



SOCIETY OF OUTDOOR  
RECREATION PROFESSIONALS

*SORP provides leadership for the outdoor recreation profession through skill development, networking, and technical guidance.*

# 2026

# NATIONAL OUTDOOR RECREATION CONFERENCE

MAY 11-14, 2026 | DULUTH, MINNESOTA

*Outdoor Recreation Pathways to Restoration and Revitalization*

REGISTRATION NOW OPEN AT [NORC2026.ORG](https://NORC2026.ORG)

In partnership with



[NORC2026.ORG](https://NORC2026.ORG)

# NORC

## CEU Credits

Interested in obtaining learning credits for this session?

- Quiz: <https://forms.gle/zjq3EkuRh8hFfjFD8>
- Survey: <https://forms.gle/HQikXjxFK6jucB9d6>

This course is worth the following credits courtesy of American Trails: 1.00 AICP CM | 1.00 LA CES HSW | 0.10 CEU/1.00 PDH Equivalency Petition). A certificate is automatically emailed to those who pass. Quizzes can be retaken if need be.

This webinar is being recorded and will be available at [www.recpro.org](http://www.recpro.org). After the webinar wraps all registered attendees will receive an email with a link to the recording and links for CEU credits.

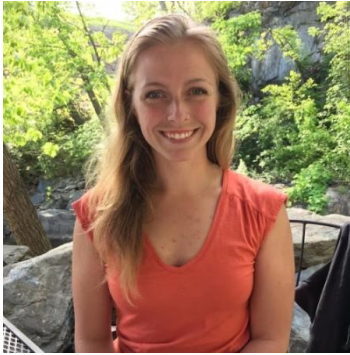


Scan for Quiz



Scan for Survey

# *Approaching Big Inclusivity Gaps as a Grassroots Trail Organization*



**Kenzie Brunner**  
Stowe Trails Partnership



**Kelsie Sibbald**  
Stowe Trails Partnership



**Angie Braley**  
Society of Outdoor  
Recreation Professionals

# Where/How Do We Get Started?



# Audit + Workshop Development

Developed through collaboration

- Gerry Seavo James – Founder, Outdoor Recreation Design Lab and Explore Kentucky, and Deputy Campaign Director, Sierra Club Outdoors For All
- Rachel Franchina – Executive Director, SORP



# Workshops

Nevada:

- International Trails Symposium, Apr. 2023

Colorado:

- Staunton State Park, Dec. 2023
- Ridgway State Parks, Apr. 2024
- Funded by Colorado Parks and Wildlife

Vermont:

- Poultney, Aug. 2025
- Train-the-Trainer pilot added, with 14 people from 5 states trained to lead workshops
- Funded by the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative



# Inclusive Spaces Audit Tool & Workshop



## Inclusive Spaces Audit Tool

### Pre-observation Data Gathering Worksheet

Purpose: The Inclusive Spaces Audit Pre-observation Data Gathering Worksheet is a tool for outdoor recreation providers to help formalize, inform, and guide the process to expand welcoming and belonging for users who have traditionally been excluded or underrepresented in outdoor recreation spaces. This worksheet is designed to facilitate discussion and reflection before making field observations at an outdoor recreation space. Use the area below each topic to document notes and follow-up items.

- How You Operate
  - How are underrepresented people integrated across your staffing, volunteer system, board, or leadership structure?
  - How is inclusion referenced in your space's strategic or operational plan, goals, policies, planning documents, mission, vision, outward facing messaging? Do you have a team or staff member focused on these efforts?
  - How, if at all, does your organization use regular training and learning initiatives and discussions with the staff, volunteers, board members, and external stakeholders on methods to remove barriers to access/entry and to increase the degree of cultural competency and inclusionary practices internally? What types of training would be most valuable?
- Understanding who you serve and how they access site
  - Do you understand who is currently using your space (demographics), how (activities), and how often (frequency)? I.e., do you collect demographic data, perform intercept surveys, or activity audits?
    - If yes, what does it tell you? How do you use it to make management decisions about your space? If no, what is your impression of how different demographic groups utilize your space?
  - How do you think the culture of the surrounding region of the space (i.e., local demographics, transportation availability, culture, and socioeconomic status) affects the way underrepresented populations utilize the space?
  - How do most people access your space (e.g. walking/biking access, personal vehicles, public transportation)? Does your community have a public transportation system? If so, does it offer routes that provide access to your space?
  - What is the proximity of your space (in both distance and transportation infrastructure)?

