



Adopt-A-Trailhead Montana: How-To Volunteer Guide

Noxious weeds grow best in areas that suffer continual disturbance; parking lots and trailheads are prime locations for invasion of noxious weeds. To help limit the spread and reduce further introductions of these invaders, in 2015, the cooperative volunteer program, Adopt a Trailhead Montana or AATM was developed. AATM is a cooperative grassroots program driven by volunteers that is designed to help protect Montana from further spread of noxious weeds into pristine wilderness and backcountry areas. The goal of AATM is to encourage volunteer groups to take an active role in managing noxious weed infestations at trailheads while engaging the public to do their part to reduce spread by cleaning their gear before and after recreating on trails. Adoption of trailheads is open to any group willing to perform annual maintenance at the adopted trailhead. Once a trailhead has been adopted, an educational boot brush kiosk is placed at the trailhead alerting recreationists of the noxious weed species that occur on or around the trailhead; the goal of the sign and boot brush are to encourage trail users to clean their shoes before and/or after hiking, raise awareness about noxious weeds, and to showcase simple steps to reduce the spread while people brush shoes clean.

Volunteer Expectations:

The Adopt-A-Trailhead program relies heavily on the dedication and involvement of volunteer groups from across the state. Groups interested in participating need to be organized and have good support from their membership for an AATM project to be successful! Membership of the adopting group must be willing to perform removal of noxious weeds at least once per calendar year at the site selected. The group must also be willing to provide details and information about annual maintenance to the Montana Noxious Weed Education Campaign (MNWEC) so that information such as pounds of weeds removed, volunteer numbers, etc. can be tracked. As a “thank you” and recognition for the hard work and dedication to the program, all adopting groups get a sign with their group name on it placed on the kiosk of the trailhead they have adopted.

Steps to becoming an AATM volunteer group:

- 1.) Select a trailhead of interest.
- 2.) Get group approval and support for participating in the project. The more people on board, the better the project will be.
- 3.) Work with land management officials or the local entity where the trailhead is located
 - identify a place for the kiosk
 - select species to be put on signage
 - discuss various management options (is the entity “okay” with volunteers spraying, hand pulling, or releasing biological control agents? Each land management agency is different and different management strategies may apply depending on the species identified and the location)
- 4.) Select a day that works best for group members to meet and perform removal of noxious weeds at the selected trailhead maintenance.

Partner roles & responsibilities:

- Montana Department of Agriculture (MDA)
 - o Will provide boot brush, kiosk base and recognition signage.
 - o Will complete sign design, provide all parties involved with a draft for approval.
 - o Will provide gloves and bags for initial kiosk installation day/weed pull.
- Adopting group
 - o Provide 4x4x12' treaded post for the kiosk
 - o Provide cost for educational signage (in cooperation with MDA)
 - o Provide bags and gloves for yearly maintenance.
 - o Provide tools for initial kiosk installation.
- County Weed District (If applicable)
 - o Provide programmatic support to the adopting group; including weed education presentation at initial kiosk installation/weed pull day, plant identification, spray.
 - o Help dispose of bagged weeds from annual maintenance activities.
- Forest Service/Bureau of Land Management/Other agencies (If applicable)

- o Help select (4) species to feature on sign.
- o Provide programmatic support to both the MNWEC and the adopting group.

Kiosk Installation Guide (2024)

AATM Kiosk Materials:

- Montana Department of Agriculture
 - o Kiosk exhibit base and boot brush
 - Hardware is included – no other screws, nails are necessary for the kiosk installation
 - o 1 – 6"x8" Dibond vinyl recognition sign
 - o 2 – 2" all purpose wood screws (only necessary for the recognition sign)
- Adopting Group/Sponsors
 - o 18"x24" Dibond vinyl education sign (printed by Montana Dept. of Ag.)
 - o 1 – 12' 4x4 treated wood post (or 1 - 10' 4x4 treated wood post if ground is difficult)
 - This will need to be cut in half at a 45-degree angle, so you will end up having two 6' 4x4 posts. This is necessary for the posts to slide into the exhibit base correctly.

