

# Mancos Trails Group Trail Adoption Agreement

## Mancos Spur Trail Segment Adopters Guide

**Project Goal** The goal of this program is to implement an adopt-a-trail segment maintenance program that will help MTG develop the capacity needed to continue maintaining the Mancos Spur to the Colorado Trail, while at the same time develop the additional capacity that is needed to implement new trail construction projects that are planned in the coming years. By assigning trail segments to individual MTG volunteers it should become easier to identify and address recurring trail maintenance issues on those segments while also providing more flexibility for people to perform this volunteer work when it fits best into their schedule, freeing up weekends for larger group trail construction and maintenance projects.

### Adopters Responsibilities

#### A. Safety

This is the most important part of trail work. We all want to come home to our friends and family uninjured with all of our fingers and toes, and able to enjoy all of the things we like to do. ***Take this part very seriously!***

Tasks to be performed:

1. Ensure that you and everyone working with you has reviewed and signed a JHA (Job Hazard Analysis) document this year and is also on the list of MTG volunteers . This document lists all of the known hazards associated with performing trail maintenance along with ways to mitigate those hazards. It will be provided to you by the Forest Service and will be reviewed during the training day. If you miss the live training you will need to view the video of the training. If you have additional people working with you that have not reviewed this document please review it with them, and get them to sign it prior to starting work. Again this document needs to be signed just once annually but it should be reviewed at the start of each work session
2. Gather people up and do a pre-work safety talk. Address the following points: ● Do you have communications (cell phone service, SPOT device, etc.)? If you don't have cell service, in the event of an emergency what are you going to do to get to a place where you do? What's the plan? Discuss this

with your group or if you are by yourself discuss this before you leave with your partner, family, friend, or club member that knows where you are going, what you're doing and when you expect to be back.

- Discuss any hazards specific to the tasks you plan on doing and the tools that you are using.
  - Discuss any environmental factors that may affect your safety while working. Is it hot? Lightning? Rain, cold weather, etc.
3. Ensure that all work is performed in a safe manner.
    - Check for proper PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) use: Boots, long pants, work gloves and eye protection.
    - Ensure that tools are used properly.

## **B. Trail Maintenance Tasks**

As part of this adopt-a-trail program we are focusing on a subset of the annual maintenance tasks associated with maintaining a trail: brushing and maintaining existing trail features. These tasks can be completed without further input or approval from the Forest Service and are typical of the vast majority of the needed annual work on the Mancos Spur to the Colorado Trail system.

Tasks to be performed:

1. Complete the Survey 1-2-3 app for your segment of trail
2. Trail corridor brushing
  - Ensure that no branches or vegetation are protruding into the trail tread. Trim all brush flush with the ground and/or trim branches back flush with the trunk of the tree or bush it protrudes from.
  - Trim brush back on the inside of turns to the extent necessary to establish good sight distances. *Note: Take some time with this. You may have to trim brush back several feet. There have been several head on collisions in the past few years. Think like a trail user and ensure that it is possible to see through a turn.* Think about different trail users - a horse rider might need something higher up cleared away than a hiker or biker!
  - Don't leave punji sticks! These are diagonal cuts near, but not flush to the ground. They can slash bike tires and can injure hikers or bikers. They have the potential to severely injure someone.
3. Trail tread and feature maintenance
  - Ensure that all existing water diversion structures are functioning properly and maintain them if needed.
  - Remove loose rocks, sticks and debris from the trail tread.

## **C. Trail Monitoring**

This is the easy part. Let us know what you are seeing out there. What are the problems in your section? What could be improved? What has changed?

- Report any missing trail or road intersection signs. Each trail should have a routed trail sign on a wooden post on each end. Any road crossing should be signed with a carsonite post with a usage strip depicting the allowed and disallowed trail uses. The Forest Service will provide replacement signs to be installed.
- Take note of and report any new social or unauthorized trail construction. ● Take note of any new infrastructure needs, preferably with the Survey 1-2-3 app (photos with GPS coordinates are also acceptable), and report those back to the MTG Trail Coordinator. This would include sections of trail that need new drainage features, culverts, retaining walls, switchback reconstruction etc.

#### **D. Reporting**

This is the boring part... but it is actually really important too. MTG uses this information to apply for grants and also to demonstrate that we have active volunteers that have the ability to support trail maintenance and development projects.

- Record the number of participants, the date and hours worked, and a brief description of the work performed each outing to the MTG Trail Coordinator. We compile that information and report it to the Forest Service annually.

#### **MTG Trail Coordinator**

While all adopters are welcome to contact the FS at any time, the MTG Trail Coordinator works closely with the Forest Service and is generally the first contact for questions about trail maintenance tasks. They may be able to give you an answer quickly and are also authorized to oversee some maintenance and construction projects that are not included in this adopt-a-trail segment program.

#### **US Forest Service Responsibilities**

The Forest Service is the land manager responsible for making sure the trails are maintained in a safe manner while following all applicable laws and workplace safety rules. We are also available to provide guidance and training to support these volunteer efforts.

Thank you very much for your volunteer service. The work that you do is what makes it possible to offer some of these great recreation opportunities to the public. It is very much appreciated!

**Contacts:**

**US Forest Service**

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**MTG Trail Coordinator**

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