## Pre-Observation:

- ➔ Leadership & partnerships
- ➔ Outreach & communications

## Field Observation:

- ➔ Arrival experience
- ➔ Signage & interpretation
- ➔ Accessibility & comfort

Collaborative, not compliance-focused



# Approaching Big Inclusivity Gaps as a Grassroots Trail Organization



Applying the Inclusive Spaces Audit to a popular multi-use trail network in Vermont  
Presented by Kelsie Sibbald and Kenzie Brunner



SOCIETY OF OUTDOOR  
RECREATION PROFESSIONALS



# Outline

- About Stowe Trails Partnership
- Applying the Inclusive Spaces Audit
- Shared examples
- Creating a task inventory
- Collaborating with Partners
- Next Steps



# Who we are



Kelsie Sibbald- Trail Manager  
(She/Her/Hers)

[kelsie@stowetrails.org](mailto:kelsie@stowetrails.org)



Kenzie Brunner- Executive Director  
(She/Her/Hers)

[kenzie@stowetrails.org](mailto:kenzie@stowetrails.org)



# About Stowe Trails Partnership

- Stowe, VT : Recreation Destination
- Began in 2000
- 2nd largest Chapter of Vermont Mountain Bike Association (VMBA)
- Manages 40+ miles of multi-use trails
- 3 paid staff
- 700+ hours of volunteer work annually



# STP Fosters an Inclusivity Culture

- Vermont Mountain Bike Association DEI Initiatives
- Internal Initiatives
- Bike Borderlands Chapter-Ride with Gratitude



VERMONT MOUNTAIN BIKE ASSOC.  
SINCE  1997



## RESPECT THIS GIFT

Riding trails on public or private lands is a gift, not a right. That hiker we just passed? She might own the land we're riding on. With every ride, let's remember to be grateful for the landowners and others who make it possible.

## PROTECT NATURE

Enjoy nature, don't ruin it. Keep on the trails. Erosion is our single highest impact when we're out riding. Skidding causes erosion. Cutting corners can cut off access. Riding muddy trails messes it up for everyone. If we see animals, don't bother them, remember them. Pick up trash, pack it out, carpool here and back.

## CARE FOR OTHERS

We share the trails with others, and they have the same rights and responsibilities as each of us. If someone needs help, we help. If someone needs encouragement, we share our enthusiasm. And if it's going to make the situation better, we dismount. Be nice, yield to others, and give a smile.

## BE THE EXAMPLE

Being aggressive has no place in mountain biking. We know our limits, and we ride within them. Beyond the ride, let's park where we're supposed to, keep the tunes to a dull roar, and leave the IPAs for après somewhere else. Reckless behavior? A simple, polite call out will do.

# Inclusive spaces Workshop with SORP- August 2025

## Pre-Observation:

- Leadership & partnerships
- Outreach & communications

## Field Observation:

- Arrival experience
- Signage & interpretation
- Accessibility & comfort



# Cady Hill Forest Trail Network

- Over 100,000 users in 2025
- Located downtown near the village center
- Abenaki Land
- 11 miles of natural surface multi-use trail
- 7 miles of adaptive mountain bike trails
- Land owned by Town of Stowe and within conservation easement managed by Stowe Land Trust



# Applying the Audit in the Field

- Our goals
  - ◆ Make Cady Hill more welcoming, inclusive and accessible
  - ◆ Inventory improvements we can make
- Assessing both strengths and weaknesses
- Thinking both big and small!
- All about perspective taking



# Example 1: Trailhead Kiosk

# Trailhead Kiosk

What are some strengths here?



