

Creating and Managing a Volunteer Trail Patrol



ASSIST EDUCATE INFORM

Your Presenter:

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 - Trail Ambassador, Tahoe Rim Trail Assoc.
 - IMBA National Mountain Bike Patrol Instructor
 - AHA CPR/First Aid Instructor
 - Professional Firefighter/EMT
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- Also President of the Tahoe Area Mountain Biking Association (TAMBA) and event promoter for several Tahoe area trail events.

About the Tahoe Mountain Bike Patrol

- ▶ Formed in 2002 by Nevada State Parks
- ▶ Expanded in 2011 to cover the TRT
- ▶ Part of IMBA's National Mountain Bike Patrol
- ▶ Currently about 30 active patrollers
- ▶ Average 2000 contacts per year



Types of Trail Patrols

- ▶ Dependant on user types
 - Horses would be best for wilderness areas
 - Hikers may be best for urban trails
- ▶ Although any type of trail user can be part of a trail patrol, we will be focusing on utilizing a bike patrol for their efficiency in covering more ground and the peer value in educating cyclists.

Benefits of a Volunteer Trail Patrol

- ▶ Eyes and Ears in the Backcountry
- ▶ Force Multiplier for Land Manager staff
- ▶ Foster Stewardship
- ▶ Improve the User Experience

Services

▶ Assist

- Medical, Mechanical, Food and Water

▶ Educate

- Etiquette
- Environmental

▶ Inform

- Directions
- Recommendations



Services

- ▶ Trail Maintenance
 - Simple water runoff issues and corridor pruning are acceptable.
 - Report larger maintenance issues



- ▶ Event Support

How to start a patrol

- ▶ Talk to your local trail group
 - Easier to utilize an existing organization rather than start a new one.
- ▶ Determine the level of service to be provided
- ▶ Determine the area to be covered

Create an Organizational Structure

- ▶ Put it on paper
- ▶ Transparency
- ▶ Establish minimum basic roles
 - Director
 - Assistant Director
- ▶ Scale as necessary

Recruiting Volunteers

- ▶ Start with your local trail group
- ▶ Advertise in local media
- ▶ Trailhead bulletins
- ▶ Bike shops/sporting goods/feed stores

What makes a good patroller?

- ▶ Knowledgeable of the area
- ▶ Good people skills
- ▶ Approachable and friendly

- ▶ Things like prior medical training, or bike mechanic skills are a bonus.

Organizing Volunteers

- ▶ Land manager expectations
 - Scheduling
 - Minimum commitment
- ▶ Balance flexibility with commitment

Patroller Duties

► Responsibilities

- Present yourself in a professional manner
- Maintain patrol equipment
- Wear clean patrol uniform
- Assist injured, ill or lost trail users
- Complete incident reports and/or log sheets
- Interact with trail users, emergency staff and land management agencies
- Educate trail users

Patroller Duties

▶ Qualifications

- ▶ First Aid/CPR certification
 - ▶ Good Interpersonal skills
 - ▶ Interagency relations
 - ▶ Knowledgeable of Trail/ environmental issues
 - ▶ Map skills
 - ▶ Riding skills
 - ▶ Trailside bike repair
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- Know and follow local policies and rules
 - Know personal limitations

Patroller Duties

► Personal Risk Management

- Stay within your limits
- Operate within your scope
- Dress for weather conditions — be prepared for the unexpected
- Keep your bike and/or gear in good working condition
- Carry extra water and food

Level of Training

- ▶ Cost and Availability
- ▶ More training = more effective patrol
- ▶ Medical level of care



Patrol Training Topics

- ▶ Medical Scenarios
- ▶ Law Enforcement Situations
- ▶ Bike Repair
- ▶ Educating Trail Users
- ▶ Dealing with difficult people
- ▶ Communications

Medical Scenarios

- ▶ Field Assessment
- ▶ Reporting Emergencies
- ▶ Stabilizing the patient
- ▶ Interfacing with Emergency Responders



Law Enforcement Situations

- ▶ Patrols normally do not perform law enforcement
- ▶ Do not engage
- ▶ Back away from the situation
- ▶ Contact appropriate agency when clear
- ▶ Stay a safe distance away or leave the area until Law Enforcement Officer arrives.

Trailside Bike Repair

- ▶ Avoid performing mechanical aid when possible
 - Instead, supply the rider with tools and advice
- ▶ Use common sense, help if necessary
 - Point out safety issues to the rider



Educating Trail Users

- ▶ Ensure Patrollers are familiar with the local rules and regulations
- ▶ IMBA's "Rules of the Trail"
- ▶ Practice conveying these messages in a way that is effective



Dealing with difficult people

- ▶ Verbal Judo
 - The Gentle Art of Persuasion
- ▶ Act out scenarios in the classroom environment

Communications

- ▶ Local radio procedures
 - ▶ How to operate the radios
 - ▶ Who to call and what to say
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- ▶ Cell phones
 - Coverage
 - Local dispatch numbers



Patrol Equipment

- ▶ Communication device
- ▶ First Aid Kit
- ▶ Other supplies
 - Food
 - Water
 - Tubes
 - Sunscreen
 - Moleskin



Patrol Identification

- ▶ Identifiable uniform
- ▶ Bike placard



Documentation

- ▶ Create an easy way to log patrols
- ▶ Capture at a minimum:
 - Patroller
 - Date and Time
 - Location Patrolled
 - Number of contacts
 - Any assists or incidents
- ▶ Use existing land manager incident form for any major events



Community Outreach

- ▶ Partnership opportunities
 - Event donations
 - Equipment manufacturers
 - Bike shop participation



Maintaining Volunteers

- ▶ Make them feel like their time was valued
- ▶ Provide worthwhile training
- ▶ Acknowledge accomplishments
- ▶ Share thank you letters
- ▶ Create incentives or rewards

More Information

▶ www.tahoebikepatrol.org

▶ www.tahoerimtrail.org

▶ www.imba.com



Questions?

