



2026

TrailLink Unlimited



Guides



**Samuel Justus  
Recreation  
Trail**  
*Pennsylvania*



# Samuel Justus Recreation Trail

Pennsylvania

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Oil flows through the veins of the Samuel Justus Recreation Trail. Its northern departure point is Oil City, which was founded during the 1860s oil boom and became the headquarters for several petroleum corporations. The route follows the unused corridor of the Allegheny Valley Railroad, whose trains carried crude away from the oil fields to the refineries. It's even named for an oil baron, Samuel Justus, who used his fortune to create a trust fund for widows and children.

The paved trail rolls 6 miles along a wooded route overlooking the Allegheny River between Oil City and Franklin. The 8-foot-wide paved surface parallels a dirt access road suitable for horses. Its southern trailhead connects to the [Allegheny River Trail](#) that runs another 30 miles south from Franklin to Parker. Its northern

trailhead links with the 3-mile [Oil City Trail](#), which crosses the Petroleum Street Bridge and joins the 9.4-mile [McClintock Trail](#) to Oil Creek State Park. Horse riding is allowed on an adjacent gravel road, though horses are not permitted on the trail itself.

The trail is part of the future 270-mile Erie to Pittsburgh Trail, which will incorporate several trails stretching from Presque Isle State Park on Lake Erie to the Steel City, and the Industrial Heartland Trails Coalition's developing 1,500-mile trail network through Pennsylvania, West Virginia, Ohio, and New York.

Starting at a boat launch site on the south side of Oil City, the path rolls along the base of a bluff alongside the Allegheny River. You'll enjoy views of the river the entire way. After passing a sewage treatment plant in a mile, you'll pass a half dozen pumps over the next couple of miles that still bring up oil or natural gas.

About 4.5 miles down the trail, you'll pass the large stone gate for River Ridge Farm, built in 1913 for Joseph C. Sibley, who made his money in the oil refining and animal breeding businesses. He later became a five-term congressman, first as a Democrat and then as a Republican. The mansion, still standing, is owned by Life Ministries and commands a view of the river and surroundings.

In about a mile you'll start seeing commercial businesses across the river in Franklin, soon after which you'll pass underneath the US 322 bridge and arrive at the southwestern trailhead. A visitor center is located here, housed in a saltbox--style house identified by the roof that slopes lower in back than the front.



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**States:** Pennsylvania

**Counties:** Venango

Length: 6.98miles

**Trail end points:** Oil City Marina near Wyllis St & W Front St (Oil City) to Allegheny River

Trail at US 322/Lakes to the Sea Hwy &

Bredinsburg Rd (Franklin)

**Trail surfaces:** Asphalt

**Trail category:** Rail-Trail

**Trail activities:** Bike,Horseback Riding,Mountain Biking,Inline

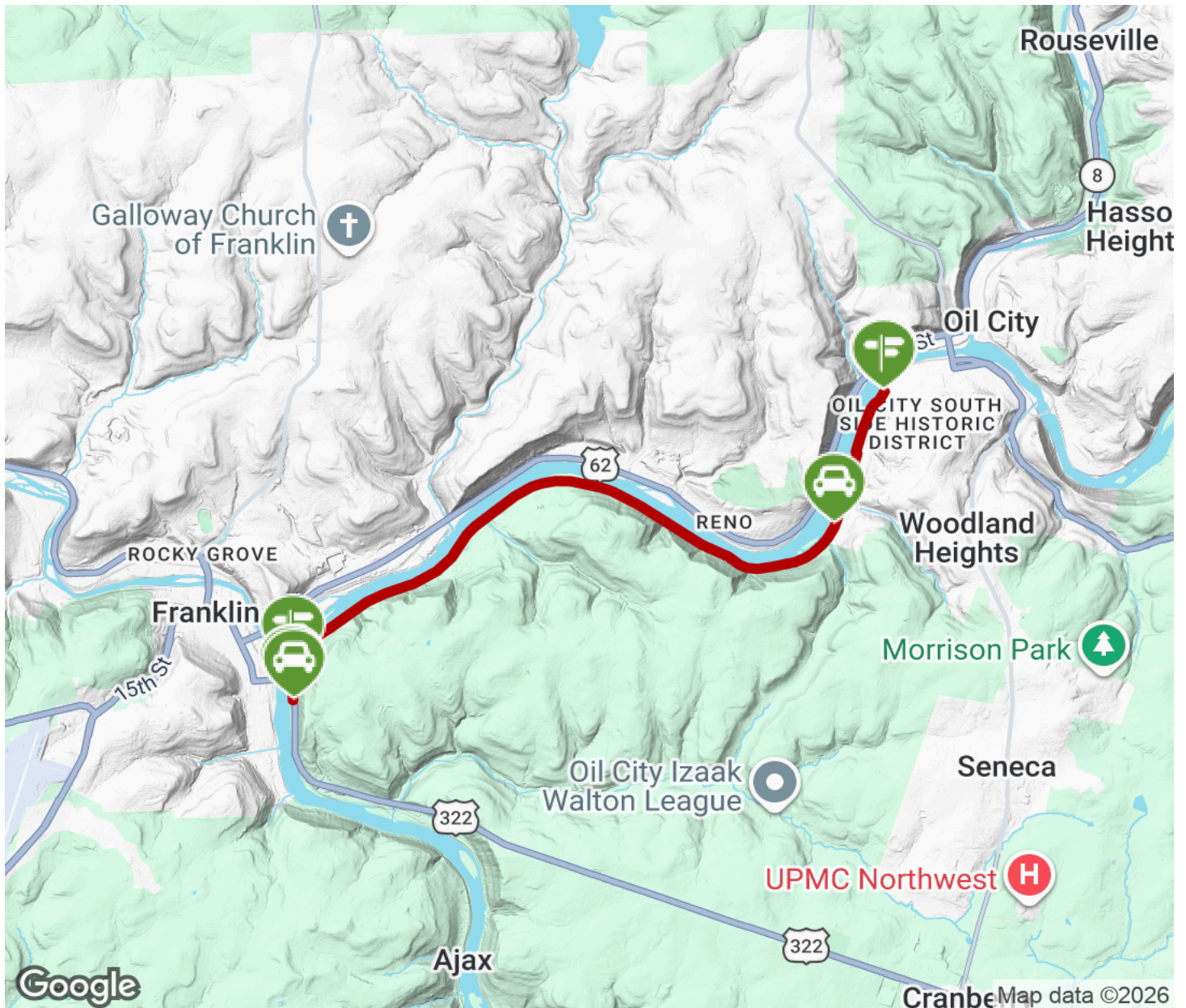
## Parking & Trail Access

There are three parking locations available along the trail, at the Visitor center and western endpoint, 4514 US-322, at a Water Treatment Plant along Osborne St. and at the Oil City Marina (Eastern Endpoint), 1016 W 1st St. See [TrailLink Map](#) for more detailed information.



# Samuel Justus Recreation Trail

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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



**TrailLink**  
by Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

[TrailLink.com](https://www.TrailLink.com)