Night hiking is permitted but special permission must be obtained from the trail committee to do so. A flashlight must be taken on night hikes. The trail may not be walked in reverse order for the trail award.

It is requested that hikers wear their uniforms. The Boy Scout or Explorer uniform is the official uniform and should be worn to identify the hikers as members of the Boy Scouts of America. This may vary, depending on weather conditions.

This trail is not difficult, but it will prove to be longer than the hiker might think. The rules set up by the Trail Committee must be obeyed at all times while making the hike. It is advisable to make a conditioning hike before this hike is made, but this is not necessary and is up to the individual. It would also be advisable to carry a compass and it is a good idea to read the Hiking Merit Badge Pamphlet.

No one is allowed to mar any signs or property on this trail. Trash should not be thrown around the way, and all animals and birds must be left alone. Any Scout caught chasing or molesting Farm animals on this trail will not receive the trail award. Checkers will be out from time to time to check on hikers while they are making the hike.

Upon completion of the hike, trail cards and medals will be given to the leader or person in charge so they can be presented at a later date. Registration fee is $2.50 per hiker. Reservations can be made by sending $1.50 per hiker to the committee. Checks and Money Orders can be made to “Three Rivers Trail.” Two weeks’ advance notice must be given to the Trail Committee before the hike can be made, and approximately 20 days before the date should be included on the application. Send application for $1.50 to Three Rivers Trail, Box 362, Cairo, Illinois. Registration fee is transferable, but cannot be refunded.

The medal to be awarded is a beautiful design. It is a bronze Pilot Wheel with the following inscription: “Three Rivers Trail — Cairo, Illinois.” It is suspended from a solid white satin ribbon.

A six colored trail patch can be purchased for $1.25. Patches are not limited in quantity.

This trail was conceived by Sea Explorer Ship 5 Skipper, Frank Karcher, Jr., and a group of Sea Explorers while making a hike on a trail in Kentucky, in November of 1956. It was later mentioned to the other members of the Ship and then at a meeting it was unanimously voted to build the trail. Thedetails and operation of the trail were turned over to the Pilot Crew of the Ship and it was completed by them.

This is probably the only trail of its kind in the United States, since it is entirely on top of a levee system and completes an entire circle.

Since Cairo is the home of the We-Wo-Keye Chapter, N-O-A-T Lodge of the Order of the Arrow, the Chapter helps to maintain the trail and sees to it that everything is in order.

Each Unit must have a trail leader in charge at all times. Eagle Scouts, Silver Award Scouts, or Sea Explorer Quartermasters may serve as trail leaders if they are appointed to do so by the Scoutmaster, Advisor or Skipper. Hikers must hike in pairs or trios. Larger hiking groups are not permitted, but one group may pass another group, so long as they go on by. Slower groups must let faster groups go through.

The Three Rivers Trail Committee would appreciate any comment in regard to the trail, your visit, or suggestions for betterment of the trail.

There are many other Boy Scout Trails within a 350 mile radius of Cairo that could be made in unison with this one.

Camping facilities can be arranged for if the Trail Committee is notified in advance. Sunday hikers may get a list of Churches and the times of their services in the Saturday issue of The Cairo Citizen.

There are three special awards for the Three Rivers Trail for those hikers that make the hike a second, third, and fourth time. A miniature pilot wheel, same as the larger medal, bronze for the second hike, gold for the third hike, and silver for the fourth hike, will be awarded to the hiker. Fee for the second and third hike is $1.00. The fourth hike award will be presented with compliments of the Trail Committee.

We hope that each hiker enjoys his walk on the “THREE RIVERS TRAIL” around Cairo. Here you can visit three Scout Regions in ten minutes; Regions 7, 4, and 8. Here also is where “Southern Hospitality meets Northern Enterprise.”

The Scout Oath and Law are the Laws of the Trail. Be a credit to Scouting.