Other tools needed for installation:

- Gloves
- Shovels
- Other digging tools (Rock bars and post hole diggers can be extremely helpful.)
- Hammer
- Level
- Allen wrench set
- Drill & multiple drill bits
 - o 3/8' extra length bit is recommended
- Ratchet set
 - o 1/2" size recommended
- Wrench set
 - o 1/2" size recommended
- Optional: Concrete (Not necessary, but some groups have installed with concrete. Pre-approval from landowners is required!)

Note: For the installation you will need all above mentioned items. Kiosk installation is relatively easy. However, be sure to keep vinyl signs always face up or in the package prior to being installed in the kiosk exhibit base. The vinyl can get scratched if laid face down.

Step 1: Determine where the kiosk will be placed.

Work with the land management agency that oversees the trailhead to determine where they would like the kiosk placed. Ideally, the kiosk should be placed next to existing informational signage, somewhere visible and where recreators will be more likely to use it.

Step 2: Dig a hole for the 4x4 posts.

The depth of the hole will largely depend on the type of ground in which the kiosk is to be installed. Hole depth can range from 24" to 36" deep for kiosks. The deeper the hole, the sturdier the kiosk will be. Hole width needs to accommodate the width of the kiosk and posts, usually about 24".

Step 3: Test the height of the kiosk.

Remove dirt and rocks from the bottom of the hole, making sure that it is semi-level so that the flat end of the posts rests level on the ground in the hole. Test the height of the kiosk by sliding the exhibit base onto the 45-degree angled posts while they are in the hole.

Ensure that the finished kiosk will not be too tall for users. If the kiosk is still too tall, dig the hole deeper or trim the posts if the ground is too difficult to dig. There should be roughly 30' between the sign and the boot brush.

Step 4: Drilling holes for boot brush and exhibit base installation.

Next, measure where the boot brush should be assembled before starting to backfill the hole and packing in dirt. During this process, continuously double check with a level to make sure everything is even with the ground!

To do this you will:

- Slide boot brush assembly onto the posts. Hold the boot brush 2" – 3" above where the ground will be leveled after the hole is filled and mark the holes where the boot brush will go.
- Slide exhibit base onto the 45-degree angle posts, mark the holes where the exhibit base will sit on the posts.
- Remove the posts and drill where you have marked.
- Place posts back in the hole.

Step 5: Secure boot brush and exhibit base.

- Slide exhibit base onto the 45-degree angled posts, do not slide on the boot brush just yet. Have someone hold the exhibit base and posts steady while others begin filling the hole with dirt (set aside any large rocks, they can create air pockets and not allow dirt to be packed tightly around the posts.)
- Once the posts are secured on the ground, remove the exhibit base, and slide on the boot brush. Install boot brush to posts using provided bolts. Tighten to ensure that the boot brush will stay securely attached to posts.
- Slide the exhibit base onto the angled ends of the posts, line up with holes, and use provided bolts to attach. Tighten to securely attach.
- Note: Make sure that bolt heads are facing the outside of the posts and nuts should be on the inside of the posts for safety.

Step 6: Install sign in exhibit base.

Use an Allen wrench and wrench to remove the two bolts from the backside of the top of the exhibit base. Remove the top piece of angle iron and gently slide the vinyl sign into the exhibit base. Replace the top piece of angle iron, replace bolts and tighten the nuts.

