

# **HUMBOLDT TRAILS COUNCIL**

## **STRATEGIC PLAN**

### *2024-2028*

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# **Humboldt Trails Council Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028**

## **I. About the Humboldt Trails Council and its Strategic Plan**

### **About the Humboldt Trails Council**

The mission of the Humboldt Trails Council (HTC) is to serve as a unified voice to support development, maintenance, connection to and use of trails for recreation and transportation throughout Humboldt County. As of late 2023, the organization consists of 11 board members, six Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS) Trail Crew Leaders, and one part-time Trail Coordinator. There are approximately 100-120 volunteers, many of whom regularly show up to maintain, build, and otherwise support local trails throughout the year. The HTC sends out a regular e-newsletter and supports a website, Facebook page, and Instagram account. The Council's primary ongoing expenses are insurance and operating expenses for Trail Stewards at the many work sites, our e-newsletter, support to partner non-profits, and incidental expenses for special events. The council has been extremely active in advocating for the formation of the Great Redwood Trail and the railbanking of the railway. The Humboldt Trails Council is a 501(c)3 organization.

### **History of the Humboldt Trails Council**

The Humboldt Trails Council was founded in 2004 and was initially called the Trails Trust of Humboldt Bay. In 2010 it became the Humboldt Trails Council, primarily for two reasons: (1) it wished to focus on supporting trails in communities throughout Humboldt County, and (2) the term “trust” has a legal meaning that was not accurate for this organization. For many years, HTC was a membership-based organization and had one part-time staff person. In 2015 it ceased to have any paid staff and was unable to provide membership “perks” or coordinate renewals. HTC continues to accept donations but does not track memberships. This plan outlines some of the options for engaging future supporters.

Since 2015, the Humboldt Trails Council Board of Directors

- has held monthly meetings.
- formed board committees to carry out the strategies and actions as directed through the board. Standing committees include Advocacy and Volunteer/Community Engagement. The committees meet separate from the regular board meeting and report back to the board. Each board member is part of at least one of these sub-committees.
- developed MOUs with the City of Arcata, City of Eureka, County of Humboldt, McKinleyville Land Trust, and Northcoast Regional Land Trust.
- have a part-time VTS Coordinator to oversee and organize the VTS operations.
- expanded the VTS program to include 11 trails that are routinely maintained.
- recruited VTS volunteers through a presence at local events.
- increased volunteer activity in the VTS program with over 6000 hours of volunteer work to maintain local trails in 2023.
- hosted several volunteer recognition events to thank volunteers and provide recognition items to them.

- purchased a Kubota Flail Mower and Eco-Counters as tools that can be utilized by trail organizations.
- responded to needs for trail-related advocacy and representation in the community.
- strongly advocated for formation of the Great Redwood Trail, rail banking the corridor, No Coal in Humboldt, McKay Community Forest, Humboldt Bay Trail, etc.
- developed a website that supports communication with volunteers and supporters.
- communicated via a quarterly e-Newsletter (over 1000 subscribers) that shares information regarding local and regional trails, photographs, and trail experience opportunities.
- held periodic Trail Summits in collaboration with other trail partners to inform the public about trail development, trail-related legislation, trail programs, etc.

## About this Strategic Plan

This Strategic Plan is an update to the previous five-year plan (2018-2023). The document outlines what our board of directors believes to be achievable objectives for the next five years. The plan was developed with two primary methods of input: (1) responses from a Stakeholder Input survey emailed to partners in July, 2023 (see all comments received in Appendix A), and (2) input from our current board of directors.

## II. Strategic Plan Narrative and Implementation Schedule

Our primary goals in the next 5 years are to:

1. **Advocate for development of trails, active transportation, trail connectivity, and trail amenities.** Share information about local trails, needs, and calls-to-action. Maintain and expand website, continue quarterly e-Newsletter, and provide “Calls-to-Action” to the trail’s community when necessary.
2. **Support the Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS) program to provide ongoing building and maintenance of trails and trail networks.** Continue support for the Trail Stewards program, grow the VTS program where support exists, support the Trail Crew Leaders, recruit and utilize support from HTC volunteers for non-VTS activities.
3. **Encourage safe trail use for recreation and transportation in Humboldt County.** Partner with groups that work directly with people of color (POC), persons with disabilities, seniors, women, the LGBTQ+ community, and youth. Engage youth in volunteerism and trail experiences. Continue to support local governments to identify trail accessibility needs and opportunities. Inform the public of maps of local trails using an easily accessible web-based platform, continue use of social media and messaging.
4. **Ensure organizational capacity to accomplish HTC mission:** Improve board and volunteer recruitment, improve the website to support communication with supporters, conduct fundraising, consider “membership” options and models, continue development of board member “jobs” beyond executive officer roles, maintain and improve relationships with community partners, and host an annual meeting.

