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September 2013

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Trail Tracks is our monthly e-Newsletter with links to www.AmericanTrails.org, one of the world's most comprehensive online resources for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, and enhancing trails and greenways. 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 the topics below for what's new in the trails world!

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WHAT'S HOT

Next American Trails Webinar Sept. 25 covers trail maintenance

This is the first in a series of three webinars on Trail Maintenance Management brought to you by Kim Frederick of Chinook Associates LLC and American Trails. If you already have a Trail Maintenance Management Plan this webinar will present some ideas on how you might improve it. If you are considering developing one, you will get information to consider so you can make good decisions about how you might best move forward with the development of your plan.



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CEUs are being offered for this webinar. [Learn more and register for this webinar...](#)

Recreational Trails Program - UPDATE

Under Map-21, Governors may choose to opt out of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) has tirelessly pursued strategies to protect the RTP in California and across the nation. As a member of the CRT, American Trails is pleased to tell you that thanks to thousands of supporters across the country helping Governors, state legislators, and agency leaders understand the breath and scope of support for the RTP, **the only state in the country that is opting out of the program for FY 2014 is Florida.**

A big thank you goes out to all the Governors that have recognized the positive benefits of the RTP in their state!

US DOT Secretary Foxx: "Everyone is a pedestrian"

U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx announced a new \$2 million grant program to improve pedestrian safety through increased education and enforcement. These grants will go to 22 cities, which have experienced a higher rate of pedestrian fatalities than the national average. A webpage also provides safety tips and other resources for local communities. [Read more...](#)

US DOT promotes bicycling and walking

The U.S. Department of Transportation is updating its strategic plan and including goals to "foster livable communities." Specifically, the draft plan says communities should, "Promote the use of bicycling and walking for daily activities through investment in on- and off-street bike and pedestrian infrastructure and safety enhancements." [Download the chapter on livable communities...](#) (pdf 313 kb)

With a shovel in one hand and a phone in the other

Whether you're building or marking a trail in the deep woods or inner city, calling 811 before starting any project is a necessity. This nationwide number is used to find buried infrastructure in and around proposed excavation locations. You'll get the location of the underground utilities below, showing excavators the safe zones where digging can occur. Calling 811 not only protects buried infrastructure, but it can keep a project moving forward without interruption, and possibly save a life.

[Click here for more information on 811...](#)



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NEWS

Texas Governor signs bill to expedite utility corridor trails

Gov. Rick Perry has signed a bill that could allow for more than 100 miles of idle land under power transmission lines in the Houston area to be developed into hike and bike trails. The bill would make the electric utility liable only for a serious injury or death caused by its "willful or wanton acts or gross negligence." It also would grant the utility expedited appeals and enable it to require partner governments to provide insurance to cover its litigation costs. [Read more and see map...](#)

Trail of happiness comes full circle to Iowa advocate

"Iowa trails are the best thing to happen in my lifetime," Chuck Offenburger said as he led the first bicycle trip over the entire length of the new 33-mile segment of the Raccoon River Valley Trail, which completes a 72-mile loop west of the Des Moines metro area. This trail is particularly meaningful to Offenburger, the former *Des Moines Register* columnist who became the face of the Register's Annual Great Bicycle Ride Across Iowa during the 1980s and '90s. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Boy Scouts improve accessibility at National River Area

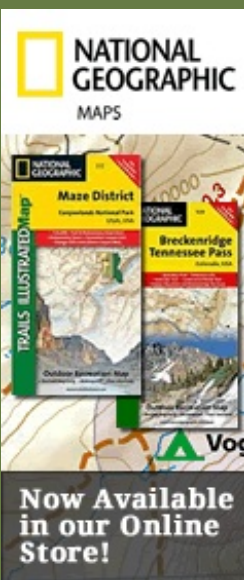
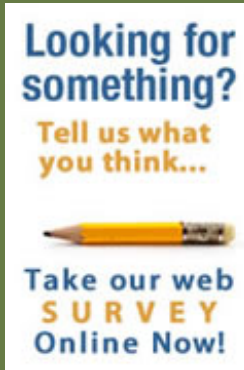
This year's National Boy Scout Jamboree at Bechtel Summit in West Virginia featured a day of service projects to improve accessibility at the nearby New River Gorge National River. Scouts teamed up with park personnel to make a trail, picnic and camping areas, parking, and a fishing bridge accessible for people with disabilities. The project taught scouts how to achieve access to the great outdoors and enabled them to earn a Messengers of Peace patch. Over 300 participated in the event, which involved eight troops from across the country. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Nine-mile trail and bridge crosses Tampa Bay

The 10 News TV station reports on the new Tampa Bay trail crossing. "All new paved paths, tables, and more will join the centerpiece of the project, the bridge that rises 45 feet above Tampa Bay. Next year, the rest of the new trail will open, connecting Tampa to Clearwater and trails that stretch all the way to places like Tarpon Springs, St. Petersburg, and Gulfport. The whole nine-mile trail and bridge project will cost around \$20 million." [Read more and see photos...](#)

WV trail system continues to show economic benefits

The Huntington, West Virginia *Herald-Dispatch* reports on continuing economic benefits of the Hatfield-McCoy Trail System. "Since the trail was begun in 2000, more than 200,000 permits have been sold allowing use of the trails, and more than 80% were purchased by



people who live out of state. It's clear that the system brings in outside money to the benefit of the local economies." Apartments, homes, and a former post office have been converted into lodgings to meet trail users' demand for accommodation. [Read more and see photos...](#)

