

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**BIG SKY TRAILS SURVEY COMPLETED**

The Trails Committee of the Big Sky Community Corporation recently completed a survey of trails usage and expectations in the Big Sky area.

The results of the survey show that interest in the trails program is high with over 400 individuals responding with written returns. The majority of those responding (240) were residents of Big Sky. The remainder was visitors and commuters.

Trail usage among the 400 plus respondents accounted for over 2500 hiker days spread over a wide variety of mountain and meadow trails for an average of over 6 hiker days per year per person.

Of the eighteen trails identified on the Big Sky Trails Map & Guide, those cited as being the most popular were Ousel Falls, Beehive Basin and Porcupine Creek. Ousel Falls is an easy to moderate trail that follows the stream bed of the South Fork of the West Fork of the Gallatin River to Ousel Falls. Beehive Basin is a moderate Forest Service Trail that stretches north of the Mountain Village area into the base of the Spanish Peaks for approximately three miles before entering a wilderness and wildlife habitat. Porcupine Creek is also a Forest Service Trail of moderate elevation gain that follows Porcupine Creek East from the Gallatin River.

The principal uses of the trails system as indicated in the survey were: hiking, cross country skiing, biking, family outings and horseback riding.

The future improvements mentioned by respondents to the survey were: more maps and guides, better signage including mile markers and "pack in /pack out" reminders. A variety of requests for new trails were cited including linking trails systems to Yellowstone Park, Ennis and Bozeman. The survey also indicated that respondents were eager to see the completion of the Spur Road Trail which will parallel Montana 64 along the West Fork of the Gallatin from US 191 to the Town Center.

When asked what entity should create and maintain trails in the Big Sky area, 59% opted for a locally funded organization such as the Big Sky Community Corporation or a proposed "City of Big Sky".

The Big Sky Community Corporation Trails Committee will use the Trails Survey in reviewing and updating its Trails Master Plan. The Master Plan is now being revised by the Planning Sub-committee Chaired by Barry and Denise Margetts. Individuals interested in participating in the trails program or making private contributions for trail development and maintenance should contact the Trails Chairman, John Leeper or the BSCC Staff at 995 4166.