

View looking south along a section of the proposed trail.

Red Grade Trails

Experience Your Backyard

SCLT recognizes the many outdoor recreation opportunities in our area, whether it is strolling along Sheridan's pathways, hiking in Cloud Peak Wilderness, riding through the Bighorn National Forest, or floating down one of our local streams. However, finding a non-motorized trail in the mountains is more difficult, especially one within 30 minutes of Sheridan or Big Horn.

A core part of our mission is to increase public access to recreation in Sheridan County. We are especially interested in completing projects that connect you with the spectacular scenery and wildlife of the Bighorns. SCLT's Red Grade Trails project will do just that and we hope it will become one of your favorite places to escape to in the future.

Why Red Grade?

Over the past few years, we have seen exponential interest from our community for non-motorized, natural surface trails that are easy to access, scenic, and safe. With this in mind, SCLT's Recreation Work Group, comprised of community volunteers, set out to identify potential locations for developing a 15 - 20 mile non-motorized trail system. While we looked at a number of different potential sites, the Red Grade vicinity quickly rose to the top as the premier project setting due to the large tracts of public lands (State, Bureau of Land Management, United States Forest Service), well-established public access on Red Grade Road, proximity to over 60% of Sheridan County's population, and spectacular terrain and scenery.



Our Mission:

To preserve our heritage of open spaces, healthy rivers and creeks, working ranches, wildlife habitat, and vibrant history, while expanding non-motorized recreation opportunities to connect people with the places they love.

Staff

Colin Betzler
Executive Director

Claire Hobbs
*Communications &
Development Associate*

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Secretary

Susie Ponce
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Jeff Way



P.O. Box 7185
52 S. Main St., Suite 1
Sheridan, WY 82801
(307) 673 - 4702
sheridanclt.org

...Red Grade Trails continued



From left to right: Volunteers Jim Sorenson and Sarah Wallick, Board Member Sally Morton, SCLT Executive Director Colin Betzler, Board Member Dan Rieder, NPS staff Gary Wiener, SCLT staff Claire Hobbs, and former Board Member Roger Wilson after wrapping up our Landowner Open House on Red Grade Road on June 20th.

Planning for Success

In January of 2014, SCLT's Board of Directors adopted a strategic plan for the project. Since that time, we have reached out to property owners within roughly one mile of the proposed trail corridor, which is entirely located on State, BLM, and USFS lands. This outreach was a natural priority for SCLT because we realize that local residents should be involved in the process to make sure our project reflects the needs of local communities. The response from landowners in the vicinity has been mostly neutral or supportive, with a few landowners who are opposed to the project. We have received excellent feedback from this outreach that we used to modify and improve the overall project concept.

Next Steps

In June, SCLT contracted with the International Mountain Biking Association's (IMBA) Trail Solutions division to design the trails and trailheads. These professional trail designers build trails specifically to minimize the impact to sensitive environments and consider countless other factors like steepness of grade, scenic values, safety, shared uses, and more. Recently, they designed the trail systems at Curt Gowdy and Glendo State Parks. We anticipate submitting final project proposals to the State, BLM, and USFS by September 1, 2014. Review processes vary with each entity, but will likely take between 6 to 24 months in total and include formal opportunities for public comment.

Community Trails Need Community Support!

The initial design work for the Red Grade Trails project will cost \$15,000. We already had a donor step forward and pledge a \$7,000 match to fund this work and know there are others out there just as passionate about this project. We welcome donations to cover the cost of this contract. Also, please plan to drop by Black Tooth Brewing Company on July 8th between 7 pm and 10 pm for our "Crafting Ales for Local Trails" Boot Kick-Off After Party. Black Tooth will donate \$1 of every pint to SCLT's recreation projects, including Red Grade Trails, during the party and we'll have maps and information to share.

More formal and long-term fundraising for this project will begin soon. To view the proposed trail map and project Fact Sheet, go to www.sheridanclt.org.

Water Trail Assessment

Members of our Recreation Work Group floated roughly 70 miles of the Tongue River and Goose Creeks this spring prior to run-off. We captured existing conditions and identified potential projects that will improve your access to water recreation and make waterways safer (hazard removal). We also identified potential areas appropriate for day-use sites.

THANK YOU to the nearly 150 people who completed the online water trail survey. We received great information with many detailed comments, which helps us better understand the public's interests and needs as we put together a strategy for making our waterways more boater-friendly for residents and visitors alike.

After reviewing all the responses, our Recreation Work Group will review the list of existing issues, determine potential solutions to those issues, and begin to organize short and long term recommendations with a strategic funding schedule. We anticipate completing the assessment by the end of August. It will be available to the public on SCLT's website.



Volunteer Dave Peterson inventorying a section of the Tongue River for the assessment.

Biketoberfest 2014

Saturday, October 11th



Mountain Bike Races,
Trail Runs, After Party!

Register before

August 1st to save \$\$!

www.sheridanclt.org

Doc Huson Homestead

Conservation Easement

This combined conservation and historic easement project will preserve the Doc Huson home along Clear Creek, one of only a handful of locally quarried stone structures still standing in Sheridan County, and conserve 535 acres of ranchlands and wildlife habitat.

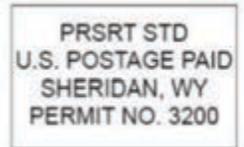
We continue to adjust this project to meet the National Resource Conservation Service's Farm and Ranchland Protection Program (NRCS-FRPP) revised standards. This project is one of roughly 25 across the state of Wyoming that have been stalled as a result of internal procedural issues at the Wyoming NRCS office.

SCLT submitted our final deed of conservation easement January

of 2013, and we have been working closely with NRCS staff at regional and national levels since that time to meet all NRCS language requirements. We are optimistic that the project will close this fall. While the delays have been completely out of SCLT's control, we believe that the NRCS will come away with a better knowledge of this process, which will allow for increased conservation into the future.



P.O. Box 7185
Sheridan, WY 82801



Please pass our newsletter on to a friend, recycle it, or let us know if you'd rather not receive a paper copy to help us reduce waste and costs. Thank you!

Join us for an event this summer!

Boot Kick-Off After Party - "Crafting Ales for Local Trails"

Tuesday, July 8th, 7 pm - 10 pm

Don't head home after the Boot Kick-Off in Kendrick Park during Rodeo Week or you'll miss the Munsick Brothers live at Black Tooth Brewing Company and the chance to support SCLT's recreation projects! Black Tooth will donate \$1 of every pint sold to SCLT. Catch the Trolley after the Boot Kick-Off to brewery.



Water Trail Float Trip

Saturday, July 12th, 9 am - 12 pm

Join us for a two to three hour group float on a beautiful stretch of local water! We'll take care of the logistics, but you'll need to bring your own kayaks, canoes, or rafts. RSVP to claire@sheridanclt.org to reserve your spot. FREE for SCLT members, \$10 for non-members. Bring lunch, water, and your camera.

Spur Ranch Fest

Saturday, July 27th, 11 am - 10 pm

This family friendly event at Tom Balding's Spur Ranch has something for everyone. Bike races and time trials, live music, food vendors, and more! SCLT's Red Grade Trails project will benefit from a portion of proceeds. For more information email sales@tombalding.com or call 672 - 8459.



For a full list of upcoming events, go to sheridanclt.org or call (307) 673 - 4702.