

Trinity River National Water Trail Master Plan

AUGUST, 12TH 2024



North Central Texas
Council of Governments





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Ea prima scripta nostrud sit, id eos cetero suavitate. Mel ea elitr assentior. Mei an magna idque intellegat, mea ea diceret forensibus. Te modo quas veritus sea. Ei sea unum sonet copiosae, odio purto graece nam cu.

Vis an percipit inimicus, sea cu eros elaboraret. Sea at quot placerat, his te cibo diceret nusquam. At veri platonem voluptatum cum, eos dicam dictas dicunt an. Ei pro amet congue, ut scaevola complectitur eam. Tation munere sed ea, aperiri adipisci te sit, eu abhorreant honestatis nam. Iuvaret nusquam forensibus per ei, velit aliquid petentium ea nec, etiam exerci percipitur ut usu.

Author Name

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Place Holder

Place Holder

Executive Summary

The upper corridor of the Trinity River, a hidden ribbon of natural wonder, runs almost unnoticed through one of the busiest and fastest-growing metropolitan areas in the United States. As it traverses through the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, the river is flanked along much of its length by paved hike/bike trails and is adjacent to five learning centers and over fifty parks and nature preserves. There are also connections to the region's vibrant past, including the site where thousands of 49ers crossed the river on the way to the California gold rush.

With 21 existing canoe/kayak launch sites, Trinity Coalition, a local nonprofit organization, recognized the value and recreational significance integrating these sites could bring to the North Central Texas region. In 2018, Trinity Coalition, in partnership with the North Central Texas Council of Governments (NCTCOG), met with representatives from nine cities (Arlington, Carrollton, Coppell, Dallas, Grand Prairie, Farmers Branch, Fort Worth, Irving, Lewisville) and Dallas County, with a proposal to integrate all 21 existing canoe launch sites, plus three future launch sites, into a single paddling trail. Trinity Coalition received letters of support from all ten local governments and others and applied to the National Park Service (NPS) for National Recreation Trail status. The designation of National Water Trail by the Secretary of the Interior was awarded in 2020, creating a national paddling destination.

The Trinity River National Water Trail ("Water Trail") as it stands today covers 130 river miles, providing access to three major river tributaries, the Clear Fork, West Fork, and Elm Fork, as well as 40 miles of the Main Stem. The Upper Trinity River Corridor is one of only 56 water trails in the United States to hold that designation, and the first of its kind in Texas. To maintain the National Water Trail status, Trinity Coalition must work with local communities, who own the launch sites, to ensure continued compliance with NPS standards. Developed by NCTCOG, in coordination with Trinity Coalition and the Trinity River National Water Trail Task Force, the purpose of this Master Plan is to identify long-range actions that advance tourism, recreation, and economic development, and provide resources to help Trinity Coalition and communities maintain and develop the Water Trail.



01 Introduction



VISION

The Trinity River National Water Trail seeks to elevate the value of the Trinity River through **community** access to the river.

MISSION

This will be achieved by ensuring access is safe and equitable, protecting natural resources, promoting economic and cultural assets, and integrating land trail connections and trail expansion. This Trinity River National Water Trail Master Plan will identify long-range actions to advance these ideas, and to help communities develop the Water Trail and identify resources.

GOALS



DEVELOPMENT

Develop new entry sites and expand the footprint of the existing water trail.



PROMOTION

Promote the use of the Water Trail and educate all users.



ACCESS

Make the Water Trail more accessible to all.



MAINTENANCE

Maintain condition and safety of the Water Trail's existing and future launch sites.



PROTECTION

Promote stewardship along the Trinity River.



INTEGRATION

Connect the Water Trail to existing land trails.



PROSPERITY

Promote the economic benefits of the Water Trail.



LEGACY

Highlight the cultural and historical context of the Water Trail.



02 Goals



DEVELOPMENT

Develop new entry sites and expand the footprint of the existing water trail.

GOAL

Strategically identify, plan, and integrate new areas and launch sites to reduce distances between sites and to extend the Water Trail's reach.

OUTCOME

Broadening the geographical scope of the Water Trail will provide more communities and residents with access to the unique recreational, cultural, and natural experiences offered by the waterway. The development of new entry sites will help improve the overall user experience and enhance the overall functionality of the entire Water Trail. Successful implementation will require careful planning, collaboration with stakeholders, and consideration of user needs and safety standards. As the Water Trail expands, the economic and social benefits will follow, as well as draw more attention to the Water Trail increasing activity and investments made along the Trinity River.





DEVELOPMENT

Identify Locations



Collaborate with local communities to identify areas where new entry sites can be established. Consider factors such as existing Water Trail segments, user accessibility, and natural features.

Plan and Design Future Launch Points



Collaborate with local communities to plan and design new launch sites. Ensure that these sites strategically reduce distances between existing Water Trail segments.

