

AMERICAN TRAILS CONFERENCE



Little Rock, Arkansas
November 14-18, 2008
www.americantrails.org/2008

Notes from the Plenary and Concurrent Sessions

*as recorded by Frieda Baldwin
Huron Trails and Greenways
www.simcoecountytrails.net*

As there were many concurrent sessions, this report focuses on those related to Trail Building, Active Transportation, Physical Activity on Trails (particularly those of children and youth), and Funding for Trails. The "Art of Trails", a trail building course by Woody Keen, was a separate workshop, covered in a separate document.

Table of Contents

Page

Key Note Speakers	2
Future of Trails	3
Active Transportation	4
Children and nature	6
Fundraising	12
Trail Building	15
Selling skills for trail advocates	18
Trail surveys	21
Interesting Reference Materials, Quotes and websites	23-24
Attendees	25
2010 Conference in Chattanooga, TN	25

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

Symposium Opening Keynote Luncheon:

Trails: Prescription for Better Health

by Dr. Richard Jackson, UCLA School of Public Health.

[Download the Powerpoint presentation from Dr. Richard Jackson's talk \(.ppt file, 9.4MB\).](#)

www.americantrails.org/2008. **A MUST read!!!** He discusses the increase of inactivity, leading to health problems, etc... and the fact that :

- students have better attendance, less likely to drop out of school, or have discipline problems, when they are attending smaller schools (and not bussed to huge schools)
- kids who walk to school are more alert, have increased concentration and perform better
- children who have more contact with nature also study better, etc.

Hence a call to create “places of health”, such as trails, complete streets (with proper sidewalks, bike lanes, street scaping, etc.), as well as natural places where children can play in an unstructured way. He also said: “Our shaping of the built environment is shaping our health, wealth and future”.

Symposium Closing Keynote Luncheon

Last Child in the Woods

Saving our children from Nature Deficit Disorder

By Richard Louv, 2008, Penguin Books

<http://richardlouv.com/>

The recipient of the 2008 Audubon Medal, Richard Louv identified a phenomenon we all knew existed but couldn't quite articulate: nature-deficit disorder. Since its initial publication, his book Last Child in the Woods has created a national conversation about the disconnection between children and nature, and his message has galvanized an international movement. Now, three years later, we have reached a tipping point, with the book inspiring Leave No Child Inside initiatives throughout the country.

He says for instance that humans are “hardwired to nature”. People all over the world are attracted to landscapes (beautiful scenery). We therefore have to hold dear what is special to us, what makes us happy. We would not be whole without it. However, those places are “endangered” and our kids are therefore disconnected from that opportunity because of urban development, lifestyle of parents, less places to play in an unstructured way, etc. Kids are “plugged in” more hours than the hours their parents work!

However, kids who have access to nature, show more creativity, improved cognitive development, learn executive function (i.e. what to do or no), and will be less dependent on medication (for ADDA, diabetes, depression, etc.). Unless, we act, this generation of kids may even have a lower life expectancy than that of their parents.

The other danger if not re-introducing kids to nature, is that if they do not go out in nature, and learn to appreciate it, who will protect the environment, and protect endangered species in future?

Richard Louv suggests amongst others to (read his book!):

- redefine parks and trails as classrooms, and even redefine the farm as a classroom (farms should plant the seed of nature, rather than getting subsidies for not planting certain crops).
- Since parents are scared of predators and danger, we should realize that we are conditioned to live in fear by the media, and as such that fear is not going to go

away. In order to give kids some kind of semblance of unstructured activity in nature, we should try to achieve cultural change:

- Support parks, nature centres, etc. because they are limited in their funding
- Support volunteers and their limited budgets
- **Organize Nature Family Playdays:** Meet at the park every Saturday/Sunday. You will find safety in numbers, anyone can do it – especially the single parent, and you don't have to wait for funding.

What if this caught on? We should activate people to do this!! Create human energy, by painting a picture of a world people will want to go to. It does exist! It is right down the Trail!!!

Also Check:

Children and Nature website <http://www.childrenandnature.org/>

The Children & Nature Network (C&NN) was created to encourage and support the people and organizations working to reconnect children with nature. C&NN provides access to the latest news and research in the field and a peer-to-peer network of researchers and individuals, educators and organizations dedicated to children's health and well-being.

Leave No Child Inside <http://www.kidsoutside.info/index.htm>

Chicago Wilderness is a group of more than 220 public and private organizations working together to protect the Chicago region's natural spaces, help conserve the diversity of plants and animals, and enrich local residents' quality of life. We are launching Leave No Child Inside, a multi-year plan with the ultimate goal of fostering generations of children that care enough for nature to protect it.

THE FUTURE OF TRAILS

The Path Ahead: what is the Future of Trails?

At the 2006 Trails conference, delegates recommended the following 10 steps for the Future of Trails in the USA:

1. Promote Connections in our Communities
2. Promote Access and Accessibility
3. Encourage all Americans to Participate
4. Engage and Motivate Youth and Elderly
5. Promote Sustainable Transportation
6. Commit Sustainable Funding
7. Associate Trails with Health and Fitness
8. Expand Environmental Education
9. Build Partnerships
10. Create a Quality National and Local Trails Network

For the next decade, we need to focus our efforts on:

Goal 1 - Expand outreach

so we have public awareness in every household and community across the nation

- Collaborate with tourism, health, insurance, recreation communities
- Reach out to people of all ages, ethnic background, diversity

Goal 2 - Complete the trail network

- Fill in the gaps, connect them
- Redouble our efforts to get sustainable funding, and programs are supported at all levels

Goal 3 - Redouble our capacity

- Agencies working in tandem with citizen volunteers and organizations

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION

How Urban Trail Systems and Complete Streets Provide Connections within Cities (Complete cities)

By Greta de Mayo, Ecos Environmental Design Inc. (landscape architect)

Create active transportation corridors in a built environment. The purpose of the trail is to provide mobility for active transportation and create greenways in built up areas.