FEATURES

Volunteers add 80 miles to Colorado Trail along Continental Divide

The U.S. Forest Service had a need, the Colorado Trail Foundation (CTF) saw an opportunity, and trail users are the winners. Last year, the CTF, with Forest Service blessing, added 80 miles of tread to the Colorado Trail, an increasingly popular long-distance track spanning nearly 500 miles of spectacular Colorado high country between Denver and Durango. The new route creates a 160-mile loop in the Collegiate Peaks area. [Read more and see photos...](#)

From logging roads to singletrack trails in Washington

The South Fork Snoqualmie trail is a terrific example of multiple organizations coming together to transform a formerly logged area into a non-motorized recreation opportunity. With beautiful views and significant elevation it had the potential for fantastic riding and hiking, but lacked any form of singletrack trail network. Today the roads are being removed and in their place is seven miles of gorgeous, sustainable singletrack. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Trails to wildlife at Lee Metcalf National Wildlife Refuge

Over 150,000 visitors come to this refuge annually to view and photograph wildlife, archery deer hunt, walk the refuge trails, or participate in interpretive programs in the indoor and outdoor classrooms. Two nature trails and a half-mile, paved, wheelchair-accessible trail are equipped with wildlife viewing and fishing structures, restrooms, benches, and information kiosks. The refuge lies along the meandering Bitterroot River along wet meadows and riverfront forest habitats. [Read more and see photos...](#)

A vision for trails overlooking the Golden Gate

The Presidio Trails and Bikeways Master Plan will provide visitors, neighbors, and residents of the San Francisco parkland with an interconnected, safe, and enjoyable trails and bikeways system, while protecting and managing the natural and cultural resources. The plan accommodates a variety of recreational and educational activities, including walking, running, cycling on a road or trail, rollerblading, dog walking, natural and cultural history exploration, and quiet contemplation. [Read more and download the complete report...](#)

Featured National Recreation Trail: Guadalupe River Trail, San Jose

Travel along the Guadalupe River Trail offers the user a variety of experiences from parks and open space, points of historical interest, and the many attractions of Downtown San Jose. Surveys indicate that nearly 1,000 people use the Guadalupe River Trail on a daily basis, and of that number, over 50% are commuting to and from work. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Stewardship in Yellowstone with Youth Conservation Corps

Yellowstone National Park is home to a residential Youth Conservation Corps that brings young people from diverse communities across the U.S. to work and learn on the trails. It is an opportunity for youth to connect with trails in a way that sheds light on how they are designed, maintained, and used. But even more importantly, when youth can call a trail "their own" and be proud of their work, they become ambassadors for trails. [Read more and see photos...](#)

TRAINING & EDUCATION

American Trails Webinar Series continues with Fall programs

American Trails is working to create a dynamic online 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 [International Association for Continuing Education and Training](#). Our 75 minute webinars are worth .10 CEUs.



Check out upcoming webinars for 2013:

- **SEPTEMBER 25:**
Introduction to Trail Maintenance Management Planning ~ Part 1 of 3 (presented by Kim Frederick, Chinook Associates LLC)
- **OCTOBER 24:**
Natural Surface Trail Tread Maintenance ~ Part 2 of 3 (presented by Kim Frederick, Chinook Associates LLC)
- **NOVEMBER (date TBD):**
Equestrian Design & Construction (presented by Jan Hancock, Hancock Resources LLC)

We also have **sponsorship opportunities** for our webinars that provide great recognition for your company as well as complimentary registrations. [Read more and see current Webinar schedule...](#)

Archived Webinar: From the Driveway to the Trailhead

You can now purchase the archived American Trails Webinar "From the Driveway to the Trailhead - The Missing Link." The program explores the elements of street design, the value of local and regional partnerships, and how advocacy can make your community more bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The presenters detail the success and experience of expanding a traditional trail organization into an effective multi-modal initiative to advocate for better community-wide connections to trails from sidewalks and bike lanes. [Access the archived webinar in the American Trails Store...](#)

Best Practices: accessible interpretive trails

This Tennessee project is a great example of techniques to construct a paved, accessible trail and boardwalk. Located at the Beaman Park Nature Center, the goal was to improve the connection between the park's new nature center and the existing trail system. Volunteers contributed over 1,500 hours of labor, valued at \$25,000, to match funds from the Recreational Trails Program. [Read more and see photos...](#)

Fall training opportunities for trail skills

Here are some of the trail-related training opportunities coming up in late summer 2013. [See the Online Trails Training Calendar for details...](#)

September 24-25 - Dubuque, IA

* Growing Sustainable Communities Conference

September 24-25 - Greenfield, NH

* Sustainable Trails For All Conference

September 25 - American Trails Webinar ~ [REGISTER NOW!](#)

* Introduction to Trail Maintenance Management Planning ~ Part 1 of 3

September 26 - Navigating MAP-21 Workshop Charleston, WV

* Charleston, WV

September 28 - Sanford, FL

* Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) Symposium

October 1-3 - Washington, DC

* 2013 Walking Summit

October 2 - Jackson, MS

* Mississippi Bike Summit

October 4 - Providence, RI

* New England Bike-Walk Summit

October 9 - In communities everywhere

* International Walk to School Day

October 24 - American Trails Webinar ~ [REGISTER NOW!](#)

* Natural Surface Trail Tread Maintenance ~ Part 2 of 3

October 25 - Madison, WI

* Wisconsin Bike Summit

October 27-30 - Matteson, IL

* Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference

November 2-7 - Tucson, AZ

* National Scenic & Historic Trails Conference

Contact us with your scheduled training opportunities at 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.

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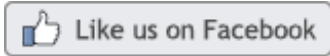
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- **American Trails** - maintains one of the World's most comprehensive online go-to sources for planning, designing, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails and greenways at www.AmericanTrails.org.

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



Header photo:River Beach Trail through the Redwoods in Jedediah Smith State Park, CA; photo by Stuart Macdonald