

Trail Terminology and Glossary

Alignment (or Tread Alignment): The exact route taken by a trail.

Armor: Stone, brick, block, or other tough materials used to reinforce a surface.

Bench cut tread: Shaped tread excavated out of slope. “Full Bench” contains no fill dirt on the tread, while “partial bench” may utilize compacted fill dirt on the outer (downhill) edge of the tread.

Berm: Mounded soil.

Boardwalk: A sophisticated structure elevating users above wet ground, water, or plant communities needing protection. See photos:



Causeway: An elevated tread utilizing mineral fill material confined by stable edge materials such as stone or timber. See also 'Turnpike'. See photos:



Choke Point: A narrow spot in the trail and corridor that tends to slow and calm users. See also 'Gateway'.

Contrast: A visual dissimilarity between adjacent surfaces. Contrast is important in

keeping users on-tread on at-grade trails.

Corridor: Full trail dimension, including overhead space and areas beside the tread, that must be free of brush and obstacles.

Crowning: A trail construction technique in which the center of the tread is raised slightly to promote drainage to each side of the tread.

Destination Motivation: A user's focus on reaching a specific destination.

Edge Definition: clear demarcation of tread surface from adjacent surfaces.

Edging: The use of plants, timbers, stones, or other items to mark the edge of a trail. See also 'Contrast' and 'Edge Definition'.

Exotic Plants: Plants introduced from outside their natural range.

Flow: The rhythm or character of a trail.

Gateway: A structure or trail-side feature that makes the corridor narrower, slowing and calming trail users. See also 'Choke Point'.

Hardened Tread: Tread whose surface is hardened through the use of pavers, compacted crushed stone, etc. See also 'Armor'.

Journey Motivation: A user's focus on enjoying the travel experience.

Kiosk: A sign or bulletin board that houses interpretive or informative displays.

Master Plan: A comprehensive and long-range plan guiding the overall development of a facility, community, or region. The plan should include assessment and recommendations.

Mineral Soil: Soil relatively free of organics; mineral soil should form the base of any tread.

Native Species: Flora or fauna indigenous to the region being considered.

Natural Surface Trail: A trail whose tread is the product of clearing and shaping the native mineral soils. No surfacing materials are added.

Organic Soil: Soil composed primarily of plant material in varying degrees of decay. Because organic soils tend to hold moisture, they should not be used as tread material or under tread material.

Puncheon: Simple raised timber treads on sleeper sills. See photo:



Signage: Boards or posts with words or symbols relaying information about the trail or the area around the trail. Clear and frequent signs, especially on extended trails, increase user comfort and safety.

Sill (or Sleeper Sill): The timber or stone supporting an end of a bridge or puncheon.

Stewardship: Acting in the interest of land and water resources.

Structures: Man-made facilities.

Trail: A defined route.

Trail Sensory Stimulus: Any feature, object, or characteristic of a trail that captures a user's attention and enhances the user experience.

Trail structures: Man-made trail elements or trail-side elements

Tread: The portion of the corridor upon which the users travel; tread is designed to accommodate the focused impact of its users.

Turnpike: A trail building technique that uses mineral soil or other fill material to elevate the tread above adjacent wet (or seasonally wet) areas. See also 'Causeway'.

Wetlands: Swampy or marshy areas usually saturated with water and offering unique habitat for flora and fauna.