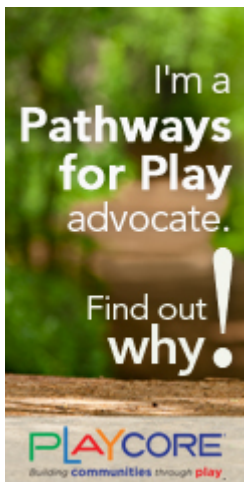




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OCTOBER 2011



Trail Tracks is the monthly e-Newsletter from American Trails. We continue to bring you news from the halls of Congress, as well as new resources for planning, designing, building, funding, and managing trails and greenways. Check the topics below for links to www.AmericanTrails.org, the World's most comprehensive online trail resource for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails and greenways.

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Attend archived webinar "Making the Case for Trails in Tight Economic Times"

Webinar available for purchase! Attend an archived version of the webinar "Making the Case for Trails in Tight Economic Times" and view it at your own convenience. This webinar will put sound ideas and hard numbers together to illustrate the contribution of trails to the prosperity of communities. Learn about some recent studies and enjoy an overview of state and national trends and statistics. Cost is only \$25 for American Trails members or \$45 for non-members. [Purchase the session via the American Trails Online Store now...](#)

National Recreation Trail nominations due November 1

Is your trail a good candidate for National Recreation Trail designation? The NRT program celebrates 1,100 of America's great trails through Federal designation. The deadline for nominations is November 1, 2011. Any public or private trail manager operating a trail that meets the basic criteria may apply for NRT designation. Nominations are handled by the US Department of the Interior, except for trails on National Forests or Grasslands. [Read more about applying...](#)

American Trails Online Business Directory ~ one stop shop for all things trails

Find cutting-edge products and services for trails and greenways. The American Trails Online Business Directory is your one stop shop for all things trails that includes trail planners, designers, and builders to products for trails such as surfacing, amenities, signage, and bridges -- plus backpacking food and trail maps! And if you're looking to promote your trail product or service, you can advertise for less than \$25 a month and get a custom profile webpage created just for you! [Check out the Business Directory today...](#)

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Help American Trails fight for funding and support for trails

Transportation program funding extended another six months

Both houses of Congress finally voted to extend funding authority for the federal fuel tax, which was about to expire. The new "clean" extension continues policies and funding for transportation programs including Recreational Trails, Transportation Enhancements, and Safe Routes to School until March, 2012. The big debate over appropriate transportation funding levels continues, however, along with the problem of decreasing gas tax revenue. The House version would limit spending to about \$35 billion, or the actual federal gas tax annual revenue, while the Senate proposal would raise spending to \$54 billion a year. [Read more and see current status...](#)

Long-term funding for trails and bike/ped facilities still in doubt

While specific language in both the House and Senate transportation spending bills have not yet surfaced, trail advocates are concerned. House Majority Leader Eric Cantor (R-VA) talked up his House proposal to eliminate requirements for states to spend money on Transportation Enhancements. Senator Tom Coburn (R-OK) held up the funding extension, also objecting to what he called "beauty enhancements." Trail advocates have been urging local project sponsors to tell their story to Congress on why bicycle and pedestrian facilities are important. [Learn more about how you can support funding for trails...](#)

GameTime offers American Trails Affinity program opportunity

GameTime is pleased to offer American Trails members around the country the opportunity to share in their research, programming, and products. They offer many ways to expand playful opportunities, engage families, and learn something new along the way. In addition to members' 5% discount, American Trails will receive 5% back to help us continue our mission of creating and protecting America's trails. [Read more...](#)

Support trails and keep up to date on actions in Washington, DC

American Trails "SUPPORTING TRAILS" pages provide the facts on current issues and debates and the ongoing efforts of American Trails to continue its [20 years of support](#) for positive policies and funding for trails and greenways. Please join our efforts to document the value of trails and bicycle/pedestrian facilities as transportation infrastructure, and be an active and positive voice in the reauthorization process, economic stimulus proposals, and Federal land management agency budgets. We continuously add news and action items to these pages. [Check back often and forward this link on through your networks...](#)

American Trails International Trails Symposium (ITS) is coming to Arizona!