Benefits

See website of the Rails to Trails Conservancy of Benefits of trails and greenways, incl. statistics. Also, most trips are 3 miles or less. If we cut down on these trips, it will make a difference in many areas, including in our Quality of Life.

How to get started?

- Form Partners with public/private leadership
- Develop an urban mobility master plan
- Adopt the master plan and implement the plan into the zoning regulations for future development
- Develop and construct a pilot with high visibility
- Develop momentum and keep going!

Funding sources: Federal, state, local, as well as private funding from corporations, individuals, clubs, etc.

Note: 81% of Americans support the allocation of tax dollars to be spent on urban trails in their community.

Master plan for urban trail

Identify trail corridors to assemble/acquire

- Over designed streets (designed well originally, but traffic patterns changed/decreased)
- Hydro and railway corridors
- Abandoned railways
- Undeveloped land
- River and stream corridors
- Parks and public spaces
- Edges of golf courses and cemeteries

Select desired route

- Access to mass transit
- Safe routes to schools
- Trips to employment
- Recreation and travel opportunities

Connections within cities

- Visioning process (If you can dream it, it can happen!)
- Design considerations: how to think creatively in a built environment
- Challenges and obstacles
- Case studies

Visioning process

- Before and after graphic to provide to the politicians what they need to present
- Goal separated pedestrian and separated bike routes, to avoid conflict.
- Design depends on your existing conditions: number of expected users, inventory, etc.
- Important to show a graphic of what you are trying to create (ask for consultant help)

Case study: A Trail to your house (Atlanta)

Using complete streets to connect your community

Before: 4 lane 1 way street in Atlanta, not much traffic, buildings built up to the edge of the road, etc. (over-designed). Vision is to put in a pedestrian lane:

- Put in a buffers between traffic, bike lane and pedestrians wherever possible, and it will increase bike traffic.
- Typical surface in Georgia: concrete because of the long term lesser cost of maintenance
- Prefer 5 ft buffer between traffic and bike lane.
- Sometimes you may have to make the travel lanes narrower through striping, or coloured concrete, or reflective cones to show separation
- Use pedestrian signals at busy intersections

Try to get there before the development, so the visioning can be incorporated, and you will have less issues with trying to retrofit, driveways crossing, etc.

Involve private property owners, listen to their issues, and work with them to find solution.

Challenges:

Driverways, underpasses, overpasses, proximity to rivers and waterways, etc.

Road diet program: narrowing of roads, and replacing lanes with bike paths, etc. (example: take 4 lane road to 3 lanes, with a centre lane, and bikepaths on either side)

Look at existing challenges, such as drainage problems, and resolve them.

Along railroad

Connections to:

- downtowns (focal points, bring green space)
- trail heads and build amenities

See americantrails.org conference proceedings for pictures etc.

The Trail to Your House

By Philip Pugliese, Bicycle Coordinator, Outdoor Chattanooga

- 1/3 of Americans are looking to walk/bike more, but find out there are no sidewalks, bike paths, etc.
- 52% of Americans want to bike more and 55% would prefer to drive less and walk more

Streets are incomplete right now. Many don't even have crosswalks, sidewalks, too narrow to share with bikes, uninviting for bus riders.

Complete streets are safe, comfortable for all users, cars, bikes, pedestrians, etc.

Safe and Complete Streets Act of 2008 (in front of Congress currently)

Complete Streets policy ensures that all road users are considered in the planning process for roads. Some states already have policies (example California, etc.), but the policy is not always enforced

Types of complete streets: crosswalks, bike lanes, side walks, traffic signals, traffic calming measures, buffers, refuse island, enhanced transit stops, etc.

It's not about a single street, but build a network.

Connect existing facilities, pave unpaved trails, etc.

Implementation process

- Revise policies and standards
- Revise decision process (involve all users)
- Staff training in traffic calming, pedestrian use, etc.
- Data collection to document efforts

Does it cost more?

- Avoid costly retrofits
- Minimal additional funding (2.5 to 5% overall project cost)
- Save money with better design

Benefits of complete streets

- Encourages biking and walking
- Better mobility for elderly (choosing alternate transportation) and disabled
- Improve safety for our children
- Promote healthy lifestyles
- Improve air quality (less CO2 emissions)

www.completestreets.org

CHILDREN AND NATURE

A Trail To Every Classroom (TTEC)

By Rita Hennessy National Parks Service, Appalachian Trail (rita_hennessy@nps.gov)
304-535-6170, and Janis Brannon, Cummit Charter School, Cashiers, NC

A Trail To Every Classroom (TTEC) program engages young people in nature. It brings together trail managers, teachers and children, allowing a safe pace to engage in physical exercise, explore nature, learn about the trail as a natural and cultural resource, and collectively get their hands dirty. In short, a program to connect children to Nature, get them physically active and child hood obesity.

What led to TTEC:

- shortage of volunteers to help maintain the Appalachian Trail (long distance hiking trail in the USA across 14 states)
- increased visitor use of the AT
- graying of volunteer trail crews
- Learn and Service Corps America: volunteer program, from which we learned that **kids who are involved with learning in nature are twice as likely to volunteer later on.**

In 2006, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the National Park Service developed a "Trail To Every Classroom" as a strategy to help preserve volunteer traditions through a multi-disciplinary professional development program for K-12 teachers that use the Appalachian Trail as an educational resource through service-learning and place based education.

Place Based Service learning

Service learning is linked back to the curriculum (i.e. after garbage cleanup connect with class on recycling, landfill, etc.). They have then touched on language arts, science, environment, civic engagement, etc.

Place based education: learn about local topics (geography, history, etc.) then broaden it to national and international studies, topics.

