



Trail Management Plan

Path Begins for Trail Plan Process

The rich history of the Ohio & Erie Canal Towpath Trail, the embodiment of the Cuyahoga River, and the close proximity to a major metropolitan area has established the Cuyahoga Valley National Park (CVNP) as a significant and unique National Park (NPS) unit in the United States.



Cuyahoga Valley National Park contains 160 miles of trail including the Towpath Trail and its historic significance. Photo: NPS

Public Open Houses Announced for Cuyahoga Valley National Park Trail Management Plan

Thirty-five years since its legislative inception in 1974, Cuyahoga Valley National Park now protects 33,000 acres, provides over 150 programs annually, and has established a 160 mile trail network throughout the park.

The Towpath Trail and the park's trail network are major park attractions. In 1985, the park's first Trail Plan was completed outlining objectives and guidelines for a desired trail network consisting of 20 priority trails.

The 1985 Trail Plan created the foundation to guide trail planning within the park and was largely successful in its implementation. Twenty-five years have passed since the Plan was initiated. The Park and its

users have evolved with new challenges and opportunities for trail use in conjunction with the Park's mission. To address this evolution, the Cuyahoga Valley National Park has initiated a Trail Management Plan (TMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process. This newsletter provides an overview of the process, a status of the Plan process and an invitation for public involvement to all interested stakeholders.

Public involvement will be essential to the Plan's development and its implementation. The involvement process kicks off with public open houses in February. (see page 4 for more details.)

The Purpose and Need of the Trail Management Plan

This Plan is needed as a strategic tool to guide the future course of trail management and development in Ohio's only National Park. The park's original 1985 plan is outdated and largely implemented. Regional trail networks have blossomed across Northeastern Ohio, increasing demands for additional trail connections, new trail uses and expanded recreational opportunities. The broad purpose of the TMP is to identify management objectives and strategies to guide the development, protection, management, operations and use of the trail system within the Cuyahoga Valley National Park over the next 15 years to meet new challenges and opportunities.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park Mission:

To preserve and protect for public use and enjoyment the historic, scenic, natural, and recreational values of the Cuyahoga River Valley and to maintain the open space necessary to the urban environment.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends,

We are excited to embark on the path of the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Trail Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement process. We recognize the plan's importance and need for this significant resource in the park and to the region.

The planning process will be conducted over the next two years and will be kicked off with our public open houses in February. The creation of the plan will bring together multiple agencies, communities, organizations and individuals to ensure the plan reflects the mission of the park and its many users and partners.

This effort is just one facet of the newly launched *Trails Forever* initiative. *Trails Forever* broadly focuses on CVNP's trail system and highlights opportunities for the public to enjoy, maintain, enhance, and expand these trails for the benefit of all people, for all time. Through this planning process and other opportunities, I hope you will get involved in this new initiative. Learn more at www.cvnnpa.org/trailsforever. See you on the Trail!

Paul Stoehr
Acting Superintendent

The Trail Management Plan Partners

The Rivers, Trails, Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service is a partner in the public engagement process and development of the Trail Management Plan.

Cleveland Metroparks & Metroparks, Serving Summit County
Cuyahoga Valley National Park has established an agreement with the Cleveland Metroparks and Metroparks, Serving Summit County to serve as administrative partners for the Trail Management Planning Process for their park units within Cuyahoga Valley National Park boundaries.

Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association
The Cuyahoga Valley National Park Association mission is to engage public support for the park and enhance public use and enjoyment of the park.

