



Volume 16, Issue 3

Official Newsletter of the Maah Daah Hey Trail Association



Turtle Tracks

President's Message

First, I would like to thank all the hardy individuals that showed up at our trail's day event in June at Third Creek Trailhead, some 40+ individuals came out and surfaced over ¼ mile of trail. Thanks to Rod Mitzel for handling the food, and the Forest Service for the t-shirts, and to Roger Ashley for the coordination effort put forth to make the event a success.

Next the NEW website (MDHTA.com) is up and running, we have processed over 30 orders since it has been put on online, we have to charge sales tax and have the postage figured out, so we just have to get the items ordered in the mail. Which Roger Ashley, with a little help from yours truly, has been on time so far, with the exception of the US mail eating a few items. One item not on the website is long-sleeved t-shirts, of which I have quite a few so just holler at me, if you need a long sleeve T-shirt. Please get on the site and tell us if we need more data, information or whatever to make it meet your needs.

In working with volunteering for the Forest Service, we (MDHTA) got the four posts in place to locate the FS Knutson Creek crossing, and are volunteering to inspect the Hanley Plateau surfacing contract.

The MDHTA was successful in obtaining money for canopies to be used at trail events as aid stations and also help in sponsoring the Annual ND Trail Conference to be held in August in Dickinson this year. Thanks to Roger Ashley for preparing the grant applications. We thank the Operation Round Up Board of the Roughrider Electric Cooperative for these funds, and to Bruce Bishop for his work in purchasing the canopies.

In closing, we also want to thank the over 50 people who attended our annual meeting to make it a great success and put us on track for another year of trail activities on the MDH Trail System. We also want to thank the Dickinson Eagles for hosting and preparing a very good meal for us.

Enjoy what is left of summer and sign up to help out with the tree trimming party or participate in the MDH100.

Happy trails

Curtis W. Glasoe, President - MDHTA

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Special points of interest:

- *Contrary to popular belief the MDHT is not flat, there is 17,903' of elevation gain.*
- *The MDHT crosses federal, state and private land.*

Knudson Creek Crossing on Buffalo Gap Trail Marked

Curt Glasoe and Roger Ashley, volunteers from MDHTA, recently completed marking the Knudson Creek crossing on the Buffalo Gap Trail. Creek crossings are constructed so a hard supportive surface of the crossing sits about a half to one inch below the stream bed surface. The structure that provides support for the trail is about six feet wide and is constructed by first digging a trench 18 inches deep and six feet wide. A geotextile fabric is laid at the bottom of the trench with six inch by six inch timbers laid at the sides of the trench. Gravel fills the space between the timbers and then the geotextile fabric is wrapped around and over the top of this layer. A second set of timbers is placed on top of the first layer of timbers. Gravel again fills the

space between the timbers. Again the geotextile fabric is wrapped around this layer and a third layer of timbers and gravel is added on top of the previous two layers. Rebar is used to tie the three layers of timbers together. Since the structure sits below the stream bed surface water can freely pass



over the structure while the structure provides firm footing for equestrians, bikers, and hikers. These structures are preferred over bridges as sudden gully washing rains often occur in the badlands. Since the surface of the crossing sits below the surface of the water most people don't know that the crossing is there and therefore look for other potential crossings. This leads to a lot of "casual" trails that run up steep slopes eventually leading to stream bank erosion. This is what is happening at the Knudson Creek Crossing on the Buffalo Gap Trail even though a puncheon structure is provided for helping trail users cross. Four trail markers are now in place marking this crossing. There are five other such structures in the Maah Daah Hey Trail System and they are all marked in a similar way. Though you may still get your feet wet using these crossings be assured that there is solid footing at these crossings – not a chasm of mud.



