

Rock Island

STATE TRAIL



Illinois
Department of
Natural Resources

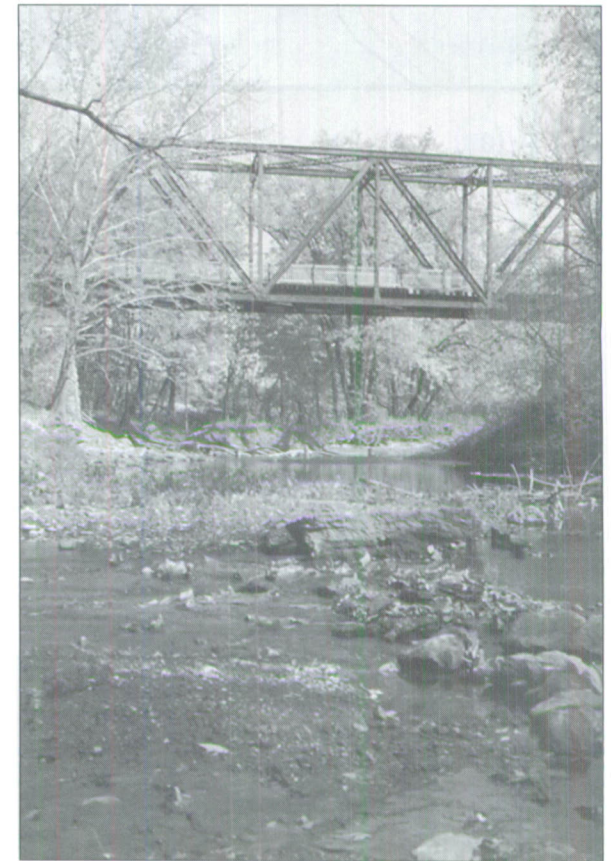


Rock Island State Trail

Beauty and solitude, away from the hustle and bustle of city traffic, await visitors at Rock Island State Trail. Named for the abandoned Rock Island Railroad Line it traces, the

park offers many natural and architectural attractions in a tree-canopied corridor that is only 50 to 100 feet wide. It stretches for 26 miles from Alta, in Peoria County, to Toulon, in Stark County.

Prairie grasses and wildflowers co-exist as remnants of early rail travel along the trail. Just north of Alta, an arched culvert offers a lovely backdrop for the natural beauty of the area. At the Peoria/Stark county line, a tallgrass prairie remnant provides a step back into time and allows visitors to see the landscape that Native Americans and early settlers experienced. Just a few miles from the Toulon access area, a trestle bridge spans the Spoon River. A few miles further south in the town of Wyoming, the park office is located in the renovated Wyoming, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Depot. The depot serves as a visitor center/railroad museum and is a mute testimony to the many passengers that traveled along the railway 100 years ago.



History

The Peoria and Rock Island Railroad Co. was granted a charter to construct a railroad between Peoria and Rock Island on March 7, 1867. Construction began two years later, and the first regularly scheduled passenger train passed over the Rock Island Line July 8, 1871.

For more than 40 years, passenger and freight trains rumbled through the small towns of Alta, Dunlap, Princeville, Stark, Wyoming and Toulon. By 1915, however, rail traffic through these communities began to decline and ceased completely by the late 1950s.

Peoria's Forest Park Foundation acquired the abandoned railway corridor in 1965 and deeded the property to the state four years later. Officially dedicated in 1989, the Rock Island Trail is the first railway conversion completed by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources.



Facilities and Activities

Since the only improved access points to the Rock Island Trail are at Alta, Wyoming and Toulon, hikers, bikers and skiers will enjoy nearly 26 miles of uninterrupted nature. Parking, water and toilets are located at all three access areas. Only parking facilities are located at Dunlap (on Parks

School Road) and the Peoria/Stark county line (North Cedar Bluff Road, 00N). Where the trail intersects the small towns along its route, village streets and sidewalks, with directional signs, are utilized.

Only non-motorized traffic is allowed on the trail, and equestrian use is not permitted. North-to-south biking is easier because of prevailing wind direction and a slight grade relief.

Camping

The Class D (primitive) camping area is located between Alta and Dunlap in the Kickapoo Creek Recreation Area. The campground is accessible only by bike or foot and requires a 1-

mile bike or hike from the nearest road. Campground entrance is located just north of Mile 2 on the trail. Facilities include pit toilets, fire pads, picnic tables, a picnic shelter and water.

