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April 2014

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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, 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!

WHAT'S HOT

May 15 American Trails Webinar: Integrating Habitat & Trails

American Trails presents this Webinar on strategies to include wildlife habitat throughout the trail planning process. Presenters are Robert Spurlock and Elaine Stewart of Metro (the Portland, OR metropolitan planning agency). They will also present a new tool for trail planners called the Top 10. It includes key principles and milestones where planner-biologist collaboration can avoid conflicts during permitting, plan review, and other key steps in trail development. [Read more and register for the webinar...](#)

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INTERNATIONAL NEWS

If you are interested in sponsoring any of our webinars or have any questions, contact Candace Mitchell, Communications Specialist, at candace@americantrails.org.

Coalition for Recreational Trails maps out strategies for 2014

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) has engaged in some productive efforts in support of continued funding for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The CRT board and members created a Position on Recreational Trails Program Reauthorization, detailing some key points about the program. Congressional Champions suggest that supporters begin advocacy of RTP in light of announced plans by key Congressional leaders to work on MAP-21's successor this spring. [Read the CRT Position and current actions for RTP...](#)

States get creative to fund transportation infrastructure

Trails and bikeways, as well as bridges and highways, are at risk as Federal transportation spending outpacing fuel tax income by over a billion dollars a month. Increasingly states and counties tax themselves to support local transportation projects. According to Innovation NewsBriefs, "a combination of user fee revenue and public and private financing may offer the best long term solution to the perplexing infrastructure funding problem." [Read more...](#)

African American National Parks Event June 7-8

Organizers envision a day when supporters across the country will congregate in one of their local National Parks to show that African Americans do enjoy the outdoors and will work to protect and maintain our precious resources. "There are numerous stories of African Americans forging history in our national parks, such as the Buffalo Soldiers and Colonel Charles Young. Let's make sure their stories continue to be told." [Read more...](#)

Congress holds hearings on Federal fee legislation

Rep. Rob Bishop (R-UT) chaired a hearing on the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act, which allows Federal agencies to charge visitors entrance and recreation fees. These fees now provide five agencies with \$300 million in funding annually, mostly to national parks. The American Recreation Coalition facilitated comments by over 30 key recreation, conservation, and tourism organizations. The groups outlined ways to more effectively involve the public in discussions on where and how fees would be charged and used, and called for new steps to make the fees convenient and less costly to collect. American Trails sent a letter supporting continuation of the program. [Read more...](#)

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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
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Frisco Highline Trail celebrates 20 years of improvements

The *Springfield News-Leader* reports on 20-year anniversary of Missouri's Frisco Highline Trail and a renewed push to make the trail more widely known. According to Terry Whaley, executive director of Ozark Greenways, "There was a general agreement on the board that we should do a recommitment to this trail, we should make it shine more, that we should make it a destination trail that people will want to experience." [Read more and see video...](#)

Secretary of the Interior details expansion of Service Corps initiative

On March 20, Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell issued a Secretarial Order formalizing the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps to expand educational, volunteer, and career opportunities. The initiative is related to the President's 2015 budget request for Interior, which proposes \$50.6 million for youth programs and employment opportunities, a \$13.6 million (or 37 percent) increase from 2014. [See the video...](#)

Outdoor retailer pledges \$1 million for Youth & Conservation Initiative

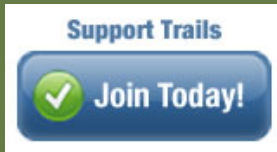
American Eagle Outfitters, Inc. (AEO) announced a \$1 million commitment to develop the next generation of outdoor stewards. It is the first pledge toward Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell's target of raising \$20 million from private partners by 2017 to support the 21st Century Conservation Service Corps. The goal is to provide 100,000 work and training opportunities to young people and veterans on public lands. [Read more about 21st Century Conservation Service Corps...](#)

Funds will rebuild Colorado parks and trails damaged by floods

Great Outdoors Colorado plans to channel \$13 million in state lottery collections toward fixing damaged trails and open space areas in six Front Range counties. Gov. John Hickenlooper announced the funding, which is earmarked to address specific flood-ravaged recreational facilities. Great Outdoors Colorado is a program to apply lottery proceeds to preserve, protect, and enhance the state's wildlife, parks, rivers, trails, and open spaces. [Read more and see video...](#)

Share your transportation (or Recreational Trails Program) story

If you want to provide feedback on any aspect of transportation-including trails, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, road design, and safe routes to school -- you have an opportunity. US Department of Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx is on a road trip to gather ideas, problems, and stories from local communities and organizations. [Read more...](#)



