

# American Trails

Spring 2009

Ensuring Trails for  
Our Future

20  
YEARS

American  
Trails

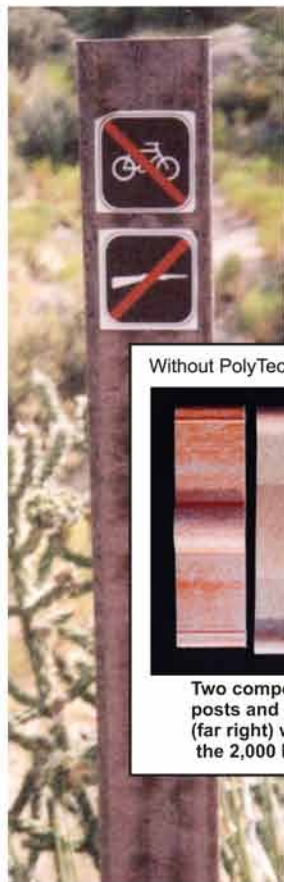
**Community trail systems:  
pathways to healthy living**



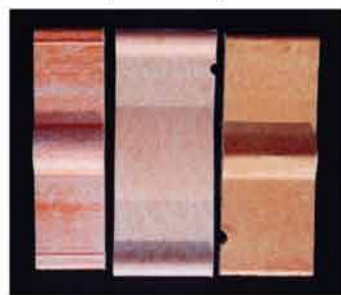
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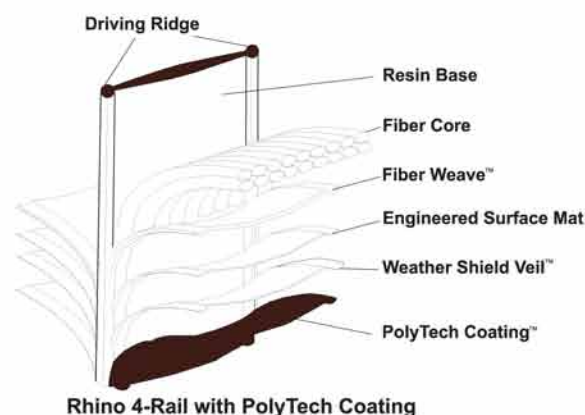


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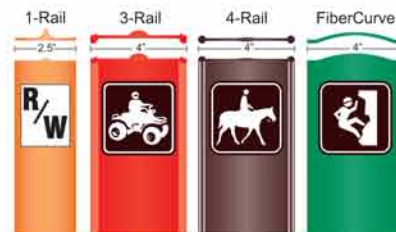
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**On the Cover:** Trails in the Summerlin housing development in Las Vegas, Nevada  
Photo by Howard Hughes Corporation, General Growth Properties

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### American Trails Magazine

*American Trails Magazine* (ISSN 1082-8303) is the magazine of American Trails, the nonprofit organization dedicated to quality trails and greenways within 15 minutes of every American home or workplace.

Editor: Stuart H. Macdonald

**Subscriptions** are \$35 per year or free with membership—see page 37 for membership form.

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## Editorial

### American Trails Magazine goes online

**O**KAY, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ONE OF THOSE curmudgeons who resists change. By the time I started using a fax machine (remember those), email had already taken hold. And IM-ing, forget it! I could never figure out how to punch in the letters on my phone. So when the proposal came to take *American Trails Magazine* digital I was, of course, resistant.

But then I saw the samples and the technology and was amazed at what could be done. And think of the paper, ink, and fossil fuel needed to distribute the magazine the traditional way. All of these convinced me this is the way to go. BTW and FWIW—my two kids are proud of me to be a part of this change and so will U2!

In addition to the environmental benefits and the storing and sharability of the new format, going digital also allows us to vastly expand our readership and participation by trails experts and advisers. This became very evident on a visit to Beijing, China in late March where former American Trails Chair Chuck Flink and I met with eager graduate students and trail/greenway advocates at Peking University. We learned that there is a wealth of knowledge, solutions, and motivation out there!

Going online will allow American Trails to facilitate this information exchange globally—literally at the speed of light. In fact, to that end we are already talking with experts in China about a series of articles on planning and implementation of long distance trails in both nations.

This would not be feasible in the printed format. And, you can still always hit the “print” button for reading over morning coffee and other venues.

To all of our members, readers, and advertisers, welcome to *American Trails Magazine* online! To our new website visitors in China and around the world, we welcome you to the American Trails family and look forward to sharing a planets-worth of ideas and creativity in the growing arena of trails, greenways, and green infrastructure!

Sent from my Blackberry (just kidding).

— Robert Searns, Chair, American Trails

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# An economic stimulus— and a challenge

## Good news, but concerns remain

**W**OW— WHAT AN EXCITING TIME for trails! Trails are recognized as a part of the solution to the economic crisis! Funds are flowing to address maintenance backlogs and unfunded projects! There are endless job opportunities for trail builders! Youth will learn new skills! LWCF receives a major increase in funding! The first new National Scenic Trails in 25 years have been designated! And more!

Visit the Supporting Trails page on the American Trails website at [www.americantrails.org/support](http://www.americantrails.org/support) to view the many opportunities and to learn how to access funding.

Recently, the Florida legislature, in response to fiscal constraints, proposed to slash the state's Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) budget. Because of the public outcry, and efforts to educate leaders as to the importance of OGT's work, this vital trails program remains intact!

We must be vigilant and not take anything for granted! The Florida episode must be a wake up call to the trails community. In this economic time, it is easy for others to consider our work as non-essential. We know better! We must work to educate our leaders about the variety of benefits trails provide our citizens and visitors.

The NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program budget was cut by \$500,000! While that has been restored for 2010, hundreds of projects need this technical assistance and partnership program. The Rivers & Trails Coalition, of which American Trails is a member, seeks to increase this budget to \$12 million. We must promote the benefits of this critical program at every opportunity!

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) needs your help to ensure the Recreational Trails Program is included in the next authorization. Visit our Supporting Trails page to sign on to a letter in support of preserving and growing this program.

Nonprofit trail organizations across the country are working together to save these programs and need your assistance! Please help them by joining and becoming active members, and by donating funds to support their work.

One of the best things you can do to bring attention to trails and their benefits is to hold a National Trails Day event and get your Congress members out on your trails!

– Pam Gluck, Executive Director, American Trails

## Reauthorization may not include Recreational Trails Program

**W**E ARE LOOKING AT THE VERY REAL possibility that the federal Recreational Trails Program will disappear. With the surface transportation act expiring this year, reauthorization is the next step. Rep. James Oberstar, Chair of the 75-member House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, is planning on a draft of the new funding bill by May.

The spotlight will be on how we pay for transportation. Vehicles are more fuel-efficient, people are driving fewer miles, and the 18.4 cent per gallon federal fuel tax has not been raised since 1994. As a result, an \$8 billion deficit had to be filled by Congress in 2009 and a similar shortfall is expected next year. There is a lot of discussion about possible solutions, all of which mean somebody, and probably everybody, is going to pay more. With the political complexity of the funding problem, and the gush of "stimulus" billions, Congress may decide to extend reauthorization to 2010.

What happens to the programs like RTP, Enhancements, and CMAQ? They will only be in the next "TEA" bill if a Member of Congress writes them in. As Rep. Oberstar stated, "we have been judging the usefulness of SAFETEA-LU and the new bill can't be business as usual."

Trails money touches every Congressional District in America, but it doesn't inspire the same urgency as falling bridges and homeless mothers. The new bill is targeted at \$500 billion— a 75% increase over SAFETEA-LU— but trails may not be part of the plan. Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood has expressed support for "livability" programs, but would trails be able to compete for funds as part of a consolidation of many such programs?

What will happen in your state if RTP disappears? Now is the time to think about it. And even more vital is to get the thousands of trails advocates and project sponsors to think about it. We're working with the Coalition for Recreational Trails on strategies for RTP and we'll need your help. This may be the most important year ever to get Members of Congress to a trail ride or hike, a volunteer project, or a National Trails Day event. Please watch for news at [www.AmericanTrails.org/reauth](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/reauth).

– Stuart Macdonald, Editor, American Trails Magazine

## Support funding for trails and greenways!

Learn more about issues and opportunities in the Public Lands Omnibus bill, the economic-stimulus package, and stay informed about trails in the Federal transportation reauthorization process. You can keep informed on legislation, agency budgets, and funding opportunities by visiting our continually updated resources at [www.AmericanTrails.org/support](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/support).

# Agencies plan trail projects

Federal funding drives efforts to invest in trail systems on public lands

**THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT** was created to add \$787.2 billion to the economy with an emphasis on job creation and major infrastructure projects. The bill includes expenditures for trails, parks, and public lands under local, state, and federal management. Funding opportunities for park and recreation agencies include various competitive grant programs, federal budgets, and community development block grant programs. Read more about the ARRA, federal budgets, and funding for trails at [www.AmericanTrails.org/support](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/support).

## FHWA to receive highway and Enhancements funds

THE FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION is authorized \$27.5 billion for competitive grants for infrastructure projects including highway rehabilitation and restoration, bridge repair, and projects to improve highway safety and resurfacing. The bill also allows for up to 3% of each state's allocation to be used towards Transportation Enhancements projects (about \$800 million nationwide). These projects allow opportunities for park and recreation agencies as well as cities to directly apply for funding for trail, bike, and pedestrian projects. For more details see [www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/economicrecovery).

## NPS will oversee \$750 million in stimulus programs

THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE will receive funds to help preserve and protect national icons and historic landscapes, improve energy efficiency at park units, and improve roads and trails. Funding includes \$589 million for construction and repairs, including restoration of historic facilities and road work. An additional \$146 million

for operations will address deferred maintenance of trails and recreation facilities.

The Park Service as well as other Department of Interior programs will engage young adults in these projects throughout the nation. Job Corps and youth recruited by partners, including the Student Conservation Association, will assist in restoring trails and in controlling invasive species. For more information on NPS recovery plans, see [www.doi.gov/recovery/plans.html](http://www.doi.gov/recovery/plans.html).

