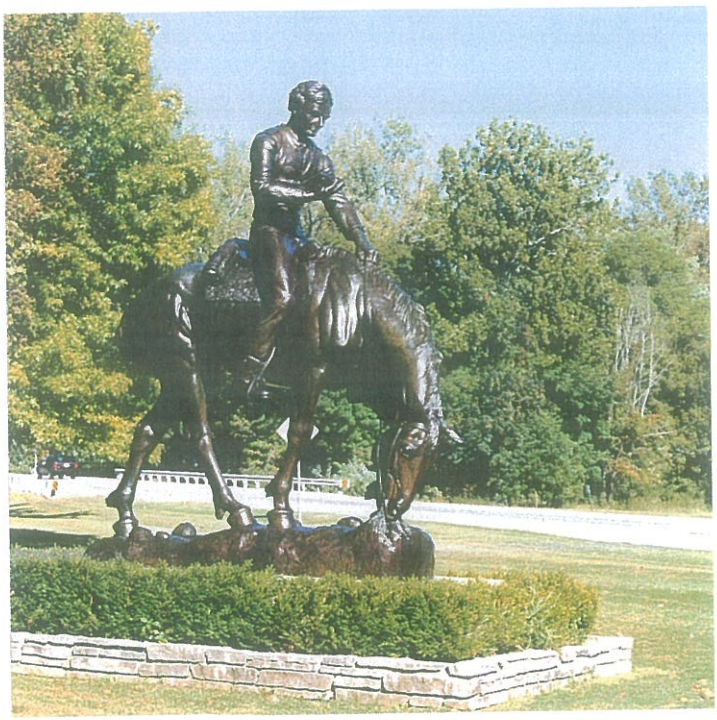
Corridors of Beauty, Enjoyment, and Opportunity



Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways in Menard County

January 2001

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR TRAILS AND GREENWAYS IN MENARD COUNTY

prepared for

THE MENARD COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Barbara Kyes, Chairman
Welden Gerdes
Tim Rogers

administered by

THE MENARD COUNTY TRAILS COMMITTEE
Allen Grosboll, Chairman
Gerald Boutelle, Past Chairman
Sheila Blodgett
Mavis Brauer
Will Carter
Tom Casson
David Edwards
Nancy Favero
Eric Golden
Jim Hart
David Hedrick
Gloria Heggy
Carolyn MacDonna
Karen Schainker

funded by

ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

prepared by

MASSIE MASSIE & ASSOCIATES, INC.
1210 South Fifth Street
Springfield, IL 62703

January 2001

Menard County Trails Committee

January 15, 2001

To: Members of the Menard County Board:

It is with great pleasure that we submit to you the final report of the "Comprehensive Plan For Trails and Greenways in Menard County." This project has been underway for more than a year, and we wish to thank the many citizens who helped in this process.

Special recognition goes to the Menard County Board for serving as the conduit for state planning funds. The Board's foresight will benefit current and future generations of citizens. The Committee also thanks the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, which funded the plan.

Massie Massie and Associates was selected to do the research, mapping, information gathering and draft documents. The Committee wishes to recognize the exceptional effort by Kent and Sue Massie in preparing a comprehensive, readable plan. Finally, we thank the many citizens who took time to attend meetings, review plans, offer comments, and ask questions about the future of trails and greenways in Menard County. We hope this document reflects their ideas and input.

The world around us is changing. We believe it is important to respect and preserve the historic heritage, natural beauty, agriculture traditions and cultural values of Menard County. This report identifies ways to enhance these county attributes and respond to the desire of citizens to provide safe recreational opportunities for our children and families. This plan offers long-term ideas for improving our quality of life, while respecting the traditions and beauty of Menard County.

Gerald Boutelle, Past President
MCTC (1999-2000)

Allen D. Grosboll, President
MCTC (2000-2001)

Menard County Trail and Greenway Plan

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Lincoln Statue at the New Salem State Historic Site

Chapter 1 - Summary

Background

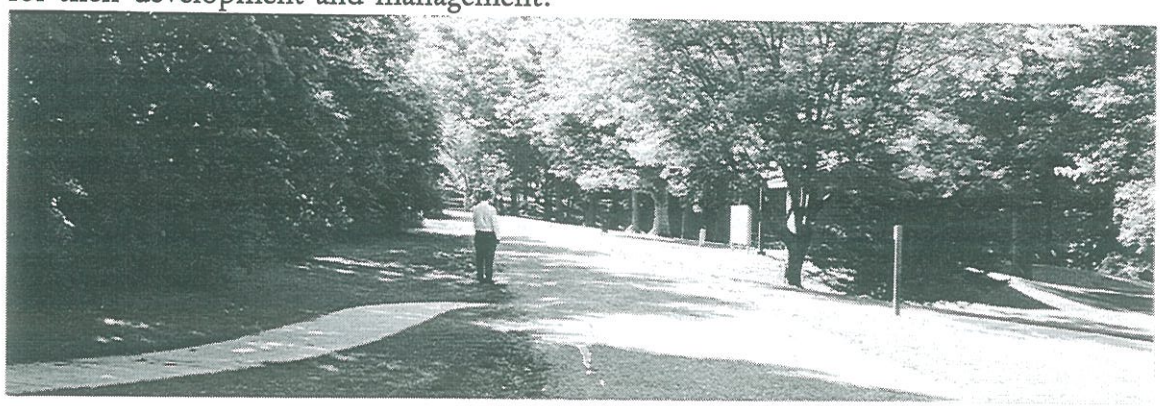
During the past few years residents of Menard County have had an increasing interest in the development of trails and preservation of natural and cultural resources. Spurred by recent trail initiatives and preservation efforts in nearby areas, the County determined to have a Comprehensive Plan for Trails and Greenways. The plan identifies opportunities within the county for trails and greenways, and it can serve as a guide for decision making in the future.

Plan Preparation

The plan was prepared by Massie Massie & Associates, Springfield, IL, under the guidance of the Menard County Trails Committee. Funded by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources, the plan was started in November of 1999 and completed in December of 2000. During this time, the Trail Committee held open meetings on a monthly average and often had individuals with special interests attending. The Committee held a public hearing, organized other special meetings, and helped operate an informational booth at a community event to gather suggestions and opinions about the developing plan.

Trail and Greenway Plan

The final Plan provides recommendations for conservation and recreational corridors of several kinds – driving routes, hiking trails, walking and bicycling trails, horse trails, and small craft water routes. These corridors incorporate many of the outstanding historic and natural features that exist in Menard County. The Plan assesses opportunities for connections with potential corridors and sites in adjoining counties. It ranks the proposed trails and greenways as to their need, cost and feasibility. Finally, it discusses funding sources and other implementation opportunities for their development and management.



River Day Use Area at New Salem State Historic Site

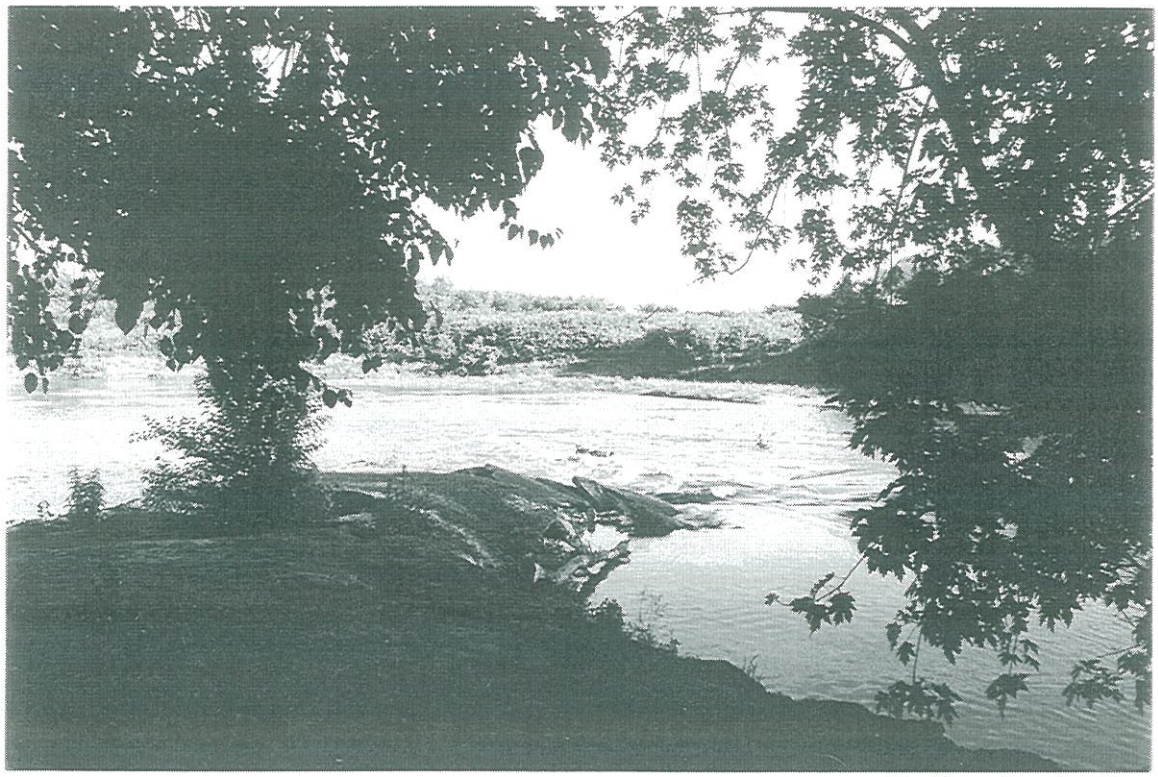
Benefits of Greenways

Greenways are corridors or linear areas comprised of land and water which are valuable for their natural qualities and opportunities for human recreational use. Greenways can be high quality natural areas which need to be protected; they can be environmentally degraded areas which need to be rehabilitated; and they can be open spaces which have specific recreational opportunities. The value of greenways (over individual disparate sites) is that they can provide long distances for 1) various human activities and 2) habitat and movement of native animal populations. A greenway designation can focus public concerns and guide efforts to protect valuable resources or rehabilitate damaged environments.

Benefits of Trails

Trails can provide recreational opportunities for residents of the county, enhancing the local quality of life. With possibilities for scenic driving, strolling, running, bicycling, in-line skating, canoeing, kayaking, etc., people of all ages and interests could make use of the trail system.

These trails could also add to the existing attractions for tourists visiting the area. Trails could increase the number of visitors and extend the length of their stay. In turn, new business opportunities and economic benefits could be realized.



Kayaking at Petersburg Dam

Chapter 2 - Introduction

Menard County has long been recognized as a center of historical and cultural interest. American Indians once occupied areas along the Sangamon River, Abraham Lincoln lived at New Salem Village, large cultural events were held at Chautauqua Park, and many other significant events and places make the area distinctive. Several of the sites have been marked and structures have been preserved. In the case of New Salem Village, the entire town has been rebuilt and is operated by the State of Illinois.

What has been less recognized are the natural resources of Menard County. It was, of course, the Sangamon River which brought early settlers into the area. They nestled into the hills and valleys along the river where later, villages took root. At that time the bottom land was grown-up in lowland trees and herbaceous wetlands. The hills were covered with a rich diversity of upland trees, shrubs and herbaceous plants. The flat land beyond was an open savanna where scattered trees mixed with tall grass prairie. Although much of this native vegetation has been removed to make way for agriculture, remnant areas still remain particularly along the creeks and rivers.

During the past few years, residents of Menard County have had an increasing interest in identifying, characterizing and charting opportunities to see and appreciate this rich historical and environmental diversity.

The most urgent desire is to develop safe walking and bicycling trails in the county. Currently area residents walk and/or bicycle on county roads and city streets. Several organized events are held each year which also use roads in the area - the traditional Boy Scout treks, bicycle tours, and cross-country running events. These people want and need routes which are safer.

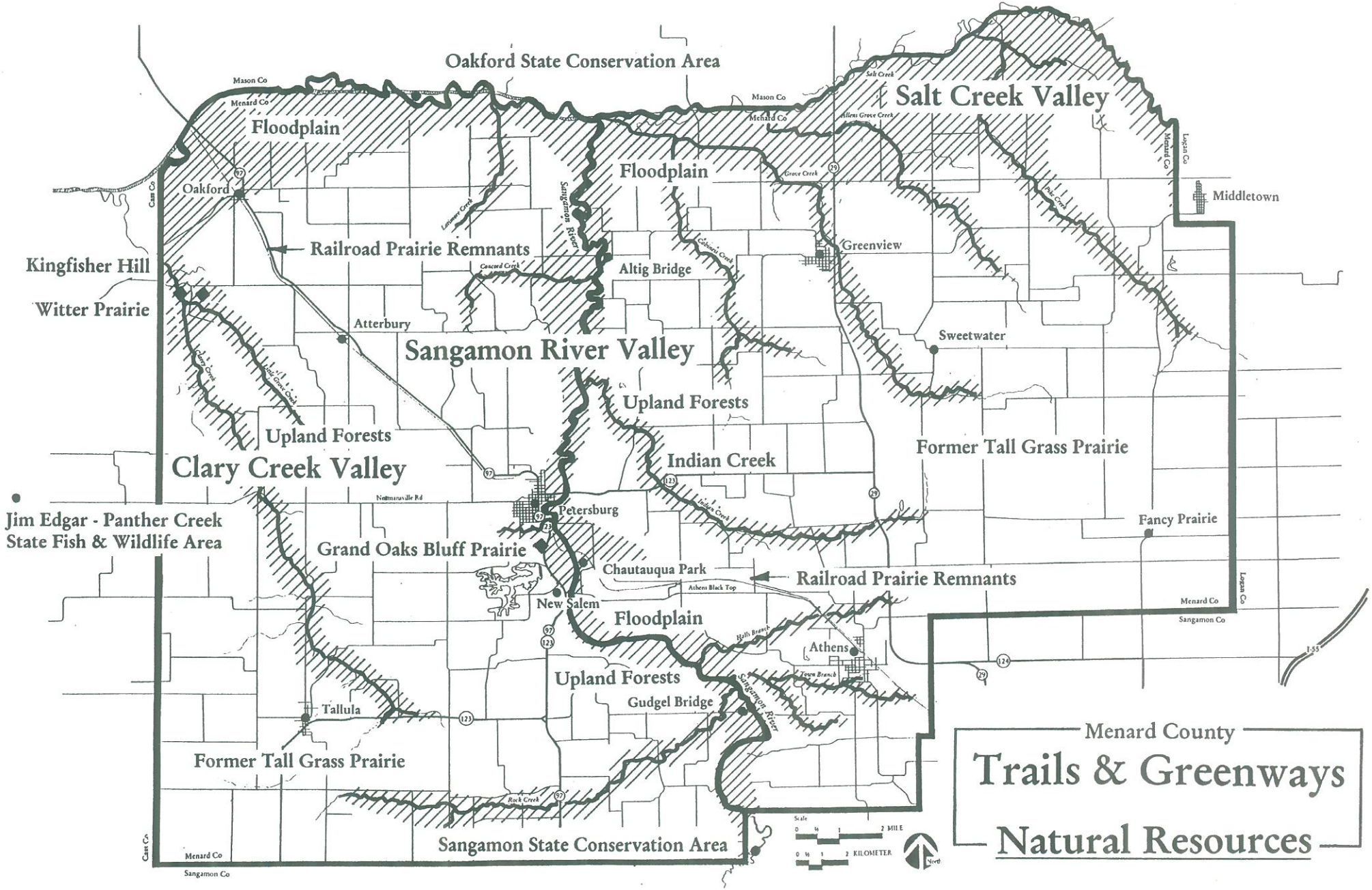
There are other trail opportunities within the county. One is for small-craft use of the Sangamon River. Only a few people now experience this river's scenic route because of river snags and uncharted conditions. With improvements within the river and access locations and support facilities along the banks, a river route could be an attractive and unique feature in the Central Illinois region. Other opportunities include, 1) designating scenic driving routes through the county that connect locations of historical and cultural interests and 2) developing trails for equestrian use that compliment the historic character of New Salem and connect horse facilities in the area.

This plan attempts to connect trails in Menard County with trails and sites in adjoining counties. To the south, Sangamon County's trail plan proposes that the abandoned railroad which runs through Sangamon County be converted to a trail. That railroad continues north into Menard County near Athens where a linkage can be made. To the west in Cass County, the 15,574-acre state-owned Jim Edgar / Panther Creek Fish and Wildlife Area is being developed with miles of bicycle and equestrian trails. This facility could be linked to trails and sites in Menard County. Just east in Logan County, the nationally designated Route 66 Trail (Chicago to Los Angeles) could also be linked with Menard County.

This Comprehensive Plan assesses these greenway corridor needs and recreational trail opportunities. It ranks them according to their desirability, cost and feasibility. Finally, it discusses funding sources and other implementation opportunities for future development. The goal of this plan is summarized in the following mission statement.

Mission Statement

Designate various greenways and trail routes in Menard County which 1) preserve and enhance cultural features and natural environments and 2) provide for pleasurable, healthy and educational experiences. The system may accommodate uses including driving, biking, hiking, boating, and horse riding. Where possible, the system should feature the natural and cultural character of the area, without damaging those qualities. Where possible, routes should interconnect with existing or planned routes in adjoining counties. The system should enhance the quality of life for residents and visitors of Menard County and preserve the cultural and natural resources for future generations.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Natural Resources
Oakford State Conservation Area
Salt Creek Valley
Floodplain
Oakford
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Middletown
Kingfisher Hill
Witter Prairie
Railroad Prairie Remnants
Altig Bridge
Greenview
Sweetwater
Atterbury
Sangamon River Valley
Upland Forests
Clary Creek Valley
Indian Creek
Former Tall Grass Prairie
Jim Edgar - Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Petersburg
Fancy Prairie
Grand Oaks Bluff Prairie
Chautauqua Park
New Salem
Athens
Tallula
Gudgel Bridge
Sangamon State Conservation Area
Sangamon Co
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER
North

Chapter 3 - County Resources

a. Natural Resources

Waterways

Menard County is within the Illinois Central Grand Prairie drained by the Illinois River system. Two major waterways, the Sangamon River and the Salt Creek, drain Menard County's rich farmland which historically was tall grass prairie.

Sangamon River at New Salem State Historic Site

Flowing northward from Sangamon County, the Sangamon River neatly bisects Menard County. At the county's northern boundary, the Sangamon River joins Salt Creek which flows westward from Logan County. At their confluence, the combined waterways flow westward to join the Illinois River in Cass County. Salt Creek combined with the Sangamon River, therefore, define the northern boundary of Menard County.

Other creeks and numerous tributaries also cut through the county, namely:

1. Tributaries of the Sangamon River (town nearby)
    a. Town Branch (Athens)
    b. Halls Branch (Athens)
    c. Rock Creek (Tallula)
    d. Hemp Factory Creek (Petersburg)
    e. Concord Creek (north of Petersburg)
    f. Latimor Creek (Oakford)
    g. Tar Creek (Oakford)

2. Tributaries of Salt Creek (town nearby)
   a. Pike Creek (Middleton)
   b. Grove Creek (Greenview)
   c. Cabiness Creek (Curtis)
3. Clary Creek (Tallula)
4. Indian Creek (east of Petersburg)

Topography and Vegetation

Prior to European settlement of the area, lowland forests lined these waterways and filled their flood plains, less that 2% of the county's area. Upland forests occupied the surrounding hills and bluffs, some 18% of the county's area. Tall grass prairies covered the level-to-rolling lands beyond the hills, the remaining 80% of the area.

Much of the vegetation was eliminated during the 1800s as land was cleared for cultivation and pasturing. Pockets of the original plant communities remain, primarily in river and flood plain areas which frequently flood and in steep, hilly areas which limit other possible uses.

In more recent years the remnant areas have become attractive for residential development due to their scenic qualities. Small acreages have been carved out of farm fields, residential subdivisions have been developed, and even businesses have carved-out areas for commercial use. This development is especially apparent along the Southern Section of the Sangamon River Valley, in areas around Petersburg, Athens and Salisbury.

1. Several natural areas within the county are being preserved or restored, including:
   a. New Salem State Historic Site
   b. Oakford State Conservation Area
   c. Floodplain areas in Petersburg
   d. Certain subdivisions which have set-aside natural areas
   e. Certain farm lands under Soil and Water Conservation Programs
   f. Railroad corridors near Athens, Petersburg and Oakford

   Other areas, although probably not being actively preserved, have good quality natural environments.

