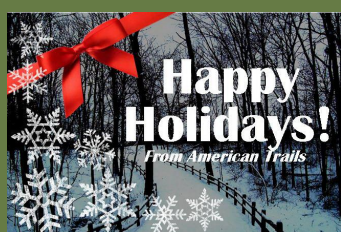




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*Advancing trails for those who build, maintain, use, and dream of trails...*

### WHAT'S HOT

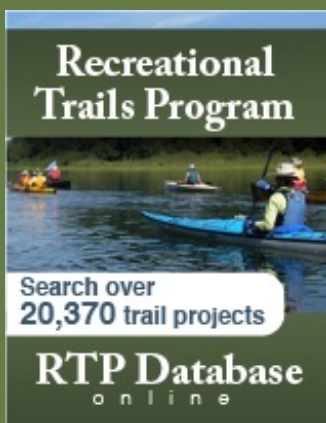
**Help provide critical assistance to Nepal's trails with a special year-end gift**



*A section of trail near Kathmandu, Nepal following the 7.8 magnitude earthquake on April 25, 2015.*

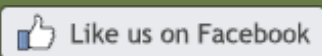
This giving season, we invite you to join us in supporting Nepal following the [7.8 magnitude earthquake](#) that occurred on April 25, 2015. Although the earthquake occurred nine months ago, the Nepali people are still in great need of support, specifically in trail restoration. Trails are much more than a recreational opportunity in Nepal; they are THE major source of transportation and revenue-generator fueling tourism - the basis of their economy.

American Trails, in partnership with the [Professional TrailBuilder's Association](#), is planning to send 1-3 trail experts to Nepal who are willing to volunteer their time to provide critical assessment assistance and technical support. But we need to raise funds to get them there! Our friends in Nepal will take care of all in country expenses. Your year-end, tax-deductible gift of \$10, \$25, or more will help Nepal take one step closer to restoring its vital trail system. Will you help us support Nepal in their time of need? [Learn more and give](#)



\*\*\*\*\*

STAY UP-TO-DATE ON TRAIL NEWS WITH AMERICAN TRAILS:



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### NEWS

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### International Trails Symposium coming to Dayton, Ohio May 2017

Dayton, Ohio will serve as the host city for the 23rd American Trails International Trails Symposium to be held May 7-10, 2017. We look forward to showcasing their world-class trails system and extensive partnerships and networks to the rest of the trails community. More details will be available soon and added to the website as they become available. [Read more...](#)

If you have any questions or are interested in hosting the 2019 Symposium, email [candace@americantrails.org](mailto:candace@americantrails.org).

### American Trails webinars continue in 2016

The American Trails [Advancing Trails Webinar Series](#) continues in 2016. The online educational programs help trail professionals and supporters learn about focused topics of special interest.

- **January 28, 2016:** "Why Resolve Conflict When You Can Prevent It?"
  - *This webinar is presented by Karen Umphress and Russ Ehnes with the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC), as well as Mark Himmel with Back Country Horsemen of Montana.*
  - [REGISTER and learn more...](#)
- **February 25, 2016:** "Trail Volunteer Development Program"
  - *This webinar is presented by Kim Frederick with Chinook Associates.*
  - Registration and more details COMING SOON!
- **March 24, 2016:** "Trails for Heroes - Healing our Military Veterans"
  - *This webinar is presented by Jan Hancock, Principal, Hancock Resources LLC; Sirena Dufault, Gateway Community Liaison, Arizona Trail Association; Debbi Fisher, PATH International Equine Services for Heroes Committee; Brian W. Scholl, Ride 2 Recovery Project; and Aaron Heliker, Former U.S. Air Force Staff Sergeant. **(This is an extension of their presentation at the Closing Luncheon at the 2015 International Trails Symposium this past May in Portland, Oregon.***
  - Registration and more details COMING SOON!

Our webinars are eligible for CEUs through the [Texas Recreation and Park Society](#) (TRAPS), an authorized independent CEU provider through IACET ([International Association for Continuing Education and Training](#)). Our 75 minute webinars are worth 0.10 CEUs and are available for an additional \$20 fee.

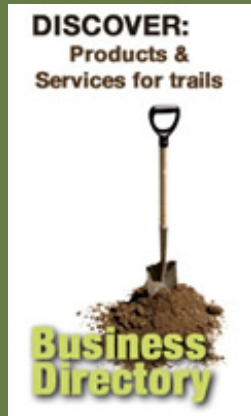
View our current [Advancing Trails Webinar Series](#) schedule as well as a list of all of our past webinars and recordings available for purchase or free! Learn more about CEUs and how to sponsor a webinar as well.

