



2024

TrailLink Unlimited 

Guides



Northwest Lancaster County River Trail

Pennsylvania



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Overview

Spanning over 15 miles on the banks of the Susquehanna River, the Northwest Lancaster County River Trail is a tranquil and easy-going meander between the towns of Bainbridge, Marietta and Columbia. In addition to striking views of the river, the trail weaves beneath a historic rail bridge and tunnel, and past limestone “cliffs” along its course. Fully paved, shady, and well-served by trailside amenities like drinking fountains, bathrooms, and bike repair stations, this riverside trail has something for everyone.

About the Route

The Northwest Lancaster County River Trail’s western

endpoint is at 6 Collins Rd, in Bainbridge, by the Falmouth Boat Launch and the Fisherman’s Wharf Trail. The trail takes off eastward through the Falmouth Forest Garden, a floodplain forest within the Conoy Wetlands Nature Preserve that uses regenerative agroforestry — a sustainable land management practice of re-introducing native, crop-producing plants to the ecosystem. In Bainbridge, the trail passes Koser Park, offering one of several boat launches along the trail.

After continuing for 1.5 miles southwest out of Bainbridge, between the river and an active freight railway, the trail finds the White Cliffs of Conoy. This unique landmark was formed over time by the waste products of a limestone quarry, creating a hilly area of limestone “cliffs” on the shores of the Susquehanna. Just ahead to the southeast, the trail passes under the stone-arch Shock’s Mill Bridge, providing stunning views right from its base. From the Shock’s Mill Bridge, through the outskirts of Marietta, the route becomes straighter and occasionally leaves the tree cover to travel through open cornfields. In Marietta, several parks and trailheads offer an opportune spot for a break. Dining and convenience options are also available in town in Marietta, a short ways off the trail.

For a short segment in Marietta, the trail splits in parallel segments spanning either side of the railroad tracks. The main trail runs on a dedicated path along Front Rd and Donegal Place, in Marietta. The alternate route remains adjacent to the river, before finding Robert K. Mowrer Drive, which, if followed, quickly re-joins the main trail at Furnace Road. From here, the trail takes an on-road segment east on Furnace Road for another 0.4 miles. The on-road segment along Furnace Road has a dedicated bike lane.

Continuing east, the trail finds Chickies Rock County Park, where up above, where trail users may be able to spot rock climbers scaling the craggy face of Chickies Rock, via the 0.5-mile [Chickies Rock Overlook Trail](#) spur trail that’s nearby.



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States: Pennsylvania

Counties: Lancaster

Length: 15.9miles

Trail end points: 6 Collins Rd (Bainbridge) to
157 N. Front Street, near Columbia Crossing
River Trails Center (Columbia)

Trail surfaces: Asphalt

Trail category: Rail-Trail

Trail activities: Bike,Inline

Skating,Fishing,Wheelchair

Accessible,Walking,Cross Country Skiing

Parking & Trail Access

The Northwest Lancaster County River Trail runs between 6 Collins Rd (Bainbridge) and 157 N. Front St, near Columbia Crossing River Trails Center (Columbia), with parking available at both endpoints.

Parking is also available:

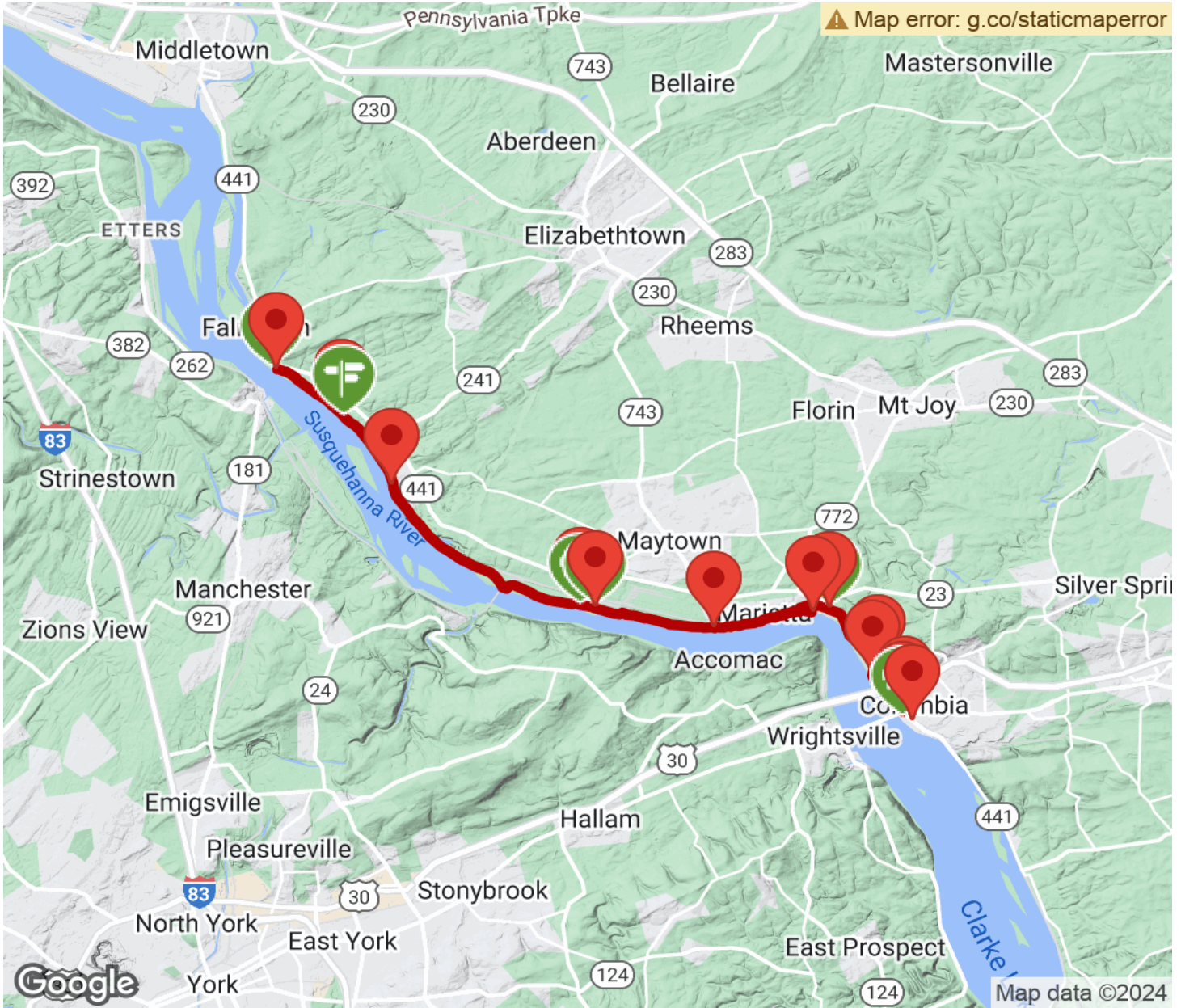
- 8 Race St (Bainbridge)
- Riverfront Park at 551 Vinegar Ferry Rd (Marietta)
- 29 Furnace Rd (Marietta)

There are numerous parking options along this route, see [TrailLink Map](#) for all parking options and detailed directions.



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Trailhead



Restroom



Parking



Water Fountain



Tunnel



TrailLink
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