



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Chattahoochee River
National Recreation Area

1978 Island Ford Parkway
Sandy Springs, GA 30350

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Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area invites public input on Preliminary Trails Management Plan

SANDY SPRINGS, GA – Today, the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area (Chattahoochee River NRA) launched public commenting on a preliminary strategy for improving the park’s trail system.

Initial public commenting on the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Preliminary Trails Management Plan will open from March 15 to April 15, 2021, and include opportunities to submit written comments and participate in public meetings.

“We are pleased to offer this opportunity for the public to provide early input on the future of the park’s trail system,” said Acting Superintendent Elisa Kunz. “We’ve used what we have heard from our trail users in the past and designed a system that should be both more sustainable and more enjoyable, but we now need feedback from the public and our stakeholders on our effort. This feedback helps us know if we are on the right track, and where improvements might be needed.”

Two virtual public meetings to discuss the trails plan and answer questions about the project will take place on Thursday, March 25 at 6:30 p.m. (ET), and on Friday, March 26 at 1:30 p.m. (ET). Links to join the virtual meetings may be accessed on the project website at parkplanning.nps.gov/CRNRA_Trails. During the virtual meetings, National Park Service staff will explain the plan process, showcase methods for public comment, and answer participants’ questions. The meeting presentations will be identical and interested parties are encouraged to attend the time most convenient.

Chattahoochee River NRA has developed two methods for submitting plan comments online. Written comments may be submitted by visiting parkplanning.nps.gov/CRNRA_Trails and selecting “Open for Comment” on the left menu bar and selecting “Preliminary Trails Management Plan.” There is also a second online platform that provides an interactive option for viewing trail proposals and an opportunity for the public to upload their own concerns, designs, and suggestions. It may be accessed at <https://arcg.is/1PKmna>.

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

Written comments may also be submitted by mail to:

National Park Service
Denver Service Center
Attn: CRNRA Trails Plan / Charles Lawson
12795 West Alameda Pkwy
Denver, CO 80228

Written comments on the initial phase of the plan must be submitted online or postmarked by April 15, 2021 to be considered. Additional opportunities for commenting and public engagement will be offered throughout the project.

About the Trails Plan Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area Preliminary Trails Management Plan

Within the park's boundary are approximately 65 miles of pedestrian and mixed-use trails. Most of the existing trail system consists of legacy social trails, relict roadbeds, and utility corridors predating the park's establishment in 1978. These legacy trails were never intentionally designed for a positive trail experience. They lack connectivity to neighboring trail systems while potentially degrading water quality through erosion runoff and impacting plant habitat. Many of the existing trails are also difficult and costly to maintain.

To help address the issues, the National Park Service is developing a plan for design and maintenance of an improved pedestrian and multi-use trail system for the entirety of the Chattahoochee River NRA. After working with trail users and professional trail designers, the park has developed a set of preliminary trail design proposals for each of the park's 15 land units. The preliminary designs aim to improve the visitor experience on trails, improve the sustainability of the park's trail system, and improve its connectivity to planned and existing regional trail systems – including the proposed Chattahoochee RiverLands Greenway (chattahoocheeriverlands.com).

The preliminary management strategies include programmatic actions, which would apply parkwide, and specific trail designs for each unit of the park. The unit-specific trail designs are best understood by reading the descriptions and viewing the maps in the *Preliminary Comprehensive Trails Plan* available for download on the project website (parkplanning.nps.gov/CRNRA_Trails).

After public comments are received, park staff will adjust the proposed strategies, as necessary, before developing the complete Trails Management Plan. There will be another opportunity to comment on the plan once it is in full draft.

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