



TRAIL TRACKS

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SPRING 2001

Coalition for Recreational Trails presents annual awards

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), a federation of national and regional trail-related groups, has selected the winners of its third annual Achievement Awards for outstanding use of Recreational Trails Program funds. The awards will be presented at a special Capitol Hill ceremony in Washington, D.C. on June 14, 2001 as part of the celebration of Great Outdoors Week.

The trail projects and programs honored by the CRT are:

- **Locust Creek Riparian Trail Park, Jefferson City, Missouri** and the **East Trapps Connector Trail in the Mohonk Preserve, New Paltz, New York**, in the category of *Construction and Design - Local*
- **Cumberland State Trail Park, Crossville, Tennessee**, in the category of *Construction and Design - Long Distance*
- **Pelham Bay Park Bridle Path, New York, New York**, in the category of *Maintenance and Rehabilitation*
- **Southeast Alaska Avalanche Center Education Project** in the Category of *Education and Communication*
- **Continental Divide Snow Trail Grooming Program, Wyoming**, in the category of *Multiple-Use Management and Corridor Sharing*
- **Snow Trail Signing Program, Wyoming**, in the category of *Environment and Wildlife Compatibility*
- **Cedar Ridge Trail, Tuttle Creek State Park, Manhattan, Kansas**, in the category of *Accessibility Enhancement*

The Recreational Trails Program, first established in 1991 and then reauthorized as part of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), returns a portion of federal gasoline taxes generated by non-highway recreation to the states for trail-related purposes [see the article on the reauthorization of TEA-21 on page 3]. Currently, the program receives \$50 million in annual funding. CRT members are working together to build awareness and understanding of the RTP, to support its effective implementation and to help ensure that it receives adequate funding.

For more information on the Recreational Trails Program, and projects funded in all 50 states, see www.AmericanTrails.org (click on "Resources & Library" and click on "Federal Funding").

New on-line database for National Recreation Trails

There is a lot happening with the National Recreation Trails (NRT) Program of the National Park Service. This past year several trail groups and agencies have worked together to redesign and revitalize the NRT Program.

One big news item is that a searchable database of NRTs is under development and will be available online this summer at www.AmericanTrails.org. This is a listing of all 800+ National Recreation Trails with details provided by the trail managers. Trail users, land managers, and trail activists can all get the information they need via the American Trails website. The online functions are in the development stage, so please keep checking the site as it we continue building it.

Here are some example of ways to use the online database:

- Search for a particular NRT by name
- Get a list of all the NRTs in any state or county or even Congressional District, or search for a particular trail type, such as rail trails or backcountry trails
- Search for trails by activity type such as hiking, snowmobiling, mountain bicycling, or canoeing
- Get information on trail length, accessibility, contacts, fees, dates and times of operation, and Internet links

For more information on the National Recreation Trails Program, and to see the new database, visit www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails

More National Recreation Trail news on page 5

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Trail Tracks

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Editor: Stuart H. Macdonald

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On the trail of accessibility awareness

An editorial by Stuart Macdonald and Christopher Douwes

Trails and greenways people are always looking for bright new ideas. And when it comes to making trails more available to everybody, most of us need to raise our accessibility awareness. Let's get smarter! We'll improve our trails for everyone, and it's the right thing to do. Here are some suggestions:

Most of us really don't have a clue about the obstacles that confront disabled visitors to our trails. One way to improve your accessibility awareness is to get acquainted with people who use wheelchairs. Spend some time with them around town, on a trail, and in a park. You'll learn very quickly about grades and sideslopes, how tough a two-inch high obstacle is, and how much effort it takes to cross a stretch of gravel.

Another way to raise your accessibility awareness is to learn about existing trails. One good system is the Universal Trail Assessment Process (UTAP). Developed by Beneficial Designs, this process involves simple tools to measure accurately the basics of trail accessibility: the slope (steepness), cross slope, width, height of obstacles, and surface stability. Several state parks agencies and federal agencies have trained staff in the process and use it to take a close look at their trails. American Trails is coordinating UTAP training around the country. Check the calendar at www.AmericanTrails.org or contact American Trails to arrange for your own state or agency training program.

A lot of mental energy went into developing proposed regulations for trails under the Americans with Disabilities Act. We don't know when they might take effect, or what they will finally require. But some smart folks already know a lot about how to design and maintain trails for better accessibility. We want to encourage them to share their experience and success stories with the rest of us. We're making it a personal challenge to find ways to make more accessibility training available.

One example is our work with American Trails, which is developing the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP) with many other trail groups and agencies. One goal is identifying all the existing programs that teach trail planners and volunteers about trail surfacing, design, construction, and all the other elements that affect accessibility. We hope to make this instruction more available, and we are looking for more funding for new courses to raise accessibility awareness around the country.

Finally, we should remember that our urban trails, or shared use paths, should be fully accessible. The trails that link our communities make up an important part of the multi-modal transportation system. Because federal funds are so often involved in these greenway and bikeway projects, accessibility is clearly an important consideration. But it's not just the law, it's the smart thing to do.

Christopher Douwes of the Federal Highway Administration is Program Manager for the Recreational Trails Program. Stuart Macdonald is Chair of the National Association of State Trail Administrators. For more on accessible trails training visit www.AmericanTrails.org/NTTP



News from America's Trails

National Trails Training Partnership moves ahead

American Trails is coordinating the National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP), a voluntary association of Federal, State, and local agencies, and trail organizations to improve the range of skills and training available to enhance America's national system of trails and greenways.

The Partnership is first identifying trails training available around the country through organizations, agencies, universities, and businesses. To promote these opportunities, American Trails maintains an extensive calendar of classes, workshops, and training sessions at www.AmericanTrails.org/nttp and is developing the NTTP database of many other trail and greenway resources. We'll also be creating pages to highlight training providers and resources in all 50 States.