## Humboldt Trails Council Strategic Plan: Strategies and Implementation Schedule

<b>Goal 1: Advocate for development of trails, active transportation, trail connectivity, and trail amenities.</b>				
<b><i>Strategy (how we will achieve the goal)</i></b>	<b><i>Step (what actions do we need to take)</i></b>	<b><i>Who is responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Target date</i></b>	<b><i>How we will measure success</i></b>
1a. Support new trail development	Attend public meetings and voice support for board supported trails Encourage active transportation and connectivity	Advocacy Committee  Board members	Ongoing	Documentation of trail progress in board minutes and/or advocacy reports
	Participate in development of the Great Redwood Trail in collaboration with GRT Agency	Advocacy Committee  Board members	Ongoing	Documentation of trail progress in board minutes and/or advocacy reports regarding progress in development of trail segments
1b. Build and maintain relationships with trail partners and stakeholders	Identify community partners and stakeholder Determine level of contact and collaboration warranted Assign liaison to each organization	Advocacy Committee  Board members	Ongoing	Documentation in advocacy report and/or board minutes  Board and community partner feedback/perception  Timely responses to requests

	Develop collaborative activities and liaisons with selected trail partners	Advocacy Committee  Board members	Ongoing	Documentation of collaborative projects and activities in board minutes and/or advocacy reports
1c. Encourage development of trail amenities	Support efforts to improve trails through signage, connectivity, and other amenities	Board members  Advocacy Committee	Ongoing	Documentation of the development of signage and other amenities on specific trails or trail segments in board minutes and/or advocacy reports
1d. Strengthen communication regarding calls-to-action and advocacy opportunities	Notification through eList, community partners; posts on social media, and webpage  Press releases/updates to newspapers, TV stations, radio.	Advocacy Committee	As needed	Communication records in board minutes and/or advocacy reports  Board and community partner feedback

1e. Continue responsiveness to needs for trail-related advocacy and representation in the community	<p>Have a presence at public meetings, events, and celebrations.</p> <p>Write support and comment letters</p> <p>Voice support for trail connectivity and active transportation</p> <p>Monitor trail-related legislation</p> <p>Issue calls-to-action</p>	<p>Advocacy Committee</p> <p>HTC supporters</p> <p>Board members</p>	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes and/or advocacy report
1f. Produce an annual Trails Summit for the region	<p>Plan and stage Trails Summit working with community partners</p> <p>Provide a “state of the trails” report</p> <p>Invite keynote speakers.</p> <p>Reach out to unrepresented user groups</p>	Board sub Committee with community partners	First Saturday in June (National Trails Day)	<p>Annual Trail Summit event occurs</p> <p>Feedback from public, speakers, and committee members</p> <p>Documentation in board minutes and/or advocacy report</p> <p>Video of summit posted to Access Humboldt when feasible</p>

<b>Goal 2: Support the Volunteer Trail Stewards (VTS) program to provide ongoing building and maintenance of trails and trail networks</b>				
<b><i>Strategy (how we will achieve the goal)</i></b>	<b><i>Step (what actions do we need to take)</i></b>	<b><i>Who is responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Target date</i></b>	<b><i>How we will measure success</i></b>
2a. Maintain, support, and expand existing VTS program	Hold regular VTS workdays at the designated trail sites in conjunction with MOUs	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation of VTS workdays in VTS database and board minutes
	Maintain records of volunteer work for each trail; provide documentation per MOUs; maintain communication with MOU partners	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation of VTS workdays in database
	Provide tools, equipment, supplies and food as needed for each trail site.	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	VTS records of expenditures for operations Treasurer records
	Recruit at tabling and similar events	Board members Volunteer Committee VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Events reported in board minutes Measure number of new volunteers on list annually Feedback from Trail Crew Leaders on workday attendance
2b. Develop new VTS groups	Recruit at tabling and similar events  Reach out in media	Board of Directors Volunteer Committee	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes

		VTS Coordinator		
	Develop VTS program for Final Four section of Humboldt Bay Trail and Great Redwood Trail	VTS Coordinator Volunteer Committee	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes Measure trail workday attendance on new sites
	Develop training/equipment programs targeted to youth	Board of Directors Volunteer Committee Trail Crew Leader	Ongoing	Report in board minutes  Documentation of youth attending VTS workdays
	Collaborate with USFS to develop trail maintenance activities on forest service trails in Humboldt County	Board of Directors Volunteer Committee VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes
2c. Continue with part-time VTS Coordinator for VTS operations	Provide supervision through regular meetings Refine job description for this role Identify potential individuals for this role	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Position filled or alternate plan in place



