

Delphi Trail hike set for Dec. 26

Delphi Historic Trails is hosting a winter trek along a historic trail east of Delphi on the day after Christmas. Hikers should meet at the Canal Center at Canal Park at 1 p.m.

Weather could cause cancellation or cause the group to move indoors for a talk while looking at maps.

Trails chairman Dan McCain tells walkers to dress warm in layers and be ready to hike through snow on ungroomed landscape. Members of the group will be given a choice of an easy or a difficult walk.

Hikers will board the trolley at the Canal Center (weather permitting) and be shuttled to the east side of Delphi where the Monon High Bridge Trail begins. Similar hikes in the past were organized by the late Charles Gerard. Last year's day-after-Christmas walk attracted more than 100 people.

McCain said the mission is to first explore the developed

old Monon rail trail that skirts the valley high up on the side north of Deer Creek. For those who wish to only walk the easier trail portion and then return to the Center, the trolley will pick up at the Sherry Mears farm lane that connects to the high bridge route.

Hearty hikers may go on to the old trestle and overview Deer Creek from the height once experienced by the train travelers. Then on the return circuit the trek will show the remaining hikers the old farm access tunnel under the Monon tracks that was used for passage of livestock and two-row equipment going to the lower field.

The area between Deer Creek and the NS Railroad will reveal the changes INDOT made in the past six months for the Hoosier Heartland Highway.

"These welcomed changes came from a concerted effort by

local historical organizations and city leadership concerned with the highway's impact on the Deer Creek valley," McCain said.

Narration along the hike will also illustrate how the addition of a historic bridge will enhance the Monon rail-trail as the old railbed will be permanently severed by the highway corridor.

"With greater public involvement it is hoped that a beautiful 300 foot long historic iron bridge can be placed for the hikers in the future to cross above the new four lane highway," McCain said.

The trolley will pick up from various points making a short walk and a long walk, depending on how far the hiker wishes to go. Then back in the Canal Center will be hot coffee and cocoa for the hikers. A response form will be offered for collecting public feelings about the proposed iron trail bridge being contemplated.

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