



# Discover America

Newsletter of the American Discovery Trail Society

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## ADT Featured Trail: Crag Crest National Recreation Trail



*A view of Grand Mesa from the Crag Crest National Recreation Trail*

High on the Grand Mesa, in western Colorado between Grand Junction and Delta, lies a rocky trail that is a good reminder of why hiking is a glorious activity. The Crag Crest National Recreation Trail juts above the world's largest flat-topped mountain to reach 11,189 feet in elevation and reveal views that extend in all directions. To the south and east are the San Juan and West Elk mountain ranges, to the west is the Uncompahgre Plateau with views into Utah on a clear day, and northward are the Colorado River Canyon and the multicolored edges of the Book Cliffs and Roan Cliffs.

The Crag Crest Trail, designated a national recreation trail in 1978, is a 10.3-mile circular trail consisting of the crest portion and a loop portion. The American Discovery Trail utilizes only the 6.5-mile crest portion for its route. Due to the narrow trail and at times steep, rocky drop-offs on both sides, the crest portion is restricted to foot travel only. Foot, mountain bike, and horse travel are allowed on the loop portion and on the crest

portion between the West Trailhead and the Cottonwood Lakes Trail junction. Motor vehicles are prohibited on all portions of the Crag Crest Trail.

The crest of the trail is 1,000 feet higher than the mesa below. It rises more steeply from the East Trailhead than from the West Trailhead. Due to its exposed nature, it is advisable to get an early start to avoid afternoon thunderstorms.

The trail traverses through thick stands of fir and pine, and open meadows of tall grass and wildflowers before climbing to the rocky crags. Quaking aspens can be found among the conifers to offer a colorful contrast to the darker evergreens—light green in summer and bright yellow in autumn.

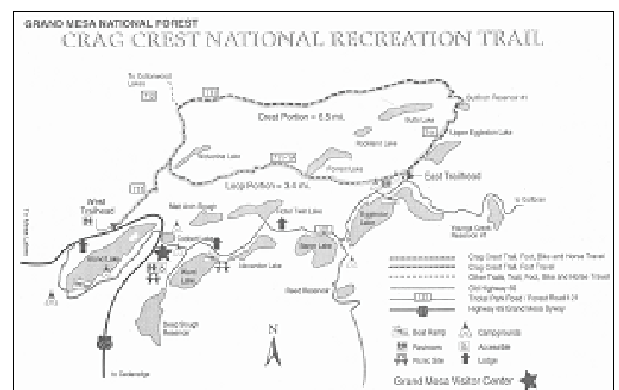
There is abundant wildlife in the vicinity. Large and small mammals range from deer and elk to fox, marmots, snowshoe rabbits, and mice. The forested areas are home to a variety of birds including woodpeckers, grouse, hawks, and hummingbirds.

Grand Mesa itself looms almost 6,000 feet above the surrounding countryside. The plateau, which is roughly the size of Rhode Island, exists because as many as 25 different lava flows occurred there millions of years ago. The hardened lava, sometimes as deep as 600 feet, protected the mountain from erosion during the long ago Ice Age and left an island in the sky that is popular with Colorado residents escaping the heat of the lower elevations on summer weekends. Others are drawn by the abundant fishing opportunities offered by more than 300 crystal blue lakes.

During the winter, this area can see snow packed to a depth of 5 to 10 feet enticing people on cross-country skis, snowshoes, or snowmobiles in some areas.

During the week, there is usually a good selection of spacious camping spots available in the dozen scenic U.S. Forest Service campgrounds. The Crag Crest Campground, adjacent to the East Trailhead, has drinking water and restrooms.

Whether you are looking for beautiful vistas, a moderate but challenging hike, solitude, or a chance to see wildlife, the Crag Crest National Recreation Trail has something to offer you.



## House Bill H.R. 74—National Discovery Trails Act

Our legislative effort to amend the National Trails System Act to authorize a new category of long-distance trails to be known as National Discovery Trails, and to designate the American Discovery Trail as the first of these new trails, was renewed on the first day of the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress when Rep. Roscoe Bartlett of Maryland introduced H.R. 74, the National Discovery Trails Act.

