



2025

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**Torrey C.
Brown Rail
Trail**
Maryland



Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail

Maryland

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The Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail is a popular destination for outdoor enthusiasts because of its proximity to populous Baltimore and its relatively flat course, which winds along river valleys through the picturesque rolling hills of northern Maryland.

The crushed-stone trail rolls for nearly 20 miles from Cockeysville to the Pennsylvania border, where it connects to the Heritage Rail Trail County Park.

And it's not just bikers, hikers, and equestrians who are drawn to the trail; folks lugging inner tubes use it to escape the muggy Maryland summers by floating the cool waters of Big Gunpowder Falls, which flows along the southern half of the trail.

About the Route

The trail passes through several other towns and communities, such as Glencoe, White Hall, Parkton, and Bentley Springs, although these offer little in the way of food or refreshments. If you're traveling through, it's best to carry your own supplies and plan for stops in Monkton and New Freedom (about a mile north of the state line).

The trail starts in the community of Ashland on the outskirts of Cockeysville. The parking lot here can fill up early on summer and fall weekends; a larger lot less than a mile away on Paper Mill Road/MD 145 has more spaces.

About 3.5 miles from Ashland, the trail passes the Sparks Bank Nature Center, which is open during the summer and has interpretive displays on local wildlife. Many bird species populate the forests and fields along the trail, and waterfowl flock to Big Gunpowder Falls.

The trail climbs slightly and is less congested as it heads toward the state line. In New Freedom, rail enthusiasts can board a replica of a Civil War-era train north to Hanover Junction.

Trail History

The rail corridor of the Northern Central Railway dates back to 1832 and served towns between Baltimore and upstate New York. Some of the original white whistle posts and mileage markers still stand. The railroad ran for 140 years until flooding from Tropical Storm Agnes devastated the railbed in 1972.

After acquiring the rail corridor, the Maryland Department of Natural Resources opened the first 7.2-mile segment from Cockeysville to Monkton in 1984 as part of the Gunpowder Falls State Park. Originally named the Northern Central Rail Trail (NCR Rail Trail), the trail was renamed in honor of the



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States: Maryland

Counties: Baltimore

Length: 19.9miles

Trail end points: Heritage Rail Trail County Park (PA-MD Stateline) to 7 Stone Row Ct. (Cockeysville)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone,Dirt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Fishing,Horseback Riding,Walking,Wheelchair Accessible,Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail leaves off from the Heritage Rail Trail County Park (PA-MD Stateline) and 7 Stone Row Ct. (Cockeysville), where parking is available.

Parking is also available at:

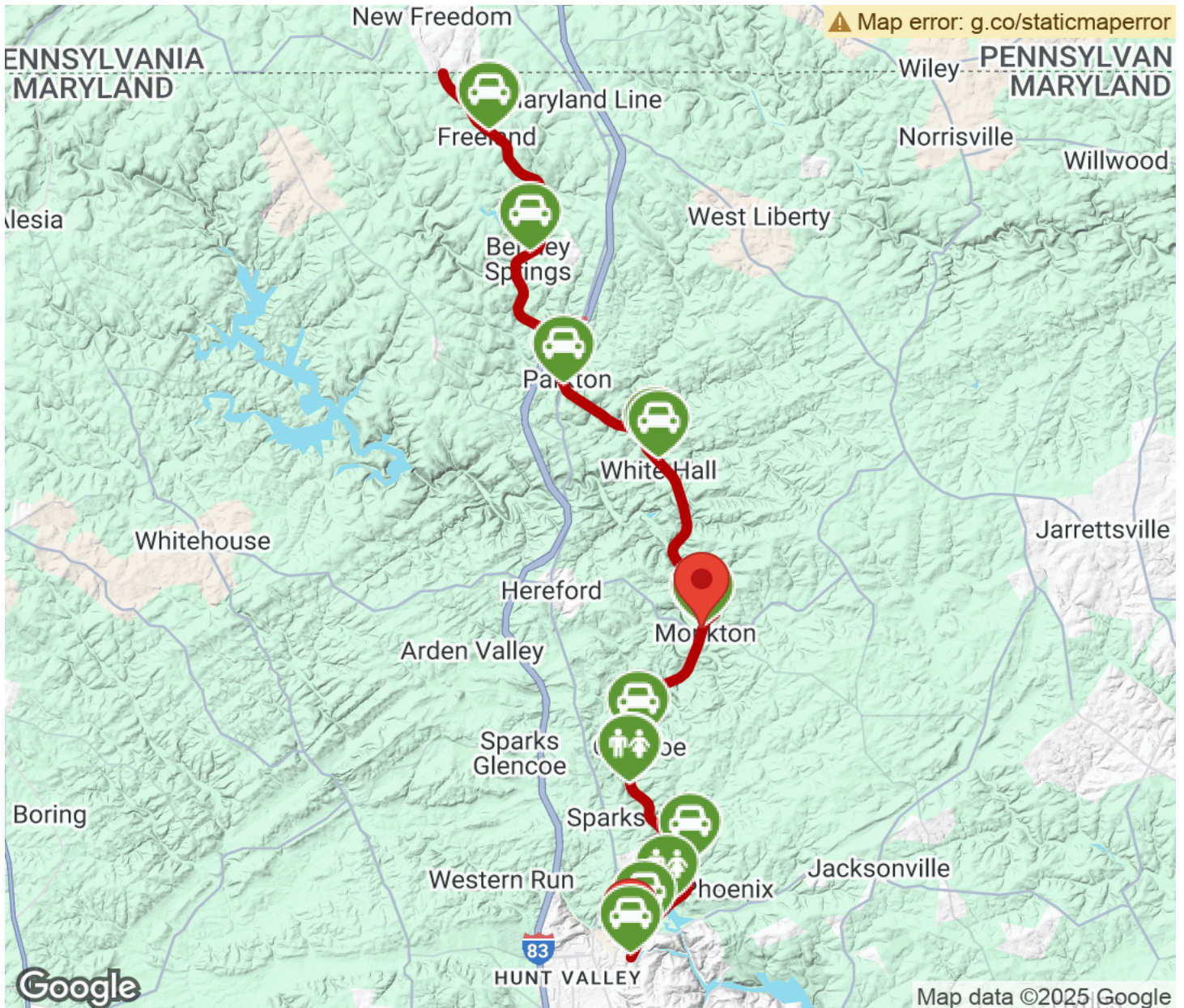
- 1302 Paper Mill Rd #1300 (Cockeysville)

See [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



Torrey C. Brown Rail Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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