

THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL

Cecil Friends take on new segment

by Tim Killmeyer

Due to red tape in obtaining a contract to build the anticipated segment in South Park this year, it looked as though the Montour Trail wouldn't gain any length this year. But the Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail didn't want to see that happen and John Hooton started making inquiries on equipment rental. When Joe Stewart offered to make a motor grader and other equipment available to the Trail at a price they couldn't refuse, John approached the Trail Council board of directors with the idea that for \$5,000, the Cecil Friends could construct the 1 1/4 mile section of Trail from Hendersonville to Chartiers Creek at the Peters Township border. He convinced the board that it was feasible and the motion was approved.

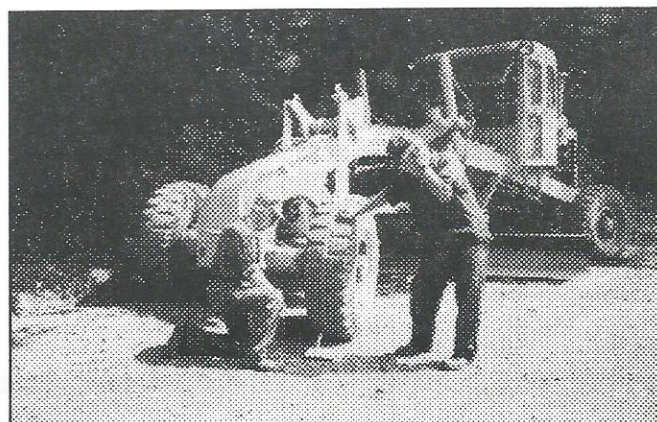
Work started shortly thereafter. With Dan Jones and his precious CDL at the wheel of the grader and Hoyt Hall cutting brush and moving ties and spikes out of the way almost every day throughout August, work has been progressing nicely. With Don Berty, Hooton, Dennis Sims, Paul McKeown and others helping out on weekends, they expect the

newest section of Trail to be open by the end of October.

They still need to stockpile tons of railroad ties, a few of which will be used to protect some planned daylily beds from marauding lawnmowers. 500 - 600 feet of split rail fence will need to be installed near some of the high embankments along the stretch.

With the exception of a few flat tires due to rail spikes, problems have been few. Workers have been anxiously awaiting word on when the old Maple Lane bridge will be moved to its new location across Rt. 519/Morganza Rd., connecting both sides of the Trail. Maple Lane parallels the new segment and the bridge along it is scheduled for replacement. When it was discovered that it would be cheaper to move the bridge rather than tear it down, the Montour Trail Council said it would take over ownership.

The Friends would like to thank everyone for their moral and monetary support, and if anyone would like to lend a hand in getting this new section finished, please call John Hooton at 942-0115 or Don Berty at 221-6406. ♦



Hoyt Hall and Dan Jones try to avoid these "industrial strength" thumb tacks (old rail spikes) scattered all over the Trail.



photos by John Hooton

John Hooton inspects numerous old ties along the new section.

INSIDE

DO YOU KNOW
THE
SIGNIFICANCE
OF #3308?

SEE PAGE 5

THE MONTOUR
TRAIL'S
ANSWER TO
BIGFOOT?



SEE PAGE 6





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**MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER
25 REGINA DR.**

MCKEES ROCKS, PA. 15136

Or E-mail to: 74144.103@compuserve.com

All other trail correspondence should be addressed:

**MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
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MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL PHONE NUMBERS:

For information: 412-831-2030

**For administration and
business: 412-257-2328**

Newsletter Editor Tim M. Killmeyer

Circulation Manager Jerry Agin

The Montour Trail Council is an *all volunteer* organization founded in 1989 to convert the abandoned Montour Railroad right of way and the abandoned Peters Creek Branch of the Pennsylvania Railroad into a fifty-five mile recreational trail for non-motorized activity regardless of physical ability or financial wherewithal.

