



Turtle Tracks

Official Newsletter of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association



Volume 14, Issue 3

President's Message

Hi Everyone:

With fall upon us, it is time to reflect over this past year. Without a USDA Forest Service Trail crew, unfortunately the trail had another year of deterioration. However thanks to great volunteers, the majority of trail did get mowed, and small sections did have some repair work completed. In addition, through USDA Forest Service contacts, three low water crossings were installed: at Knutson Creek on Buffalo Gap Trail, Whitetail Creek on the Maah Daah Hey, and Wannagan Creek on the Maah Daah Hey. There is still an additional issue, markers that indicate exactly where to cross are difficult to keep in place. As these are solid, under water crossings you must know exactly where to cross. Hopefully a new design will be in place for next year. These crossings work very well and make traveling the trail a safer and much cleaner experience.

Another contract was completed involving constructing nearly four miles of trail on the Deuce to the new trail specifications. Another three plus miles will be constructed early in 2015. Although the Knutson Creek crossing project in the National Park did not happen (see the article in this newsletter) we are confident that will also happen this next year. Once completed that will solve one of our

most difficult and dangerous crossings.

Also in this newsletter you will read in detail about this organization placing six water cache boxes along the trail where water is most needed. The completion of this project makes the trail safer for all users, but especially hikers, who have difficulty carrying enough water.

Your board has done a good job of seeking out and applying for gifts and grants where ever possible. While I was down and out, due to unexpected quadruple bypass surgery, the rest of the board stepped up and handled everything with great passion and professionalism. I thank them all for going above and beyond to help me out during a tough time.

All of this starts with you, our members. Thank you all for your support. Please continue to support this trail system and suggest memberships to your friends.

Thank you, recovering nicely,

Don Mayer President

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Special points of interest:

- *Maah Daah Hey means "Grandfather."*
- *Kelly Magelky holds record for MDH 100 at 8 hours 56 minutes*
- *La Ray Ries, 86 years young, hiked entire 145-mile MDHT*

Grand Opening of the “THE DEUCE” - June 7, 2014

By Curtis W. Glasoe, Retired

After more than a decade since the idea of the extension to the Maah Daah Hey Trail was brought forth by the Slope County Commissioners at the annual spring meeting with the Forest Service. The Commissioners asked District Ranger Scot Fitzwilliams and I, where was their MDH?? So the idea was formulated to bring the trail from Sully Creek Campground to the Slope County Fairgrounds at Amidon. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process was started in 2002 and completed in 2007 after many changes and alternatives were considered by any and all people both in service and from the outside. The document is over 100 pages long and final location was determined by the new District Ranger to end at Burning Coal Vein Campground for this effort. Within four years of the NEPA completion, some 48 miles of trail were constructed along with 5 trail bridges and numerous creek crossings with smaller bridges. Some 38 self-closing gates were also constructed along the new route. Many miles are also surfaced to date with that effort continuing as we speak, mostly with Recreation Trails Program (RTP) funding through the ND State Park and Recreation Department.

The name for the extension came from District Ranger Scot Fitzwilliams, mainly because we had to distinguish between the old and the new segments. With both legs of the trail being very long and different histories it was important to separate the names to know which one a person is talking about and keep track of the information for each segment.

So over 75 people showed up on this clear sunny day in June to dedicate and officially open the first segment of the DEUCE on Saturday, June 7, 2014. Many dignitaries spoke, with Grasslands Supervisor Dennis Neitzke being the Master of Ceremonies. The most interesting speaker, was Gerard Baker, the person who named the trail, the Maah Daah Hey, he went into great detail on how much time he spent trying to figure out the proper name for this trail, because he knew it

would become a very big deal for western North Dakota, the Forest Service and Park Service. This special trail in this special place in North Dakota would have to have an appropriate name for such an endeavor. I pressured him many times with great ideas like North South- Teddy Roosevelt- Lewis Clark- and Uff Dah trail, but Gerard was not swayed in his duty, and after much thought, he selected the name (Maah Daah Hey) for the trail. He knew that “Grandfather” or “has been and will be around for a long time” was a



Gerard Baker and Curtis W. Glasoe
Photo courtesy of Patricia Ashley

very appropriate name for this trail. Gerard also gave a little history on the Mandan and Hidatsa languages and proper pronunciation of the name. I gave the history of the trail and the events that brought the first segment and this extension to be placed on the ground. The original MDH grand opening was held on two weekends back in 1999 at Sully Creek and at CCC campgrounds.

