



The Pacific Crest Trail

A Successful Public-Private Partnership



1. The **U.S. Forest Service** has overall responsibility for the PCT.
2. Operational responsibility is shared with:

National Park Service
Bureau of Land Management
Several state and county parks.

3. The nonprofit **Pacific Crest Trail Association** is the major private partner of the federal government and California State Parks as codified in a Memorandum of Understanding with these agencies for the maintenance and management of the PCT.

4. The PCTA leverages limited federal dollars through the extensive use of volunteers and private donations to ensure the PCT is protected, preserved and promoted as an internationally significant resource for the enjoyment of trail users, and for the value that wild and scenic lands provide to all people.

The Pacific Crest Trail Association Contribution

Our private-public partnership continues to produce outstanding results in the spirit of citizen stewardship as sought by Congress in the 1968 National Trails System Act.

- **Volunteer hours are regularly a significant contribution.**
- **Six PCTA Regional Representatives cover all 2,650 miles of the PCT and provide volunteer support through local offices.**
- **Volunteers have access to trail project information, training, tools and supplies.**
- **PCTA continues to raise a significant amount of private funds.**

Hours and Funds Contributed

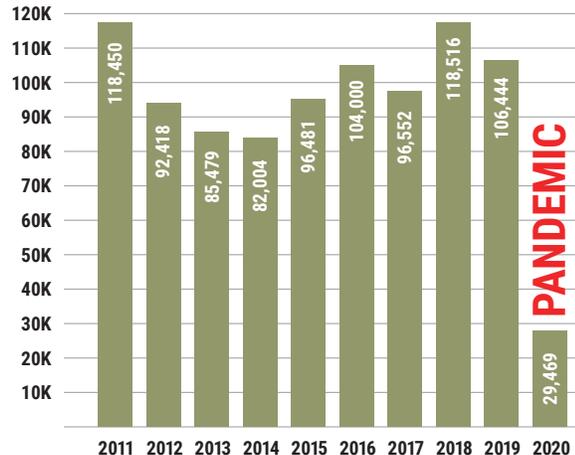
2020

Volunteer Hours: **29,469**
 Value of Volunteer Hours: **\$801,557**
 Private Dollars Raised: **\$2.7 million**
Total PCTA Contribution: \$3.5 million

10-Year Total

Volunteer hours **929,813**
 Value of Volunteer Hours: **\$22.1 million**
 Private Dollars Raised: **\$20 million**
Total PCTA Contribution: \$42.1 million

PCT Volunteer Hours





FY2022 Appropriations Request

The Pacific Crest Trail Association respectfully asks Congress to support the following FY2022 appropriations to protect, preserve and promote the Pacific Crest Trail:

I. Capital Improvement & Maintenance - Trails (CMTL) **\$2.5 million**

\$2.5 million—allocation for PCT in the USFS Region 5 CMTL account to fund the following ongoing programs:

- **Robust Forest Service trailwide management staff**
- **Forest/Project Planning and optimal trail location reviews**
- **Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the PCTA and other private partners to support volunteer trail maintenance and public education programs**
- **Trail maintenance, construction, reconstruction**
- **Trail information for trail users, including *Leave No Trace*, permit applications and other educational materials**
- **Trail management and operations**
- **Youth and Corps trail crew programs**

II. Trail Maintenance **\$500,000**

National Park Service (NPS) Budget Request: \$200,000

- Line item for PCT maintenance on NPS lands

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Budget Request: \$300,000

- Line item for PCT maintenance on BLM lands



The Pacific Crest Trail near Oregon's Mount Jefferson—miles of the trail here were damaged in 2020 by the Lionshead wildfire.