STRATEGIES

Coordinate Strategic Trail Planning



Conduct a thorough assessment of the existing Water Trail network. Collaborate with local stakeholders, landowners, and agencies to secure necessary permissions and rights-of-way.

Collaborate with Stakeholders



Engage local communities and raise awareness about the Water Trail and opportunities for enhancement. Host public meetings, workshops, and educational events to involve residents in the planning process.



DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION ITEM 1

Complete Priority Gaps Along The Water Trail.

While the National Park Service (NPS) does not require a maximum distance between launch sites, a comfortable distance for recreational paddlers is approximately seven miles or less. As identified in Figure 1.1 and Table 1.1, the majority of launch sites are within seven miles or less, except:

- Arrow Park South (L4) to White Settlement Road (L5)
- Handley Ederville Road (L10) to River Legacy Park (L11)
- River Legacy Park (L11) to Trammel Crow Park (L19)
- Frasier Dam Recreation Area (L18) to Trammel Crow Park (L19)

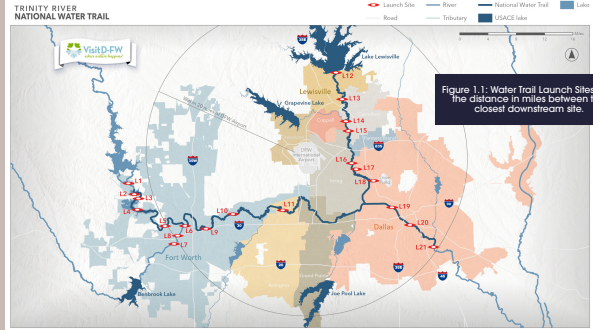


Table 1.1: Information about the Water Trail's current launch sites, including the distance in miles to the closest downstream site.

| Number | Launch Site | Location | Launch Type | Length (miles) |
|--------|--------------------------|------------|---------------------|----------------|
| L1 | Fort Worth Nature Center | Fort Worth | Floating Dock | 2.7 to L2 |
| L2 | Fort Worth Nature Center | Fort Worth | Gravel Bar | 1.7 to L3 |
| L3 | Casino Beach | Fort Worth | Boat Ramp | 3.5 to L4 |
| L4 | Arrow Park South | Fort Worth | Boat Ramp | 8 to L5 |
| L5 | White Settlement Road | Fort Worth | Rock Steps | 4.5 to L6 |
| L6 | Panther Island | Fort Worth | Sand Beach | 7 to L9 |
| L7 | Rogers Road | Fort Worth | Grassy Bank | 1.5 to L8 |
| L8 | Trinity Park | Fort Worth | Sloping Sidewalk | 1.8 to L6 |
| L9 | Beach Street | Fort Worth | Sloping Sidewalk | 6.7 to L10 |
| L10 | Handley Ederville Road | Fort Worth | Rock Steps | 14 to L11 |
| L11 | River Legacy Park | Arlington | Concrete Platform | 24 to L19 |
| L12 | LLELA Nature Preserve | Lewisville | Grassy/Pebble Slope | 6 to L13 |
| L13 | Trinity Fork Park | Lewisville | ADA Platform | 5 to L14 |
| L14 | McInnish Park | Carrollton | Concrete Platform | 1.6 to L15 |
| L15 | Dimension Tract | Carrollton | Stone Steps | 6.4 to L16 |
| L16 | Bird's Fort Park | Irving | Concrete Ramp | 2 to L17 |
| L17 | California Crossing | Dallas | Concrete Ramp | 5.5 to L18 |
| L18 | Frasier Dam Rec. Area | Dallas | Gravel Bank | 8.3 to L19 |
| L19 | Trammel Crow Park | Dallas | Boat Ramp | 3.7 to L20 |
| L20 | Moore Park | Dallas | Dirt Ramp | 6 to L21 |
| L21 | Loop 12 | Dallas | Boat Ramp | End |



DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION ITEM 2

Identify Common Projects To Leverage Joint Investments And Development Opportunities.

Developing new launch sites to bridge the gaps in launch sites or to enhance the Water Trail may prove difficult due to a lack of resources and/or the inability to bring in heavy equipment. Cities may consider identifying future roadway/bridge improvements in proximity to the Water Trail to collaborate on the timing and use of heavy equipment. The Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) maintains a Project Tracker interactive map that provides public information on a project's construction status (source: https://apps3.txdot.gov/apps-cq/project_tracker/). NCTCOG also maintains an interactive map, Revenue and Project Tracking System (RAPTS), to find active transportation project details (source: <https://rapts.dfwmaps.com/>). See Figure 1.2 and Figure 1.3 for screenshots on what information may be obtained from these resources.