U.S Forest Service Trail Update

by Greg Morel, Trails Manager, U.S. Forest Service, Dakota Prairie Grasslands

Dry weather in the fall and spring have reduced the number of slumps, slides and other emergency type work required to keep the MDHT passable this year, a real contrast to what the FS and volunteers have had to deal with the past three or four years. As a result, the FS trail crew has been doing tread repair work, which is fixing ruts and improving drainage along the trail. Later this fall the crew will be placing guide signs at trailhead junctions south of Medora. Also weather conditions are such that sweet clover is nearly non-existent this season, something which has helped. Volunteer mowing crews covered 106 miles (as of July 24) of trail from Sully Creek north. This includes the Buffalo Gap Trail. Recreational Trails Program (RTP) contract work is in progress and ahead of schedule across 6.1 miles of the Hanley Plateau. This work may be done by the end of August or early September. Another section of surfacing from just north of the 3rd

Creek Trailhead south for 4.5 miles is awaiting advertisement for bid. Depending on when the bid is let work could begin this fall or next spring with work to be completed by the summer 2017.

The Maah Daah Hey Trail and the MDHII, Deuce, or Southern Extension became one trail earlier this year. Mile markers have been changed to reflect this on the now 144 mile long trail that begins at Burning Coal Vein Campground and ends at CCC Campground. Plans are that the combined MDHT will be approved as a National Recreation Trail later this year. This would make it one of the nation's longest non-motorized, single track National Recreation trails giving it further recognition. MDHTA along with other partners are providing letters of support to help make this happen.

In the fall, when the dust settles, a more detailed report will be given.

Membership Recognition—Thank You!

Life Members:

Roger & Pat Ashley

Glenn & Jolene Baranko

Tom & Sherri Dickson

Ken Eberts

Curt & Carol Glasoe

Jesse Hanson & Lisa Kudelka

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 & Lindsey Ybarra

Trail Boss:

Carol Carter

Phillip & Beth Helfrich

Stephen & Janet Wieser

Founding:

Curtis Alkire

Bruce & Roberta Bishop

Kim Callahan

Dickinson Convention & Visitors Bureau

Darcy Sandstrom

Robert Stein

Freida Tebelius

Thank You Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation Again and Again!

MDHTA extends a double thank you to the Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation for supporting the Association in its efforts to improve the safety and enjoyment of the trail by all users. The Foundation provided \$1,500 for canopies used in trail events as well as a \$500 grant to help support the North Dakota Trails Conference held August 1 – 3, 2016. The canopies have already been used to provide shade during the National Trails Day program this year and will be used to provide shade during the MDH 100 on August 6. On August 6 these canopies can be seen and appreciated at Checkpoints F, G, and H (see map on experienceland.org). Many riders will appreciate the shade this year too as they near completion of their long ride.

Its always great to assist in hosting a statewide event such as the North Dakota Trails Conference in Dickinson. Roughrider Electric Charitable Foundation makes it possible for MDHTA to help sponsor this

worthwhile educational program. Thank you again for all your help.



National Trails Day

by Bruce Bishop



National Trail Days on the Maah Daah Hey Trail was hosted by the MDHTA on Saturday June 4th at the Third Creek Trailhead.

The event was a great success with 42 people

participating in the trail's day event. The group worked on the trail about a mile north of the trailhead laying down about 1/4 mile of gravel to surface the tread of the trail and then making a 1/2

mile of trail ready for surfacing later this summer.

After the work was completed the Association provided a lunch of pulled pork sandwiches, potato salad, desert bars and lemonade for the volunteers. In addition to lunch volunteers received a National Trails Day t-shirt sponsored in part by the American Hiking Society and the Forest Service.

Thank you to Rod and Carol Mitzel for getting lunch organized and served and to Curt Glasoe on his work in putting the trail day's event together. What a great day! Next year's Trails Day is scheduled for Saturday, June 3, 2017. Put it on your calendar to be there.



Maah Daah Hey Trail Races

The Maah Daah Hey Trail can be challenge at a walk. It is certainly more challenging at a run! Experience LAND has organize a number of races designed for different participant skill and conditioning levels. The Maah Daah Hey 100, the Granddaddy of the races is approximately 106 miles long and will be held on August 6. Three other variations of the MDH 100 are the MDH 75, MDH 50, and the MDH 25 also held on the same day. Approximately 400 riders have sign up to participate. Race details can be found on the experienceland.org website. MDHTA will be assisting racers at three of the 15 checkpoints along the MDHT. These check points are Checkpoint Foxtrot, Checkpoint Golf, and Checkpoint Hotel from 6:30 am to 6:15 pm will all be hosted by MDHTA members this

year. The MDHTA canopies will be setup so it will be a great time to come out and see MDHTA in action supporting the trail and trail use. To find the location of the checkpoints go to experienceland.org website.

