



# TRAIL TRACKS

the Trails Information Newsletter  
published by AMERICAN TRAILS

Volume 34, Number 3

Editor: Stuart H. Macdonald

FALL 2005

## Call for presentations for 2006 Symposium coming up

The "Call for Presentations" for the **18th National Trails Symposium** will be sent out in January 2006. We'll be looking for great ideas, inspiring speakers, and educational programs. *Trails for America: Every Where, Every Way, Every Day* is the theme America's largest gathering of trail supporters, planners, and managers. We'll also be showcasing a wide variety of interesting projects in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois.

**Read more on the National Trails Symposium on pages 20-23. Look for updates and details at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).**

## National Awards honor trail heroes

Every two years American Trails presents the National Trails Awards to recognize the tremendous contributions of volunteers, professionals, businesses, and leaders who are working for a national system of trails for all Americans. The deadline for nominations is May 31, 2006 and covers the period of June 1, 2004 to May 31, 2006. The awards will be presented on October 21, 2006, at the 18th National Trails Symposium in the Quad Cities of Iowa and Illinois.

Take advantage of this opportunity to recognize someone worthy! Mark your calendar!

**Go to [www.americantrails.org/quad/awards.html](http://www.americantrails.org/quad/awards.html) to read about the award categories and past award recipients, and to download a nomination form.**

***This issue of Trail Tracks is the largest ever.  
See page 36 to join American Trails today!***

## American Trails Website Contest underway for 2005

We're looking for the best websites for trails and greenways.

American Trails sponsors the only annual contest to seek out the best trail-related sites in cyberspace. It's easy to nominate a website, either your own or a favorite. The deadline is January 31, 2006.

**See all the details on entering at:  
[www.americantrails.org/webcon05.html](http://www.americantrails.org/webcon05.html)**

## Start shooting for National Rec Trails photo contest

We are looking for exciting photos of National Recreation Trails across America. American Trails is sponsoring the 2006 contest for photos of designated NRTs. Awards in several categories will show off your skills, your favorite trail, and make more Americans familiar with these great trails. The deadline for entries is August 31, 2006.

**Details at [www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails)**



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# Hindsight. 20/20.

**The Cross Alert System is a motion-activated, solar-powered, radio-controlled early warning system.**

The simple difference between hindsight and foresight is planning.

At too many intersections where recreational paths cross public roads, poor sight distances and other obstructions can lead to dangerous vehicle/path user interactions.

The Cross Alert System has been designed to address the sight distance and obstruction issue by raising the awareness of motorists to the presence of path users at or approaching the intersection.

The Cross Alert System, when triggered by path activity, flashes an amber warning beacon to approaching motorists forewarning them of path users at or near the intersection. Safety is enhanced at the intersection without altering the existing flow of traffic. The system also flashes red beacons to pathway users forewarning them to stop.

At intersections where the rate of travel of approaching vehicles is high, early warning poles can be placed up to 400 feet from the intersection. These poles are also triggered by path activity, providing crucial advanced warning of path activity.

An integrated trail counter can provide downloadable counts of trail-user crossings to your laptop.

For planners, builders and maintainers of recreational paths that intersect public roads, the simple difference between hindsight and foresight is Cross Alert Systems.

## Solar Powered

*Solar energy with battery backup powers the installation. The battery stores over 70 hours of flashing power and is capable of powering the system for over a week in cloudy weather. With no need to connect to the power grid, the Cross Alert System significantly lowers installation costs.*

## Motion Activated

*Path activity triggers flashing caution lights and provides real-time information to intersecting vehicle traffic that path users are near or at the intersection.*

## Radio Controlled

*System signs "talk" by radio signal across the intersection when motion is detected along the pathway and a warning flash is initiated. No underground or overhead wires are ever necessary for multi-pole systems to communicate.*



# Foresight. 866-CROSSALERT.

*"Our innovative use of proven technology allows Cross Alert Systems to provide a typical two-pole system for under \$20,000 (excluding installation costs). In addition to solving many safety and infrastructure concerns at many problematic intersections, Cross Alert can also help with financing to meet fiscal and/or budget considerations."*

—Ken Block, President,  
Cross Alert Systems

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### Trail Tracks

**Trail Tracks** (ISSN 1082-8303) is the newsletter 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 32 for membership form.

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## Please help trails ravaged by Katrina

**By Pam Gluck, American Trails Executive Director**

**A**s you are aware, Hurricane Katrina, on August 29, 2005, caused the loss of numerous lives, the loss of jobs, and mass destruction in South Mississippi, as well as in other adjoining areas. But other casualties of the hurricane are trails and greenways. We urge you to consider helping rebuild these vital community assets.

### The Longleaf Trace, Mississippi

The Longleaf Trace is a 40-mile trail from Hattiesburg to Prentiss, MS. Even though FEMA will contribute over \$1 million, trail supporters and its governing authority will be responsible for approximately \$100,000 of the cost of cleaning up more than 20,000 trees, numerous hazards, and debris along the trail to return it to its intended function.

Help is needed from the many thousands of bikers, hikers, bladers, and horseback riders who enjoy and support the Longleaf Trace. Everyone will want to support the recovery of this National Recreation Trail. They would appreciate very much, your solicitation of cash to assist, as the governing authority of the Longleaf Trace does not have the funds necessary to pay its estimated share of cost for the debris clean-up and return of a functional Longleaf Trace. If you can assist, please send check to Longleaf Trace, P O Box 15187, Hattiesburg MS 39404. For more information call (601) 450-5247 or visit [www.longleaftrace.org](http://www.longleaftrace.org).

### The Mississippi River Trail, Louisiana

MRT, Inc. is working on ways to impact the disaster-ridden hurricane area along the coast. MRT has been successful in designating approximately 320 miles of trail in Louisiana and had another 75 miles under development in the impacted area below New Orleans. Roughly 20% of the MRT system was been affected by the storm.

Trails are important to recovery because appropriate green infrastructure planning and development will help shape the new future of New Orleans and southern Louisiana as it has many other thriving cities and metropolitan regions.

Please help MRT, Inc. help the Mississippi River Trail; please donate today to Mississippi River Trail, Inc., 858 N. Jackson, Fayetteville AR 72701. For more information: (479) 444-0678; [teastin@lynks.com](mailto:teastin@lynks.com) or [www.mississippirivertrail.org](http://www.mississippirivertrail.org).

### American Trails partner sends solar-powered lighting

SOL, Inc., in conjunction with the Louisiana State Police, has installed the first 30 solar-powered lighting systems at critical areas around New Orleans. "These systems have been battle-tested in areas beset by hurricanes and other disasters, here and abroad. We feel privileged to be able to bring some light and hope to these communities," said Michael Sonnenfeldt, chairman of SOL, Inc. He also said, "During the next phase we expect to bring lights to areas of New Orleans and beyond which would otherwise be without lights for weeks and maybe months to come. These lights will be the first signs on a long road to recovery and will help stabilize local conditions." Visit [www.solarlighting.com](http://www.solarlighting.com).





# Trails Training Partnership

## OHV Recreation Management Workshops offered in 2006



A series of OHV Recreation Management Workshops is put on every year by the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC). The workshops are held throughout the country to bring together public land managers and users, recreation

planners, and OHV enthusiasts to create a better understanding of motorized recreation. The goals are to examine environmental issues, to promote more effective management, and to improve the planning, design and maintenance of quality OHV trails systems and areas.

OHV Recreation Management Workshops are typically statewide in scope and are developed in cooperation with local USFS, BLM, and State agencies. Workshops may also offer courses from the ATV Safety Institute, Motorcycle Safety Foundation, and Tread Lightly!.

"One of the more interesting aspects of the OHV Recreation Management Workshops is the bringing together of folks who may not necessarily see eye-to-eye on how OHVs should be managed on our public lands," explains NOHVCC Communications Director Steve Casper.