The MDHTA association served a lunch catered by Terry Federer. It was a big success, no one went home hungry for sure.

The completion of the Deuce is still in question, District Ranger Ron Jablonski stated at a public meeting, put on by the Roosevelt Custer Regional Development

Council, in Amidon back in 2006, that as soon as the trail construction to Burning Coal Vein got complete he hoped the NEPA would be done for the rest of the Deuce. The local people were excited to hear that schedule. The FS got the location GPSed on the ground, along with botany and wildlife, and archeology studies completed, but ran out of commitment due to changing issues on the Little Missouri Grasslands. The oil and gas boom did not help the situation.

Here’s hoping the Forest Service and local entities can get the rest of the Deuce on the ground in the near future.

Knutson Creek Subsurface Puncheon Update

By Grant Geis, District Ranger, South Unit, Theodore Roosevelt National Park

This spring in Medora started off wet with an abundance of water and some staffing changes. The project was dry assembled in July by park volunteer Ed Wright.



Dry assembled project

By the first of August things had evened out and we proceeded with the project in earnest. With the support of a crew from the Minnesota Conservation Corps (MCC), Back Country Ranger Dru Johnson had most of the supplies and materials transported out to the work site by August 5th.

On August 6th through the 8th great strides were taken with earth being moved and the project was near ready to be assembled on site.



MCC Aug 5th 2014

Mid-August brought record amounts of rain and flash flooding to the area, with nearly 7.5 inches in one day, just west of Medora. Due to the rains and flooding the site was not visited again until August 21st. All that remained after the rains was, one 4"x6"x20' stringer, one pile of nails and screws, a set of waders, and a



Knutson Creek work site August 6th

shovel. Shortly after the rains Back Country Ranger Johnson accepted a position with the Bureau of Land Management and the project was put on hold until the spring of 2015.

Photos courtesy of Grant Geis

Gifts for the Holidays

Looking for gift ideas for the Holidays? MDHTA sells merchandise suitable for any age and size of trail users. This is the only stop for your official MDHT merchandise. Contact us at info@mdhta.com for more information and to order.

Cap - \$15

T-Shirt - \$15

Long Sleeve T-Shirt \$17

MDHT Map - \$15

MDHT Book - \$15

Fanny Pack - \$20



Water Bottle - \$10

Bug Cap - \$30

Vest - \$30

Fleece Blanket - \$20

Back Scratcher - \$15

Pullover Fleece - \$25

Zippered Fleece - \$35

Boonie (Bucket) Hat - \$20

Scarf, Neck, Earwarmer Fleece - \$15

Bandana - \$8

Badlands 50/50

By Mel Bullinger

“Beautiful!” “Breathtaking!” “Gorgeous!” These were among the many exclamations I heard voiced by fellow participants during the inaugural Badlands 50/50 which was held on Saturday, August 9, 2014 on the Maah Daah Hey Trail (MDHT). Promoted by Eagle Endurance, L.L.C. of Goose Creek, South Carolina, CEO and Race Director Chad Haffa, Medical Director Crystal Reynolds, and Course Manager David Allen put together a memorable event on inarguably the most scenic racing venue this state has to offer.

The first official ultra-marathon held on the MDHT began at the Wannagan Campground. From there the race course headed north along the MDHT from Wannagan to County Road 725 (a distance of approximately 8 miles) and then reversed course and

backtracked south along the MDHT back to the Wannagan Campground. The 50K racers were required to complete the out and back 16 miles twice, while the 50 mile racers were to complete it three times, with an additional 2 mile jaunt tossed in to equate to a distance of 50 miles. Following the 6:30 AM runner check-in and short pre-race instructions from

Chad and his crew, the twenty-one racers, assembled from seven states and Canada, eagerly embarked on their ambitious treks on the MDHT.

While the sun had made a few feeble attempts to break through the clouds during the pre-race period, the clouds asserted and maintained their tight control for the bulk of the morning and race conditions were ideal. The morning miles seemed to glide blissfully by with the typical MDHT spellbinding vistas located all along the trail, punctuated with friendly exchanges between the participants as we eventually crossed paths on the out and back course. Well stocked aid stations with water, fruit, and salty/sweet snacks awaited the runners at the two mandatory checkpoints (Forest Service Road 728 and County Road 725) located along the route, as well as at the Wannagan Campground checkpoint.