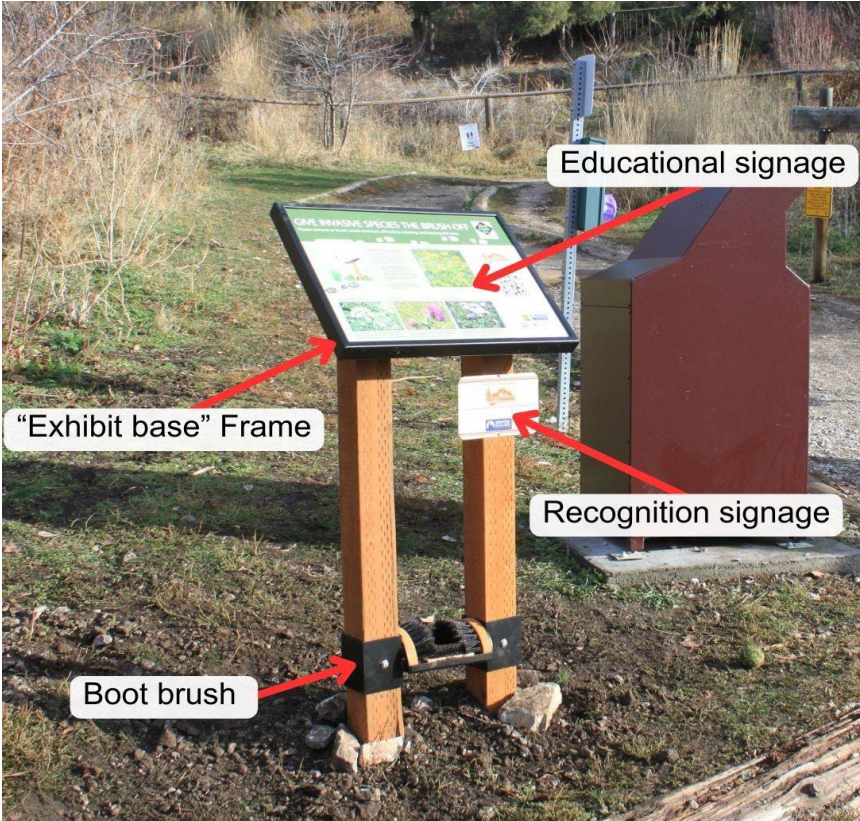
Step 7: Install recognition signage.

Place this sign on one of the posts, making sure it is visible when you step 2 – 3' back. Level and install this sign using two 2" wood screws.

Step 8: Complete installation.

Use large rocks in the area around the base of the kiosks. If there are no rocks, leave the kiosk as is and make sure the ground has been well compacted around the posts. Installation is complete! Take photos and record location with coordinates.

Additional photos:



Educational signage

"Exhibit base" Frame

Recognition signage

Boot brush

BEST-EXHIBITS
 DIVISION OF DRM DIVERSAFAB
 INFO@BEST-EXFAB.COM
 WWW.BEST-EXFAB.COM

BEST-EX POST MOUNT SIGN FRAME WITH BOOT BRUSH ASSEMBLY

FOR GRAPHIC PANEL 18" H X 24" W
 PROVIDED BY OTHERS

OFTEN USED FOR THE EDUCATION AND
 CONTROL OF GARLIC MUSTARD SEED

FRAMES ATTACH TO WOOD POST
 WITH THRU BOLTS - PROVIDED

STANDARD PONDOR COAT
 COLOR BLACK TEXTURE

FRAME EDGE WILL COVER
 5/8" MARGIN ALL EDGES OF
 PANEL

BOOT BRUSH ASSEMBLY
 ATTACHES TO POSTS

BRUSHES ARE
 REPLACABLE WHEN WORN

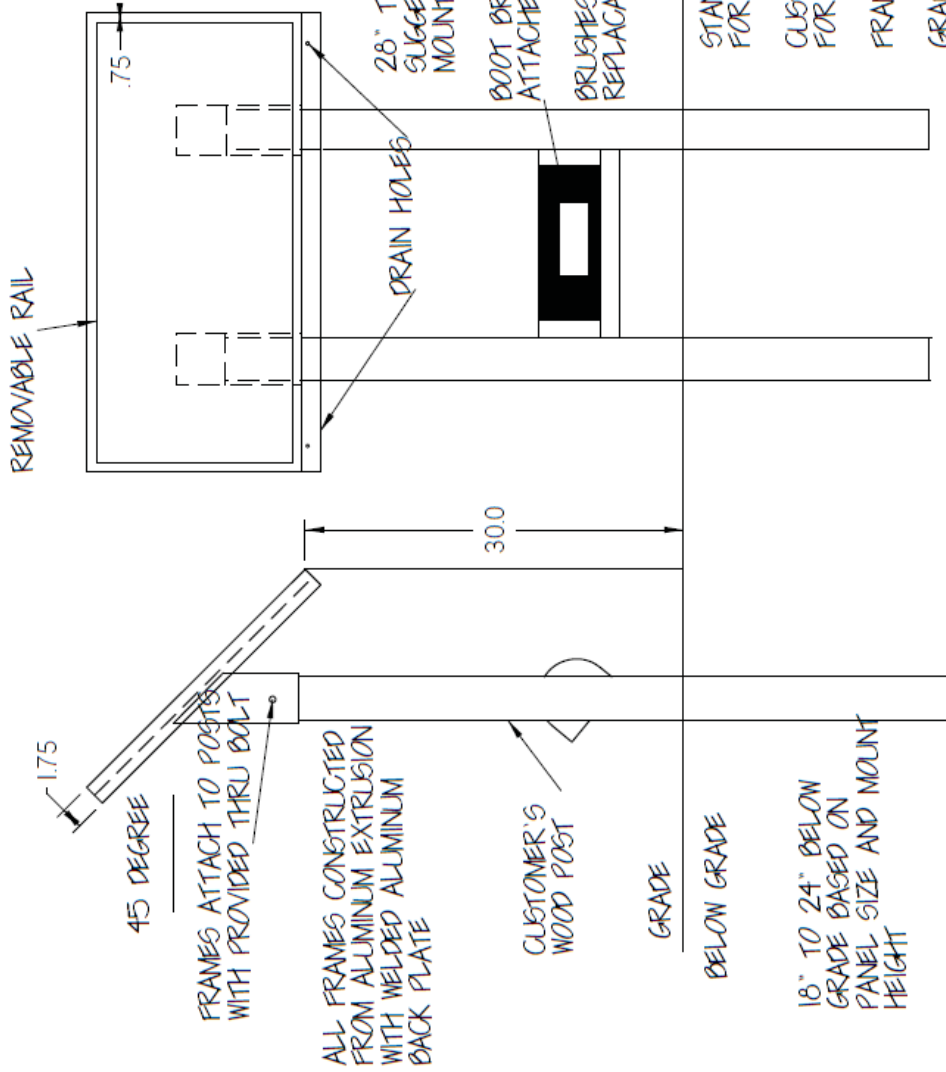
STANDARD FRAME CONSTRUCTION
 FOR MAX 1/8" THICK PANEL

CUSTOM FRAME CONSTRUCTION
 FOR PANELS UP TO 1/4" THICK

FRAMES SIZED TO FIT GRAPHIC PANEL

GRAPHIC PANEL PRODUCED BY OTHERS

ATTACHES TO CUSTOMER SUPPLIED WOOD 4"x4" POST



REMOVABLE RAIL

1.75

45 DEGREE

FRAMES ATTACH TO POSTS
 WITH PROVIDED THRU BOLT

ALL FRAMES CONSTRUCTED
 FROM ALUMINUM EXTRUSION
 WITH WELDED ALUMINUM
 BACK PLATE

30.0

CUSTOMER'S
 WOOD POST

GRADE

BELOW GRADE

18" TO 24" BELOW
 GRADE BASED ON
 PANEL SIZE AND MOUNT
 HEIGHT

0.75

DRAIN HOLES

ORIGINAL DESIGN BY THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - EXTENSION, AND BEST-EX, INC.

2/15/2010