



President's Message:

Time for another *Trails Connections* and a brief update on our activities; it is an exciting time to be a supporter and user of our growing trail system in Linn County. Trails are being repaired, new sections are being paved and plans for trail improvements are continuing to develop. Our expanding advocacy role is putting greater emphasis on our ability to manage and disseminate information to our supporters. We also have efforts underway to openly demonstrate our support for trails for recreation and transportation. Within this summer's *Trail Connections* you will get an update on the advancement of a number of trail projects, some completing and some being planned in the future.

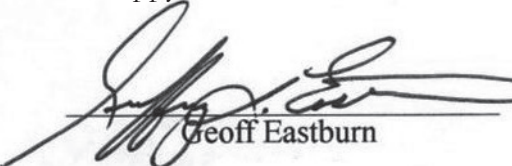
While nothing seems to happen as quickly as we would like, tangible progress is being made and our opportunities for new and improved trails continue to present themselves as a result of our advocacy. The resurfacing of some of the existing trails has been a great improvement and the extension of the Hoover Trail closer to Ely adds mileage to our system. It is gratifying to witness the dramatic increase in users along that new length of pavement. A big thank you to our partners at the Linn County Conservation Board who have been tenacious in advancing the trail system in all directions.

Our capital campaign to raise funds in support of Linn County's plan to improve and pave the Cedar Valley Nature Trail continues on. We inch closer to achieving our goal and have been getting good news from major contributors. We are still short of our goal of \$96,250, so please consider a contribution. Our communities and our citizens will benefit from this significant improvement.

Lastly, your LCTA Board has embarked on an aggressive campaign to enhance our ability to communicate information to our existing trail supporters, but also to reach out to new supporters. Through the efforts of our Public Awareness Committee we have begun a reconstruction of our website to enable our supporters to keep apprised of new developments to our trail system. It will also allow for improved, direct communication with those agencies responsible for the various parts of our trail system. We will have the ability to easily update information, list our calendar of events, download maps, locate trail access points and many other enhancements. Expect our new look within the next couple of months.

Now go and enjoy the warm weather and our fall season on your trails.

Happy Trails,



Geoff Eastburn

LCTA Officers

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Geoff Eastburn

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Upcoming Events

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, August 9th, 7:00pm

People's Church

700 3rd. Ave. NE.

Mayors' Bike Ride 2010

Monday, September 6th, 9:00am

Ellis Park, Cedar Rapids

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, September 13th, 7:00pm

People's Church

700 3rd. Ave. NE.

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, October 11th, 7:00pm

Location: TBD

LCTA Board Meeting

Monday, November 8th, 7:00pm

Location: TBD

All meetings are open to the public. Check
www.linncountytrails.org for updates on events.

*Trail Connections is the quarterly publication of the
Linn County Trails Association.*

*It is published March, June, September, and December.
Articles may be submitted as an MS Word or text file. Typed,
printed or clearly handwritten articles are also accepted.
Photos can be prints or can be submitted digitally and saved
with a resolution of ideally 300 dpi and a size of 6x8 inches.
The deadline for each issue is the first day of the month prior
to publication. Please send pictures, stories, and ideas to
Brad Mullin: mullinb1427@yahoo.com*

Current Metro Area Trails

Open for use Summer 2010

Trail	Miles	Surface	Remarks
Cedar River Trail (ADT)	11	Asphalt	Cedar Rapids+Hiawatha+County
CRT Lake Loop	1.3	Asphalt	Around Cedar Lake
Bowling Street Trail	1	Concrete	From 50th Street SW to Wilson Avenue
Cherokee Park Trail	1	Crushed Limestone	West Side: Edgewood to Wiley Blvd.
Ellis Park Trail	3	Asphalt/Concrete	From Ellis Park to Downtown
Boyson Trail	3	Crushed Limestone	Follows Indian Creek, Marion
Kirkwood Connector Trail	1	Concrete	From Ely Rd. to Kirkwood Campus
Grant Wood Trail	5	Grass/Gravel	Through Eastern Linn County
Lowe Park Trail	0.5	Asphalt	Marion: N. 10th St to 35th Ave
Cherry Hill Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NW Cedar Rapids: Cherry Hill Park
Noelridge Park Trail	0.8	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Noelridge Park
Nixon Trail	0.75	Crushed Limestone	NE Cedar Rapids: Around Nixon School
Fay Clark Memorial Trail	0.7	Asphalt	Hiawatha: Fay Clark Memorial Park
Squaw Creek Trail	4	Natural-Groomed	Located within Squaw Creek Park
Matsell Bridge Natural Area	8.4	Natural-Groomed	NE Linn County, near Viola
Pinicon Ridge Park	12	Natural-Groomed	Five park trails near Central City
Beverly Park	5	Natural-Groomed	SW CR: Singletrack Mountain Bike trails
Fross Park	1.2	Crushed Limestone	Walking trail, NW Center Point
Wickiup Hill	5	Natural-Groomed	5 mile network near Toddville
Hoover Nature Trail	1.3	Asphalt	76th Ave. SW to Wright Bros. Blvd.