### Recreational Trails Program achieves major victory and is

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**JOIN THE AMERICAN TRAILS NETWORK**

## **funded for five more years!**

With the leadership of the Coalition for Recreational Trails, the trails community has achieved a major victory in protecting the Recreational Trails Program in the recent transportation reauthorization process. The new legislation, which covers the next five years, was signed into law by the President on December 4. Annual trails funding remains at \$85 million and will be distributed among the States according to the formula that has been in place since 2009. Many thanks to all of the bipartisan trails champions in the U.S. Congress and to all the RTP advocates across the country. [Read more...](#)

## **Land & Water Conservation Fund extended for three years**

The House and Senate gave final approval December 18 to an Omnibus Appropriations Bill (HR 2029) with significant assistance to the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). President Obama signed the bill into law the same day. It reauthorizes the Land & Water Conservation Fund through FY 2018 with the current authorities and potential funding of \$900 million annually. The bill allocates \$450 million for land acquisition projects in 2016 and includes funding for National Scenic and Historic Trails. This funding is \$143 million more than Congress has appropriated in each of the past two fiscal years. [Read more...](#)

## **Archived webinar on the role of trails in healthy communities, presented by Mark Fenton**

A recording of the webinar, "The Role of Trails in Healthy Community Design," hosted by American Trails, is available through our Online Store. It was presented December 3 by Mark Fenton, a transportation, planning, and public health consultant, author, PBS television host, and active transportation advocate; with an introduction by Bob Searns, The Greenway Team. This is a cutting-edge webinar discussing many pressing issues facing communities across the nation. [Read more and purchase this archived webinar...](#)

## **Free days in 2016 for Federal lands and parks**

The 2016 fee-free days are:

- **National Park Service:** January 18, April 16-24, August 25-28, September 24, November 11
- **Bureau of Land Management:** January 18, February 13-15, September 24, November 11
- **U.S. Forest Service:** January 18, February 15, June 11, September 24, November 11
- **U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service:** January 18, February 13-15, September 24, October 9, November 11-13

In addition to the fee-free days, the nation's fourth graders and their families can get year-round free entry to all Federal lands and waters through the online [Every Kid in a Park Initiative...](#)

[New American Trails members receive a gift of a Klean Kanteen water bottle](#)



## 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!](#)



Support Trails



Join Today!

## The Fall issue of the American Trails Magazine available in digital format

This issue features an overview of the 2015 International Trails Symposium that took place in Portland, Oregon May 17-20. It features articles on the Emerging Leaders who attended the Symposium on scholarship, as well as the National and International Trails Awards winners. The Fall issue also includes trail project awards highlighting outstanding use of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds, as presented by the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT). Additionally in this issue, there is a variety of resources and training opportunities for trail professionals. [Read now...](#)

## NEWS

### American Trails announces Roger Bell as Honorary Chair of Emerging Leaders Program

On his 80th birthday this past November, and after stepping down from the American Trails Board after 20 years, Roger Bell was inducted to a new position and named Honorary Chair of the Hulet Hornbeck Emerging Leaders Scholarship Program. Roger has had a great passion for this program since its inception at the 2013 International Trails Symposium, as well as years of interest in getting youth in the outdoors. His support as a funder, committee member, mentor, and active participant of the program has impacted emerging trail leaders around the world. [Read more in the Fall 2015 issue of the American Trails Magazine...](#) (See pages 16-17 and 35)

### Oregon rail trail would be one of nation's most scenic

The Salmonberry Coalition, a steering committee of local interest groups, politicians, and landowners, authorized a 2013 study to see if the route couldn't be repurposed as a trail for hikers, bikers, and equestrians. Since then, the group has been working out details of their plan. Their proposal would link the Portland area to the coast with a multi-use trail through wild, forested canyons. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### The "trail is better than pavement" lie

Are runners who argue against paving trails being irrational? Does running on asphalt actually decrease the risk of tendon injury or inflammation? Erin Beresini in *Outside Magazine* cites research that concludes "surface hardness doesn't make much difference at all: by subtly changing how we land, our bodies are pretty good at keeping impact forces constant no matter what we're running on." [Read more and see photos...](#)

### Missouri State Parks reach 1,000 miles of trails

The Missouri Department of Natural Resources celebrated reaching

## Better Skills for Better Trails

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

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1,000 miles of trails on its state parks. The 1,000th Mile Trail at Harry S. Truman State Park is a one-mile loop trail, open to day-use hikers, that was built primarily by park staff. The trail includes a scenic overlook with a spectacular view of Truman Lake. It is very common to observe turkey vultures and American Bald Eagles soaring on the updrafts along the bluff. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### Volunteers are working on a trail map of the entire State of New Jersey

