



2024 Annual Report



HTA Mission Statement

Headwaters Trails Alliance (HTA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to trails, outdoor recreation, and stewardship education in scenic Grand County, Colorado. Our primary goals are to provide high quality trails linking towns and recreational areas within Grand County, with additional trail systems connecting historical, cultural, and recreational sites near our towns. HTA's mission is to preserve, enhance, and promote sustainable, high quality, multi-use trail opportunities for residents and visitors.

Strategic Goals 2024

Strategic direction for 2024 focused on organizational improvements moving towards sustainability, employee retention, and future planning. Goals included:

- Strive for organizational excellence and sustainability: strengthen financial position through funding diversification.
- Foster public and private partnerships to support and enhance HTA through strengthening and initiating partnerships.
- Improve HTA's efforts towards diversity, equity and inclusion; ensure that HTA's policies follow standards.



Field Season Summary 2024



Trails Maintained and/or Assessed: 415 miles
 New Trail Construction: ~1 mile
 Reroute Trail Construction: 0.65 mile
 Trails Decommissioned: 1 mile
 Trail Restoration: 0.81 mile
 Drains Cleared: 2,052



Bridge Construction: 12
 Bridge Replacements and/or Repairs: 4
 Turnpike Construction: 550 feet
 Buck & Rail Fence Construction: 750 feet



Winter Trail Grooming: 650 hours



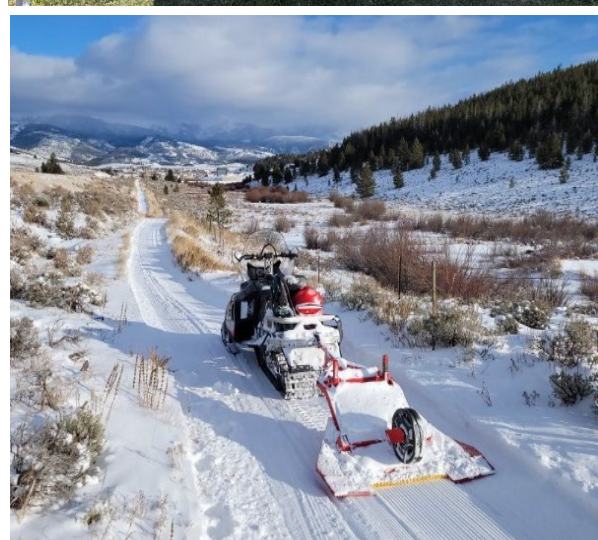
Trail Volunteer Hours: 1,249
 Stewardship Ambassador & Wilderness Group
 Volunteer Hours: 3,407
 Public Education Contacts: 45,434
 Trail Work Hours: 6,148

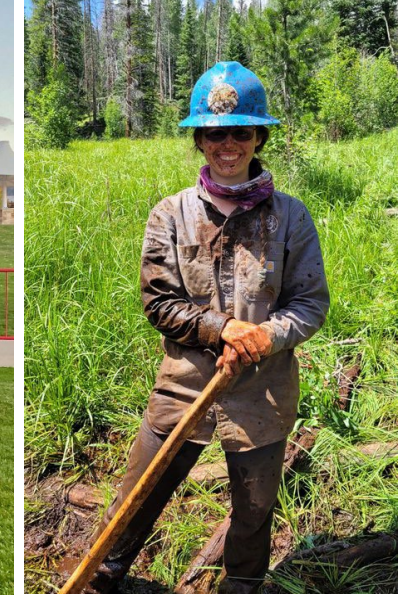


Trees Cleared: 2,795



Adopt-A-Trail New: 8 trails
 Total Adopted Trails: 95
 Continental Divide National Trail Projects: 4
 Youth /Service-Learning Projects: 12
 Youth Corps Project Weeks: 6





