

Special Issue - Prescott Circle Trail Prescott Circle Trail Completion Celebration



(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)

Cutting the cake was Jan Alfano (left) with Eric Smith, Recreation Services Dept.

On the evening of May 29, 2015, a celebration of the completion of the Prescott Circle Trail (PCT) sponsored by Yavapai Trails Association (YTA), in cooperation with the City of Prescott, was held at Watson Lake ramada. The date and time were selected to coincide with the PCT Commemorative Hike sponsored by the City of Prescott's Recreation Services Department and hosted by Director Joe Baynes. The hikers camped on day three at Watson Lake campground and attended the celebration that evening.

Attended by 150 enthusiastic guests, attendees included representatives from all entities, past and present, who were deeply involved in the trail from conception to completion. A light, fun, and informal function, the event was designed to keep speeches to a minimum.

Emceed by YTA President George Sheats, among those who were acknowledged were Jan Alfano (early PCT visionary). Although not in attendance, Rob Hehlen and Wade Collison, M.D. were mentioned for their work on both city and forest jurisdiction sites (each one a project in itself). Early Over the Hill Gang members included Bob Sutton, Tony Beere, Bill Brown, and Doug Buck. Also in attendance was Elizabeth Ruffner, well known Prescott historian, preservation specialist, and long time open space advocate. The Prescott National Forest was well represented with the presence of Jason Williams, Dorothy Baxter, Sarah Tomsy, and Mike King (retired, and Prescott Recreation Services Advisory Board member). Prescott Recreation Services Department was represented by Joe Baynes, as well as Chris Hosking, Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator, and Eric Smith, Special Projects Administrator.

After indulging in 25 pizzas, beverages, and cake, attendees were invited to say a few words. With humor and an abundance of stories, many relayed their experiences with the trail. As George Sheats put it, "It was a perfect night,

location, and weather, with PCT passing just behind the celebration."

This special issue not only celebrates PCT, it documents the trail's completion and opening hike. More importantly, it recognizes the people, groups, and entities that made it possible. Like so many accomplishments in Prescott, a group of citizens came together and worked hard to make a dream come true. Not just for themselves, but for the entire community.

(Contributors: Nancy Nesbit with George Sheats)

Recreation Services Advisory Board

Janelle Riedl

Mike King

Ted Blake

Wayne Howell

Thomas Dwyer

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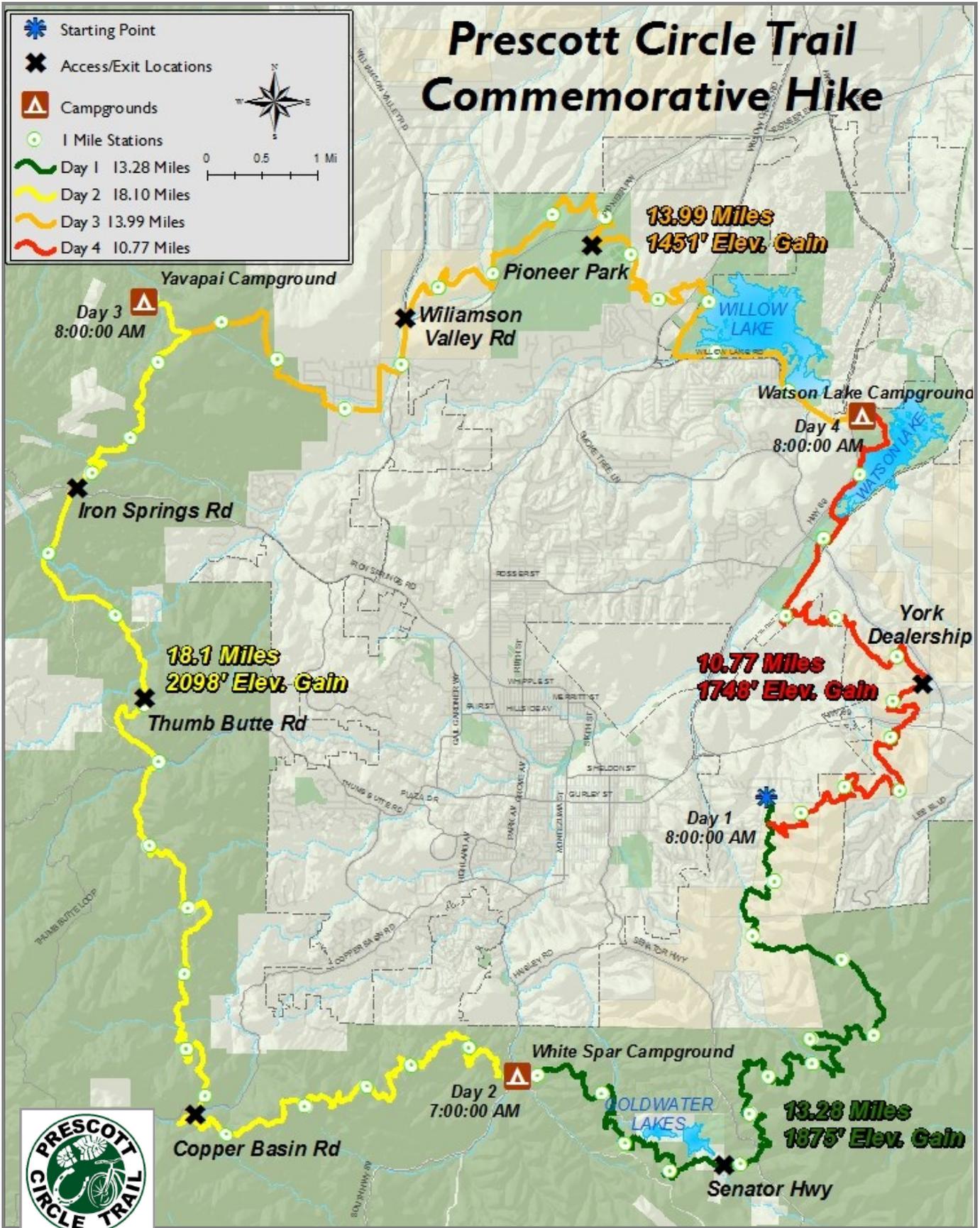
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(Courtesy Photo)

