



Want to learn more?

Become involved with the Trail Ranger Program

Questions about trails or our trail outreach program? Email our DC Trail Ranger Coordinator at trailranger@waba.org or give us a call at (202) 518-0524 x 208.

Want to make biking better?

Join your local bike advocacy group, WABA, as we work to make the DC region a fantastic place to bike. Our mission is to create a healthy, more livable region by promoting bicycling for fun, fitness, and affordable transportation; advocating for better bicycling conditions and transportation choices for a healthier environment; and educating children, adults, and motorists about safe bicycling.

Join us at waba.org.



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Funded by a generous grant from the District Department of Transportation.

Marvin Gaye Trail

Connecting Capitol Heights to the Anacostia River



Trail Highlights

As a link between numerous parks and neighborhood institutions, Marvin Gaye Trail is both an important community resource and a commuter connection. The 1.6 mile trail and park has undergone extensive restoration with native plantings to become the shady sanctuary it is today.



Following the Watts Branch in Marvin Gaye Park, the trail is an urban greenspace for humans and wildlife alike. Keep an keen eye out - you might spot a heron!

Many mini playgrounds are scattered along the corridor, this fantastic music themed splash park is at the Marvin Gaye Recreation Center (6201 Banks PI NE).



Initially called the Crystal Room where Marvin Gaye began his career, the Riverside center is now home to Washington Parks and People.

Founded by Nannie Helen Burroughs in 1909 to educate African American women, the National Training School for Women and Girls is now a National Historic Landmark.



DC Trail Rangers

Trail Rangers are a consistent and helpful presence on DC's mixed use, paved trails, charged with assisting trail users, improving trail conditions, and working with city agencies to keep the trails clean, bright, and clear of obstacles. We have a regular trail presence, events and smaller outreach to encourage and support trail use along the Metropolitan Branch, Anacostia River, Marvin Gaye and Suitland Parkway trails.



Events

Pitch in Cleaning Up: Throughout the spring and summer, neighbors and trail users are invited to lend a hand in keeping our urban trails looking good. We'll provide the tools, snacks and some new friends.

More info at waba.org/trailranger or give us a call at (202) 518-0524 x 208.



Trail History

Now named for Deanwood's famous son, Marvin Gaye, initial construction of the park started in the 1930s as Watts Branch Park as urban housing stock transformed the former farmland. After years of neglect, the park underwent beautification in the 1960s spurred by community members and supported by Lady Bird Johnson. But after the 1968 riots, the park reverted back to neglect and vandalism - despite the efforts in the 1970s that



built the bike trail as part of a community development plan.

The park gained a reputation as a drug haven in the 1990s and the nickname "Needle Park." But the park began a new life with the new century thanks to the efforts of the community and Washington Parks & People - work that has continued with many community partners to this day. Rededicated in 2006 as Marvin Gaye Park, stream restoration of Watts Branch and 10,000 new trees and other plants have made the trail a scenic ride.