Capital Improvement & Maintenance - Trails (CMTL) USFS: \$2.5 million

CMTL Request:

Allocate \$2.5 million for the PCT in the USFS CMTL-PC line item to fund the following ongoing programs in USFS Regions 4, 5 and 6:

- **Robust Forest Service trailwide management staff, which includes a full-time Pacific Crest Trail Program Administrator working at multiple levels of the agencies**
- **Forest/Project Planning and optimal trail location reviews**
- **Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the PCTA and other private partners to support volunteer trail maintenance and public education programs**
- **Trail maintenance, construction, reconstruction**
- **Trail information for trail users, including Leave No Trace, permit applications and other educational materials**
- **Trail management and operations**
- **Youth and Corps trail crew programs**

NEED: Every year, the PCTA sees a rising threat to public access—insufficient funding to maintain and reconstruct trails for a variety of users. Easy access to public lands through safe and well-maintained trails drives a considerable recreation economy. The economic impacts of trails can be seen in small, rural communities surrounding our nation’s popular national forests and parks. And outdoor retailers do a booming business supplying enthusiasts for a variety of outdoor pursuits. This economic benefit is not unique to the PCT, and the PCTA urges an overall increase in the entire USFS CMTL budget, especially as it funds work on all the National Scenic and Historic Trails.

Funding Shortfall: On the PCT, federal funding in past fiscal years has been far below what’s needed to keep the trail safe and passable for the public or to respond to disasters such as landslides, washouts, and wildfires. This results in a maintenance backlog that grows each year and reduces access to public lands.

- **Public interest in the PCT is at an all-time high.**
- **Increased use brings more user impacts to the trail, which must be addressed through education and maintenance.**

In 2012, the U.S. Government Accounting Office suggested that enhanced training and collaboration with volunteer groups was a good way to reduce the maintenance backlog. Year after year, dedicated PCTA volunteers rebuild washed-out bridges, cut away fallen trees and restore eroded portions of the trail.

In 2020, PCTA volunteers and corps crews maintained 503 miles of the PCT and built or rebuilt 7 miles. (2019 miles were 1,605 maintained and 35 built or rebuilt; the difference is a direct result of the Covid-19 pandemic.)

With more robust and sustainable federal funding, we would be able to do much more. Hikers and horseback riders will tell you that the PCT is one of the finest wild and scenic trail experiences in existence. We don’t want to lose that.





Capital Improvement & Maintenance - Trails (CMTL) USFS: \$2.5 million - continued

Our volunteers cannot be successful without government support. Volunteers need tools, training classes, food and transportation so their efforts are most effective and will do the most good. We partner with the Forest Service to purchase materials for bridge repairs, plan work projects effectively and otherwise ensure that the PCT continues to be a world-class trail for the hundreds of thousands of users who expect to go out and enjoy it.

Each year, the PCTA raises significant private funding. Federal support of the PCTA triggers its ability to raise more private money to energize volunteers. We urge Congress to support this reasonable appropriation for the Forest Service to dedicate to PCT maintenance. Programs administered within this budget are programs that “give back” to youths, to rural communities and to the general public.

The youth corps and volunteers learn skills in forestry and trail maintenance and gain experience in cooperation and leadership. Jobs are created in rural areas, while visitors from all over the world spend their recreation and tourism dollars in communities along the trail. At the same time, the ongoing work of keeping the trail accessible is achieved. These programs represent what can be accomplished when people work across boundaries toward a common goal.

Trail Maintenance—NPS and BLM: \$500,000

PCT Maintenance Request:

- **\$200,000 to the National Park Service**
- **\$300,000 to the Bureau of Land Management**

NEED: This appropriation is necessary to meet the demand for federal agency direct work and coordination of volunteer crews that maintain and repair the PCT in five National Parks, one National Monument, and several BLM field offices on more than 600 miles of the PCT.

PROGRESS: Since 2008, PCTA has done work under a long-term Challenge Cost Share Agreement with the BLM, which provides funding for the support of volunteer work projects on BLM lands. PCTA volunteers and staff worked with BLM and local volunteers to perform needed maintenance and repairs in California and Oregon.

During 2019, 2,038 volunteers, in cooperation with federal agency and private partners, donated 106,444 hours of service to the PCTA.





Conserving Open Space and Recreational Access On the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail



The Pacific Crest Trail in Soledad Canyon, CA—looking toward the San Gabriel Mountains.

For most of the 2,650 miles of the PCT from Mexico to Canada, you can experience some of the most sublime outdoor scenery in the world. But in far too many spots along the way, this experience is being threatened by development, resource extraction, inappropriate barriers, and unsafe road walks.

Over fifty years after the 1968 Congressional designation of the PCT as one of the first National Scenic Trails, it is still not completely protected. **Approximately 10 percent of the trail remains on private land** with little in place to help protect the trail experience for future generations.