## BLM plans economic stimulus programs related to trails

THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT will have some portion of their part of the stimulus package (about \$320 million) directed at three areas that have a significant connection to trails and recreation:

1. Trails construction or travel management
2. Road and trail maintenance
3. Facility-related deferred maintenance

The majority of the funds are expected to be used for renewable energy development and conservation, and habitat restoration projects. BLM is also emphasizing projects that employ youth, such as AmeriCorps programs, as well as highly-rated projects, such as those located in units of the National Landscape Conservation System. While national scope projects are not anticipated, there may be interstate projects such as National Historic Trails.

Not all projects are construction or maintenance related; some may involve condition assessments of trails or roads, route inventory, and GPS mapping, as well as evaluations and corridor studies. Once projects are identified and approved, the states will be able to move forward with implementation in the next three to 18 months.

Most of the projects will be contracted through the normal agency contracting procedures; BLM has taken steps to increase its procurement staff. Some projects may be extensions of existing projects. BLM contracts will be handled through the respective state and field offices.

Find BLM opportunities at [www.fbo.gov](http://www.fbo.gov).

A green banner with large, light-green numbers '2010' in the background. The text 'Save The Dates' is in white at the top right. Below it, '20th National Trails Symposium' is in bold red, followed by 'November 14-17, 2010' and 'Chattanooga, TN' in white. At the bottom left, the website 'www.chattanoogaofun.com' is written in white.

Save The Dates

**20th National Trails Symposium**  
November 14-17, 2010  
Chattanooga, TN

[www.chattanoogaofun.com](http://www.chattanoogaofun.com)

Find links to current federal funding for trails at [www.AmericanTrails.org/support](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/support)



To learn more about how federal agencies are spending economic stimulus funds, visit [Recovery.gov](http://Recovery.gov)

## National Forests plan work on trails across the country

**T**HE FOREST SERVICE WILL SEE \$1 BILLION agency-wide to provide private sector employment for thousands of people to maintain and enhance the Forest Service's recreational infrastructure, including trails and developed sites. The agency has the largest network of trails in the world and these funds will enable USFS to work with partners to address the maintenance backlog. See more details at [www.fs.fed.us/recovery](http://www.fs.fed.us/recovery).

These funds will be used to protect private sector jobs that are at risk at many existing businesses (outfitters, guides, recreation lodges, etc.) by addressing the need to repair basic infrastructure and enhancing the quality of the recreation experience on which they depend. This first set of projects comprises 10% of the total projects being funded in the Forest Service under ARRA. They include construction and maintenance of facilities, roads and trails, abandoned mine mitigation, and wildland fire management projects.

As one example, the Superior National Forest will use \$557,000 of funding to improve conditions on its extensive trail system, including hiking, portage, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, ATV, and interpretive trails. Work will be done in partnership with Minnesota Conservation Corps, including brushing, tread work, erosion control, boardwalk reconstruction, and trail sign maintenance. Project sites will include the Kekekabic Trail, Whiteface Campground Hiking Trail, Franklin Lake ATV Trail, and Cascade River Ski Trail.

## Fish and Wildlife Service plans for trail work with ARRA funds

**T**HE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM will be spending about \$45 million on hiring young people, ranging from 15-17 year olds in the Youth Conservation Corps that work on the refuge properties, to college interns, including Student Conservation Association and other conservation corps. During the two fiscal years that agencies have to spend ARRA funds, much of the work that the corps will accomplish will include trails and trail-related facilities. Interested corps groups or trail builders can contact the eight Fish and Wildlife Service regional offices to get more information once the ARRA funds are released at [www.fws.gov/offices](http://www.fws.gov/offices).

## Youth and conservation corps to receive funding increase

**A** TOTAL OF \$160 MILLION was provided for the National and Community Service Act, with \$89 million reserved for AmeriCorps. Parks and recreation agencies are eligible to receive AmeriCorps projects and volunteers. See The Corps Network's "Recovery Resource Center" at [www.corpsnetwork.org](http://www.corpsnetwork.org).

## Department of Energy grants may fund bike/ped facilities

**T**HE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION Block Grant (EECBG) program is a new program created in late 2007 and funded for the first time through the ARRA. The program provides funding for local governments and states to support projects that improve energy efficiency in all sectors, including transportation. Because the funding comes through ARRA, additional goals which focus on job creation and economic stimulus have been added.

Two of the goals of EECBG funding are right in line with bicycle, pedestrian, and Safe Routes to School projects, and could be beneficial to communities who want to develop bicycling and pedestrian networks and improve access to work, school, and retail. In addition, at a later date, the Department of Energy will be releasing a separate Funding Announcement for \$455 million in competitive grants. A list of eligible localities and estimated allocations are available at [www.eecbg.energy.gov/grantallocation.html](http://www.eecbg.energy.gov/grantallocation.html).

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# Trails add value to new homes

What amenity gives the developer/builder the highest investment return?

By Randy Martin, President, Trailscape, Inc.

**I**N THE LAST FEW YEARS, it has become clear that natural surface trails are the lowest-cost amenity for a developer to build and maintain. More importantly, however, is that in surveys across the nation, trails are the most popular amenity preferred by home buyers and usually consume very little residual (buildable) land.

Given those advantages, it is surprising how little serious consideration has been given to such a high-yielding amenity. In this challenging market, we believe it is time that trails are given the respect they deserve.

With the help of Merit Property Management and The Planning Center, we have compiled a list of amenities with estimates of cost, and cost per unit for construction and maintenance. We have also indicated the results of an American Lives survey of the popularity of various amenities. Of course, the actual costs will adjust depending on limitless variables, but what is most important is the comparison of one amenity to another, in both the cost category as well as desirability.

What is astounding is that for an initial cost well under \$1,000 per unit and a maintenance cost of less than \$1 per month per unit, a project can have the amenity that 80 percent of buyers want— natural surface trails.

Based on only a three percent increase in value to the homes by the addition of the most popular amenity, a \$520,000 investment would yield \$7,200,000 in value.

This represents a return of 14 times the investment! In most cases, this value would be realized during sellout, through higher sales rates rather than higher prices.



*Subtle trailhead at edge of Winchester project entry, Auburn, CA*

## Common concerns regarding natural surface trails

- **“We don’t have enough land.”** Trails are best built on slopes where homes are not built, so little land is lost. You might also look outside your property. With some effort and a little cash, you may be able to get easements across the neighbor’s property as long as you are willing to let them use your trails.
- **“What about liability?”** Most liability is covered by the Recreational Use Statutes in your state. Whatever liability is left can be covered reasonably by insurance. See Trailscape.net for a link.
- **“Our land is flat.”** Natural surface trails are not a great option on flat land; however, if you have a way to generate excess dirt (such as by digging a lake) you can use the dirt to build a large enough berm to make natural surface trails.
- **“We only have a few lots.”** Natural surface trails start to make financial sense with as few as 10 home sites.

## Amenity Estimate (800 UNIT DEVELOPEMENT SPRINGVILLE, CALIFORNIA)

AMENITY	SIZE	COST/UNIT	MAINTENANCE/ UNIT /MONTH	2005 % DESIRED
Natural Surface Trails	8 miles	\$500	\$1	80%
Paved Trails	8 miles	\$625	\$4	80%
Ball Fields	2 acres	\$1.125	\$8	50%
Pool & Facilities	1 acre	\$1,750	\$21	45%
Four Parks	0.75 acre each	\$3,750	\$6	60%
Golf Course	18 Holes	\$11,250	\$52	20%



# Trails add value to new homes *continued*

Cost/Benefit (800 UNIT DEVELOPEMENT SPRINGVILLE, CALIFORNIA)				
IMPROVEMENT	UNITS	PER	UNIT COST	TOTAL
Trail Construction	8	mile	\$40,000	\$320,000
100-foot Bridge	100	foot	\$1,000	\$100,000
Design				\$50,000
Contingency				\$50,000
COST PER HOUSING UNIT \$650				\$520,000
REVENUE	INCREASED UNIT VALUE		UNITS	TOTAL VALUE
3% increase in Base Price (\$300,000)	\$9,000		800	\$7,200,000
OTHER FINANCIAL BENEFITS				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A 15% Velocity increase would significantly effect IRR for the Builder which directly effects land value</li><li>• Helps answer the objection: are people really going to come to Springville?</li></ul>				

It has been our experience that developers often assume that existing farm or fire roads on adjacent land will suffice as trails. While any access to nature will be greatly appreciated, trails that have been designed and engineered to meet the needs of a wide variety of user groups will maximize the value to the customer.

If executed well, people will drive across town to experience the trails. Trails can also provide an alternative transportation network to schools, shopping, or visits with neighbors— that can address the concerns of the growing segment of the population that is eager to reduce car trips because of high gas prices and environmental issues.

Great trails require thoughtful design and construction by people who are specifically trained and experienced in the engineering of sustainable trail networks. In addition, having an experienced marketing company demonstrate the benefits of trails will help maximize the value. The bottom line is that there is no better low-cost/high-impact

amenity than natural surface trails. Trailscape has developed experience and expertise implementing a sought-after trail system in several communities.

**Randy, an avid cyclist and trail runner, is a development partner on two California projects on the edge of the Sierras where natural surface trails are a primary amenity. He can be reached at [Randy@trailscape.net](mailto:Randy@trailscape.net) or (530) 852-5155. The website is [www.Trailscape.net](http://www.Trailscape.net) and several movies are available at [www.youtube.com/trailscape](http://www.youtube.com/trailscape).**



**Trails can be planned on slopes and in drainage areas where homes can't be built**

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# 2008 Developer Awards

American Trails presents the first program to recognize trail-friendly homebuilders

By Jim Wood, Florida Office of Greenways and Trails

**T**he first-ever American Trails Developer Awards were presented at the 2008 National Trails Symposium. American Trails has developed this national award program to recognize quality, well-designed multi-use trail systems that are integrated into private developments. The program is the only one of its kind in the nation. The three communities given American Trails Developer Awards were recognized as partners in providing access to trails from the doorsteps of American homes. Trails are increasingly popular within planned developments. In surveys conducted by the National Association of Homebuilders, trails are the number one community amenity desired by prospective home buyers.