EDITOR'S OBSERVATIONS

O.K., summer is over. Little League is finished. You've had your vacation and there is no more overtime at work because everyone else is back from vacation too. What are you going to do with all that spare time - sit around and watch Brady Bunch re-runs on Nickelodeon? Why not take one evening a month to show your concern about something that you use all the time - the Montour Trail? Why not come down to one of our board meetings some time? That's where all the big decisions are made. "Should we build here?" "Should we build there?" "Should we buy a new weed whacker?" "Should we pay for porta-potties along the Trail?" You know - all the really big decisions.

Seriously though, the nuts and bolts of what is and what will be the Montour Trail is put together at the board meetings, and you as a member of the Montour Trail Council are entitled and invited to attend. It was not and is not our intention to be one of those "cliqueish" groups. We are all volunteers and welcome any advice, criticisms, suggestions, etc. from our fellow members. (And we often get it.)

The meetings begin at 6:00pm every third Monday of the month. They are held on the second floor of 441 Smithfield St., right across from Kaufmann's Dept. Store. You can come late or leave early. But don't worry about dinner. Some of the people bring up food for themselves from the little smorgasborg shop on the first floor of the building. The rest of us kick in five bucks each to order pizza and soft drinks to be delivered right to the room.

If Mondays are bad, you might consider lending a hand with one of our local friends groups. Each one meets at a different time and place and each one has a work party on a different Saturday. You don't have to attend the meeting to go to the Work party and visa versa, but you might want to call before you come on a Saturday just to verify the meeting place and time. The times and locations are listed in the calendar on the next page.

If you can't make any of those, you can still write or e-mail your views, good and bad, to this publication at the address on the left. It'll save me from having to fill this space. 8-)

Tim



Letters



THE MONTOUR TRAIL-LETTER welcomes all questions and comments. Please send all correspondence to the address on the left.

September						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

Calendar

October						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

- ♦ **MTC Board Meeting**, every **third Monday** of the month - Second floor of 441 Smithfield St. across from Kaufmann's, 6:00pm. All MTC members are welcome to attend. Call Jack at 221-7708 for more information or to get on the agenda.
- ♦ **Cecil Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **first Tuesday** of the month - in the Boy Scout room at the Cecil American Legion, Rt. 50, 7:30. Call 221-6406
- ♦ **Work & Clean-up party**, Cecil segment, every **third Saturday** of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Kernick Tract parking area. Call 221-6406 for more information.
- ♦ **Moon/Robinson Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **second Thursday** of the month at 7:00. At the All Occasion Catering party room near the intersection of Silver Lane and Clever Rd.s in Robinson Twp. Anyone from the communities near Moon and Robinson are encouraged to attend. Call 859-3020 more information.
- ♦ **Work & Clean-up party**, Moon/Robinson segment, every **second Saturday** of the month - 9:00am. Meet at North Star Petroleum (Formerly Robinson Petroleum). Call 262-3748 for more information.
- ♦ **Findlay/ North Fayette Friends of the Trail meeting**, every **third Wednesday** of the month, at 7:00. Held at the West Allegheny Community Library. Anyone from the communities around Findlay and North Fayette are encouraged to attend. Call Fred at 695-0134 for more information.
- ♦ **Work & Clean-up party**, Findlay/North Fayette segment, every **forth Saturday** of the month - 9:00 am. Meet at the Enlow Ballfield. Call 695-2354 for more information.
- ♦ **Trail construction preparation** - South Park Twp. Every **Monday evening** at 6:00 until segment is completed. Meet at the site of the future CoGo's at the intersection of Brownsville Rd. and Piney Forks Rd. Call 831-8304 for more information.
- ♦ **MTC Annual Meeting** - Sunday, December 3. Details to be included in the next **TRAIL-LETTER**. Mark this day on your calendar now!

Pittsburgh Cares cares about the Montour Trail

by Dave Wright

On Saturday, July 22, 1995, four volunteers from Pittsburgh Cares assisted me in clearing debris from under the Library Trestle in South Park Township. Sarah Hartman, Gerri Rosenblatt, Linda Gonzalez, and their leader, Sarah Walfoort cut trees and removed dirt and trash piled-up against a steel bridge member. Trail Council volunteers had already cleared much of the area around the other bridge members. The trees and trash need to be removed to allow the bridge steel to dry.

