Follow the Tahoe Rim Trail Association through a series of activities to learn about trail building and maintenance, stewardship ethics, and all things—Tahoe Rim Trail!
The Tahoe Rim Trail Association

The Tahoe Rim Trail Association (TRTA) is the primary steward of a 200-mile trail system in the Tahoe Basin. It is a non-profit organization that runs on support from volunteers, members, and donors. Like this activity book, the TRTA provides programs for kids to get engaged in the outdoors, educated about wilderness ethics, and empowered to be environmental stewards and leaders.

In this activity book, you will discover how the Tahoe Rim Trail Association achieves its mission to maintain and enhance the Tahoe Rim Trail, practice and inspire stewardship, and preserve access to the natural beauty of the Tahoe Basin. What is your mission for this activity book? Do you want to have fun, express your creativity, or learn new things? Write your answer below and write your name on the safety helmet to gear up for fun in the Tahoe Rim Trail Toolkit!
The Tahoe Rim Trail

What is it? The Tahoe Rim Trail is a loop-trail that circles the ridgeline of the Lake Tahoe basin. It is over 165 miles long!

Connect the dots below to discover what a map of the Tahoe Rim Trail looks like.
Map the Tahoe Rim Trail

Where is it? The Tahoe Rim Trail crosses six counties, four National Forests, three wilderness areas, two states, and one state park!

Below, color each county a different color and match it to your custom map key. Label each state in the boxes below.
Directions on the Tahoe Rim Trail

How do I get there? Use directions! To find your way around the Tahoe Rim Trail, it is important that you know the cardinal directions: north, east, south, and west.

The cardinal directions make up the four points on a compass. Use the compass and the written directions to fill out the BINGO card below. ‘X’ marks the spot!

1. Find the northeast corner of the card. Draw an “X” in this square.
2. Go south 4 squares. Draw an “X” in this square.
3. Go northwest 1 square. Draw an “X” in this square.
5. Go north 2 squares. Draw an “X” in this square.
6. Go southeast 1 square. Draw an “X” in this square.
9. Go east 3 squares, then go south 1 square. Draw an “X” in this square.
Signs on the Tahoe Rim Trail

How do I find my way on the trail? Follow the signs! The Tahoe Rim Trail Association puts up signs at trailheads and on the trail to let you know where you are starting and where you are going. Signs typically point to specific locations and include distances to those locations.

In the space below, draw a sign that you would put at the front door of your home. Find out how many steps it takes to get to your bedroom, kitchen, and bathroom from the front door. Include the direction (using arrows) and distances (amount of steps) to each location on your sign. See an example of a Tahoe Rim Trail sign below!
Tracks of the Tahoe Rim Trail

Who can use the Tahoe Rim Trail? You! Hikers, bikers, and equestrians are allowed on sections of the Tahoe Rim Trail. The Tahoe Rim Trail sees over 480,000 users every year—wow, that’s a lot of tracks!

When you are on the Tahoe Rim Trail, you are likely to see trail-user tracks! Below, read the descriptions to learn about the types of users and the trail-etiquette triangle. In the boxes, write the trail-user that makes that track.

This is a trail-user that hikes on the trail! This trail-user should always step aside for equestrians, but has the right of way when passing a biker.

This is a trail-user that rides a horse on the trail! If you see this trail-user coming, step to the side of the trail to let them pass. This trail user always has the right of way.

This is a trail-user that pedals their bike on the trail! This trail-user should always pull to the side of the trail when other users are coming.
Tahoe Rim Trail Superheroes

How did the trail get there? With a big dream and many years and hands of dedicated volunteers—our superheroes! See the timeline below to discover how the Tahoe Rim Trail came to be!

Fill in the blank on the timeline below using the information provided. How many years did it take volunteers to build the Tahoe Rim Trail? At the bottom of the timeline, fill in your own event and year for how you will make history by helping build or protect the Tahoe Rim Trail!

1981
Glen Hampton, a United States Forest Service Recreation Officer created the idea of a loop trail around the ridge tops of Lake Tahoe.

1984
Construction began at Luther Pass to start the Tahoe Rim Trail.

1990
The first trailhead was completed at Luther Pass, what is now known as the Big Meadow Trailhead in California.

2001
The Tahoe Rim Trail is complete! It took _____ years and 200,000 volunteer hours to build.

2003
96 miles of The Tahoe Rim Trail are designated as a National Recreation Trail.