2d. Support the Trail Crew Leaders	Schedule VTS meetings as needed to provide information and training to all Trail Crew Leaders	Board of Directors Volunteer Committee VTS Coordinator	Annually	Minutes from VTS Trail Crew Leader meetings Reports from VTS coordinator Documentation in board minutes
	Provide training and information to allow volunteers to qualify as Trail Crew Leaders	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes
	Assist Trail Crew Leaders in addressing the challenges they encounter on their trail sites	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator Volunteer Committee	Ongoing	Reports from VTS Coordinator Documentation in board minutes
2e. Support, promote, and celebrate the volunteers who contribute to the VTS program	Provide volunteer recognition items	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes Volunteers recognized and retained
	Schedule and organize annual recognition event	Volunteer Committee VTS Coordinator	Annual event	Annual recognition event Document in board minutes and in eNewsletter
	Document VTS trail work effort and provide content for website, eNewsletter and local media coverage	Board of Directors  VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Documentation in website, eNewsletter, and other local media coverage

2f. Maintain website calendar that facilitates VTS Trail Crew Leaders contact with VTS volunteers and potential volunteers	Website design that permits updating information by VTS Coordinator for each trail	Board of Directors VTS Coordinator Web administrator	Ongoing	Feedback from VTS Coordinator  Document number of participating VTS volunteers
2g. Develop, print, and update brochure/flyer about Humboldt Trails Council and VTS.	Create brochure/ flyer and print.	Community Engagement Committee	August 2025	Flyer/ brochure created and printed. Brochure updated and improved as needed.

<b>Goal 3: Encourage safe trail use for recreation and transportation in Humboldt County</b>				
<b><i>Strategy (how we will achieve the goal)</i></b>	<b><i>Step (what actions do we need to take)</i></b>	<b><i>Who is responsible</i></b>	<b><i>Target date</i></b>	<b><i>How we will measure success</i></b>
3a. Reach out to underrepresented user groups, including POC, women, LGBTQ+, disabled community, youth, seniors, Hispanic, Indigenous, ASL	Attend new events to disseminate HTC information and to recruit volunteers. Create outreach materials and distribute to key groups/ locations. Share county demographic data with board.	Board members  VTS coordinator	Ongoing	Annual measure of volunteers recruited from specific events reported in board minutes  Feedback from groups we reach out to
3b. Partner with organizations and local agencies that serve underrepresented groups on	Collaborate on events/activities that serve more people than our “traditional base”	Board members Volunteers Community partners	ongoing	Recorded in board minutes and/or advocacy reports.

events and efforts that are relevant to our mission				Report on annually
3c. Encourage and support accessibility on trails and public transportation to trails.	Attend meetings, understand needs, be a voice in planning. Advocate for appropriate and standardized signage. Communicate information about trail accessibility and changing trail conditions.	Board members  Advocacy Committee	Ongoing	Report in board minutes and/or advocacy reports  Report on annually  Regular, timely updates about trail accessibility and conditions.
3d. Share information regarding local and regional trails, including trail conditions, photographs, and trail experience opportunities.	Encourage and coordinate with board members and volunteers to share posts on media sites  Press releases to newspapers, NC Journal, TV stations, etc.  Reports on trail conditions from Trail Leaders  Have multiple administrators on accounts to increase HTC activity	Community Engagement Committee  Web designer  Board of Directors  Volunteers  VTS Coordinator	Ongoing	Feedback from board members, VTS coordinators and community partners.  Documentation in minutes on progress  Measure media data of users

3e. Explore applications and sites for trail mapping, determine which is most appropriate for HTC, and upload desired link information	Research and use different free trail mapping interfaces and determine which we prefer. Add trail segments and share them via our outreach methods. Work with HCAOG and other local agencies to identify next steps and ensure that efforts are not duplicated	Board of Directors  Web administrator	Ongoing	Trail information uploaded to a user-friendly interface.  Feedback from users.
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Goal 4: Ensure organizational capacity to accomplish HTC mission				
<i>Strategy (how we will achieve the goal)</i>	<i>Step (what actions do we need to take)</i>	<i>Who is responsible</i>	<i>Target date for completion/ milestone</i>	<i>How we will measure success</i>
4a. Continue organizational financial tracking and improve funding streams	Develop and review annual budget Review financial status on quarterly basis Develop and implement fundraising plan	Board members  Volunteers	Present budget annually  Quarterly	Review and approve annual budget.  Documentation of annual budget, quarterly reports, and funding plan in board minutes.

