

# Trail Happenings

## Steward Moab

### What is Steward Moab?

Steward Moab is a newly established nonprofit organization created to continue and expand the **Moab Trail Ambassador Program**. Its leadership team is the same group that built the Moab Trail Ambassador Program into an award-winning, nationally and globally recognized model for visitor engagement, stewardship, and community collaboration. As a result, the program's long-standing partnerships, trusted relationships, and collaborative leadership approach remain firmly in place as Steward Moab moves forward.

Steward Moab leadership has helped launch a variety of projects that support Moab's recreation community and improve the dissemination of important visitor information. These efforts include the Back From Beyond Podcast, a visitor planning video tool, the Moab Guide Summit, and a regional human waste education initiative - each designed to assist the community in enhancing visitor experiences and protect the landscape that makes the Moab area unique.

In addition to continuing cornerstone programming, Steward Moab leadership is actively developing long-term sustainability strategies to support and expand its work. Volunteer opportunities are on the horizon, and the organization looks forward to deepening community engagement through meaningful partnerships and hands-on involvement.

### Moab Human Waste Initiative

The Moab Human Waste Initiative was developed in response to growing concerns about solid waste in Grand County. Steward Moab takes a multi-pronged approach: educating visitors on trails, providing resources to local businesses, and developing the "Wag Bag" disposal system. The initiative also engages the public with fun, memorable social media posts that spread awareness about keeping Moab's trails human waste free.

This work was carried out in collaboration with many partners and reflects the community's commitment to maintaining safe, clean, and accessible trails for both visitors and local residents.



Signup for updates via the Steward Moab Newsletter

### Back from Beyond Podcast

*Back From Beyond* is a compelling local podcast that shares the real-life rescue stories of Grand County Search and Rescue in Moab's rugged backcountry. Produced by Steward Moab in partnership with GCSAR and KZMU Moab Community Radio, the series goes beyond the headlines, featuring in-depth conversations with rescuers and the adventurers they assist. Hosted by Molly Marcello, the podcast highlights courage, teamwork, and the importance of safety and stewardship on public lands. Season One was recognized by Spotify as a 2025 Marathon Show, Instant Hit, and Most Shared Show. Season Two is currently in development. Learn more and listen at [stewardmoab.com](http://stewardmoab.com)



### Plan a Trip to Moab - Visitor Video Series

Steward Moab also houses the visitor planning tool - *The Desert Is Different, Plan a Trip to Moab*. This is a video series designed to help visitors plan for their Moab adventure. The series provides practical guidance on critical trip planning topics such as recreation specific tips, heat safety, hydration, trail preparedness, weather awareness, and respecting fragile desert landscapes. By delivering clear and engaging content, *The Desert Is Different* supports a visitor's experience while encouraging a deep connection to Moab's landscape. Find the free video series on Steward Moab's website: [stewardmoab.com](http://stewardmoab.com)



### Moab Guide Summit

Steward Moab is hosting the 2026 Moab Guide Summit, sponsored by the Canyonlands Natural History Association, bringing together more than 20 agencies, nonprofits, and local stakeholders for a two-day educational event designed for guides, outfitters, and commercial permittees who operate on public lands around Moab. The summit aims to provide timely updates, hands-on learning opportunities, and meaningful connections for those who help visitors experience Moab's natural and cultural resources. More information and registration details are available on the Steward Moab website. Find more information on Steward Moab's website [stewardmoab.com](http://stewardmoab.com)



#### • Pre-event, Day 1 - \$20, limited capacity

The event will begin Wednesday, March 11, with an evening dinner for business owners, managers, and leadership, featuring agency updates and a keynote presentation by LJ Wilde of Huckleberry Hiking (\$20, limited tickets).

#### • Main Event, Day 2 - Free, expanded capacity

The main Guide Day will take place Thursday, March 12, offering free registration for guides and industry professionals, with morning educational presentations, agency tabling, and afternoon field sessions led by land managers and partner organizations.



## From Moab. For Moab: Mad Moose Events

### We Chose This Place

My sister Kylah, my parents, and I built this company together. Four partners. Each of us owns twenty five percent. No outside investors. No board. No silent money behind the curtain. At some point this stopped being a race calendar and became our life. We moved here. We put down roots. We built something as a family and tied it to this town. That decision changes everything. When an event happens here, it is not a line item. It is in our backyard. If something goes sideways, we do not get on a plane and head home. We are already home.

### Family Owned Means Something

When people say family owned, it can feel like a buzzword. For us it is literal. Race day mornings are our family in the dark setting up tents. It is group texts about permits. It is dinner conversations about trail impact and volunteer turnout. It is four equal partners having to agree because all of us are accountable. There is no outside money pushing for more volume. No investor asking why we did not add another thousand runners. Every decision lands on our own household. If the town is frustrated, we hear about it. If the town is proud, we feel that too. We are not a massive operation. When you email, you are talking to one of us. When you check in, you are likely shaking hands with an owner. When you see social posts, they are not scheduled by an agency in another time zone. That proximity matters. It forces you to care more. It forces you to listen. It forces you to think long term instead of just this quarter.

### Why Ownership Matters

There are other companies producing events here. Some are backed by private equity. Some are owned outside the United States. Their responsibility is to investors. Ours is to this place. We believe in supporting American local businesses. We believe family ownership still matters. We believe that if you are going to build something in a town, you should live there, hire there, and reinvest there. This is not about competition. It is about alignment. We are aligned



with Moab because our life is here. When you sign up for one of our races, you are not just registering for an event. You are supporting a small American family owned company that chose Moab and tied its future to this town.

You are supporting shoulder season business. You are supporting trail stewardship. You are supporting local organizations. You are supporting people you will probably see at the grocery store.

That connection matters to us. We hope it matters to you too.

### We Do Not Just Use This Place

The trails are not a backdrop for bib numbers. We do trail work. We coordinate with land managers. We think about erosion, congestion, and long term impact. If we burn out a route for short term growth, we are hurting our own backyard.



That perspective changes how you design a course. It changes how many runners you allow. It changes how you talk about the land. And it extends beyond the trails.



We donate to organizations in town because they are our neighbors. The schools. The nonprofits. The people who make this place run. It is not a campaign. It is part of being here. You cannot separate your business from your community when you actually live in it.

### Tied to This Town

At the end of the day, this is simple for us. We live here. We work here. We are living our lives here. Every decision we make touches the same trails we run on, the same businesses we dine in, the same neighbors we see every week. This is not a portfolio play. It is not a growth strategy built for investors. It is a family owned company rooted in one town. When you register for one of our races, you are supporting a small American business that chose Moab and committed to it. You are supporting trail stewardship. You are supporting shoulder season business. You are supporting a team that has to stand behind its work in real life. That means something to us. If you want to see the people behind it all, we put together a short family video that tells the story of Mad Moose better than words ever could.



Take a few minutes and watch it at [www.madmooseevents.com/](http://www.madmooseevents.com/)

### Supporting Our Local Hotel Partners

Our hotel partners are part of this community too. They hire locally, support local events, and open their doors to runners year after year. If you are coming in for a race, consider staying with one of the properties that reinvests in Moab.