The Tahoe Rim Trail is still being maintained and re-routed every year by the Tahoe Rim Trail Association. I will be a Tahoe Rim Trail superhero by ________________________________________________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________
Tahoe Rim Trail Superpowers

How did volunteers build it? With their hands! And a little help from our friends—trail tools! These tools are like superpowers. They make cutting branches, digging roots, and moving soil possible by making the effect of human force bigger!

The Manzanita Bush Monster is attacking the trail by growing into it! Below find out which tools will give you the superpowers you need to clear out the monster and make a durable path for trail-users! Color the parts of the Manzanita Bush Monster’s costume based on the descriptions below.

**Loppers**—this is a tool used to cut back the branches with small, green leaves that are sticking out into the trail. ‘Manzanita’ means “little apple” in Spanish because it has red berries that look like little apples!

**Pulaski**—this is a tool used to chop up and dig out the red branches and roots from the soil.

**McLeod**—this is a tool used to build the trail surface, which is made of sandy, brown soil.
What about trees on the trail? The Tahoe Rim Trail passes through coniferous forests—areas with lots of pine trees! Sometimes, you might see living trees. Other times, you might see dead trees near or even on the trail.

You’re walking on the trail and you see a forest of Jeffrey pines, your favorite tree! It’s your favorite because it smells like vanilla ice-cream when you stick your nose in the tree bark. Below, match each type of Jeffrey tree with the picture it describes!

**Healthy Tree**—this Jeffrey is living, standing, and covered in green pines all year-round. It is like a big scoop of vanilla ice cream in a cone!

**Blowdown**—this Jeffrey is dead or dying, and fell over from strong winds and weak roots or trunks. It is lying on the ground. It is like a vanilla ice cream cone that fell on the ground.

**Snag**—this Jeffrey is dead, but still standing. It only has some small branches and doesn’t have any pines. Sometimes it can be hollow. It is like an empty cone with no ice cream.

**Cross-Cut Saw**—this tool is used to cut out trees that are lying across the trail in wilderness areas, so that trail-users can stay on the path! Which type of tree would you use this tool for?
Tahoe Rim Trail Rocks

What about rocks on the trail? Sometimes, rocks fall from the sides of mountains and onto the trail because of erosion. Erosion happens when land crumbles and slides from rain, wind, or trail-users.

Below, move the rock off-trail and help the Tahoe Rim Trail Association build stairs by connecting them in the maze.

Granite—this is an igneous rock which was created when magma from inside the earth cools. The Rock-Bar is a tool that volunteers use to gain super-strength and move these large rocks.

Stairs—these are built on the trail to prevent erosion of the soil from trail-users. They are often made with granite rocks, which are durable to walk on! You can find stairs all over the Tahoe Rim Trail.
What about water on the trail? Much of the water that flows down rivers, streams, and waterfalls ends up in Lake Tahoe! It is important to keep these water sources clean to protect the plants, animals and humans that live in and around them! To do this, volunteers build bridges over water sources on the trail to keep users from polluting it!

Complete the word-search below to discover all the things that bridges on the Tahoe Rim Trail protect!

I N S E C T S T D W
G L S L B H V U B H
W A T E R F A L L S
M K F U E Y N S B I
V E B L L R M C I F
T S I A O A T J R H
U O W C E W M B D N
S B O R I V E R S T
H R T G S A J R O R
I S M A M M A L S G

Word Bank

<table>
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<th>Rivers</th>
<th>Insects</th>
<th>Soil</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Streams</td>
<td>Fish</td>
<td>Flowers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Waterfalls</td>
<td>Birds</td>
<td>Shrubs</td>
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<td>Lakes</td>
<td>Mammals</td>
<td>Trees</td>
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What about wildlife on the trail? Sometimes, trails travel through areas with sensitive wildlife like meadows filled with wildflowers, bugs, and critters! Boardwalks are built to keep users off the trail in these areas to prevent damage to wildlife.

Big Meadow is in need of a boardwalk! To protect the flowers and pollinators, help the Tahoe Rim Trail Association by “building” or drawing a boardwalk in the empty space below through Big Meadow on the Tahoe Rim Trail!

Pollinators—critters, birds, and insects like butterflies pollinate or ‘fertilize’ wildflowers in Big Meadow — this allows the flowers to reproduce.

Wildflowers—lupine (purple) and paintbrush (red) are types of wildflowers that provide food for pollinators.
Tahoe Rim Trail Trivia

Woo-hoo! You made it through the Tahoe Rim Trail Tool Kit! You’ve learned all about trail maintenance, natural history, and why the Tahoe Rim Trail is the way it is—awesome!