Figure 1.2: Screenshot of TxDOT's Project Tracker mapping application. (source: https://apps3.txdot.gov/apps-cq/project_tracker/)

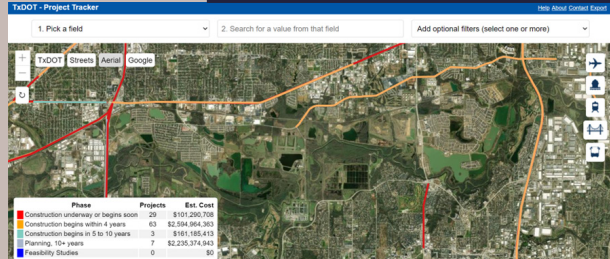
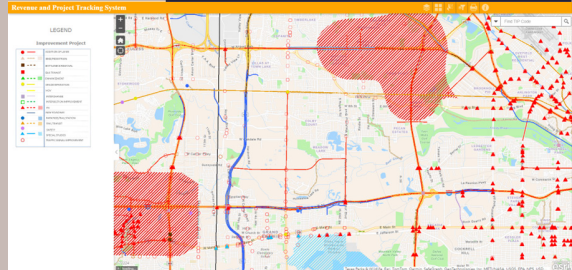


Figure 1.3: Screenshot of NCTCOG's RAPTS search engine. (source: <https://rapts.dfwmaps.com/>)





DEVELOPMENT

RECOMMENDATIONS

ACTION ITEM 3

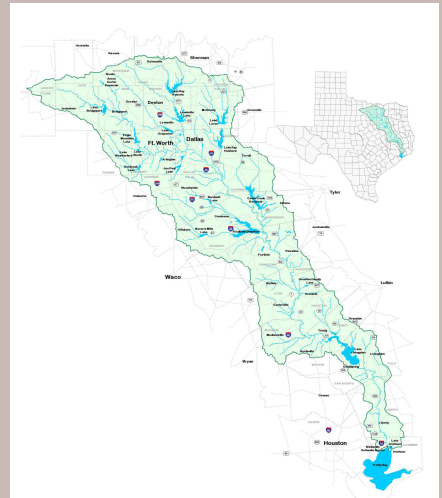
Collaborate With Other Communities Or Organizations To Expand The Water Trail.

The nationally designated Water Trail covers 130 river miles; however, Trinity Coalition has a desire to include additional river and/or lake miles in the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, as well as expanding to the Gulf Coast. Figure 1.4 displays the Trinity River Basin, where it originates in far north Texas and empties in the Trinity Bay in the Gulf of Mexico. Trinity Coalition, as a nonprofit organization, does not have any authority to develop or maintain launch sites, requiring coordination and partnerships with local cities and counties who do. These partnerships would help Trinity Coalition understand applicable local, state, and federal requirements. As a starting point, Trinity Coalition may consider connecting with other Councils of Governments that the Trinity River passes through on its way to the Gulf Coast, including:

- East Texas Council of Governments
- Heart of Texas Council of Governments
- Brazos Valley Council of Governments
- Deep East Texas Council of Governments
- South East Texas Regional Planning Commission
- Houston-Galveston Area Council

Trinity Coalition may also consider coordinating with communities that have established paddling trails in local lakes in partnership with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to identify potential connections to the Water Trail.

Figure 1.4: Trinity River Basin map.



(source: The Texas Landscape Project
https://www.amazon.com/dp/1623493722?ref=ppx_pop_mob_ap_share)



DEVELOPMENT

CASE STUDY

New launch site at Trinity View Park.

The City of Irving Parks and Recreation Department partnered with Trinity Coalition to locate a new canoe launch site at Trinity View Park (Figure 1.5) that will provide better accessibility to the river after the original launch located at Mountain Creek Preserve was severely damaged by the record floods of 2015 to 2016. This new launch site will help shorten the distance between the Frasier Dam Recreation Launch Site (L18) and the nearest downstream launch site 8.3 miles away at Trammel Crow Park (L19).

A resolution to award a contractor to install the launch site was approved at the May 2, 2024 Irving City Council meeting and supports the city's "Future in Focus: Sense of Community - Provide exceptional recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities" initiative. According to the Irving City Council Agenda, "the project will provide for egress and ingress of canoes and kayaks by installing a 10-foot-wide concrete walk to the Trinity River's normal water elevation. Concrete walls, rip-rap, and gabions will be installed to protect the river bank and prevent erosion." (source: <https://www.cityofirving.org/DocumentCenter/View/61371/May-2-Long-Agenda>)

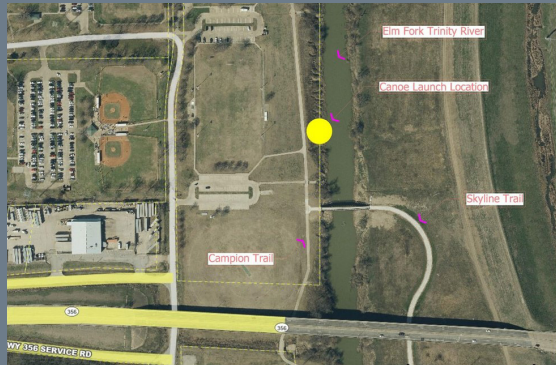


Figure 1.5: Future launch site location at Trinity View Park in Irving.



