

2021 Trail Trek *Making Connections!*

Trail Trek registration is NOW OPEN! We will be trekking on Sunday, June 20. There are four routes this year that will allow every rider an opportunity to ride over the new GPTN Connector Bridge near Densmore Park.

Trail Trek is a popular community fundraising event that encourages families to explore Lincoln's 134-mile trails system. A variety of routes and distances appeal to both novice and experienced riders. Each participant receives lunch, snacks on the trail and a t-shirt.

Now in its 19th year, Trail Trek has contributed over \$200,000 to building trails in and around Lincoln. Go to **GPTN.org** to register today! Early bird registration ends June 13 - costs go up \$5 on all entries.

NEW THIS YEAR - We have a new starting location. All routes will take off from Speedway Village located at 345 Speedway Circle off Van Dorn. Also we are upgrading our t-

shirts for all adult participants. The upgrade will be to a super-soft cotton blend t-shirt printed by Screen Ink.

Trail Trek will be different in 2021 due to COVID-19. We are working on the details with the Health Department. We plan on having a take-a-way lunch instead of a buffet. This will help us limit a group gathering. At this point due to the Health Department Directives, masks will be required when participants are not biking on the route.

If this should change we will send out a communication through email prior to the event. Regardless of directives, hand sanitizer will be available at the start of the event, at rest stops and at the finish.

Packet pick up is Saturday, June 19 or Sunday, June 20. Helmets are mandatory for all riders.

Continued on page 3

Chris Beutler Trail

In the future South Haymarket Park, the Chris Beutler Trail will connect the N Street Protected Bikeway to the Jamaica North Trail at J Street. Estimated cost for the trail and easements is \$275,000. GPTN in partnership with NTF is raising funds to support this critical trail connection. Please consider donating to this exciting project. Thanks!



Make contributions payable to: Nebraska Trails Foundation

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Designated Project: _____

**Mail to: GPTN
P.O. 82902
Lincoln, NE 68501-2902**





Great Plains Trails Network

since 1988

dedicated to the goal of developing a network of commuter and recreational trails within Lincoln and Lancaster County

2021

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Newsletter comments, questions, corrections
gbentrup68@gmail.com

A Note from the President



Making Connections was the theme of our Annual Meeting.

That phrase summarizes what we do as Great Plains Trails Network – we help make Connections. For more than 30 years we’ve worked to make physical connections throughout Lincoln and southeast Nebraska.

But these connections are so much more than just utilizing an old railroad corridor or getting more paved trail.

Through these physical trail connections, we’re connecting your community. We’re connecting neighborhoods. We provide every person who visits, or calls Lincoln home, a way to connect to their health through outdoor recreation. We connect to our livelihood through transportation. Through our trails, we can connect to almost every aspect of our lives. These connections are more important than ever.

Our community needs more connections to be strong and unified, and that can happen through trails. Pathways through our city bring people out and we’ve seen that more than ever in the last year, and it’s good. Whether we utilize the trails for health, recreation, transportation, lowering your carbon footprint; regardless the reason, it is good to connect with our community. The beauty of the trails is that they are assessable to all and allow for everyone to connect in their own unique way. The possibilities are endless.

As I serve as President of Great Plains Trails Network, I want to thank you for being connected and supporting GPTN. Together, we will build even stronger connections for our community.

Jim Krieger

GPTN NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS

January 23, 2021 - May 12, 2021

Standard \$10

Max Antoine, Pamela K. Baker, Jenni Bartles, Colleen Beard, Paul Breikreutz, Mark Brohman, Donald Dingman, John Eggerss, Mark Eilers, Matthew Frengs, Darren Furasek, Dale Gebhard, Matthew Gilmore, Robin Goracke, Charles Hanson, Jim Harder, Tim Henkel, Susan Hertzler, Paula Kellner, Addison Killeen, Kirk & Jo Kinberg, Art & Earlene Knox, Doug Koebernick, Barb Kortum, Diane Laffin, Michael Laughlin, Kenna Lehmann, Louis Lemon, Christine Lodes, Matt Maw, Maralee Meyer, James Ostdiek, Lois Paschke, Lana Peterson, Joanna Pope, Krista Potter, Ann Quinlan, Julia Reed, Gareth Rees, Joao Rogado, Bonita Sharif, Rita Shaw, Edie Skelton, Nicole Sleddens, Jaelyn Smith, Daria Springer, Jo Stewart, Joe Sweeney, Tedde Taege, Annette Thompson, Barry Urtel, Melinda Varley, Amanda Volz, Jason Volz, DiAnn White, Kyle Winchell

