



# **Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation**

## **Trail Stewardship Program**

### **Segment Steward Volunteer Training Manual**





## MARICOPA TRAIL AND PARK FOUNDATION

### ABOUT

The Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation, a 501(c)(3) non-profit, tax-exempt organization, is dedicated to protecting, preserving, promoting, developing and maintaining the County's regional trails, open space, and parks for current and future generations. The Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation advocates to protect the natural heritage of the region; provides information and education; partners to provide important recreation facilities and amenities; and provides stewardship assistance through the management and training of the organization's volunteer programs.

The Foundation is aligned with the Maricopa County Parks and Recreation Department's Strategic Plan for future development and improvements in the Maricopa Trails and the County Parks System.

The Maricopa Trail winds through the County connecting 10 Maricopa County Regional Parks on a 315-mile scenic and diverse route. A network of volunteers actively help monitor, Maintain and protect the 315 miles of trails.

This manual serves as a training guide for the Foundation's volunteers.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation

This manual was researched and authored by Rick Kesselman, Director of Training.

It is a compilation of information and techniques based on the training materials of Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona and other trail organizations.

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*The material in this manual is intended to provide training assistance and general guidance to volunteers. It is not a legal document. Volunteers for the MT+PF accept full responsibility for their actions. The Foundation may not be held accountable for actions by volunteers. For more information about the Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation, to donate and/or to volunteer, go to [MCTPF.org](http://MCTPF.org).*

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# **MARICOPA TRAIL AND PARK FOUNDATION**

## **Segment Steward Training Manual, Trail Stewardship Program**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This manual has been prepared as a guide to those persons who have agreed to accept the position as a Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation (MT+PF) Segment Steward and to be part of the Foundation's Trail Steward Program. It provides the Segment Stewards the knowledge needed to assess trails in their segment and to conduct a trail maintenance event that gives trail work volunteers a safe, enjoyable and productive experience as they maintain quality trails. It draws on the work of Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona and other trail-building organizations noted at the end of this Manual.

The Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to protecting, promoting, developing, and maintaining the Maricopa County Park Systems. Maricopa County has entered into an agreement with the Foundation to partner with the Maricopa Parks and Recreation Department (MCPRD) to provide trail maintenance, to enhance and to promote the Maricopa Trail and to ensure the environmental sustainability of the Trail. This will be completed in compliance with the trail planning and design guidelines established by MCPRD.

### **REGIONAL TRAIL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

The Foundation has developed a Trail Stewardship Program to help accomplish its goals. Its structure is the following. The Maricopa Trail is divided into approximately 36 segments in four to six regions. Each region is assigned a Regional Steward. Each segment is assigned a Segment Steward. The four to six Regional Stewards each manage four to six Segment Stewards. Each Segment Steward manages his/her individual segment trail maintenance events and volunteers.

The Foundation seeks a network of volunteers who can actively help to monitor and to maintain the land areas the MT+PF needs to protect and to preserve. With a limited number of Park Rangers and land management agency personnel on hand to manage the Maricopa Trail, volunteers are a focal point for land stewardship. Maricopa Trail volunteers learn how to "give back" to these beautiful trails and regional park areas that so many enjoy. Committing to as little as one or two days a year makes a significant difference in the Trail Stewardship Program. No experience is necessary.

### **BENEFITS OF PARTICIPATING IN THE MARICOPA TRAIL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM**

- Gain valuable new skills through free training programs and supervised work events.
- Gain valuable experiences for personal & professional enrichment.
- Improve and protect YOUR Maricopa Public Lands.
- Fulfill community service/school credit hours.
- Perform healthy activities with your organization, family and friends. Get in shape.
- Meet new people and make new friends while having fun.
- Set a good example for our children and our community.
- Share your time, skills and expertise.
- Build self-esteem.
- Enjoy the outdoors.