American Trails is providing on-line details of businesses, products, and services that support trail planning, improvement, and education. We're also doing research to identify needs as well as resources in priority areas such as accessible trails, volunteer development, funding, trail design, construction, and maintenance, nonprofit management, strategic planning, and liability. American Trails is also seeking grants to support the program and develop new training materials and curricula.

Ways you can help!

- Sign on as a contributing partner
- Add to the calendar of training events
- Tell us about existing training opportunities in your agency or organization
- Share training materials, curricula, and other trails-related documents or expertise
- Identify volunteers to help conduct research
- Suggest a source of funds to support training
- Describe unmet training needs in your area
- Identify experts in a trail-related field
- Invite others outside your group or agency to attend your in-houses trail training sessions

For more information see the NTTP website: www.AmericanTrails.org/NTTP

We're eager to hear your ideas! Please contact American Trails at (520) 632-1140 or amtrails@futureone.com

Reauthorization of TEA eyed by trails coalition

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT) is pursuing its strategy to support reauthorization of federal transportation programs and ensure continued funding for trails and greenways. CRT is a federation of all national trails groups and many state and regional recreation organizations with an interest in the Recreational Trails Program.

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA 21), enacted in 1998, expires September 30, 2003, so attention is being focused on its reauthorization. In particular, two funding programs have been a tremendous benefit for trails: the Recreational Trails Program (currently \$50 million nationwide) and Transportation Enhancements (bike/ped facilities, historic preservation, and other projects).

The National Governors Association noted May 3 that "Despite the current Administration's full support of TEA-21 as revealed in its recently released FY 2002 budget blueprint, full funding of authorized levels for highway and mass transit may face an uphill battle as reauthorization of TEA-21 is debated in upcoming years." The American Public Transportation Association believes that "Congress is likely to begin the process of reviewing the existing law and writing new legislation during 2002 and 2003."

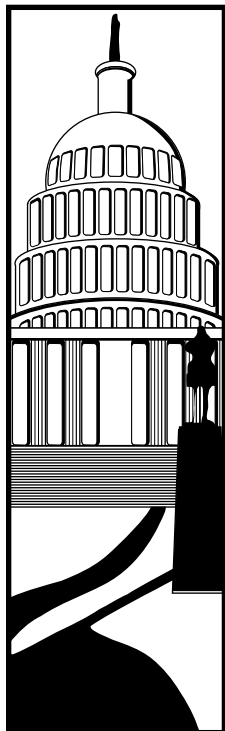
Trail advocates, however, are not waiting until then. The Coalition for Recreational Trails is developing an action plan that will cooperate with others involved in TEA-21 reauthorization:

- Develop materials on the benefits of the Recreational Trails Program (RTP)
- Work with State trails program agencies on importance of RTP funding and reauthorization
- Ensure that Members of Congress are aware of key trail projects in their districts
- Develop press office contacts with agencies
- Provide opportunities for media events

For more information on the Recreational Trails Program and the reauthorization of TEA-21, see the American Trails website: www.AmericanTrails.org (click on "Resources & Library" and click on "Federal Funding").



Trails legislation in Congress



Willing-seller legislation moves through Congress

H.R. 834, the National Trails System Willing Seller Act, seeks to expedite the development of the national scenic and national historic trails, although government entities are blocked from forcing sales or condemning property.

On March 13, 2001, less than two weeks after Rep. Scott McInnis (R-CO) reintroduced willing-seller legislation in the 107th Congress, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly passed it by a 409-3 vote. The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

Authority to purchase land along the 11 other trails in the system already exists. The nine affected trails are: Continental Divide, Ice Age, North Country and Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trails, and the Oregon, Mormon Pioneer, Lewis and Clark, Iditarod, and Nez Perce National Historic Trails.

Bike Commuter Act would provide incentives

Rep. Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) and Mark Foley (R-FL) introduced legislation in the House (H.R.1265) that would allow employees who bike to work the same financial incentives as car-poolers and public transit users.

The Bike Commuter Act would extend the Transportation Fringe Benefit of the tax code, which currently provides a tax-exempt benefit of \$175 for employees participating in qualified parking plans or \$65 for transit, car-pool, and van-pool expenses, to bicyclists who chose to bike to work.

“Bicycling is one of the cleanest, healthiest and environmentally friendly modes of transportation that exists today. Common sense dictates that people who bike to work should have the same financial incentives as those who car-pool or who participate in a qualified parking plan,” Congressman Blumenauer said.

New CARA bill supported by 180 co-sponsors

Another try is being made this year to pass H.R. 701, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act. Similar to last year’s bill, the new CARA measure retains its provisions for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and the Urban Park and Recreation Recovery Program (UPARR). LWCF would be funded at its authorized amount of \$900 million and UPARR is funded at \$125 million annually.

Changes from last year’s bill include an increase to the Historic Preservation Fund (HPF) to its authorized level of \$150 million; full funding of Payment In-Lieu of Taxes (PILT) and Refuge Revenue Sharing (RRS) at their authorized levels of \$320 million and \$30 million, respectively; and removal of agricultural programs that will be addressed in the 107th Congress’ upcoming reauthorization of the 1996 Farm Bill. The wildlife provision deposits \$350 million into an account created under last year’s Commerce, Justice, State Appropriations Act.

So far, more than 180 Members of Congress have cosponsored the legislation. The goal is to revive the same spirit of momentum that brought 315 members of the House to vote for passage of CARA in the 106th Congress. The most recent action on H.R. 701 was its referral to House Resources Committee.

National Discovery Trails Act back in Congress

National Discovery Trails Act of 2001, H.R. 36, would amend the National Trails System Act to “authorize an additional category of national trail known as a national discovery trail... and to designate the cross country American Discovery Trail as the first national discovery trail.” The bill has 29 cosponsors so far. It has been referred to the House Resources Committee, Subcommittee on National Parks, Recreation and Public Lands.