Area Trail News:

- ♦ The Cedar Rapids Parks Department will officially open the former Martin Marietta Quarry to the public in September 2010. The official name of the new park is Prairie Park Fishery and features a 1.7 mile trail around the 104 acre lake. The entrance to the park is located off Otis Rd. S.E. The city plans an eventual connection with the Sac and Fox trail.
- ♦ Groundbreaking for Phase II of the CEMAR trail, 20th Street to 29th Street, will take place in the fall of 2010 with possible completion by winter. The city is purchasing property for the Phase I. Construction of the \$1.4 million Phase I project is planned for spring or summer of 2011.
- ♦ This spring trail users encountered several trail closures along the Cedar River Trail as the result of Cedar Rapids Parks Department improvements. Roughly 450 tons of asphalt was used to overlay over 3,600 feet of trail. Improvements were done on the trail from A St. S.W. along the eastern edge of the landfill and from the entrance at 4th St. (near Quaker Oats) to the Cedar Lake Loop. The crossing of the CRANDIC railroad remains closed as it is redesigned. The railroad has purposed an underpass rather than an at-grade crossing as before. The city of Cedar Rapids is evaluating the cost and feasibility of the idea. For now, trail users are asked to take a short detour through the park and ride lot.



Sponsored By:

City of Cedar Rapids
Bicycle Advisory
Committee and
Bicycle Ambassadors



Progress towards a Bicycle Friendly Community



Monday, September 6

Registration Starts 9AM

Ride Starts 10AM

Ellis Park Pool

8 Mile or 2.5 Mile Route

Free, Educational Event

As Cedar Rapids moves towards a “bicycle-friendly” city, there is a lot of education and work to be done. Take part in this free event to help educate Linn County’s elected leaders on the continued need to develop trails and alternative means of transportation.

For more information,
www.linncountyrails.org

HELMETS MUST BE WORN

LCTA Cedar Valley Nature Trail

Campaign Update:

The Linn County Trail Association's fund-raising campaign to aid in the paving of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail is nearing its goal of \$96,250. The campaign has raised \$78,760 so far. The Linn County Conservation Board has combined the construction of Phase II of the project with the third phase, from Lafayette Rd. to Schultz Rd. Work on Phase II and Phase III of the trail is scheduled to begin in the spring of 2011 and the completion of both phases complete in the fall of 2011. It is not too late to contribute as the campaign will end in October.

Northtowne Cycling and Fitness, an authorized Specialized dealer, partnered with the Linn County Trails

Association and applied for a grant from the Specialized Dealer Grant Program. The program is designed to help Specialized dealers support local initiatives that they are passionate about. In April 2010, Bernie Smith, LCTA board member, assisted in writing an application with Northtowne Cycling and Fitness. The end result was the creation of a Specialized water bottle to be sold with the proceeds donated the LCTA for the Cedar Valley Nature Trail project.

The "I Paved the Trail 2010" water bottles featured the logos of all the participating organizations: Specialized, Northtowne Cycling and Fitness and Linn County Trails Association. Lindsay Dick, another LCTA board member,



Above: Derek Stepanek, of Northtowne Cycling and Fitness, presents a \$2,500 check to LCTA president, Geoff Eastburn.

designed the "I Paved the Trail 2010" logo (right) also included on the bottle

short while.

On July 13, 2010, Derek Stepanek awarded a check for \$2,500 in water bottle proceeds to the LCTA.