PROMOTION

Promote the use of the Water Trail
and educate all users.

GOAL

Increase awareness, utilization, and understanding of the Water Trail. National water trails represent scenic and recreational waterways with cultural, historical, and natural significance to its area.

OUTCOME

Promoting the Water Trail encourages individuals and communities to actively engage with the Trinity River while ensuring they possess the knowledge necessary for responsible and enjoyable use. By leveraging different media platforms this plan will help communities understand how to promote the trail and attract a diverse range of users. Additionally, educating communities on the use of the Water Trail will equip users with essential information on safety, environmental stewardship, and the cultural or historical significance.





PROMOTION

STRATEGIES

Conduct Community Outreach And Events



Organize community events, workshops, and guided tours to introduce people to the Water Trail.

Collaborate with local schools, outdoor clubs, and environmental organizations to raise awareness about the benefits of water trails.

Create Online And Social Media Campaigns



Leverage social media platforms and websites to share Water Trail stories, photos, and user experiences. Create engaging content that highlights the beauty of water trails, safety tips, and responsible use.



PROMOTION

RECOMMENDATIONS

Establish Regularly Scheduled Trail Focus Meetings For Additional Stakeholder Input. (tourism, visitors' bureaus, recreation groups, etc.)

Trinity Coalition established a Board of Directors in 2015 to carry forth its mission, "To transform that Trinity River corridor into a nationally-recognized conservation and recreations area". In 2018, NCTCOG supported Trinity Coalition during the process of applying to the National Park Service for National Trail status, awarded in 2020, and hosted regular Task Force meetings from Fiscal Year 2021 to 2024. This helped establish a means for local government coordination and stakeholder involvement. Trinity Coalition continues to meet with the Board of Directors to involve additional stakeholders in achieving their mission, such as private business representatives, naturalists, community activists, and governmental representatives.

ACTION ITEM 1

Increase Sharing Of Information To Improve Communication With Stakeholders.

Trinity Coalition regularly shares information online about the Water Trail via its website (www.trinitycoalition.org), Facebook page (www.facebook.com/trinityrivercoalition), Trinity River Paddling Association Facebook Group page (www.facebook.com/groups/638530459657010), and Meetup page (www.meetup.com/dfwpaddlesports/). Trinity Coalition also attends community events, fairs, expos, and conferences to further publicize the Water Trail. As a way to increase publicity of the Water Trail, cities along the trail may consider providing information and regular updates to their staff, residents, and businesses via online and mailed newsletters and at community events. Opportunities exist for cities to partner with Trinity Coalition at community events and River cleanup events.

ACTION ITEM 2



PROMOTION

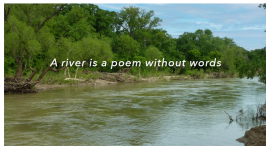
CASE STUDY

VisitD-FW.com

Trinity Coalition has developed a new website, www.visitd-fw.com, to highlight the nature-based tourism opportunities in the Dallas-Fort Worth (DFW) metroplex. Hike and bike trails, mountain biking trails, nature centers, golf courses, and lakes are featured on this website, where potential visitors can explore these experiences in close proximity to the Water Trail. Trinity Coalition hopes to expand this resource even further by providing sample itineraries and partnering with local tourism/visitors' bureaus and recreation groups to make planning a visit easy. The centrally-located DFW Airport is "the second-busiest airport in the world", operating approximately 1,800 flights per day.



WELCOME to AMERICA'S LARGEST COLLECTION OF URBAN NATURE-EXPERIENCES!



A river is a poem without words



The Trinity River National Water Trail is the only National Park Service designated national water trail in Texas.

Beginning between the Lake Lewisville Dam on the north and Lake Mead on the west, continuing through Ft. Worth, including Fort Worth and Keller, the 100-mile trail ends in southern Dallas just about 100 miles from Ft. Worth.

Beginning between the Lake Lewisville Dam on the north and Lake Mead on the west, continuing through Ft. Worth, including Fort Worth and Keller, the 100-mile trail ends in southern Dallas just about 100 miles from Ft. Worth.

The Trinity River is the longest river within a single continental U.S. state and is the longest river whose watershed is fully contained within Texas borders. The Trinity River supplies drinking water for half the 10 million residents in Texas, a population that is approximately equal to all of New England.



Trinity River basin watershed



Nature abounds here.

Because the land is very flat in this part of Texas, where the river flows, as it does in most springs, the river grows wide. This means that normal human development of buildings stays away from the river. As a result, nature abounds here.



Trinity River House, 1900s



Swans and egrets along the shores of the Trinity River



ACCESS

Make the Water Trail more accessible to all.

GOAL

Ensure that the Water Trail becomes inclusive and welcoming to individuals of diverse abilities and backgrounds.