**Please help keep the trails safe and usable all winter long:**



During snow conditions please travel on sleds, snow shoes, or fatbike ONLY, and please keep off the trails during wet or slushy conditions.

Walking in soft snow creates postholes - a dangerous condition for all trail users.

Thanks for respecting your trails!



**TRAIL PARKING**

Additional parking is available for the general public in several locations - scan the QR code for more info!



Stowe Trails Partnership  
StoweTrails.org  
802.253.3333  
stowetrails.com

**RIDE WITH GRATITUDE**

**WHEEDS YOUR FEET**

Helping you enjoy your ride with gratitude. Scan this QR code for more information.

**PROJECT OUTLINE**

Stowe Trails Partnership is proud to announce the launch of the Ride With Gratitude project. This project is a multi-year effort to improve the trail network and provide a better experience for all trail users. The project includes the installation of trail markers, the creation of a trail map, and the development of a trail app. The project is a partnership between Stowe Trails Partnership and the Stowe Land Trust.

Stowe Trails Partnership  
StoweTrails.org  
802.253.3333  
stowetrails.com

**CLOSED**

Check trail conditions at [www.stowetrails.org](http://www.stowetrails.org)

**How to Enjoy Cady Hill Forest**

- Hiking / Snowshoeing:** Walkers, runners and bikers are not allowed to use the trails and interpretive routes at any time.
- Mountain Biking:** An 11-mile network of designated trails offers beginner to expert terrain open for riding year-round unless noted as otherwise. Trail to horse and horse.
- Cross-Country Skiing:** Skiing is permitted in Cady Hill Forest, but only the trails on the ground.
- Wildlife Viewing/Binding:** Cady Hill Forest is home to many beautiful species of birds, including white-throated sparrow, black bear and fox. Migratory songbirds breed in the forest in spring and summer.
- Hunting:** Hunting is permitted in Cady Hill Forest in accordance with VT Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations.
- Dogs:** Dogs must be under voice control or leashed. Remove dog waste from trails.

Scan this QR code for recommended activity routes.

A three-mile beginner blue trail route.  
A beginner orange track route.  
An intermediate "hoopy" blue route.  
An easy walking route.  
A challenging walking / running route.  
Adaptive MTB trail loops for all abilities.

Please respect closure signs when posted  
Leave no trace. Carry in Carry Out



**Legend**

- Intersection Marker with Trail Map
- Easy
- Intermediate
- Difficult
- One Way Trail
- Parking
- Trail Access
- Viewpoint

**The Cady Hill Forest Partnership**

Cady Hill Forest was once pasture and woodland. Over time, it became the site of a farmstead and then a small town. In 2012, the Stowe Land Trust and the Stowe Trails Partnership entered into a partnership to restore the forest and make it accessible to all.

The Town of Stowe owns Cady Hill Forest, and is responsible for its management. Stowe Trails Partnership manages the trails, including maintenance, education and outreach. STP is pleased to partner with the community to build and maintain a world-class trail network.

Stowe Land Trust holds the conservation easement to Cady Hill Forest. Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the preservation of scenic, recreational, and productive lands and landscapes for the benefit of the greater Stowe community. stowelandtrust.org

Stowe Trails Partnership  
StoweTrails.org  
802.253.3333  
stowetrails.com

This project managed with funding from:



Protected by a



Conservation Easement

stowelandtrust.org  
802.253.3221

**Getting a Wash?**

**Borrow a Pair of Snowshoes?**



# Trailhead Kiosk

What are some strengths here?



**TRAIL PARKING**  
Additional parking is available for the general public in several locations - scan the QR code for more info!

**RIDE WITH GRATITUDE**  
Bicycle Use on Trails  
Please do not ride your bicycle on any of the trails in Cady Hill Forest. The trails are for hikers, runners, and skiers only. Bicycles are not allowed on any of the trails. Thank you for your cooperation.

**Please help keep the trails safe and usable all winter long:**

During snow conditions please travel on skis, snow shoes, or fatbikes ONLY, and please keep off the trails during wet or slushy conditions.

Walking in soft snow creates postholes - a dangerous condition for all trail users.

Thanks for respecting your trails!

