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New Kentucky Roadside Signage Marks “Daniel Boone Bike Route” Spanning 10 Counties

Nearly 350 signs installed identifying U.S. Bike Route 21

FRANKFORT, Ky. (Nov. 1, 2021) – Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Secretary (KYTC) Jim Gray and local officials gathered today in Berea to celebrate the completion of a four-month roadside signage project identifying Kentucky’s new U.S. Bicycle Route 21 (USBR). The route stretches across through 10 counties and 15 communities, and will be a part of a national route that ultimately spans from Cleveland, Ohio to Atlanta, Ga.

"Many roadside signs signal significance and this new signage are no exception," said Kentucky Transportation Cabinet Secretary Jim Gray. "Kentucky roads are shared roads and we hope the signs encourage residents and tourist alike to get out and enjoy the scenic and historical bike route."

Kentucky is now ranked as one of the top five states with the most miles on the U.S. Bicycle Route System. By partnering with community members, the cabinet has earned designation for U.S. Bike Routes 21 and 23, creating new north-south connections with its neighboring states. Both routes are found in Berea. KYTC provided the Madison County fiscal court with \$85,000 to fund the signage project.

"While we are located in the center of this new bike trail, we want to call attention to the importance of preserving the history and of the entire length of first road into Kentucky, which was blazed in 1775 by Daniel Boone, and we celebrate with all of the communities along Boone Trace," said Berea Mayor Bruce Fraley. "This is an important day for Kentucky history."

USBR 21, also known as the Daniel Boone Bike Route, begins at the Cumberland Gap in Middlesboro and extends 265 miles to the southside of the Ohio River in Maysville, Kentucky. Passing through the historic Cumberland Gap and foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, it crosses through 10 counties: Bell, Knox, Laurel, Rockcastle, Madison, Clark, Bourbon, Nicholas, Robertson and Mason. The route follows much of the original “Boone Trace”, the historic trail established by Daniel Boone in 1775 marking the first road to land west of the Appalachian Mountains.

“U.S. Bike Route 21 not only provides recreational, health and tourism benefits, it also helps to raise awareness of the historical significance of Boone Trace,” said Friends of Boone Trace, Inc. President Dr. John Fox. “The symbolism of two national bike routes that cross in Berea reflects the significance of this city where the mountains meet the Bluegrass and a melting pot of cultures merge at the renowned Berea College.”

The U.S. Bicycle Route System develops partnerships between transportation agencies, bicycle and trail organizations and volunteers. The Adventure Cycling Association partnered with the Friends of Boone Trace, Inc. to design and implement USBR 21.

The U.S. Bicycle Route System (USBRS) is a developing national network of officially recognized, numbered and signed bicycle routes. All U.S. Bicycle Routes are certified by the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). These new routes bring the total mileage of the USBRS to 14,000.

The trail route was developed over the course of four years by the 501c-3 organization Friends of Boone Trace, Inc., in partnership with Berea College’s Entrepreneurship for the Public Good Program. Students researched the route and evaluated it for both safety and unique features. The approved route is designed for bicycle touring, showcasing low-volume country roads, diverse terrain, picturesque vistas and significant historic sites, including Cumberland Gap National Historic Park, Pine Mountain Resort Park, Levi Jackson Park, Fort Boonesborough State Park and Blue Licks Battlefield State Park.

“At Berea College, we think of this route as a meeting point – a point where east meets west, north meets south, and the mountains meet the bluegrass,” said Berea College President Roelof. Symbolically, this reflects the college’s history as a meeting point – a point where black and white students first studied together, and one of the first points in the south where men and women studied together. To me, it is altogether fitting that this point becomes the crossroads of bicycling in Kentucky. I’m proud that Berea College students were able to play an important role in this project, and that cyclists from across Kentucky and the United States can now travel through this important meeting point and learn about the history and beauty of Kentucky and of Berea College.”

Free digital maps for all designated U.S. Bicycle Routes — including USBR 21, 23 and 76 in Kentucky — are available [here](#) through a partnership with Ride with GPS. For additional information, contact: **John Fox, M.D.** President, Friends of Boone Trace, Inc. (859) 533-6433

EDITORS NOTE: Click [here](#) to view a video about the signage project.

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