

# Skyline Trail: It's down to the final work

By Clark Forster | Posted: Wednesday, August 17, 2016 4:30 am

Friends of Pathways is alerting mountain bikers that the Skyline Trail between Snow King and Game Creek Divide has been connected.

The project, under construction since last September, is not finished but is passable, according to an email sent last week. The message states that the trail is rough and possible closures could occur. Cyclists are asked to obey closed signs.

“The trail is connected but not finished. There’s at least 2, 2 1/2 miles of rugged, unfinished and in many cases unrideable trail,” Friends of Pathways Executive Director Katherine Dowson said. “It’s OK to go up but just recognize that you may have to stop.”

Dowson said the trail is ahead of schedule.

“This is super early,” she said. “I want to say three weeks early, maybe four. Originally we just wanted to connect the trail before the snow flies.”

Dowson credits the work of the Montana Conservation Corps and the high turnout for volunteer dig days for the early trail connection.

The Bridger-Teton National Forest first mapped out the Skyline Trail in 2011 as part of a scoping document for improvements in the Cache-Game area. Following public comment the U.S. Forest Service approved the trail’s construction in 2014. Friends of Pathways created a budget of \$140,000 for the project, and the final funds were donated in early July.

Dowson said that work on the trail will continue into next summer but that the majority of the work will be cleanup efforts.

“We’re hoping that we will have it in a pretty well-finished condition by end of September,” Dowson said. “There’s a lot of cleanup to do on the rougher sections that are in the woods on the north side of the ridge.”

When completed the trail will be about 6.3 miles long and will rise above 7,400 feet. It will peak at about 8,000 feet of elevation.



## Skyline Trail

Sabrina Hardy works with other Members of the Montana Conservation Corps last month to help build the Skyline Trail, a 6.31 mile multi-use trail following the Skyline ridge that extends eastward from Snow King Mountain, on Saturday. The trail was first proposed in March 2011, and approved in May 2015. The projected budget for the project is \$140,000.