The PCTA's land acquisition program works with willing sellers to conserve land along the entire 2,650 miles of the trail to protect the trail experience, enhance recreational access to our public lands, protect habitat for sensitive species, and secure critical watersheds. While federal agencies take the lead role in acquiring lands to permanently protect the PCT, they also rely heavily on the valued assistance of private, nonprofit partners.

Our land acquisitions at Stevens Pass, Washington and Trinity Divide, Donomore Meadows and Landers Meadow in California are prime examples of this public private partnership in action. These acquisitions were accomplished through the combined work of the **Pacific Crest Trail Association, USDA Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, The Conservation Fund, and The Trust for Public Land.**



5 Years of PCT Land Protection Success

2015-2020

75 parcels acquired

22,700 acres protected

29.5 miles of the PCT were acquired and protected

\$22,797,000 in public funding invested (state and federal)

21 miles of the PCT was protected viewshed along an additional

\$7,500,000 estimated value of land donated by private landowners

\$8,524,500 in private funding invested

Also protected:

13 alpine lakes

1 future trailhead location

52 miles of streams

Habitat for **special status species** including (but not limited to):

- Northern spotted owl
- Quino checkerspot butterfly
- California pitcher plant
- Siskiyou fireweed
- Coho salmon



Mountain Bikes, E-Bikes and the Pacific Crest Trail



Mountain bikers and equestrians on a trail near the PCT in Southern California..

The PCTA opposes bikes in Wilderness

For the last 8 years, the PCTA has opposed efforts by some in Congress to amend the 1964 Wilderness Act to allow bikes in wilderness. The PCTA supports bikes having a fair place on public lands. But wilderness and the PCT are not the places for bikes.

Background: In 2012, a small group of mountain bike enthusiasts who originally wanted to ride on the Pacific Crest Trail sought to open all designated wilderness trails to mountain bikes under the guise of fair access to public lands. Since then, they've been successful in getting several bills introduced in both the House and Senate. These bills have gotten little traction, but the push continues.

Allowing bikes in wilderness areas would be a game changer sidestepping the country's most sacred and farsighted conservation law, the 1964 Wilderness Act. This watershed law was approved overwhelmingly by a bipartisan Congress that wanted to protect the very best American landscapes and ecosystems from the disruptive influences of mechanization and development.

The Pacific Crest Trail has been designated for hikers and horseback riders since its creation, and about half of its 2,650-mile is in wilderness. Today, the Wilderness Act ensures the longevity of places like the PCT that provide clean air and water, preserve biological diversity and offer citizens much needed refuge from noisy crowded cities.





Mountain Bikes, E-Bikes and the Pacific Crest Trail - *continued*

- The PCT runs through 48 Congressionally designated wilderness areas.
- Wilderness lands are a boon to the outdoor recreation economy and a driving force for many small rural towns along the PCT.
- Only 3 percent of federal land in the lower 48 states is set aside as wilderness.
- The U.S. Forest Service says that 98 percent of its trails not in wilderness are open to bicycles, which belies proponents claims that mountain bikers have no access.

Allowing bikes in Wilderness would undermine the nature and character of wilderness as it's so clearly and purposefully defined by Congress. The Wilderness Act states: "...there shall be no temporary road, no use of motor vehicles, motorized equipment or motorboats, no landing of aircraft, **no other form of mechanical transport...**" [Emphasis added.]

The PCTA supports e-bike use in appropriate places on public lands

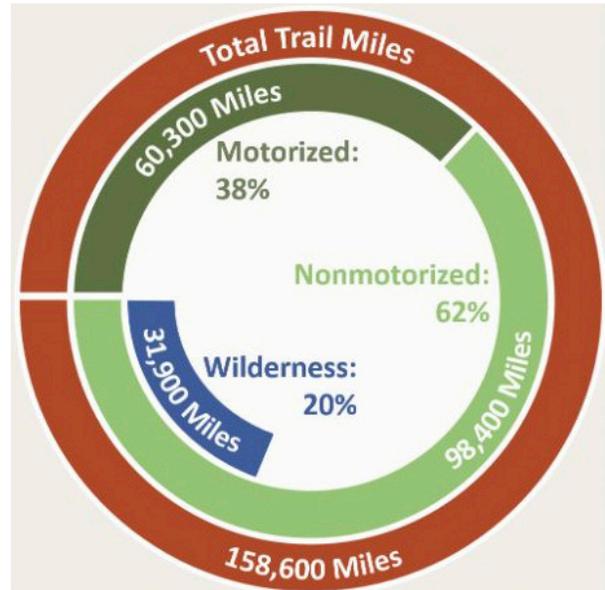
Electric Bikes, more commonly called e-bikes, are complicating the issue of bikes being used illegally on the PCT. The popularity of these machines is soaring. We believe e-bikes should have their place on public lands within the existing rules for travel management.