4b. Develop and maintain an effective committee structure to utilize available volunteers and organize activities that support HTC mission	<p>Identify and appoint necessary committees.</p> <p>Structure agenda so board committee chairs will provide committee reports</p> <p>Ensure that committees engage in activities that fulfill HTC Mission.</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Committee Chairs</p>	Ongoing	<p>Board member feedback about effectiveness and satisfaction with their role</p> <p>Retention of board members</p> <p>Status reports in board minutes</p>
	Submit grant proposals to provide funding for VTS staff and operational expenses.	Board of Directors	Ongoing	<p>Documentation in board minutes of grants written and awarded.</p> <p>Documentation of grant management by Treasurer</p>
4c. Maintain website that supports communication with volunteers and supporters	<p>Ensure web designer knows we want a method to engage with supporters.</p> <p>Ensure board and VTS Coordinator can easily update.</p> <p>Ensure site provides a feed with social media updates.</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>VTS Coordinator</p> <p>Web administrator</p> <p>Volunteer Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Board and VTS coordinator feedback about ease and effectiveness of use.</p> <p>Track number of hits on the website, social media</p> <p>Website has links to social media updates</p>

4d. Annual report on our accomplishments and activities provided to our supporters and partners via a meeting or a written report	<p>Prepare and provide updates</p> <p>Communicate method of presentation</p>	Board of Directors Volunteer Committee	Yearly	<p>Documentation in board minutes</p> <p>If written annual report will be sent out via eAnnouncement and posted on web page</p>
4e. Strengthen volunteer recruitment for non-VTS volunteer opportunities.	<p>Utilize e-News (Happy Trails) social media, and public events to publicize needs.</p> <p>Develop list of tasks the HTC needs help with.</p> <p>Be specific when specific skill needed</p> <p>Identify opportunities to recruit student volunteers.</p>	<p>Board members</p> <p>Volunteer Committee</p> <p>VTS Coordinator</p>	Ongoing	<p>Documentation in board minutes</p> <p>Create task list</p> <p>Advertise needs</p> <p>Create eList for volunteers</p> <p>Monitor yearly improvement in function of organization</p> <p>Responsiveness to requests for volunteers.</p>
4f. Maintain board recruitment/retention for a varied composition of board members and officers	<p>Utilize e-news, social media, website to advertise needs.</p> <p>Develop recruitment strategy and list of specific skills desired.</p>	Board members	Ongoing	<p>Number of board members</p> <p>Board jobs adequately filled</p> <p>Recruitment strategies reported in in minutes.</p>
4g. Develop progression path and growth into new positions within the organization.	Board members to train and grow into officer positions or other leadership roles	Board of Directors	Ongoing	Documentation in board minutes

	<p>Chart a course for others to join ad-hoc committees, and join the board</p> <p>Chart a course for volunteers to train as crew leaders to join the board</p>			
4h. Advance equity by recruiting diverse people and talents to board and volunteer network.	<p>Continue to recruit volunteers through the organizations and user groups identified in 3a</p> <p>Develop and use more bilingual materials</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p> <p>Volunteer Committee</p>	Ongoing	<p>Documentation in board minutes</p> <p>Bilingual materials.</p>
4i. Information Technology competency	<p>Improve what we are doing</p> <p>Share knowledge</p> <p>Support and fund training</p> <p>Keep up social media trends</p> <p>Keep Update Board of Directors site</p>	<p>Sub-committee from board</p>	Ongoing	<p>Monitoring site-use</p> <p>Documentation in board minutes</p> <p>Budget item for training</p> <p>Feedback from board members regarding their comfort with their role related to social media and outreach</p>

Strategic Plan accepted by HTC Board 1/15/24.

## Appendix A: Stakeholder Survey Responses

### Summary and categorization of stakeholder comments

#### Support for VTS

- Strong consensus to maintain and support existing VTS program
- Be prepared to deploy VTS programs in Bay Trail South and Annie/Mary
- Recruit more volunteers for trail work - all trails could use higher # of volunteers.

