



Pittsburgh Trails Advocacy Group

July 2011

PTAG Statement on Illegal Trail Building

Pittsburgh Trails Advocacy Group (PTAG) has been working to ensure mountain bike access to trails in Western Pennsylvania parks for 10 years. When PTAG was created, mountain bikers were banned from certain county and city parks. As an International Mountain Biking (IMBA) affiliated organization, PTAG has built good relations with the land managers and promoted the installation and maintenance of trails over the past 10 years. As a direct result of PTAG's work, mountain biking is now a protected recreational activity throughout all county and city parks.

PTAG's number one priority is to work with the land manager to get approval for all trail work including maintaining existing trails, building man-made features, and developing new trails. Illegal trails damage the relationship between land managers and mountain bikers. There can also be legal repercussions for illegal trailbuilders, such as liability lawsuits (if someone gets hurt on your illegal trail) or criminal prosecution. Nationwide, illegal trails have led to situations where mountain bikers are restricted or banned in public lands. Below are links to two stories about illegal trail problems:

[<http://www.phillymtb.org/pmba-statement-recent-events-wissahickon>
<http://www.lvrj.com/news/53397297.html>]

PTAG trail builders work hard to create trails that appeal to most trail users. PTAG acknowledges that many mountain bikers want more technical trails and trail features. PTAG now leads the way in the installation of more technical trails, including the first legal freeride trail in a public park. We work diligently to ensure they are properly approved, designed, built and protected by law. PTAG welcomes anyone interested in trailwork. There is always a need for creative, hard-working volunteers to help improve our trail networks.

Please do not build illegal trails. Doing so damages relations between Pittsburgh bikers and land managers and threatens the future of mountain biking in Western PA-area public parks.

PTAG Board