

ANNUAL REPORT 2012



**American
Hiking
Society**

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY®



Photo Courtesy of Finger Lakes Trail Association

American Hiking Society's
National Trails Day® is made
possible by sponsors:
The North Face
Milk-Bone Trail Mix
Adventure Medical Kits
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Photo Courtesy of Misti Haines



Photo Courtesy of Ice Age Trail Alliance

From the Board Chair and President

Dear Supporters:

American Hiking Society members have deep roots in the outdoors, in volunteering and in experiencing nature through hiking. As the national voice for hikers, American Hiking Society engaged hundreds of thousands of people across our nation in 2012 to demonstrate that hiking our nation's trails offers Americans from all walks of life spectacular opportunities to enjoy nature, renew themselves, and establish a lifetime of fitness.

In 2012, we connected people and places through hiking by promoting a number of strategic partnerships. We strengthened our alliances with the Boy Scouts of America, YMCA of the USA, Congressional Trails Caucus, and many others to activate and energize a new generation of hikers and trail stewards.

Across all fifty states, Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico, our National Trails Day[®], Volunteer Vacations, and National Trails Fund stewardship programs marshaled 22,000 trail volunteers working on 486 trail projects. These trail champions contributed more than 122,000 service hours to hiking trails, valued at \$2.6 million. Our Alliance of Hiking Organizations has now grown to over 375 members—our highest number ever. America's hiking community truly "walks the talk" and is a leader when it comes to contributing volunteer service for the long-term sustainability of our nation's trails.

Our sustained commitment would not be possible without our supporters. We thank our individual and Alliance members, our partners and our corporate, foundation, and government supporters for their tireless dedication and generosity. The trail ahead presents many challenges, but American Hiking Society will continue to stand up for the interests of hikers and seek effective, sustainable solutions to secure a lasting natural legacy for this and future generations.

Experience your outdoors. Hike.

