



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Delta Heritage  
Trail State  
Park**  
*Arkansas*



# Delta Heritage Trail State Park

Arkansas

*By 2025, the Delta Heritage Trail State Park is planned to stretch 84.5 miles, including 73 miles on a former railroad right-of-way*



By 2025, the Delta Heritage Trail State Park is planned to stretch 84.5 miles, including 73 miles on a former railroad right-of-way donated to the state by the Union Pacific Railroad Company. As of 2020, 46.1 miles of the trail are complete in two disconnected sections: 25.6 miles from Arkansas City to Watson and 20.5 miles from Elaine to Lexa. The southernmost tip of the route, beginning at Arkansas City, includes 14 miles of on-street riding on a low-volume, low-speed roadway, the Mississippi River Mainline Levee.

Named for the region's rich history and culture, the trail traverses a forested corridor on a packed limestone surface through a rural landscape cut by babbling streams. With a nearly flat grade of around 1 percent and a firm surface, the route is ADA compliant and a pleasant

ride for most ages and abilities. The park has a visitor center on Route 49 in Barton, where you'll find maps, a gift shop, restrooms and picnic sites. You can also rent bicycles. Campers will find five primitive tent sites here, too.

The entire corridor, preserved for interim trail use under the railbanking provision of the National Trails System Act, passes through some of the most remote and scenic areas remaining in the Delta region of eastern Arkansas. The region was once covered by a bottomland hardwood forest extending from Cairo, Illinois, to the mouth of the Mississippi River. Today only fragments of this great forest remain since much of the land is separated and surrounded by agricultural development. Once completed, the middle portion of the trail will pass through some of the finest examples of the remaining wetland forest.

The southern end of the trail offers a route through shady tree tunnels that open up to old railroad bridge crossings of sloughs and bayous. Along these waterways, you might even spot alligators. The White River crossing is especially notable with its high steel bridge and a long, elevated trestle on either end. For the 3 miles between the White and Arkansas rivers, the trail will pass through the dense bottomland hardwood forests and wetlands of the Trusten Holder State Game Management Area.

As you continue south, you'll pedal through Rohwer. Here, be sure to take a side trip to explore the [Rohwer Heritage Site](#) where more than 8,000 Japanese Americans were interned between 1942 and 1945. More history is on display at the end of your journey in Arkansas City, where a handful of properties are on the National Register of Historic Places. In town, check out the [John H. Johnson Museum and Educational Center](#), which celebrates the life and contributions of the founder of the Johnson Publishing Company, once the largest black-owned publishing company in the world.



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**States:** Arkansas

**Counties:** Desha, Phillips

Length: 46.7 miles

**Trail end points:** Kate Adams Rd & CR 43 (Arkansas City) to Front St & AR 1 (Watson); to Main St & Quarles Rd (Elaine) to PC 251 (Lexa)

**Trail surfaces:** Ballast, Cinder, Crushed Stone

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike, Fishing, Wheelchair Accessible, Mountain Biking, Walking

## Parking & Trail Access

Along the route, there are seven trailheads with parking (from north to south): Lexa, Barton, Lake View, Elaine, Watson, Rohwer, and Arkansas City.

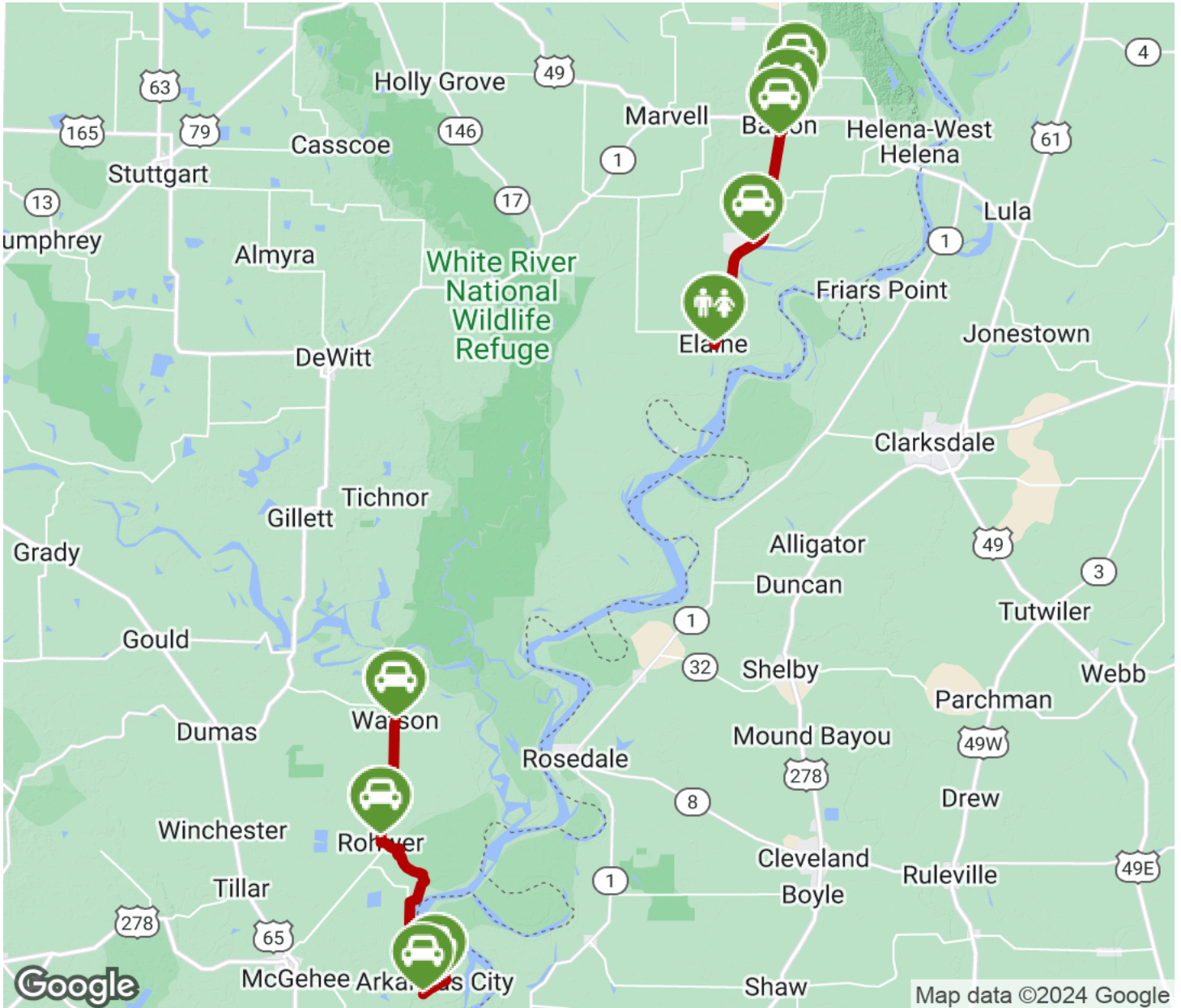
Note that the Barton Trailhead, near the northern end of the trail, is located at the Delta Heritage Trail State Park visitor center, which offers camp sites, restrooms (no showers), grills, a community water spigot, interpretive programming, bike rentals, and a gift shop.

At the southern end of the trail, the Arkansas City Trailhead—styled as an old train depot—offers restrooms, picnic areas and a large grill, a water fountain, a bicycle repair station, and limited camping facilities.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



## TrailLink

by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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