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American Trails

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American Trails Magazine

American Trails Magazine (ISSN 1082-8303) is the magazine of American Trails, the nonprofit organization dedicated to quality trails and greenways within 15 minutes of every American home or workplace.

Editor: Stuart H. Macdonald

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FROM THE EDITOR

Celebrations are serious fun

We all have our own story about why trails are important. But it's up to all of us to share that story with the people in power, at every level of government. Celebrations are one vital way that we get that important message to business and community leaders.

Our eyes should also be on Congress. There are so many issues being debated this year we need to be sure that trails, greenways, bikeways, parks, and outdoor recreation are not forgotten. It is critical this year to bring attention to our trails and to the important roles they play in our communities. It's time to celebrate!

With trails, the news is all good. Bikeways and walkways are an important aspect of our transportation system. Trails are a tremendous resource for improving health through physical activity. Trails are becoming familiar to developers and planners as they work to create new communities. And, as we seek to revitalize our cities and suburbs, greenways are key ingredients in both the economy and quality of life.

At the same time, our trails and riding routes in state and federal lands, from deserts to wetlands, need attention, too. There is an amazing diversity of organizations that are dedicated to every kind of trail. These volunteers are the backbone of our trails system. They are also making possible the great outdoor resource work of small businesses as well as youth and conservation corps.

American Trails is seeking every opportunity to celebrate our nationwide trails system. Please join our efforts to document the value of trails and bicycle/pedestrian facilities as transportation infrastructure. Be an active and positive voice in the reauthorization process. Keep up to date at www.AmericanTrails.org—just click on the button that says “Advocacy” on any page.

Finally, don't forget that one way to celebrate your trail is to host a National Trails Day event. Be sure to ask your Members of Congress to join you on the trail. Sign up on the American Hiking Society's website at www.americanhiking.org.

— **Stuart Macdonald, Editor**

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SUPPORTING TRAILS in CONGRESS



Congress has had its hands full with the continuing uncertainties of the economic structure, and all eyes are on the unemployment numbers. And what about health care? Trails advocates have an opportunity to promote the healthful effects of walking and bicycling as one way to help reduce costs. Eventually Congress will tackle transportation, which more directly affects federal spending on trails, bikeways, and greenways.

■ Another extension for the Recreational Trails Program

The ongoing debate over federal funding for transportation will continue. A series of extensions for Surface Transportation Authorization expired on February 28. Just before that deadline the Senate passed its version of the jobs bill. It included a one-year reauthorization of the highway trust fund (SAFETEA-LU), which has guided transportation funding programs since 2005.

A \$20 billion infusion of cash would make up for the ongoing shortfall in gasoline tax revenues, and keep transportation spending in line with 2009. During a Senate Budget Committee hearing February 24, Chairman Kent Conrad (D-ND) asked Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood when the Obama administration will reveal its plans for a new surface transportation bill. LaHood said that the administration would release its version "soon" after Congress passes the SAFETEA-LU extension.

Trails advocates continue to urge everyone's support for the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). American Trails is a member of the Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), a broad-based coalition of recreation and conservation organizations. With the support of over 200 organizations nationwide, CRT has been urging key members of Congress and Administration officials to recognize the importance of funding for trails and related facilities. See our "Support RTP" page for more about these efforts to save Recreational Trails and other vital programs.

For more information on the process of funding America's transportation system, including trails and greenways, see the "Authorizing Federal Transportation Funding" page at www.AmericanTrails.org/reauth.html.

■ Awards showcase Recreational Trails Program-funded projects

The Coalition for Recreational Trails, a federation of national and regional trail-related organizations, is seeking nominations for the 2010 Annual Achievement Awards for outstanding projects funded by the Recreational Trails Program. The recognition helps build awareness of this vital funding program as Congress grapples with reauthorization of the federal transportation funding legislation.

The awards will be presented in Washington, D.C. during Great Outdoors Week 2010 (June 7-13) to showcase this highly successful program, which has built and enhanced trails across America. As has become the custom, the awards ceremony will be held on Capitol Hill to encourage members of Congress to join us in honoring the outstanding achievements of their constituents.

The deadline for submissions is April 16, 2010. Download the 2010 CRT Award Nomination Form at www.AmericanTrails.org/rtp/crtawards.html

■ Active Community Transportation Act would fund walking and bicycling

The Active Community Transportation Act of 2010 (H.R. 4722) is to be incorporated into federal transportation reauthorization. The goal is help communities "connect people with public transportation, workplaces, schools, residences, businesses, recreation areas, and other community activity centers."

The bill is a major effort of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy which is encouraging supporters to ask their U.S. representative to cosponsor the legislation. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure.

The U.S. Department of Transportation would administer a competitive fund of \$2 billion over five years, which would be allocated to communities for projects including:

1. sidewalks, bikeways, and pedestrian and bicycle trails
2. bicycle boxes, cycle tracks, bicycle boulevards, dual traffic signals, and bicycle sharing stations
3. restore and upgrade current active transportation infrastructure facilities
4. educational activities, safety-oriented activities, and technical assistance to further the purpose of the program

See details and how to support the Active Community Transportation Act, with links to Rails-to-Trails Conservancy advocacy efforts at www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html.

**Keep up to date on funding and legislation to support trails:
www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html**

Set the stage for water trails

A new workshop from American Trails on developing and managing accessible paddling trails

By Mike Passo, Owner, Elakah Expeditions (www.elakah.com) & American Trails Board Member

You only get one chance to write your life story. In which case, I would suggest gathering worthy material at your local water trail. Sure, you could choose a regular old land trail, or (God forbid) your office cubicle as the setting for your life story, but frankly, it's been done before.

A water trail guides you through the unscripted tangent of land and sea, taking all the best of both, and weaving a magical tapestry of mystical costal inlets, rocky lakeshores, meandering river banks, eerily quiet backwater sloughs, and impossibly bright sand beaches. Here is where you can find yourself refreshingly tucked away from the rest of humanity, providing the ideal environment for fostering creativity and forgetting conformity.



A little overly dramatic, you say? Well... maybe.

Now, one might wonder (with good reason) how do we get ourselves out to this magical setting? Admittedly, you cannot just throw on a pair of tennis shoes or hiking boots and hit the trail, as you can with a land-based trail.

Water trails demand not only something upon which you can float, but they demand that you know how to use that float, as well as the dynamics of the water. I do not want to make light of this, because, as anyone that has tried to swim out through breaking waves or cross a fast moving stream knows, the power of water is astonishing and quite unexpected.

As with all trails, the user of the water trail can benefit greatly from detailed and objective information about what they can expect when they venture onto this stage. Let us review the critical elements involved in the successful use of a water trail.



Mike Passo teaching at the Water Trail Assessment and Adaptive Paddling Workshop

Outfitters & trail managers– providing the boat

The local outfitter and agency manager is the first line of defense against uninformed or inappropriate use of the water trail. Outfitters and managers should be prepared to make people aware of the minimum level of knowledge and skill necessary to use a water trail (i.e. the “Essential Eligibility”). They should also have the equipment and adaptations necessary to help people of all backgrounds and abilities to participate successfully.

If they are prepared to serve all kinds of people in a safe manner, the water trail becomes easy and inspiring to use, for everyone. An open, informed, and willing person answering the phone when a curious user calls makes a water trail much more accessible, right off the bat, without spending a dollar in physical upgrades.

Wind, waves & currents– what happens when the water moves?

Moving water is arguably the most enjoyable type of water. Unfortunately, it can also quickly sneak up and bite you! The key is knowing:

- Where and when the water moves
- How exposed you may be to that movement at any given time
- How to avoid being caught up in the movement when you are not prepared to be

Water Trail Workshop offered by American Trails

American Trails is proud to offer the Water Trail Assessment and Adaptive Paddling Workshop. This new course is designed to help water trail managers and outfitters improve opportunities for people of all backgrounds and abilities to enjoy water trails.

The workshop includes a half day indoor instruction, followed by a half day of on-the-water training in adaptations and programmatic access.

Call the America Trails office to learn more and to schedule a training in your area: (530) 547-2060.

A water trail manager or outfitter that can simply and succinctly convey this information at key points along the water trail, makes a water trail much safer and more usable to everyone.

Transition/access points– crossing the unscripted tangent

The greatest challenge for many people is crossing over from the land to the water. Mud, slick rocks, and steep



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Mike Passo discussing water access facilities

banks are now combined with floating bits that have the annoying tendency to move away from you when you try to sit on them. Knowing that there is or is not a dock at a location, or that the path accessing the water is or is not gentle and wide enough for a boat to be carried are very important to the success of the day. Starting out a day on the water with a wet bum causes even the hardest of souls to think twice about returning.

Obstacles– things that may break your boat (not to mention you)

This may be a little self-evident, but you will probably like to know about the things that can run you over, drown you, or just make your water trail life miserable. These can be anything from hordes of mosquitoes, to wind and current, to 900 foot super tankers traveling at 30 knots. You can avoid them, but only if you know they are there. What's a good story without a few obstacles, anyway?

Facilities– answering nature's call, among other things

Where do I park? Where do I camp? Where do I refill my water? Knowing that your basic needs will be taken care of can be the difference between deciding to accept a new adventure, or clinging to the home front. The truth of the matter is that many people will not venture out if they think their only option for answering nature's call involves anything remotely close to a bush and the softest leaves they can find. We are a fickle society.

Armed with this information, you are ready to explore the world's water trails. The perfect setting. Unique characters. An ever changing plot. What are you waiting for? This puppy isn't going to write itself.