- Best practices of place based education include services
- Best practices of service learning begin at home.

Evaluation to date

- Positively impacts student learning
- Positively influences educators knowledge and involvement with the AT as a community and teaching resource
- Sustainability of curriculum developed as a result of TTEC is dependent on support from local community partners

Program led to Real outcomes

- High school students learn about hike leadership, Leave No Trace and mentor elementary school kids
- Trail head bulletin boards – community ownership limits vandalism (Kids adopted the bulletin board and posted art work by kids – never been vandalized)
- Students hike through 100 miles of wilderness, and hiked with Bill Irwin first blind thru hiker and author of Blind Courage
- High school students help work crew
- Students create trail brochure (grant from Toyota to print)

To date, 125 teachers have been trained and 3500 students have gone through the program.

Summit Charter School, Cashiers, North Carolina (example of TTEC)

Janis Kay Heller Brannon (science coordinator)

Implemented Place Based Education in 2007, received a grant from the Appalachian Trail license plate program. They started with a strategic plan for the school, centered around environmental education, and more specifically place based education. Plan was prepared by staff, board and parents. (Reference: David Sobel: "Place based education - connecting classrooms and communities"). They created partnerships with nature centre, hiking club, Audubon Society, conservation alliance

Whole school activities:

- Virtual hike of the AT: Students were to hike at home (virtual), did field classes, etc.: were supposed to hike the entire state, learned about the flora/fauna along the trail
- Story time activity for kindergarten and grade 1 every month (integrated into curriculum)
- Rebuilt an old outdoor classroom as a class project (involved student council who brought in material, plants, weather station, etc.)
- Grade 3-5 Atrium started a Heritage club: spent 10 weeks of hiking (every Wednesday afternoon), did more cultural activities (made quilt based on who they are, etc), built things based on how construction was done in the past and today,
- Grade 6-8 Atrium: trash pickup, brought it back to school, sorted it in recyclable and weighted it, and wrote a newspaper article and published it. Also, guest speakers, food preparation for hikes, trail name contest, filter water, Adopt a Hemlock program (you can treat the tree with a chemical)
- Grade 6: Earthshine Camp - adventure activities and overnight (2 years earlier than traditionally 8th grade)
- Grade 7: field trip to Judaculla Rock (petroglyphs): language arts and science
- Grade 8: AT water testing field trip, tested at 6 different sites on World Wide Water Monitoring Day, students camped overnight. Huge success!!! Hiked up to a fire tower, did nature journaling, were joined with AT volunteers who told them about the journals in the shelters, students had to set up their own tents, cook their own food, studied salamanders.

New in 2008:

- AT license plate grant to develop a trails as the beginning of an outdoor classroom
- Added more program to place based education
- Family Workday for the "Quiet Coyote" Trail
- Service learning workday on the Quiet Coyote Trail
- Bird of prey program (Dr. Talmadge)
- Summit Experiential Education Clubs (SEEC): service learning, hiking and music/technology.
- Rock climbing physics field trips
- Heritage Club focuses on Cherokee Culture (they learn the Cherokee language)
- K2 Atrium focus on integrating outdoor activities with year end hiking trips and develop a service learning program Kids for Service
- Create a curriculum map to integrate placed based optics with State Curriculum to create a Summit Curriculum

Plans for additional curriculum K-2 Atrium

- Nature journaling
- Stewardship: how to act in an outdoor classroom
- Learn how to interact, respect and identify wild and domestic animals and plants

- Students will be introduced to habitats specific to the area
- Introduce students to scientific methods
- Study of local history

Plans for 3-5 Atrium

- Nature journaling, focus on drawing and writing
- Orienteering
- Plant and animal taxonomy and categorizing organisms
- Begin student initiate community service projects
- Build on scientific method
- Study history and people of local area
- Implement overnight camp outs connected with curriculum such as the 9th grade AT water testing field trip

Plans for 6-8 Atrium

- Develop orienteering skills and incorporate into scientific studies
- Continue student initiated community service projects
- Incorporate local historical and literary figures
- Implement overnight camp outs connected to curriculum such as the Grade 8 AT water testing field trip

Other plans for 2008-09 academic year:

- Trail essay and speech contest (all grades)
- School wide study of local trail and culminating in trail night celebration
- 8th grade culminating fieldtrip to a week long coastal ecology program

Children and the Outdoors

Presented by Rivers Trails and Conservation Assistance, US Dept of the Interior
Diana Allen, National Park Service
Pam Johnson, Orange County Dept. of Education

California's Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

Connecting children with nature and how that translates with health

Why? Every child by the time they are 14 should have experienced 10 different activities.
Why? Connections with happier, healthier and smarter kids

Barriers:

- Parental fear of critters and predators
- No more "free range" children
- The outdoors is no more dangerous than it was when we grew up.
- Consequences: poor health: obesity and Type 2 diabetes
- Lack of connections and understanding of nature
- Increased physiological problems

California's Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights

With recent concerns about youth detachment from outdoor activities, lack of physical exercise and increased health risks, the California Roundtable on Recreation, Parks and Tourism adopted the [California Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights](#) for the purpose of recommending a fundamental list of experiences that every child in California would benefit from experiencing, before entering high school.

Numerous studies document that children who do these things are healthier, do better in school, have better social skills and self-image, and lead more fulfilled lives.

