



# Discover America

Newsletter of the American Discovery Trail Society

Volume 8, Number 4

[www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org)

Winter 2003

## ADT Featured Trail: Kokopelli's Trail



*Kokopelli's Trail, Utah*

High on the Colorado Plateau, connecting the western part of Colorado to the eastern edge of Utah, is the 138-mile long Kokopelli's Trail. Going from east to west, the trail starts at the Loma Boat Launch near Grand Junction, Colo., and travels through desert sandstone and shale canyons on its way to Moab, Utah. It provides a vital link for the ADT between two states.

Kokopelli's Trail was developed in 1989 primarily for mountain biking by the Colorado Plateau Mountain-Bike Trails Association, Inc. (COPMOBA), a nonprofit organization of trail cyclists, bike shops, local businesses, federal land managers, and government entities. The association continues to manage and maintain this trail along with others in a regional trail system. COPMOBA sees mountain biking as a vehicle to promote low impact outdoor recreation, natural history education, bike safety, and environmentally and socially responsible use of land.

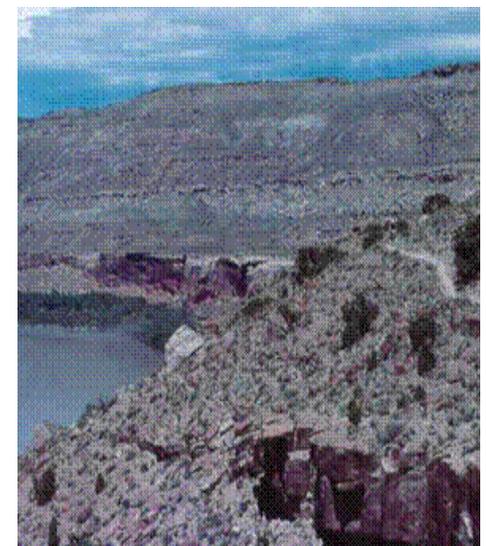
Most of the trail is on remote Bureau of Land Management property where few travelers venture. It includes challenging but beautiful high-desert trail that provides high cliff overlooks of the Colorado River below. Awe-inspiring geological formations, sandstone knolls, cottonwood, pinon and juniper, and a backdrop of the LaSal Mountains all contribute to the breath-taking scenery along the route. Near the midway point of the trail is the historic Dewey Bridge crossing of the Colorado River.

Some of Kokopelli's Trail is easy-to-moderate travel on county or jeep roads while other parts are single track and test the skills of the most advanced rider. Twice the trail climbs to 8500 feet in elevation. Steep grades with rocky or sandy surfaces are found all along the route, while a slickrock section is encountered near Moab. The trail is marked by brown fiberglass posts set approximately every

half mile and at intersections. The trail is usually open from March to November, but due to summer heat or snows at higher elevations, the most popular times to visit are probably June and September. Due to the desert conditions along the way, maps, sunscreen, lots of water, and a knowledge of travel in this type of environment are advised for all who take on the trail.

So who is Kokopelli and why did they name a trail after him? Kokopelli is a magical being recognized by many Native American groups along the Colorado Plateau. Portrayed as a humpbacked flute player, Kokopelli is associated with the Flute Clan of the Hopi Indians. Originally this figure was painted on pottery, etched into rock, or shown as the Hopi kachina Kokopelli. Legend holds that he was able to drive back winter with his flute playing and was welcomed among the native tribes as a symbol of fertility during spring planting. Today, Kokopelli is often seen adorning coffee mugs, T-shirts, and earrings. But the trail was named out of respect for our Native American heritage and to symbolize the wandering of the Colorado Plateau Mountain-Bike Trail System.

For more information about Kokopelli's Trail, visit [www.copmoba.com](http://www.copmoba.com).



*Single track along Colorado River*

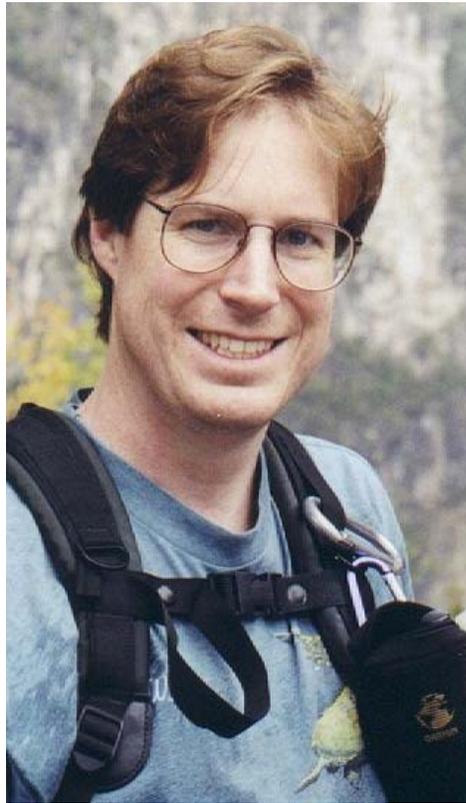
## Glenn Bock: ADTS Digital Mapping Consultant

By Harry Cyphers

Glenn Bock, a new member of the Maryland ADT Committee, comes to us with an impressive and varied background. He is a mid-career NASA professional involved with managing flight operations for some of NASA's most sophisticated earth-observing satellites. Glenn will help us produce computer trace overlays of the entire ADT route on U.S. Geological Survey source maps. He will also oversee the creation of a system to manage and distribute the immense amount of data that will result from the digitized traces we produce.

