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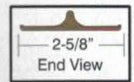


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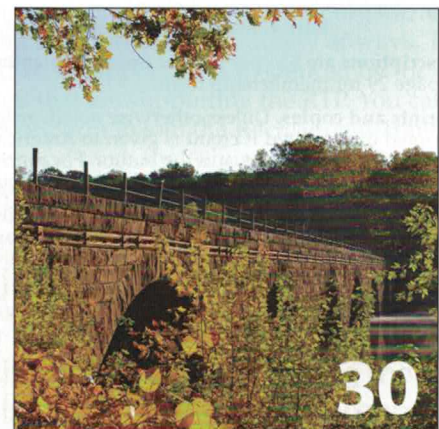
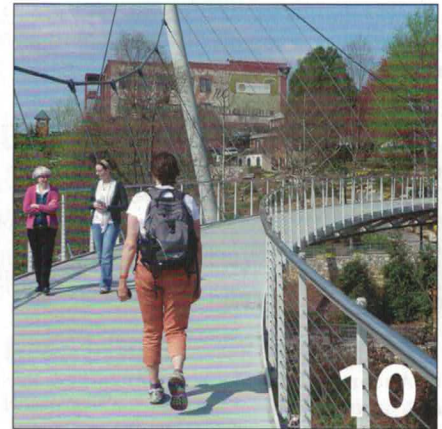
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# American Trails

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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**

**Subscriptions** are \$35 per year or free with membership—see page 29 for membership form.

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## FROM THE EDITOR

# The electric revolution

The trails community has discovered a mysterious force called “electricity.” Consider the “electronic personal assistance mobility device,” of which the Segway is the familiar example.

We have recently been publicizing the Department of Justice rules relating to “Power-Driven Mobility Devices.” The DOJ included over 6,000 words discussing how to define and categorize wheelchairs and other devices, that may be used to help people with disabilities get around.

DOJ concluded that the Segway is not a wheelchair, but leaves it up to local agencies whether to allow its use on trails as an assistive device. As we are finding, many of the trail managers who have addressed the issue are choosing to allow electric devices that do sound a lot like Segways.

The trail regulations, however, tend to limit the weight and dimensions of vehicles for people with mobility disabilities. That would rule out the appearance of the electrifyingly powerful Tesla as an assistive device, but it makes you think. There is a whole lineup of electric two-wheelers from Zero Motorcycles. Lithium-powered mountain bicycles are benefitting from new battery technology. Will the electric bike be the first big step for China into American transportation?

It looks a lot like an expanding technology that is heading for the trails. The big question, though, is how electric vehicles will affect land management. If it's quieter than a horse, weighs less than a llama, and doesn't spew fumes or leave waste behind—where's the environmental impact? Or is there an ethical issue, perhaps that riding sedately up the long hill is not painful enough?

And then, there are a few million active Baby Boomers who expect to spend a lot more years in the great outdoors—and not in an Escalade. Where is the dividing line between an “assistive device” for people with mobility problems, and fast toys for folks with bad knees?

Electricity looks like the next challenge to our traditions about planning and managing trails.

— *Stuart Macdonald, Editor*

## Identification Statement

**Publication's title and number:** American Trails Magazine (ISSN 1082-8303)

**Issue date:** April 15, 2011

**Statement of frequency:** Published three times a year

**Authorized organization's name, address, phone number:**

American Trails, P.O. Box 491797, Redding, CA 96049-1797

**Physical Address:** 21750 Rolling Hills Drive, Palo Cedro, CA 96073 - Phone (530) 547-2060

**Issue Number:** Volume 40 Number 1

**Subscription price:** \$35 per year or free with membership



# SUPPORTING TRAILS in CONGRESS



*American Trails and other nationwide organizations have been urging key members of Congress and Administration officials to recognize the importance of funding for trails and related facilities. For instance, the Coalition for Recreational Trails is the umbrella group for protecting and growing the Recreational Trails Program. See our Web page for more about funding federal transportation programs, LWCF, federal land managing agencies, and more:*

[www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html)

## ■ Time to talk trails!

By Pam Gluck, Executive Director  
**AMERICAN TRAILS**

American Trails' vision is of trails within 15 minutes of every American home and workplace. We support efforts to link community trails to neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces. As our nation looks closely at the increase in childhood obesity, the need for healthier lifestyle choices for everyone, safe routes for active transportation, urban development, and the environment, there are major issues to address. Trails, greenways, bikeways, and other routes are a major part of the solution. The health of our children, as well

as our cities, will depend on preserving trails, open space, parks, transportation choices, and places for recreation.

In this stressed economy, it is easy for others to consider our work as non-essential. We know better! We must be much more vigilant in educating our leaders as

*The West Orange, Little Econ, and Cady Way trails in Orange County supported 516 jobs and an estimated economic impact of \$42.6 million in 2010. (East Central Florida Regional Planning Council - 2011 Economic Impact Study)*

to the variety of benefits trails and greenways provide our citizens and visitors.

## Contact your Members of Congress!

There has never been a more critical time to speak up for trails! This is the most important year ever to get Members of Congress to know why trails and greenways are critical to the health of our families and communities. We know about the endless benefits of trails. But, the most compelling cases to be made at this time are about the economic and health benefits of trails.

Invite your Senators and Representatives to a trail groundbreaking, to a volunteer work day, or to a National Trails Day® or National Get Outdoors Day event. Tell the media about these events, too, and then send news clips to your Congressional offices. Tell them about your success stories and about the myriad of people of all ages and abilities that love and use these trails!

## ■ Opportunities to highlight trails:

- **June 4 ~ American Hiking Society's National Trails Day** ~ [www.americanhiking.org](http://www.americanhiking.org)
- **June 11 ~ National Get Outdoors Day** ~ [www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org](http://www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org)

## ■ America's Great Outdoors Initiative

The goal of the President's America's Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative is to connect Americans to the outdoors and encourage land and resource conservation, as well as greater public access to our natural areas. The vision reflected in the newly released report dovetails with the First Lady's Let's Move Outside program ([www.letsmove.gov/lets-move-outside](http://www.letsmove.gov/lets-move-outside)) that is a part of her Let's Move campaign. The AGO report also includes the goal of full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Read the full "Connecting Americans to the Great Outdoors" report at [www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov](http://www.americasgreatoutdoors.gov).

## ■ Sign on as a supporter of the Recreational Trails Program!

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) has created a Council of Advisors comprised of organizations that support RTP's continuation. Advisors add their names to letters to key Members of Congress, to the Administration, and to others. In addition, Advisors reach out to other organizations to ask them to sign-on and to help in a variety of ways. The program has broad-base support — as evidenced by the 471 groups and agencies that are supporting the RTP. You can download the sign-on form to join the Recreational Trails Council of Advisors and view the Advisors that have joined to date on this page: [www.americantrails.org/rtp](http://www.americantrails.org/rtp).

## SHARE YOUR SUCCESS STORIES

The Summer 2011 issue of the *American Trails Magazine* will be dedicated to "making the case" for trails. We will highlight the economic and health benefits of trails and greenways. Please send us your article ideas and photos for consideration. The deadline is June 15.

**Keep up to date on funding and legislation to support trails:**

[www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/support.html)



# Powered mobility on the trails

*How land managers are responding to the recent DOJ rule on accessibility and allowing "power-driven mobility devices" on trails*

By Stuart Macdonald, *Editor*,  
AMERICAN TRAILS MAGAZINE

## Policies address trail accessibility rule

March 15 was the date that Department of Justice (DOJ) regulations dealing with "other power-driven mobility devices" went into effect. The challenge for trail managers was to respond to a rule that would allow persons with mobility disabilities to drive virtually any vehicle on trails.

The new rule addresses "nondiscrimination on the basis of disability" under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Land managers—whether local, state, or nonprofit—are all affected by the rule.

We have gathered quite a few of the new policies to determine how land managing agencies are responding to the new rule. (See the complete policies at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)). Not surprisingly, there is a lot of variation. Some of the key issues we found are:

### Use of motor vehicles

*Since the DOJ does not rule out any vehicle types, policies need to specify which kinds of OPDMD could be operated safely.*

- Internal combustion engines prohibited (Santa Monica Mountains)
- If powered by an internal combustion engine, the engine shall have a four-stroke cycle, be equipped with an approved spark arrestor muffler, and meet Clean Air standards in



*Segway tours are popular with visitors to several cities; the devices can potentially be used for mobility by people with disabilities*

effect at the time of its manufacture. Two-stroke cycle engines are not allowed. (Illinois)

### Use of electric vehicles

*The most common power-driven mobility device allowed by land managers is the class of "Electronic Personal Assistance Mobility Devices" (EPAMD) such as the Segway.*

- OPDMD must be electric powered (Jefferson County)
- Any electric propulsion device that does not exceed 750 watts or 1-HP in power (West Penn)
- All-electric mobility devices that can access the trails from the trailheads (Puente Hills)
- EPAMD (e.g., Segways®), electric-assisted bicycles and the following electric-powered devices: foot scooters, tracked mobility chairs or tricycles that are designed to transport a single individual with a disability as a substitute for walking may be used by a person with a mobility

disability on all paved and aggregate surfaced trails (MN)

### Speed limits

*Most policies specify a maximum speed for accessibility devices.*

- EPAMD must not exceed a speed of 5 miles per hour (Fort Collins)
- 5 mph when other users are present; 10 mph when other users are not present (Jefferson County)
- 5 miles per hour (Santa Monica Mountains)
- Typical walking speed, based on the particular soil type and existing environmental conditions, not to exceed 5 miles per hour (Florida)
- 10 mph for fuel-driven devices or devices over 36" wide (COSCA)
- 10 mph for fuel-driven devices or devices over 36" wide; EPAMD 12 mph (Conejo Open Space)
- 15 miles per hour for electric personal assistive mobility devices
- 20 mph for all devices operated on the trail (West Penn)







## Size and weight limits

*Specifying dimensions is one way to determine the kinds of devices, such as ATVs, that would be excluded.*

- OPDMD may be up to 32 inches wide, up to 6 feet long, and weigh up to 150 pounds (Jefferson County)
- No wider than 36 inches (West Penn)
- On Single Track Trail, devices not to exceed 26" width and a maximum wheel width of 6" (Orange County)
- OPDMD "shall not typically exceed" 34" width, 62" length, and 550 pounds in weight (Florida)
- Combined width of the OPDMD, operator, and additional load does not exceed 45% of the surface width of the circulation path (Illinois)

## Trail limitations

*Some policies refer to specific measurements or characteristics of the trail.*

- OPDMD may only be operated on trails with grades (slopes) of 12% or less (Jefferson County)
- List of specific trails where "mobility devices over 36" wide may be used" (Conejo Open Space)
- Trails designated for hiking, interpretation, horseback-riding, cross-country skiing, biking, and mountain biking are open to individuals with mobility disabilities

using wheelchairs, but not open to OPDMDs due to assessment factors (i), (ii), (iv), and (v). OPDMDs pose a legitimate safety threat to other individuals using the trails and they pose a substantial risk to the natural and cultural resources associated with the trails, and by their nature they disturb the intended trail experience. (Illinois)

