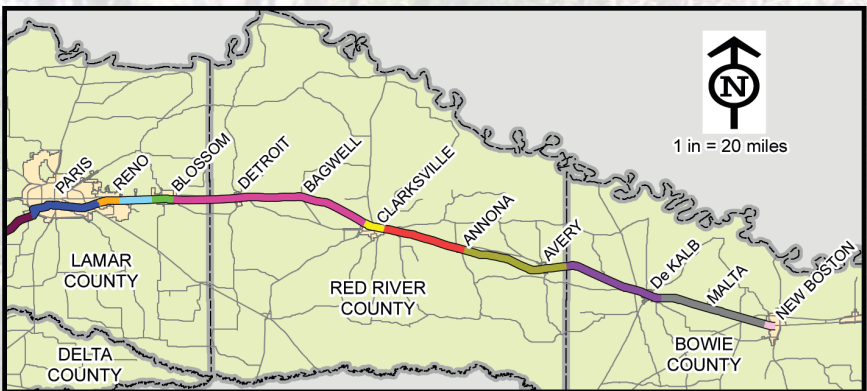
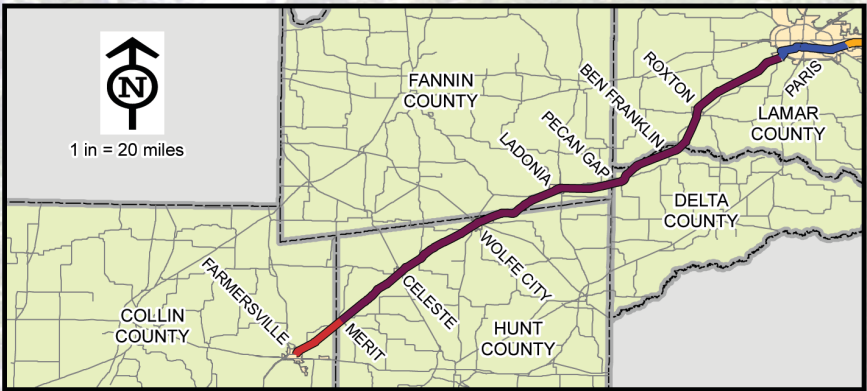
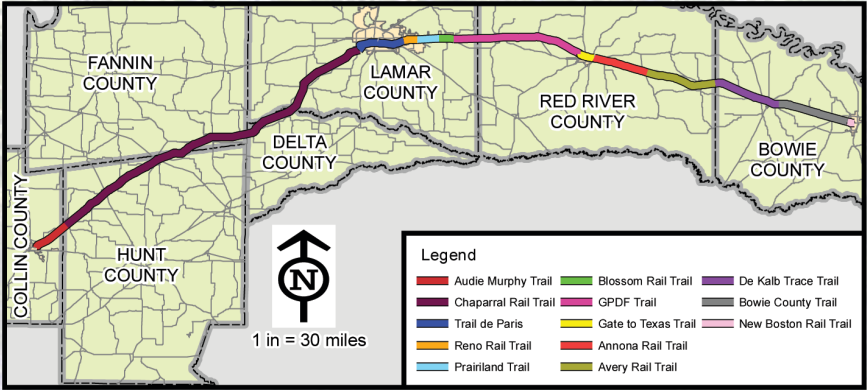


*A 130-MILE RECREATIONAL TRAIL  
ROLLING OVER RURAL NORTHEAST TEXAS*

ONE  
HECK  
OF A  
TREK



# NORTHEAST TEXAS TRAIL



## *Come Aboard!*

Join us in “re-cycling” an invaluable rail banked corridor into pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails for moving people through the picturesque countryside of Northeast Texas. From Farmersville

(East Dallas) it will travel through 19 rural towns and 7 counties to New Boston (West Texarkana).



**Northeast Texas is a Destination!**

Become a part of completing the trail way and building a destination for current and future generations, and a legacy for our children and grandchildren. Successfully completed trail sections have proven they richly enhance the quality of life for everyone - those who actively use the trail, the communities along the trail, and trail visitors.

We have a “diamond in the rough” in our region and we ask you to help us shape the Northeast Texas Trail into a shining destination for active transportation participants to “burn calories, not carbon”.



*Photo: Kevin Whitley*



## Your Role for Success

We hope each and every resident along the trail will become a supporter and learn more about how they can be the one to truly make a difference.



You can:

- Join us on “One Heck of a Trek” as the trail is lengthened, so more and more residents will enjoy the beauty and tranquility the trail creates.
- Get involved for your health and the health of others by getting active and being part of the solution.
- Encourage visitors to enjoy the trail. Statistics prove the longer a trail is the farther people will travel to use it, stay longer on it and spend more money in towns along the trail.





