



PRESS RELEASE

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For Immediate Publication

TRAIL DRIVERS MEND THEIR WAYS

Last weekend teams of recreational motor vehicle enthusiasts abandoned their wheels for picks, shovels and pry-bars and made tracks for an ancient road high in the English Lake District.

National Green Lane Day is sandwiched between the frozen ground of winter months and the nesting season of early spring. National Green Lane Day is an annual event organized by the Land Access and Recreation Association (LARA) and recreational motor vehicle user groups. Members volunteer their labour for green lane maintenance initiatives at many sites across England and Wales.

Geoff Wilson, Chairman of the Trail Riders Fellowship (TRF), was one of the volunteers working on Gatescarth Pass, one of the highest old roads in the Lake District which escaped the tarmac machines of the 20th century. Geoff said, "This weekend of voluntary work makes a direct link between trail riding and our countryside. When we ride pedal cycles, horses or trail motorcycles, drive 4x4s or even walk over an old road, we don't always appreciate the need for care to sustain these routes. But getting our hands in the earth increases our awareness of the history and the need for sympathetic maintenance if we are not to lose an important heritage."

Duncan Green, Chief Executive of the Green Lane Association (GLASS) stressed "many people using the countryside think the wear and tear that recreation causes should be repaired by the local council or National Park Authority. But in the real world, where financial resources are finite, we believe that there is great benefit to society from encouraging volunteers to assist with the maintenance work. What we do on these Green Lane Days is add value to the limited rights of way maintenance budget of the local authority and improve routes that everyone can use. Volunteering is generally on the decline in Britain but with our Green Lane Day programme we are working hard to revitalise it."

Tim Stevens, Motor Recreation Development Officer for LARA said, "All members of LARA support the introduction of partnership trail-route management programmes that help ensure the use of routes remains sustainable for all users. These programmes range from just keeping a watching brief on lanes that are not under any pressure to sophisticated traffic regulation regimes that restrict vehicle use on a seasonal, monthly or sometimes daily basis, or according to type of vehicle."



Gatescarth Pass The Lake District February 2005: Members of the TRF, GLASS and the Lake District Hierarchy of Trail Routes Group work together to repair surface erosion in a dramatic location with Haweswater Reservoir in the background. The use of motor vehicles on this road is regulated to just one day in each month.

The TRF is a national, voluntary and non-competitive body that was established in 1970, for people who enjoy exploring green lanes by motorcycle. Its aim is to conserve our heritage of green lanes for everyone to enjoy.

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