2. Floodplain forests
   a. Sangamon River Valley
   b. Salt Creek Valley
   c. Clary Creek Valley

3. Prairies
   a. Remnants along the old roadways and railroads
   b. Uncultivated hillsides (such as Kingfisher Hill and Grand Oaks Bluff)

4. Upland forests
   a. Sangamon River Valley Hills
   b. Clary Creek Valley Hills

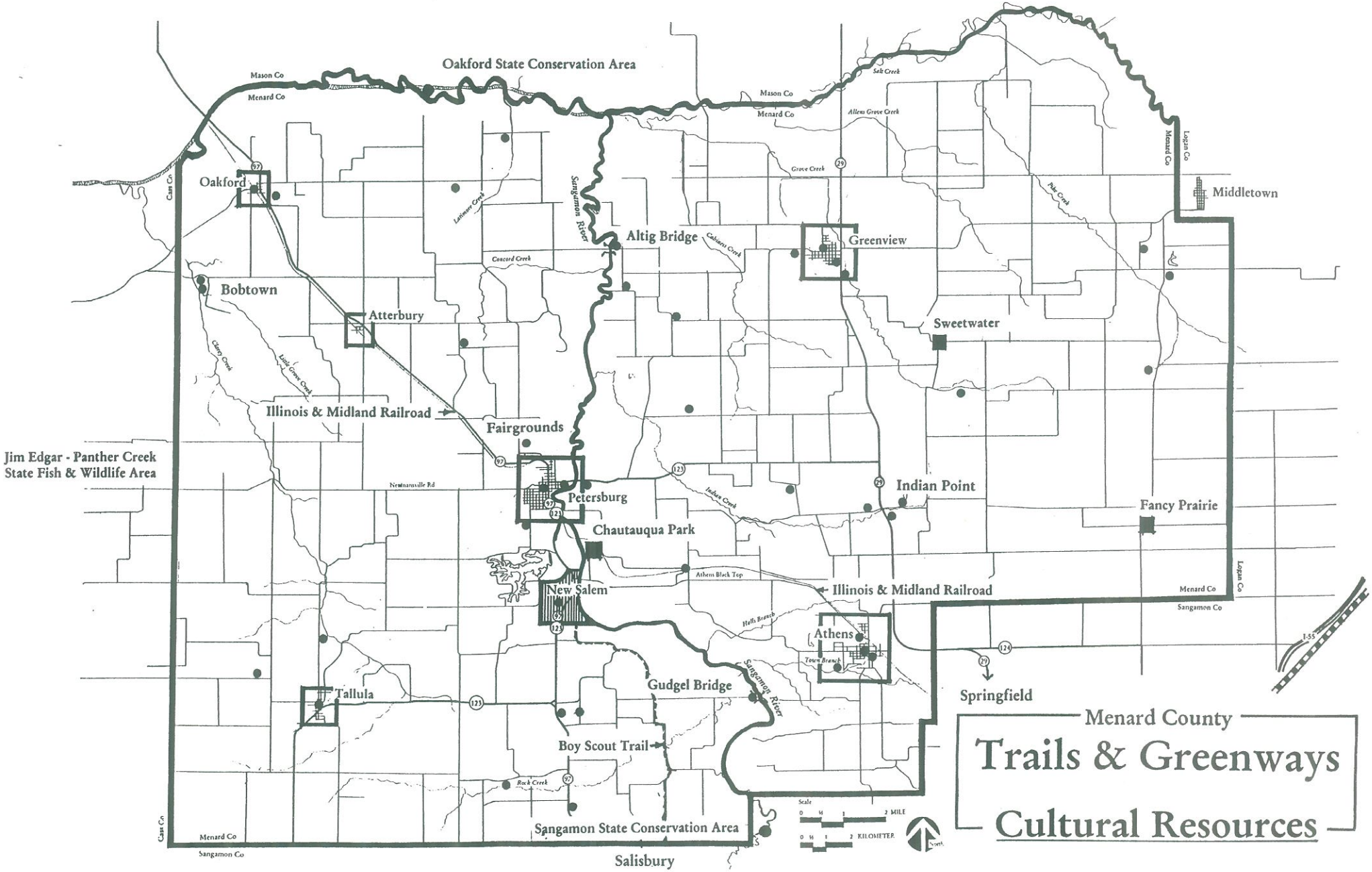
Wildlife

The varied environments in the county offer habitats for many native animal species. Game species include deer, squirrels, rabbits, geese, ducks, quail and wild turkeys. Raccoon, opossum, and skunk are common. Numerous species of birds are common, including hawks, vultures, owls, and song birds. Reptiles and amphibians abound and many species of fish are found in the streams and rivers. Such numerous and varied species indicates a high quality environment and provides interest for both casual and serious observers.

Old River Road at New Salem State Historic Site

Conclusion

These existing 'natural features' in Menard County should be one component which is woven into a county-wide system of trails and greenways. As routes are delineated, it will become apparent that other areas, contiguous or related in some way, would be logical candidates for preservation or enhancement of their natural qualities. These additional areas would help to form corridors and/or areas where nature can be enhansed and appreciated by current and future generations.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Cultural Resources
Oakford State Conservation Area
Oakford
Bobtown
Atterbury
Illinois & Midland Railroad
Fairgrounds
Jim Edgar - Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Petersburg
Chautauqua Park
New Salem
Tallula
Altig Bridge
Greenview
Sweetwater
Middletown
Indian Point
Fancy Prairie
Athens
Gudgel Bridge
Boy Scout Trail
Sangamon State Conservation Area
Salisbury
Springfield
Sangamon River
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Salt Creek
Allen Grove Creek
Grove Creek
Pale Creek
Latimer Creek
Concord Creek
Cabinet Creek
Clary Creek
Little Grove Creek
Newmansville Rd
Indian Creek
Athens Black Top
Hells Branch
Town Branch
Rock Creek
I-55
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER
North

b. Cultural Resources

Menard County has a rich history and, fortunately, retains many physical remnants of the past. New Salem Village where Abraham Lincoln once lived is the most widely recognized and attracts over half-a-million visitors each year. The City of Petersburg, county seat and once home to poet Edgar Lee Masters, has a charming turn-of-the-20th century historic character. Numerous historic structures, cemeteries, and homesteads are also scattered throughout the county. Individually or combined these sites offer quality and interest to the area. Major cultural features within the county include the following.

New Salem State Historic Site

New Salem Village

South of what was later developed as Petersburg, on a narrow ridge above the Sangamon river, settlers constructed a small, rustic log cabin village. River boats provided a means of trade and travel. Abraham Lincoln lived here as a young man and spent these formative years, studying and attempting various trades. The village was gradually abandoned in the 1840s as other towns became dominant. In the early 1900s, William Randolf Hearst assisted in its acquisition and rebuilding. Today the original village site is a 'living museum' with reconstructed log structures and interpreters in period costumes. This State Historic Site also has a visitors' center, museum, picnic areas, nature walk, a campground, and access to the river. Special events, evening performances (indoor and outdoor), youth day camps, and other activities are regularly held here.

Petersburg

The town of Petersburg was developed during New Salem's decline and the introduction of the railroad in the area. Located along broad plain of the Sangamon River, the site for Petersburg offered flat plains and bluff slopes for development. It became the county seat and a distinguished court house was constructed in the town square. Around the court house, commercial Italianate buildings developed. Simple Greek revival and vernacular carpenter style houses were built during the mid-1800s. Numerous grand homes in Victorian-styles were built during the turn-of-the-century.

Many of the old houses and commercial buildings throughout town are well preserved and maintained. A historic museum on the square is operated by the Menard County Historical Society. The Edgar Lee Master Home still stands just off the square and is open to the public. An early Carnegie-type library is still being used.

The historic quality of Petersburg has encouraged businesses which can capitalize on history. Many antique shops, craft stores, cafes and bed-and-breakfast establishments occupy especially the downtown area. The City itself hosts the annual 'Pioneer Days' which focuses on old-time activities and events.

There appears to be great potential for expansion of such businesses and development of other tourist services. The New Salem State Historic Site, only 2 miles to the south on Route 97, is attracting over a half-million visitors each year. Petersburg could increase its tourism trade by supplementing what Lincoln's New Salem now offers. Tourist services could include interesting shopping opportunities, overnight accommodations, food and dining establishments, additional educational and interpretative programs, evening entertainment, etc.

Petersburg also has modern facilities which also offer opportunities for residents and tourists. The city has good schools, parks, sports fields, two nearby golf courses, and a good variety of stores and services.

Athens

The town of Athens along Route 29 has a population of 1400. The Long Nine Museum is located in an historic building within the downtown area and displays items related to Abraham Lincoln and early Menard County history. Also in Athens are retail and service businesses, a community park with a swimming pool, sports fields, and an arena where rodeo and other events take place. The Athens area is being developed with residential sites and subdivisions primarily for commuters who work in Springfield.

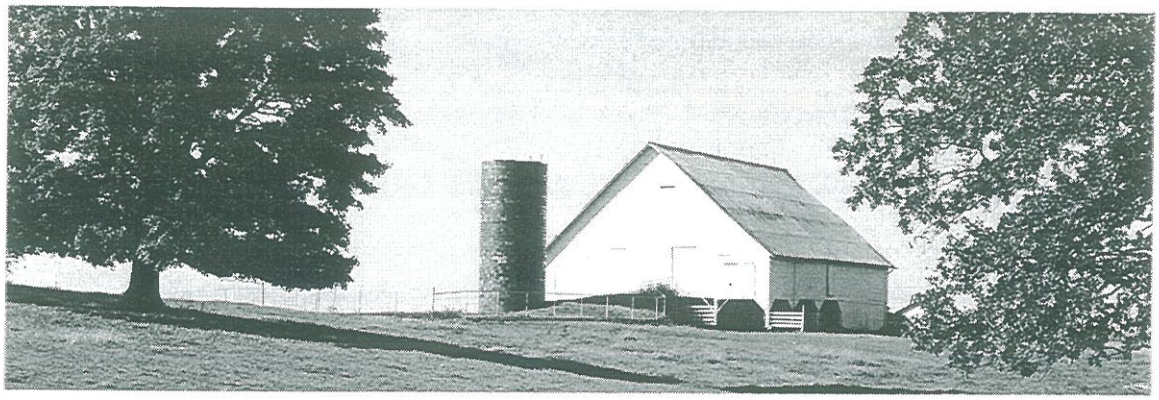
Many tourists drive through Athens on their way to the New Salem State Historic Site. From Interstate 55 traffic is routed through Athens to Lincoln's New Salem. From Springfield many tourists drive north on Route 29 and turn through Athens toward the New Salem State Historic Site.

Greenview

Greenview, population 800, is situated north of Athens on Route 29. Greenview's commercial town square was built around a central park. Several of the original commercial buildings remain, including the extraordinary Marbold Bank Building, built by the Marbold family. (The Marbolds also built two large homes at the turn of the century which still stand today at the edge of town.) These historic commercial buildings are now used for restaurants and other businesses. The bank building houses a church. Near town is an historic cemetery. Today the community is active and utilizes the town square as a center for many community events.

Other Menard County Towns

Tallula, Oakford, Atterbury, Sweetwater and Fancy Prairie are small towns which originally developed along railroad tracks. They are quiet communities with well-kept homes, churches and small service businesses.



Barn and Silo on Rock Creek Road

Sites in Rural Locations

Other significant historic sites are located in rural Menard County, including, 1) archaeological sites of Native American settlements along the Sangamon River, 2) the Salem Chautauqua site south of Petersburg along the river, 3) numerous rural churches, schools, and cemeteries established early during the county's development, 4) numerous farmsteads with historic homes, barns and other outbuildings, 5) the Sangamon River which provided early settlers with transportation, 6) early railroad corridors and roadways (notably the Lincoln Post Road and the Lincoln Boy Scout Trail) which subsequently provided transportation of people and goods.

Rock Creek Road

Summary

The following cultural features may be incorporated in plans for trails and greenways to provide interest and character.

1. New Salem State Historic Site
   Historical site, camping, day use, special events, theater.

2. Petersburg
   Menard County Courthouse, Edgar Lee Master Home, cemeteries, historic architecture, special events, parks, sports fields, commercial district, golf courses.

3. Athens
   Long Nine Museum, park, swimming pool, commercial district.

4. Greenview
   Historic architecture, park, special events, commercial district.

5. Other Communities
   Commercial services, historic architecture.

6. Chautauqua Park
   Historical site and period architecture.

7. Rural Areas
   Historic rural schools / churches / cemeteries.
   Historic rural farmsteads and landscapes.
   Historic roadways and railroads.

8. Jim Edgar / Panther Creek Fish and Wildlife Area (west of Menard County)
   Hunting, fishing, bicycling, equestrian trails, day use, camping, and driving routes.

9. Sangamon County, Springfield, and historic Route 66 Trail (south of Menard County).

10. Mason County, Havana and Illinois River Valley (north of Menard County).

c. *Existing Greenways and Open Space*

Menard County is primarily a rural county with a high percentage of open space compared to many Illinois counties. With its wealth of natural and cultural resources, Menard County attracts many to live in its towns and developing rural areas that commute to Springfield for work. In recent years, this growth has increased, making Menard one of the fastest growing counties in the state. With the increase in development and population, the quality of its open space (agricultural, natural, recreational) needs to be protected.

The Menard County Zoning Ordinance was recently adopted to set standards for new development. The first of its kind in the county, this ordinance limits the location of new development, thus protecting agricultural lands and other open space.

Currently the county has no plan which identifies open space for preservation. In the future a Comprehensive Plan which identifies the open space - agricultural, natural areas including particular sites and greenways, recreational - could further guide the county in better protecting and enhancing its resources for the future.

New Salem Bridge and Sangamon River

Greenways

No greenways in the county are formally designated or controlled. The Sangamon River and to some extent its tributaries, however, form a natural branched greenway system. Woodlands and wetlands exist along many of these waterways. In some areas, however, the natural vegetation has been removed to allow for farming or other activities.

To protect this Sangamon River greenway, several actions can be employed including encouraging voluntary cooperation from landowners, coordinating efforts with local/state governments where land ownership is already public, and acquiring land and/or easements at critical locations. Such steps can be taken to preserve natural areas, restrict inappropriate development, or potentially provide public access to the waterways.

Two federal programs are contributing to potential greenways in the county. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has recently acquired flood prone areas along the Sangamon River within Petersburg. Structures are being demolished and plans made by the city to convert areas to park and open space.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture offers Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to promote the planting of long-term resource-conserving planting which improves soil, water and wildlife resources. The voluntary program offers annual rental payments, incentive payments, and cost-share assistance to establish such cover on eligible cropland.

Another effort to preserve sensitive lands is being initiated in Menard County. The Conservation Resource Enhancement Program (CREP) of the Soil and Water Conservation Service encourages private owners to convert farmland adjacent to waterways back to riparian woodland environments. The program provides for easements to be acquired from the landowners for the purpose of converting erosion sensitive areas into woodland habitats and greenway corridors.

Open Space

Presently, open space for public use is limited in Menard County. New Salem State Historic Site is the primary park which offers recreational opportunities and resource protection. It is well used by both the local population and visitors. The Sangamon River attracts people for fishing, canoeing and kayaking. The only public boat access points, however, are at Petersburg and New Salem State Historic Site.

The Oakford State Conservation Area on the Sangamon River provides some hunting opportunities. The Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area and the Sangamon County State Conservation Area in adjoining counties also provide opportunities for hunting, fishing and other recreational opportunities as well.

Smaller areas developed for local use are community and neighborhood parks, public school grounds, and incidental areas such as the county court house grounds, public cemeteries, etc. Some dedicated open space also exists on private lands. These open space facilities are limited in scope and lack an important element of resource preservation and protection.

The following are the major public or quasi-public open space in and near Menard County which may be incorporated in the proposed trail and greenway system.

1. New Salem State Historic Site near Petersburg
   Managed by IL Historic Preservation Agency
2. Oakford State Conservation Area
   Acres managed by the IL Department of Natural Resources
3. Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area in adjacent Cass Co.
   Managed by the IL Department of Natural Resources
4. Sangamon County State Conservation Area in adjacent Sangamon Co.
   Managed by the IL Department of Natural Resources
5. State Routes 97, 29, 123
   48 miles, managed by the IL Department of Transportation
6. County Highway Routes
   200 miles, managed by the Menard County Highway Department
7. County Cemeteries and Court House Square
8. Petersburg park land and open space including FEMA acquisitions
   Managed by the municipality
9. Athens park land
   Managed by the municipality
10. Greenview park land
    Managed by the municipality
11. PORTA school grounds
    Managed by the school district
12. Athens school grounds
    Managed by the school district
13. Greenview school grounds
    Managed by the school district
14. Lake Petersburg common lands (private)
    Managed by the home owners association
15. Grand Oaks common lands (private)
    Managed by the home owners association

d. Existing Trails, Routes and Corridors

Trails

Menard County has few trails. The only public recreational trails are located within New Salem State Historic Site. Here, on the west side of Route 97 is a nature trail used for interpretation and walking. One the east side of Route 97 is a riverside trail used for walking, bicycling and cross country skiing. An off-road route is also used for a mountain-bike event each year.

South of New Salem State Historic Site is the historic Boy Scout Trail. The trail is recognized as the oldest Boy Scout Trail in the country. Each year hundreds of scouts walk it's 20-mile length from Springfield to New Salem to honor Abraham Lincoln. Its entire length (except for the section within the park) is along county roadways which have many hills and curves. Safety of trail users is an increasing concern.

There also are short pathways within the Athens Community Park and as part of the PORTA School Nature Center in Petersburg.

Route 97 and 123 South of Petersburg

Routes

Routes are public rights-of-way including roads, highways and navigable waters which are used for transportation. These routes can also be used for recreation and as alternative modes of transportation.

Most of the routes in Menard County have been developed for motor vehicles such as cars, trucks, buses and motor boats. Interestingly, although many of these routes were originally established for horses, carriages, bicycles, walking and paddle boats, these uses are now restricted or prohibited because of safety concerns.

Although public sidewalks are available in some communities for pedestrian use, they are not always required in newer residential or commercial developments.

Within existing rights-of-way, little opportunity exists to incorporate a safe trailway. In urban areas, the existing rights-of-way are limited by entrances to properties and close proximity of commercial or residential structures. In rural areas, the rights-of-way are taken-up with the road surface, drainage ditches and structures, and utilities. Little or no space remains for a separate or even adjacent trail surface.

There are many activities already occurring in Menard County roadways and waterways which really need safe trails including walking/hiking, bicycle riding, canoeing, kayaking, and horse riding. Canoeing and kayaking are popular on the Sangamon River and Salt Creek, and races from Springfield to New Salem State Historic Site are periodically scheduled. Kayaking has become especially popular in the Petersburg dam area. Several special events are scheduled each year, including an annual bicycle tour sponsored by the Petersburg Chamber of Commerce and Springfield Bike Club and the mountain bike race held at New Salem.

Corridors

Corridors are linear areas which are designated for a particular purpose. Commonly designated corridors are utility corridors for transmitting power and transportation corridors for roadways or rail lines. Often corridors have shared uses such as utility lines along railroad corridors. Corridors are sometimes vacated or abandoned, offering opportunities to utilize the old corridor for a new purpose.

Abandoned corridors sometimes offer opportunities for designation as greenways or development of trails. Recently the Chicago and Northwestern Railroad was abandoned. This now offers an opportunity to develop a trail from Springfield into Menard County, just south of Athens. Another opportunity has been diminished, however, when the abandoned IC&G Railroad from Tallula to Petersburg and Greenview was sold-off piecemeal.

Few utility corridors exist currently in Menard County. Two of the existing corridors, Williams Pipeline and AmerenCIPS Transmission Lines, do not appear suitable for ancillary trail uses.

The FEMA flood plain restoration project, the CRP program to encourage planting of long-term cover crops, and the emerging CREP riparian lands program (discussed in the above section) have potential to contribute to the corridor systems. The FEMA lands near Petersburg have good potential for development of trails and support facilities, as well as providing attractive open space. The emerging CREP program, which acquires easements for development of riparian environments along waterways, does not provide for public access. It may be possible, however, to work with landowners to provide supplemental easements for public use. This could provide riparian areas for boaters, fishermen and/or hikers. As the CREP program unfolds, its beneficial impact and off-shoot opportunities can be better assessed.