OUTCOME

Removing and addressing barriers that may limit accessibility will create a Water Trail that everyone can fully enjoy and participate in the trail experience. Strategic plans and improvements can be implemented to remove or mitigate barriers and enhance accessibility. Achieving this goal will foster a culture of inclusivity where people of all abilities and backgrounds can experience the benefits of the Water Trail in a meaningful and equitable way.





ACCESS

STRATEGIES

Evaluate Existing Barriers



Identify any physical, language, or financial barriers. Consider factors such as trail surfaces, signage, access points, and amenities.

Implement Universal Design Principles



Apply universal design principles to create an inclusive experience for all users.

Propose Signage And Information



Install clear and well-designed signage at trailheads, access points, and key locations. Include information in multiple formats to accommodate different needs.



ACCESS

ACTION ITEM 1

Identify ADA Accessible Launch Sites on the Water Trail.

The following launch sites are ADA compliant:

- Trinity Fork Park
- Others?

ACTION ITEM 3

Involve Advocacy Groups in the Planning and Design Process to Gather Insights and Feedback for Improving Accessibility.

Launch sites are often designed by individuals with limited knowledge and understanding of what adaptive paddlers may require. It is important for Trinity Coalition and local communities to involve local advocacy groups with knowledge of adaptive paddling to ensure ADA launch sites have the necessary features to get into the water.

Ensure Best Practice Design Standards Meet Accessibility Standards.

(Including gentle slopes, firm surfaces, and minimal obstacles.)

Trinity Coalition, in coordination with local communities, should consider the quality of ADA accommodations over the number of access points. Many launch sites may be considered ADA accessible but are not for paddlers with moderate to severe disabilities who need additional adaptive features -- "Accessible features will get you to the water, and adaptive features will get you into the water."

(source: <https://www.npsa.org/parks-recreation-magazine/2023/july/ensuring-kayak-launches-are-adaptive-and-inclusive/>)

ACTION ITEM 2

RECOMMENDATIONS

Conduct outreach and Educational Programs to Raise Awareness About Trail Accessibility, Inclusivity, and Proper Etiquette When Sharing the Trail With Diverse Users.

ACTION ITEM 4

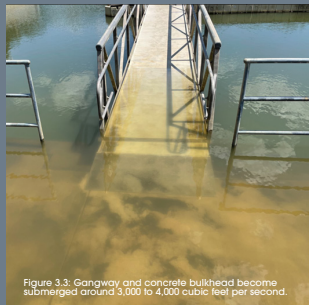


ACCESS

CASE STUDY

The Trinity Fork Park Launch Site

The Trinity Fork Park Launch Site (L13) in Lewisville is an American Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant platform allowing for paddlers of all ages and abilities safe and easy access to the Water Trail. The platform consists of a floating "roll-on/roll-off" dock with gangways to bridge the gap between the dock and land. The launch site sits just off the Elm Fork to protect the platform from fast-moving flood waters. Occasionally the rising water will disconnect the floating section and is reconnected by city staff once flooding subsides. See Figures 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 for details of this launch site.





MAINTENANCE


Maintain condition and safety of the Water Trail's existing and future launch sites.

GOAL

Ensure an overall well maintained and safe network of launch sites by providing recommendations that preserve future and existing infrastructure, keep users safe, and minimize environmental impact.

OUTCOME

Strategies for maintaining existing launch sites and best practices for the design of futures entry sites make for a safer and user-friendly experience. The upkeep of the launch sites increases the longevity of the launch sites and contributes to a consistent and sustainable experience for users engaging in water-based activities.



Trinity Trails Rogers Road



MAINTENANCE

STRATEGIES

Conduct Regular Inspections And Maintenance



Establish a routine inspection schedule for all launch sites.

Inspect docks, ramps, and access points for signs of wear, damage, or hazards.

Educate Users On Guidelines



Develop clear guidelines for users regarding safe practices at launch sites. Educate boaters, kayakers, and paddlers on proper launching techniques. Promote responsible behavior, such as cleaning up after use and respecting other users.



MAINTENANCE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Identify and document best management practices for launch site construction and maintenance.

The National Park Service (NPS) in coordination with the River Management Society developed guidelines for assessing, designing, and building access sites for carry-in watercraft, known as Prepare To Launch! Launches are typically designed as ramps, stairs, or elevated using materials such as native natural materials (e.g., soil, sand, gravel, rocks, vegetation), concrete, geotextile/concrete mats, timber, and wood-alternative materials.

(Source: Prepare to Launch! Chapter 3)

ACTION ITEM 1

Increase Sharing Of Information To Improve Communication With Stakeholders.

When issues arise on the Water Trail making launch sites difficult to access or passage hazardous, being able to collect and distribute that information easily, quickly, and to the appropriate people is important. Trinity Coalition may consider creating and hosting an online form where paddlers can report trail conditions, notifying Trinity Coalition and the city where the issue is reported. Coordination between Trinity Coalition and cities/counties along the Water Trail is necessary.