The following communities were selected from across the nation to serve as fitting models for excellence in trails within a private development:

## **Summerlin by Howard Hughes Corporation, General Growth Properties**

Located in Las Vegas, Nevada, Summerlin's extensive system of trails connects into the public trails network and includes a significant regional trail corridor running through the community.

- 22,500-acre community is planned for 95,000 residents.
- Over 150 miles of trails have been completed.
- Planned network consists of street-side trails, village trails, and nature trails.
- 89% of Summerlin residents surveyed say walking trails are the most important amenity in the community.



**Summerlin trail system in Las Vegas**



**The Summerlin community threads major trails through open space corridors**

- The system starts with four-foot sidewalks in each neighborhood, linking to five, eight, and 12-foot walks along throughways and common areas.
- Soft trails of mulch or grass leading to the natural areas, waterways, lakes, and preserves connect to the sidewalk system.
- Extensive partnership with public trails planners and managers.



**There are over 150 miles of trails in Lakewood Ranch**

## **Lakewood Ranch by Schroeder-Manatee Ranch, Inc.**

Located in southwest Florida, Lakewood Ranch includes a planned trails system that will ultimately connect to the public trails system via a regional trail corridor.

- 8,500-acre planned community.
- Over 150 miles of trails with a mix of paved (varying widths based on location) and unpaved nature trails.
- Trails will facilitate educational field trips for students in Manatee and Sarasota County School Districts.



## 2008 Developer Awards *continued*

- Some community trailheads and parks are managed by the County as part of the public parks system.
- In post move-in surveys, residents cite trails as a top amenity in the community.

### **Woodlands Edge by Rocket Properties, LLC**

Located in Little Rock, Arkansas, Woodlands Edge has trails that provide walking and biking access to restaurants, business offices, retail areas, and four adjacent developments. The community's conservation design has earned it recognition from the American Society of Landscape Architects, the Arbor Day Foundation, and the Arkansas Urban Forestry Council.

- 800-acre planned community with 800 homes interwoven with heavily forested green space.
- Will ultimately have up to 10 miles of trails.
- Green space encompasses over 33% of the total community acreage.
- Worked with the city to allow reduced street and right-of-way width to preserve trees closer to the roadway.

*American Trails is committed to encouraging the integration of public trails and greenways as part of private housing developments. We'd like to hear your suggestions on communities that should be recognized for their efforts in planning trail systems. Contact us at [trailhead@AmericanTrails.org](mailto:trailhead@AmericanTrails.org).*



*Elevated boardwalks invite exploration of nature in Woodlands Edge*

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**Read more about the American Trails Developer Awards for 2008 at [www.AmericanTrails.org/awards](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/awards)**

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**Green Trails International** is an authorized distributor of  
**PX 300 Enzymatic Vinyl Copolymer Emulsion.**

PX 300 is a high-quality copolymer soil stabilizer used for construction of natural eco-friendly trail surface stabilization.



**Green Trails International**

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**Email address:** [Jeff@greentrailsintl.com](mailto:Jeff@greentrailsintl.com)

# 2008 National Trails Awards

American Trails recognizes volunteers, professionals, and trails community leaders

**A**merican Trails is pleased to announce the winners of the National Trails Awards for 2008. Every two years American Trails presents the awards to recognize the tremendous contributions of volunteers, professionals, and other leaders who are working to create a national system of trails for all Americans. The awards were presented on November 17, 2008 at the 19th National Trails Symposium in Little Rock, AR.

## ★ LIFETIME SERVICE AWARD: Ronald G. Strickland

Dr. Strickland has worked for the planning and development of the Pacific Northwest Trail since 1970. His success in recruiting volunteers, securing funding, lobbying landowners and legislators, and working with partners has been essential to this massive project. Through the Pacific Northwest Trail Association, training in trail construction and maintenance has improved the lives of “at-risk” youth. Dr. Strickland has authored many trail guidebooks, as well as *Take a Hike*, which encourages non-outdoor enthusiasts to take up hiking. Dr. Strickland’s life work is inspiring many to continue their dedicated and invaluable service to the cause!



**Ronald G. Strickland**

## ★ HULET HORNBECK AWARD: O.L. “Leff” Moore

Leff Moore, a native West Virginian who passed away in 2004, was the father of the most innovative motorized trail system in the eastern United States. The 2,000-mile Hatfield-McCoy Recreation Area in southern West Virginia includes the cooperation of 25 corporate land interests and attracts over 100,000 visitors a year. An advocate for motorized recreation and the safe operation of recreational vehicles, Leff represented local, state, and national interests in his role as Executive Director of the West Virginia Recreational Vehicle Association. As a county commissioner, Leff Moore fought for the services offered to local citizens, which included the expansion of the Putnam County Parks and Recreation system, and funding to build the Putnam General Hospital.



**Photo by John Moran**

## ★ BEST TRAILS STATE AWARD: Florida

Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) is facilitating the establishment of an outstanding statewide system of trails. OGT purchases land for trails and greenways to be developed and managed by local communities and provides training on accessibility and other technical topics. OGT works with Florida Department of Transportation and metropolitan planning organizations throughout the state to ensure that trails are an integral part of the state’s bicycle and pedestrian planning. OGT also partners with the Florida Department of Health to encourage the integration of trails into statewide health planning, and works with Visit Florida, the state’s official tourism marketing entity, to promote trails.

## ★ TRAILS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD: Senator Tom Torlakson, Contra Costa County, CA

Senator Torlakson is the Chair and founder of the California Task Force on Youth and Workplace Wellness, which advocates for increased physical exercise for youth. He authored the Great Delta Trail System bill, signed by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2006 to establish a system of hiking and bicycling trails in the region. Senator Torlakson and his staff worked with local communities to insure the people who live, work, and play in the Delta area will drive the planning process. The concept was inspired by the San Francisco Bay Trail. Senator Torlakson’s efforts will preserve trail and recreation corridors along more than 1,000 miles of Delta waterfront, one of the most extensive networks in California.



★ **PARTNERSHIP  
AWARD: University of  
Pittsburgh Center for  
Minority Health &  
Adventure Cycling Assoc.**

The Underground Railroad Bicycle Route was developed through a partnership between Adventure Cycling Association and the Center for Minority Health. The concept highlights this cultural struggle while celebrating diversity and promoting health and recreation. As a creative way to bring public health initiatives to minority populations, the concept of traveling great distances by bicycle was both intriguing and daunting.

★ **TRAILS FOR HEALTH AWARD:  
Pottstown Health and Wellness Foundation**

Believing that trails are an important part of a regional recreation plan, the Foundation's effort over the past two years has been designed to encourage physical activity and use of the Schuylkill River Trail. The Foundation has provided over \$160,000 in support of the trail since 2006. Most recently, it



**Friends from Detroit on a supported tour of the Underground Railroad Bicycle Route**

created and distributed brochures and installed signs that enable trail users to better assess their exercise goals along the trail by providing information on calories burned and distance covered.

★ **OUTSTANDING  
TRAIL SHARING  
AWARD: Bill Manning**

As the Administrator of The Colorado Trail Foundation, Bill administers one of the premier trails in America — the

Colorado Trail, which runs 500 miles from the outskirts of Denver to Durango. It's a great example of what cooperation can bring when trail user groups put their differences aside. This cooperative spirit prevailed when Bill and the foundation put together a National Trails Day event in 2008 to help repair a section of the trail which had been damaged by storms. Bill played an integral part in bringing together volunteers from different trail user groups and organizations. Those planning sessions were a study in the benefits of shared use as well as the same cooperative spirit that brought the trail into existence.

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# 2008 National Trails Awards *continued*

## ★ **CORPORATE AWARD: John and Annette Schnatter, Evergreen Real Estate LLC**

John Schnatter, founder of Papa John's Pizza, has preserved priceless land and created a state-of-the-art trail. He and his wife, Annette, and their company, Evergreen Real Estate, have contributed close to \$4 million for trail and greenway improvements in the greater Louisville, Kentucky area. The result is a priceless legacy for Louisville and an inspiring model for other landowners and companies nationwide.

## ★ **PLANNING AND DESIGN AWARD: Judge "Buddy" Villines**

Judge Villines led the vision of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over Murray Lock and Dam on the Arkansas River. This connection provided the Little Rock area with a 15-mile loop trail and improved access to parks and open space. The challenge was designing a bridge that would attach to a fully operational lock and dam with an extreme slope. LED lighting on 13 bridge piers gives a dramatic night effect.

## ★ **TRAILS AND THE ARTS AWARD: Pinellas County Environmental Lands Division**

By integrating art and science, visitors are presented with thought-provoking information along the trails managed by Pinellas County (FL) Environmental Lands Division. This discovery-based strategy aims to inspire citizens to adopt an ethic of individual stewardship, becoming active conservation stewards.

## ★ **OUTSTANDING MEDIA AWARD: *The Tennessee Conservationist***

*The Tennessee Conservationist* magazine is well known for its outstanding photography and well written articles. The magazine's mission is to "educate the public about the preservation, protection, and wise use of the state's natural and cultural resources." The magazine is available at over 1,000 schools and public libraries across the state. The vision of the magazine is truly to demonstrate sustained and exemplary positive public exposure and education in the field of trail use, planning, and construction.



**Chris McNeil with Wyoming's ATV safety simulator**

## ★ **TRAILS PUBLIC SERVICE AWARD: Chris McNeil, Wyoming State Trails Program**

As Wyoming Trails Safety and Education Coordinator, Chris saw the need as well as the opportunity to educate families and kids on how to be safe and smart while having tons of fun on ATVs. The ATV Safety Simulator gives students an active way to feel the movement, angular forces, and safe riding skills. In 2007, Chris McNeil spoke with over 1,200 students from six schools, and traveled to 15 special events.