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When you need a restroom for a location that lacks access to water and sewer lines, the Clivus Multrum M54 Trailhead is the Natural Solution. The odorless, environmentally friendly Trailhead is a composting toilet system with handicapped accessible bathroom structure. The Trailhead structure is available in single or double-stall configurations and a variety of finishes. To learn more about the Trailhead and discuss the details of your project, call Clivus today.



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Paralympians urge kids to get active

Being active is good for you, and it's fun. So let's get moving!

By Peter Axelson and Manny Guerra

The 2010 Paralympic Winter Games, held recently in Vancouver, celebrate spirit in motion. Athletes with disabilities from around the world met to compete—inspiring and exciting the world with their performances—always moving forward and never giving up. These athletes remind us that when we work hard, we can achieve our dreams. We can all be sports champions.

As Paralympic-level athletes, we were proud to compete with some of the best athletes in the world—we pushed our limits and had fun too. But you don't need to be an Olympian to get moving.

An important part of Let's Move! is helping kids to stay physically active and making sure they have a healthy, balanced diet. Children need physical activity to be healthy and strong. Being



Peter Axelson



active can seem like a challenging goal, but it starts with finding an activity that you enjoy and making it a part of your routine.

It can be as simple as playing ball or finding an adaptive sport like sled hockey or mono-skiing that's right for you. If you have a disability, there is adaptive equipment available that can help you play the sports you love. Parents can also play an important role by being

active together with their children. Find a physical activity that the entire family can enjoy.

Peter Axelson is a world champion mono-skier, founder of Beneficial Designs (see pages 32-33), and Advisor to American Trails. Manny Guerra is a Paralympic gold medalist in sled hockey. Peter and Manny were part of the Presidential Delegation to the Closing Ceremony of the Vancouver 2010 Olympic Winter Games.



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Chattanooga downtown and riverfront with the lighted Tennessee Riverway trail

Partners join in for 2010 Symposium

Working together to bring you an outstanding national trails conference

The Symposium is a premier opportunity for greenways and trails advocates, managers, planners, builders, and users, as well as environmental, tourism, developers, and business interests, to come together to strengthen America's remarkable network of trails and to experience an inspirational, educational, and fun-filled conference.

American Trails would like to recognize and thank our federal agency partners for their ongoing sponsorship of the Symposium:

- US DOT Federal Highway Administration
- USDA Forest Service
- US DOI Bureau of Land Management
- US DOI National Park Service – RTCA Program
- US Fish & Wildlife Service

Host organizations include:

- American Trails

- Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau
- City of Chattanooga Parks & Recreation Department
- Hamilton County
- Outdoor Chattanooga
- Tennessee Department of Environment & Conservation
- Tennessee Greenways & Trails

Local partners in bringing the American Trails National Symposium to Chattanooga include:

- Trust for Public Land
- Tennessee Council on Greenways & Trails
- Cumberland Trail Conference
- Chattanooga Hiking Club
- North Chickamauga Creek Conservancy
- Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association
- Tennessee River Gorge Trust
- South Chickamauga Creek Greenway Alliance
- Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition

Join us in November for the 20th American Trails National Symposium. American Trails presents the 2010 Trails Symposium with host organizations and agencies, as well as many volunteers.

Visit our website for the full list of sponsors at www.AmericanTrails.org/2010

Trails: The Green Way for America

The theme for the 20th American Trails National Symposium is "Trails: The Green Way for America."

The idea of the theme is to evoke the benefit of trails to America's economy and environment. As we evolve toward a green economy, trails are the way for outdoor recreation and alternative transportation. Trails provide access and connections to many of this nation's most incredible green spaces: parks, forests, and wildlands. Trails are a critical component of green infrastructure within communities, tying homes to businesses, schools, and workplaces, and empowering clean human-powered mobility. Trails support the new American dream which is built upon environmental and economic efficiency. Trails are, very simply, the green way for America.

Call for Presentations/Topics

To help us develop an exciting and motivating program for the Symposium, we have invited the nationwide trails community to submit ideas for presentations in support of the Symposium's theme. We expect to offer 80 concurrent sessions, each lasting 75 minutes. Another opportunity, in a smaller scale format, to display information about your project or issue to a wide audience is creating a poster. Posters will be displayed in a common area throughout the Symposium. Individuals displaying posters will also have an opportunity to share their "story" and to meet with interested attendees at designated times during the Symposium.

The Program Committee has been particularly seeking presentations that introduce new ideas, convey useful strategies, identify lessons learned, and strengthen participants' existing skills and knowledge — in the spirit of the Symposium theme. The Program Committee looks forward to receiving your ideas. Due to the tremendous number of proposals expected, we will not be able to accept every proposal, and we may combine individual proposals with similar topics to create a Panel Session.

For additional information about the program, please contact the Program Committee Chair: Jeff Hunter, Tennessee Field Organizer, Southern Appalachian Forest Coalition, PO Box 2142, Chattanooga, TN 37409, jeff@saafc.org, (423) 322-7866.

The deadline for submitting proposals is April 9. Visit our website to download the complete instructions for submitting a proposal for a presentation at the 2010 American Trails National Symposium:
www.AmericanTrails.org/2010/call.html

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American Trails' 2010 National Trails Awards

*Honoring people and programs at the
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American Trails presents the National Trails Awards to recognize the exemplary people across America who are working to create a national system of trails to meet the recreation, health, and travel needs of all Americans. We will honor outstanding efforts made by agencies, trail professionals, the private sector, corporations, media, and others at the National Trails Awards Banquet ~ On the Path of Excellence on November 16, 2010 in Chattanooga, TN. *The deadline for nominations is June 30, 2010.*

Award categories & criteria

Trail Advocacy Award
(one award per state):
For efforts to influence public policy relating to trail planning, trail protection, trail development, or maintenance.

Trail Worker Award
(one award per state):
Recognizes the efforts of a private or public sector individual working for trail planning, development, or maintenance in their local area or state.

Best Trails State Award
Recognizes a state which is facilitating an outstanding statewide system of trails, including planning, legislation, funding, and programs.

Trails for Health Award
For a community's efforts to improve access to trails and promoting their use for increasing physical activity.

Lifetime Service Award
For an individual demonstrating long standing, significant, and exemplary service to trails planning, implementation, and recreation.

Partnership Award

For partnerships among private organizations, public agencies, or public and private interests for the field of trail planning, design, or implementation.

Trails Public Service Award

For agency staff, volunteers, or elected or appointed officials at the Federal, state, or local level who have supported trail planning, design, or implementation through strong leadership and/or legislative efforts.

Community Service Award

For organizations that perform exceptional community service relating to, but beyond trail work, such as making their communities better places to live, improving the natural environment, or promoting volunteerism.

Outstanding Media Award

For efforts to provide positive public exposure and education in the field of trail use, planning, design, or implementation, including free publicity for trails.

Trails and the Arts Award

The award recognizes outstanding public art projects, interpretive signs, or other creative structures associated with trail-related improvements.

Planning/Design Award

For problem solving through innovative methods, including public participation and/or public agency involvement to enhance trails.

Corporate Award

A business or corporation must have demonstrated significant, sustained, and exemplary service to trails planning.

State-of-the-Art Technology Award

For a trail-related product or service that has significantly met a need, addressed an issue, or increased efficiency in trail design, development, or maintenance.

Outstanding Trail Sharing Award

The award recognizes innovative and successful trail sharing efforts, programs, and systems.

Kids and Trails Award: NEW AWARD

This award honors efforts to engage children and youth in outdoor experiences using, but not limited to trails. Creative, interpretive, educational, and/or recreational

design components are included, along with innovative programs which stimulate kids' imaginations and promote their interest in and appreciation for the natural environment while developing healthy lifestyles.



Bob Searns, Chair of American Trails, presents the Partnership Award to Ginny Sullivan at the 2008 American Trails National Symposium in Little Rock

2010 National Trails Awards: See details and nomination forms at www.AmericanTrails.org/2010/awards.html



Recipients of the Developer Awards at the 2008 Symposium

Developer Award

In addition to the National Trails Awards, American Trails also recognizes quality, well-designed multi-use trails systems that are integrated into private developments to encourage active lifestyles, reduce reliance on automobiles, connect the development to other public and private pathways and destinations, and preserve and promote natural areas. See a link to the 2008 American Trails Developer Awards given to three American communities at the National Trails Symposium in Little Rock at www.americantrails.org/2010/awards.html.

Registration and Accommodations

Online registration will be available May 1. The cost of registration will range from \$325 early registration for an American Trails member to \$450 regular registration, non-member.

Recognizing that budgets are tight, we will not be raising the rates this year.

Lodging starts at \$99 per night plus tax. A limited number of rooms will be available at the prevailing government per diem rate at the time of the conference. Check the Symposium Web page at www.AmericanTrails.org/2010 for our three host hotels and their contact information.

Airfare and car rental information will be posted on the Symposium Web page as soon as it's available.