California's **Children's Bill of Rights:**

1. Discover California's Past
2. Splash in the Water
3. Play in a Safe place
4. Camp under the Stars
5. Explore Nature
6. Learn to swim
7. Play on a team
8. Follow a Trail
9. Catch a Fish
10. Celebrate your heritage

The above are very comfortable statements, that everyone can agree on.
Check website www.Calroundtable.org for logo and marketing materials, incl. implementation tools

California State Parks – Children in Nature Initiative

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=24914

Goals

- To promote California State Park programs
- To focus on regional coordination and collaboration among partners to provide seamless information and opportunities for kids to get outdoors.
- To increase the number and capacity of public, private and nonprofit organizations committed to providing opportunities to connect children with nature
- To engage the private sector for funding and other support for the Campaign
- To help provide opportunities for children to participate in unstructured play in the natural environment
- To further the welfare of California's children through the following:
 - Encourage children to experience nature and give them the opportunity to develop a sense of wonder and joy for the natural world,
 - Increase children's awareness that nature is everywhere,
 - Build children's knowledge of the interconnectedness of natural systems,
 - Help children develop the critical scientific and social skills necessary to address environmental issues, both locally and globally.

Inside the outdoors program (Orange County Dept of Education)

Science Study Programs

Elements of excellent environmental education

Nurturing a natural curiosity

- Outdoor science school
- Field trips
- Traveling scientists (in class program K – 6th grade, earth life and physical education)
- Community programs

www.insidetheoutdoors.org

714-708-3885

Diane Moderator and Roger Bell

Conference Group exercise – brainstorming session as to how to connect children with nature:

- Educate the educators (parents, teachers, schoolboards, etc.) that trails are safe
- Connect schools and greenspace
- Project Wild, Project Wet and Project Learning Tree (See http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/learning/project_wild/ and www.plt.org/cms/pages/21_19_1.html)
- Vacant Lot Society (where kids roam around and play free)
- Open up school grounds to public to play and enjoy greenspace
- Building outdoor classrooms
- Teaching kids how to volunteer on trails
- Indian guides and parent led outings
- Acquaint grandchildren with the outdoor
- Recess: unstructured
- Create events for the community (low cost)
- Use existing resources in community (Keep America Beautiful, Lions Club, Rotary club, Naturalists, school districts, etc.)
- Should not be a one day event, but should expose them on a regular basis
- Family opportunities to educate the parents as well as the kids
- Give families ideas, such as promote family fishing on “Free fishing day” in partnership with Anglers and Hunters
- Reach out to corporations to mentor inter-city youth in the outdoors
- Engage both the kid and the parent
- Lay out on a blanket and look at the night sky
- Geocaches on loop trails
- Stacked trails (increased difficulty on top trails – introduce difficult challenge at the front of the trail, to let them know next loop is more difficult). Proper wayfinding markers necessary (i.e. this way to parking).

Kids should have 1 hour of physical activity a day, parents 30 minutes, as per the Surgeon General of the USA.

Get the media to tell the story to dispell the fears of parents, educators, etc.

Economic downturn may be an opportunity for less buying, computer games, etc., but do more low cost activities, incl. in the outdoor.

Other States also have Children’s Bill of Rights, such as the Oregon Children’s Bill of Rights, which includes many simple ideas. See www.portlandonline.com/mayor/index.cfm?a=119688&c=40070

Hooked on Nature website has lots of cool ideas, easy to implement. www.hookedonnature.org

FUNDRAISING

See www.americantrails.org: "Funding Ideas for Trails and Greenways"

Strategic fundraising for long term success

By Eric Van Steenburg – Friends of the Katie Trail in Dallas

The Katie Trail is a \$3 million dollar project of a 3.5 km urban trail and 30 acre park in downtown Dallas.

Friends of the Katie Trail had to raise 500K first before State would match it. (500K in bond program as 20% match for project)

Dallas has more millionaires than any other city in the US, lots of oil revenues as well

Local foundations: source of grants:

1. Must know some people on the board of the foundation, and put them on trails board
2. Introduce leaders of the organization (president, officers) to trail project through that board member
3. Listen to them, i.e. find out what their interest is (education, gathering place, etc.)
4. Work with donor to develop the "common interest"
5. Use some as seed money
6. Some organizations have to give back to the community, such as the American Airlines Foundation.
7. Constantine Foundations added final \$100,000
8. Leverage donations to get government grant
9. Foster relationship afterwards
10. Develop additional partnerships to build more and better trails such as county, municipality
11. Compliment with private donations (sponsor bench, water fountain, incl. fountain for dogs)

Use private dollars for trail master plan, so that you do not have to adhere to stringent government standards and can work at a better speed to develop the 30 acre plan

Whether economy is good or bad, foundations are still required to give away same % of funds. In a bad economy, their funds may not be as high, but they still have to give it away.

Not all donors get a location for name recognition. In Dallas, only the sponsor that gives half of the cost of the project has naming rights for the project. Ask corporations/foundations, etc. to fund ½ of the project for Naming Rights.

"Your fundraising is only as good as your Prospects List with qualified donors". You only get 20-25% of prospects on Prospect List to sponsor your project.

Some cities may require 100% funds available before project starts. Get a community foundation to manage the funds.

Friends of the Trail are responsible for trail maintenance. Membership will help them do that. Capital improvement funds paid by big sponsors, and operations funded by membership and private donations.

Keys of successful membership:

1. Every board member to start writing a check. Foundations will ask about how much your board is participating. Board members will then ask their friends to contribute as well.
2. Membership acquisition and retention are key as well. You have to maintain good donor relations: newsletters, thank you letters, e-news (keeping them informed, how you spend their money)
3. Have Happy Hours 4 x years to thank donors: it makes them feel good. Spread the joy and have Thank You parties. Held at a local restaurant, which provides 2 free beers to donors, who then stay for dinner afterwards.
4. Thank you letters: 4 x years
5. Membership increases by 10% per year, some years even by 20%, and decreased non-renewals by 5%.
6. Reach membership by e-mail and ask them to put their best foot forward, and donate generously to raise additional funds (matching funds for lighting the trail, 50% of which was sponsored by a Security company).
7. Upper level members have a special function 2 x year at one of the funders' mansions.

