

Volunteer Trail Surveyor Handbook



Thanks for volunteering to explore trails for Local Motion's Trail Finder project! Volunteers are the backbone of our work and your efforts will help us in our efforts to map trails throughout the state. As a trail surveyor, you will be *collecting GPS data*, *taking notes* on trail information, and *capturing photographs* of the trail. This handbook is designed to help you with these three tasks. Please take a moment to review before embarking on your excursion.

OVERVIEW

The Trail Finder project seeks to inventory all publicly-accessible hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing trails in the state. Along with a map and photos of the trail, this resource will contain valuable information about the trail surface, length, available amenities, and directions to get there. All of this information is presented in a user-friendly and searchable website. The site first launched in 2008 in Chittenden County and has since expanded to more parts of Vermont. Visit <http://trailfinder.info> to learn more.

YOUR ROLE AS A VOLUNTEER

As a volunteer of the Trail Finder project, you are a *Trail Surveyor*. Your role is to collect information on *publicly-accessible* trails. As a representative of Local Motion in the field, you may encounter trail users who are curious about the work that you are doing. Feel free to tell them about this exciting project. Please also remember that we are attempting to foster good relations with landowners and trail enthusiasts. If anyone has concerns about the way trails are publicized on the site, please have them contact Local Motion staff directly.

PICKING UP AND RETURNING SURVEY MATERIALS

At your convenience, schedule a date for your surveying excursion. On or before that day, stop by your local pick-up location to get your survey materials. You will receive:

- GPS unit (with spare batteries)
- Trail Information Collection Worksheet (1 per trail)
- Volunteer Trail Surveyor Handbook (this document)

Please provide these items yourself:

- Pen or pencil
- Camera
- Clipboard (optional)

Of course, you'll also want your typical trail gear, including water, snacks, and clothing appropriate for the conditions. You can choose to do all of your trails at once, or to do them one at a time. Since we have a limited number of GPS units, it is important to return them in a timely fashion. ***Please return the unit to the pick-up location within a week.*** Trail Information Collection Worksheets can be submitted afterward if you need more time.

If you have any questions about volunteering, please don't hesitate to contact Todd Taylor at Local Motion - 802-861-2700x104 or todd@localmotion.org.

COLLECTING GPS DATA

For some of you, this is your first experience using a Global Positioning System (GPS). For others, you are knowledgeable and have done GPS work before. Either way, collecting GPS data for this project will be easy and fun!

Here is an outline of the steps involved:

1. Turn on GPS unit
2. Wait for sufficient satellite signal (unit will tell you when it's ready)
3. Walk the entire length of the trail
4. Collect track data (automatically done as you walk the trail)
5. Mark waypoints (done manually, see section below)
6. Have fun!

To ensure accurate data collection, *please keep the GPS out in front of you with a clear path to the sky. Please do not carry the unit in your pocket or backpack.*

Take a look at the diagrams below to familiarize yourself with the buttons on the GPS. You can turn the unit on and off with the Power button (lower button on the right). Scroll through pages (signal, map, odometer, menu) using the Page button (upper button on the right). Once the unit tells you it has a strong satellite signal, scroll to the map page to see your data.

GARMIN Quick Start Guide

eTrex[®] HC series

Vista HCx, Legend HCx, Summit HC, and Venture HC

(eTrex Vista HCx shown)

Using the Keypad

- POWER/Backlight key**—press and hold to turn the unit on or off. Press and release to adjust the backlighting, view the date or time, and view the battery capacity.
- IN/OUT Zoom keys**—from the Map page, press to zoom in or out. From any other page, press to scroll up or down a list.
- MENU/FIND key**—press and release to view options for a page. Press twice to view the Main Menu. Press and hold to display the Find Menu.
- QUIT/PAGE key**—press to cycle through the main pages. Press and release to cancel data entry or exit a page. Press and hold to turn the electronic compass on or off (Vista HCx and Summit HC only).
- ENTER/ROCKER key**—press and release to enter selected options and data or confirm on-screen messages. Press and hold to mark your current location as a waypoint. Move up, down, right, or left to move through lists; select fields, on-screen buttons, or icons; enter data; or to move the map panning arrow.
Press down to **ENTER**. Move to the side or up or down to scroll, move the cursor, or increase or decrease values.

WARNING: See the *Important Safety and Product Information* sheet in the product box for product warnings and other important information.

Getting Started

To install the batteries:

1. Remove the battery cover from the back of the unit. Turn the D-Ring 1/4 turn counter-clockwise and pull the cover away.
2. Insert two AA batteries.
3. Replace the battery cover, turning the D-Ring 1/4 turn clockwise to lock in place.

To turn on the eTrex:

1. Press and hold **POWER**. A tone sounds, and the Introduction page appears, followed by the Satellite page. The GPS receiver begins searching for satellite signals. When the receiver has signals from at least three satellites, the display at the top of the page indicates position accuracy and location coordinates.
2. Press **QUIT** repeatedly until the Map page appears. You are now ready to begin GPS-aided navigation.