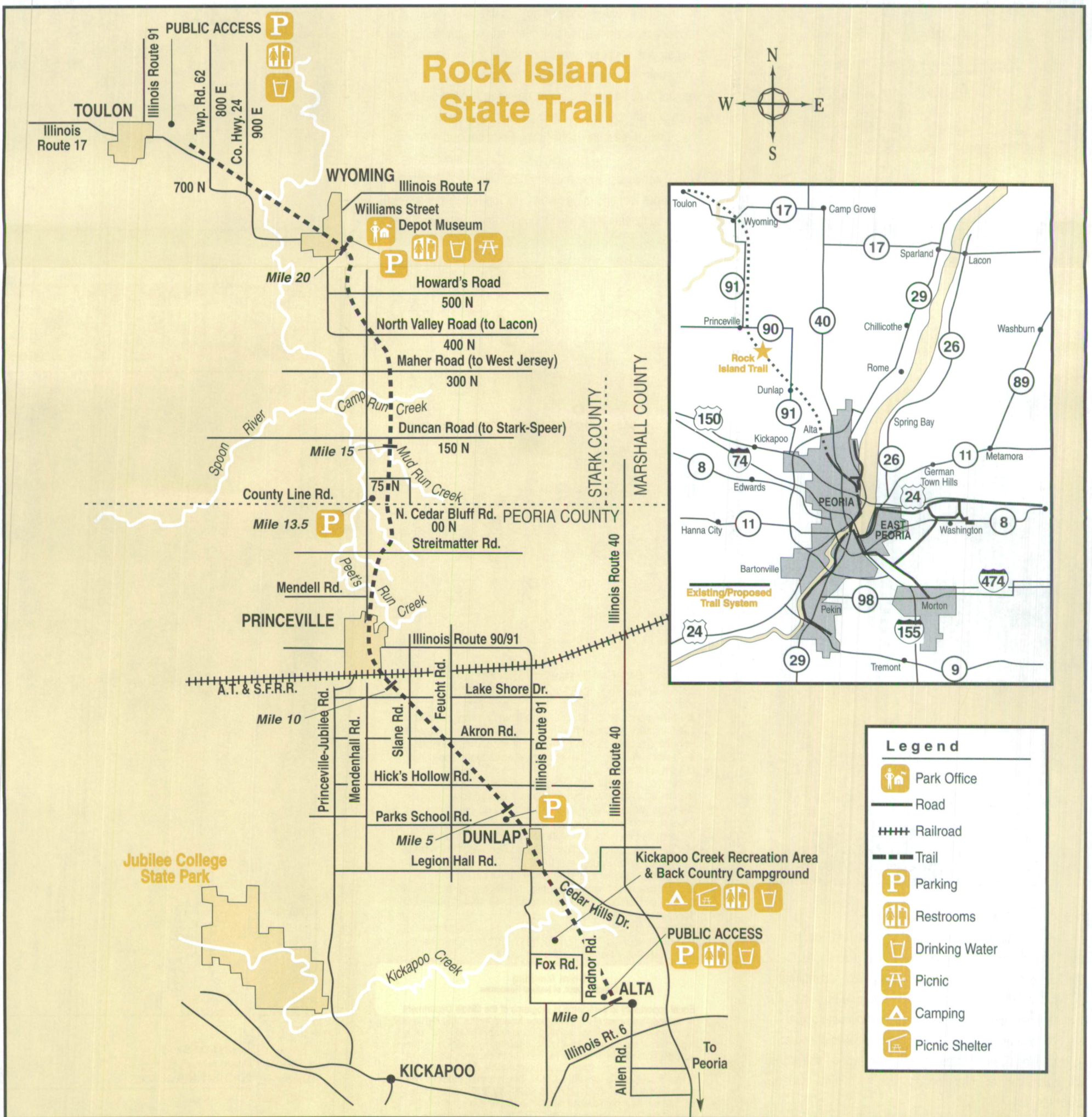
For more information, contact Rock Island State Trail, 311 E. Williams St., P.O. Box 64, Wyoming, IL 61491 or phone (309) 695-2228, e-mail ritrail@starkcounty.com.



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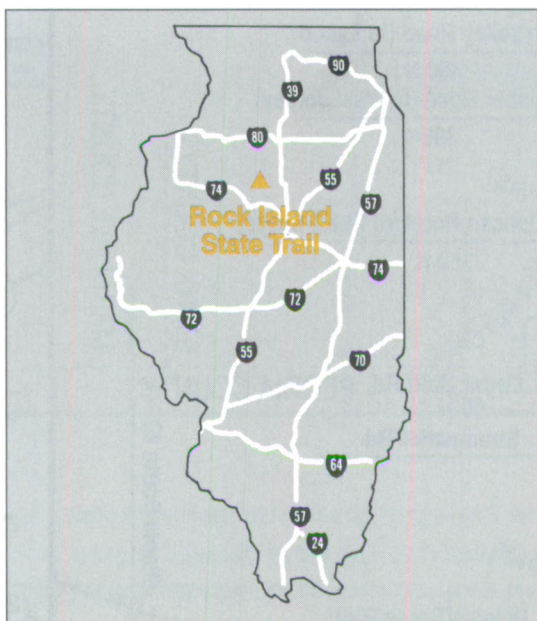




Natural Features

The Rock Island Trail is in the Grand Prairie Division, a vast plain formerly covered with tall prairie grasses. As the trail has reverted to nature, much of the prairie has returned.

North of Princeville lies a dedicated Nature Preserve with abundant native prairie grasses and flowering perennials. Fourteen acres have been restored to native prairie at the Kickapoo Creek Recreation Area. Hardwood trees and wildflowers can be found along the streams and rivers that cross the trail.



Rock Island State Trail

311 E. Williams St., P.O. Box 64
Wyoming, IL 61491, (309) 695-2228

■ While groups of 25 or more are welcome and encouraged to use the park's facilities, they are required to register in advance with the site office to avoid crowding or scheduling conflicts.

■ At least one responsible adult must accompany each group of 15 minors.

■ Pets must be kept on leashes at all times.

■ Actions by nature can result in closed roads and other facilities. We hope you enjoy your stay. Remember, take only memories, leave only footprints.

■ For more information on state parks, write to the Department of Natural Resources, Office of Public Services, One Natural Resources Way, Springfield, IL 62702-1271, call (217) 782-6302 or visit our website at <http://dnr.state.il.us>.

■ For more information on tourism in Illinois, call the Illinois Department of Commerce and Community Affairs' Bureau of Tourism at 1-800-2CONNECT.

■ Hearing-impaired individuals may call the Department of Natural Resources' TTY number, (217) 782-9175, or use the Ameritech Relay Number, 1-800-526-0844.

Rod R. Blagojevich
Governor

Joel Brunsvold
Director

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