- ATVs, golf carts, or other power-driven mobility devices, except as described above, are not recognized as appropriate devices for park trails, bike paths, and greenway trails for the following reasons:
  - The slope of the natural terrain, which may exceed 5%.
  - The congestion of foot traffic on the shared paths of the facility.
  - Manufacturers recommendation for helmet and protective equipment for riders.
  - The unrealistic administrative burden of identifying FDA-approval or speed, weight, and safety features of each device upon entry, including any form of assessment of rider abilities, or managing pedestrian traffic throughout the facility for separated movement. (Nashville Metro Parks)

## Other restrictions

- May only be used during regular operating hours on Mondays through Thursdays (no weekends or holidays) (Conejo Open Space)

## Permits and permission

*DOJ does not address the issue, but some agencies see permits as a way to ensure both safety and legality of vehicle use.*

- For safety purposes, individuals seeking to use fuel-driven mobility devices or mobility devices over 36" must obtain a permit from the COSCA Rangers.
- The permit identifies the individual responsible for the [OPDMD]. It also gathers contact information, describes the stated use, defines time frame for access, confirms the motorized device is for use because of a disability, requires proof of vehicular insurance, and sets guidelines for safety precautions including for fire as it pertains to devices with fuel powered engines. (Puente Hills)
- Upon arriving at the site, individuals with mobility disabilities using OPDMDs must check in at the site office prior to use of the OPDMD on a trail or roadway to ensure its use is acceptable at that site. (Illinois)

## Interim policies

*Some agencies have recognized that they may need to modify policies as they gain experience with visitors' needs as well as the new uses on the trails.*

- Special access requests will be processed on a case-by-case basis until the time in which an assessment of all public trails managed by the Authority has been conducted in accordance with federal guidelines. (Puente Hills)



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- While these evaluations are in progress, we invite persons with mobility disabilities to contact us about use of devices that are currently prohibited to other park users (i.e., motorized OPDMDs) but may provide you with better access in a safe manner, considerate of natural resources... We are also in communication with state agencies and community park and recreation systems to develop a plan that may be consistently applied throughout the state. (Three Rivers Park District)
- As technology advances and new devices are developed, public use patterns change, and impacts to natural and cultural resources are reevaluated. OC Parks may modify the type of OPDMD permissible within specific facilities on specific trails as necessary. Please check this site regularly for updates to these guidelines. (Orange County)
- County may issue a permit to use an OPDMD in areas prohibited if it determines that a unique situation applies and special conditions can be placed on the use that would make it safe to operate the OPDMD or prevent serious harm to the environment or natural or cultural resources. In these situations, special circumstances permission should be requested 7 days in advance of arrival date. (Anoka County)

**See many resources on the DOJ rule for use of "power-driven mobility devices," including a free, on-demand webinar, sample policies, background from DOJ, and questions and answers at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible).**



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## New ADA rulemaking underway for "shared use paths"

*The Access Board in Washington, DC is developing accessibility guidelines for shared use paths. These trails or greenways are designed for both transportation and recreation purposes by pedestrians, bicyclists, skaters, equestrians, and others. The guidelines will include technical provisions for making new and altered shared use paths covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA).*

**The public may submit comments by June 27, 2011.**

### QUESTIONS FOR PUBLIC COMMENT:

**QUESTION 1.** Does the draft definition of "shared use path" sufficiently distinguish these paths from trails and sidewalks? If not, please provide any recommendations that would strengthen this distinction.

**QUESTION 2.** What technical provisions, if any, should apply where separate unpaved paths are provided for equestrian use?

**QUESTION 3.** Are there conditions where a 5 percent maximum grade cannot be achieved on a newly constructed shared use path?

**QUESTION 4.** Should the Board provide guidance on how to address steeper segments of shared use paths when they cannot be avoided? For example, would providing space for bicyclists or wheelchair users to move off of the shared use path in order to avoid conflict with other traffic be helpful?

**QUESTION 5.** What would be considered a sufficient separation between a shared use path and a roadway, or outside border of a roadway, where it may not be necessary for the shared use path to follow the grade of the roadway?

**QUESTION 6.** Are there conditions where cross slope steeper than 2 percent is necessary in new construction?

**QUESTION 7.** Is there a need to provide additional warnings or information to bicyclists regarding potential conflicts with other shared use paths users, including pedestrians with disabilities?

**QUESTION 8.** What technical provisions should apply where the shared use path overlaps a trail or sidewalk?

**QUESTION 9.** Are different technical provisions needed when applying the draft technical provisions for shared use paths that "connect" shared use paths together or with other pedestrian routes (e.g., sidewalks, trails, accessible routes)?

**QUESTION 10.** Should the accessibility guidelines for shared use paths be included in the same document as the accessibility guidelines for pedestrian facilities in the public right-of-way?

**QUESTION 11.** Are there other issues that need to be addressed by the accessibility guidelines for shared use paths?

*For details and how to submit comments on Shared Use Path Accessibility Guidelines, see the link under "ADA Guide" at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/accessible).*



# Greenville's trail system is key to livability



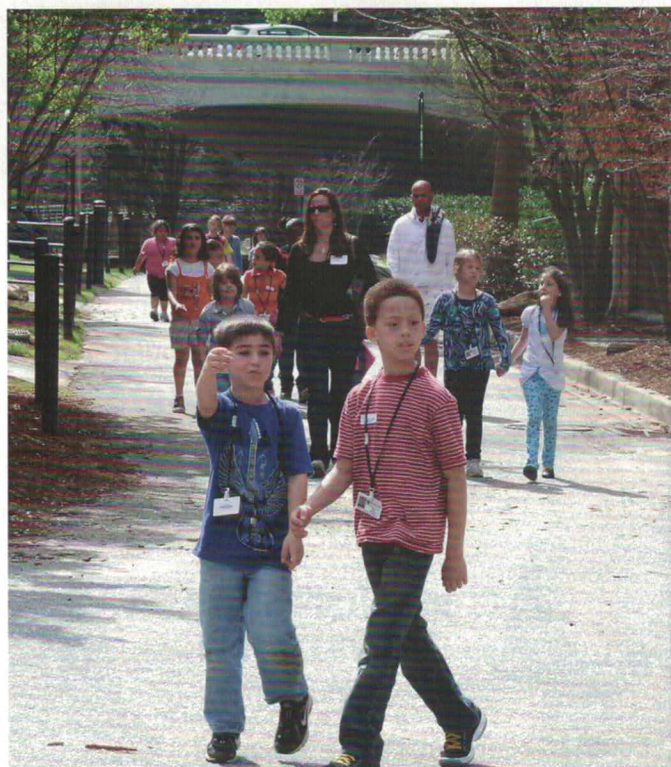
*Liberty Bridge in downtown Greenville, South Carolina*

By Stuart Macdonald, *Editor*,  
**AMERICAN TRAILS MAGAZINE**

**T**he walk across Liberty Bridge, which soars over Falls Park on the Reedy River, gives an inspiring view of Greenville, South Carolina. The flow of kids, families, and people of all ages is nearly constant. "We always bring visitors here," said one lady and her friend admiring the view, "we're just so proud of our city."

The story of Greenville's rise as a more livable city is one of both vision and patience. As with many places across America, the mid-Twentieth Century brought unwelcome changes to cities both large and small. In Greenville, in 1960, the concrete Camperdown road bridge was built across the falls, obstructing the views and further compromising the river corridor. Over 20 years later, in the 1980s, the city adopted a master plan for the park, which led to the removal of the Camperdown Bridge and in turn made way for the rehabilitation of what is now 20 acres of flowering parkland.

As the centerpiece of central Greenville, Falls Park is the hub of new trails and bridges. The improvements have spurred new development that includes a hotel, high-rise housing, and historic preservation, as well as shops







*The Swamp Rabbit rail trail extends north from downtown*

and galleries right on the greenway. Stairs and walkways lead pedestrians and cyclists from the historic downtown streets, where prominent signs show the way to Falls Park. With the new minor league ball park a few blocks away, once-deserted avenues are seeing restoration of housing and new restaurants.

### Living well in Greenville

Among these many efforts to reclaim the river and improve the downtown environment, is a movement to make the entire region healthier. Trails, parks, greenways, bike routes, and transit are all part of the vision, called "LiveWell Greenville." [See sidebar at right.]

In the larger context, partner organizations are also concerned with healthier eating, school lunch programs, and safe routes to school. Eleanor Dunlap, who works with LiveWell Greenville, believes that a vital outcome will be better connections to the trail system as well as to parks and school facilities. She dubs the issue "Safe Routes to Parks."

*Continued page 12*

## LiveWell Greenville works for a healthier community

Making the healthy choice the easy choice is the goal of LiveWell Greenville coalition. More safe places to walk, bike, and play; promotion of healthy living by employers; opportunities for physical activity in child care and after school programs; and easier access to fresh fruits and vegetables are all part of the LiveWell Greenville plan, which was announced in January 2011.

"This is a call to action," says Eleanor Dunlap, lead facilitator of LiveWell Greenville, "strong schools, beautiful parks and trails, community-oriented business, and vibrant neighborhoods make Greenville County a great place to live. And, we can make our quality of life even better by living well through policy, systems, and environments."

Dunlap said that all plans use strategies that have been tested in other communities as having an impact on community health. "We expect that as we improve quality of life through LiveWell Greenville strategies, we will also reduce chronic disease and obesity, lower health care costs, increase productivity, and generally make for a healthier community."

Nearly 100 partners from schools, health care, business, childcare and after-school programs, local government, and neighborhoods have joined the LiveWell Greenville coalition. Key supporters include Bon Secours St. Francis Health System, City of Greenville, Communities in Schools, County of Greenville, Furman University, Greenville Chamber of Commerce, Greenville County Health Department, Greenville County Planning Commission, Greenville County Schools, Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center, the Piedmont Health Care Foundation, and YMCA of Greenville.

A seed grant of \$75,000 from the Piedmont Health Care Foundation has helped launch LiveWell Greenville. The foundation has also provided funding and staff support during LiveWell Greenville's planning process. LiveWell Greenville is also supported by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and an ACHIEVE grant through the National Recreation and Parks Association and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Staff and organization support for LiveWell Greenville will be provided by the YMCA of Greenville.

**For more information visit [www.livewellgreenville.org](http://www.livewellgreenville.org).**





*The greenway runs along the Reedy River at Falls Park looking toward the Peace Center theater complex*

Communities near trails often have busy streets and no sidewalks. Among the techniques to improve the connections are traffic calming and better street crossings, as well as wayfinding signs and route identification. Residents have started doing assessments of streets and sidewalks to find the best routes for walking and biking— as well as places where improvements would make a big difference in connectivity.

These efforts are all part of “complete streets,” but another idea is “complete parks.” Why not improve our parks to support people of all ages and abilities, and include trails and places to be active? For instance, ballfield complexes should include walking paths and play areas. They already have parking, lights, and restrooms. As with other active living efforts, the goal is to create an environment where

people can enjoy being active— to make exercise fun rather than a chore.

### **Creating a healthier future**

The big goal in all of these efforts is to improve the health of individuals as well as the community. As we know from many studies across America, a crucial marker is the high rate of childhood obesity. In the Greenville area 41 percent of children are overweight or obese. The goal of many programs is to reduce the numbers, because it portends a tidal wave of increased medical costs.