George Sheats (above), current President of Yavapai Trails Association (YTA) and Coordinator for Over the Hill Gang, not only emceed the celebration but was also involved in hosting and organizing it.

Joe Baynes
City of Prescott
Recreation Services Director



History of the Prescott Circle Trail



(Photo courtesy of Charlene Craig)

(Left to right) Jan Alfano, early visionary of PCT, Elizabeth Ruffner, Prescott historian, and Dorothy Baxter from the Prescott National Forest, celebrated the completion of the Prescott Circle Trail.

Imagine the idea of a recreation trail encircling Prescott and capturing all the ecological and geological diversity of this area. The Prescott Circle Trail (PCT) is designated as *non-motorized* for hikers, equestrians, runners, and mountain bicyclists, or muscle-powered recreation only. It is a beautiful trail that meanders through forest, chaparral, grasslands, rock formations, and along the shorelines of Watson, Willow, and Goldwater Lakes. The topography along the route ranges in elevation from approximately 5,200 feet to over 6,000 feet, and many sections feature panoramic views.

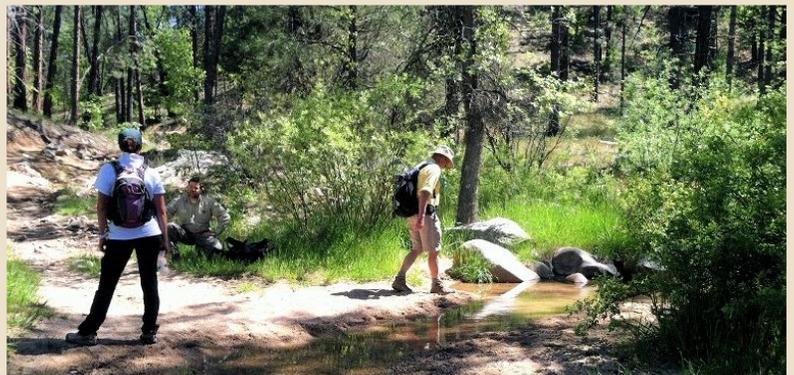
The concept of the PCT began with the Yavapai Trails Association (YTA) under the long-time presidency of Jan Alfano dating back to about 1990, and the collective vision of many others seeking a long-distance trail. Many dedicated trail users and volunteers, YTA Board members, and local government employees and elected officials, have helped bring the PCT to fruition. (See page 8 for more information on YTA.)

As YTA's vision and perseverance gained momentum, the Prescott National Forest undertook a major planning process for the PCT that paved the way for that 50% of the trail. Soon thereafter, City planning efforts paved the way for many City-managed portions in Pioneer Park, along Watson and Willow Lakes, and through Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. The above two efforts also resulted in immediate progress on-the-ground.

The PCT today is a composite of individual non-motorized routes that lie on lands owned and managed by the City of Prescott, Prescott National Forest, Arizona State Land Department, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, and Yavapai County. The PCT was officially accepted in 2007 into the Arizona State Trails System, and this made the project eligible for State and Federal grant funds. Combined with the City's former 1% sales tax for Streets and Open Space, this also made possible the extensive lease of rights-of-way from the Arizona State Land Department.

Construction and maintenance of the trail was facilitated through grant applications and funding, but primarily with the physical work of many trail workers too numerous to mention. These trail workers came from City of Prescott and Prescott National Forest personnel, Vista volunteers, individual citizens, the "Over the Hill Gang" trail volunteers, Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance, and City and County restitution crews. Other creative measures were also undertaken, to include the International Mountain Bike Association securing \$99,000 in Federal trails monies through Arizona State Parks, and using a (paid) American Conservation Experience trail crew for major trail construction on Badger Mountain. As a result of all above efforts, the PCT was completed in May 2015 (i.e., with the exception of a two-mile gap on private property). (See page 9 for more information on the trail's construction.)

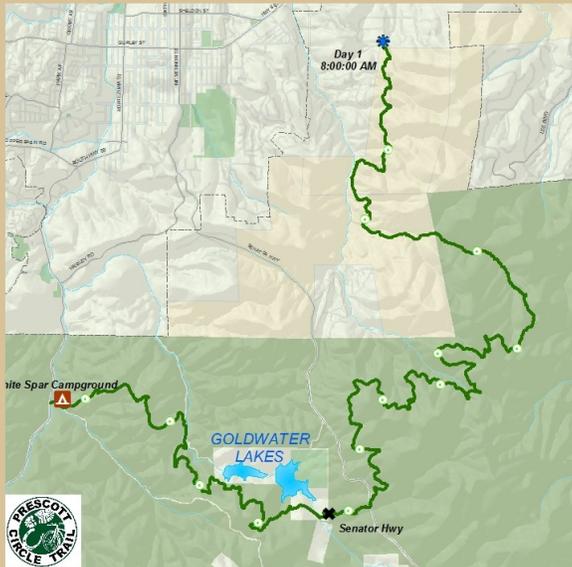
As with any long-distance trails nationwide, refinements are completed, and amenities and trailheads are added, to ensure a high quality trail now, and for future generations to come. (Contributors: Yavapai Trails Association and Eric Smith)



Located in Arizona's central highlands' transitional zone, PCT's trails travel through one of the most diverse ecosystems in Arizona.