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For more information on hosting an OHV Recreation Management Workshops in your area, contact NOHVCC, 4718 South Taylor Drive, Sheboygan, WI 53081; (800) 348-6487 or [trailhead@nohvcc.org](mailto:trailhead@nohvcc.org)  
 Online at [www.nohvcc.org](http://www.nohvcc.org)

## American Trails offers new Accessible Trails workshop

**Accessible Trails Workshop: Understanding Accessibility and Building Better Trails** is the title of a new workshop that is coordinated by American Trails in cooperation with the National Trails Training Partnership

The objectives of this one-day workshop are to teach:

- current accessibility requirements and legal issues
- Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP) introduction
- benefits of sustainable trail design
- analysis and problem solving for accessibility

Sustainability has many facets, including environmental, social and economic sustainability. Sustainable trails are better for the environment because they minimize trail impacts on the surrounding environment. Trail users of all abilities benefit from and contribute to the social sustainability of the trail. A broader spectrum of trail users builds more public support for the trail and the benefits that it provides. Sustainable trail design ensures a high probability of compliance with the proposed recreation trail accessibility guidelines. Sustainable trails are also better from an economic perspective because of the decreased costs for maintenance and environmental protection.

**For information on hosting the Accessible Trails Workshop in your state or region, please contact Pam Gluck, Executive Director, American Trails, P.O. Box 491797, Redding, CA 96049-1797 • (530) 547-2060**  
[trailhead@americantrails.org](mailto:trailhead@americantrails.org)



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# Summary of Federal Funding

## The big picture: Federal trail funding for FY05-09

By Stuart Macdonald, Trail Tracks editor

Federal funding for programs that affect trails has been a long and political process in recent years. However, with the passage of agency budgets and the big federal transportation funding bill, we can report on a wide variety of funding for trails, parks, and outdoor recreation:

### Federal Land Management

**USDA Forest Service Recreation:** \$265.2 million

**USDA Forest Service Trails:** \$72.5 million in FY06 (down from \$75.9 million in FY05)

**USDOJ Bureau of Land Management Recreation Management:** \$66.1 million (up from \$60.6 million in FY05). Three National Scenic and Historic Trails (Iditarod NHT, Continental Divide NST, and Pacific Crest NST) received specific money in the BLM budget.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF):** provides funding nationwide for federal land acquisition and state outdoor recreation grants:

- \$30 million for LWCF state assistance in FY06 (down from \$92.5 million in FY05)
- \$115 million for federal land acquisition in FY06 (down from \$166 million in FY05)

**National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance (RTCA) program:** \$8.135 million in FY06 (down from \$8.3 million in FY05)

**National Park Service operation:** \$60 million increase for FY06 includes \$500,000 for 18 of 24 National Scenic and Historic Trails.

**Recreational Fee Demonstration Program:** creates a new national, interagency “America the Beautiful” pass, and extends the program to five agencies for ten years adding the Bureau of Reclamation.

### Transportation (SAFETEA-LU)

Mired in the reauthorization process for two years, the “Safe, Accountable, Efficient Transportation Equity Act— a Legacy for Users” (SAFETEA-LU) authorizes spending for a six-year surface transportation program. It covers fiscal years 2005-09 and replaces TEA 21. A great deal of funding has been provided through this program since 1991 for a variety of projects that encourage walking, bicycling, and recreational trails.

**Recreational Trails Program (RTP):** \$370 million over six years (up from \$270 million under TEA-21, a 64% increase). Fifty state grant programs continue to fund motorized and nonmotorized trails and education programs; see how FY05 funds are apportioned to states.

**Transportation Enhancements (TE):** \$4.79 billion over the next six years (up from \$3.33 billion under TEA-21). Continues as 10 percent set-aside; approximately \$3.5 billion over six years. Approximately 55 percent of enhancements funding in previous years went to bicycle/pedestrian trails and rail-trail conversion projects.

**Safe Routes to School initiative:** \$612 million over six years to encourage children to walk or bicycle to school. Funding will be distributed to states in proportion to the number of primary and secondary school students in the state, with no state receiving less than \$1 million annually.





# for Trails, Greenways, and Parks

**Many different Federal programs provide funding for trails and greenways, as well as outdoor recreation on public lands.**

**Nonmotorized Transportation Pilot Program:** \$100 million is provided through FY 2009 to support construction of a network of nonmotorized transportation facilities and infrastructure. The four pilot program communities are Columbia, MO; Marin County, CA; Minneapolis-St. Paul, MN; and Sheboygan County, WI.

**Special Projects (“earmarks”):** SAFETEA-LU is also packed with individual special appropriations: 6,400 special projects worth \$24 billion. Trails advocates along with many other interests have used this process to fund special projects. Here are just a few examples to show the variety:

- \$1,500,000 Construct a bridge for the Paul Bunyan Trail over Excelsior Road (Baxter, MN)
- \$1,600,000 Construction of the Montour Trail (Great Allegheny, PA)
- \$400,000 Construct Mississippi River Trail and Bikepath (New Orleans, LA)
- \$200,000 Develop trails, bike paths and recreational facilities

- ties on Cumberland Trail State Park (Morgan, TN)
- \$1,300,000 Construct recreational visitor center on the Mesabi Trail (Virginia, MN)

**Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality program:** \$8.6 billion over six years. Some CMAQ projects can be eligible to incorporate bike and pedestrian trail construction as a way to reduce air pollution.

**Sport Fishing Restoration and Boating Safety Trust Fund (Dingell-Johnson):** Provides \$570 million a year for fisheries management and research; fishing and boating access facilities such as trails, piers, and boat ramps; and education and safety programs for anglers and boaters.

**Transit in the Parks:** Demo program for federal public lands to promote alternative access to National Parks and federal public lands by trails, bikes, or people movers.

**Federal Lands Highways program:** Park roads and parkways, \$1.06 billion; refuge roads, \$180 million.

**Scenic Byways:** \$174 million over six years.

**Visit [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org) for details of Federal funding and agency programs. See the “Resources & Library” area as well as “News & Alerts” for current issues and funding opportunities.**



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## Risk management and insurance takes planning

**By Doug Wyseman**

**A**s trail systems become increasingly important to recreation across North America, so does managing the risks associated with multi-use trails. There appears to be much confusion and misunderstanding regarding many of the liabilities associated with trails, and there are definitely errors being committed in efforts to transfer the risks from landowners (public and private) to trail user groups.

***There are definitely errors being committed in efforts to transfer the risks from landowners to trail user groups.***

In the mid 1980s many insurers got out of the municipal insurance business. A key reason was a judgment in a case involving an accident on a municipally-owned trail. In that case a young man suffered serious permanent injuries when his dirt bike collided with another trail user. The trail was located by a gravel pit and was owned by a municipality. The court felt that the municipality knew or ought to have known that this dangerous practice was taking place, on their land, and therefore had an obligation to provide a safe place for it—or stop the activity. Damages of \$6 million were awarded.

If you were to mention trail liability to many insurance underwriters, they would be quick to cite that case with any thought of trails on municipal lands. Few know that the judgment was tremendously reduced on appeal, or that Occupier's Liability laws in almost every jurisdiction have been changed since that case to provide more protection to trail owners. Legislation and insurance statutes provide a level of protection from risks relating to motorized vehicles on the trails.

Due, in part, to some overly heightened fears regarding trails and their use, landowners are often directed to ensure that user groups provide proof of liability insurance, naming the (public or private) landowner as an insured on the user group policy, before allowing trails to be developed on their lands.

We are certainly not opposed to municipalities transferring risk to users of their property. Risk transfer is a proper and useful risk management strategy in many circumstances. But many municipalities, who would like to develop trails to reap their many financial and physical rewards may want to consider establishing a Committee of Council to allow increased influence over the trail as well as allowing the volunteers assisting in such a project to possibly be protected by the municipality's existing insurance coverage.

However, not all insurance is the same, and we recommend that you check to ensure that such a committee would be covered under your existing policy. We have seen instances where trail risks have been transferred by landowners being named on trail users insurance policies, yet on examination of the users' policies, they may not provide anywhere near the protection the landowner, or their insurer, assumed.

If you are demanding proof of insurance in any recreational activity, make sure that the insurance is in an adequate amount, and that it will respond to the types of loss you may encounter. Is the covered limit “per occurrence” or “aggregate”? Do any conditions of the policy make the coverage void through an error in the performance of operations?

Recently we were involved in the examination of the risks associated with trails and the transfer of that risk between trail user groups and landowners. We were very surprised with the misconceptions we discovered— both in understanding the real level of risks on the trails, but also with the number of people who had the warm, fuzzy feeling of protection from transferring their risk, who had in fact not transferred nearly as much risk as they thought.

Developing a risk management program for trail ownership, use or maintenance is not a cumbersome task. A written policy should be established regarding frequency and types of inspection on the trail. As with all such policies, they should be followed and documented. Since municipal staff has more than enough tasks to occupy their time, we recommend the use of volunteers to assist in the trail inspection program.

