



2026

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



**MCT
Confluence
Trail**
Illinois



MCT Confluence Trail

Illinois

Bring your camera to the MCT Confluence Trail. Part of Illinois' Madison County Transit (MCT) bikeways network, this trail is a



Bring your camera to the MCT Confluence Trail. Part of Illinois' Madison County Transit (MCT) bikeways network, this trail is a photographic patchwork of rivers, bridges, waterfront wildlife and industrial cityscape. The trail starts at Russell Commons Park in Alton and curves south, mostly along the Mississippi River levee to Granite City, offering spectacular views along the way. It supports both walking or biking, with a smooth asphalt surface along some stretches, oil and chip seal along the levee by the canal, and rougher gravel surface along other segments.

Leaving the town of Alton, the trail maintains an elevated position so that you will be able to see the highway on your left and the river (and the state of Missouri beyond that) on the right. Heading south, after 1.5 miles, look for

the Skinney Island facility, which has locks and a dam and offers great opportunities for taking photos. Soon after this, you arrive at the Amoco facility, with its series of five gates and hills that force cyclists to dismount and walk through them. There are also small hills associated with each of these gates. Be prepared to mount your bike and immediately pedal up the incline.

In the town of Hartford, the Lewis and Clark Confluence Tower appears along the left side of the trail, about 7.5 miles south of Alton and 0.75 mile from the Lewis and Clark Museum. The observation decks, historical displays and museum make for a great diversion.

In Granite City, the on-road connector takes you along Highway 3 for 3 miles west to the historic Chain of Rocks Bridge. Today, the bridge is reserved exclusively for pedestrians, bicyclists and skaters. Historically, however, this bridge served as the Route 66 connection between Illinois and Missouri. The unique St. Louis skyline welcomes you on the far end of the 1-mile bridge.

Back on the trail heading away from the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center, you come to the limestone-covered portion of the trail that parallels the Chain of Rocks Canal for 6.5 miles. Turn left on Bauer Road and continue for 0.25 mile until the trail picks back up again. For the next 1.75 miles, the trail becomes more urban and ends abruptly at the intersection of Illinois Route 3 and W. 20th Street. There is no official trailhead or parking here; however, you can pick up another short disjointed segments by crossing 20th Street and picking up 1st Street, heading south to turn west on E Street. At the end of E Street, the MCT Confluence Trail continues south to end at McKinley Bridge Roadside Park.

This trail has many connections on its northern end, including a link to Missouri's [West Alton Trail](#) and a signed, mostly city street route, to Piasa Park, where it meets the [Sam Vadalabene Bike Trail](#). Also from the northern section, you



MCT Confluence Trail

Illinois

States: Illinois

Counties: Madison

Length: 18.7miles

Trail end points: Russell Commons Park (Alton) to 20th Street at Lewis & Clark Blvd, (Granite City) to E Street to McKinley Bridge Roadside Park (Granite City)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt, Gravel

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike, Inline Skating, Walking, Wheelchair Accessible, Cross

Parking & Trail Access

To access the trail at Russell Commons Park in Alton, take State Route 140 west and turn left on Washington Avenue. After 1.3 miles, turn right on E. Broadway Street and continue for 0.3 mile. Make a quick left onto the Broadway Connector, and then travel for 0.25 mile to Landmarks Boulevard; turn right. After another 0.25 mile, turn left on Ridge Street and follow the curving road to the left. The trailhead is on the left in 0.3 mile.

To reach the East Alton trailhead on New Poag Road, take State Route 3 to East Alton and travel east on New Poag Road/ State Route 203. The trailhead is on the left.

Parking and trail access are also available at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Hartford and on both the Illinois and Missouri sides of the Chain of Rocks Bridge. For the southern segment, parking is available at McKinley Bridge Roadside Park (off Cedar/Main Streets near Bremen Street).



TrailLink.com