A small portion of PCT is located in Watson Woods Riparian Preserve (above left, the City's Trek-About Hiking Club in the woods). The "City portion" comprises 25 miles of the 54 mile PCT. It includes trails within the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, Bureau of Land Management land, Arizona State Trust Lands and through Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University.

The remaining 29 miles of PCT are located in the Prescott National Forest. (Above right) Although day two was the longest leg of the PCT Commemorative Hike, hikers spent their day in the shade of the forest. (Photos courtesy of Chris Hosking)



Trails:

- Turley Trail
- Forest Trail #126 (Boy Scout)
- Forest Trail #62 (Ranch)
- Forest Trail #396

Terrain:

Mountainous and forested, some creeks, many views.

Hikers:

- Joe Baynes (Director, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Chris Hosking (Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Eric Smith (Special Projects Administrator, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Mike King (Retired, Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest)
- Larry Stephan (Dean of Students, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, afternoon & camping)

Day One Hike Photos

(Below left) Day one began promptly at 8:00 a.m. with (left to right) Mike King, Joe Baynes, Chris Hosking, and Eric Smith at Turley Trail.

(Right) The hikers return from the first leg via National Forest Trail 62 at Senator Highway for lunch.

(Photos courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



PCT Commemorative Hike

Day One, May 27, 2015; 13.28 Miles Elevation Gain; 1875'

Under the leadership and planning of Joe Baynes, the hike began at 8:00 a.m. along the Turley Trail in the Government Canyon Area on a cool and overcast morning. Chris Hosking set a gasping pace in the initial uphill grinds, yet conversation was still attempted. Mike King shared his wealth of knowledge about the area. Very primitive trail conditions were found along the Turley and Boy Scout Trails, with continuous elevation gain, and much vegetation to push through. Some water was flowing through the creek along the Boy Scout Trail, with some original spring boxes. NOTE: Future planning will provide a new bypass to the east of this route, following contours at a higher elevation. Once on the Ranch Trail #62, we were treated to outstanding trail conditions with fairly new tread (i.e., constructed around 2013 by American Conservation Experience, and the Over-the-Hill-Gang trail volunteers). This new trail was well designed and constructed, and follows contours while affording great views in multiple directions. At one point on a north facing slope, we encountered some Douglas Firs, a tree more typically found at higher elevations, and saw what appeared to be a Cooper's hawk in the same area.

Around noon, we were treated to a great lunch at Senator Highway by Kelly Tolbert and Tim Legler, and then joined by Larry Stephan for the afternoon leg. As we traversed around the southwest portion of the upper Goldwater Lake, and passed the Pinehurst subdivision, we were met by a solo mountain biker as she travelled in the opposite direction. A large group of hikers was met closer to the end of the day's hike. Now with the group at five hikers, we made great progress as we passed both Goldwater Lakes. The conversation also became more interesting with the humor element added. At approximately the 11-mile point, we encountered a creek coming in from the east, with some large pools and much riparian vegetation. At approximately the 12.5-mile point, the volume of large quartz along the trail was a great surprise as well. By this point, conversation was becoming limited as we were focused on completing the day's hike. That evening, the group was treated to an



excellent camping experience and meal at Prescott National Forest's White Spar Campground along Granite Creek and SR89, with other guests in attendance. Day one of this commemorative hike was a hike to remember.

(Contributor: Hiker Eric Smith)

PCT Commemorative Hike Day Two, May 28, 2015; 18.10 Miles Elevation Gain; 2098'

With their feet suffering from the previous day's hike, we joined the PCT hike led by our hosts Joe Baynes and Chris Hosking. I really admired their stamina on this hike. With 18 miles of trail before us, Joe led with a fast pace. Joe and Chris were the consummate hosts. They knew exactly the pace we needed to keep, how far we had gone, and how far we needed to go. Of course they also made sure we had plenty of fluids available. As if 18 miles wasn't enough, we had a lot of "fun" walking back and forth for the videographer who was accompanying us.

The trail conditions were excellent and the views beautiful. We were in the pines for the majority of the day which made for a nice, shady hike. We crossed several areas with water and lush riparian vegetation. The views from Wolverton were impressive and expansive. That trail seemed to give views in all directions, depending on which segment we were on.

The Thumb Butte section was interesting to us, since we usually approach it from the road. Coming out to see it from the woods somehow seemed more spectacular and special. We also came across an injured biker walking his bike down the trail to Thumb Butte Road. Although he was still in good spirits, it reminded us of the importance of safety while on the trails.

Along the hike we found a couple of places that could use some signage. We immediately sent GPS coordinates with text to Jason Williams (who joined the hike in the afternoon) for future signage. Larry Stephan kept us entertained all morning with his jokes, as did Mike King with his witty banter.

