

**2025 Trail Master Certification Course**  
**May 18 – 21, 2025 | Governor Dodge State Park, Dodgeville, Wisconsin**

Join us for an in-depth, hands-on training designed to equip participants with the latest knowledge and skills in trail design, construction, and maintenance. This four-day program focuses on sustainable practices for all types of trails, environmental stewardship, and leadership techniques for working with volunteer teams. Whether you are an experienced trail builder or a newcomer looking to enhance your skills, this course offers valuable insights and practical tools for creating and maintaining high-quality trails.

Each participant will receive a detailed booklet that aligns with the course curriculum, offering guidance and resources for all segments. The program is divided into classroom sessions and outdoor fieldwork, culminating in a leadership-focused practical session where participants apply their knowledge as crew leaders.

### **Course Highlights**

The course is structured into three main classroom sessions followed by outside implementation of the daily lessons learned. The fourth day takes you through crew leader skills and leading a part of the crew project

**Start times and session durations are subject to adjustment based on class needs.**

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### **Trail Design and Layout**

This session focuses on the critical foundations of trail design, emphasizing long-term sustainability and reduced environmental impact.

#### **Key Topics Include:**

- Principles of sustainable trail design to minimize erosion and ecological disruption.
- Techniques to address water/soil relationships and manage trail durability.
- Avoiding user conflicts and impact problems through thoughtful planning.
- Practical flagging and layout exercises to reinforce classroom learning.

#### **Schedule:**

- 8:30 AM: Classroom session (8:00 AM start on subsequent days)
  - 10:30 AM: Break
  - 10:45 AM: Continue session
  - 11:45 AM: Test
  - 12:00 PM: Lunch (provided)
  - 12:30 PM: Outdoor session (flagging and layout drills)
  - 3:30 PM: Final comments and wrap-up
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### **Trail Construction**

This session delves into building trails that withstand use and weather while maintaining accessibility and safety for all users.

**Key Topics Include:**

- Proper clearing techniques for different types of trail use.
- Best practices for constructing durable tread surfaces and managing trail width.
- Advanced methods for building cribbing, raised tread sections, switchbacks, and water crossings.
- Guidance on constructing and maintaining bridges and boardwalks.

**Schedule:**

- 8:00 AM: Classroom session
  - 10:30 AM: Break
  - 10:45 AM: Continue session
  - 11:45 AM: Test
  - 12:00 PM: Lunch (provided)
  - 12:30 PM: Outdoor session (hands-on construction techniques)
  - 3:30 PM: Final comments and wrap-up
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**Trail Maintenance**

Maintaining trails is as vital as building them. This session focuses on practical approaches to ensuring trails remain safe, accessible, and sustainable over time.

**Key Topics Include:**

- Techniques for addressing common maintenance challenges.
- Long-term repair strategies to reduce environmental impacts.
- Methods for trail hardening and rehabilitating disused or damaged trails.
- Hands-on fieldwork to practice maintenance techniques.

**Schedule:**

- 8:00 AM: Classroom session
  - 10:30 AM: Break
  - 10:45 AM: Continue session
  - 11:45 AM: Test
  - 12:00 PM: Lunch (provided)
  - 12:30 PM: Outdoor session (maintenance drills)
  - 3:30 PM: Final comments and wrap-up
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**Crew Leadership**

The final day is dedicated to leadership skills and practical application, offering participants the chance to lead a crew in real-world trail work. This outdoor session emphasizes team management, clear

communication, and efficient task delegation.

**Key Activities Include:**

- Leadership exercises designed to build confidence and team dynamics.
- Managing trail construction or maintenance projects with a team.
- Final review and feedback from instructors.

**Schedule:**

- 8:00 AM: Session One (trailhead briefing and preparation)
  - 10:45 AM: Session Two (field leadership on the trail)
  - 12:00 PM: Lunch (provided)
  - 12:30 PM: Session Three (practical leadership and wrap-up tasks)
  - 3:30 PM: Final comments, course review, and certificate presentation
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**What to Bring**

Participants should come prepared for both classroom and outdoor activities:

- Notebook and pen for taking notes.
- Comfortable, durable work boots or shoes.
- Work gloves.
- Weather-appropriate clothing for outdoor sessions, as activities will proceed rain or shine.
- A willingness to learn, collaborate, and engage in hands-on trail work!

This course is your opportunity to deepen your understanding of trail sustainability and gain practical skills to enhance your trail projects. **Space is limited, so register early to secure your spot!**