Partner with Hospital to connect between hospital and trail and built a 750 ft ramp. Hospital contributed 150K towards the ramp.

Donors understand that the costs of a project may go up, and are receptive to you coming back.

Don't share membership info with anyone!! Katie Trail has 12,000 names in database. Monthly e-mail, but if the trail group has challenge grants, may send more frequently.

Help Raise Funds for Running Trail (5K) by communicating with runners (500 to start). Added a post raise party, invited local restaurants to set up a table and hand out free samples of their food. Started in 2002. In 2008, 50 restaurants participated, and netted 50,000\$. Maintenance of the Running Trail: portion of memberships will resurface rubberized trail surface.

Fundraiser salary: 40% is allocated to operations budget, 40% on capital grants budget, and 20% on actual capital project.

Funds raised for capital were put into an endowment fund, so that the \$500K will result in approx. \$700K in the endowment fund, and can be used for maintenance.

5K Run helps to get community involvement, regardless of their financial status. They all like a run. They will take ownership and be the foot soldiers on the trail.

\$1.36 is the actual cost of fundraising, and covers \$1 for the project, 12% engineering fees, 12% fundraising cost, 10% to endowment fund, etc.

Friends of Katie Trail builds the trail and amenities, but City of Dallas owns it, and Parks & Recs cuts grass and empties trash.

Most popular funding projects: trees and drinking fountains.

Trees fundraising program: \$200/tree – no naming

3 level water fountain (3rd level is for dogs), cost is only \$2500, but sponsorship available at \$15,000, and don't have enough spots to put fountains for sponsorships.

When to hire a professional fundraiser? Not a success story. You don't get to know the donors. You must have a plan, including a visual graphic of the project. Get the donor

engaged in the actual design (art program, physiotherapist of the hospital helped design the ramp).

Other funding models:

- OHV: sold a \$20 calendar which raised \$40-60K of profit. Calendar included a charitable gambling event: draw of all the people that buy the calendar. One draw a day. Some prizes are gifts, some certificates for stay, products, etc. Every calendar has a draw ticket to fill in and goes in the draw. Tell the buyers what the money is for, what they are supporting.
- 5K run party, charge for pancake breakfast, lunch or BBQ. Build in \$5 for pancakes as part of an event registration. Not everyone eats the food, but you have the \$5.
- Important to have a project budget, and then look for sources of funding. Find the best way to present the project, and how to make it visual.
- Credit card fundraising. You buy the cards up front. Sell them, but you get residuals afterwards. Does not cost the organization anything.

Other notes about fundraising in the USA and the future of trails

To date, \$ 4 billion USD has been spent on trails with funding from TEA and RTP (US government programs to build alternate transportation routes, such as trails). However, the funding programs need re-authorization, which the Rails to Trails Conservancy (RTC) is lobbying for. The new authorization is however focused on highways, trains, aviation, public transit, and less on trails, which is a concern. Therefore RTC is recommending to:

- move to mode neutral funding program
- consolidate the many different smaller programs
- set accountability standards and goals, making sure that the experience of using trails is also a measurable goal

The RTC is therefore campaigning to:

- Prove the value of trails around “infrastructure-right” communities (which study the impact of physical activity, health, quality of life, etc.)
- Prove the economic benefits of trails and networks for walking and biking.
- Form partnerships with various coalitions (bike, walk, etc.)
- Convince congress of the value of trail benefit and that constituents want these trail networks because of the human factor (constituents want the experience of “getting there” rather than just seeing the transportation value).

As part of the economic stimulus package, intended to stimulate the economy, the RTC is lobbying to include trail infrastructure building in addition to highway infrastructure projects.

Other suggestions:

Trails: calculate the cost per acre and you will find the cost is a lot less. Also trails don't require the fund “programming”, since users know what to do on trails. Also, trail use is much higher than other facilities, such as ball parks, stadiums, etc.

See also:

“Maximizing Trail Budgets through Competitive Bidding”

By Tone Boone, Principal, Arrowhead Trails Inc. and Quatro Hundley, Principal, Anasazi Trails Inc. See www.americantrails.org/resources/boonebidding.html

And plenty more Funding Ideas for Trails and Greenways, as posted on www.americantrails.org (updated November 2008)

TRAIL BUILDING

Building the trails users want

So you don't get the trails you don't want

“**Build a Trail they WANT to stay on, NOT have to stay on**”

By Cam Lockwood, Trails Unlimited & US Forest Service

What is the reason trail systems fail?

Lack of vision: rider expectation, education, terrain, etc.

Need to understand the user, their needs, understand the difference between want and need. Take the most time up front will save time in the long run.

Point system to rate their wants

1. Information (quality maps, signage, brochures, visitor centre, clubs, shops)
2. Resources (adequate trail opportunity, varied terrain & level of difficulty, quality riding experience)
3. Facilities (distance markers, etc.)
4. Involvement
5. Evaluation
6. ask Cam for presentation

Type of Enthusiast user

Walking, cycling (free riding, mountain biking, trail riding, recreational, family, downhill), hiking, horseback riding, Motorcycle (trails, long distance, enduro, motocross), fourwheel drive, atv, dune buggy (OSV), UTV (hunting, sightseeing, rock hounding, fishing), off road rollerblades, etc.

Trail user mix

- Recreational
- Competitive
- Commercial

All have different needs, wants, etc.

How is the trail route to be used?