For more information on legislation affecting trails, see the American Trails’ Web site:

www.AmericanTrails.org

Click on the “News & Action” icon for current events. Articles and analysis are in “Resources & Library” under “Federal Legislation.”



National Recreation Trail news

New NRTs designated for 2001 as program moves ahead

On National Trails Day, June 2, 2001, a new group of 15 trails and greenways is receiving official designation as National Recreation Trails by Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton. This is the first annual event to celebrate the NRT Program. Descriptions of the new NRTs are on the web at www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails.

American Trails is the lead partner in the revitalization of the National Recreation Trails Program, along with many other supporters. The first project was developing a website for the NRT Program. Now underway is an on-line registry that will recognize and encourage the use of existing trails, provide the opportunity for their promotion, and stimulate and enhance future trail development. The goal shared by all is to realize the long term goal of "Trails for all Americans" within 15 minutes of their home or work.

Applications being accepted for NRT designation

Are you interested in more recognition for your trail as a possible National Recreation Trail? Applications for next year are being accepted and can be downloaded from the NRT website.

Who can apply for National Recreation Trail designation?

Any public or private trail manager operating a trail that meets the definition and criteria below may apply for NRT designation.

What kinds of trails are eligible?

- A trail is a travel way established either through construction or use and is passable by at least one or more of the following, including but not limited to: foot traffic, stock, watercraft, bicycles, in-line skates, wheelchairs, cross-country skis, and off-road recreation vehicles such as motorcycles, snowmobiles, ATVs, and four-wheel drive vehicles.
- Roads and highways suitable for passenger car travel are not eligible for NRT designation. Other programs are more appropriate for their recognition, such as the National Scenic Byways Program.

What are the criteria for NRT designation?

- 1) The trail must be open to public use and designed, constructed, and maintained to the trail managing agency's standards, in keeping with the use anticipated. Trails that

demonstrate state-of-the-art design and management are especially encouraged to apply for NRT designation.

- 2) The trail manager is willing to certify that the trail will be open for public use for at least 10 consecutive years after designation.
- 3) NRT designation must be supported by the landowner(s).

How do I apply for National Recreation Trail designation?

The trail managing agency is responsible for submitting the application along with supporting letters, maps, photos, and other documentation. Applications for NRT designation can be printed or downloaded from the Website at:

www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails

When can applications be made for NRT designation?

National Recreation Trail applications are processed on an annual cycle. Applications must be submitted by November 1 to the appropriate NRT Program contact for the designation to be announced during the following National Trails Day celebration. It is recommended that interested trail managers begin the application process by September 1 to insure they meet the November 1 deadline.



If your trail is on federal land administered by the Secretary of Agriculture:

The Secretary of Agriculture has delegated authority for designating NRTs on land administered by the USDA to the Forest Service, which has developed its own designation process. For trails on National Forests, National Grasslands, and National Recreation Areas, contact National Recreation Trail Coordinators for application information.

If your trail is on other federal land (outside the Department of Agriculture) or on state, local, or private land:

The Secretary of the Interior is the designating official for NRTs on all other federal lands and on state, local, and private lands, and has delegated responsibility to the National Park Service for the overall administration of the NRT program.

For more information on the National Recreation Trails Program see the NRT website:

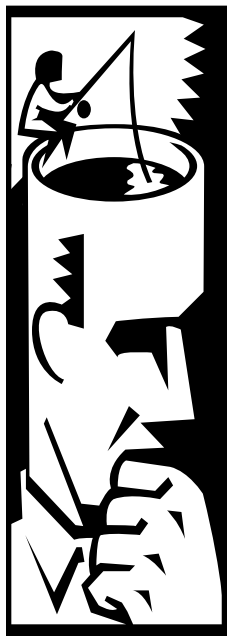
www.AmericanTrails.org/NationalRecreationTrails

You can also contact the American Trails office at (520) 632-1140 or the NRT Program Coordinator, Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program, NPS, 1849 C Street NW, MS 3622, Washington DC 20240 (202) 565-1200.

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Homeowners find trails



Omaha study confirms benefits of trails

We were pleased to see another study of the impacts of trails in a neighborhood setting: *Omaha Recreational Trails: Their Effect on Property Values and Public Safety*. The study was completed in 2001 by Project Director Donald L. Greer, Ph.D., of the University of Nebraska at Omaha, Recreation and Leisure Studies Program. Partial funding was provided by the Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program of the National Park Service.

CONCLUSIONS

Some of the key findings include:

- The Omaha recreational trails are used often by nearby residents. Over half (58.4%) of the responding used the trails daily or weekly.
- Omaha trails are generally perceived by nearby residents as an economic benefit. Almost two-thirds of those surveyed felt the trails would increase the selling price of their home.
- Property owners do not appear to have a widespread concern for their safety. Trespassing, theft and vandalism by trail users were relatively infrequent events.
- Very few residents in the sample had increased home security, considered moving or wanted the trail closed.
- Residents living along the trails appear to perceive there to be a positive relationship between the trails and neighborhood quality of life (75%).
- There are noticeable differences between trails (or neighborhoods) in residents' reaction to Omaha trails. All neighborhoods reacted positively to the trails, but the responses were higher among residents living near the West Papio Trail.

BACKGROUND

During the past decade, few metropolitan areas have developed their recreational trail systems as rapidly as Omaha, Nebraska. From a complete absence of recreational trails and greenways in early 1989, Omaha has developed a system that today contains approximately 67 miles of paved recreational trails.

Another 35 miles of trails are scheduled for completion within the next eight years, and trail planning has become a continued feature of the urban and suburban park master planning process. Resources for this rapid development have come from a variety of sources, including the City of Omaha, Douglas County, and the Papio-Missouri Natural Resource District.

