

## **Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA)**

**Policy:** IATA Awards

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### **1.0 Purpose and Rationale**

In recent years, some Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA) awards had begun to lose their significance due to inconsistent presentation. The IATA Board of Directors has determined to review existing IATA awards and create a policy that will enhance the relevance and profile of all awards, clarify criteria for each one, and provide more detailed direction for the award process.

### **2.0 Public Awards**

Public awards may or may not be given on an annual basis, determined as fields of nominees dictate. Awards will be given selectively in order to emphasize and uphold the full integrity of each award.

*2.1 Ray Zillmer Award* – As the highest honor given by the IATA, the Ray Zillmer Award recognizes individuals whose work exemplifies the long-range, big-picture ideals that inspired/inspire the establishment of the Ice Age Trail. Nominees have performed at least two of the following actions:

- Served the Ice Age Trail for many years
- Markedly elevated public awareness of the Trail
- Secured significant funding

- Significantly advanced the Trail in some other way

Nomination: Written nominations are submitted to any staff member or member of the Board of Directors. Nominations will be directed to the Executive Director, for additional input, then to the Board President for distribution to the ad hoc Award Selection Committee.

Selection: See section 4.1.

Presentation: Presented publicly by the Executive Director and the Board President at a statewide Trail event, celebration, public event or media event.

*2.2 Henry S. Reuss Award* – A prestigious award, the Henry S. Reuss Award recognizes work performed by individuals through government channels on behalf of the Trail at multiple levels. It emphasizes the recipient’s ability to:

- Affect influential parties to take an active role in the mission of the IATA
- Maintain an ongoing public relationship as a Friend of the Trail
- Bring about significant change for Trail mission advancement
- Change the political climate to benefit the Trail

Nomination: Written nominations are submitted to any staff member or member of the Board of Directors. Nominations will be directed to the Executive Director, for additional input, then to the Board President for distribution to the ad hoc Award Selection Committee.

Selection: See section 4.1.

Presentation: Presented publicly by the Executive Director and the President of the Board of Directors at a statewide Trail event or celebration, public event, media event or a gathering of the recipient’s peers.

*2.3 Public Partner Award* – The recipient of this award:

- Is an individual rather than a body of government
- Works for a public, governmental agency
- Has provided dedicated, ongoing service for the Trail, above and beyond regular duties

Nomination: Written nominations are submitted to any staff member or member of the Board of Directors. Nominations will be directed to the Executive Director, for additional input, then to the Board President for distribution to the ad hoc Award Selection Committee.

Selection: See section 4.1.

Presentation: This award will be presented at a gathering of the recipient’s peers.

*2.4 Friend of the Ice Age Trail Award* – This award recognizes foundations, businesses and other organizations for their strong support of the Ice Age Trail. A recipient has accomplished one or more of the following:

- Given a single sizable monetary contribution

- Given significant monetary contributions over many years
- Enabled new capacity within the IATA through financial contribution
- Partnered with the IATA in another significant way

Nomination: Written nominations are submitted to any staff member or member of the Board of Directors. Nominations will be directed to the Executive Director, for additional input, then to the Board President for distribution to the ad hoc Award Selection Committee.

Selection: See section 4.1.

Presentation: Presented publicly by the Executive Director or the President of the Board of Directors at a statewide Trail event or celebration, public event, media event or recipient's choice of location.

### 3.0 Internal Awards

3.1 *In the Mud Award* – Awarded to IATA member volunteers who display dedication to the mission and goals of the IATA and a willingness to roll up their sleeves on behalf of the Ice Age Trail. An In the Mud recipient:

- Consistently shows up at workdays and dives into the dirty work
- Makes significant efforts to establish the Ice Age Trail
- Epitomizes the bedrock volunteer spirit responsible for building trail

Nomination: For recognizing contributions to a specific chapter, chapter leaders request nominations from chapter members toward the end of each year. For recognizing contributions on a Trailwide basis, any IATA member may submit a nomination to staff.

Selection: Chapter winners will be selected by chapter vote at December or January chapter meetings, with a maximum of two recipients per chapter per year. Chapter leaders then forward to staff, by February 1, the name of the award winner along with a list of specific tasks the volunteer completed during the past year and how In the Mud criteria was met. For those nominated for Trailwide efforts, all nominations received by February 1 of each year will be reviewed by staff, who will select winners by majority vote.

Presentation: Presented at the IATA annual membership conference. If the award winner cannot attend the conference, the award is delivered via mail.

3.2 *Spirit Stick Award* – This statewide award symbolizes long-term dedication and volunteer service to the Ice Age Trail and is presented to only one recipient per year. Spirit Stick nominees:

- Exhibit a passion for the Trail that has become a way of life
- Lead by example and inspire those around them
- Carry out their service in a spirit of cooperation, optimism and enthusiasm

Nomination: A Spirit Stick nomination form is submitted to any staff member by any IATA member. Nominations are valid for three years from date of submission. Addendums/updates to a nomination form do not reset the original date of receipt for that nomination.

Selection: All nominations received by February 1 of each year will be reviewed by staff, who will

select a winner by majority vote.

**Presentation:** Presented at the IATA annual membership conference, this award is a hand-carved walking stick depicting the Wood Spirit in human form. The Spirit Stick is a traveling trophy that remains with the recipient for one year. Each recipient's name and the year of their award are carved into the stick.