A vital supporter of the movement for healthier living is the Greenville Hospital System University Medical Center (GHS). Knowing that physical activity and good eating habits are the most effective ways to prevent obesity, GHS and the Greenville County Recreation District partnered to create what is now known as the GHS Swamp Rabbit Trail. Soon to be 17 miles long, the trail extends from Greenville to the town of Travelers Rest, offering an accessible opportunity to get fit and be active at no cost.

In 2006, the City of Greenville commissioned Greenways Incorporated and Arbor Engineering to prepare a *Trails and Greenways Master Plan*. Greenville’s trail network is designed to contribute to the overall health of residents by offering hundreds of miles of safe pedestrian and cycling greenway corridors. In short, the trails network will create better opportunities for active lifestyles, as well as connecting major institutions such as hospitals, colleges, and new corporate centers.

### **From vision to environmental change**

In the long term, the vision of the larger trail network must survive many changes and fiscal challenges, while taking advantage of emerging possibilities. It is vital to prove that trails and greenways benefit the region’s economic as well as physical health. We do a great deal of education about smoking, healthy eating, and exercise. But creating real change in people’s lives is even harder. In Greenville this has meant investing in new trails, promoting their use, and helping the next generation to share the vision.

According to Greenville Vision 2025, “The Reedy River Greenway convinced people that public spaces were safe and an amenity worth having in their backyard. As a consequence, similar efforts were initiated for greenways along the Saluda and Enoree Rivers. These greenways not only offer bikeways, walkways, and public spaces, but also provide riparian buffers for protecting the river and providing wildlife habitat.”

Communities throughout the United States, and increasingly in other countries, look to trails, parks, and open space as vital elements of livability. In Greenville, we find yet another great example of how many interests can come together to find a shared vision— and then to do the hard work of coordinating efforts to achieve a more livable city.



# Iowa trails lead to High Trestle

VISITORS WILL DISCOVER a new view along a portion of the 25-mile High Trestle Trail with the completion of the High Trestle bridge north of Des Moines, Iowa. The half-mile-long bridge rises 13 stories above the Des Moines River valley between the towns of Madrid and Woodward, and links Ankeny, Sheldahl, and Slater as well.

Once a Union Pacific Railroad crossing of the Des Moines River, the bridge is now a unique element of the High Trestle Trail. At 130-feet tall, it is one of the tallest trail bridges in the nation. The structure also features artistic elements inspired by the area's coal-mining history. With its 22 structural columns, sculptural forms, and patterns, this bridge is an art form in itself.

The monumental columns will be illuminated from underneath the bridge deck created a stunning visual. The geometry of the steel "cribbing," reminiscent of a mine tunnel, changes around the viewer. The integration of artwork along the High Trestle Trail reflects the geological history of this area, with the design elements providing visual connection to the passage.



Steel "cribbing" is all part of the integrated artistic experience of the bridge (photo by Snyder and Associates)

A modern bridge, the railroad structure was completed in 1973. The concrete piers replaced the original 1912 railroad trestle. The High Trestle Trail is built on the 1881 former railroad grade of the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul Railroad Company. Union Pacific Railroad sold the corridor to the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in 2005. The Foundation then transferred the corridor to nine public partners. Trail partners are grateful to more than 800 donors and to the major public grants that have brought this \$14.7 million project to life.

See more on the High Trestle Trail at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/art/HighTrestle.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/art/HighTrestle.html) and download a map of the trail at <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/HighTrestleMap.pdf>.

Discover a new view  
along the High Trestle Trail  
Near Des Moines, Iowa

## Featuring:

- Five towns along the 25-mile trail.
- One of the largest trail bridges in the world: 13 stories tall & 1/2-mile long.
- Links to the 670-mile Central Iowa trail system.

Helping make Iowa *The World Capital of Trails*.

More info at [www.HighTrestleTrail.org](http://www.HighTrestleTrail.org)



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# NEW RESOURCES

Some recent articles, studies, and projects at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)

## Florida Regional Planning Council studies economic impact of trails

The East Central Florida Regional Planning Council (ECFRPC) worked with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) and Orange County to analyze the economic impact of trail use in Orange County. The ECFRPC, Orange County, and OGT conducted over 660 online and face to face surveys to collect data on the business activities and consumer spending related to the West Orange, Little Econ, and Cady Way Trails. Data collected was analyzed and split into different categories reflecting specific consumer spending and business sales.

The study is highlighted in a new webinar on the "Economic Benefits of Trails" hosted by Jim Wood of the Florida Office of Greenways & Trails and research specialists from the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council. The webinar also includes data from studies by the Great Allegheny Passage, North Carolina DOT, National Association of Homebuilders, and others.

See the link to the webinar and more resources at [www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/economic/economic.htm](http://www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt/economic/economic.htm).

## Coal River Group promotes water trails and conservation

A small group of volunteers formed in 2003 have been instrumental in cleaning up the Big, Little, and Coal Rivers of West Virginia. They have joined with many partners to return the rivers back to a great fishery, as well as to restore the many recreational benefits that such a waterway offers to the communities and visitors to the region.

Early in its life the Group realized the best way to get the public to appreciate the rivers was to get people in and on the water. To help they created the Walhonde Water Trail, 88 miles of paddling route from Whitesville on the Big Coal River and Danville on the Little Coal River to St. Albans at the mouth of Coal River. The Coal River Group also teaches students at local schools about the importance of keeping rivers clean, and has engaged students in river clean up and litter control efforts.

See the link to this article under "Greenways and Water Trails" at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html).

## Arizona Trails Plan addresses diverse issues and needs

The demand for recreational trails in Arizona, both motorized and non-motorized, is high: 69% of Arizonans are trail users, twice the national average. Considerable change has occurred on Arizona's recreational trails and off-highway vehicle (OHV) routes and areas in the last five years including a 16% state population increase, and a 20% increase in numbers of recreational trail and OHV users.



Lava Flow Trail at Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument

To pull together these diverse issues and the needs of agencies, organizations, and individuals into a statewide plan, Arizona State Parks conducted a yearlong process of gathering public input, researching issues and developing recommendations for trails and off-highway vehicle recreation in Arizona.

Top three trail and OHV issues from public workshops—statewide view:

1. Keep trails and routes, and their access open
2. Proactively implement interagency / cross-jurisdictional planning and coordination
3. Improve volunteer coordination and management

The research found that there are more people wanting to use trails close to home as part of their regular exercise routine (walking; running; biking; bird watching; walking the dog). There are also increasing numbers of people with mobility issues wanting to explore Arizona's trails and backcountry (people with disabilities; people with small children; senior citizens; baby boomers).

See the link to the Arizona Trails Plan under "Planning" at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html).



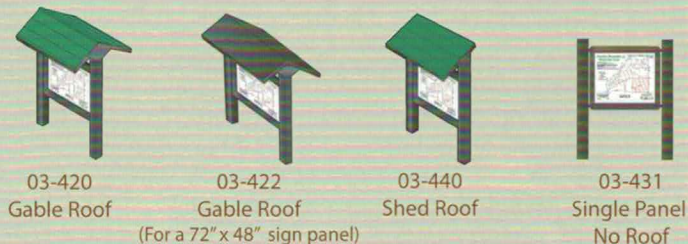


# ROCKART SIGNS AND MARKERS

Rockart Signs and Markers has been your source for durable fiberglass trail markers, decals and signs for the past 14 years. We now offer a full line of durable, tamper resistant, steel products to complete your trailhead and campground signing.

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## MESSAGE CENTER KIOSK



03-420  
Gable Roof

03-422  
Gable Roof  
(For a 72" x 48" sign panel)

03-440  
Shed Roof

03-431  
Single Panel  
No Roof



03-450-L 03-450-R  
Left or Right Wing Double Panel

03-460  
Three Panel

CALL FOR PRICING!

- ▲ All square steel tube and vandal resistant construction
- ▲ Vertical posts 6"x 6"x 3/16" thick square steel tube
- ▲ Mounting tabs are 1/4" thick steel, slotted for sign expansion
- ▲ Brown texture powder coated for durability and longevity
- ▲ Shipped disassembled with hardware, tools and instructions
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- ▲ Easily assembled with tamper resistant fasteners
- ▲ Interchangeable replacement parts in stock
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- ▲ Non-roof Kiosks are also available in 4" and 5" square tubes
- ▲ Available in 11 different roof models and 30 without roofs

SIGN PANELS SOLD SEPERATELY

03-470 - 4 Panel  
03-471 - 5 Panel  
(Also available in a straight line design and without roofs)



03-420



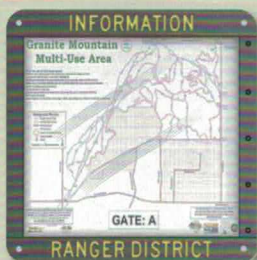
Single Panel  
Gable Roof

Slotted steel mounts allow for sign expansion and contraction due to temperature changes



03-420  
With Sign Panel

## 48 x 48 PLASTIC KIOSK SIGN PANELS

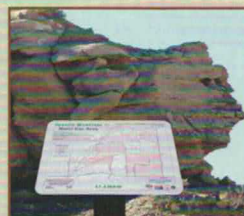


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- ▲ 42"x 40" viewing area
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- ▲ Mounts to all Rockart Kiosks

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## SIGN PEDESTAL



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Below ground, welded rebar anchors secure the Sign Pedestal

- ▲ All steel construction
- ▲ Sloped for ease of reading
- ▲ Durable powder coat
- ▲ Larger pedestals available
- ▲ Signs sold separately

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## REGISTRATION BOX



03-540



90-851 Text

- ▲ All steel construction
- ▲ Heavy-duty hinged lid
- ▲ Durable powder coat

Our durable steel Registration Box not only holds sign-in books and brochures, but the generous 15"W x 13"H lid is ideal for an informative text. (Text sold separately)

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## BROCHURE BOX

12"H x 5"W x 5"D



03-550-6

- ▲ Attaches to Kiosk post with tamper-resistant fasteners (included)
- ▲ Oversized, slanted lid keeps literature safe from elements
- ▲ Fits 4", 5", or 6" square tube

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# 20th NATIONAL TRAILS AWARDS

Presented at the 2010 American Trails National Symposium

Every two years American Trails presents National Trails Awards to recognize the tremendous contributions of volunteers, professionals, and other leaders who are working to create a national system of trails for all Americans. The 2010 Awards were presented at the 20th American Trails National Symposium, on Nov. 16, 2010 in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

See details and photos of the award-winning people and projects at [www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS10awards](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS10awards).

## Best Trails State Award: State of Minnesota

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources works with land owners, organizations, and communities to help provide more opportunities for trail activities. The Clean Water, Land, and Legacy Act, passed in 2008, will provide \$35 million for new and enhanced trails. In the 1960s Minnesota was one of the first states to develop rail trails. Today the state system includes 1,266 off-road trail miles, 22,000 miles of snowmobile trails, 2,300 miles of OHV routes, 1,000 miles of equestrian trails, and 4,400 miles of water trails.

## Lifetime Service Award: Kurt Loheit

For 20 years Kurt Loheit has been instrumental in organizing and leading trail programs with Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy and many other organizations across the nation, including founding the Los Angeles Chapter of Concerned Off Road Bicyclists Association, and being the



Kurt Loheit demonstrating trail maintenance techniques to Palos Verdes Peninsula Land Conservancy team leaders

Resources Director of the International Mountain Bicycling Association. Kurt has been a leader for both hikers and mountain bikers in designing and building sustainable trail systems. He has supervised and written about trail projects and trail building classes around the country. In 2004 he was inducted into the Mountain Bike Hall of Fame.