Born in Oscoda, Mich., Glenn was an Air Force "brat" who has lived in Turkey, England, and five U.S. states. He has two degrees in physics, one in astronomy, and one in education. Glenn taught these subjects in central Maryland high schools for 10 years.

It appears Glenn approaches everything whole-heartedly. He started hiking and rock climbing when he came to the Maryland area and was immediately attracted to the emerging global positioning system (GPS) technology and the technical aspects of wilderness rescue techniques. It wasn't long



before he became a rescue training coordinator. After locating a downed airplane and experiencing radio problems during the rescue effort, he decided to get his ham radio license. Glenn went on to earn the extra class license, the highest level awarded.

Glenn's dual interests in GPS capabilities and hiking led him to the County High-

pointers Association. He began documenting his many climbs and those of his club members. To date, he has hiked to the tops of 31 state "high points."

He became the largest contributor to their website, as well as to the National Geographic's mapXchange program website, where the ADT trail traces will be made available.

In addition to guiding the Society's mapping efforts, Glenn will also serve as the ADTS system librarian and technical liaison with the web site contractor, state and local government natural resources personnel, and National Geographic Maps.

It was agreed at the recent ADTS board of directors meeting in September that we would ask Glenn to help develop digital traces of the ADT route. We asked him to map one-half of the 15 states that the ADT passes through over the next year. As an example of this man's extraordinary energy level, as of November 20, he had already completed this task!

*Harry Cyphers is ADT State Coordinator for Maryland/Washington, D.C., and chair of the website committee.*

*Editor's note: We have featured the newest member of our mapping team in this issue. In a future issue we will feature Harv Hisgen, the other key individual in this effort.*

---

## Mapping Donors

The ADT Society has embarked on an ambitious project to digitally map the trail, a project made possible by grants from **National Geographic Maps** and the **Kodak American Greenways Awards**. The latter is a partnership project of **Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society** that provides grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout America.

National Geographic Maps agreed to provide about \$7,000 worth of software at a cost of only \$600, including multiple copies of its TOPO! software.

The Kodak American Greenways Awards provided a \$1,000 grant to defray the costs of this and other software, as well as other

costs associated with the project.

Thanks to these donations, in the next year the ADTS hopes to digitally map the entire trail and make its maps accessible through the internet and through several exciting products, along with updated, more detailed turn-by-turn descriptions of the trail route.

## Coleman Donation Keeps Website Improving

**The Coleman Company**, which has provided major funding for the ADT since its outset, including being a sponsor of the original ADT Scouting Expedition, continued its support this year with a \$12,000 contribution toward upgrading the ADTS website. If you haven't visited

[www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org) lately, check it out to see how you can now take a virtual tour of the trail through the photo show the grant allowed us to add.

A snazzier, redesigned home page and some updated trail descriptions are among the other improvements that the donation allowed us to implement. The Coleman support enabled us to post breaking news, such as the successful completion of the thru-hike by Joyce and Peter Cottrell.

Coleman also unveiled its own website for outdoor travel and activity planning, at [www.coleman.com/outernet](http://www.coleman.com/outernet). A one-stop source of searchable information on more than 16,000 public and private campgrounds and other data, it is geared toward helping people plan all types of outdoor trips and activities.

# Digital Mapping of ADT Moves Forward

## Part one of two articles

By Harry Cyphers

After more than a decade of concerted effort, the American Discovery Trail Society has developed a comprehensive written description of its current 6800-mile route across the United States. However, the trail's sheer magnitude and its continuously evolutionary nature have made it very difficult to keep our traditional maps current and readily available to trail users.

Today, we have within our reach the tools to radically improve how we create and maintain our maps. It took the migration of global positioning system (GPS) technology down to everyday users as well as the successful digitization of every U. S. Geological Survey (USGS) map to be able to do this.

By gathering the precise latitude and longitude coordinates for trail and point-of-interest waypoints with a handheld GPS unit or a computer mouse, we can build an "overlay" or "trace" map that can be superimposed on each respective digitized topographical (TOPO) map. The process of collecting these "digital" waypoints is well underway, and through a special arrangement, the ADTS is already using the National Geographic Society's interactive mapping software.

This will enable the ADTS to:

1. more effectively manage the trail;
2. provide a cost-effective way to update our trail maps and descriptions;
3. collect and archive critical trail information;
4. provide a range of maps, delivered in multiple formats (CD, on-line, paper) and in multiple ways (download, mail, make a map-on-demand ); and
5. create a line of products to that will bring financial support for the Society.