## ★ **COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD: Jim Meyer, Trails4All**

In 1993, Jim Meyer founded Trails4All, an organization that recruits and trains volunteers to maintain trails. By 2007, the organization had completed approximately 650 clean-up and trail work projects, recruited over 23,000 volunteers, and logged some 114,600 volunteer hours, valued at close to 2 million dollars. Trails4All has become the leader in the Orange, California area for such efforts as the "Inter-Coastal & Watershed Cleanup Days." Jim Meyer and his Board have brought a

rich mixture of corporate, public, and organization sponsors, and have secured grants to provide equipment, funding, and community support for these projects.



**Artistic interpretation on a Pinellas County trail**

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**Read details and see photos of all the National Trails Awards for 2008 at [www.AmericanTrails.org/awards](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/awards)**



# 2008 National Trails Awards *continued*

## ★ TRAIL ADVOCACY AWARDS:

One award per state for efforts with public policy relating to trail planning, protection, and development.

ALABAMA: **Sammie K. Danford**

ARIZONA: **Dale Shewalter**

ARKANSAS: **Greg Butts - Arkansas State Parks**

CALIFORNIA: **The Redding Foundation - Brent Owens and Kimberly Hawkins**

DELAWARE: **Paul H. Morill, Jr.**

DISTRICT of COLUMBIA: **Julie Childers**

FLORIDA: **Linda Crider**

ILLINOIS: **Kandee Haertel**

KENTUCKY: **Mike Dulin**

LOUISIANA: **John Tarver**

MASSACHUSETTS: **Craig Della Penna**

MONTANA: **Bill Howell**

NEVADA: **Elise McAllister**

NEW HAMPSHIRE: **Tom DiMaggio**

NEW JERSEY: **Wally Tunison**

NEW MEXICO: **Deirdre Monroe**

NEW YORK: **Irene Szabo**

NORTH CAROLINA: **Jeff D. Brewer**

OREGON: **Gary Chapman - Corvallis to the Sea Trail Partnership**

PENNSYLVANIA: **Ron Steffey**

SOUTH CAROLINA: **Berkeley Soil and Water Conservation District**

SOUTH DAKOTA: **Kim Raap**

TEXAS: **Howard Peak**

UTAH: **Sandy and Geoff Freethey**

VIRGINIA: **Sally Aungier**

WEST VIRGINIA: **Kathleen Panek**



*Corvallis to the Sea Trail Partnership members on the trail*

ILLINOIS: **Brian Bourne**

LOUISIANA: **Richard Kittok**

MASSACHUSETTS: **Colleen Abrams**

MONTANA: **Gary Vodehnal**

NEBRASKA: **Lynn Lightner**

NEVADA: **Steve Hale**

NEW HAMPSHIRE: **Eric Anderson**

NEW JERSEY: **Janice Elsishans**

NEW MEXICO: **Dr. Richard Kozoll**

NEW YORK: **Edward Holmes -**

**Friends of Genesee Valley Greenway**

NORTH CAROLINA: **Jim Horton**

PENNSYLVANIA: **Jim Holden**

TENNESSEE: **Robert Richards**

TEXAS: **Mike Cox**

UTAH: **John Knudson**

VIRGINIA: **Brian Detweiler**

WASHINGTON: **Tom Mix**

WEST VIRGINIA: **Bill Queen**

*For more information on all of the award winners, see [www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS08awards](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS08awards).*

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## ★ TRAIL WORKER AWARDS:

One award per state to recognize the commitment and efforts of private or public sector individuals in working for enhanced trail recreation in their local area or state.

ALABAMA: **Thornton Clark**

ARIZONA: **Dale Shewalter**

ARKANSAS: **Bert Turner**

CALIFORNIA: **Ted Schofield**

COLORADO: **Kym Williams**

CONNECTICUT: **Ann Colson**

DELAWARE: **Thomas Kneavel**

FLORIDA: **Renee Blaney**

# "A" in ATV may mean Access

It takes more than wheelchairs to help people with disabilities enjoy the backcountry

By Karen Umphress, American Trails Board

I WAS STANDING IN LINE to use the microwave during lunch at my company. The person using the microwave was in a wheelchair and had his tray balanced on his lap. I was looking at the chair to see what kind it was when I saw the person looking at me. I smiled and asked him if he had ever taken his chair up an escalator. I thought that the other people in line were going to have a heart attack because of my "insensitive" comment. However, the gentleman smiled wide and admitted that he had. This started a good conversation where we compared some escalator adventures of friends who use wheelchairs.

One thing that I have discovered is that people who are in wheelchairs or are otherwise disabled want to feel "normal." In the everyday world, they do not get many opportunities to feel this way. One way that many of them are getting to feel normal again is riding on trails in a variety of off-highway vehicles (OHVs). Some are able to use an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) or snowmobile, and others drive a four-wheel drive vehicle (4WD). This does not mean that they want to take an ATV down a motorcycle-only route or on a pedestrian trail or through the local mall. The key here is legal access to motorized trails or hunting areas. It does not do any good for them to stand out on their OHV any more than if they stand out in their wheelchair.

A few years ago, Sandie Jungers was in an accident which left her paralyzed from the bust down. Sandie has not let that stop her. She remains active doing the things that she loves to do. In 2005, Sandie decided to compete in the Ms. Wheelchair South Dakota pageant. She did this because she felt it is a great program that focuses on the abilities of women instead of their disabilities. The contestants must demonstrate personal and professional achievements and have a project on which to work. About the experience

## More on accessible trails

How does the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) affect trails and greenways? Learn about accessible trail and greenway design, new projects, training opportunities, legal issues, and proposed federal guidelines on our website.

You can read opinions and comments on accessibility issues, study design and problem solutions, view photos of accessible facilities, and compare surfacing materials. Visit [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible) for a wide range of articles and resources.



**For many people, an ATV is the only way they are able to get out to explore our natural areas**

she says, "I learned so much from very talented women who just happened to use a wheelchair for mobility."

When talking to Sandie about what she likes about riding an ATV, she said, "The Black Hills have been a vacation spot for my family all of my life. I have many memories of vacations as a young girl and also with our own children. Driving an ATV allows me to be deep into the heart of the Hills, a place I truly love. There is nothing better than a day with family and friends on an ATV, lunch by a gurgling creek, and the smell of pine. Add in exploring old mines or seeing wildlife up close and the day gets even better."

Sandie continued, "I enjoy riding ATVs because that is one thing that I can do in the same way I did before my accident. Now that I am a paraplegic, many things have to be modified or altered. The automatic ATV allows me to get out and have fun just like before and to be normal."



## **"A" in ATV may mean Access** *continued*



**Dan Kleen gets ready to do some turkey hunting**

Dan Kleen has been an avid off-highway motorcyclist for all of his life. In 1987, he had an accident which left him an incomplete paraplegic. He switched from the motorcycles to an ATV after the accident. It is one of the few ways in which Dan could still enjoy OHV riding. There was very little modification that needed to be done on the ATV to get him set up. "An ATV is a great equalizer," says Dan. "I can go out and ride 50 miles during the day along the trails in the woods without any problems. Then I get back to the parking lot and will be stopped cold by a 6 inch curb in my chair."

Dan is also an avid hunter. Using an ATV for hunting allows Dan and a number of people access to their hunting spots. Dan says, "As a hunter with a physical disability, I'm pleased to report that a growing number of states recognize the value of ATVs to those of us with disabilities. Without an ATV, my hunting would be limited to areas I can access with my wheelchair or pickup. And believe me, my ATV is a lot better in mud and snow, and going up and down hills than my chair!"

Legislation was passed in West Virginia to allow the trails of the Hatfield-McCoy trail system direct access into the communities. So in this area of the country, it is not uncommon to see off-road vehicles traveling on city streets. This has benefited the people of the community in both social and economic ways.

Stephen Caldwell, or Bandit as he is called, has seen some of the side benefits of this trail system. Bandit is a paraplegic who lives in Accoville, WV, which is about five miles away from the Rockhouse Trailhead. His main form


of transportation is his ATV. He has literally put thousands of miles on his two machines, racking up more than 39,000 miles in approximately five years.

When Bandit is on his ATV, he is just like everyone else who is riding an off-road machine. You would not be able to tell his condition because he never takes his wheelchair with him when he rides. When running errands, the hospitable people in this area of the country come out of their stores to assist him.

When asked why he started using his ATV as his transportation, Bandit

replied, "I have been using an ATV since I was four years old. It seemed the natural choice for transportation."

Bandit's advice to anyone else with a disability is simple: "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't do something. You can always find a way around any obstacle."



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## **"A" in ATV may mean Access** *continued*

Scott Rosium was riding a snowmobile three days before his 17th birthday when he was hit by a truck. Although he did not suffer a spine injury, severe blood loss and a lack of oxygen to his legs resulted in nerve damage and left his legs paralyzed. Scott modified the truck that he owned at the time for hand controls and he now uses it to get out into the woods. Most of the off-roading he does involves leaving the camp area and spending several hours on the trail. He usually doesn't bring his chair along, as he doesn't spend too much time sitting idle.

He and a few friends formed the LWT ORV Club to be able to participate in more events in his local area. Scott and the rest of the LWT work as trail guides during the Minnesota Go 4-Wheelers annual Memorial Day weekend event, and also trail ride in the area on numerous other weekends throughout the year. Scott's favorite hobby is working on the trucks, so going off-roading is a fun chance to see if what he has built works and to hang out with friends for the weekend.

In addition to ORVing, Scott also has an ATV which he rides often. He is an avid deer hunter and uses his ATV to get to the deer stands which he has built on his land and family land in northern Minnesota. Scott usually takes his ATV trail riding in Minnesota and in other states in the nation. In those cases, he straps his wheelchair to the back



**A four-wheel drive vehicle allowed John Johnson to bring his wife, who has MS, on a trail ride**

of his machine. This allows him to spend all day away from camp and be able to go into a restaurant or bar when stopping for a break. His ATV is also useful for plowing his driveway in the winter. ATVs and ORVs allow Scott to do many of the things he was able to do before his accident.