Chapter 4 - Public Input

The Menard County Trail Committee met each month during the planning process. The Committee consisted of volunteers from throughout the county who were interested in trails, conservation, and the overall improvement of the area. Members had a broad variety of backgrounds, a thorough knowledge of the county's history and geography, and an extensive involvement in local civic activities. Members aided immensely in identifying opportunities and potentials for trails and greenways throughout the county.

On August 31, 1999, the Committee and its planning consultants began the year-long process by organizing a 'brainstorming' session for members and the interested public. Trail and greenway needs were identified, and key ideas were recorded on charts and maps.

Regular Committee meetings were held at the New Salem State Historic Site Visitors Center. Additionally, meetings were held in the towns of Greenview, Athens, and Petersburg to allow more convenient access by the interested public.

Many people contributed ideas to this plan. The committee invited various groups and individuals to present particular expertise and/or ideas to the group. During the year, presentations were given on the subjects of kayaking, canoeing, equestrian needs, bicycling, and running. Additionally, presentations were made concerning agricultural land use, streambank protection, commercial/residential land development, and trail development in other counties.

On February 28, 2000, a public open house was held to exhibit preliminary concepts for the location and use of greenways and trails in Menard County. More than 40 individuals attended the event. Many discussed ideas at length with Committee members. The presentation boards were then displayed at the Petersburg Public Library through March and written comments were encouraged.

The Committee also manned a booth at the Fall Festival in Petersburg. Here a computer slide presentation prepared by one of the members showed the overall plans. Associated with this event, a raffle for a mountain bicycle was organized and a list of interested persons was generated. A logo contest among county high school students was orchestrated, and the winning logo was adopted for trail use. These activities greatly increased visibility of the developing plan.

Local newspapers have covered the activities of the planning committee and presentations to the County Board and Petersburg City Council.

Ideas gleaned from these many meetings and hours of discussions were incorporated in the final plans. This vast local participation allowed the plan to be carefully tailored to the local needs and unique potentials of Menard County.

Chapter 5 - Goals and Criteria

a. Overall Goal

Trails and greenways in Menard County should be, "Corridors of beauty, enjoyment and opportunity." These simple words embody the essence of what such a system can provide within Menard County, specifically:

Beauty

1. Protect significant natural resources, preserve historic sites, and retain the charming rural character of the area.

2. Enhance the county's overall appearance as an attractive place to live, visit and enjoy recreational activities.

Enjoyment

1. Serve the outdoor recreation needs of both the local population and tourists in a safe and enjoyable manner.

2. Encourage physical fitness and good health, social activity, and an appreciation of nature.

3. Promote events and activities related to trail and greenway use which provide social interaction, personal development, and general entertainment.

Opportunities

1. Provide safe alternative transportation routes between key community and tourist facilities.

2. Create economic opportunities for trail-related businesses, jobs, and community events and activities.

3. Improve the quality of life for residents and enhance real estate values.

4. Promote tourism by improving visitors' understanding and enjoyment of the area.

b. Criteria for Evaluation

Based on the above objectives and survey information, the following criteria were developed to evaluate various opportunities within the county.

1. Protect natural and cultural resources.
2. Serve the geographical location and needs of residents and visitors.
3. Provide safe and enjoyable trail opportunities.
4. Encourage social and economic benefits.
5. Integrate with other greenways, trails, and recreational facilities.

Spring Bike Tour - Petersburg

Protect Natural and Cultural Resources

Major categories of natural and cultural resources within the county.

1. The Sangamon River and its tributaries including its water, flood plains, lowland forests and wetlands
2. The wooded hills along the rivers and streams
3. Remnants of upland forests and prairies
4. New Salem Historic Site
5. The vernacular architecture and land use within towns and rural areas
6. Historic buildings and sites including museums, cemeteries, homesteads, businesses, churches, etc.

Serve the Geographic Location and Needs of the Residents and Visitors

The concentration of potential recreational corridor users are in five locations. Each has particular needs or desires because of that location.

1. New Salem State Historic Site

   With 600,000 visitors each year, interest could be strong for activities which supplement what is currently provided. Possibilities include horse or carriage rides, and recreational biking, hiking, and boating. A safe and colorful means of accessing Petersburg for sight-seeing, shopping, eating, etc. would be desired.

2. Petersburg and general vicinity

   With a population of around 3,000, residents need safe routes for people of all ages to walk, ride bikes, and participate in popular skating activities. With many residents working or volunteering at the New Salem State Historic Site, a safe off-road route to walk or ride to the site would be well-used. Short and long distance trails are needed for casual walking and riding, as well as rides, races and other special events.

3. Athens and general vicinity

   Athens, population 1400 and growing rapidly, needs safe and convenient routes for walkers and bicyclers to access the local school, park, and commercial area. Residents would benefit from a connection to a regional trail system. Located just north of Springfield as well as along the designated route from I-55 to the New Salem State Historic Site, Athens would be a convenient location for visitors to access trails leading to New Salem and beyond.

4. South Central Menard County

   The growing population of this more rural area has a need for commuting to surrounding towns and enjoying recreational value of trails. Additionally, the many owners and breeders of horses in this area have a particular interest in equestrian trails.

5. Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish & Wildlife Area

   Use of this 15,500-acre area, currently being developed, is difficult to project. It is possible that during prime seasons, more than one thousand visitors would occupy the site at one time. For them, a convenient location for food, camping and hunting/fishing supplies will be essential. Additionally, some will be interested in eating and entertainment in nearby areas, and even 'hotelling' over-

night. For tourists using the site's trails, connection to a regional system will expand their opportunities and make the area more attractive as a destination.

6. Springfield and Sangamon County

   Already large numbers of this 200,000 population enjoys activities and performances at New Salem. Somewhat smaller numbers are attracted to Menard County towns and rural areas, primarily because of limited opportunities in those locations. This population has a growing interest in trails. In the greater Springfield area, trails are being developed very slowly and tend to lack natural or cultural interest. Trails developed nearby in resource-rich Menard County will undoubtedly attract Sangamon County residents.

Provide Safe and Enjoyable Trail Opportunities

To accomplish this objective, the following design criteria should be applied.

1. A trail should be laid-out with the minimum possible conflict with motorized vehicles, including sharing roadways, crossing roadways, crossing driveways or other access routes. Motorized vehicles should be kept off trails except for necessary emergencies and maintenance.

2. Trail surfaces and shoulders should be wide enough for intended use; should be smooth and well drained; and should have no obstacles or hazards within or near the riding surface.

3. Trails should be clearly marked for the safety and convenience of its users.

4. Trail access/exit locations and other support services (water, restrooms, food service, bike parts/service) should be provided in safe and convenient locations.

5. Trails should be accessible for both emergency and maintenance vehicles.

6. Trails should be visually interesting and varied. With Menard County's richness of natural and cultural qualities, trails can provide an enjoyable and worthwhile experience for all ages and interests.

Encourage Social and Economic Benefits

The following should be provided where possible, providing a mututal benefit to trail/greenway users and businesses within the county.

1. Develop trails so that they allow optimum access for local residents and serve as walking and bike routes to schools, parks, county/city offices, churches, and neighbors.

2. Provide opportunities for business establishments to tie-in with trails and/or allow trail users convenient access to existing commercial services.

3. Provide opportunities for new businesses to establish in locations which, 1) conveniently serve trail users, and 2) comply with local building and zoning regulations.

Integrate With Other Greenways, Trails, and Recreational Facilities

Trails and greenways should connect with other existing facilities or facilities that may be developed in the future. In this way, facilities can be shared and a recreational system expanded beyond its own physical and economic limits. To the extent possible, a trails and greenways system should be planned to:

1. Interconnect existing public landmarks, natural areas, open spaces, parks, greenways, and other recreational facilities.

2. Enhance nearby areas (such as a significant natural areas and greenways) which could provide for desirable/necessary protection in the future.

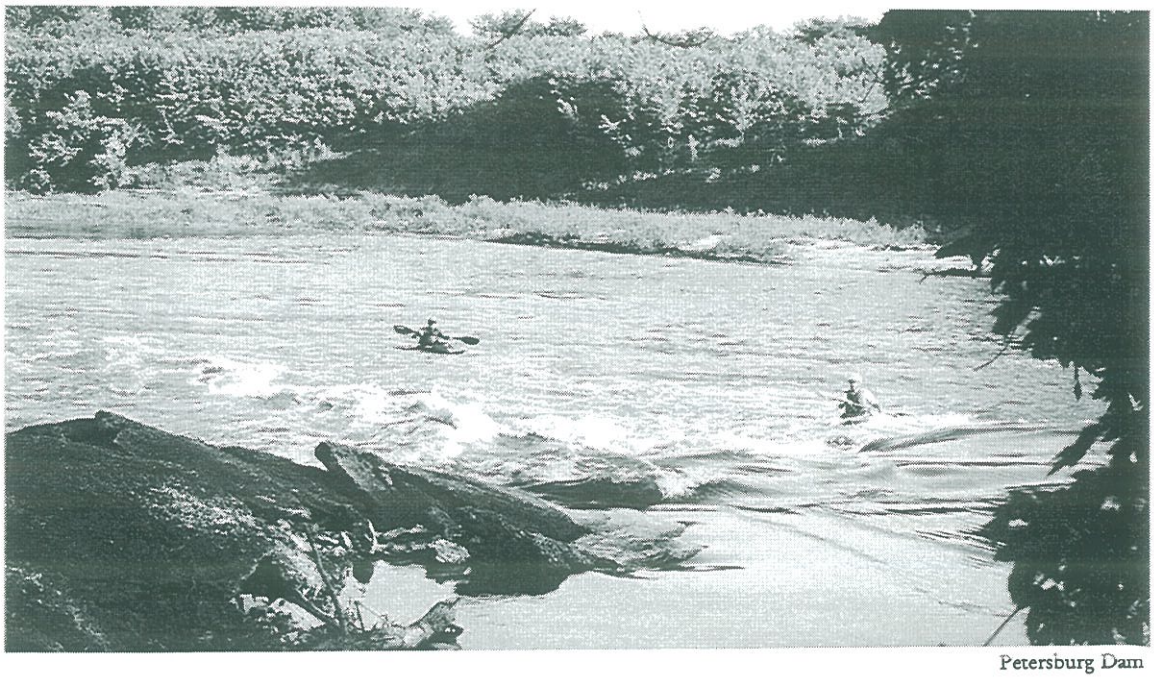
3. Interconnect communities.

4. Connect with other existing or planned greenway and trail systems.

Chapter 6 - Greenway and Trail System

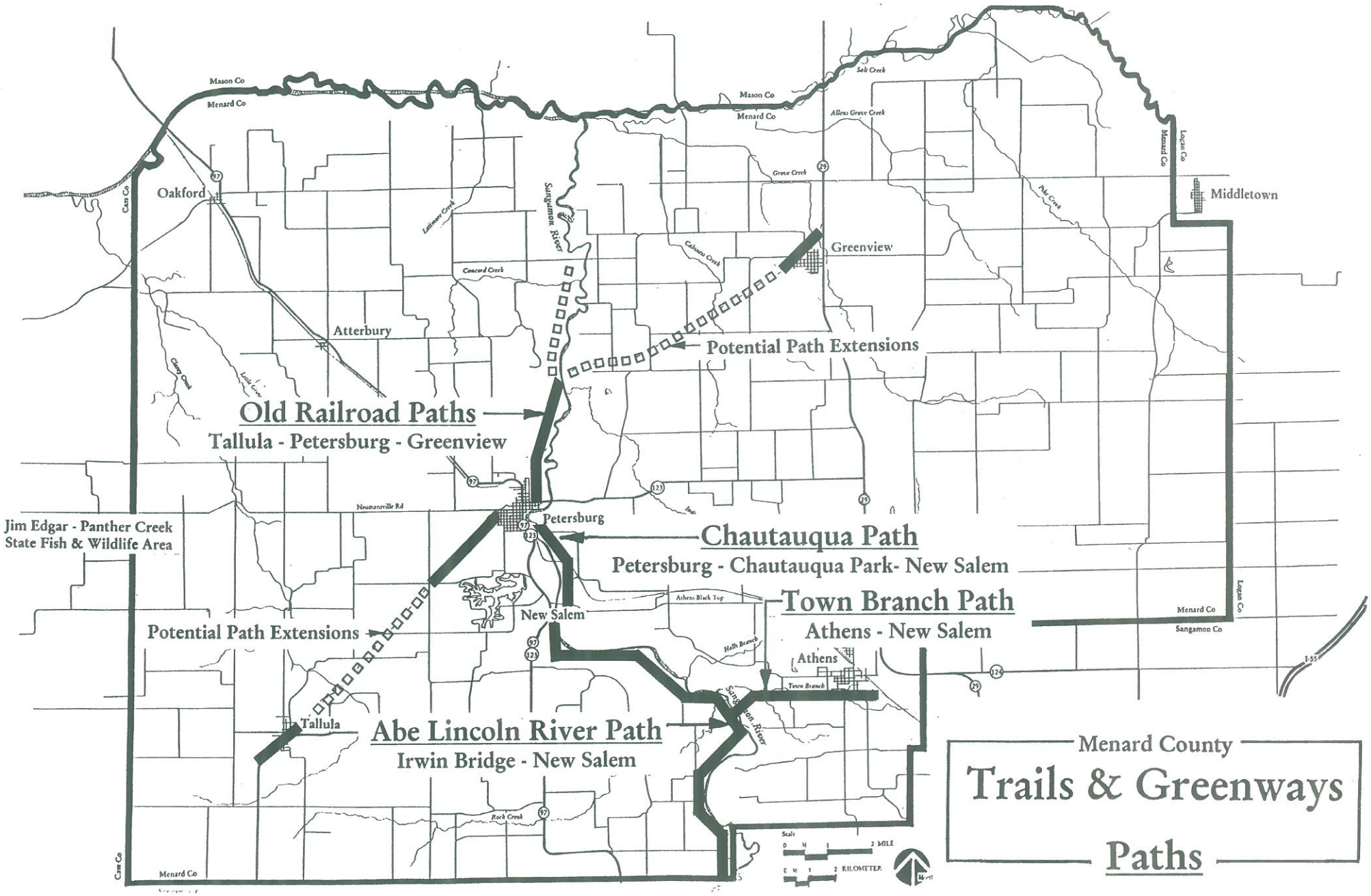
This section describes recreational corridors proposed within Menard County. They are divided into four types – paths, trails, scenic roadways, greenways and riverways. Also described are the major trail hubs, or strategic locations, where several corridors converge and support facilities would be developed. These proposed facilities are listed in an order which a reader can best understand, but not necessarily in an order of importance or priority. Chapter 7 discusses priorities for development.

The proposed system attempts to provide a variety of types of trails which accommodate a variety of uses. To do this, several different approaches were taken. In some cases, a particular alignment accommodates more than one trail such as a walking path beside an equestrian trail. Many of the trails follow the county's primary greenway, the Sangamon River corridor. In other cases, a particular route may accommodate more than one use, such as a trail for both biking and walking. Finally, to provide long-distance bikeways, bike routes were designated along existing roadways.



Petersburg Dam

The use of off-road vehicles was researched and eventually not included in the plan. This category includes motor bikes, ATVs, and snowmobiles require somewhat different facilities and have a greater impact on the environment. It was determined that this use was not compatible with the other trail and greenway uses and resource preservation goals. Additionally, safety and liability concerns with their use would require special considerations. At this time, such facilities might more appropriately be privately developed where proper management, safety controls and control of environmental impact can be provided. In other areas, such facilities have been developed on disturbed sites, such as abandoned quarry lands, or on other lands without sensitive environments. Such sites may exist in Menard County, but are not a part of this plan.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Paths
Old Railroad Paths
Tallula - Petersburg - Greenview
Potential Path Extensions
Chautauqua Path
Petersburg - Chautauqua Park- New Salem
Town Branch Path
Athens - New Salem
Abe Lincoln River Path
Irwin Bridge - New Salem
Potential Path Extensions
Jim Edgar - Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Oakford
Atterbury
Greenview
Middletown
Petersburg
New Salem
Athens
Tallula
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Sangamon River
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Grove Creek
Pike Creek
Cabinets Creek
Concord Creek
Latimore Creek
Clary Creek
Little Grove
Neumansville Rd
Athens Black Top
Hally Branch
Town Branch
Rock Creek
I-55
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER

Paths

Paths are for walking and the enjoyment and study of nature. They are generally not paved. Instead their surfaces are mowed turf, wood chips, crushed stone, or dirt. They allow hiking into forests and prairies, along rivers and creeks, through greenways and parkland.

Some paths also can be used for running and mountain bike riding. These more intensive uses should not occur where nature study or quite walking is primarily intended, as they would obviously be disruptive. In many greenways designated for preservation of sensitive environments, these uses could be seriously damaging.

Horseback riding also can occur parallel to the paths, but should not be on the path itself as hoofs damage the surface and manure on the path can be disagreeable to other users. In particular locations where separate facilities are not feasible, pedestrians and equestrians can share facilities. Common examples are bridges, paved inclines, and access locations.

Paths have a low impact within their environment. They provide a more natural experience for the user and are less noticeable in the landscape. They also require less construction activity and less cost than paved trails which are discussed in the next part. Management and maintenance of paths, however, may be more difficult as these paths are less defined and are often located in more remote areas. In some cases, popular paths may be overused and require fencing or temporary closure during a rejuvenation process.

In many areas, paths could use existing farm field roads, tops of flood-control levees, and old roadway or railroad embankments provided that appropriate easements are obtained. Farm equipment, inspection vehicles, and emergency vehicles could continue to utilize these paths, but any other vehicular use would be prohibited for the safety of the path users.

Old River Road at Petersburg's Bridge Park

The paths proposed in this plan are primarily along the Sangamon River, within the Sangamon River Greenway. From here, connections are suggested to the nearby towns of Athens and potentially Greenview and Tallula. Most of the paths along the river can be developed in conjunction with other uses of the river proposed in this plan. The paths and riverways can share support facilities such as parking, restrooms, and concessions. The paths also would provide access to the river for maintenance and emergency vehicles.

The proposed path system along the river could be combined with other floodplain enhancement programs. In this way path users would observe and learn about the greenway, including such overriding concepts as, 1) its need for erosion control, 2) the significance of riparian wildlife habitats, and 3) the importance of good water quality.

Abe Lincoln River Path

Linkage: *Sangamon County State Conservation Area, New Salem State Historic Site*
Length: *11-1/2 miles*
Route: *Irwin Bridge, along the west side of Sangamon River, to the New Salem Bridge*

This path parallels the Sangamon River (and the proposed Abe Lincoln Riverway) and extends from the southern edge of Menard County to the New Salem Bridge. Access to and from the trail is provided at Irwin Bridge, Gudgel Bridge and New Salem State Historic Site

The trail generally follows the riverbank but also uses roads, levees, and other paths where available. Because it occupies the flood plain, sections of the trail will flood periodically. Most of the property is privately owned so that access easements and/or acquisition of parcels would be needed. This could become a safer, alternate route for this section of the Boy Scout Trail.

Chautauqua Path

Linkage: *New Salem State Historic Site, Chautauqua Park, Petersburg*
Length: *3 miles*
Route: *New Salem Bridge, along the east side of the Sangamon River, to the Petersburg Bridge.*

This path runs along the east side of the Sangamon River, through the Sangamon River Greenway. It parallels the river (and the proposed Chautauqua Riverway) from the New Salem Bridge, through the historical Chautauqua Park, to the Petersburg Bridge.

Town Branch Path

Linkage: *New Salem State Historic Site, Athens*
Length: *9 miles*
Route: *New Salem Bridge, along the east side of Sangamon River and along Town Branch Creek to Athens*

This path through southern Menard County offers a scenic route along the Sangamon River and Town Branch Creek, within the Sangamon River Greenway. Levees, farm roads and utility access roads are utilized where possible.