The grant donated 500 water bottles to be sold at Northtowne and by several organizations at \$5 a piece. Thanks to all those who purchased bottles as the inventory lasted a



Yes, I would like to contribute to the paving of the Cedar Valley Nature Trail

Please accept my tax-deductible contribution of: \$ _____

If you would like to give \$20 or more, LCTA will send you the *Trails Connections* Newsletter for the next year. Check here ☐ if you would not like to receive the *Trails Connections* Newsletter.

Name (Please Print): _____

Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Telephone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please send payments to: LCTA

(Make checks payable to LCTA) P.O. Box 2681

Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-2681

☐ I've enclosed the employer matching gift paperwork

National Trails Day 2010

In the celebration of American Hiking Society's National Trails Day® on Saturday, June 5, 2010, the Linn County Trails Association held its annual progressive breakfast along the Cedar River Trail. Stops were at McCloud, Greene Square and Sokol Parks. Local area businesses and organizations donated food and items for all NTD participants. Scattered showers led to a modest turnout at McCloud and Sokol Parks with the bulk of the trail users at the Downtown District's Farmer's Market. The Cedar Rapids Bicycle Advisory committee held a bike check located along the trail between 3rd and 4th Avenues. National Trails Day is equally about celebration trails as it is educating people about the trail opportunities in the area. Thanks to Vicky Evans for soliciting donations from area businesses and this year's volunteers.

2010 National Trails Day® Donors

Croissant Du Jour

Panera Bread

Target Stores

Hy-Vee

Blue Strawberry Café

Coffeesmiths

Sykora Bakery

Fareway Stores

**National
Trails Day**



2010 National Trails Day

Volunteers:

Jeff Keiser

Joe Clark

John Wauer

Tom Pepper

Steve Hershner

Lindsay Dick

Ron and Toni McGraw

Dean and Jan Barnum

Vicky Evans



Hoover Nature Trail: Cedar Rapids-Ely Connection

Long gone are the sounds of train whistles between Cedar Rapids and Ely. However, the sounds of trail users will soon resonate through the old Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific Railroad corridor. The abandonment of the railway (March 1980) led to the planning of the Hoover Nature Trail with the vision of an eventual connection of Cedar Rapids and Burlington with a separated multi-use trail.

In July 2010, the Linn County Conservation Board began a \$1, 084,750 project creating a hard surfaced trail between Ely and Cedar Rapids. The first phase of the project involved the conversion of the pre-existing 1.25 mile naturally groomed section, from 76th Ave. to Wright Brothers Blvd, to asphalt in July of 2010.

The second phase involves the creation of an entirely new trail. The construction of a 1.091 mile trail connecting the completed first

phase to Ely City Park is scheduled for August 2010 with an estimated cost of \$392, 510. The majority of the new trail will use the old "Rock Island Line" with a short section requiring trail users to travel closer to Ely Rd. The at-grade crossing of Ely Rd, near Wright Brothers Blvd, and rehabilitation of historic arch culvert are unique features of the newly created piece of trail.

The Linn County Conservation Board was able to acquire \$791, 600 in state and federal funds for the project in addition to \$205, 150 in local funding from the Linn County Board of Supervisors. Approximately \$88,000 in property was donated to the project. Several of the deeds were in the possession of the Linn County Trails Association and were gifted, in 2007, to the Conservation Board. Construction of the second phase should be completed in November 2010.

In the future, the city of Ely is planning the development of trails throughout the city. The Conservation Board has plans for the construction of a short section of trail from Ely to the county line at Seven Sisters Road. The Johnson County Conservation Board is constructing trails beginning from the southern part of the county with the eventual connection to the Hoover Trail at the north end. Upcoming projects involving improvements to Dubuque Street and the construction of a new Mehaffey Road Bridge with a separated bike lane. Plans for paved shoulders along Mehaffey Road into Solon would connect to the Hoover Nature Trail.

Currently, about 30 miles of the Hoover Nature Trail is constructed and open for use. When completed, the Hoover Nature Trail will become Iowa's longest recreational trail spanning 115 miles through 15 towns and six counties. The trail is part of the American Discovery Trail.



Above: The new southern entrance to Phase 1. Below: The the northern entrance to Hoover Trail. Left: Phase 2 tentative alignment of the Hoover Nature Trail project



Pinicon Ridge Park Trail System

Exciting things are happening at Pinicon Ridge Park in northern Linn County. The 965 acre park is located along the Wapsipinicon River west of Central City. The hilly, heavily wooded area is divided by the river and home to several species of wildlife.