***The Risk and Trails training manual includes samples of written inspection policies and inspection forms.***

A half-day training program we have developed for staff and volunteers can dramatically improve your risk management initiatives. Volunteers will also thank you for the opportunity to help, and often want to put their new-found interest in risk management to work to assist the community in other areas.

To assist in developing sound risk management practices for your trails, we have put together a Risk and Trails training manual that includes samples of such written inspection policies and inspection forms. Copies of Risk and Trails will be provided to all participants at the Public Risk Management Association sponsored Risk and Recreation workshops being presented across North America ([www.primacentral.org](http://www.primacentral.org)) or are available by contacting [dwyseman@rogers.com](mailto:dwyseman@rogers.com)

**For more on this topic visit the “Safe Trails Forum in the Resources area of [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).**







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# Awards for Trail Heroes

## Take Pride in America gives 2005 awards for excellence

**T**he Take Pride in America Awards honor those who best maintain and enhance our public lands, including parks, forests, grasslands, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, and other recreation areas. This year 25 award recipients from 16 states were recognized for efforts in a variety of categories.

"The individuals we honor today have surpassed simple duty and gone on to achieve excellence," **Interior Secretary Gale Norton** said about the honorees. "Today's winners have given their time, their labor and their commitment to the lands that belong to all Americans. It is these citizens who make this Nation great."

Of the many great people and projects recognized by the awards, we wanted to highlight some of those who are helping maintain and preserve trails across America:

### Taking Pride in America's Trails

- Since 1995, the **The Continental Divide Trail Alliance (CDTA)** has played a central role toward the completion, management, and protection of the Continental Divide Trail. Public service is the cornerstone of CDTA with programs that include Adopt-A-Trail, Youth Corp, Explorers, Crew Leader, Crew Chef, and Trail Building. In the last decade this allied effort has built 1,275 miles, 31 bridges, and 46 trailheads; with 43 volunteer projects offered in 2005. To learn more see [www.CDTrail.org](http://www.CDTrail.org) or call ( 888) 909-2382.
- The 2004 Florida hurricane season left 1,180 miles of the **Florida National Scenic Trail** closed and in need of highly specialized repair skills. **USDA Forest Service** trainers taught community volunteers the needed skills, and helped the Florida Trail Association meet their hurricane recovery pledge of 60,000 volunteer hours.
- The **Folsom-Auburn Trail Riders Action**, a mountain biking club in northern California, organized volunteers to maintain the Foresthill Divide Loop Trail. Five miles of trail were cleared by club members and volunteers from the Bureau of Reclamation helping keep the extremely popular trail open for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding.
- Over three years volunteers, youth corps, and other partners have built trails, removed invasive plants, and planted new wetlands at the **Bruce Vento Nature Sanctuary** restoration project along the Mississippi River near St. Paul.
- **Friends of Anahuac Refuge** raised funds and organized volunteers who constructed an attractive trail system that wanders through the Anahuac National Wildlife Refuge on the Texas Gulf Coast.

- The Volunteers-in-Parks (VIP) Program of the **Chesapeake & Ohio Canal National Historic Park** grew from 1,847 volunteers to 2,396 in the past year, contributing an estimated value of \$840,041. The VIP program is guided by one staff person and managed by an intern to engage youth, students and seniors in the bike patrol program, visitor center work, as a campground host, or a living history interpreter.

**Read all the Take Pride in America award citations at [www.funoutdoors.com](http://www.funoutdoors.com).**



**Hulet Hornbeck talking at the trail dedication event.**

## Hulet Hornbeck Trail honors longtime advocate

**A** trail was named in recognition of **Hulet Hornbeck's** tireless efforts in parkland development and management for the East Bay Regional Park District. The California Riding and Hiking Trail segment in Carquinez Strait Regional Shoreline was renamed in honor of Mr. Hornbeck. East Bay Regional Park District Board President **Beverly Lane** and Board Member **Ted Radke** dedicated the Hulet Hornbeck Trail on the occasion of his 86th birthday, October 14, 2005.

Hulet Hornbeck enjoyed a distinguished career as Chief of Land Acquisition of the East Bay Regional Park District from 1965 through 1985, serving legendary leaders **William Penn Mott** and **Richard Trudeau**. Hulet is credited with overseeing the acquisition of 49,000 acres of parkland, expanding the District's land holdings from eight parks (13,000 acres) to 46 parks (62,000 acres) thus securing the East Bay Regional Park District unique position as the largest regional park agency in the nation. The development of the EBRPD regional inter-park trails system is another of his many accomplishments. A lifetime conservationist and outdoorsman, Hulet has held many positions in local trail and conservation organizations, including American Trails, receiving many honors and awards.

# Caring for Trails and Greenways

## Operations, Maintenance, and Stewardship 101

By Robert Searns, American Trails Board

It's not as glamorous as building the trail. There is no ribbon cutting for a maintenance program and seldom does upkeep win a national award. Yet, operations, maintenance, and stewardship are essential to the safe use, enjoyment, and long-term success of any trail. Increasingly, planners and elected officials want to see a workable O & M plan. They want to know the cost and how it will be funded.

Indeed an excellent project concept may die on the vine if these challenges are not adequately addressed. Here is an outline of the key elements of this vital aspect of trail management.



**Trails must do many things: promote safety, protect the environment, and provide quality experiences.**

or more— or after an event such as a flood. Other examples include stabilization of a severely eroded hillside, repaving a trail surface, or replacing a bridge. Remedial maintenance should be a consideration in formulating a long-term capital improvement plan, though budgeting could be on an individual and as-needed or anticipated basis.

A quality O & M program addresses specific required tasks and begins with sound design, durable components, and a comprehensive management plan. The responsible officials and entities should embrace the plan at the beginning.

Programs and protocols that will endure should be instituted— including training of field and supervisory people. In addition, community groups, residents, business owners, developers and other stakeholders should be engaged in the long-term stewardship effort.

### Operations and Maintenance Defined

**Operations and Maintenance** refers to the day-to-day upkeep as well as the smooth and safe functioning of a trail, greenway or trail/greenway system. The term **Stewardship** refers to long-term care and oversight of the trail resource. This is essential to assure it will be sustained as a quality component of the community infrastructure and a good neighbor to adjacent properties and surrounding natural environment. Stewardship also includes building community support and advocacy so the integrity of the trail or greenway will not be compromised in the future.

### Routine and Remedial Tasks

**Routine Maintenance** refers to the day-to-day regimen of litter pick-up, trash and debris removal, weed and dust control; trail sweeping, sign replacement, tree and shrub trimming and other regularly scheduled activities. Routine maintenance also includes minor repairs and replacements such as fixing cracks and potholes or repairing a broken hand railing.

**Remedial Maintenance** refers to correcting significant defects as well as repairing, replacing, or restoring major components that have been destroyed, damaged, or significantly deteriorated during the life of the project. Minor repairs such as repainting, seal coating asphalt pavement, or replacing signs may occur on a five to ten-year cycle. Major reconstruction items might occur over a longer period— up to 100 years

### Guiding Principles for a Successful Program

*The following guiding principles will help assure preservation of a first class system:*

- Good maintenance begins with sound planning and design.
- Foremost, protect life, property, and the environment.
- Promote and maintain a quality outdoor recreation experience.
- Develop a management plan that is reviewed and updated annually with tasks, operational policies, standards, and routine and remedial maintenance goals.
- Maintain quality control and conduct regular inspection.
- Include field crews, police and fire/rescue personnel in both the design review and on-going management process.
- Maintain an effective, responsive public feedback system and promote public participation.
- Be a good neighbor to adjacent properties.