## SEGMENT STEWARD'S ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The Foundation has designated the Segment Steward as the individual in charge of his/her segment. An organization that wishes to mobilize volunteers for the often hard and dirty work of environmental stewardship must never forget the importance of taking good care of volunteers; in particular, to make a positive impression the first time someone volunteers. People who volunteer for this kind of work are highly motivated, but they are just as likely as anyone to be put off by poor event management. Most volunteers can understand mistakes and accept glitches, but only to a point. The need for outdoor stewardship is too great to settle for poor, lackluster management of volunteer events. The contributions of a Segment Steward to a well-organized volunteer work event are significant and imperative to the success and longevity of the MT+PF Stewardship Program.

Some of the most important functions include the following.

- Serves as the liaison to the Land Manager and Regional Segment Steward.
- Monitors the trail and trailhead condition. This involves hiking or riding the trail on a regular basis, quarterly if possible, but not less than semi-annually. When maintenance is needed, report it, and, if agreed by the Regional Steward and land manager, plan and schedule a work event to correct the problem.
- Schedules Trail Events. Once an event is scheduled, the Segment Steward plans and coordinates all the pieces that make a successful event. Events usually take place at least twice a year.
- Recruits volunteers as necessary. The Segment Steward oversees and helps to train the Crew Leaders and Trail Crew volunteers. The MT+PF also provides training workshops for all volunteer leaders.
- Present and manages all trail events. The Segment Steward coordinates the event with the Regional Steward and Land Manager. They may also act as a Crew Leader at an event.
- Assumes responsibility for the segment. The Segment Steward has the responsibility to make sure that his/her section of the Maricopa Trail is in top shape and user friendly for all trail users.

## PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

### Pre-Event Work Tasks

1. **Scheduling Training.** Training is critical to have a knowledgeable and effective work force. Formal free training is provided by the MT+PF on a regular basis. Confer with the Regional Steward if additional training is need for volunteers. Training is a continuing part of each trail event.
2. **Work Events.** Work events should be scheduled at least twice a year, or more frequently, if needed, and when sufficient volunteers are available. Work events can take several different forms that may include a couple volunteers for a few hours to 20 volunteers at a full-day event. Children 14-17 years are permitted and must be accompanied by a parent or some adult approved by the parent. Adults are 18 and older. No pets are allowed. Usually, the events are scheduled on Saturdays, between the months of October and May. Event check-in usually takes place 7:30 a.m., the event begins at 8 a.m., and ends between 12 noon and 3 p.m., depending

upon the specific event needs. Each volunteer is responsible for getting to the event check-in location. Training is scheduled, as needed, and with the approval of the Regional Steward. Formal MT+PF training workshops will be scheduled and managed throughout the year by the Chief Trail Steward and the Director of Training.

3. **Segment Assessment.** Travel the assigned segment quarterly or semi-annually to evaluate its condition and plan the scheduling of work events. To assess the segment, look for and note any or all of the following.
  - Vegetative encroachment into the trail corridor. Note its kind and severity. Can it be cleared with saws and loppers or is there deadfall, which would require chain saws to remove? Promptly report to your land management agency all deadfall locations that cannot be cleared. If possible, provide GPS coordinates to communicate the exact location.
  - Tread damage. Note the locations and the severities of erosion, washouts of drainage crossings, extent of any tread creep, rocks on the tread, sloughing and of developed berms along the outside/critical edge. Also record the locations and extent of clogged water diversion structures.
  - Routing. Note sections of the trail that require future alternate routing to improve long-term sustainability and lessen the maintenance effort.
  - Evidence of improper and/or illegal use of the trail. For example, is there evidence that motor driven vehicles have been on the trail? Have there been littering and other violations of the “leave-no-trace” principals of outdoor ethics? With the assistance of the Regional Segment Steward, determine how and who will correct the condition.
  - Signage. Determine if there are sufficient signs and cairns visible to users coming from both directions on the trail that alert users to the correct direction of the trail. Do any signs need to be added, repaired, removed or replaced? If so, notify the Regional Segment Steward.
  - Gate Assessment. Assess the condition of any gates and ATV barriers on your segment. Do they need to be repaired or replaced? If so, with the assistance of the Regional Segment Steward, determine how and who will correct the issue.
  - Take pictures and record GPS coordinates of the problem sites. Make notes of the estimated crew size, time, tools, supplies and availability of rocks, fill, etc. to repair the problem.
4. **Project Selection and Assessment.** After assessing the segment, select the area that is best for a work event. Visit the location again at the beginning of the planning process, and if possible, with the Regional Segment Steward and land manager, for the purpose of gathering enough information to assess the current condition and needs of the trail. This also includes an assessment of the event staging area. Where will a registration area be placed? What are the road surfaces? Are 4x4 or high clearance vehicles required for some part of the trip? How will volunteers get from a parking area to camping and/or work site? Where will food, gear and tools be unloaded? What sanitation needs should be addressed?