Currently, 11 miles of trails traverse the park. The Pinicon Ridge trails provide several opportunities for hiking, running and biking. The winter of 2008-09 was the first time trails on the north side of the river were groomed for cross country skiing. Several trails provide scenic views of the Wapsipinicon River. Acreage of the park increased with a recent 40 acre addition funded by a \$96,000 Resource Enhancement and Protection (REAP) grant.

In May 2009, \$500,000 was appropriated from the Rebuild Iowa Infrastructure Fund (RIIF) to aid trail projects associated with the park. The \$500,000 awarded by the state was matched by \$500,000 from the county. One project involves the construction of a multi-use trail connecting the town of Central City to the park. The project will include 1800 ft of trail on the west side of river and 1100 ft on the east side of river through the park. Construction of an underpass of US Highway 13 is a key component of the project and will connect to a trail system under development in Central City. Tentatively, the trail surface will be aggregate composite and paved in the future. Work is scheduled to start on the Pinicon Ridge-Central City connection in the fall of 2010.

Within the park, the Linn County Conservation Department will construct a \$1.12 million trail bridge connecting the west side picnic area to the east side campground. The bridge had long been a priority for the late member of the Iowa Legislature Mary Lundby of Marion, IA. The Pinicon Ridge Bridge project is consistent with Lundby's values as an advocate for parks, recreation, trains, the outdoors and the environment during her 22 year service. More than likely, the bridge will be named after her as the Lundby Memorial Bridge.

The 250 foot bridge will create a loop using the Pinicon Ridge Park trails and the Central City trail system. Possible completion dates of the Pinicon Ridge projects could be soon as 2012.

Pinicon Ridge Park Trails:

Woodpecker Hill Trail:

One mile in length, the Woodpecker Hill Trail takes about 45 minutes to walk. It is a post-by-post self-guided nature study trail. A booklet is available from park staff.

Flying Squirrel Trail:

A 2 ½ mile trail which takes about 2 hours to walk. The trailhead is on the east side of the river along Valley Farm Road one mile west of Highway 13. This area is open to hunting during the hunting season.

White Oak Trail:

This trail is approximately 2 ½ miles long and takes approximately 2 hours to walk. The trail traverses heavily wooded hills and valleys along the route. The trailhead is located near the river just past the boat ramp.

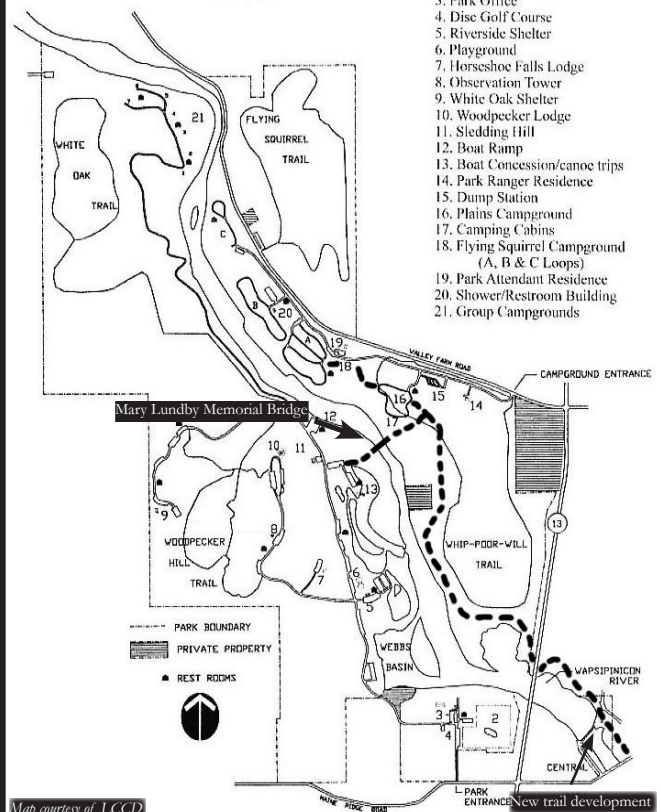
Whip-poor-will Trail:

This trail is 2 3/8 miles in length and begins in Plains Campground. It takes about 1 hour and 30 minutes to walk. When the campgrounds close in the fall, the trail is expanded through Flying Squirrel Campground and becomes the only designated cross-country ski trail in the park. The new trail connecting to Central City may incorporate part of the existing trail.

