

# Arkansas Trails System

The Arkansas Trails System is defined by the “Arkansas Trails System Act” of 1979 and maintained by the Arkansas Trails Council.

The Arkansas Trails Council has further defined the Arkansas Trails System as a compilation of trail data from all managing agencies about trails in Arkansas. The list is intended to:

- Reflect the wide diversity of trail experiences in Arkansas
- Provide a resource to Arkansas trail users to find data on Arkansas Trails
- Serve as an attraction to draw trail users across the country to come to Arkansas for an exceptional trail experience
- Identify a representative list of some of the most attractive trails in Arkansas

The Natural State has an abundance of trails that satisfy a variety of interests for a wide range of trail user groups. Trails are available in each of the state’s geologic regions. These trails are maintained by several federal agencies, the state and municipalities. They include trails for enjoying scenic highlights, backcountry/wilderness, history or urban parks. Trails range from less than one mile to 223 miles in length and offer a broad range of difficulty. Trails offer outdoor opportunities for walkers, runners, hikers, backpackers, bicyclists, mountain bikers, canoeists/kayakers, ATVers and other off-road vehiclists.

Information and access to these trails is in numerous locations available to trail users. Principal trails databases are listed here, and these sources may include further references to additional resources for the user.

Two lists are provided as part of the Arkansas Trails System:

- Trail Resources (listed below) – A record of primary information sources on Arkansas trails made available by managing agencies.
- Featured Trails – A document of specific trails considered by the Arkansas Trails Council to be most representative of what Arkansas trails have to offer.

## Trail Resources

### Federal Trails

- **National Park Service**
  - Arkansas Post Memorial - <http://www.nps.gov/arpo/index.htm>
  - Buffalo National River - <http://www.nps.gov/buff/planyourvisit/hiking-at-buffalo-national-river.htm>

The Buffalo river offers trails for hikers, backpackers, equestrians and water trail users. There are over 100 miles of terrestrial trails and over 100 miles of river.

- Hot Springs National Park - <http://www.nps.gov/hosp/planyourvisit/trails.htm>  
The Hot Springs National Park trail system dates back to the 1920s. It includes over 26 miles of trails, including the 10-plus-mile Sunset Trail.
- Pea Ridge National Military Park - <http://www.nps.gov/peri/index.htm>  
Pea Ridge is the site of a pivotal Civil War battle fought on March 7-8, 1862. On the grounds there are an auto tour, a 7-mile hiking trail and a 9-mile equestrian trail.
- Trail of Tears National Historic Trail - <http://www.nps.gov/trte/index.htm>  
The Trail of Tears is a National Historic Trail that commemorates the 19<sup>th</sup>-century forced removal of the Cherokee from their homelands in the eastern United States to the Indian Territory.
- **United States Forest Service** – The two National Forests in Arkansas maintain trails for a large variety of user types.
  - Ouachita National Forest - <http://www.fs.usda.gov/ouachita/>
  - Ozark-St. Francis National Forest - <http://www.fs.usda.gov/osfnf/>
- **United States Army Corps of Engineers** – The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) maintains trails in recreation areas around the state. Parts of three USACE districts cover the state of Arkansas:
  - Little Rock District - <http://www.swl-wc.usace.army.mil/>
  - Memphis District - <http://www.mvm.usace.army.mil/>
  - Vicksburg District - <http://www.mvk.usace.army.mil/>

### **State Trails**

- **Arkansas Game and Fish Commission** - <http://www.agfc.com/Pages/default.aspx>
- **Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission** - <http://www.naturalheritage.com/>
- **Arkansas State Parks** - <http://www.arkansasstateparks.com/>

**Urban Trails** – A large number of municipalities and counties in Arkansas have developed trails. Information is available at individual sites.

**Privately Owned Trails** – Many trails in Arkansas are on private property, sometimes associated with private campgrounds and activity centers. This is particularly true for equestrian trails. The best way to locate these trails is through a trail user group, such as a hiking or riding club.

### **Other Arkansas trail listings** –

- American Trails - <http://americantrails.org/resources/statetrails/ARstate.html>
- Arkansas Outdoors - <http://www.arkansas.com/outdoors/>
- Hike Arkansas - <http://www.hikearkansas.com/>

*If this document needs any additions or corrections, Please contact the Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Trails Council. Here is his information:*

Mike Sprague  
Executive Secretary of the Arkansas Trails Council  
Arkansas State Parks  
One Capitol Mall  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72201  
(501) 682-6946  
[michael.sprague@arkansas.gov](mailto:michael.sprague@arkansas.gov)