Despite increased promotion of trails for health and recreation, critics of new trail development continue to raise questions about the suitability of trails in neighborhoods. Concerns often focus on the impact of trails on property values and public safety in different types of neighborhoods.

METHODOLOGY

To address these concerns, this research sought to examine the impact of the existing trail system, focusing on residents living within one-block of each of three targeted trail segments. Trail selection was accomplished by consulting with the Omaha Parks and Recreation Department. Criteria included the desire to examine trails in areas of the city with old and new housing, short versus long term existence of the trail, and trails that are connected to the system versus trails not yet connected.

Following the method of much previous trail research, a survey was designed addressing three distinct issues of interest: property values, public safety, and trail use. Using both telephone and mail survey methodology, we asked residents living near the most heavily populated segments of the West Papio, Keystone, and Field Club Trails about the trails' impact on public safety, property values, and general neighborhood quality of life. Recognizing that all households in these areas might not be trail users, we also included questions about the frequency and type of trail usage by household members.

SURVEY RESULTS

Trail Use: All three trails had high percentages of households who had at least a member who used their local trail.

Frequency of Trail Use: 85% of all surveyed households had a member use their local trail daily or weekly with the highest use on the West Papio Trail.

Type of Trail Use: Walking (91%) and bicycling (54%) were by far the most frequent trail use types.



benefit communities

Influence of Trail on Home Purchase or sale

Of the respondents who purchased their home after the trail existed, 63.8% indicated that the trail positively influenced their purchase decision.

81% felt that the nearby trail's presence would have a positive effect or no effect on the ease of sale of their homes.

Experiences with trail-related theft and property damage

Theft (4.0%) and property damage (4.7%) were reported infrequently by respondents and most of these incidents were of relatively minor nature. Most security improvements mentioned consisted of building privacy fence or installing security lighting around the home. These security measures were deemed successful in all but one of the reported cases.

The use and acceptance of recreational trails may differ depending on the demographic characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood.

Residents expressed the opinion that the trails had improved life in their neighborhoods. There was little indication of a harmful impact except for three respondents, all located on the Keystone Trail, who reported a decline in the neighborhood due to the trails. Their resentment appeared to be associated with the development of a controversial skateboard facility in a park adjacent to the trail. Only one respondent out of 149 wanted to see the trail along their property closed. Only two have ever considered moving but they are the same respondents who did not care for an adjoining skateboard facility.

These data leads us to conclude that trail development in Omaha, Nebraska has been well received by residents who live adjacent to the trails, the very group who would be most directly affected by trail-related problems such as crime and declining property values.

Results were not dissimilar to the findings of previous comparable studies. By-and-large, the trails seem to be viewed as desirable quality of life enhancements that, despite their occasional problems, make homes and property more desirable and improve the quality of neighborhood life. Even so, there were signs in our data that the use and acceptance of recreational trails may differ depending on the demographic characteristics of the surrounding neighborhood.

The most positive responses to Omaha trails were found in the neighborhoods surrounding the West Papio Trail. Trail development has occurred more or less simultaneously with the construction of newer housing, and where home prices are

higher and the educational and occupational backgrounds of residents are likely to be higher. The average age of adults may be lower, and the number of children per household may be somewhat greater, in that region of the city.

In the older sections of Omaha near the Keystone and Field Club Trails, we found that the trails generated a more guarded optimism. This may be attributable to a number of factors. For example, homes in these areas are generally very modest in size and price, reflecting lifestyle trends that are decades old. Owners of these properties may well recognize that the future marketability of their properties is somewhat limited, no matter what amenities are added.

Limitations

Although we have gone to some length to achieve acceptable methodological rigor in this investigation, a few of its limitations should be mentioned in closing. The purpose of this investigation was not to establish an absolute or "true" increment of value that results when residential property is located next to a trail. Rather, we only sought to determine whether or not a subjective effect on property value exists in the minds of residents. This finding is consistent with the results of other recent surveys in Omaha and Council Bluffs (*Omaha Master Planning Survey*, 1998; *Council Bluffs Master Planning Survey*, 1999). Findings showed a substantial number of randomly selected respondents reported that they would pay more for residential property located near public parks and recreation facilities.

Finally, a decision that may strike some as a significant limitation was the selection of our sample to cover only residents living in close proximity to the target trails. We can defend this decision on a number of grounds. Persons living near trails, whether users or nonusers, are the most likely to be aware of the safety and economic issues that were central to our purpose.

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Case Study: sharing winter trails

Snowmobilers and skiers reach agreement in Sun Valley

By Adena Cook, Public Lands Director for the Blue Ribbon Coalition

An agreement between snowmobilers and cross-country skiers in the Wood River Valley made the news recently at a press conference in Ketchum, Idaho. This historic effort by a special committee of snowmobilers and cross-country skiers aims to solve conflict between the two groups.

A challenge was made by Sawtooth National Forest Supervisor **Bill LeVere**. "When I came on as Supervisor five years ago," he observed, "the biggest issue in the Forest was not grazing or logging, but was the conflict between skiers and snowmobilers in this Sun Valley area."

Historically, there was a "gentlemen's agreement" between cross-country skiers and snowmobilers that the areas north of Prairie Creek were used by the skiers and the Baker Creek area and south were used by snowmobilers. However, five or six years ago, this informal arrangement began to erode. New people moved to the area who were unfamiliar with the agreement. Technology changed. More people were using the area for winter fun. Conflicts escalated and enjoyment declined.

To begin to address the situation, the Blaine County Recreation District in 1996 formed a Wood River Winter Recreation Coalition, a group composed of skiers and snowmobilers. While the group achieved some success in addressing small issues, they were unable to resolve the larger problem of escalating conflict in favorite areas. By 1999, it was apparent that this effort was not going to succeed.

