

# Volunteer Services Agreement

Headwaters Trails Alliance

&

United States Forest Service

Adopt-A-Trail Program



Adopter Name/Group Name \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Trail Number(s) \_\_\_\_\_

**GENERAL PROVISIONS-BASIC ADOPTION:**

This agreement is valid for **one year** after signing date.

All work performed under this Agreement, as part of the Adopt-A-Trail Program (AATP) administered under the auspices of Headwaters Trails Alliance (HTA) and the United States Forest Service (USFS) is done on a volunteer basis.

HTA and (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ acknowledge the inherent risks of trail construction and trail maintenance, and agree to indemnify and release each other of and from any liability, claims, demands (including attorneys' fees) actions and causes of action arriving whatsoever out of or related to any loss, damage or injury, including death, which may be sustained while participating in the AATP.

I (We), \_\_\_\_\_ agree to adopt this/these trail(s) in accordance with the provisions listed below, and understand I(we) are not authorized to proceed with any AATP trail maintenance, construction or reconstruction on my/our adopted trail until this agreement is signed.

By signing below, I certify that I have read, understand and agree to abide by the terms of this AATP agreement provided in its entirety.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Adopter (sign)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address (optional)

This Agreement accepted by:

\_\_\_\_\_  
HTA Representative (sign)

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Adopter Agrees to:

- Complete a minimum of **1** day (8hrs) on the adopted trail(s) or sections of trail(s) annually performing necessary trail assessments, maintenance, clean up and upkeep; or donate a minimum of \$250 or in order to keep the adoption status. Adopters understand that they will receive an invoice request for their donation if they so choose to contribute with their donation. We recommend assessments on your adopted trail at least twice a season (spring and fall).

The adopter understands that if after one year of signing this agreement neither volunteer work is performed, nor the minimum donation is provided, the adopter agrees to withdraw from their adoption status.

Adopters are to work in cooperation and compliance with HTA and USFS field staff if necessary.

- First time adopters **must** attend a HTA/USFS trail maintenance training, or perform maintenance with the field cooperation of HTA or USFS field staff, and agree to required safety protocols and maintenance standards. This will allow adherence to quality USFS and HTA standards (See Appendix A-C).

After the initial work day or training, and the adopters are cleared by the HTA or USFS staff for basic maintenance work on their own, they may do so without USFS or HTA accompaniment.

- Organize the group and coordinate its members if applicable.
- Provide the AATP Coordinator with a list of participants for each project. (Participants under 18 must have parental or guardian consent and ensure adult supervision).
- All individuals in your working group are to always have and wear appropriate personal protection equipment (PPE) including, but not limited to closed toe shoes, eye protection, hard hats, gloves, long pants and long sleeve shirts. (Hard hats, gloves and eye protection can be provided by HTA if necessary).
- **Record all work**, accomplishments and time spent on the trail(s) and complete the required assessment and maintenance forms within 1 week of trail work completion.

Online forms are to be filled out and completed through the HTA website:

<https://headwatertrails.org>

[Trail Volunteer Forms](#)

Paper forms are to be turned into the Adopt-A-Trail Coordinator.

Verbal or phone text correspondence will not be accepted as trail reports.

## HTA Agrees to:

- Make available a cache of common trail construction and maintenance tools to AATP groups. Use of tool cache will be under the control of HTA, with the availability subject to prior commitments and repair. Requests for tool use must be communicated to HTA a minimum of one week in advance of the project. Tools must be checked out and returned promptly after the AATP activity.
- Provide materials, supplies, and equipment, and direction needed to complete the work to meet agency or authorized management standards, unless already provided by adopting group or other donor.
- Record and report all trail accomplishments (reported by the adopter) to the authorized agencies.

# Appendix A

## Description of the Adopt-A-Trail Program

**Headwaters Trail Alliance** (HTA) will perform the following types of volunteer activities on the Sulphur Ranger District, United States Forest Service (USFS) during fiscal year 2018:

- Managing the Adopt-A-Trail Program (AATP),
- Completing, as well as leading and instructing volunteers, on routine trail maintenance and reconstruction associated with the AATP, and
- Completing, as well as leading and instructing volunteers, on non-routine trail maintenance, reconstruction, and construction associated with the AATP.

