

Nebraska Trails News

October 20, 2010

Teens Collaboration between Agencies Create a Trail Plan for Crete's Tuxedo Park

The [Crete Youth in Governance Team](#) (a 4-H community leadership program) works to develop leadership and life skills while improving the community of Crete, Nebraska. The group consists of ten high school students full of energy and ideas.

The students recently conducted three public forums to discuss needs of the community. After collecting and organizing data from these meetings, one of the hot topics that surfaced was the need for additional biking/hiking trails. With this data, they approached the [Crete City Council](#) with a request to work on a trail plan. The city passed a resolution that allowed the Crete Youth In Governance team to work with the city to form a task force to develop a comprehensive plan for the Tuxedo Park Community Trail.

Lee Ann Manning, Saline County Extension Educator with the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, helped them realize the type of professional help needed to develop their ideas. After contacting Mary Hanson, a planner with [National Park Service's Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance](#) (RTCA) Program, students received education in all aspects of trail development and grant funding. With their new found knowledge in hand, students went to work analyzing flood plans, mapping out the trail, solving design obstacles and developing cost estimates. On August 17, the team presented their [comprehensive plan](#) to the Crete City Council.

The City of Crete has started construction on the first phase of the trail. The Crete Youth In Governance Team has written two grants for financial assistance. Applications are pending, with grant announcement awards expected by year's end.

The students have since formed another partnership with the [Crete Area Medical Center](#). Through this partnership, an application will be submitted next year for a Blue Cross Blue Shield grant for funding to assist development of additional sections of the trail as part of a wellness program.

The Crete Youth In Governance Team is partially funded by a [Rural Youth Development Grant](#) supported by the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service, and the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture and is administered by the [National 4-H Council](#), Youth in Governance grant project.

The Nebraska Trails Council plans on following the progress of the Tuxedo Trail on NTC's [Facebook photo album page](#).

UNO Students in Action

On October 2, twenty-two UNO students worked at fifteen various locations along the Omaha Metro System to collect trail data. They tracked 817 trail users in a matter of two hours. The percentage of bikers versus pedestrians varied from location to location. The data the students collected will now be analyzed and assembled into a public report to assist policymakers in understanding trail use patterns in Omaha.

The students send a special thank you to the [Papio-Missouri River Natural Resource District](#) for their support of this research project!

Nebraska Leads States in Rescinding Transportation Enhancement Funds

On August 13, 2010, notices were sent to all fifty states indicating that they had less than two weeks to rescind \$2.2 billion in transportation funds to the Federal Highway Administration. The funds were previously allocated to each states DOT for transportation needs and subsequently asked to be returned for budget needs.

Analyzing state rescissions, [Rails-To-Trails Conservancy](#) determined nearly \$580 million was cut from [Transportation Enhancement](#) (TE), more than 25% of the total rescission and nearly eight months' worth of TE funding. TE funds are the nation's largest source of funding for trails, walking and bicycling.

Nebraska led the nation in disproportional cuts to TE funding. TE funding accounted for 2.6% of Nebraska Department of Roads total apportionment in 2010; however 100% of the funds Nebraska rescinded were cut from TE programs. The \$16 million in TE funds Nebraska rescinded equal 25 months worth of Transportation Enhancement funding.

Please visit the [Rails-To-Trails Conservancy](#) site to voice your dismay at Nebraska's decision to disproportionately rescind TE funds.

Other Trail News

- 20th [American Trails National Symposium](#), November 14-17, 2010 in Chattanooga, Tennessee.
- Deer rifle hunting season, Nov. 13-21. Known trail closures at this time are: Steamboat Trace, Oak Creek Trail, Bader Park Trails (Central City).
- Enjoy hiking with your family or want to get started check out [americanhiking.org](#).

For more information on [Nebraska Trails Council](#) visit our website where you can also find a form for becoming an individual or organizational support member of Nebraska Trails Council.

Nebraska Trails Council is on [Facebook](#). We are always looking for more friends, please pass the word.