## Hulet Hornbeck Award: Carroll Vogel

This award is for an individual that, like Hulet Hornbeck, exemplifies long-standing vision and wisdom in support of trails.

Carroll Vogel was the most accomplished trail bridge builder of his generation. He didn't just build a bunch of bridges; he raised the bar to a new level and gave us a new vision of what is possible. He built with the passion and the artistry of a master backcountry craftsman, and created an effective system for building suspension bridges that is unequaled.



Lakeside trails in The Woodlands Town Center

## Developer Award: The Woodlands, Texas

Recognizes quality, well designed, multi-use trails systems that are integrated into private developments.

The Woodlands, a 28,000-acre community north of Houston, has been one of the best-selling master-planned communities in Texas since 1990 and is currently #2 in the nation. The community's 93,000 residents have access to a 185-mile community-wide pathway system linking neighborhoods, schools, churches, shopping, parks, and workplaces. The development even encourages walk to school days to encourage children to lead active lifestyles.

See details and photos of the National Trails Awards at [www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS10awards](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/NTS10awards)



## 20th NATIONAL TRAILS AWARDS

### **Kids and Trails Award: Student Conservation Association**

During the summer of 2009, the Student Conservation Association brought kids and trails together on 103 crews in 18 cities and major metropolitan areas across the nation.



*The urban high school students who participate in SCA programs often work on trail building and restoration*

These SCA crews (with a total of 1,272 high school age members) restored 329,392 feet of trail at 185 project sites in city and county parks. An additional 57,641 feet of new trail was created by these kids.

### **State-of-the-Art Technology Award: City of San Jose, California**

To aid emergency response personnel with more useful information along trails, San Jose's Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services created a system of mileage markers to convey precise locations. Emergency services personnel can also access supporting data for each marker which provides a complete set of location, surface, and accessibility data to speed assistance when needed.

### **Trails for Public Service Award: Senator Robert H. Plymale**

As an advocate for trails throughout southern West Virginia, Senator Plymale has been a key player in the development of trails for recreation and economic development. Seeing the community revitalization potential the Hatfield-McCoy Trails could bring to coal-dependent counties, he has helped enable the mapping, planning, and promotion of hundreds of miles of trails. Off-highway vehicle recreation has become southern West Virginia's most frequently visited outdoor recreation attraction, surpassed only by white water rafting.

### **Partnership Award: Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association and Tennessee Valley Authority**

The Raccoon Mountain trail system is a result of the partnership between the Tennessee Valley Authority and the Southern Off-Road Bicycle Association. TVA's Raccoon Mountain Reservoir has become a destination trail system. Both parties worked together to help maintain the integrity of the land by providing a trail that is environmentally friendly, and teaching users the Leave No Trace philosophy of trail recreation.

### **Trails and the Arts Award: Slavic Village Development/Cleveland Public Art and ParkWorks**

As part of the public art program for the Morgana Run Trail, Slavic Village Development, and Cleveland Public Art and ParkWorks collaborated to develop a distinguishing marker for the East 49th Street trailhead. The groups wanted a marker that would be an inspiring piece of artwork while also serving to identify the entrance to the trail. They found their answer with local artist Jake Beckman who designed the 35 foot tall flower sculpture that now admits thousands of people each year to the trail.

## Your Trail-Side Interpretive Displays: Start to Finish

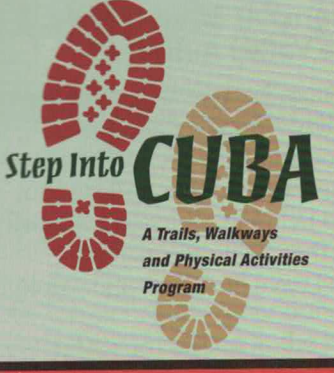


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**Step Into CUBA**  
A Trails, Walkways  
and Physical Activities  
Program

*Coordinated by Nacimento Medical Foundation*

**LOCATION**  
Village of Cuba, New Mexico and surrounding areas.

**PROJECT GOAL**  
To promote a healthy lifestyle by increasing walking and hiking in Cuba and on the surrounding scenic Federal lands.

**PROJECT ACTIVITIES**

- ▶ Creating walkways and trails and promoting their use
- ▶ Increasing pedestrian safety and walkability in the Village of Cuba
- ▶ Developing and improving St. Francis of Assisi Park as a central trailhead and recreation destination
- ▶ Linking the Village of Cuba to the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- ▶ Engaging individuals and organizations in a shared goal of promoting physical activity and offering social support.

**PARTNERS**  
Continental Divide Trail Alliance, Cuba Independent School District, Cuba Regional Economic Development Organization, Nacimento Heritage Team, NM Department of Health, NM Department of Transportation District 6, Presbyterian Medical Services, Sandoval County, University of New Mexico Prevention Research Center.

*Cuba, New Mexico's trails, walkways, and physical activity program*

## Trails for Health Award: Step Into Cuba Alliance

Based in the village of Cuba, New Mexico, Step Into Cuba is a program combined of 18 local and national groups working to promote healthy physical activity through development of sidewalks, paths, trails, social support, and opportunities for lifestyle change. The Alliance's vision is to create a "greener," healthier, and more pedestrian friendly community by improving pedestrian trails and connecting these to surrounding scenic Federal lands.

## Outstanding Trail Sharing Award: Ride With Respect

Ride With Respect aims to protect natural resources while accommodating diverse recreation on public land. The Utah group works on trail restoration as well as educational programs. In combination, these initiatives help keep both motorized and nonmotorized use on established roads and trails. Members foster conscientious use by educating through interpretive signs and personal contacts.

## Community Service Award: Coal River Group

In 2004, the Coal River was listed as one of the ten most endangered rivers in the country. The Coal River Group

**GREENWAY AND TRAILS SPECIALISTS  
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH DHM DESIGN**



**THE GREENWAY TEAM**  
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was formed to preserve the Big Coal, Little Coal, and Coal Rivers, while creating recreational and economic opportunities for the watershed. To help people gain access to the rivers, the group created the 88-mile Wallhonde Water Trail.

## Corporate Award: Lyndhurst Foundation

The Lyndhurst Foundation has demonstrated tremendous support and exemplary service for trails planning and development in the east Tennessee and north Georgia region. The foundation focuses on the enhancement and enrichment of the natural, educational, cultural, and urban environment of Chattanooga and the surrounding region. The foundation's service has benefited thousands of people in the region by creating various outdoor recreational opportunities for them to enjoy.

## Outstanding Media Award: Bob Fulcher

Bob Fulcher, Park Manager of the Cumberland Trail State Park has worked as a park naturalist and ranger for over 25 years. For more than 10 years, people from all over the world have been tuning in each Sunday night to listen to The Cumberland Trail—a half-hour radio program hosted by Bob. The Cumberland Trail is the only state or national park in America using weekly musical documentaries to present and preserve its heritage.



*Along the Tennessee Riverpark in Chattanooga*

## Planning/Design Award: Tennessee Riverpark

The Tennessee Riverpark is a 13-mile linear park and trail system along the Tennessee River. Its development was a key part of Chattanooga's downtown revitalization plan, which stressed bringing the river and the trail as "a central point of pride for the City's people." By reconnecting with the river, the city overhauled its image and fueled the engine of economic development which continues today.



## 20th NATIONAL TRAILS AWARDS



Tennessee trail workers with the tools of the trade

### State Trail Advocacy Awards

This award recognizes individuals for successful efforts to influence public policy relating to trail planning, trail protection, trail development, or management.

- Alabama - Rob Grant
- California - Beverly Lane
- Alberta, Canada - Alberta TrailNet & Alberta Tourism
- Colorado - Kevin Pellini
- Connecticut - Stan Malcolm
- Florida - Herb Hiller
- Illinois - Bev Moore
- Indiana - Lori Keys
- Iowa - Carl Voss
- Kentucky - Steve Barbour
- Louisiana - Kevin Davis
- Massachusetts - Wayne Feiden
- Minnesota - Ron Potter
- Missouri - John Roth
- Montana - Gene Townsend
- Nevada - Clay Grubb
- New Hampshire - Charles Martin
- New York - Ivan Vamos
- North Dakota - Keri Wanner
- Ohio - Royce Wood
- Pennsylvania - David Buck
- South Carolina - City of Charleston
- South Dakota - Perry Jewett
- Tennessee - Bob Richards
- Utah - Lynne Olson
- West Virginia - Robert Scatterday & Ben Stout
- Wisconsin - Menomonee Valley Partners

### State Trail Worker Award

This award recognizes individuals in either the private or public sector who have made outstanding contributions to trail planning, development, or maintenance.

- Alabama - Debbie Quinn
- Alaska - Mike Shields
- California - Robert Griffis
- Connecticut - Joe Hickey
- Delaware - Delaware Trail Spinners
- Florida - Helen Koehler
- Idaho - Kristin Lundstrom
- Illinois - Steve Buchtel
- Iowa - Carol Williams
- Louisiana - John C. Leslie
- Minnesota - David Halsey
- Missouri - Kathie Brennan
- Montana - Jon H. McBride
- Nevada - Jeremy Vican
- New Hampshire - Lainie Castine
- New Jersey - Lew Gorman
- New Mexico - Kerrie Brokaw Pattison
- New York - Eddie Walsh
- North Carolina - Hillrie Quin
- North Dakota - Marc Brown
- Pennsylvania - Terry Wentz
- South Carolina - Don Watts
- Tennessee - Ken Jones
- Utah - Max Reid
- Virginia - Sam Jensen
- Washington - Joan Melcher
- West Virginia - Ella Belling
- Wisconsin - Rich Propp
- Wyoming - Tony Simek

Smart planning  
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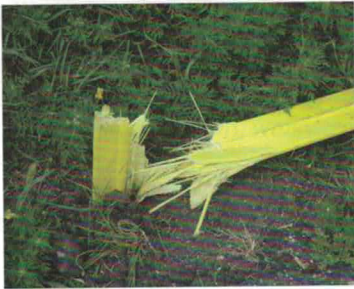
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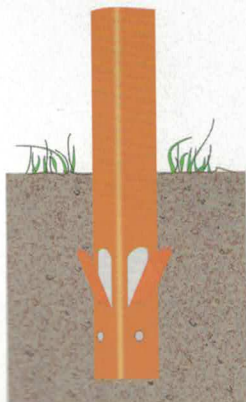


Hazard marking

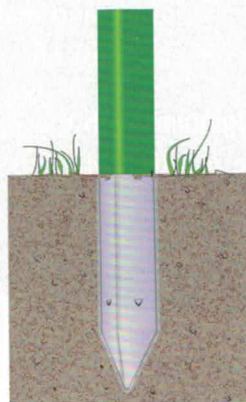
Patented three-sided design allows you to have factory installed decals on one, two, or all three sides.