To learn more about Chattanooga visit:

- www.outdoorchattanooga.com
- www.discoversceniccity.com
- www.tennesseeanytime.org/travel

To learn more about American Trails and the Symposium:

- Visit www.AmericanTrails.org/2010
- Contact (530) 547-2060 or symposium@AmericanTrails.org



EXHIBITORS:

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Exhibit at the 20th

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Trails: The Green Way for America

November 14-17, 2010

Chattanooga, TN

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Tennessee Riverwalk

Greenway along the city's major river helped spur Chattanooga's revival

*By Jim Bowen, Chattanooga Area Regional Transportation Authority, and Candace Davis, Chattanooga Convention & Visitors Bureau
Photos by Stuart Macdonald*

Now into its second decade of development, the Tennessee Riverwalk will form a 20-mile greenway through Chattanooga. It stretches from the Chickamauga Dam to downtown and out to Moccasin Bend, recently designated the country's newest national park and very first archeological district. Along the way, the trail links parks, green spaces, museums, public art, shops, fishing piers, boating facilities, and miles of scenic Riverwalk along the Tennessee River.

The Riverwalk experience begins at Ross's Landing Plaza, a novel combination of landscaping, art, and architecture creating a captivating public space that serves as the set-

ting for the Tennessee Aquarium and the Chattanooga Visitors Center. The design incorporates exhibits, artifacts, and legends from Chattanooga's history and geography.

The Riverwalk extends out over the river and up on to the Walnut Street Bridge, a steel truss bridge built in 1890 that has been renovated into one of the world's longest pedestrian bridges. The bridge is perfect for strolling by day or by moonlight, and connects downtown to the numerous shops and restaurants along the north shore.

The north shore is also home to Coolidge Park, which honors Charles B. Coolidge, a World War II Medal of Honor recipient. It features an antique carousel furnished with animals carved by students of Chattanooga's Horsin' Around carousel animal carving school. Children can cool off in the interactive water fountains featuring large animals.

Back on the south shore, the glass-bottom Holmberg Bridge leads to the Hunter Museum of American Art and the Bluff View Art District. Galleries and restaurants, as well as a spectacular sculpture garden overlook the river. From Bluff View, two pedestrian bridges lead to the historic Battery Place neighborhood and the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga campus.

Farther up the river, the Riverwalk passes through the Centre South Industrial Park and offers great river views of MacClellan Island and the four downtown bridges spanning the river.

The final 4.5-mile segment connecting the Rowing Center and the Fishing Park along the south shoreline was completed in May 2005. This newest Riverwalk component added three lighted parking areas, numerous picnic facilities, and two public rest rooms.



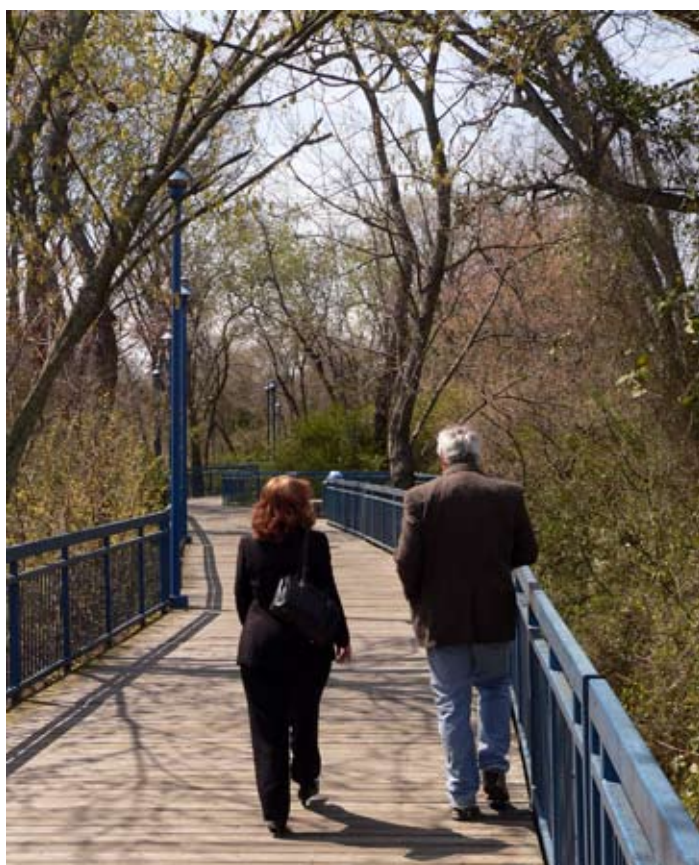
The bike-pedestrian Walnut Street Bridge (foreground) and the Market Street Bridge



Cyclists and walkers enjoying the trails along the Tennessee River in Chattanooga

Along the route are numerous river, creek, and wetland overlooks, and a grand, 360-foot pedestrian bridge. The walker, jogger, or bicyclist can travel on a 10-mile continuous path along the southern shoreline from the Chickamauga Dam to the Tennessee Aquarium and Ross's Landing in downtown Chattanooga.

The 21st Century Waterfront Plan was a sweeping \$120-plus million vision that transformed the downtown riverfront with a careful combination of development, preservation, and enhancement. An aggressive schedule made this transformation happen in 35 months. This unique plan evolved out of a public process that has become second nature for Chattanoogaans.



Boardwalk section of the Tennessee Riverwalk

The revitalization of Ross's Landing Park is a cornerstone of the plan. The project also reconfigured Riverfront Parkway, allowing for an enlarged and enhanced riverside park. The trailhead of the Trail of Tears is honored at The Passage. New docking facilities were added, the 1st Street Sculpture Garden was created, reconnecting visitors to the Hunter Museum of American Art (completed \$19.5 million expansion) in the Bluff View Art District. The Tennessee Aquarium also added a new saltwater addition (completed \$30 million expansion). Additional work along the north shore area has expanded Coolidge Park west of the Market Street Bridge to include the 23-acre Renaissance Park, a wetland park, and appropriate mixed-use development along Manufacturers Road.

The 21st Century Waterfront Plan represents a major portion of the unfinished business begun with the Tennessee Riverwalk Master Plan and stands as a testament to Chattanooga's ability to forge bold visions punctuated by aggressive implementation. It is a blueprint for a riverfront without rival. Already, housing, office, and retail developments have totaled more than \$750 million, making certain that this riverfront renaissance lasts well into the 21st Century.

See more photos and information about trails and greenways in Chattanooga and Tennessee on the 2010 American Trails National Symposium website at www.AmericanTrails.org/2010

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Vast new nature park opens

Recycled ammunition plant becomes major trail site for Chattanooga

By Gina Hatler, Hamilton County Government

Enterprise South Nature Park is Hamilton County's newest and most prized public properties. Set to open in October 2010, the 2,800 wooded acres will offer visitors a rare opportunity to explore land that has been heavily protected and largely left to flourish in its natural state for over 80 years!

This immense tract of land is part of what used to be the Volunteer Army Ammunition Plant, known locally as VAAP. Consisting of over 7,000 acres located in the heart of the county, heavily populated on all sides, the area has always been closed to the public and heavily guarded.

VAAP's history stretches to World War II when the federal government acquired the land for TNT production. Employment peaked at about 3,500 workers with varying production over the years that also included the Korean and Vietnam wars. Production ceased in 1977.

In 1978 negotiations were started to acquire portions of the site for an industrial park, but it wasn't until 2000 that the city and Hamilton County were able to buy the heart of the acreage for use as an industrial park. It was renamed Enterprise South in 2002 and chosen as home of the new Volkswagen America Production Facility in 2008. Construction is now underway on the 940-acre plant and several surrounding equipment suppliers.



Visitors explore one of the many subterranean storage bunkers remaining from the former ammunition plant

The 2,800 acres were conveyed to the City of Chattanooga and Hamilton County in 2004 to be used as a nature park due to its hilly terrain and proximity to surrounding residential areas. There are numerous remnants of the VAAP operation still evident along the trails, including almost 100 subterranean storage bunkers. Considerations for their possible use is still underway. Three of these will be restored as historical exhibits.

The park will offer miles of walking paths, bikeways, off-road biking, and horse trails. There are ample areas for picnics and a secluded two-acre lake that attracts deer, turkeys, and other wildlife.

An equestrian trail-building workshop and tour of the facility will be offered at the Symposium in November.

See more about Chattanooga and Tennessee trails on the 2010 American Trails National Symposium website at www.AmericanTrails.org/2010



The public enjoys a first look at the new park

Bridge provides opportunity for creativity

Highway project evolves into park and trail project

By Rick Herold, City of Grand Prairie

During the planning process for extending State Highway 161, the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT) determined that the most feasible alignment through the city of Grand Prairie would result in the loss of about 10 acres of park land. Other options to avoid the park produced negative impacts to residential areas.

The highway project became mired in litigation and TxDOT proposed a settlement to mitigate the park impact by acquiring 62 acres of additional land and providing \$10 million dollars in park improvements and amenities, concentrating on a linear trail connecting C.P. Waggoner Park to Mike Lewis Park, approximately 1 mile north of the affected park. The overall vision of this project was to enhance the two existing parks and create a natural corridor linking the two parks with a fully accessible trail that separates the user from the urban environment.

The consultant firm HNTB of Dallas was contracted to design the park improvements, in concert with Grand Prairie Parks and Recreation staff and representatives from TxDOT. Both parks are partially located in the floodplain of the west fork of the Trinity River and each feature large wooded areas and a rich riparian environment. The design team focused on opportunities to protect and enhance the natural habitat, while encouraging trail users to experience the outdoors.



Signs, landscaping, and artistic railings enhance the project



River overlook structure

TxDOT partnered with the City of Grand Prairie to reimburse the city for all acquisition costs. Improvements included construction of 4.85 miles of accessible 14' wide concrete trail. Due to the site conditions, a 250-foot pedestrian bridge had to be constructed to cross Johnson Creek, a major tributary of the west fork of the Trinity River. Three elevated boardwalks were also constructed to access designated wetlands. Accessible ramps at six locations provide trail users with access to the linear park.