Complete planning, prepare promotional materials and create a volunteer fact sheet. As volunteer time is valued, Segment Stewards should avoid proposing or accepting a project if desired sustainable outcomes are not probable. Additional considerations to be addressed in the selection process include the following.

- Work value. Is the proposed work worth the effort? A project of minimum value is a waste of volunteer time and will result in turning off volunteers to participation in future events.
  - Completion time. Determine the event timeline and the likelihood the event volunteers can successfully complete all the scheduled work.
  - Appropriateness of the work for volunteers. Will the technical requirements of the project fall within the technical capabilities of the volunteers?
  - Tool needs. Are all the tools available to complete the work?
  - Number of volunteers required. Is it possible to secure the needed number of volunteers, including Technical Advisors, Crew Leaders, Trail Crew volunteers, sign-in staff, food support, tool manager, etc.
5. **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) and the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA):** The MOU contains important provisions and agreements with Land Managers and other agency partners. It also includes primary contacts, goals, time parameters, reporting requirements, and specific responsibilities accepted by each partner. The MOA is a specific agreement between Maricopa County and the MT+PF. The purpose of the MOA clearly identifies each partner's responsibility (who provides the tools, water, snacks, land manager's safety requirements, agreed work to be done, agreed route to access the work site, agreed date and times for the event, etc.). The MOA may be created for a single event or for a project that will be completed through a series of events. The MT+PF will provide the MOA or the form needed for each event.
6. **Event Promotion and Recruiting:** Effective event promotion is critical to a successful event. Use advertising, social media and friends to promote and inform the public and our volunteers of the upcoming event. Contact Scout troops, schools, corporations, bike, hiking and equestrian clubs, environmental, conservation or community organizations, and religious groups and invite them to participate in a general event or to arrange an event designed solely for their group. Also consider local print media outlets, flyers posted at trailheads and other spots, like retail sports shops, where prospects are likely to gather. The MT+PF, MCPRD and OutdoorVolunteer.org are additional good outreach tools.

Include in the outreach the following.

- Beginning and ending time of the event (usually 7:30 a.m. registration and 8 a.m. start time to 12 noon or 2 to 3 p.m. ending time depending on the event).
- Type work and the degree of difficulty.
- Special requirements to participate such as age, skill and fitness level. Prospective volunteers also need to know if there are physical challenges or access issues. *Complete details about the event are not needed, but give prospective volunteers what they need to know to make an informed decision to participate.*
- Benefits derived from participating (meals provided, any appreciation items, features of the location).

- Information where volunteers will be camping (car or other) and/or working.
- Sanitary facilities or if the location is primitive.

It is important to promote the event as a fun, exhilarating experience that also meets a real community need.

Event promotion not only helps recruit volunteers needed to do the work, but also helps promote the MT+PF and the Maricopa Trail. People working together on a task they believe is worthy is a powerful experience. Publicity is needed to get people to do the work, but it is the actual work that forges the bond of lasting relationships and a stream of continuing volunteer and financial support.

7. **Staffing the Event.** A work event can be as little as a Segment Steward and a friend going out to a section of the trail for a few hours or it can be a larger, more structured event. While small events may be run by one volunteer or staff person, there are some advantages to creating more roles whenever reasonable. This provides a way for volunteers to participate that do not want to do the manual work and engages them more in the operation of the organization if they have a special role at an event. Select registered participants for some of these roles. They may include food service, photography or greeting volunteers.