Pittsburgh Cares offers volunteers for a variety of projects, including working with troubled teenagers, hospitals, house-building, shelters, the physically disabled and the homebound. Their office is in the Oliver building on Smithfield St. and their telephone number is 471-2114.

Lawrence Fulton, owner of the adjacent Rite-Aid Pharmacy property, came by and offered to chip the branches we had cut. He said that if we marked the trees that needed to be cleared, he would have his workers cut them and chip the branches. We may also load trash from under the bridge into his dumpster at the Rite-Aid store. ♦

Radio equipment donation deserves kudos

by Bill Morphy

The MTC received an equipment donation of \$8000 value from **Kyodo West**, U.S.A. distributor in Canonsburg Pa. The owners are **Tom and Pat Steiner**, who gave us brand new 2-way radio equipment, (6) walkies and (1) mobile radio.

The **Kyodo West** radios are high quality commercial units like you might see your police use. They operate on our radio repeater system, licensed by the FCC, recently installed on top of the new water tower in Robinson Twp. (see newsletter May \ June). Besides being able to communicate to or from any point of the trail in Moon, Robinson, Findlay, N.Fayette, and Cecil, they allow MTC officials to discuss trail business details from home or work. We also hope to someday use the radios to have some sort of routine safety patrol of the trail by volunteers.

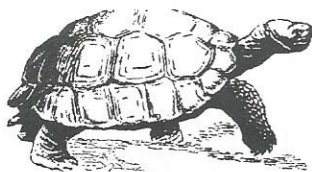
We thank the Steiners for having made a very generous donation to the Trail and our communities. ♦

Let that terrapin alone!!!

Numerous turtles have been spotted on and around the Montour Trail. It is up to all of us to ask people not to remove them from their natural habitat. This article from **ROOTS**, the newsletter of The Hollow Oak Land Trust tells us why.

Turtle Alert

Remember those cute turtles you used to find in your backyard? Ever wonder where they've been hiding recently? In dwindling numbers, they've been fighting for survival.



Box turtles reproduce slowly. They lay few eggs and most are lost to weather and predators. When a hatchling does survive, its chances of reaching adulthood are slim. It takes 10 - 15 years for a turtle to mature and reproduce. Statistically, a turtle has a slim chance of successfully producing offspring during its 100 year lifespan. Rapid land development and disturbed habitat have left this species in a struggle for survival. We need to find ways to balance the growth of our community with the needs of wildlife that already call our undeveloped land sites home.

Why are box turtles an important part of our environment? Turtles are important seed dispensers for a variety of forest plants. They are also an asset to the farmer and the backyard gardener. Pests such as snails and other invertebrates are part of the turtles diet. We must also appreciate their pure aesthetic value - they are a part of the natural community in which we live.

Here in the Montour Valley, there are still areas where the box turtle survives. It is important that we continue our land conservation efforts to help preserve the turtles' habitat and let the children of tomorrow share in the excitement of seeing a turtle in the wild. In addition: **If you are lucky** enough to spot one, leave it in the wild, do not take it home to keep as a pet. **If you see one** on the road or Trail, help it across, don't run over it. **Stay aware of** what is in front of you when you are mowing the lawn. Turtles are often victims of mowing accidents. ♦

Take the Montour Trail to the Cecil Indian Summer Festival

by Don Berty

The Cecil Friends of the Montour Trail will man a booth for the two day Indian Summer Festival on September 23 and 24. The festival is held in Cecil Township Municipal Park on Rt. 50 near Venice. The ramp at the trailhead drops down into the park.

The Friends group will be providing

information, passing out brochures and Trail Guides, promoting membership and accepting donations. A \$10.00 donation will receive a free walking stick.

This is the 8th annual festival and the 4th year that the Montour Trail Council has provided information to the public.