## *National Trails System Act*

Land for constructing the Northeast Texas Trail project is provided at **no cost** through a 1983 Federal Law called the National Trails System Act (the Act). The main purpose of The Act is to:



1. Preserve established railroad rights-of-way for future reactivation of rail service.
2. Protect rail transportation corridors.
3. Encourage energy efficient transportation use.

The Act defines the process of “**Rail Banking**” also called “**Rails-to-Trails**”.

### **Rail Banking Overview**

Rail banking is when a railroad company voluntarily sells, donates or leases unprofitable or unwanted rail lines and tracks to a qualified public or private entity (the rail bank entity). Important facts about rail banking include:

- The rail bank entity assumes financial responsibility for, and management of the railroad and trail right-of-way (ROW).
- Rules and regulations are set by the Interstate Commerce and the Surface Transportation Board of the United States Department of Transportation.
- The railroad has the right to re-establish rail service in the corridor ROW.
- The rail banked corridor is **not** considered abandoned.
- The rail banked corridor, and any trail improvements are managed by the rail bank entity.
- The ROW **does not** revert to the adjacent landowners.
- Thus a rail banked corridor is not splintered and is kept intact for future railroad use.





## Our Communities will Benefit from Rail Banking



Through the Act, rail banking has preserved 5,000 miles of rail corridors in 35 states that would have been abandoned.

As of 2011, 1,717 rails-to-trails projects have been established totaling 20,820 miles of former dormant railroad beds - of these trail miles, 16,208 are built on former railroad corridors.

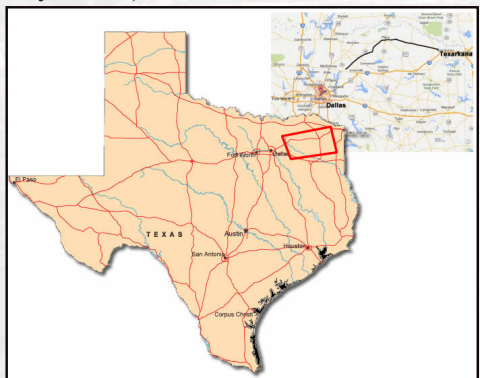
### Our Eight Local Rail Bank Entities

The Northeast Texas Trail's entire 130-mile railroad corridor right-of-way is contiguously rail banked by seven local rail bank entities:

1. City of Farmersville (Farmersville to Merit)
2. Chaparral Rails-to-Trails Inc. (Merit to Paris)
3. Greater Paris Development Foundation (Paris to Clarksville)
4. City of Clarksville (Clarksville to Annona)
5. City of Annona (Annona to Avery)
6. City of Avery (Avery to Bowie County west boundary)
7. Bowie County (Bowie County to New Boston)
8. New Boston (New Boston city limits)

### The Northeast Texas Trail Coalition

In 2012, the Northeast Texas Trail (NETT) Coalition was formally organized as a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization to advocate for the development and use of the NETT.



Visit our website: [www.nettrail.org](http://www.nettrail.org)



## The Northeast Texas Trail Coalition

There are 17 NETT Coalition board members. Each of the rail-banked agencies is represented on the board. The board works with area residents and landowners to improve communication along the trail, create a synergy for the recreational trail project, provide a clear understanding of the benefits of the trail, and spur its development. They are the glue that binds it together. However, the board's most important function is to act as an advocate for the trail, defending it when necessary and promoting it the rest of the time.



*Photo: Anita Akers*

Some parts of the trail are still in their natural state and haven't been completely developed as a shared-use trail. Our challenge is to get these sections completed.

## Pedestrian Safety and Quality of Life

Pedestrian safety and quality of life are two major reasons citizens support the Northeast Texas Trail. SAFETY features:

- The trail can only be used for non-motorized (two and four-wheel) transportation.
- The trail separates motorized transportation from active transportation (walkers, joggers, and cyclists).
- The trail is a **WIN/WIN** for everyone – walkers, joggers, cyclists, homeowners and the community!





## ***Top 10 Reasons to Support Local Trails!***

The following will help you understand the many benefits of trails:

1. **Trails are proven. They are not risky investments.** In the past 30 years, hundreds of abandoned rail corridors totaling over 18,000 miles have been converted into trails and are successfully used for public enjoyment all over the United States.

2. **People love trails.** Trails are ideal for many active commuting uses, including walking, hiking, biking, jogging, horseback riding, in-line skating and even provide wheel chair accessibility. Trails are safe places.

