



## Happy Holidays!

*The American Trails Board and Staff wish you happy holidays and endless outdoor adventures and memories in the New Year!*

*We look forward to working with all of you in 2014!*



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## Table of Contents

**December 2013**

### WHAT'S HOT

[Jan. 9 Webinar: Trails and New Federal Accessibility Guidelines](#)

[Learn more in 2014 with American Trails Webinars](#)

[Make a special donation and receive American Trails trainings for FREE!](#)

[Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to defend rail-trails in the Supreme Court](#)

[First Day 2014: take a hike in a state park](#)

[National Recreation Trail photo entries online](#)

**Trail Tracks** is our monthly e-Newsletter with links to [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org), one of the world's most comprehensive online resources for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, and enhancing trails, greenways, and blueways. We also bring you news from the halls of Congress, new studies and resources, interesting articles, events, training opportunities, and the latest in trail products and services. Check out the topics below for what's new in the trails world!

#### **Special thanks to the sponsor of this issue:**

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### WHAT'S HOT

#### **Jan. 9 Webinar: Trails and the New Federal Accessibility Guidelines**

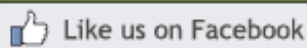
This free webinar covers the trails portion of the "Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Guidelines; Outdoor Developed Areas." These new accessibility guidelines for federal lands cover new or altered trails, picnic and camping areas, viewing areas, beach access routes, and related recreation facilities. Hosted by American Trails and

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TRAIL NEWS WITH  
AMERICAN TRAILS:**



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## NEWS

[Governor Nixon announced his "100 Missouri Miles" in Springfield](#)

[Tourist train or scenic rail-trail in New York?](#)

[Defending spending on bicycling infrastructure](#)

[Trail Town Program helping renovate downtown properties](#)

[Study looks at role of horses in weed dispersal](#)

[Local beer and mimosas along Arkansas trail](#)

[American Public Health Association Adopts 17 New Policy Statements](#)

## FEATURES

[VT partners with NC to create a new statewide Conservation Corps](#)

[Transmission lines offer a](#)

the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the presentation is by Janet Zeller, U.S. Forest Service National Accessibility Program Manager. [Read more and register for the webinar...](#)

## Learn more in 2014 with American Trails Webinars

American Trails continues the dynamic online *Advancing Trails Webinar Series* to help trail planners, supporters, and managers learn about focused topics of special interest. Our webinars are now eligible for CEUs through the [Texas Recreation and Park Society](#), an authorized independent CEU provider through IACET ([International Association for Continuing Education and Training](#)). Our 75 minute webinars are worth .10 CEUs and are included in the webinar fee (our free webinars will have a \$15 charge for CEUs).

Check out upcoming American Trails webinars for early 2014:

- **JANUARY 9:** Trails and the New Federal Accessibility Guidelines (hosted by American Trails, U.S. Fish and Wild Service and presented by Janet Zeller, U.S. Forest Service) **[REGISTER TODAY!](#)**
- **JANUARY 30:** Creative Fundraising for Trails (presented by Conservation Partners and Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation, moderated by The Greenway Team) ***Details coming soon***
- **FEBRUARY (date TBD):** Managing User Conflicts ~ Part 3 of 3 (presented by Steve Sherwood, Chinook Associates LLC) ***Details coming soon***

[Read more and see current Webinar schedule...](#)

## Make a special donation and receive American Trails trainings for FREE!

- Give a gift at **ANY** level and your name will be placed in a drawing for a FREE registration to the next International Trails Symposium in Portland, Oregon in 2015
- Contribute \$35 and receive **one free webinar** from the American Trails Advancing Trails Webinar Series
- Contribute \$75 (or more) and receive **two free webinars**

Your free webinar(s) can be used for recordings of past American Trails webinars as well as future webinars scheduled in 2014. Your generous contribution helps us to continue to help trails! Thank you in advance! *American Trails is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax-deductible.*

[Donate today](#) or view past or upcoming webinars in the [Advancing Trails Webinar Series...](#)

**Rails-to-Trails Conservancy to defend rail-trails in the Supreme Court**

[unique opportunity to provide public spaces](#)

[Featured National Recreation Trail: Econfina River Water Trail, Florida](#)

[TRACKS group installs sign for better trail user safety](#)

[Best Practices: trail neighbors - residences along trails](#)

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

[Sign-posting of hiking trails in Greece](#)

## TRAINING & EDUCATION

[Download free webinar recording: Navigating the American Trails Website](#)

[Forest Service updates accessibility standards for recreation, trails](#)

["Share the Trails": Illinois trail etiquette guide](#)

[Funding opportunities in the Transportation Alternatives Program](#)

[Calendar of trails training and educational opportunities](#)

## JOIN THE AMERICAN TRAILS NETWORK

[Working together - works! There is strength in numbers!](#)