For more information contact Grand Prairie Parks & Recreation, P.O. Box 54045, Grand Prairie, TX 75054 - phone (972) 237-8375 www.grandfungp.com



The trail bridge over Johnson Creek at dusk

NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS

NRT Photo Contest winners

We are pleased to announce the winners of the National Recreation Trails Photo Contest for 2009. American Trails sponsors the annual contest for photos of designated **National Recreation Trails** across the country. Awards in several categories highlight the diversity of the NRTs and introduce more Americans to these great trails. See the winners and all 240 photos entered in the contest on the NRT web-site at www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails.

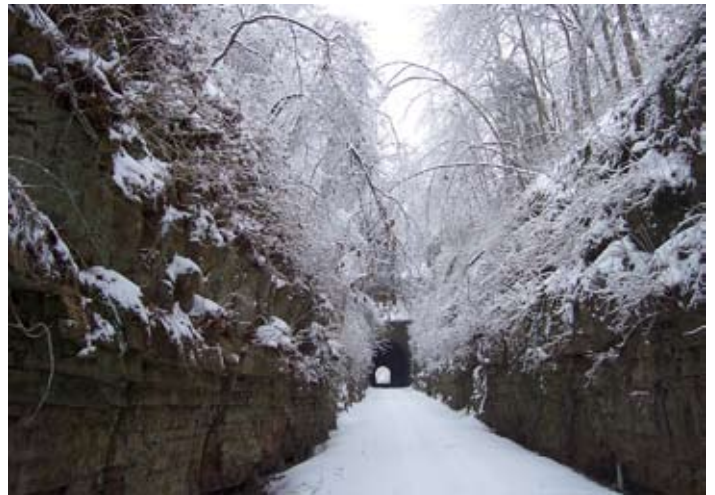
TRAIL USE CATEGORIES

Hiking and Walking • photo by **Eddie Gerritsen**
• Mount Timpanogos National Recreation Trail, UT

Equestrian Trails • photo by **Carl R. Knoch**
• Heritage Rail Trail County Park, York County, PA

Paddling and Water Trails • photo by **Karl King**
• Juniata River Water Trail, PA

Bicycling • photo by **John Reimer** and **Lorne Reimer**
• Maah Daah Hey Trail, ND



Tunnel Hill State Trail, Illinois (photo by Jonathan Voelz)

Admissible Trails • photo by **Lloyd Smith**
• Woodlands National Recreation Trail, Jacksonville, OR

TRAIL MANAGEMENT

Trail Sharing • photo by **Palisades District Staff, USFS**
• Palisades Creek National Recreation Trail, ID

Trail Work • photo by **Loretta Melancon**
• Ouachita National Recreation Trail, OK

Health and Fitness • photo by **Carl R. Knoch**
• Heritage Rail Trail County Park, PA

Volunteers • photo by **Brooke Smith**
• George S. Mickelson Trail Trek Bicycle Ride, SD

TRAIL FEATURES

Arts and Interpretation • photo by **Mary Shaw**
• Great Allegheny Passage Trail, PA

Rail and Canal Trails • photo by **Jonathan Voelz**
• Tunnel Hill State Trail, Johnson County, IL

Innovative Facilities • photo by **Mary Shaw**
• West Penn National Recreation Trail, Bow Ridge, PA

Environmental Features, Flora, and Fauna • photo by **Stan Malcolm**
• Raymond Brook Marsh, Hebron, CT, along the Air Line Trail

Scenery and Natural Features • photo by **Marty Silver**
• Little Stony Creek National Recreation Trail, VA

Urban Trails and Greenways • photo by **Yves Zsutty**
• Guadalupe River Trail, San Jose Trail System, CA



Volunteers on the Ouachita Trail (photo by Loretta Melancon)

Artistic Merit • photo by **Stephen Aushman**

- Tent Rocks National Recreation Trail, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument, NM

Historic Features • photo by **Mary Shaw**

- Canal Locks in Saltsburg on the West Penn Trail, PA (part of the Pittsburgh to Harrisburg Mainline National Recreational Trail)

If you enjoy photography, look up designated NRTs in your area or next time you travel. We'll be sponsoring another photo contest this year with a deadline for entries of December 15, 2010. Learn more about the National Recreation Trails Program and see more photos at www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails.



Art at the Eastern Continental Divide on the Great Allegheny Passage Trail
(photo by Mary Shaw)

2009 National Recreation Trails Photo Contest

See all 240 NRT photos entered at www.AmericanTrails.org



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Trails training opportunities

A sampling of the many topics covered by courses and training offered this year. See details on these opportunities and many more on the online Training Calendar: www.TrailsTraining.net.



David Bartoo of Delaware State Parks teaching a group about trail design

Courses include Mountain Leadership School, Basic Maintenance Skills, Teen Trails Leadership Crew, Crosscut Saw Certification, and more.

• www.outdoors.org

MOUNTAIN BIKING

Subaru/IMBA Trailbuilding School

The **International Mountain Bicycling Association** hosts dozens of three-day Subaru/IMBA Trail Care courses. The interactive learning and hands-on trail work emphasizes "sustainable" trail building, which means building trails that last a long time and require minimal maintenance. In addition to basic trail design and construction, the courses focus on fostering volunteer clubs and partnerships.

• www.imba.com

ALL TRAIL ACTIVITIES

Leadership for Trails Training

The **Outdoor Stewardship Institute** of Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado hosts several training events around the state including Crew Leader Instructor Refresher, Crew Chef Training, Ecological Restoration, Crew Leader Training for Trails, Working with Youth, Basic Trails Skills, and Wilderness First Aid & CPR.

• www.voc.org

EQUESTRIAN TRAIL SKILLS

Backcountry Horse Skills

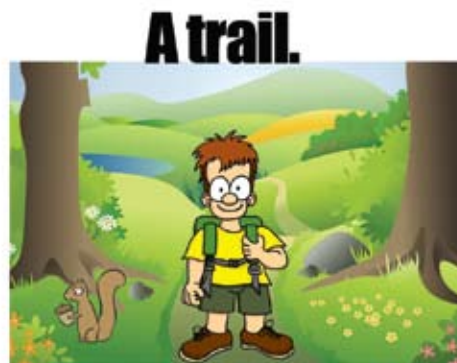
Ninemile Wildlands Training Center near Missoula, MT is hosting several workshops on backcountry horse trail and packing skills. Classes include Defensive Horse Safety, Mule and Horse Packing, Horsemanship Techniques, and Back Country Survival Techniques.

• www.fs.usda.gov/lolo

HIKING and BACKPACKING

Appalachian Trail Skills

A great reason to join one of the chapters of the **Appalachian Mountain Club** is to take advantage of the training offered in several regions the trail traverses.



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Training in soil composition (photo by Cam Lockwood)

ALL ORGANIZATIONS

Fund Raising and Grant Writing

The Center on Philanthropy at Indiana University hosts Principles & Techniques of Fundraising online and teaches classroom sessions around the country in Preparing Successful Grant Proposals, Online Fundraising and Social Media, Developing Major Gifts, and Fundraising for Small Nonprofits.

- www.philanthropy.iupui.edu

ALL OUTDOOR RECREATIONISTS

Leave No Trace

Training in the outdoor ethics program includes Master Educator Courses for those who then teach the Trainer Course to people who become Leave No Trace Trainers. Trainers (Master Educators) are then able to conduct Awareness Workshops, which are designed for the general public on Leave No Trace.

- www.lnt.org

Tread Lightly!

Tread Lightly! sponsors Train-the-Trainer courses around the country with local hosts. The innovative, practical methods of spreading outdoor ethics to the public use a curriculum specifically focused on motorized and mechanized recreation. Tread Trainers present the Tread Lightly! message of responsible recreation practices to groups and other educators.

- www.treadlightly.org

TRAINING CALENDAR

A few notable upcoming 2010 events; see details at www.TrailsTraining.net

April 16-18 - Cascade Locks, OR

- Trail Keepers of Oregon Trail Skills College

April 20 - Seyon Ranch in Groton, VT

- Vermont Trails and Greenways Annual meeting

April 21-23 - Cambria, CA

- 2010 California Trails & Greenways Conference

April 28-29 - Martinsville, IN

- Accessible Trails Training Course: 21st Century Trails

May 14-16 - Oakridge, OR

- High Cascade Forest Volunteers Trail Skills College

May 15-17 - Guadalajara, Mexico

- International Ciclovía – Car Free Sunday Study Tour

May 18-20 - Portland, OR

- Joint Conference: River Management Society and National Association of Recreation Resource Planners

May 24-28 - Albuquerque, NM

- National Landscape Conservation System Science Symposium includes National Scenic and Historic Trails

June 10-12 - Great Barrington, MA

- Northeast Trail Symposium

June 16-20 - Marathon County, WI

- Ice Age Trail University Mobile Skills Crew Training

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- Training and Leadership



The annual PTBA Trailbuilders Conference is the only national conference dedicated exclusively to trail design, construction, and maintenance. Join land managers, trail workers, and trail contractors nationwide for three days of informative sessions and a Trailbuilders Trade Show.

www.trailbuilders.org

For classes, conferences, and training opportunities, visit the NTTP online calendar at www.TrailsTraining.net

Twenty life lessons of the trail

The trail allows us to experience others, our world, and ourselves in a unique and intimate way.