In December 1999, Supervisor LeVere met with the group and challenged them, "Come up with a resolution, come up with a map in a year's time, or I'll do it for you." Both groups realized that the agency was unlikely to develop a plan they'd each like. Snowmobilers knew that some closures were imminent and they were terrified of losing their favorite areas. Skiers wanted some assurance that they could enjoy a scenic, fun experience without encountering a snowmobile.

They formed a Winter Recreation Mapping Group composed of five snowmobilers and five skiers. To begin their collaboration, they hired **Bob Werth** of Werth and Werth Mediation of Ketchum, Idaho, to assist them. They began an intense process of communicating and collaborating that was difficult but ultimately successful.

Werth worked intensively with the group to lay the groundwork for addressing the issues. Members had to learn to understand and respect the other side. They had to learn to communicate and negotiate. They also had to frame the parameters of the issue and work out a timetable.

The group agreed to keep the proceedings confidential. Forest Service personnel could attend and observe. They provided technical information as requested and took minutes for the group, but otherwise did not participate.

Last winter, the group took a field trip where each member first skied, then snowmobiled to facilitate mutual understanding. They spent time in a back country yurt talking about management details that would be addressed later. They began to discuss criteria against which aspects of a plan's details would be tested. Subsequent development of these criteria

was essential to the ultimate success of the project. All of this preceded actual work with maps that would shape how allocations would be made on the ground.

There were many frustrations along the way. The group's progress was set back by an unfortunate incident

this past year when someone burned a popular yurt near the headquarters of the Sawtooth National Recreation Area. Skiers accused the snowmobilers, increasing tensions between winter recreationists. In an effort to reconcile, volunteers on both sides rebuilt the yurt.

As the group faced their frustrations, snowmobile member **Nancy Monk** said, "We live together. We go to church together. Our children go to school together. What kind of example do we set if we walk away from these problems? What kind of community do we want?"

The group finally produced a map to present to Supervisor LeVere which allocates areas closed to winter motorized use, areas closed to winter motorized use until March 15 but open after that date, and areas open to winter use. In one area snowmobilers will be urged to stay on a designated route to protect the skiing opportunity adjacent to the area. In the areas open for winter motorized use, non-motorized recreationists will be advised that encounters with snowmobilers may be expected.

Supervisor LeVere took the group's recommendations and made his decision by special order. He also based his decision on advice from staff, review of the Forest Plan, other regulations, and the Endangered Species Act, professional judgment, and correspondence from other users. The decision makes provision for special use permittees and property owners to access their homes by snowmobile in the winter.



Sharing trails successfully

The group acknowledged that its work is just half over, even though they've gotten the agreement of their respective constituencies. While they have laid a concrete foundation for management of the area's winter recreation, implementation will make it a reality. The skiers have historically had a "courtesy patrol;" this will now be expanded to include snowmobilers. Signs and informational material need to be produced and distributed. The public at large and the press must be enlisted to implement the plan and make it work. The group will continue to meet this winter to refine issues as the plan's implementation is monitored.

The plan represents a compromise, according to Idaho State Snowmobile Association Public Lands Director **Sandra Mitchell**, "No one group received everything it wanted. In the end, we all had to give a little to get a little. The process was long and hard, but it was appropriate for this unique area."

"We go to church together. Our children go to school together. What kind of example do we set if we walk away from these problems?"

Idaho **Senators Larry Craig and Mike Crapo**, and **Representative Mike Simpson** praised the decision. "I praise the collaborative efforts by back country skiers and snowmobilers that produced a decision they both can agree upon," Senator Craig said. "This is an excellent example of two feuding groups working together to ensure valid uses of our public lands continue. I applaud Forest Supervisor Bill LeVere for his leadership on this issue and hope that this effort can serve as a precedent on how to work out future land management disagreements."

Senator Crapo said, "These have been contentious issues in Idaho and elsewhere in the West, but it has been proven time and time again that bringing all sides to the table in a truly collaborative manner results in the best decision-making and this recreation plan is a good example of that."

Congressman Simpson said, "When local users sit down, work out their differences and solve the problem the public wins. This is exactly what should happen all over Idaho."

Although the circumstances and physical locale of the Wood River Winter Recreation Mapping Project are unique, the process they used is not. With the assistance of a skilled facilitator, such as Bob Werth, elements of the process can be identified and used in other situations. It is hoped that this kind of collaboration will be the future of land management planning.

The Continental Divide Trail belongs to all citizens

By Lyle Laverty, Associate Deputy Chief, USDA Forest Service

Hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians are all users of the CDT. All of them are enjoying the outdoors, challenging themselves, and gaining new skills, and renewing themselves in the pleasures of activities in the great outdoors. When they meet on this multiple-use (shared-use) trail, sometimes conflict results. Sometimes this conflict includes fear, physical interaction, and other times just plain annoyance at the interruption of their activity or enjoyment of nature. With increasing frequency, as the amount of trail use increases and the kind of users diversifies, conflicts are escalating.

To resolve these conflicts, hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians all call on public land managers. Unfortunately these managers are often asked to reduce or eliminate some users on the public lands commons, or build and maintain new trails to provide additional opportunities for single uses as the easiest route to reduce conflict. With limited budgets and limited public lands these kinds of solutions create winners and losers and often deny access equity to the most under-represented user group.

Multiple-use trails are efficient, environmentally friendly, and sometimes the only practical alternative. Managers alone cannot be expected to resolve these social issues. Users need to build on common ground, engage with managers, and together undertake thorough and thoughtful planning embracing each other's recreation needs.

Providing opportunities for high quality recreation experiences while sustaining the trail systems and natural areas they pass through should be everyone's goal. Research and experience shows that workable solutions can be reached that can manage these often emotional conflicts, given commitment and cooperation among users and managers.

Lyle Laverty was previously Regional Forester for the USFS Rocky Mountain Region. His comments appeared in the Spring 2001 Continental Divide Trail News.