ACTION ITEM 2



MAINTENANCE

RECOMMENDATIONS

Maintain cohesive signage throughout the trail and clearly mark hazard areas.

Trinity Coalition's online "Launch Sites Map" and sites descriptions clearly identifies the existing hazards that paddlers need to be aware of before paddling the Water Trail. For example, see Figure 4.1 for the hazards at the Arrow Park South Launch Site (L4).

Paddlers may not consult the online map beforehand; therefore, signage identifying hazards along the Water Trail posted at the launch sites may be necessary. Trinity Coalition has worked with several cities to develop signage that includes this type of information. Figure 4.2 shows a picture of signage that has been installed at the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area. In addition, Trinity Coalition serves as an outfitter, known as TC Paddlesports, at Panther Island and when staff are present, hazards are verbally communicated (Figure 4.3).

Trinity Coalition may also consider coordinating with cities and appropriate agencies to clearly mark bridges with street names to ensure paddlers always know their general location. The paved trails that make up Trinity Trails of Fort Worth have signage that could be replicated. See Figure 4.4 for an example of the signage along the Trinity Trails.

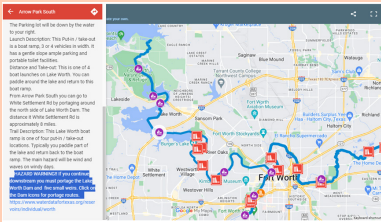


Figure 4.1: Hazards identified at Arrow Park South Launch Site.



Figure 4.3: TC Paddlesports' Teresa Patterson preparing paddlers for the Water Trail.

Figure 4.2: Signage installed at the Lewisville Lake Environmental Learning Area Launch Site (L12) to identify information like hazards along the Water Trail.



Figure 4.4: Signage displayed along the Trinity Trails of Fort Worth that clearly identify street names.





MAINTENANCE

CASE STUDY

Prepare To Launch! Design Success

Natural surfaces: Rogers Road, Panther Island, LLELA, Frasier Dan Rec Area.

Ramps: Trammell Crow, Loop 12, Casino Beach, Arrow Park South, Birds Fort Trail, California Crossing (2 Boat Ramps)

Stairs: Dimension Tract at Elm Park

Docks/Piers/Cantilevers/Floating: Fort Worth Nature Center, Trinity Fort Park (Hebron Parkway), Beach Street.

Elevated walkways/portages to sites (including concrete sidewalks): Moore Park, Trinity Park Launch, White Settlement Launch, Hadley-Ederville

Figure 4.5: The launch site at Trinity Fork Park provides a great example of the use of concrete stairs with dual handrails to help with sliding kayaks up and down.





PROTECTION

Promote stewardship along the Trinity River.

GOAL

Cultivate a sense of responsibility, care, and active engagement among communities and individuals towards the environmental health and overall quality of the Trinity River.

OUTCOME

Prioritizing environmental awareness, sustainable practices, and community involvement to preserving the Trinity River will contribute to enhancing the quality of the Water Trail. These efforts aim to instill a sense of stewardship by fostering a deeper understanding of the river's role in supporting both natural habitats and human communities and to address preconceived notions associated with the water quality of the Trinity River. By fostering a sense of shared responsibility, the objective is to ensure the continued health and vitality of the Trinity River for current and future generations.





PROTECTION

STRATEGIES

Collaborate With Stakeholders



Work with local organizations, schools, businesses, and government bodies to collectively promote stewardship.

Educate and Involve Users on Stewardship



Develop educational opportunities and implement volunteer programs to increase volunteer engagement in water trails.



PROTECTION

RECOMMENDATIONS

Distribute information that educates visitors about the ecosystem, conservation practices, and the importance of responsible behavior including guidelines for proper trail use.

(Newsletter, social media, clearly posted guidelines at the launch sites.)

The Trinity River water trail plays a crucial role in fostering environmental awareness.

Communities can generate signage and brochures that provide information about the diverse wildlife that thrive along the river, emphasizing their ecological significance and the conservation efforts being done to preserve them. Community conservation and stewardship guidelines will highlight best practices for preserving the natural environment, minimizing waste, and supporting sustainable recreational activities. By promoting stewardship, communities can use the Trinity River Water Trail to encourage visitors to actively participate in the preservation of the river and ensure it will be sustained for future generations.

ACTION ITEM 1

Mobilize volunteers and community groups to participate in regular river cleanup drives. Remove litter, debris, and invasive species from the riverbanks and water to maintain a clean and healthy environment.

(Hold community cleanup events, collaborate with corporate volunteers (e.g., TC's efforts), adopt a spot/river segment.)

Communities that want to mobilize volunteers for river cleanups can establish or leverage volunteer programs. Communities can partner with community organizations, schools, environmental groups, and businesses to grow their network of potential volunteers for environmental stewardship. Programs like Adopt-a-trail can be expanded to train and provide volunteers with the appropriate materials and knowledge for safe cleanups, including proper waste handling, safety protocols, and environmental conservation practices.

