

Extending the Heart of Vilas
Here's the latest on the River Trail
and all those who are moving it forward



For more than a decade, residents and officials in the Eagle River-St. Germain area have been informally discussing a biking and walking trail to connect those municipalities as well as Cloverland and Lincoln and extend the nationally recognized Heart of Vilas Trail System. The 2018 formation of the River Trail Commission and its partnership with Great Headwaters Trails sets the stage to make that connection happen.

The River Trail will be a paved, off-road trail for people of all ages to use on foot or on bikes. At its western end, the trail will start on the northwest corner of Hwy 70 and Cty O where the bike-ped trail coming out of St Germain now ends. It will head east from there for 10 miles, ending at a Riverview Park trailhead in Eagle River. This will connect Eagle River, the Three Eagle Trail and the Town of Three Lakes into the 55-mile-long Heart of Vilas walking and biking trail system (it's the burnt orange line on the areawide map on the reverse side).

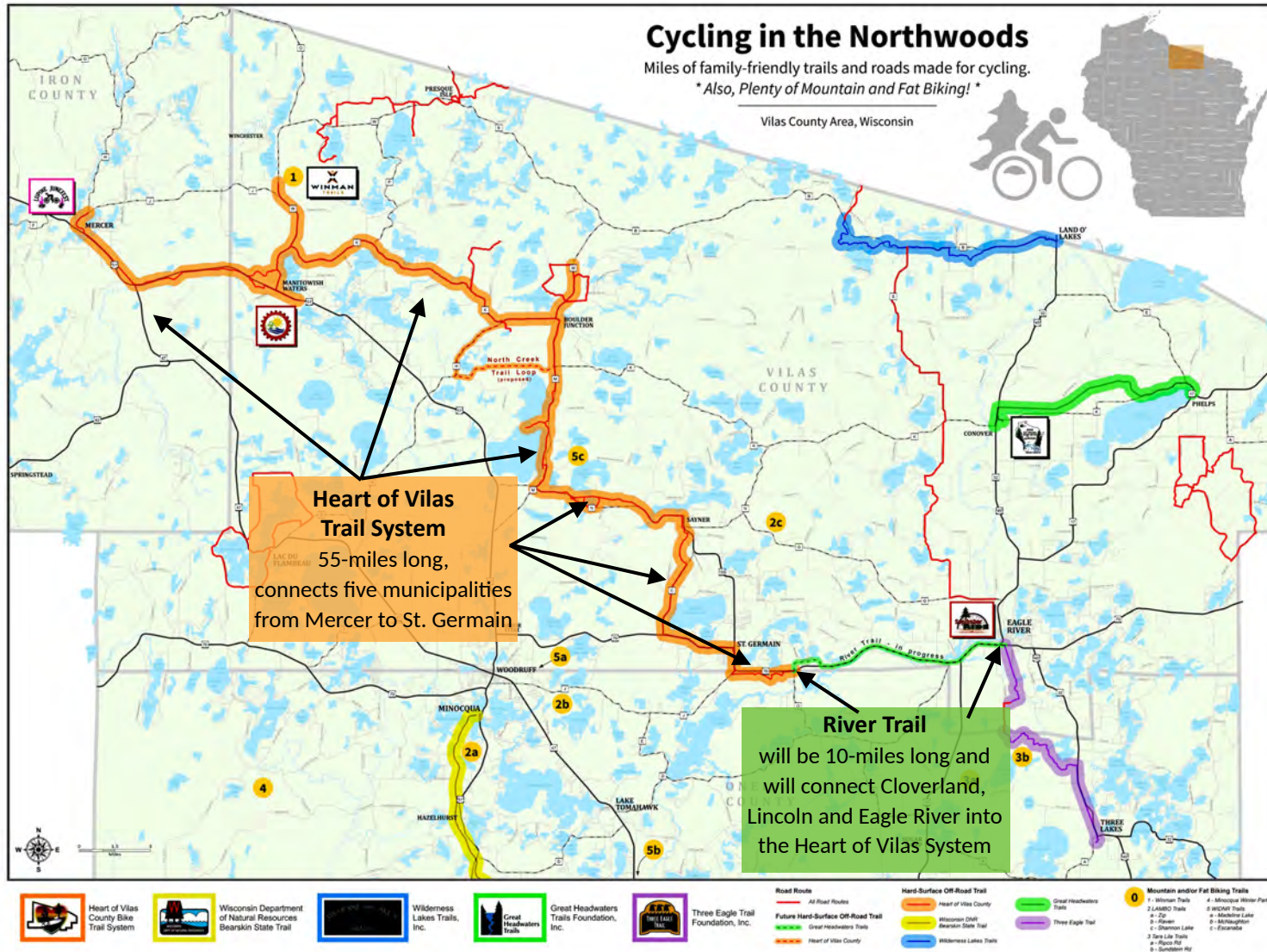
The River Trail will be close to the Wisconsin River for much of its route. It will include parking and waysides to enhance recreational opportunities already presented by the river, like fishing, boating and tubing.

The 10 foot wide asphalt trail will also give residents along busy Hwy 70 near Eagle River a safe place to walk or bike into town, providing a convenient way to visit neighbors, get to worship, and go to businesses.

Overall, the River Trail will add a convenient amenity for community members, and a powerful draw for visitors and for people considering the area as a place to settle down. It will also be good economic news for private property owners and businesses.

- **The River Trail Commission** will build, operate and maintain the biking and walking trail. The Commission is composed of supervisors from the towns of Cloverland (Joe Spitz) and St Germain (Jim Swenson), and an alderman from the City of Eagle River (Ron Kressin). Lincoln can join at any time but has so far declined. County supervisor Holly Tomlanovich and Recreation Supervisor Todd Bierman regularly attend Commission meetings.
- **Great Headwaters Trails** (GHT) is a local nonprofit working with the Commission in the same manner that it had worked with the towns of Phelps and Conover, raising all the funds needed to build their bike-ped trail. GHT also provides volunteer engineering services and public information about the project.
- **MSA Professional Services** completed a detailed Feasibility Study for the project in January of 2020. The study is based on MSA field work done in 2018 and a conceptual plan that GHT had developed. That plan was reviewed favorably by the DOT and DNR, and MSA's study has facilitated further coordination with the DOT and DNR, as well as with stakeholders of all sorts.

2023 Vilas-area Biking and Walking Trail Picture



- Heart of Vilas Trails
- Wilderness Lakes Trails
- Great Headwaters Trails
- Three Eagle Trail
- Bearskin State Trail

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT RIVER TRAIL and TO DONATE...
Contact Jeff Currie at ghtrails@gmail.com or 715-617-0080.
Or visit www.ghtrails.org.