

News Release  
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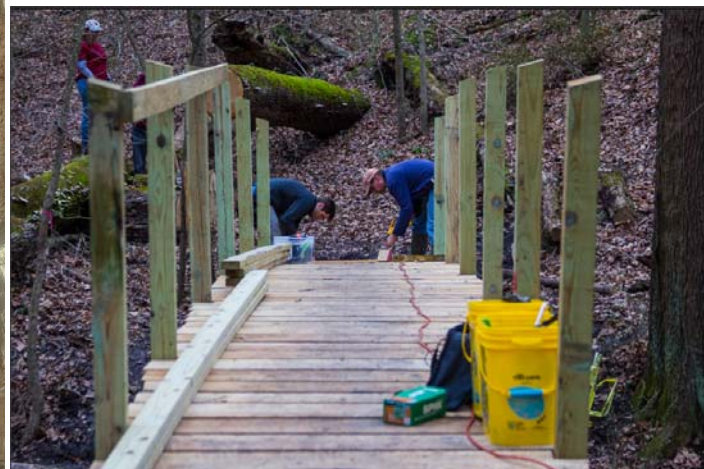
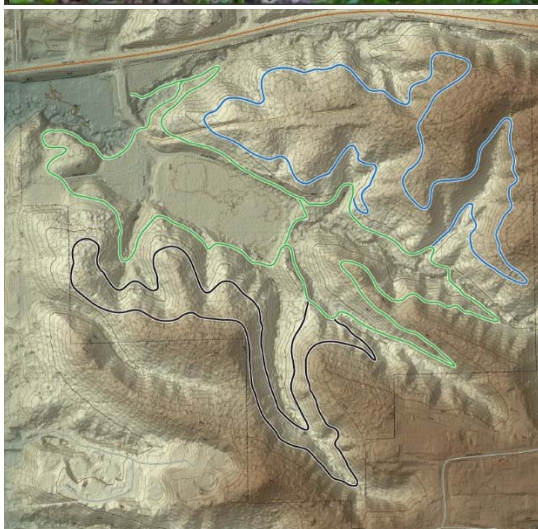
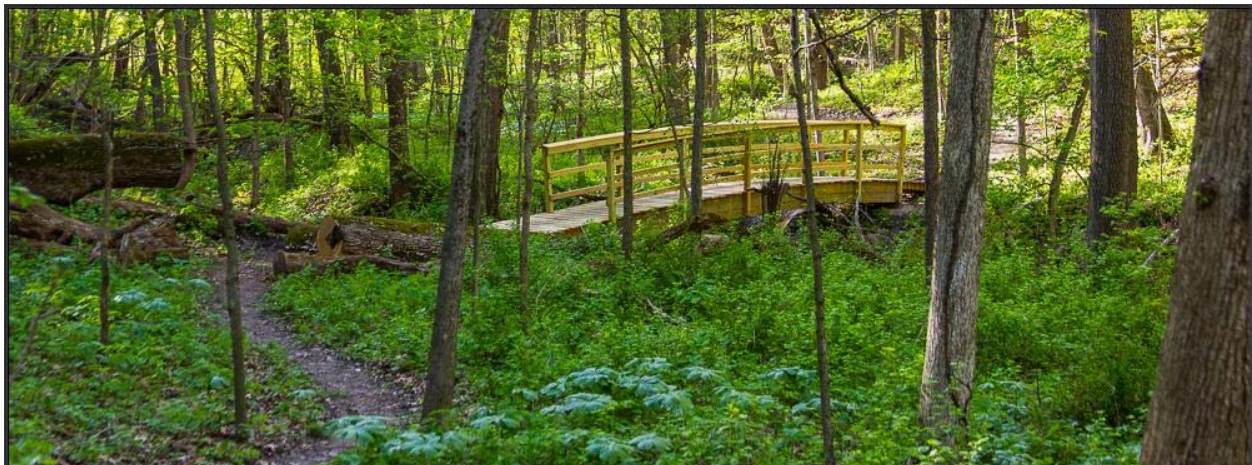
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**Rock Island County Forest Preserve District to Open Multi-use Trail  
System at Dorrance Park in Port Byron, Ill.**

*A grand opening event will take place Sunday, May 7 from 10 a.m. to Noon – Open to the public*



*PHOTO CREDIT: HANSON PHOTO & DESIGN.*

*The first of the three-part multi-use trail system at Dorrance Park will open to the public on May 7.*

**PORT BYRON, Ill. (May 3, 2017)** – The Rock Island County Forest Preserve District will open the first of a three-part multi-use trail system at Dorrance Park at 307 Agnes St., Port Byron, Ill., on Sunday, May 7.