Associate \$20

Mary Andelt, Bev Barry, Maggie Bigelow, David Brooke, Jim & Liz Carney, Michael Eppel, Pamela Forster, Carrie Grant, Doyle Helmink, Elizabeth Hunt, Steve Jones, Darrell & Julie Knight, Trixie Koch, Ed Kouma, Dan Kounovsky, Mike Melbye, Vaden Miller, John Oswald, Shane Patrick, Jesse Petersen, Andrew Sarafian, Heidi Schumacher, Robert Shanahan, Hal Smith, Kristine Strand, Del Stuefer, Monica Vandergriend, Joyce & Lyle Vannier, Michael Walsh, Jamie Wenz, Douglas Zink

Trail Sustainer \$50

Mary Amen, John & Jana Clark, Steve Clements, Cathy Cole, Cindy Conger, James Crook, Donald Davids, Curt Donaldson, Brian Fitzgerald, Mike Gloor & Marie de Martinez, Corey Godfrey, Ron & Connie Gormley, Janice Gradwohl, Karen Griffin, Wayne & Judy Jensen, Nancy Johnson, Charles W. Kasson, Sara Kemper, Chris & Mary Kingery, Mike Kreikemeier, Jon Large, Roger & Ann Lott, Mike Malloy, Robin McFarland, Jane & Jack McVay, Richard Meginnis, Kristi Newcomb, Gerry & Jane Oligmueller, David Palm, Drew Pumphrey, Ruth Rodden, Donita Consbruck & David Scoby, Bert & Karalene Smith, Scott Vicroy, Brenda Weyers, Mark Wilson, Joel Zuerlein

Trail Patron \$100

Marybell Avery & Stan Campbell, Glynnis Collins, Hess & Nancy Dyas, De Edgar, Paul Harrison, Lisa Janssen, Jeff & Heather Kimble, Jim & Doris Lewis, David & Jan McChesney, Neal Mersmann, Bob Michaud, Chris Morton, Craig & Rhonda Munier, Lynn Murman, Michael Murman, Terry & Julie Pramberg, Greg Rosenboom, David & Sharon Sinkler, Shelley Sorensen, Jerry & Jo Stanley

Trail Benefactor \$250

Andrea & Gene Dinkelman, Elijah Frank, Roger & Jan Hirsch, Jack Podoll



Thank You!



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BICYCLINCOLN™

BicycLincoln is a community group that supports and promotes bicycling in the city of Lincoln. Our mission is to provide information and a unified voice for bicycle advocacy in an effort to make cycling in Lincoln more friendly, safe, easy, accepted, and "so that more people bike and bike more often."

Check them out at <http://bicyclincoln.org/>



Ride. Share.

That's what the Great Plains Bike Club is all about. We actively promote bicycling with rides for all levels of riders in and around Southeastern Nebraska.

Weekly rides with a leader | Show 'n go rides
Ice cream & coffee shop rides | Moon-lit rides
Hammering training rides | Trail rides

We sponsor the Spring Fling ride in April and Heatstroke 100 in August. We also promote bicycling safety through community-sponsored events. For more information and an on-line application to join the club, go to greatplainsbikeclub.org.



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BIKE WALK NEBRASKA

Bike Walk Nebraska cultivates and supports safe and accessible active transportation across our state by leading sound policy and advocating for best practices. We work across sectors in partnership with elected officials, municipalities, and organizations to ensure that biking and walking - whether for transportation or recreation - works for all Nebraskans.

Become a member at:

<https://www.bikewalknebraska.org/>

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HOURS:
Monday - Friday 10 AM - 6 PM
Saturday: 10 AM - 5 PM
Sunday: 12 PM - 5 PM



2021 Trail Trek

Making Connections!

Continued from page 1

Thanks to the Bike Rack and Cycle Works, 20 bikes will be given away again this year. Three bikes will be given away as promotions at stations of Alpha Media prior to the event and the remaining bikes will be drawn for at Trail Trek. Each participant receives an entry to win one of the 17 bikes!

Thank you for supporting the trails in Lincoln and the surrounding area.