Towards the end of the hike along the old roadbed toward Iron Springs, we noticed a lot of trail usage by locals, clearly a favorite place to take a walk. Just before we hit Iron Springs, we looked back and saw the "P" on Badger Mountain. Wow, it really gave us a sense of just how much ground you can cover on PCT.

The hike gave us all a real sense of and appreciation for the amount of time, dedication, and effort that went into the new trail connections. Overall, it was great to spend the whole day with our partners.

(Contributors: Hikers Teresa Chase and Sarah Tomsky)

SAFETY

Keep safety a priority. Know your limits. Let someone know where you are going and when you expect to return. Wear proper clothing. Bring sufficient water, gear, and a communication's device (e.g. cell phone.)

Day Two Hike Photos

(Far right) Hikers enjoy the view of distant Thumb Butte and Granite Mountain from Wolverton Mountain.

(Photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

(Right) A well known, old dead, juniper tree along Trail 393. Trails are designed to retain as many interesting features, such as trees, boulders, and outcroppings, as possible.

(Photo courtesy of Sarah Tomsky)



Trail:

- Forest Trail #9415 (Wolverton Mountain)
- Forest Trail #48 (Aspen Creek)
- Forest Trail #393 (Cold Spring)
- Forest Trail #327 (Potts Creek)
- Forest Trail #322 (Circle Connector)
- Forest Trail #392 (Garden Grove)
- Forest Trail #332 (Javelina)

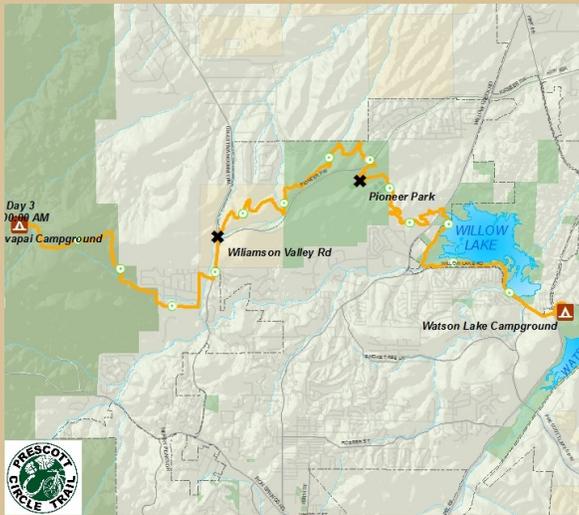
Terrain:

Mountainous and forested, some creeks, many views.

Hikers:

- Joe Baynes (Director, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Chris Hosking (Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Mike King (Retired, Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest)
- Teresa Chase (Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest)
- Sarah Tomsky (Bradshaw District Ranger, Prescott National Forest)
- Larry Stephan (Dean of Students, Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University, afternoon & camping)
- Jason Williams (Wilderness and Trails Specialist, Prescott National Forest)





Trails:

- Forest Trail #341 (Hokaygon)
- Forest Trail #347 (Willow)
- Williamson Valley Road
- Longview Trail
- Circle Trail
- Legacy Trail
- Jan Alfano Trail
- Embry-Riddle Trail
- Willow Lake Trail
- Willow Lake Rd. and Roundabout to Watson Lake

Terrain:

Most of Arizona's transitional zone ecosystems.

Hikers:

- Joe Baynes (Director, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Chris Hosking (Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
- Teresa Chase (Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest)
- Kenny VanKuren (Facilities Director, Yavapai County)
- Tom Thurman (Supervisor, Yavapai County)
- Chris Kuknyo (Councilman, City of Prescott)
- May Kuknyo
- Sue Black (Arizona State Parks)
- Emily Jurmu (Partnering Manager, Arizona State Parks)
- Cindy Barks (Reporter, The Daily Courier)
- Margo Christianson (Prescott Tourism Board, Businesswoman)
- Catherine Sebold (Communications, City of Prescott)

PCT Commemorative Hike Day Three, May 29, 2015; 13.99 Miles Elevation Gain; 1451'

We started day three from our campsite at Yavapai Campground. I started it off with blisters I'd gotten on day one, which were mysteriously located on the middle toe of both feet. They plagued me until the end of the hike.

We hiked down from Granite Basin on Trail 341 and Trail 347 in the pines and chaparral, to Williamson Valley Road. Walking up the road we connected to the Longview Trail. Once on Longview Trail we were amidst the grasslands which afforded a great view of the San Francisco Mountains to the northeast. I also experienced a different aspect of town.

From Longview Trail we entered the trails located in the City's Pioneer Park area. Jan Alfano Trail is located here and included in the Prescott Circle Trail. It was special realizing that I was on a trail whose name honored one of PCT's founders. At this stage we stopped for lunch at Prescott Recreation Services Department's maintenance yard.

After lunch we continued on from Pioneer Park to Willow Lake. This took us along the newly realigned Embry-Riddle Trail. Experiencing the newly completed Embry-Riddle and Longview Trails as a hiker was fun for me. Our day ended with steak for dinner at Watson Lake campground. My spirits were up knowing there was only one day to go. Also, it was time to celebrate. My family and friends joined me for the evening's festivities at the Watson Lake ramada celebrating the trail's completion (*see page one*). It wasn't lost on me that Jan Alfano, whose trail I'd just been on, attended the celebration and cut the cake.

