

# THE CITY OF HELENA

## 2020 TRAIL ETIQUETTE PLAN

PREPARED BY: PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST



**PRICKLY PEAR  
LAND TRUST**  
CONNECTING LAND AND PEOPLE



**City of  
Helena**

# OVERVIEW

The following plan outlines the steps Prickly Pear Land Trust (PPLT) will take to fulfill commitments outlined in the 2020 open lands system contract signed between the City of Helena and PPLT.

*“Contractor (PPLT) shall develop a trail etiquette signage program for the City’s open space system trailheads. Additionally, Contractor shall draft, manufacture, and distribute trail etiquette literature at the City’s open space trailheads and natural resource events occurring in the greater Helena, MT area.”*

The information herein describes the structure and timeline of PPLT’s proposed trail etiquette signage program and a plan for the distribution of “trail etiquette literature” within the community.

## PROGRAM OVERVIEW

This plan aims to provide all trail users with the information and skills necessary to get the most enjoyment out of their South Hills trail experience, and interact safely and respectfully with all other trail users. The trail etiquette plan offers 1.) an outline of trail etiquette signage design and distribution, and 2.) a series of draft “trail etiquette literature” design and distribution ideas and budgets. The goal of this program is to engage trail users at key entry points to the Helena trail system. The recommendations offered in this plan aim to support safe recreation for experienced and inexperienced local bike and pedestrian users, out of state and out of town trail users, users of remote trail heads, and new users at popular entry points to the South Hills Trail system.

**Through consultation with area multi-user trail groups** during the creation of this plan, including the Helena Bike Guild, Helena Hikes, and the Helena Trails Alliance, PPLT has identified:

- 1.** Acceptable etiquette language and educational distribution methods,
- 2.** Areas in the trail system to target education towards, and
- 3.** Creative methods to educate the public on trail etiquette best-practices



# TRAIL ETIQUETTE LITERATURE

## TRAIL TIPS BROCHURES

The goal of the trail etiquette brochure is to provide a digestible, comprehensive and portable guide to best trail etiquette practices on the South Hills Trail system. The brochure will offer a flexible and wide-ranged distribution medium for the etiquette information. Brochures will be available at popular trail heads outlined below, will be handed out at public PPLT events, and will be made available at local public meeting spaces.

### DESIGN

**3** When wishing to pass by another trail user, communicate, smile, and be friendly. Slower travelers: be courteous and move aside to allow others by.

**4** Be a good public lands and trails steward. Pack out all garbage, food, equipment, doggie waste, and even weeds if you pull them. Happy trails are clean trails!

**5** There is no poo fairy! Take time to pack out your pet's waste.



Created in partnership with:



**pricklypear.org**  
40 W. Lawrence St., Ste. A  
PO Box 892 Helena, MT 59624  
406-442-0490

### PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST'S TRAIL TIPS

Things to BEAR in mind to keep Helena's multi-use trails happy



**Prickly Pear Land Trust** in partnership with the City of Helena, United States Forest Service and Visit Helena Montana. To ensure that Helena's multi-use trails remain a safe and fun atmosphere, we have come up with a few guidelines for what to do, and not to do. While out enjoying the land, you will see hikers, bikers, bird watchers, wildlife, dog walkers, and children, young and old-please follow these Helena Trail Tips! The wonderful drawings were created by Mel Griffin. More information on Prickly Pear Land Trust can be found at our website [pricklypear.org](http://pricklypear.org)

- 1** Be sure to have your pets under voice control and follow on-leash rules at trailheads and parking lots.
- 2** Stay on the trails in all conditions. Going around icy or muddy spots widens the trail and kills surrounding plants.



**6** Riding bikes downhill can be a lot of fun, but always keep the safety of others in mind. Ride in control to avoid close calls with other trail users, know your limits, and exercise caution.



**7** Bikers yield to hikers, horses, trail runners, dogs, deer-everything. Come to a complete stop, put a foot down and allow the other trail user to pass.