The festival starts at noon on

Volunteer profile: Meet George M. Marcovich III

by Stan Sattinger

By building on a practice begun by his late father, George T. Marcovich III has shown himself to be a true supporter of the Montour Trail. Shortly after the completion of the Cecil segment of the Trail, George's father, acting on his own initiative, began to regularly cut the trailside grass along the length of Trail bounding his property at Dacor Dr. After his father passed away in 1993, George not only continued the volunteer effort but gradually began mowing a longer and longer portion of the Trail, reaching a present distance of about 1.5 miles. Georges care for the Trail is not limited to mowing, as he also manicures the grass around gates, fencing and mileposts.



photo by Don Berty

George does this grass cutting while he is between shifts working as a warehouseman for E. W. Tire and as a fuel attendant for Weavertown Transport. We can continue to take pride in the Montour Trail because of the willingness of people like George to give of their own time and energy to keep it looking its best. ♦

Saturday and continuous entertainment all day will climax with a fireworks display. Sunday starts with breakfast and the main attraction will be the Billy Price Band. Both days will feature craft and food booths, a petting zoo, horse drawn buggy rides, hot air balloon rides and helicopter rides, plus fun for the kids. ♦

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| ☆ Paul Bahr | ☆ Barbara Moore |
| ☆ Sarah J. Beck | ☆ Sharon Newman |
| ☆ Cynthia Cochenour | ☆ Demetra Pappas |
| ☆ Marjorie H. Connor | ☆ Steve & Tracy Parrella |
| ☆ Roger C. DuBois | ☆ Ed Quigley |
| ☆ Robert C. Eddins, Esq. | ☆ Lee & Rosalind |
| ☆ Kathie K. Godwin | Rosenblum |
| ☆ Glen Gold | ☆ Jerry Sherman |
| ☆ James Goldsmith | ☆ Steven P. Sibenik |
| ☆ John J. Haney | ☆ Thresa P. Sukaly |
| ☆ Terry & Jini Hawk | ☆ Bernard G. Swegman |
| ☆ Kimberly J. Hoover | |
| ☆ Grace Kim | |
| ☆ Mr. & Mrs. Edward J. Krall, Jr. | |
| ☆ Mr. & Mrs. Michael J. Lisk | |
| ☆ Matt Mayhew | |
| ☆ Mark D. Miller | |

The Montour Trail Council would like to welcome these new members and thank them for their support. We would also like to thank all our members who have renewed their membership and remind all that a growing membership is one of the criteria foundations look for when we apply for grants. ◆

Yes, I want to help build the Montour Trail!

- ☐ I want to spread the word. Please send me additional flyers.
- ☐ I have written my Legislator and County Commissioners asking them to support the trail.
- ☐ My organization would like to provide a letter of endorsement.
- ☐ I know a group interested in a presentation.
- ☐ I wish to become a member of the Montour Trail Council.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> STUDENT | \$5 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> INDIVIDUAL | \$15 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAMILY | \$25 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ORGANIZATION | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUPPORTING | \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SUSTAINING | \$100 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BENEFACTOR | \$250 + up |

(Membership is tax deductible)

- ☐ I wish to make an additional tax deductible contribution of \$_____ to the Montour Trail Council to help make the Montour Trail a reality.

(Make your check payable to the Montour Trail Council)

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (day time) _____ (evening) _____

By applying for membership in the Montour Trail Council, I indicate my support of its goals.

SIGNATURE _____

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling tollfree, within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.

Please fill out this application and return it with your check to:

MONTOUR TRAIL COUNCIL
P.O. BOX 11866
PITTSBURGH PA. 15228-0866

DON'T FORGET! The Montour Trail Council may be designated as your United Way Contributor Choice option #3308 where you work.

United Way Contributor Choice

**Program set
to begin
where you
work!**

The Montour Trail
Council continues to be among

the agencies that are approved to receive donations under the United Way Contributors Choice Option. This means that once again, when the United Way volunteer at your business or corporation comes around to solicit from you, you can direct that a certain percentage of your United Way contributions for the coming year go to the Montour Trail Council. Just list Contributor Choice Option #3308 on the form you will be asked to fill out.