Upon reflection it dawned on me that day three's hike was the most diverse. We experienced terrain that included pines, oaks, brush, scrub oaks, grasslands, riparian areas, and the dells. Everything Arizona's transitional zone has to offer. But it wasn't just the terrain that was diverse. So was our group representing people from the City, County, State, and Forest Service, and included workers, politicians, tourism, businesses, and media. For me the day was complete, fun, and satisfying.

(Contributor: Hiker Chris Hosking)



Day Three Hike Photo (Left)
Hikers trek through grasslands of Longview Trail. This trail offers expansive views, including the San Francisco Mountains.

(Right) Although not taken during the hike, this photo shows another portion of Longview trail, enjoyed by both mountain bikers and an equestrian. Hikers, mountain bikers, and equestrians are not the only trail users. With many access points, portions of PCT are also frequented by walkers, joggers, bicyclists, and others.

(Photos courtesy of Chris Hosking)



PCT Commemorative Hike Day Four, May 30, 2015; 10.77 Miles Elevation Gain 1748'

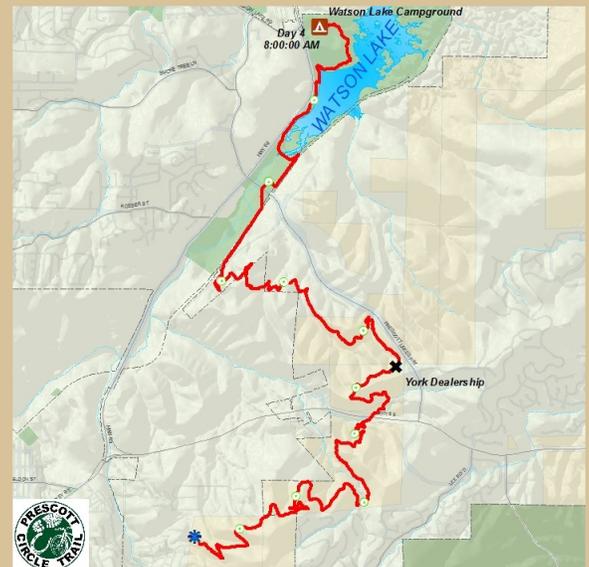
We awoke from a restful sleep with great anticipation for the final hike of our journey. After a quick breakfast and an introduction of new participants, we departed from our idyllic campsite at Watson Lake. We started on the final leg with fairly flat terrain and great views of the lake and Watson Woods Riparian Preserve. At mile two we crossed Granite Creek via the "Red Bridge" (an Eagle Scout project completed in the early 2000s). At about mile 2.5 we connected with the Prescott Peavine National Recreational Trail, an old historic railroad grade. After about half a mile we crossed a closed landfill, now capped and used to provide connectivity for the Circle Trail. As we walked my thoughts turned to the many people and land managers that worked together for over 25 years to make this signature trail available to the public, and how proud I was to be a small part of this project which will be enjoyed by people not yet born. I thought of the original visionaries' concept and it brought to mind one of my favorite sayings, "the world is a better place when old people plant trees they know they will never sit under the shade of".

After crossing the landfill we entered a newer part of the trail built in 2014, and made possible by a license agreement with Yavapai County. By this time I was becoming aware of how close we were to the finish line, 47 miles of trail behind and only seven to go. While this segment of the hike was the shortest, it has the most elevation gain per mile and I was feeling it as I started the climb to the top of "Bullwhacker Hill Road". Dating back to the mid 1860s, this road got its name from the oxen that were whacked while pulling freight wagons up the steep hill.

After a lunch break we were at the halfway mark and crossed under Highway 69 through a box culvert. The cool dark passageway was welcome and while the toll of the trip was speaking to me through my blistered feet, the sense of the accomplishment more than offset the pain. At this point I was on the portion of the trail that had been completed a couple of weeks prior and was excited to get on it to see how it flowed. With hikers now separated into groups of two or three the end was near, but was the biggest part of the climb with about 180' of vertical gain per mile. At mile eight I paused to look at a view I had never seen of Watson and Willow Lakes, appearing as one large lake. The views from this vantage point were some of the most spectacular on the trail, and allowed me to get a great look at the route we had traversed over this four day hike. Almost done, I now had a craving for a nice cold margarita! With only two miles to go I crossed under the "P" on Badger Mountain. The "P" was originally constructed in 1922 by the Prescott High School class of 1922.

As I approached the finish point of the commemorative hike I thought about how proud I am to live in this special place with all it has to offer, and now through the vision and hard work of many, how this trail shows off the best of all of it!!!

(Contributor: Hiker Joe Baynes)



Trails:

Watson Lake Trail
Discovery Trail
Peavine Trail
Sundog Trail
Badger - P Mountain Trail
Return to Turley Trailhead

Terrain:

Dells riparian, grasslands, and chaparral. Stunning views.

Hikers:

Joe Baynes (Director, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
Chris Hosking (Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator, City of Prescott-Recreation Services Department)
Mike King (Retired, Forest Supervisor, Prescott National Forest)
Sarah Tomsky (Bradshaw District Ranger Prescott National Forest)
Kenny VanKuren (Facilities Director, Yavapai County)
Mickey Rogers (Arizona State Parks)
Sue Rogers
Jane Rudder
Illtyd Jones
Derek Young

Day Four, End of Hike

(left to right) Mickey Rogers, Sue Rogers, Kenny VanKuren, Chris Hosking, Illtyd Jones (back), Joe Baynes, Mike King, Jane Rudder, Derek Young, Sarah Tomsky.

(Photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



Yavapai Trails Association

Early on, a group of citizens including equestrians, bicyclists, and hikers came together with an interest in providing non-motorized trails in the greater Prescott area. An unofficial advocacy group was formed, and in the 1990s became a non-profit known as Yavapai Trails Association (YTA). Their trail building sub-committee led to the formation of the Over the Hill Gang, which is now instrumental in trail building around Prescott and in the Prescott National Forest. This early advocacy group of citizens led the way in the creation of the Prescott Circle Trail (PCT). In the 1980s and '90s, jurisdictions were not well defined.

Advocacy groups led the way in building PCT by obtaining cooperation from the entities involved, including the City of Prescott, Yavapai County, the State of Arizona, and the Forest Service.

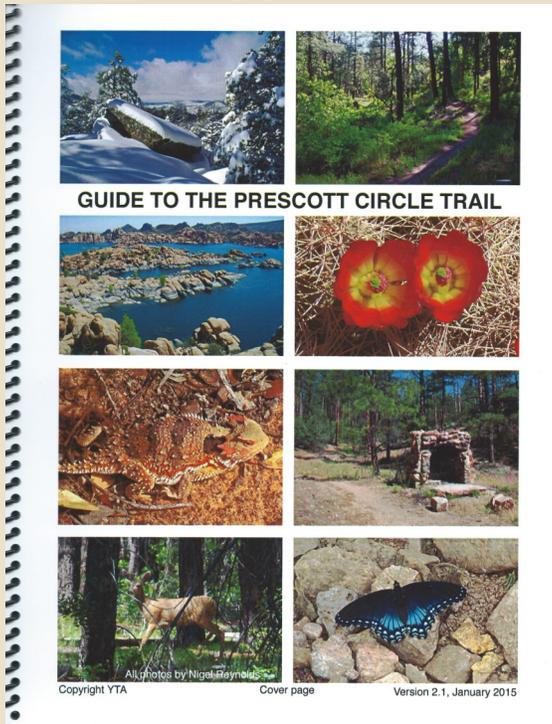
Today, YTA is also involved in obtaining grants for trails through private funds to supplement public money for continued trail building and maintenance. From 2012 to the present they have received grants for construction tools to complete the Watson and Willow Lake Loop Trails, signage along PCT and other forest trails, construction materials for Greenways' Miller Creek Trail, for retaining walls, the trail, and equipment rental, as well as materials for Butte Creek Trail at Prescott College along the Greenways Trail system.

YTA also produces a newsletter to inform the public of priorities, as well as details on trails and hikes.

(Contributor: George Sheats, President, Yavapai Trails Association)

PCT Memorabilia

YTA has received inquiries for souvenirs, as well as some kind of recognition for hikers completing the Prescott Circle Trail. To answer the call, they will be making available a 3" PCT patch, Certificate of Merit, and bolo tie. Currently in production, they will be available at the same outlets as the Guide to the Prescott Circle Trail.



Prescott Circle Trail Guide

A former long-time board member of YTA, Nigel Reynolds has independently written and published a complete "Guide To The Prescott Circle Trail." The Guide provides detailed descriptions and annotated maps of the various segments of the trail. It is available for sale at several locations in downtown Prescott, including *The Hike Shack*, *Manzanita Outfitters*, and *Prescott Chamber of Commerce*.

As hiker Joe Baynes (*see page 7*), Director for the City of Prescott's Recreation Services Department, observed, "There are many ways to complete the Prescott Circle Trail trip and this is a great guide for doing it. If you are interested in the camping component and doing it as one trip, you might consider doing it counter-clockwise, over 5 days and 4 nights. Whether you plan to complete the trail in one visit, or over time in segments, there are many ways to experience the Prescott Circle Trail. It can be customized to fit your level of fitness and interests."

A Coalition of Non-motorized Trail Users



Yavapai Trails Association

Yavapai Trails Association is dedicated to protecting, preserving, and developing recreational, non-motorized trails. We are an all-volunteer group that represents the interests of hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians.

We are a non-profit corporation with federal 501(c)3 designation, and our operating expenses are funded by dues and donations. We are supported by many other organizations and recognized by the City of Prescott, Prescott Valley, and Chino Valley, as well as Yavapai County, the Prescott National Forest, the Bureau of Land Management, and the State of Arizona.

Contact us:

Yavapai Trails Association
P.O. Box 403
Prescott, AZ 86302
yavapai.trails@gmail.com

Join us! We welcome your active participation. We have many different projects requiring a variety of skills.
www.yavapai-trails.org

Many Volunteers Built the Trail

Many existing trails, including National Forest and City trails, were used on the Prescott Circle Trail. To connect these existing trails new trails needed to be built. Volunteers and coordination between various entities and organizations was paramount in the trail's successful completion.

The Prescott National Forest portions of the trail were coordinated by Rob Hehlen, Trails Volunteer Coordinator at Prescott National Forest, utilizing the trail building skills of Over The Hill Gang. Chris Hosking, Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator for the City of Prescott's Recreation Services Department, coordinated the efforts on City trails and easements on various properties. Volunteers included Over the Hill Gang, the City of Prescott Restitution Program crews (brush removal), Yavapai County Juvenile Probation crews (brush removal), and Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance who helped with work days on the trail.