Pinicon Ridge Park

Map Key

1. Dam
2. Alexander Wildlife Display
3. Park Office
4. Disc Golf Course
5. Riverside Shelter
6. Playground
7. Horseshoe Falls Lodge
8. Observation Tower
9. White Oak Shelter
10. Woodpecker Lodge
11. Sledding Hill
12. Boat Ramp
13. Boat Concession/canoe trips
14. Park Ranger Residence
15. Dump Station
16. Plains Campground
17. Camping Cabins
18. Flying Squirrel Campground (A, B & C Loops)
19. Park Attendant Residence
20. Shower/Restroom Building
21. Group Campgrounds



Map courtesy of LCCD

All Trails Lead to Marion

Public support for Marion's trail projects has been bolstered by the creation of the "All Trails Lead to Marion" group of the city's Imagine 8 project. The mission of Imagine8 is to engage the greater Marion area in an open, all-inclusive discussion to develop 8 ideas that will enhance the quality of life and create a strong identity for the Marion community.

"All Trails Lead Marion" is a citizens committee that will help raise funds, build awareness and advise the Marion Parks Department, and Linn County Trails Association, in the design and routing of a trails and green space along the central corridor. This initiative will also work toward connecting and expanding existing trails to adjacent trail networks and communities as well as

improvements to existing trails. The group has discussed planning events and clean up days.

In April 2010, the city of Marion received a \$2,500 Rockwell Collins Green Communities grant for Phase I of All Trails Lead to Marion project. In addition, the Iowa Department of Cultural Affairs awarded an Iowa Great Places grant of \$25,000 to the city of Marion for the construction of a trail along the right-of-way of an abandoned railroad line to allow pedestrian and bicycle usage between Marion and Cedar Rapids. The grant is funded through the I-Jobs program. The trail is on the western edge of Marion from Lindale Dr. to C Ave. The new trail will eventually connect with a system of trails throughout Marion.

On the eastern side of Marion, Marion and the Linn County Conservation

Department are working with the Iowa Department of Transportation on the plans to connect the new Marion trail system with the Grant Wood Trail. After several studies, the original plan to create a new tunnel under Highway 13 has been reconsidered. On the southern side, the city is working on its portion of the CEMAR trail. Property acquisitions, with REAP funding, are complete and the city has negotiated an easement with Menards to construct a segment of trail with two or three bridges over Indian Creek.



Hiawatha's Boyson Trail

The city of Hiawatha, with assistance of the Corridor Metropolitan Planning Organization, planned the creation of a new trail along Boyson Road. Plans include a 10 foot wide path along the southern side of Boyson Road. The trail will extend from Miller Road to North Center Point Road for about 2.5 miles. Preliminary design includes a fourteen foot wide cantilever bridge over the I-380/27 interstate. When complete, the trail will provide a connection between the future Edgewood Road and Dry Creek trails and the existing Cedar Valley Nature Trail.

Programmed in 2008, the project will receive funding (80%) through Transportation Enhancement funds received by the Corridor MPO. The project has a total cost of \$706,673 with the first installment of funds



scheduled for November 2011.

Construction of the trail is dependent on the current plans by the Iowa Department of Transportation to improve the I-380/27 interchange at Boyson Rd. The city of Hiawatha has completed some initial work.

The Boyson Road and North Center Point Road intersection was included in Hiawatha Gateway Project, completed in the spring of 2007, providing a formal northern entrance for vehicular and pedestrian traffic along the North Center Point Road corridor. *(Continued on page 10)*

LCTA Trail Counters

John Wauer

Linn County Trails Association maintains infrared counters to measure trail usage on several Linn County trails. You may have seen the blue, brown or white posts on either side of the trail. An infrared beam similar to the TV remote is sent from one of the posts and detected from the other post. When the beam is interrupted, a count is recorded. The detector measures the beam interruption period and the time between interruptions to prevent false counts due to rain drops, swinging arms, and many other events that could produce multiple false counts.