The 21st American Trails International Trails Symposium (ITS) will be coming to Arizona April 14-17, 2013 at the Radisson Fort McDowell Resort near Fountain Hills, Scottsdale, and Mesa, Arizona. **It's still 18 months away but exhibitors that come in before the end of the year (December 31, 2011) can save 25% off exhibitor fees AND get a logo link on our homepage and Symposium index pages.** [Become an exhibitor today and learn more...](#)

NEWS



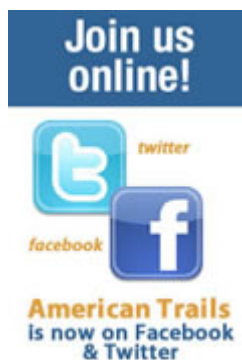
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Cities consider economic success of NYC High Line for elevated rail lines

The New York Times reported that, "the High Line Park, built on an elevated railway trestle in Manhattan, has become both a symbol and a catalyst for an explosion of growth." Cities around the country, including Chicago, Philadelphia, and St. Louis, are working up plans to renovate old railroad trestles, tracks, and viaducts for parkland. Cities with little public space are realizing they badly need more parks, and the High Line has taught that renovating an old railway can be the spark that helps improve a neighborhood and attract development. [Read more...](#)

Hatfield-McCoy Trails: growing business as well as tourism

The Herald Dispatch in Huntington, West Virginia, published an editorial about the economic benefits of the Hatfield-McCoy trail system. Besides whitewater rafting and skiing, "the state has a third outdoor recreation success story in the Hatfield-McCoy Recreational Trail System in southern West Virginia, which draws ATV enthusiasts and other trail riders from across the country to enjoy more than 500 miles of trails." The article cites 44 new businesses due to the trails, which "range from lodging and restaurants to companies that rent and sell ATVs, as well as market ATV gear and clothing and provide tours." [Read more...](#)

Pittsburgh's bikeways & walkways lure businesses and homeowners

Bicycling or walking to work, shopping, or to entertainment venues has become a way of life for those living near trails or bikeways. Before work or after, the trails are frequented with walkers carrying their briefcases to the office or bicyclists with packs bearing a change of clothes. Besides the trails, the city of Pittsburgh earned recognition as a bike-friendly city by establishing bike lanes and shared routes on more than 35 miles of city streets. [Read more...](#)

Kentucky's longest rail trail expected to boost tourism

Known as the Dawkins Line, the 36 mile stretch runs through Johnson, Magoffin, and Breathitt counties, and will be managed by the Kentucky State Parks. The trail will be developed in phases. Once complete, the Dawkins Line will be the longest rail-to-trail project in the state. "This trail will help attract tourists to Eastern Kentucky and will be a boost to the local tourism economy," Gov. Steve Beshear said in a press release. "This trail will not only promote adventure tourism, but it will also be a community asset that promotes fitness and health." [Read more...](#)

Federal directive challenges parks with increased access for disabled

The new federal directive has a progressive goal: giving "mobility disabled" residents a better chance to enjoy public parklands by letting them use motorized vehicles on trails. Park supervisors can bar such access only if they document that conditions are too rough on a given trail and must publicly post the results of that study. But those seemingly simple changes to the Americans with Disabilities Act have New Jersey and county parklands staff scrambling to assess thousands of miles of trails, in addition to rubbing up against the state's ban on motorized vehicles in environmentally sensitive lands. [Read more and see photos...](#)

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FEATURES

Promoting trails in the Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor

A coalition of communities and organizations are working to promote tourism and business along the 165 mile Delaware & Lehigh (D&L) Canal Corridor. The D&L Trail winds along mountains, the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers, and towns in northeast Pennsylvania. A new website provides information on recreational, educational, and other tourism activities for 23 towns along the route. "If you're looking for an afternoon festival or a hiking, biking, or boating excursion, the D&L website will give you the facts you need, and a map to get you there!" [Read more and see photos...](#)

Partners build mountain biking trail system at Oak Mountain State Park

When the Birmingham Urban Mountain Pedalers (BUMP) began contemplating their Oak Mountain State Park trail expansion project some years ago, it was clear from the get-go that crossing the Double Oak Lake Dam Spillway would be a major hurdle. Through the assistance of state and local authorities, who shared BUMP's commitment to park improvement, a new steel truss, wooden-decked bridge now spans the spillway. In addition, the trail system has been designated an "Epic Ride" by the International Mountain Bike Association. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Improving the California Coastal Trail at Lands End

Community partnerships enabled improvements to the Coastal Trail at Lands End for safe and accessible recreation, which help will continue to protect native landscape, plants, and wildlife. The spirit of cooperation and collaborative stewardship is best reflected in the robust volunteer program at Lands End. More than 3,150 community members joined us to restore native habitat and maintain trails. In fact, a remarkable 31,000 hours of volunteer time were donated to help grow and replant the native plants. [Read more and see photos...](#)

TRAINING & EDUCATION

Join the conversation: American Trails blog on trail economics

Help keep the conversation about the economic impacts of trails going on the new American Trails blog. Following the many ideas presented at the recent economic benefits webinar, we'd like to hear about your challenges as well as success stories. Have you been successful in "selling" the economic benefits of trails? Are your trails seen as a valuable part of investment in transportation as well as recreation? Please join us and share your ideas, resources, and questions. [Join the conversation on our Economic Benefits blog...](#)

More resources from webinar on economic benefits of trails

Check our webinar follow-up page for many studies and articles on aspects of economic benefits of trails and greenways. Topics include how trails are having an impact on tourism, community development, real estate sales, health, and transportation. If you missed the webinar "Making the Case for Trails in Tight Economic Times," it is for purchase.

