

# **ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROGRAM **HANDBOOK****

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A Practical Guide to Trail Maintenance in Provo



## Introduction

One of Provo's greatest assets is its geographic location. With the majestic Wasatch Mountain range forming the city's eastern boundary and Provo River running through the city to Utah Lake on the west, Provo has uncommon natural beauty and offers a wide variety of outdoor recreation opportunities.

In order to provide recreation opportunities and to preserve public access to these wonderful natural areas, the Provo Parks and Recreation Department is continuing to develop a system interconnecting trails. Provo City has developed partnerships with the US Forest Service, Utah state government agencies, local businesses, philanthropic organizations and hundreds of citizen volunteers to make these trails possible.

Trail Maintenance is the responsibility of each individual that uses the trail. Unfortunately, many trails are often taken for granted. Over the past few years, there has been an increase in the trail usage of public lands and in particular Trails. Greater numbers of people are spending more time hiking, walking, jogging, bicycling, horseback riding, skating, etc... The frequent use of these trails has increased the amount of time required for maintenance to be done. With out proper maintenance and clean up, the trails will deteriorate and become cluttered. The clearing of downed trees, brush, or trash is an important element in trail maintenance.

In order to keep the trails free from debris and in good repair, Provo City Parks has implemented an Adopt-A-Trail program. This program was developed in order to give practical guidance for routine trail maintenance. Through this program, volunteers work with Provo City Parks and assume responsibility for the basic maintenance and clean up of a selected trail head or trail section. This way those of us who use the trails can share in there stewardship and insure they remain safe, minimally obstructed to the environment, and recreationally satisfying.

## Trails in Provo

- ✓ Provo River Parkway Trail
- ✓ Bonneville Shoreline Trail
- ✓ College Connector Trail
- ✓ Big Springs Loop Trail
- ✓ Y-Mount Trailhead
- ✓ Indian Road Trailhead

## The Adopt-A-Trail Program

The Maintenance of a trail is the cooperative responsibility between the adopting party and the appropriate public agency. Groups, families, or individuals interested in the Adopt-A Trail program should contact Provo City Parks & Recreation at 852-6600 or Provo City Parks Volunteer Service Coordinator at 852-7607 for more information.

The adoption begins with an introduction to the duties and responsibilities of the adopters. Information on which trails are available for adoption and how difficult the trail is to hike is given to the potential adopters in advance. We also will provide orientation.

Some trails are divided into sections. These sections make maintenance easier by various groups. A one-year trail maintenance agreement is signed for the chosen trail or section. This one-year commitment must be taken seriously. Early termination may leave a trail with out maintenance. It is important that the trails are kept up. Maintenance on a trail is much easier and less costly than rebuilding or repairing a trail.

The Adopt-A-Trail program has four main goals

1. To maintain trails and to provide an enjoyable recreational experience for the hiker;
2. To help keep trails clear and free from debris in order to have a safe and pleasing passage;
3. To help insure that the trails and it's users have minimal impact on the environment;
4. To provide awareness to the public about the importance of trail maintenance and public land.

These goals are an essential part of the Adopt-A-Trail program. Both volunteers and Provo City Parks & Recreation are responsible for insuring that these goals are met.

## **Adopter Responsibilities**

### ***Basic Maintenance***

- Clearing , cleaning and repairing of all trails, trail head and parking areas
- Reporting of blocked areas, damage or parts of the trail that may require major repair or reconstruction to Provo City Parks & Recreation
- Basic maintenance which may include working with the Provo City Parks Department on major slide material removal, tread maintenance, and trail realignment or reconstruction. And other construction as needed.
- Maintenance is generally done two or three times per year. A suggested maintenance schedule may go as follows:
  1. Start with a late spring hike to pick up trash and check the trail conditions;
  2. Hold monthly service projects, and check your adopted section bi-weekly.
  3. In mid to late fall do a winter preparation and clean up.
- Work days will be scheduled in advance with Provo City Parks Department Volunteer Services Coordinator. This advance notice allows for the reservation and distribution of maintenance equipment and garbage pick up.
- Choose a **Maintenance Coordinator** to work with the Provo City Parks Department Volunteer Services Coordinator as a central contact person.

### ***Maintenance Coordinator Responsibilities***

- Works with Provo City Parks Department Volunteer Services Coordinator to organize specific projects, general maintenance, and training regarding tools, safety and specialized equipment usage.
- Completes the volunteer form, "Volunteer Services Information Recording Form," as for the names of all volunteers, and hours worked to Provo City Parks Department.
- Insures that someone in the group has emergency first aid knowledge and that a first aid kit is readily available.
- Reports any major damage or repairs that the trail needs to Provo City Parks Department.

## **Provo City Parks & Recreation Responsibilities**

### ***Volunteer Services Coordinator***

- Records the amount and the type of equipment that is checked out to each group and insures that the equipment is returned in good condition.
- Arranges for more difficult maintenance that is outside the volunteer group's work scope.

## ***Training***

- Provide a basic tour and orientation of trail. Point out key areas and basic trail maintenance.
- Provo City Parks Dept. Volunteer Services Coordinator (VSC) makes provisions for awareness, orientation and training sessions. These sessions include general maintenance techniques. Rules and regulations, specific trail information, and safety training for the use of tools.