Rep. Bartlett has sent a “Dear Colleague” letter to all 435 members of the House of Representatives inviting them to become co-sponsors of H.R. 74 and assist him in “creating a nationwide system of interconnected pathways with the American Discovery Trail as its backbone.” Reese Lukei, ADT Society vice president, notes that “the national discovery trails legislation has always been a bipartisan issue, and we have always sought and welcomed cosponsors from both parties.” This could be the year that the legislation passes both the House and the Senate, **if we can demonstrate enough grassroots support.**

**You can help!** Ask your representative to become a co-sponsor of H.R. 74. The ADTS website – [www.discoverytrail.org/news/issues](http://www.discoverytrail.org/news/issues) – contains information to help you do just that, including how to contact your representative and sample letters that you can modify to add your personal touch. You can view H.R. 74 and get your representative’s address at <http://thomas.loc.gov>. Hard copy letters or phone calls often receive more attention than e-mails, but a quick e-mail letter can also help if that is all you have time to do. Ask your friends and family to do the same. The more people who contact their representatives, the better our chances.

### Why We Need this Legislation

Here are the basics on this important legislation to help you craft your letter to your member of congress. Let’s all work together to make 2007 the year this legislation passes!

#### *Why support the National Discovery Trail Act?*

The American Discovery Trail benefits local areas by attracting tourist dollars and bringing national visibility.

It benefits the country by connecting five national scenic, nine national historic, and 29 national recreation trails. It is the backbone of the national trails system.

It benefits our citizens’ health by providing outdoor opportunities to keep fit, burn calories, and fight obesity. It brings a national trail to a huge population because some 32 million people live within 20 miles of the trail.

The ADT is a public-private partnership that is cost-effective with the vast majority of the work being done by volunteers.

The presence of the ADT has resulted in many local trails being developed.

#### *What does the act do?*

It amends the National Trails System Act to create a new category of long-distance trails called national discovery trails and designates the ADT as the first trail under that category.

#### *Why create a new category of national trails?*

A National Park Service study recommended this because the American Discovery Trail fills an important spot in the National Trails System but it doesn’t fit into the traditional categories of national scenic or national historic trail. Discovery trails are different because they emphasize accessibility to more people by deliberate routing through small towns and major metropolitan areas, providing trails close to the homes of all Americans.

#### *Why do we want this designation?*

It brings unique qualities to the National Trails System by supplying connections that are currently missing.

We need the designation to fully mark the ADT. Without it, we are in legal limbo and many federal and other land managers will not allow us to mark the trail on lands they administer.

This designation adds legitimacy and visibility to the trail. Becoming part of the National Trails System will enhance the ADT’s eligibility for technical assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program.

The legislation is not a question of land acquisition, but of designation and recognition. The American Discovery Trail follows existing trails, country lanes, and towpaths. It is already almost entirely on public land. The few exceptions are by landowner invitation on existing rights-of-way or agreement, such as Indiana’s Cardinal Greenway, which is owned by a non-profit organization with the mission of making the trail accessible to the public.

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THE OUTDOORS AT YOUR DOORSTEP

**Backpacker Magazine:  
A founding sponsor of the  
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**Many thanks to The Coleman Company for its  
continued support of the American Discovery Trail!**

# Trail News

## Ohio

By Patrick Hayes

I hosted the American Discovery Trail Society booth at a much expanded and very well attended event the weekend of Jan. 27–28 at the Wright State University Student Union in Dayton, Ohio. The second year for this annual event drew good crowds both days to hear featured presentations by such notable outdoor adventurers as: Craig Luebben, climber, mountaineer, photographer, author, and world traveler; Bill Miller, climber, photographer, professional adventure traveler, and guide; and Eric Jackson, world freestyle champion kayaker and owner of Jackson Kayaks. An additional 38 outdoor enthusiasts also gave presentations or demonstrations on a wide range of topics over the two days. The major problem was finding the time to attend all the presentations and demonstrations that piqued your interest, because there were at least five going on at once.

Many people stopped at our display and asked questions about the ADTS and took our literature. Many of the attendees had never heard of the American Discovery Trail, so events like the Miami Valley Adventure Summit are great opportunities for us to spread the word about our trail and the possibilities it offers.