### **Managing Adopt-A-Trail Program**

Managing the Adopt-A-Trail Program includes being the primary contact for individuals to participate in the program. HTA is responsible for recruiting and signing up volunteers prior to project initiation, maintaining a database of volunteers, annual project list, tracking volunteer hours worked, and providing monthly updates of this information to the USFS liaison. Additionally, HTA will submit by October 1st annually the total number of volunteer hours worked, the ages and genders of the volunteers, and the ethnic diversity information of the volunteers for the entire season. HTA will also provide a list of participants, trail miles maintained, and work hours contributed to accomplish specific work projects. Within one month of project completion an HTA Project Report Form and Volunteer Sign-In Sheet will be submitted to the USFS liaison. HTA will obtain parental or guardian consent for each individual under 18 years of age and will comply with child labor laws.

The USFS will appoint a USFS liaison to interact and be the primary contact with HTA regarding the AATP. The USFS liaison will provide a list of trails available for adoption to HTA by May 1<sup>st</sup> (list to be updated as necessary). Only system trails provided on this list may be adopted. Certain system trails may be adopted but work may not be authorized through the AATP. Examples of this would include situations where a safety concern, environmental concern or other Forest Service project occurs. A list of these trails will be provided to the HTA liaison by the Forest Service. Nothing in this agreement prohibits the Forest Service from completing any trail work they deem necessary and/or from closing, restricting use or the type of trail use for any reason. The AATP is subject to the same closures and restrictions as the general public. The USFS liaison will communicate these closures and restrictions to the HTA liaison.

HTA and the USFS liaison will hold bi-weekly meetings regarding the AATP from May 15<sup>th</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>. Prior to May 15<sup>th</sup> HTA and the USFS will hold a pre-season meeting regarding the AATP. Prior to December 1<sup>st</sup>, HTA is required to submit to USFS any project proposals for the following summer field season that require environmental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Prior to March 15<sup>th</sup>, HTA is required to submit any project proposals that are considered non-routine trail maintenance, reconstruction, or construction (Appendix B). The USFS will respond to project proposals requiring environmental analysis and/or project proposals considered non-routine trail maintenance, reconstruction, or construction at the pre-season meeting held prior to May 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **Appendix B**

### **Routine and Non-Routine Trail Maintenance, Reconstruction, and Construction**

#### **Routine Trail Maintenance, Reconstruction, and Construction**

The following activities are considered routine and can be completed without approval or onsite supervision of a USFS employee after the initial work day with HTA or USFS staff:

- Clearing the trail of small trees (< 8in. diameter) and branches already on the ground with handsaws (no cross-cut or chainsaw unless proper certification and Appendix A procedures are followed). There must be less than five (5) trees in a 20' foot segment of trail with trees lying flat on the trail or suspended across the trail tread with no more than two trees touching.
- Brushing back vegetation with loppers, pruning saws, and handsaws.
- De-berming and removing slough from trail tread.
- Restoring a proper trail outslope.
- Restoring proper trail width and/or clearing limits.
- Installing minor drainage features such as knick drains, rolling dips, and water bars as needed.
- Removing litter, garbage, pet waste, or refuse.

#### **Completing Routine Trail Maintenance and Reconstruction**

Routine trail maintenance and reconstruction include activities listed above. Work will only be permitted on designated system trails within the Sulphur Ranger District (with the exception of system trails where work is prohibited for safety or environmental concerns). Routine trail maintenance will be reported within one month of completion. Arrangements will be made to ensure that work is accomplished to the USFS technical and safety standards.

#### **Non-Routine Trail Maintenance, Reconstruction, and Construction**

The following activities are considered non-routine and **require approval or onsite supervision** by the USFS:

- New trail construction
- Trail re-routes
- Bridge construction
- Structure/Feature construction (i.e. jumps, bermed corners, wooden or metal structures)
- Turnpike construction
- Puncheon construction
- Check Dams
- Sign/Trail Marker Installation
- Moving large rocks/boulders (in excess of 50lbs)
- Buck-N-Rail Fence Construction
- Any use of pack stock
- Any use of chainsaws or crosscut saws
- Clearing trails of downed trees in complex situations

## **Completing Non-routine Trail Maintenance, Reconstruction, and Construction**

Non-routine trail maintenance, reconstruction, and construction include activities listed above. HTA is responsible for contacting the USFS liaison to schedule work days, as well as, to make arrangements to ensure that work is accomplished to the USFS technical and safety standards.

