Join us as we take you down the trail of how you’re building a more special Sheridan County.
SCLT Trail Builder Ronnie Wagner began work on The Link in mid-April. Utilizing the mini-excavator donated by EMIT last summer, Ronnie made the initial cuts on what he describes as a “dirt coaster” - a fun span of trail with features bikers and runners alike will love.

“Dirt Coaster”

“It’s like a dirt coaster,” Sheridan Community Land Trust Trail Builder Ronnie Wagner mused one sunny April afternoon as he took a break from digging trail drains on a new section of what will soon be The Link.

Ronnie then began talking about the turns, runs, rollers, table tops and all the “flowy” features he will incorporate into the newest stretch of single track trail being built.

“They’re lots of fun!” he said of the features that led him to describe riding the trail to the thrill of a roller coaster. Fortunately, The Link isn’t Jackson’s “Cowboy Coaster” and you don’t need to be “this tall” to ride.

Rather, Ronnie’s goal is to provide a fun experience for bike riders, runners and walkers of all experience levels. “I’m trying to create something that will develop riders,” he explained.

For an example, he pointed to a small table top. It’s a feature that gives bike riders who wish to slip the surly bonds of gravity a chance to take flight while those less aerially inclined can ride with two tires on terra firma.

SCLT Trails Manager Tami Sorenson added
that runners will “really enjoy the punch” those features bring.

But the “dirt coaster’s” design isn’t all about daredeviling; it’s equal measure sustainability. Ronnie explained that the rollers that are so much fun for runners and riders are also perfect places for drains that will minimize erosion, and, ideally, make maintenance much easier over the long haul.

The same goes for building on the undulating topography of Sheridan’s western hills. Ronnie said rather than just taking users from point A to B, he can zig and zag with turns and berms while fluctuating gradients of different lengths. That will add distance, improve drainage, and by aiming for grades of 5-7%, ensure the trail isn’t too steep.

“I don’t want it to be homogeneous, because it’ll get boring quickly,” he opined.

Once Ronnie’s done building The Link, he’ll kick off work on Kicking Horse Trail, which will be shared by bipeds and quadrupeds alike. Kicking Horse will mark the second trail open to equestrians on Sheridan’s periphery. It will connect to Soldier Ridge Trail approximately 2 miles from the current trailhead. All told, these trails, along with the Sheridan Pathways system, will create more than 14 miles of opportunity for people to go from their front door to the outdoors easier than ever before!

The Link and Kicking Horse aren’t the only trails on the 2020 calendar. If Mother Nature cooperates, Ronnie will close the season up the mountain by starting work on the first of 22 new trail miles and 4 parking areas at Red Grade Trails. That will give folks new ways to enjoy the beauty of the Bighorns.

Not a cyclist, runner or horseback rider? The trails still have plenty for you to enjoy. As you traverse along Jensen Draw, you’ll experience solitude, open space and some of the best mountain views anywhere on the Front Range. With birds, deer and antelope galore you’re sure to get your dose of Vitamin Nature. Bring a camera!

With so much variety, from the “dirt coaster” to coasting away from it all, these trails have something for everyone. As Ronnie put it, “they should put smiles on people’s faces.”
Interest and acres in voluntary conservation agreements rapidly grows

Partnering with families to conserve working lands, open spaces, clean water and wildlife habitat is at the core of our values. While voluntary conservation agreements don't often happen quickly, their gift is one that will last far longer than any of us. That's precisely why they're so important. Thanks to you and friends like you, in the 14 years since SCLT was established, your work has made it possible to conserve nearly 3,500 acres at 11 sites across Sheridan County.

Currently, two local ranch families are working to create voluntary conservation agreements in the Clear Creek and Tongue River watersheds. In April, these agreements were awarded $232,000 by the Wyoming Wildlife Natural Resource Trust, which, when combined with more than $500,000 in NRCS farm bill funds, means the agreements are closer than ever to completion.

However, the goal to conserve these properties has not yet been met. You can join other people who know the value of keeping working lands working while ensuring the open space, clean water and wildlife habitat that make Sheridan County so special today are here tomorrow and every tomorrow.

There is only $19,065.50 left to go. That means nearly 98% of the funds are secured!

Why safeguard these lands? Because it ensures a safe place for Greater Sage-grouse, 2 miles of free-flowing stream and riparian habitat, wetlands and many, many mule deer all while keeping 550 acres of working lands working.

WHAT A VALUE!

At least 550± acres more with your help!

HOW CAN I HELP?
To help conserve these lands or learn more about how a voluntary conservation agreement can work for your family or someone you know, please contact Brad Bauer by phone (307) 673-4702 or email, director@sheridanclt.org.

0 acres conserved
1) SCLT registered as a nonprofit 2006.  
2) VOA Little Goose Creek est. 2007, 9.3± acres. Protects riparian habitat in Sheridan city limits.  
10) Sheridan Heights Ranch est. 2019, 476± acres. Working ranch, open space, trail access.  
11) Clear Creek & Tongue River Watershed est. TBA, 550± acres. Working sagebrush steppe range, hay ground, riparian habitat.
Preserving and telling the story of our unique history

One story Carrie’s particularly excited to tell is out east along US Highway 14 where she’ll explore the relationship between the land and the people who have lived on it through time.

The project, Human Migration of Southeastern Sheridan County, will tell stories of the Plains Indians, homesteaders, railroad towns, ranchers and much more! Be on the lookout for upcoming community events.

Carrie’s also working on three interpretative signs for the trails. Keep an eye out for them soon.

SCLT is also pleased to partner with Downtown Sheridan Association to include segments of the Big Goose Walking Tour in WY Tour Sheridan on TravelStorys.

Be sure to read our #TBT stories on Facebook and Instagram. Every Thursday, Carrie’s telling the stories of Sheridan County’s unique history you’ve helped preserve by supporting SCLT.

We’re thankful for the generous support of the Wyoming Humanities Council and Wyoming Cultural Trust Fund.

Social Distancing Spring Cleaning Virtual Party

This spring has presented unforeseen challenges in many places. One of those was trying to coordinate community cleanups. While we wanted to give our favorite outdoor places a bit of TLC this spring, we couldn’t bring lots of people together at the same time and place. So, we asked our friends to grab their trash bags and gloves and show some love on their own with our first (and hopefully only) Social Distancing Spring Cleaning Virtual Party.

Thank you to everyone who partied with us! Together, Kendrick Park, South Park, Hidden Hoot Trail, Little Goose Creek, Big Goose Creek, Penrose Trail, the alleys of downtown Sheridan and the roadside along I-90 all received a lot of TLC!
A note from SCLT staff

If one thing has been reinforced this spring, it is the strength of community. Many great people in our county have worked hard and risked the health of themselves and their families to help family, friends and neighbors here in Sheridan County.

If you are in a position to help the organizations who have helped our community this spring, please consider a donation. Nonprofits, SCLT included, get by because of help from our friends. Because of your help, Sheridan County is a truly special place to call home.

Thankfully, there are several new ways you can help nonprofits.

- The CARES Act allows a one-time deduction up to $300 for individuals who don’t itemize their federal income taxes. That amount can establish a $25 monthly sustaining gift at a time when many nonprofits need your help.
- You can spread your $1,200 federal economic impact payment around to help several nonprofits all at once, or give a visionary gift to help one nonprofit you value greatly.
- The CARES Act also raised limits on charitable giving to 100% of adjusted gross income for individuals who itemize and 25% of taxable income for corporations.

We’re grateful we can spend our days working hard to carry out your vision of building new trails, sharing historical stories, connecting people to nature and conserving what makes Sheridan County so special. Thank you.