The New Jersey Conservation Foundation and several dedicated volunteers are working on a comprehensive trail map of the entire State of New Jersey. The map is still in BETA format and exact locations are still being reviewed and confirmed. Please bear with them as they finalize these details! If they've missed a trail or have an incorrect location, please send them an email to let them know. [Read more and access the online map...](#)

### A boom in bicycle tourism: "wallets on wheels"

The *Seattle Times* reports on the economic value of touring cyclists, who tend to be older and wealthier, and are especially valuable to a state's economic health. "They stay in smaller towns and support locally-owned bed-and-breakfasts, motels, cafes, craft breweries, and shops. Other tourists tend to patronize national chains, economic analyses have found." [Read more...](#)

### U.S. Access Board Training Coordinator Peggy Greenwell to retire



Peggy Greenwell, the Board's Training Coordinator and expert on recreation accessibility, will retire from government service at the end of December. Greenwell joined the Board as an Accessibility Specialist in 1992 and led the development of accessibility guidelines for recreation facilities. She also headed separate rulemakings on play areas and on trails, picnic and camping areas, and other outdoor developed areas. For the past 18 years, Greenwell also oversaw the Board's training program on its accessibility guidelines and standards. During her tenure, she coordinated over 1,500 training sessions that reached a combined audience of almost 150,000 attendees. In 2010, she implemented the agency's popular program of monthly webinars. The Access Board commends Greenwell for her 23 years of dedicated service to accessibility, particularly in the realm of recreation, and her expansion and promotion of its training services.

*American Trails would like to thank Peggy for being such a great friend of trails and for helping make them more accessible for all to enjoy! The trails community will miss her and looks forward to seeing her out on the trail!*

### **Cornelia, Georgia builds accessible trails**

The Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP) helped Cornelia, Georgia improve the accessibility of its trail system. The UTAP evaluation tool was used to assess routes in Cornelia Park- primitive trails that had been built as Eagle Scout projects in the 1980s. The assessment identified current and potential sources of environmental impact, maintenance needs, and improvements needed to prevent erosion and ensure sustainability. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### **Featured National Recreation Trail: Chief Ladiga Trail, Alabama**

The Chief Ladiga National Recreation Trail (NRT) is Alabama's first extended rails to trails project. The 9-mile section that runs through Jacksonville has a college-town and quaint Southern town atmosphere. The Piedmont Section runs 3.8 miles through Piedmont, nestled in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountain range. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### **Featured Recreational Trails Program-funded project: Chief Joseph Ski Trail System, MT**

The Chief Joseph Ski Trail System in Montana provides free cross-country skiing for the public, with funding through the Federal Highway Administration's Recreational Trails Program and other sources. The trail system is groomed weekly by the volunteer Bitterroot Cross-Country Ski Club. Multi-use trails also provide recreational opportunities for people using snow shoes, nonmotorized snow bikes, skate skiers, snowmobiles, and people who wish to ski with their dogs. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### **Featured Online Business Directory advertiser: Pannier Graphics**

Pannier leads the way in the production of trail signs and markers because they understand this signage is about more than marking the paths - it's also about sharing and preserving the world's most beautiful and irreplaceable areas. Pannier manufactures a full range of fiberglass signage, panels, bases and frames ideal for: trail maps, interpretative panels, wayfinding signage, trail markers, and more. [Learn more about Pannier in the American Trails Online Business Directory...](#)



## **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**

**Visit Snowdonia's trails without leaving home on Google Street View**

Since the launch of Street View in 2007, Google has traveled around the world capturing panoramic 360-degree images of the world's streets. But for the past two years, the company has ventured into places that are inaccessible to vehicles. Earlier this year, in collaboration with the Snowdonia National Park Authority, some of the most scenic footpaths in Wales have been captured. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### **Singapore embarks on an ambitious rails-to-trails project**

Japanese firm Nikken Sekkei was selected to design an inclusive space accessible to all, called "Lines of Life." The masterplan includes 122 access points and a paved cycling path that runs the park's full length. The 24-kilometer linear park includes eight activity nodes, from active event spaces, like an outdoor film screening area, to quiet rainforest viewing platforms and nature boardwalks. [Read more and see photos...](#)

### **Alpine-style hut trails eyed as a boost for Scottish tourism**

*The Herald* of Glasgow reports that "Although its landscapes are world class Scotland's tourism offering is sometimes criticised for being somewhat basic." The article examines many models for hut-to-hut hiking and mountain cabin systems throughout Europe. Deputy Business Editor Mark Latham examines the case for setting up hut trails in Scotland. [Read more and see photos...](#)