A Wyoming landowner threatens public ownership of rail corridors. The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy will file an Amicus brief in December before the U.S. Supreme Court to defend America's ownership of a former rail corridor that connects communities to Wyoming's Medicine Bow National Forest. American Trails will sign on to RTC's Amicus brief. [Learn more about this critical issue and how you can help support RTC in this effort by visiting their website...](#)

### First Day 2014: take a hike in a state park

America's State Parks boast a variety of beautiful settings for year-round outdoor recreation, and each First Day Hike will offer an opportunity to explore unique natural and cultural treasures close to home. Featured hikes nationwide include a candlelight walk during Alaska's darkest time of year, a horseback ride along Indiana's Tippecanoe River, an interpretive trek along the magnificent longleaf pine forest at Florida's Alfred B. Maclay Gardens, a guided exploration of the wide open desert hills of West Texas, and a sunrise tour of Hawaii's sweeping ocean views. [Read more...](#)

### National Recreation Trail photo entries online

American Trails sponsors the annual contest for photographs of National Recreation Trails across the country. Dozens of entries are already online and more will be added within the month of December. We'll be giving awards in several categories to highlight the diversity of the NRTs and to make more Americans familiar with these great trails. Last-minute entries will be accepted until December 31, 2013. [See photos and learn how to enter...](#)

## NEWS

### Governor Nixon announced his "100 Missouri Miles" in Springfield

Governor Jay Nixon joined Ozark Greenways on South Dry Sac Greenway to celebrate National Trails Day in June, and praised Missouri for being awarded "[Best Trails State 2013](#)" by American Trails. Governor Jay Nixon and First Lady Georganne Nixon are encouraging Missouri families to get outside and take advantage of the incredible resources found in the Show-Me State by joining the Governor's 100 Mile Challenge. "We are challenging Missourians to complete "100 Missouri Miles" of physical activity by the end of the year. Whether you run, walk, bike, paddle or roll, everyone can participate," said the Governor. So far 12,605 Missourians have logged 1,104,376 miles.

*Learn more about the Governor's 100 Mile Challenge at [www.100MissouriMiles.com](http://www.100MissouriMiles.com) and learn more about [American Trails' National Trails Awards...](#)*

### Tourist train or scenic rail-trail in New York?

## Quick Links

Need Trails Training? Visit  
[www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net).

[Find Products and Services for Trails.](#)

**Join American Trails** - one of the World's most comprehensive online go-to sources for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails, greenways, and blueways  
~ [Join Now!](#)



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The *Daily Freeman* reports on the controversial demise of a tourist train in favor of a trail. "The New York City Department of Environmental Protection is putting up \$2.5 million to turn the 11.5-mile rail bed that runs along the north side of the Ashokan Reservoir into a recreational trail, moving Ulster County Executive Michael Hein's plan to create a 'world class rail trail' stretching from the Walkway Over the Hudson to the reservoir one step closer to reality." [Read more and see video...](#)

### Defending spending on bicycling infrastructure

Bill Lindeke in *Twin Cities Daily Planet* takes issue with an interesting critique of big-dollar bike/pedestrian facilities. He cites Kevin Krizek's piece on the "Unintended Consequences of the Bicycle Facilities Arms Race." Do "high quality off-street trail features take valuable resources away from other smaller projects?" Lindeke argues that "cities should pay close attention to the qualities of bike infrastructure, and try to go the extra mile by creating spaces that allow bicyclists to relax when they ride through the city." [Read the debate...](#)

### Trail Town Program helping renovate downtown properties

The Trail Town Program works in eight focus communities along the Great Allegheny Passage in Pennsylvania and Maryland. The nonprofit Progress Fund provides business coaching and capital to businesses in tourism and agriculture. Its Trail Town Program is a community revitalization initiative in communities along the 150-mile Passage, providing marketing, economic research, trail surveys, and signs. [Read more...](#)

### Study looks at role of horses in weed dispersal

Researchers at Australia's Griffith University studied weed seeds that are potentially dispersed through horse manure in national parks around the world. The findings have been published in the journal *Ecological Management and Restoration*. The *Jurga Report* commented that "Studies will be needed to determine the impact of increased equine traffic on trails, but it will also be up to horse owners to be pro-active about equestrian access to trails, and to support trail and outdoor organizations that are horse-friendly." [Read more and see photos...](#)

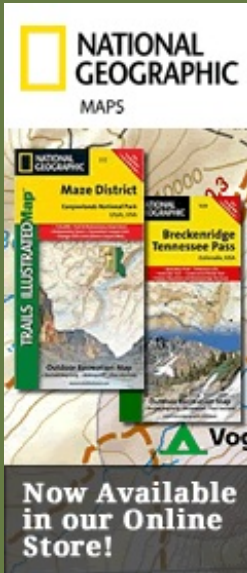
### Local beer and mimosas along Arkansas trail