**3.3 *Years of Service Award*** – Longevity of active volunteer service is awarded at 10-, 20- and 30-year milestones.

**Selection:** Chapter leaders work with their chapter's active volunteers to determine "active volunteer since" dates which are forwarded to staff for entry into a database. When records show a volunteer has been active for 10, 20 or 30 years, staff members review the volunteer's record in the IATA's volunteer hours database and ask chapter leaders to verify that the volunteer has indeed contributed consistently over the span of the award.

**Presentation:** Presented at the IATA annual membership conference. If the award winner cannot attend the conference, the award is delivered via mail.

**3.4 *Excellence in Staff Service*** – From time to time, the Board of Directors may recognize staff members who have exhibited exceptional and long-term dedication to the Trail mission; fostered positive, productive relationships between staff, volunteers, partners and communities; and served as an exemplary "face of the Ice Age Trail."

**Presentation:** Presented by the Board President at the IATA Annual Conference or recipient's choice of location.

**3.5 *Mammoth Society*** – Also categorized as the IATA's most prestigious level of membership, this award grants lifetime membership and is reserved for extraordinary contributions by an individual in one or more of the following categories:

- Those who have given a significant planned gift to the IATA
- Those who have facilitated significant land access or given major monetary donations
- Volunteers who have given 30 years of "active" membership or served on the IATA board of directors for at least two full terms, or made other extraordinary contributions.

**Nomination:** Written nominations are submitted at any time to the Development Committee for recommendation to the Board.

**Selection:** The Board will review recommended nominees and grant approval to qualified candidates.

**Presentation:** May be presented at the IATA annual membership conference or at the location of recipient's choice or delivered via mail.

**3.6 *Leadership Memorial*** – The Leadership Memorial category recognizes longtime Trail leaders who have passed away, whether they were Board members or Directors Emeritus. This expands IATA leadership recognition beyond Directors Emeritus.

Nomination: Written nominations are submitted at any time to the Development Committee for recommendation to the Board.

Selection: The Board will review recommended nominees and grant approval to qualified candidates.

Presentation: The Leadership Memorial award is given to a member of the recipient's family at a Trail event or private gathering.

*3.7 NPS VIP Program* –All IATA volunteers are eligible for the National Park Service Volunteers In Parks (VIP) program. Every volunteer in the IATA database has a "career hours count" that began January 1, 2007. Volunteers earn awards (e.g. certificates, pins, hats, shirts and jackets) as they log hours in increments of 100, 250, 500, 1000 and beyond. Additionally, each time a volunteer passes a 250-hour increment, they receive a federal Interagency Volunteer Pass that waives entrance fees at all federally administered recreation sites (national parks, national forests, etc.) for one year.

Selection: The IATA tracks volunteer hours, through chapter and other volunteer event reporting, to identify these award recipients.

Presentation: Presented at the IATA annual membership conference. If the award winner cannot attend the conference, the award is delivered via mail.

## **4.0 Process and Timeline**

*4.1 Public Awards* – This awards process timeline is formulated using current Mammoth Tales publication and annual membership conference dates as process milestones. The timeline may change if the scheduling of these events is significantly altered.

*4.1.1 Call for Nominations* – This process allows six weeks between the call for nominations during the first week of August and the closing, the third week of September. Nominations will be solicited via Mammoth Tales, IATA website, email to all members, available social media, public news releases, and perhaps a special mailing to all members.

*4.1.2 Selection Process* – Prior to the nomination deadline, an ad hoc Award Selection Committee will be determined and the selection meeting date scheduled to occur within a few weeks after the close of nominations.

The ad hoc Award Selection Committee will be determined on an annual basis by the Executive Director, using the following criteria: the Committee will consist of five members that represent the diverse constituency involved with the Trail and include the IATA Executive Director or staff designee, and four IATA constituents (e.g. a mix of Board members, former Board members, active IATA members or public partners.) If a Committee member is later determined to also be an award nominee, the Executive Director or Board President will select an alternate to serve on the Committee.

A packet containing all of the nominations will be sent to each member of the Committee at least one week prior to the selection meeting to allow time for thorough review. The Committee will review all nominations and select the nominee who best fills the stated criteria for each award given.

4.1.3 *Promotional / Organizational Phase* – Adequate time will be provided between recipient selection and presentation events, to allow for proper notification of winners, to schedule presentations, promote the award recipients through media channels, and have awards created.

Once recipients are selected, the Executive Director or Board President will contact each recipient by phone to deliver the news. After each of the winners has been notified verbally, formal notification letters will be mailed to all recipients before any public announcements are made. Public promotion will occur through various IATA media channels, including Mammoth Tales, website, email, social media, special mailings and public news releases, especially in the regions where the recipients reside.

4.1.4 *Public Awards Process Timeline*

Last week of June	July	1 <sup>st</sup> week Aug	3 <sup>rd</sup> week Sept	2 <sup>nd</sup> week Oct	Nov	Dec	1 <sup>st</sup> week Jan	3 <sup>rd</sup> week Feb	3 <sup>rd</sup> week April
Deadline to place call announcement into Fall MT		MT mailed: Call for nominations opens	Closing deadline for nominations	Selection committee meets. Winners notified.	Write and submit winner profiles for early Jan. deadline of Spring MT			MT mailed, announcing winners	Awards presented
							Promote recipients and presentations beginning 3 <sup>rd</sup> week of Jan.		

4.2 *Internal Awards* – Because nomination processes and timelines for several of the internal awards — including In the Mud, Spirit Stick, Years of Service and NPS VIP awards — were established and in practice before the creation of this policy, the processes and timelines are detailed in the descriptions of each award above and are separate from those for public awards. That said, internal award promotion and nomination solicitation should always be considered when efforts are made to promote and solicit nominations for public awards as detailed in section 4.1.