Recreational: heavy, moderate, light

Competitive: races

Commercial: special use permits

Form a coalition

Spend the time to find the folks who understand what they are doing

Do a trail Planning Inventory

Not to understand what you have, but what they want

Know your enthusiasts,

Location location and relocation

Water control and drainage: climbing turns and rolling dips

Encourage compliance by design (super elevated turns)

Build trail they want to stay on, not ones that they have to stay on

- Appropriate challenge for level of differentiation.
- Develop a complete loop system first
- Super elevate turns (big turns on banks to slow traffic flow)

The 4E's

By Jack Terrell, National Off Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (OHVCC)

Principles of effective OHV recreation management

1. Engineering (what actually happens on the ground: if you design it right, they will stay on the trail)
1. Education
2. Enforcement (what happens in the wallet)
3. Evaluation (how are we doing)

The 4E's are interrelated and co-dependent. None of the 4's can stand on their own. We will have success only if we effectively apply the 4 principles simultaneously.

1. Engineering
 - a. What they want
 - b. Maintenance
2. Education
 - Quality mapping
 - Kiosks, route signs
 - Public contacts (trail patrol, ambassador group)
 - Interpretation
 - Printed materials (rules regulations, where the trails are)
 - Public service announcements
 - Curriculum
 - Websites

Education serves to

 - Set expectation before they arrive at site
 - Info visitor of rules and regulation
 - Improve compliance
 - Improve quality of experience
 - Reduce conflicts
3. Enforcement
 - Land manager has to have a presence where the users are
 - If we did a poor job engineering and education, we will have poor compliance, etc.
4. Evaluation
 - Are methods effective?
 - Are we getting compliance?
 - Satisfaction of the user?

Case Studies

By Forrest Boe, Minnesota Dept of Natural Resource

Currently doing a forest classification / route designation

Forest by forest of all trails, roads, access roads

GPS'd everything (14,000 miles)

- Access
- Ministry maintenance
- System forest road
- Closures
- Motorized trail
- OHV trail
- Non-designated

Details of study are on the Minnesota DNR website

3 Case studies to address the needs of the users

1. **Gitchi Gami State Trail** (Non-motorized): 14 mile corridor in an 84 mile trail in total on Lake Superior shoreline. Primary use is bicycling also used by hikers and skaters. Goes through 11 state parks. Paved, 10 ft wide in rural areas, and 12-14 ft in communities. Cost per mile: \$450,000 per mile incl. bridges, etc. See <http://ggta.org>

2. **Hay Creek Unit in Dorer Forest** (non-motorized)

- utilization of existing logging routes
- re-habilitate 5 miles of existing trail. Cost \$100,000 to make them more sustainable
- kept the canopy from opening up (good to keep the bugs away, provides shade, etc.
- parking lot too small and could not accommodate high use levels
- parking lot renovations: \$70,000 incl. vault toilets, designated parking, etc.

3. **Spider Lake area, Foothills State Forest** (motorized)

14.9 miles of ATV only, 11.4 miles of ATV, OHM and ORV

55% of users on OHV while hunting, median travel 100 miles

Survey results (2004) are posted on Minnesota DNR website

Erosion problems, needed to stabilize trails, etc.

Engineering solutions: Geo-links project: supports and dissipates loads on difficult soil situations and preserves soil integrity and allows water filtration (Cost: ¼ miles \$ 31,000)

4. **Tower hill project**

Before: Uncontrolled erosion, motorcycle hill climbing,

After:

- Closed, restored and re-vegetated user created trail
- Cut a new sustainable challenging trail into the hillside
- Maintained access to the hill top

Trail characteristics

- Now sustainable OHV
- Improved facilities
- Narrow challenging trails
- Great day trips

- One of the most used trail systems in the state
- Advisory group comprised of all user associations
- Printed info to educate users, manage their expectations
- Enforcement & monitoring: staff, trail ambassador program
- Give early warning of problem areas, etc.
- Monitors are being provided with PDA, which sits in a cradle mounted on ATV, in which they can type in any issues, wildlife issues, etc. – Use of PDA allows the Park Monitors to get away from the paperwork.

Forrest.boe@dnr.state.mn.us

www.mndnr.gov

651-259-5615

Also reference the Minnesota DNR's 2006 Trail Planning, Design, and Development Guidelines: shared use paved trails, natural surface trails, winter use trails, bikeways (see details below)

TRAIL SELLING SKILLS FOR TRAIL ADVOCATES

“Don’t Open your show on Broadway”

Ron Carter, Executive Director, The Greenways Foundation
rcarter@greenwaysfoundation.org

Goal: to help trail advocates better sell our trail and greenways and shorten the time to get a trail on the ground. Average trail now takes 8 years to complete.

Have a better feel for sales skills training.

- Selling skills can be taught.
- Each of us sells all the time
- Try on your sales skills with someone who is not your top target (to get the crinkles out of your pitch, etc.)
- Everyone has to sell to get the trail on the ground quicker and to lessen your concerns and hassles.
- No “Closers” (expert to close the sale) need apply: you can do it yourself because of the knowledge and passion we have of the project

Needs/Benefits Selling:

Understand the needs, and provide them what they want

Preparatory work

- List of prospects (council members, corporation, donors, municipal staff, developers, etc.)
- Ask yourself what their needs are (environmental benefits, economic benefits, etc.)
- Determine your prospect’s needs
- Match your project’s benefits to the needs of those you are selling to

Describe your project

- List the features and benefits
- Give serious thought to how your prospect is different from the competition
- White out questions to ask your prospect
- Just prior to the call, verbally set a goal you want to achieve

This will allow you to much better articulate what your project is all about.

Presenting is NOT selling – true elements of a sales call

- Five minute intro of yourself, project, and goal for the meeting
- Remaining time devoted to asking questions about your prospect's needs (Ask how much time your prospect has to discuss, if little ask for another time to go into more detail)
- Matching your benefits to the prospect's needs

The Most important part of your call: Ask Questions:

- Open ended: tell me how you felt (first time you went on a trail). Use the word "Oh?" to get them to give you more info so you can better match their needs with those of your project.
- Closed probe: prospect has to give a yes/no or quantitative answer

Only time you have to "sell" is if you get objections. A successful presentation is to get beyond the prospect's indifference. So, you want to get the objections out, so you can address them.