In August 2019, former Interior Secretary David Bernhardt signed **Secretarial order 3376** classifying e-bikes as non-motorized. **The PCTA has grave concerns about this classification.** Logic dictates that if it's got a motor, it's a motorized vehicle.

- The order was done **without public comment, environmental review** or consultation from outdoor/recreation groups other than bike manufacturers.
- With **illegal mountain bike use** already an issue on the PCT, electric bikes would allow **faster travel deeper** into areas where bikes are prohibited.
- **We need a thoughtful, national approach to e-bike use on public lands** through established travel management processes that allow for public comment and environmental analysis.

The PCTA believes that motorized recreation is an important use of public lands; however, the effects of designating motorized use on non-motorized trails must be analyzed through existing law and regulations to ensure that this use will not degrade the natural, cultural, recreational, and social values for which that land and other resources are managed.

National Forest Trail Miles





Mountain Bikes, E-Bikes and the Pacific Crest Trail - *continued*

Enforcement Needed

Land managers are not able to sufficiently enforce the prohibition of non-mechanized and motorized vehicles on the PCT, resulting in illegal bicycle and motorcycle trespass. In some areas, this problem is rampant and because of a lack of law enforcement, there is little consequence. This trespass:

- **negatively impacts the PCT experience**
- **creates user conflicts**
- **poses serious safety concerns.**

A mountain bike rider traveling downhill at high speeds can be a serious threat to hikers, and especially horseback riders.

An e-bike, like a mountain bike, is relatively quiet and can come up quickly on a hiker or horseback rider, surprise a horse and lead to an accident with potentially significant consequences. The potential hazard will increase as e-bikes travel at a high speed, not only downhill, but uphill by engaging the electric motor.

Final Points

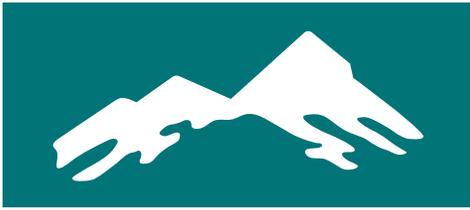
Illegal bike use is a problem in many areas along the trail. The PCT is not just another trail. Hiking and horseback riding on the PCT is an iconic experience offering quiet and peaceful journeys through some of the country's most remote and rugged landscapes.

In an age in which people are inundated with advancing technology, **the PCT and the primitive experience it provides are worth saving for future generations.** As hikers, horseback riders and mountain bikers, we all need to work together to protect America's wilderness and nonmotorized trail experiences for future generations.



Mountain bikers enjoy riding at high speeds when traveling downhill—sometimes too fast to avoid hikers and equestrians.





The Pacific Crest Trail Association

Protecting America's Greatest Wild and Scenic Trail Experience

Established by volunteers in **1977** recognized as the PCT's champion & steward.



Headquarters: Sacramento, CA
Staff: 27
Regional Offices: 6

Governed by a volunteer Board of Directors



13,800 members

Organizing **2,000** Volunteers

10% of the PCT is still on private property. PCTA works to protect it all.

Partners: U.S. Forest Service Bureau of Land Management

National Park Service California State Parks and other nonprofit groups.



From 2011 to 2020 The PCTA raised

\$20 million

while our volunteers gave more than

1 million service hours an in-kind value of

\$22.1 million

2020 Operating Budget Revenue

\$ 2,062,000	59%	Individual members and trail users
\$ 219,000	6%	Corporate & outdoor industry partnerships
\$ 422,000	12%	Foundations
\$ 818,000	23%	Federal agency partners
\$3,521,000	100%	TOTAL

You can help by becoming a PCTA member. Visit us at www.pcta.org or call us at 916-285-1846.



