Thankful to Complete the Trail...

At a press conference on November 17, The Trail Foundation launched our "Campaign for the Trail."

The $5-million "Campaign for the Trail" includes a $3 million capital fundraising effort for completing the Trail. Funds raised will go directly to the construction of a 1.1-mile section in the Trail, from the east side of the Austin American-Statesman building to Lakeshore Park. Almost half of the route will be on land and the remainder will be a boardwalk-type structure running along the shoreline. The City of Austin estimates the construction of this portion of the Trail funded by our public-private partnership will begin in early 2012, and it will take an estimated 18 to 24 months to complete.

TTF has received donations and firm commitments totaling $2.4 million, to date for "Campaign for the Trail." Lead donors contributing to the "Campaign for the Trail" include: Austin Parks Foundation, CDK Riverside LLC, Griffin Davis and Heather Keating, Michael & Susan Dell Foundation, Luci Baines Johnson, Jones Energy, Bill Kerr, Cheryl and Walt Penn, The Charles and Betti Saunders Foundation, The Texas Gas ONEOK Foundation, Whataburger/Lynne Dobson and Greg Wooldridge and all members of The Trail Foundation board.

"The Trail Foundation is delighted to partner with the city and people of
Austin to help complete, enhance and preserve Austin's crown jewel," Susan Rankin, executive director of The Trail Foundation, said. "We are tremendously grateful to our generous early contributors, and we thank them all for helping to kick off this campaign with a bang. We now encourage all Central Texans to give what they can to help finish the Trail on the southeast side to truly connect East and West Austin."

We invite you to join us on the journey to complete the Trail!

Decker the Halls...

Still in that turkey coma? Or maybe all those pies got the better of you? How about lacing up those running shoes, pinning on a bib and racing some of your friends around Decker Lake! Only 12 days until the Austin Runner's Club (ARC) annual Decker Challenge. They are capping the number of registrants this year, but there are still a few slots left for this holiday classic - a great way to gear up for the holidays and support The Trail Foundation. Click here to register (fees will increase tomorrow, December 1).

We are truly honored to be this year's race beneficiary...Thanks, ARC!!

Not interested in running? Come help us cheer the runners on at the Mile 6 water station. TTF needs several volunteers for our water stop - please e-mail Jenny today if you're willing to help. Thanks!

Trail Work

We would like to extend a great big Trail Foundation "THANK YOU!" to
this AMD corporate volunteer group. They spent their morning spreading 20 cubic yards of mulch around live oaks close to where the new Boardwalk will make landfall on the south side of the Trail. It was a tough, dirty job… but AMD was willing to get it done - thanks, team!

Waggener Edstrom employees volunteering on a brisk fall morning.

Our thanks also go to Waggener Edstrom for donating their time and resources to support TTF. On November 4th this energetic group braved the water in kayaks on a very cool morning to pick up trash that had collected along the banks of the lake. In addition, another crew rolled up their sleeves, donned garden gloves and dug in to get two gardens ready for their new adopters. Great job, everyone!

Remember last year's cool Trail Shirt?

Join us at Luke's Locker on Wednesday, December 7th for the unveiling of the NEW Trail shirt! 100% of all Trail shirt proceeds are generously
donated to TTF. In addition to the new Trail swag there's lots of fun to be had:

- social 5K run at 6:00 p.m.
- Jason Bales and The Charmers will play from 6:30 - 8:00 p.m.
- food and drinks
- 20% discount from 5:00 p.m. until close
- Nike shoe raffle.

Now, that's a PARTY! Hope to see you there.

Almost there...

We hope you have noticed the improvements we are making at the Johnson Creek trailhead, a.k.a. "the Rock." Our thanks go to Bosse & Associates who did an outstanding job designing this renovation. Here's what we've done and where we go from here:

- The Trail was widened just east of the trailhead to accommodate the large numbers of bikers, runners, walkers, strollers & dogs that cruise by this spot.

- Beautiful curved limestone retaining walls incorporating two sets of steps were constructed at the trailhead to give Trail lovers better access to the lakeshore below.

- A bank of twelve geo-cooled water fountains was installed at the west end of the trailhead and will serve thousands of Trail visitors, especially on hot Texas days. These water fountains are under a new shade structure and will also benefit from new native shade trees that will replace trees that had brittle, failing branches.

- Two large gabion rainwater filtration collection devices were constructed on the west side of the trailhead to collect rainwater runoff from MoPac above. This water will flow to the large stone-edged rainwater garden situated on the west side of the trailhead.

- An irrigation system has also been installed to insure the native landscaping will thrive. The native flowering perennials and trees
will be added when City water restrictions allow new plantings. The rainwater garden will be a gorgeous gathering spot in the spring!

- In early 2012, seven granite blocks will be placed at the trailhead providing additional informal stretching and visiting spots for Trail visitors. The blocks were chosen as a reflection to "the Rock" which is the original granite historical marker block. The new granite blocks will be in an axis with "the Rock" and will be engraved with the names of major donors to the project. Please contact Jenny for information on remaining available sponsorships.

- We are busy working with Studio 8 to design and permit the new restroom which will be across the street just east of Johnson Creek. We'll keep you posted as this project progresses.