

8-19-2013

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Recommended Citation

"330 Miles and Counting" (2013). *News Releases*. 390.
https://ecommons.udayton.edu/news_rls/390

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330 Miles and Counting

08.19.2013 | Campus and Community, Students, Energy and Environment

Under the warm August morning sun, cyclists celebrated the opening of the newest stretch of the Great Miami River Recreation Trail by going for a bike ride.

"I'm one of the thousands of people who go out on these paths, almost every day," said University of Dayton President Daniel J. Curran at the ribbon-cutting ceremony. "When you bicycle, you see the beauty, you see the wildlife. When I look at the economic development of this region, the river plays a big role."

The University of Dayton, Miami Conservancy District and Five Rivers MetroParks partnered to extend the Great Miami River Recreation Trail bike path along the west bank of the Great Miami River from Stewart Street to the University of Dayton softball stadium. The University of Dayton Arena and Time Warner Cable Stadium for Flyers baseball sit across the street.

The trail already runs from Stewart Street to Dayton's Island Park on both sides of the river. It crosses the river from Island Park to Triangle Park. From there, cyclists have a choice. They can take the Stillwater Bikeway through DeWeese Park, Wegerzyn MetroPark and on to Sinclair Park, or they can take the Great Miami River Bikeway north through Tipp City and Troy. Riders can continue on the trail to Piqua but must ride on the street for a short distance. To the south, the Great Miami Bikeway travels through Moraine, West Carrollton, Miamisburg and the southern tip of Franklin. Cyclists also can use the southwest extension to head east to the Mad River Bikeway and on out to Huffman MetroPark and the Wright Brothers Overlook.

A spur along Stewart Street connects the path to the University of Dayton campus. The region now boasts 330 miles of connected trails, according to Janet M. Bly, general manager of the Miami Conservancy District.

"This is the best and the biggest bikeway network in the country," she said. "We want to thank (the University of Dayton) for making the campus even more green and sustainable."

The University contributed \$52,000 with the Miami Valley Conservancy District and Five Rivers MetroParks contributing the remainder for the \$140,000 project. Officials from the University of Dayton, Miami Conservancy District, Five Rivers MetroParks, city of Dayton, Montgomery County and Marriott Courtyard participated in today's ribbon-cutting celebration.

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