

Nebraska Trails News

February 2011

Revised Rules to allow “other power-driven mobility devices” on Trails

On March 15, 2011, Department of Justice (DOJ) revised rules go into effect allowing “other power-driven mobility devices” (OPDMD) to be used by “individuals with mobility disabilities” on trails. The rules apply to all public, nonprofit and commercial establishments that operate any trail that is open for public use.

American Trails reports the revised regulation requires, “The entity shall make reasonable modifications in its policies, practices, or procedures to permit the use of OPDMD by individuals with mobility disabilities, unless the public entity can demonstrate that the class of OPDMD cannot be operated in accordance with legitimate safety requirements that the public entity has adopted based on actual risks, not on mere speculation, stereotypes, or generalizations about individuals with disabilities.” For more on the revised ruling see American Trails’ news release http://www.americantrails.org/enewsletter/accessible_Jan_2011.html or visit the questions and answers page for trail managers <http://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessible/power-mobility-questions-answers.html>.

Nebraska Revising Nutrition and Physical Activity State Plan

The Nutrition and Activity for Health Program, at the Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services, is working with stakeholders from across the state to revise the Nebraska Physical Activity and Nutrition State Plan. To initiate the process, two statewide partnership meetings were held in Kearney and Lincoln in the fall of 2010. Partners shared what was currently happening in the state regarding physical activity and nutrition promotion, identified strategies and activities for the future, and highlighted success stories within schools, worksites, communities and health care settings throughout the state. Three task forces were formed to guide the process of revision: Breastfeeding, Healthy Eating, and Active Living. To enhance and increase physical activity in the state, the Active Living Task Force decided to focus on three key areas of promotion: 1) enhance physical education and physical activity in schools; 2) enhance the built environment and improve access to physical activity in communities; and 3) enhance individual-based behavioral and social support approaches.

The goal of impacting the environment and improving access within communities has a direct relationship to the promotion, enhancement,

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and sustainability of trails in Nebraska. The revised Plan will provide activities to which not just individual organizations can implement, but to work through an integrated network of partners to enhance the opportunity for active living, which includes trails promotion. These opportunities for change are within the transportation, planning, and parks and recreation settings. The plan has several key activities that are related to trail efforts in the state: 1) Expand and enhance connectivity for all trails; 2) Advocate for sustainable funding streams for trails; 3) Reduce barriers (e.g. safety, cost, transportation, and accessibility) to outdoor recreation facilities; 4) Promotion of existing recreation facilities; and 5) Advocate for policies that improve access, sustain funding, and reduce barriers for opportunities of active living.

The revised Nebraska Physical Activity and Nutrition State Plan will be released in July of 2011. There is still time to be involved in the process by joining the Active Living Task Force. If you wish to join the task force, please contact Brian Coyle at brian.coyle@nebraska.gov In addition, if you would like to learn more about the revision process or see the updated action plans for active living, please visit www.dhhs.ne.gov/nafh/PAtaskforce.htm.

NTC to Partner on Elkhorn River Cleanup

Nebraska Trails Council will embark on a new river cleanup project this summer. The effort, being organized by the Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA) of National Park Service, will bring together a wide variety of partners for the June event. RTCA employees, Karen Anderson and Anne Hazuka, participated in Iowa Department of Natural Resources' Project AWARE last summer. They were so "wowed" by the river cleanup project they decided to emulate it on this side of the Missouri. The one day event will cover approximately 17 miles on the Elkhorn River.

Current project partners include Papio-Missouri Natural Resources District, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, United States Geological Survey, Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality, Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Keep Nebraska Beautiful, Firststar Fiber and the Venture Crew of the Boy Scouts of America.

We'll keep you posted as we get closer to the date and more details become finalized.

RTC Issues Call for Help to Nebraskans

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy recently added a dozen trails in Lincoln to their TrailLink site and are in need of users to provide reviews. To share your experiences on these trails and submit photos visit <http://www.trailink.com/viewnationalmap.aspx?z=11&lat=40.81347&lon=-96.651296>

Bikes Belong Launches Bicycle Research Grant Program

The Bikes Belong Foundation announced the launch Bicycle Research Grant Program to fund research on the economic impact of bicycling facilities and events. This new program aims to fill a crucial

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knowledge gap. Collecting quantitative evidence on the benefits bicycling brings to local, regional, and national economies will help encourage and guide investments in bicycling.

The program will award a total of \$40,000 in grants, ranging from \$5,000 to \$10,000, to academic or non-profit research institutions in 2011. Application deadline for the first round of grants is March 31, 2011. In addition to funding economy-driven projects, Bikes Belong will consider innovative or unique research on other bike-related topics on a case-by-case basis.

To learn more about the program or to apply for a research grant, visit Bikes Belong [Foundation page](#). Questions can also be directed to the [grants manager](#) or [research analyst](#).

Apply for a \$500 Road Safety Mini Grant

From League of American Bicyclists

If you are planning a traffic safety event in May (National Youth Traffic Safety Month, National Bicycle Safety Month, National Motorcycle Safety Month or other safety event), \$500 mini grants are available to assist with activities for the May 11th [Decade of Action for Road Safety](#) launch. It is a 250 word application, open to any not-for-profit organization (including government offices). Due date is March 21, 2011. For application and details, [http://www.bikeleague.org/news/pdfs/un\\$500minigrants.pdf](http://www.bikeleague.org/news/pdfs/un$500minigrants.pdf).

National Bicycling and Walking Update Released

U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration released The National Bicycling and Walking Study: 15-Year Status Report. The report is the third status update to the study, originally published in 1994 as an assessment of bicycling and walking as transportation modes in the United States. The 15-year update measures the progress made toward the original goals of lowering the number of fatalities while increasing the percentage of trips made by bicycling and walking. The report, found at <http://atfiles.org/files/pdf/NatBikeWalkStudy2010.pdf>, examines a range of efforts to increase bicycling and walking in the United States.

National Bike Summit

There is still time to register and attend the National Bike Summit in Washington, D.C. from March 8-10. Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood is scheduled to speak at the opening dinner. More information can be found at <http://www.bikeleague.org/conferences/summit11/index.php>.

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