

# Sharing Dirt Trails

How hikers, cyclists, equestrians  
and others can get along



# About CITA

- Creates and maintains unpaved, shared-use trails in and around Des Moines, Iowa
- Land management relationships include
  - Polk County
  - City of Des Moines
  - Iowa Department of Natural Resources
  - Private landowners
- IMBA affiliation connects to global expertise

# In 20 minutes...

## 1. Why we must share trails

- Resources
- Community
- Stewardship

## 2. How to share dirt

- Design
- Use
- Management



# Why share dirt trails?

1. Satisfy user demand
2. Preserve resources
  - Land?
  - Money?
3. Build community
  - Peer influence
  - Common ground
4. Enhance stewardship
  - Grow volunteerism
  - Strengthen advocacy



# Yeah, but what about...

1. User conflict?
2. Erosion?



how to share > design

# Start with good design!

- Embrace singletrack
  - a preferred experience
  - addresses sharing problems
  - low-impact design



how to share > design

# What we want

## Singletrack experiences!

- Hiker
- Runner
- Cyclist
- Equestrian
- Angler
- Hunter

QuickTime™ and a  
H.263 decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.



how to share > design

# Inside the experience...

- Influence perception
  - Natural shape
  - Anchors
  - Control points



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# Inside the experience...

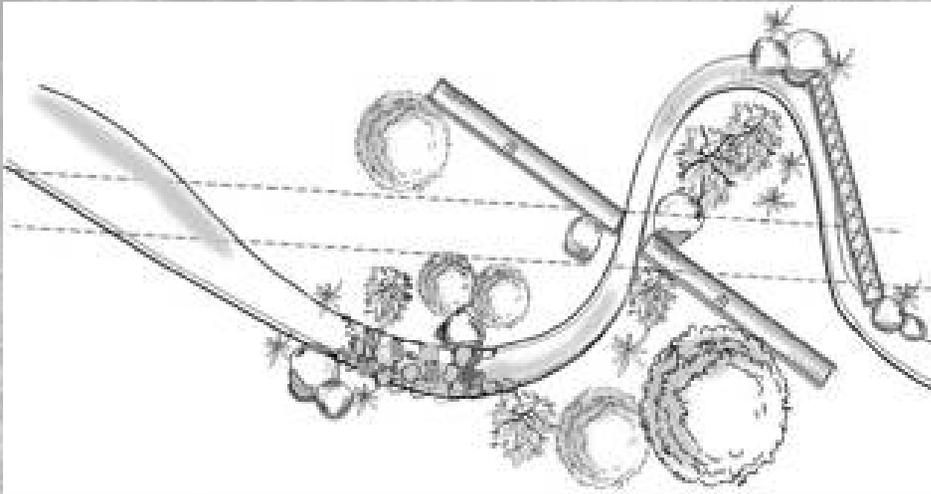
- Connect to human feelings
  - Safety
  - Efficiency
  - Playfulness
  - Harmony



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# Avoid problems

- Manage speed for sharing
  - Sightlines
  - Corridors
  - Intersections



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# Avoid problems

- Make tread sustainable
  - Follow contours
  - Engineer for uses



how to share > use

# Rules of the Trail

1. Use open trails only
2. Leave no trace
3. Control your bicycle
4. Always yield trail
5. Never spook animals
6. Plan ahead