*An effective O & M plan should include the following areas:*

- Maintenance— Routine and Remedial
- User Safety and Risk Management
- Programming and Events
- Resource Stewardship and Enhancement
- Marketing and Promotion
- Oversight and Coordination



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Sincerely,

*Walter C. May*



# Operations, Maintenance, and

## Typical Operations and Maintenance Tasks

Following are some of the typical O&M Activities for various types of trail amenities:

- Inspection and Citizen Response
- Trail Surface Maintenance
- Repaving and Pavement Overlays
- Sweeping/Street Sweeping
- (For On-Street Facilities)
- Street Surface Upkeep and Repair (On-Street Facilities)
- Parking Lot Repair at Trailheads
- Maintain Connecting On-Street and Sidewalk Routes
- Vegetation and Pest Management (e.g. Trimming Overhanging Branches)
- Irrigation Systems
- Litter and Trash Removal
- Graffiti and Vandalism Control
- Dust Reduction
- Address Detours/Disruptions (With Workable Alternative Routes)
- Remedy “Social Trails” (Such as Shortcuts)



**Proper handling of water runoff is a key element of trail maintenance.**

- Repair Trail Structures and Fixture/Erosion Control
- Signage (Especially Safety Signage), Striping and Lighting

- Rest Areas, Shelters and Water Stations (Including Equestrian)
- Toilet Facility Service
- Patrol, Security, Enforcement, Safety Hazard Reduction
- Special Event Policies and Permitting
- Education and Enforcement
- Accident and Incident Data Tracking

User safety is critical to trail design, operations and management. Trail planners and managers should implement a safety program that includes: systematic risk management assessment, inter-agency design review for all proposed improvements and accident and crime reporting. In addition to department managers, planners, designers and engineers, law

enforcement, fire/rescue and field maintenance personnel should be consulted in the design and review process.

## User Safety and Risk Management

Important steps in this process include:

**Use sound design and engineering principals in the planning and design phase.** For instance, trail designs should conform to currently established standards such as the *Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities* available from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO). Safety and regulatory signage should conform to the *Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices* available at <http://mutcd.fhwa.dot.gov/> from the Federal Highway Administration. For good references that address accessibility standards, design of primitive trails, mountain bike facilities, bridges, boardwalks, and other facilities, visit the American Trails Web site: [www.americantrails.org](http://www.americantrails.org).

**Consult experts in bicycle facility engineering for difficult situations** such as at-grade street crossings, trails built next to roads, mid-block crossings and other challengers. It may be advisable to have a the engineer review the entire plan set. Remember, bikes are vehicles and should be treated as such.

**Include all points of view.** Involve members of both genders, a variety of age groups, and law enforcement and fire/rescue people in reviewing plans. Concerns with respect to safety and security will vary depending on the perspective.



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# Stewardship for Trails

**Implement an emergency response protocol** working with law enforcement, EMS agencies, and fire and rescue department that includes mapping of trail and open space access points, design of trails and access roads (to accommodate up to 6.5 tons), an “address/location positioning system” such mile markers to identify locations and, where appropriate, 911 emergency phones in remote areas.



**Implement a data base management system** with law enforcement and fire/rescue to track specific location and circumstances of all accidents, reported incidents and crime and create a safety follow-up task force to address any problems that develop.

**Routinely inspect** for safety hazards, defective structures, missing safety signs, etc.

**Promote user courtesy and trail etiquette** and post and enforce safe user behavior and bicycle speed limits (in congested and risk areas).

**Have a user feedback plan and problem hotline.** Develop a procedure for timely and effective response.

**Sturdy mileage markers placed at appropriate intervals can aid in both maintenance and safety.**

## Effective Administrative Structure and Resource Allocation

*Several steps can be effective on organizing leadership and effective administration of an O&M program including:*

- Preparing and distributing an O&M manual with a specific listing of all functions, frequency of tasks, quality standards and estimated unit costs and/or staffing requirements. This should be translated into an annual budget that anticipates build out in five-year increments.
- The program should be goal-oriented and mission-focused based on the written and agreed to policies and guidelines.
- A lead individual or committee should be identified to serve as liaison/advocate for the system. This lead person should also work cooperatively with the respective department and agency heads and staff to assure a coordinated effort amongst all of the participants.
- Allocate discrete and adequate funding based on the written O&M program manual and annual budget.

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## New book covers rail trail management

A new resource is *Rail-Trail Maintenance and Operation: Ensuring the Future of Your Trail: A Survey of 100 Rail-Trails*. Written by Tim Poole of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy's Northeast Regional Office, the report documents maintenance practices, issues, and costs for 100 rail-trails. Information is provided about trail ownership, maintenance responsibility and cost, and other operational issues such as liability. Maintenance of various trail components is discussed, including the surface, vegetation, structures, and amenities. Maintenance tips are presented along with sample schedules and budgets.

**For a printed copy contact [northeast@railtrails.org](mailto:northeast@railtrails.org) or call (717) 238-1717. For a link to the electronic version and many more resources, see the "Rail Trails" section of the "Resources & Library" area at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).**

# Effective Trail Management

- The program must be cost-effective with sustainable funding sources identified.
- Key participants in the O & M Program should meet at least twice a year to assess performance for the past season and set direction, priorities, and funding needs for the upcoming season.
- Several agencies or jurisdictions may be involved in the management. Greenway systems often including neighboring communities or infrastructure partners such as a stormwater management agency or a highway department. An inter-agency maintenance agreement may be based on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) or other agreement that covers responsibilities, sharing of equipment, standards of performance, and cost-sharing if applicable.



**Multi-agency cooperation on a restoration project**

## Estimating Costs

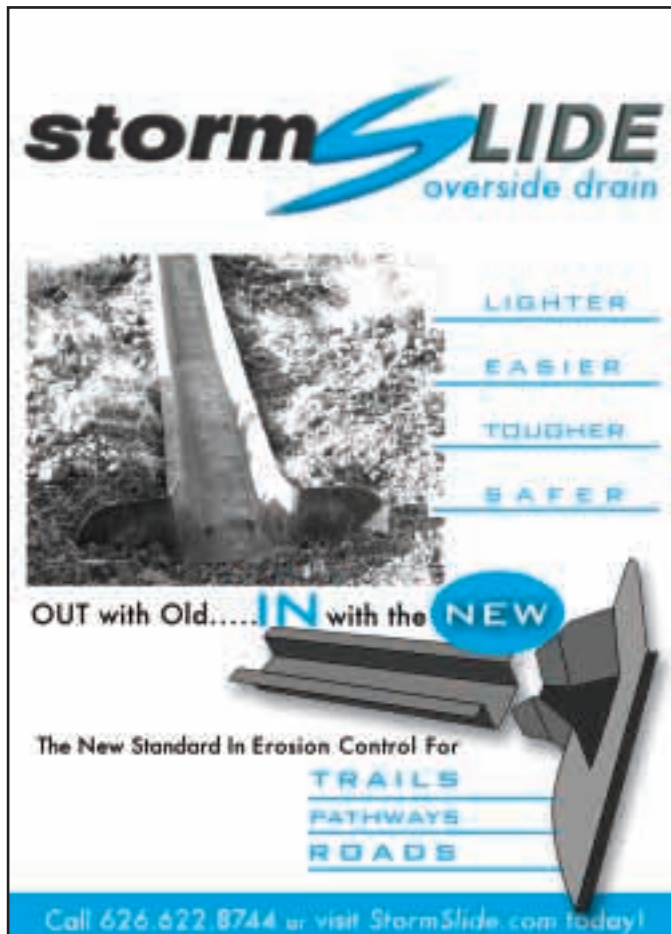
O & M costs can vary substantially depending on the facility, climate, and complexity of the system. For urban trail systems an annual per-mile cost might run from \$2500 to \$10,000. Different sources of revenue may be identified including:

- General fund allocations;
- Revenue from right-of-way leases such as cable use;
- Participation and partnering with the stakeholders such as a flood control agency, streets department, or a homeowners association;
- Creation of an endowment from philanthropic or other sources to generate on-going revenue;
- Recruiting volunteers, youth and adopt-a-trail participants and sponsors.

While the annual O&M costs may seem intimidating, it is important to note that the return to the community in terms of recreational benefits, health and fitness, and economic development have been shown through a number of studies nationwide to be multi-fold.

A proper O&M program will reduce long-term costs by extending the life of trails and trail components, and it will win the support of the residents, homeowners, and businesses. A community with trails and greenways needs to invest over the long term in a quality O&M program. Indeed, a community, state or nation cannot afford to not make that investment.

**Robert Searns is a principal of Greenway Team, Inc., and works with communities nationwide on greenways, trails, and outdoor resource conservation.**



**The important people who get the O & M work done: Spring Mountains Youth Camp workers at the trail-head of the Mount Charleston National Recreation Trail, NV (photo by Annice Ellis, USDA Forest Service).**



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- Alabama Trails Association, Inc.
- Alta Planning & Design
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- California Travel Parks Assn.
- City of Corinth
- City of Eugene Parks and Open Space Division
- City of St. Johns
- Contrax Enterprise
- Eastern Trail Management District
- Equestrian Land Conservation Resource
- Florida Division of Forestry
- Forest Preserve Dist. of DuPage County
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- Headwaters Trails Alliance
- Hudson River Valley Greenway
- Idaho Trails Council
- In Memory of Charles Moore
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- New Mexico Rails-to-Trails Assn.
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Your membership enables us to do important project work, as well as provide you with state-by-state information plus technical assistance through thousands of resources and publications on our website. Won't you please help us continue to serve the needs of the trails community? For details on joining American Trails, see page 36 or visit us online: [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)



# Iowa and Illinois will host 2006

## Variety of trails await Quad Cities visitors

**T**he Quad Cities, located on the Mississippi River at the only place where it runs east to west, are comprised of Davenport and Bettendorf, Iowa; Rock Island and Moline-East Moline in Illinois; and surrounding communities.