Approximately eight miles of trail were built on easements. Badger Mountain, Sundog, and Longview Trails easements were paid for out of Open Space monies. About half a mile of the Sundog Trail easement was donated by Yavapai County.

Although Prescott Circle Trail is officially complete, work continues. A new section of trail, west of town, from Trail 341 directly to Longview Trail is anticipated in the near future. This will eliminate the portion that goes through the Hokaygon neighborhood, and up Williamson Valley Road to the Longview Trail. Another planned improvement is connecting the portion between Willow and Watson Lakes which currently uses Willow Lake Road just southeast of Willow Lake and crosses Highway 89 at the roundabout into Watson Lake.

As time goes on it is anticipated that trail improvements and maintenance will continue by Prescott's many volunteers including Over the Hill Gang and other groups, providing area residents and visitors the best experience possible.

(Contributor: Nancy Nesbit with Chris Hosking)



(Photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

American Conservation Experience

Much of the dozer work and brush cutting was done by American Conservation Experience. Funding for their services was provided by a Recreation Trails Program grant, applied for and won by the International Mountain Bike Association (IMBA) with some matching funds from Yavapai Trails Association (YTA). IMBA initially funded the work and were reimbursed by the grant.



(Photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

Over the Hill Gang

Well known in the Prescott area, the infamous Over the Hill Gang, working with both the National Forest Service and the City of Prescott's Recreation Services Department, built the majority of new trails necessary to connect existing trails. Working two days a week, this all volunteer group donates their time and labor, building the majority of trails in the City, surrounding area, and the Prescott Circle Trail.



(Photo courtesy of Over the Hill Gang)

Dozing and Excavating

After American Conservation Experience dozed the trails (pictured above), Chris Hosking, Trails and Natural Parklands coordinator for Prescott's Recreation Services Department, contoured the trails in an excavator for drainage. Chris was also involved in trail alignment, design, and volunteer work coordination.

Campgrounds Along PCT

Several of the hikers on the four day, three night Prescott Circle Trail (PCT) Commemorative Hike camped at three of the improved campgrounds along PCT. With many access points to the trail, visitors to Prescott have many lodging options including campgrounds, RV parks, bed and breakfast inns, motels, and hotels.

PCT Commemorative Hike Campgrounds

Day 1

White Spar Campground

Prescott National Forest

Operator: USDA Forest Service

Season: Year-round

Website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/prescott/recreation/recarea/?recid=67165&actid=29>

Day 2

Yavapai Campground

Prescott National Forest

Granite Basin Recreation Area

Operator: USDA Forest Service

Season: Year-round

Website: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/prescott/recreation/recarea/?recid=67185&actid=29>

Day 3

Watson Lake Campground

City of Prescott

Operator: Prescott Recreation Services Department

Season: Mid-April to mid-October

Open Thursday through Monday nights only

Website: <http://www.cityofprescott.net/services/parks/parks/index.php?id=24>

After day one, hikers spent the night in the Prescott National Forest at White Spar Campground (*photos below*) south of Prescott on White Spar Road (SR 89).

Also located in the Prescott National Forest, Yavapai Campground in the Granite Basin Recreation Area was the camping site for day two. The longest day of the hike, the weary group was treated to a tasty rib dinner prepared by Kelly Tolbert from the Prescott Recreation Services Department.

On day three, a steak dinner was the menu enjoyed by the hikers at Watson Lake campground. After dinner, accompanied by family and friends, they joined the Prescott Circle Trail Completion Celebration held at the Watson Lake ramada that evening (*see page one*). (Contributor: Nancy Nesbit)

The End of Day One

(Bottom right) Hikers returned from their day one hike to White Spar campground, led by Chris Hosking, Prescott Recreation Services Department's Trails and Natural Parklands Coordinator.

(Bottom left) Hikers and guests discuss the day's events. Those dropping by to greet the hikers after the first leg of the hike included day three hiker Chris Kuknyo, Prescott City Councilman, Andrew Reinhardt, Prescott Deputy Chief of Police, and George Sheats, Yavapai Trails Association President and Over the Hill Gang Coordinator.

(left) The hikers and their guests were treated to a Dutch oven dinner of chicken enchiladas and peach cobbler prepared by Steve Sams (*shown*) and hiker Mike King. (Photos courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



PCT Lakes & Fishing

Of the seven Prescott area lakes, four can be found along or near the Prescott Circle Trail. All lakes support a variety of fish. The species stocked in each lake varies, depending on elevation, depth, and water attributes.

Operated by the Forest Service, **Granite Basin Lake** is located in the Prescott National Forest at an elevation of 5,600 feet. Information is available online at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/recarea/prescott/recreation/recarea/?recid=67261&actid=42>

The other three lakes are operated by the City of Prescott. Information on these lakes is available online at: www.prescott-az.gov/services/parks/parks/

The City lakes include **Goldwater Lake** at an elevation of 6,000 feet among the pines of the Bradshaw Mountains. Located north of Prescott, **Watson** and **Willow Lakes** are at an elevation of 5,000 feet among the majestic boulders of the Granite Dells, and are within an Arizona Audubon Society IBA (Important Bird Area.)