ACTION ITEM 2

Partner with nonprofits and neighboring communities to regularly test water samples for pollutants, nutrient levels, and other indicators of river health. Share findings with the public to foster a sense of responsibility.

(Partner with Stream Team; add data to TC's website.)

Currently, water quality testing is done annually or on request. To encourage more usage of the trail, it is important to track the quality of the Trinity River and complete water testing for pollutants, nutrient levels, and other indicators of river health. Reports have shown that volunteer water quality testing can be as accurate as those done at the State level. Communities can partner with the Texas Stream Team Program to establish a community water testing program. Currently, this program is led by Texas State University. The Texas Stream Team coordinates a network of organizations and volunteer community scientists who "seek to increase the public's knowledge of water quality and nonpoint source pollution across the state through water quality monitoring, data collection and analysis, and related educational programs". This can help show that residents and trail users that the Trinity River is safe to navigate, and the overall health of the river is up to par. Communities can partner with Texas Stream Team and other organizations, schools, and environmental groups to outline roles and responsibilities for their own testing identify suitable key testing locations along the river and determine the frequency and parameters of the tests.

ACTION ITEM 3



PROTECTION

CASE STUDY

Cities/communities that have partnered with Stream Team

Currently, water quality testing is done annually or on request. To encourage more usage of the trail, it is important to track the quality of the Trinity River and complete water testing for pollutants, nutrient levels, and other indicators of river health. Reports have shown that volunteer water quality testing can be as accurate as those done at the State level. Communities can partner with the Texas Stream Team Program to establish a community water testing program. Currently, this program is led by Texas State University. The Texas Stream Team coordinates a network of organizations and volunteer community scientists who "seek to increase the public's knowledge of water quality and nonpoint source pollution across the state through water quality monitoring, data collection and analysis, and related educational programs". This can help show that residents and trail users that the Trinity River is safe to navigate, and the overall health of the river is up to par. Communities can partner with Texas Stream Team and other organizations, schools, and environmental groups to outline roles and responsibilities for their own testing identify suitable key testing locations along the river and determine the frequency and parameters of the tests.



INTEGRATION

Connect the Water Trail to existing land trails.

GOAL

Creating a seamless and integrated recreational network that enhances accessibility and promotes a holistic outdoor experience.

OUTCOME

This objective aims to establish physical and functional links between the water-based activities along the Water Trail and the surrounding land trails, fostering a cohesive recreational environment. By connecting the Water Trail to existing land trails, the goal is to offer a diverse range of recreational opportunities that cater to a broad spectrum of outdoor enthusiasts. This integration not only enhances the overall user experience but also promotes a deeper appreciation for the interconnected ecosystems and landscapes along the Trinity River corridor.



INTEGRATION

STRATEGIES

Integrate the Water Trail with Existing Land-based Trails.



Identify points where the Water Trail can intersect with established hiking, biking, or equestrian trails. Create seamless transitions between water and land routes to enhance user experience.

Highlight Areas of Interest.



Showcase community points of interest that elevate the recreational experience of the Water Trail.



INTEGRATION

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create a Recreational Map That Includes the Water Trail, Land Trails, Bike Paths, and Points of Interest.

To create a comprehensive recreational map that includes the water trail, land trails, bike paths, and points of interest, NCTCOG has met with communities along the Trinity River to determine which locations were most suitable to highlight. After inventorying existing maps and data on all relevant trails and points of interest, including historical sites, scenic views, and recreational facilities, NCTCOG will work with Trinity Coalition on how to graphically create the map. Once the map is finalized, a digital version of the map will be made available to communities and the possibility of printed maps will be explored. By developing a detailed map, communities will enhance the experience of exploring local trails and points of interest, fostering greater appreciation and use of the region's recreational opportunities.

ACTION ITEM 1

Create Guidelines for Signage That Show the Relation of the Water Trail to Existing Land Trails.

ACTION ITEM 2



INTEGRATION

CASE STUDY

Farmers Branch John F. Burke Nature Preserve

Signage is important for the Trinity River Water Trail because it shows the relationship of the water trail to existing land trails. Communities will need to decide strategic placements for signage. Currently the Trinity Coalitions offers personalized Trinity River Water Trail signage with branding for communities to use at their respective launch sites. However, there is still a need for additional signage that incorporating educational elements, including information about local wildlife ecosystems, safety tips that inform users able any potential hazards or conditions of the Trinity River, and considers accessibility as a priority, ensuring that signage is readable and understandable to all trail users.

Currently, there is no formal design guideline for consistency in the appearance and messaging of the signs. However, because of the Trinity River Water Trail's proximity to the DFW Discover Trail, it is recommended that communities refer to the DFW Discover Trail Branding & Wayfinding Final Report and Recommendations and Best Practices for guidelines on trail signage. These guidelines include standards for materials, colors, fonts, symbols, and layout, ensuring that signage is both cohesive and easy to read.