The paved bike trails along the Mississippi River are a popular place to go. River Action just celebrated the closing of a half-mile gap in the trail between Davenport and Bettendorf in June. Work on the new trail connection started in mid-April and was completed in time for River Action's annual Ride the River.

Now the trail is an 11-mile stretch from Credit Island in Davenport to Bettendorf along the Iowa riverfront. It's part of the longer Mississippi River Trail.

Also on the Iowa side is the Duck Creek bike path in Davenport. This trail is the oldest bike trail in the Quad Cities. Its origins date back to the 1930s when it was initially planned as a park road. During the 1970s, it was redesigned to be a bike/pedestrian trail. The present length of the trail is 13.5 miles and the scenery along the

way includes: parks, wooded areas with deer, golf courses and limestone bluffs.

The Channel Cat Water Taxi is a unique amenity in the Quad Cities. This open-air boat can take people and bikes from the trail on the Iowa side of the mighty river to the Illinois side where the Great River Trail goes for 60 miles from Rock Island, Illinois, to Savanna, Illinois. The Great River Trail takes cyclists through three counties and 11 municipalities. The trails wind through some unique urban settings, but 75% of the trails are in rural settings that take the cyclist along the picturesque Mississippi riverfront.

Along each side of the river on the trails, riders will find public art to look at. From an architectural park in Lindsay Park in Bettendorf to a group of life-sized sculptures of Seurat's painting of Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grand Jatte to a four-tiered sculpture fountain on Sylvan Island in Moline. Along each path there are historical markers that talk about the histories of the cities, as well as important events that happened there.





# National Trails Symposium

Bicyclists and horse lovers will like the Hennepin Canal State Trail in Illinois. Riders can enjoy 48 miles along the main canal and over 25 miles along the Feeder. The trail follows the canal that was constructed in 1892 and uses part of the tow-path. The Hennepin also boasts the longest snowmobile trail in the State of Illinois— 91 miles. There is also a shorter horse trail just outside Scott County Park in Long Grove, Iowa. This shaded two-mile trail follows the park border.

If you want to rev it up, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has an off-highway vehicle area located northwest of Solon, Iowa. It is approximately 45 minutes from Davenport, and near Iowa City. There are approximately 160 acres of land devoted to off-road vehicle and motorcycle use. This tract of land has numerous trails with areas ranging from sandy shore-line flats to heavily wooded areas intermingled with lowland. A county road, a creek bed and the southern boundary, which is marked with highway guard rail, border this area.

As you can see the Quad Cities has a wide variety of trails to keep you busy. We're getting ready for the 2006 National Trails Symposium in October and would love to welcome you for a sneak-peek of the area.



*Art in Lindsay Park in Bettendorf, Iowa*

**For more information on the National Trails Symposium and links to trails in the Quad Cities and throughout Iowa and Illinois, visit us online at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).**

**National Trails Symposium, October 19-22, 2006**  
**For details visit [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)**



## Attend the 2006 National Trails Symposium in the Quad Cities

Located right on the mighty Mississippi River, the Quad Cities is made up of the riverfront cities of Davenport and Bettendorf in Iowa, and Moline/East Moline and Rock Island in Illinois.

We'll exceed your expectations with outstanding riverfront and inner city trails. Discover the Mississippi River Trail, Great River Trail, Grand Illinois Trail and the American Discovery Trail. These are just a few of the many trails within the Quad Cities region!

The Quad Cities is easily accessible via Interstate 80, 88, 74 and several major state highways. Air transportation is available through the Quad Cities International Airport (MLI), which offers over 70 flights daily to and from 10 business and leisure destinations.

**Quad Cities Convention and Visitors Bureau**

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# National Trails Symposium

**For more information see [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org)**

## Thanks to our generous Symposium sponsors

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**Contact the American Trails office at (530) 547-2060 or email [Symposium@AmericanTrails.org](mailto:Symposium@AmericanTrails.org) to request a Sponsor/Exhibitor packet.**

# Looking for hosts for 2008 National Trails Symposium

**Highlight your state and community trail achievements by hosting the 2008 National Trails Symposium!**

American Trails' biennial National Trails Symposia are premier opportunities for trail advocates, managers, contractors, planners, and users — as well as tourism and busi-

ness interests— to come together to communicate and experience an inspirational and educational conference.

The Symposium is a gathering of trail enthusiasts and professionals representing both the nonmotorized and motorized trails community. The Symposium includes numerous educational sessions covering the broad range of trail issues, nationally prominent speakers, a state-of-the-art, trail-related exhibit hall, informative and interactive mobile workshops, and much more.

**American Trails will be sending out bid packets for the 2008 Symposium in January of 2006. If you are interested in receiving a packet, email your contact information to**

**Symposium@AmericanTrails.org or telephone the American Trails office at (530) 547-2060.**

## Madison County, IL, has wide-ranging trail system

The Madison County Transit trail system of Metro St. Louis is one of the greatest trail systems in the Midwest. Details on all of the regional trails are now available online, thanks to RideFinders, the regional carpooling and vanpooling program, operated by MCT. The site features a new zoomable map, and interactive tools such as a distance calculator.

**The map is available by calling (800) VIP-RIDE or online at <http://bikeways.ridefinders.org/viewer.htm> . Contact The Tourism Bureau Southwestern Illinois for a free Visitors Guide magazine. Call 618-398-1488 or [the-tourismbureau.org](http://the-tourismbureau.org).**




***“As a child I loved to bike the trails in Davenport, Iowa, which shaped my love of trails and the outdoors and ultimately, lead me to a career in recreation management with the federal government. The Quad Cities will be a great place to hold the National Trails Symposium!”***  
**— Patti Klein, Bureau of Land Management  
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# Trails in New Developments:

***Especially with the growing frugality of governmental funding for trails, private developers will need to be seen as significant partners in developing public trail systems.***

## Trails are a trend in new home developments

***By Roger Bell, Bellfree Contractors, Inc.  
Photos by George Kopf***

**I**n Southern California and elsewhere, building trails in new home developments is a distinct trend, especially where those developments abut hillsides or public open space. Trails are increasingly part of the infrastructure.

Consequently, my trail building business, which began in response to high altitude bid opportunities by the Forest Service, has been transformed. I am currently involved with about eight projects, most of which involve new developments of one kind or another. These are almost exclusively design/build projects in my area, whereas we used to move from state to state to ply our trade.

One example of this interesting process is a project which has engaged my company for over a year. Near to and partly within a high-priced gated community in Calabasas, CA, this project is located in the Santa Monica Mountains. It had been grandfathered in due to an earlier approval, which today probably would never have occurred due to pressure to preserve such hillside areas as open space.

Either because of, or as a balance to that approval, one provision was that the developer fund a sub-

stantial trail project surrounding the property. The trail would then become primarily a city responsibility. This is preferred by developers as it shifts liability, maintenance, and management control.

**Ron Webster**, who had designed other trails in the Santa Monica Mountains, was asked by the city to provide a preliminary map for this eight-mile trail. Not only would it totally encircle the property, it would connect to other existing and proposed trails within two conservancies.

This preliminary plan was then submitted to the Calabasas City Council, which, as part of its approval, required New Millennium Homes to post sufficient funds in escrow; and asked a local environmental entity, Mountains Restoration Trust (MRT), to manage the project. Ron was engaged to flag the initial line, and my company, Bellfree

Contractors, Inc., was hired to partner with Ron in the design and then to build the trail.

This unique arrangement did reduce bureaucracy. It enabled a negotiated price and a less formalized contract process, without the requirements and bid process necessary with a city-administered project.

I did prepare specifications incorporating special environmental concerns, and we got a buy-in by one of the conservancies about some sensitive areas we needed to protect. But approvals from State Fish and Game, Army Corps of Engineers, and Regional Water Quality Control Board took much longer.