PLEASE NOTE TICKETS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE UNLESS THE EVENT IS CANCELLED DUE TO NEW COVID-19 HEALTH DEPARTMENT DIRECTIVES - IF THIS SHOULD HAPPEN THEN A FULL REFUND IS AVAILABLE. THE EVENT WILL TAKE PLACE RAIN OR SHINE.

Trail Trek is a fun event whether you ride or volunteer! If volunteering is your jam, we have just the opportunities for you. Trail Trek is run 100% by volunteers--about 75 volunteers to be exact. As a volunteer, you'll receive a t-shirt, lunch at Speedway Village and the joy of keeping Trail Trek a fun, safe event for all levels of riders. Sign up for any of the below opportunities:

- Packet Pick-up (Saturday, 6/19 or Sunday, 6/20)-4 volunteers
- Speedway Village (Sunday, 6/20): Set-up, Parking/Traffic, Information Booth, Teardown--30 volunteers
- Trail Guide (Sunday, 6/20)--12 volunteers
- Rest Stops (Sunday, 6/20)--22 volunteers

To sign up by **Wednesday, June 9** to receive a spectacular t-shirt, contact Rachelle at rachelle.hadley@gmail.com or go to: <https://www.gptn.org/trailtrek/volunteersignup.html>.



PRESENTED BY:



Trail Trek Sponsors



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TOUR de Lincoln 2021

EXPLORE LINCOLN ON THE TRAILS!

Each ride features a different quadrant of the city.

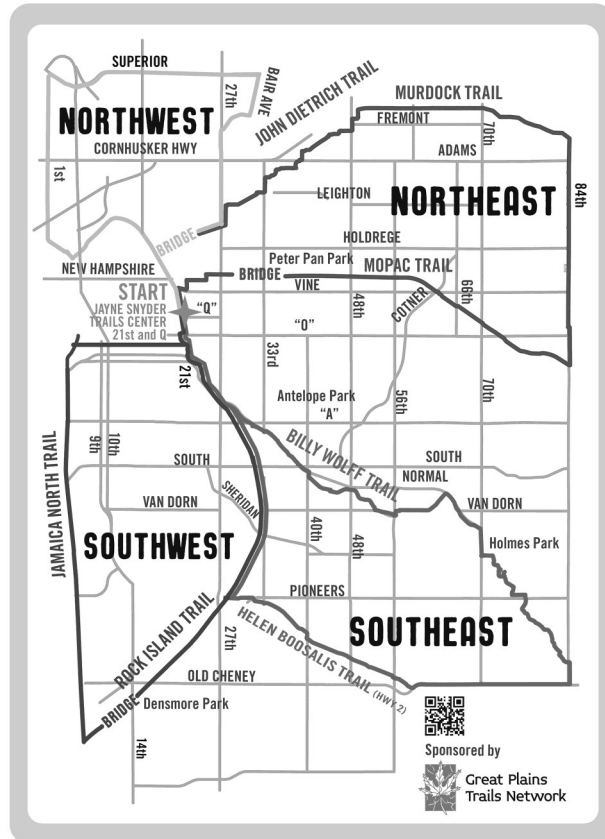
- Routes subject to change.
- Refreshments 15 minutes before each ride.
- Weather cancellations - gptn.org
- No registration fee, just show up and ride.
- Helmets required.



MEET AT THE JAYNE SNYDER TRAILS CENTER (21st and Q) Union Plaza Park.
For more information visit gptn.org or call Mary, 402-429-5753. Support GPTN by becoming a member today!



SOUTHWEST THURSDAY, MAY 6 6:00PM · 13 MILES	NORTHWEST THURSDAY, MAY 13 6:00PM · 12 MILES	SOUTHEAST THURSDAY, MAY 20 6:00PM · 15 MILES	NORTHEAST THURSDAY, MAY 27 6:00PM · 16 MILES
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Lincoln Track Club Membership Application

The Lincoln Track Club, Inc. was established in 1975 by an eager group of track enthusiasts. Although our title contains the reference to track, we have become a distance oriented club. Our membership includes some of the nation's finest road racers as well as a great number of fun runners.

In essence, our club is a nonprofit community service organization, established to promote running throughout this area and provide educational assistance for its runners. Our quarterly newsletter has become an informational running publication for local runners. The LTC is a member club of both the Road Runners Club of America (RRCA) and USA Track and Field.

The Lincoln Track Club is not just about running. It's also about volunteering. This is the one ingredient that makes LTC work. The whole organization is made up of volunteers and we can always use more.