**CLOSED**

Go Red!     
Ride with caution on wet, muddy areas. Please don't ride later.

**How to Enjoy Cady Hill Forest**

- Hiking** (Snowshoeing, Mountain, Runners and fatbikes are not permitted to use the trails year round unless noted at trailheads.)
- Mountain Biking** An 11-mile network of designated trails offers beginners to expert terrain open for riding year round unless noted at trailheads. Not for horses and dogs.
- Cross-Country Skiing** Skiing is permitted in Cady Hill Forest, but only after dark on well-groomed.
- Longboarding** Cady Hill Forest is home to many miles of trails, including technical desc. Check local story strengths listed in the forest in spring and summer.
- Handcycling** Handcycling is permitted in Cady Hill Forest in accordance with Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations. Runners and skiers must wear control or washed. Runners and skiers must wear control or washed. Runners and skiers must wear control or washed.

Scan QR code for recommended activity routes. At these with beginner trail all routes. A beginner single track route. An intermediate "flowy" bike route. An easy walking route. A challenging walking / running route. Adaptive MET trail loops for all abilities.

Please respect closure signs when posted. No no trace. Carry In Carry Out.

**Legend**

- Yellow circle: Intersection Marker with Trail Map
- Blue line: Easy
- Green line: Intermediate
- Red line: Difficult
- Red line with arrow: One Way Trail
- P: Parking
- Yellow triangle: Trail Access
- Green triangle: Viewpoint

**The Cady Hill Forest Partnership**

Stowe Trails Partnership is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that manages and maintains the trails in Cady Hill Forest. We are a member of the Stowe Trails Partnership and are committed to providing a world class experience for all trail users.

**Going for a Walk?**  
Borrow a Pair of Snowshoes!

**Stowe Trails Partnership**

**Stowe Land Trust**

Protected by a **STOWE LAND TRUST** Conservation Easement

# Trailhead Kiosk

What are some weaknesses here?



**Please help keep the trails safe and usable all winter long:**



During snow conditions please travel on sleds, snow shoes, or fatbike ONLY, and please keep off the trails during wet or slushy conditions.

Walking in soft snow creates postholes - a dangerous condition for all trail users.

Thanks for respecting your trails!



**NOT A MEMBER?**  
Get your membership here: [stovetrails.org](#)



**TRAIL PARKING**

Additional parking is available for the general public in several locations - scan the QR code for more info!


**RIDE WITH GRATITUDE**

WINTER TIPS  
PROJECT OUTLINE  
BY THE EXAMPLE

[RideWithGratitude.org](http://RideWithGratitude.org)

**CLOSED**

Go Back    Ride with caution in wet, muddy areas    Please don't ride later.

Check trail conditions at [www.stovetrails.org](http://www.stovetrails.org)

# CADY HILL FOREST

**How to Enjoy Cady Hill Forest**

- Hiking / Snowshoeing:** Walkers, runners and bikers are not allowed to use the trails and interpretive routes at trailheads. Trail to beach.
- Mountain Biking:** An 11-mile network of designated trails offers beginner to expert terrain open for riding year-round unless noted as seasonal. Trail to house and beach.
- Cross-Country Skiing:** Skiing is permitted in Cady Hill Forest, but only the trails on the ground.
- Wildlife Viewing/Binding:** Cady Hill Forest is home to many different species of wildlife, including white-tailed deer, black bear and fox. Migratory songbirds breed in the forest in spring and summer.
- Hunting:** Hunting is permitted in Cady Hill Forest in accordance with VT Department of Fish and Wildlife regulations.
- Dogs:** Dogs must be under voice control or leashed. Remove dog waste from trails.

Scan this QR code for recommended activity routes.

A three-mile beginner bike / fat route.  
A beginner single track route.  
An intermediate "flowy" bike route.  
An easy walking route.  
A challenging walking / running route.  
Adaptive MTB trail loops for all abilities.