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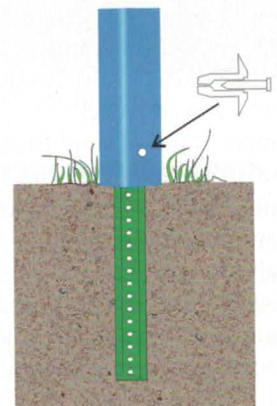
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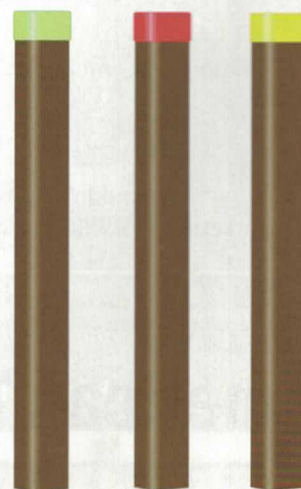
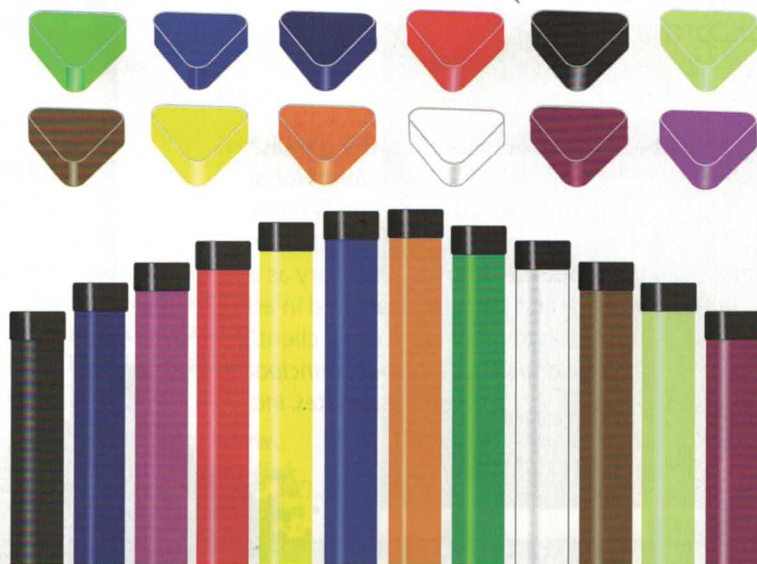
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Use different color TriView posts or TriView caps to identify specific trails, mile markers, special trail features or hazards. Color can make your trails more user friendly without adding any cost.







## Trails training opportunities

**Many trail-related topics will be covered by courses and training offered this year. See details on these opportunities and many more on the online Training Calendar: [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net).**

### Universal Design for Byways: a more accessible future

The America's Byways Resource Center has recognized the importance of universal design for Scenic Byways. To better plan for and provide accessible experiences for people of all abilities, the Resource Center hired DSL Design Consulting to develop a universal design curriculum for the byway community:

**Universal design** is the design of environments, products, information, and services so that they are usable by all people regardless of age, size, or ability.

**Accessibility** generally refers to designing for the needs of persons with disabilities.

It is generally agreed that designing for people with disabilities and older adults in mind creates a better design for anyone. Spaces that are universally designed are also

accessible, but they don't look like they were made only for people with disabilities.

The Byways Resource Center interactive workshop covers the latest trends in universal design for buildings, spaces, outdoor recreation, programs, marketing materials, visitor etiquette, and strategic planning. It also covers the economic imperative of ensuring that byways are universally designed, with new construction as well as retrofitting.

The curriculum has been developed through a modular approach where each module can stand on its own or be mixed and matched. PDF files of the presentations are available to anyone. They include a One-Hour Overview, Evaluating Your Byway, Sample Activity: Byways Report Card, and Case Studies. An archived Webcast is also available on "Universal Design for Byways."

**For information on Universal Design for Byways visit [www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/resources/universal-design/accessibility/](http://www.bywaysresourcecenter.org/resources/universal-design/accessibility/).**

## WANTED: Your products and services for trails

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"Simply put – American Trails is the one-stop resource and authority for everything trails."

*John Hohol*

*Rhino Marking & Protection Systems*

"We couldn't be more pleased with our choice to try out the Business Directory as a marketing tool. Within a month of signing up we received our first hit, which resulted in an invitation to team with a new client."

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

# American Trails Business Directory

Visit [AmericanTrails.org](http://AmericanTrails.org) or contact us at (530) 547-2060.







## Fleming College certificate program in Sustainable Trails

College level courses for trails and greenways topics are rare. The National Trails Training Partnership has researched this issue, and we are happy to learn about a new effort in Canada.

A part-time certificate program in Sustainable Trail Development is being offered at the Frost Campus in Lindsay, Ontario. The program requires seven foundation courses plus two elective courses. Time required is 14 to 21 hours per course. Classes are held on weekends and include hands-on field activities.

Coursework covers plans for the development and construction of individual trails and trail systems; safe trail construction and maintenance; legal and liability issues; fund raising strategies; business plans for the creation and management of a trail agency; and effective marketing and promotion of trails with the tourism industry.

### FOUNDATION COURSES

- Trail Business Planning and Law & Risk Management
- Trail Design
- Trail Maintenance & Signage
- Ecologically Sustainable Trails
- Trail Planning
- Trail Construction
- Management of Trail Users & Volunteers

### ELECTIVE COURSES

- Introduction to Trails
- Marketing & Promoting Trails
- Wilderness Survival Part 1
- Trails Education & Interpretation
- Universal Trail Assessment
- Motorized Trail Recreation
- Chainsaw Operator

For more information visit [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net) and see the link under the "What's Hot" category.

# TRAINING CALENDAR

A preview of 2011 training events; see details at [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net).

May 15-19 - Abingdon, VA

- 13th National Scenic and Historic Trails Conference

May 23-26 - Breckenridge, CO

- National Association of Recreation Resource Planners

June 1-4 - Calgary, Alberta, Canada

- International Snowmobile Congress 2011

June 19-22 - Washington, DC

- American Horse Council National Issues Forum

July 21-23 - Auburn, AL

- Southeastern Equestrian Trails Conference

August 21-24 - Minneapolis, MN

- 2011 National Scenic Byways Conference

September 22-25 - Bloomington, MN

- National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council Conference

October 2-5 - Fort Wayne, IN

- Mid America Trails & Greenways Conference

And don't forget: **June 4** is National Trails Day and **June 11** is National Get Outdoors Day.

Look for currently scheduled courses and conferences at [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net), sponsored by American Trails and the National Trails Training Partnership. Contact us with your scheduled training opportunities at [NTTP@AmericanTrails.org](mailto:NTTP@AmericanTrails.org).

## Professional Trailbuilders Association

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- Construction
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- Maintenance
- Consulting and Research
- Training and Leadership

Promoting quality trailbuilding since 1976, PTBA is the nation's largest group of private trail specialists, contractors, designers, and consultants.



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](http://www.trailbuilders.org)

For classes, conferences, and training opportunities, visit the NTTP online calendar at [www.TrailsTraining.net](http://www.TrailsTraining.net)





# Playful pathways

## Changing the way families play

*"There is something very exciting to be present at the birth of a new idea. Pathways for Play gives us new tools to ensure that children grow healthier in body, and healthier in spirit. American Trails is honored to be a part of this project and to help introduce it to the trails world. As the central theme of our organization is "Trails for All Americans," we hope this new effort will open doors to the outdoors for children, as well as their parents, grandparents, and friends."*

— Pam Gluck, Executive Director, American Trails

**H**OW CAN WE get families out on the trail? Create activities and adventures that draw them outdoors and entice them to keep moving along the path. Recreation and trail professionals interested in building a pathway to facilitate playful family behavior will find the best practice guidebook *Pathways for Play* extremely useful. Written by Robin Moore, Dipl Arch, MCP, ASLA, and his team at the Natural Learning Initiative, College of Design, NC State University, in partnership with PlayCore, the guidebook serves as an exciting tool to build support for playful trails, as well as ideas on layout, creating adventures, obtaining funding, and sustaining the trail. The guidebook addresses how to integrate play into walkable, bikeable networks, offers case studies, and discusses best

practice principles for design, to ensure a playful pathway meets the expectations of both trail owners and users.

To create the guidebook, supporting research was gathered on spontaneous play, family interaction in the outdoors, traffic issues, independent mobility, contact with nature, and adult/child interaction. This data was used to develop a set of benefits for playful pathways, supported and implied by the research, namely health promotion, inclusion, engagement with nature, environmental literacy, connectivity, and community social capital. Since this combination of benefits may not necessarily be achieved by other means, Pathways for Play creates a new paradigm in outdoor recreation for the family.

The program guide describes ways to combine historical elements, built play equipment, and natural materials in the pockets of activity, then space these pockets along a trail, designed with curving paths to disguise the next activity, and create an element of mystery and discovery.

"What waits around the next corner" becomes the theme of the adventure, and families spend quality time walking along the path, appreciating the natural environment, the sounds, smells, and sights of the pathway network, all while anticipating what adventures await them next, and when they will be encountered. With curving path alignments, both children and adults have a choice in the way they experience the path, and the order in which they encounter the events.

Playful pathways are a new focus for many planners and



trail designers as they create corridors for community connectivity. All children need access to the wonder of the outdoors, and this new approach to playful pathway design offers compelling ways to engage children and families alike. Playful exhibits stationed along the trail increase the usage of pathways and trails by infusing them with play and adventure, engaging children by using familiar behaviors, centered around play, all while teaching facts about the environment in a friendly, non formal way.

At the new playful path installed at the Chattanooga Riverwalk in Chattanooga, TN, families were recently observed playing and proving the power of bringing play to nature. Play pockets spaced along the trail invite this type of behavior and interaction, as families set off in search of the next play pocket: they talk about the adventure they just had, discuss their own life experiences, and enjoy a nature walk along the way, supporting the growth of mind, body, spirit, and appreciating the rich diversity of the outdoors. Fun and playful activities that are set in nature are also thought to help instill environmental stewardship in children, ensuring that they will appreciate nature, and therefore work to preserve it as adults.

While most parents will find a bench or place to rest while children play, the linear nature of these playful pathways ensures the entire family gets active and participates. They become a part of the adventure: during the walk, with the activities, and while interacting with the signs. Jeannine Alday, Chief of Staff of Hamilton County, TN, recently stated at the opening of the Chattanooga Play Trail, "This project represents another pearl in the necklace that is the Chattanooga Riverwalk, and is an exciting addition Chattanooga is proud to have." At another playful path installation in Springfield, MO, Park Director Jodie Adams said, "we are so thrilled to have this cutting edge program here in Springfield."

## pathways for play™

home | about | benefits | research | case studies | my path | resources



**Case Studies**

Riverpoint Park  
Chattanooga, Tennessee

**my path...**

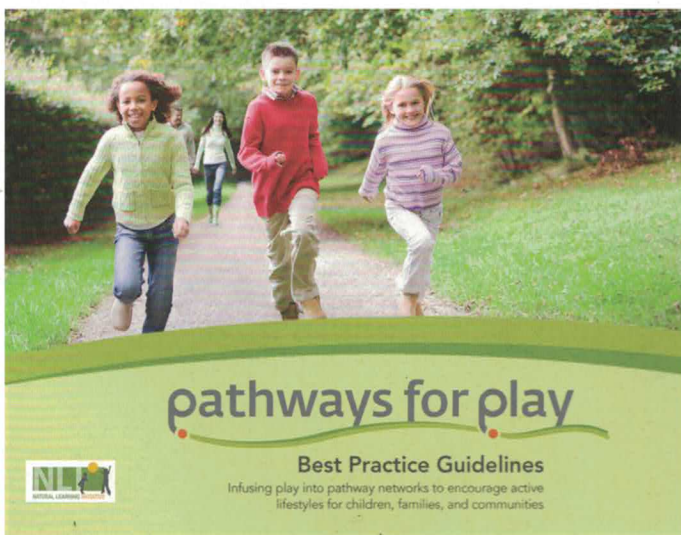
Interactive activities for pathway play

**Request the book**

pathways for play  
Best Practice Guidelines

One only has to observe the families at either location to understand the impact these trails are having. "Wow, did you know a dragonfly can fly 30 miles per hour," or "I don't think I should squish spiders, they are actually pretty cool," are just some of the comments children make as they learn about the environmental contributions of creatures they see every day.