Highlights of 2024

Headwaters Trails Alliance celebrated another very strong field season and winter trail grooming program in 2024. Despite having a smaller field crew than the previous year, HTA still completed a record number of trail improvements, projects, structure construction, new and/or rerouted trails, wilderness trail projects, educational outreach, county-wide sustainability planning, winter trail grooming expansion (location and frequency), and outdoor recreation leadership of local, regional, and state committees. HTA staff attended the Western States Trail Conference in Utah, Leave No Trace Global Summit, continued to help organize the statewide Colorado Trails Symposium, and participated in the Partners in the Outdoors Conference hosted by Colorado Parks and Wildlife. 2024 also marked the 30th year for Grand County's National Public Lands Day (NPLD) and the weekend welcomed over 300 volunteers to 15 land and water projects across the county. NPLD was dedicated to HTA's late Board President, Roger Hedlund, who served public lands, waters, and equitable outdoor access for decades in Grand County. This year's NPLD featured projects on federal lands, the Fraser and Colorado Rivers, town open spaces, and in partnership with many organizations and entities.

Another highlight of the 2024 field season included working with Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado (VOC) for the fourth year on trail tread establishment and restoration on the Second Creek Trail on Berthoud Pass. Work included building timber and rock steps to improve and define the trail surface. Trail braiding was reduced through restoration work and revegetation. *(See left photo below.)*



Changes to Grand County's Open Lands, Rivers, and Trails Fund

The extended countywide OLRT 0.3% sales tax now includes operational expenses, multi-use trails, new trail construction, fire mitigation and recovery as eligible expenses. OLRT funds are competitive grant dollars, however, these funds can be used for HTA's future operations since staffing and planning are eligible expenses beginning in Fall 2024. HTA was awarded operational funding for its 2025 administration and trail crew expenses and plans to apply for fire recovery for the East Troublesome and Williams Fork burn scars.



Outreach and Education/Stewardship Ambassador Program



New in 2024, HTA had a full-time Stewardship Ambassador Coordinator who worked closely with the US Forest Service to train five paid Stewardship Ambassadors who provided public lands information to visitors in Winter Park, Fraser, Granby, Grand Lake and at busy trailheads throughout the summer and fall. More outreach promoting responsible recreation occurred through events, youth education programs, volunteer trainings, quarterly book club, and at 24 community events ranging from parades and recreation events to farmers markets. Topics and events focused on balancing recreational interests with conservation values, Leave No Trace ethics, and recreation impacts. *(Photo: Grand Lake)*

HTA hosted the first ever interagency training with state and federal land management agencies representing USFS, CPW, NPS and BLM (see right photo). Over 50 public facing businesses and organizations attended and received updated public lands information. Ambassadors and volunteers reached 45,434 people and over 800 youth.



Structure Projects throughout Grand County

HTA completed more structure repair, replacement, and new construction than ever in its history - highlighting the capacity challenges at the federal agencies. HTA's Trail Crew have consistently demonstrated more leadership, skill, and capacity and are trusted to construct complex, multi-span bridge projects. Major structure projects included bridges, boardwalks, and/or turnpikes on High Lonesome, Challenger, Bowen Gulch, and Horseshoe Trails. *(Photo left: Bowen Gulch Trail turnpikes)*