## Iowa

ADT Society board member and Iowa ADT state coordinator, Tom Neenan, was honored as an outstanding volunteer at the “9 Who Care Jefferson Awards” banquet on Jan. 27 in Cedar Rapids. KCRG-TV9 and other Show You Care sponsors presented Neenan and eight others with \$500 for their favorite charities. Profiles of their volunteer work were featured in the news and in a half hour television special.

Tom Neenan of Cedar Point has been the volunteer director of the Iowa Trails Council for 22 years and can account for 10,000 acres put to public use across the state.

Additionally, the Iowa Trails Council

recently published a colorful new brochure to publicize the trails in the state. The American Discovery Trail and its logo are featured prominently and, if you look closely, you will find ADT Society Director Susan Henley enjoying a hike on a trail in Iowa.

## Indiana

By Ron Craig

The Indianapolis Hiking Club, a longtime supporter of the American Discovery Trail and the home club of one of its Indiana coordinators, Swati Gunale, is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary during 2007. The club, which was founded by a handful of members on Jan. 23, 1957, has grown to a 700 member organization sponsoring 1200 hikes a year. Celebration activities during the year will include cake at the state-house in honor of Indianapolis Hiking Club Day, a large banquet with an original member in attendance, and of course, many commemorative hikes; some not done in many years. After 50 years, the club still seeks to fulfill its original motto of “Happiness—A Step At A Time.”

Also, this past year a new section of trail took the ADT off a road in Dearborn County in southeastern Indiana. The paved trail runs between the towns of Aurora and Lawrenceburg along the Ohio River. The trail includes a refurbished 1882 iron truss bridge over a creek. Future connections are planned to Greendale.

## Nebraska

Construction has begun on the big Missouri River pedestrian bridge that will connect Nebraska and Iowa and become part of the ADT route. Despite freezing winter temperatures, digging of the foundation began for the first of the two planned 204-foot high triangular concrete towers.

The towers will hold the 44 cables that will support the bridge. A special 300-foot-long temporary trestle had to be built to support the cranes that are needed to dig the hole into the bedrock below the riverbed to support the second pylon. The winter weather will not affect the setting

of the concrete because deep in the bedrock the temperature remains a constant 55 degrees.

## Colorado

Harv Hisgen, assistant ADT coordinator for Colorado, attended the Santa Fe Trail Association meeting and rendezvous in Larned, Kansas. At that meeting, the ADT Society and the SFTA formed an alliance to study possible cooperative future projects.

Of the meeting, Hisgen writes, “I had the pleasure on Saturday last to dine and make the acquaintance of the modern-day Libby Custer, the wife of Gen. George Custer, at Fort Larned. Yes, the Custers were residents on the path of the American Discovery Trail and Libby was a quite knowledgeable re-enactor.”

“A Pike bicentennial celebration broke out. Lt. Zebulon Pike was the first American to explore what was to become much of the path of the American Discovery Trail and the Santa Fe Trail. Many of you know that the southern route of the ADT is contiguous with the Santa Fe Trail from St. Louis to Old Franklin, Mo., and from Old Franklin all the way to La Junta, Colo. Pike’s path was further contiguous with the ADT all the way to Canon City, Colo., because he was exploring the Arkansas River to its source for the U.S. government.”

## Missouri

The January Wheels and Heels newsletter from the Missouri Department of Transportation reports the Columbia PedNet Coalition operated 16 walking school buses at six schools last semester with 145 children walking to school every day under the supervision of 30 trained volunteer leaders. A pedestrian and bicycle safety course for K-2 was taught during P.E. and a BikePro proficiency class for grades 4–7 was offered after school. A bike train program (similar to the walking school bus) is planned for children who pass the BikePro class. Last May, more than 2,450 Columbians participated in Bike, Walk, and Wheel Week.

## Project Discovery: Few Remember Pike

By Harv Hisgen

Amid the attention of the past two years given to Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, a person who did an immeasurable amount for America has been overlooked. His name is Zebulon Montgomery Pike.

This is the Pike bicentennial, and one rarely hears of his accomplishments. We may be aware of the thousands of places named for him or of the wagons painted with "Pike's Peak or Bust," but few know of the organization named in his honor (see [www.zebulonpike.org](http://www.zebulonpike.org)). Perhaps he needed better-known biographers.