By developing clear and informative signage guidelines, communities will enhance the user experience on the Trinity River Water Trail. However, it is not expected that signage for the water trail will capture all the information necessary for users. Signage can also utilize QR codes so that users can access more information as necessary. For example, Trinity Coalition signage includes a QR code that shows if the flow of the Trinity River is too dangerous to navigate. Utilizing digital content will make signage for the water trail more robust and can give users access to information about the connections between the water and land trails, providing maps, directional arrows, distance markers, and relevant information about trail features and amenities.



PROSPERITY

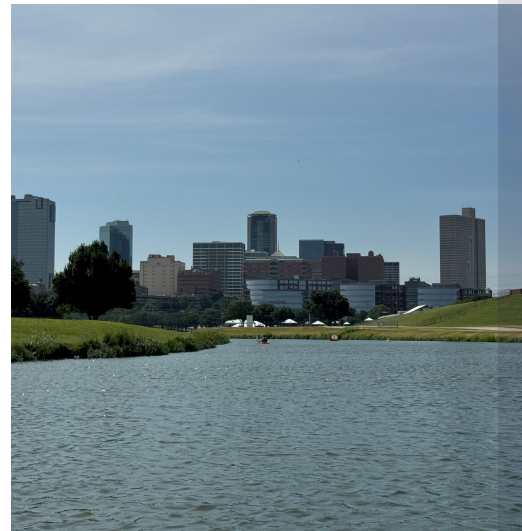
Promote The Economic Benefits of the Water Trail.

GOAL

Showcase the positive economic impacts that the Water Trail system can bring to local communities, businesses, and the broader region.

OUTCOME

Recognizing the Water Trail as more than just a recreational asset will allow communities to leverage the Water Trail to drive economic growth, tourism, and community development in the region. By actively promoting the economic benefits of the trail, the goal is to generate increased support and enthusiasm from stakeholders, local governments, and the community. This, in turn, can lead to sustained economic growth, job creation, and enhanced quality of life for residents in the areas surrounding the Water Trail.





PROSPERITY

STRATEGIES

Encourage Eco-Tourism



Develop targeted marketing campaigns that highlight the Water Trail's unique features. Collaborate with visitor bureaus to promote the Water Trail as a must-visit destination.

To complete additional studies on the economic impact and value of the Water Trail, we will begin by defining the scope and objectives of our research, focusing on geographic boundaries and specific outcomes such as assessing economic benefits and local business impacts. We will assemble a multidisciplinary research team, including economists, environmental scientists, and sociologists, and identify key stakeholders, such as local governments and tourism boards, to collaborate on the project. Next, we will develop a robust research framework that outlines methodologies, key metrics, and data collection strategies, and secure necessary funding and resources through grants and organizational support.

Our data collection phase will involve both secondary data analysis and primary data gathering, including surveys, interviews, and focus groups with tourists, local businesses, and residents. We will also conduct environmental and social impact assessments to gauge the broader implications of the Water Trail. Following data collection, we will perform a detailed economic impact analysis using input-output models, a cost-benefit analysis to compare costs and benefits, and a comparative analysis with similar projects to benchmark our results.

The findings will be compiled into a comprehensive report, including an executive summary, methodology, results, and recommendations, which will be reviewed and refined based on stakeholder feedback. The final report will be published and disseminated through presentations and workshops. For implementation, we will provide policy recommendations to local authorities, suggest strategies to maximize benefits, and establish an ongoing monitoring framework to track the Water Trail's long-term economic impact. Community engagement will be key, with efforts to maintain support and raise awareness through educational programs. This structured approach ensures a thorough and actionable assessment of the Water Trail's economic value.



PROSPERITY

STRATEGIES

Highlight the Economic Impact.



Conduct studies to quantify the economic impact of the Water Trail. Assess spending by trail users to use as data to advocate for investments in trail development.

Promote Trailside Businesses and Services.



Showcase nearby businesses and services that enhance user experience.



LEGACY

Highlight the cultural and historical context of the Water Trail.

GOAL

Enrich the Water Trail experience by bringing attention to the rich heritage and historical significance embedded along its route.

OUTCOME

In addition to serving as a recreational asset, the Trinity River should be recognized as a living tapestry of stories, traditions, and historical events that contribute to the unique identity of the region. By identifying key points of interest, landmarks, and narratives that reflect the cultural diversity and evolution of the Water Trail, communities can establish connections to the Water Trail and its residents.





LEGACY

STRATEGIES

Collaborate with Local Historians and Community Leaders.



Engage historians, scholars, and community leaders. Collect oral histories, photographs, and personal accounts related to the river.

Incorporate the Legacy of the River into the Water Trail.



Establish a cohesive theme that ties the river's history to the trail. Tagline: "Embracing the Legacy of the River."