#### Doing well

- Advocacy and support for GRT and Bay Trail were highly regarded
- Continue this work, looking at Eureka to CR Trail and Old Town GRT
- Newsletter is good source of trail news

#### Collaboration

- Co-branding to highlight trails - I imagine this means continuing to strengthen partnerships with cities and agencies managing trails, and other active groups
- Partnering with other trail/biking/enviro orgs to market and promote trail use
- Reach out to groups doing equity work to partner on bringing more diverse users out
- Work with First 5 Humboldt to do programs for kids. Hiking Humboldt w/ Kids
- Go to events where underrepresented users are. Meet people where they are.
  - need to identify who is underrepresented on trails?
- Reach out to Green Diamond for trail easement/use
- Partner with schools (see new idea)
- People like being part of a group. Explore more opportunities for people to identify as a trail user, potential for HTC membership
- Collect info from people with disabilities, relay back to trail managers. Partner with Tri-County Independent Living. **Support at public meetings.**
- Chambers of Commerce, service clubs (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc) and other civic groups

#### Geographic focus

- Major emphasis on Humboldt Bay Area where most trail users live
- Look at trails that connect neighborhoods/communities and have the greatest potential for transportation use in addition to recreation
- As capacity/interest grows, expand outward (i.e. Willow Creek)
- Be sensitive to areas historically underinvested in
- Be open to broader regional connections to enhance trail advocacy



## New ideas

- Create and support education program for youth on trails
- Youth training on trail building
- Scholarship/internship to support youth training in trail advocacy
- Educate about sea-level rise and how trails are at ground zero
- Table at Friday Night Market

## Needs Improvement

- More regular action alerts so people know how to support trails
- More press and regularly syndicated trail column

## Great ideas but beyond HTC scope

Advocate for east-west trails

Bring trails up to State safety standards (maybe advocacy related)

Encourage County to hire more staff at County Parks

List of contacts sent the survey and survey respondents (highlighted in light green):

VTS Coordinators	
Rees Hughes	Arcata Community Forest
Chah GAH Cho Trail, Mad River Bluffs	McKinleyville Land Trust
Dennis Houghton	Eureka Waterfront Trail North
Gail Popham	Eureka Wharf Trail
Jeremy Cashen	Wigi Wetlands
Mark	Hikshari' Trail
Shelly Lusk	Hikshari' Trail
Matthew Morassutti - NC Reg Land Tr	Freshwater Farms Reserve Trail
Stacy Becker	Hammond Trail
Dennis Houghton	McKay Community Forest
Tom Phillips	Lacks Creek Trail
Wildlands Conservancy	Seawood Cape Preserve
Rachael Garcia	coordinator

HTC Contacts for Questionnaire		
<u>Name</u>	<u>Organization</u>	<u>Title</u>
Hank Seemann	Humboldt Co. Public Works	Dep. Director - Environmental Services
Natalie Arroyo	County of Humboldt	Board of Supervisors
Rex Bohn	County of Humboldt	Board of Supervisors
Michelle Bushnell	County of Humboldt	Board of Supervisors
Steve Madrone	County of Humboldt	Board of Supervisors
Mike Wilson	County of Humboldt	Board of Supervisors - 3rd Distric
Robin Praszker	City of Eureka	Environ. Project Manager
Jesse Willor	City of Eureka	City Engineer
Emily Sinkhorn	City of Arcata	Environmental Service Director
Merritt Perry	City of Fortuna	City Manager
Kyle Knopp	City of Rio Dell	City Manager
Mike Foget	Blue Lake	Staff Engineer
Mandy Mager	City of Blue Lake	City Manager
Patrick Kaspari	McKinleyville CSD	PE & General Manager
Beth Burks	Humb. Co. Assoc. of Governments	Executive Director
Oona Smith	Humb. Co. Assoc. of Governments	Sr. Regional Planner
Great Redwood Trail Agency	Caryl Hart	Chair, Board of Directors
Great Redwood Trail Master Planning	Louisa Morris	Project Development Specialist
Great Redwood Trail Friends	Alicia Hamann	Executive Director
Rick Littlefield	Eureka Natural Foods	
Carol Vander Meer	RCAA	Projects Coordinator
Alysia Bixler	RCAA	Planning Specialist II
Dennis Rael	Humb. Bay Trail Fund	Founder Los Bagels
Elaine Astrue	advocate	
Lynn Crosthwait	Fortuna Sr Hiking Group	organizer
Larry Conwell	Fortuna Sr Hiking Group	organizer
Carol Polasek	Backcountry Horsemen of CA - Redwood Unit	President
Colin Fiske	Coalition for Responsible Transportation Priorities	Executive Director
Denise Seeger	Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge	
Sebastion	Lation Outdoors	
Rick Knapp	Humboldt Bay Bicycle Commuters Assoc	President
Julie Clark	Headwaters Reserve	Ranger

