

## TRAIL DEFINITION

**OBJECTIVE:** Concentrate use on the trail. Discourage hikers from creating multiple “bootleg” paths and prevent trail widening and associated trampled vegetation, compacted soil and hastened erosion.



Above: closed bootleg trail, brush piled helter-skelter.  
Right: *AMC Complete Guide* (page 157).

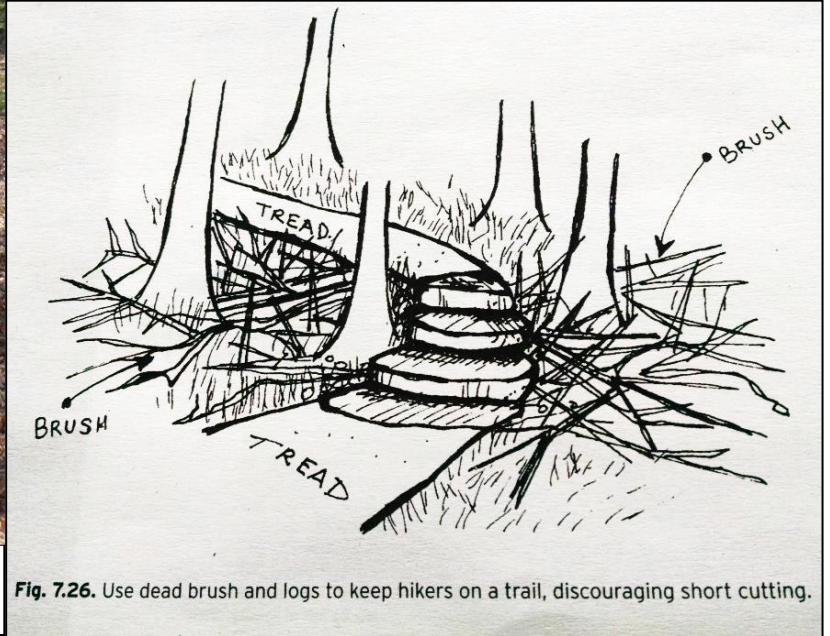


Fig. 7.26. Use dead brush and logs to keep hikers on a trail, discouraging short cutting.

### KEY POINTS:

- Trail users tend to take the path of least resistance. “Brush in” bootleg trails to make them look uninviting; dragging in ugly dead trees and large branches.
- Intermittent wet sections of trail often show signs of widening, or “creep,” as users stray to the higher, drier edge of the trail. This can lead to gulying and erosion. Consider whether drainage is possible (think bleeders, discussed in previous section) or if trail relocation should be considered. Note in your trail report.