

WELCOME TO THE DELTA HERITAGE TRAIL

Experience one of eastern Arkansas's recreational treasures, the Delta Heritage Trail, a 21-mile hiking/biking trail stretching from Helena junction to Elaine. This is the completed section of what in the future will be an 84.5-mile long-distance trail. This rail-to-trail conversion is being developed in phases by Arkansas State Parks. Your journey on this historic rail route immerses you in the sounds and scenery of today's Delta landscape and reveals echoes of the past. The compacted, crushed rock trail passes through fields and treelines offering smooth riding and walking through Delta farmland scenery. Mammals, songbirds, and raptors can be seen along the route. Be sure to pick up *A Guide to Wildlife Watching at Delta Heritage Trail State Park* at the visitor center on U.S. 49 in Barton.

Donated in 1992 by Union Pacific Corporation, the 73-mile railroad corridor extends from Helena Junction south through three counties. The trail was extended another 14.7 miles on the southern end in 2010. Once completed, the trail will stretch from one mile south of Lexa (six miles west of Helena) to Rohwer, and extend via the Mississippi River levee to Arkansas City. The right-of-way passes through some of the most remote and scenic areas remaining in "the Delta" region of eastern Arkansas. This region was once covered by a bottomland hardwood forest extending from Cairo, Illinois to the mouth of the Mississippi. Today only fragments of this great forest remain, separated and surrounded by agricultural development. The middle portion of the Delta Heritage Trail passes through some of the finest examples of the remaining wetland forest.

Future trail development will open the section south of Snow Lake. Here the route becomes a shady tunnel through overhanging vegetation with openings where trestles cross sloughs and bayous. For six miles the trail adjoins the 160,000-acre White River National Wildlife Refuge and trestles become longer, crossing larger areas of wetlands. The route crosses the White River on a high steel bridge with a long, elevated trestle on either end. For three miles between the Arkansas and White rivers, the trail passes through the dense bottomland hardwood forests and wetlands of the Trusten Holder Wildlife Management Area.

The White River/Lower Arkansas River basin is recognized by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission as an ecological "megasite," representing a significant

remnant of the once great bottomland hardwood ecosystem of the lower Mississippi River Alluvial Plain. Several forest types are readily observed from the trail and wildlife is abundant.

AREA ATTRACTIONS

The Delta Heritage Trail is one of many attractions in the Arkansas Delta. This region is a crossroads of activity for today's travelers, just as it was a crossroads for frontiersmen, traders, hunters, and planters throughout its 200-year history as part of the United States.

Missouri Pacific's passenger train, the Delta Eagle, no longer steams down this right-of-way. However, the Delta is attracting visitors in increasing numbers on the Louisiana Purchase Highway, The Great River Road, and Crowley's Ridge National Scenic Byway. They come to learn of Delta life at the Delta Cultural Center in Helena, and to camp in the unusual forest community of Crowley's Ridge in the St. Francis National Forest. Comfortable campsites are also available in U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation areas along the Arkansas River near the south end of the Delta Heritage Trail.

Nearby are Louisiana Purchase Historic State Park, Arkansas Post Museum, and Arkansas Post National Memorial. Visit one of the nation's oldest and wildest areas: White River National Wildlife Refuge.

Just north of Interstate 40 you'll find one of mid-America's most remarkable Native American sites—Parkin Archeological State Park. Here Casqui, head of a large group of Native Americans of the Mississippian culture, befriended Spanish explorer Hernando de Soto. The gallery, programs, and exhibits along the barrier-free trail through the village site tell the story. West of Parkin and just 13-miles north of Forrest City, in the beautiful Crowley's Ridge forest, is 7,000-acre Village Creek State Park where you'll find lakes, golf, multi-use trails, campsites, and cabins.

Of course, the primary livelihood of the Delta, farming, is one of its attractions. The soil is extremely rich and cotton and soybeans are staples of the economy. Arkansas is the number one producer of rice in America. Rice elevators resemble city skyscrapers on the horizon, and Stuttgart, on the Grand Prairie of the Arkansas Delta, is famed as the home of Riceland Rice. Rice is a beautiful crop. As the soil is prepared, farmers make serpentine levees across their fields. When growing, rice is a vivid green. It turns a rich golden color when ready to be harvested.

Enjoy your stay in The Delta.

THERE'S A LOT TO SEE IN THE DELTA.

- Delta Heritage Trail State Park
- Delta Cultural Center
- St. Francis National Forest (USFS)
- Great River Road
- Crowley's Ridge National Scenic Byway
- Village Creek State Park
- Parkin Archeological State Park
- Louisiana Purchase Historic State Park
- Mississippi River State Park
- Arkansas Post Museum
- Arkansas Post National Memorial (NPS)
- White River National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS)
- Trusten Holder Wildlife Management Area (AGFC)
- Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Center
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers recreation areas

LOCATION

The primary access to the Delta Heritage Trail is at Barton, six miles west of Helena on U.S. Highway 49.