Old Railroad Paths

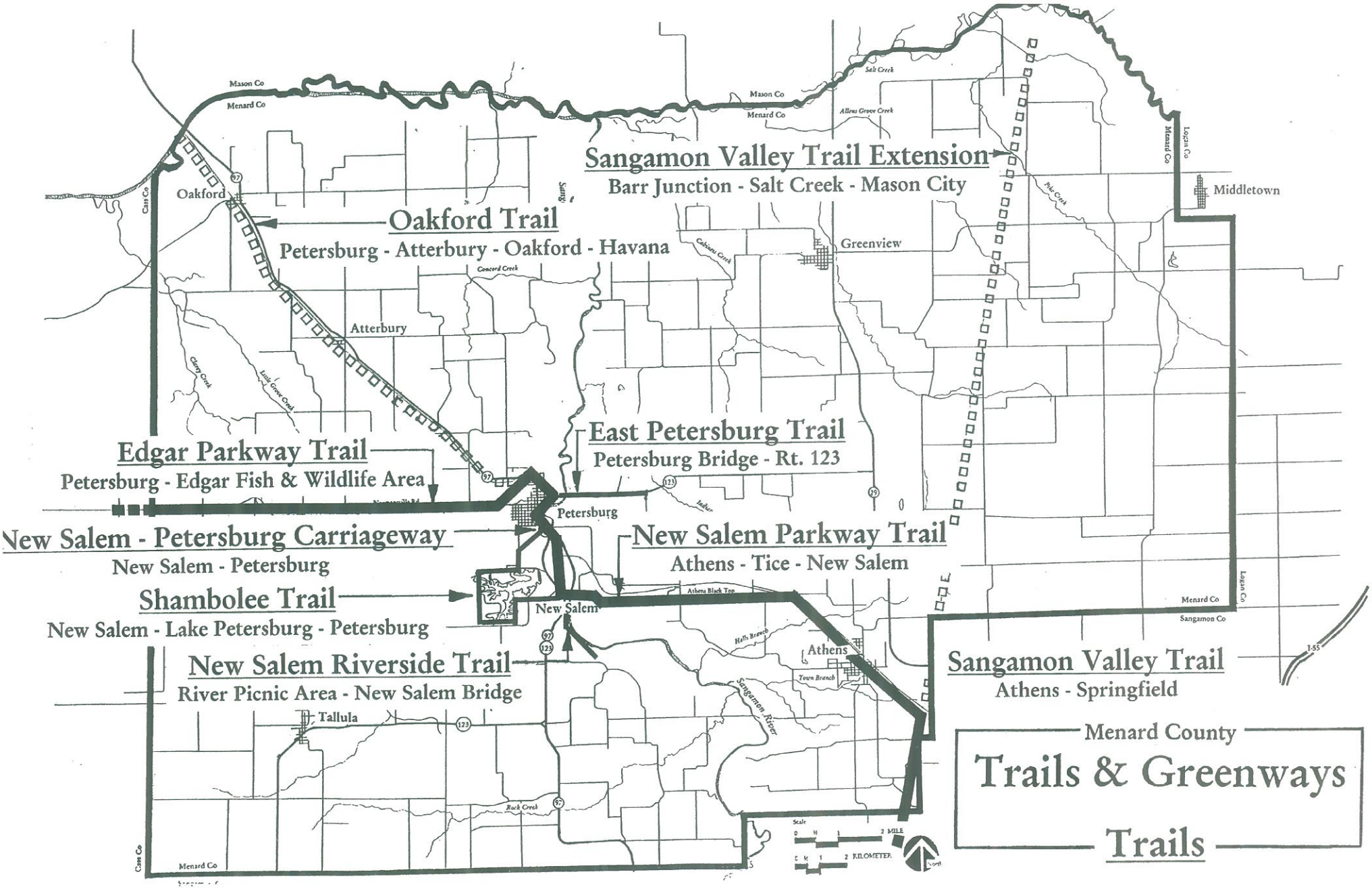
The abandoned ICG railroad corridor (Tallula to Petersburg to Greenview) could potentially become a valuable component within the Menard county trail system. However, much of it has been sold to adjoining landowners. Barring a groundswell of effort to recapture now privately owned sections, potential for use of the abandoned corridor is very limited. The exception may be four small sections which have enough potential value that purchasing from their current owners could be justified.

In both Tallula and Greenview the old railroad ran diagonally through the towns and close to their central business districts. Those sections could be developed to provide trail connections between the business districts and residential areas.

In Petersburg, the old railroad ran through the western and northern residential area of town, skirting the business district. The segment in town is 20 feet below grade and virtually inaccessible. (It can remain an open space.) The two segments, however, that extend beyond the city, one to the north and one to the southwest, could be developed as paths.

The northern segment would follow the old railroad for two miles to the former railroad river crossing. Here it would join the Sangamon River Corridor at the proposed Lower Sangamon Riverway. From there the path could, 1) continue along the river's west side to the Altig Bridge, or 2) with replacement of the old railroad bridge, continue on the abandoned railroad bed to Greenview. This second option, however, would require substantial investment in its acquisition and development. That investment may be worthwhile because of the great value this extended trail would have. It would, 1) be a very scenic route and 2) its 20-mile length, beginning at the full-service Petersburg Hub, provide an optimum trail situation for day use.

The southwestern segment could provide a path from the PORTA school campus on the west side of Petersburg to the 5-Points Road near Shambolee Golf Course. At this point, a user could connect with the Shambolee Trail to New Salem State Historic Site or continue on the Clary Creek Trail to the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. It also could be an attractive route from the Petersburg Hub and PORTA school campus.

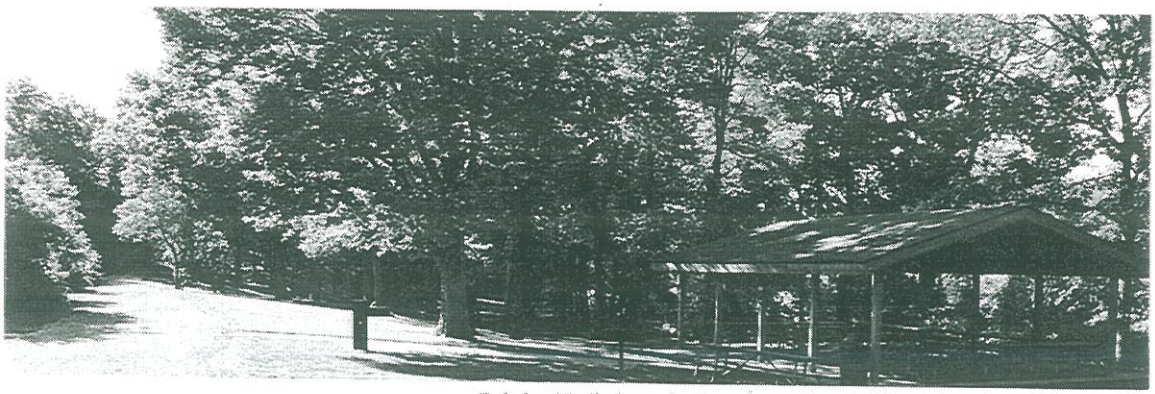

Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Trails
Sangamon Valley Trail Extension
Barr Junction - Salt Creek - Mason City
Oakford Trail
Petersburg - Atterbury - Oakford - Havana
Edgar Parkway Trail
Petersburg - Edgar Fish & Wildlife Area
East Petersburg Trail
Petersburg Bridge - Rt. 123
New Salem - Petersburg Carriageway
New Salem - Petersburg
New Salem Parkway Trail
Athens - Tice - New Salem
Shambolee Trail
New Salem - Lake Petersburg - Petersburg
New Salem Riverside Trail
River Picnic Area - New Salem Bridge
Sangamon Valley Trail
Athens - Springfield
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Oakford
Atterbury
Greenview
Middletown
Petersburg
New Salem
Athens
Tallula
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Pike Creek
Cabins Creek
Concord Creek
Clamp Creek
Little Grove Creek
Athens Black Top
Hells Branch
Town Branch
Sangamon River
Rock Creek
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER
I-55

Trails

Trails have surfaces paved with asphalt or concrete to support more intensive uses such as walking, running, non-motorized vehicles use (tricycles, bicycles, scooters, stake boards, in-line skates, etc.). Trails could be located along edges of natural areas, but would not generally be through those areas because of the disruption to wildlife habitat. Typically trails are located through open areas such as non-sensitive greenways, parks, on abandoned railroad rights-of-way, along utility corridors, or adjacent to roads and highways.

Equestrian use could be permitted on some trails, especially harnessed horses, where the use would not significantly interfere with other trail users. Use of motorized vehicles would be limited to maintenance and emergency vehicles.

Although separate off-road trails are usually preferable, combined uses may be appropriate in some circumstances. One case would be in towns where the right-of-way is limited, but where wide sidewalks could accommodate trail uses. Another case would be at the Shambolee Golf Course where, in some limited cases, a trail could be shared with golf carts. Sometimes there is little alternative to allowing trails to share roadways with vehicles. Where shared roadways are proposed in this plan, they are along rural, low-traffic-volume roads. To increase safety these roads could be posted for use only by local residents for access to their homes and farm fields. Speed limits could be lowered and visibility improved. Traffic signs, pavement markings and other methods would be used. Additional development along these routes should be discouraged through zoning regulations and decisions.



Existing Trail along the Sangamon River in New Salem State Historic Site

The ultimate goal for trails in the county is to have an entirely off-road paved trail from Springfield through Menard County to the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. The trail would enter Menard County (Sangamon Valley Trail along the abandoned railroad near Athens), follow the New Salem Parkway and New Salem/Petersburg Carriageway through the New Salem State Historic Site and Petersburg. It would continue on the Edgar Parkway to the State Fish and Wildlife Area. The distance in Menard County would be about 25 miles.

An additional off-road trail is proposed as an alternate route between New Salem and Petersburg. It is referred to as the Shambolee Trail. Combined with the New Salem/Petersburg Carriageway, it forms an attractive loop through the area. Other off-road trails include, 1) a spur through New Salem State Historic Site along the Sangamon River to connect with the historic Boy Scout Trail, and 2) a spur on the east side of Petersburg to connect with the new development there.

Trails which are designated along limited use roadways are proposed either as, 1) an interim route until an off-road trail can be developed, or 2) alternate routes for trail users wanting more variety in routes offered. In some cases, an on-road alternate is offered to form a loop trail, allowing those who wish to return on a different route rather than returning on the same trail. One of these alternatives is using the country road connection to the Route 66 Trail at Williamsville, rather than using the longer off-road trail route through Springfield.

Sangamon Valley Trail (Old Chicago and Northwest Railroad)

Linkage: *Sangamon County, through Menard County, to Mason County*
Distance: *2 miles*
Route: *Springfield to Athens with potential extension to Mason County*

This trail runs completely through eastern Menard County. From Sangamon County on the south, the trail extends into Menard County on the southeast side. The first 2 miles of trail would be built on the recently abandoned railroad corridor that extends to just south of Athens.

If the remainder of that railroad were to be abandoned in the future, this trail could extend north to Salt Creek and Mason County. This trail extension would be more attractive if connected to a longer system going north, otherwise the extension would terminate at Salt Creek.

New Salem Parkway Trail

Linkage: *New Salem State Historic Site and Route 97 with Athens and Route 29*
Distance: *8-1/2 miles*
Route: *New Salem Bridge, along the Athens Blacktop, to Athens*

The route between Athens and the New Salem Bridge would accommodate a scenic motorist parkway, an off-road recreational trail, and even a train route.

The trail follows the Athens Blacktop which is a heavily used roadway. Local residents use the road for access within the county and for commuting to Springfield. It is the route marked on I-55 at Williamsville for tourists bound for New Salem State

Historic Site. As the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area develops, the route will carry an increasing number of visitors there. The recreational trail would follow this roadway, providing an alternative to driving. The route is also generally more level than the surrounding area.

The Illinois Midland Railroad parallels much of this route. An excursion passenger train could provide another method of transportation and an opportunity for accessing Menard County. Bikers could bike one way and ride the train back, a rather unique recreational opportunity. If the railroad were to be abandoned in the future for commercial use, the corridor could be developed as a recreational trail or path or be retained for train excursions.

New Salem - Petersburg Carriageway

Linkage: *Petersburg Bridge Park and Petersburg to New Salem State Historic Site*
Distance: *2-1/2 miles*
Route: *New Salem Bridge, along the west side of the Sangamon River, to the Petersburg Bridge*

This trail would be the principal tourist route linking New Salem to nearby Petersburg. It would also provide area residents an off-road route to community facilities, New Salem State Historic Site, and other trails within the system. The tree lined, paved trail would include historically appropriate bridges and site amenities to resemble a mid-1800s roadway in character with the park and city.

Passing through the picturesque Sangamon River Valley, a portion of the Sangamon River Greenway, the route begins at the intersection of Athens Blacktop and Route 97 then parallels Route 97 on its east side for 2-1/2 miles north into Petersburg. On the southern edge of Petersburg the Carriageway passes the Hemp Factory Creek Landing which could provide trail access, parking and a canoe landing location on the Sangamon River. The trail runs near downtown Petersburg along the railroad to Petersburg's Bridge Park.

Edgar Parkway Trail

Linkage: *Petersburg & Rt. 97 with the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish & Wildlife Area in Cass County*
Distance: *9 miles*
Route: *Petersburg along the Newmansville Blacktop to the west Menard County line*

Both a trail and scenic driveway could be developed along the Newmansville Blacktop providing a direct route from Petersburg to the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area.

The proposed parkway would begin at Route 97 north of Petersburg and run diagonally through a new corridor north of the schools to meet with Newmansville Blacktop west of Petersburg. It would then follow existing roadways directly west for nine miles to the county line. This route passes through the Clary Creek Valley and a picturesque area of Menard County's rural landscape. It provides access to the PORTA school campus on the west side of Petersburg and a route from the schools to Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub.

New Salem Riverside Trail

Linkage: *River Picnic Area and Boat Ramp at New Salem State Historic Site with New Salem Bridge*
Distance: *1 mile*
Route: *Boat Ramp/Day Use Area to New Salem Bridge Trail Hub using the Old River Road*

The trail would lie along the Old River Road, parallel to the Sangamon River. It would be developed with historically appropriate bridges and amenities. At the New Salem Bridge Trail Hub, facilities for tethering and grooming horses would be provided. To visit New Salem Village, people would use the existing foot bridge over the highway. The park road on the east side of the highway could be used as a shared roadway to make an extension to this trail and a link with the historic Boy Scout Trail.

Shambolee Trail

Linkage: *New Salem Village with Petersburg*
Distance: *10-1/2 miles*
Route: *New Salem Trail Hub, around Lake Petersburg, to Hemp Factory Creek Landing*

The Shambolee Trail forms a loop from the New Salem State Historic Site, around Lake Petersburg, through the Grand Oaks residential area, to the Hemp Factory Creek Landing. Here it connects with the New Salem - Petersburg Carriage Path. The trail offers area residents and park visitors convenient access to the New Salem State Historic Site, other Menard county trails, the Sangamon River Greenway, and Shambolee Golf Course. The loop consists of three trail sections:

Warburton Trail Section

This section is primarily within the New Salem State Historic Site. It meanders up the old pasture bluff from the New Salem Bridge Trail Hub to New Salem's campground, Visitors Center, and picnic area. It passes the site's overflow parking area which could be used as a staging area for trail events.

Lake Petersburg Trail Section

This section connects Warburton Trail with Grand Oaks Trail. It could utilize the Lake Petersburg roadways, golf paths, and new trails on commonly owned lands. It also could be used for golf cart access to Shambolee Golf Course west of the lake.

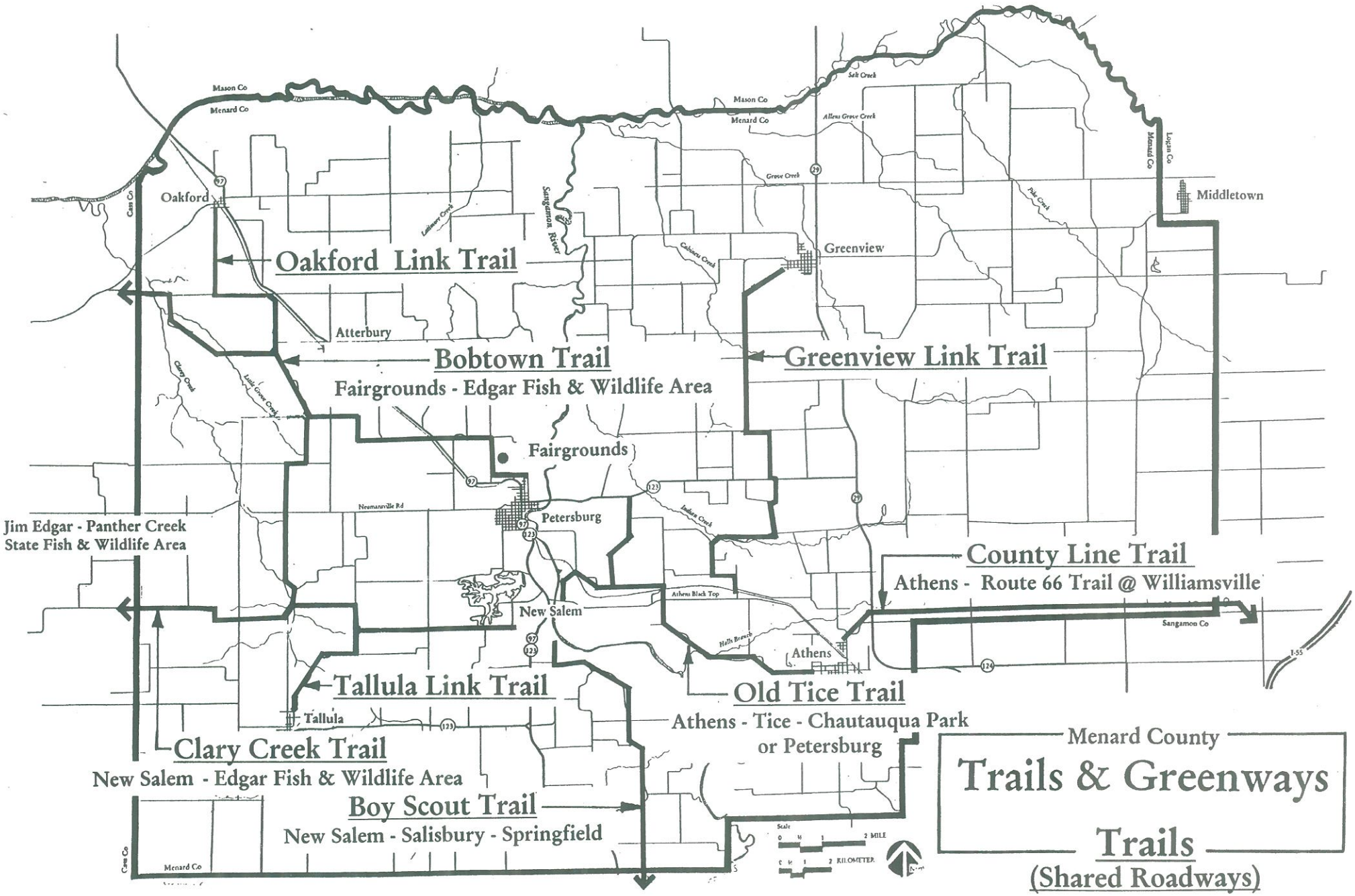
Grand Oaks Trail Section

With their scenic views, the cul-de-sac roadways in Grand Oaks Estates provide ideal biking and hiking opportunities. The roadways could be joined to the Lake Petersburg Trail Section (above) and Route 97 near Hemp Factory Creek with new connecting trails.