Sincerely,

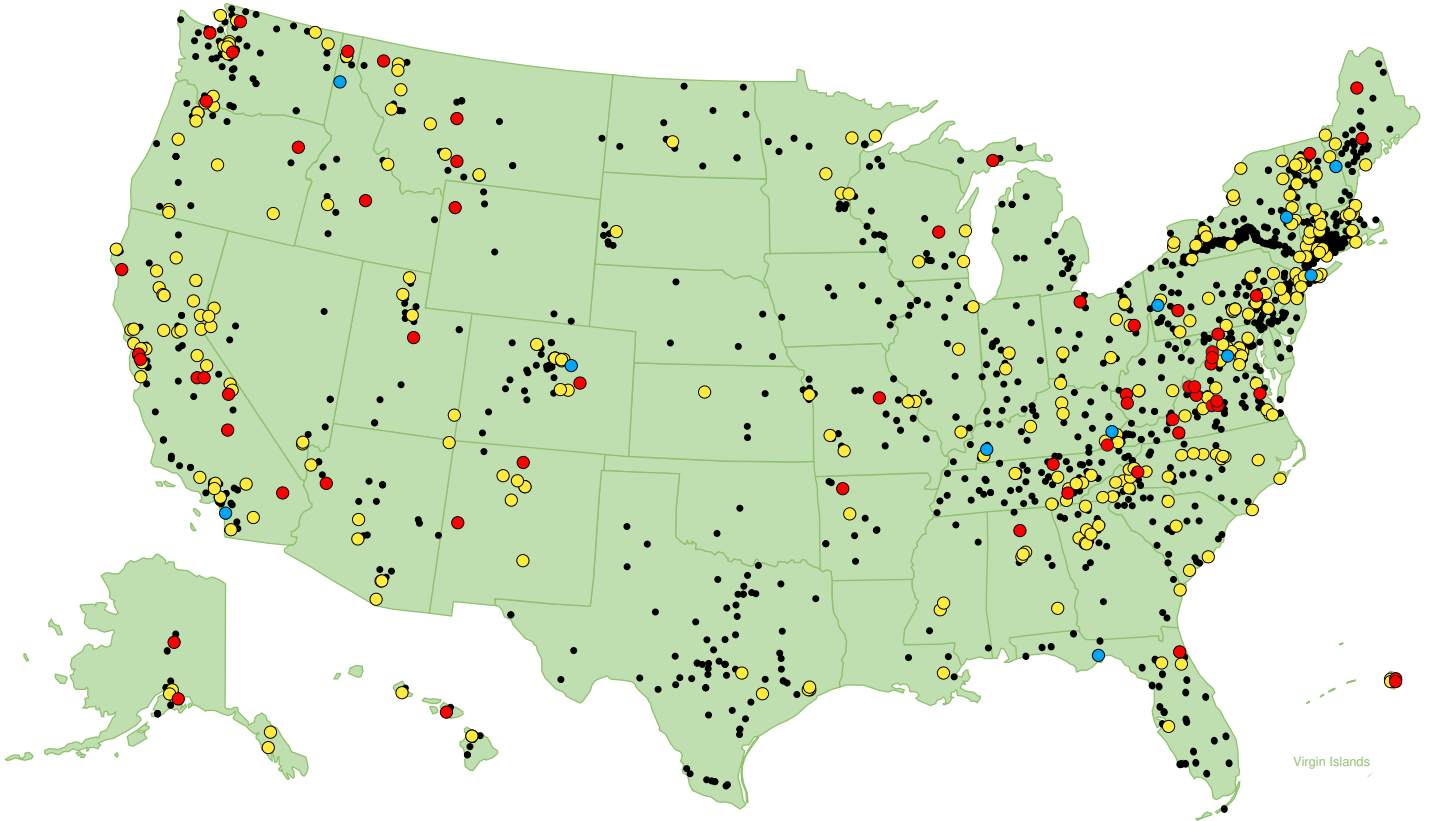


Lynn Scarlett
Chair, Board of Directors



Gregory A. Miller, Ph.D.
President

PROTECTING TRAILS NATIONWIDE



● National Trails Day®

2,176 activities including 414 trail projects
157,000 participants from all 50 states, the
District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
375,000 miles hiked (15 times around the earth)
1,291 miles of trail maintained by more than
21,000 volunteers
95,428 volunteer hours worth \$2 million
Hundreds of educational exhibits, children's
activities, trail dedications & more

● Volunteer Vacations

52 Volunteer Vacation projects
9 Alternative Break projects
511 volunteers
Trail projects in 26 States and the US
Virgin Islands
20,440 labor hours, valued at nearly
\$450,000
More than 310 miles of trail built and
maintained by AHS crews

● Alliance of Hiking Organizations

Network of 375 trail and hiking groups
promoting and protecting foot trails
and the hiking experience

● National Trails Fund

11 trail grants
9 states
\$26,000 awarded
100s of volunteers

HIKER OUTREACH & EDUCATION

American Hiking Society provided both new and experienced hikers with valuable information that helped them stay safe outdoors and to better engage with nature. Additionally, AHS programs and initiatives provided opportunities for people to get out on the trail, many for their first time.

American Hiking Society once again supported The North Face's Explore Your Parks (EYP) initiative, which encouraged families to enjoy hiking, paddling, camping, and volunteering at state parks. The initiative included The North Face's distribution of colorful Activity Guides (featuring AHS's list of the 10 Essentials of Hiking) in ten major US markets. The North Face, American Hiking Society, and other partners kicked off the summer EYP program with a camping event on National Trails Day® at Patapsco State Park in Maryland for veterans, active duty military, and their families.



American Hiking Society worked with partners in outdoor recreation and the Undersecretary of Agriculture, Harris Sherman, to enhance recreational opportunities in National Forests. Together we outlined a list of recommendations and priority actions important to hikers that will improve hiking and outdoor recreation on our National Forests for years to come.

“Alaska State Parks’ National Trails Day® celebration was a huge success,” said Darcy Harris, Trails Program Coordinator, “Various community groups came together in Palmer and worked hard to accomplish several unglamorous, but necessary, tasks that will allow visitors to the Matanuska Lakes State Recreation Area a safer and more enjoyable experience. After several hours of hard labor, volunteers and Alaska State Parks employees enjoyed a cookout on a gorgeous Alaska afternoon.”



On National Trails Day®, Leominster Trail Stewards of Leominster, Massachusetts organized a 4-mile hike along the Nashua River through wildlife habitats in the native floodplain forest. Twenty three participants came out to view the scenic vistas across Fall rock and Johnny Ro Veteran's Park. Photo by Joe Lorusso

CONSERVING THE TRAILS YOU HIKE

Whether it was sending out more than 500 volunteers to spend a week maintaining and building hiking trails, or sponsoring National Trails Day®, which drew more than 21,000 volunteers who worked on trails nationwide, AHS ensured that America's hiking trails were cared for and kept open for your enjoyment.



