

**THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
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SURVEYS FIND TRAILS MOST POPULAR IN COUNTY PARK SYSTEM

SILVER SPRING, MD - The nearly 200 miles of trails for hiking, strolling, biking and/or horseback riding in Montgomery County's 32,639-acre park system continue as the most popular and heavily used facilities throughout the county, according to several random sample surveys of park users taken over a period of years.

"More Montgomery County residents use our scenic trail network than use any other category of park facilities," said Derick P. Berlage, Chairman of The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission. "You don't need any special equipment or athletic ability to get out into our parks and walk our network of trails. And many of our trail segments are accessible for strollers, walkers and wheelchairs."

Montgomery County parks offer 74 miles of paved trails and 116 miles of natural surface trails that include many miles for hiking, biking and horseback riding. In addition to the miles of loop trails in the county's five large regional parks and 11 recreational parks, the Capital Crescent Trail, Seneca Greenway Trail, Sligo Creek Trail and the Rachel Carson Greenway Trail are some of the most popular trails.

"Our long-term goal is to link our trails to form a continuous trail network from the Potomac to the Patuxent river and to connect trails to population, transportation and shopping centers throughout Montgomery County," he added. More information about trails, including trail maps, is available online at www.montgomerytrails.org.

Created by Maryland legislators in 1927, M-NCPPC is the only organization in the country to earn five national gold medals for Excellence in Recreation and Parks Management from the National Recreation and Parks Association.

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