## **TRAINING & RESOURCES**

### **FHWA provides case studies for Safer Streets initiative**

Federal Highway Administrator Gregory Nadeau announced a new resource "Case Studies in Delivering Safe, Comfortable, and Connected Pedestrian and Bicycle Networks." It is described as "our latest step in the Safer People, Safer Streets initiative" with 86 examples of bike-ped network improvement projects - 21 regional, 6 statewide, and 59 local. [Read more and access case studies...](#)

### **Marshall University OHV Recreation Management Program**

Marshall University offers a series of four courses in planning, design, construction, and management of off-highway vehicle trails and facilities. Courses are available at the West Virginia campus and online. Career employees can obtain academic credit after completing the courses and students attending other colleges and universities may have these credits transferred to their own institutions. [Read more...](#)

### **Presentations from 2015 Massachusetts Trails Conference**

Many presentations from this year's statewide meeting are available in pdf format. Topics include volunteers, bridges, sustainable design, tourism, partnerships, boardwalks, and lease agreements. This conference was supported by the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation and the MA Recreational Trails Advisory Board, with funding from the Recreational Trails Program. [Read more and download presentations...](#)

### **Oregon statewide trails plan available for public comment**

The draft Oregon statewide trails plan entitled "Oregon Trails 2015: A Vision For The Future" is available for public review and comment until January 6, 2016. The Oregon Parks and Recreation Department has taken an innovative approach to statewide trails planning by including separate (but concurrent) off-highway vehicle, snowmobile, nonmotorized, and water trail planning components. [Download the report on the Oregon trails plan...](#) (pdf 555 kb)

### **Early 2016 trail training opportunities**

Current training opportunities for trail skills across the country. [See the Online Trails Training Calendar for details...](#)

**January 7** - Online Webinar hosted by the U.S. Access Board  
\* Webinar: Requirements for Protruding Objects along Circulation Paths

**January 28** - Online Webinar hosted by American Trails  
\* Webinar: Why Resolve Conflict When You Can Prevent It?  
[REGISTER TODAY](#)

**January 28** - Online Webinar hosted by Society of Outdoor Recreation Professionals  
\* Webinar: Making the Case for Parks and Trails

**February 7-10** - Washington, DC  
\* The Corps Network's National Conference

**February 25** - Online Webinar hosted by American Trails  
\* Webinar: Trail Volunteer Program Development

**March 5-11** - Knoxville, TN  
\* Professional TrailBuilders Association's Sustainable Trails Conference

**March 7-9** - Washington, DC  
\* National Bike Summit

**March 24** - Online Webinar hosted by American Trails  
\* Webinar: Trails for Heroes - Healing our Military Veterans

**April 5-7** - Columbus, OH  
\* Safe Routes to School National Conference

**April 6-8** - Riverside, CA  
\* California Trails & Greenways Conference

**May 16-20** - Boise, ID  
\* River Management Symposium and National Outdoor Recreation Conference



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

## JOIN THE AMERICAN TRAILS NETWORK

**Join American Trails and receive a gift of an 18-ounce Klean Kanteen water bottle!**

New [members](#) who join at the Trail Professional level or higher will **receive a gift of an 18-ounce stainless steel Klean Kanteen commemorative water bottle** celebrating American Trails 25 year anniversary!

Water bottles are also available for purchase in our [Online Store](#).



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

For over 27 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 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 tax-exempt, nonprofit charitable organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Donations are tax-deductible.



## QUICK LINKS

- Visit [American Trails "Supporting Trails" webpage](#) for current alerts and legislation.
- Read about great Recreational Trails Program-funded projects by visiting the Federal Highway Administration's [RTP Database website](#).
- Find products and services for trails in our [Online Business Directory](#).
- Visit our [Blog](#).

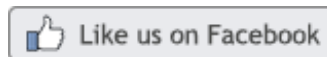
- Join us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)!
- Learn about and find [National Recreation Trails \(NRT\)](#) near you today!
- I'm a [Pathways for Play](#) advocate. [Ask me why.](#)
- The [Online Trails Training Calendar](#) connects you with webinars, courses, conferences, and trail-related training.
- 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.
- **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).
- 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 joining the American Trails Network today](#).

**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 above for what's new in the trails world!

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

**Advertising Opportunities:**

*American Trails offers cost-effective advertising opportunities for our Trail Tracks e-Newsletter, the American Trails Magazine, in our Business Directory, and on our website! Find out more [here](#).*



Header photo: Cross-country skiing at Mountain Dell Golf Course, east of Salt Lake City ~ 6,000 feet elevation; photo by Stuart Macdonald