Promoting education and care

Contribute to the conservation and celebration of our great outdoors by actively participating in the Tread Lightly! program.

Dialogue continues on responsible recreation

The mission of Tread Lightly!, Inc., is to instill an ethic of low-impact recreation among all Americans. The non-profit group has sponsored a series of "Convergence Dialogue" meetings for outdoor recreation interests to share ideas and develop a strategic plan of actions to promote responsible recreation into the new millennium.

The third meeting was held March 30-31 in Shepards town, West Virginia, at the National Conservation Training Center. Participants represent federal and state land management agencies, enthusiast groups, industry, and conservationists.

Actions agreed on included:

- Get Administration and agency heads to stress the importance of recreation management to the field. Both motorized and non-motorized recreation organizations agreed to work together on this goal. It includes providing more accurate information on the unmet funding needs.
- Develop a system that allows the participants to collect and submit accomplishments and success stories to a central clearing house for distribution to agencies and the public.
- Promote a dialogue with non-motorized recreationists and environmentalists about role of motorized recreation on public lands.
- Form a broad coalition for recreational access which includes all types of users.
- Expand and enhance education on responsible recreation ethics to such groups as hunters and youth groups, as well as to the general public.
- Develop education actions, including classroom curricula, coordination of of Tread Lightly! and Leave No Trace messages, and encouragement of recreation groups to pass along the message.
- Incorporate off-highway vehicle ethics in state hunter safety education programs in all states.
- Include education on what the consequences are of not using proper ethics

- Build common approaches, and support planning for balanced travel management that includes both road and trail opportunities on public land.
- Continue the Dialogue Series and find new ways to reach out to non-participants in a way that sets aside polarized positions and politics.
- American Trails will help develop coalitions among non-governmental organizations on common approaches for travel management support on public lands, and to provide a forum for responsible recreation efforts at the next National Trails Symposium in 2002.

Attending the Convergence Dialogue was **Nina Leopold Bradley**, eldest daughter of **Aldo Leopold**, author of *A Sand County Almanac*. She inspired participants with her keynote presentation on finding a connection with the land while reading her father's famous book. Bradley, a renowned conservationist, works with the Aldo Leopold Foundation to help people connect with the land around them.

The complete text of the March 30-31 Convergence Dialogue meeting is available at www.AmericanTrails.org. Click on "Resources & Library," then click on "Federal Agencies."

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For more information on Tread Lightly!, Inc., please contact their office at (800) 966-9900 or visit the Website at www.treadlightly.org.



and Greenways

Citizens help select greenway route in Maine

Apart from Florida, Maine contains the longest section of East Coast Greenway on its 2,600 mile route from the Canadian border to Florida. It is the most rural and least populated of the 15 Eastern seaboard states and arguably provides some of the most scenic and historically interesting experiences for the non-motorized traveler along the entire route.

“Although Maine has significant stretches of abandoned railway and utility right-of-way that will provide excellent Greenway, much of our route will have to utilize roads initially,” says **Sue Ellen Bordwell**, the Chair of the Maine East Coast Greenway committee. “Our objective is not only to develop a safe and scenic interim road route but one that local communities will support.”

A series of 21 “regional town meetings” were organized to enable local officials, citizens, and trail groups to decide not only the best route for the Greenway, but also the best interim road route to be used while the Greenway is being designed and built. **Pat King**, Chair of the East Coast Greenway Alliance Board of Trustees explains, “It is easy to draw a line on a map. We did not want to repeat the mistake of other trail organizers by utilizing a top-down approach.”

The first section of the East Coast Greenway starts at the Canadian border in Calais. The route follows much of the 132-mile Calais Branch rail-with-trail project sponsored by the Maine Department of Transportation and the Sunrise Trail Coalition. During the initial planning design, input was sought from within MDOT, other state and federal agencies, municipalities, and the public. Later, four public meetings were held for citizen review and input.

Another example of this process is in the southern part of Maine, where the Greenway will follow the planned 65-mile Eastern Railroad corridor between the New Hampshire border and South Portland. “It may take 10 to 15 years to convert all off-road sections to useable standards following the original Eastern Railroad corridor wherever possible,” says **John Andrews**, the president of a group of dedicated volunteers working to make the Eastern Trail a reality.

Again with MDOT financing, more than 280 attendees in six public meetings helped to define two parallel routes— one for the ideal off-road trail, and a second on-road parallel route which can be opened as soon as signs and maps can be provided. The road sections may continue in use as optional routes for those preferring access to town centers and amenities, as well as if a trail needs to be closed for maintenance.

On a rainy weekday night...

How has the “regional town meeting” process worked? Let’s take a look at one of the 11 meetings, this one in Belfast, Maine. **John Balicki**, the Bicycle/Pedestrian coordinator for the Maine Department of Transportation has arrived early to set up the corridor maps and the tables for the group consensus mapping exercise.

Although only 12 attendees ventured out on this harsh early April night, they represent a diverse cross-section of the local communities: a city councilwoman, a professional city planner, the head of the local trails group, a kayaker, a long distance hiker, a member of the Regional Transportation Advisory Council, and several cyclists from surrounding towns. An overview of the East Coast Greenway vision, organization, and progress is followed by a description of how the corridor was defined in the State of Maine.



“So this is another MDOT project?” asked one attendee with a cynical tone. “Not at all,” replied Balicki, “the easement acquisition and the actual planning of the trails along the Greenway route are being done by citizen groups and volunteers. MDOT and its engineers are only facilitating the meetings and recording the results.”

The second part of the meeting was more fun: a participative mapping session. Balicki unrolled large-scale maps covering the 40-mile corridor that was the focus of the night’s meeting.

Marking pens made their way around the table as people inked in routes and alternatives. Some were crossed out and others were doubled or triple marked to emphasize the voting. At the end of the meeting, both the preferred Greenway and interim road routes were marked, along with numerous shops, campgrounds, museums, bakeries, and the establishment with the best Margaritas on the Mid-Coast.