Please respect closure signs when posted  
Leave no trace. Carry in Carry Out



**Legend**

- Intersection Marker with Trail Map
- Easy
- Intermediate
- Difficult
- One Way Trail
- Parking
- Trail Access
- Viewpoint

**The Cady Hill Forest Partnership**

Cady Hill Forest was once pasture and woodland. Over time it returned to a mix of hardwood and softwood forest and currently has mostly spruce and pine woods habitat. In 2012, the Stowe Forest was purchased by the Stowe Housing & Conservation Board for the enjoyment of Stowe residents and visitors through a successful partnership.

The Town of Stowe owns Cady Hill Forest, and is responsible for its management. Snowshoosers give Stowe Trails Partnership maintenance. Cady Hill Forest's 11 miles of trails through meadows, fields, wetlands and woodlands. STP's mission is to partner with the community to build and maintain a world class trail network.

Stowe Land Trust built the conservation easement to Cady Hill Forest. Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the preservation of scenic, recreational, and productive farms and landscapes for the benefit of the greater Stowe community. [stowelandtrust.org](http://stowelandtrust.org)



**Getting for a Wash?**  
Borrow a Pair of Snowshoes!



This project managed with funding provided by the Vermont Housing & Conservation Board



Protected by a  
**STOWE LAND TRUST**  
Conservation Easement

[stowelandtrust.org](http://stowelandtrust.org)  
802.526.7221

# Trailhead Kiosk

What are some weaknesses here?

No aMTB or E-bike information

**TRAIL PARKING**  
Additional parking is available for the general public in several locations - scan the QR code for more info!

Stowe Trails Partnership

**NOT A MEMBER?**  
Get your Day Membership here: [www.stovetrails.org](#)

**Please help! keep the trails safe and usable all winter long:**

During snow conditions please travel on sleds, snow shoes, or fatbike ONLY, and please keep off the trails during wet or slushy conditions.

Walking in soft snow creates postholes - a dangerous condition for all trail users.

Thanks for respecting your trails!

**RIDE WITH GRATITUDE**  
WINTER TIPS  
PROJECT OUTLINE  
BY THE EXAMPLE  
Check trail conditions at [www.stovetrails.org](#)

**CLOSED**

Go Slow! Ride with caution on wet, muddy areas. Please don't ride latey.

Check trail conditions at [www.stovetrails.org](#)

**How to Enjoy Cady Hill Forest**

- Hiking / Snowshoeing: Cady Hill Forest is open to the public for hiking and snowshoeing. Hikers and snowshoers are not permitted on designated trails.
- Mountain Biking: Mountain biking is permitted on Cady Hill Forest, but only on designated trails.
- Cross-Country Skiing: Cross-country skiing is permitted on Cady Hill Forest, but only on designated trails.
- Wildlife Viewing/Photography: Wildlife viewing and photography is permitted on Cady Hill Forest, but only on designated trails.
- Hunting: Hunting is permitted on Cady Hill Forest, but only on designated trails.
- Dogs: Dogs must be under control and on a leash at all times.

Scan this QR code

Please respect the signs when posted. Leave no trace.

**The Cady Hill Forest Partnership**

Cady Hill Forest was once pasture and woodland. Over time it became a site of farmland and then a wooded forest. In 2012, the Stowe Forest was purchased by the Town of Stowe and the Stowe Trails Partnership.

The Town of Stowe owns Cady Hill Forest, and is responsible for its management. Stovetrails.org is the Stowe Trails Partnership website. Cady Hill Forest is 1.7 miles of trails through meadows, fields, woods and forests. STP is a non-profit organization that is committed to the preservation and maintenance of Cady Hill Forest.

Stowe Land Trust holds the conservation easement to Cady Hill Forest. Stowe Land Trust is dedicated to the preservation of scenic, recreational, and productive lands and landscapes for the benefit of the greater Stowe community. [stovelandtrust.org](#)

**Legend**

- Intersection Marker with Trail Map
- Easy
- Intermediate
- Difficult
- One Way Trail
- Parking
- Trail Access
- Viewpoint

**Getting For a Wash?**  
Borrow a Pair of Snowshoes!

This program is powered by **Vermont Housing & Conservation**



# Example 2: Hiker Infrastructure

# Hiker Cut-off

This is a set of stairs that allow hikers to skip switchbacks.

