One Wheel at a Time

Building a mountain bike trail system through partnerships to boost economic development, youth opportunities, and build community

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This presentation shares a case study of the Iron Hills Trail System developed by the Cedar City Bureau of Land Management in partnership with the International Mountain Bike Association, the Dixie Mountain Bike Association, Southern Utah University, American Conservation Experience, Cedar City, Cedar City Brianhead Tourism, and many others. In 2014, a Salt Lake Tribune article announced a public meeting inviting mountain bikers to help plan a trail system in Cedar City’s foothills. The invitation was simple, please come help us figure out which trails to build first. Mountain bikers and community members showed up and gave input, but what occurred over the next three years was more than trails. Through partnerships and community involvement, the trails have brought divergent groups together creating opportunities for youth involvement (through youth conservation crews and a mountain bike racing club), community building (through public input session, volunteer opportunities and trailhead dedication ceremonies), and economic development (through races and mountain biking visitors). Many recreation planners promise these results. This presentation will share a compelling story showing how a community can go from a few mountain bike trails to hosting 1,200 riders and their fans for the Utah High School Cycling League’s State Championship.
Presentation Overview

I. Introduction to Iron Mountain Trail System
II. The Need
III. Our Process
IV. The results
   A. Community
   B. Youth Opportunities
   C. Economic Development
   D. Momentum
V. Lessons Learned
I. Introduction: Let’s go for a ride.
II. The Need (2014)

Rogue mountain bike construction

- Quality control

Connect to developed city trail

IMBA influence

- Steep terrain
- 100 miles

Recreation Corridor

- Expand mountain bike in summer season (too hot in St. George)

Rusty Slade, MTBProject.com
III. Process

1. Identify and defining the need
2. Consult with IMBA
   - Zones (Downhill Flow, Traditional BC)
   - Conceptual map
   - Develop the experience for each trail
3. Public Meetings
4. Encourage Dixie Mountain Bike Trails Association
5. Working with Cedar City (changing hearts and minds)
   - Change the use (shooting to mountain biking)
   - Partnering
6. Building
7. Getting on the Map
IV. Results: 4 years later

- A Trail System
  - Thunderbird Gardens
  - Shurtz Canyon
  - Southview
- A Community
- Youth Development
- Economic Development
Community through Partnerships

- Cedar City and Brian Head Tourism
- Cedar City
- DMBTA
- State Parks
- Gov Office of Outdoor Recreation
- SUU
- IMBA
- ACE
- Iron County Government
- Dixie National Forest
Total Cost of Trail: $84,610.00 (Approx: $6.75 per FT) 12,500 feet built

Actual Cost $77,000 ($6.15 per FT)

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<th>Contribution</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BLM Contribution</td>
<td>(91%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DMBTA Contribution</td>
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<td>USFS Contribution</td>
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<td>Utah State Parks</td>
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$60,000 Paid Trail Solutions (IMBA)-Design & Build
$7,500 Paid BLM Saw Crew and Trail Work
$4,500 IIC Paid Crew
$1,000 ACE Paid Crew
$2,610 DMBTA Donated Volunteer Labor
$4,000 Forest Service Trail Cat Donation
$500 Utah State Parks Trail Cat Donation
$500 ACE Volunteer Labor Donated
Youth Opportunities

Internships - Career Path

Trail Building - on going, now an opportunity for skill development

Middle/High School Mountain Bike Team: Iron Giants Mountain Bike Team
Economic Development

City Council diversifying

ROI

- Average visitor spends $131/day leading to an estimated $589,500 in direct economic impact in the last year.

NICA (1500 riders)

- 17% increase in lodging from previous year

Momentum – the I-15 Mountain Bike Corridor
Lessons Learned

- Finding a Mac (social influencer, connected private citizen)
- Different models of trail development with an end result
  - Pirates at Three Peaks - rogue mentality
- BLM planning process
- Volunteer association vision and momentum
- Public involvement in a short period of time
  - Name trails
  - Mark up maps
  - Local input
- Where you can put a trail - tie into broader skill and vision sets
- Expect and ebb and flow for participation
- Interests differ and people match to their participation
- Be willing to be persistent and share your vision
  - Many visits to the City Council
- User shift from Thunderbird Garden
In Review

We hope you have a greater understanding of what it took to use partnerships to build the Iron Mountain Trails System

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