The Land and Water Conservation Fund creates and protects lands for national parks, national forests, and wildlife refuges, protecting these places for conservation and for the enjoyment of Americans, today and in the future. While this program always facing a struggle for funding, AHS worked particularly hard in 2012 to encourage Congress to provide a permanent funding solution.

American Hiking Society awarded \$26,000 in National Trails Fund grants in 2012 thanks to lead sponsors L.L.Bean, MSR and Therm-a-Rest. One recipient of these grants was the Colorado Mountain Club which used the funds to restore a trail in Genessee Mountain Park. Along with the effort of 17 volunteers, new signage was installed, stairs and walls were rebuilt, and trail tread was restored along the Beaver Brook Trail, enabling people to enjoy this area of the Rocky Mountains.



AHS successfully worked with Congressional offices to protect funding for trails in the Recreational Trails Program. AHS's hard work advocating for this funding paid off: Congress approved \$85 million for this vital program over the next two years. This funding helps many trails across the nation and is a critical piece of protecting America's trails.

Volunteer Vacations Trip #10 Mojave Nat'l Preserve, CA April 2012

The National Park Service estimates 542,527 people visited Mojave National Preserve in 2012



Before



During



After

PROTECTING THE PLACES YOU LOVE

Working with Congress, federal land management agencies, the administration, and nonprofit conservation and recreation partners, American Hiking Society increased the protection and preservation of hiking trails and the lands around them. Our work with these agencies and organizations helps to ensure the preservation of the places you love to hike, for today and for future generations.



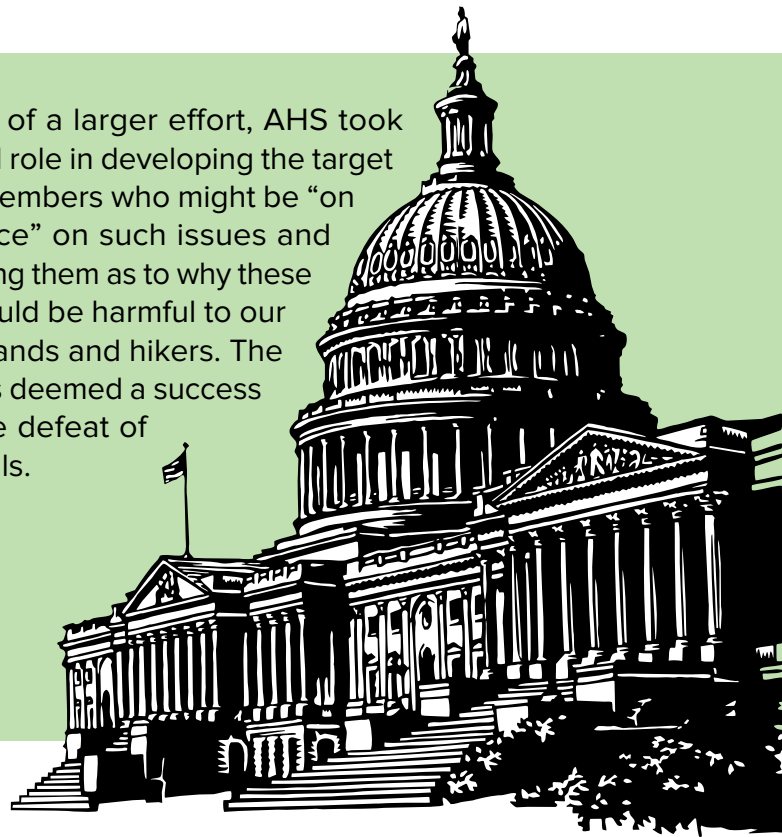
American Hiking Society hosted Hike the Hill in Washington, DC, in mid-February. After a series of briefings, attendees participated in more than 150 meetings with both government agency officials and members of Congress covering a variety of trail related advocacy topics. In addition to budget issues, regulatory and agency issues were also discussed including implementation of planning rules, access, and interagency cooperative efforts on behalf of trails.



