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EMS TRANSMISSION  
Instruction Memorandum No.  
Expires: 09/30/2003

To: All State Directors  
Associate State Directors/Affected Deputy State Directors  
State Recreation/Cultural/Engineering/NLCS Program Leads  
Affected Field and District Managers/National Trail related field staff

From: Director, Office of the National Landscape Conservation System

Subject: Trail Contacts and Development of the National Trails Program in FY 2002

**Program Area:** National Scenic and National Historic Trails

**Purpose:** The purpose of this instruction memorandum is to (1) set up a more effective internal and external system of communication and coordination throughout the national trails system and (2) review, develop and establish any needed policies for the Bureau's national scenic and historic trail program through the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) beginning in FY 2002.

**Policy/Action:** This instruction memorandum seeks to establish (1) a set of official national trail contacts in State, district, field and visitor center offices (2) a trail liaison for each national trail and (3) a list of individuals for various national trail issue teams who will review, develop and establish a national trail program and any needed policies within the NLCS.

**Time frame:** Contacts, liaisons and issue team members will be identified by December 31, 2001. A meeting of the trail contacts, liaisons and issue team members and review of the National Scenic and Historic Trails Program and related policies will begin in the spring of 2002.

**Budget Impact:** Travel will be assumed by the Washington Office and State Offices. Time will be negotiated.

**Background:** The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has had administration and management responsibility for several national scenic and national historic trails since the passage of the National Trails System Act in 1968. The agency is now involved with 11 of these congressionally-designated national trails and more are anticipated. With each passing year, that

responsibility has grown, through new trail designations, secretarial assignment for administration, completion of connecting trail segments, inventory and documentation of cultural sites along trails, land acquisitions, increased interagency coordination and cooperation, new programs and laws, funding and volunteer increases, visitor increases, commemorations and many other activities.

Program guidance for national trails, unlike many other BLM programmatic functions, is essentially non-existent. There are no regulations, manuals, handbooks or directives and only minor mention in a departmental manual. Although the lack of any guidance has allowed for maximum flexibility in the field, the results have been a variety of mixed and inconsistent land-use planning and other decisionmaking applications across thousands of miles of these scenic and historic linear landscapes. With the ever-increasing level of public involvement, interagency coordination, complexity of land-use planning and decisionmaking and strong potential for increased future funding, the program clearly needs a basic foundation from which to operate.

Several important changes have taken place, affecting National Trail System and the way the BLM will manage and administer these trails and the program in the future. Since they are congressionally designated, all 11 national scenic and historic trails comprising over 4,000 miles were added to the Bureau's new National Landscape Conservation System in the summer of 2000. They are now in a combined program managed out of WO-172 (NLCS- Wilderness, Rivers and Trails Division), under one program lead, with program support from WO-240 (Cultural Heritage, Fossils and Tribal Coordination Group) and WO-250 (National Recreation Group). This will provide a strong focal point for program direction.

In January, a Memorandum for the Management and Administration of National Historic and Scenic and Historic Trails was signed by BLM, the USFS, NPS, FHWA and the NEA (attached). The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a series of 20 tasks geared toward managing and administering the National Trails System on an interagency basis. These task agreements were prioritized in an interagency trail managers meeting in Denver in May of this year, and steps are being taken that will affect budgets for these trails, policy, training, GIS and other areas, lead by the Federal Interagency Council on Trails for the respective agencies.

An Executive Order (EO 13195), Trails for America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, was also signed this winter, which affects trails of all kinds, but contains several provisions clearly related to the National Trails System (attached). Provisions from this order will likely be included in future guidance and a revised departmental manual in Fiscal Years 2002 (as well as provisions from the MOU.)

Another change includes the Department of the Interior designating BLM as co-administrator with the NPS on the new El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro, affecting BLM in New Mexico. This trail was designated by Congress in October of 2000. Several potential national trails await

Congressional designation within the next year or two, which will add still more responsibility for the BLM. Add-on and other funding is being shifted to those priorities.

With large-scale commemorations every few years, such as the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, and a number of issues regarding trail policy direction, budget and challenge-cost share, data standards and GIS and a number of other programs, it is essential that the agency take the time to develop a realistic, committed and thoughtful approach towards future management of these trails and trail resources. In order to move ahead with this goal, the NLCS Office is requesting the following information:

1. The establishment of Official State Office Contacts, District/Field Office Contacts and Trail Liaisons along each national trail. This request stems from an important agreement in the MOU to establish a network of trail contacts in each agency. This list will be provided to our agency partners. Additionally, the contact list will be used as the way to formalize our internal contacts and better target and communicate important trail program direction, news and information throughout the BLM.
2. A list of interested individuals from the agency who would like to participate in future issue teams. This will be a list of persons who would like the opportunity to help develop the National Trail Program in NLCS for the Bureau. Major issues have been listed where help is needed, but other issues may be suggested along with potential team members. A meeting will be held in spring of 2002 to discuss the issues and direction.

The instructions to submit the official response are attached, including descriptions of the types of work that a contact would do. Each State Office Recreation and Cultural Lead and NLCS lead is asked to work together to coordinate the response in the State Office and in all District and Field Offices.

**Manual/Handbook Sections Affected:** None.

**Coordination:** This Instruction Memorandum was coordinated between Geoff Middaugh, Rivers, Wilderness and Trails Group Manager National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) Office, Marilyn Nickels, Cultural, Fossil Resources and Tribal Coordination Group Manager and Rodger Schmitt, National Recreation Group Manager.