Pacific Crest Trail Association

The Pacific Crest Trail

A National Scenic Trail

Northern Terminus near: Manning Provincial Park, Canada



2,650 miles
from Mexico to Canada



passes through **9** North American ecoregions

25 million
people live within an hour's drive of the PCT
according to 2010 U.S. Census data



established as a National Scenic Trail in **1968**
by Congress through the National Trails System Act

↑ highest point
Forester Pass, CA
13,153'
↓ lowest point
Bridge of the Gods
Cascade Locks, OR
180'



administered by the U.S. Forest Service and the Pacific Crest Trail Association with **14,300 members** and organizing **2,038 volunteers** who contributed **106,444 hours** maintaining the trail in 2019.

passes through
48 wilderness areas
25 national forests
6 national parks



7 BLM units
5 state parks
5 national monuments

climbs **60** major mountain passes, most in the Sierra Nevada and Cascade ranges.

The PCT and the 211-mile John Muir Trail are the **same trail** for 170 miles in the Sierra Nevada Range.

Southern Terminus near: Campo, California

To learn more, visit www.pcta.org



Partnership for the National Trails System

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Phone: (202) 963-2910 | Web: www.pnts.org

Contributions Sustaining the National Scenic and Historic Trails Made by Partner Trail Organizations

Year	Volunteer Hours	Estimated Value of Volunteer Labor	Financial Contributions	Total \$ Value
1995	369,941	\$4,262,093	\$2,754,934	\$7,017,027
1996	473,066	\$4,467,794	\$4,071,409	\$8,539,203
1997	439,299	\$5,686,028	\$4,243,943	\$9,929,971
1998	498,702	\$6,909,157	\$4,403,802	\$11,312,959
1999	553,905	\$7,422,326	\$5,780,340	\$13,202,666
2000	593,392	\$8,799,993	\$6,638,313	\$15,438,306
2001	621,615	\$9,566,652	\$6,652,079	\$16,218,731
2002	662,429	\$10,631,985	\$6,850,214	\$17,482,199
2003	648,548	\$10,726,994	\$6,997,803	\$17,724,797
2004	668,996	\$11,801,091	\$6,449,719	\$18,250,810
2005	723,191	\$13,046,366	\$7,275,556	\$20,321,922
2006	687,904	\$12,409,472	\$7,934,074	\$20,343,546
2007	720,935	\$13,540,396	\$8,064,293	\$21,604,689
2008	771,993	\$15,631,643	\$9,108,338	\$24,739,981
2009	907,380	\$18,601,296	\$8,823,248	\$27,424,544
2010	1,115,559	\$24,366,484	\$12,486,240	\$36,852,724
2011	1,141,866	\$24,390,258	\$8,714,610	\$33,104,868
2012	1,185,375	\$26,244,202	\$7,509,777	\$33,753,979
2013	1,144,407	\$25,337,171	\$10,685,751	\$36,022,922
2014	1,053,896	\$23,765,355	\$10,836,694	\$34,602,049
2015	1,073,026	\$24,754,710	\$12,396,728	\$37,151,438
2016	1,029,569	\$24,256,645	\$13,184,886	\$37,441,531
2017	1,046,194	\$25,796,531	\$14,485,936	\$40,282,467
2018	978,034	\$24,871,405	\$14,489,472	\$39,360,877
2019	997,162	\$27,122,806	\$15,934,798	\$43,057,604
2020	942,886	\$25,646,499	\$23,146,874	\$48,793,373
Total	21,049,270	\$430,055,352	224,445,743	\$669,975,183

The 1995 and 1996 totals represent contributions from 20 organizations for 20 national scenic and historic trails while the 1997 - 2001 totals represent the contributions of 22 organizations for those trails and the 2002 - 2005 totals represent the contributions of 24 organizations for 21 national scenic and historic trails. 2006 and 2007 totals are the contributions of 23 organizations for 20 national scenic and historic trails. The 2009 and 2010 totals include the contributions for four new national scenic and historic trails authorized by Congress in 2009.

*Dollar values not adjusted for inflation.





