



# Turtle Tracks



Official Newsletter of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

Volume 15, Issue 1

## President's Message

Hi Everyone,

I hope this past year has been kind to you and yours. For the first time in many years we are having our annual meeting in Watford City, our anchor town of the north. I hope we have the opportunity to meet old friends, greet some new members from the area, and introduce some of our other members to Watford City. This meeting will be an opportunity for our members to vote in a new president. I am stepping down after many, many years as your president.

The board and president have some challenges to meet which I am confident they will solve with persistent effort and a ton of smarts! The water cache boxes project should be completed this spring, which will make the trail a safer place. The website is going through an update, and perhaps will be complete for viewing by the annual meeting. The greatest challenge facing the organization is trail maintenance, something that requires a delicate balance between our organization and the USFS. It is of great concern to the board and yours truly and will require even more effort in the

next few years. We need to be stubbornly persistent, so the trail is safe and will last for us and for future generations.

I have enjoyed my time as president, and will continue to use the trail and participate as an active member of this organization. For anyone that would like to be more involved, the annual meeting is a great way to start. Introduce yourself to the board members, and let them know you would like to be more involved. I would like to thank all of the members for your help through the years, and the fact you cared enough to purchase your membership to support this organization. Special thanks to the members who have served on the board. I have enjoyed working with those special people who have had such passion for the trail, that they went the extra mile, giving of their time to serve a very worthwhile organization. I am confident that the board and your new president will do a great job representing all the membership as we move forward.

Thank you,  
Don Mayer President

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### Special points of interest:

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## Annual Meeting, Saturday, April 11, 2015—Eagles Club, Watford City

The MDHTA annual meeting will be held Saturday, April 11, 2015, at the Eagles Club, Watford City. The social will begin at 5pm CT, dinner at 6pm CT followed by the meeting.

The menu includes a salad bar, roast beef, roasted chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy and vegetable, with a price of \$20 per plate including tax and tip.

There will be a cash bar, silent auction and door prizes.

Please bring an item for the silent auction. Please RSVP for the meal to Don Mayer at westernsg@hotmail.com or call 701-290-5434.

We hope to see you there!

## North Dakota Outdoors Day event at the State Capitol

by Don Mayer, MDHTA President

The Maah Daah Hey Trail Association was invited to attend this event, held at the ND Capitol building, on February 20<sup>th</sup>. I attended and was aided by board member, Rod Mitzel. We set up a nice display and attracted quite a few ND Senators, Representatives, and others that were present at the capital that morning. We had a chance to visit with them personally, answer questions, and provide information about the Maah Daah Hey

Trail and this organization. We were fortunate to have a chance to visit at length with the head of the ND Heritage Fund board, and plead our case for a grant from that program. Overall the time and effort was well spent, and something we should do again in the future. Thanks again, to Rod Mitzel for his help on this project, it was great to have his help throughout this project.

## New MDHTA Website Under Construction

by Bruce Bishop, MDHTA Secretary

As many of you have probably noticed our website has gotten quite out of date. We have hired a web developer (at least we have signed the contract) to update our web site and get it brought up to date. We are also adding features to let us add articles and to

change existing articles a lot easier. We hope to have it completed this spring. Please watch for our newly updated web page and please continue to submit articles for us to post on the website.

## Special Offer to MDHTA Members

Breckenridge Brewery is offering a 45% discount on Breckenridge Brewery Avalanche Ale bike jerseys to MDHTA members. To get this offer go to the website [allthesethings.ecrater.com](http://allthesethings.ecrater.com)

**Click on the jersey priced \$35.95. That's the special for MDHTA members which will remain posted until April 15, 2015.** Any questions call/text me 970 376 2261. – Marc Carlie Carlisle

## Membership Recognition—Thank You!

### Life Members:

Ken Eberts  
Curt & Carol Glasoe  
Dale & Jennifer Heglund  
Mark Liebig  
Ron & Aileen Luethe  
Don & Susan Mayer  
Medora Convention and Visitors Bureau  
Charles & Sandra Peterson  
Brian Selland  
Dwight & Loa Tober  
Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation  
Glennys Ulschak  
Nick & Ybarra

### Trail Boss:

Stephen & Janet Wieser

### Founding:

Curtis Alkire  
Glen Bruhschwein  
Dickinson Convention & Visitors Center  
Kelly Krohn  
ND Department of Commerce/Tourism  
ND Parks and Recreation Department  
The Printer Inc.  
Larry & Freida Tebelius

## Thank You Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation

by Roger Ashley, MDHTA Treasurer

The Maah Daah Hey Trail Association received a \$1,000 grant from the Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation to help update the MDHTA website. The grant along with membership contributions will allow the Association to make improvements in the website to provide timely information

to trail users, updates for membership as well as to help promote the trail to the general public. Please take this opportunity to thank the Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation. Cards can be sent to Mr Curtis Glasoe, President, Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation Inc., PO Box 1038, Dickinson, ND, 58602.