**8** Be cautious and slow down-you never know what is around the blind corner!

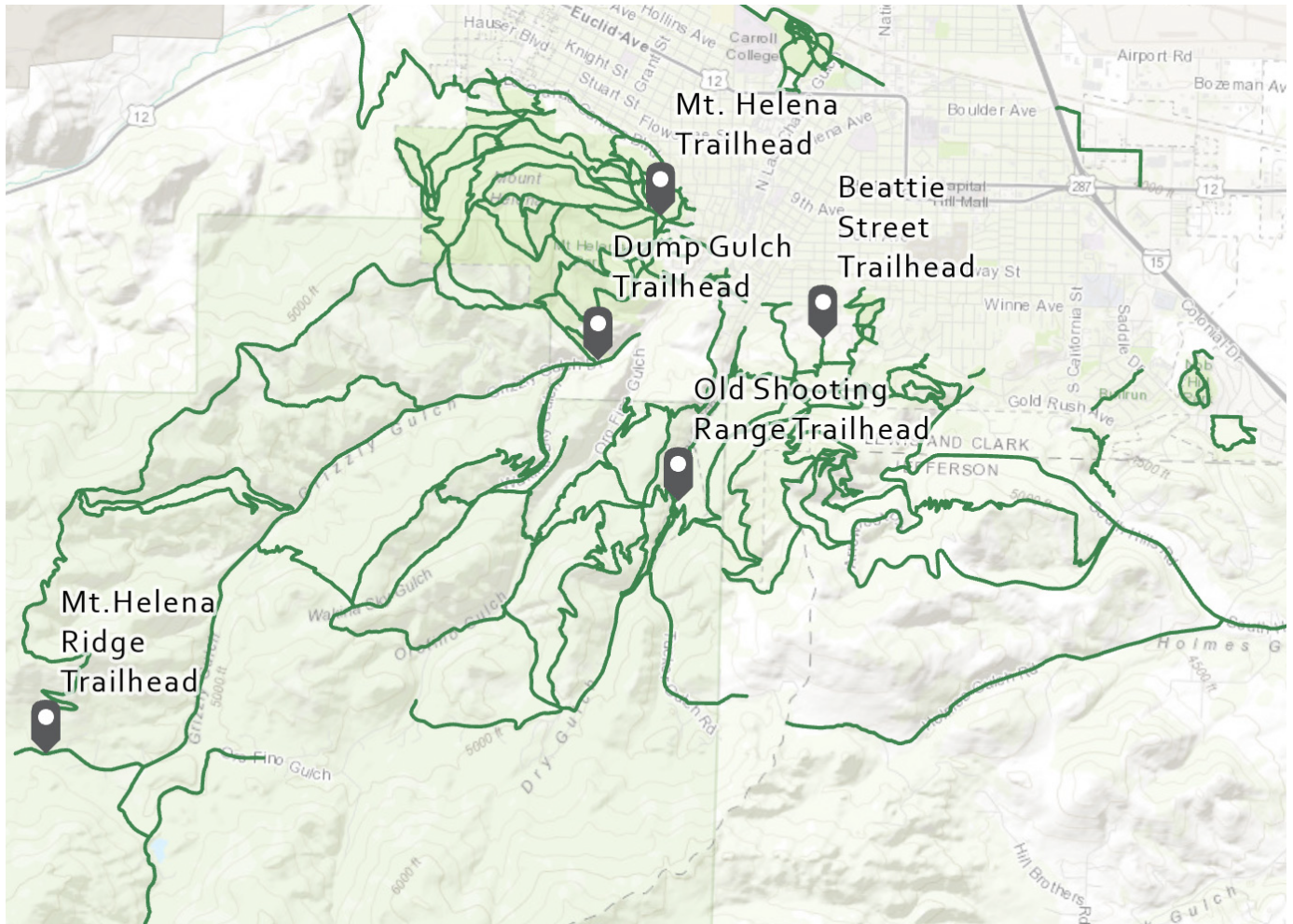


**9** While recreating, keep one ear free of headphones. It is important to listen for what's around the corner or someone asking to pass you.



# DISTRIBUTION

Brochure distribution will be limited to the developed trailheads outlined below. In addition to trailhead distribution, PPLT is willing to distribute the brochures at public events, the Visit Helena office, the PPLT office, and other relevant public meeting spaces.