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Learn more about evidence and hard numbers on the contribution of trails to the local and national economies. [See more resources and how to access the archived webinar...](#)

Learn about classes and training for trail skills across America

Check the Online Training Calendar for a wide variety of learning opportunities for volunteers and professionals engaged with trails of all kinds. American Trails, through the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP), works with agencies and organizations across America to promote trail-related training. Let us know if we can publicize your training, courses, workshops, or conferences! See details on events below and many more opportunities for training on the [Online Trails Training Calendar...](#)

Upcoming trail-related training opportunities

October 11 - Olympia, WA

* Washington State Trails Coalition Fall 2011 Gathering

October 14 - DeBary, FL

* Incorporating Trails into the Planning of Our Communities

October 15 - White Point Nature Center, San Pedro, CA

* Volunteer Trail Crew Training

October 30 - November 2 - San Diego, CA

* ASLA Annual Meeting and Expo

November 1-3 - Atlanta, GA

* NRPA Congress and Exposition

November 1-4 - Tallahassee, FL

* Natural Areas Conference

November 7-9 - Jeju, South Korea

* World Trails Conference

November 12 - Leominster, MA

* 1st Annual Massachusetts Trails Conference

November 14-15 - Baltimore, MD

* Wildlife Habitat Council Symposium: People, Partnerships, and Pathways

Look for currently scheduled courses and conferences at www.TrailsTraining.net, sponsored by American Trails and the National Trails Training Partnership. Contact us with your scheduled training opportunities at NTTP@AmericanTrails.org.

NEW RESOURCES

Study looks at economic aspects of redevelopment in Ludlam Trail Corridor

The "Miami-Dade County Trail Benefits Study" uses the Ludlam Trail as a case study to estimate quantifiable social, environmental, and economic benefits. The 6.2 mile long shared-use trail would serve local residents and visitors who want to exercise, access transit, go shopping, and commute to school or work. The study estimates many benefits of redevelopment, including new housing and commercial spaces, savings in health costs, transportation improvements, and increased property values and tax revenue. [Read more and download the study...](#)

Benefits of the Recreational Trails Program updated by the Coalition

The Coalition for Recreational Trails, a network of national trail and outdoor recreation organizations, has updated its "Recreational Trails Program Talking Points." Many supporters are concerned about the future of all bicycle/pedestrian and trails funding in current transportation bills in Congress. Eliminating the RTP would be the equivalent of raising taxes on recreationists. Depending on the formula used to calculate the taxes paid by recreational fuel use, the burden could range from \$600 million to as much as \$2 billion over the life of a six-year bill. [Read more and download the paper...](#)

Seeing Transportation Enhancements as infrastructure investment

The America Bikes Coalition urges Congress to reject proposals to eliminate funding for bicycling and walking projects that are based on a misunderstanding of the role bicycling and walking play in our nation's transportation system. The Coalition argues that, "Investing in smallscale, labor intensive projects such as bicycling and walking infrastructure is particularly effective in creating jobs while simultaneously helping to solve problems of congestion, obesity, air pollution, and oil dependence." [Read more...](#)

JOIN THE AMERICAN TRAILS NETWORK

Help American Trails fight for funding and support for trails

Now is a great time to join American Trails to help us advocate for trails and greenways of every kind. With your help, we can increase funding for trails, keep more trails open, and improve the health and well being of Americans of all ages and abilities. Please help us continue to serve you and the trails community by enlisting a new member or renewing your own membership today. [Give the gift that makes a difference ~ an American Trails membership...](#)

Thank you for supporting American Trails and America's trails!



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- The largest online resource in the world for trail advocates is www.AmericanTrails.org.
- Purchase books and memberships through the [American Trails Online Store](#).
- What's your opinion? [Send us](#) your editorial or opinion piece.
- [Cool Trail Solutions](#): view galleries of trail projects, enhancements, and facilities to give you ideas and see how others solved typical trails and greenways problems.
- If you appreciate the thousands of resources we provide to help you do your work better, please help support American Trails ~ [make a donation today.](#)

- [Join American Trails](#) and receive a 40% discounted rate (dropping the price to just \$29.95) on an annual unlimited subscription for access to over 47,000 trails on [Trails.com](#).
- American Trails wants your opinion! [Take our online web survey!](#)
- **Join American Trails** - the World's most comprehensive online go-to source for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails and greenways ~ [Join Now!](#)

Send news and calendar items to trailhead@americantrails.org.

American Trails is a tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.

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Header photo: Trails provide for active living close to home; photo by Stuart Macdonald