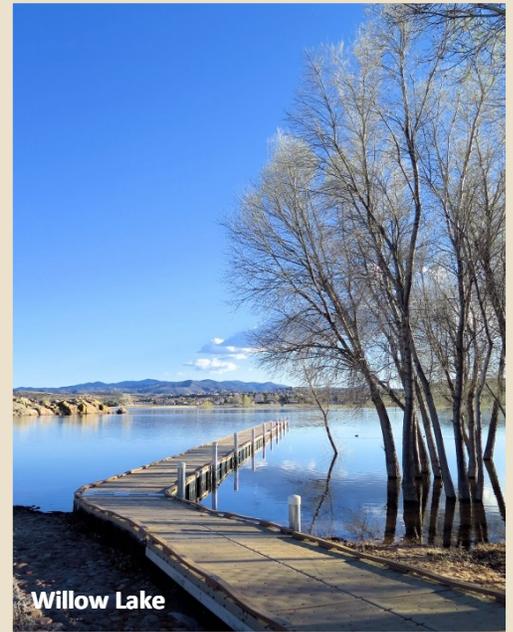
(Contributor: Nancy Nesbit)



For information on fishing Prescott area lakes, visit Arizona Game and Fish Department online at:

http://www.azgfd.gov/h_f/fishPrescott.shtml

Information on this page includes lake locations, amenities, species stocked, bag limits, fishing updates and tips, as well as fishing license links and locations.



Willow Lake



Goldwater Lake



Granite Basin Lake



Watson Lake

Mark Your Calendar

October 10-11, 2015 (Saturday & Sunday) Prescott's Great Outdoors-Outdoor Recreation Festival & Expo, Watson Lake, 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

October 10-11, 2015 (Saturday & Sunday) Fraternal Order of Eagles National Softball Tournament, Pioneer Park 4-Plex

October 17, 2015 (Saturday) Over The Line Tournament, Heritage Park

November 28-29, 2015 (Saturday & Sunday) NFL Flag Football Tournament, Pioneer Park 4-Plex



Prescott National Forest Trail 396

(Above photo courtesy of Nancy Nesbit)



Prescott Circle Trail A Community Makes a Dream Come True

The City of Prescott Recreation Services Department would like to thank the hundreds of people, too numerous to list, who have worked hard over the last 25 years to make the Prescott Circle Trail (PCT) a reality. With contributions big and small, a community came together and offered their time and talent to make a dream come true.

Both the trail and people who built it represent the diversity of the community and landscape. Whether it is hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, walking, jogging, bicycling, birding, or nature study, it offers visitors with diverse interests an exciting and unlimited way to explore. Within its 54 miles, this trail wanders through one of the most diverse ecosystems in Arizona bringing it to life and making it available for everyone to enjoy.

In many ways the trail is an example of the indomitable spirit, perseverance, and can do attitude of the greater Prescott community. They have given us all an outdoor recreation legacy that will be enjoyed for many generations to come.

Trail Maps

For each of the individual trails on the Prescott National Forest (PNF) that are part of the Prescott Circle Trail, PNF publishes excellent one-page information sheets on each trail. These can be found at the Bradshaw Ranger District office at 344 South Cortez Street, or the Prescott Chamber of Commerce - Visitor Center at 117 West Goodwin Street, which is open seven days per week.

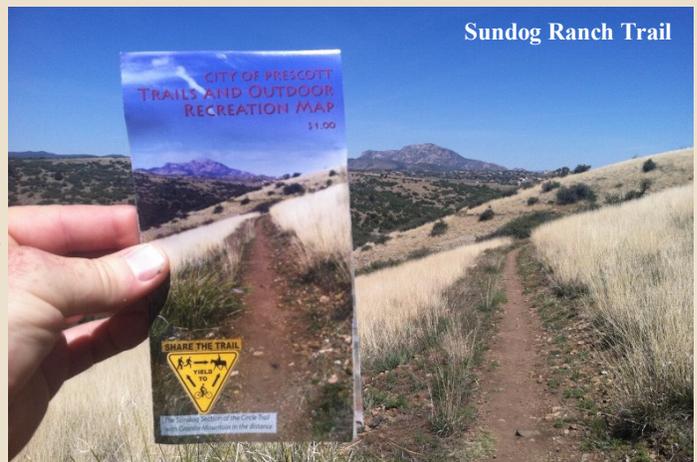
For each of the individual trails in Prescott's Mile-High Trail System that are part of the Prescott Circle Trail, visit the following link for details on each trail at:

http://www.prescott-az.gov/service_s/parks/trails/



Recreation Services Department
Grace Sparkes Memorial Activity Center
(Old Armory Building)
824 E. Gurley St., Prescott, AZ 86301
Telephone (928) 777-1122
Visit us on the City website at:
www.prescott-az.gov/services/parks

Over 50,000 City of Prescott Trail Maps (photo right) are distributed per year, and made possible by the generous sponsors. These are available from the Recreation Services Department office, from the various sponsoring businesses, and in map boxes at various City trailheads. The map is essential for those exploring the PCT.



(Above photo courtesy of Chris Hosking)

A very special thank you to all City of Prescott Recreations Services Department employees, including Tim Legler, Steve Mancha, and Kelly Tolbert for their logistical support in providing meals, preparing camping facilities, and shuttle services for the PCT Commemorative Hike.

This newsletter is a collaborative effort between City of Prescott employees and volunteers. Compilation and graphics provided by Nancy K. Nesbit, Volunteer Park Ranger.
This newsletter is available on line at: www.prescott-az.gov/services/parks
You can also pick up a copy at our office at the Grace Sparkes Memorial Activity Center.