For additional information write to:
Three Rivers Trail
Sea Explorer Ship 5
Box 362
Cairo, Ill.
Welcome to Cairo, Illinois

Welcome to Cairo, Illinois, an inland island, surrounded by the Ohio, Mississippi, and Cache Rivers, spanned by five fine bridges and guarded by a multi-million-dollar levee system excelled by none in the world, the Crossroad of the Nation. At the south end of Cairo stands what is left of the old Halliday Hotel, where once was General U. S. Grant's headquarters. One block south of it was the drill grounds and barracks for the Army Grant assembled here. Here was Fort Defiance where black muzzles of the rifled muskets of the Confederates would bring a heavy volley across the river to death and destruction of a fort on the southern shore, which was later seized by the Federal forces. Today, no building is left standing except a part of the Halliday Hotel. Here was the Naval Headquarters for the Western Flotilla all during the war, and Grant's headquarters from September of 1861 until February 1863, when he launched his siege of the city.

The old Halliday Hotel Building peers over today's tall levees down to the river bank where were moored the Essex Ironclads and a mile long string of steamboats, warfrachts, and tugs that had been impressed into service to carry on the grim business of war.

Here on this levee have stood, at various times in history, General Zachary Taylor, General U. S. Grant, Sam Houston, Vice-President John C. Breckinridge, James A. Garfield, Stephen Douglas, David Porter, Theodore Roosevelt, and William H. Taft. Here stopped the steamboats laden with thousands of California's gold for the mining camps.

The trip from Cairo you will hike the twenty-two miles of the "Three Rivers Trail." You will circle the city that has never been flooded, the capital city of "Little Egypt." The name "Three Rivers Trail" is derived from the fact that the trail borders three rivers, the Ohio, Mississippi, and Cache. Cairo is located on the extreme southern tip of Illinois in Alexander County, at the confluence of the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers. It is in the Western District of the Egyptian Council, Region Seven, Boy Scouts of America.

Upon arrival in Cairo, the hikers should check in at Durbin's Gulf Station at 15th Street and Washington Avenue. The phone number is 680. Mr. Fred Durbin or someone there will give the hikers further information and the orientation will either be given at Durbin's Gulf Station, Hotel Cairo, or at the Sea Explorer Ship 5 Headquarters on the second floor of the Old Post Office Building at 14th and Poplar Streets.

Durbin's Gulf Station is open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. If the hikers wish to start the hike before 7 a.m., they may have orientation the night before, or if they arrive in Cairo early in the morning of their hike, someone from the Trail Committee will meet them at Hotel Cairo at the desired time. Three Rivers Trail Committee members can be reached by phoning 692, or 680.

The primary purpose of the trail is for hiking for Scouts, Explorers, and their Leaders. Minimum age for hikers is 11 years of age, and their registration cards should be up to date. This trail is also open to Senior Girl Scouts, minimum age 14. By special request, groups may make the trail and receive the approval.

For the most part, the levee trail is a good walkable path, but at certain times of the year it may become overgrown with weeds, tussocks, and thickets. Units that come to make the trail that are more than 150 miles away should have a Tour Permit.

After passing the large gas storage tanks of the Martin Oil Company veer left on the Cache River levee and walk 5.5 miles to the Mississippi River levee. At this point, Illinois State Route 61 and Mississippi State Route 61 and the double tracks of the Illinois Central Railroad must be crossed on this leg of the trail and extreme caution should be taken, as both can be hazardous. Both highways and railroad tracks are heavily traveled. Several fences must be crossed on this leg. Automobiles cannot travel along this leg as there are no roads or lanes.

Proceed south 10.6 miles from the end of Cairo to the Ohio River levee. Highway US 51 must be crossed again near the end of this leg and again used with caution. Care should be taken along this leg as the busy roads, golf courses, and Ohio River railroad runs parallel to the river that you hike, and a constant watch for trains should be maintained.

At the Ohio River levee, turn left and go northward. Walk 2 miles on the Ohio River Levee to 8th Street where you will be where you started. This is the actual finish of the hike, but go to Durbin's Gulf Station at 8th Street and Washington Avenue to be signed in and receive your medals, cards, and patches.

Actually, the hiker is never forced to leave the levee from the time he leaves 8th Street until he returns to the same place. Food and water must be carried along the trail. As there are no stores on the entire hike.

The hike should take approximately eight hours, but it can be made in less time, depending on the individual hiker, however, do not make it longer. Time is not important, but the trail must be continuous, although camping over night along the trail is permitted, so long as it is known by the Trail Committee.