and Environmental Assessment.

WALLACE CENTER ADDRESS:
4097 Albany Post Road,
Hyde Park, NY 12538

**The Wallace Center is located
at the same site as the
Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential
Library and Museum and
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt
National Historic Site.**

Supporting General Management Plan (GMP) Goals

The Trails Master Plan will contribute to the realization of GMP goals, by helping visitors to be:

- Informed and oriented before they arrive,
- Comfortable, safe, and able to navigate clearly among the sites throughout their visit, and
- Left with an enhanced understanding of the parks' resources and stories, along with a better understanding of NPS preservation practices.

Overall Proposed Trail System

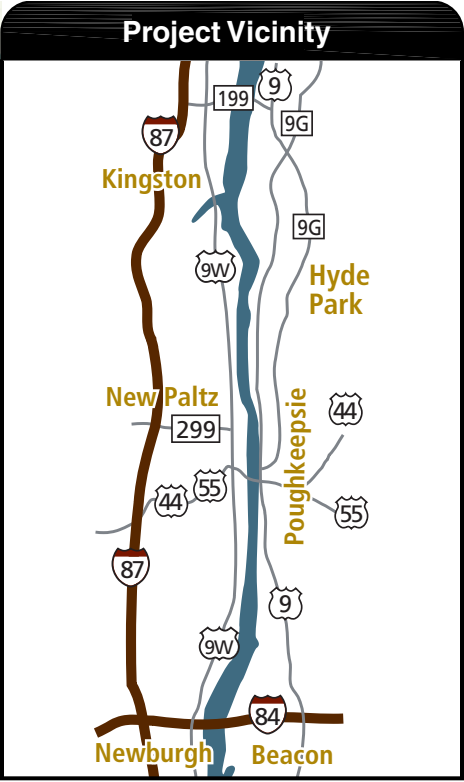
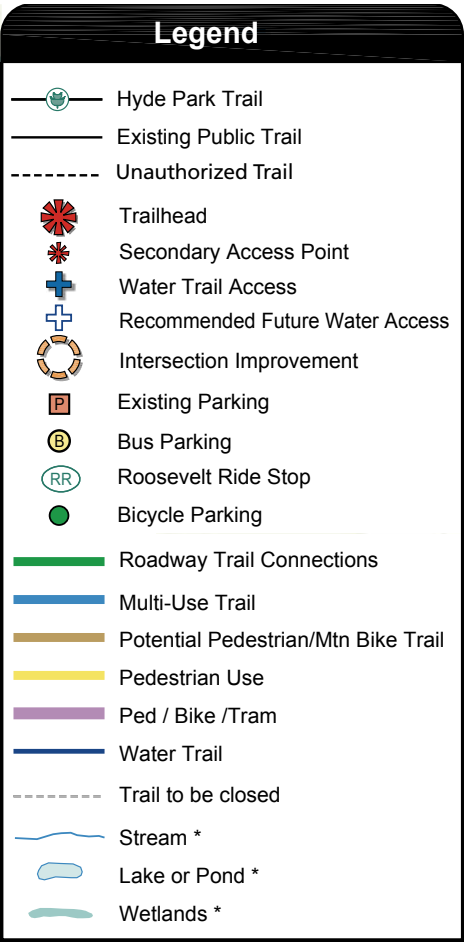


The Proposed Trails Master Plan (Preferred Alternative)

Under the preferred alternative (alternative B in the draft environmental assessment), the NPS would adopt the proposed Trails Master Plan as a comprehensive plan for how to best capitalize on and enhance the existing trail network, while also adding or formalizing new trails to improve access and connections within and between the sites. The overall proposed trail system illustrated on page 2 focuses on improved access, connectivity, and use management.

The Trails Master Plan proposes improvements by user type. Given the variation in existing conditions, along with the variety of trail user groups, the proposed plan addresses use management as well as physical improvements. Currently there are no multi-use paths within the sites or immediately nearby. Though the roadway network can be expected to address the connectivity needs, there are limited instances where a shared-use path may better address the needs of visitors travelling between the sites.

The plan focuses on the improvement of connectivity for the specific trail user groups. In some cases, the plan recommends separation of different user groups. In other cases, it suggests appropriate locations for shared use. Portions of the overall system require no change in existing conditions, while other aspects of the plan require physical and/or use management changes. The overall system demonstrates how the trail network can unify the three sites and facilitate connection to the Hyde Park area. The proposed master plan describes general improvements that affect the entire trail system, specific improvements within each site, and improvements suggested for areas outside NPS jurisdiction. The plan also describes potential interpretive opportunities, as well as trailhead improvements (see table, page 4). See the link to the plan in the “How to Comment” box on page 4 to access a full copy of the draft plan and environmental assessment.



No-action Alternative

Under the no-action alternative, the existing trail system would continue to be managed as it is currently, according to guidance provided in the park’s general management plan. Maintenance and improvements would take place as time and funding allows but would not be part of a formalized comprehensive trails plan.