## **All Responses**

**If you could pick only one new thing that HTC would accomplish in the next five years, what would that thing be? What are the immediate BIG NEEDS to support and promote trails in Humboldt County?**

- Support the CR trail as much as we can.
- New thing: Collaborate and learn from other Trail Councils. Big Needs: promote McKay Community Forest as venue for volunteers.
- Encourage more community members to volunteer to maintain trails.
- Co-branding that highlights the trail opportunities in each area.
- Inform trail-supporters on how to support trail building (e.g., opportunities for letters to elected officials, support letters, pressure when needed, trail maintenance, donations, being informed etc.).
- Help create and connect to the Great Redwood Trail!

- Partner with Green Diamond Resource Company to allow hiking and biking on private GDRC lands via a permit system (as they do in WA and OR).
- Ensure Great Redwood Trail build out in downtown Eureka and from Eureka to CR
- Sustain volunteer trail stewards at existing trails and promote new VTS sites for the Bay Trail South and Arcata Annie & Mary Trail
- Educate the local community on the potential effect of climate change/sea level rise on local trails.
- Establish and maintain outreach to inform public about VTS in the community
- Support and advocate for the maximum extent of the Great Redwood Trail throughout the county!
- Build the Humboldt Bay Trail Endowment Fund to \$1,000,000 to support volunteer activities. It (it's) already at \$500,000!
- Continue to grow capacity for maintaining and expanding Trail Stewards projects
- Bring existing trails up to **State safety standards**.
- I have two things that are on my mind . . . they are somewhat related. Many of the trail maintenance needs in Six Rivers NF, some BLM properties, and some State Park properties have been very neglected. Is there capacity to expand our trail maintenance support to include some of these trails? These may make more sense to be done by a volunteer trail crew working for a weekend or a week . . . generally a 2 - 3 hour work day will not cut it. It would be worth talking with the Bigfoot Trail Alliance about either collaboration or learning from the BFTA experience. The second item is to collaborate with the Bay Trail Fund Committee to take advantage of new milestones on the Bay Trail and the Annie & Mary Trail to reinvigorate the fund raising effort and, perhaps, work to expand the scope of the endowed Fund (what can it be used to support).
- County Parks and Recreation need more staff to manage their many (and ever growing) responsibilities. Is there anything HTC can do to support that need, recognizing the county currently is in the red?
- Generating more volunteer numbers for each event and location.
- One idea is helping to create a pathway for young people (especially in high school and college) to become actively involved in trail initiatives. Facilitate the next generation. Maybe sponsor a scholarship or internship to serve on the council board or some other position? Another idea is to expand opportunities for people to IDENTIFY as a trail support and lover. As humans we have a natural affinity to feel connections as members of a group. VTS volunteers feel this through working with others. The trail summit supports this outcome as well. Are there additional programs or initiatives to reinforce a sense of group belonging? For example, distributing materials with HTC name and logo, or considering becoming a membership organization.

### **What can our Board do to improve access to trails for new or underrepresented users?**

- Publicity!
- Reach out to schools or organizations to promote Humboldt County Trails.

- Find out which user groups are underrepresented and do targeted advertising and provide guided tours to those users.
- Advocate for the connection of the Annie & Mary Trail between Blue Lake and Glendale.
- Build reciprocal relationships w/ advocacy groups/advocates for those users
- Meet them where they are- connect with them to find out what they are interested in.
- Facilitate school field trips with a program of discovery. The kids will educate the parents.
- Partner with organizations that are doing equity work, particularly related to outdoor recreation & transportation, and support them in their needs
- Advocate for more trails that directly connect to neighborhoods, seek to expand community representation on the HTC board, collaborate to provide more trail information in Spanish.
- Table at Friday Night Market. Promote website, Newsletter, Facebook and Instagram. Maps too!
- Participate in public events where underrepresented users might learn of the program.
- Social media promotion of different trails and how to get info about them.
- School field trips, local service clubs planning events on the Trails, Churches and other existing networks.
- Trails in every community
- safe parking, safe trails, more publicity, room for horse trailers
- I think access is pretty good.
- Work with First 5 Humboldt to support the use of Hiking Humboldt Kids . . . First 5 Humboldt has access to families from underrepresented trail users. More liaison with Cal Poly students and student organizations . . . where the student population is far more diverse than the surrounding community . . . as hike leaders, trail stewards, interns.
- **Provide Spanish translation on humtrails.org** website. Continue efforts to outreach in neighborhoods with diverse populations, markets, Cal Poly Humboldt, etc.
- Collaborate/host events with groups such as Latino Outdoors, Black to the Land, etc. Highlight accessible trails for those with disabilities.
- Reach out to local Chamber of Commerce's with an information sheet about HTC and Trail Stewards program.
- One potential role is to facilitate communications from people with physical disabilities who are trail users, back to trail managers, regarding what features they like and don't like about local trails and how these trails could be improved. This effort could be coordinated with Tri-County Independent Living.

