**5/10/2021 News Release**

**National Forest System Trail Stewardship Partner Funding**

**2021 Projects Selected**

The National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service is pleased to announce 48 funded projects. Over 2,700 miles of National Forest System trails will be maintained this year through the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Partner Funding Program. These trail projects are more important this year than ever before. Land management agencies like the Forest Service are welcoming unprecedented numbers of visitors to recreate on National Forest System trails and more communities nationwide are discovering the emotional, physical, and economic benefits of outdoor recreation. The projects also offer opportunities for volunteers and organizations to participate in trail stewardship in many different ways.

Projects for the 2021 field season were selected thru a collaborative process by the National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, American Trails, American Hiking Society, Back Country Horsemen of America, International Mountain Bicycling Association, American Motorcyclists Association, and the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council.

For the past 5 years, the Trail Stewardship Partner Funding Program has helped the Forest Service carry out the [National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act (PL 114-245)](https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/house-bill/845)of 2016 and the [National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System](https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/national-strategy). The program has provided grant funding to trail stewardship organizations to achieve more sustainable National Forest System trails and trail systems that are socially relevant, economically viable, and that support ecological resiliency.

Highlights of the program include over $2,156,000 million in matching cash contributions and over $3,870,000 million in in-kind volunteer labor and equipment contributions. The past 117 funded projects have facilitated over 12,200 volunteers and staff maintaining over 4,650 miles of trail. That’s a 6:1 return on the investment of public funds. Tens of thousands of trees have also been cleared, hundreds of signs have been replaced, and thousands of drainage features have been cleaned and repaired through these volunteer and partner efforts.

This year, even bigger results are anticipated. The $547,000 funding the 48 projects will generate an estimated 2,709 miles of trail maintained by over 6,700 volunteers and staff; contributing $1,144,779 in cash and $2,521,086 in-kind contributions. That’s nearly a 7:1 expected return on investment of public funds.

**Trail Stewardship Partner Funding**

**2021 Key Facts**

* Return on investment from cash and in-kind contributions 7:1
* 48 projects funded, totaling $547,689
* 92 proposals received, totaling over $1,000,000
* Projects selected in 8 of 10 Forest Service
* Four projects spanned multiple regions

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Region | Proposed | Selected | Region | Proposed | Selected | Region | Proposed | Selected |
| Region 1 | 5 | 3 | Region 2 | 17 | 11 | Region 3 | 15 | 9 |
| Region 4 | 16 | 7 | Region 5 | 20 | 8 | Region 6 | 6 | 4 |
| Region 8 | 11 | 7 | Region 9 | 7 | 3 | Region 10 | 1 | 0 |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Details | Projects Proposed | ProjectsSelected | % of Total Proposed in Selected Projects |
| $ Match (dollars) | **$1,512,382** | **$1,144,779** | **76%** |
| In-Kind Match (dollars) | **$3,067,285** | **$2,521,086** | **82%** |
| # of Volunteers | 7,441 | 6,504 | **87%** |
| # of Volunteer Hrs. | 105,211 | 89,135 | **85%** |
| # of Staff/Crew | 383 | 203 | **53%** |
| # of Staff/Crew Hrs. | 56,006 | 39,139 | **70%** |
| Miles of Trail Maintained | 3,126 | 2,709 | **87%** |

Randy Welsh, Executive Director of NWSA said, “We were able to fund more than half of the projects which contained over 80% of the potential accomplishments from all the projects submitted. We look forward to a lot of wonderful volunteer engagement and trail maintenance work to be completed this summer and fall.”

Brenda Yankoviak, USDA Forest Service National Trail Program Manager adds that, “Investing in the Trail Stewardship Partner Funding program has proved to be an excellent way to meet the goals of the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act and the National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System—to increase the collective capacity to maintain trails and increase the number of sustainable trails.”

Proposed Timeline: **Work to be Completed between May and December 2021**

Additional information on the Trail Partner Funding is found at [www.wildernessalliance.org/funding\_programs](http://www.wildernessalliance.org/funding_programs)

**Organizations Receiving NFS Trail Partner Funding in 2021**

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| --- | --- |
| American Endurance Ride | Nevada County Woods Riders |
| Arizona WildArnold Rim Trail | New Mexico Volunteers for the Outdoors |
| Ascend Wilderness Experience | Northeast Tennessee Economic Development |
| BCHA – Gila Chapter | Overland Mountain Bike |
| BCHA - San Joaquin-Sierra Chapter | Potomac Appalachian Trail Club |
| BCHA - Virginia Highlands Chapter | Roaring Fork Outdoors Volunteers |
| Bob Marshall Wilderness Foundation | Routt County Riders |
| Camp Grier | Santa Fe Fat Tire Society |
| Colorado Fourteeners | Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation |
| Continental Divide Trail Coalition | Silver Threaders Club |
| Cottonwood Canyons Foundation | Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists |
| Durango Trails | Source One Serenity |
| Enchanted Circle Trails | Toulomne River Trust |
| Friends of Panthertown | Tucson Off-Road Cyclists |
| Friends of Pathways | Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado |
| Green Mountain Club | Wallowa Mountain Hells Canyon |
| Headwaters Trail Alliance | Washington Trail Association |
| Idaho Trails Association | White Mountain Trail Collective |
| LaVeta Trails | Wild Alabama |
| Love in Motion, Puerto Rico | Wildlands Restoration |
| Mammoth Lake Recreation | Wounded Soldiers and Families |
| Mountain Bike the Tetons | Yavapai Trails |
| National Forest Foundation - Gunnison CO | Yosemite South Gate Trails |
| National Forest Foundation - Sawtooth |  |

Questions can be addressed to Randy Welsh, Executive Director, National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance, at randy@wildernessalliance.org or at 801-808-2167.