



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



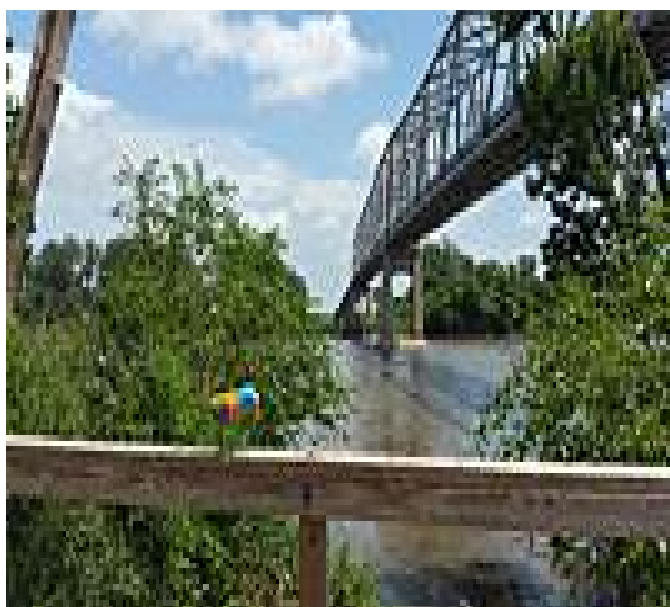
**Steamboat
Trace Trail**
Nebraska



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The Steamboat Trace Trail in southeastern Nebraska rests on a former Burlington Northern railroad corridor stretching from Brownville to just south of Nebraska City. The corridor was railbanked by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy and deeded to the Nemaha Natural Resources District—the trail's current manager—in 1995.

Nearly 22 miles of the Steamboat Trace Trail are open from west of the Omaha Public Power District (OPPD) Power Station (south of Nebraska City) to Cooper Nuclear Station (south of Brownville). The route, like most rail-trails, is quite flat, and the surface consists of crushed limestone screenings.

Both the scenery and history along the trail are its main draws. The trail follows the wooded bluffs along the

Missouri River, and at times, the river rests immediately at the trail's edge. Cottonwoods, oaks and other deciduous trees form forests that lend welcome shade to trail users during the summer months. The river and forests are not the trail's only scenery—at more than a few locations, the Steamboat Trace Trail runs adjacent to open farmland.

The trail is steeped in history, too. Lewis and Clark passed through the area more than two centuries ago on their journey westward. In the mid-1800s, the development of the steamboat led to the establishment of trading towns along the river (and later gave the trail its name). In the late 1800s, the Midland Pacific Railroad built the corridor that the trail now occupies.

Be sure to check out the small towns along the trail. In Peru, visit Nebraska's first 4-year college. The town is a popular place for trail users to grab a bite to eat. It also offers clean well-lit modern public restrooms with water right next to the trail, making it a good spot to refill water bottles, or use the facilities on longer excursions. South of Peru, Brownville offers its own fine eateries, as well as a winery.

No permits are required to enjoy the Steamboat Trace Trail, but voluntary donations are suggested. Donations may be submitted at collection boxes along the trail's route. The trail is closed to all uses from mid-November to early January, as the surrounding area is a popular deer hunting site.



Steamboat Trace Trail

Nebraska

States: Nebraska

Counties: Nemaha, Otoe

Length: 21.4 miles

Trail end points: Arbor Station Trailhead at County Rd L (6 miles south of Nebraska City) to 648A Ave west of Cooper Nuclear Station (south of Brownville)

Trail surfaces: Crushed Stone

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Mountain

Biking, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross

Parking & Trail Access

Parking for the Steamboat Trace Trail can be found in the north at the large Arbor Station Trailhead, located just west of the Omaha Public Power District station on County Road L. Near the trail's midpoint in Peru, park at the intersection of 5th Street and Plum Street. In the south, leave your car at the Lewis and Clark Campsite in Brownville. The recreation area is located at the intersection of 648A Avenue and E. Water Street, about a mile north of the trail's southern endpoint.



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by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

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