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# A Case Study

The project has one 60' bridge (installed by helicopter lift), and in a steep section, some engineered treated wood walls with steel posts and tiebacks. There are many switchbacks, and the trail, despite being multi-use, is natural in terms of surface and width so as to preserve a pristine character.

Coordination has been critical.

Adjoining gated communities needed to be persuaded to allow the trail to traverse their land. Other property owners were financially induced to permit a trail easement. These arrangements take time and negotiating skill, but as a result two miles of trail completing the loop will be built, plus construction of a connector trail through property owned by a supportive citizen.



These arrangements are complex, to be sure. The many “partners”—the Developer, the City and City Council, MRT, the other conservancies, State Parks, and the National Park Service (which may eventually “own” the trail), other approving agencies, the residents and HOA’s, the contractor and designers, various user groups, and interested citizens—all of these had to blend their input and support the project, or it perhaps could have been derailed. But all the parts have worked quite harmoniously.

As the contractor, we were fairly compensated; consequently, I have been readily available for many unpaid extras, consulting on a variety of related aspects, providing construction and design service beyond the scope of our agreement.

MRT has managed skillfully, keeping focus on both details and the larger picture. Through a series of community meeting they have assuaged resident fears about the prospect of bringing the unwashed public into their community and invited input from various user groups about the design and management approach. This has built support and acceptance.

They will sponsor an initial trail ride on a completed segment by CORBA, the local mountain bike club, which has indicated interest in helping with long term maintenance. Ron Webster has led Sierra Club hikes on other segments and will organize volunteer maintenance groups as well. We will also likely assist with maintenance. This will be an essential dimension because vegetation growth, especially with record rains, constantly threatens to return the trail to nature.

All in all, the project so far has been a huge success. My experience on this and similar projects, lead me to see this dimension as crucially important in the larger world of trail development. Especially with the growing frugality of governmental funding for trails, private developers will need to be

seen as significant partners. And while this financial and other support may need to be “induced” by appropriate land use policies, I think I detect a growing recognition by these companies that trails add value to their projects. On the one hand, they see that such amenities usually increase the attractiveness

and property values of their homes, and on the other, it may be a subtle device to reduce public suspicion of gated home developments.

In this case, I can only say very positive things about New Millennium Homes. Their project is hugely profitable and they have been generous and supportive in every way. Similarly, the City and the Conservancy have been there as responsible and creative supporters throughout.

This is win-win in every way!

**Roger Bell is the Chair of the American Trails Board, and active with the Professional Trailbuilders Association.**



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## Frisco Highline Trail recycles railroad flatcars for bridges

***By Terry Whaley, Ozark Greenways, Inc.***

Ozark Greenways, Inc., in southwest Missouri recently completed construction of the second-longest rail trail in Missouri. The Frisco Highline Trail was dedicated on September 24 with the “Mayors Meet in the Middle” event and 350 citizens from the six communities the trail links. In addition to great pastoral scenery this 35-mile long trail comes with 13 different railroad trestles ranging in length from 15 to 317 feet— over 2,000 feet of bridge surface in all.

One of the challenges with retrofitting the bridges to trail was that arsonists successfully damaged one, and destroyed two of the original trestles so badly that no support structure or piers were left to work with. The normal routine for an Ozark Greenways retrofit included decking over the existing railroad ties and adding handrails. However, the burned bridges were going to require something different and the assumption was it would be very expensive.



***President Harry Truman rose from the dead for a special appearance at the dedication of the Frisco Highline Trail (photo by Debra Lee).***

called Diversified Railcar located in Camden, Arkansas. The company was advertising used flat bed rail cars for the use of road bridges. Game on! Out to the field we went for some measuring, re-measuring, thinking and more head scratching. After several calls to the salvage company, requests for some photos, and several questions we learned that they had three flatcars that would fit our needs nicely. Arrangements were made for delivery of the flatcars to a local holding site, followed by logistic plans to move each car to its specific site and add handrails in the field.

The cost of using the salvaged railroad cars was comparative to the re-decking treatment other bridges received. The cost of a re-decked wooded bridge 50-foot in length complete with handrails was \$10,065, while the 50-foot railroad car bridge was \$11,900 including the cost of the car, delivery, crane rental for setting it in place, and steel handrails which were built in sections then delivered to the site and welded in place. Plans are underway to paint the flatcar bridges and some cost will be incurred with that as well. However, it is anticipated the maintenance of the three flatcar bridges will be much less than the wood decks. Ozark Greenways is proud to have these bridges on their trail. In addition to achieving a bit of unique railroad theme and some great conservation items along the trail, the recycling and reuse of these cars fits well into the overall philosophy of the organization.



**Placing the flatcar bridge (photo: Ozark Greenways)**

Ozark Greenway board members, trail supporters and members of the organizations technical committee made several trips to the bridge locations looking, thinking, and scratching their heads over the best approach to replacing these bridges. We hoped that an inspiration would hit us and the problem would be solved. On another front the group was involved in a capital campaign to raise the needed funds to develop the entire trail, so there was plenty of time for “thinking”.

The Solution came very routinely one day when Tom Netzer a board member of Ozark Greenways was reading a professional trade magazine, and noticed an ad from a salvage company



# Promoting Trail Safety

## Idaho campaign promotes responsible OHV recreation

A new highway billboard has been catching motorists' attention throughout Idaho recently. The billboard reads "Use Your Power Responsibly" and asks Off Highway Vehicle users to "Stay on Trails" when riding in Idaho.

The signs are part of a new public outreach campaign promoting the responsible and safe use of OHVs on Idaho's state and federal lands. The campaign also features a radio advertisement airing on 25 radio stations across the state. The billboards and radio ads direct viewers to a companion website, [www.idaho-ohv.org](http://www.idaho-ohv.org). The website has useful information about where to ride, how to register, hunting season tips, and how to have a safe, responsible, and fun OHV experience.



The campaign is product of a partnership of the Idaho Department of Parks and Recreation, Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Idaho Department of Lands, U.S. Forest Service, and U.S. Bureau of Land Management.

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# The Poetry of Trail Building



## Veteran trail planner tells his stories in verse

**R**oger Bell, a trail contractor for many years, has been turning the grit and labor of trail building into poetry. Read more of his poems at [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).

### THE TRAIL THAT FELL INTO THE SEA

We were invited as SoCal experts  
To create some showcase trails—  
Palos Verdes looking out on Catalina,  
A golf community looking for sales.

These would sit on magnificent cliffs  
Right next to Portuguese Bend—  
That was an earth slide warning  
A hint how this tale will end.

We worked on these trails for years  
They tested our skills to the max  
Fitting them into the landscape  
Not much would Ocean Trails lack.

One interesting drama played out  
Some visitors who probably were hoods  
They left a lookout above them  
While picking up contraband goods.

Or maybe the Mafia likes trails,  
And strolls along desolate shore.  
Trailbuilding can be quite exciting  
But here we could do without more.

Well finally the trails were built—  
We went on a final walk-thru.  
A crack in the ground was discovered  
This generated one major stew.

They scrambled to find the true cause  
And shortly they got a strong clue—  
'Cause the 18th fairway collapsed  
Our trails were wiped out too.

Eleven acres just sunk while we watched,  
Ocean Trails made the Seven O'clock News.  
My wife called me quite alarmed  
To see if it was real or ruse,

Or else she thought we caused it—  
Somehow had triggered the fall.  
I assured her we had a few problems  
But this one sure wasn't our call

So that very high priced amenity  
Had sunk almost into the Sea.  
Getting paid was going to be iffy—  
Get in line and make a strong plea.


Donald Trump would later take over  
After the owners went belly up—  
Insurance covered most the damage  
But the situation was still corrupt.

California coastline does recede,  
The Sea and the soil take a toll.  
We lost good trails in the process—  
Swallowed up kinda' like they were stole.

Trails and golf are my passions,  
I spend quite some time on each.  
I've noticed that golf's even harder  
With many a lesson to teach.

So here's to more trails on courses,  
A trend that is coming to be.  
Just don't build too close to the edge—  
Your trail might fall into the sea!

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# Trails in the News

## Designing vehicle barriers that allow personal mobility device access

People with disabilities are often prevented from using trails that prohibit motorized vehicles. Land management agencies are required to provide accessible facilities, but current gate designs that are accessible to PMDs, such as wheelchairs, also permit access by small motorized vehicles (e.g., snow machines, motorcycles). As a result, land managers must choose between providing access to people with disabilities and securely preventing unauthorized motorized use.