Now test your Tahoe Rim Trail knowledge by completing the crossword puzzle below!

Across
1. What organization builds and maintains the Tahoe Rim Trail?
2. How many years did it take volunteers to build the Tahoe Rim Trail?
3. Which trail structure is used for water-crossings?
4. What type of tree can block the trail?
5. Which cardinal direction is at the top of the compass?

Down
1. Who built the Tahoe Rim Trail?
2. What type of trail-user rides a horse?
3. What do you call animals and insects that help wildflowers reproduce?
4. What type of rock does the Tahoe Rim Trail Association often use to build stairs for steep terrain?
5. Which tool is used to chop up and dig out branches and roots of bushes like Manzanita?
Tahoe Rim Trail Terms

Biker—a trail-user that rides a bike.
Blowdown—a dead or dying tree lying on the ground, blown over by harsh conditions including drought, strong winds, and fire.
Bridge—a trail structure that is built over water to protect water and habitats from pollution and erosion.
Cardinal Directions—the four directions on a compass: north, south, east, and west.
Cross-Cut Saw—a saw used to cut trees by hand, typically used to remove blowdowns from the trail in wilderness areas.
Erosion—the crumbling and breaking of rocks and earth’s soil from water, wind, and human impacts.
Equestrian—a trail-user that rides a horse.
Granite—an igneous rock formed by magma cooling within the earth, found throughout the Sierra Nevadas.
Healthy Tree—a standing, living tree that can be identified by many branches and green pine needles year-round, or leaves in the spring and summer.
Hiker—a trail-user that walks.
Jeffrey Pine—a species of tree that can be identified by its vanilla-scented bark, green pine needles, and pinecones that are large and gentle to the touch.
Loppers—a tool used to cut branches of bushes and trees to clear the trail corridor.
Manzanita—a bush that grows in the Tahoe Basin that can be identified by its red colored branches and roots, small green leaves, and small red berries that look like little apples.
McLeod—a tool used to create ‘tread’ or the top surface of the soil on the trail.
Pollinators—mammals and insects that move pollen around to fertilize wildflowers.
Pulaski—a tool used for more than one purpose including chopping branches and digging up roots.
Rock-Bar—a tool used to move large rocks.
Snag—a standing, dead tree that can be identified by broken, dead branches, a hollow inside, or no pine needles.
Stairs—a structure built on the trail to prevent erosion in steep areas.
Tahoe Rim Trail Association—the non-profit organization that builds and maintains the Tahoe Rim Trail system, and creates outdoor education programs and materials like this activity book!
Tahoe Rim Trail—the 165+ mile-long trail that follows the ridgeline around Lake Tahoe.
Volunteer—a person who freely gives their time and effort to an organization to make a difference. A superhero!
Wildflowers—flowers that reproduce from pollination and provide food sources to pollinators.
Now that you see how much work goes into the Tahoe Rim Trail, help the Tahoe Rim Trail Association take care of it! There are a few different ways you can show your support.

Below, select a link to learn more about how you can get involved.

**Be a Steward!**
Learn more about stewardship ethics through hands-on activities that you can do in your backyard and community. Through a series of worksheets, you will learn the Seven Leave No Trace Principles and earn your Leave No Trace Awareness certificate! Visit [https://tahoerimtrail.org/stories/online-to-outdoor-education/](https://tahoerimtrail.org/stories/online-to-outdoor-education/) to get started!

**Volunteer!**
Spend your time helping the Tahoe Rim Trail Association build and maintain the Tahoe Rim Trail! You will take the knowledge you learned from this tool kit and apply it to the trail! Visit [https://tahoerimtrail.org/volunteer/](https://tahoerimtrail.org/volunteer/) to learn more about how you can help!

**Become a Member!**
Donate to the Tahoe Rim Trail Association to show your support and become part of the Tahoe Rim Trail community! You will get benefits such as member discounts on outdoor programs and merchandise, e-news to keep you up-to-date on the Tahoe Rim Trail, and a copy of the Tahoe Rim Trail Association’s magazine, the Trail Blazer. Visit [https://tahoerimtrail.org/become-a-member/](https://tahoerimtrail.org/become-a-member/) to become a member today!

Interested in finding the answer key and more youth programs opportunities from the Tahoe Rim Trail Association? Visit our webpage at [tahoerimtrail.org/youth-programs](https://tahoerimtrail.org/youth-programs).