## New Life-Time Members

MDHTA welcomes two new Life-Time members since the last Turtle Tracks Newsletter. They are Charles and Sandra Peterson and the Medora Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Charles and Sandra Peterson have been members since the inception of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association. Their preferred use of the trail includes mountain biking and hiking on their favorite parts of the trail, Devils pass as well as south of Sully Creek to Burning Coal Vein Campground. The Peterson's joined MDHTA because they believe in the Associations goals of maintaining and

promoting the trail. They encourage all to spend time on the trail.

## 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  Tshirt S M L XL
- \$200 Trail Boss Member - S M L XL
- \$500 Mile Marker Member
- \$750 Gatekeeper Member
- \$1000 Life Member

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*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)
- ◆ \$200 Trail Boss Membership    ANNUAL  
(denim shirt with MDHTA Trail Boss imprint)

- ◆ \$500 Mile Marker Membership    ANNUAL  
(Plaque with your name on a trail mile marker post)
- ◆ \$750 Gatekeeper Membership    ANNUAL  
(Plaque with your name on a trail gate)
- ◆ \$1000 Life Member    LIFETIME  
(Mile marker and gate plaques)

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

# U. S. Forest Service Trail Update

by Greg Morel, Trails Manager, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

Here at the Forest Service, 2015 looks to be another busy year on the Maah Daah Hey (MDH). We have already submitted an application for the North Dakota Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Grant this winter. We applied for funding to continue surfacing the southern extension of the MDH for 4.7 miles from Mile Post (MP) 3-8.5. We also applied for restoration of the MDH for 17 miles from MP 20.5 to 37.5. If approved the work will begin on these two projects as early as the summer of 2016 and be contracted with the already approved surfacing from MP 8.5-15.

As I write this we have a solicitation open for bids for a contract that will begin work the summer of 2015. This contract includes RTP funding to surface 4.6 miles of the south section from MP 15-19.5 and to restore miles 75-80 on the MDH, a majority of the Long X and all of the Bennett trails. This restoration will help with a number of rough spots on these sections of trail. Also, in this contract the Forest Service will be funding construction for the reroutes east of Devils Pass and just north of County Road 50. The reroute east of Devils Pass, which was moved because of the installation of a gas pipeline, has already been posted, cleared and mowed. The reroute North of County Road 50, which was moved due to a large series of slumps, has been flagged and is awaiting completion of the environmental assessment. All of these projects are scheduled to be completed in 2015. We will also be completing a contract for surfacing almost 3 miles of the south section from MP 19.5-22.5. This should be completed by early summer.

We would like to thank Nick Ybarra, Dakota Cyclery, and all of the volunteers for the help they provided on the trail last summer by logging over 600 hours of trail maintenance. They had our three trail mowers working overtime. After last season one of the three will be retired as a parts mower and another may be on its way out. We will be purchasing three new mowers for this summer, of which two are being funded by RTP. Hopefully this will result in not only more mowers available, but more reliable mowers.

Our hiring process for seasonal trail crew is underway. The application period closed in early February

and we are currently waiting for the list of qualified applicants. We have one returning crew member and hope to hire four new seasonals which will make six counting myself.

We have faced three main hiring obstacles in the last few years. The first obstacle is the change in process for hiring that took place initially in 2013. We can now only accept applications through [usa-jobs.gov](http://usa-jobs.gov) and this application period has been moved to an earlier time period which is before many of our target audience begin to look for summer employment. This new system has had many growing pains and has provided challenges in hiring seasonals the last few years. The second obstacle has been pay. When I began working on the trail in the summer of 2008 this was one of the better paying summer jobs for a college student. We are no longer competitive because we can only pay between \$11-14 per hour under the federal pay scale. The third obstacle has been lack of housing for those willing to come and work to gain experience with the Forest Service. In 2014, we had hundreds of applicants, but after learning of the housing situation our list was narrowed to under 30 and of those only a handful had plans for housing. By the time we were able to make job offers; those interested had taken other jobs. This year we worked on the parts of the process where we have flexibility. We have also tried to recruit more local applicants that are interested in doing the job for more than just the paycheck. We have also begun constructing government housing that will allow seasonals a place to live at a reasonable rate.

In closing, I am hoping for a spring that does not provide the extended and excessive amounts of moisture that lead to major trail damage. As always, if any one has any comments, questions, concerns or updates about the trail feel free to contact me by phone (701-227-7854) or email ([gsmorel@fs.fed.us](mailto:gsmorel@fs.fed.us)).

**Maah Daah Hey Trail  
Association**

PO Box 156  
Bismarck, ND 58502

E-mail: [info@mdhta.com](mailto:info@mdhta.com)

**We're on the Web!**  
**[mdhta.com](http://mdhta.com)**



**MAAH DAAH HEY TRAIL ASSOCIATION  
Officers and Board of Directors**

President—Don Mayer  
Secretary—Bruce Bishop  
Treasurer—Roger Ashley  
Director—Rod Mitzel  
Director—Nick Ybarra

**Dates to Remember**

April 6	RSVP to Don Mayer for Annual Meeting—See Page 2
April 11	MDHTA Annual Meeting, Eagles, Watford City, 5 pm CDT
June 7	National Trails Day

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.