While Lewis and Clark found the headwaters of the Missouri and Columbia rivers and explored the Northwest, Lt. Pike explored the headwaters of the Mis-

issippi River in 1805. In 1806, after returning Osage Indians to their villages, he was assigned to explore and map the headwaters of the Arkansas and Red rivers in the southwest corner of the newly acquired Louisiana Purchase.

After finding the headwaters of the South Platte River near Fairplay, Colo., he discovered the headwaters of the Arkansas River near Leadville, Colo. In accomplishing this, he made some false assumptions along the way. Pike thought the Arkansas ended near Royal Gorge (near present day Canon City) since the Arkansas was apparently dry. He then went north and west into South Park to the headwaters of the South Platte before going farther southwest following a river to Leadville. He thought it was the Red River until he followed it to Royal Gorge and realized he had found the true headwaters of the Arkansas.

Next, Pike headed south in search of the Red River. Camping along the Rio

Grande River (or Rio del Norte as the Spanish called it), he thought he was near the headwaters of the Red. He was eventually arrested for being so far into New Spain and brought to Santa Fe. He was not entirely disappointed in being arrested because it was January in the Rockies and his troops were low on provisions.

In Santa Fe, Pike became friends with the arresting officer, Lt. Melgares, and was treated to fandangos, maps, and information that later was important for reconnaissance for the 1846 Mexican American War.

In the journal he published in 1810, he reported that wool sold for \$25/yard in Santa Fe. Many say his descriptions of opportunities in New Mexico led traders to travel the route that became the Santa Fe Trail. The only American officer to capture a British fort in Canada during the War of 1812, in what is now called Toronto, Pike died a brigadier general in 1818.

### Memberships and Donations

**A membership in the American Discovery Trail Society helps to promote and sustain America's only cross-country non-motorized trail. It also makes a great gift!**

Each new membership includes an ADT decal, patch, lapel pin, member I.D. card, and *Discover America* newsletter. Discovery and Life members also receive the book, *American Discoveries*, written by Eric Seaborg and Ellen Dudley.

- Yes, I want to be a part of this American adventure!
- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life Member - \$1,000    | <input type="checkbox"/> Family - \$50 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Member - \$250 | <input type="checkbox"/> Member - \$30 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Discovery Member - \$100 |  |

**Did you know that the American Discovery Trail Society is a non-profit 501(c)3 organization and your donations are tax-deductible?**

Here's my additional tax-deductible contribution of:  \$10  \$20  \$50  \$100  \$500  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

- Enclosed is my check (made payable to ADTS)  
Charge my  MC  VISA  AMEX  Discover

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George Cardinet with Belle Bar and Clayton Mayor Pete Laurence with scissors at the dedication of the Clayton trail system in 1996. Cardinet built many of the trails.

## In Memory of Trail Advocate George Cardinet

The American Discovery Trail and trail lovers everywhere lost a good friend this January. George Cardinet Jr., often referred to as the father of California's trails, died at the age of 97. Cardinet was advocating for trails before their importance had even occurred to most people. In the 1930s, he bought a ranch in Concord, Calif., that backed up to Mt. Diablo and began building trails through the sagebrush in what was to become Mt. Diablo State Park. The ADT uses a part of the Mt. Diablo trail system for its route.

Although he was primarily a horseman, and he was able to enjoy horse riding into his nineties, Cardinet pushed to preserve both hiking and horse-riding space in the ever growing development that accompanied the state's population surge. He was among those who fought to establish the 1968 National Trails System Act and wanted to connect the world so people could explore it on foot, horse, or bicycle.

John Fazel, ADTS California state coordinator said, "He was a pioneer in America's modern-day trails and a big supporter of the American Discovery Trail."

## Get Out More Couple

*Backpacker* magazine, one of the founding sponsors of the American Discovery Trail, has selected Randy and Sheri Propster, 2006 thru-hikers of the ADT, to be their official 2007 "Get Out More Couple."

The Get Out More Tour provides information and inspiration to encourage readers to enjoy the outdoors. The Propsters will give presentations and tips to everyone from trail rookies to experienced hikers. It will also be a great opportunity for more people to learn about the American Discovery Trail. To see if the tour is coming to your town, visit [www.backpacker.com/getoutmore/tourSchedule.html](http://www.backpacker.com/getoutmore/tourSchedule.html).