# BUDGET

| Item                  | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Total Cost |
|-----------------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| Brochure Printing     | 500      | \$.75         | \$350.00   |
| Brochure Holder Costs | 8        | \$14.00       | \$112.00   |

# TRAIL ETIQUETTE SIGNAGE

The goal of the proposed Trail Etiquette Signage is to capture the attention of inexperienced and non-local trail users at popular trailheads. By targeting the popular entry points to the trail system, this signage will serve to captivate and educate a bulk of new users, who will be able to take the skills learned from the campaign to safely and respectfully recreate on other trails in the system. Inspired by a similar trail education campaign by Five Valleys Land Trust on their Mt. Dean Stone property, PPLT proposes the use of staggered educational signage on the first 100 yards of popular trails. This signage will capture the attention of users as they first enter the trail system, and will provide assured engagement as opposed to voluntary engagement through the use of brochures or optional reading material only.

## DESIGN

Below are a few drafted signs to visualize the type of language to be used on the signs. This language was developed with input from local user-groups.

### “Do you mind if I pass?”

When wishing to pass:  
**communicate, smile, and be friendly.**



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**Downhill traffic** generally **yields** to uphill traffic. Keep your speed in check.



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**Keep at least one ear free** so you can hear other users.



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**Stay on the trail** in all conditions. Wear spikes to walk on ice; walk through the mud.



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When off-leash, **pets must be under voice control**

Take time to pack out your pet's waste, and follow on-leash rules at trailheads.



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**Bikes should yield to all other users.**

Be kind and communicate clearly to one another.



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**Be a good public lands steward.**

Pack out all waste, and be respectful of all users.

**HAPPY.**  
PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST - HELENA, MT  
**TRAILS.**

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# DISTRIBUTION

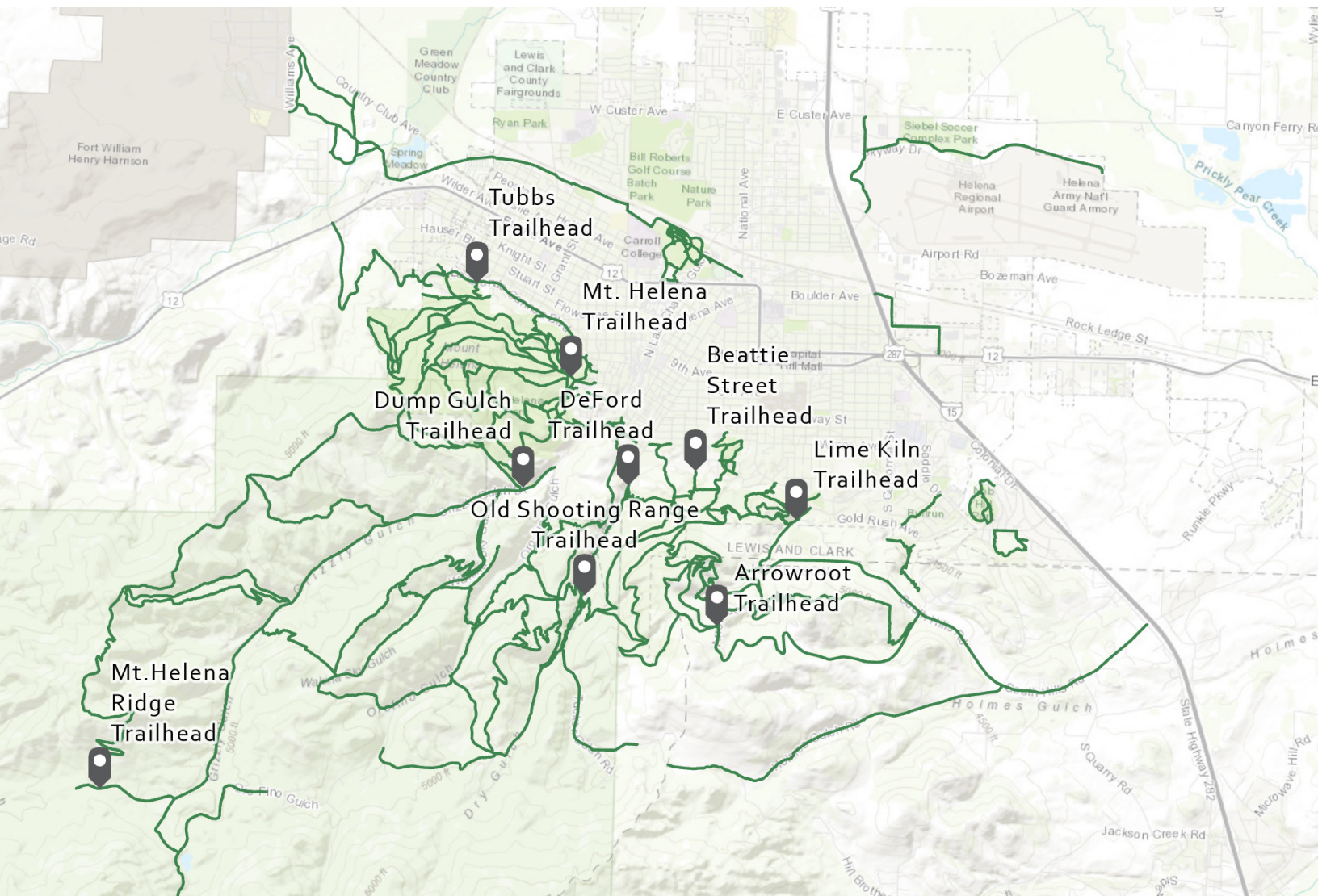
PPLT developed the recommended distribution locations below through consultation between the Montana Bike Guild, Helena Hikes, and the Helena Trails Alliance. Each of the locations listed below were pointed out as a high conflict area by one or more of these local stakeholder groups. Primary locations were noted by the most user groups and should be prioritized. The secondary locations offer locations where conflict was identified and might benefit from signage.