## **Trail Aesthetics and Anatomy**

A good trail layout and proper maintenance should provide the hiker with a safe and pleasant journey. Enjoyable sights inspire and revitalize hikers, thus adding to the enjoyment of the out-of-doors.

Most trails curve and meander across a hillside. When re-routing or building a trail, let a trail follow the natural curves of the area. Avoid building long straight stretches; instead pick a route consisting of gentle curves and short straight sections. Pleasing access into natural areas, with minimal impact on the environment, is one of the goals of the Adopt-A-Trail program. The trail should blend into its surroundings and provide consistent climbing or varying levels of difficulty whenever possible.

Some trails may have signs or plaques describing the area. These places need to be checked for damage or vandalism. Check with Provo City Parks Dept. Volunteer Services Coordinator for information regarding the specific cultural or historical features on your adopted trail.

## **Basic Maintenance**

Basic maintenance includes repairing erosions, clearing the passageway, litter control and removal, multiple trail prevention, fire ring removal, vandalism removal, and signs.

### ***Erosion Repair***

The trail tread packs down from usage and resists water absorption. The water will puddle or travel downhill and cause erosion. This type of erosion can quickly damage a trail tread.

Look for loose stone that cause poor footing. Loose stones and gravel are the first signs of trail erosion. Take care of drainage problems as soon as they occur and it will prevent further erosion.

- Remove logs/debris from outside edge of trail if they are hindering run off.
- Remember; report any major damage to a Provo Parks & Recreation representative.



### ***Clearing the Passageway and Restoring Tread***

- The removal of brush, trees, and vegetation from the passageway insures safety.
- Remove rocks over 3 inches in diameter, if they interfere with a safe passageway.
- Fill ruts and holes with native rock or gravel and compact firmly.
- Return trail to its proper width
- Remove berms from the outside edge of trail.

### ***Litter Control and Removal***

Litter control is an important part of the Adopt-A-Trail program. Help keep an area clean and free from litter by removing all litter from the trail and its surroundings. Place the litter in sturdy garbage bags and carry the litter to the nearest garbage can or to the place specified by the Parks Department Representative for the litter pick up.

### ***Multiple Trails***

Often trails become eroded and hikers will avoid using the original trail thus creating multiple trails. (Watch for switch back cuts) Report multiple trails to the Provo City Parks Representative. Given time there are several ways to heal and correct multiple trails. The Parks department will decide which trail to keep and appropriate procedures for removing and blocking unwanted trails.

### ***Fire-ring Removal***

Remove all fire debris and unapproved fire rings. If the fire rings are made of large boulders from the immediate area scatter the rocks in several different directions. Brush the ground so that the moisture will be able to penetrate the packed surfaces more easily.

### ***Signs***

Signs are provided for a variety of reasons: to aid in direction, to clarify a land marking or historical point of interest, or to give information about different points of reference. In order to maintain signs, the following is the suggested procedure:

- Check all signs to make sure that they are straight and attached properly.
- Secure and reset sign posts as needed.
- Clear vegetation around the sign.
- Report any vandalism or missing signs.
- Paint or varnish as needed.

### **Safety and First Aid**

SAFETY IS THE FIRST AND FORMOST IMPORTANT PART OF ANY ADOPT-A-TRAIL PROGRAM.



### 1. Start with safety first

- Think safety first in how you improve a site, how you work, and how you safeguard others
- Adopt a trail within your capabilities.
- Become familiar with the trails individual hazards.
- **If it's not safe don't do it.**

### 2. Use protective personal gear, clothing and safety equipment

- Wear lightweight hiking boots
- Long-sleeved shirts and long pants will protect you from the sun, poisonous plants, branches, and help reduce water loss.
- A hat will help protect you from the sun.
- Wear loose-fitting, light-colored clothing.
- Gloves will protect your hands from abrasions.
- Eye protection is necessary when using equipment and will protect you from flying objects and protruding branches.
- When using power tools follow all of the previous guidelines and include hard hats, heavier leg protection, ear plugs and safety-toe-boots.
- Bring sunscreen and bug repellent.
- Bring a first aid kit (one designated person)
- Have someone in your group carry with them a compass, matches, map, extra clothing, food, nylon rope, and a small flashlight.

### 3. Eliminate area hazards / Trail Maintenance

- Be extra cautious on hazardous footing such as loose rock, branches, vines, slippery moss or clay surfaces.
- Before starting work, remove obstacles and debris from your working space overhead, underfoot, and in tool swing area.
- Place tools and materials aside where they don't present a hazard.
- Take a firm, balanced and comfortable stance before using a tool.

### ***Smart Precautions***

Planning is the key to success. Volunteers should have someone in the group that has basic first aid knowledge. Volunteers should become familiar with local poisonous plants and aggressive animals. A few basic principals should be followed in order to insure the safety and prevent the use of emergency first aid:

- Bring water.

### **Trail Etiquette**

#### ***Major (Urban) Trails***

***Walkers have the right of way; skaters, then bikers are next in line.***