



Turtle Tracks



Official Newsletter of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

Volume 22, Issue 2

President's Message

Hello to trail users:

Well, I was dead wrong with saying no snow and very good weather in the last TT, since then we have had 2 blizzards and received over 3 feet of snow. SO we will try again to start the field season on the MDH trail. Quite a few people have called and/or contacted us about trail conditions for May, which looks to be a good month - fingers crossed.

First, Our **Annual Meeting** scheduled for April 23, 2022 had to be postponed till April 30, due to the weather, but it turned out to be a good meeting in Dickinson. We had 39 people (including 9 Life members) show up at the **Eagles club**. Board member **Mark Zimmerman** gave a great talk on Teddy Roosevelt. **Board Members, Amy Vojacek, Jesse Hanson, and Britney Barnett**, were re-elected and will continue on the Board. MDHTA caught up on local updates by **Badlands to Badlands Trail, ND Park and Rec, TR Presidential Library, Dakota Prairie Grasslands, and Dickinson Convention and Visitors Bureau**. A **By-Law update** was passed, so now all Board terms will be three years with staggered terms.

The **MDH trail** is on 11 pages in the new **North Dakota Tourist Guide** and The **MDH Trail** is included in the 2022 ND Tourism video of Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the Badlands. Look it up on <https://youtu.be/o7X2oPGLGq8>, kinda neat coverage featuring our 2020 RTP trail surfacing project south of Sully Creek State Park.

A big **THANK YOU** to new Life Members

Bethany and Levi Andrist. Our 49th Life member. All membership donations really help our mission to **Promote and Maintain the Maah Daah Hey Trail system**.

The **MDHTA** has received approval for a 2022 **Recreational Trail Program (RTP)** grant from the **ND State Park and Recreation Department** that entails about 3 miles of trail surfacing on the **MDH and Buffalo Gap** trails to the west river road west of Medora. **Western Sand and Gravel** is the contractor for this project. We are planning a volunteer workday on **National Trails Day** (June 4) on this project. Hope to see you there at Andrews Creek

Don't miss the **Guided bike event on the Buffalo Gap trail** scheduled for May 14 see another article on this event in this TT for more information on this fun trip. Follow us on Facebook for more trail information also.

The **MDH book and MDH maps** continue to be the big sellers from our website store. Check it out on MDHTA.com, click on **STORE**, and place your order.

Here is to a great summer and hope you plan to get out on the **MAAH DAAH HEY Trail**.

Curtis W. Glasoe – President - MDHTA



Mark Zimmerman speaking at Annual Meeting. Photo by Lisa Kudelka.

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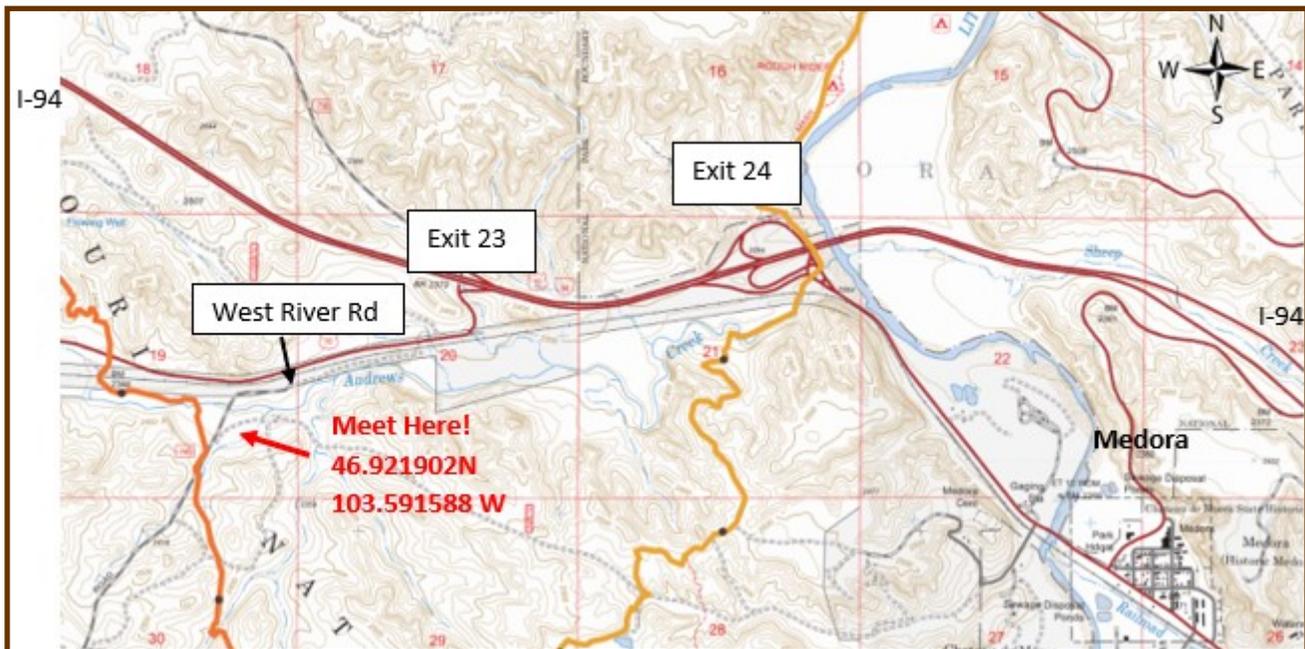
Special point of interest:

- *Clinker, locally known as scoria, can be found along the trail. It is formed where seams of lignite coal burned and adjacent sediments baked to a natural brick. The presence of hematite (iron oxide) gives it a red color.*

National Trails Day on the MDHT—June 4, 2022

This is the 23rd year that the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association (MDHTA) and the USDA Forest Service will be hosting a celebration of National Trails Day on the Maah Daah Hey Trail System. This year's project will be surfacing trail in the Andrews Creek area near the West River Road located west of Medora. Participants will help with surfacing approximately 1,000 feet of trail (this is part of the Buffalo Gap Trail Restoration Project RTP 2.65-mile 2022 project) in an area where users have created casual trails that have eroded creating problems of braiding and degradation of the area. Also, use of the trail in this area is expected to significantly increase due to the construction of the Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library. Surfacing the trail in these areas encourages users to stay on the trail especially after rain events when un-surfaced trails are muddy and slick. Also surfacing requires less annual maintenance such as mowing and repairing gullies. It is time for all our members, friends, volunteers, outdoor enthusiasts, trail lovers, and those new to the outdoors to give back to trails and pay it forward by introducing someone new to the outdoors. Individuals and groups interested in participating in this year's program should contact Curt Glasoe, President

MDHTA at 701-260-9459 or email him at curtglasoe@ndsupernet.com with your attendee numbers. This will help us to plan for enough food, drinks, tools, equipment, and trail prizes for all who attend. Attendees interested in participating should plan on meeting just south of Andrews Creek on West River Road west of Medora. Directions from I-94 Exit 24 (west Medora Exit) travel west 1 mile on I-94 to Exit 23 (west River Road). Turn south and go about one mile west on Old US 10 (asphalt surfaced) to West River Road. Turn south (left) on West River Road (gravel) and go 0.4 miles. You will cross the RR tracks and then a bridge over Andrews Creek and then you will see an approach on the left. Meet at that location. Destination coordinates are given on the map below. Travel time from Medora is about 5 minutes. The event begins at 9 am and concludes by 3 pm MDT. Ticks can be an issue this time of the year so bring your repellent, dress appropriately for conditions, and bring your work gloves. Check our website for any changes in any details at www.mdhta.com or follow us on Facebook. Participants will receive a **free lunch** and an opportunity to win trail merchandise provided by MDHTA.



MDHTA sponsors a guided mountain bike event

By Jesse Hanson, MDHTA Treasurer, and Amy Vojacek, MDHTA Vice President

The MDHTA is sponsoring a one day guided mountain bike trail ride on May 14, 2022. The ride is open to anyone but, is focusing on those new to riding the Maah Daah Hey and would like to ride with a group on a relatively easy portion of the trail.

The ride will start at the Buffalo Gap trailhead west of Medora with two riding options. A six-mile option will pull

off where the trail crosses old Highway 10 and the 14-mile ride will end up in Medora.

MDHTA will provide shuttle service back to the Buffalo Gap trailhead after the ride. Watch for updates for the event on the MDHTA Facebook page.

Contact Amy Vojacek at amyjo49@hotmail.com or phone 406-939-3789 if you plan to attend, for planning purposes.

Membership Recognition—Thank You!