Kinds of objections

- Misunderstanding,
- Perceived drawbacks

You must be able to recognize the difference because you have to handle them differently.

Misunderstanding (such as "I don't want the crime behind my house if the trail is built").

- Restate the objection as a question
- Confirm the objection
- Provide the correct and true information
- Confirm that they now understand

Perceived Drawbacks

Example: there will be a lot more people behind my house

- Restate and acknowledge the objection
- Confirm the objection
- Overcome the objection with the other benefits your prospect has already agreed to as meeting his or her needs
- Confirm that you have provided enough benefits to overcome the objection.

Conclude the sales call

- Restate/get agreement to each of the benefits your prospect has already agreed to
- Ask them for agreement on the goal you set before you went into the meeting
- If they won't agree, ask them what else is of concern to them, and start the process again

After the call

- Review if you achieve the objective/goal.
- Ask yourself what is next step? Not all calls conclude in one setting.

Next step for your trails advocacy organization

- Review this material (this session of the conference)
- Choose a small team of your volunteers to train in selling skills
- Make sure to do your homework (features, benefits, and target audiences)

Remember that nothing ever gets decided in council chambers!!

- They will happen in one on one calls with mayors, council members, staff, etc.
- Make the pitch to individuals council members (i.e. 4 out of 7), before this gets on the council floor.

Determine who your “guinea pig” to test your skills to, and practice on them. (go to the person who is least likely to vote in your favour, get all the objections out of them right off the bat).

How to handle the “Dreaded public meetings” (brainstorming session)

- Try to have a trail supporter at the end of the line so you can counter the objective
- Sit before meeting with the moderator to make sure he is on side and understands the project, benefits, etc.
- Listen to objections and address later on.
- Remember that the trail users reflect those in the community, i.e. if there is crime on the streets, there may also be on the trail (but likely much less), and vice versa, if the trail is going through a safe neighbourhood.
- Have people in the audience (local experts), that can answer objections of a previous opponent with real world testimony or expert knowledge.
- Know your opposition
- Have your own champion, one who is good at conflict management

There are organizations that organize the “opposition”. They educate their members on how to organize. They have fact sheets about how to dominate a public process and derail it? (google this!)

How to deal with the press?

Even if you provide them with lots of information, they sometimes put their own spin on it, with the objective of being controversial, etc. Journalists are “urban terrorist”, i.e. capable of “dropping a bomb in the community and watching the arms and legs fly”.

- Provide them with a written release and continue to refer them to the written release. Do regular interviews. Ask them what is their angle on the story, so that you can address that.
- Give them a card to make sure they know how to contact you.
- Provide a headline to the journalist that speaks to what you want.

We are not selling to the choir, we are selling to those outside the church!!

TRAIL SURVEYS

Using Rapid Visitor Assessment Visitor Inventory (RAVI) to monitor changes in Trail Use

Ken Chilman, Southern Illinois University

Les Wadzinski, Hosier National Forest

Greg Oller, US Army Corps of Engineers

John Collins (American Trails board member): moderator

Changes are constant, and trail conditions change over time.

RAVI was developed as a trail survey:

- 4 day sample (Thursday-Sunday), one weekend in every season
- A short summary is written within one week.
- Tested in 14 places with 4 federal and 2 state agencies in 4 states
- Various situations: trails, visitor centres, various users

Examples:

- of horse trail in Hosier National Forest, Indiana in 2005 and 2007
- scenic trail at Table Rock Lake, Missouri

Development of RAVI

Method developed at University of Michigan for graduate research, and worked with areas managers to obtain visitor use information for management decisions (Ozark Scenic Riverways, Lake Tahoe Basin land area)

Participant Observation: requires participating in the field, and managers need place-specific use data

Methodology:

- Inventory existing conditions
- Determine management objectives
- Develop management prescriptions
- Implement

Components of RAVI

1. Identify Travel Pattern Concentrations (TPC's) within management subunit (travel destination points, trail intersections, etc)
2. Collect data
3. Do 7 hour work day counts and surveys (most concentrated hours of use)
4. Do short report, circulate for discussion

Case Study 1: Hosier Park equestrian trail - RAVI: figuring out trail use on the cheap

Decision conflict:

- Wildland areas are scarce in Indiana
- Invariably there will be management problems at some sites
- What's a manager to do?

Toothpaste theory

- Changed conditions in location X affects location Y
- Problems start to show up at specific places
- Change is constant

Managers soon figure something is wrong: complaints, resource impacts

Managers have to question carrying capacity
(some existing assessment methods are LAC, VERP, IRM, etc.)

RAVI (Rapid Assessment Visitor Inventory) however is easy and cheap, and focuses on social conditions!

- place specific data
- number of visitors/trail users
- their perception of conditions
- types of visitors/trail users

Components

1. Focus on areas of concentrated use (where it is worth to go for 4 days in a row)
2. Take four day sample: 2 weekend days, 2 weekday days, which represents 7.7% of weekends for a season, i.e. one in 13 weekends (ideally should do each season)
3. Collect data: counts, survey (very short one pager, filter out "nice to know", just pertinent questions)
4. Develop a short report available within days

Case study 2: Hickory Grove Church

Travel pattern concentration near church, conflict between trail users (equestrian) and church goers, manager wanted info on use type, numbers, origination, fee preferences, satisfaction

What was asked:

Visitor experience and present visit, how many times have you visited, how long did you stay, did you visit other similar areas, why did you choose this place, noticed any changes since your last visit, any likes or dislikes, have changes affected your use, did you encounter more or less people than expected, would you prefer more, less, same, were other trail users a problem, how much would you pay for an annual or daily trail tag, should there one annual that is cheaper, or a daily and annual, rate your satisfaction, do you have any other comments, asked for zip code or home town, group size

What did we find?

