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Greater Prince William TRAILS COALITION

Mid-May 2026 Newsletter

see more at our [calendar](#), [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page

Tier 1 Top Segments (Active Mobility)

Rank	Roadway Name	Trail Type	Trail Length (Miles)	Trail Status	Trail Segment Location	Magisterial District
Tier 1						
1	Minnieville Road	Shared Use Path	3.22	Planned	Caton Hill Rd to Cardinal Drive	Neabsco
2	Old Bridge Road	Shared Use Path	1.77	Planned	Rolling Brook Dr to Oakwood Dr	Occoquan
3	Richmond Highway	Shared Use Path	0.47	Planned	Cardinal Dr to Port Potomac Ave	Woodbridge
4	Bristow Road	Paved Shoulder	9.10	Planned	Nokesville Rd to Independent Hill Dr	Brentsville
5	Smoketown Road	Shared Use Path	2.71	Planned	Cavalier Drive to Gideon	Neabsco
6	Richmond Highway	Shared Use Path	0.53	Planned	Powells Creek to Panther Pride Dr	Potomac
7	Joplin Road	Shared Use Path	0.79	Planned	Prince William Forest Park to US Route 1	Potomac
8	Hoadly Road	Shared Use Path	2.15	Planned	PW Pkwy to Purcell Rd	Occoquan
9	Dale Boulevard	Sharrows	1.75	Planned	Ridgefield Rd to Glendale Rd	Neabsco
10	Richmond Highway	Shared Use Path	2.02	Planned	Marine Corps Heritage Center entry to Stafford CL	Potomac

Pathways 2035 - Trails Master Plan

Pathways 2035 is scheduled to be presented to the Board of County Supervisors in June. The list of **planned trail segments** as of April 23 was shared at the Quarterly Meeting of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition.

Next Quarterly Meeting of the Greater Prince William Trails Coalition is June 25, 10:00-11:30am. You can **register** now.

While you are marking your calendar - next meeting of Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST) **subcommittee** of the Trails and Blueways Council is May 20, 2:00pm at Helwig Administrative Center. The monthly Trails and Blueways Council meeting is May 26 at 6:30pm. All meetings are open to the public. The monthly meetings are hybrid, people can participate online.



Getting Across the Tracks

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) has established a process to authorize new pedestrian crossings at railroads, based on [HB2088](#) passed in 2009.

As noted in the [2022 Virginia Statewide Rail Plan](#):

"Although Virginia State Code provides indemnity for private property owners entering into an agreement with the Commonwealth that allows for public access to a property, host railroads continue to be wary of potential liability issues regarding recreation access in and around active rail lines."

On the western end of Prince William County, the new trailhead at Bull Run Mountains Natural Area Preserve needs a new crossing to connect to the existing trail network. The Virginia Outdoors Foundation has initiated the process with Norfolk Southern.

CSX controls the ability to cross the tracks along the Potomac River to access Cockpit Point. A connection linking the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail to the county park on the waterfront will require Prince William County to obtain CSX approval.

The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority (VPR) **does not have authority** to approve recreational trail use along the tracks. The City of Manassas is taking the lead on the Rail-With-Trail project, building a link from Manassas VRE station to Bull Run Occoquan Trail in Fairfax County. That trail also will have to get authorization from the Norfolk Southern railroad.

Interested in how state agencies can help get trails across railroad tracks, or get new trails constructed together with new railroad bridges? Share your ideas when the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority holds a **virtual public meeting** on June 1 starting at 6:30pm.



Public Participation in Developing the First Comprehensive Plan for the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST)

A virtual public meeting on the **PHNST Comprehensive Plan** will be held May 28 starting at 6:00pm. The public comment period runs through June 29.

The National Park Service may not use this high-level plan to define the exact locations of specific trail segments, but the plan could prioritize choosing routes that are relatively scenic - rather than paved shared use paths along busy roads.

Public input could also determine which historic sites the National Park Service will consider to be worthy of a trail connection, either as part of the main trail or as a side braid. For example, will the historic elements in **Leesylvania State Park** east of the CSX railroad tracks (see above) or **Cockpit Point Civil War Park** be officially part of the PHNST?



Do You Know: Where Is This Trail?

Guess first - then see the answer.



Potomac Heritage Trail Association (PHTA) Review of Statewide Mobility Trails Plan

The State Trails Office in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) released the **Statewide Multiuse Trails Plan** on May 1. The state agency did not try to create a comprehensive map of all existing or planned trails. The plan identifies primarily hard-surface trails that are suitable for bikes, strollers, wheelchairs, etc.

Natural surface trails intended for recreational use were omitted, as were most other trail segments which do not meet current Americans With Disabilities Act (ADA) **design standards** for accessibility and safety.

The **Potomac Heritage Trail Association** (PHTA) has identified key segments of the **Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail** (PHNST) through Prince William County which are - or are not - in this version of the state plan before VDOT takes its **next steps**:

Omitted:

- Existing Occoquan footbridge (*above*)
- Planned trails through Town of Occoquan to Poplar Lane/Sea Ray Lane/Swan Point Road (part of Gap 1 in **FLAP grant study**)
- Existing trails in southern Belmont Bay, Occoquan National Wildlife Refuge, Veterans Park and Drive
- Existing Neabsco Creek Boardwalk
- Existing Metz wetlands trails (and planned upgrades)
- Leesylvania Park sections of the PHNST
- Existing PHNST segments in Locust Shade Park

Included:

- Planned PHNST shown from Swan Point cul-de-sac under I-95 along the river, under Route 1 and the CSX railroad to Belmont Bay (part of Gap 1)
- Planned Powells crossing shown (though not the current design route closer to the Potomac River)
- Planned route south of Powells Creek to Dumfries and under I-95 into Prince William Forest Park (including Gap 2)
- Planned route along Joplin Road under I-95 (though not the preferred alternative for Gap 3)

The state plan also identifies a planned trail in Fairfax County from Franconia-Springfield Parkway south along the CSX/Virginia Passenger Rail Authority tracks. Trail would link to a potential bike/pedestrian bridge across the Occoquan River, connecting Mason Neck to Belmont Bay.