Life Members:

Curtis Alkire
*Bethany & Levi Andrist
Roger & Pat Ashley
Sandy Baertsch
Bahne, Kay, Charlie & Anna Bahnson
Gerard & Mary Kay Baker
Glenn & Jolene Baranko
Brittney Barnett & Daniel Dwyer
Bruce & Roberta Bishop
Chad & Emily Mitzel Brackelsberg
Bev Brierley
Richard & Lori Brierley
Doug & Kathryn Burgum
Adam & Barbra Curtis
Tom & Sherri Dickson
Kenneth & Norma Eberts
Curt & Carol Glasoe
Matthew, Carter & Chase Glasoe
Greg and Michele Gunderson
Jesse Hanson & Lisa Kudelka
Ron & Sheila Hartl
Dale & Jennifer Heglund
Heidi Heitkamp & Darwin Lange
William Hoeg
Dr. Tim & Amy Juelson
Ryan & Jo Marie Kadrmas
Christa Kron
Mike & Chandra Langseth
Mark Liebig
Ron Luethe
Don & Susan Mayer
Medora Convention & Visitors Bureau
Rodney & Carolyn Mitzel
John R. Olson
Mike Parke
Charles & Sandra Peterson
Hiram Rogers & Jean Gaugler
Brian Selland
Jason, Jennifer, Morgan & Elliot Stiefel
Diane Stoltz Family
Vonne Tarnavsky
Theodore Roosevelt Medora Foundation
Theodore Roosevelt Presidential Library Foundation
Loa Tober

Glenny Ulschak
Ryan and Amy Vojacek
Steve & Janet Wieser
Nick & Lindsey Ybarra
Mark Zimmerman

Post Marker:

Rachel & Randy Brag
Glee Mayer
Jarrod & Michaela Schell

Trail Boss:

Peggy & John Fiedler
Andrea Stromberg

Founding:

*Spring Bakke
Jessica Brooke
Kim & Joseph Callahan
Brittney Denesha
Donald Kingston
*Kevin Kirkey
Jeremy Mahowald
Amy McCann
Loren & Jennifer Morlock
Matt Pekuri
Thomas Schneider
Robert C. Stein
Freida Tebelius
*Shannon Straight
The Printers, Inc.

In Memoriam

Denton & Paulette Berntson
Kyle Brierley
Aileen Luethe
Morris Tarnavsky

- Denotes new member at this level since last *Turtle Tracks*



Annual Meeting Attendees. Photo by Lisa Kudelka.

Maah Daah Hey: Inside-out Perspective

by Spring Bakke with contributions from Brandy Chaffee

If you would have asked us just five years ago if hiking the Maah Daah Hey Trail was on our radar, we would have grabbed a beer, sat down in our camp chairs and kindly replied, “Yeah, No.” Yet, there we were in May 2020, our first day on the MDH.

The whole experience was filled with firsts. The first time either of us hiked in and picked a random spot on the prairie to pitch a tent. The first time we carried on our backs all we would need to eat, drink, and live out on the trail. The first time using a camp stove, sleeping pad, head lamp, and with great apprehension, digging little cat-holes and pooping in nature. We did it. Two North Dakota girls figured it out and survived the first day and night on the trail.

As the turtle emblazoned mileposts went by, so did the rollercoaster of emotions and experiences. We soared with joy and doubled over with laughter, swelled with pride, rejoiced in accomplishment and overflowed with gratitude. We battled the inescapable sun and relentless prairie wind. We wept with the heartbreak of defeat and the searing pain of blisters and sprains. We struggled with the weight of packs, the frustration of straps, uphill, downhill, evading ticks, and overbearing heat. Patience, perseverance, grit and gratitude were hard won.

All the while, we delighted in the glorious ridges and beautiful sunsets. We relished the magical comfort and relief of climbing inside the tent at the end of a long day, and the sweetness of waking up to chirping birds while savoring our

morning coffee and tea. We loved the fresh air, the juniper trees and the disconnection from the busy world outside the MDH. We settled into the beautiful simplicity of trail life - a view from the inside-out. What does that mean exactly? The MDH provides a new perspective by being on the inside. A

perspective nearly impossible to experience from the car or the quick gaze from the scenic overlook.

The simple life is a real thing on the trail. There is a rapid adaptation leading to a very different and basic realization. We can be overwhelmingly happy eating a snack bar while sitting on a cheap blue tarp on the side of a trail ridge. We can carry all we need on our back and within ourselves. There is a realization that we are tiny specks in this glorious western North Dakota landscape of expansive badlands and prairies, wild creatures, and awe-inspiring painted canyons. Yet, we are connected to and part of all of it.

