

THE AMERICAN HIKING SOCIETY 1980

HIKANATION

CROSS COUNTRY HIKE

According to the U.S. Forest Service, there were less than 1,000,000 hikers and backpackers using 325,000 miles of trail in 1945. Today, there are nearly 42,000,000 hikers and backpackers using 218,000 miles of trail. This increase of hikers and reduction of trails is apparently continuing today in spite of the fact that an energy crisis looms that will severely curtail the interest in high-energy forms of recreation.

The American Hiking Society believes that America and its elected representatives should wake up at once to these facts and encourage walking and hiking. To dramatize this need and the size of the hiking community, AHS has planned a dramatic hike from Golden Gate Park in San Francisco to the Washington Monument in Washington, D.C. The hike will begin in mid March, 1980 and end in the spring of 1981. Hiking clubs all along the proposed route are being alerted and will be involved in the hike. State coordinators for every state have already been selected and are finalizing the route through their state. Three thousand inquiries have been received about the hike to date, although publicity has been almost nil. The Sierra Club has volunteered to support the hike in the west, the Appalachian Trail Conference in the east. We expect huge numbers of people to depart Golden Gate Park and even larger numbers to make the last few miles of the hike into Washington, D.C.

The hike could not be more timely. The impending energy problems will turn our attention to low-energy forms of recreation. (See Appendix A). Several independent sources are predicting that walking and hiking will be the next national fad. Simon & Schuster is even advising its book salesmen that it expects this to happen and is preparing to market several new books on walking and hiking in 1980. A hike across America is just what America needs.

LEADERSHIP

The American Hiking Society is fortunate in having the services of Lawrence M. Montgomery in the execution of its 1980 HikaNation. "Monty" Montgomery is ideally qualified to serve as the Hike Coordinator for the entire project. His reasonable remuneration is reflected in the proposed budget which certainly indicates a strong desire on his part to make a contribution to an exciting idea.

His background of military service, of considerable time working with college students since his military retirement, and the fact that he is one of those few Americans who has hiked the entire length of the 2,035 mile Appalachian Trail, uniquely qualify him for the job he has offered to do.

Monty graduated from Western Illinois University with a B.S. in recreation and park administration. He also attended graduate school there from 1973 to 1975 doing further study in his field and in camping. Only his thesis needs to be completed for his Masters degree. He has been involved in the Boy Scout program much of his life as an adult leader, troop committeeman, district commissioner and camp commissioner. His interests include camping, hunting, target shooting, canoeing, nature study and backpacking.

James A. Kern has ultimate responsibility for the planning and execution of the hike as President of the American Hiking Society. In 1966 he founded the Florida Trail Association and built it to an organization of 5,000 members dedicated to building a footpath the length of Florida. Six hundred fifty miles of a proposed 1300 mile trail have been completed. He was President of FTA for its first nine years. During that time he organized a hike from southern Florida northward to the capitol in Tallahassee, following the route of the trail whenever possible. Hundreds of people took part in this activity. A scroll and hiking staff are now on display in the capitol as a testimony to this achievement.

Jim Kern is one of the original three founders of the American Hiking Society.

Kern graduated from Andover in 1952 and from Yale in 1956. He is a past trustee of the Museum of Science in Miami; past Board member of the Tropical Audubon Society, Miami; presently a Board member of the South Florida Council, Boy Scouts of America. He is a wildlife photographer and writer and is active in the south Florida real estate market. Kern is married and has three children.

BUDGET

PRE-HIKE REQUIREMENTS

1. Personnel Support		
A. Coordinator	\$4,000.00	
B. Clerk	2,000	
C. Washington Office	12,000	
2. Administrative Support		
A. Supplies	200	
B. Production/Reproduction	300	
C. Postage	100	
D. Telephone	500	
E. Advertising	1000	
F. Miscellaneous	2000	
3. Coordination Support		
A. Travel	800	
B. Miscellaneous	0	
4. Departure Celebration Support	1000	
	TOTAL	\$23,900.00

HIKE REQUIREMENTS

1. Personnel Support		
A. Coordinator	9600	
B. Service Person	9600	
C. Pathfinder	9600	
D. Clerk	4800	
E. Washington Office	20000	
2. Personnel Subsistence Support		
A. Food	6300	
B. Lodging	540	
C. Equipment	100	
3. Personnel Insurance		
A. Liability	2500	
B. Health and Accident	0	
4. Administrative Support		
A. Supplies	3000	
B. Postage	500	
C. Telephone	2500	
D. Contributions/Charges	500	
E. Travel	2500	
F. Reproduction/Production	1000	
G. Miscellaneous	1000	

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HIKE REQUIREMENTS (continued)

5. Vehicle Support		
A. Insurance	2500	
B. Compensation	15200	
C. Fuel/Oil	6000	
D. Maintenance/ Repairs	2500	
E. Emergency Service	150	
F. Special Equipment Required	6000	
G. Miscellaneous	200	
	TOTAL	\$106,590

POST-HIKE REQUIREMENTS

1. Personnel Support		
A. Coordinator	800	
B. Clerk	800	
2. Hiker Administrative Support		
A. Awards		
1. Individual	3000	
2. Group	500	
B. Contractural Requirements	1000	
3. Miscellaneous Administrative Support		
A. Administrative Closeout	1000	
B. Financial Account Audit	1000	
C. Travel	500	
D. Telephone	200	
Contingency Fund	9000	
	TOTAL	\$17,800
	GRAND TOTAL	\$148,290.00

APPENDIX "A"

Walking, hiking and backpacking are in the path of the future.