Mostly horseriders, fairly high use, people satisfied, like changes, not too crowded, most riders from a particular campground, people were unsure about fee, most riders are from Indiana

How did we use info?

- Determined it was appropriate to spend money to enhance site (put in toilet)
- Confirmed our trail maintenance techniques were working and acceptable to the users
- Determined if/when we set new fees there is no consensus regarding the amount
- Contrary to previous perceptions many users prefer the option to buy a daily tag
- Determined a significant number of users originate from private camp (may have future implications regarding cost recovery)
- Determined trail is not popular/desirable for hikers or mountain bikers
- Can do a follow up to monitor conditions or if data is questionable (surveyed again in 2007, which confirmed the data)

Pros and cons of RAVI

Pro:

- cheap, easy and fast
- easy to understand
- even judges can understand it

Cons:

- Scientifically defensible? (probably, because the 7% statistically correct measure)
- Number of users requires broad extrapolation

Case Study 3: Table Rock Lake (Missouri Department of Natural Resource)

US Army of Engineers, Little Rock District

60,000 acres of park land with 40,000 acres lake

2.2 mile trail, ADA accessible, older population, 10 ft wide paved trail with 1 ft shoulder

Constructed in 2001. Did RAVI survey (100 surveys over 4 days) in July 2001 at 3 access points (1 at visitor centre, 2 at adjacent properties)

Important to understand where to spend money: has to be where the user wants it!

Findings:

- High percentage of people really enjoy the trail and complimented the trail.
- They however wanted it to be longer.
- Survey data allowed the parks manager to get grant to increase trail length, not paved, for 11 additional miles and another 7 miles over 3 years.

INTERESTING REFERENCE MATERIALS (HTG has 1 copy each)

Trail Planning, Design and Development Guidelines:

Shared Use Paved Trails, Natural Surface Trails, Winter Use Trails and Bikeways

Published by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, Trails and Waterways Division, 500 Lafayette Road, St. Paul, MN 55155-4052. 306 full colour pages. 2006. Cost approx. \$29.95 USD

Building Mountain Bike Trails – Sustainable Singletrack (DVD 40 minutes)

USDA Forest Service, Missoula Technology and Development Centre, Missoula, MT
Available at no charge from the FHWA Recreational Program Website at

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/trailpub.htm

The DVD is a supplement to the International Mountain Bicycling Association's Guide, Trail Solutions – IMBA's Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack. This DVD will give an introduction to the basics of building mountain bike trails that can be enjoyed by cyclists, and other single track trail users (hikers, horse riders, motorcycles). It includes subjects like design mistakes, armoring, creating challenge, maintaining trails, and reclaiming trails.

Trail Training DVD Series (set of 2 DVD's – 4 hours)

- constructing trail switchbacks
- basic trail maintenance
- trails in wet areas: turnpike and puncheon construction
- surface water control
- techniques for trail maintenance
- handtools for trail work

Published by the USDA Forest Service, Missoula Technology and Development Centre, Missoula, MT. Available at no charge from the FHWA Recreational Program Website at

www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/trailpub.htm

The FHWA website also has new/revised publications on:

- Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds
- Field Evaluation of Electronic Fee-Collection Machines for Forest Service Recreation Sites (September 2000)
- Geosynthetics for Trails in Wet Areas: *2008 Edition*
- Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook (2007)
- Wetland Trail Design and Construction - 2007 Edition

And a lot more.

INTERESTING QUOTES

When I see a man on a bicycle, I no longer despair for mankind.

- Albert Einstein, genius, physicist, bicyclist

Trails restore our innerself!

Thriving by Nature (theme of American Rivers)

INTERESTING WEBSITES

Stop, Watch, Walk!

By Parks and Trails New York www.ptny.org

Complete the Streets

www.completestreets.org
www.apbp.org

Walk CT, the path to health and happiness

www.walkct.org

Safe routes to school Partnership Foundation

www.saferoutespartnership.org

The Blue Trails Guide: helping communities protect and restore rivers and landscapes through recreation by American Rivers

www.americanrivers.org
www.bluetrailsguide.org

Rivers, Trails and Conservation Program of the National Park Service, US Dept. of the Interior.

www.nps.gov/rtca

Trail counter data

www.ptny.org/pdfs/canalway_trail/user%20counts/2008.pdf

Road and Trail Intersection Safety

www.ptny.org/pdfs/canalway_trail/user%20counts/2008.pdf

Working with Railroads to build trails in New York State

www.ptny.org/pdfs/greenways/publications/getting_on_track.pdf

Hybrid Contracting: extending resources with trail contractors

By Roger Bell, American Trails Board member

www.americantrails.org/resources/volunteer/hybridBell.html

About effective use of professional contractors in conjunction with other trail project labour (volunteers, youth, staff, etc.)

Manuals and Guides for Trail Design, Construction, Maintenance and Operation and for Signs. www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/rectrails/manuals.htm

CONFERENCE ATTENDEES

Conference was attended by approx. 600 delegates, including 6 from Canada:

- 3 from Edmonton including Loren Winnick, Manager, Development Policy and Planning, Tourism Development Branch, Tourism, Parks and Recreation, Govt. of Alberta
- 3 from Ontario: Peter Dunbar and Gordon Russell from the Town of Collingwood, and Frieda Baldwin from Huronia Trails and Greenways

2010 TRAILS CONFERENCE

The National Trails Symposium is your best opportunity to network with the nationwide trails community and learn state of the art trail planning, development, and management techniques. The Symposium addresses both non-motorized and motorized issues and our vision for trails and greenways nationwide. Dozens of speakers and keynote presenters will join us from the trails community across America, November 14-17, 2010.

See www.americantrails.org/2010/index.html and start planning for it!!!



View of Chattanooga, Tennessee, on the Tennessee River