New report provides bicycling and walking statistics

The Alliance for Biking & Walking released "Bicycling and Walking in the United States: 2014 Benchmarking Report," a compendium of data on demographics related to bicycling and walking in all 50 states and many cities. The Alliance produces the Report every two years in partnership with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's Healthy Community Design Initiative to examine bicycling and walking transportation and how these trends relate to public health, safety, and social and economic well being. [Read more...](#)

INTERNATIONAL TRAILS SYMPOSIUM May 17-20, 2015 ~ Portland, Oregon

Exhibitors save 25% ~ deadline May 15

Mark your calendar! Just over a year from now you'll be attending the 2015 American Trails International Trails Symposium. The host city is Portland, Oregon, and the dates are May 17-20, 2015. The [exhibitor contract](#) is now available. **If you send in your contract and payment by May 15, you will receive a 25% discount!**

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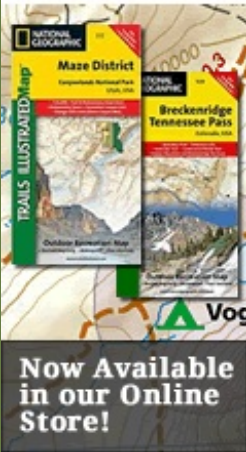
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[Learn more about the upcoming and past Symposiums...](#)

Contact Candace Mitchell, Exhibitor Coordinator, if you have any questions at candace@americantrails.org or (530) 605-4395.

National and International Trails Awards for 2015

American Trails is working to recognize projects and organizations that enhance the overall trails movement worldwide. In 2013, at the 21st American Trails International Trails Symposium, efforts in three countries were recognized: the Jeju Olle Foundation (South Korea), New Zealand Cycle Trail Team, and Trans Canada Trail. International trails will again be featured at the 2015 Awards Program in Portland, Oregon. Nomination forms are already available. [Download a 2015 nomination form](#) and [see 2013 awards and photos...](#)



Physician prescribes outdoor activities for her patients

Daphne Miller, MD writes about health and trails in National Parks Magazine: "When is the last time a doctor or nurse asked you about your exposure to nature? Perhaps you were asked if you smoke, how much alcohol you drink, and whether you exercise. But time spent in nature? An unlikely topic. And yet evidence has made it increasingly clear that exposure to green space can affect our health just as much as other lifestyle factors." [Read more...](#)

Spring trail riding tips for equestrians

When the wildflowers start blooming and the temperatures start to rise, trail riding is a common adventure for both equestrians and those looking for a fun afternoon activity. In order to have a fun yet adventurous trail ride, safety is the premier focus in preparing for the ride. Jessica Adcock from Dover Saddlery brings us "15 Tips for Spring Trail Riding Safety." [Read more...](#)

Featured National Wildlife Refuge Trail: Mud Pond Trail, NH

The Mud Pond Trail is located on the Pondicherry Division of the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge and is universally accessible. It includes a 900-foot raised boardwalk with rest stops that offer extraordinary views of a boreal forest and wetland communities. Designated as a National Recreation Trail in 2013, it was built by Youth Conservation Corps, US Fish and Wildlife Service staff, and volunteers. [Read more and see photos...](#)

American Trails *Cool Trail Solutions* Best Practices: Direction signs for urban trail users

Our newest gallery of photos shows signs indicating directions and routes to help trail users stay oriented. On urban trails, just as in the backcountry, visitors want to be sure they are on the right route. Many trails have discontinuous sections where users must take what seems like a detour, or jog out of the expected direction. Trails along canals, rivers, and abandoned railroads often have few access points as well as segments where the trail must leave the corridor. [See commentary and gallery of photos...](#)

American Trails Business Directory IN THE SPOTLIGHT: **Pannier Graphics**

The Allegheny, Monongahela, and Ohio rivers offer miles of scenic waterfront land in the Pittsburgh area. Friends of the Riverfront has been working for over 20 years to help increase the awareness and engagement of the region's rivers and riverfronts. The Three Rivers Heritage Trail system has segments on both banks of Pittsburgh's

three rivers with access to city neighborhoods, business districts, and local attractions. Along the trail, signs mark the significant places, historical events, and native wildlife for runners, bikers, and walkers to enjoy. "We currently have 37 interpretive signs (courtesy of Pannier Graphics) that are placed along all sections of the Three Rivers Heritage Trail and tell stories of unique Pittsburgh history," said Sarah Carr, Program Manager of Friends of the River Front. "The location of each sign along the trail is significant, calling attention to the past inhabitants (often steel mills or other industrial structures) that used to occupy the land now used for trail." [Read more on this press release and to learn about Pannier Graphics...](#)