## Primary Locations:

Mount Helena Trailhead  
Dump Gulch Trailhead  
Beattie Street Trailhead  
Helena Ridge Trailhead  
Old Shooting Range Trailhead

## Secondary Locations:

Tubbs Trailhead  
Lime Kiln Road Trailhead  
Arrowroot Trailhead  
Deford Trailhead





# METHODS

The proposed distribution method outlined here follows best practices for trail system education around the country and in Montana. PPLT proposes the use of staggered signage at the first 100 yards of selected trailheads and trails. It is not necessary that all signs be used at each location, but instead tailoring the signage program to conflicts unique to individual trails.

User groups recommended that signage be limited, in response PPLT proposes the use of seasonal signage to address timely trail issues. For example, educating the public to use spikes and walk through the ice in the winter and not to pick wildflowers in the spring. The use of T-posts and metal signs offers a more permanent and costly option, while T-posts with wood or wooden stakes and rotating stapled posters offer a lower cost more temporary option.

## EXAMPLE:

The City of Missoula  
Mt. Dean Stone



# SIGNAGE BUDGET

## PERMANENT SIGNAGE (METAL SIGNS WITH T-POSTS)

| Item          | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Total Cost |
|---------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| Sign Printing | 30       | \$35.00       | \$1015.00  |
| T-posts       | 30       | \$4.00        | \$120.00   |
|               |          |               | \$1135.00  |

## TEMPORARY SIGNAGE (LAMINATED SIGNS ON WOODEN STAKES)

| Item          | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Total Cost |
|---------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| Sign Printing | 30       | \$2.00        | \$60.00    |
| Wooden Stakes | 30       | \$1.50        | \$45.00    |
|               |          |               | \$105.00   |

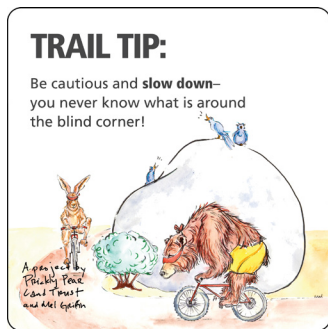
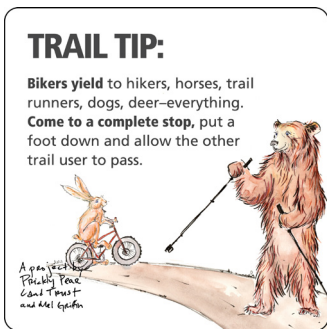


# OTHER TRAIL ETIQUETTE LITERATURE - FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION

## TRAIL TIPS COASTERS

The goal of the Trail Etiquette Coasters is to provide fun, digestible, and memorable information to out-of town users of the South Hills Trails system. Through a partnership with Blackfoot River Brewing Company, the City will be able to reach a large number of non-local users and provide essential tips unique to the local trail system.