The ability to take an ATV, ORV, or even a Recreational Off-Highway Vehicle (ROV or sometimes called a "side by side") through the woods to get back to nature is important for people other than those who are in a wheelchair. According to a Federal study on Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) use, the demographic that is increasing the fastest is for people age 50 and over. Many of these people no longer have the ability to walk miles along a trail in the woods, but they can ride an ATV there.

Ed Goss has developed severe arthritis in one of his feet. He can't ride a bike or hike on a trail. In order to get into the woods he uses an ATV. Without the ATV he would not have that opportunity to experience nature. Ed wonders how other "old duffers" like himself would be able to enjoy that opportunity if they did not have motorized access and trails into the woods.

I have a friend who is now an avid ATV rider. She used to ride horseback and still considers herself an equestrian, but she is "getting up there in years" now and can no longer ride horseback. She, like Ed, works as an advocate to keep trail systems open. She says, "As people get older, we can no longer get around like we used to. We need to be able to ride ATVs and have ATV trails. This is our form of outdoor recreation."



**Areas such as the Paiute Trail in Utah provide people of all abilities with access to the backcountry**



## "A" in ATV may mean Access *continued*



**Driving an OHV can provide a fun challenge on equal footing for people with disabilities**

There are also cases where the use of an off-highway vehicle is necessary not because of age, but because of a disease. Danette Johnson was diagnosed with Primary Progressive Multiple Sclerosis in 1998. At first she was able to still ride in an ORV with her husband John on trail rides. She loved getting out into nature. They always found it very peaceful. In the last seven years, her MS progressed to the point that she is unable to travel any more on the trail rides. Her transportation is an electric wheelchair. As her husband John said, "Unfortunately this means, she's stuck within the confines of our concrete and asphalt world. During the time that she was able to still go out, due to fatigue and minimal strength, she would have had no other choice but to ride in a four-wheel drive truck because it provided the support she needed."

John continued, "In 2004 I came up with an idea to raise money to help fight this disease that has wrecked our lives. The 'Crawl 4 the Cure' is an ORV event held at the Iron Range OHV Park in Gilbert, MN. All of the proceeds go to the National MS Society, MN Chapter. In our first four years we have raised over \$120,000, becoming the third largest party event in the MS Society. This year will be our fifth annual event and we are planning it to be bigger than ever. We usually have a few people with MS

attend the event. They truly enjoy the opportunity to get out and enjoy our natural resources and to see nature as it was intended to be seen, not at some paved walking path at a zoo or conservatory."

So the next time you are in the woods, and you hear an off-road engine for a short time in the background, before getting too upset, take a moment and consider that the off-highway vehicle you hear might be that person's only possible form of outdoor recreation. It might also be giving that person a chance to feel like a normal person. And pause to consider how you will get into the woods in 10, 20, 30, or even 40 years from now. It just might be that in a few years you, too, will be responsibly riding an off-highway vehicle to enjoy the life in nature around you.

**Karen Umphress has been an enthusiastic advocate of on- and off-highway riding for over a decade in her home state, Minnesota. She also enjoys hiking, cross-country skiing, canoeing, and other activities which allow her to be in the great outdoors.**

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# Trails training and resources

[www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net)

## Organizations across America are providing trails training

A WIDE VARIETY OF TRAINING is available during 2009 for volunteers and professionals working to develop trails of all kinds. American Trails and the National Trails Training Partnership are working with agencies and organizations across America to promote trail-related trainings. See dozens of courses, conferences, and workshops for 2009 on the online Trails Training Calendar at [www.AmericanTrails.org/Calendar](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/Calendar).

Our online clearinghouse helps find and promote these opportunities to make training more available nationwide. Highlights of the training available from organizations are listed below. Many other educational opportunities for trails are sponsored by agencies and businesses.

*American Trails* sponsors workshops on key trails topics and the National Trails Symposium, the premier opportunity for a wide range of educational sessions. The 2010 Symposium will be held in Chattanooga, TN. The 2008 Symposium was in Little Rock, AR.

*Appalachian Trail Conference* provides trail skills workshops for volunteers.

*America's Byways Resource Center* offers a variety of webinars and podcasts, which will be covering some trail topics, and hosts an annual conference.

*International Mountain Bicycling Association* sponsors the Subaru/IMBA Trail Care Crews with dozens of trail schools across America and Canada.

*Marshall University Park and Recreation Resources* program of Huntington, WV, has developed and is teaching a series of off-highway vehicle courses via the internet.

*National Center on Accessibility* provides training courses and distance learning programs on many aspects of accessibility, including parks and recreation facilities and programs.

*National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council* sponsors several statewide workshops for OHV planning and management, as well as an annual conference.

*National Recreation and Park Association* provides a wide range of educational opportunities. Professionals looking to maintain certification levels can earn CEUs.

The Partnership for the National Trails System sponsors the annual conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails.

The *Tread Trainer* courses from Tread Lightly! train participants in innovative, practical methods of spreading outdoor ethics.

There are several state-based organizations that host training on trails and greenways. These include *Colorado Outdoor Stewardship Institute*, *Alaska Trails*, *Georgia Trails and Greenways*, and the *Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society*.

**For more about the National Trails Training Partnership and many more training providers and educational opportunities, visit [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net). Send your scheduled trainings to [NTTP@AmericanTrails.org](mailto:NTTP@AmericanTrails.org).**



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**For classes, conferences, and training opportunities, visit the NTTP online calendar at [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net)**



# Developers Forum for trails

Helping development professionals and planners work together for trails

**H**OW DO YOU GET LARGE-SCALE HOUSING developments to be part of community-wide trail systems? One effective way is to engage business leaders and community officials on the serious issues of trail planning. The “Greenways and Trails Forum for Development Professionals” is one avenue that is available to your community or region.

The goal of the Forum is to stimulate an inspiring, achievable vision and nurture partnerships that lead to action for trails and greenways. The workshop brings together a “roundtable” of key decision makers representing developers, builders, landowners, public agencies, resort operators, consulting firms, nonprofit organizations, user groups, and conservationists from the area to share ideas and identify strategies.

The state of Florida used the Developers Forum to launch an effort to convince home builders and developers to consider creating walking or bike trails, greenways, and even water routes inside their projects. “We want private builders to see what opportunities there are,” said Jim Wood of Florida’s Office of Greenways and Trails. “In the long run, their trails would connect to the state’s overall greenway and trail network.”

Florida’s Developers Forum offered:

- Examples of developments that incorporate well-planned and connected trails and greenways
- Information on the economic and environmental benefits of trails and greenways
- Training on the fundamentals of trail and greenway planning, design, and management
- Strategies for expanding the growing trails and greenways network in the First Coast region

American Trails offers the “Greenways and Trails Forum for Development Professionals” workshop to any agency or nonprofit organization. It can be coordinated with a state trails conference or other training event, or it can be held as a single event or one of a series in different locations. The objectives of this one-day workshop are to teach participants:

- How and why trails and greenways have become an integral part of community and destination planning
- How developments incorporate well-planned and connected trails and greenways

- The economic and market value of greenways and trails
- Findings from sustainable regional planning studies and the potential cost savings
- Strategies for expanding the greenways and trails networks
- Integrating private and public greenways and trails
- Celebrating successes and accomplishments that have already been realized
- Setting priorities for action

**For information on hosting the “Greenways and Trails Forum for Development Professionals” workshop, contact Pam Gluck, Executive Director, American Trails at (530) 547-2060 or [pam\\_gluck@americantrails.org](mailto:pam_gluck@americantrails.org).**



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# NRT Photo Contest winners

Highlights of the 2008 National Recreation Trails Photo Contest

**We are pleased to announce the winners of the National Recreation Trails Photo Contest for 2008. American Trails sponsors an annual contest for photographs of National Recreation Trails across the country. Awards in several categories highlight the diversity of the NRTs and introduce more Americans to these great trails. See the winners and 240 entries: [www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails).**

## **Hiking and Walking •**

photo by **Matt Mutel**

- Mountains-to-Sea National Recreation Trail, NC



**Mountains-to-Sea Trail (photo by Matt Mutel)**

## **Equestrian Trails •**

photo by **Julie Green**

- South Fork of Trinity River National Recreation Trail, CA

## **Paddling and Water Trails •**

- photo by **Ron Ahle**
- Congaree River Blue Trail, Columbia and West Columbia, SC

## **Bicycling •**

- photo by **Matthew Wilder**
- Silver Comet National Recreation Trail, Paulding County, GA

## **Winter Trails •**

- photo by **Stark County Park District**
- Congressman Ralph Regula National Recreation Trail, Stark County, OH

## **Trail Work •**

- photo by **Chuck Wocken**
- Lake Wobegon National Recreation Trail, Holdingford, MN

## **Education and Training •**

- photo by **Mark Musselman**
- Four Holes Swamp National Recreation Trail, Audubon Center at the Francis Beidler Forest, Harleyville, SC

## **Scenery and Natural Features •**

- photo by **Cecil Sanders**
- Williwaw Lakes National Recreation Trail, Anchorage, AK

## **Health and Fitness •**

- photo by **Larry Smith**
- Sarah Zigler National Recreation Trail, Jacksonville, OR

## **Urban Trails and Greenways •**

- photo by **Mary Shaw**
- Three Rivers Heritage Trail, Pittsburgh, PA

## **Rail and Canal Trails •**

- photo by **Jonathan Voelz, Johnson County Revitalization Corporation**
- Tunnel Hill State Trail, Johnson County, IL

## **Historic Features •**

- photo by **Michael R. King**
- Erie Canal Heritage Trail, Rochester, NY



**Three Rivers Heritage Trail (photo by Mary Shaw)**

## **Flora and Fauna •**

- photo by **Jerry Bauer**
- Tradewinds National Recreation Trail, El Yunque National Forest, Puerto Rico

## **Arts and Interpretation •**

- photo by **Mary Shaw**
- Great Allegheny Passage, Connellsville, PA

## **Innovative Facilities •**

- photo by **Sallie Burchett, BWM Group**
- Brushy Creek National Recreation Trail, Williamson County, TX

## **Artistic Merit •**

- photo by **Marty Silver**
- Virgin Falls National Recreation Trail, TN

## **Youth and Volunteers •**

- photo by **Anthony Taranto**
- Palisades Long Path National Recreation Trail, Alpine, NJ



**Palisades Long Path (photo by Anthony Taranto)**

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**2008 National Recreation Trails Photo Contest**  
See all 240 NRT photos entered at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)



# A trail system for San Jose

San Jose's trail network is the foundation for its Green Vision

By Yves Zsutty, City of San Jose, California

**S**AN JOSE IS A PLACE OF CONTRADICTIONS. It has all the attributes of a new city, but is in fact California's first city, founded in 1777. Silicon Valley's latest discoveries come from San Jose and the region, but San Jose is also the site of the world's first radio station offering regular broadcasts since 1909. It is an auto-centric place but has a growing trail and bikeway network, used by over 38,000 people annually.