Please consider joining one of Nebraska's finest volunteer-run organizations. LTC members receive entry forms for all LTC races, FastTimes (our newsletter, which is e-mailed quarterly), an invitation to our annual meeting, and a discount of an entry fee for a single LTC road race. All memberships expire at the end of the calendar year (December 31).

2021 LTC Calendar

Check LTC Website for Current Status



To join the Lincoln Track Club: www.lincolnrn.org



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TWO BLOCKS NORTH OF O STREET ON 21ST, JUST EAST OF UNL CITY CAMPUS

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Support Lincoln Trails

By donating to the Nebraska Trails Foundation through the:



Community Services Fund of Nebraska

www.communityservicesfund.org/



Give to Lincoln Day is on May 25 and is a great way to support trails in Lincoln. GPTN is raising funds to support projects like the Chris Beutler Trail in downtown Lincoln that will connect N Street (Haymarket Trail/N Street bike lane) and the Jamaica North Trail.

Every donation given makes a bigger impact because nonprofits also get a proportional share of a \$500,000 challenge match fund provided by Lincoln Community Foundation.

Go to www.GivetoLincoln.com and give to Nebraska Trails Foundation. Donations can be made from May 1st to 25th.

Event Calendar

MAY

20 —Tour de Lincoln Ride #3 Southeast

25 —Give to Lincoln Day

27 —Tour de Lincoln Ride #4 Northeast

JUNE

5 —GPTN Connector Bridge Celebration

20 —Trail Trek

Save the Date—June 5: City of Lincoln will be hosting a grand opening celebration for the GPTN Connector Bridge since last year's event was cancelled. More details to come.

National Bike Challenge

Local riders encouraged to repeat as National Bike Challenge champions.

To celebrate National Bike Month in May, the City invites area cyclists to start pedaling to help Lincoln continue its streak as National Bike Challenge champions. The 2021 National Bike Challenge begins May 1 and runs through September 30. To participate, sign up at lovetoride.net.

In 2020, Lincoln was a National Bike Challenge champion for the fifth time in nine years, with 1,568 Lincoln riders pedaling more than all other cities in the nation, logging 453,529 miles. Lincoln was the overall national champion in 2013, 2016, 2017, and 2019. Lincoln's national championship victories surpass all other communities in the nation, beating cities like Chicago, Atlanta, Portland, and Philadelphia.

As of 5/9/21, Lincoln was in first place with 21,788 miles while Madison was second place with 18,324 miles (cities with 150,000 to 400,000 residents). The State of Nebraska was in first place for states with populations up to 2 million.

CAN YOU CATCH THIS GUY?
Wouldn't it be fun to try?

Homestead Trail
Oak Creek Trail
MoPac East Trail



 **LOWER PLATTE SOUTH**
natural resources district
www.lpsnrd.org

Trail Updates

South Beltway construction and utility relocation: The Jamaica North Trail will remain open during construction, but temporary and periodic closures will be required in the area one-half mile south of Saltillo Road. This is a multi-year project.

Beal Slough Trail from 56th to 70th St: Design work continues on the Beal Slough Trail and construction should begin in 2022.

Lincoln Trail-A-Thon

You can still sign up and participate in the Lincoln Trail-A-Thon 2021. The Lincoln Trail-A-Thon is a challenge to ride, run, jog or walk all the trails within the Lincoln city limits in 2021. When you finish you will have covered 78 miles of trails.

In 2021 as you complete each trail section, you'll record the accomplishment with us and receive a 2.25-inch diameter locally designed collectible trail button. This fun challenge was started to inspire individuals to be healthier with an opportunity to GIVE BACK, EXPLORE new trails and CONQUER a common goal. Check out gptn.org to register and see button designs.

GIVE

The 2021 entry fee will GIVE BACK to the Great Plains Trails Network (GPTN) to help expand the trail system in Lincoln and Lancaster County.

EXPLORE

Each month a different trail will be explored. You may choose to follow our plan or rearrange it to create a plan that fits your schedule. The plan was created to do two things, keep the exploration to a reasonable distance and keep trails grouped together based on location. We will also have fun monthly trail activities to keep everyone moving toward their goal.

CONQUER

While Trail-A-Thon is a self-directed, family friendly event, once you complete all 78 miles you will feel like you have conquered the challenge, and you won't be alone. We'll all do it together.

We invite you to join us by registering at gptn.org today!