In a sales bulletin issued this spring, Simon & Schuster advised its sales people: "Walking may well be the next rage in this fad-ridden land." With fossil fuel becoming scarcer, and the costs of off-road vehicle operation on the rise, other companies are also predicting a surge in the popularity of walking, hiking and backpacking.

This is no surprise.

During the past ten years, the number of hikers and backpackers in the United States has increased more than tenfold. Winter camping, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing have also become increasingly popular during this decade.

A recent survey by the American Forest Institute shows that one out of every five Americans hiked on an accessible trail last year -- more people than jogged, played tennis, played golf, hunted or went boating -- while 11% of the population, or about 24 million people, backpacked on a remote trail. These figures (see report which follows) are confirmed by National Park Service estimates.

But an incredible fact is this: we have 33% fewer miles of usable foot trails than we did 25 years ago. The most recent statistics reveal there are presently 280,000 miles of trails in the U.S., compared with 325,000 miles in 1945. The bulk of these trails -- nearly 145,000 miles -- are on private lands. Of the rest, 30,000 miles are provided by state and local governments, 8,000 miles are contained in our national parks, and 97,000 miles are in the national forests and on Bureau of Land Management lands. But nearly 60% of all the trails on federal lands -- more than 62,000 miles -- have been allowed to deteriorate beyond their usefulness as trails!

A comparison with Europe is useful. West Germany is only half the size of Idaho, but has half as many miles of trail as the entire United States. England has an equivalent trail mileage, and it is smaller than Florida. Even tiny Luxembourg (the size of Rhode Island) has three miles of foot trail for every square mile of countryside.

APPENDIX "B"

The American Hiking Society was incorporated in Virginia in 1977 as a non-profit organization to provide a national voice for hikers. The founders of AHS adopted the following goals and objectives for the new association.

GOALS

1. To educate the public in appreciation of walking and the use of foot trails.
2. To provide for and protect the interests of hikers.
3. To encourage hikers to build and maintain foot paths.
4. To encourage others to enjoy the aesthetic and spiritual experience of hiking in the natural world.
5. To foster research related to the goals of the organization.

OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a set of standards for hiker education programs that stress respect for nature.

To encourage the development of hiker education programs built on these standards.

To promote the use of educational programs by government agencies, equipment manufacturers and suppliers, children's summer camps, outing organizations, and all other users of foot trails.

To encourage the development of educational materials.

2. To work with affinity groups to insure that hikers' interests are represented in responses to environmental issues.

To communicate the needs of walkers in land and resource management decisions to state and federal administrative agencies.

To establish close relationships with the private sector to insure the provision of hiking opportunities on private lands.

3. To provide information and awareness about existing hiking organizations.

To provide information and awareness about specific

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governmental programs in which hikers can volunteer their services to build and maintain trails.

To foster the development of local hiking organizations to build and maintain trails where no such organization exists.

4. To provide information on quality outing programs offered by other organizations and outfitters.

To encourage the authorship of articles, books, films, photography, painting and other representations of the hiking experience.

5. To identify and make available existing research on the relationship of the hiker to the natural world and the impact of all users on the hiking environment.

To identify areas of need for further research.

To encourage research on areas of need.

In its first two years, the American Hiking Society has begun to constructively work toward achievement of most of these goals and objectives. For instance:

- A Board of Directors has been selected that brings together many of the top representatives of the U.S. hiking community.
- AHS played the leadership role in successful opposition to a proposed excise tax on backpacking and camping equipment that would have provided funds for projects unrelated to foot trails and their use.
- An AHS Director, the late Representative Goodloe Byron of Maryland, sponsored the Appalachian Trail Bill, which was signed into law by President Carter on March 21, 1978. The Bill, which provides \$90 million for the purchase of trail rights-of-way, is the first piece of legislation in the U.S. to: a) legally establish a permanent right-of-way for a trail, and b) protect that right-of-way from closure or diversion because of development.
- AHS published Volunteer Vacations' on America's Public Lands, a directory of volunteer work opportunities in the nation's forests and parks, the first such directory ever published. The book includes a foreword by President Carter who commends the AHS for its efforts to maintain and improve the national parks - an unusual distinction.
- The Society sent a representative to the October, 1978 European Ramblers Association meeting in Yugoslavia to:

- a)brief European groups on the AHS program, b)provide information on the status of trails and the opportunities for walking and backpacking in the U.S., c)engender a closer cooperation between U.S. and European trail groups, and d)explore the establishment of formal ties between the AHS and major European hiking organizations.
- The AHS compiled a status report on the 23 proposed trails that are under study by the U.S. Department of Interior for designation as National Scenic Trails, a report that was picked up by Associated Press and released to the nation's press on May 18, 1989.
- The Society hired an Executive Director and opened an office in Washington, D.C.
- The Society established four standing committees, staffed entirely by volunteers, to oversee: a)short- and long-range planning, b)education, c)membership growth, and d) monitor state and federal legislation.
- The Board of Directors and Advisory Board began the challenging task of setting organizational priorities and of raising required financial resources.

Still, this is a mere beginning.