Developing San Jose's bicycle infrastructure didn't just happen. Over the past decade, over 51 miles of trails and 150 miles of on-street bikeways have been created. San Jose's Mayor and City Council adopted a Green Vision in 2007, which seeks to make the city the epicenter of the Clean Tech economy. Ten goals are to be accomplished within 15 years: San Jose will have 100,000 more trees, use 50% less energy, and have a public fleet running entirely on renewable sources. Another goal is the completion of a 100-mile trail network to improve access to recreation and be an integral part of the overall transportation system.

Today, residents and visitors already enjoy many trails along rivers and creeks, through neighborhoods, and within open space. Nearly 1,500 people enjoy jogging and exercising along the Los Gatos Creek Trail on any given Saturday. The Guadalupe River Trail's proximity to Silicon Valley's largest employers means it is both a recreational and transportation resource. In September 2007, the city documented that nearly 1,000 people use the trail on weekdays and 58% report that they are commuting.

San Jose has a number of factors that make it ideal for recreation and active transportation. The city enjoys over 300 days of sunshine annually, has flat topography, and is criss-crossed by creeks and rivers, offering space for shaded trail systems. The city and Silicon Valley in general have a work environment that permits casual attire and flexible work schedules, which encourage alternative modes of travel. Major employers report that the city's trail network already serves as a competitive advantage in attracting new talent and managing health care budgets.

Meeting the Green Vision trail goal requires the planning, design, and construction of 49 more miles of trails. Unlike the first half of the network, the newer trail systems will travel through more constrained sites. Greater levels of coordination, funding, and problem solving will be required. A collaborative relationship with the Santa Clara Valley Water District facilitates development of many trails along waterways. Past experience and a track record



**One of the many trail systems along rivers and creeks**

of well used and managed trails makes discussions easier with other public agencies and private parties. Use of recycled materials and permeable surfaces plus a history of sensitive trail development give the city credibility, as planners present its projects to the myriad of environment-oversight agencies with a role in permitting.

Plan your visit to San Jose by viewing the city's trail program website at [www.sjparks.org/trails](http://www.sjparks.org/trails). It offers plenty of maps, photos, and other useful trail information. Your trail adventure will take you from the San Francisco Bay, through downtown and its cultural attractions and festivals, a 250-acre park in the heart of the city, delightful shopping districts, and open space that recalls the past when the area was known as the "Valley of Heart's Delight." For more great travel planning information, visit [www.SanJose.org](http://www.SanJose.org) and [www.SJDowntown.com](http://www.SJDowntown.com).

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# Greenway strategy brings results

East Coast Greenway Alliance helps drive Florida and Georgia trails

By Herb Hiller - photos by John Moran

**F**LORIDA WAS HONORED BY AMERICAN TRAILS at the 2008 National Trails Symposium in Little Rock. A new award, the "Best Trails State Award," was presented to Florida's Office of Greenways and Trails on behalf of the many communities, organizations, and individuals working for trails and greenways.

One of these vital organizations is the East Coast Greenway Alliance, which funded a bi-state Florida-Georgia office in 2006 to help drive regional and state trail programs. Alliance strategy draws on non-traditional partners by channeling people's desire for trails near home to free up their sense of can-do and let's-do. As part of a new broad national agenda, the Alliance is reviving regard for that forgotten high school subject of civics, of the privileges and responsibilities of citizens.

Efforts led by the Alliance include:

- As part of plans to build a new section of a 260-mile loop trail, a move to revive rural north Florida's town of Hastings and its popular Cabbage and Potato Festival given up in 2003 for lack of volunteers.
- Water taxi service that last year replaced 30 miles of sub-standard Georgia-Florida bi-state route that also re-connects two historic river towns after a lapse of nearly a century.
- Wildflowers that a half-millennium ago gave the continent one of its first Spanish names— La Florida— newly inspire a trails partnership that is helping economically-battered Titusville overcome its dependence on the ups and downs of space funding.



**Map check for an East Central Regional Rail Trail section of the Loop between Volusia and Brevard counties**



**Along the Ormond Loop in northeast Volusia County, part of the St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop**

County by county— almost town by town— greenway advocates are following the grass roots Alliance strategy to adapt the 3,000-mile vision of the East Coast Greenway to connect some 800 miles of spine route and additional alternate routes through Florida.

Who knew that trails could make such things happen?

Of course trail advocates knew, but it's the mix of vision and practicality that is intriguing public administrators in eight northeast Florida counties. They are looking to trails for cost-efficient and popular answers to problems that have challenged convention.

## Rail trails and wildflowers

With its emphasis on wildflowers, the Florida-Spain Quincentennial is fast-driving completion of the 260-mile five-county River to the Sea Loop through one of the state's regions of wildflower profusion. Trails have already helped revive the economies of Florida towns, including the Pinellas Trail in Dunedin, and the West Orange Trail in Winter Garden.

Representative John L. Mica, who represents Florida's 7th Congressional District, ranks the Loop "in the forefront of trail programs that improve how Americans live." In a letter marking Florida's best trails state honor, Mica declared, "I am fully committed to working with the county and state officials and with my colleagues in national office to complete this trail, paved and off-road, by 2013."

Mica was echoing the commitment between backers of the Loop and the Florida Wildflower Foundation to make wildflowers a signature feature of north Florida trails and



## Greenway strategy brings results *continued*

to introduce wildflower tourism comparable to fall colors up north. North Florida has remained more rural than the rest of the state. Now the idea is doubly to represent the region for its recreational and touring beauty. Visitors drawn to rural places for such enjoyment easily respond to the priorities of conservation and culture.

One plan calls for Bike Florida, the state's premier touring organization (led by Linda Crider, Florida recipient of AT's 2008 State Trail Advocacy Award) to operate an annual mass tour of the Loop during fall wildflower season and an additional tour during spring wildflower season in 2010. Advocates want wildflowers to dress up the corridor through Hastings, and in Titusville, where officials and a bona fide NASA astronaut turned out to welcome the inaugural tour of the Loop. The newly-acquired 52-mile East Central Regional Rail Corridor has its start-finish point three blocks from a landmark seafood restaurant, whose owner is driving Titusville's Loop connection. Once hyped as the City of Chrome and Steel,



**A compacted dirt section near New Smyrna Beach**

Titusville now looks to wildflowers and trails. Its new mayor rode his bike the two longest days of the inaugural tour. Indeed, Titusville trail backers showed how the tail of the rail-trail corridor could also become looped through the Merritt Island National Seashore to keep cyclists from having to re-trace any part of the route. Bike Florida right away adopted the change.



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## Greenway strategy brings results *continued*



**Herons along one of many long rural sections of the St. Johns River-to-Sea Loop**

### Water and trail connections

An additional Greenway strategy last summer led to the launch of the Cumberland Sound Ferry Service between St. Marys, Georgia, and Fernandina Beach, Florida. The service does more than just reconnect these historic port towns. It helps strengthen the Coastal Georgia Greenway and its close relationship with the East Coast Greenway Alliance. To feature the ferry, 14 Savannahians in January toured four northeast Florida counties to learn the best—and less than best—about how to answer typical trail policy questions. How do you strengthen political will?



**Passenger and bicycle ferry across Ponce Inlet near the Canaveral National Seashore**

What measure of advocacy can you expect from bicycle clubs or do you have to generate new advocacy partners? How do you work with developers on major projects, with real estate boards, with the fitness community? How do you promote safe use of rail trails through depressed neighborhoods?

Savannahians on the tour—the Savannah-Northeast Florida Workshop on Wheels, or the WOW—are now helping policy makers understand that touring cyclists aren't people who can't afford cars but instead represent banking, medicine, the clergy, and development interests who champion the health and quality of life benefits of cycling. Host chairman for the WOW was David Strickland, vice chairman of EverBank Community Bank. Strickland appeared before the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce to propose trails as a priority comparable to long highly-regarded golf in the region.

### The St. Johns River Loop

In one of its recent successful moves, the Alliance now works with the nonprofit St. Johns River Alliance. It's chaired by John Delaney, University of North Florida President and former Jacksonville mayor. The St. Johns is one of 14 American Heritage Rivers. The river and its tributaries drain 15 east-central and northeast counties. Seven of the counties constitute to the spine route of the Greenway; another constitutes part of the Greenway's alternate route, which incorporates the entire Loop.



## Greenway strategy brings results *continued*

The River Alliance seeks to protect the St. Johns, which faces new threat from developers who pressure water managers to disrupt river ecology by tapping its flow. Although the river was the route of Florida's first tourists 150 years ago, few have come since rail, and then cars and planes, replaced water as the favored means to reach Florida's fabled winter warmth. Now the plan is to re-position the St. Johns as Florida's first region for eco-vacationing. The River Alliance wants to establish a combined greenway and blueway the 310-mile length of the river.

The Loop concept has expanded to encompass two loops which will overlap between the old river town of Palatka and historic St. Augustine. The pair of overlapping loops will create a figure eight trail running 400 miles through large cities and ghost towns, through rural areas and wilderness. The chair of the St. Johns County Commission rode five days of the inaugural tour of the Loop. Additional champions include elected officials in all four remaining counties.