What do you notice here?



# Hiker Experience

- Awareness of our biases!!
- Providing infrastructure
- Enhancing safety
- Interpretive Signage



# Example 3: Inclusive Mountain Bike Features

# Adaptive Mountain Biking Perspective

- Lower POV
- Three wheels
- Larger turning radius
- Tip over risk!



# Rock and Bridge Feature on Bears

Is this trail feature  
inclusive or not?



# Rock and Bridge Feature

Go or no go?



# Observations

Improve messaging:

Signage and map updates

Interpretive signage

Land Acknowledgement

Multilingual options

Positioning of signage

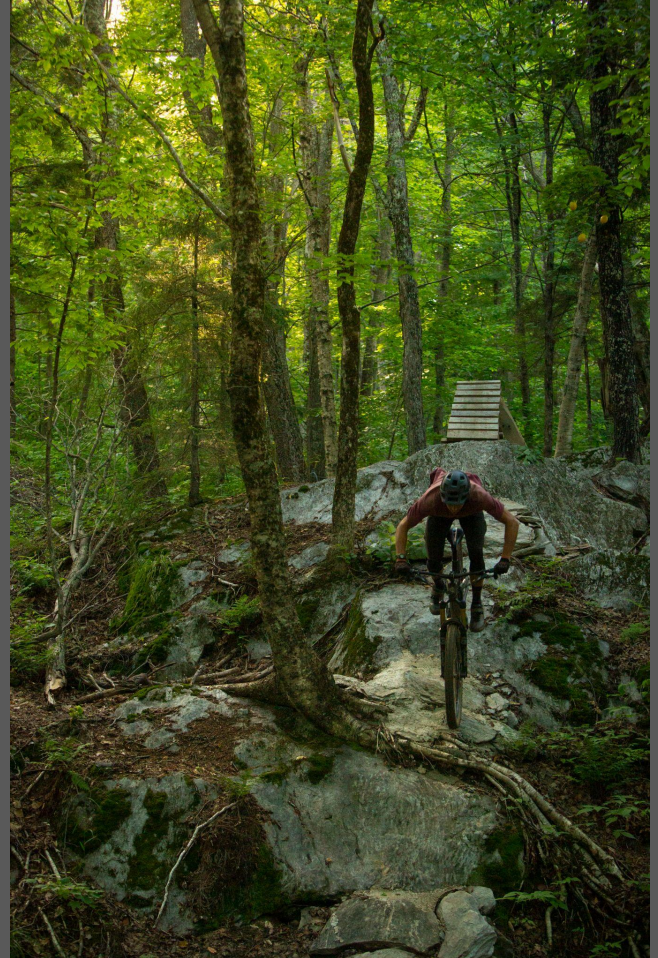


# Task Inventory Spreadsheet

Staff created an inventory.

- Used our trail maintenance App to collect data
- RASCI style sheet
- Color coded priorities
- Locations and Descriptions

Location	Description	Notes	Photos	Project Lead	Support from	Financial Lead
108 Parking Lot	Accessible Parking Spot	There is currently no accessible parking spot		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Sign for Accessible Prking	Currently no sign saying accessible entrance		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Placement of trash cans	Taking up a parking space. Can this be moved next to portapotty?		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Poop bag placement	Move to kiosk		ToS	STP	ToS
108 Parking Lot	expand kiosk placement	add additional kiosk to share more information.		STP	ToS/SLT	
108 Parking Lot	Add arch to entrance	Makes it an obvious entrance to Cady Hill		STP	ToS/SLT	STP



# Priority 1:

## Safety-related

- MTB feature warning signs
- Yield and BIKE DOWNHILL ONLY
- Install handicap accessible parking spaces with signs
- aMTB signage
- Evac points- SAR purpose



## Low-lift

- Clearing sightlines
- LNT principles
- Update maps
- Update QR codes
- Consolidate Signage



## Priority 2: High priority, but will take time

- Add interpretive signage along trail
- Add French language option
- Revamp hiker stairs
- More benches/ picnic tables
- Bike hangers at trail hub



# Priority 3: Going the extra mile

- Trash can at trail hub
- Fun archways at entrances and exits
- Land acknowledgment
- Fun decorations for kids trails



# Who is in charge of making this happen?

Back to the chart!