In the past, gifts to the Montour Trail via Contributors Choice have amounted to several thousand dollars per year. Please remember the Montour Trail and request option #3308 during the upcoming United Way pledge campaign at your work-place this fall. ◆

MTC hosts the Tour de MERCY

by Stan Sattinger

The Montour Trail Council put on a festive "Focus Day" on July 8 to welcome participants in the Pittsburgh Mercy Foundation's series of area trail events known as the Tour de Mercy. The Mercy Foundation had earlier worked with eight Western Pennsylvania trail groups to organize eight separate events promoting rail-trails as resources for wellness, fitness, and family fun. Proceeds from mileage pledges are benefitting programs in the Pittsburgh Mercy Health System for at-risk youths and families.

Included in the Montour Trail Focus Day activities were health and recreation-

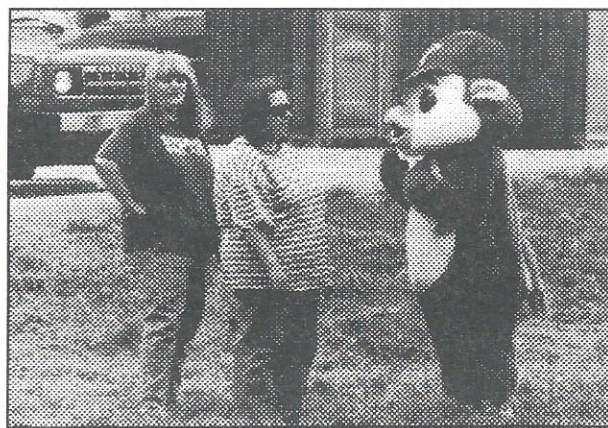


related demonstrations, including the Blue Cross/Blue Shield HealthPLACE and a bike clinic conducted by Bike Line. There were also displays assembled by outdoor-interest groups, games for children, food and beverages, and the music of the "Steel Impressions" steel drum band. Sponsors of our Focus Day included Michael and Lynn McCarthy and children, Integra Bank, PNC Bank, and the Tonidale Restaurant

Event co-chairs Dennis Pfeiffer, Arnie Schulberg and I wish to thank the following volunteers who helped to organize and publicize the Montour Trail Focus Day: Ray Calfo; Tom Fix; Judy Fritz; Karen Joos; Frank Keppel; Tim Killmeyer; Paul McKeown; Bill Morphy; Dick Quasey; Maggie Posey; Nancy Reed; Stan Siranovich; and Bill Zinn. We also wish to thank Findlay Township Police Chief Paul Wilks and Manager Gary Klingman as well as the members of the Moon/Robinson Friends of the Montour Trail for their help in preparing this event. ♦



Photos, previous page. (far left): George Schmidt of the Western Pennsylvania Wheelmen discusses cycling with a guest. (top): The Caring Cub, T Carnegie Rex, and Snoop Doggy Dog get acquainted. (middle): Tom Fix (sitting) explains adaptive bicycles and skis. (bottom): The "Steel Impressions" makin' wi' de island sound, mon.



Photos, this page. (left): Bertha Hayes (with hand raised) and members of the Hollow Oak Land Trust putting on the push to conserve land in the Montour Run Valley to enhance the "Trail experience." (Top) Willy Y tries to make a point with two friends of the Trail.

All photos by Tim Killmeyer

Order form for the Incredible Inch Campaign

Disclaimer: You won't actually own a piece of the Montour Trail, but we appreciate your donation.

The whole Montour Trail is now "for sale". All 3,484,800 inches of it. Buy it by the inch, foot, yard, rod, meter, furlong, mile or league. It is all the same reasonable price; a buck an inch. That's right, **a buck an inch!** And your inches run the whole ten foot width of the trail (that's 120 inches wide).

You can be creative: add up the

height of your entire family and buy that many inches of trail, or measure the length of your whole family's feet. How long is your dog? Buy his length in inches of trail. Or, if your a little short, just buy the length of his tail. And they make great gifts for that active friend. If we "sold" every inch of trail, it would pay for the whole thing.

