



# Family Bike Ride Recommendations

Take the family out on some of our great nearby biking paths. To make your planning easier, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

## Be sure to bring these necessities along on your ride:

- Helmet
- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Map and route directions
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Tire mini-pump or CO2
- Spare tube or patch kit
- Tire levers

For a complete cycling checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.



## Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Bike Rides

### Yellow River Regional Park

Terrain: **Paved paths and dirt trails**

Distance: **6.9 miles, including both paved and mountain bike trails. Minimal elevation gains on paved paths; up to 1,000 feet elevation gain on mountain bike trails.**

**Why This Ride:** Yellow River is among the most well-developed bike-specific parks in the metro area—meaning there's something here for everyone!

**Ride Description:** There are two areas to ride: the first is Riverside, which has a 1-mile, paved loop trail that winds around a large “passive” area for picnics and is perfect for kids just learning to ride. Other trails wind through upland deciduous forests, traditional pine woodlands and mixed pine and hardwood forests. Bridges, boardwalks, and the Yellow River are really cool to check out. Plus there are observation decks along the river.

The other area is the Creekside riding trails. Mountain-bike-loving kids will get a thrill out of the more challenging terrain here, which is ideal for more advanced riders.

**Driving Directions:** From I-285, take Highway 78E (Exit 39B). Go east 9 miles to West Park Place Boulevard. Go right at the exit, then after about 1 mile take the right fork onto Annistown Road, then go 1.1 miles to Juhan Rd. Take a right on Juhan, then go 1.2 miles to bike parking lot (left at stop sign). “Passive” area parking lot is 0.25 miles before stop sign on left. There are no fees.

**Tips:** The park has restrooms at the mountain bike parking lot, along with a changing area and bike wash.

### Suwanee Greenway

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **4 miles one way; moderate elevation gain. An additional 3+ miles lie within connecting George Pierce Park.**

**Why This Ride:** In combination with George Pierce Park, the Greenway offers the most lengthy easy riding in the northeast metro area.

**Ride Description:** Six-foot-wide asphalt and concrete paved paths follow the babbling Suwanee Creek. The trail takes riders over boardwalks through wetlands where the bird-watching is fantastic. The mostly flat route is an easy ride for beginners. Keep your eyes open for deer and rabbits in the grassy areas and the adjacent George Pierce Park. In Pierce Park, riders are treated to an additional 3 miles of finely ground gravel trails, several more miles of brand-new asphalt paths, as well as some easy singletrack. The newest paths wind through the woods from the lake all the way to the farthest ball fields and are a fantastic way to spend time while the kids practice sports. However, the hills here can make this a moderately difficult ride.

**Driving Directions:** From I-85, get off at Exit 111 and head west towards Suwanee. Go about 3 miles and when you reach Buford Highway, take a left to go south towards McGinnis Ferry (take a left on McGinnis Ferry, and a right into the parking lot) and Suwanee Creek Park (about 3 miles down Buford Hwy on the left, past McGinnis Ferry). Go right for about a 0.25 miles at Buford Hwy to reach George Pierce Park on the right.

There are points of entry at each end and twice in the middle of the greenway: at Suwanee Creek Park just south of McGinnis Ferry; on McGinnis Ferry Road just east of Buford Hwy; a quiet parking lot on Martin Farm Road; and anywhere in George Pierce Park, which is on Buford Hwy just north of GA317/Lawrenceville-Suwanee Road. Parking is free.

**Tips:** There are restrooms, but only at the end of the trail in Suwanee Creek Park and George Pierce Park.

## Big Creek Greenway

Terrain: **Paved path; additional dirt trail options**

Distance: **6.1 miles one way. Minimal elevation gain.**

**Why This Ride:** A woody path that winds along the banks of Big Creek makes this a great place for riders of all skill levels.

**Ride Description:** The wide, concrete path meanders through the woods along the Big Creek flood basin. Along the ride, kids may even spot a deer or two. At the end west end of the path, you'll discover a mulched wetland loop that's ideal for bird-watching or taking a break—look for blue heron, ducks and Canada geese.

**Driving Directions:** The west entrance is at Kimball Bridge Road located ¼ mile southeast of North Point Parkway, across from New Prospect Elementary School. Parking is allowed at the school when classes are not in session. The east entrance is at the Alpharetta YMCA: From Old Milton Parkway, go ¼ mile north on North Point Parkway to Preston Ridge Road; turn right toward the YMCA.

**Tips:** Restrooms are available only at the parking area on the east end.

## Silver Comet Trail

Terrain: **Paved path**

Distance: **Up to 37.5 miles one way, but you can choose a shorter distance. Minimal elevation gain.**

**Why This Ride:** This is the big daddy of paved pathways in Georgia, but with its wide, flat surface kids of all ages can ride for as long and as far as their legs will take them.

**Ride Description:** Because the route follows the exact railroad line of the old Silver Comet train, the converted railroad trestles and tunnels make it a neat experience for kids. Many of the bridges are quite long and span sparkling rivers and streams. This trail connects to the 33-mile long Chief Ladiga Trail that ends in Anniston, Alabama.

**Driving Directions:** There are numerous entry points along the entire route. To reach the easternmost trailhead, take I-285 to Exit 15, South Cobb Drive SE. Go northwest on S. Cobb Dr. SE to Cooper Lake Road and turn left. Just past Laurel Lake on your right, take a left on Mavell Road, which will take you right to the trailhead. Parking is free at most locations.

**Tips:** Lots of bridges and benches throughout the trail offer great spots for breaks or a picnic. There are occasional porta-potties along the way, as well as restrooms at the parking areas.

## Cochran Shoals—Chattahoochee National Recreation Area

Terrain: **Groomed gravel path**

Distance: **3 miles one way; 500 feet of elevation gain. There are an additional 4–5 miles of more difficult mountain bike trails in the woods.**

**Why This Ride:** This wildly popular recreation area offers more than 5 miles of groomed gravel paths that parallel the beautiful Chattahoochee River.

**Ride Description:** Kids of all ages will love riding along and taking in all the sights of the river and woods. Along the dirt hiking and biking trails, you'll find neat rock formations and a small pond—a perfect spot to take a break and watch some wildlife. The river has many access points so you can cool off after your ride, too. Bigger kids who like to mountain bike will also find 4–5 miles of more challenging mountain bike trails in the woods.

**Driving Directions:** From I-285 East, take Exit 22, Northside Drive, New Northside Drive, Powers Ferry Road. Go to the second traffic light and turn left onto New Northside Drive. (From I-285 West, take Exit 22 and turn right onto New Northside Drive.) From this point, use the "through" lane to pick up Interstate North Parkway. Parking will be 0.8 miles on the right after crossing the Chattahoochee. Parking is located on either side of the river on Interstate North Parkway; the fee is \$3 per vehicle.

**Tips:** Restrooms are at the 1-mile mark on the main path, and in the Powers Island parking area on the east side of the river.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit [www.rei.com/PEAK](http://www.rei.com/PEAK) for more information.



**First Saturday in June** The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com) for more information.