### **Where do YOU go to get local trail updates now? How can HTC improve its communication with the public?**

- I still think a monthly column in NCJ or LoCO would help tremendously.
- Where do I go: local internet news. Improve Communication: go multi-lingual
- Perhaps Lostcoast outpost would carry a weekly trail update and we could provide them the information.

- **Create a FB/Instagram page** with updates that can be followed
- Email.
- The phone... either online or with a phone call
- I get them piecemeal, sometimes from the HTC website, sometimes from LoCo. I'm not on Facebook (and never will be). HTC probably needs to prompt visitors to the website to sign up for the newsletter, proactively. Twitter is no longer a good option - let's see what happens with **Mastodon and Threads**...
- Local newspapers & websites, HTC newsletter, other organizational newsletters
- Perhaps HTC could partner with KHUM or LoCo to have a bi-weekly or monthly feature on local trails
- Both from personal contacts and emails from other boards members.
- From memory and from friends. Social media is a powerful tool! Great job expanding to Instagram and getting more photos of trails out there.
- HTC newsletter and local media.
- Doing a good job.
- Your newsletter.
- GRT, Backcountry Horsemen, word of mouth
- I contact Agencies that maintain the trail but often rely on word of mouth. If HTC maintained **trail update info** that would be great.
- I really appreciate both the website and the e-newsletters.
- humtrails.org; local media- Loco Outpost, North Coast Journal, Times-Standard, McK Press, email newsletters from groups like HTC, Land Trusts, Friends of the Dunes, NorCAN etc.
- Facebook. Use all the social media platforms.
- The periodic e-mail update is great.

**What should be the geographic scope of HTC's activities? Is there a priority area within this whole area?**

- We've always been focused pretty much on the Humboldt Bay area; I don't see that changing.
- Stay local, stay focused on Eureka trails and McKay
- Humboldt county with Eureka, Arcata, Fortuna and McKinleyville as the priority region
- Trails create connectedness between communities; highlight all of it!!!
- County? Prioritize trails that have highest potential of getting people to drive less.
- all of Humboldt County
- Now that we have trail projects in the works for the north-south coastal corridor, prioritize connecting the dots between **Arcata and Redding/Red Bluff**. There's been latent demand for east-west routes for decades, and virtually no progress there. We should be looking at utility right of ways, as well as fire roads, forest service roads, etc. to define through east-west routes.
- Priorities should focus on either (a) areas with greatest potential for public use, or (b) areas with a historic underinvestment in trails

- Where there is community energy within Humboldt County...likely more focused in the Humboldt Bay region
- Humboldt County, with a focus on Eureka, Arcata and Fortuna
- Hard to consider is static geographic area, as HTC has possibility of linking with more trails. As long as these trails are supported by volunteers, they will be part of our geographic area.
- Countywide but with a focus on where trails are used for transportation in addition to recreation
- Humboldt Bay area and then expanding outward
- Whole county
- Humboldt Bay Region
- start with most easily accessible trails to get the most use from the public and build from there
- The county, with named, known trails prioritized.
- You are wise to keep your focus on the Fortuna/Hydesville to McKinleyville area . . . it is where most of the walkers/cyclists/runners/equestrians live and use trails.
- Humboldt county, with efforts focused on bay area vicinity, unless HTC board capacity grows (or new Volunteer Trail Steward project start ups, for instance in Willow Creek, if a coordinator is identified).
- Trinidad to Ferndale

### **What is HTC doing well that it should continue doing?**

- VTS is invaluable, and advocating for trails has been very successful.
- Support of Trail coordinators, offering training and guest speakers
- Supporting trail volunteers, managing the website, sending out calls for action
- Advocacy
- Showing up, and being informed!
- advocacy
- Trail maintenance, fundraising, facilitating data collection :-)
- Vigorous, effective advocacy for trail development, and productive partnerships to maintain trails
- VTS and cultivating support for trail projects throughout the region and demonstrating that support with decision makers.
- Supporting VTS
- The actual hands on, boots on the ground, maintaining of our trails.
- VTS! 😊
- Trail Stewards! Engaging with local entities and elected officials, working with partners (CalTrans, governments etc...)
- Trail Stewards
- Not giving up, e.g., the Final Four Project
- assessing the need for trails and beginning trail development and linking
- Supporting the VTS