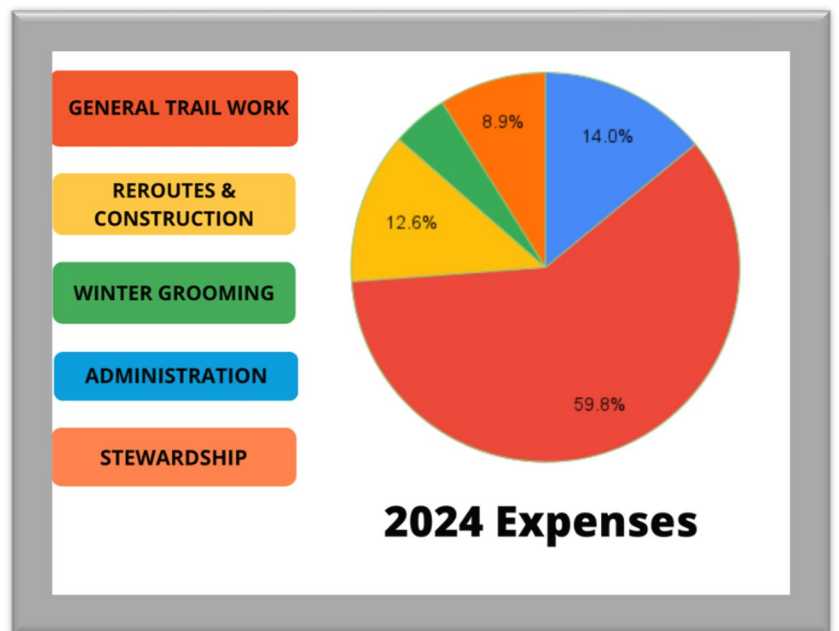
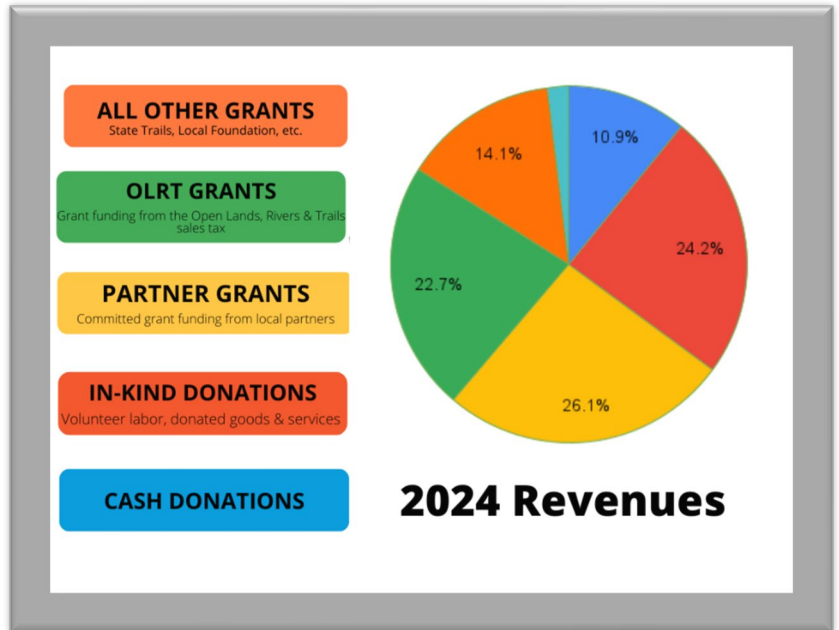
Statement of Financial Position

HTA's primary goal in 2024 was to create a more sustainable income model to cover our general operations. HTA initiated discussions with local funders to simplify funding requests, but there is still work to be done to improve HTA's current funding structure. Project funding continues to be easier to secure thanks to support from Winter Park's and Fraser's Transit & Trails Tax, Grand County's Open Lands, Rivers, and Trails Tax, and Colorado Parks and Wildlife's State Trails grant program.

General Trail Work on existing summer and winter trails by our field crew and volunteers amounted to almost 60% of HTA's \$850,000 budget to the benefit of all recreators. The headway we have made over the last several years on deferred maintenance has improved both the user experience and safety of Grand County's trail systems, boosting their status as economic drivers in our communities.

Reroutes and Construction were completed by both HTA Trail Crew and paid contractors. Work primarily focused on the Phases Trail System in Tabernash and Trail Smart Sizing projects in the Winter Park area.

Looking forward to 2025, we anticipate challenging times for organizations like HTA who work closely with federal land management agencies. Their previously slim budgets are becoming skeletal - which will further reduce resources like seed money to leverage grant dollars. The reduction in federal funding will likely also create both personnel and project shortages - requiring creativity in finding new funding and collaborative solutions to continue the same level of trail and outdoor recreation infrastructure maintenance, repair, and construction that are at the core of Grand County's economy.

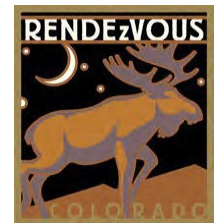


Funding Partners

HTA is primarily funded through grants and donations from individuals and the following partners:



Grand County
Colorado



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