**To receive a complimentary copy of Pathways for Play, or to inquire about becoming a National Demonstration Site, contact PlayCore at [info@playcore.com](mailto:info@playcore.com) or visit [www.pathwaysforplay.com](http://www.pathwaysforplay.com). The website was selected as the winner in the "Kids and Trails" category in the 2010 American Trails Website Contest.**



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# Getting kids on trails



By Roger Bell, Pam Johnson, and Jennifer Rigby

**W**HAT HAPPENS WHEN a trail designer (Roger Bell), outdoor educator (Pam Johnson), and interpretive planner (Jenny Rigby) collaborate to strengthen connections between children and nature, developing creative strategies to get kids outdoors and on trails? We'd like to share what we have learned working on two Southern California projects.

The first took place at Rancho Soñado, an Inside the Outdoors school managed by the Orange County Department of Education. The second took place at West Coyote Hills, an open space preserve adjacent to a planned housing development project in North Fullerton.

Both venues, despite contrasting settings, share common goals: to connect children with nature, to enhance their environmental awareness, and to encourage them to make active and healthy lifestyle choices. Both involved trail design, and provided insight that we hope others in similar situations might find instructive.

Field trips at Rancho Soñado provide a hands-on science curriculum for fourth and fifth grade students. Learning takes place on hillside trails, around water, in a natural setting away from urban clutter. This site was transformed dramatically during the October 2007 Santiago wildfire as much of the outdoor learning environment was reduced to ash and slurry. Roger was called in to repair the trail infrastructure, including footbridges and learning stations, and to build new trails in keeping with the educational mission Pam set forth. It was an intense, mutual learning experience for them and occurred with children and teachers still in attendance watching the process unfold. As Mother Nature demonstrated her remarkable self-healing process, and became itself a teachable opportunity, the outdoor classroom was brought back to life before our eyes.

Roger came to this with some background having worked in two school camps his father pioneered some 50 years earlier for Los Angeles City Schools, so this was an important reconnection. Outdoor education, he discovered, has come of age in California and elsewhere. Important new legislative initiatives, even special attention by the First Lady, hold promise for expanding this movement and offer challenges to designers to craft outdoor facilities, including trails, that facilitate active engagement of kids with nature, enlivening the teaching process.

Trails, in other words, are being viewed as significant, vibrant laboratories for outdoor learning. "No Child Left Inside" and messages from the ground-breaking book *Last Child in the Woods* are the new mantra, challenging the childhood obesity epidemic and helping develop a new generation of enlightened environmental stewards.

Since Inside the Outdoors is self-supporting and receives no tax-based funding, it relies on companies like Disney and The Boeing Company Charitable Trust, as well as student fees and other donations, to sustain the program.



The West Coyote Hills community group on the trail



While the repair work at Rancho Soñado was underway, Disney provided funding and volunteers to support the rebuild. Inside the Outdoors' staff and Roger's employees worked side by side with them to install foot bridges, teaching stations, and to make other trail repairs.

In a second project, Boeing engineers worked as mentors in a service-learning project with high school students to design three shade shelters to replace ones that were lost in the fire. Boeing also provided volunteers to work with Inside the Outdoors staff. Students and Boeing mentors produced alternative shelter design concepts, and once the winner was determined, Bellfree Contractors, under its new owner, installed these handsome structures. Over 12,000 students each year visit Rancho Soñado for field trips. They hike the trails and use the shade structures as they learn science and actively enjoy nature's classroom.

Over 150,000 students, teachers, parents, and community members throughout southern California participate annually. All IO programs are aligned with California Content Standards—the 4-5 day overnight Outdoor Science Schools in the San Bernardino National Forest, the Traveling Scientist, and a rich variety of community outreach offerings.

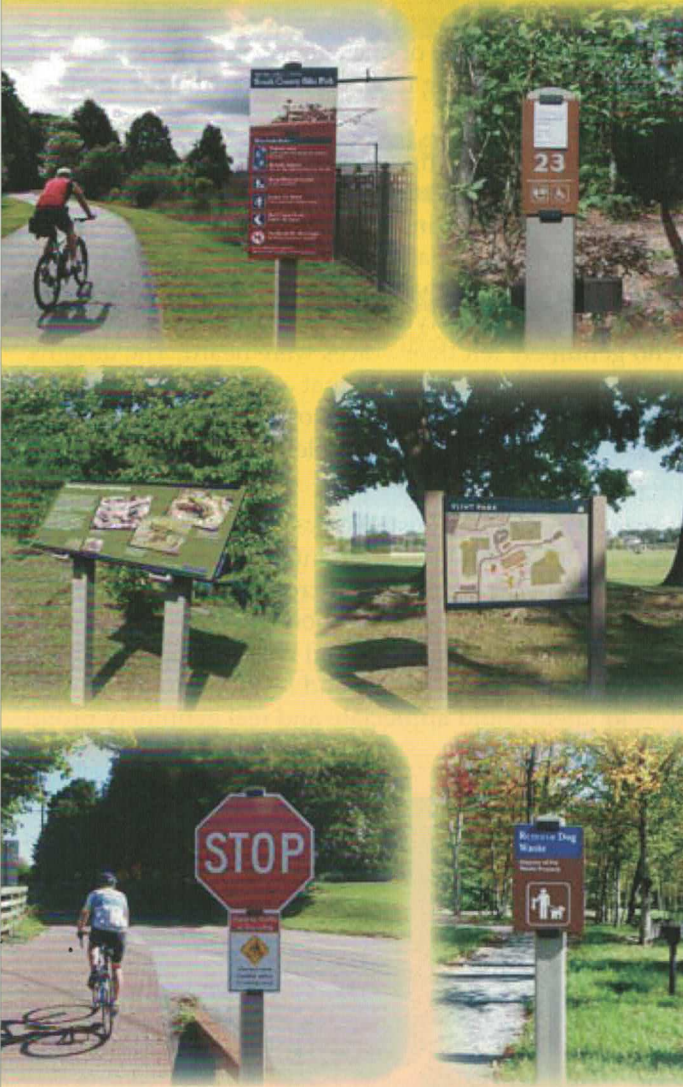

The goal of Inside the Outdoors is to connect students and families to nature, making them happier, healthier, and smarter. Watching these programs in action is to see intense participation and energized people out on trails, spending time together and learning to see the world in fresh new ways. Evidence indicates these programs succeed admirably in meeting their goals.

Our second collaboration, West Coyote Hills, occurred on a hillside parcel, Fullerton's last remaining open space, which in its most recent iteration had been an oil field still owned by Chevron. For many years, Chevron's development company had wanted to build new homes on this site, but faced with strong local opposition, they simply fenced off the property, which remained in somewhat degraded condition even though the oil wells had long since been removed.

To gain city and community approval, and because they saw the larger value of preserving the majority of the property in a natural state, Chevron agreed to the proposal for open space with a network of multi-use trails. This portion would be city-owned and tied into the city's fairly extensive trail system.

So our task was to develop—with input from educators, user groups, neighbors, business, architectural and environmental consultants, and city staff—an imaginative design that would satisfy the city and build local support. The slate was open for innovative, engaging ideas, and especially for making the project "kid-friendly."

Besides trails, proposals emerged for a nature center designed especially for older children, a natural play space area for younger children, a destination bridge, and a number of wayside exhibits that would teach visitors



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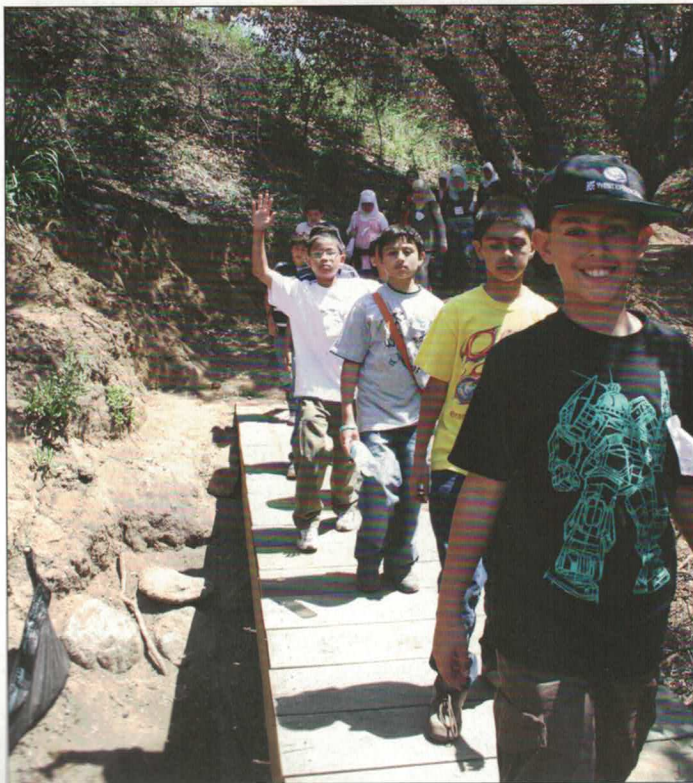


## Getting kids on trails *continued*

about the wildlife and plant communities, human history, and the urban-wildlands interface. In short, we wanted visitors to become “bioregionally literate.” Unlike the Rancho Soñado program, visitors would not be captive, nor would they all be of one age. We had to think about attracting and holding their attention without benefit of staff interaction.

Jenny led the group through a stimulating process in which ideas were transformed into concrete design detail. Chevron also sought input from environmental experts on how to remove non-native plants, preserve coastal sage, and in other ways enhance natural resources. It was a challenging and satisfying process for all participants, who genuinely felt their voices were heard. The designs that emerged include media that are layered in ways that attract multiple audiences and low profile facilities that address visitor needs without blemishing or detracting from the fragile landscape.

It was just what all of us who design and build trails hope for—the involvement of local interests, imaginative input, respect for natural values, and creative ways to engage children and youth, both as school groups and families. All who took part are convinced we came up with design concepts the city, the public, and residents in the new development could appreciate and feel genuinely proud to see happen.



Walking on Rancho Soñado's new footpaths



Wayside exhibit prototype for West Coyote Hills

Sadly, however, the project has been put on hold by the city council, influenced especially by one particularly vocal group that apparently prefers to have the property remain in its current state, even if degraded and unavailable to all but those who enter illegally. The project will resurface this year for a new vote by a new city council and we are optimistic it will eventually be built.

Despite the limbo status, we have learned much about ways to design that are especially meaningful and beneficial for children. Most importantly, we have focused more on child-centered design. Jenny's company, The Acorn Group, proposed a new acronym to replace the three Rs with four Es: excitement, engagement, education, and empowerment. Our design goals are first to attract and then excite children and youth; engage them in sensory-rich experiences; subtly raise their awareness and knowledge; and empower them to do something based on new insight and conviction.

