



## California Trails & Greenways 2020

### Webinar Series Report October 2020



When the COVID pandemic sidelined this year’s in-person conference, the California Trails Conference Foundation and California State Parks quickly adapted by partnering with American Trails to produce a virtual experience. Between April and August, 11 webinars were produced on a variety of trails and greenways topics. Thanks to the generous support of private and public groups, the webinar series was provided free of charge.

The venture was a resounding success that boosted the reach of California Trails and Greenways sponsorships more than tenfold. Thanks to our partnership with American Trails, our California-based efforts were highlighted on national and international levels. Where the average annual attendance for the traditional three-day in-person Trails & Greenways is around 300, over 3,000 attendees from 49 states and 19 countries participated in this year’s webinar series, with another 2,000 who registered but were either not able to attend or watched with their colleagues. All 5,000+ people received webinar announcements containing recognition for our event sponsors.

#### Session Presentations & Attendees

Date	Registrants	Attendees	Title
April 23	609	431	1. Tech on the Trail: Engaging California’s Kids on Hikes using Technology
May 21	436	288	2. Fiberglass Access Structures – Planning, Design, Engineering and Installation
May 27	436	257	3. Creating Culture Change through Outdoor Recreation
June 2	543	333	4. Leveraging Outdoor Recreation to Revitalize Rural Economies
June 11	485	309	5. Gatehouses and Greenways: Interactive Community Engagement for Trails
June 18	214	130	6. CEQA Strategies to Streamline Wildfire Fuel Reduction
June 30	383	230	7. Sustainable Advantage: Outdoor Recreation and Rural Community Development in California
July 9	451	277	8. How to Create an Instant Urban Trail
July 16	329	192	9. Expanding Partnerships and Opportunities for Mountain Biking
July 21	584	355	10. Advancing Trails Through Maps, Apps, and Analysis Tools
Aug 27	767	490	11. Balancing Recreational Area Use with Homelessness and Vagrancy ( <i>rescheduled from Aug 17</i> )
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,237</b>	<b>3,292</b>	

Over half of the attendees were from local, state, and federal government agencies, while the rest were from a variety of non-profit organizations, consulting firms, trail builder organizations, and educational institutions (both educators and students). Over 700 participants received continuing education credits for their attendance, which means that the webinar series played an important role in building and maintaining people’s professional standing in the world of trails and greenways.

Type of Employee	# of Attendees	% of Total Attendees
Government Agencies		
State Agency	521	17%
Municipal Agency	428	14%
Federal agency	398	13%
County Agency	312	10%
Other Private & Nonprofit Groups		
Nonprofit Organization	517	17%
Other	265	9%
Landscape Architecture Firm	160	5%
Planning Firm	119	4%
Volunteer/Friends Group	130	4%
Land Conservation Org.	88	3%
Professional Trail Builder	39	1%
Student	27	1%
Educator	23	1%
Youth or Conservation Corps	45	1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,072</b>	

### Outcomes & Insights

According to the follow-up survey completed by 1,200 individuals, 96% reported that the courses met or exceeded their expectations. Survey respondents also provided valuable feedback on specific content and session format. Session leaders have expressed their gratitude for the comments provided.

As with many new ventures into technology during this pandemic, there were a couple of instances of technical issues that briefly affected the audio or visual aspects of the webinar. The last webinar had to be rescheduled when the technical issues could not be immediately overcome. However, considering that many webinars involved multiple panelists located around the country, as well as the varying levels of participants’ internet bandwidth, the relative absence of technical issues was considered a great success.

### Summary

Overall, the partnership with American Trails was extremely effective in providing the California Trails and Greenways content to a huge international audience at a fraction of the cost of an in-person conference. While we all greatly missed the opportunity to interact with friends and

colleagues, old and new, the webinar series was an excellent alternative. And the series lives on, as the webinars will continue to be available for viewing on the American Trails website ([www.americantrails.org](http://www.americantrails.org)).

### **Participant Testimonials**

*“This was a very inspiring webinar to watch!”*

*– Rachel from Oklahoma*

*“Wendy gave me great ideas on how to balance out the tech and unplugging and how to connect school subjects with the technology.”*

*– Carrie from North Carolina*

*“Awesome! Loved all of the resources discussed. I look forward to implementing some of the ideas in our parks.”*

*– Kevin from Virginia*

*“Best webinar I have ever seen.”*

*– Lisa from California*

*“Excellent engagement! I felt like the presenter was just talking to me!”*

*– Michael from Michigan*

*“It was just me on the presentation today but I am assigning staff to watch the recording as the content is well-aligned with our strategic plan.”*

*– Kristi from California*

### **Webinar Series Sponsors**

Many thanks to these entities for supporting our venture into the virtual world this year!