The *Fayetteville Flyer* reports on a new bar set to open along the Frisco Trail: "With the growing popularity of the Fayetteville trail system, it was only a matter of time before someone opened a trailside bar. Local DJ Greg Hodges plans to soon open a new establishment called The Nines in the metal building along Frisco Trail near Center Street, in the space formerly occupied by Abshire's Neighborhood Store. The new bar will focus on champagne, wine, and locally brewed beer," Hodges said. [Read more and see photos...](#)

## Better Skills for Better Trails

- Accessibility
- Management
- Planning
- Trail Building
- Backcountry Trails
- Urban Trails

**TrailsTraining.net**  
For Professionals & Volunteers



### American Public Health Association Adopts 17 New Policy Statements

The Policy Statements include "Nature, Health, and Wellness."  
[Learn more by visiting the Children and Nature Network website...](#)

## FEATURES

### VT partners with NC to create a new statewide Conservation Corps

After almost three decades of empowering youth in its home state, this year the Vermont Youth Conservation Corps decided to branch out to a broader audience, hiring approximately 50% of the Youth Corps Members from out of state, working for a couple weeks with the Forest Service in New York, and starting two brand new crews in North Carolina in the Raleigh Triangle area and in the Croatan National Forest. It's a partnership with the Conservation Trust for North Carolina. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### Transmission lines offer a unique opportunity to provide public spaces

Transmission Right of Ways (ROWs) offer a unique opportunity to provide public spaces that can be relatively easily obtained, especially when considering the often insurmountable barriers present when reclaiming urban spaces for public use. Residents, utility companies, city employees, and politicians should all feel that they have a voice to spur on these transmission trail projects. All parties need to be open to this opportunity and the benefits that it can bring to everyone in the community. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### Featured National Recreation Trail: Econfina River Water Trail, Florida

The Econfina River offers paddlers a 16-mile journey on an intimately-canopied dark water river in the remote Big Bend region of North Florida. Paddlers will find the Econfina River offers adventure for all skill levels. The Econfina River State Park offers picnicking, camping, and lodging plus a 15-mile network of multi-use trails. Also, a primitive campsite is located on the banks of the Econfina a couple of miles upstream from the Gulf for the use of paddlers. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### TRACKS group installs signs for better trail user safety

Proper trail marking can contribute to safer trails and more efficient response when there are problems. To meet that goal, volunteers on the White Mountains Trail System installed about 1,500 coded white reflective diamonds approximately every 1/4 mile along the trails.

TRACKS was awarded an Arizona Game & Fish Heritage Fund grant to help cover costs of materials for this project, called the Emergency Responder project. [Read more and see photos in the American Trails Safe Trails Forum...](#)

### **Best Practices: trail neighbors - residences along trails**

Learn about examples of trails near homes that are typical of suburban trail corridors everywhere. People DO want to live near parks, and many trail corridors are indistinguishable from parks. The narrower the trail corridor, and the closer the trail is to the residence, the more likely fencing will be provided. Single family homeowners are generally less accepting of trails than people who live in multi-family developments. [See commentary and American Trails Cool Trail Solutions gallery of photos...](#)

## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

### **Sign-posting of hiking trails in Greece**

A new friend we've made in the trails world has many examples and several articles about providing better signs on trails in Greece. Fivos Tsaravopoulos manages the "Paths of Greece" website and has been installing metal signs and trail logos on a variety of trails on the Greek islands and mainland. The project is part of a larger effort to improve and promote hiking in Greece. [See signs and articles...](#)

## **TRAINING & EDUCATION**

### **Download free webinar recording: Navigating the American Trails Website**

American Trails hosted a FREE webinar December 11 to help our many visitors to navigate our vast clearinghouse for trails. [AmericanTrails.org](http://AmericanTrails.org) is one of the world's largest online resources for trails, greenways, and blueways. Our mission is to share new technology and expertise for better trails everywhere. The webinar was presented by our webmaster, Stuart Macdonald, and moderated by Candace Mitchell, our Communications Specialist. We continue to ask for your feedback on how to improve the website and better serve your need for information, and we also answered some of these questions during the webinar.