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# Stewardship

1. Construction and reclamation
2. Maintenance
3. Patrol



how to share > **management**

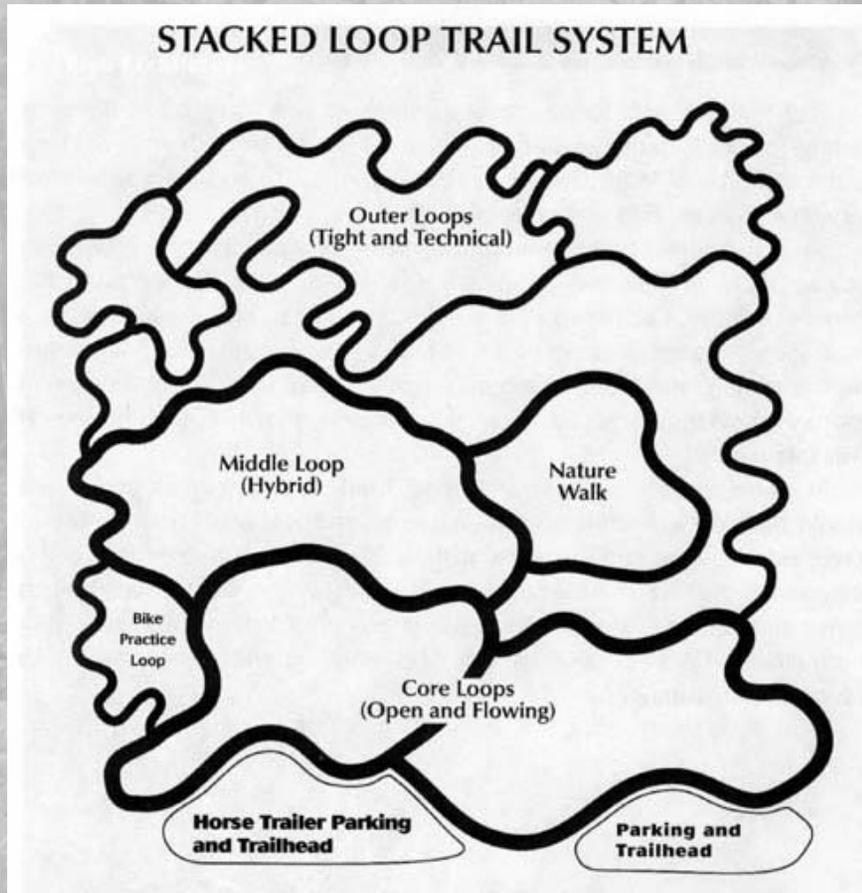
# Practical solutions...

1. System design
2. Information and education
3. User involvement and partnerships
4. Regulations



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# 1. Design a system



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## 2. Provide information

- Signage
- Patrols
- Clinics



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# 3. Encourage involvement

- Organize users
- Encourage trail work
- Host shared-use events



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# 4. Regulate lightly

- Enforcement = expensive
- Types of sharing
  - Preferred use
  - Alternating use



# Questions?



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# Sustainable Trails

- Not social trails
- Not fall line trails

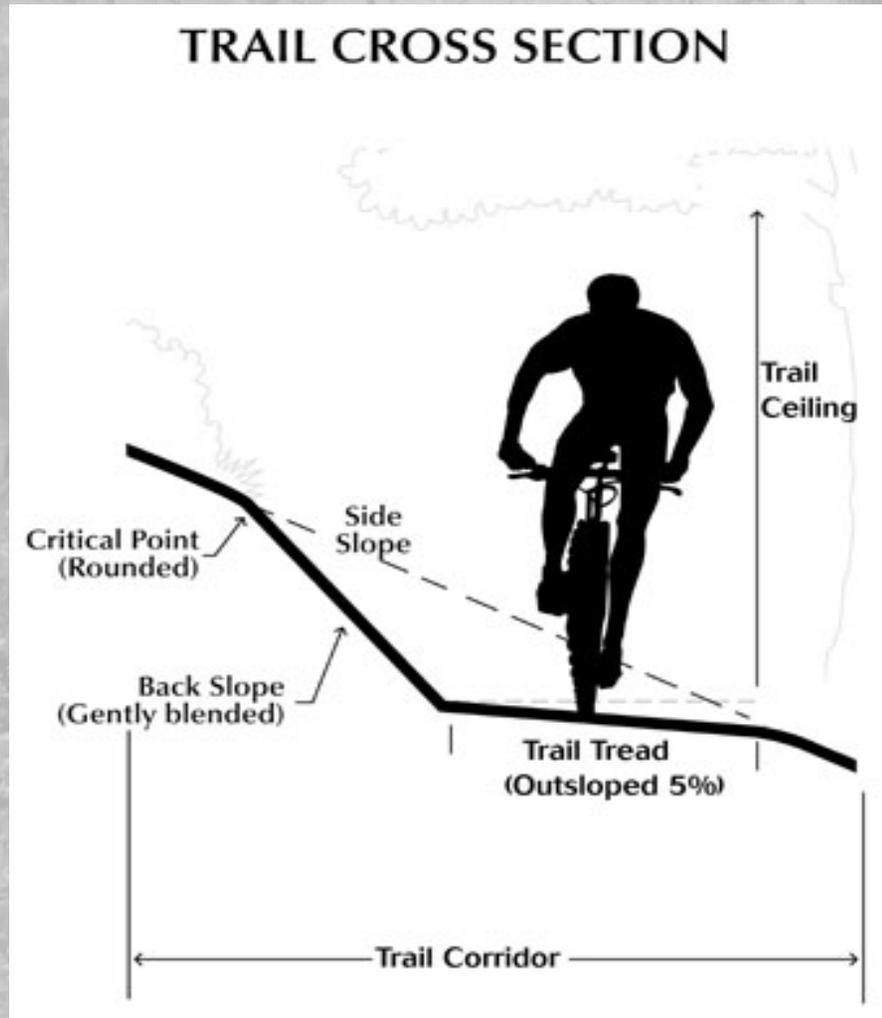


# Sustainable Trails

- Support current and future use with minimal impact to the area's natural systems.
- Produces negligible soil loss or movement while allowing vegetation to inhabit the area.
- Recognizes that pruning or removal of certain plants may be necessary for proper maintenance.
- Does not adversely affect the area's animal life.
- Accommodates existing use while allowing only appropriate future use.
- Requires little rerouting and minimal long-term maintenance.