East Petersburg Trail

Linkage: *Carter Road & Indian Point Road with Petersburg*
Distance: *2-1/4 miles*
Route: *Carter Road along Route 123 to the Petersburg Bridge*

The East Petersburg Trail completes a link from Athens to Petersburg along small country roads. The two and a quarter mile long trail adjacent to Route 123 passes the Rose Hill Cemetery east of Petersburg and several new commercial and residential areas. This trail creates an important connection to the Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub and joins the two sections of the community divided by the Sangamon River.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Trails
(Shared Roadways)
Oakford Link Trail
Bobtown Trail
Fairgrounds - Edgar Fish & Wildlife Area
Greenview Link Trail
County Line Trail
Athens - Route 66 Trail @ Williamsville
Tallula Link Trail
Old Tice Trail
Athens - Tice - Chautauqua Park
or Petersburg
Clary Creek Trail
New Salem - Edgar Fish & Wildlife Area
Boy Scout Trail
New Salem - Salisbury - Springfield
Jim Edgar - Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Oakford
Atterbury
Fairgrounds
Petersburg
New Salem
Greenview
Middletown
Athens
Tallula
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Sangamon River
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Grove Creek
Pike Creek
Cabinets Creek
Latimore Creek
Clary Creek
Little Grove Creek
Neumansville Rd
Indian Creek
Athens Black Top
Halls Branch
I-55
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER

Old Tice Trail (shared roadways)

Linkage: *Athens with Chautauqua Park and Petersburg*
Distance: *9 miles*
Route: *Athens to Tice on to Chautauqua Park and Petersburg*

This trail would wind through central Menard County using scenic back roads along the Sangamon River bluffs. The nine mile long trail begins on the west side of Athens and follows Cantrall Road northwest crossing the Athens Blacktop near Tice. The trail forks. One fork would follow Sunny Acres Road west to Chautauqua Park to join the Chautauqua Path. The other fork would use Carter Road north to Indian Point Road, joining with the Petersburg Trail. There are many scenic lookout points along these narrow rural roadways. Safety and steep grades would be concerns that could require improvements. This route could be an alternate to the proposed New Salem Parkway Trail, or combined with the New Salem Parkway Trail to make an attractive loop.

Historic Boy Scout Trail (a shared roadway)

Linkage: *Sangamon County with New Salem State Historic Site*
Distance: *5 miles*
Route: *Southern Menard County line near Salisbury to New Salem State Historic Site*

The Historic Boy Scout Trail is noted as the oldest Boy Scout trail in America. It is a scenic route along the Sangamon River Valley in southern Menard County. The trail begins in Springfield and winds its way north through Menard County on county roads to Coal Mine Road and eventually a service road connection into the east side of the New Salem State Historic Site.

Safety of trail users on this roadway has been a concern due to its hilly and curving character. An alternative route (Abe Lincoln River Path) along the west side of the river may be more scenic and safer while providing greater recreational value.

Bobtown Trail (a shared roadway)

Linkage: *Petersburg & the Menard County Fairgrounds with the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area*
Distance: *11-3/4 miles*
Route: *Northwest from Petersburg to West Oakford Road*

This trail passes through northwestern Menard County utilizing several lesser used country roads and a portion of an abandoned road. Though population is sparse in this area, the trail would provide an excellent scenic connection between Petersburg and the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area.

The trail begins on the north side of Petersburg near the fairgrounds and follows North Petersburg Road to Worthington Road. It then follows Bobtown Road crossing Little Grove Creek and Clary Creek. Using these less-traveled country roads provides an attractive route through Menard County's rural landscape. They could also be developed for horse riding thereby providing an added route for equestrians using the campground and trails in the northern part of the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. Facilities at the Menard County Fairgrounds could be used for more equestrian events and possibly equestrian camping.

Clary Creek Trail (a shared roadway)

Linkage: *Petersburg and New Salem State Historic Site with Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area*
Distance: *10 miles*
Route: *Southwest from Petersburg to Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area*

Clary Creek Trail starts southwest of Petersburg at Five Points Road. At this location a link to the southwest could be made with the nearby Shambolee Trail around Lake Petersburg and the Old Railroad Path running diagonally into Petersburg.

Clary Creek Trail in southwestern Menard County serves a purpose similar to Bobtown Trail in the northwest. The trail would use picturesque country roads through a rural landscape offering a relaxing and relatively safe path from Petersburg to the southern parts of the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area.

County Line Trail (a shared roadway)

Linkage: *Athens with Route 66 Trail at Williamsville*
Distance: *12 miles*
Route: *Athens along County Line Road to Williamsville*

This trail runs along the southeastern edge of Menard County. It begins near the Athens Park and follows Evers Road to the north. It then turns east and follows County Line Road into Sangamon County near the I-55 at Williamsville. This trail would be an important and direct connection to the National Route 66 Trail (Chicago to Los Angeles).

Community Links (3)

Linkage: *Tallula, Greenview and Oakford/Atterbury, with the principal cross-county corridor*
Distance: *Greenview - 11 miles*
Tallula - 5 miles
Oakford/Atterbury - 8 miles
Route: *Most direct backroad routes to the principal cross-county corridor*

These designated shared-roadways would provide the safest, shortest and most direct access between the communities and the main corridor. These Community Links would allow residents to access the corridor which would link the other towns, trails, and recreational sites. These links also provide an attractive side trips for corridor users who wish to further explore Menard County.

Oakford Trail (current railroad)

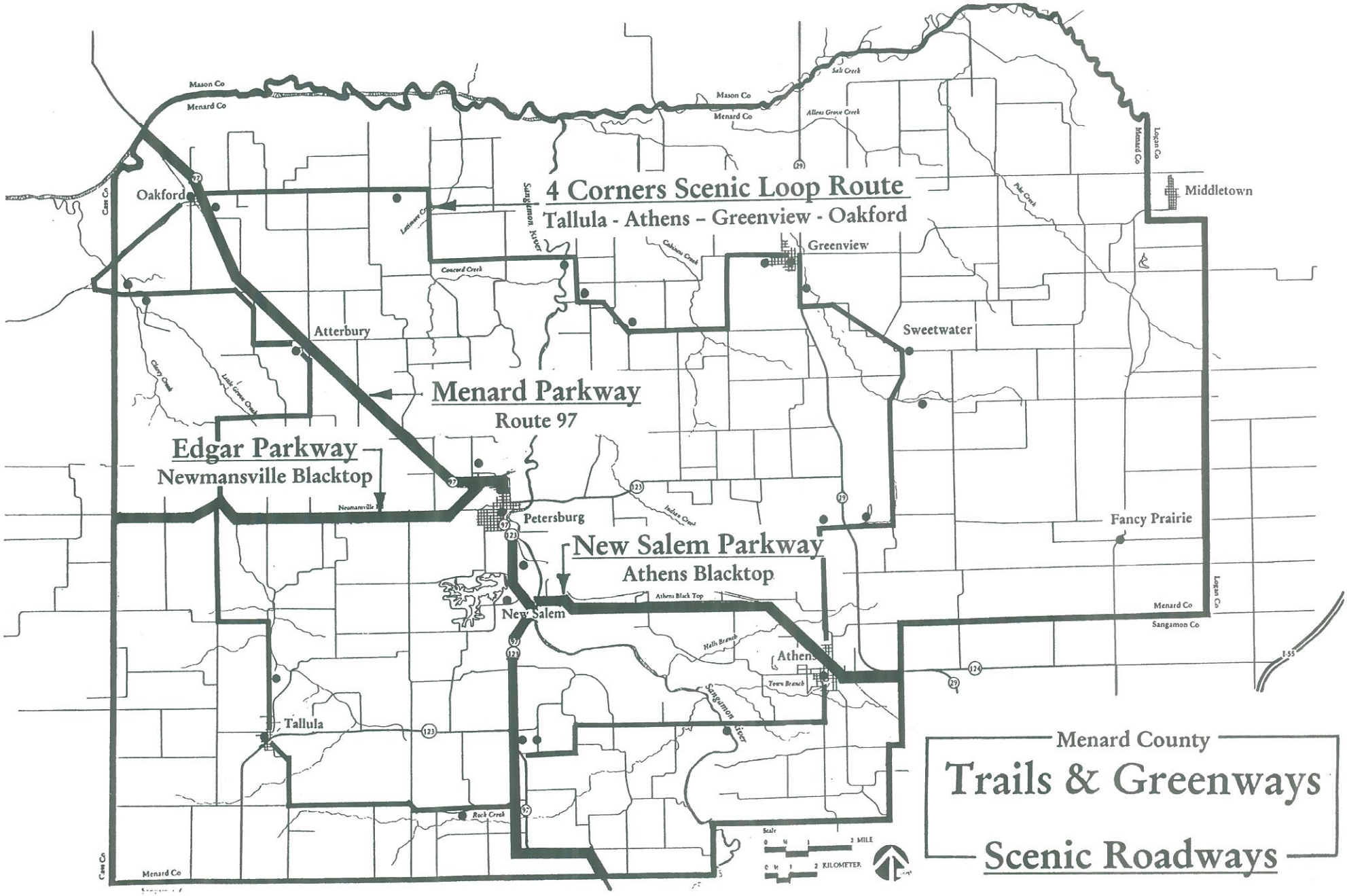
Linkage: *Petersburg and Atterbury with Oakford and Mason County*
Distance: *13 miles*
Route: *Petersburg to Oakford and on to Havana*

If the commercial use of the railroad were to be discontinued it could be converted to a scenic trail or path connecting the Menard County Trail system with several of the natural and cultural sites in the Illinois River Valley. The tracks could also be retained for use by an excursion train with could possibly be linked to Springfield and Peoria.

Sangamon Valley Trail Extension (current railroad)

Linkage: *Sangamon County, through Menard County, to Mason County*
Distance: *16-1/2 miles*
Route: *Athens (end of Sangamon Valley Trail, #1 above) north to Mason County*

If this segment of the railroad were to be abandoned in the future, the Sangamon Valley Trail could be extended north to Salt Creek and Mason County. From this point, then, the trail could be extended into Mason County and areas beyond.



Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Scenic Roadways
4 Corners Scenic Loop Route
Tallula - Athens – Greenview - Oakford
Menard Parkway
Route 97
Edgar Parkway
Newmansville Blacktop
New Salem Parkway
Athens Blacktop
Oakford
Atterbury
Greenview
Sweetwater
Middletown
Petersburg
New Salem
Athens
Tallula
Fancy Prairie
Mason Co
Menard Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Cass Co
Sangamon River
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Concord Creek
Cabinets Creek
Pike Creek
Clarry Creek
Little Green Creek
Indian Creek
Athens Black Top
Halls Branch
Town Branch
Rock Creek
Scale
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER

Scenic Roadways

Scenic roadways and driving routes have been proposed by this plan for those who enjoy a drive through Menard County's picturesque countryside or an excursion to its many historical and cultural features.

New Salem Bridge

Three existing roadways are identified as potential scenic roadways. These routes bisect the county. At the county borders, they form entrances or gateways into Menard County from surrounding counties and regions. The routes intersect most of the major tourist locations and provide a good overview of the area.

A fourth scenic driving route is identified which would form a loop and tie into the above routes. The interconnection of these routes would provide additional driving opportunities within the county and would allow motorists to customize their routes to suit their particular interests.

The scenic roadways would become principal tourists routes, as well, providing access to the major tourist locations in the county. As such, they should be protected with special zoning, sign controls, and scenic easements to insure their lasting quality. Their visual quality and safety should be evaluated and enhanced as needed. Enhancements might include providing good directional signs, attractive roadside plantings, and overall clean-up and maintenance of the roadways. For safety, high quality road surfaces, good visibility at intersections, and appropriate speed controls and other regulatory signs need to be provided and maintained. These conditions will help assure an attractive and safe experience for both visitors and county residents traveling in Menard County.

The following are proposed major scenic roadway routes.

Menard Parkway (Route 97)

Links:	*New Salem State Historic Site, Petersburg, and Oakford with Sangamon & Mason Counties*
Distance:	*23 miles*
Route:	*Menard County line on south to the north county line at the Sangamon River*

This route would be the major north/south corridor through the county. It links Petersburg, the county's largest town, with New Salem State Historic Site, the county's largest tourist site. Route 97 is the primary connection from Sangamon County to the south and Mason County on the north. It intersects the major east/west routes to provide connections to Athens, Interstate 55, and the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area.

The route begins at the south edge of Menard County and winds north ten miles through the New Salem State Historic Site to Petersburg. North of Petersburg the parkway parallels the Illinois Midland Railroad for thirteen miles through Atterbury and Oakford before crossing the Sangamon River and entering Mason County. The north and south sections of Route 97 pass through a gently rolling rural landscape, while near New Salem, Petersburg, and Oakford the parkway offers views of the Sangamon River Valley.

The Illinois Midland Railroad is adjacent to this route for part of the distance. An excursion passenger train could provide another connection between the towns along the track and provide a service for trail users who may wish to ride one way. If the railroad were to be abandoned , this could become the recreational paved trail, or a path for equestrian use.

New Salem Parkway (Athens Blacktop)

Linkage: *New Salem State Historic Site and Route 97 with Athens and Route 29*
Distance: *8-1/2 miles*
Route: *Athens to New Salem*

The proposed parkway between Athens and the New Salem Bridge would be a combination scenic motorist parkway and a separate paved recreational trail. The current roadway, locally referred to as the Athens Blacktop, is part of the direct tourist route between Interstate 55 at Williamsville and New Salem State Historic Site. This major county road carries thousands of tourist cars and buses each year through the community of Athens to the New Salem State Historic Site. In the future this route will carry additional visitors beyond to the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area west of Petersburg. This route also carries a considerable amount of local and commuting traffic as it connects the two largest communities in the county and is the shortest commuting route for many people in central Menard County to Springfield.

A recreational trail is proposed beside this roadway, providing a direct route to New Salem and the Sangamon River Valley. The route is generally more level than the surrounding area. The Illinois Midland Railroad is adjacent to this route for part of the distance. An excursion passenger train could be developed to provide another recreational opportunity along this route. If the railroad were to be abandoned, the alignment could be developed as either a path or a paved trail. An equestrian route could possibly be provided here as well.

Edgar Parkway (Newmansville Blacktop)

Linkage: *Petersburg & Rt. 97 with the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area*
Distance: *9 miles*
Route: *Petersburg, along the Newmansville Blacktop to the west Menard County line*

This parkway can provide a major link for motorists from Menard County and other locations east to the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. With extensive hunting/fishing facilities, equestrian/bike trails and camping facilities this state park is a growing tourist attraction. An enhanced roadway with controlled development along the route would create a pleasurable experience.

The proposed parkway begins at a new intersection with Route 97 at the north edge of Petersburg and run diagonally north of the schools to meet with Newmansville Blacktop west of Petersburg. It then heads directly west for nine miles to the county line. This route passes through the Clary Creek Valley and a picturesque area of Menard County's rural landscape. It also provides access to the PORTA school campus on the west side of Petersburg.

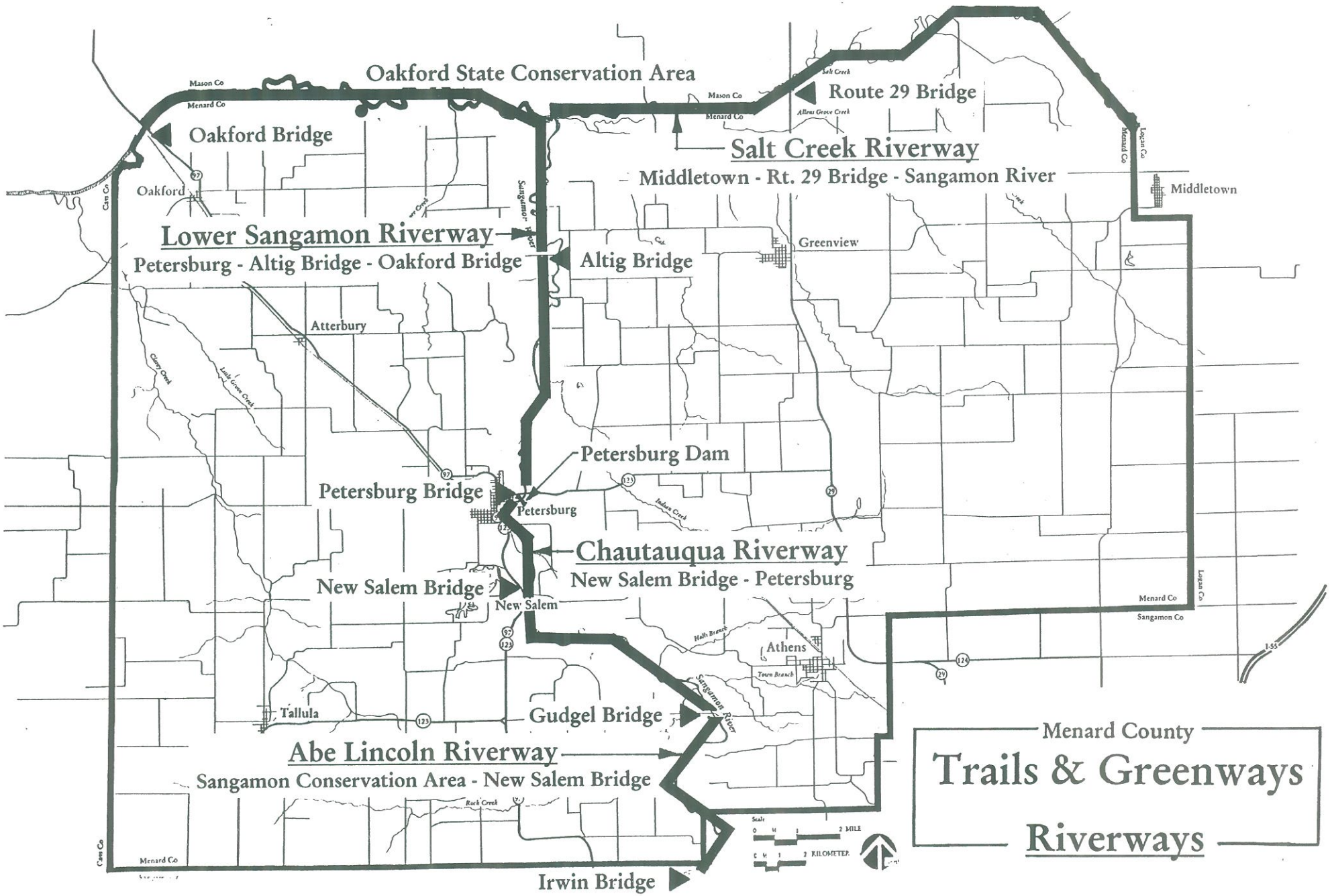
Four Corners Scenic Loop Route

Linkage: *Oakford, Greenview, Athens and Tallula*
Distance: *50 miles*
Route: *Scenic back roads connecting the 4 communities*

This route forms a loop through Menard County, connecting the four communities of Tallula, Oakford, Greenview, and Athens. Each of these communities has historic homes, commercial buildings, churches and cemeteries that reflect the rich heritage of the area. The route also provides scenic rural driving with vistas of the wooded Sangamon River Valley, the picturesque rural landscape and several country churches, rural cemeteries, and farmsteads.

This route through less visited areas of the county provides a representative sampling of landscapes and features. With the parkway routed through towns, visitors will have access to their services including gas stations, restaurants, and gift shops. Local businesses may be able to build on this increased traffic. Communities may wish to sponsor events which would attract driving tourists or to promote side routes to encourage motorists to see more within their areas.

This loop route intersects the other three designated parkways, to create a web formation and many possible variations in driving routes.


Oakford State Conservation Area
Mason Co
Menard Co
Route 29 Bridge
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Oakford Bridge
Salt Creek Riverway
Middletown - Rt. 29 Bridge - Sangamon River
Logan Co
Menard Co
Middletown
Oakford
Cass Co
Lower Sangamon Riverway
Petersburg - Altig Bridge - Oakford Bridge
Altig Bridge
Greenview
Sangamon River
Atterbury
Clarey Creek
Little Grove Creek
Petersburg Dam
Petersburg Bridge
Petersburg
Indian Creek
Chautauqua Riverway
New Salem Bridge - Petersburg
New Salem Bridge
New Salem
Menard Co
Sangamon Co
Logan Co
Halls Branch
Athens
Town Branch
Sangamon River
Tallula
Gudgel Bridge
Abe Lincoln Riverway
Sangamon Conservation Area - New Salem Bridge
Rock Creek
Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Riverways
Scale
2 MILE
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Menard Co
Cass Co
Irwin Bridge

Riverways

The two principal rivers in Menard County are the Sangamon River and the Salt Creek. They are classified as navigable waters and can support public canoeing, kayaking, boating, fishing, etc. In other sections of this plan, the river corridors have been proposed as the Sangamon River Greenway and the Salt Creek Greenway, respectively.

Riverways, sections of these rivers, are also being identified for boating uses. Currently the main limiting factor to using the rivers is the limited number of publicly owned areas for access and egress and the significant distances between those points.