By Ronald R. Bearwald, Ed.D.

Traveling in a chosen mode at a pace that allows us to immerse ourselves in the surrounding environment far surpasses what we might experience as a passerby in a speeding car. We are presented with both serenity and rigors that put us in touch with our own capabilities and sensibilities. We are stimulated by scenery and inhabitants that often escape our attention. Perhaps most importantly, in addition to the scenery, serenity, stimulation, and the intrinsic rewards that come with walking, hiking, and climbing, the pathway uniquely presents life “lessons.”



The Fisher Towers National Recreation Trail in Utah (photos by Stuart Macdonald)

The trail can be a great teacher if we allow ourselves to reflect on the nature of our experience. In fact, the trail is a perfect metaphor for life itself. Like life, the trail has its forks in the road which present us with decision points, its obstacles that slow our journey and test our resolve, its ever-changing terrain which demands that we adapt, its inclines and descents which draw on different strengths, and its fellow travelers whose relationships enrich our experience. Sometimes the trail is hidden and worn, but it is always there waiting to be rediscovered. And, like life, the trail always leads somewhere. As we set aside our trail gear and resume our normal daily routines, our memories of the trail experience can easily translate into “lessons” that lead us to a better understanding of our lives lived each day.

Walking the trail requires intention.

Trails abound. Selecting and walking the trail is not a passive activity. Whether we hike for function, conditioning, adventure, exploration or whether we seek solitude or engagement with the wonders of nature, we must intend to walk the trail. Bringing ourselves to our first steps on the pathway requires purpose and commitment. Our purposes bring meaning to our steps along the trail.

Some trails must be walked from the beginning while others may be joined at any point.

While the designated trailhead provides a clear beginning, many trails have entry points along the way. If we choose to start our journey at a point farther along the pathway, we must remain aware of what preceded us and seek information that will guide our direction.

There are forks in the trail.

Rarely do we encounter a trail without branches. These forks in the road are moments of decision. In deviating from the determined path we may learn and experience more or we may detract from that which lies ahead by branching off. It is important that we weigh our reasons and the consequences of selecting the fork we choose.

There are obstacles in the trail.

No trail is without obstacles. We will encounter fallen trees, flooded streams, jagged rocks, and animals even on the most well groomed trails. These obstacles are a way of testing our mettle and sense of purpose while providing us with an opportunity to achieve more. Obstacles overcome help make our trip all the more memorable.

Parts of the trail are often unmarked.

While many things point the way, the markers are not always clearly identifiable. We must deal with the uncertainty of direction by tapping into our experience, knowledge, skill, understanding and, sometimes, even our courage. Our skills and knowledge influence our decisions. Our choices guide the journey as it continues.

The trail always leads somewhere.

Some pathways lead to familiar and expected destinations while others open us to new discoveries. Occasionally, either as expected or unexpectedly, the trail brings us back to where we started. When it seems that we are on a trail to nowhere, our patience and persistence determine how far we travel.

The terrain and landscape of the trail changes. The trail is dynamic, not static.

The pathway presents a variety of terrain and landscapes. Clay and stone give way to the soft cushion of moss and



fallen pine needles. Sun-baked meadows may be replaced by damp soil by a forest stream. As we continue, we adapt to the changing character of the trail and relish what it offers.



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DECALS Both custom and standard recreation style decals are available.





Parts of the trail are more challenging than others.

We may encounter inclines, descents, curves, changing weather, weather extremes, and other tests and obstacles of nature. Each challenge urges our active engagement with what we encounter in the environment as we chart our way. The ebb and flow of the trail's demands remind us that life is not linear and opens us to learning more about our strengths and needs in dealing with change.

The difficulty of the trail is relative.

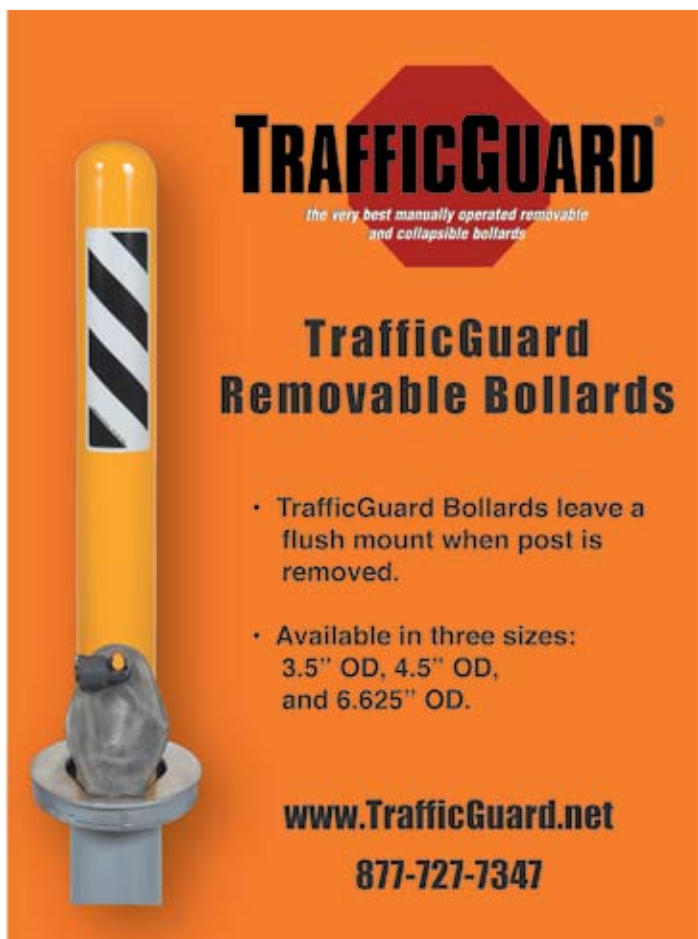
Some days we encounter trails that are challenging; on other days an easier path awaits. The relative difficulty of the trail is defined by both the condition of the trail and what we are able to bring to the trail. As we understand our part in determining the relative difficulty of our trail we can better appreciate the rewards we experience.

Sometimes the trail doubles back so that we can reach higher ground.

Often the trail is not linear, a straight line between two points. Sometimes the trail curves and even doubles back on itself. The zigzag pattern of the trail keeps us from being discouraged by an incline that is too steep to conquer all at once. By following the side-to-side pathway, we are able to maintain our resolve to carry on.

Descending may be more rigorous than climbing.

We sometimes resist a trail that declines, as it seems counter to reaching higher ground or the summit. However, the valleys, canyons, meadows, and streams that lay at the end of the descent provide an enriching new perspective. Each descent conditions our bodies and minds for each and refreshes us to climb higher.



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We will meet others along the trail.

Most contact is likely to be in passing, but remaining open to contacts and conversation to be more expansive will enrich your trail experience. Directly or indirectly you have shared an experience with those you meet along a mutually traveled path. In doing so you have become part of each other's trail experience that will only be remembered if you are present to these contacts when they occur.

Some trails should not be walked alone.

The trail offers a fulfilling solitude to those who choose the singular stroll. However, on treacherous trails a traveling companion provides the counsel and protection that ensures our safety or survival. While hiking alone offers its own rewards, companionship becomes essential along a threatening pathway.

Resting along the trail allows one to complete the journey.

Fatigue, that often comes on suddenly and unexpectedly can ultimately prevent us from concluding our walk. By carefully monitoring the demands that the trail is placing on our body and allowing for purposeful rest in the short-term, we can preserve a long-term and continuing experience on the trail.

Walking the trail requires nourishment.

While water and food seem the most obvious form of nourishment, resting along the way to enjoy or photograph the view, journaling our experience, conversing, or soaking our feet in a stream can also sustain us. Most importantly we must consciously seek and provide ourselves with opportunities for nourishment.

The trail and its surroundings are one.

The pathway is but a part of a larger and intertwined environment. Like most ecosystems each individual part affects and relies on all of the other parts for survival and life. While on the trail, remember that we are a living part of the of the trail's ecosystem and travel respectfully.

The trail is always there.

Once a trail is blazed it is always there waiting to be rediscovered. But when washed away, covered by snow, hidden by overgrowth, or faint from disuse, we have to work a little harder to find it. The hidden trail always waits as a pathway to our destination.

The trail is multi-sensory.

The movement of our body against the trail and the sights we see predominate our experience. We feel the elements against our skin. We smell the wildflowers or pine needles on the trail bed. We hear the sounds of water and wildlife. Even silence catches our attention. We must use all of our senses to appreciate the full impact of the trail.

Walking the trail mindfully is often more rewarding than hurrying to the finish.

It is easy to get caught up in the notion that completing the trail is the overriding goal of our efforts. Our motivation to achieve the finish may close us off from many rich

and rewarding experiences and images along the way. Our memories of the trail are significantly enriched when we remain mindful and attentive to all that the surrounds our every step of the journey.

The trail becomes more memorable through reflection.

In order to give each trail experience a lasting place in our memory, we must actively and consciously reflect on its meaning. What new sights, sounds, challenges, and people did we encounter? What did we learn about the trail? What did we learn about ourselves? Finding time to reflect through journaling, cataloging images, and sharing with others will help create lasting memories of our trail experience.

As we follow our trail through urban, rural, or wilderness settings, pay close attention to the "messages" that can enrich our experience. Reflecting each day on the unique "lessons" of our trail experience helps us better understand ourselves and each other, and promotes appreciation for our world. The trail has been, and will continue to be a great teacher.