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

New trail gives visitors a spectacular panorama of Belfast

The 4.2-mile Ridge Trail commands inspiring views over the city of Belfast and as far away as Scotland and Cumbria. The trail, developed by Outdoor Recreation Northern Ireland, is expected to entice more than 50,000 visitors to Divis and Black Mountain and opens up previously inaccessible areas. The stunning site recently provided the backdrop to several films including Dracula and Academy Award-winning short film "The Shore." [Read more and see photos...](#)

"La Cola de Caballo" trail brings hikers into Spanish Pyrenees

How many Americans or Brits have travelled to Spain, toured its many beaches, and never thought to do rural or mountain tourism here, of which Spain has much to offer? In Ordesa and Monte Perdido National Park the "horse's tail" trail follows a river up to its source in the mountains, which gives you the experience of a valley between magnificent mountain peaks and cliffs with several spectacular views of waterfalls. [Read more and see photos...](#)

TRAINING & EDUCATION

May 1 question and answer webinar on accessibility issues

The US Access Board is hosting a webinar on the "Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards for Trails, Camping and Picnic Facilities, Viewing Areas, and Beach Access Routes." This is an opportunity to ask questions on the conditions for exception for trails and other elements, the scoping provisions for picnic facilities, or any other aspects of this rule which covers Federal outdoor facilities. [Read more and register for the webinar...](#)

June 26 Webinar: Foundations of Mountain Trail Sustainability

American Trails presents this Webinar which is the first of a series of three on Sustainable Mountain Trails. Each webinar in this series is independent of each other and can be attended individually. You'll learn to apply these principles to a trail network "One Trail at a Time,

One Mile at a Time." The course includes Tools and Techniques, Examples, and Case Studies of mountain trail sustainability. The presenter is Hugh Duffy, Landscape Architect and Project Manager with the National Park Service. [Read more and register for this webinar...](#)

Fifteen recorded webinar programs available from American Trails

Many of the webinars sponsored by American Trails are now available for purchase -- and several are free of charge -- through the American Trails Online Store. Our webinars cover a variety of topics from trail design, maintenance, fundraising, marketing, and more! [Read more and access the archived webinars...](#)

National Trail Surfaces Study looks at options for accessibility

The National Center on Accessibility studied 11 different surface materials and surveyed trail managers about their own experience. All surface materials displayed varying issues over, but the data suggest that a trail composed of an all-aggregate material, when constructed to specified parameters, could be maintained with little to no maintenance as a firm and stable surface. The study includes many photos and detailed analysis of the various test surfaces. [Read more and download the complete study...](#)

Urban Bikeway Design Guide focuses on "complete streets"

California Bicycle Coalition is promoting a campaign for "Better Bikeways." According to the Coalition, "Right now, protected bikeways are being pioneered across the country, but under California's Department of Transportation outdated guidelines -- protected bikeways are banned." Now, California has become the third state to endorse the Urban Streets Design manual from the National Association of City Transportation Officials. [Read more...](#)

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...](#)

May 1 - Online Webinar hosted by the Access Board

* Question and Answer Session: Architectural Barriers Act Accessibility Standards ~ [REGISTER TODAY!](#)

May 10-11 - Del Norte, CO

* Elements of Trail Design and Rock Skills

May 13 - Online Webinar hosted by Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado

* Crew Chef Webinar Training

May 13-16 - San Francisco, CA

* 2014 National Outdoor Recreation Conference

May 14-16 - Nashville, TN

* Tennessee Bike Summit

May 14-16 - Sacramento, CA

* PedsCount! 2014 Summit

May 15 - Online Webinar hosted by American Trails

* Webinar: Integrating Habitat and Trails ~ [REGISTER TODAY!](#)

May 29 - Harrisburg, PA

* Navigating MAP-21 Workshop

June 7 - On trails everywhere!

* American Hiking Society's National Trails Day® ~ [REGISTER YOUR EVENT!](#)

June 8-9 - National Parks across America

* African American National Parks Event

June 26 - Online Webinar hosted by American Trails

* Webinar: Applying Foundations of Mountain Trail Sustainability ~ [REGISTER TODAY!](#)

Contact us with your scheduled training opportunities at ntp@americantrails.org.

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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.

American Trails is a 501(c)(3) organization and all donations are tax-deductible.

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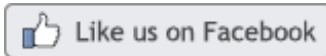
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- Need Trails Training? Visit www.TrailsTraining.net.
- [Cool Trail Solutions](#): view galleries of trail projects, enhancements, and facilities to give you ideas and see how others solved typical trails and greenways problems.
- If you appreciate the myriad of resources we provide on our website to help you do your work better, please help support American Trails ~ [by making a 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.

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Header photo: Spring on a neighborhood trail in Haarlem, Netherlands; photo by Stuart Macdonald