



The Regional Trail System for Northeast Indiana needed a name and a brand. We needed something to call our system that would speak to the residents and visitors of Northeast Indiana. Part of this not only required names and logos, but also required a common signage and wayfinding system to capture visually the message of our trails. It had to be unique, and allude to Northeast Indiana's cohesiveness and future connectivity of trails and communities throughout the region. Just like new trails, there are many existing trails throughout our region with different "owners" and different "names" that while needing to maintain their identities, there was also a need for consistent signage and information

regarding regional identification, visual branding, directions and destinations, and other trail related information. A named and branded system provides a simple way to market our trail system to users and potential funding partners, thereby playing a crucial role in the development of our trail system and solicitation of private investment.

To accomplish this NIRCC contracted the consultant firm Merje to provide services that assisted in preparing a comprehensive branding initiative for the Northeast Indiana Regional Trail System which is now called the "Northeast Indiana United Trails". The services they provided resulted in this new regional trail system name along with brand and wayfinding signage guidelines to follow for design and implementation. This manual provides details for designs, materials, dimensions, and location guidelines to allow communities to choose the signs needed for their unique situations.

Many existing or planned trails already have names or identities. The United Trails brand does not intend to change unique identities already established but rather mark these trails as part of the regional system that can be recognized no matter what part of the Northeast Indiana Region an individual may be in. The consistent use and design of wayfinding signs will allow residents and visitors to our region to easily recognize and become familiar with our vast regional trail system. The brand and wayfinding signage guidelines that Merje has produced for our region provides a manual that gives a number of options that trail owners can choose from if they decide to identify their trails as part of the United Trails regional system. These options range from simple placards that can be installed on a sign post to a complete trailhead kiosk.

Our United Trails brand and wayfinding signage guidelines can be downloaded at <https://www.in.gov/nircc/files/unitedtrailsguidelines.pdf>. If you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact NIRCC. Also, contact NIRCC for access to logo files, sign designs or templates, high resolution files, etc. We are able to provide these for trails or projects throughout the Northeast Indiana Region. The United Trails Plan includes the counties of Adams, Allen, DeKalb, Huntington, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Noble, Steuben, Wabash, Wells, Whitley, and the communities within. For maps of the United Trails system go to <https://www.in.gov/nircc/planning/bicycle-pedestrian/>.

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