

# First public dig day set for Skyline Trail

By Johanna Love | Posted: Wednesday, September 2, 2015 4:30 am

Volunteers can dig in to help construct the long-awaited Skyline Trail starting Sept. 19.

First proposed in 2011, the trail was approved this spring but could take two more years to build. Its creation will be a partnership between the Bridger-Teton National Forest and the nonprofit Friends of Pathways.

The pathways group on Tuesday announced the project's first public dig day. Spokesperson Lauren Dickey said the project is "incredibly ambitious" and the nonprofit's board and employees are excited to break ground.

"The crew is up there working right now," Dickey said. "They have a lot of clearing work to do, so they're spending the next two weeks doing that."

The dig day will be held from 9 a.m. to noon Sept. 19. People can meet at the base of Snow King, ride the Summit Lift to the top of the mountain and walk a short distance to the place the trail will start, or they can bike or hike up Ferrin's trail. Friends of Pathways will provide coffee, lunch and tools. Closed-toe shoes, work gloves and long pants are advised.

The Skyline Trail will stretch eastward along the ridge of Snow King Mountain, eventually measuring 6.31 miles and connecting to the Game Creek divide. Users are expected to include hikers, runners, cyclists and equestrians, although travel will be prohibited in winter and spring to protect wildlife.

The work day is being dedicated to the memory of Luke Manger Lynch, a former Friends of Pathways board member who was killed in an avalanche in May. Lynch worked hard to advocate for the trail, Dickey said.

"He felt it was a place you could see wilderness and open space and was really inspiring," Dickey said.

Friends of Pathways plans to launch a fundraising campaign soon to pay for trail-building costs. Its goal is not yet firm but will probably be around \$150,000. Although the trail was approved by the U.S. Forest Service and will be maintained by that federal agency, Friends of Pathways has pledged



## Skyline Trail

The Skyline Trail will run from Snow King's summit to Game Creek divide.

support.

“We’ve always agreed we would help fund it,” Dickey said.

Much work lies ahead. The third Saturday in September is probably the only public dig day on the project for 2015, but Friends of Pathways and Forest Service crew members are designing the segments of the trail to consider users, wildlife, geology and more.

“It’s a big operation,” Dickey said.