CONTRIBUTIONS MADE IN 2020

TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM BY
NATIONAL SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS



Trail Organization(s)	Active Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Private Contributions
Ala Kahakai Trail Association and E Mau Nā Ala Hele	-	194	\$5,276.80	\$1,505
Anza Trail Foundation and partners	109	12,337	\$335,566.40	\$11,175
Appalachian Trail Conservancy	3,562	135,746	\$3,692,291.20	\$15,741,399
Arizona Trail Association	655	14,909	\$405,524.80	\$679,198
Chesapeake Conservancy and partners	-	-	-	\$173,271
Connecticut Forest & Park Association and Appalachian Mountain Club	636	6,733	\$183,137.60	\$22,100
Continental Divide Trail Coalition and partners	?	30,228	\$ 822,201.60	\$ 751,879
El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association	66	10,079	\$274,148.80	\$78,750
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association	10	300	\$8,160	\$500
Florida Trail Association	524	16,119	\$438,436.80	\$222,034
Ice Age Trail Alliance	1499	53297	\$1,449,678.40	\$1,396,863
Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance	220	2800	\$76,160	\$8,470
Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc., and partners	848	63,292	\$1,721,542.40	\$95,000
Mormon Trails Association and partners	-	-	-	\$25
Natchez Trace Parkway Association	25	3,440	\$93,568	\$21,000
National Pony Express Association	589	15,132	\$411,590.40	\$5,695
National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route NHT Association, Inc. (W3R-US)	87	8,331	\$226,603.20	\$69,832
Nez Perce Trail Foundation	6	450	\$12,240	\$600
North Country Trail Association	988	91,086	\$2,477,539.20	\$800,217
Old Spanish Trail Association	1,255	27,610	\$750,992.00	\$8,000
Oregon-California Trails Association	200	337,509	\$9,180,244.80	\$228,850
Overmountain Victory Trail Association	400	21,064	\$572,940.80	\$14,504
Pacific Crest Trail Association	832	29,469	\$801,556.80	\$2,675,574
Pacific Northwest Trail Association	190	3,614	\$98,300.80	\$54,310
Potomac Heritage Trail Association	10	600	\$16,320	\$3,300
Santa Fe Trail Association	978	44,107	\$1,199,710.40	\$68,358
Trail of Tears Association	127	14,440	\$392,768	\$14,465
Totals	13,816	942,886	\$25,646,499.20	\$23,146,874

Notes: Value of volunteer time calculated using the national 2019 value of volunteer time (\$27.20/hour) by the Independent Sector. Some, but not all, trail organizations include Federal reimbursement rates for miles driven for volunteer work as part of their private contributions. Volunteer Stewardship activities include, but are not limited to: trail building and maintenance, outreach event development, youth engagement, public education, development of interpretive materials and sites, removal of invasive species, habitat restoration, land protection, historic research, reenactments, archaeological studies, and community partnership development.



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2021 Trail Priorities

Trail Funding (FY 22 Top Priorities)

- Dedicated and robust funding in FY22 for all trails, including the National Trails System, across Interior and Related Agencies (Forest Service, NPS, BLM, & FWS)
- Restore agency staffing levels at public land management agencies to ensure maintenance and management of our nation's trail systems.

Transit to Trails Act (Transportation)

- Support and Co-sponsor the Transit to Trails Act
- Include the Transit to Trails Act in any Infrastructure Package

National Scenic Trails within the National Park Service

- Support and Co-sponsor the National Scenic Trails Parity Act

Support Outdoor Equity and Access Legislation

- Support and Co-sponsor the Outdoors for All Act
- Provide \$500M Park Stimulus Funding for Outdoor Recreation Legacy Partnership (ORLP) Program

Recreational Trails Program Legislation (Transportation)

- Co-sponsor the Recreational Trails Full Funding Act (House)
- Reauthorize and fund the Recreational Trails Program in any Infrastructure Package or Surface Transportation Reauthorization Legislation

Who We Are

American Hiking Society is the only national, recreation-based nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering millions of hikers to enjoy, share, and preserve the hiking experience.

The **Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS)** comprised of 34 member and 8 affiliate organizations works to further the protection, completion, and stewardship of the 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails within the National Trails System.



For more information on trails and other contact Tyler Ray, Director of Policy and Advocacy, tray@americanhiking.org or Valerie Rupp, Executive Director, Partnership for the National Trails System, valerie@pnts.org

