TRAIL POLICY AND PROCEDURES:
INTERNAL CONSTRUCTION AND MAINTENANCE FOR ARROWHEAD LAKE ASSOCIATION TRAILS

I. Introduction

The Association recognizes the need to develop and adopt a consistent Trail Policy for trail development, maintenance and administration. The Trail Policy applies to the Association's lands, managed trails, easements, and will communicate the Association's trail management practices to members. Nothing in this policy shall be deemed to limit members' access to ALA property.

II. Policy Interpretation

Nothing contained in this Trail Policy and Procedures creates a standard of care or duty to comply with the Trail Policies and Procedures, rather, the Trail Policy contains suggested guidelines which can be deviated based upon the location of the trail, topography of the adjacent property and trail, practical difficulty, excessive costs and expenses and other variables determined from time to time in the sole discretion of the Association's Board of Directors.

III. Trail Construction

A. General

New trails should be designed and construction overseen by staff, to fulfill the guidelines in this policy document. However, existing trails may not fulfill the guidelines, and modification may not be feasible in all areas.

Trails should be located at least 10 feet from roadways and should avoid streambeds, known wildlife sites, riparian habitats, and other sensitive areas.

B. Surface Materials

Materials should be consistent with the surroundings and the type of intended use. Existing natural materials from the local surroundings should be used as much as possible. Other considerations in the choice of materials are (1) water erosion, (2) resource protection, and (3) safety.

C. Trail Width

In lightly used areas, trails should be only as wide as necessary for the intended foot traffic, generally 48 inches where possible. Heavily used trails should be sufficiently wide to accommodate historic usage but should be maintained no wider than 72 inches.

D. Integration with Terrain

Trails should follow natural contours, and incorporate turns and elevation changes to break up straight lines and provide visual interest. They should include vista points/overlooks to enhance the trail experience.

The priorities for design are (1) provide access without harming natural resources, and (2) aesthetics. Resource values always take precedence.

E. Signage

All trails are "Use at Own Risk". This should be clearly noted in member information and posted where feasible. Postings should clearly state that users use the trail at their own risk. However, scheduled trail inspection and maintenance is conducted regularly, to discover and correct any problem areas.

Obvious but unobtrusive signage should be used to (1) describe regulations for use and traffic control, and (2) warn of hazards. Signs should be constructed of highly durable materials that will require minimal maintenance in the expected conditions of sun, temperature, and precipitation. Signs should be located outside of the tread width.

F. Fencing/Gates

Where a trail is easily accessible by motor vehicles, such access will be discouraged by use of fences, bollards, or natural barriers except for members who have been granted a permit for vehicular access due to mobility concerns or where other legal documents provide access. Bollards for the exclusion of motor vehicles should be placed approximately 4 feet apart to allow for the easy passage of pedestrians

Fences and gates should be constructed only if required for (1) safety, (2) limiting access by persons not allowed on ALA property, or (3) keeping motor vehicles off the trail where applicable.

Fences should not interfere with the movement of wildlife. Use of barbed wire or "new" chain link fences is prohibited.

G. Plantings

Plantings should not normally be added to "natural" trails, unless they replace a fence that would otherwise be required. If used, they should incorporate native vegetation to the maximum extent possible, and should require little or no maintenance or supplemental water after becoming established.

Planting may be used to (1) prevent erosion, (2) screen adjacent property and/or frame views, (3) help block wind, (4) provide shade, or (5) replace fencing that would otherwise be required. They should be set back or pruned so as not to interfere with the trail's cleared area

H. Grading for Drainage

Designing for proper drainage to prevent erosion is one of the most important design features of a trail. Surface drainage of trail tread is accomplished by out-sloping, frequent grade dips, and in-slopes with rock-lined drainage tails at switchbacks. Trails should be outsloped 2% to 5% to minimize water accumulation and gullies along the trail.

Grade reversals, water breaks, subsurface drainage, and other features can be incorporated to facilitate drainage and prevent erosion. Natural materials should be placed diagonally across the trail from the cut bank side to the outer edge to carry off surface water.

Trails employ three basic drainage methods:

1. Open system uses swales – shallow drainage channels run adjacent to the trail (most natural and cost effective)
2. Sheet flow – disperses water evenly over the trail
3. Closed system – underground structures, catch basins, culverts etc.

IV. Trail Maintenance and Oversight

All trails under ALA management should be inspected no less than annually. Reports should be analyzed yearly.

Two types of maintenance are conducted: **Routine Maintenance** consisting of drainage maintenance, clearing, and tread maintenance. **Project Maintenance** consisting of rehabilitation, construction, improvements and restoration. Annual maintenance is generally done by a contractor. Association employees and/or contractors may perform Project Maintenance.

A. Records and Reports

The trail record begins with the baseline inventory, list of maintenance tasks and maintenance schedule, trail budget of anticipated costs, trail maps and photos, GIS and GPS records, recorded deeds and easements, biological data about the surrounding area, and any other site information. Annual and periodic inspection checklists, maintenance checklists, work crew reports, enforcement reports, and trail partner and contractor information should all be included in the trail record.

The inventory of trail features, with measurements to record condition changes, if appropriate, is broken into maintenance categories in order to quantify the maintenance workload, life expectancy, and appropriateness of proposed maintenance schedule.

The Association will maintain possession of all trail records, which will be available upon request as appropriate, although nominal copy costs may be charged.

B. Periodic closures

Periodic closures can be necessary due to maintenance, repair for safety, weather, and seasonal closure for species sustainability. Signs should be posted indicating why the trail is closed, the dates of closure, and if possible, indicating a detour trail that is the most direct route around the closure. When appropriate, the public and other agencies can be notified.

If a trail is kept open during work, when trail users approach, the work crew should move to the downhill side of the trail.