Determine the required jobs and the number of volunteers needed for the event (registration, food service, tools, Technical Advisor, Crew Leaders, Trail Crew volunteers, photographer). Often the most consistently productive form of work event comes after a Segment Steward has developed a crew of “hard-core” folks who want to work on a more or less repeated and scheduled basis such as once a month on a specific day of the week. These volunteers are often from hiking, mountain biking and/or equestrian clubs. Scheduled trail maintenance is a source for permanent volunteering. Family groups, students, business/corporation employee groups, local clubs and Scout groups can often staff other events.

Send confirming emails to all relevant parties who register for the event. Include the directions, beginning and ending time of the event, describe work to be accomplished, fitness level needed and reminders for correct shoes, sunscreen, gloves, snacks, hat and water.

8. **Safety Considerations.** Protecting volunteers requires a written Safety Plan for every event. The Safety Plan identifies all the actions to be taken to minimize the risk of injury or illness during the event. The plan includes the following items and involves the Crew Leaders to help implement it.

**Fitness Requirements.** Each participant must understand the required level of fitness to participate. Information should be sent to volunteers stating the description and physical requirements of the work involved, the amount of walking required to reach and complete the work and what to bring and wear. Crew Leaders have the authority to direct volunteers away from tasks that they believe the volunteer is unqualified to perform for either safety or quality control reasons.

**Crew Assembly and Safety Introduction.** Before being assigned to a crew, the volunteer must sign an event waiver of liability. Basic safety items are addressed at the check-in area as crews assemble for the walk/shuttle to the work area. See section “Event Day Work Tasks” below and the Crew Leader “Safety & Tool Checklist” (provided at training) for more

detailed information. Smaller events can have an initial safety talk as one group; otherwise, this responsibility falls to each Crew Leader.

**Safety and Tool Use at the Work Site.** The safety and tool use orientation is reinforced once the crew has arrived at the work area. Crew Leaders may break tool use training into stages corresponding to work stages for which each tool will be used. The closer the training is to the actual application of the skills to be learned, the more effective it is apt to be. Crew Leaders should especially observe and promptly correct safety and tool-handling errors during the first part of each work phase. Volunteers are never required to perform work they do not feel comfortable doing.

**Monitor Fatigue, Water Consumption, Sunburn.** Crew Leaders will continuously monitor for and address overexertion, heat exhaustion, dehydration, sunburn and hypothermia.

**Food Service and Camp Hygiene.** When meals are prepared or assembled at a work event, all food handlers are required to use a hand washing station that should be made available to volunteers, as well. If a wash station is not available, sanitary wipes should be provided. Food service disposable gloves should be worn by food service staff/volunteers. Adherence to appropriate sanitary facility standards is observed at every event.

**Safety Net Protocol.** This is a protocol to guide actions should an injury or illness occur that warrant securing emergency medical support. The Segment Steward should have the telephone numbers to the local hospital and Sheriff/police. Directions to the nearest local hospital also should be available at the event site. The Safety Net Protocol is activated when the Segment Steward, who knows the protocols for managing an emergency situation, determines that an *injury or illness requires immediate outside assistance*. The Safety Net Protocol is not activated in response to a minor scrape that the volunteer seems able and willing to self-treat. *Those who are not certified in first aid are not allowed to administer first aid*. The Safety Net Protocol is not activated when a Crew Leader asks a volunteer, who appears to be getting overheated or exhausted, to sit down in the shade, rest and take a long slow drink of water.

The first step in activating the Safety Net Protocol is for all work to stop. The Crew Leader must stay calm so that she/he can help an ill or injured volunteer and help other volunteers remain calm. All Crew Leaders also must know the basic Safety Net Protocol implementation process.

If the Crew Leader is unable to establish contact with the Segment Steward without leaving the crew, one or more crew members (“messengers”) are sent to the Segment Steward. Before messengers are sent, the messenger must have exact information about the nature of the problem. The Crew Leader must ensure the messenger understands what information must be relayed to the Segment Steward. The Crew Leaders should ask the messenger repeat the message to him/her before departing. The Crew Leader also must ensure the messenger understands to report back to the Crew Leader. *The Crew Leader does not leave the injured or ill person until responsibility is transferred to the event Segment Steward or emergency personnel.*

*Do not initially move ill or injured persons.* The Segment Steward, Crew Leader or other volunteer *certified* in first aid or cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) may offer assistance following the protocol for their level of certification. Injured volunteers should be encouraged to remain on the work site until the Segment Steward has obtained appropriate

assistance or reviewed the situation. Another volunteer always must accompany the injured volunteer upon leaving the work site.