### DESIGN



### BUDGET

| Item             | Quantity | Cost Per Item | Total Cost |
|------------------|----------|---------------|------------|
| Coaster Printing | 10,000   | \$0.07        | \$700      |

# TRAIL TIPS POSTERS

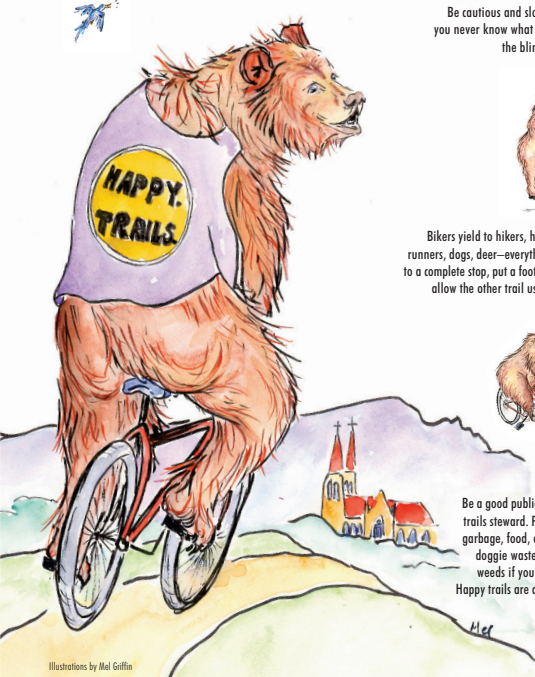
Trail Tips posters can be continually shared to provide trail users with information about safe and responsible recreation. Potential distribution locations include the Visit Helena office, local businesses, community meeting places, and continued distribution at trailheads and partner organizations.

## DESIGN

**PRICKLY PEAR LAND TRUST'S**


# TRAIL TIPS


**Things to BEAR in mind to keep Helena's multi-use trails happy**





Illustrations by Mel Griffin


- 1** Be sure to have your pet under voice control and follow on-leash rules at trailheads and parking lots.



- 2** There is no poo fairy! Take time to pack out your pet's waste.



- 3** While recreating, keep one ear free of headphones. It is important to listen for what's around the corner or someone asking to pass you.



- 4** In all conditions, stay on the established trail. Going around icy or muddy spots widens the trail and kills surrounding plants.



- 5** Be cautious and slow down—you never know what is around the blind corner!


- 6** When wishing to pass by another trail user, communicate, smile, and be friendly. Slower travelers: be courteous and move aside to allow others by.


- 7** Bikers yield to hikers, horses, trail runners, dogs, deer—everything. Come to a complete stop, put a foot down and allow the other trail user to pass.


- 8** Riding bikes downhill can be a lot of fun, but always keep the safety of others in mind. Ride in control to avoid close calls with other trail users, know your limits, and exercise caution.





- 9** Be a good public lands and trails steward. Pack out all garbage, food, equipment, doggie waste, and even weeds if you pull them. Happy trails are clean trails!



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# ADDITIONAL TRAIL ETIQUETTE EDUCATION

## TRAIL TIPS VIDEOS

The city could develop educational videos to share through parks and rec social media followers and area user-groups social media. This could be an opportunity to partner with local user groups such as the Montana Bicycle Guild, Helena Hikes, or Helena Trails Alliance, etc. in the creation of the videos. These videos would offer best practices for trail etiquette on “grey area” topics that require further elaboration than offered via signage and brochures. Topics include: “How to politely ask to pass”, “What to do when you yield”, or “Tips to be respectful on the trails” etc.

## YOUTH EDUCATION

In collaboration with the “2020 Youth Participation Program Plan”, the city could partner with PPLT to administer youth trail etiquette education on the South Hills. PPLT is currently working to develop a lesson and set of materials to educate area high schools students about courteous recreation on the South Hills system.