"Each day is a journey, and the journey itself is home."

— Matsuo Basho, Haiku Master

Dr. Bearwald is a professional services consultant in education with teaching expertise in educational leadership, instructional systems, and educational policy development, and communications.



NEW RESOURCES

Some recent articles, studies, and photo galleries at www.AmericanTrails.org

Valuing Bicycling's Economic and Health Impacts in Wisconsin

This new study estimates the economic impact of bicycle recreation and tourism in Wisconsin to be \$924,211,000, and the total potential value of health benefits from reducing short car trips and increasing bicycle trips to total \$409,944,167. The study demonstrates that bicycling has the potential to contribute substantially to the health and economic well-being of Wisconsin citizens.

The report includes data from surveys, analysis of the key topics with bicycling, and recommendations for actions and policies by communities, agencies, and organizations. Topics covered include:

- Economic impact of bicycle tourism and recreation
- Valuing bicycling's impact on health
- Gathering evidence for investments in bicycling infrastructure

See the link to this study under "Benefits and Economics" at www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html



Low water crossing on Cherry Creek Trail, Denver, Colorado

New Cool Trail Solutions gallery: low water stream crossings

Low water crossings for trails are typically concrete structures near water level. Much wider than culverts, these structures cross over drainageways at the same grade as the trail surface. Low water crossings are designed to allow normal flow under the trail, and to be over-topped during seasonal floods. Concrete is the normal material used to withstand flooding and scouring from flowing water.

Unlike bridges, railings are typically not used on low water crossings, although the structure may be wider than the normal trail width. Similar structures are used to carry trails over streams under road bridges. Narrow channels may be cut in the concrete to allow moderate water flow through rather than under the trail itself.

See this and more recently added photo galleries in our "Cool Trail Solutions" area at www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/cool/

Schuylkill River Greenway land deal benefits public as well as industry

Schuylkill River National and State Heritage Area worked with Brentwood Industries to acquire and construct a trailhead facility in Reading, PA. The trail is a planned, 130-mile regional facility between Pottsville and Philadelphia. For the community, a manufacturing plant was able to expand basic sector employment, the kind of employment that generates secondary employment in the service sector of the local economy.

The property, now back on the tax rolls, was vacant for decades, producing little or no taxes to support the City of Reading, the Reading School District, and Berks County. The project also closed a gap in Reading's trail section, making it possible to travel uninterrupted from the center of Reading 6.75 miles to the village of Gibraltar.

See the link to this study under "Benefits and Economics" at www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html

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NEW PRODUCTS

Technology for trails and greenways

Pathway GuideLite system lights the way for trail users

One challenge for trail managers is to provide the appropriate lighting system for different situations. An interesting solution for some applications is a solar-powered rechargeable lighting system.

Arbor Glow, Inc. is the manufacturer of a lighting device to mark the location of pathways, sidewalks, and various types of trails in total darkness. The "Pathway GuideLite" system serves as a series of low light-level beacons to identify the pathway's route at night. The GuideLite will emit a long-lasting steady glow that continues for at least 15 hours at a light intensity 100 times greater than the human eye can perceive.

The Pathway GuideLite does not rely on reflective light or any electrical power source. There are no underground cables to install and there is no maintenance needed. The Pathway GuideLite fully recharges through normal daylight exposure to extend its glowing time through the following night darkness, and is sustainable for up to 100,000 recharge cycles. The Pathway GuideLite is easily recognized in darkness from 40 feet away, providing safety benefits to all pathway and sidewalk users.

Trail Markers come in 3" X 6" panels so an 18 square inch size is now offered. Custom sizes can also be produced. The secure mounting is typically 16 inches above the ground level. The product is American-made from metal.

For more information contact John Valenta at arborglow@cox.net.



Simulation of the Pathway GuideLite in use on a trail

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- ◆ EZ Dock
- ◆ Jefferson County Open Space, CO
- ◆ Kansas Dept. of Wildlife & Parks
- ◆ Mt. Shasta Products, CA
- ◆ Minnesota Recreational Trail Users Association, Inc.
- ◆ Pioneer Bridges
- ◆ Trails.com, Inc.
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- ◆ Voss Signs, LLC

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More details at www.AmericanTrails.org/patrons.html

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*Scott Belonger, P.E., Associate Principal
Loris and Associates, Inc.*

American Trails Business Directory

Visit AmericanTrails.org or contact us at (530) 547-2060.



PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

The leaders and volunteers who are helping create trails for all Americans

Dale Shewalter, founder of the Arizona Trail

Dale Shewalter, known as the “Father of the Arizona Trail,” and guiding spirit for the Arizona Trail Association (ATA), died January 10. According to the ATA, Dale had a vision of a continuous path across Arizona, and in 1985 he undertook a journey on foot across the state. Following that experience, Dale began sharing his trail idea throughout Arizona to many people and agencies.

The idea quickly took hold and within a few years the Arizona Trail idea was born. Today the 819 mile Arizona Trail is nearly complete and was congressionally designated a National Scenic Trail in 2009. Dale’s positive spirit, sense of cooperation, and refusal to give up are still the Arizona Trail Association’s operating style.

In 2008 American Trails presented Dale Shewalter with the State Advocacy Award for Arizona. The citation reads: “While walking from the Mexican border to the Utah border, he visualized and tentatively mapped an interlocking route of trail systems traversing the state from south to north. The concept of the Arizona Trail was born, offering opportunities for hikers, equestrians, mountain bicyclists, and cross-country skiers to experience the rich diversity Arizona has to offer.”



Dale Shewalter at a recognition event in 2006



Dale with his horse Cimmaron

THE ARIZONA TRAIL

By Dale R. Shewalter, February 1, 2003

**In the land of Arizona
Through desert heat or snow
Winds a trail for folks to follow
From Utah to Old Mexico.
It's the Arizona Trail
A path through the great Southwest
A diverse track through wood and stone
Your spirit it will test.
Some will push and pedal
And some will hike or run
Others will ride their horse or mule.
What else could be more fun?
Oh, sure, you'll sweat and blister
You'll feel the miles each day
You'll shiver at the loneliness
Your feet and seat will pay.
But you'll see moonlight on the borderlands
You'll see stars on the Mogollon
You'll feel the warmth of winter sun
And be thrilled straight through to bone.
The aches and pains will fade away
You'll feel renewed and whole
You'll never be the same again
With Arizona in your soul.
Along the Arizona Trail
A reverence and peace you'll know
Through deserts, canyons, and mountains
From Utah to Old Mexico.**

Beneficial Designs works for accessible trails

Working toward universal access through research, design & education

Beneficial Designs develops assessment systems and devices to give people the information they need to access a variety of environments. Other work involves new technologies to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities. Peter Axelson founded Beneficial Designs in 1981 and has been an Advisor to American Trails for many years. [See more about his work with skiing and healthy kids on page 9.] According to Peter, "We are developing new technologies with USDA and FHWA government-funded research and development that will improve the efficiency of conducting assessments of trails and public rights-of-ways."

Current projects include:

UTAP & TrailWare 2.0 Workshops

There are currently 1,044 trail enthusiasts trained to lead assessments using the Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP). In addition to workshops held recently in California and North Carolina, Florida continues to lead the way in providing training to their trails personnel and was presented a "Best Trails State" award by American Trails in 2008.

Trail assessment coordinators are involving various groups to assist in the UTAP process, including Girl Scouts, 4-H Clubs, and high school and college students. Beneficial Designs provides the training materials and tools through PaxPress, while American Trails coordinates most UTAP training courses.

TrailWare 2.0 is used to generate trail access information, signage, and trail management reports. Data is uploaded to the Trail Explorer website at www.trailexplorer.org. For more information, contact trails@beneficialdesigns.com.



One of Beneficial Designs' Trail Access Information signs on the Truckee River greenway trail in Reno, Nevada

Recreation Trails

We are working on our third Nevada Recreational Trails Program project to provide signage in Northern Nevada. The goal is to continue making Trail Access Information (TAI) widely available in Northern Nevada for a variety of trails and trail users. In 2007/2008, we assessed 29 trails totaling 37.8 miles. A total of 80 TAI signs and 9 full panel color trail signs were created and installed. This year, we have assessed 103 miles of trail and are creating full color trail maps and TAI signs for at least 12 different parks.

Tahoe Meadows (near Lake Tahoe)

This project is designed to improve trail access and opportunities while protecting the natural and archeological resources within and around Tahoe Meadows. In cooperation with the U.S. Forest Service and Nevada State Parks, three new loop trails totaling 3.4 miles have been built or improved, including 1,200 feet of boardwalk along Ophir Creek. Two new stair sets and a new turnpike have also been constructed. Completion of this project is anticipated in 2010 with a new bridge over Ophir Creek, an interpretive sign, multiple directional signs, and a trails map.

High Efficiency Trail Assessment Process

This project created the Wheeled Instrumentation Sensor Package (WISP) to collect more accurate, objective information about trails, including shared use paths, back-country singletrack trails, and cross-country ski trails. To date, 70 trails have been assessed in Northern Nevada using the new system. Multiple HETAP systems have been purchased by state and city land managers and the National Park Service in Florida, Arizona, and Canada. This system has been commercially available through Beneficial Designs for the past year.

Accessible Trail Gate Barrier

The goal of this project is to design an electronic trail gate barrier that can be used with or without a mechanical trail gate barrier to restrict access to motorized trail vehicles, and allow access to personal mobility device users. The system uses infrared heat detection technologies to detect and report violations by motorized vehicle users.