For your money, you will receive a genuine, simulated hand-lettered, faux-embossed, 8 1/2 x 11 inch official looking "deed" (suitable for framing), that will proudly proclaim your ownership of the trail (with the requisite fineprint). This beautiful document will show the total number of inches you "own" and the township in which they are located.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE _____ ZIP _____

NUMBER OF INCHES _____

CIRCLE THE COMMUNITY THAT YOU WOULD LIKE NAMED ON YOUR "DEED":

Please fill out this form and return it with your check to:
MTC INCREDIBLE INCH CAMPAIGN
1060 STANFORD RD.
PITTSBURGH PA. 15205

USE
the
COUPON

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ROBINSON TWP. (ALLEG.)

FINDLAY TOWNSHIP

NORTH FAYETTE TWP.

ROBINSON TWP. (WASH.)

MT. PLEASANT TWP.

CECIL TOWNSHIP

PETERS TOWNSHIP

SOUTH PARK TWP.

JEFFERSON BORO

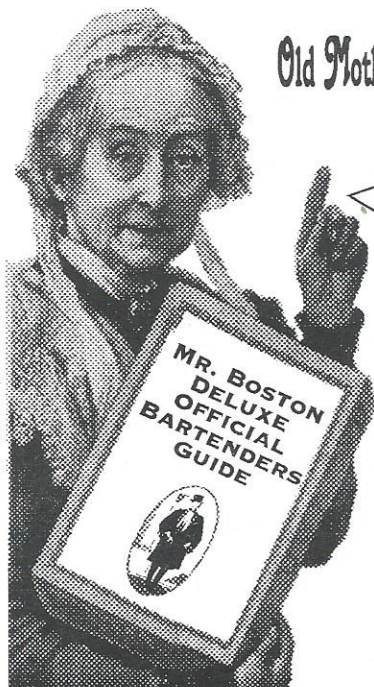
CLAIRTON

BETHEL PARK

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Old Mother Montour sez:

No Kamikazes
for me at THIS
year's Annual
Meeting banquet.
I'm just getting
over last year!

8

Rules or Common Sense

by Tim Killmeyer

When the directors of the Montour Trail

Council first sat down to work out the rules for the Trail, they tried to limit the "official" rules to things that would not be readily apparent to the average user. It was agreed to limit the rules to the 10 things that most affect the safety of the Trail user and the well being of the Trail.

Rail-trails are a new experience for lots

people, many of whom have only the experience of negotiating 5th Ave. at lunchtime or the mall at Christmas-time to compare. Bicyclists have to completely rethink their style after being on the defensive all the time on our streets. Rail-trails sometimes don't have the safety net of lots of room to maneuver. In other words, we must re-educate ourselves and others to new ways of sharing the trail. This is critical as more and more people begin to realize the benefits of rail-trails. And the education process must start now before the problems grow. So please take a minute to familiarize yourselves with the Trail Rules

- **Be Courteous** - All trail users, including bicyclists, walkers, joggers, and users of wheelchairs should be respectful of other users regardless of their mode of travel, speed, or skill level.
- **Yield when entering the trail.** - When entering or crossing a trail at trail intersections, yield to traffic on the cross trail or road. This is often the most dangerous point on the trail.
- **Be Predictable** - Walk and ride straight and to the right. Indicate when you are turning or passing. Warn other trail users of your intentions.
- **Do not block the trail** - When with your

Sharing the Trail

that duplicate our own Trail Rules.)

- **The Ohio Bicycle Advisory Council** has issued this set of "User Guidelines" because if you follow the same set of rules as everybody else, everyone will have a more enjoyable time. (We have not included the ones that duplicate our own Trail Rules.)
- **No alcohol or drugs** - You often need to react quickly. Not only is it unsafe, it is against the law for a bicyclist to be under the influence of alcohol.
- **Clean up litter** - Do not leave glass, paper, cans, or any other debris along the trail. If you drop something please pick it up until you find a litter receptacle.
- **Take out more than you bring in.** Move pet droppings off of trail surface.
- **Have you outgrown trails?** - Trails have engineering and design limitations. If your bicycling speed or style is endangering other users, look for alternative routes better suited to your needs. Selecting the right location is safer and more enjoyable for all concerned.