**Contact:** Direct any questions and the response to Deb Salt, National Trails Coordinator, (909) 697-5309.

Thank you for your assistance in improving this important BLM program.

1 Attachment

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide name, title and office location for each individual below:

(1) Name one **Primary State Office-level National Trails Program Contact** (or 2 if you choose to separate out the Historic Trails Contact from the Scenic Trails Contact). Name **other key State Office National Trail Contacts**. (See descriptions below)

(2) For every office with national trails, name a **Primary Field/District Office-level National Trails Program Contact** National Trails Program Contact (including 3-tier organization at District Office-level) (or 2 if you choose to separate out the Historic Trails Contact from the Scenic Trails Contact). Name **other key District/Field Office National Trail Contacts**. (See descriptions below)

(3) Name your **National Trail Visitor Center Manager** . Name **other key Visitor Center Contacts**. (See descriptions below)

(4) Name a **National Trail Liaison** for the specific trail your State has been assigned who will represent the entire length of the trail across State boundaries. (See descriptions and list below)

(5) Identify, by issue, **any** individuals interested or skilled in leading or participating on a **National Trail Issue Team**. These teams will help construct any necessary guidance needed to create the foundation of a National Trails Program. These issues stem from the MOU, Executive Order and programmatic concerns from the field. These will be discussed with trail contacts, liaisons and potential team members identified at a national meeting this spring.

#### National Trail Issue Teams

Issues:

Data Management (Data standards, GIS, GPS, RMIS, FIMMS, data dictionaries)

National Trails Training Course Development

Interagency Trail Administration and Management Handbook

Coordinated Trail Budgets

Visitor Center Management

Interpretation and Education

Trailshed Planning and Management (linear landscapes, viewsheds, historic context, corridors)

Others

## DESCRIPTIONS:

### Function of Primary State Office National Trail Contact:

- Person appointed in the State Office who will be the official contact to WO for national trails and trail issues.
- More than one may be appointed per State for if there are both National Scenic and National Historic Trails in that State and a separation of the functions is desired.
- This individual should be the program expert. Will work with, but may not necessarily be the S.O. NLCS representative.
- Person who will be responsible for program oversight regarding budget coordination, policy, State-level trail group contact, data calls, attends national and trailwide meetings, and other program oversight functions for the field.
- Works as liaison between WO and any other State Office Personnel involved in national trail management or administration.
- Works with various agency trail administrators, who are appointed at the departmental level.
- Works with trail liaisons (defined below) to get clarification of issues and in data collection or information dissemination as needed.

### Function of other key State Office National Trail Contacts:

- Wishes to be involved in the program and on e-mailing lists.
- May actively participate in some facet of the program, but does not typically lead the program.
- May be the NLCS representative for the State.

Primary District or Field-level Contacts are the individuals responsible for carrying out the provisions of the National Trail System Act and related laws and Executive Orders. They keep data, inventory, plan, conduct projects, maintain the trail and work with constituent groups, among many other tasks. They are key contacts internally and externally for the national trails, and effect all of the on-the ground accomplishments in the National Trails System, through staff, volunteers, and seasonals and personnel-sharing with other agencies.

Other key individuals are those on the District or Field Office staff who play a role in the management of National Trails, but may not assume or are not assigned full program responsibility for them.

Primary Visitor Center Contacts are the Visitor Center managers.

Other key individuals are the staff that are responsible for programs which may involve a key issue area on the visitor center staff.

## Trail Liaisons

To better organize this system of contacts and trail liaisons, as with the 2002 AWP, each State will be assigned responsibility for a particular trail- a “target trail”. This is based on location of trail, largest mileage, Visitor Center location, administration responsibilities, demonstrated commitment and balancing workload. This ensures that someone will always focus on every trail, despite funding or emphasis. It also ensures that we will focus on each trail as a whole, rather than at the FO, DO or SO boundary. This table shows each State and target trail assigned. The trail liaison must live and work in that State, and will serve in the overall vision of that trail across State boundaries.

States and target trail (liaison housed):

AK- Iditarod  
AZ- San Juan Bautista  
CA- Pacific Crest  
ID- Nez Perce  
MT- Lewis and Clark  
NM- El Camino de Tierra Adentro  
NV- California  
OR- Oregon  
UT- Pony Express  
WY- Mormon Pioneer  
and Continental Divide

## Trail Liaison

- One liaison per trail. Individual must be located in the State assigned responsibility for that trail.
- Preferably a field office level staff person, but may be the same as the State Office Contact (defined above).
- Serves as trail-wide liaison with official trail administrator as needed.
- Serves as trail-wide liaison with primary State Office trail contact in each affected State as needed.
- Serves as trail-wide liaison with National Trails Coordinator as needed.
- Serves as trail-wide liaison with primary trail organizations.
- Attends annual interagency national trail administration/management meeting.
- Attends annual trail-wide meeting- may help to coordinate as available.
- Affiliate member of Federal Interagency Council on Trails- may attend one trail council meeting(s) as available (2 days).

- Communicates occasionally with the primary BLM field trail contacts along entire length of the trail-informally disseminating information, retrieving information-electronically or on conference calls as needed.
- Must have demonstrated high interest in the trail, knowledgeable about trail issues, be able to commit 2-3 weeks of time to this task each year; needs to be excellent communicator, team player.
- May incidentally participate on and/or leads an issue team.
- Will be the well informed expert; may be able and potentially asked to train others.
- Collateral duty, less than 5 percent of workload. Similar to Leave No Trace coordinators or cave. coordinators. Will assess value of position after the first year.