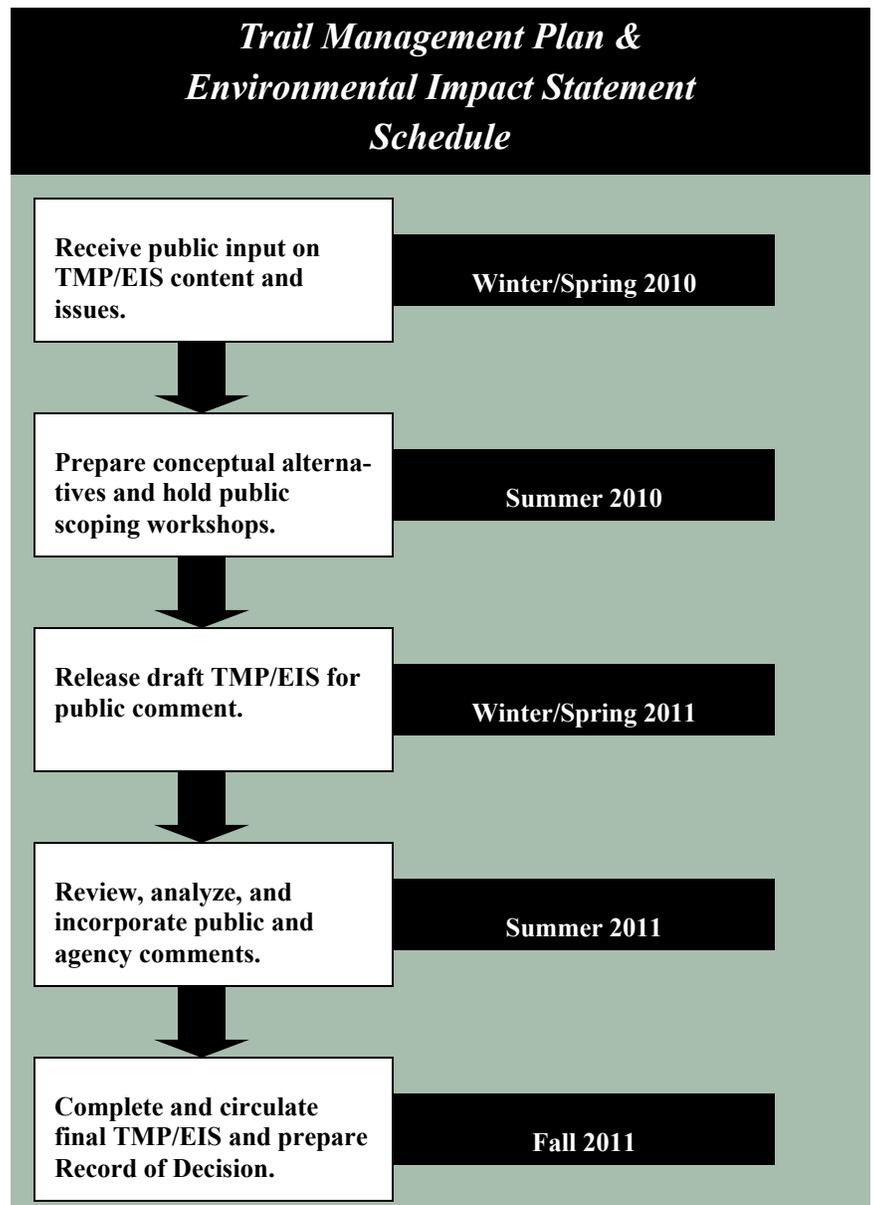
What is the Trail Management Plan & Environmental Impact Statement?

The Trail Management Plan (TMP) and its Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) will be developed utilizing the framework required under NPS Director's Order 12 and the National Environmental Policy Act.

The National Park Service has kicked off the process through the submittal of a Notice of Intent to the Federal Register, establishment of a InterDisciplinary Team of park partners and CVNP staff, and the development of a purpose and need statement.

The National Park Service has outlined a preliminary timeline shown below and opportunities for public input and stakeholder involvement during the planning process.

The process will include examining existing conditions, identifying issues and ideas, preparing conceptual and final alternatives, examining impacts to a preferred alternative and establishing guidance for implementation and stewardship.



Bring Your Ideas

The National Park Service is currently developing an updated Trail Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement. The plan will provide guidance to the future trail network, its stewardship, and its relation to the park's cultural and natural resources.

Since the park offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities, the development of the plan will require the same wide variety of public participation. This will ensure the goals for the future trail network consider the broad user base of the park while reflecting the mission of the NPS and Cuyahoga Valley National Park. The Plan also offers an opportunity to think creatively and provide innovative concepts to the NPS network and CVNP's contribution to the region.

