

NAVAJO TRAILS INITIATIVE

History & Overview of the Navajo Trails Initiative

The Navajo Nation Trails Initiative was formally launched in fall 2015. The initiative was a joint effort of the Navajo nonprofit organization Y.E.S. for Dine' Bikeyah (NavajoYES), the Office of President and Vice President (OPVP), Navajo Parks & Recreation and Division of Natural Resources (DNR) with the support and involvement of Engineers Without Borders, and various tribal entities, Indian Health Service and local communities.

The Task Force is focusing on three categories of trails: Community Trails, Trails in the Parks and Long-distance Routes.



On the Museum Trail in Window Rock, in the Carrizo Mountains and Rainbow Bridge

Community Trails

Local community trails are established under the auspices of the local community/chapter, with some technical support from various trail entities. The trails are developed under the guidelines of the Navajo Nation Trails Template, which provides a basic “how-to manual” for trails on the Nation. The community trails are the core of the Trails Initiative.

Examples: Shonto Bear Rock Trail, Kayenta MTB Trails, Shiprock River Trail, Dilkon mountain bike trail system, Dine' College Pinon Trail, Tuba City Trails, Naatsisaan Nature Trail, Cove community trails, and Black Mesa community trail.

Trails in the Parks

The Navajo Nation Parks, as well as National Park Service sites within Dine' Bikeyah, contain some stunning trails. Trail crews under the guidance of NavajoYES work in the tribal parks throughout the summer to restore and establish amazing miles of trails.

Examples: Dancing Horse Trail (Four Corners Monument), Navajo Museum Trail (Window Rock Tribal Park), Little Colorado River Trail (LCR Tribal Park), Wildcat Trail and Lee Cly Trail (Monument Valley), Rainbow Trail (Lake Powell Navajo Tribal Park) and Camp Asaayi Trail.

Long-Distance Routes

The development of long-distance routes through some of the remote, scenic areas of the Navajo Nation is a key component to the Trails Initiative. The goal is to designate long-distance mountain bike routes that will be used by Navajo Nation residents and non-residents alike in the pursuit of lifelong fitness, community wellness and the enjoyment of beautiful landscapes of Dine' Bikeyah. Some of these routes may be existing forest roads, old roadbeds, mining roads, etc. Routes will be designated through signage, maps and guides, as well as at established trailheads.

Examples: Chuska Mountain Route; Grand Canyon to Cameron (old highway 64); and Shonto-Navajo Mountain Route (BIA Road 6130).

Navajo Nation Trail Guide

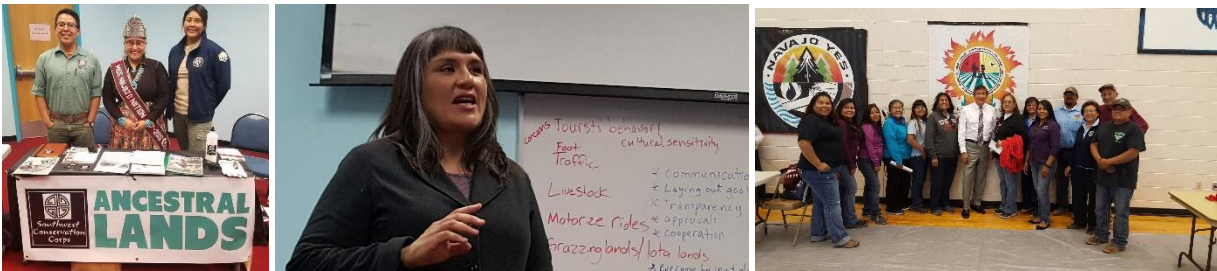
Sharing the trails with our communities, the Navajo Nation at-large and, in some cases, the world beyond, is one of the goals of the trails initiative. Creating an interactive trails resource is a goal of the Trails Task Force, and the publishing of a “Navajo Nation Trails Guide” is in the works.

Trails Task Force

The Navajo Trails Task Force is a group that whose mission is to oversee, support and promote trail projects in communities across the Nation. The Task Force was initiated by NavajoYES, Division of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Office of Navajo President and Vice President (OPVP) in 2015, and includes representatives from various communities, Navajo Parks & Recreation, Navajo Tourism, IHS Health Promotion, Engineers Without Borders and Navajo Fish & Wildlife.

The Task Force maintains **a large cache of trail tools** that are available for check-out through Navajo Parks & Rec. Macleods, saws, picks, shovels and more are ready for your use on trail projects.

The Trails Task Force hosts an **annual Navajo Trails Conference** at the Navajo Museum in February.



Some of the advocates for trails in Dine’ Bikeyah (from left): Southwest Conservation Corps, Bidtah Becker of Division of Natural Resources and Navajo Parks & Recreation staff.

Resources

The trails initiative has been able to tap into remarkable resources that are spurring the growth of trails on the Nation. There are a litany of resources available to assist with your trail projects – American Conservation Experience, Southwest Conservation Corps, Engineers Without Borders, Mountain Bike Association of Arizona, International Mountain Bike Association and Southwest Trail Solutions are among the potential partners. A comprehensive listing of “Resources” is available on the NavajoYES website – www.navajoYES.org/trails.

Y.E.S. for Dine’ Bikeyah (NavajoYES) – nonprofit organization spearheading the Navajo Trails Task Force
Tom Riggerbach – chuskaman@yahoo.com; cell: 928.429.0345 and Garin Greyeyes – trail consultant

Navajo Nation Parks & Recreation Department

Louise Tsinijinnie; Martin Begaye – Office: 928.871-6647



On the LCR Trail in Little Colorado River Gorge Navajo Tribal Park near Cameron