Other races scheduled the remainder of the summer include the Maah Daah Hey Trail Run (MDHTR) on August 20 and the Maah Daah Hey (MDH) 150 on September 17. The Trail Run on August 20 actually has seven different distances, 5K to 106 miles, for runners to pit their skill and endurance against the trail. The MDH 150 is an extension of the MDH 100 and is an endurance race for bikers. Additional information about all these races can be found at experienceland.org.

MDHTA Meets with Forest Service Staff

Rod Mitzel and Roger Ashley, MDHTA board members, met with U.S. Forest Service (FS) staff about the trail on Friday, July 22. FS staff attending the meeting were Shannon Boehm, Medora District Ranger; Greg Morel Dakota Prairie Grasslands Trails Manager; Joni Packard, Region I Partnership Manager; and Kent Weller, Region I Trail Coordinator. Region I FS staff cover Montana, North Dakota and northern Idaho. MDHTA expressed concerns about the backlog of trail maintenance and erosion that was occurring on as well as adjacent to the trail as a result of the lack of a good surface on the trail or where the surface had been washed out because of heavy rains the past five years. Without adequate maintenance “casual” and “cutoff” trails are occurring resulting in more impact to the surrounding area. Resources available for maintenance are limited so formal condition surveys are no longer done. Condition surveys were used to target funding as well as work on the trail. Some trail funds have been “folded” into other programs. The FS is now in a reactive mode – if an emergency occurs or a hazardous situation develops resources will be used to address the situation. In short, the FS would rather fix the trail than survey it. MDHTA will develop a form on its website to help trail users report problems to the FS so action can be taken to correct deficiencies in the trail. MDHTA and other organizations will be working with FS to address some of the maintenance issues. MDHTA has suggested using selected technologies for decreasing labor requirements

in maintaining the trail. FS is considering developing and hosting a “Trail Skills University” to train volunteers.

A trailhead is needed at or very close to Medora as no suitable trailhead exists at this major point of departure. MDHTA has suggested a trailhead and parking be developed off of the I-94, Exit 24 interchange. To date the U. S. Forest Service, National Park Service, and ND Parks and Rec have expressed support for such a project but the DOT has given the idea a cool reception. DOT’s concern appears to be safety yet the access being proposed here by MDHTA is similar to recently built access off of the Interstate System at Fargo. MDHTA has also expressed the need for primitive trailheads along the MDHT north of I-94. It’s a real challenge to hike the 18 to 20 mile distances between campgrounds with most hikers and some equestrian users indicating 10 miles a day as the limit for an enjoyable experience. MDHTA on its website will be including some tips for day use on the MDHT in the near future.

The Forest Service is working on a revised MDHT System map. MDHTA along with others will have the opportunity to review the map to suggest changes, additions, and corrections. MDHTA hopes this map is completed in time for the 2017 season.

Tree Trimming Party

Trees and brush can obstruct a trail no matter how much or how little a trail is used. It is time to do a little trimming on the MDHT near the North Unit of TRNP. Roger Ashley will lead a tree and brush trimming party on Saturday, September 10. Participants will receive 30 to 45 minutes of training in the proper way to prune a tree. Participants will then be able to practice what they learned and contribute volunteer service that day. We will be walking up to 5 miles one-way. If you are interested in this outing please contact Roger Ashley at 701-300-3315 or email him at rogerashley@ndsupernet.com for further details.



MDHTA Website

The MDHTA website has been updated and now includes some features that will help in planning trail adventures, lookup past issues of *Turtle Tracks*, and shop for MDHTA merchandise. The feature that changed the most with this update is the Trail Guide. The Trail Guide now shows all of the trails of the Maah Daah Hey Trail system. Clicking on the trail will bring up an elevation profile as well as a brief overview of the

GPS coordinates, directions from a major road, and the amenities found at the campground will be listed. Clicking on Trail Head, Points of Interest or Water Cache Box symbols will provide directions and GPS coordinates.

