



2024

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



Bitterroot Trail

Montana



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The Bitterroot Trail is a paved pathway largely paralleling US 93 between Missoula and Hamilton in Montana's scenic Bitterroot



The Bitterroot Trail is a paved pathway largely paralleling US 93 between Missoula and Hamilton in Montana's scenic Bitterroot Valley. The trail provides a safe transportation alternative to the busy highway and a treasured recreational asset. Along its more than 50-mile length, trail users are treated to stunning views of the Bitterroot Range to the west and the Sapphire Mountains to the east. With towns dotting the route every few miles at which to rest and refuel—as well as several campgrounds offering drinking water, toilets, and places to stay overnight for multi-day excursions—the trail makes an ideal way to explore this beautiful area at your own pace.

The north end of the trail begins in central Missoula, where it meets the [Milwaukee Trail](#) near the Clark Fork

River and McCormick Park. From there, the trail travels southwest following still-active railroad tracks and then Ronan Street as it heads out of town. As you pedal through Missoula, it's worth a quarter-mile side trip to visit the Historical Museum at Fort Missoula (3400 Captain Rawn Way), a 32-acre site originally established in 1877. Explore more than a dozen historical structures to dive deep into the regional and cultural heritage on display.

After about 2 miles, the trail meets US 93 and whisks travelers away into the rural countryside. The next community you will come to is Lolo. Here, you can take a short westward spur along US 12 to reach Travelers' Rest State Park, where you can explore an area once used as a campsite by Lewis and Clark in 1805 and 1806. Today, the 51-acre park offers opportunities to hike, fish, picnic, and view wildlife.

From Lolo, it's 9 miles to the next town of Florence, where you will find a grocery store and eateries to fill up and recharge for more cycling. Just outside of Florence, the Chief Looking Glass campground offers a popular overnight stop for bicycle tourists and is also a fishing site along the Bitterroot River. The campground is located only a mile east of the Bitterroot Trail, straight down Chief Looking Glass Road.

A little over 4 miles south of Florence, you'll come to Bass Creek Road; you can turn right, heading west down the road about 2 miles to reach the Bass Creek Recreation Area, which has another camping option nestled among spruce and fir trees, as well as picnic areas, hiking trails, and access to the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness.

A few more miles south and you will come to State Route 269. You can follow the roadway southeast and, after a half mile (after crossing the Bitterroot River), pick up the Stevensville River Trail, which parallels SR 269 into downtown Stevensville, a small town recognized as Montana's first permanent settlement. Explore this history at the Historic St. Mary's Mission at the west end of 4th Street. The mission was



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States: Montana

Counties: Missoula, Ravalli

Length: 51miles

Trail end points: Milwaukee Trail (Missoula)
to Angler's Roost on US 93 at Bitterroot River
(south of Hamilton)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Concrete

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline

Skating, Wheelchair Accessible, Horseback
Riding, Walking, Cross Country Skiing

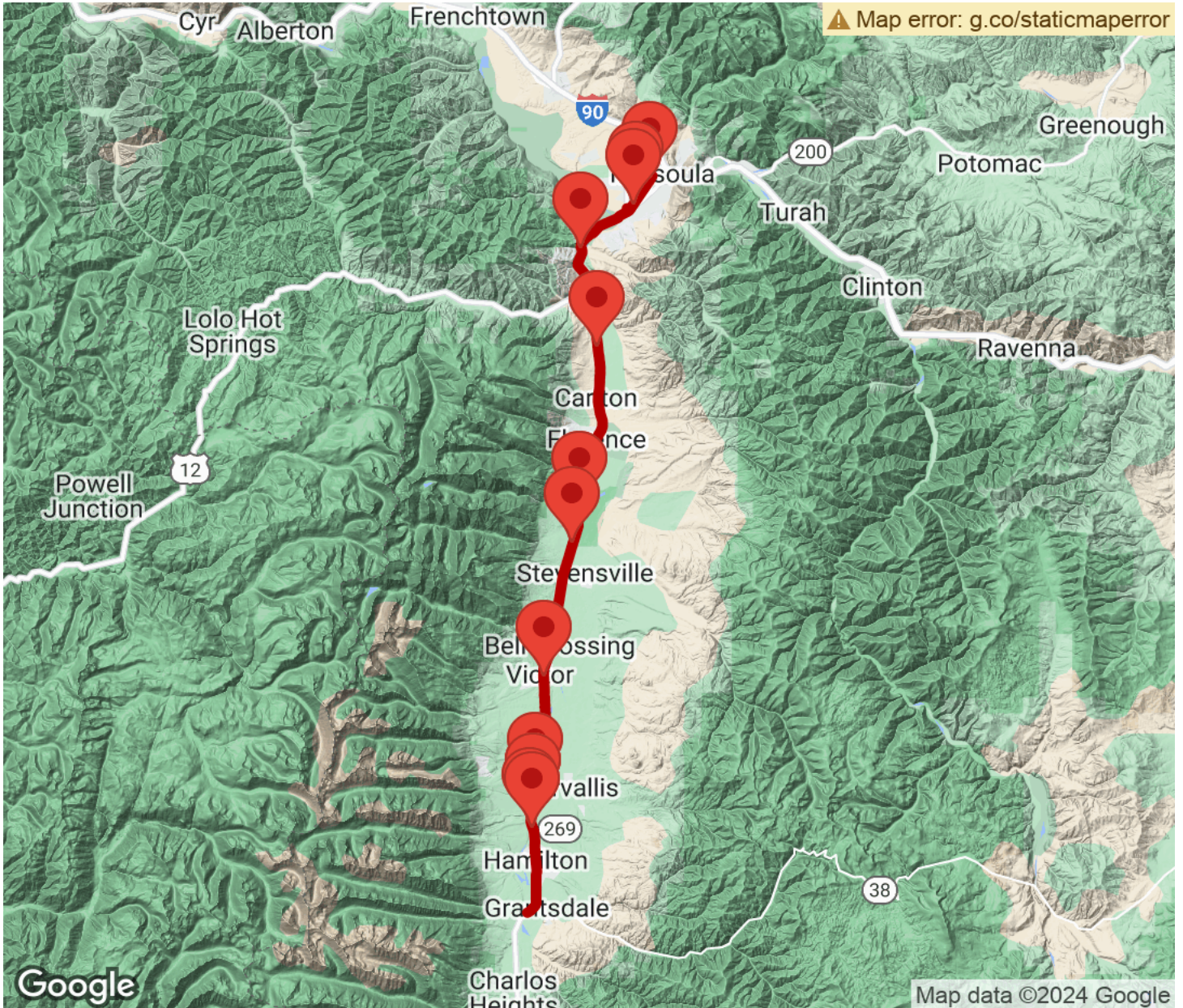
Parking & Trail Access

Parking for the Bitterroot Trail is available at several park and ride lots along US 93. Refer to the TrailLink map for specific locations and directions.



Bitterroot Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

TrailLink.com