## **Routine and Non-Routine Trail Maintenance, Reconstruction, and Construction**

Work will only be permitted on designated system trails within the Sulphur Ranger District (with the exception of those provided to HTA from the USFS liaison, closed by order, closed for project work, or for an authorized activity). **Any use of chainsaws or crosscut saws requires separate USFS recognized certification that is current, valid, and must be presented to USFS liaison prior to use on USFS lands. Use of chainsaws or crosscut saws outside of the terms and conditions outlined in this volunteer agreement are not authorized and will not be covered under this agreement.**

HTA will disclose the type of work that volunteers will be involved in before each project. Any physical limitations that would either be aggravated by or restrict participation of members of this group to participate in the volunteer work described above will be noted on the Volunteer Sign-In Sheet (provided by HTA). This agreement does not include any use of stock. If an individual chooses to use stock, their volunteer work should be covered under a separate agreement. If an individual chooses to use stock outside of a volunteer agreement they are fully responsible for any loss or injury to the stock and will not be covered for injuries related to stock use. In either case, all stock use must be reported to and coordinated with the resource area liaison prior to commencement of work.

The USFS will provide such materials, equipment, and facilities as are available and needed in performing the work described above.

# Appendix C

## Safety Protocols

- Prior to allowing work activities on USFS System Trails HTA will require all volunteers to review and sign the current Forest Service Job Hazard Analysis for Trail Maintenance.
- A minimum of 24 hours prior to commencing work volunteers will inform HTA of their intent to perform volunteer work.
- No sooner than 12 hours prior to engaging in trail work activities, volunteers will obtain advance weather forecasts for the area they intend to work, in order to better predict weather related hazards that may be incurred (i.e. especially wind speed and direction in bark beetle affected forests).
- Prior to engaging in work activities volunteers will ensure a communications plan for personal safety is established and ensure a minimum of one operable emergency communication device is with each volunteer or group of volunteers at all times in the field.
- For the purpose of tort claims and compensation for work injuries, to the extent not covered by the sponsor, volunteers will be covered from the time they depart the trailhead in the morning to the time they return to the trailhead at the end of each shift. On multi-day work parties where camping is involved, volunteers will be covered from the time they leave the camp in the morning until the time they return in the evening. Typically these hours range between 8:00 AM – 5:30 PM but may vary.
- Prior to engaging in work activities in bark beetle affected environments, volunteers and/or HTA will identify and flag safety zones which are large enough to provide unconscious safe haven from falling trees.
- When working in bark beetle affected environments, park all vehicles and equipment in areas devoid of standing dead trees or identified safety zones. This would include caching of project related building materials.
- When working in bark beetle affected environments, all rest and lunch breaks, safety briefings, or coordination shall be performed in identified safety zones.
- Immediately prior to engaging in trail maintenance activities all volunteers will complete a tailgate safety session to discuss proposed work activities, identify associated risks and hazards, and outline appropriate mitigation measures for the identified hazards.
- Required PPE shall be worn during all work related activities including travel to and from work sites. Required PPE for trail maintenance includes; long sleeve shirt, full length pants, hard hats, eye protection, sturdy hiking boots, and leather gloves.
- Volunteers using Chainsaws or Crosscut saws will have current and certification and follow all USFS safety protocols governing their use. Volunteers will **at no time** engage in tree felling activities.
- First aid kits will be available through HTA for use when working through the AATP.
- AAT large group (4 individuals or more) projects will include someone who is CPR/First Aid certified on the project.
- Notification Procedures - if an emergency or accident which requires medical treatment occurs during work covered under this agreement; HTA will notify the USFS liaison as soon as possible but at the latest within 48 hours. If an accident or injury does not require treatment immediately, HTA will notify the USFS liaison as soon as they are notified of the medical treatment. HTA should relay all emergencies, injuries, or accidents which may potentially need medical treatment as soon as possible.