The North Dakota Badlands are continually changing and the experienced MDHT hiker knows that he never hikes exactly the same trail twice. While ideal race conditions prevailed in the morning, by noon the sun

scattered the clouds and conditions on the race course changed noticeably. With temperatures holding in the mid-80's and humidity readings hovering near that level as well, the event quickly transformed into a “tale of two races” for those of us remaining on the course during the afternoon. After expending three additional hours of effort in those trying conditions, I eventually succumbed to the combination of heat and humidity. Approaching a mild state of dehydration, exhausted and spent, I voluntarily withdrew from the race at mile 24 after 8 hours and 25 minutes. (In contrast, the 20 year old Bismarck speedster who claimed first place in the 50K completed his entire race in 4 hours and 44 minutes, more than two hours ahead of the next finisher, and before I had even

reached the midpoint of the race.)

Fourteen of the seventeen 50K participants succeeded at conquering the course and three runners completed the even more daunting 50 mile task under the taxing conditions. Humbled by my own experience, I applaud my fellow race participants for

their fortitude and perseverance. Unquestionably they earned the bragging rights for having completed the initial Badlands 50/50. No doubt every single race participant came away changed by their efforts on the Maah Daah Hey Trail that day. I congratulate Chad and his crew for presenting the opportunity to experience the Maah Daah Hey Trail in a novel way.

I've since had a subsequent discussion with Chad Haffa regarding next year's race. Next year the Badlands 50/50 will be held on August 8, 2015. He is planning the addition of 6.6 mile, half-marathon, and 16 mile races to the signature 50K/50 mile events for 2015. That should provide ample opportunity for runners and walkers of all experience levels to test their skills on the MDHT. Please consider participating in the race next year so that this annual event which showcases our beautiful North Dakota MDHT scenery can continue to be enjoyed by all who wish to challenge the Maah Daah Hey. I will see you out there!



Photo courtesy of Mel Bullinger

Maah Daah Hey 100

By Nick Ybarra

After all the effort that went into preparing the Maah Daah Hey trail for the 2013 Maah Daah Hey 100 mountain bike race I said I would never do that again... Well, some things are just worth "fighting" for! This year the trail was just as overgrown as last year, if not worse.



Once again passionate trail users united together to reclaim the trail. In three weeks we took it from unenjoyable, unrideable, and in some places literally unfindable



Water Cache Boxes Finally!

By Roger Ashley

Thanks to the generosity of Roughrider Electric Round-up Fund, Dickinson Ready Mix, Western Sand and Gravel and MDHTA members support, six water cache boxes have been installed along the MDH Trail. These steel boxes will provide a place for water and food storage for through hikers, bikers, and horseback riders.

MDHTA members assisting with the installation of the boxes were Bruce, Nute & Gus Bishop, Tonya Eckroth,

to "race ready." And I'm glad we did! On August 2, 2014 the MDH trail was in the best mountain biking condition I've ever seen it in. Weather was great, not



too dry, not too wet, cool in the morning and hot, but not too hot in the afternoon. We had a total of just over 170 people participate in the event this year. There were no major injuries and we had our highest percentage of finishers yet. All in all it was almost perfect in every way. For me as the race coordinator one of the best parts of the day was watching Kelly Magelky set the new course record at under 9 hours! His thoughts from the day, told as only Kelly tell it can be found on his blog:

<http://kellymagelky.blogspot.com/2014/08/theyre-called-badlands-for-reason.html?m=1>

Photos printed in Turtle Tracks with permission from Chad Ziemendorf.

Roger & Pat Ashley, Randy Snyder, Rod Mitzel, Curt Glasoe, and Don Mayer.