The first phase of research underway will be to develop initial design concepts and a market survey. Objective measurements of the performance characteristics of MTVs and PMDs will be completed. Characteristics that distinguish MTVs and OHVs and input from trail and rehabilitation experts, gathered through focus groups, will provide the basis for the gate design concepts.

Prototypes developed in Phase II will be used to evaluate the designs' suitability for various trail environments, accessibility to users with and without disabilities, and effectiveness in preventing OHV access.

**For more information: Beneficial Designs, Inc., 1617 Water St., Suite B, Minden NV 89423. (775) 783-8822 • [trails@beneficialdesigns.com](mailto:trails@beneficialdesigns.com) • [www.beneficialdesigns.com](http://www.beneficialdesigns.com)**

## American Trails Patron Member Profile

### The McConnell Foundation

The McConnell Foundation's 200-acre Lema Ranch and adjacent Churn Creek property in Redding, California include over eight miles of walking trails. This trail system was developed by The Foundation to provide a serene environment for the public to enjoy as they walk, birdwatch, or appreciate the many varieties of plants.



The McConnell Foundation

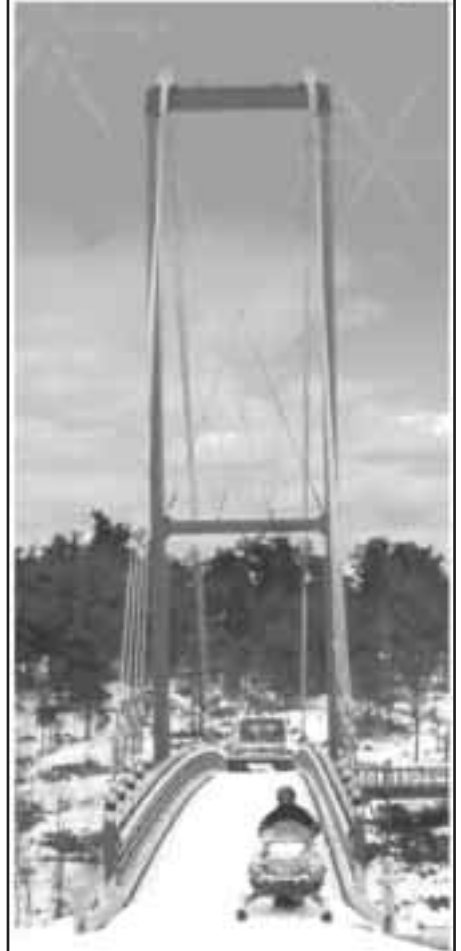
Five ponds, built by the Lema family in the early 1950s, were improved in 1997 to encourage aquatic plant communities, which provide wildlife habitat and improve the water quality. Biofilters— heavy plantings of aquatic plants — slow the water down as it runs into the pond and cleanse the water of chemicals and harmful runoff. An ongoing effort to establish perennial grasses and reduce invasive, non-native plants is

underway. The mission of The McConnell Foundation is helping build better communities through philanthropy. The Foundation is also the primary funder of the Sundial Bridge at Turtle Bay Exploration Park.

**The McConnell Foundation, 800 Shasta View Drive, Redding, CA 96003 (530) 226-6200**  
**[www.mcconnellfoundation.org](http://www.mcconnellfoundation.org)**



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# Promoting Accessible and

## State Trail Administrators meet for trails training

By Jonathan LeClere

State Trail Administrators from across America met this year in Newark, DE, thanks to hosts Susan Moerschel and David Bartoo of Delaware State Parks. The annual meeting is sponsored by the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) Recreational Trails Program, assisted by American Trails.



**David Bartoo of Delaware State Parks telling State Trail Administrators about sustainable trails**

Christopher Douwes of FHWA led the first day's meetings and discussion, and covered changes to the Recreational Trails Program affected by new legislation. This year's program featured numerous opportunities to view and discuss sustainable and accessible trail projects first-hand.

On the second day the group participated in a "walk and talk" along a single-track hiking and biking trail in White Clay Creek State Park. We discussed in detail what made the trail accessible, or not, for people of all abilities. In the afternoon the participants split into four groups to tackle projects that reinforced the discussions from earlier in the day.

Delaware's trail crew emphasized the importance of building trail that meets the standards of accessibility and sustainability instead of creating a poorly designed trail-system which can create a long-term maintenance burden.

A third day focused on the relationship and importance of accessibility, sustainability, and trail assessments. By designing easy grades and proper drainage we not only make it easier for people with special needs, but also help eliminate the need to constantly fix the trail. You still can build sections of trail that will challenge other users. At White Clay Creek State Park a skills course with narrow boardwalks and steep drops provides challenges for advanced cyclists.

Presentations on proposed accessible trail guidelines were given by Janet Zeller of the USDA Forest Service and Bill Botten of the Access Board. "Well designed trails are more accessible for all kinds of users," said Mr. Botten. "You should use the best design information and practices currently available," said Ms. Zeller.

Mike Passo of American Trails explained that "the greatest barrier to trail use is lack of knowledge about actual trail conditions. Accessibility is 80% information." He emphasized the need for signs that convey the grade, slope, and surface type to users so they can make informed decisions about which path to take. "Universal design is a process of making outdoor recreation available to as many people as possible," Mr. Passo said. "We need to convey the actual experience, not just certify that a trail is built to indoor wheelchair standards.

There are many methods of trail assessments. The Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP), developed by Beneficial Designs and managed by American Trails, is one option for those assessments. UTAP provides the user with a process for gathering information and refers to design standards to explain and promote best management practices. Trails were used to practice assessment techniques and to learn what goes into planning and designing trails.

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# Sustainable Trails

Patti Longmuir, a trainer in accessibility issues, discussed the similarities and differences between Environmental, Social, and Economic sustainability. She, too, emphasized the relationship between UTAP and accessibility, and sustainability. American Trails is making training opportunities for trail assessment available to help States and project sponsors be informed to make good decisions about their trails.

**The full report on the meeting of the State Trail Administrators and issues discussed can be read at [www.AmericanTrails.org/http/notes/STAM05.html](http://www.AmericanTrails.org/http/notes/STAM05.html)**

## Staff member Kathy Jenkins takes a new path

**K**athy Jenkins, who has been with American Trails for three years, is moving on. "It is with mixed feelings that I inform you that I am leaving American Trails," said Kathy. "I am considering various options that will provide me the creative outlets I experienced as a graphic designer, as well as allowing me more time with my family, for travel with my husband, and for other civic and personal pursuits."



"I will do all I can to ensure a smooth transition of my responsibilities. I have thoroughly enjoyed working with you over the years and will miss the friendships that I have created," said Kathy in a farewell note. "I wish you the best of luck in achieving your individual and organizational goals as you move forward. Should you wish to be in touch, I can be contacted personally at 530-275-6530 or

[KatyJCA@aol.com](mailto:KatyJCA@aol.com). I encourage you to continue to support the terrific work of American Trails!"

Pam Gluck, Executive Director, says, "We will miss Kathy's talents and enthusiasm. She did some great work for American Trails over the years. We wish her all the best in her new endeavors."



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# Resources and Research

## Recent studies evaluate trails and health

**T**hanks to Dr. John Librett, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, for providing these abstracts of research on trails and physical activity.

### *Wheeling Walks: Evaluation of a Media-Based Community Intervention*

**Authors:** Reger-Nash B, Bauman A, Booth-Butterfield S, Cooper L, Smith H, Chey T, Simon KJ. **Journal:** *Family and Community Health*. 28(1):64-78, 2005.

Wheeling Walks, a community-wide, media-based physical activity intervention implemented in Wheeling, WV, targeted sedentary and irregularly active adults ages 50 to 65. TV, radio, newspapers, and educational activities were used to promote walking in the community. Telephone surveys were used to collect data at baseline, and 3-, 6- and 12-month post-intervention. Higher levels of overall walking were achieved. Among the least active individuals, a higher level of walking was sustained 12 months after the intervention.