The next steps were outlined by Balicki: the routes would be checked on the road for any potential problems; each municipality would receive a letter requesting endorsement of the route(s) through its community, and finally, a written report summarizing the selection process would be published.

This inclusive, grass-roots process has proven successful in other states as well, not only in finding the best route for this trail but in developing the local base of support required to ensure that it is implemented.

For more information about the grass-roots selection process for the ECG route in Maine contact: Sue Ellen Bordwell, the Chair of the ECG Maine State Committee (207) 846-3340, seb1476@aol.com or John Balicki, Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator, MDOT, (207) 287-6600, john.balicki@state.me.us.

Recognition for trail projects

Well-designed trails could truly engage the present moment and provide a sense of place, thereby becoming "a chord that resonates the soul."

Western Trailbuilders give award for Greenway

The Western Trailbuilders Association gave the first annual **Harvey Bell Memorial Award** to The Greenway Collaborative for excellence in Trail Design, more specifically for their leadership in creating the Grand Canyon Greenway project.

The award was accepted by three design team members who have provided countless hours of expert volunteer assistance re-conceiving how people will experience the Grand Canyon.

Present to accept the award were:

- **Jeff Olson**, a trailblazer from New York and recent Director of the Millennium Trails initiative;
- **Peter Axelson** of Beneficial Designs, who provided design guides for disability access; and
- **Robert Searns**, a greenway planner/developer from Urban Edges of Denver, Colorado, the Project Development Consultant.

The team, at work for four years, may see the first construction during 2001. It includes a rich mix of professionals from outside and inside the National Park Service. They have raised over two million dollars to date from Government, corporate, and individual sources and will incorporate volunteer participation by youth groups, possibly with expert help from members of the Association.

The Western Trailbuilders Association is made up of over 30 contractors who specialize in trails. The organization has been in existence for about 25 years and meets annually in Reno with various Government agencies such as the US Forest Service who use the services of contractors to build trails.

This award also recognizes the contributions of one of its founding members who had been fiercely committed to excellence in trail design. **Harvey Bell**, truly an unforgettable character, was represented by his brother, **Roger Bell**, also a California trail contractor and currently Vice-Chair of American Trails.

A similar design concept is proposed for Yosemite National Park, and members of the team have creatively influenced greenway design in urban centers and front-country trail systems nation-wide.

Searns, a major contributor to three books on greenway design and also a Board member of **American Trails**, told the group that good trails were an antidote to technical overload in the information age. In this age, leisure activity tends to mirror the demands of work culture so that "even places like the Grand Canyon are now packaged tour bus photo-ops and not places that fully engage the whole body, mind and spirit."

Instead, he envisions open spaces and greenways, whether in wilderness parks or urban centers, as "vital infrastructure that can become part of our daily lives." Well-designed trails could truly engage the present moment and provide a sense of place, thereby becoming "a chord that resonates the soul."

For additional information on the Grand Canyon Greenway Project, contact Bob Searns (303) 904-6886. For more information on the Western Trailbuilders Association, contact Roger Bell (909) 793-4501 or see www.trailbuilders.org.

California state trails program gives awards

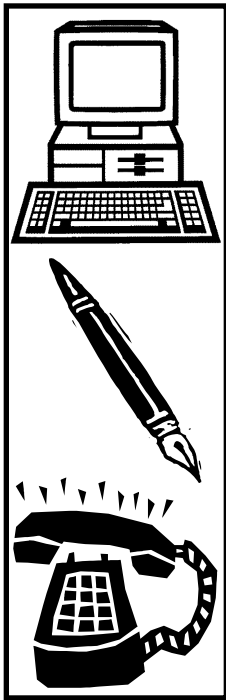
The California State Trails Conference in late 2000 was the scene for recognition of several important trail and greenway projects, and the communities and people making them happen. Trail Project Merit Awards were presented to:

- « **Cities of Clovis and Fresno** and the **Coalition for Community Trails** for completing the 13-mile Sugar Pine Trail.
- « **Cities of Glendale and Burbank**, and the **Santa Monica Mountains Conservancy** for completing the 36-mile Verdugo Mountains Trail System
- « **Santa Cruz Mountains Trail Association** for their 30-year program of building and maintaining trails in the Santa Cruz Mountains
- « **Bay Area Ridge Trail Council** for their successful "Hike for the Ridge" volunteer, fundraising, and media project

For links to these and hundreds of trail groups and projects throughout America, visit www.AmericanTrails.org and click on "America's Trails State by State."

Resources

For hundreds of resources on all aspects of trails and greenways, go to www.AmericanTrails.org and click on "Resources & Library."



New edition of *Trails for the 21st Century*

The new edition of *Trails for the Twenty-First Century: Planning, Design, and Management Manual for Multi-Use Trails* is a 211-page paperback covering the basics of a wide variety of trail topics such as surfacing, signs, bridges, tunnels, environmental contaminants, and maintenance.

Case studies and photos of typical situations illustrate the ideas. Included are discussions of trail issues including shared use, risk management, user fees, marketing, and public involvement.

The authors of the book are **Robert Searns** of Urban Edges, Inc., an American Trails board member [see the article on page 6], **Charles Flink** of Greenways, Inc., a North Carolina State University professor, and **Kristine Olka** of the Triangle Greenways Council. Publication sponsors are the Rivers & Trails Program of the National Park Service and the Federal Highway Administration.

Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by Island Press, is available from (800) 828-1302 or www.islandpress.com.

Trailbuilding Basics from IMBA and Subaru

This concise publication starts with the Philosophy of trail planning, moves through Establishing the Route, and continues through Construction into Maintenance. The focus is on providing routes for mountain bicycling, but the book contains much of interest to all natural surface trail users, including:

- Erosion
- Try to Mimic Mother Nature
- Building Flow Into Your Route
- Flagging and Clearing the Trail
- Bridges, Switchbacks, and Drainage

Printed copies can be purchased from the **IMBA Online Store: www.imba.com**. For a link to a printable PDF file, go to www.AmericanTrails.org (click on "Resources & Library" and click on "Trail Construction").