- You have been great advocates! That is huge. Your staying on top of the GRT has been critical.
- Support of Volunteer Trail Steward projects with hospitality, publicity, and coordination with local jurisdictions. Regional trails advocacy, and collaboration with a wide range of government, nonprofit, private sector groups and stakeholders.
- Being consistent with offering volunteer workdays rain or shine.
- VTS, e-mail updates, advocating at public meetings

### **What is HTC not doing but should be? What can HTC do for your trail workdays and work crews that it isn't already doing?**

- Expanding our geographic scope.
- Board training from Humboldt Area Foundation (sp.error)
- Organizing guided tours of local trails to improve community awareness
- Marketing/Branding
- Is there an HTC strategic plan for imbuing equity, diversity, and inclusion throughout the organization's actions and efforts? And eventually DEI for the whole makeup of volunteers and members?
- Working with SDBC to foster small businesses (food trucks, bike rental, etc.) along the GRT. Dealing with the loose dog problem.
- Perhaps a greater focus on equity - improving access to safe active transportation facilities as well as access to nature for underrepresented groups - would be helpful
- Getting word out about the potential effects of climate change on our local trails, as well as what folks can do to moderate that in terms of lifestyle.
- Maybe (Maybe) have some kind of PSA (public service announcement) that could run over radio and possibly public channels locally. Also why not "advertise" in the local press.
- more members
- remember that there is a huge equestrian community in Humboldt
- More trail maintenance equipment like a battery riding mower and weed eaters.
- We just have to continue to keep VTS work in the forefront of the people of Humboldt County and continue to recruit volunteers . . . it is a never ending cycle.
- HTC is doing GREAT for trail workdays and crews!
- More newspaper articles throughout the year, profiling the different trail locations and people involved.

### **How is your workload as a trail coordinator?**

- My workload as a trail coordinator is manageable. At times, I feel like I am overcommitted to the general health and support of the VTS program.
- Just fine.
- Moderate
- As someone who works full-time, it can be challenging to get everything done in a timely manner, but it's manageable. I know my site very well, so don't have stress too much with the workday planning.

### **What are the difficulties and challenges of your trail?**

- Trash from homeless people. Vandalism. Litter.
- County Parks Staff and Sheriff's office needing more personnel to make a presence and keep up with the work necessary. On the Hammond itself, abandoned camps/dumps, loose dogs, vandals (graffiti and property), invasive plants, 5 miles of trail with adjacent parks and facilities needing maintenance.
- For Eureka Waterfront North, it is convincing EPD to work for more directly with us.
- We're getting great participation at McKay CF. There will be a need for VTS work on the new Humboldt Bay Trail segment near the end of 2024.
- Although the focus on our trail is ecological restoration, trash is the biggest challenge to the trail. It is never ending and can't be completely combated by volunteer days. We are just a band-aid on a bigger issue.

### **Please provide any additional ideas, comments and suggestions you may have for HTC.**

- Change the title from "Trail Coordinator" to "**Trail Crew Leader**" "Coordinator" is confusing, because "Coordinator" is Rachael's title.
- I will say that the HTC, VTS, and support for trails has grown so much in the past half dozen years. The leadership of the HTC has been wonderful . . . thank you for all of your efforts.
- Thank you HTC for your wonderful support of the Trail Stewards and regional trails advocacy!
- Thank you for all the volunteer work and being so effective serving our community.
- We need to encourage cities and the county to install **wayfinding signage**. Try to establish new or better ties with other advocacy groups such as Friends of the Annie & Mary and RCMB. **Is there anything useful we can do in Fortuna?**
- Advocate for trail support amenities, including infrastructure and economic development. Trails are a huge part of our local economy and they go hand-in-hand with economic development
- "On our local trails many dog owners seem to think leashes are optional. This problem is not going away on its own. It must be addressed, and sooner is better than later.
- I encourage HTC to set aside time for strategic thinking and planning. board development, and other activities that are crucial to long-term success. Focusing on trail maintenance and communication is great, but only part of the picture. "
- Thank you!!!
- Thank you HTC for all you do!
- Switch out all equipment used for trail maintenance to electric/manual instead of gas, use low emission fuel in flail mower.
- I think we are showing so much potential for growth and development in trails it is an amazing time to be involved with HTC.
- Thank you so much, y'all are my heroes!
- Thank you for all you do!!!!!!!!!!!!!!