While working on these two projects, we had to look at the intersection of the physical site, interpretative opportunities, input from supportive partners, and, in the case of Rancho Soñado, educational mandates. As we discovered, thoughtful planning is multidisciplinary, nonlinear, and involves a system of checks and balances so that ideas emerge and evolve through an engaging process. The West Coyote Hills design ideas seemed to blossom—and now and again caused our client to wonder if they had opened Pandora's Box!

The fire at Rancho Soñado, though seemingly a disaster, ironically turned out instead a marvelous opportunity to collaborate and create something exceptional for the kids. The three of us have become fast friends and ambassadors for fresh ways to get kids into nature and onto trails.

**Roger Bell, former trail contractor, is Vice Chair of American Trails. Pam Johnson, administrator, has worked with Inside the Outdoors for 28 years. Jenny Rigby, director of The Acorn Group, is a nationally certified interpretive planner.**



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**Thank you!**

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



# American Trails Website Contest

Links to winners and entries at [www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon10.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon10.html)

Our annual website contest highlights the creative ways that trail advocates, organizations, agencies, and communities are promoting trails. It's the only national contest to recognize trail-related websites delivering effective information, supporting volunteers, and engaging the public. See links to the 2010 Winning Websites at [www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon10.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/webcon10.html).

## State programs and statewide organizations

- *Michigan Trails & Greenways Alliance* works for an interconnected statewide system of trails and greenways for recreation, health, and transportation.

## Trails on federal lands

- *ProTrails* is dedicated to building a database of GPS-verified trail maps along with many photos showcasing national parks and wilderness areas across the country.

## Community trails system site (town, county, or other local jurisdiction)

- *Lewis County Community Trails* is a lasting legacy for generations to come as the trail system links up with adjacent trail systems statewide.

## Trail organization or club website

- *Rails to Trails of the Withlacoochee* is a citizen support organization helping Florida Office of Greenways and Trails develop, maintain, and promote the 46-mile paved trail with adjacent unpaved equestrian trail.

## Designated National Recreation Trail website

- *Friends of the Ouachita Trail* (FoOT) is a nonprofit organization created by trail users to maintain the Ouachita National Recreation Trail in Arkansas.

## Personal website

- Kevin Purdy's *Trailsnet.com* is a nonprofit website that promotes multi-purpose trails that are family friendly and that are great for all ages and abilities throughout the U.S.

## Best use of photographs

- *Indiana Trails Community Website* is sponsored by Hoosier Rails to Trails Council to share 20 years of experience in promoting and advocating for rail trails.

## Education and stewardship

- *Trailkeepers of Oregon* works to inspire action to protect and enhance the Oregon hiking experience through advocacy, stewardship, outreach, and education.

## Presentation of plans and proposals

- *Parley's Rails, Trails and Tunnels Coalition* is working to create a multi-use trail system in Salt Lake City along I-80 via Parley's Creek Corridor and the Sugar House Rail Spur, from the foothills to Provo-Jordan River greenway.

## Trail finding and database site

- *Maine Trail Finder* was launched by the Center for Community GIS and allows users to search and display information and maps for a growing database of trails across the state.

## Trail tour or virtual visit

- *Larapinta Trail* is one of Australia's most spectacular bushwalking and trekking experiences running 223 km through rugged desert landscapes with access near Alice Springs.



## Travel and tourism site for trails

- *VISIT FLORIDA Trails and Greenways* brings together trail descriptions and maps with information about lodging, restaurants, outfitters, and other travel related services.

## Trails for health and active living

- *Go Play! Campaign* of BikeNet in Billings, MT promotes health through activity and enjoyment of the Billings Trails and Park system with billboards, events, and education.

## Kids and trails

- *Pathways for Play* helps communities create networks of shared use pathways, infused with play pockets, and usable by all for healthy recreation and nonmotorized transportation.

## Promotion of trail ethics and trail sharing

- *New Hampshire Mushers Association* works to help maintain and promote safe and responsible trail use for all dog-powered sports and activities.

## Recognition and promotion of volunteerism

- *New York-New Jersey Trail Conference* partners with parks and organizes volunteers to create, protect, and promote more than 1,700 miles of public trails.

## Trail-related business or product

- *PermaTrak* is an eco-friendly product often chosen as an alternative to wood for boardwalks and trails that need to be installed within a sensitive natural environment.





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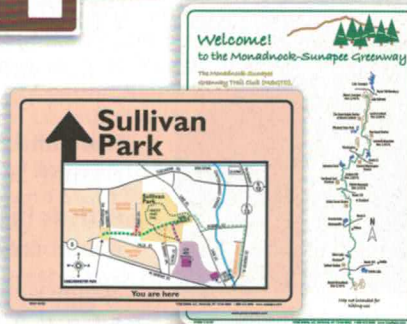
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# NATIONAL RECREATION TRAILS

## NRT Photo Contest winners

We are pleased to announce the winners of the National Recreation Trails Photo Contest for 2010. 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 website at [www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails).

### WINNING NRT PHOTOS by CATEGORY

#### Hiking and Walking • photo by **Sherrae Phelps**

- Bald Mountain National Recreation Trail, UT

#### Off-Highway Vehicle Routes • photo by **Nancy Geehan**

- Minooka Park National Recreation Trail, AL

#### Paddling and Water Trails • photo by **Mary Shaw**

- Three Rivers Water Trail, PA

#### Bicycling • photo by **Don Sullivan**

- Silver Comet National Recreation Trail, GA

#### Winter Trails • photo by **Mary Shaw**

- Youghiogheny River National Recreation Trail, PA

#### Trail Accessibility • photo by **Sherry Sullivan**

- Eastern Shore National Recreation Trail, AL



*Flying armadillo (photo by Sean Thomas Brumley)*

#### Trail Work • photo by **Mary Shaw**

- Great Allegheny Passage National Recreation Trail, PA

#### Education and Training • photo by **Jonathan Voelz**

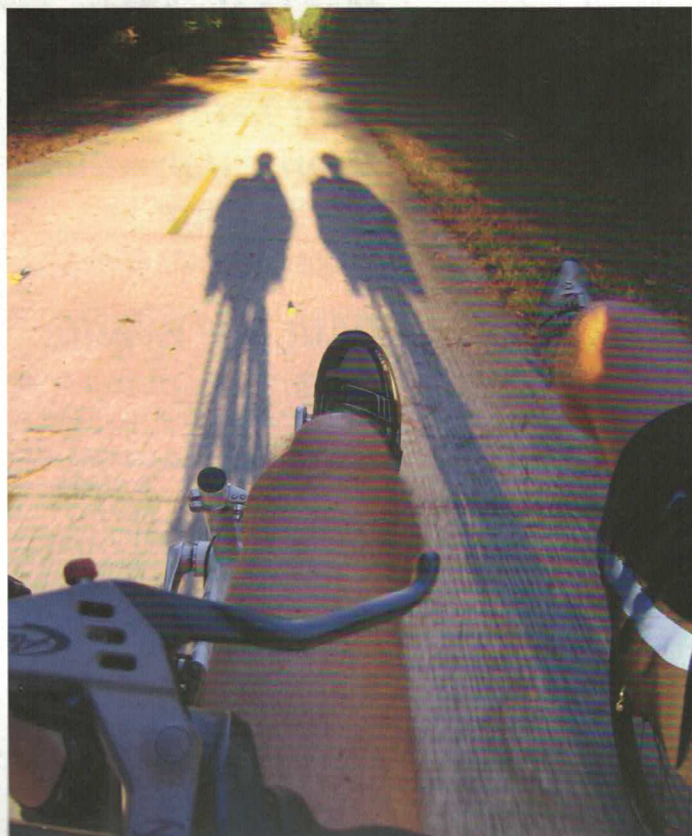
- Lower Cache River National Recreation Trail, IL

#### Art and Interpretation • photo by **Rob Grant**

- Eastern Shore National Recreation Trail, AL

#### Rail and Canal Trails • photo by **Brooke Smith**

- George S. Mickelson National Recreation Trail, SD



*Evening on the Silver Comet Trail (photo by Don Sullivan)*



*New trail bridge over the railroad (photo by Mary Shaw)*

#### Innovative Facilities • photo by **William R. Sherman**

- Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail, AL

#### Historic Features • photo by **Clare J. Kaczmarek**

- West Penn National Recreation Trail, PA

#### Health and Fitness • photo by **R. E. Martin**

- Lady Bird Lake National Recreation Trail, TX

#### Flora and Fauna • photo by **Sean Thomas Brumley**

- Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail, AL

#### Artistic Inspiration • photo by **Mikaela May**

- Benbrook Lake Horseback National Recreation Trail, TX

#### Scenery and Natural Features • photo by **Clare J. Kaczmarek**

- Great Allegheny Passage National Recreation Trail, PA

See all the National Recreation Trail contest photos  
at [www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails)



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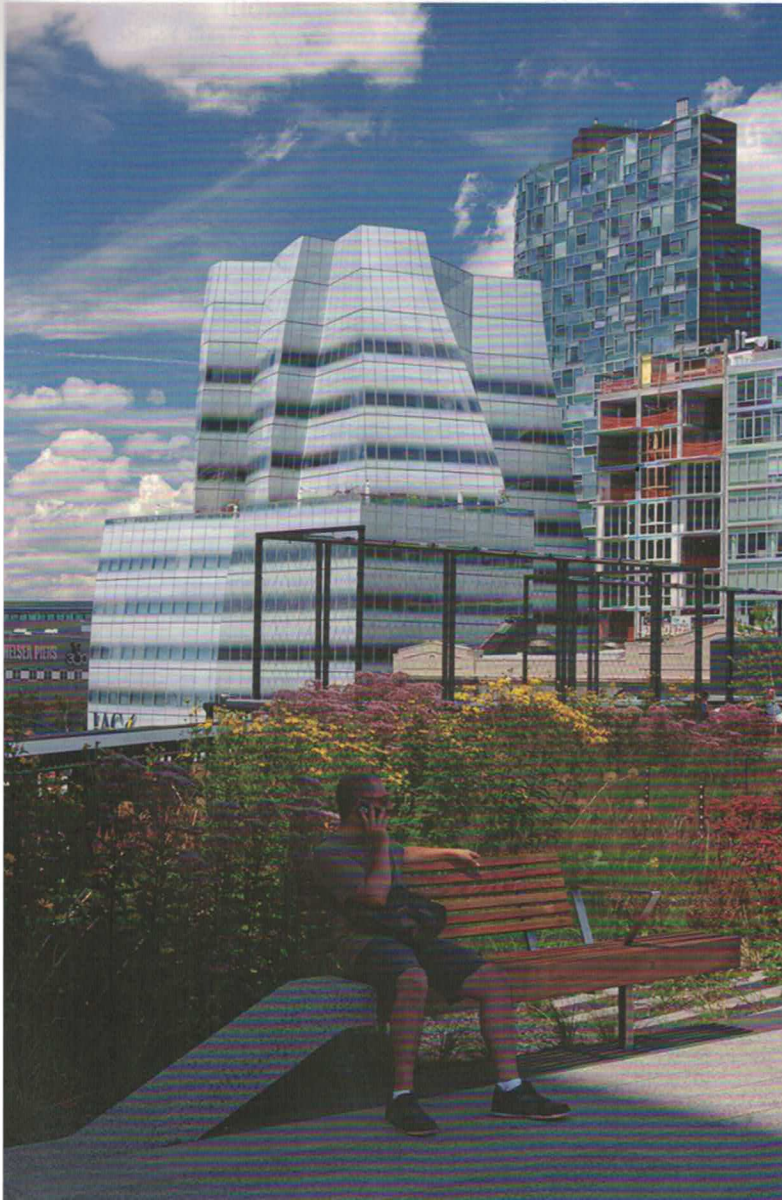
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*The contrast of wild flowers amid sleek modern towers gives the High Line a sense of being in the midst of the city and yet in a world apart*

*A former railroad line is now a linear park soaring above the Manhattan streets*

**A** SLICE OF NEW YORK HISTORY is preserved as a growing linear park on the elevated railroad parallel to 10th Avenue in Manhattan. Part of the 1930s West Side Improvement Project, the High Line was a joint project of the city and state of New York with the New York Central Railroad. The structures managed to survive until 2005 when the line was finally preserved under the federal railbanking program.