Past issues of *Turtle Tracks* are now available for download from the website under the News tab. As we find more of the archived hard copies of past *Turtle Tracks* these will be added to the website.

The MDHTA Store has been improved so now multiple items can be ordered at one time. Shipping has been adjusted to reflect our actual costs of mailing items.

Check MDHTA.com for future updates, event news and links to other helpful websites in the future.

TRAIL
Buffalo Gap

DISTANCE
18.9 miles

ELEVATION PROFILE
ft. 2,600 2,500 2,400 0
mi. 0 5 10 15 16.240 mi. 2517 ft.

Click and drag to zoom map to elevation.

CAMPGROUNDS
[Coal Creek](#) [Sully Creek](#) [Buffalo Gap](#) [Wannagan](#)

OVERVIEW
The Buffalo Gap trail goes around the South Unit of Theodore Roosevelt National Park. This trail was developed as an uninterrupted single track mountain bike trail to Sully Creek Campground. The trail crosses Knutson creek with a hardened low water crossing and numerous long rolling grasslands areas. The trail goes just south of the Buffalo Gap guest ranch, and accesses the Buffalo Gap campground on a short spur trail.

trail, and nearby campgrounds. Click on either the campground name or campground symbol and information about the campground such as location,

Maah Daah Hey Trail
ASSOCIATION

TRAIL GUIDE NEWS PHOTOS ABOUT

RIVER CROSSING
Elkhorn Crossing

NEARBY TRAILS
[Maah Daah Hey](#)

REAL TIME RIVER INFORMATION
This Little Missouri River crossing has good bottom and is easily crossed in low water, however every year it changes with rain storms and spring runoff, so one must cross slowly and carefully. The trail from the river to the top of the ridge on road 708 just west of the river climbs 300 feet and has numerous switchbacks to traverse to the top. An excellent hike with breath taking views.

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

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

PLEASE PRINT

Date: _____ Phone: _____

Name: _____

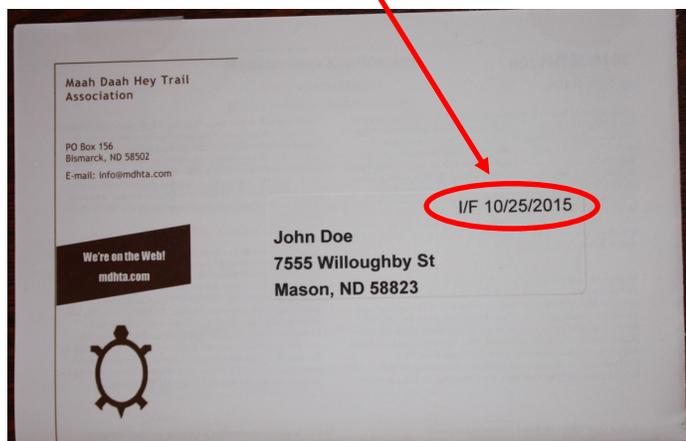
Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Email: _____ Email newsletter: Yes No

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; G = Gatekeeper; 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!

NEW!

Electronic delivery option

Our dues have remained unchanged for many years while printing and postage costs have risen. In an effort to put more

of your dues toward improving the trail we are emailing *Turtle Tracks* to those who notify me at rogerashley@ndsupernet.com.

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—Curt Glasoe
Vice President—Rod Mitzel
Second Vice President—Nick Ybarra
Secretary—Bruce Bishop
Treasurer—Roger Ashley

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

August 1-3	ND Trail Conference, Dickinson
August 6	Maah Daah Hey 100 (experienceland.org)
August 20	Maah Daah Hey Trail Run (formerly Medora Foundation Badland Trail Run) (experienceland.org)
September 10	Tree Trimming Party (rogerashley@ndsupernet.com)
September 17	Maah Daah Hey 150 (experienceland.org)