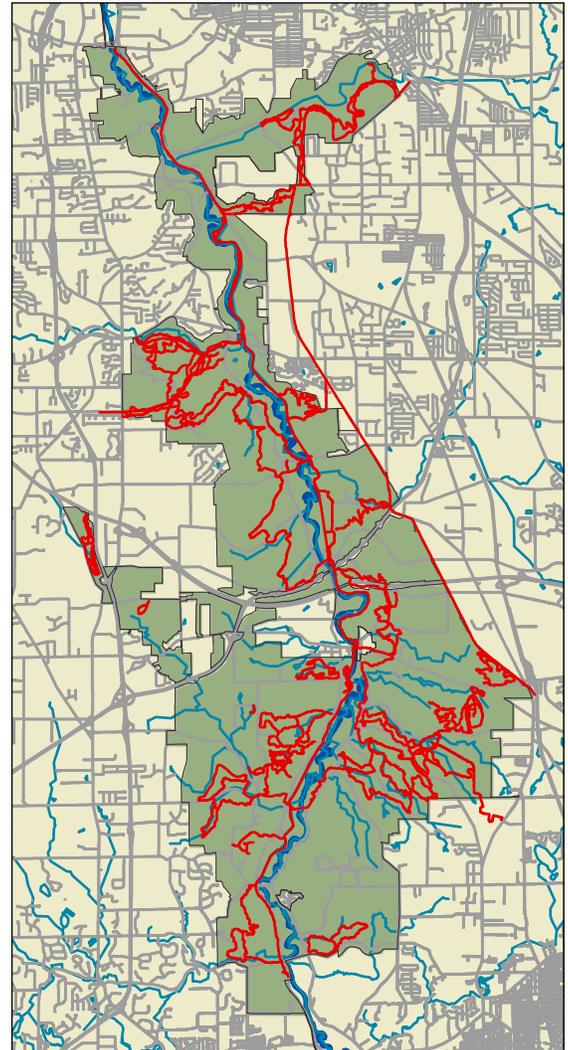
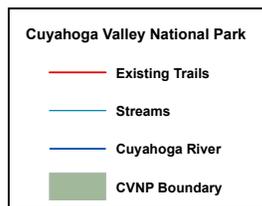
The NPS has begun to identify issues focused on three areas of park management; trail user experiences, trail stewardship and resource protection. A few examples of issues to consider for the Trail Management Plan are provided below.

- How can the trail network be improved or enhanced to provide opportunities for a wide variety of users?
- How can the trail network's conditions, operations and stewardship be enhanced?
- How should the trail be improved or enhanced to minimize resource impacts?

Public participation will kick off with public open houses in February. These meetings will gather ideas, identify issues and seek input for the Trail Plan. Future opportunities for public input and participation will include workshops during the development of alternatives and review of the Plan during its various stages of refinement.



Photos: NPS & Tom Jones



Identifying Issues

Preliminary issues have been identified based upon discussion with NPS staff, CVNP park partners, and initial stakeholder groups in the community. They are a starting point for public involvement and input. Some of these issues include:

Expand & Improve Existing Trail Network

- Examine the expansion of user types and facilities to support these uses. User types to consider include mountain bike trails and water trails for canoe and kayak. Compatibility with existing uses, expansion of single use trails and their impacts to park resources should be considered.
- Connect and enhance existing trails to provide a variety of skill levels, distances and visitor experiences.
- Provide connections between existing trails within the park and connect the park trail network to existing and planned trails outside of park boundaries.

Optimize Visitor Facilities

- Increase visitor education on trail etiquette, signage and resource interpretation.
- Increase park ranger and volunteer presence on the trails.
- Enhance existing or add new trail support facilities to improve visitor experience.

Sustain and Expand Trail Stewardship

- Enhance trail operations and usage with consideration to park resource conditions.
- Sustain and enhance trail maintenance programs with existing park staff and volunteer stewardship groups.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Cuyahoga Valley National Park
15610 Vaughn Road
Brecksville OH 44141

First Class Mail
Postage and Fees
PAID
City, State
Permit Number

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™



Cuyahoga Valley National Park

www.nps.gov/cuva
www.dayinthevalley.com

This newsletter was produced in connection with the Cuyahoga Valley National Park Trail Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement

Volume 1, Issue 1 (Winter, 2010)

Cuyahoga Valley National Park
15610 Vaughn Road
Brecksville OH 44141

For more information about this newsletter or to sign up to receive future newsletters, please contact:

Lynn Garrity
Trail Planner
Cuyahoga Valley National Park
National Park Service
(440) 343-4803
lynn_garrity@nps.gov

Public Scoping Open Houses Announced

Public open houses have been scheduled for the winter of 2010. CVNP staff will present a slide-show on the plan process, initial issues and objectives and purpose of the scoping meetings. Participants will then be invited to share ideas about issues identified through issue boards around the meeting facility. Issue boards will be staffed by planning team members.

All meetings will be held at
Happy Days Lodge
500 West Streetsboro Road (Rt 303)
Peninsula Ohio 44264

February 11, 2010
Time: 2:00 - 4:00 pm

February 11, 2010
Time: 6:00 - 8:00 pm

February 13, 2010
Time: 10:00am - 12:00pm

Ways to Be Involved:

Public Scoping Open House/Meetings
Winter 2010, Summer 2010, Winter 2011,
Fall 2011

Public Comment Online

To provide comments, share ideas and offer suggestions visit the NPS Planning, Environment & Public Comment website and click on 'Trail Management Plan'
<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/cuva>

Send Comments to

Cuyahoga Valley National Park
15160 Vaughn Road
Brecksville OH 44141
ATTN: Lynn Garrity