

Trail Terminology

Backslope - The excavated bank on the uphill side of a trail tread.

Berm - The raised outside edge of a trail.

Blowdown - A fallen tree across the trail.

Borrow - Fill material taken from a site other than the trail excavation. Good **borrow pits** can be found beneath root balls from fallen trees.

Bucking - Sawing a fallen or horizontal log.

Clearing Limits - The distance to the either side of and above a trail from which brush and limbs must be cleared.

Climbing Turn- A turn that sweeps widely as opposed to the more abrupt directional turn of the switchback. Should be used on 15% grade or less.

Cross Slope – The percent of slope along the width of the trail.

Crowned – The tread is highest along the centerline of the trail, promoting drainage to either side. Best used on flatland trails.

Culvert - A drainage structure that passes beneath a trail to allow the flow of water from the inside to the outside edge. Culverts may be metal, plastic or even concrete. Culverts can also be fashioned from wood or rock.

DG – Disintegrated Granite used for pathways and some trails.

Drain Dip - A depression built into the trail to guide water off the tread.

Duff - Ground cover consisting of organic matter such as needles, leaves, twigs, etc.

Grade - Percent slope of trail measured as feet rise/100 feet run.

Inside Edge - On a hillside trail this is the up-hill side of the trail.

In-Slope - The inside edge of the trail is lower than the outside edge. Rarely recommended.

Mineral Soil - Soil that has little or no organic matter.

Outside Edge - On a hillside trail this is the down-hill side of the trail.

Out-Slope - The outside edge of a trail being lower than the inside edge to promote drainage.

Pathway – A multi-use trail within a parkway or public road right-of-way that serves as local circulation, recreation, and connection to other trail systems.

Puncheon – a deck or flooring of sawn treated lumber or native logs placed on stringers to elevate the trail across wet areas.

Settling Basin - A deep rock lined pit placed in front of a culvert to allow silt to settle out before entering the culvert.

Slough - Silt and organic debris that have slid down onto the trail.

Switchback - A sharp reversal in the direction of the trail, allowing the tread to maintain a reasonable grade as it climbs a steep hillside.

Tread - The travel surface of the trail.

Trail Corridor - The full area of the trail including the tread and the zone on either side of the tread from which brush and limbs must be removed.

Turnpike - A structure used to carry a trail across ground that is usually saturated with water. Logs or rocks embedded along the sides of the tread hold fill material in place to form an elevated travel surface.

Water Bar - A drainage structure composed of an out-sloped segment of tread leading to a rock or log barrier embedded at an angle across the trail. Water across the slope will be diverted by the out-slope or by the barrier.

