



# Tourism News

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## Dutchess Rail Trail Voted into the National Rail-Trail Hall of Fame

*Thank You for Your Support!*

**Poughkeepsie...** Rail-trail supporters from Dutchess County, the Hudson Valley Region and beyond, spurred the Dutchess Rail Trail's selection as the newest inductee into Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's (RTC) 2016 Rail-Trail Hall of Fame! Thanks to the overwhelming support of residents, County employees, and users of the [William R. Steinhaus Dutchess Rail Trail](#), the [Walkway Over the Hudson](#), and the [Hudson Valley Rail Trail](#), the [Hudson Valley Trail Network](#) became the 30th Rail-Trail Hall of Fame selection, receiving almost 54 percent of the 19,885 total votes placed in a nationwide public vote, beginning on June 6 and ending on June 15.

"Thank you to all those who voted for our Dutchess Rail Trail, along with the Walkway Over the Hudson and Hudson Valley Rail Trail, to be part of the 2016 Rail-Trail Hall of Fame! Dutchess Rail Trail has been a destination for thousands since the first phase opened, as people flock to enjoy the scenic views, the quiet and tranquility, as well as the easy-to-navigate surface along the 13-mile path. Together with the Walkway Over the Hudson and Hudson Valley Rail Trail, we have created an 18-mile-plus world-class treasure that has no equal," said County Executive Marc Molinaro.

The Dutchess Rail Trail is a 13-mile multi-use linear park that runs through the middle of the County along the former Maybrook Rail corridor including the towns of Poughkeepsie, LaGrange, Wappinger and East Fishkill, with a direct link to the Walkway Over the Hudson and the regional trail network. Since the first phase of the trail opened in 2008, thousands of residents and visitors have walked, biked, ran, skated, and have even gone snowshoeing on the Dutchess Rail Trail, all while enjoying the scenic beauty of Dutchess County. The Dutchess Rail Trail has earned several accolades including *Hudson Valley Magazine* readers' pick for "Best Bike/Rail Trail" in 2015, the editors' pick for "Best News for Outdoor Enthusiasts (Planned Extension) in 2012, the readers' pick for "Best Bike Trail" in 2011 and the editors' pick for "Best New Hiking Trail" in 2008. The Rail Trail is a popular venue for organized races including the Walkway Marathon and several charity fundraisers.

The popular Hudson Valley Trail Network covers 18 miles and connects three rail-trails, stretching from Highland, over the Hudson River and through Poughkeepsie, to Hopewell Junction. On the west side of the river, the flat, paved Hudson Valley Rail Trail stretches nearly 4 miles through hardwood forests, over Black Creek and under two spectacular stone-arch bridges. Walkway Over the Hudson runs 212 feet above the river along the steel cantilever truss Poughkeepsie-Highland Railroad Bridge (which was once the longest bridge in the world) and draws a half-million visitors annually. The Dutchess Rail Trail runs through what seems like a perpetually green landscape of dense tree cover, linking Poughkeepsie at the Hudson River with smaller towns to its southeast. The Hudson Valley Trail Network was RTC's Trail of the Month in March 2016.

“The way that the Hudson Valley Trail Network seamlessly connects three unique trails is a prime example of how integrated trail systems can produce important benefits for communities—for transportation, tourism and economic development,” said RTC President Keith Laughlin. “We’re thrilled to induct the Hudson Valley Trail Network as our 30th Hall of Fame rail-trail.”

RTC is the largest trails organization in America, representing a community of more than 160,000 members and supporters—including 33,000 in New York—and more than 850,000 trail users. RTC selects Hall of Fame rail-trails based on merits such as scenic value, high use, trail amenities, historical significance, excellence in management and maintenance, community connections and geographic distribution. As a Hall of Fame inductee, the Hudson Valley Trail Network will receive national publicity, trail signage, coverage in Rails to Trails magazine and an unveiling event.

To learn more about the Dutchess Rail Trail and all of Dutchess County’s Parks, go to:  
<http://www.co.dutchess.ny.us/CountyGov/Departments/DPW-Parks/PPIndex.htm>

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*Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), a nonprofit organization with more than 160,000 members and supporters, is the nation's largest trails organization dedicated to connecting people and communities by creating a nationwide network of public trails, many from former rail lines and connecting corridors. Founded in 1986, RTC's national office is located in Washington, D.C., with regional offices in California, Florida, Ohio and Pennsylvania. For more information, visit [railstotrails.org](http://railstotrails.org).*

[www.dutchessNY.gov](http://www.dutchessNY.gov)