

# Trail Construction: Building in Steep Areas

Water travels along the path of least resistance. That means the steeper the trail, the more prone it is to erosion. To combat this, trail builders use several methods of construction, including side hilling and hardening the tread with stairs.

## SIDE HILL CONSTRUCTION

BEFORE



Erik Mickelson

AFTER

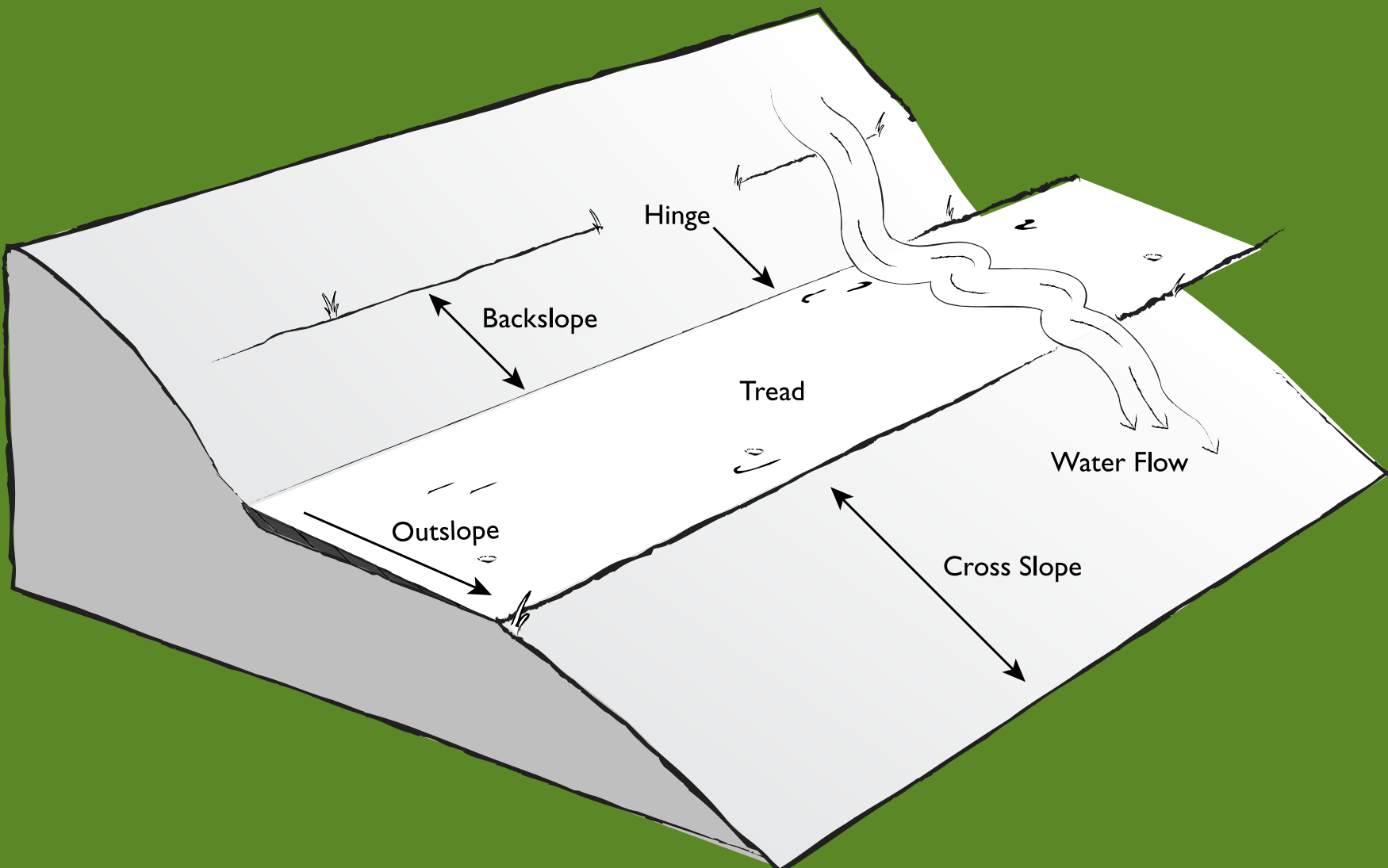


Erik Mickelson

Side hilling is a construction technique that situates the trail perpendicular to the fall line, which is the direction water travels down a slope. It allows water to run across the trail instead of down it, minimizing erosion.



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Joseph Knight

## STAIR CONSTRUCTION



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Stairs are constructed on trails to gain elevation quickly. Steps harden the tread surface to combat erosion.

## STRAIGHT UP THE MOUNTAIN



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If the soil is rocky enough, the character of the trail calls for it, and the user expects it, sometimes the best solution is to route the trail straight up the mountain for a short stint.