*- From the National Park Service, Rocky Mountain Region, January 1991*

# Sustainable Trails



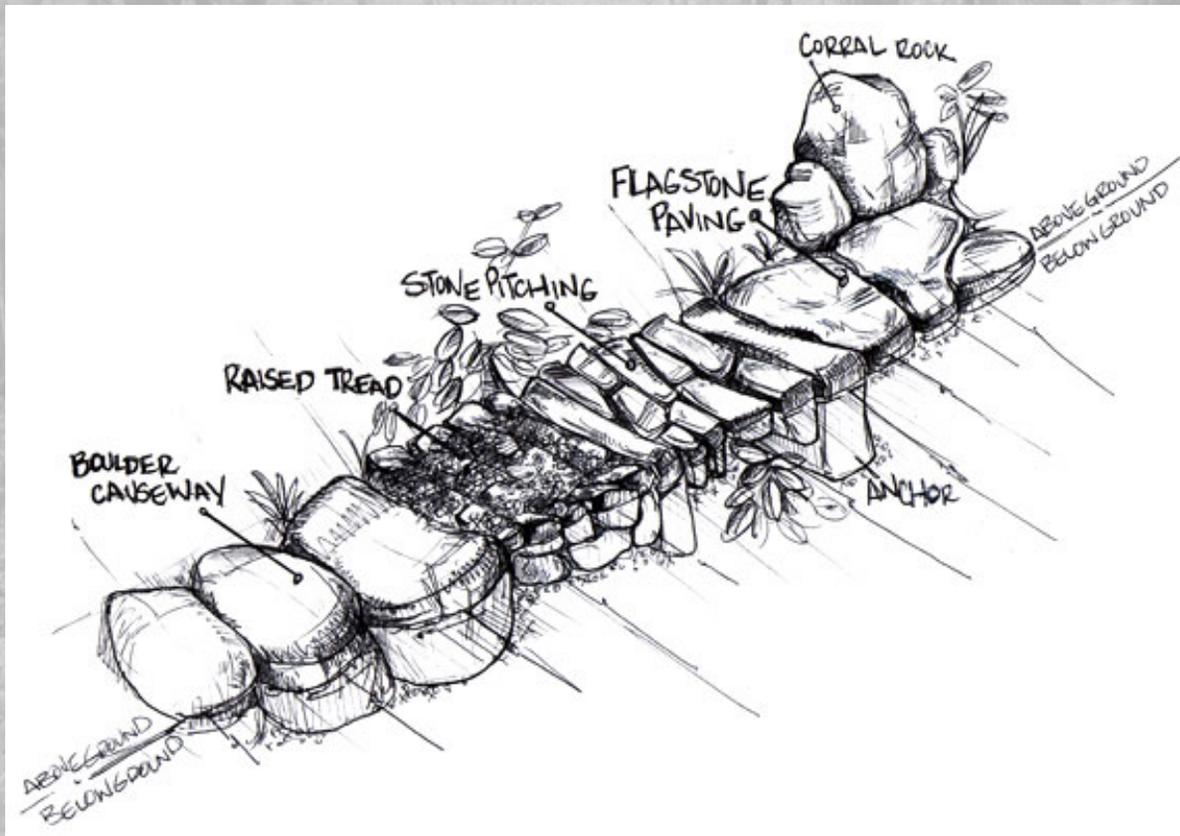
# Sustainable Trails

- The Half Rule and 10 Percent Rule



# Sustainable Trails

- Armoring



# Responsible Use

- Sharing amongst feet, wheels and hooves...
  - Accommodates the needs of the most users
  - Builds a trail community to preserve and protect resources
  - Peer regulation helps outlaws and novices
  - Cost effective for land managers

# Sound Good?

- 1. Let's find common ground** among trail users
- 2. Let's engage more lowans** in trail building and trail management
- 3. Let's build trails** that respect our limited resources and strengthen the appreciation of Iowa's natural beauty



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