The north Florida focus of the Greenway Alliance has not led it to overlook southern counties. The Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (TCRPC) leads a new Greenway Alliance-sponsored initiative through four spine route counties. In southeast Florida, the two most populous counties have so far have been the slowest to come around. Plans under consideration for fall 2010 would schedule meetings of the Alliance Trail Council



***Pre-bike patrols re-enacted at St. Augustine's Castillo de San Marcos, historical highlight along the Loop***

and its board in these areas of the TCRPC that could help promote development of the Loop.

So far in Florida, the Alliance has enjoyed the wind at its back.

***Herb Hiller is a founder of the Florida bicycling and Florida bed-and-breakfast movements. He is the state's leading voice for ecotourism. He serves the East Coast Greenway Alliance as its regional program consultant for Florida and Georgia.***



***Bike Florida's Linda Crider on the River of Lakes Heritage Corridor section of the Loop***

# American Trails Website Contest

## Winning Websites for 2008

**W**INNERS OF THE 2008 American Trails Website Contest are some great examples of how advocates are using the Internet to promote trails and greenways. It's the only national contest to recognize trail-related websites delivering effective information, supporting volunteers, and engaging the public. For links to the Winning Websites and dozens of nominated sites, visit [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).

### 2008 WINNING WEBSITES

#### STATE AGENCY website:

- **Arizona State Trails Program** provides many levels of information on trail resources for residents, land managers, trail advocates, and volunteers.

#### COMMUNITY trails system (town or county):

- **Portland Trails (Maine)** presents the history and future of the trail network with many ways to get involved.

#### ORGANIZATION or club website:

- **Club Scrub** supports Camp Murphy Off-Road Bicycle Trails and promotes volunteerism and adventure sports in Jonathan Dickinson State Park.

#### PERSONAL site (an individual's effort):

- **Shasta Cowgirls** was created by Susie Gavigan to provide northern California horse back riding opportunities.

#### TRAIL TOUR or virtual visit:

- **Rambletown** provides great trail graphics by combining Google maps and Picasa web albums.

#### Best site for KIDS and FAMILIES:

- **Stark County (OH) Explore the Parks** encourages hiking and riding the trails, attending programs, and completing environmental service projects.



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*Award winners are entitled to use the "Winning Website" logo on their sites*

#### Designated **NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL:**

- **Alabama Scenic River Trail** is an NRT stretching 631 miles from the Georgia border to the Gulf of Mexico.

#### **PRESENTATION of PLANS and proposals:**

- **Friends of the Bruce Freeman Rail Trail (MA)** includes copious information and studies about rail trails and ways for people to get involved in this grass roots effort.

#### Trails for **HEALTH and ACTIVE LIVING:**

- **WALKArlington (VA)** seeks to get more people walking more of the time with the Walkabout series, events, and promoting use of the community trail system.

#### Trails on **FEDERAL LANDS:**

- **Hiking in the Smokys** provides in-depth trail information for the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

#### **GRAPHICS and site design:**

- **Local Motion** created a free Vermont trail and map database in collaboration with volunteers and trail managers.

#### **Best use of PHOTOGRAPHS:**

- **Ontario Trails Council** details 1,400 trails to demonstrate the importance of the "trail economy" to the province.

#### Trail-related **BUSINESS or PRODUCTS:**

- **ProTrails.com** provides detailed multi-use trail information, all measured by GPS with trail photo galleries.

#### **TRAVEL and TOURISM site for trails:**

- **Cycling the Erie Canal** is an interactive map and guide promoting trail tourism with a unique trip-planning tool.

#### **Promoting trail COURTESY and SHARING:**

- **Stay The Trail** promotes a statewide culture of responsible OHV use in Colorado including where to ride.

#### **TRAILS TRAINING and education site:**

- **Weed Free Feed** teaches how to prevent weeds and where equestrian riders can find weed-free feeds.

#### **Recognition and promotion of VOLUNTEERS:**

- **Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District** covers the open space and preserves while engaging volunteers and the public in a wide variety of projects.

*John Ansbro assisted Stuart Macdonald, American Trails webmaster, in reviewing the many websites nominated for the contest.*

## American Trails Website Contest for 2008

See links to all the sites at [www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon08](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon08)



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**T**HE AMERICAN TRAILS WEBSITE is the world's largest online resource for planning, building, funding, managing, and supporting trails and greenways. With over a million visitors a year, we're helping the trails community connect and find information on every aspect of trails.

We've just launched a new look for our home page at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org). With thousands of web pages, articles, and other resources, it's a challenge to help visitors

find what they're looking for. Try the "Select a Topic" menu at the top right of every page to go directly to top areas. You can also use the "Search" box to try specific key words.

Our goal is to be the Library of Congress for trail publications, photos, projects, and organizations. We cover current news and legislation, as well as the history of the trails movement. We also provide ways to find trails and the organizations that support them. Visit [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).



# Horses + mules + explosives



*The bulging cliff overhang that needed to be blasted to prepare a shelf for trail construction*

## San Gabriel Mountains volunteers get a bang out of their trails work

By Fredric L. Rice

We had an exciting day with horses, mules, and 935 pounds of gelatin explosive, all brought up to Upper Bear Creek Trail in the Angeles National Forest of the San Gabriel Mountains. The trailhead is located on Highway 39, eighteen miles north of Azusa, CA.

The story begins last winter, when hikers found that a big section of the Upper Bear Creek Trail had slid off into the canyon below. The much-loved hiking trail was closed due to the dangerous gap. Since the gap crosses a sheer cliff face, blasting was needed to carve out the cliff face so that a tread could be established.

The day of the blasting, work began early with volunteers from San Gabriel Mountains Trailbuilders and High Country Riders joining Forest Service

crews and the Bear Divide Hot Shots. A pack string was loaded with the tools and explosives for the long day ahead.

**Read the whole story about the Upper Bear Creek trail project on Fredric Rice's website. See [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/trailbuilding](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/trailbuilding) for dozens of trail building and maintenance articles and resources.**



**Loading the 17 packages of explosives, each weighing 55 pounds**



**Stock packing the tools and explosives up Bear Creek Trail to the blasting site**



# American Trails Member Groups

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- Donald A. Neptune, A.I.A.
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- Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail
- Logansport Memorial Hospital Foundation
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- Loris and Associates, Inc.
- Los Alamos County Parks Division
- Lyons' Pride Trail Crew
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- Meeker & Associates, Inc.
- Methow Valley Sport Trails Assn.
- Minnesota DNR, Trails & Waterway Division
- Morton Trails
- Motorcycle Industry Council
- National Park Service - RTCA Program
- Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District
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- Polaris Sales Inc.
- Prince William County Park Authority
- Rocket Properties, LLC

- S. W. Leader, Inc.
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- Baker County Development Corp.
- Bicycle Colorado
- Big Island Soil & Water Preservation Assn., NFP
- Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire
- Blue Ribbon Coalition
- Broads Healthy Lands Project
- Butler Freeport Community Trail, PA
- Bylines...
- California Assn. of RV Parks & Campgrounds
- Chicagoland Cycling Meetup
- Chico Hiking Association, CA
- City of Clayton, MO
- City of Eugene, OR Parks & Open Space Division
- City of Lewistown, MT
- City of Salina, KS
- Clay County Growth Alliance, MS
- Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Assn.
- Connecticut Forest & Park Assn
- Cumberland Trail Conference
- Davis County C.E.D., UT
- Desoto County Greenways, MS
- Dillon Nature Center
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Five Rivers Outdoors
- Florida Trail Association
- Forest Preserve Dist. of DuPage Co.
- Friends of the John Smith Chesapeake Trail
- Friends of the Katy Trail
- Friends of the Mountains-to-Sea Trail
- Friends of the Wissahickon
- Gallatin Valley Land Trust
- Pam Gluck
- Great Rivers Greenway District
- Hansville Greenway Association
- Hill Country Conservancy
- In Memory of Charles Moore
- International Snowmobile Mfg. Assn.
- Iron Ore Heritage Recreation Authority
- Kentucky Horse Council
- Kentucky Tourism, Arts & Heritage Cabinet
- Lee County Parks and Recreation
- Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust
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- Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association
- Michigan Snowmobile Association
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- Mountain Trails Foundation
- New Jersey Horse Council
- New Mexico Rails-to-Trails Assoc.
- Northwestern Ohio Rails-to-Trails Assn.
- Oregon-California Trail Assn.
- Palmetto Conservation Foundation
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- Pennsylvania Environmental Council
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- Sierra Front Recreation Coalition
- Snowmobile ND
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- Teton Valley Trails & Pathways
- The Carolina Thread Trail
- The Catamount Trail Association
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- Maryanne Vancio
- Verde River Greenway
- Vermont Assoc. of Snow Travelers (VAST)
- Virginia Dept. of Conservation & Recreation
- Walk & Bike for Life
- Wallkill Valley Rail Trail Assn.
- Warrenton Trails Association
- Wolf River Conservancy

# Greenways to green communities

How trails and greenways contribute to sustainable cities and neighborhoods

By Tom Woiwode, Director, GreenWays Initiative,  
Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan

Communities around the country are finding that more ecologically sound planning and development efforts are paying dividends. Those that are integrating the combination of social, economic, and environmental components of their communities are developing a more vibrant economy and sense of community, and a more engaged populous. Cities such as Grand Rapids, with its Green Grand Rapids plan; Ann Arbor, with its greenbelt and transportation strategy; and Traverse City, working on community development that honors its most valuable resource, the Grand Traverse Bay, are finding increasing success with such sustainability strategies.

In southeast Michigan, and even in cities like Detroit, projects that contribute to greener communities are finding wide acceptance and strong support. The new greenway that connects the commercial district of West Dearborn with the University of Michigan-Dearborn and Henry Ford Community College has been embraced enthusiastically by faculty and staff, many of whom now bike or walk to the school. The urban farming program in

Detroit is one of the most active and engaged in the country. And the redevelopment of the Detroit riverfront has transformed the way people think about the city.

Since 2001, the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan has been investing in greenways. Through the GreenWays Initiative, the Community Foundation and its funding partners, public and private, have invested over \$100 million in greenways design, planning, and construction. This investment has begun the development of what will become a linked system of non-motorized transportation opportunities that connect the entire region.

