

# This is A Mile's Journey

## Step 1 RESOURCES

***“Giving is not just about making a donation. It’s about making a difference.”***

- KATHY CALVIN

Through the generosity of this trail community and throughout our history, the NCTA continues to build infrastructure to support the trail’s needs. Your memberships and donations make miles possible. You make a significant impact.

## Step 2 PLANNING

***“A goal without a plan is just a wish.”***

- DEAN GRAZIOSI

Each mile begins by identifying a desirable route that showcases the area’s natural or cultural features, and allows for safe use. NCTA staff partner with volunteers, landowners, managers, and federal or state partners to secure permits.

## Step 3 DESIGN & LAYOUT

***“Design can be art. Design can be aesthetics. Design is so simple, that’s why it is so complicated.”***

- PAUL RAND

Getting to this stage can be a waiting game, but ensuring the mile be permanent is important. Once the land requirements have been met, volunteers and NCTA staff work to lay out the trail with flags and refine the route. Parameters are set, and solutions for natural elements, like stream crossings, dry/constructible soil, and more, are conceived.

## Step 4 CONSTRUCTION

***“Building is not just about shelter. It’s about realizing dreams, making statements, creating spaces where life happens.”***

- JOHN AARON

In a mile’s journey, this is one of the heaviest lifts. Trail building can take a weekend or an entire season, depending on the project’s complexity. NCTA Chapters organize workdays where all experience levels are welcome. They often partner with youth corps, scouts, or professional trail builders to begin the construction phase. Once completed, the mile is submitted for official certification, making it a permanent part of the NCNST. As a member, you help fund volunteer efforts and worthy recognition for their good works.

## Step 5 MAINTENANCE

***“Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land.”***

- ALDO LEOPOLD

Stewardship of the trail’s corridor is far from an afterthought. It is at the forefront of every decision impacting the mile’s journey. The resources needed, both human and material, are ongoing. This routine yet critical maintenance is supported in part by programs like Field Grants - which are funded by NCTA memberships.

## Step 6 SIGNAGE

***“Signage is the wow moment of arrival—it’s how you know that you are there.”***

- NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF INTERPRETATION

From painting blue blazes to installing the National Park Service’s emblem signage, this step in a mile’s journey provides trail users with a safe experience. Your support aids the NCTA’s map program, keeping navigation resources updated and accurate.

## Step 7 TRAIL USE

***“Walking is the most perfect form of motion for a person who wants to discover the true life.”***

- HENRY DAVID THOREAU

The end of a mile’s journey is the beginning of yours. It becomes a haven to restore body, mind, and spirit. It brings families of all ages together to explore nature. Thanks to you, the trail is here to enjoy.