Sangamon River near Petersburg Dam

This Plan divides the Sangamon River into three sections. The first is the upstream section from the south county line to New Salem State Historic Site. It is named Abe Lincoln Riverway because this section of the river was often used by young Lincoln while at the original New Salem Village. The second section is the shortest, from New Salem State Historic Site to Petersburg. It is called the Chautauqua Riverway because it was used during the Chautauqua era (1880 to 1910) for recreation and transportation between Petersburg and the Chautauqua Park. Last is the lower Sangamon Riverway that runs from below the dam at Petersburg to Oakford, 20 miles to the north.

Chautauqua Riverway

Linkage: *New Salem Bridge to the Petersburg Dam*
Distance: *2-1/2 miles*
Route: *Sangamon River*

This section of the river was actively used during the turn of the century. During the Chautauquas, the river was used for recreation and for transporting visitors from the Petersburg train station to the Chautauqua site south of town.

The water level of this section of river is somewhat elevated by a low dam at Petersburg. The concrete dam has broken into sections, creating small waterfalls, eddies, and other impediments. For some kayakers, the dam has become a popular location for practicing and enjoying white water paddling.

For typical boaters, however, the broken dam is a potential hazard. If boating on the riverway is to be promoted, boaters need to be provided with a safe location for taking-out their boats above this dam. A landing could be developed at Hemp Factory Creek, upstream from the dam, or a safe portage around the dam could be designated.

Above the Petersburg dam, the railroad track obscures good views of the river and limits opportunities for scenic improvement and public access. The railroad turns away from the river, leaving a sizeable area adjacent to the river. Here Petersburg has developed a park with ball fields and a small boat ramp. Adjacent to the park is an area which has been bought-out by FEMA. This open space could be used for additional recreational facilities and support services for the riverway.

Abe Lincoln Riverway

Linkage: *Sangamon County State Conservation Area with New Salem State Historic Site*
Distance: *11-1/2 miles*
Route: *Irwin Bridge to the New Salem Bridge*

This section of the Sangamon River was used often by Abe Lincoln while he lived in New Salem Village. Lincoln came to New Salem on a flatboat and used the river often to transport goods. Interestingly, one of his first political platforms was to improve the river for navigation.

Today, as in the 1800s, this section of the river flows through a narrow valley surrounded by wooded hills. In some locations, levees, farm fields and cabins line the banks. Most of the adjacent land is privately owned.

A proposed boat launch at Irwin Bridge would provide access to the river and form a 'put-in' point for canoes and other small craft. A second access point would be developed five miles downstream at Gudgel Bridge, the half-way point in the route. The final access/egress point would be at the existing landing facilities of the New Salem State Historic Site.

To make this a safer river route, tree snags and debris along the river would need to be removed. Access routes for maintenance and emergency assistance would be desirable and could use the adjacent proposed paths (Abe Lincoln River Path and Town Branch Path).

Lower Sangamon Riverway

Linkage: *Petersburg, Altig Bridge, and Salt Creek with Oakford*
Distance: *22 miles*
Route: *Sangamon River from Petersburg Bridge to Oakford Bridge*

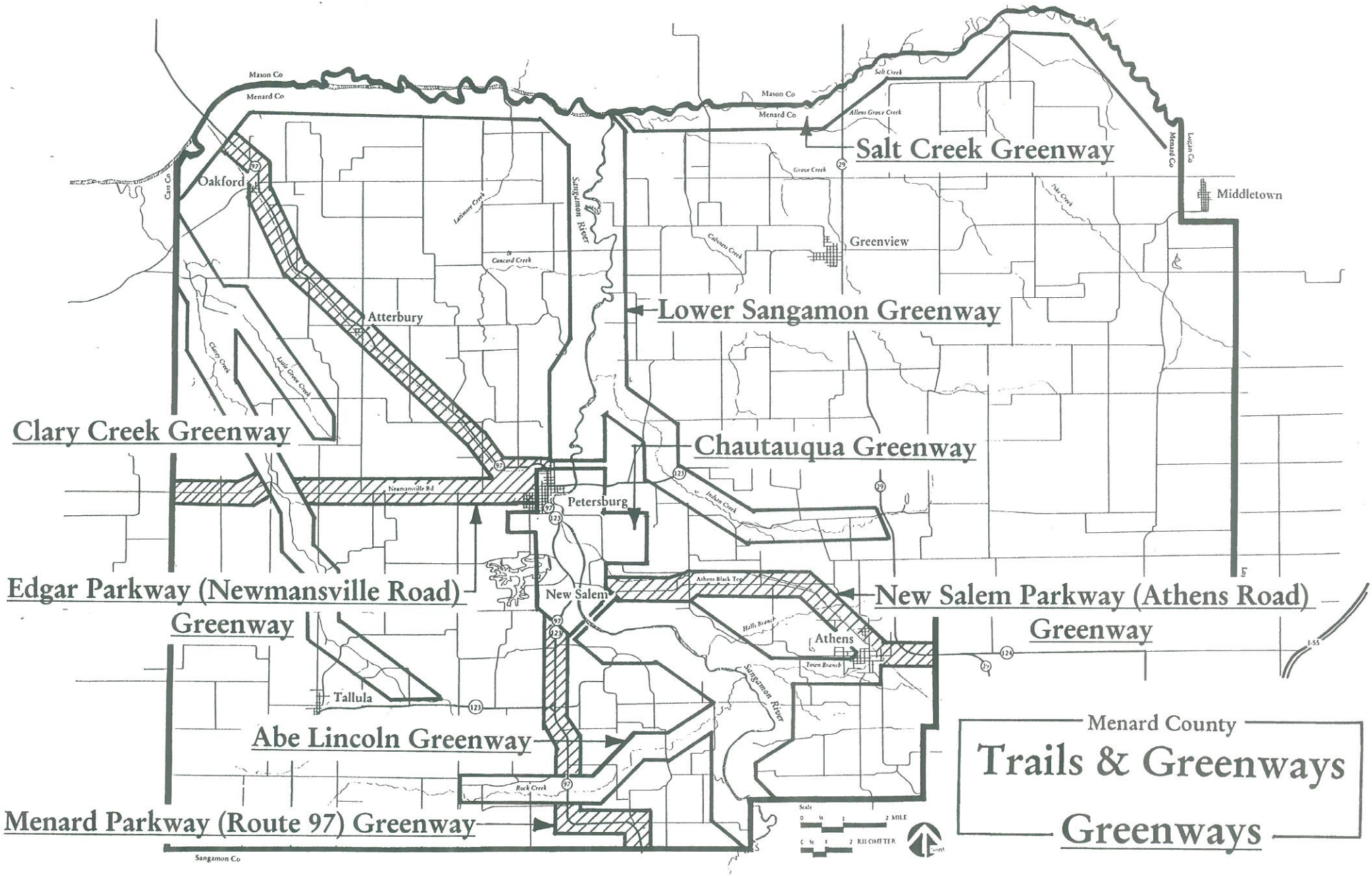
This route of the Sangamon River runs north from Petersburg to the northern boundary of Menard County. Here it joins Salt Creek and then flows west to the Illinois River. The river's natural twists and turns provide an interesting and scenic canoeing experience. A public access/egress point at the Altig Bridge would provide a place for boaters to stretch, lunch or 'take-out' midway along this route.

The Oakford State Conservation Area east of the community of Oakford is the only public land along this entire section of the river. This recently donated land is not yet developed and is not accessible by any public road. If this riverway is to be developed, the state might consider providing primitive camping facilities at this site, to be accessed from the river.

Salt Creek Riverway

Linkage: *Middletown with the Sangamon River and Oakford*
Length: *18 miles*
Route: *Middletown Bridge to Oakford Bridge*

Salt Creek, a tributary of the Sangamon River, is part of the northern boundary of Menard County. When the water level is high enough, this creek offers scenic views and relaxing canoeing/boating. Beginning at the northeast edge of Menard County near Middletown, this riverway flows west, crossing under Route 29 north of Greenview and under other rural roadways. The bridge crossings potentially could serve as points of ingress/egress for public use. Final egress could be provided below the Oakford State Conservation Area at the Oakford Bridge.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Greenways
Salt Creek Greenway
Lower Sangamon Greenway
Chautauqua Greenway
Clary Creek Greenway
Edgar Parkway (Newmansville Road) Greenway
New Salem Parkway (Athens Road) Greenway
Abe Lincoln Greenway
Menard Parkway (Route 97) Greenway
Mason Co
Menard Co
Cass Co
Logan Co
Sangamon Co
Oakford
Atterbury
Petersburg
New Salem
Athens
Tallula
Greenview
Middletown
Sangamon River
Salt Creek
Allens Grove Creek
Grove Creek
Latimer Creek
Concord Creek
Clary Creek
Little Grove Creek
Newmansville Rd
Indian Creek
Athens Black Top
Hills Branch
Town Branch
Rock Creek
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I-55

Greenways

The term 'greenway' as used in land planning is a geographic corridor identified for the value of its natural environment(s), wildlife habitats, and/or recreational use by humans. Greenways often follow waterways, edges of water bodies, or other distinct geographic features where native vegetation is present or could be reestablished. They often include areas with reasonably intact vegetation communities (in Central Illinois, areas of prairie, forest, and wetland).

Since greenways by definition are linear areas, it is sound planning to link and include within these greenways existing public open spaces and recreational areas. In Menard County those areas include the state and local parks, historic sites, and conservation areas as previously discussed. With one of the purpose of greenways being to promote conservation and environmental improvement, private lands can be included. Those private lands could include, 1) areas in flood plains and other development-restricted areas, 2) lands already zoned for conservation, and 3) areas within conservation easement programs.

Greenways can be designated for various purposes and functions, including preservation or reestablishment of natural environment(s), development of particular wildlife habitats, and provision for various human activities. The existing character of specific greenway environments should determine what functions it supports.

In Menard County, the river systems offer excellent opportunities for greenways. Their natural character and qualities can be protected while providing some popular recreational opportunities. Additionally, a few 'overland' routes can be serve as additional greenways for the purposes of, 1) connecting the river system's natural and recreational systems, 2) incorporating the paths, trails and driving routes along these overland routes, and 3) enhancing the overall visual and environmental quality of the selected travel corridors and their environs.

Abe Lincoln Greenway

Links:	*Sangamon County State Conservation Area on the south to New Salem State Historic Site*
Length:	*11 miles*
Area:	*Approx. 15 sq.mi.*

This area in South Central Menard County includes the Sangamon River and its tributaries Rock Creek and Town Branch. The greenway includes the floodplain and hillsides along the water courses. Along the Sangamon River, the greenway width is about a mile wide, and along the tributaries, the width is about 1/2 mile wide.

Although some good quality forests occur in the area, the greenway is predominantly agricultural in use. This part of the county is moderately populated with rural residents living on farms and farmettes, residential plots of 5 acres or more.

The primary purpose of the Abe Lincoln Greenway would be to preserve the natural character of this section of the valley and its riparian environments. The tributaries are included in the greenway in order to, 1) increase the habitat and corridors for wildlife and 2) to provide buffer areas where runoff and erosion can be controlled before entering the river.

Public recreational facilities proposed in this greenway include:

1. Abe Lincoln River Path, Town Branch Path
2. South Section of the Old Tice Trail
3. Parts of the Historic Boy Scout Trail
4. Abe Lincoln Riverway
5. 4 Corners Scenic Loop at Gudgel Bridge

Chautauqua Greenway

Links: *New Salem State Historic Site to Petersburg*
Length: *3 miles*
Area: *Approx. 5 sq.mi.*

This mile-wide corridor lies in central Menard County, and includes the Sangamon River Valley and its tributary Hemp Factory Creek on the south edge of Petersburg. Within this greenway are many areas of good quality forest and remnant prairie. Additionally, the historic Chautauqua Park which once hosted major social and cultural events is located about midway along the route.

Current uses of the corridor include agriculture, residential, and recreational. The surrounding area is more populated than the other greenway areas principally because of Petersburg's population. Additionally, visitors to New Salem State Historic Site add a temporary population to the area and a market for additional activities in the area.

The purpose of the greenway is to preserve the natural environment in this area. Preservation is especially important because the area will be increasingly subject to development and use pressures from the populations of nearby Petersburg and New Salem State Historic Site.

Recreational facilities proposed for this greenway are:

1. Chautauqua Path
2. New Salem Parkway Trail
3. New Salem/Petersburg Carriageway
4. Shambolee Trail
5. New Salem Riverside Trail
6. Sections of the East Petersburg Trail
7. Sections of the Old Tice Trail

8. Sections of the Historic Boy Scout Trail
9. Chautauqua Riverway
10. Menard Parkway (central section)
11. New Salem Bridge Hub
12. Hemp Factory Creek and Petersburg Bridge Hub

Lower Sangamon Greenway

Links: *Petersburg to Oakford*
Length: *20 miles*
Area: *16 sq.mi.*

This greenway is located in the north central area of the county and includes the Sangamon River Valley and its tributary Indian Creek east of Petersburg. Along the Sangamon River, the corridor is about one mile wide, and along Indian Creek its is about 1/2 mile wide. This greenway is less hilly and has fewer forests than that to the south.

The corridor is used primarily for agricultural, although a golf course, campground, and the Oakford State Conservation Area also are located along the river. Public access to the river is very limited. This area of the county is sparsely populated.

The purpose of this greenway is to preserve areas along the river and its major tributaries for wildlife habitat, erosion and flood control, and aesthetic value.

Recreational facilities proposed within the greenway are:

1. Sections of the Old Railroad Path
2. Section of the Oakford Trail
3. Small section of Menard Parkway near Oakford Bridge
4. 4-Corners Scenic Loop at Altig Bridge
5. Lower Sangamon Riverway

Salt Creek Greenway

Links: *Middleton to the Sangamon River*
Length: *16 miles*
Area: *Approx. 8 sq.mi.*

Salt Creek forms the eastern half of Menard County's northern boundary. The Salt Creek Greenway would include an approx. 1/2 mile wide area on the south side of the river, incorporating its flood plains and levees.

Trees are present only along the edges of the creek. Otherwise, this broad, gently rolling valley is primarily farmed, leaving few public access points to the river. The area of the county is sparsely populated by farm families.

The purpose of this greenway is to preserve areas along the river and its major tributaries for wildlife habitat, erosion and flood control and aesthetic value.

Recreational facilities proposed within the greenway area:

1. Sangamon Valley Trail Extension
2. Salt Creek Riverway

Clary Creek Greenway

Links: *Oakford to Tallula*
Length: *10 miles*
Area: *Approx. 5 sq.mi.*

Clary Creek and its small tributaries form the watershed of the western third of Menard County. The greenway would be about 1/2 mile wide along these waterways. The area is very hilly and has large areas of forest and remnant prairies. Toward the north near Bobtown and Kingfisher Hill, unusual geological formations caused by wind-blown loess are found.

The area is sparsely populated. It is visited primarily for the purpose of hunting, a use which likely will increase because of the area's proximity to the new Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area.

The purpose of the greenway is to preserve and enhance the natural systems of this valley. The forest and prairie environments could be upgraded to improve the habitat value of the area, reduce soil erosion and increase the overall visual quality of the area.

Recreational facilities which are proposed with this greenway are:

1. Old Railroad Path in and near Tallula
2. Edgar Parkway Trail
3. Bobtown Trail, a shared roadway
4. Clary Creek Trail, a shared roadway
5. Edgar Parkway Scenic Roadway
6. Community Trail Links to Tallula, Oakford/Atterbury

Menard Parkway (Route 97) Greenway

Links: *Sangamon County, Petersburg and Oakford*
Length: *23 miles*
Area: *Approx. 12 sq.mi.*

New Salem Parkway (Athens Road) Greenway

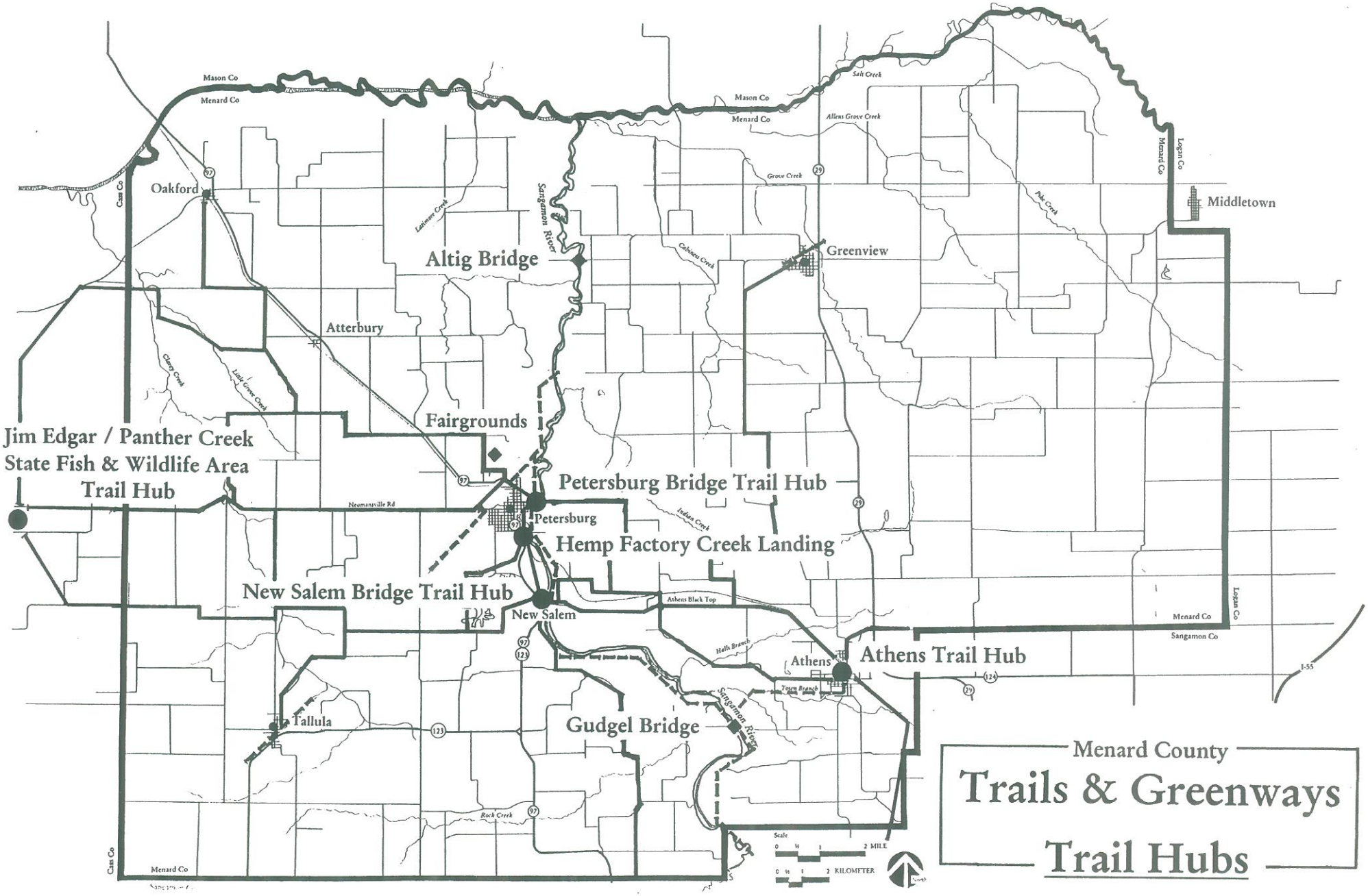
Links: *Athens, New Salem State Historic Site*
Length: *9 miles*
Area: *Approx. 4.5 sq.mi.*

Edgar Parkway (Newmansville Road) Greenway

Links: *Petersburg, Jim Edgar/Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area*
Length: *9 miles*
Area: *4.5 sq.mi.*

Three parkways are proposed in Menard County (see scenic roadway and trail categories). These are coincident with the major tourist routes in the county. These routes would be designated and developed as greenways, for the purpose of interconnecting the river-based greenways, 2) to preserve what remains of the existing native forests, prairies and the rural landscape along these routes, and 3) to aesthetically enhance the corridors.

Enhancement could include adding native vegetation to increase its visual and environmental quality for animal habitat and for human use and enjoyment. Scenic views could be preserved and improved, the use of signs controlled, and future development limited. Roadway quality and regulatory signs could be upgraded as needed for the safety of motorists and trail users. Such improvements along these Parkway Corridor Greenways would improve safety and enjoyment for both local residents and visitors.