## Best Day Hikes

*Backpacker* magazine's February issue selected the Garden of the Gods section of the River to River Trail in Illinois and the

Two Lakes Loop Trail in Indiana's Hoosier National Forest as the best day hike in each state. We are proud to report that both of these trails are part of the ADT!

## Did You Know?

Brian Stark's book, *Getting to the Point*, about his run across the United States in 1998 on the American Discovery Trail is now available through the ADT Society. Visit our website at [www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org) or order one from an ADT Society merchandise order form.

## Travel Expo Offer

Once again, ADT Society members and friends were offered a free invitation (normally \$15) to attend the Adventures in Travel Expo in Washington, D.C. The Expo showcases the best in adventure and travel experiences on the planet. Another example of the benefits of Society membership.

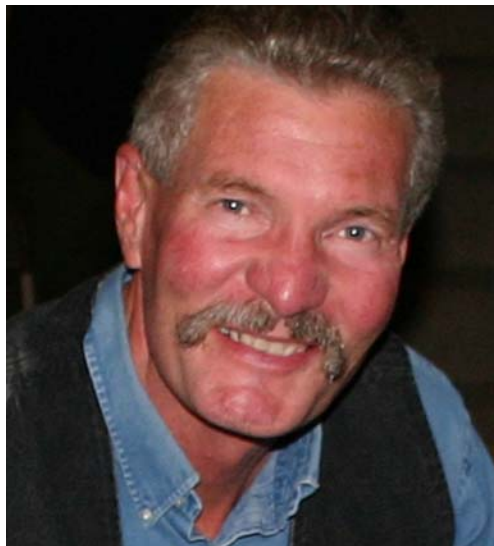
## **ADT Society Welcomes New Board Members**

**Michael Muir** founded Access Adventure in 2005, after retiring as president of United States Driving for the Disabled, Inc. A lifelong horseman born in Dixon, Calif., in 1952, Michael was diagnosed with multiple sclerosis when he was 15 years old. When he could no longer ride, he learned to drive horses.

In countries around the world he has competed in driving events, winning numerous medals and championships. Muir credits his life with horses and the ability to enjoy nature with keeping him active and strong. In 2001, as an advocate for the disabled, he led an international group of equestrians with disabilities on a remarkable 3,000-mile, ten-month Journey Across America. Driving wheelchair-accessible horsedrawn carriages, they traveled from Mission San Diego in California to Washington, D.C. In 2003, he drove his horse and carriage from Indiana to the Gulf of Mexico along the same route John Muir traveled in 1867.

Muir says, “We have shown that people with disabilities can accomplish amazing things. The horses of Access Adventure, combined with innovative adaptive equipment, are blazing a new trail into the wilderness...opening a path for people with disabilities. Demonstrating that life can still be full, rich, and exciting after a catastrophic illness or accident gives people hope, and the value of hope is priceless.

“My great-grandfather was America’s vi-



*Michael Muir*

sionary conservationist John Muir. He instilled in his family a great love of the wilderness and he inspires me today to share the glories of nature with people living with mobility challenges. The coast-to-coast American Discovery Trail offers the opportunity for all people with adventurous spirit to enjoy those glories. I look forward to traveling the trail and being involved in its development.”

**Ken and Marcia Powers’** interest in trails developed when they started backpacking on retirement from Chevron (Ken) and teaching flute (Marcia). The first to complete a continuous thru-hike of the ADT, their 2005 trek connected long-distance trails they had hiked previously: the Appalachian, Continental Divide, and Pacific Crest trails. They say, “Any trail is an exciting adventure as we see new places, meet other people on and

off the trail, and adapt to ever-changing circumstances. The more we hike the more hiking speaks to our souls.”

Ken and Marcia grew up in the Idaho-Montana area and have lived in the San Francisco Bay Area where Ken volunteered for Boy Scouts when their two sons were scouts.

Both appreciate the outdoors and are thankful that trail visionaries dreamed of building trails for future Americans, to save wilderness areas and to nurture the human spirit. Eager for all people to enjoy the outdoors, they are glad to help the American Discovery Trail achieve even more public visibility and use.



*Ken and Marcia Powers finish their ADT thru-hike at the Pacific Ocean.*