3. **Trails promote community improvement and healthy lifestyles, benefiting local residents.** National studies show that trails provide social environments that promote a unique, livable community atmosphere, and provide citizens and visitors a place that is safe, convenient, interesting, inviting and family friendly. Trails are free to use, open to the public, safe and perfect for promoting outdoor activities that improve everyone's quality of life. Trails are "pedal-ling health" to communities by providing sustainable and health-promoting physical modes of transportation, to combat obesity, diabetes, and heart disease.

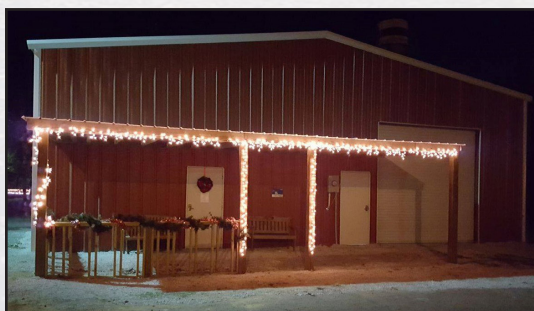






**4. Trails are good for the economy – especially in rural communities.** Trails provide rural economic revitalization through creating jobs, stimulating local economies, and sustaining property values. The economic impact starts with construction and continues well into the future, growing over time.

**5. Maintenance costs are nominal and offset by volunteers and increased sales tax revenues.** The economic impact of “rails-to-trails” is proven to increase tourism and promote the retention and expansion of local businesses that provide jobs and family-sustaining incomes. Trail towns can welcome trail users to spend money in town by meeting their needs and promoting the character and unique features of the community. Just as the railroads originally helped build towns, today, trails can do the same to revitalize their struggling communities.



*Pictured: Avery Hostel*



*Pictured: New Boston Visitor Center*



**6. The proposed 130-mile trail puts Northeast Texas on the map.** It will roll through 19 Northeast Texas towns and 7 Counties. According to the 2010 US Census Bureau, five of these counties are economically distressed areas with higher unemployment and per-capita income well below the State and National averages. This will be Texas' longest trail and the 5th longest trail in the United States!



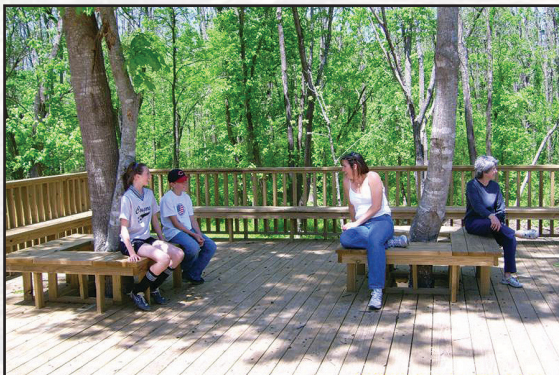
*Pictured: Clarksville Rail Trail Bridge*



*Pictured: Paris Pony Rainbow Truss Bridge*

**7. The trail will increase tourism and visitors into our towns.**

The trail will bring visitors not only from Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Louisiana, but also from across the United States and worldwide. Within a 60-mile radius (1 hour drive) from the 3 major trail heads in Farmersville, Paris and New Boston, there are 7.4 million potential trail users. The longer a trail is the farther people will travel to use it, stay longer on it and spend more money in the community.





**8. The trail will conserve our environment, promote nature and preserve Texas heritage.** The trail offers open green space, preserves historic Texas railway corridors and bridges, and serves as a wildlife conservation corridor.

**9. We all want to follow the law.** By Federal law, rail-banked railway corridors must be used only for non-motorized transportation. Motorized vehicles (two and four-wheelers) are not allowed on the trail. Trail supporters understand the importance of good roads and highways and want to cooperate and co-exist in a non-confrontational environment that is offered by the trail.

**10. A vibrant partnership is alive and well in Northeast Texas.** The Citizens and public officials of this 130-mile proposed route are encouraged to embrace a ‘vision for the future’ which include the health, welfare and economic prosperity for their constituents, all of which is offered by the proposed Northeast Texas Rural Bicycle/Pedestrian Trail System.





## Ways You Can Help

We have raised nearly 20 million dollars for trail construction. Our main sources of funding have been grants: 14 Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recreational grants and six (6) Texas Department of Transportation TAP grants which are a 80/20 match. We also have received grants from private and industrial foundations in the northeast Texas region.

Some sections of the Trail have been completed by in-kind donations where individuals and businesses donate services such as equipment, materials, and labor for construction work. In-kind donations are tax-deductible, and they have reduced the cash requirement for the 20% match.

Our challenge is to secure the matching funds needed to apply for grants to complete all sections of the NETT. We welcome partnerships, in-kind and cash contributions.

**To learn more about the NETT and the trail towns along its path, or to make a donation, please visit our website: <http://netexastrail.org>.**