You'll learn:

- How to find the right resources for every trail-related topic
- How to search for a variety of trails
- How to connect with organizations and communities
- How to take action on funding and policy issues
- How to publicize your projects, photos, and trails
- How to find training

**A special thanks to the sponsors of this webinar:**

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- Dave Larsen, American Trails Board Member
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- [Terrabilt Wayfinding Systems](#)
- [Terry Hanson Consulting](#), American Trails Board Member
- [The Acorn Group](#), American Trails Board Member

[Learn more about this webinar and download the recording now...](#)

### **Forest Service updates accessibility standards for recreation, trails**

The U.S. Forest Service has released the agency's 2013 Accessibility Guidebook on Outdoor Recreation and Trails that updates the agency's direction on providing recreational opportunities accessible to everyone. "It is accessibility integrated into the outdoors without changing the setting or the outdoor experience," said Janet Zeller, USFS National Accessibility Program Manager. "We don't call them accessible trails, which makes one think of flat and paved paths. Instead trails that comply with the accessibility guidelines look like other trails that blend into the setting, but with a sustainable firm, stable surface and, where the terrain allows, grades that provide easier passage." [Read more and access Forest Service publications...](#)

### **"Share the Trails": Illinois trail etiquette guide**

Illinois' colorful "Share the Trails" brochure says: "Trails provide a great opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and your favorite activity—whether that is biking, horseback riding, hiking, etc. However, particularly during nice days, trails can become crowded. The following basic share-the-trail etiquette tips can improve both your activity as well as the trail experience of others." [Download pdf of "Share the Trails" \(731 kb\)...](#)

### **Funding opportunities in the Transportation Alternatives Program**

The National Park Service has published a concise guide to Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding opportunities with State Departments of Transportation (DOTs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). The guide explains eligibility, types of allowed projects, the funding process, and other essential details. Resources and contacts are also included as internet links. [Download the pdf \(2.2 mb\)...](#)

### **Calendar of trails training and educational opportunities**

Here are some of the trail-related training opportunities coming up in

2014. [See the Online Trails Training Calendar for details...](#)

January 9 - Online Webinar

\* American Trails Webinar: Trails and the New Federal Accessibility Guidelines

January 15-17 - Jeju Island, South Korea

\* World Trail Conference

January 22 - Online Webinar

\* Community Builders Webinar: Directions in Federal, State, and Local Transportation Funding

January 24 - Des Moines, IA

\* Iowa Bicycle Summit

January 24-27 - Guadalajara, Jalisco, Mexico

\* Open Streets/Ciclovía Study Tour

January 30 - Online Webinar

\* American Trails Webinar: Creating Fundraising (details coming soon)

February 6 - Online Webinar

\* Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals Webinar: International Outdoor Recreation Planning Perspectives

February 8 - New Brunswick, NJ

\* New Jersey Bike & Walk Summit

February 9-11 - Washington, DC

\* American Hiking Society's Hike the Hill

February 18-21 - Corpus Christi, TX

\* Texas Recreation & Park Society Institute & EXPO

February 19 - Online Webinar

\* Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals Webinar: Design for Cyclist and Pedestrian Comfort

Contact us with your scheduled training opportunities at [ntp@americantrails.org](mailto:ntp@americantrails.org).

## JOIN THE AMERICAN TRAILS NETWORK

### **Working together - works! There is strength in numbers!**

For over 25 years, [American Trails](#) has been a collective voice for a diverse coalition of enthusiasts, professionals, advocates, land managers, conservationists, and friends of the outdoors and livable cities. American Trails strives to enrich the quality of life for all people and the sustainable development of communities by advancing and promoting the development, preservation, and enjoyment of diverse, high quality trails and greenways. We envision a network of trails *within 15 minutes of every home, school, and workplace.*

American Trails will continue to keep you informed on both trail know-how and issues critical to the future of trails. 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, including our children.



**With a donation of \$35, you'll receive a FREE webinar from our [Advancing Trails Webinar Series](#). With a donation of \$75 or more, you'll receive two free webinars. This includes recordings of past webinars as well as future webinars scheduled in 2014.**

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## QUICK LINKS

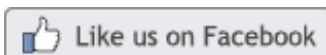
- Find products and services for trails in our [Online Business Directory](#).
- Visit our [Blog](#).
- Join us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter!](#)
- Learn about and find [National Recreation Trails \(NRT\)](#) near you today!
- I'm a [Pathways for Play](#) advocate. [Ask me why.](#)
- The [Online Trails Training Calendar](#) connects you with courses, conferences, and trail-related training.
- Purchase books, maps, memberships, and webinars through the [American Trails Online Store](#).
- Need Trails Training? Visit [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net).
- [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 myriad of resources we provide on our website to help you do your work better, please help support American Trails ~ **[by making an end of the year, tax-deductible donation today.](#)**
- **American Trails** - maintains one of the World's most comprehensive online go-to sources for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails, greenways, and blueways at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).

Send news and calendar items to [trailhead@americantrails.org](mailto:trailhead@americantrails.org).

### **Advertising Opportunities:**

Learn about cost-effective advertising opportunities in our Trail Tracks e-Newsletter! Find out more [here](#).

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: Sugar House Park in Salt Lake City on Christmas Day, 2012; photo by Stuart Macdonald