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**Idaho Trails Association**

**Strategic Plan**

**2022 – 2024**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The objective of this Strategic Plan is to increase the ability of the Idaho Trails Association (ITA) to meet the growing demand for ITA’s maintenance, construction, and stewardship services for Idaho’s hiking trails. ITA has the distinction of being the only non-governmental organization in Idaho that maintains and constructs trails throughout the entire state.

Between 2016 and 2019, ITA doubled the numbers of hours ITA volunteers and staff worked on Idaho’s non-motorized hiking trails. In 2021, ITA had its biggest year yet in terms of hours worked, number of volunteers, and other performance metrics. ITA achieved this dramatic growth through the expertise of our staff, board members and volunteer crew leaders, the emphasis on the quality and safety of the work we have done since inception in 2010, and the geographic distribution of our projects.

The lessons learned during our growth have shown that we now need to enhance our policies, procedures, and practices to ensure that we can continue to do our trail work safely, efficiently, and in compliance with our land manager partner requirements. New demands for ITA’s services are exceeding our capacity. This Strategic Plan outlines how we will meet those requests for services while continuing to do safe, high quality work.

These four pages contain a high-level strategic plan for the next three years. This plan will help ITA stay focused on doing more hours of work on Idaho’s hiking trails while maintaining excellent quality work. Annual Work Plans supplement this document and show the specific actions we will take each year to achieve ITA’s strategic goals.

Stewardship, fundraising, outreach, and community relations are all tied to ITA’s mission to facilitate the active enjoyment of Idaho’s hiking trails and public lands. This Strategic Plan is a living document. It will be updated as needed to further the mission.

Tom Dabrowski

Board President

**Idaho Trails Association: Strategic Plan**

**MISSION**

The Idaho Trails Association (ITA) helps keep Idaho’s hiking trails open for all.

**VISION**

A vast system of quality hiking trails that reaches the wild wonders of Idaho.

**PURPOSE**

To facilitate the active enjoyment of Idaho’s hiking trails; the Idaho Trails Association brings together citizens and develops partnerships to foster:

* Care taking of Idaho’s hiking trails through maintenance, construction, and stewardship projects with a focus on non-motorized trails.
* Development of traditional trails maintenance skills to land manager standards.
* Preservation, protection and access to Idaho’s hiking trails through outreach, education, and advocacy.

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

The intent of this Strategic Plan is to facilitate an increase, over the next three years, in the capacity of ITA to do more projects in more areas of Idaho, while maintaining the reputation for excellence and engaging a broader, more diverse cadre of volunteers.

**Goal 1: Improve ITA procedures, processes, and practices to facilitate continued safe, high quality and efficient work.**

*Strategies:*

a) Determine which written policies, procedures, and practices are critical to the success of how we plan, conduct, manage, and provide oversight of our work. b) Assess the effectiveness of critical policies, procedures, and practices and identify those that need improvement. c) Develop, revise, or replace all policies, practices, and procedures that must be improved.

**Goal 2: Increase the hours of time spent by ITA staff and volunteers on the maintenance and construction of hiking trails in Idaho.**

*Strategies:*

1. Annually issue a Trail Project Work Plan that identifies where and when ITA will be doing trail maintenance or construction work during the coming fieldwork season.
2. Increase the geographic diversity of our project work throughout the state.
3. Increase the pool of trained crew leaders.
4. Increase the pool of field work volunteers.
5. Increase the hours of work done by ITA to 10,000 by the end of 2022.

**Goal 3: Increase the annual income, allowing ITA to continue to expand the amount of work done each year on Idaho’s hiking trails and to fund the Executive Director, Trails Program Director, and Communications Director positions as full-time.**

*Strategies:*

1. Issue an annual operating budget to project, monitor, and manage expenditures and income.
2. Implement an annual fundraising plan to identify, prioritize, and track grants and other income opportunities at the national, state, and local levels.
3. Assess the need for additional staff to help develop and implement the fund raising plan.
4. Build and expand relationships with businesses, foundations, and other sources of funding across the state, region, and nation.
5. Expand ITA’s capabilities in identifying and pursuing fundraising opportunities.
6. Achieve an annual income of $260,000 from all sources by fiscal year 2023.

**Goal 4: Increase the number of ITA members and volunteers to expand trail work and stewardship activities and to improve financial sustainability.**

*Strategies*:

1. Implement an Outreach and Communications Program that will seek and recruit new ITA volunteers while retaining existing volunteers for trail work.
2. Continue to implement the new ITA Youth Program that will provide opportunities for youth to participate in trail projects.
3. Clearly and consistently communicate with members, volunteers, subscribers, and other trail users to increase participation in trail projects and deepen their relationship to and passion for our mission.
4. Maintain and improve the quality of our work through volunteer leader training at Crew Leader Colleges every year.
5. Identify and pursue opportunities to increase the number of volunteers for trail projects. Such opportunities may include partnerships with corporations, other non-profit organizations, women’s organizations, or other outdoor recreation groups.
6. Actively seek feedback from all trail project volunteers and use this feedback to correct problems and enhance success.
7. Establish and nurture relationships with supporters in every region of Idaho.
8. Conduct periodic membership drives to increase membership numbers.

**Goal 5: Raise public awareness of ITA’s work and establish ITA as a leader in stewardship of non-motorized trails.**

*Strategies*:

1. Develop and implement an Outreach and Communications Plan, updated annually, that includes our diverse audiences of members, volunteers, land managers, and potential funders.
2. Attend meetings, symposia, fairs, and other events throughout the state and outside Idaho, as appropriate, to solicit new members, volunteers, and funding.
3. Continue to build relationships with land managers and partner stewardship nonprofits such as Friends of Scotchman Peaks, Selway-Bitterroot Frank Church Foundation, etc.
4. Cultivate and expand relationships with media contacts and hiking guide or other outdoor recreation authors.
5. Maintain an energetic, informative, and interesting online presence through our website and appropriate social media platforms.
6. Publish an Annual Report each year highlighting ITA’s accomplishments and modeling transparency.
7. Support National Trails Day and National Public Lands Day projects in cooperation with land managers and stewardship organizations.

**Goal 6: Be a recognized advocate for hiking trails, particularly non-motorized trails, in Idaho, to the extent it furthers our mission and organizational purpose.**

*Strategies:*

1. Use the volunteer project work to facilitate community building for hikers and backpackers.
2. Collaborate and partner with non-motorized advocates and land managers in keeping trails accessible, finding funding sources, and support local efforts for open space and non-motorized trail systems to the extent that effort is compatible with and does not compromise our mission and purpose.
3. With Board and American Hiking Society’s, ITA will mirror American Hiking Society’s [stewardship advocacy position statements](http://www.americanhiking.org/advocacy/?gclid=Cj0KEQjw7LS6BRDo2Iz23au25OQBEiQAQa6hwGCUzyLSENt9YDGvaVOR1RBm3jI_vcbaDOJyGXZUNHcaAqn98P8HAQ).

**SUPPLEMENTAL DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE:**

Board of Directors Roster