### *Use of a Community Trail Among New and Habitual Exercisers*

**Authors:** Gordon PM, Zizzi SJ, Pauline J. **Journal:** *Preventing Chronic Disease: Public Health Research, Practice and Policy* [serial online]. 1(4): 2004

Adults, ages 18 to 82, using new paved trails in Morgantown, West Virginia were surveyed about their trail activity patterns. Of those surveyed 23% (n=93) were new exercisers and 77% (n=321) were habitual exercisers. New exercisers reported safety, terrain, and convenience as primary reasons for using the trails, and participated in moderate activities on the trails, such as walking. Habitual exercisers reported terrain, convenience, and scenery as primary reasons for using the trails and

did more vigorous activities such as biking, running and inline skating. Of new exercisers 25% also reported becoming regular exercisers as a result of the trail development suggesting the value of trails in the promotion of physical activity.

**For many more studies and resources see the "Health and Trails" area of [www.AmericanTrails.org](http://www.AmericanTrails.org).**

## Hospital spearheads Indiana trail for community health

**T**he River Bluff Trail project in Logansport, IN was started by Memorial Hospital and its Foundation because it exists to provide direction and financial support for activities that promote health and wellness in the community. Cass County and Logansport Parks Departments and the Little Turtle Waterway, a local park and trails group, provided technical assistance. Funding for the over \$910,000 total project came from corporations and individuals in the community, as well as a Recreational Trails Program grant from the state.

**For more information contact Becky Lowry, Memorial Hospital Foundation, 1101 Michigan Avenue, Logansport, IN 46947; (574) 753-1414.**



## Tread Trainer course: dates for 2006 are available

**T**he nonprofit Tread Lightly!®'s acclaimed training program called "Tread Trainer™" is now accepting course requests for 2006. The program trains participants in innovative, practical methods of spreading outdoor ethics to motorized and mechanized recreationists. Its courses are ideal for land and water managers, enthusiast clubs, safety trainers, scout leaders, educators or any other interested individuals.

**For information on hosting these courses in your area, visit Tread Lightly!'s [www.treadlightly.org](http://www.treadlightly.org) or call (800) 966-9900. Requests must be made at least 3 months before desired course date.**

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# Resources and Research

## National Trails Surface Study seeks best materials

**F**or years we have been seeking to improve trail surfaces. The goal is to provide an unobtrusive surface that blends with and is friendly to the environment; and provides a quality trail experience for people with and without disabilities.



**Achieving a firm and stable surface is a challenge for accessibility**

In the past, studies that have looked at alternatives to asphalt and concrete for making trails accessible to people with disabilities. Most notably, the USDA Forest Service and the Federal Highway Administration have for years been conducting research on various products as possible uses for trail stabilization.

The proposed longitudinal (3-5 years) study on various trail surface applications will include diverse geographic zones where controlled testing, monitoring, and research protocols can be followed. Research questions that need to be addressed include:

- what surfaces are accessible?
- what are the costs of various trail surface applications?

The National Trails Surface Study is being conducted by the National Center on Accessibility at Indiana University, which promotes the full inclusion of people with disabilities in parks, recreation, and tourism.

Since 1992, NCA has conducted training, provided technical assistance and conducted research to increase awareness and promote inclusion of people with disabilities in all aspects of recreation.

- under what climactic conditions are various surface applications accessible?
- in what geographic areas and for how long are various trail surface applications accessible?
- what are the maintenance considerations?
- what is the impact of various soil characteristics, e.g. moisture, soil composition, etc.
- do various soil applications interact positively, neutrally, or negatively?
- what impacts do various slope and cross slope grades have on various surface applications?

The selection for sites to participate in the NCA National Trails Surface Study is underway. Site selection will continue until the minimum number of stabilized trail segments by product type is achieved.

**For more information about the NCA National Trails Surface Study, visit: [ncaonline.org/trails/research/](http://ncaonline.org/trails/research/). NCA is developing a specific application form that will soon be available on the website. Contact for the study is Gary Robb, Executive Director, National Center on Accessibility at (812) 856-4422 or [grobb@indiana.edu](mailto:grobb@indiana.edu).**

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# Writing Successful Grants

## Tracking down funding for trails and bike/ped facilities

***By Christopher Douwes, Trails and Enhancements  
Program Manager, Federal Highway Administration***

New Federal surface transportation authorization legislation makes funding available for a wide variety of trail projects. See page 6 for more on SAFETEA-LU. Here are some considerations for developing a project for funding:

## How to apply for funds

Depending on what kind of project you envision, contact your State Trail Administrator, State Transportation Enhancement Program Manager, or State Scenic Byway Coordinator [*see contacts at the end of this article*]. Each State has its own project solicitation and selection process. For projects on Federal lands, contact your local Federal Land Management agency. Federal land management agencies may apply for RTP, TE, and Byways funds through the States.

If you have a trail project proposal, first contact your State to find out the program requirements and criteria for project selection.

## To do list for project sponsors

As a project sponsor, you should:

- **Prepare a project development plan.** What aspects do you need to address? Identify the issues and steps that are critical to the project development process. What are the trail needs? What can you do realistically?
- **Determine planning requirements.** Does your project meets the goals of (or is it included in) a statewide or metropolitan transportation plan and/or a statewide trail plan? Projects using FHWA funds must be incorporated into a statewide transportation improvement program (STIP) or, if in a metropolitan area, in a metropolitan transportation improvement program (TIP).
- **Develop a workable project that meets the program requirements and eligible categories.** A Scenic Byways project must relate to a scenic byway. A Transportation Enhancement project must relate to surface transportation. A Federal Lands project must provide access to or within Federal lands.
- **Get public support for the project.** How does the project benefit the community? Are there other potential sponsors?
- **Find other funding sources.** Some State or local governments may provide some matching funds, but usually the project sponsor has to provide most or all of the match. Note that some programs have new matching flexibilities: you can now use RTP funds to match other Federal funds.

- **Consider donations** of materials and services, including volunteer labor.
- **Consider how to involve youth conservation or service corps in the project.** See [www.nascc.org](http://www.nascc.org) for ideas.
- **Develop a good project design**, keeping safety and security in mind.
- **Consider the natural environment** in the project location. Environmental impacts must be minimized and mitigated, and may require some documentation.
- **Consider community benefits.**
- **Consider user needs and desires**, including use by people with disabilities.
- **Consider potential problems and opposition.** Some people may have concerns about property rights, liability, safety, security, noise, or historic, archaeological, or environmental impacts.
- **Check on permits.** Various permits may be needed prior to submitting the project proposal.

**Make your project application work for you**

- **Fill out the project application completely.** States often reject incomplete applications. Make sure you fill it out clearly: exactly what are you going to do?
- **Make sure you fill it out accurately.** Make sure numbers add up and facts check out.
- **Don't add items that aren't eligible.** You risk the rest of your application if your ineligible items get found out.
- **Don't add information that isn't necessary for project approval.** The past 150 years of history might be interesting to you, but don't waste the reviewers' time.

## When your application is approved

If your project is approved, get to work! States will withdraw project approval if a sponsor does not show evidence of project progress within a reasonable time frame. This may be a long process, but you are not alone. The State administrators are there to help you. Most States have their applications widely available on websites, and many States are trying to streamline their application processes as much as possible.

**For details about the Recreational Trails Program:**  
**[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails)**

**For Transportation Enhancement Activities:**  
**[www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/te)**

**National Scenic Byways Program:**  
**[www.bywaysonline.org](http://www.bywaysonline.org)**

**Federal Lands Highways Program:**  
**[www.fhwa.dot.gov/flh](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/flh)**





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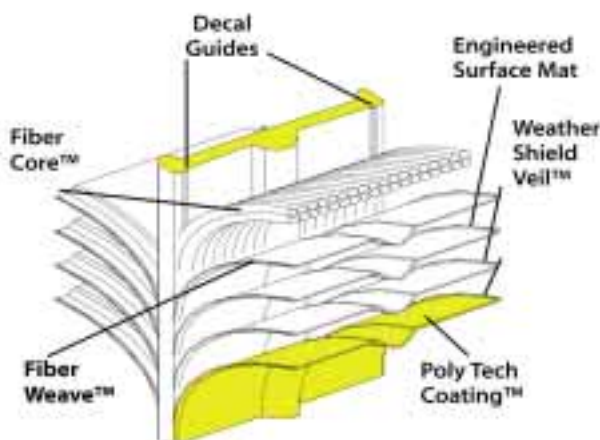
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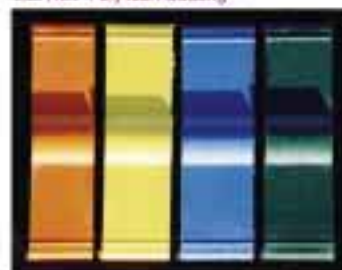
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