Incident details should not be discussed with other volunteers. If others inquire, simply report there has been an incident. Do not explain how it occurred, talk about the cause, assess the consequences or attempt to fix responsibility.

Finally, a full incident report should be completed by the Segment Steward and Crew Leader, if applicable, and delivered to the Regional Segment Steward or Chief Trail Steward immediately after the event.

**Exit Strategy.** While unlikely, leaving the work area may be necessary should an unforeseen danger arise. A sudden storm or severe lightning are possible reasons for evacuation. Implement the Safety Net Protocol to evacuate crews. When directed to evacuate, the Crew Leader assembles her/his crew and appoints a "sweep." When all are accounted for, the crew proceeds as a group to the trailhead or as otherwise directed.

9. **Detailed Work Site Planning.** Flag the work site, if necessary, the day before the event showing the work areas and what work is to be performed in those areas. Make detailed notes of the work to be performed by you and Crew Leaders. Make detailed work notes for each Crew Leader showing the work area they will be assigned, the work to be performed, the type and number of the tools needed to do that work and the number of trail workers that will be assigned to him/her. These notes should be as detailed as possible.
10. **Create Equipment Lists and Transport Arrangements.** Make an inventory of all tools and event gear (sign-in table, nametags, check-in and waiver forms, MT+PF membership and donation brochures, food/snacks service, water coolers, two-way radios, etc.) needed for the event. Use the inventory checklist. Make arrangements for all food, tools and other gear to be transported to and from the event. This should be the responsibility of a specific individual that will be at the event and make certain all equipment is accounted for returned after the event. All these items should be on the "gear" inventory list as a reminder to bring them to each event.
11. **Event Reminder and Weather.** Send an event reminder to the volunteers with the event details and driving directions a few days before the event. Include in this reminder anticipated weather conditions and things to bring. If conditions are rapidly changing, you may need to send updates.
12. **Driving Directions.** Travel directions need to be carefully prepared as they can influence the critical first impression made on a new volunteer. Before the site visit, the Segment Steward should construct directions to "test" during the drive to the site. If directions are already available, confirm their accuracy. If volunteers are likely to be arriving from several different directions, create a set of travel directions for each one. Establish a logical and easy to find reference intersection or landmark from which to start detailed directions.
13. **Reporting Requirements.** The MT+PF and the host agency should notify each Segment Steward of reporting requirements before the event. For grant-supported work, volunteer time usually counts toward matching requirements.