Surface Accessibility

The Rotational Penetrometer (RP) measures the firmness and stability of trail surfaces, carpet, and other pedestrian routes. The RP is commercially available through Beneficial Designs. It is currently under review as an ASTM standard test method for the measurement of surface firmness and stability.



Peter Axelson demonstrating the Accessible Trail Gate Barrier

A Standardized Assessment Process of Outdoor Recreation Facilities

This project will create methods for assessing the accessibility of recreation elements used for outdoor recreation, picnic and camping facilities, such as picnic tables, fire rings, and water pumps.

Public Rights-of-Way Assessment Process to Determine Accessibility

Beneficial Designs developed a manual sidewalk assessment process (SWAP) to systematically measure elements

within the pedestrian environment, such as curb ramps and driveway crossings. In phase I, we were able to automate the process to reduce the time to perform assessments to 20% of the time required to perform assessments manually. We have added a laser to measure transition heights to detect tripping hazards. We have submitted a request to the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) for Phase II funding to develop a commercial product.

Adaptive Ski Equipment Standards

Peter Axelson is chair of the Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) standards committee that developed specifications and test methods for adaptive ski equipment. The standard was published in December of 2007 as a RESNA American National Standard. The committee meets each year in December in conjunction with the Ski Spectacular event in Breckenridge, Colorado.

Canoe Seating System

The Universal Design Canoe Seat is finished and is now commercially available! The seat replaces the existing bench seat. It provides adjustable pelvic, back, and lateral supports to improve balance and comfort. For more information, contact Chosen Valley Canoe Accessories at (507) 867-3961 or cvca@gear4portaging.com.

For information about Beneficial Designs, visit the website at www.beneficialdesigns.com.

American Trails coordinates workshops on both the UTAP and TrailWare. Read more about these courses at www.AmericanTrails.org/http/ATworkshops06.html

 The image shows a promotional graphic for American Trails. At the top, the logo "American Trails" is partially visible. Below it, a pink banner contains the text: "The world's largest online resource for planning, building, funding, managing, enhancing, and supporting trails and greenways." To the right of this banner is a photograph of a wooden boardwalk winding through a grassy field. On the left side of the image, a list of services is provided:

- Trails Training
- Business Directory
- Cool Trail Solutions
- Over 2,000 articles and publications
- News, Action Alerts, and jobs
- National Recreation Trails Database
- Trail Resources by State
- Online Trail Store
- Searchable Trails Bibliography

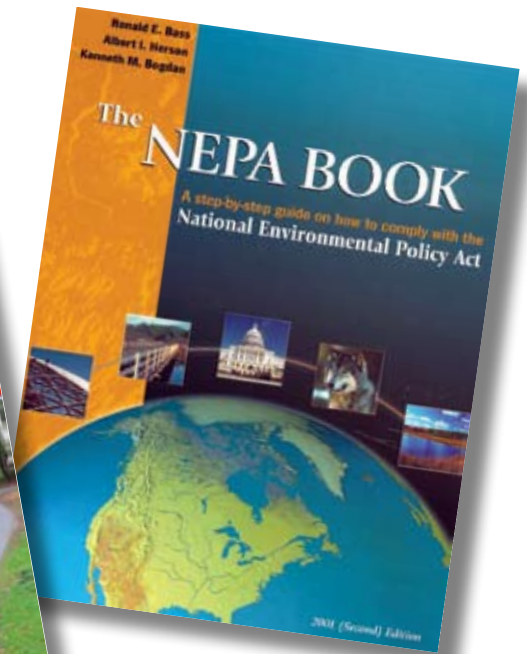
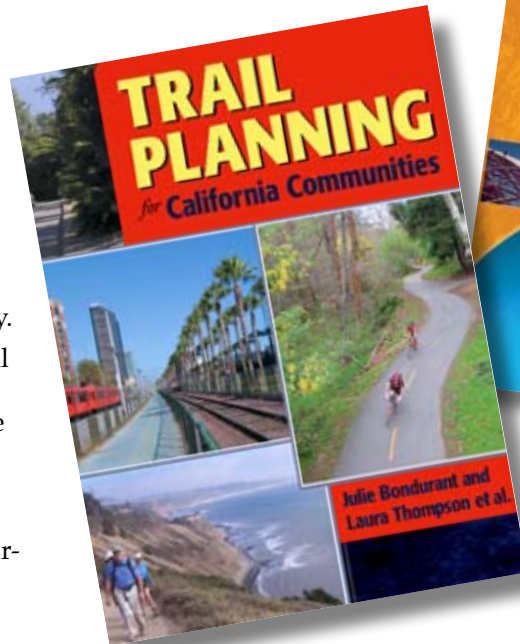
 This is a large blue banner for American Trails. At the top, the text "American Trails" is written in large white letters. Below this, on the left, are the Facebook and Twitter logos. To the right of the Facebook logo, the text reads: "Stay up-to-date with developments in the trails community - become a fan of American Trails." Below the Twitter logo, the text says: "Receive our 'tweets' on funding issues and recreation opportunities." At the bottom left, a blue bar contains the text "Follow us online". Below this bar, the text reads: "Search American Trails on Facebook www.twitter.com/American_Trails". On the right side of the banner, there is a vertical green and yellow graphic celebrating the 20th anniversary. It includes the text "Ensuring Trails for Our Future", "20 YEARS", and the "American Trails" logo.

BOOK *reviews*

Trail planning guide

A new book that originated in California will be of great help to trail planners across the country. *Trail Planning for California Communities* offers planners, advocates, developers, and trail managers a comprehensive approach for transforming their vision into reality. Based on the premise that successful trail development depends on community involvement throughout the life of the project, the book also assumes that every component of design, construction, maintenance, and funding must be considered during the early stages of the process and reassessed as the project moves from planning to implementation.

While the book is essential for those working on Golden State projects,



Conservation and Land Acquisition Handbook

The NEPA Book is subtitled "A Step-by-Step Guide on How to Comply with the National Environmental Protection Act."

Anyone seeking grants for work on federal lands needs to have a working knowledge of NEPA. The nation's oldest and far-reaching environmental law, NEPA applies to all federal agencies and most of the activities they approve or carry out.

The NEPA Book includes:

- Detailed advice on how to comply with NEPA
- Expanded discussions of EAs and EISs, as well as Findings of No Significant Impact (FONSIs)
- Flow charts and diagrams explaining the entire NEPA process
- How to integrate NEPA with other environmental laws
- Resources for NEPA compliance
- The globalization of NEPA
- Discussions of important case law
- Recent advisory memoranda on the implementation of NEPA

The 470-page book is available from Solano Press at www.solano.com or (800) 931-9373.

the sheer level of detail and the comprehensive coverage of every trail issue makes this a valuable resource nationwide:

- Purpose & Value of Trails
- Policies and Regulations
- Building the Trail Community
- Legal Rights and Concerns
- Trail Design
- Environmental Review and Permitting of Trails
- Funding Trails
- Maintenance & Operations

The book received the Outstanding Environmental Resource Document Award for 2010 from the CA chapter of the Association of Environmental Professionals.

Read more about the 429-page book from Solano Press at www.solano.com or call (800) 931-9373 to order.



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- Trails 4 All
- Trees Forever
- Tri-Cities Visitor & Convention Bureau, WA
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- Whitney Portal Store & Hostel
- Willow Creek Community Services District

AFFILIATES

- American Horse Council
- Audubon Center at the Francis Beidler Forest
- Bicycle Colorado
- Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire
- BLM - Redding, CA
- Blue Ribbon Coalition
- Brazos River Authority, TX
- Broad River Greenway, NC
- Bylines
- California Assn of RV Parks & Campgrounds
- California Center for Physical Activity
- Chelan-Douglas Land Trust, WA
- Chicagoland Cycling Meetup
- City of Clayton, MO
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- City of Leominster, MA
- City of Orange Beach, AL
- City of Wylie Parks & Recreation, TX
- Commonwealth of Kentucky
- Connecticut Forest & Park Assn
- Continental Divide Trail Alliance
- Davis County C.E.D., UT
- Dillon Nature Center
- East Arkansas Planning & Development District
- East Coast Greenway Alliance
- Five Rivers MetroParks, OH
- Florida Greenways & Trails Foundation, Inc.
- Florida Trail Association
- Forest Preserve Dist. of DuPage Co., IL
- Gallatin Valley Land Trust, MT
- Greater Memphis Greenline
- Greene County Partnership - Tourism, TN
- Greers Ferry Lake Trails Council, AR
- Hoosier Rails to Trails Council
- Hulet Hornbeck
- Iditarod National Historic Trail
- International Snowmobile Mfg. Assn.
- Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation/ Mississippi River Trail
- Irvine Ranch Conservancy
- Kentucky Horse Council
- La Canada Flintridge Trails Council, CA
- Lebanon Recreation & Parks Department, NH
- Lee County Parks and Recreation, FL
- Louisiana Office of State Parks
- Lowell Parks and Conservation Trust, MA
- Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association, OH
- Michigan Snowmobile Association
- Emily Meyerson
- Meadwestvaco
- National Association of Recreation Resource Planners
- Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission
- Northwestern Ohio Rails-to-Trails Assn.
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- Tahoe Pyramid Bikeway
- Tahoe Rim Trail Association
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- The Corps Network
- The Greenway Team, Inc.
- The Trail Foundation, TX
- Town of Collingwood, Ontario
- Trail Mix, Inc.
- Trails & Bikeways Council of Greater Redding
- Trails & Open Space Coalition
- Trailscape.net
- Ukiah Valley Trail Group
- Vermont Assn. of Snow Travelers, Inc. (VAST)
- Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado
- Volunteers for Outdoor Missouri
- Walkkill Valley Rail Trail Assn.
- Warrenton Trails Association

FEATURED NATIONAL RECREATION TRAIL

Austin loves its lakefront trail



Above: Bridge links trails on both sides of Lady Bird Lake
Left: Guitars are the theme for art along the trail

Butch Smith, who helped with the survey, noted:

“Early one July morning, I stationed myself near one of the busiest trailheads to launch the survey. As I watched the many young and fit runners go through a pre-run warm-up, the thought came to mind that this trail has probably replaced the bar scene as a place for singles to get together. But then, as I looked around, I noticed people of all walks of life on the trail. There were older people out for a stroll, dog walkers, moms pushing baby strollers, bicycle riders, and friends walking along deep in conversation. In our fast-paced, automobile-based society, it is hard for people to come together and share their time. Evidently, people have found this opportunity out on the Town Lake Trail and they are enjoying the experience.”