In 2004 LCTA board member, Ron McGraw, requested that the Rockwell Collins Retiree Volunteers (RCRV) develop a method to count trail users. Dick Kittrell, a Rockwell Collins retired engineer, took the challenge and designed and built the trail counters in use today. The first ten were built from surplus boards and modified TV remotes. John Wauer, another Rockwell Collins retired engineer and LCTA board member, installed the trail counters and maintains the counts. The ten counters are now installed on trails throughout Linn County.

Recently, Linn Area Mountain Bike Association (LAMBA) requested counters for their trails in Beverly Park. We went back to Dick and asked, "Can we build more?" In the mean time, John had designed and built an additional counter, but the design was very labor intensive and not practical for building lots more counters. The surplus boards were no longer available, so Dick designed the new counters from scratch. Another RCRV member, Kay Nelson, then built the boards. Dick and Kay have volunteered many hours working on this project. We now have ten more counters; four for LAMBA and the rest for LCTA to use as spares and on NEW TRAILS! We owe Dick and Kay many thanks for their contribution.

The trail usage data provides hard data to demonstrate the importance of trails to the Linn County residents and visitors. This in turn justifies money for maintenance of trails, improvement of trails and construction of new trails. We rely on trail users to read and report the counts. You too can be a trail count reporter. When you pass one of the trail counter posts,

stop and write down the 6 digit number shown in the window in the top of one of the posts and email it to trailcount@linncountytrails.org. Include the time, date, and location along with the count. Counters are now operating on the Cedar River Trail, Cedar Lake Trail, Cedar Valley Nature Trail, and Boyson Trail. Trail counters formerly installed on the Sac and Fox Trail are currently waiting for the trail to be reopened after the 2008 flood. To view trail usage history go to <http://www.linncountytrails.org> and click on Counter.



(Continued from page 9) The intersection showcases two decorative limestone walls, brick crosswalks, trees and shrubs, and provides the link for the Boyson Road Trail to extend easterly and southerly to the future Dry Creek Trail and the existing Cedar Valley Nature Trail.

Interstate redesign plans include moving the ramps closer to the interstate and improvements to traffic

flow. The widening of the Boyson Road Bridge over I-380/27 may lead to the construction of a new bridge with the trail incorporated within it. Once these interstate plans are complete, the city of Hiawatha would begin the IDOT process for trail development.

The city of Hiawatha plans to connect the Boyson Road Trail with Faye Clark Memorial Park with a wide sidewalk along N. 18th Ave. Construction of the new trail probably could begin as early as 2014.

LCTA SUPPORTER FORM

Why would I want to support LCTA?

1. Your support will count you among the hundreds of enthusiastic trail advocates who make up the Linn County Trails Association.
2. By becoming a supporter you will have already begun to play an important role in building a network of connected trails in Linn County and the surrounding area.
3. 95% of all money raised through donations and grants goes directly to build more trails or to improve existing trails. LCTA has been able to multiply this financial support by providing matching funds to secure significant grants.
4. As a supporter, you will receive our quarterly newsletter. Here you can read about trail vacations, upcoming trail events, opportunities to volunteer, and issues that are important to trail development.
5. Supporters are not expected to attend meetings and no one will call you. Of course, if you want to get involved, we will welcome your help.

Learn more about LCTA by visiting our website at www.linncountytrails.org

Information required: (fill out if not on label on other side)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

E-Mail: _____

Please print the information CLEARLY

Donations to LCTA are Tax Deductible

TRAIL BLAZER	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$100*
TRAIL PARTNERS (Family)	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 35
TRAIL SCOUT	<input type="checkbox"/>	\$ 20

*At the Trail Blazer level, supporters also receive the
"Advocate," the newsletter of the Iowa Trails Council.

Please consider an additional donation for NEW TRAIL DEVELOPMENT \$ _____

If you provide your email address, we will send future reminders via email and will add you to the LCTA email distribution list, which is used to provide information on trail-related events to supporters.

Mail donations to:
Linn County Trails Association
PO Box 2681 Cedar Rapids, IA 52406

*Please check your mailing label for your
Support Renewal Date.*

*If you renew without our sending you a
reminder, it saves us time & money.*

So PLEASE - Renew in a timely manner.

THANKS!

If you are not already a supporter, please consider helping us.

Linn County Trails Association
P.O. Box 2681
Cedar Rapids, IA 52406-2681

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Trail users enjoy improvements to the Cedar River Trail near
Cedar Lake.