**Event Day Work Tasks.** Complete the following checklist.

1. **Directional Signs.** Place event directional signs on the roadway and at the entrance to the work site, as applicable.
2. **Trail Maintenance Signs.** Place signs at the beginning and at the end of the work area advising users to exercise caution. Suggested language is as follows: "TRAIL MAINTENANCE CREW CURRENTLY WORKING ON THE TRAIL. PLEASE USE CAUTION."
3. **Set-up.** Set-up registration tables. Put out nametags, snacks, water, brochures, waiver forms, sign-in sheets, calendar of upcoming events, MT+PF donation forms, etc.
4. **Tool Management.** The tool manger should have the tools laid out on the ground in separate piles for each Crew Leader with the type and amount of tools needed. Each pile also should include a first aid kit and two-way radio.
5. **Crew Leader Meeting.** A meeting with all Crew Leaders should take place no later than the start time for the registration to give them their trail notes for their assigned work. Advise them of the work plan for the day so they know what is to be accomplished.
6. **Welcome Volunteers.** *The selected greeter should arrive a little early and greet each volunteer while taking care of the paperwork and questions. New volunteers especially appreciate having a greeter. It makes them feel welcome. You only get one time to make a first impression.* Each volunteer must sign a Check-in and Waiver Form. The MT+PF has a standardized check-in and waiver form to be used for all events. Most land managers may also have their own waiver forms for volunteers to sign.
7. **Opening Ceremony. Generally not more than three to five minutes.** Make a list of all staff, volunteers and partners to be recognized at the event. Thank them for coming. Tell them briefly about the Maricopa Trail and the MT+PF. Include donation appeals, guest speakers (maximum one minute each) and other information volunteers might find useful. Inform them of the days schedule, lunchtime, end of work, the work to be done, why it is needed and why each of them matters. Finally, the "safety talk" can be given at one time to everyone or the individual Crew Leaders can give this talk when they first meet with their crew.
8. **Safety Talk.** A general safety talk must be part of every work event. The safety talk includes volunteer self-monitoring; communicating among workers; walking distances (volunteers should be at least 10 feet apart when walking with tools in hand); working distances (volunteers should be far enough from each other when working so any tool use would not harm any volunteers in proximity); tool handling and carrying (tools should be carried at their side, not on the shoulder, with the most dangerous part face down); using tools safely; checking for proper footwear, gloves, snacks, water, sun protection; advising the volunteers to inform the crew leader if they are leaving the area; securing any medical conditions the Crew Leader should be made aware, etc. Also see the Crew Leader Manual and the Crew Leader Safety Checklist Booklet (separate list provided at training).
9. **Incident Reports:** Use the Incident Report Forms to report any injury or illness requiring attention, other than a simple Band-Aid. Document the following for each person injured.
  - a. Name of injured.
  - b. Description of the injury.
  - c. Resolution on-site. Follow-up plan.
  - d. Contact information for injured person and the person responsible for follow up.

- e. Witness contact information for a person who can provide additional information regarding the incident, if necessary.

#### 10. End of the Day.

- a. Thank volunteers.
- b. Solicit feedback from volunteers on any ideas they may have about what was done well or could have been done better.
- c. Thank partners.
- d. Remove tables and signs and any trail markers that are no longer needed.
- e. Completely clean the event area and remove all trash. Leave no trace.

#### **Post-Event Tasks.** Complete the following tasks.

1. **Report Data.** Compile reporting data for the Chief Steward and Regional Steward that includes volunteer hours, any incident reports, brief summary of the event evaluation, photos, etc.
2. **Give Thanks.** Thank partners and volunteers by email. Building relationships with volunteers to create and grow a constituency is one of the Segment Steward's primary goals.
3. **Identify Accomplishments.** Summarize accomplishments and note any other special information of interest.
4. **Post Photos.** Have the photographer post event photos on the MT+PF and MCPRD websites. Participants and prospective volunteers will view these. It provides a richer story of what the MT+PF volunteers accomplish. Volunteers in the photo should be smiling. Insert a hyperlink to the event photo album, if this is available. Photo display websites, such as Google Albums, MT+PF or MCPRD websites are good locations for event photos. *Be sure photo releases have been given by the volunteers before posting any photos.*

### **MAKE A DIFFERENCE! HOW TO VOLUNTEER**

*Please contact us to volunteer.* Let us know the best way to reach you (telephone or email) and what kind of work you are interested (if known). Contact us by telephone, email or through our website. We do not share our volunteer contact information with others.

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### **HOW TO DONATE**

The Maricopa Trail and Park Foundation is incorporated and recognized as a public charity or 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization by the IRS. Donations help make it possible for the MT+PF to continue the work on the Maricopa Trail. Donations may be made online or by check mailed to the MT+PF address.



**MARICOPA TRAIL AND PARK FOUNDATION  
TRAIL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM  
VOLUNTEER TRAINING MANUAL REFERENCES**

**REFERENCES AND RESOURCES**

Volunteers for Outdoor Arizona Training Materials  
“Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds 2007”  
“United States Forest Service Trail Construction and Maintenance Notebook”  
“Lightly on the Land, The SCA Trail Building and Maintenance Manual, Second Edition 2005”  
“IMBA Trail Solutions 2004”  
Arizona Trail Association Training Materials  
Maricopa County Trail Design and Construction Manual  
Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado  
Okanogan Trail Construction Co.