## Trail Management

**How it works today** – The present system for managing and updating the trail route is cumbersome when changes to the route need to be made. Changes must be written in turn-by-turn detail and mailed via a marked-up map or a written description.

This approach has been dependent on the availability of a local map with adequate resolution to convey the correction. Another concern is the USGS' plan to discontinue the current style of topographic maps of the U.S. within a decade.

**Future trail updates** – The National Geographic Society, working with the USGS, has produced a nationwide set of standardized, readily available high resolution maps. The use of digitized "base" maps with an overlay (trace) delineating the ADT route and accompanied by the appropriate symbols representing facilities along the way will facilitate changes to the system. A companion document will provide additional text information to aid the traveler. This description will use the detail catalogued through our former mapping process.

The availability of GPS waypoints and limited text information as an overlay on maps has been evolving over the past five years. What is novel about the ADTS approach is the merging of the computerized "trace" function with a low-cost map printing technology. This system is well within the financial reach of the average hiker and, best of all, its products will be readily available in retail outlets nationwide.

**Our Progress to Date** – The ADTS is currently in the process of producing digital map traces (map overlays) of the entire ADT route. This effort will be completed by January 2004. The first half of 2004 will be devoted to field checking the map traces and standardizing the format of the traces and associated map symbols. The current text trail descriptions, now available on the ADTS website, have been refined over the past decade. These descriptions are the basis for generating the map traces, so, in theory, only the changes need to be checked. With the new approach, an electronic map (such as jpeg or gif files) showing the specific areas in question will be produced and emailed to the appropriate individual for verification.

With this approach, questionable areas can be clarified, known and planned changes can be indicated, and optional (e.g., bicycle) routes can be easily added or at least noted.

## Information collection and archiving

The ADT, by design, endeavors to connect the most outstanding natural, historic and scenic features possible along its route from coast to coast. The vital statistics of our coast-to-coast trail, in terms of national and state parks traversed, national and state trails followed or crossed, length of abandoned rail beds used, number of people with access to the route, and so on, are mind-boggling.

The GPS data developed using the NGS' "TOPO!" system is upwardly compatible with the higher level GIS (geographic information systems) used by government entities such as state departments of natural resources. The data developed by these higher level systems is also downwardly compatible via available conversion programs. This file sharing capability facilitates the construction of a searchable database that can be used for planning, for example, to study view impacts of proposed projects from any point along the trail, as well as for educational and promotional purposes and as a tool for planning and maintenance.

Part Two of this article will discuss how we plan to make this plethora of information available easily and economically to the public. This will be done using the latest technological developments in map making and telecommunications.

*The ADTS would like to thank Bill Stoehr, former president of National Geographic Maps, for his guidance and support in developing this program. Bill has been a member of the ADT Society board of directors since its inception. He made the first maps and now he is helping us make the ultimate map!*

## HELP WANTED

**If you are interested in helping with this project, particularly the field checking, contact ADTS: 800-663-2387 or [info@discoverytrail.org](mailto:info@discoverytrail.org).**

*Making Connections...  
Coast to Coast*

American Discovery Trail Society  
PO Box 20155  
Washington, DC 20041-2155  
800-663-2387, Fax: 703-754-9008  
[info@discoverytrail.org](mailto:info@discoverytrail.org)  
[www.discoverytrail.org](http://www.discoverytrail.org)

## **Success of Ohio State-to-State Half-Marathon Race Far Exceeds Expectations**

It was a case of “if you build it, they will come,” for the Oxford American Discovery Trail Running Club. Paul Daniel, Ohio/Kentucky State Coordinator for the ADTS, first proposed a local marathon last year to interested members of his community. The idea literally took off running. The club was formed and it was quickly decided to change the format from a marathon to a half marathon between two ADT states, Ohio and Indiana, with the race beginning and ending on the American Discovery Trail.

When planning began for the State-to-State Half Marathon, the newly formed Oxford American Discovery Trail Running Club decided they wanted to give some of the race proceeds to the ADT Society and Oxford Area Trails. They estimated there would be 500 runners, allowing them to give \$1,000 to each group.

When the race was finally held on the cool, crystal-clear morning of September 20, there were 750 runners tying their shoes.

Besides the half-marathon, race events included a 5K race and a children’s fun run. The additional runners brought in more money and therefore larger donations for both trail organizations. The Running Club gave checks for \$4,000 each to the ADT Society and the Oxford Area Trails group.

Many thanks to everyone involved for their efforts and generosity and congratulations on a great race!

### **Oxford Area Trails Project**

The City of Oxford (Ohio), Miami University, Oxford Township, and the Oxford Area Trails committee are working together on a cooperative project to create a network of safe, paved, off-road paths and bike lanes in and around Oxford for non-motorized transportation and recreational activities. Part of this system will become the American Discovery Trail when it is finally finished. Oxford is near the junction where the ADT splits into northern and southern routes.

The initial vision is for a perimeter path encircling the city. Ultimately, a network of trails within the city will connect schools, parks, historical sites, employment centers, commercial establishments, and residential areas.



*Off and running, State-to-State Half Marathon, Oxford, Ohio*

