



Trail Building Schools

Vision

Land managers, destinations, and volunteer groups with the capability to build and maintain their own high quality singletrack trail systems. Trail systems that are well-built and properly maintained will:

- Provide High-quality trail experiences for visitors
- Reduce maintenance costs
- Protect resources

Background

Significant negative impacts to infrastructure, resources, and riding experiences can occur when trails are built poorly or don't receive proper maintenance. This is often a result of relying on inadequately trained trail workers who don't have a clear understanding of the fundamental principles of sustainable trail design, construction and maintenance. This results in poorly built and maintained trails with unpredictable experience outcomes for trail users, unwanted natural resource impacts, and increased maintenance costs for land managers. The best way to eliminate these issues is with trail building schools.

Process

TRAIL BUILDING SCHOOLS

IMBA Trail Solutions has created Trail Building School curriculums to meet the needs of volunteers, maintenance staff, and professional trail builders. Our schools teach IMBA's philosophies and train volunteers, forest workers, and land managers how to build and maintain sustainable singletrack. The sessions teach a wide variety of trail related skills including planning, design, hand and mechanized construction, and maintenance. Our specialists are experts in a wide array of topics so that we can create a custom curriculum specifically for individual client needs.

Trail Building School sessions can include an emphasis on a number of courses such as:

- Trail building theory
- Essential elements of sustainable trails

- Rerouting and reclaiming trails
- Trail Planning and Design
- Singletrack Trail Maintenance
- Sustainable Trail Construction: Hand Building
- Sustainable Trail Construction: Mechanized Building
- Pump Track Design and Construction
- Bike Park Design and Construction
- Bike Park Maintenance
- Conversion of abandoned roads into singletrack trails
- All-Weather Trail Construction: Stone armoring, surfacing and elevated wood structures.

Trail Building Schools are 2-4 days of intense instruction involving 1/2 a day of classroom time and the balance of time on an actual trail building project performing

hands-on training. All schools feature an approved trail building project where students can learn and practice in a real world environment. Depending on the instruction module, the type of project will vary. The instructors will guide students through the construction of a section of sustainable trail built “by the book” that can serve as a model for future projects.

Results

Trails that are more enjoyable to ride, minimize resource impacts, and reduce maintenance costs.

Representative Projects

PRESCOTT ADVANCED TRAIL BUILDING SCHOOL —

Prescott, AZ

Twenty four leading trail builders from around Arizona gathered in Prescott, AZ for an advanced rock armoring training. The session was held in Prescott National Forest on the Firewater Trail, with support from the Mountain Bike Association of Arizona, Prescott National Forest, and Prescott Mountain Bike Alliance. The event focused on tool and site safety followed by a session on the proper

use of a grip hoist winch for moving very large stone. Techniques included flagstone armoring, pitched stone armoring, and building retaining walls.

TBS ITALIA, BASIC TRAIL BUILDING SCHOOL —

Poretta Terme, IT

A highly successful event with 50 students from 4 countries, with Portugal, Albania, the Netherlands, and Italy being represented. This Trail Building School served as fantastic kick-off event for Italy’s first national MTB advocacy group, IMBA Italia. This model event has now been replicated 4 times over the past 3 years.

SPIRIT MOUNTAIN FLOW SCHOOL, ADVANCED TRAIL BUILDING SCHOOL — Duluth, MN

This cutting edge school was attended by 31 students from Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New Mexico, South Dakota, and Wisconsin. The primary goals achieved during this TBS were to show builders how to create greater diversity of ride experiences and to disseminate a higher level of trail building knowledge. The school accomplished this by teaching the fundamental techniques and best practices of flow trail design and construction techniques.

Who We Are

IMBA Trail Solutions is the international leader in developing singletrack trails, with experience in over 500 projects in North America, South America, Europe, Scandinavia, and Asia. Our team excels at planning, design, and construction of trail systems that provide high-quality experiences for local riders and destination visitors while minimizing resource impacts and reducing required maintenance.

Our wealth of experience has allowed us to develop professional trail industry recognized guidelines for creation of sustainable and enjoyable singletrack trails. We pride ourselves on the positive experiences we have provided to the millions of active trail users around the world and in the economic independence that communities have achieved through the development of destination trail systems.

Questions?

Go to our website, www.imba.com

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Publications

GUIDELINES FOR QUALITY TRAIL EXPERIENCES,
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT (2017)

[www.imba.com/resource/
guidelines-quality-trail-experience-gqte](http://www.imba.com/resource/guidelines-quality-trail-experience-gqte)

BIKE PARKS:

IMBA’s Guide to New School Trails (2014)

MANAGING MOUNTAIN BIKING:

IMBA’s Guide to Providing Great Riding (2007)

TRAIL SOLUTIONS:

IMBA’s Guide to Building Sweet Singletrack (2004)