See more photos and information on the Trail at Lady Bird Lake on its Featured National Recreation Trail page at www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails. Visit The Trail Foundation at www.townlaketrail.org.

The Trail at Lady Bird Lake is one of the most well-used trails in America. Formerly called Town Lake Trail, the 10-mile path was designated a National Recreation Trail in 1975.

The trail came to life during the 1970s thanks to a public-private civic effort led by the Citizen's Committee for a More Beautiful Town Lake and its Honorary Chairwoman, Lady Bird Johnson. In 2003, the Town Lake Trail Foundation (now The Trail Foundation) was formed to continue the work of the Citizen's Committee and ensure that the Trail remains one of Austin's outstanding places.

The Austin Parks and Recreation Department conducted a survey in the 2003 in order to learn more about trail users, and how to improve their experience.



Afternoon rush hour on the Trail at Lady Bird Lake

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Thank you!

American Trails does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, religion, age, or ability.

2009 American Trails Website Contest Winning Websites

Check out the winners of the 2009 American Trails Website Contest. It's the only national contest to recognize trail-related websites delivering effective information, supporting volunteers, and engaging the public. Encouraging others in the trails world to study these good examples of websites is just one of the ways we support trails across America (and Canada). For links to the Winning Websites and dozens of nominated sites, visit www.AmericanTrails.org.

❑ State agency site

Minnesota Water Trails provides a list of water trails, maps, trip planning, water levels, safety, and recommended reading.

❑ Trails on federal lands

NM Rails-to-Trails Association volunteers work to convert abandoned rail lines in the Sacramento Mountains of southern New Mexico into multi-use trails, while saving historic trestles.

❑ Community trails system website

Clear Creek Trail is Kitsap County's (WA) stream and riparian area preservation project.

❑ Trail organization or club website

Mulleville Snowmobile Club (NY) provides a forum for stewardship and information on the NY state trail system with photos, trail updates, and volunteer events.

❑ Designated National Recreation Trail website

Cliff Walk National Recreation Trail along the eastern shore of Newport, RI is famous as a public access walk that combines natural beauty with architectural history.

❑ Personal site (site developed by an individual)

Mike's Hikes, created by Mike Molloy, provides trails, hiking, and snowshoeing reports and photos in the Rocky Mountain National Park and Estes Park, Colorado area.

❑ Presentation of plans and proposals

Friends of Lafitte Corridor is dedicated to preserving the greenway corridor since Hurricane Katrina gave special priority to rethinking the New Orleans landscape.

❑ Education and training

Gwynns Falls Trail runs 15 miles along the Gwynns Falls stream to the Middle Branch and the Inner Harbor of the Patapsco River in Maryland and includes detailed graphics of all informational panels on display along the trail.

❑ Graphics and site design

York County Rail Trail Authority (PA) is a prime example of how a private business and a public agency can partner to provide trail information to the trail community.

❑ Best use of photographs

Great Rivers Greenway District highlights the River Ring, a 600-mile region-wide system of greenways, parks and trails in the St. Louis region.

❑ Trail finding and database site

UtahMountainBiking.com: Bruce Argyle has ridden, photographed, mapped, and described in detail over 300 trails spanning the state of Utah.

❑ Trail tour or virtual visit

Cumberland Trail will pass through 11 eastern Tennessee counties; site includes a wealth of maps and trail descriptions for the long-distance hiker.

❑ Travel and tourism site for trails

Delaware & Lehigh National Heritage Corridor (PA) helps visitors on boat, bike, or foot find trailheads and points of interest along the 165-mile path.

❑ Promotion of trail ethics and trail sharing

Ridge to Rivers offers trail maps, routes, and trail conditions for the Boise, Idaho foothills, and encourages responsible trail use during the wet winter months.

❑ Accessible trails

Wisconsin State Parks, Trails, and Forests provides details of many of the 650 miles of trails that are accessible to wheelchair users and others with mobility impairments.

❑ Recognition and promotion of volunteerism

East Bay Regional Park District (CA) supports a program that includes Trail Maintenance Volunteers, Public Safety Volunteers, and Regional Parks Ambassadors.

❑ Health and exercise

Albuquerque Prescription Trails Pilot Program provides prescriptions for walking and wheelchair rolling and a walking guide with directions and bus route access.

❑ Trail-related business or product

Loris and Associates, Inc. provides many examples of design solutions for urban corridors and shared-use paths, as well as mountain trails, with bridges, retaining walls, underpasses, and other facilities.

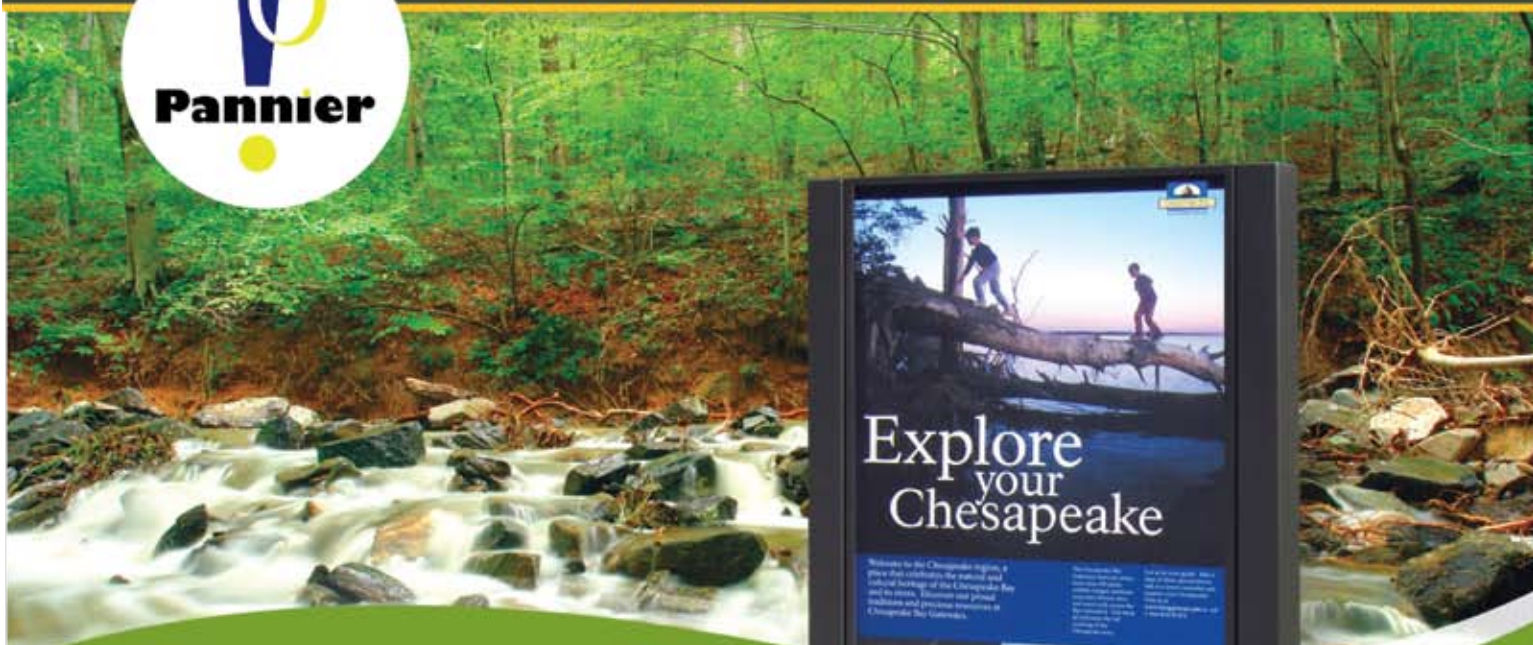
For links to the Winning Websites and dozens of nominated sites, visit www.AmericanTrails.org



Award winners are entitled to use the "Winning Website" logo on their sites.



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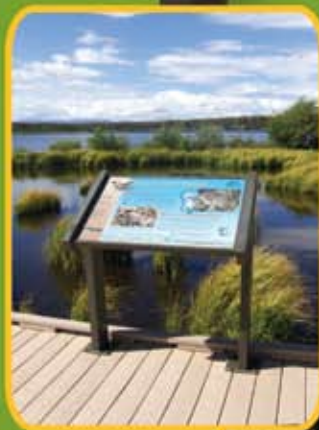


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