Over the course of the years, in addition to the grants program, the GreenWays Initiative hosted a series of educational programs about the benefits of greenways. They included conversations about the greenways themselves, such as design, construction, wayfinding, and branding. They also included discussions about how the greenways would affect the community, including programs on the economic benefits of greenways, healthy lifestyles, and community outreach. Those programs introduced the conversation about what constitutes healthy, vibrant communities—green communities.



## Building blocks of green communities

In order to understand what is being discussed, one must first understand what green communities are. In addition to the definitions and examples offered above, the following are components that also contribute to green communities:

**Well Designed and Built:** a sense of place; user-friendly public spaces, with facilities for all, including children and older adults; appropriate scale, design, and layout of developments that complement the local character of the community; buildings and public spaces that promote health and are designed to make people feel safe.

**Environmentally Sensitive:** minimize impact to the environment and encourage the use of renewable; minimize waste and dispose of it in accordance with good practice; make efficient use of natural resources, encouraging sustainable production and consumption; protect biodiversity; create cleaner, greener, and safer neighborhoods that encourage more active lifestyles and maintaining pleasant public spaces.

**Active, Inclusive, and Safe:** a sense of community identity and belonging; opportunities for a variety of activities, including leisure, sports, and culture; a feeling of safety with visible, effective, and community-friendly policing; social inclusion with opportunities for all.



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## Greenways to green communities *continued*



**Community trail and greenway systems play an important role in greener communities**

**Well Run:** governance which encourages visionary leadership, strategic partnership, and active participation by the public; effective engagement at the community level.

**Well Connected:** transportation facilities, including public transportation, that helps people travel within and between communities; facilities to encourage safe walking and biking and healthy lifestyles.

**Well Served:** public, community, and volunteer services that are appropriate and accessible to all; a strong business community with links into the wider economy; economically viable and attractive town centers; a good range of services accessible to the whole community.

**Fair for Everyone:** recognize individuals' rights and responsibilities; respect the rights of others, both individuals and communities, to be sustainable; respect the needs of future generations in current decisions and actions.

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan is pursuing opportunities to help communities develop and implement strategies that will make them more sustainable. It encourages consideration of the building stock, transportation systems, water and air quality, community connections, and community design. The GreenWays Initiative focused on creating pedestrian opportunities in the community. Future infrastructure investments will expand on what the GreenWays Initiative started, and explore all aspects of community design.

It is the hope of the Community Foundation that those projects will highlight the potential for what can be done in southeast Michigan, and will be used as educational

tools for other communities to learn from as they pursue more sustainable agendas. It is our way of supporting green communities.

**See more information on the GreenWays Initiative at [www.cfsem.org](http://www.cfsem.org) and learn more about southeast Michigan trails at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/health](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/health).**

## New website area for Community Trail Systems

**WE HAVE ADDED A NEW TOPIC AREA** to the American Trails website for Community Trail Systems. Our goal is to bring you great resources on how planners and developers can work together, as well as the benefits of planning community-wide trail and greenways systems. You can find the new index page with articles, studies, news, and many other resources online at: [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/devel](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/devel).

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**Go directly to the Online Business Directory at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/consultants](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/consultants).**



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# Trail Tracks Editorial

## Futurist sees challenges for trails ahead

**S**PEAKING ON THE TRAILS FOR THE FUTURE panel at the 2008 American Trails Symposium, professional futurist **Ken Harris** explained why he thought the growth of trails has been almost exponential in the recent past, but could significantly slow in the next decade or two. **He cited six main reasons for trail growth:**

- Strong support from the federal government, especially financial support from the Highway Trust Fund.
- Growth of rail trails resulting from a legal/regulatory climate that let railroads abandon rights-of-way for trail use on favorable terms.
- Strong state and local government and community group support.
- Public opinion strongly favors exercise even though many people don't exercise as much as they should for good health.
- The zero cost of recreational trails as exercise facilities compared with gyms, health clubs, and pools requiring admission fees or member dues.
- Growth in the number of people desiring safe, inexpensive places to exercise paralleling population growth.

**Harris believes three elements of the past favorable trends are certain to continue:**

- The federal government will continue non-financial support for trails, like the National Trails System and designating National Recreation Trails.
- Medical authorities will continue to urge us all to be more active in our leisure time, thus strongly continuing to influence public opinion in favor of exercise.
- Strong community support for trails will continue. As other symposium presenters noted, trails have become a much desired community amenity whether residents actually use them or not.

**However, Harris sees five factors in the future that will be challenging for trail planners and developers:**

- It's possible that the number of people who exercise enough for good health will not grow as in the past or decline. Job pressures and family responsibilities may limit leisure time. Or, the lure of passive leisure pursuits like television or the Internet may be too strong. It's even possible that in the future an exercise pill will let people have some of the health benefits of exercise without walking, running, or bicycling on a trail.

- People may prefer forms of exercise other than those on trails. The cost advantage of exercise on trails is strong in today's troubled economy, but a return to affluence could lead people back to the gym.
- The demographics could be more challenging as the U.S. population becomes older and more urban. If numbers of trail users grow faster than the U.S. population, there could be a shortage of trail capacity in urban areas where most people live. The U.S. population is growing older, but people over 45 are more active and are likely to prefer gentler, slower trail use, possibly causing inter-generational conflict with younger trail users.
- As a result of high fuel costs and consolidation, railroads have become much more competitive with trucks. This, plus expected growth in rail freight transport demand could make railroads less willing to abandon or share rights-of-way with trails.
- Federal financial support in the future is much less certain. Projects most directly related to interstate commerce like roads and bridges are likely to have the highest priority for both economic stimulus and regular transportation funding.



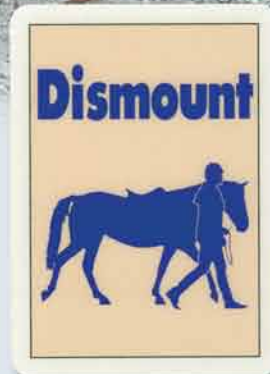
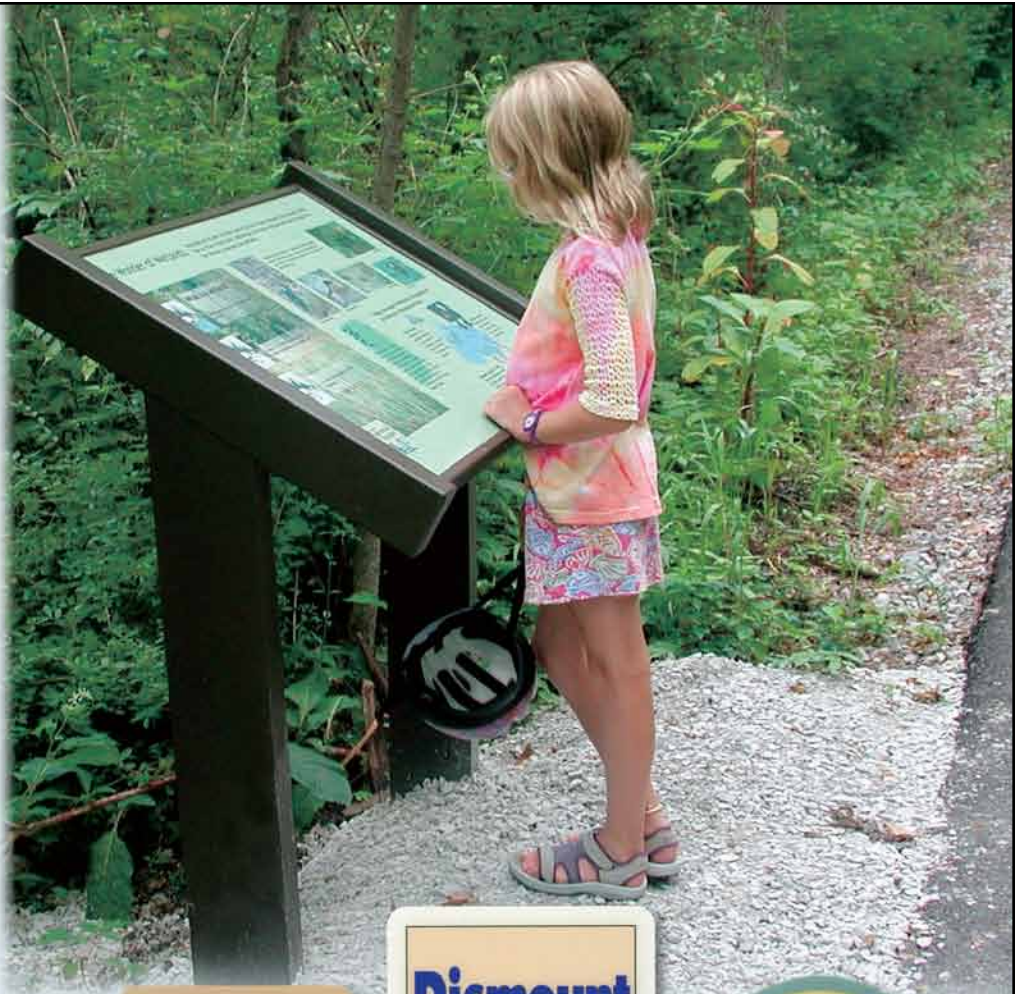
Austin, Texas (photo by Stuart Macdonald)

Although the perfect storm of conditions for trail development that has prevailed in the recent past isn't likely, **Harris thinks the trails community can keep moving in a positive direction if:**

- It lobbies Congress hard and often for continued support.
- Forms strategic partnerships with organizations favoring trail development, especially those with an "exercise for health" message, and lobbies jointly with them.
- Seeks private and charitable financing for trails.
- Continues forming and maintaining strong local trail advocacy groups.
- Makes a "good corporate citizen" appeal to railroads reluctant to share or abandon rights-of-way for trails.
- Makes trails senior citizen friendly trails.

**Ken Harris is Chairman of the Bethesda, MD futurist consulting company, The Consilience Group, LLC. He is also Secretary of the World Future Society, Transportation Field Editor of Techcast.org, and a member of the Association of Professional Futurists.**





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