Menard County
Trails & Greenways
Trail Hubs
Jim Edgar / Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Trail Hub
Altig Bridge
Fairgrounds
Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub
Hemp Factory Creek Landing
New Salem Bridge Trail Hub
Gudgel Bridge
Athens Trail Hub
Oakford
Atterbury
Petersburg
New Salem
Tallula
Greenview
Athens
Middletown
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Menard Co
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Clarey Creek
Little Grove Creek
Neumansville Rd
Indian Creek
Athens Black Top
Halls Branch
Town Branch
Rock Creek
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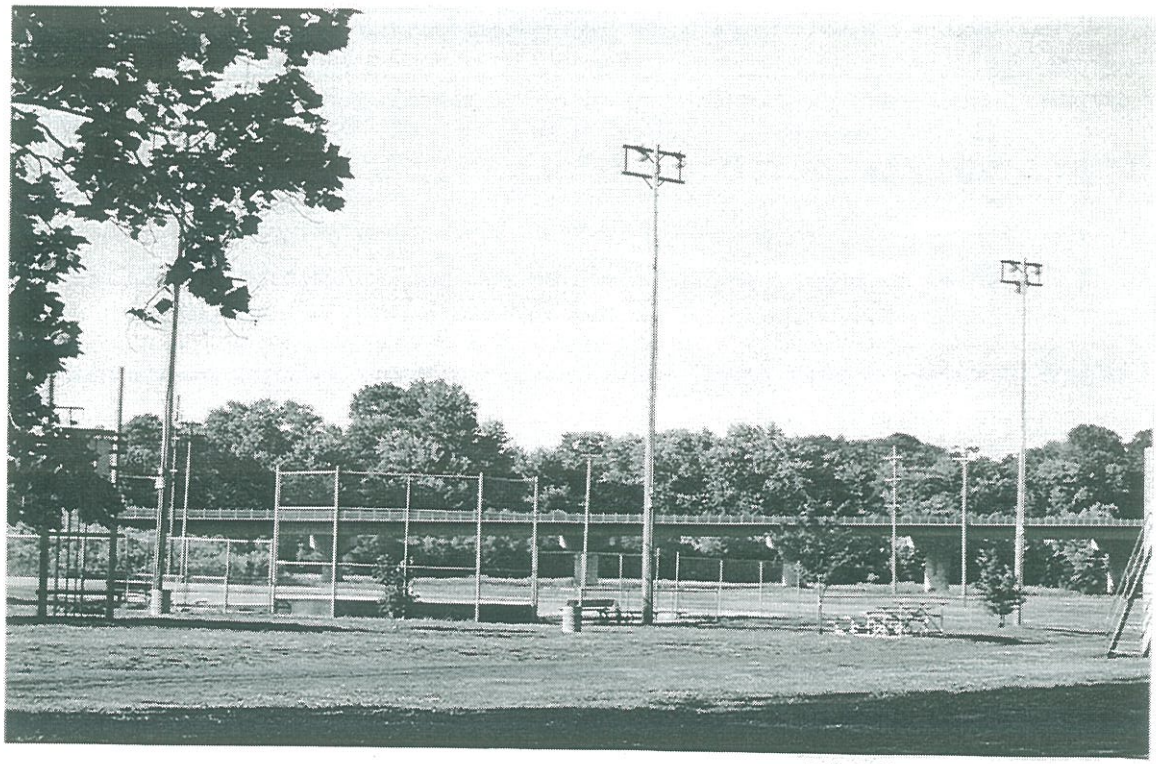
2 MILE
2 KILOMETER

Trail Hubs

Trail hubs are locations where two or more trails and/or corridors intersect. At these locations, public access to the trails and corridors would be provided. Services such as parking for cars, water, and rest rooms would be available. In some cases, additional opportunities for recreation or education could be offered. The hub locations proposed in this plan were selected because, 1) many facilities already exist at these locations, 2) opportunities exist to expand existing facilities if needed in the future, and 3) such a designation could benefit the nearby communities.

Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub

Paths:	*Chautauqua River Path, Bobtown Path, Old Railroad Path*
Trails:	*Edgar Parkway Trail, Petersburg/New Salem Carriageway, Oakford Trail, East Petersburg Trail*
Riverways:	*Chautauqua Park Riverway, Lower Sangamon Riverway*
Roadways:	*Menard Parkway, Edgar Parkway*



Ball Field at Petersburg's Bridge Park

The Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub would be the central hub and primary intersection of the trails and routes within the Menard County system. Its location in Petersburg places it centrally within the county at the intersection of numerous proposed paths, trails, riverways and scenic roadways. At this hub, Petersburg-area residents could access the various routes and trail users could take advantage of the many business services already available in Petersburg including the grocery store, service stations, restaurants, gift shops, medical services, etc.

The hub would be located north of the dam and west of the bridge where the Sangamon River abuts the Petersburg Bridge Park. Here, boat access to the river and sports fields already exist. The FEMA buy-out property adjacent to the park is potentially available for development of additional recreational and support facilities. The flood-prone agricultural fields north of Route 123 around the Petersburg's water treatment lagoon present additional lands which may be used to enhance Petersburg's park system and contribute to the trail hub.

Some of the additional facilities which might be provided at or near the Petersburg Bridge Trail Hub are:

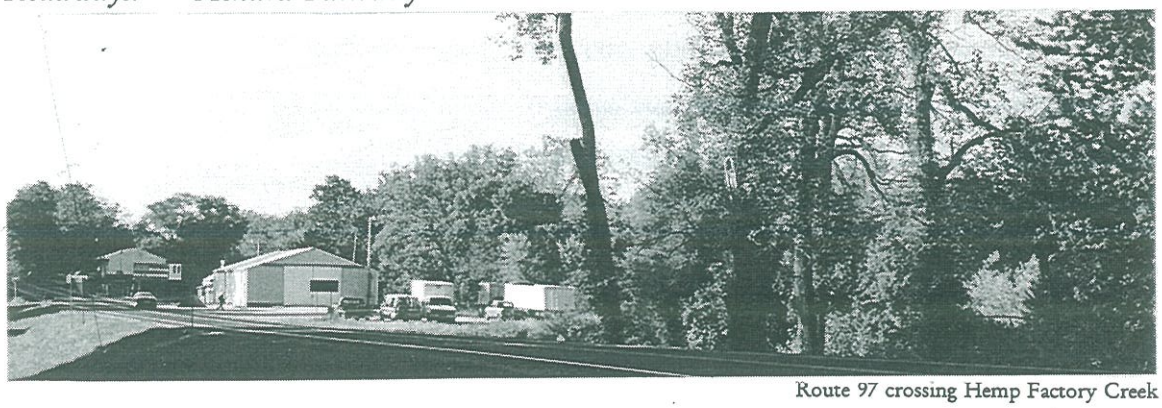
1. Campground (RV and tent)
2. Rental of small river craft
3. Rental/sales of fishing gear
4. Bait shop
5. Expanded park facilities (fields, courts, picnic areas, etc.)
6. Food concession

Particularly if the current park facilities are expanded with the development of the adjacent FEMA acreage, special events could be accommodated, such as:

1. Horse events (shows, rodeos, etc.)
2. Racing (motor, BMX)
3. Concerts, shows
4. Farm expositions
5. Flea markets

Hemp Factory Creek Landing

Paths: *Potential Short Nature Path*
Trails: *Petersburg / New Salem Carriage Path, Shambolee Trail*
Riverways: *Chautauqua Park Riverway*
Roadways: *Menard Parkway*



Route 97 crossing Hemp Factory Creek

The Hemp Factory Creek Landing would be located on the southeast edge of Petersburg along the Sangamon River at the twenty-acre FEMA buy-out site. This

floodplain site has already been cleared of houses and other structures. To make it suited for use as a landing, much of the area should be restored to lowland forest. Certain areas could be open turf for passive recreational activities including camping, informal sports, and group activities. Paths or trails in the area could provide opportunities for casual hiking and bird watching, and access to the river for fishing and boating.

The use of motorized vehicles within the area should be restricted. The only vehicles allowed should be for maintenance, emergency, and security purposes.

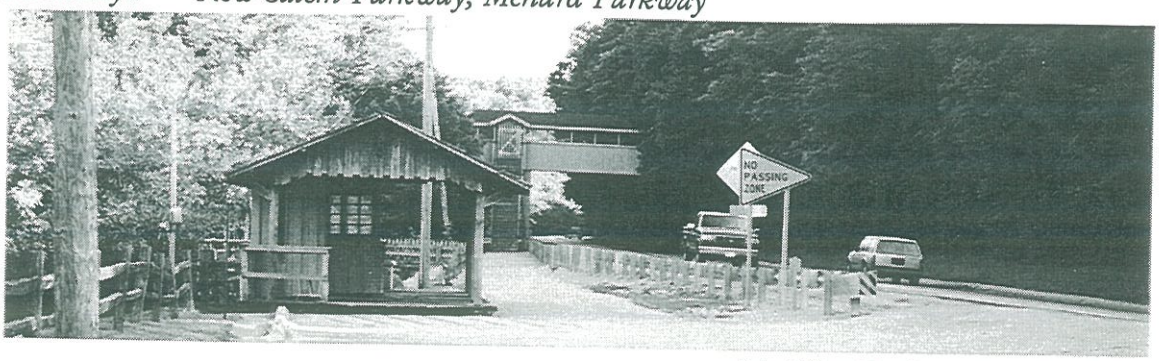
To provide vehicular parking for people using the area, a small area along the highway could be acquired. The area would be attractively developed with parking spaces, some benches and trash receptacles, and nice plantings. Lighting should be provided for security and safety, and tastefully designed signs for directions and regulations.

Facilities which could be provided at the site or nearby are:

1. Drinking fountains / jug filling hydrant
2. Picnic / resting area used for group staging
3. Boat ramp for small craft launch into Hemp Factory Creek
4. Bike rack, canoe rack, or other user storage
5. Concession stand or vending machines
6. Equipment rental or repair facilities
7. Outfitting supply shop and guide services

New Salem Bridge Trail Hub

Paths: *Town Branch Path, Abe Lincoln River Path, Chautauqua Path*
Trails: *Petersburg / New Salem Carriageway, New Salem Parkway Trail, Shambolee Trail, Boy Scout Trail, New Salem Riverside Trail*
Riverways: *Abe Lincoln Riverway, Chautauqua Riverway*
Roadways: *New Salem Parkway, Menard Parkway*



Grist Mill and Landing at New Salem Bridge

The New Salem Bridge Hub would be located at the west end of the New Salem Bridge. South of the bridge on the east side of Route 97, a parking area serving the grist mill and excursion boat already exists. This area also could provide the needed

parking for the hub. North of the bridge on the east side of Route 97, is an open space where additional facilities could be developed such as a station for tethering horses, small craft landing area, bicycle facilities, and a kiosk for maps and information. A safe pedestrian connection between these two areas could be provided by a pedestrianway along the river, under the bridge.

Athens Trail Hub

Paths:	*Town Branch Path*
Trails:	*New Salem Parkway Trail, Sangamon Valley Trail, Old Tice Trail, County Line Trail*
Riverways:	*None*
Roadways:	*New Salem Parkway, Four Corners Scenic Loop Route*

The Athens Trail Hub would be located at the Athens town center and community park. Parking and many support services currently exist here. A means of distributing information about the trail system, such as a map shelter or tourist information facility, would be desirable. For the many tourists traveling from Interstate 55 and Springfield, this hub would be the gateway to Menard County.

Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area Trail Hub

Paths:	*Misc. Site Paths*
Trails:	*Edgar Parkway Trail, Bobtown Trail, Clary Creek Trail*
Riverways:	*None*
Roadways:	*Edgar Parkway, Four Corners Scenic Loop Route*

The 'Jim Edgar Hub' would be located within the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. Already developed within this area are trails, day-use areas, campgrounds, etc. A visitors center is planned for the east central area of the site. This location would be the terminus of the Edgar Parkway and Trail and the site of this hub.

Chapter 7 - Priorities for Greenway and Trail Projects

This chapter evaluates each of the greenways and trails which have been proposed for Menard County. Each of the five criteria which were initially established for identifying and evaluating routes have been considered for each trail. Values have been assigned and a total value determined for each trail. These ratings, then, provide a way to set priorities among the proposed routes. The proposed facilities are listed in the same order that they appeared in Chapter 6, not in an order of priority.

Criteria:	#1	Protection and Enhancement of Resources
	#2	Proximity to the Needs of People
	#3	Quality, Safety, Enjoyment of Uses
	#4	Potential Social and Economic Benefits
	#5	Connection and Integration Potential

Values:	High	H
	Medium	M
	Low	L

	Name (ref.pg.)	*Criteria:*	*#1*	*#2*	*#3*	*#4*	*#5*	*Total*
Paths								
-	Abe Lincoln River (pg.32)		H	M	H	M	H	H-
-	Chautauqua (pg.32)		H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Town Branch (pg.33)		M	H	M	M	M	M
Old Railroad Paths								
-	Tallula (pg.33)		L	H	L	M	L	M-
-	Greenview (pg.33)		L	H	L	M	L	M-
-	Petersburg (pg.33)		M	H	H	H	M	H -
Trails								
-	Sangamon Valley (pg.36)		M	H	H	H	H	H
-	New Salem Parkway (pg.36)		M	H	H	H	M	H-
-	New Salem-Petersburg Carriageway (pg.37)		H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Edgar Parkway (pg.37)		M	H	H	M	H	H-
-	New Salem Riverside (pg.38)		H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Shambolee (pg.38)		M	H	M	H	H	H-
-	East Petersburg (pg.39)		L	M	H	H	M	M+
Shared Roadways:								
-	Old Tice (pg.41)		M	H	M	M	H	M+
-	Historic Boy Scout (pg.41)		M	M	M	M	M	M
-	Bobtown (pg.41)		H	L	M	M	M	M

Name (ref.pg.)	*Criteria:*	*#1*	*#2*	*#3*	*#4*	*#5*	*Total*
-	Clary Creek (pg.42)	M	L	L	L	H	M-
-	County Line (pg.42)	L	M	L	M	H	M
-	Community Links (pg.43)	M	M	M	M	H	M
Current Railroads:							
-	Oakford (pg.43)	M	L	M	L	M	M-
-	Sangamon Valley Extension (pg.43)	L	M	L	L	M	L+
<u>Scenic Roadways</u>							
-	Menard Parkway (pg.45)	M	H	M	H	H	H-
-	New Salem Parkway (pg.46)	M	H	H	H	H	H
-	Edgar Parkway (pg.47)	M	M	H	M	H	H-
-	Four Corners Scenic Loop Route (pg.47)	M	H	M	H	H	H-
<u>Riverways</u>							
-	Chautauqua (pg.49)	H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Abe Lincoln (pg.50)	H	H	H	M	M	H-
-	Lower Sangamon (pg.51)	M	L	M	M	M	M
-	Salt Creek (pg.51)	M	L	M	L	L	L+
<u>Greenways</u>							
-	Abe Lincoln (pg.53)	H	M	H	M	H	H-
-	Chautauqua (pg.54)	H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Lower Sangamon (pg.55)	M	M	M	L	M	M
-	Salt Creek (pg.55)	M	L	M	L	L	L+
-	Clary Creek (pg.56)	H	L	M	L	M	M-
Parkway System:							
-	Menard Parkway (pg.56)	L	H	H	H	H	H-
-	New Salem Parkway (pg.57)	M	H	H	H	H	H
-	Edgar Parkway (pg.57)	M	M	H	H	H	H-
<u>Trail Hubs</u>							
-	Petersburg Bridge (pg.59)	M	H	H	H	H	H
-	Hemp Factory Creek Landing (pg.60)	H	H	H	M	M	M+
-	New Salem Bridge (pg.61)	H	H	H	H	H	H+
-	Athens (pg.62)	H	M	H	H	H	H-
-	Jim Edgar/Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area (pg.62)	H	M	H	M	M	M+

The projects which emerge from this evaluation reflect two overall goals of this plan. One is to develop opportunities to appreciate and use the natural and cultural resources in the county. The other is to protect natural and cultural resources within the county to insure that they are preserved for the long-range benefit to future generations. The highest priority projects are centered on the county's two dominant features: the Sangamon River Valley and the New Salem State Historic Site.

In all discussions on this subject, there has been one over-riding interest. That is to connect the many residents and visitors in Springfield to the New Salem State Historic Site and, eventually to the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area. Located along the Sangamon River, the route would be conveniently accessible to the majority of Menard County residents.

Visitor Center at Lincoln's New Salem State Historic Site

Chapter 7 - Strategy for Implementation

The preceding chapter of this plan identified locations for trails and greenways which met the standards which had been established. Taken all together, the trails form a network throughout the county that also relates to adjacent facilities.

This is an idealized model. In practice, development of this greenway and trail plan will be section-by-section as the critical components of community support, lands and funding become available. For some sections, these critical components may not come together in a timely manner. When this occurs, alternate routes should be evaluated, especially when an important aspect of the developing system would otherwise be missing (linkage with other trails, connections to community parks and commercial facilities, etc.)

At the very least, the process of implementing this plan will take time and require considerable coordination. The following five (5) steps outline how to approach and promote the development of the trail and greenway system. The steps are:

1. Organize and develop community support
2. Target individual projects (develop intergovernmental agreements)
3. Secure funding, acquire land and rights-of-way
4. Build trails and encourage supplementary business developments
5. Manage and promote facilities

1. Organize and Develop Local Support

The first step in designating greenways and creating trails is to form a group which will promote their development. People who now enjoy walking, riding bikes, canoeing, and other recreational activities are obvious recruits for membership. Those who are involved in environmental study and preservation would be supportive. Others may be motivated as well. Community leaders who want improvements for area residents, business people who see possibilities for expansion, developers who understand the value of trail facilities, all would be important members who could expand the support.

The Trails and Greenways Committee, organized for the purpose of developing this plan, is a great core for this group. During the last year they held meetings, spoke with special interest groups, and in many other ways promoted trail development. Those types of activities need to continue. As the following steps of targeting projects and proceeding with development occur, the group will need to provide overall project leadership and coordination.

Initially, many of the chores delineated in this report can be accomplished through a volunteer organization consisting of committed community members. In the long term, however, a properly developed and maintained trail system will probably require the assistance of public bodies. Specifically, the Menard County Board and the municipal governments located within Menard County are encouraged to consider how they might be involved and thereby assist in the development and maintenance of the trail system. This assistance might take the form of financial participation, technical advice, public safety help, and/or promotion of trail-related events. Additionally, the Illinois State Historic Preservation Agency (IHPA) that administers the New Salem State Historical Site could become involved in developments proposed within and near this site.

2. Target Individual Projects

Because the entire system cannot be developed at once, individual projects need to be targeted. Initially, the projects should be those which have the greatest opportunities for success. The projects should be those that are located either on public lands or on property where easements or acquisitions are feasible. For popular support, the initial projects should also appeal to a large population and provide various uses. These characteristics also tend to be attractive priorities for grant funding.

All phases of the targeted project need to be planned. At the outset consideration should be given to, 1) what lands to acquire or easements to obtain, what jurisdictions are affected and what input and consents are needed, 2) what environmental concerns or limitations exist, 3) where and how are funds available, 4) what uses will the trail have, 5) what maintenance will be required and who will provide it, and 6) what is the implementation schedule. In this way, tasks can be identified and pursued in a logical and timely manner.

3. Secure Funding and Acquire needed Rights-of-Way

Once a specific project has been planned, funding and available lands are the critical questions.

Acquiring land can be a sensitive matter. Since each landowner's situation is different, it is often helpful to have people involved in negotiations who know the owners and understand their particular situations. Often discussing the project's vision, its practical aspects and the need for a landowner's cooperation is effective. Where acquisition of lands from several owners may be necessary, a meeting for the group may be useful. Whenever possible, options should be offered for landowners' consideration. Options may include combinations of easements or title, accomplished by outright purchase, land trade, donation allowing tax deductions, etc. See Addendum #1 for additional ownership and acquisition strategies.

Funds for development of trails and greenways can be obtained from a variety of sources. For many projects, a combination of funds can be targeted. See Addendum #2 for a listing and requirements for government grants and related programs. Each grant has specific eligibility and application requirements. Most require a local match of funds either by direct funding or donation of land, easements, labor, etc. Since these grants are very competitive, research and careful preparation of grant applications is critical. Also worth noting is that securing a grant(s) can take considerable time because application and award cycles are often lengthy.