For further information contact:

Delta Heritage Trail State Park
5539 Hwy 49 • West Helena, AR 72390
(870) 572-2352
DeltaHeritageTrail@Arkansas.com

For information on this park or other Arkansas's state parks, contact:

Arkansas State Parks
1 Capitol Mall
Little Rock, AR 72201
(501) 682-1191
ArkansasStateParks.com



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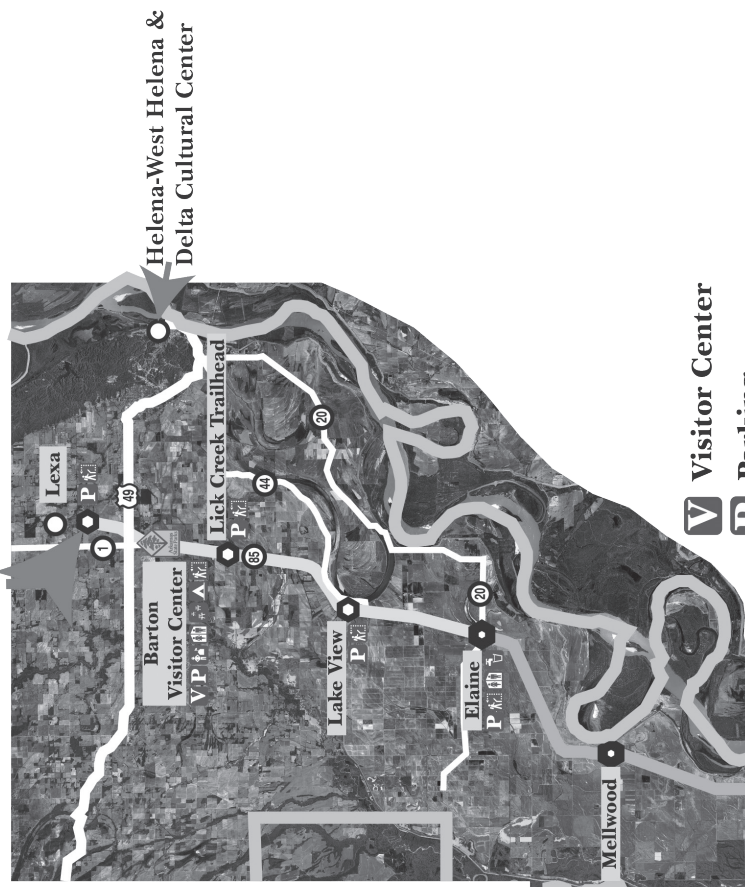
DELTA HERITAGE TRAIL STATE PARK



ARKANSAS
DEPARTMENT OF PARKS & TOURISM

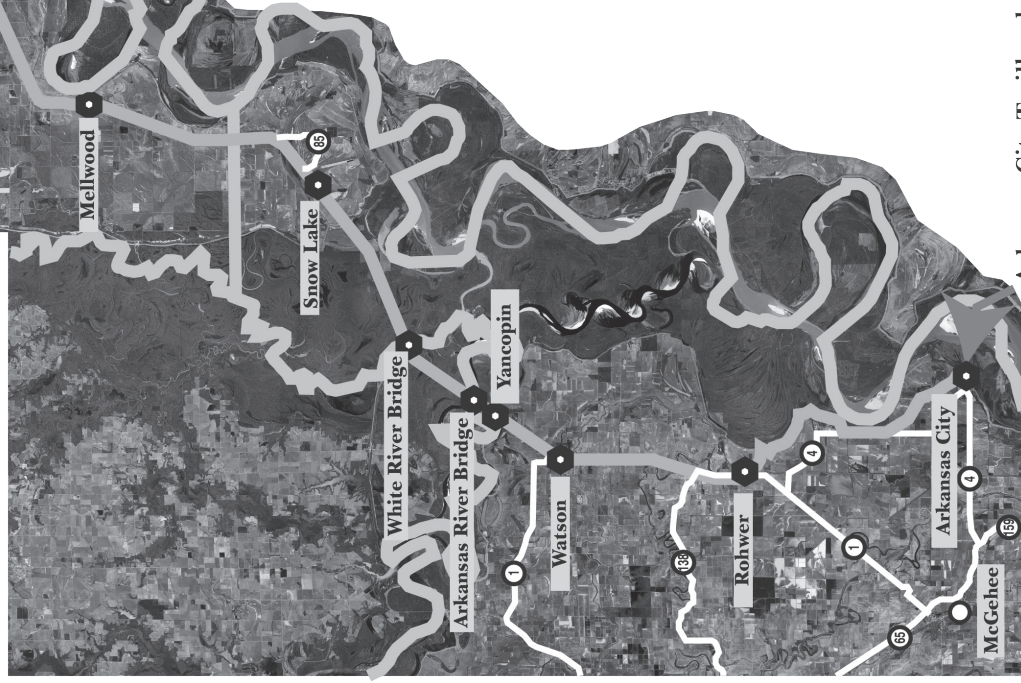
DELTA HERITAGE TRAIL STATE PARK

Helena Junction Trailhead
84.46 miles to Arkansas City



NOTICE: To preserve scenic beauty and ecology, fences and warning signs have not been installed in some park locations. Caution and supervision of your children are required while visiting these areas.

- Visitor Center
- Parking
- Self-guided Trail
- Restrooms
- Drinking Water
- Picnic Area
- Camping
- Ranger Station



Arkansas City Trailhead
84.46 miles to Lexa

This rail-to-trail conversion in southeast Arkansas is being developed in phases along the former Union Pacific Railroad right-of-way that stretches from one mile south of Lexa (six miles west of Helena) to Rohwer, the former route of *The Delta Eagle*, and extending via the Mississippi River levee to Arkansas City.

The first 21 miles of trail have been completed from Helena junction to Elaine. Trailheads are located at Helena Junction near Lexa, Walnut Corner at the U.S. 49 overpass, Lick Creek (Ark. 85 just south of Barton), Lakeview, and Elaine.

The trail stretches through a shaded canopy of native hardwoods, alongside agricultural fields, and across many streams. Wildlife viewing and birding opportunities abound along the route.

The park visitor center is on U.S. 49 in Barton. Trail maps are available at this location as are picnic sites, restrooms and five primitive tent sites. Once completed, Delta Heritage Trail will also offer sweeping views from bridges that span the Arkansas River and the White River.



Watch and listen for a variety of wildlife as you travel through the outdoor adventure of the Delta.