As part of Hike the Hill, AHS hosted the Congressional Trails Caucus reception during which they presented Congressional Trailblazer Awards to Representative Blumenauer (pictured far left, with Gregory Miller) and Representative Bono Mack for their leadership in Congress on behalf of hikers and trails.

American Hiking Society closely monitored an alarming number of small land management bills that had been introduced in the House, all of which would be problematic for hikers. These bills collectively threatened to undermine our mountains, rivers, forests and wildlife, and also put outdoor experiences, including hiking, at risk. They ranged from the Wilderness Roadless Area Release Act that would have removed millions of acres from protected lands and opened them up to development and road building, to the National Wildlife Refuge Review Act of 2011 which would have prohibited the U.S. Fish and Wildlife service from establishing new refuges.

As part of a larger effort, AHS took the lead role in developing the target list of members who might be “on the fence” on such issues and educating them as to why these bills would be harmful to our public lands and hikers. The day was deemed a success with the defeat of all 14 bills.



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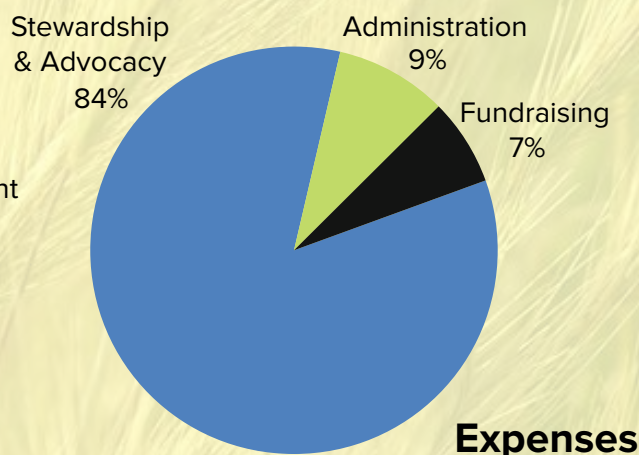
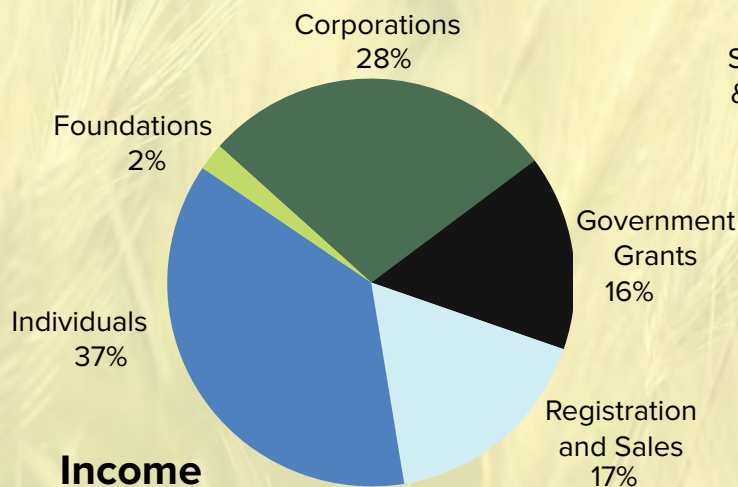
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VOLUNTEER VACATIONS

Trip #12
Yosemite, CA
Sept. 2012



Photos by Rob Chen, Volunteer



"I whole-heartedly support [American Hiking Society's Volunteer Vacations]. Our park has no trail crew, so (AHS) Volunteer Vacation participants have built six miles of new hiking trails and maintained at least 24 miles of park trails over the past seven years. Volunteer work is invaluable to help maintain park hiking trails. What an awesome program!"
-Christina Mills, District Interpreter/VINP Coordinator National Park Service

**American Hiking Society's
Volunteer Vacations are made
possible by sponsors:**
REI
Vasque
Klean Kanteen
Mountain Hardwear
Backpacker's Pantry

"We wanted the ASB location to, most importantly, include meaningful and rewarding service, but also allow students to explore a different part of the United States and give some time to relax from our rigorous academic schedules. Early on, we realized that the Volunteer Vacations with the AHS were the perfect fit."
-Alternative Break Participant,
Sky Meadows State Park





American Hiking Society represents millions of hikers who believe that the preservation of hiking trails and their environments is an important and worthwhile legacy to leave future generations.

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