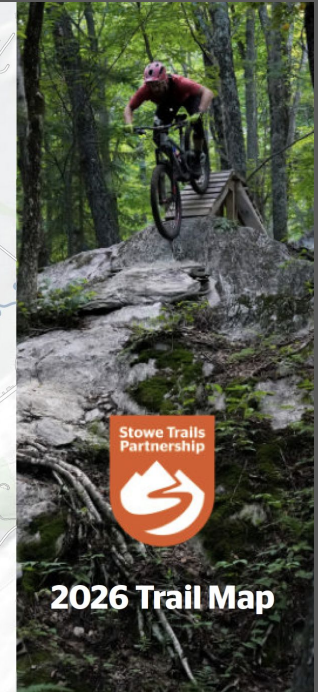
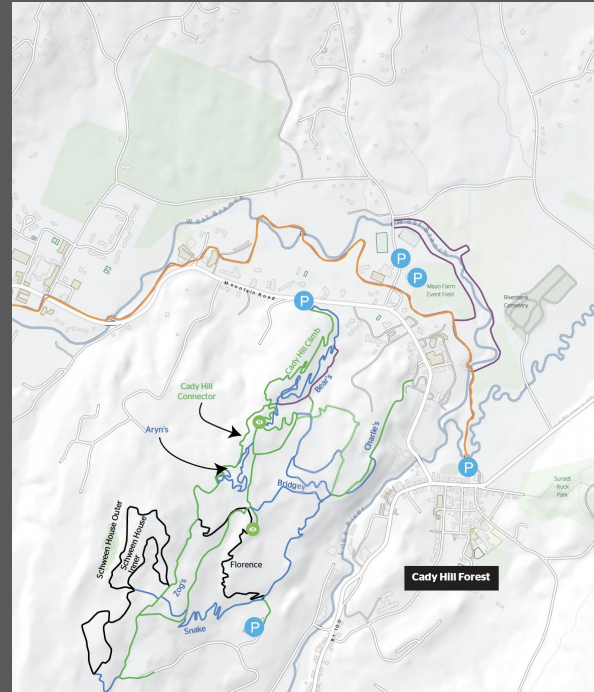
STP is the defacto trail manager

- Partners involved include:
  - Town of Stowe\*
  - Stowe Land Trust
  - Abutting businesses
  - Abutting landowners

Location	Description	Notes	Photos	Project Lead	Support from	Financial Lead
108 Parking Lot	Accessible Parking Spot	There is currently no accessible parking spot		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Sign for Accessible Prking	Currently no sign saying accessible entrance		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Placement of trash cans	Taking up a parking space. Can this be moved next to portapotty?		ToS	STP/SLT	ToS
108 Parking Lot	Poop bag placement	Move to kiosk		ToS	STP	ToS
108 Parking Lot	expand kiosk placement	add additional kiosk to share more information.		STP	ToS/SLT	
108 Parking Lot	Add arch to entrance	Makes it an obvious entrance to Cady Hill		STP	ToS/SLT	STP

# Setting up the projects for success

- Inclusion in decision making
- Come to the table with suggestions/offers to do the work
- The more simplified, the better!
- What about these additions make the trails BETTER



# Next Steps

- Working with partners to design and approve new signage/cost estimates
- Bringing budgetary items to board and town officials
- Use volunteers to assist with these changes!



# Conclusions

- Be aware of your own biases
  - ◆ Allow diverse user groups to provide feedback
- Think big and create a task inventory list
  - ◆ Catered to your goals!
- Speak to partner organizations with shared visions!



Thank you for joining!

Questions?

Contact Us:

[Kelsie@stowetrails.org](mailto:Kelsie@stowetrails.org)

[Kenzie@stowetrails.org](mailto:Kenzie@stowetrails.org)