American Trails Website adds products & services

We're developing a new section of the Website of American Trails at www.AmericanTrails.org. This new area features trail-related products, services, materials, and planners. Our goal is to provide a convenient source for in-depth information on consultants and manufacturers for greenways and trails— not just a series of ads.

For instance, we'll have information on a range of different bridge types by different manufacturers, and information on bridge selection. Links to related articles and on-line information by companies in the bridge business will provide even more resources.

A directory of several hundred trail-related businesses is also included. American Trails sponsors are featured, along with many other companies who are helping plan, build, and improve America's system of trails and greenways.

Check out this new area on the American Trails website: www.AmericanTrails.org (click on "Resources & Library" and click on "Products for Trails").

How to hike America's longest trails

A new book for the serious backpacking enthusiast is *Hiking the Triple Crown*, focusing on the Appalachian Trail, the Pacific Crest Trail, and the Continental Divide Trail. Author **Karen Berger** is hiking editor for **GORP.com** and a travel writer specializing in backpacking.

The 224-page book, aptly described as "the expert how-to guide for long-distance hiking," stresses gear selection, planning for long trips, and safety. Details of the three National Scenic Trails include recommendations for hiking specific sections.

Hiking the Triple Crown is published by The Mountaineers Books, 1001 SW Klickitat Way, Suite 201, Seattle WA 98134; www.mountaineersbooks.org



Calendar

For e-mail addresses and conference websites, go to
www.AmericanTrails.org and click on "Calendar."

August 3-5, 2001 • Bikefest 2001 • LAB's National Rally • Altoona, PA. Info: League of American Bicyclists (202) 822-1333.

August 3-6, 2001 • Lake Placid region, New York

August 18-19 • Spokane, Washington

IMBA Trailbuilding School • Classroom and on-trailwork will prepare volunteers for designing sustainable trails, controlling water flow, building effective trail structures, and doing routine maintenance. For contacts for these and other IMBA Schools throughout the year, visit the website at www.AmericanTrails.org and click on "Calendar."

August 16-18, 2001 • First National Congress of Pedestrian Advocates

Oakland, CA. Training in advocacy techniques, organizing and fundraising, pedestrian design and safety issues. Info: (503) 222-1077

August 17-21, 2001 • 7th Conference on National Scenic and Historic Trails

Radisson Hotel Conference Center, Casper, Wyoming. Organized by the Partnership for the National Trails System. Info: (608) 249-7870.

September 7-9, 2001 • 18th Annual California Trails & Greenways Conference

Lake Arrowhead, CA. Info: Paula David (916) 651-6915

September 7-9, 2001 • TrailFest 2001

Breckenridge, Colorado. The conference of the Continental Divide Trail Alliance will be key to defining a future CDT corridor and Master Plan. Contact: CDTA, P.O. Box 628, Pine, Colorado 80470; (888) 909-CDTA (2382)

September 13-15 • Colorado Trails Symposium •

Winter Park, Colorado (in the mountains during fall color season!). Programs and field trips on all aspects of trails and greenways, including funding, trail management, new technologies, land acquisition, and accessible trail solutions. Presented by the State Trails Program of Colorado State Parks, the conference is for planners, agencies, activists, organizations, and consultants to share information and new ideas. Info: (303) 866-3203 X 306.

September 17-21, 2001 • Velo-City 2001

Edinburgh/Glasgow, Scotland. Info: Meeting Makers Ltd, Jordanhill Campus, 76 Southbrae Drive, Glasgow G13 1PP, Scotland; voice: 0141 434 1500; fax: 434 1519

September 16-19, 2001 • Mid-Atlantic Governor's Conference on Greenways & Blueways

Arlington, VA. Sponsored by the governors of VA, MD and PA, with NC, SC, WV, DE, NY, and NJ, and federal agencies and numerous organizations. Latest research and design solutions for building livable communities enhancing green infrastructure. Cost is \$150, including most meals, mobile workshops, excursions, breaks, and receptions. Info: Bill Conkle (804) 786-5492.

September 21-22, 2001 • Alaska's Statewide Trails

Symposium • Mt. McKinley Princess Hotel, Mile 132 Parks Highway. Info: Ron Crenshaw, Alaska State Parks (907) 269-8704.

September 24-28, 2001 • "Retrofitting for Accessibility" • Gatlinburg, TN.

Training sessions for applying accessibility standards under the Americans with Disabilities Act for recreation access. Info: National Center on Accessibility (812) 856-4422.

September 26-29, 2001 • International Trails &

Greenways Conference • St. Louis. Topics include public health and trails, safe routes to school, urban redevelopment, policy issues, smart growth, good design, corridor acquisition, and management strategies. Info: (202) 974-5152

October 3-5, 2001 • Tread Lightly!'s "Making a Difference" Conference • Park City, Utah

Learn, collaborate, network and help move Tread Lightly! forward in its educational efforts for low-impact recreation. Info: (800) 966-9900

October 3-6, 2001 • National Recreation and Park Association Annual Congress

Denver, CO -- Info: NRPA at (703) 858-2158.

October 4-6, 2001 • Washington State Trails

Conference 2001 • Vancouver, Washington

The theme is "Healthy trails, healthy people... discover the economic, social, and health benefits." Info: Jeri Krampetz, (877) 854-9415 (toll free).

Universal Trail Assessment Training (UTAP)

October 15-16 • Oracle State Park, Tucson, AZ

October 18-19 • Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Training session on how to better assess and maintain your trails for accessibility. -- Info: visit www.AmericanTrails.org -- click on "Calendar."



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