Incessant forward motion

By Cara Benstrup

Nearly a decade has transpired since several of my friends convinced me to train for and run a trail race in southwestern Colorado; it traversed from Ouray to Telluride, cresting a 13,000-foot mountain peak known as Imogene Pass. The night before the event, runners excitedly gathered for a brief presentation that provided simple yet profound guidance for the following day. Though this has nothing to do with trails in Lincoln, I feel as though the greatest words of wisdom given that evening have carried me onward since then; I feel they are invaluable to share as the collective we begin our transition into a world beyond then and now.

I can think back to moments on that mountain. Moments during the ascent when I bounded happily upwards amongst the forest terrain, inching closer to timberline; yet other stretches found me slowing to walk for a moment or two, catching my breath in thinning air. Keep moving. Forge ahead. Just get there, no matter what it takes. Here we all are, inching closer to that peak. Stopping on a more frequent basis to catch our breath; maybe hunching over, hands on knees gasping for oxygen. Perhaps it is the last 6.2 of that marathon, a first 5K, those achy knees finding themselves embarking on a first walk in years; but we are moving forward!

Let me also confess.

The downhill was a little rough. It beat my legs up something fierce, not to mention an impressive fall in the last mile (ask my friends, I am adept at clumsiness); it was fast, uncomfortably fast. Anxiety provoking, even. Soaring head first into something terrifyingly unknown. How has this changed me? Grace. What did I leave behind? Self doubt. What can I take forward? Appreciation. What or who waits for me at the finish line? Loved ones. Wait, is there actually a finish line? Nope. Of utmost importance is, how do I feel today and in what way might I honor those emotions? I think I am going to hit the trails.

"Incessant forward motion"



Updating the Wilderness Park Master Plan

PROJECT AREAS



- 1 **Trailhead Improvements**
See page 2 for more information
- 2 **Kiosks and Navigational Signage**
See page 3 for more information
Project is not numbered on map as it covers the entire park
- 3 **Fitness Loop**
See page 4 for more information
- 4 **Rehabilitation of Epworth Arch**
See page 5 for more information
- 5 **1st St. Low-Water Crossing**
See page 6 for more information
- 6 **Old Cheney Suspension Bridge**
See page 7 for more information
- 7 **Rock Island Railroad Embankment/GPTN Connector Area**
See page 8 for more information
- 8 **Cardwell Low-Water Crossing**
See page 9 for more information
- 9 **Rokeyby and Hwy 77 Bridge**
See page 10 for more information
- 10 **Small Culvert Replacement**
See page 11 for more information

The City of Lincoln, Parks and Recreation Department has recently completed an update of the Wilderness Park Master Plan. The primary goal of this project is the development of an annotated map that identifies user amenities and guides future improvements associated with the park's trails, trail heads, wayfinding signage, parking lots, etc.

The plan addresses the "user experience" in the park – the experience of the park visitor as they enter the park and what they see as they move through the park. Goals for the master plan include:

- Provide a user experience that allows visitors to explore wilderness
- Increase trail route options available to all users with minimal increase to the overall miles of trails
- Locate and select capital improvements that provide suitable access and prioritize protection of natural resources
- Provide signage that assists in navigation, improves the understanding of park rules and etiquette, and communicates the importance of Wilderness Park to the community
- Provide trailheads that are safe, welcoming and provide useful information and services to park visitors

The park improvements are grouped into ten project areas shown on the adjacent map. More details on the projects can be found at the City of Lincoln's Park and Recreation website.

Thanks to the Wilderness Park Working Group for their efforts! Adam Hintz, Anna Wishart, Chris Heinrich, Dan King, Jim Crook, Joeth Zucco, Kat Baum, Matt Gersib, Rosina Paolini, and Susan Larson-Rodenburg

WILDERNESS PARK | PROJECT 1 - TRAILHEAD IMPROVEMENTS

Work Item

Phase 1: FUNDED, IN PROGRESS
Asphalt- \$4,500
Rock- \$61,425
Bollards- \$37,050

Total- \$102,975

Phase 2: UNFUNDED
Concrete- \$35,000
RR Shelters- \$30,000
Tables- \$3,200
Lighting- \$63,000

Total- \$131,200

1 Replace deteriorating and missing bollards

2 Seasonal portable restroom pad/enclosure
Only available outside floodplain

3 Kiosk

4 Grading and rock in parking lots

5 Solar Lights (programmable)

6 Add picnic tables