With the goal to enhance and diversify recreational opportunities in Port Byron and northern Rock Island County, the Rock Island County Forest Preserve District along with their partners, Friends of Off-Road Cycling (FORC), River Action and the Village of Port Byron, IL, created a plan to develop a multiuse, human powered, trail system at Dorrance Park.

"In 2015, we partnered with FORC and had a dream to open a trail system at Dorrance Park," said Jeff Craver, forest preserve district director. "Now, two years later, that dream has become a reality. We're thrilled to celebrate the grand opening of our trail system with members of the community and our partners!"

Dorrance Park spans over 81 acres of land. The new trail system will be 3.5 miles long and will include three difficulty levels, ranging from beginner to expert.

"The district staff and FORC developed the trails with a sustainable design in mind," said Craver. "Each phase of the trail system will have a low environmental impact, using natural surfaces to create paths. It will help further our mission of conservation, education and of course, play and recreation."

The 1.6-mile beginner trail, also called the green trail, will be suited for short nature walks, beginner mountain bikers and cross country skiing. It will be the widest of the three trails at 18 to 24 inches wide, will have a smooth service and will include a bypass option for shorter route options. It will feature a 33-foot bridge crossing a deeply incised stream.

The intermediate level blue trail will be more physically demanding than the green, suitable for seasoned hikers, mountain bikers and trail runners. The 1.1-mile trail will have a slightly narrower tread, capping off at 18 inches wide. There will be optional challenging trail features and some trail surface roughness.

The toughest part of the course is the black trail, or expert trail, spanning 1.1 miles. The more challenging trail will require additional physical exertion because of the elevation changes, steeper grades (10-15 percent), difficult natural obstacles and less developed, rough trail surface. It will be ideal for those users looking for a more challenging or primitive experience for mountain biking, hiking and running.

The typical cost per mile of professionally built trails can be more than \$15,000 in steep terrain. Total, it would cost an estimated \$52,500 to build 3.5 miles of trail at Dorrance Park. However, thanks to the partnership between the District and FORC, the labor for trail development will be 100 percent completed by volunteers and district staff.

“By the time the trail system is complete, the FORC volunteers will have put in more than 2,500 volunteer hours at Dorrance Park,” Craver said. “We can’t express in words how grateful we are to them!”

Hard costs for the project total \$6,000 and cover trail structures such as bridges and boardwalks, signage and tools for volunteers. The Rock Island County Forest Preserve funded \$3,000 of project expenses, \$1,500 was contributed by the Village of Port Byron, Ill., and the remaining \$1,500 was matched by River Action.

Construction on the green trail took eight months to complete and finished in March 2017. To celebrate the completion of phase one, Dorrance Park will host a groundbreaking event from 10 a.m. to noon on Sunday, May 7, open to the public.

The event will include a summary of the development process and progress points, and will end with a group bike ride and group hike lead by FORC. Itinerary of the morning is as follows:

- **10 a.m.** – Introduction of partners and project overview
- **10:30 a.m.** – Ribbon cutting
- **10:45 a.m.** – FORC-sponsored group ride and hike, and time for questions with RICFPD and partners.

The Upper Rock Island County Recreational Association (URICRA) will open the concession stand at Dorrance Park and sell burgers, brats, chips, candy and drinks.

The green trail will remain open to the public as progress continues on the blue and black trails. Construction is already underway for the blue intermediate trail. It will take five months to construct and is expected to open in Spring 2018. The black expert trail will wrap up in Spring 2019 and will take six months to complete.

To learn more about this project and the Rock Island County Forest Preserve District visit <http://www.qcforc.org/content.php?221-Dorrance-Forest-Preserve> and [www.RICFPD.org](http://www.RICFPD.org).

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### **About the Rock Island County Forest Preserve District**

The mission of the Rock Island County Forest Preserve District is to maintain and acquire lands and facilities in Rock Island County with the intent to restore, conserve and protect the waters, forests and prairies they contain and the goal to create educational and recreational opportunities for the residents of Rock Island County and beyond.

The Rock Island County Forest Preserve District is governed by the Forest Preserve Commission. Today the Rock Island County Forest Preserve Commission governs six forest preserve areas totaling 2,529

acres. They include Loud Thunder Forest Preserve, Illiniwek Forest Preserve, Niabi Zoo, Indian Bluff Golf Course and Forest Preserve, Dorrance Park and Martin Conservation Area.

For more information about the Rock Island County Forest Preserve District, visit [www.RICFPD.org](http://www.RICFPD.org).