The Statewide Multiuse Trails Plan does include a portion of the planned **Rail-With-Trail project** linking the Manassas/Manassas Park railroad stations, but not the extension to the Bull Run Occoquan Trail in Fairfax County.



Do E-Motos Belong on Trails?

The May 14 Rails to Trails Conservancy **E-bikes, E-motos and Safety: What Belongs on Trails?** webinar explored the differences between e-bikes and e-motos, and how best to manage use of e-motos.

The webinar highlights that e-motos are NOT e-bikes; no pedals are required, motors are larger, and speeds are higher. The capabilities and risks of e-motos are substantially different, and regulations of them should mimic regulations of motorcycles rather than of regular bikes.

People For Bikes has published an **Overview of Electric Bike Regulations** plus a three-part series:

Part 1: Understanding the Problem Behind the Headlines

PART II: Unpacking the Risks for Riders and Families of Illegal E-Motos

PART III: Policy Solutions to the E-Moto Problem

People For Bikes also is offering its **eBike eCourse** for free through May, which is Bike Month.

The course helps riders get ready for real-world eBike riding, from choosing the right bike and quality gear to navigating traffic and riding with friends.

E-Moto vs. E-Bike: How Illegal E-motos Are Threatening the Legitimate E-Bike Market

highlights:

"The biggest threat to the future of E-bikes right now is not anti-bicycle politicians. It's not city councils. It's not cars. The biggest threat to E-bikes right now is vehicles that are not E-bikes being called E-bikes. If we don't solve this problem as an industry, someone else will solve it for us. And we won't like the result."

See also:

- **Reid, Sheriff's Office Look to Tackle Scooter, E-Bike Safety Concerns** (*LoudounNOW*, May 16)
- **Haymarket to Hold Public Hearing on E-Bike Rules June 1 Amid Rising Youth Use** (*Potomac Local*, May 5 and on **Facebook**) Town Council will discuss the **draft ordinance** on June 1. It prohibits use of earphones while riding, bans e-bikes from sidewalks, and limits speed to 20mph.



Trail Proposal: Landing at Cannon Branch

On May 6, the Manassas Planning Commission **approved** a proposed rezoning with proffer amendments for the latest Landing at Cannon Branch development. The proposed General Development Plan includes a trail (*red line, above*) along the edge of the stormwater pond, along with a small public park.

The project now advances to the Manassas City Council for a final decision.



Bike to Work Day (May 15) at Manassas Park VRE station

In Other News...

- Mid-Atlantic Off-Road Enthusiasts (MORE) has scheduled a trail workday at **James Long Regional Park** on May 31.
- The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) funds bus transit, rail, roadway enhancements, technology, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, and intersection/interchange improvements. See the **comments** submitted by the co-chair of **Active Prince William** on the draft **FY2026-2031 Six Year Program**.
- The public also can **submit comments** on the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) **FY2027-2032 Six-Year Improvement Program** or participate in a **virtual meeting** on May 27.
- **Is Waymo Just Planning on Blocking all the Bike Lanes?** (*Momentum Mag*, May 4)
"...its driverless taxis stop in bike lanes to pick up and drop off passengers. And they don't seem to care about the health and safety of cyclists." A **bill** to authorize fully autonomous vehicles in Northern Virginia passed the State Senate in the 2026 General Assembly.
- Interested in seeing art along a trail, perhaps as an incentive for more people to go walking/biking there? Prince William County is asking for **comments** regarding a public art policy.
- **Appalachian Trail Festival** is June 6 in Hillsboro. There will be live music, hiking experts, nature crafts, toured a nature-inspired art show, and a rock wall to climb as well as bites and brews.
- Want to rent a Jon boat, canoe, kayak, pedal boat or stand up paddleboard at **Lake Ridge Marina**? Make **online reservations** in advance.
- **Richmond pauses bike-lane buffer tickets after backlash** (*Axios Richmond*, May 18)
"City Council voted last month to expand Richmond's no-parking rules to include the painted buffer zones separating bike lanes from traffic, citing complaints of cars improperly parked..."

Walk & Talk Wellness

In honor of **National Mental Health Awareness Month** and **National Trails Day**, the Prevention Coalition of Greater Prince William, Greater Prince William Trails Coalition, and our community partners invite you to **Walk & Talk Wellness** at one of the participating trail locations in the Greater Prince William area. We hope you will take this opportunity to participate and learn about local resources and tools that can help support you on your journey to wellness. To participate, head to a participating trail at a time that is convenient for you during May and June, and scan the QR Codes at each trailhead to learn more about the resources and wellness messages that are meaningful to you!



Participating Trails:

- Blooms Park (Manassas Park)
- Winter's Branch Trail (City of Manassas)
- Bristoe Station Trail
- Silver Lake Park Trail
- Andrew Leitch Park Trail
- Broad Run Trail
- Occoquan Greenway
- Chinn Park Trail
- Neabsco Boardwalk
- Locust Shade Park Trail

Visit www.PreventionCoalitionofGPW.org/Wellness to learn more!



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The Greater Prince William Trails Coalition is a 501(c)(3) organization
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