These boxes are animal proof so if properly closed they should keep mice, porcupines, raccoons, coyotes and other animals away from any water or food trail users might place in the boxes for safe keeping. Please do not use these boxes as trash bins or for storing fuel. Trail

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users planning to use these boxes should stock their own water and supplies before they hike the trail or make arrangements with a trail support team or vendor for this service. Water and supplies should be marked with

Locations of the boxes are:

Location Name	GPS Coordinates	
3 rd Creek	46.62999, 103.36639	From parking area go east (south bound) along the MDH trail about 70 feet.
Tom's Wash	46.66651, 103.47745	From parking area go northwest along MDH trail about 300 feet.
Bear Creek	46.72897, 103.52134	From trail head sign go northwest along connector trail to intersection with MDHT about 1,000 feet.
Plumely Draw	46.81587, 103.5090	From parking area go southeast on MDHT about 500 feet.
Elkhorn -Wannagen	47.15638,103.64976	This box is not located near a trail head but is located north of Forest Service Road 722 about 200 feet. From the intersection of FS Road 725 and 722 travel west about 2.2 miles or from intersection of Belle Lake Road (FS 708) and FS 722 travel east 2.4 miles.
Beicegel Creek Road	47.41445,103.3712	From Grassy Butte on Hwy 85 travel north ½ mile to Beicegel Road then west 6.1 miles to Beicegel Creek Road then south ¼ mile. Box is located approximately 100 feet west of road along MDHT.

a name, mobile phone number and approximate date when the item will be picked up.

Roughrider Electric Roundup Fund has provided money for two additional boxes. Look for these boxes next spring.



Photos courtesy of Patricia Ashley

U.S. Forest Service MDH Trail Updates

Solar panels to generate electricity to operate the water pump at Coal Creek Campground have been installed. The USFS contracted with Pump Systems for the design, materials, and installation of this system. Water from this well will be available in the spring of 2015. Water at the Buffalo Gap Campground will also be available next spring.

Gravel has been stockpiled along the MDHT between the intersection of Bear Creek connector trail with MDHT and Danz Creek for surfacing. These three plus miles may be

completed this fall weather permitting. Then next year will continue south from the end of that for another three to four miles.

Recreation Trails Program funds were approved for the Maah Daah Hey for 2014 and will be used for four miles of surfacing from Tom's Wash east of the trailhead. Slump repair was done on the trail east of Plumely Draw Trailhead, Cottonwood Trail and the MDHT near Ed Storms place along Beicegal Creek.



The silted in self-closing gate and fence west of Magpie Campground was relocated this fall.

Membership Application

Yes! I want to join the
Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

- \$25 Individual/Family Member
- \$70 Individual/Family Member for 3 years
- \$75 Founding Member Cap or T-shirt S M L XL
- \$200 Trail Boss Member - S M L XL
- \$500 Mile Marker Member
- \$750 Gatekeeper Member
- \$1000 Life Member

*Make checks payable to:
MDHTA, P. O., Box 156, Bismarck, ND 58502*

PLEASE PRINT

Date: _____ Email: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Membership and Renewal Options

Please check your mailing label for your membership level (I/F, F, T, M, G, Life) and expiration date. If your membership has expired or about to expire please complete the membership form and return it along with your check to MDHTA.

- ◆ \$25 Individual/Family Member ANNUAL
- ◆ \$70 Individual/Family Member 3 YRS
- ◆ \$75 Founding Membership ANNUAL
(choose a cap or T shirt, s,m,l,xl)
- ◆ \$200 Trail Boss Membership ANNUAL
(denim shirt, s,m,l,xl with MDHTA Trail Boss imprint)
- ◆ \$500 Mile Marker Membership ANNUAL
(Plaque)
- ◆ \$750 Gatekeeper Membership ANNUAL
(Plaque)
- ◆ \$ 1000 Life Member LIFETIME
(Mile marker and Gatekeeper plaques)

In addition all Memberships from Founding through Life Members will receive special acknowledgment in every newsletter and on the MDHT website.

Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

PO Box 156
Bismarck, ND 58502

E-mail: info@mdhta.com

We're on the Web!
mdhta.com



MAAH DAAH HEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION Officers and Board of Directors

President—Don Mayer

VP —

Secretary— Bruce Bishop

Treasurer—Roger Ashley

Director—Rod Mitzel

Director—Nick Ybarra

The Maah Daah Hey Trail Association is a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing and maintaining a linear, non-motorized, sustainable, recreational trail system in southwest North Dakota, through voluntary and public involvement, and in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service.

Membership Recognition—Thank You!

Life Members:

Ken Eberts

Curt & Carol Glasoe

Dale & Jennifer Heglund

Mark Liebig

Ron & Aileen Lueth

Don & Susan Mayer

Brian Selland

Dwight & Loa Tober

Theodore Roosevelt Medora
Foundation

Glennys Ulschak

Nick & Lindsey Ybarra

Mile Marker:

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