The new High Line has been acclaimed for enhancing the life of the city, while spurring new investment in the West Chelsea neighborhood. Over two million people visited the park during its first year of operation in 2009-10.

The nonprofit Friends of the High Line works with the city's Parks and Recreation Department to oversee maintenance, operations, and public events for the park facilities and trail. The Friends group is also working to raise funding to complete the High Line's construction and create an endowment for its future operations. The group's efforts were also critical in getting Mayor Michael Bloomberg and the City Council to reverse the original decision to demolish the railroad structures. Friends of the High Line also spearheaded the design process for the corridor, and raised \$44 million for its transformation to a public park.

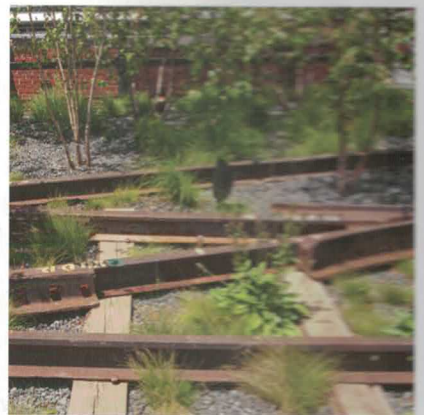
Construction on the linear park began in 2006. The first section, from Gansevoort Street to West 20th Street, opened June 9, 2009. The section from West 20th to West 30th will open this year. Total cost for the second phase is \$67 million, compared to \$86 million for the first phase. The High Line is open daily from 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. with summer hours continuing through the fall.

*The April 2011 issue of National Geographic magazine has more photos and some of the history and politics of New York's High Line Trail.*





Photography by  
**DON ANDBERG**





# Federal issues on the trails

*New resources, reports, and opportunities for public comment on land management*

## U.S. Forest Service Trail Fundamentals

The USDA Forest Service has developed "Trail Fundamentals" to provide a way to consistently record and communicate the intended design and management guidelines for trail design, construction, maintenance, and use.

Trail Fundamentals include five key concepts that are cornerstones of Forest Service trail management:

- Trail Type
- Trail Class
- Managed Use
- Designed Use
- Trail Design Parameters

Trail Fundamentals are identified for individual trails and documented as part of Trail Management Objectives. Trail Fundamentals are also used by other agencies and trail partners. They are now available on the internet for general reference and use.

**See the link to Trail Fundamentals under "Research and Policy" at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html).**

## Comment sought on Forest Planning Rule

The proposed Forest Service Planning Rule would establish a new national framework to "develop land management plans that protect water and wildlife and promote vibrant communities." The proposed rule includes new provisions to guide forest and watershed restoration and resilience, habitat protection, sustainable recreation, and management for multiple uses of the National Forest System, including timber. The 90-day public comment period ends May 16.

The Forest Service will use comments to develop a final rule.

**The proposed rule and additional information can be found at [www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule](http://www.fs.usda.gov/planningrule).**

## National Wildlife Refuge System vision

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has been working on a new vision plan for the National Wildlife Refuge System. The draft plan, released February 24, is titled *Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation*.

This effort is designed to improve how the Service conserves wildlife while providing wildlife-dependent uses. The new plan highlights the challenges of engaging local communities, reaching youth as well as new users, and being "open to innovative ways to connect people to the natural world."

Trail activities such as biking, hiking, and paddling are not always considered appropriate for wildlife refuges. The new plan promotes "an open and cooperative attitude" and suggests among its recommendations:

- Wildlife refuges must participate in regional recreation planning in order to both protect wildlife resources and reach a new generation of wildlife enthusiasts.
- A priority should be linking people to wildlife refuges from more urban areas.

The plan also notes that small-scale, low-maintenance facilities such as trails, observation towers and blinds, boat ramps, and interpretive signs are cost-effective ways to provide opportunities for visitors to access and enjoy wildlife refuges.

**See the draft vision document at <http://americaswildlife.org/about>.**

## DOI report on America's Great Outdoors

The Department of the Interior's Great Outdoors Initiative has reported on its findings. The public outreach process convened 51 listening sessions and generated 105,000 comments.

The report cites the role of outdoor activities in the economy: "At all of the listening sessions, people spoke about the realized and potential economic benefits provided by the outdoors, including recreation and tourism, rural and urban economic redevelopment, and lower health-care costs. Recreation and tourism and related businesses and enterprises have become powerful elements of rural and urban economic development."

Under the theme of "Connecting Americans to the Great Outdoors," the report aims to:

- Provide Quality Jobs, Career Pathways, and Service Opportunities
- Enhance Recreational Access and Opportunities
- Raise Awareness of the Value and Benefits of America's Great Outdoors
- Engage Young People in Conservation and the Great Outdoors

The report also ties many of its efforts to funding from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, which has been the subject of debate in the proposed Federal budget process.

**See the link to AGO Report under "Research and Policy" at [www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/resources/newest.html).**



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encourage active participation in the care and use of equestrian resources by trail riders and the general public.

SMMBCH assists state, federal, and private agencies in the maintenance and management of land resources. For more information visit [www.ShowMeBCH.org](http://www.ShowMeBCH.org).





# More than maintenance

*Four keys to sustainability: resources, economics, experiences, and politics*

By Karen Umphress

**NOHVCC Project Coordinator and member of the American Trails Board**

**I**F YOU ASK Tom Crimmins what makes a trail sustainable, he will first tell you that the trail provides protection for natural resources. He will then tell you that it means much more, such as the trail being operated cost effectively, that it is maintained efficiently, and that it will continue to enhance the recreation experience over time. Tom should know, having worked for the U.S. Forest Service for over 30 years. He has specialized in recreation, particularly off-highway vehicle recreation, but his principles can be applied to all types of recreation situations.

Sustainability of trails is a familiar catch phrase. Everyone uses the term, but without a clear understanding of the whole concept.

So what makes a trail wholly sustainable? According to Tom, there are four keys aspects:

- Resource Sustainability
- Economic Sustainability
- Political Sustainability
- Experience Sustainability

**Resource sustainability** is understood by most people as trails that are not harmful to our environment and which protect our natural resources. However, it is important to remember that all trails, even the most sustainable, require some degree of maintenance yearly, even if it is just a quick inspection to make sure everything is still working well.

What makes a trail **economically sustainable**? Besides low maintenance costs, an economically sustainable trail is one that over time will give you a return on the investment in its construction and maintenance.

This trail will not be the cheapest to create. But the up-front costs that are put into the trail will pay for themselves several times over with the decreased costs in both time and money than a less well engineered trail. And, when you are paying a lot for the maintenance of existing trails, you are not spending the money creating new trails.

**Political sustainability** is how happy the community will be to have this trail. The way that Tom describes this form of sustainability is NIMBYISM – or the “Not In My Back Yard” syndrome. Lots of people like to use trails, but as soon as you talk about building one near existing homes, NIMBYISM pops up. People will tell you that their property values will go down, that trespass issues will go up, and that the trail will enable thieves to be able to plunder homes along the trail route.

For instance, I was talking to a gentleman from the next town where a rail trail is being considered. He is very much against the trail, and unhappy that it will be running past his property. A rail line was fine, he said, “The trains went by at high speeds and didn’t stop to wander around our property. But with a trail there, people will now have access to our property where we won’t be able to see them. They will have the ability to trespass on our property easier. We won’t know what they are doing back there.”

In another case, people were very upset about an OHV park going in near their town. During all of the city and county discussions they testified that their property values would decrease, their town would see higher crime rates, and their children would no longer be safe. They also

wrote about their fears in forums and in letters to the editor.

In both cases, the fears did not come to pass. The trails were created, trespassing did not go up, crime did not go up, and the children stayed safe. However, there can still be a perceived vulnerability felt by those who have trails going by their property. There is a balance of people for and against each trail that will need to be weighed.

Politically sustainable trails are the ones where people accept the access and understand that most people don’t trespass because of the trail. If this type of understanding is not there for most of the people, then trail relocation should be a serious consideration. As Tom says, “They have moved airports because enough people complained.”

**Experience sustainability** begins with planning trails for levels of difficulty and for specific purposes. An easier trail where people can go slow and enjoy the countryside will need to be designed and maintained completely differently than a tough single-track trail designed to challenge a horseback rider, mountain biker, or dirt bike rider. The line of sight, for instance, may be longer or shorter. Obstacles may be left in the trail for more difficult trails. The trail tread may need to be widened or narrowed. And each time the recreationist uses the trail, they will continue to experience the same pleasure as the first time they used the trail.

In the end, what we need is to maintain and create a wide variety of quality recreation opportunities for all of the people who enjoy the outdoors. This is true Trail Sustainability.





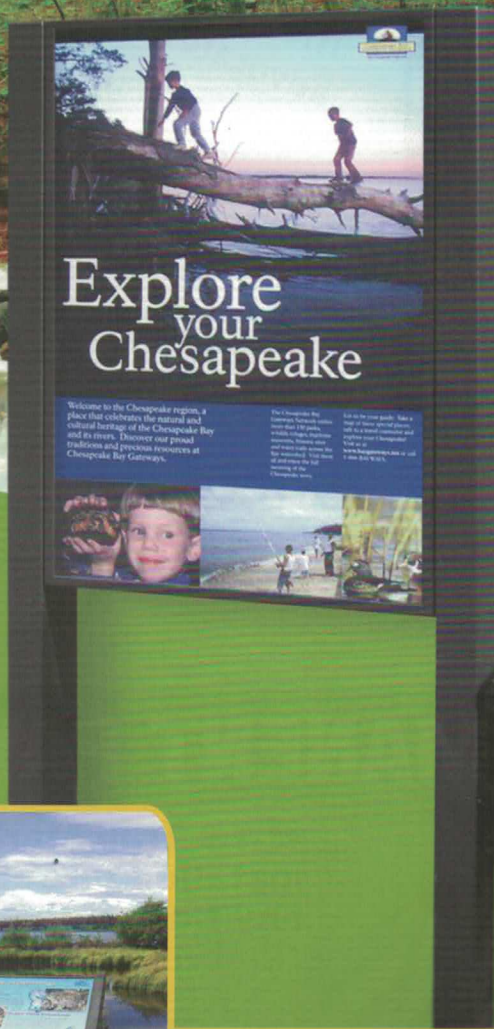
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