

## Green Fund Project Final Report

This report may be published on the SIU sustainability website.

Name of person(s) completing report: Isaiah Tanner  
Department: Public Health and Recreation Professions  
Contact Phone and email address: 817-913-9719      isaiah.tanner@siu.edu  
Faculty Advisor (if applicable): Joseph Tanner  
Project Title: Touch of Nature Multi-Use Trails Project  
Project ID #: 17SP123  
Award Date: April 27, 2017  
Completion Award: \$11,615.00  
Total Funds Used: \$11,574.78

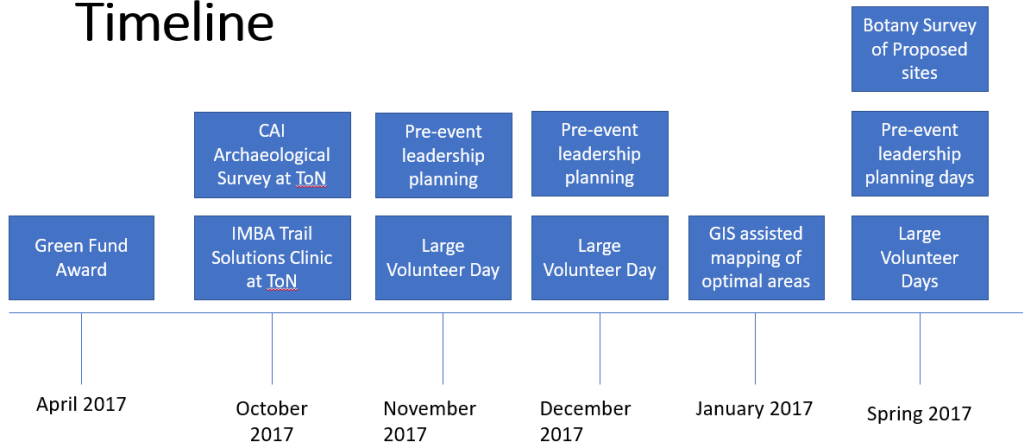
1. Please provide a write up of your project/project experience.

We were awarded funds to contribute to an ongoing trails project at Touch of Nature (ToN). SIU is fortunate to have an outdoor learning lab as part of their campus. ToN's mission is to enhance learning, promote professional development, encourage personal and interpersonal development, and increase environmental awareness. This mission runs parallel to the Student Green Fee's mission to advance sustainability on the SIU campus, specifically in the areas of education, sustainable infrastructure on our grounds, student and community engagement, environmental stewardship.

Parks and public recreation lands are hard pressed to meet the demands of visitors. We can see this both nationally and right here in the Jackson County area. This project aims to alleviate pressure on our public lands by supplying a sustainable recreation resource, while stimulating our local economy with new recreation opportunities. This will take the shape of more than 30 miles of multi-use, natural surface trail at Touch of Nature. This will be achieved with passionate student engagement, volunteers, and continued support from the community.

This project is ongoing. So far, it has involved two graduate students, and one undergraduate intern over the last two years. My contribution to the project began as a volunteer and then evolved into my graduate work for my master's degree in outdoor recreation resource management. The project began with another graduate student, and will be taken up by another graduate student after me. The timeline below gives a general perspective of my time on this project, starting with the Student Green Fee award.

# Timeline



After spending several months in late 2016/early 2017 with my predecessor, we identified key components to get the project underway. To put trail on the ground we needed training for, volunteers, and we needed an archaeological survey. Training was essential to ensure the highest level of environmental ethic, and to give us the skill to build the best product within our means. The archaeological survey was necessary to ensure we did not disturb any historic sites during our development. Volunteers were and are the engine that drives this project.

The SIU Center for Archaeological Investigations conducted the archaeological survey. We incorporated student volunteers for cost reduction and to provide an additional learning opportunity for those interested. The survey revealed nearly a dozen sites in our proposed construction area. With this data in hand, we can avoid disturbing sensitive areas. A sample map depicts the known sites below.