We completed the Maah Daah Hey in three sections over a span of 14 months. In total, we hiked 17 days and slept in our cozy nylon dwellings on the prairie for 14 nights. We get asked from those on the outside, why would you put yourselves through all of that? I guess it's based

on an individual's viewpoint. And we are so grateful we now have this one - the life altering perspective from hiking a dusty trail in western North Dakota, the Maah Daah Hey. Does it really get any better? From our perspective, “Yeah, no.”



Photo by Shannon Straight

MDHTA assisting with White Butte trail access

By Jesse Hanson, MDHTA Secretary/Treasurer

White Butte (elevation 3,506'), the highest point in North Dakota, is located southeast of Amidon, North Dakota. In a recent meeting, the MDHTA Board of Directors voted to coordinate with Slope County and the Highpointers Foundation to improve the 0.9-mile access trail route to the top of White Butte. The Highpointers Foundation obtained a long-term private land public easement for trail access to the butte guaranteeing an access route to this high point for generations to come. Slope County reconstructed and gravel surfaced the access road and the trail head parking lot in 2021, and updated directional road signing to access the high point.

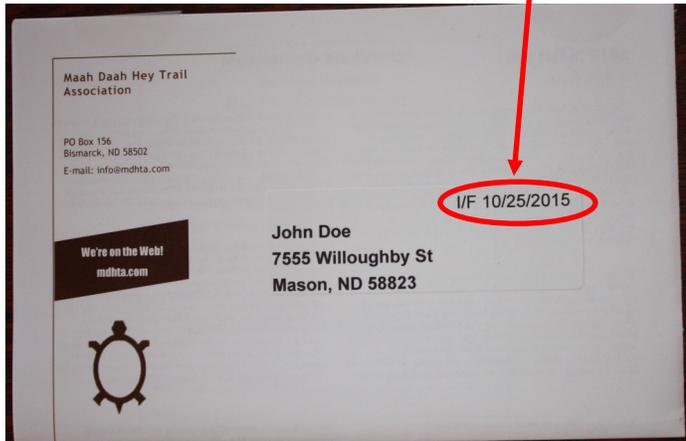
MDHTA's participation will be to plan repairs/renovations,

and secure grants and private funds for this project. The project will include: elevating low-lying trail tread, address steep bentonite grades, clearly identify and specify the location by installing “confidence” marker posts where needed, and install a trail head kiosk that includes a route map, area geology and points of interest.

Nationwide interest in highpointing White Butte and experiencing the Maah Daah Hey Trail makes this partnership between Slope County and the MDH Trail Association a win-win. Preliminary planning for trail improvements will take place in 2022 with on the ground trail improvements slated for 2023 construction.

Membership Renewal – It May be Time!

“When do I renew my membership?” All memberships are one year in length except the three year Individual/Family Memberships and Life Memberships. To determine when your membership is up for renewal check the upper right corner of the mailing label on your newsletter.



Your current membership level (I/F = Individual or Family; F = Founding; T = Trail Boss; M = Mile Marker; and Life) as well as your membership expiration date is given. If your membership has expired please complete the membership application form found in this newsletter or go to mdhta.com/membership to complete the requested information. Include a check made out to MDHTA or if you wish to use a credit card go to mdhta.com/membership.

Moving? Changing your Email address?

Don't forget to contact us with your new postal address or email address. Stay connected.

Thanks to all those that have renewed to date!

Membership Application

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

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual/Family Member - turtle pin | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Post Marker Member - wood sign on post or for home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$70 Individual/Family Member for 3 years - turtle pin | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 Life Member - turtle sign & name on kiosk |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 Founding Member <input type="checkbox"/> Cap or <input type="checkbox"/> T-shirt S M L XL | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$200 Trail Boss Member - trail map & turtle pin | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$250+ Corporate Membership | |

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

PLEASE PRINT

Date: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Email newsletter: Yes No

Maah Daah Hey Trail Association

PO Box 156
Bismarck, ND 58502
E-mail: hello@mdhta.com

We're on the Web!
mdhta.com



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

President—Curt Glasoe
Vice President—Amy Vojacek
2nd Vice President—Mark Zimmerman
Secretary/Treasurer—Jesse Hanson
Britney Barnett—At Large
Glee Mayer—At Large

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.

Dates to Remember

May 10, 2022	MDHTA Board Meeting—Zoom 6pm MT
May 14, 2022	Guided mountain bike event
May 2022 TBA	Trail post installation on MDHT in TRNP South Unit
June 4, 2022	Trails Day at Andrews Creek west of Medora
July TBA	Work Day at Coal Creek

Find us on 