Each of the three national historic sites is distinctly different; however, the trail system within each site is composed of a variety of trail surfaces and permitted user types. NPS guidelines allow biking on most, but not all park roads, as well as the recently rehabilitated farm route, Roosevelt Farm Lane. Pedestrian access is allowed on all authorized trails. Equestrian use is generally prohibited but may be granted by permit under very limited circumstances (horse-drawn wagons at park events are the only example where horses have been allowed to-date), and motorized uses are prohibited outside of the paved roads within the sites (all-terrain vehicle [ATV] use is prohibited throughout the sites). Allowed uses of trails sometimes vary between trails connecting to the sites’ trails from outside NPS jurisdiction (e.g., bicycle use may be allowed on a trail outside the national historic sites but once within NPS jurisdiction, such a use is prohibited on the same trail).

How to Comment on the Draft Trails Master Plan and Environmental Assessment

You may post comments electronically at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/hofr> or you may mail comments to the name and address below. The 30-day comment period extends from June 15, 2012 to July 16, 2012.

For more information about the park, please visit these websites:

www.nps.gov/hofr
www.nps.gov/vama
www.nps.gov/elro

DAVE HAYES
Natural Resource Program Manager
Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites
Email: dave_hayes@nps.gov
Phone: 845.229.1521
Mail: 4097 Albany Post Rd.
Hyde Park, NY 12538

The Trails Master Plan Calls for the Following Improved Trailhead Amenities:

Trailhead Location	1-Vanderbilt Mansion	2-Historic Train Station †	3-Wallace Center	4-Roosevelt Farm Lane (Western Terminus)	5-Roosevelt Farm Lane (Eastern Terminus)	6-Top Cottage/Eleanor's Walk Trailhead‡
Kiosk with Maps	*	*	*	*	*	*
Directional Signage	*	*	*	*	*	*
Regulatory and Etiquette Signage	*	*	*	*	*	*
Vehicle Parking	*	*	*	*	*	*
Bus Parking	*		*	*		*
Bicycle Parking	*	*	*	*	*	*
Rest Room Facilities	*		*	*		*(seasonal)
Benches	*	*	*	*	*	*
Water Fountain	*		*	*		*(seasonal)

† this trailhead is located outside NPS jurisdiction

‡ these trailhead amenities include those offered at the historic core of the site

Trails Master Plan and Environmental Assessment Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites



**JUNE 2012
UPDATE**

Project Purpose and Need

The purpose of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites Trails Master Plan is to develop a plan for a comprehensive, well-designed, sustainable trail system that provides a variety of visitor experiences uniquely suited to the parks' resources. The plan will be used to guide trail development on lands in Hyde Park, New York, and it will address a range of outdoor experiences, including hiking, birding, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and orienteering. The planning process will engage trail users, partners, and surrounding land owners in how best to develop trail use and design guidelines that support interpretive programming, offer a range of touring and recreational choices, protect park resources, and encourage car-free access among sites. The plan will also identify opportunities for making the trails system more usable to those with mobility impairments, older visitors, and other potential user groups presently under-represented on the trails system, as well as how the trails system could better serve the local community.

At present, the vast majority of park visitors access the park sites by private vehicle. Many see several park sites in one visit. The primary access routes to the parks (US Route 9 and Route 9G) are heavily congested. Expanding multi-site touring opportunities via trails will reduce safety risks and traffic-related stress associated with driving to and from the park sites. Reducing auto traffic will minimize the travel-related carbon footprint and environmental effects. It will also enhance the visitor understanding of the relationship between the sites (the three Roosevelt sites were part of a single estate). The

plan will complement phased implementation of an Alternate Transportation System (ATS) by providing visitors with a range of new, healthy, car-free options for touring the Hyde Park area. For all of these reasons, development of the trails system was a management objective in the General Management Plan for the national historic sites, adopted in 2010.



PUBLIC MEETING

**Thursday,
June 28, 2012**

**The Henry A. Wallace Center
6:00 pm to 8:00 pm**

*Please Plan to Attend and
Provide Your Input*

...on the Draft Trails Master Plan and Environmental Assessment.

WALLACE CENTER ADDRESS:
4097 Albany Post Road,
Hyde Park, NY 12538

**The Wallace Center is located
at the same site as the
Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential
Library and Museum and
Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt
National Historic Site.**

Trails Master Plan and EA Process

The key steps in the planning process include the following:



Supporting General Management Plan (GMP) Goals

The Trails Master Plan will contribute to the realization of GMP goals, by helping visitors to be:

- Informed and oriented before they arrive,
- Comfortable, safe, and able to navigate clearly among the sites throughout their visit, and
- Left with an enhanced understanding of the parks' resources and stories, along with a better understanding of NPS preservation practices.