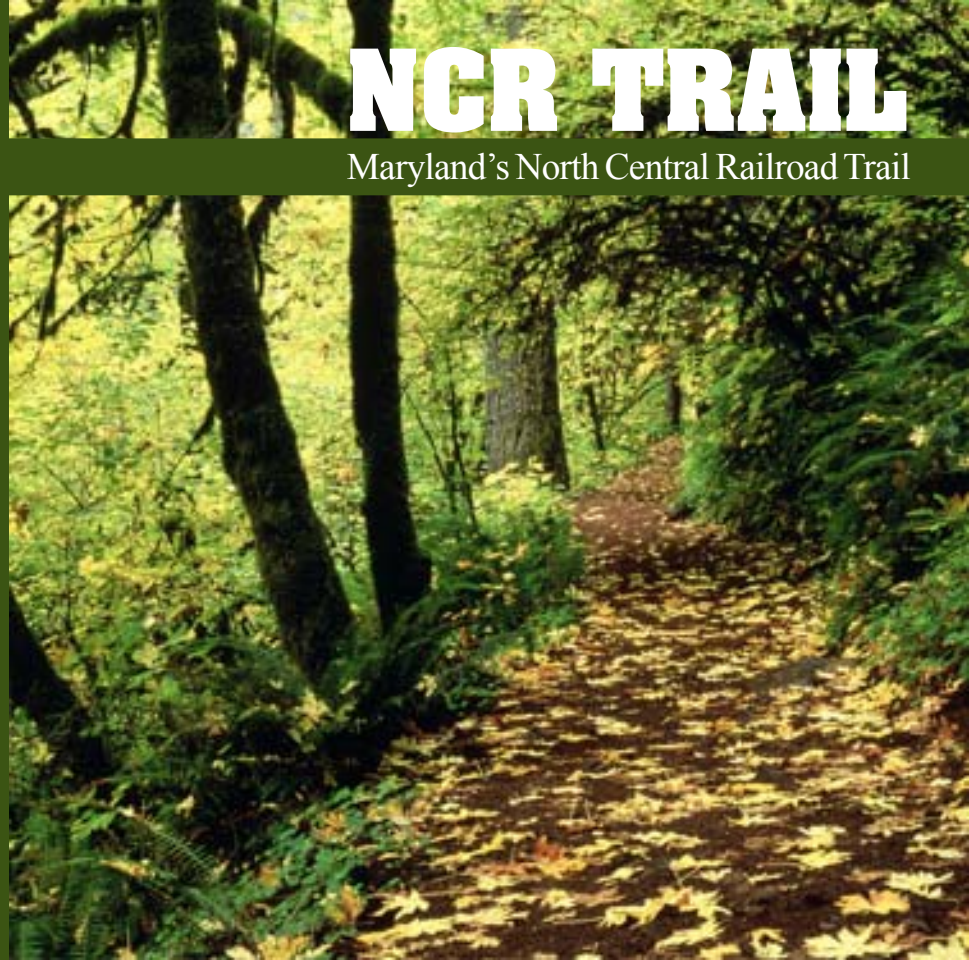


# NCR TRAIL

Maryland's North Central Railroad Trail

Take York Road to Hereford (Exit 27 off I-83). Turn right (east) on Monkton Road. Follow for 3 miles, and look for parking lot and park office (open on weekends). This location features restrooms, water, telephones and picnic tables. A convenience store is also open on weekends. Parking at this location is very limited. 410-592-2897





Maryland's Northern Central Railroad Trail (NCRT) extends 20 miles, stretching from Ashland Road in the Hunt Valley area to the state line. The trail is 10 feet wide with a stone dust surface. The most popular activities on the trail are hiking, jogging, bicycle riding and horseback riding. The trail also provides access for fishing. Trail users should note that the southern end of the trail receives heavy use on weekends. Parking areas from Monkton south are often filled. The trail is less congested and parking is more available at the northern end during peak times.

The trail is generally shady in the summer leaving only the humidity and other trail users as your only obstacles. In winter the trail can become sloppy with packed snow and ice that will only go away once the temperatures rise as the trail surface is usually hidden from the sun's rays. I have personally run many times with appropriate foot gear during the winter months on the packed layers of ice and snow. You'll be one of if not the only person out there.

**NCR TRAIL** *provides 20 miles of undisturbed nature for...*



The trail itself is a packed dirt and limestone affair, covered in many places by a canopy of green, which makes riding relatively cool even during the most humid summers. The Gunpowder River, bordered by strands of sturdy maples and birch and the occasional farm house, meanders along quietly next to the trail. At junctures where the trail intersects the road, you'll see squat white signs marked with a black W, still alerting ghostly train operators to whistle.

The NCR trail begins in the northern suburb of Cockeysville and continues for 20 miles to the Mason-Dixon Line where it becomes the York Heritage Trail. The closest access to point to downtown Baltimore is along Paper Mill Road in Cockeysville, but the most popular access lies 20 miles north of the city at Monkton, where an old train depot stands in for the trail's headquarters and information center . Here you'll find a bike shop that rents bicycles and canoes, as well as a small general store.

*everyone and anyone to enjoy. Joggers, kikers, bicyclers and horseback riders are among the trails most active visitors but you will also...*

Study a map of 19th-century Baltimore and you'll see a tangle of cross-hashed railroad lines shooting off in all directions like the legs of a spider. As the epicenter for America's earliest rail lines (most notably, the Baltimore & Ohio), the city served as a major hub in transporting goods to the frontier. One hundred and fifty years later, traffic still flows along the area's most picturesque line—the Northern Central—only nowadays, it's bicyclists and hikers. Like the best pathways, the Northern Central Railroad Trail isn't only thick with natural beauty, but with history as well. The trail sports several historic markers, the remains of an old lime kiln, and crumbling stone buildings. Lincoln rode an NCR train on his way to the Gettysburg Address. Ironically, an NCR train transported the deceased president's body back to Illinois after his assassination.

*find many fisherman out enjoying the various ponds along the...*





Miles on the trail are marked beginning with mile 0 at Ashland. There are large white numbered mile posts that are remnants of the days when the railroad passed by. There are indications along the trail of the railroad as well. Note the large white “W” markers do not indicate water. They are railroad whistle signals. To start at the beginning, park in a small housing development about a half-mile from Route 45 (York Road), off Paper Mill Road. Turn right and head straight back to the end of the road.

If this area is full, additional parking is available a half-mile north along Paper Mill Road. Traffic on the trail can be heavy on weekends, especially for the first seven miles between Hunt Valley and Monkton. Monkton is often the most congested part of the trail: a restored train station there houses restrooms, water, telephones, picnic tables and trail offices. A convenience store is located on the other side of the parking lot, and ranger-led nature and history programs are often held.

*trail. Look for deer scampering across the trail at dusk, soaring hawks overhead, and a rogue flock of black vultures that roost near...*

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*Monkton during fall and spring. Visit the* **NCR TRAIL**



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Maryland's North Central Railroad Trail

MARYLAND