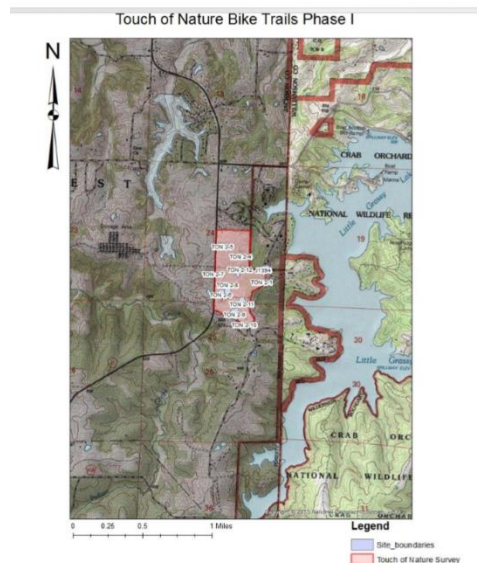


Figure 4: All site boundaries for archaeological sites identified during Trail of Nature Trail Survey.

As mentioned above, project work started with another graduate student in 2016. Her work involved contracting the services of the International Mountain Bike Association, a non-profit organization that works to promote trail access for mountain bikers, hikers, and other user groups. They not only develop trails systems, but provide education services as well. IMBA came to Touch of Nature to develop an initial trails plan for the location in 2016. With the funds from the Student Green Fee, we contracted IMBA staff to return for a three-day education and training session with students, ToN staff, and interested community members. We identified twelve individuals for the training and arranged for IMBA to run the training/clinic in October 2017. The training focused on technical aspects of sustainable trail building, planning for natural surface trail, and community engagement.

The training included a lecture style session for one day, and two days of training in the field. The lecture session focused on technical specifications for trail, environmental concerns, and problem-solving techniques. The field sessions applied the skills and techniques.

These two components were the building blocks for our large volunteer days. We've run five large scale build days since, as well as various small build days and intensive planning sessions with our community leader team that received IMBA Training.

My experience with this project has been overwhelmingly positive. Students and community members are willing to come out and give their time and effort to something they believe in. They are excited make Carbondale and SIU better for themselves and coming generations. I've been lucky to have the support of so many in the community and on Campus. It is safe to say this project will have life well into the foreseeable future.

2. Please provide a summary of your results (environmental, social, and/or economic) including quantifiable data as appropriate (ex. # of individuals reached, lbs. diverted from landfill, energy saved, etc.).

Archeological Survey:	114 Acres Surveyed for Historical Artifacts
Trail Constructed: 0	.20 miles/1050 feet (as of 4/15/18)
Volunteers engaged:	79 (as of 4/21/18)

3. Summarize how your project promoted the Green Fee Sustainability on campus including, but not limited to, flyers created, screenshots of website, signage, etc. Please include website links, if applicable.

The project promoted the Green Fee as our source of funding, and as a cultural influence at SIU. At the beginning of our project days, we explained how the Green Fee had contributed to the project, a little about the fee itself, and gave participants opportunities to pose with the Student Green Fee sign. We promote the green fund through the project web page as well at <http://ton.siu.edu/facilities-and-services/touch-of-nature-forest/multi-use-trail-projects.php>.

We believe the Green Fee is just one more thing that makes SIU unique, as is our project. We try to articulate to our volunteers this during every building event.

4. Is there anything you would do differently if you were to do a similar project in the future? If so, please describe.

In the future, I would bring more undergraduates in for semi-permanent positions. These positions would include field workers, interns, and students seeking independent study work. Our project provides so many opportunities for community engagement. There are education components that can really help to build experience for students in the fields of recreation and forestry. In the future we will work harder to bring them into the fold. We did an excellent job involving the community. While our student presence was good, I think that greater inclusion is needed.

5. Please attach a minimum of 5 digital images –these will be images used to promote interest in sustainability projects on campus. These can be photos of the progress of the project or the completed project.
6. Optional: Do you have any suggestions for the SIU Sustainability Council to improve the Green Fund Award Process?

The fund award process was straightforward and efficient. Communication was timely. The award ceremony was lovely. I don't have any suggestions.