Several aspects of Menard County's situation will be an advantage in securing funds. Grant funding, generally, is a high priority for under-served areas. The fact that Menard County presently has few trails and little preserved open space is an advantage. Connecting existing tourist sites is a high priority. The link between New Salem State Historic Site, the Jim Edgar / Panther Creek State Fish and Wildlife Area, and the numerous Springfield sites is favorable. Menard County will want to be prepared, to demonstrate other critical grant requirements, 1) community support, 2) availability of a local match, and 3) ability to manage the trail once built.

Local matches can be made in many ways. Grant matches can be made with general revenue, cash donations, and proceeds from fund raising. Matches can be of land values or easement values which are donated to the project. Finally, construction materials and labor can be structured as a donation for this purpose. In cases where businesses or individuals are making donations, many options are available to suit particular needs of the donors.

4. Build Trails and Encourage Development of Business

When the rights-of-way and funding become available, the trail must be designed. Consideration must be given to safety of trail users, intersecting with other transportation routes, means of access/egress, conveniences along the route, connection with community services, amenities along the trail, and blending with surrounding

environments. All aspects need to be designed with an eye to 1) safety and security, 2) attractive facilities which enhance adjacent lands and contribute to good environmental quality, and 3) future maintenance responsibilities.

At this time, too, business owners should be encouraged to provide important goods/services for trail users. Typical needs of trail users include bike rental and repair, canoe/boat rental, fishing tackle and bait; food service and groceries, camping and lodging, shuttle service. Existing businesses may wish to encourage the patronage of trail users by expanding product lines, establishing locations near trails perhaps on a seasonal basis, or even starting new businesses.

5. Manage and Promote

The success of a system, of course, will be its long term use. Initially, the public must be made aware of the existence of a new route. Hand-out maps can be offered at locations in the community. The trail can be listed in the brochures printed by state and local centers for tourism and in directories published by numerous publishing companies.

A trail can be promoted with special events, races, fund raisers, etc. These can be sponsored by a local group, a unit of government, a regional or national organization or business enterprise.

Feedback from users should be encouraged. This information can be used to make modifications in the trail if needed, and it can help to guide future projects.

Maintenance of the corridor is essential. Maintenance provides a clean and wholesome environment which users will want and expect. A well maintained environment will also encourage users not to litter, damage the area, or break trail rules. Routine maintenance of minor erosion or pavement deterioration can arrest what can become a safety hazard or a larger problem that is expensive to repair.

Summary

This section discusses a process of targeting a project, getting it built, and working toward its popularity and success. This process would repeat itself. With each successful targeted project, interest and support would increase. Each repeat would, in some significant ways, be easier to accomplish.

Additionally, as the trail system grows, its attraction will increase. The longer distances and variety of opportunities tend to attract users from greater distances. The system could become a destination facility for tourists. For others it could be a strong draw when combined with other sites and events in the area.

Menard County
Proposed Trails & Greenways

Corridors of Beauty, Enjoyment, and Opportunity

Legend

- Paths
- Trails
- Trails as Shared Roadways
- Scenic Roadways
- Riverways
- Greenways
- Trail Hubs & Access Points

Lower Sangamon Greenway
Salt Creek Greenway
Salt Creek Riverway
Mason Co
Menard Co
Oakford Bridge
Route 29 Bridge
Allens Grove Creek
Salt Creek
Oakford
4 Corners Scenic Loop Route
Tallula - Athens - Greenview - Oakford
Lower Sangamon Riverway
Grove Creek
Cass Co
Logan Co
Menard Co
Middletown
Pike Creek
Lattimore Creek
Sangamon River
Altig Bridge
Old Railroad Path
Gabiness Creek
Greenview
Oakford Link Trail
Concord Creek
Bobtown Trail
Atterbury
Clary Creek
Little Grove Creek
Sweetwater
Old Railroad Path
Greenview Link Trail
Clary Creek Greenway
Oakford Trail
Edgar Parkway Trail
Edgar Parkway
Newmansville Blacktop
East Petersburg Trail
Indian Creek
Jim Edgar / Panther Creek
State Fish & Wildlife Area
Petersburg
Chautauqua Path
Chautauqua Riverway
Chautauqua Greenway
New Salem - Petersburg Carriageway
Old Tice Trail
Sangamon Valley Trail Extension
Fancy Prairie
Shambolee Trail
New Salem Parkway
Athens Blacktop
County Line Trail
Clary Creek Trail
New Salem Parkway Trail
Halls Branch
Lincoln's New Salem
State Historic Site
Athens
Town Branch
New Salem Riverside Trail
Tallula Link Trail
Tallula
Gudgel Bridge
Springfield
9 MILE
Route 66 Trail @ Williamsville
I-55
Old Railroad Path
Town Branch Path
Menard Parkway
Route 97
Abe Lincoln Riverway
Abe Lincoln River Path
Rock Creek
Sangamon Valley Trail
Abe Lincoln Greenway
Boy Scout Trail
Sangamon Co
Scale
0 ½ 1 2 MILE
0 ½ 1 2 KILOMETER
NORTH

January 2001

Massie & Massie Associates Inc.

ADDENDUM #1
OWNERSHIP AND ACQUISITION STRATEGIES

COMPARATIVE OWNERSHIP STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS & TRAILS

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Private Ownership			
Individual Landowners	Adjacent landowners retain full title to land and provide for greenways through easements.	Property owners retain title to land. Large amount of funds for land purchase not needed. Land remains on the tax rolls.	Easements can restrict certain types of greenway activities, depending on the landowner's wishes.
Land Trusts and Nonprofit Organizations	A national or regional non-profit organization can acquire and hold land until a local land trust has been established or is able to finance acquisition.	A nonprofit organization can finance an immediate acquisition and hold property until a land trust has been established or has acquired necessary funds for purchase.	If a land trust does not exist, a community must establish one. A land trust needs solid support, funding, and the ability to manage land.
Corporate Landowners	A corporation may provide for greenways as part of the development of a corporate site.	Greenway is provided at no expense to local taxpayer. Managed by corporation.	Corporation may restrict use of greenway to the public or may choose to deny access.
Public Ownership			
Local Governments	Acquisition by county or municipality.	Local government can be more flexible about the type of open space it acquires.	Limited local funds and expertise limit the number and type of acquisitions.
State Government	Acquisition by state agencies.	Statewide bond acts can provide significant funding resources for important open space acquisitions throughout a state. Provides revolving loan funds to leverage nonprofit activity.	Government may miss acquisition opportunities due to long time frame for acquisition approvals.
Federal Government	Acquisition by National Park Service, Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or Bureau of Land Management.	Acquisition is at federal level, eliminating financial obligation for locality.	Acquisitions are limited due to agencies' specific criteria for acquisition. Needs congressional authorization.
Mixed Ownership			
Private-Public Ownership	A private nonprofit organization can help to implement government programs by acquiring and holding land until a public agency is able to purchase it.	A nonprofit organization can enter the real estate market more easily than government and can often sell to government at less than fair market value if property was acquired through bargain sale.	Must have public agency willing and able to buy within reasonable time frame.
Public-Public Ownership	Multi-jurisdictional partnership between local, state and federal agencies. Inter-agency projects.	Combining strengths of agencies enables greenway development to occur.	Development and management structure can be cumbersome. Partnership may not be equal.
Public-Private Ownership	Government works with private sector to implement greenway.	Private sector can realize tax benefits from participation. Cost share good for public.	Cost equity and management could be cumbersome.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 113
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS

Fee Simple Acquisition

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Fee Simple Purchase	Outright purchase of full title to land and all rights associated with its use.	New landowner has full control of land. Allows for permanent protection and public access.	Cost of purchase may be outside local ability. Removes land from tax rolls.
Donations and Gifts	A donation by landowner of all or partial interest in the property.	Provides permanent protection without public expenditures. Tax benefits to donor - charitable gift.	Receiving agency must be able to accept donation and be capable of managing land.
Purchase and Lease Back	Purchase of full title, then lease back to previous owner subject to restrictions.	Essentially land banking. Income derived from lease payments. Owner is not displaced.	Lease may restrict public access. Land must be leased for appropriate uses.
Bargain Sale	Part donation/part sale because property is sold at less than fair market value.	Tax benefits to seller, difference in sale price is considered charitable gift.	Seller must be agreeable to terms of sale. Bargain price may be inflated.
Condemnation/Eminent Domain	The right of government to take private property for public purpose upon payment of just compensation. Can be exercised for recreational purposes in some states.	Provides tool for acquiring essential or endangered properties, if other techniques not workable.	Costly. Also creates a negative attitude about government and potentially the greenway concept. Only recommended as last resort.
Installment Sale	Allows buyer to pay for property over time.	If seller-financed, can lower taxes for seller, buyer can negotiate better sale terms.	Long term financial commitment (30 years). Mortgage lien.
Land Exchange	Swapping of developable land for property with high conservation value.	Relatively cost-free if trade parcel is donated. Reduces capital gains tax for original owner.	Owners must be willing to swap. Property must be of comparable value. Can be time consuming.

Acquisition of Partial Interest

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Purchase of Development Rights	Local or state government purchases the rights of more intensive land use from current landowner.	Landowner derives financial benefit from selling rights and has reduced taxes. Government pays only for the rights it needs.	Can be costly to purchase development rights.
Management Agreements	Agreements between agency and landowner for a specific purpose.	Avoid purchase and other options, gain desired rights with minimal red tape.	Only applicable with current landowner, and could be revoked at any time.
Land Leases	Short- and/or long-term rental of land.	Low cost use of land. Landowner receives income and retains property control.	Lease doesn't provide equity and affords limited control. Does not assure protection.
Right of Public Access Easements	Provides the public with the right to access and use of a parcel of land for a specified purpose, limited to defined land area.	Can avoid need to purchase land from owner, may provide right of public access and use. Excellent for greenways.	Can be time limited, usually restricts other uses, doesn't prevent owner from exercising other property rights.
Conservation Easements	A partial interest in property generally for expressed purpose of protecting natural resources. Public access is not always a component.	Inexpensive method for protection of natural resources. Landowner retains all other property rights, land remains on tax rolls.	Public access is usually restricted. Easement must be enforced. Easement may lower resale value.
Preservation Easements	Same as conservation easement, most useful for historic landscapes.	Defines protection of historic elements of landscape.	Can restrict public access. Must be enforced.
Joint Use Easements	Accommodates multiple uses within one easement type: for example, sanitary sewer routing and public access. Should be one of the preferred methods for many greenways.	Provides opportunity to combine several public interests with one agreement. Easier for landowner to understand complete request rather than several different requests.	Can be difficult for all landowners to agree to multiple uses along an entire greenway corridor. If one objects, the entire multiple use potential can be jeopardized.

Source: The Conservation Fund, Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development, 1993, p. 112
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

SUMMARY OF ACQUISITION AND PRESERVATION STRATEGIES FOR GREENWAYS

Regulatory Control

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Exaction	As a condition of obtaining subdivision approval, local government requires developers to pay a fee or dedicate land to a municipal trust for open space.	New construction and development pays for its impact on open space. Good method during high growth periods.	Acquisition funds dependent on specific development. Difficult to calculate fair costs. Not effective during recessionary periods.
Transfer of Development Rights	Under legally established program, owner can transfer development rights from one property to another property designated to support increased density.	Cost of preservation absorbed by property owner who purchases rights. Allows local government to direct density and growth away from sensitive landscapes.	Difficult to implement. Very controversial. Often hard to identify areas where increased density is desirable. Must be established by legislation.
Cluster Development	Permits higher density development in parts of subdivision to protect sensitive lands.	Flexible and negotiable with landowner-developer. Can reduce construction and infrastructure costs.	Open space may not be linked.
Performance Zoning	Zoning district uses defined by permitted impacts as opposed to permitted uses.	Development occurs based on comprehensive, environmentally based strategy.	Criteria are hard to establish. Development plans more expensive to prepare.

NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT INCENTIVES APPLICABLE TO GREENWAY PRESERVATION

Program	Contact	Term	Minimum Acres	Purpose					
				Natural area, habitat preservation	Open space, recreation	Forestry	Wetland, water resource protection	Soil conservation	Farmland preservation
Cost Share Programs									
Ag Conservation Program	ASCS	10 years	1 acre			X		X	
Ag Loans	State Treasurer							X	
Conservation Reserve	ASCS	10-30 years	1 acre			X		X	
Forest Stewardship	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Forestry Incentive Program	ASCS	10 years	10 acres			X			
Ill. Forestry Dev. Act	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Partners for Wildlife	USFWS/IDNR	10 years	1 acre				X		
Stewardship Initiatives	IDNR	10 years	5 acres	X	X	X	X		
Trees, Shrubs, Seedlings	IDNR					X		X	
Wetland Reserve	ASCS	permanent	2 acres			X	X		
Technical Programs									
Emergency Conservation	ASCS							X	X
Forest Mgmt. Assist. Program	IDNR			X		X	X	X	
Natural Heritage Landmark	IDNR			X					
Private Land Habitat	IDNR		1 acre ●	X					
Private Waters	IDNR			X			X		
Register of Land & Water Reserves	IDNR			X					
Tax Incentives									
Assessment with Easements	SA			X					
Conservation Easements	IDNR			X					
Forestry Mgmt. Plan	IDNR	10 years	5 acres			X	X	X	
Illinois Nature Preserves	IDNR	permanent		X					
Open Space Assessment	SA		10 acres	X	X		X	X	
Preferential Assessment of Farmland	SA								X
Tax Cert. for Livestock Waste Mgmt.	IEPA						X		

Abbreviations:

ASCS	Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service
IDNR	Illinois Department of Natural Resources
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
SA	Supervisor of Assessments
IEPA	Illinois Environmental Protection Agency
●	minimum of one acre for rural areas, 1/4 acre for urban area

Source: Illinois Department of Natural Resources
McLean County Regional Greenways Plan

ADDENDUM #2
FUNDING SOURCES

PRIVATE SECTOR FUNDING SOURCES

Method	Explanation	Advantages	Disadvantages
Foundation Grants	Foundations, usually private or corporate, provide grant money for greenway related projects.	Variety of foundations creates a wealth of possible funding opportunities.	Foundation grants may have strict guidelines regarding use of funds and project scope.
Company Grants	Corporations provide grants of funds and resources for greenway related projects. Corporations provide financial support and often volunteer employee time as well.	Many corporations love community service projects such as greenways.	Corporate giving funds are often committed quickly, and there may be competition for funds.
Individual Donors and Memberships	Funding derived from individual fund-raising campaigns or through membership drives through nonprofit organizations which solicit members as a way to raise money and support projects.	Excellent method for raising funds and building support for a greenways organization and its projects.	Membership or nonprofit organizations may require a great deal of time and effort on the part of its members in order to succeed.
Planned Giving, Life-Income Gifts, and Bequests	Planned giving and life-income gifts allow the donor to give away some land, receive some continued use privileges and benefit financially through charitable tax write-offs.	These techniques can be useful in protecting private land that has important greenway features. In addition, these techniques can offer tax and investment advantages to the donor and recipient nonprofit organizations or land trust.	Can be complex issues. Require financial and legal expertise.
Service Clubs	Organizations that perform community service activities or sponsor projects such as greenways. Examples of service clubs include the Lions Club, Rotary Club or Kiwanis organization.	Service clubs can sponsor fundraising activities and provide volunteers and publicity.	Getting commitment from service club to help in a greenways project can be difficult.
Special Events and Fundraisers	These events are designed to raise funds through activities such as benefit dinners, races, tours and related activities.	Special events and fundraisers can be very successful in raising money and creating publicity for greenways.	These activities can require significant time and resources and may not provide a significant return.

FEDERAL AND STATE FUNDING SOURCES FOR TRAILS & GREENWAYS

FEDERAL PROGRAM	INTERMODAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION EFFICIENCY ACT (1)					LAWCON	N/A	HISTORIC PRESERVATION FUND
STATE ADMIN AGENCY	IDOT				IDNR			IHPA
FUNDING PROGRAMS ISTEA ENHANCEMENT CATEGORIES	ITEP Illinois Transportation Enhancement Program (2)	STP Surface Transportation Program	SCENIC BYWAYS	FTA Federal Transit Act (3)	SYMMS National Recreational Trails Funds	LAWCON Land and Water Conservation Program (W/OSLAD) (4)	Illinois Bicycle Path Grant Program	Certified Local Governments Program (5)
Provision of Facilities for Pedestrians and Bicycles	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	100% Fed $ FFY93	50% Fed $ 50% Loc $	50% State $ 50% Loc $	
Acquisition of Scenic Easements and Scenic or Historic Sites	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $							
Scenic or Historic Highway Programs	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $		80% Fed $ 20% Loc $					
Landscaping and Other Scenic Beautification	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $							
Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors (Including Conversion and Use for Pedestrian or Bicycle Trails)	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $	80% Fed $ 20% Loc $			100% Fed $ FFY93	50% Fed $ 50% Loc $	50% State $ 50% Loc $	60% Fed $ 40% Loc $

(1) Reauthorization of ISTEA will be considered by Congress in Spring, 1998
(2) Excludes land acquisition
(3) Bicycle and pedestrian facilities related to transit projects only
(4) State OSLAD program follows LAWCON guidelines
(5) Program restricted to Historic Register Properties only

MISSION STATEMENT
MENARD COUNTY TRAILS COMMITTEE

"The Menard County Trails Committee is a coalition of interested citizens whose common goal is to plan for and help establish a system of trails and greenways throughout Menard County that will provide safe recreation, enhance economic development, and preserve natural resources."

HOW DO WE INCREASE VISIBILITY?

1. Expand TGIS Bike Ride, and Sponsor Local Events.

2. Kick-off events: Opening of a trail, driving trail, or water trail.

3. Announcement of the report finalization.

4. Develop a project for all or many of the community service groups to work on.

5. Put up signage, particularly in "share the road" situations.

6. Prepare newspaper articles for publishing in local newspapers.

7. Begin a newsletter for trail enthusiasts and publish regular editions.

8. Create a MCTC web page.

ORGANIZATION/MEMBERSHIP ISSUES

1. Have an organized membership. Dues? Delay on dues initially or use small fee.

2. Create a Menard County Trails Coalition: Set a goal of a minimum of 100 members

3. Create an Executive Committee: Proposed 12 members.

4. Develop a set of working committees.

5. Explore a relationship with Menard County Tourism Council or Menard County Development Commission.

6. Target particular individuals or specific groups to become involved with MCTC.

POTENTIAL PARTNERSHIPS

1. Menard County Tourism Council.
2. Local Chamber of Commerce.
3. Athens Park Association.
4. Lincoln Land Com. College Northern Region Educational Center.
5. Area Schools. Key to Cross Country.
6. Area Service Groups.
7. Area Businesses.
8. Menard County Sheriff's Department.
9. Menard County Health Department.
10. Menard County Historical Society.
11. Future Problem Solvers.
12. Key Club.
13. Girl Scouts/Boy Scouts.
14. Springfield Volkswalk/Bicycle Club/Road Runners.
15. Menard County Farm Bureau.
16. SCS.
17. Area Development Council.
18. Illinois Dept. of Natural Resources.
19. Other Governmental Organizations.

LOW COST PROJECTS/ACTIVITIES

1. Extended walk in conjunction with a Spring bike ride.

2. May Events for "Bicycle Month." Do an event each weekend in May.

3. County event linked to a local charity. (Fall Event)

4. Bike Recycling – Donations.

5. Work on Signage.

6. Initiate First Trail Brochures. Work in conjunction with other organizations.

7. Develop Map Pads.

8. Provide a regular article for area papers. (Use MCTC Logo)

9. Expand power point presentation.

TWELVE MONTH GOALS

1. Develop popular support for the MCTC Plan.

2. Acceptance and ownership of the plan by the local government and the communities.

3. Prepare applications for funding.

4. Obtain an initial appropriation.

5. Work with the Illinois Historic Preservation Agency to begin trail planning and funding at New Salem.

6. Begin work on trail signs.

7. Sponsor local events.

8. Develop economic benefits survey.

FIVE YEAR GOALS

1. Have a minimum of one trail constructed.

2. Aim to complete the trail from Sangamon County Line to Cass County Line.

3. Obtain a state appropriation for trail construction.

4. Obtain local financial support and partnerships.

5. Expand development of trail signage in Menard County.

6. Develop trail brochures.

7. Preserve and enhance natural resources through education.

8. Promote tourism in Menard County.