To adjust the backlight level:

1. Press and quickly release **POWER** to open the backlight adjustment slider.
2. Press up on the **ROCKER** to increase the brightness, or press down to decrease.
3. Press **ENTER** or **QUIT** to close the backlight adjustment window.

COLLECTING GPS DATA (CONT.)

Collecting Tracks

The most critical part of the map are the lines showing where the trail is. Each GPS unit **automatically collects and saves these tracks**. You should see these lines on the screen as you move around. If not, try zooming in (middle button on the left).

Marking Waypoints

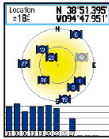
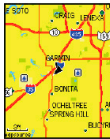
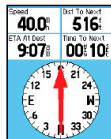
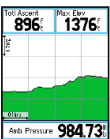
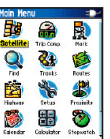
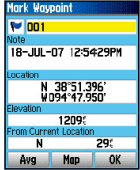
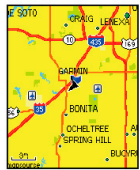
It is helpful to mark special locations on your trail, such as the trailhead, parking area, information kiosks, restrooms, scenic views, etc. To do this with the GPS unit, you'll **manually make waypoints**. Refer to the Marking a Waypoint instructions below.

As you mark each waypoint, you'll see an ID number associated with that point ("001" for instance). **Write this number** on your Trail Info Collection Worksheet along with a description of this point of interest, then save the point on the GPS. Mark as many waypoints as you'd like!

That's It!

Simply walk the entire length of your trail with the GPS turned on and mark special points of interest. Once your GPS data collection is complete, turn off the unit and return it to us. We will retrieve your collected data and double check its accuracy.

*** If you are surveying another trail before returning the unit**, simply turn off the unit between trails. The GPS has plenty of memory to store your tracks and waypoints, so don't worry about that. One thing to take note of, however, is your battery level. Always make sure you have a spare set.

Main Pages	Marking a Waypoint
<p>The Vista HCx or Summit HC has four recurring main pages and one that shows only with each start-up. The Legend HCx or Venture HC has three main pages. Press and release QUIT to cycle through the pages.</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><div style="text-align: center;"><p>Satellite Page</p><p>Satellite Page—appears only at start-up and shows the GPS receiver status, satellite locations, satellite signal strength, and the receiver's current location.</p></div><div style="text-align: center;"><p>Map Page</p><p>Map Page—shows a detailed map of the area around your current location.</p></div></div> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;"><div style="text-align: center;"><p>Compass Page</p><p>Compass Page—guides you to your destination.</p></div><div style="text-align: center;"><p>Altimeter Page</p><p>Altimeter Page—tracks elevation and pressure. (Vista HCx and Summit HC only.)</p></div><div style="text-align: center;"><p>Main Menu</p><p>Main Menu—contains advanced features and settings.</p></div></div>	<p>To mark your current location:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Press and hold ENTER.2. To accept the waypoint with the default information, select OK, and press ENTER. <p>OR</p> <p>To change any information on the Mark Waypoint page, select the appropriate field, and press ENTER to open the on-screen keypad. After entering and confirming your changes, select OK, and press ENTER.</p>  <p>To create a new waypoint using the Map Page:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Open the Map page, and use the ROCKER to move the pointer (⬅️) to the map item you want to mark as a waypoint.2. Press and quickly release ENTER to capture the pointer location. Select Save, and press ENTER to save the item as a waypoint. <p>OR</p> <p>If the map item selected contains no information, a "No map information at this point. Do you want to create a user waypoint here?" message appears. Select Yes, and press ENTER.</p> 

TAKING NOTES

While exploring your trail, please observe the various features and facilities that trail users find important. Your *Trail Information Collection Worksheet* outlines the essential details that we would like to convey on the Trail Finder. Please take this worksheet with you on the trail and fill in the information that you find. You may want to write full descriptions of particular attributes once you return home. Just take a few notes on the trail and put your thoughts on paper later.

Once you have all of your trail information gathered, *please assist us further by typing your notes into our online form.* This form can be found on the Get Involved page of the Trail Finder site (www.trailfinder.info/volunteer.php). If you do not have internet access, you may simply return your handwritten notes to us.

CAPTURING TRAIL PHOTOS

Photos help Trail Finder visitors get a sense of the scenery and type of trail they will encounter. We ask that you use your own camera (digital is preferred). Please take high-resolution photos and email them to todd@localmotion.org. We will credit the photos to your name.

Important visual information to look for:

- Trailhead signage
- Trail surface information (is it singletrack, logging road, paved path?)
- Scenery (is it in a forest, around a lake, on a mountain?)
- Scenic views, wildlife, interesting plants, etc.
- Special points of interest (camping area, summit, etc.)



THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!

www.trailfinder.info