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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Subject

6280 – Management of National Scenic and Historic Trails and Trails Under Study or Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation (Public)

1. Explanation of Material Transmitted: This manual release corrects the subject function code of this manual from 6260 to Manual 6280, Management of National Scenic and Historic Trails and Trails Under Study or Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation (Public). The draft version of this manual was released in Instruction Memorandum 2012-114 (I) as the 6260/6270 National Scenic and Historic Trails Management Manual.

This manual is one of three manuals in the National Trails System manual series (BLM Manuals 8353, 6250, and 6280). The 6280 manual provides the line manager and program staff professionals with policies for the management of National Scenic and Historic Trails. Specifically, this manual identifies requirements for the management of trails undergoing National Trail Feasibility Study; trails that are recommended as suitable for National Trail designation through the National Trail Feasibility Study; inventory, planning, management, and monitoring of designated National Scenic and Historic Trails; and data and records management requirements for National Scenic and Historic Trails.

2. Reports Required: Resource Management Planning schedule and annual reports.
3. Material Superseded: H-1601-1 Land Use Planning Handbook, Appendix C, IIIA 1, 2, and 3, regarding National Scenic and Historic Trails (03/11/05), and manual release number 6-137.
4. Filing Instructions: File as directed below.

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6280  
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*/s/ Carl Rountree*

Assistant Director,  
National Landscape Conservation System  
and Community Partnerships  
Bureau of Land Management



UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

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Subject

6260/6270 – Management of National Scenic and Historic Trails and Trails Under Study or Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation (Public)

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1. Explanation of Material Transmitted: This release transmits one of three manuals in the National Trails System manual series (BLM Manuals 8353, 6250, and 6260/6270). This manual provides the line manager and program staff professionals with policies for the management of National Scenic and Historic Trails. Specifically, this manual identifies requirements for the management of trails undergoing National Trail Feasibility Study; trails that are recommended as suitable for National Trail designation through the National Trail Feasibility Study; inventory, planning, management, and monitoring of designated National Scenic and Historic Trails; and data and records management requirements for National Scenic and Historic Trails.
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*/s/ Mike Pool*

Acting Director,  
Bureau of Land Management

6280 – MANAGEMENT OF NATIONAL SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAILS  
AND TRAILS UNDER STUDY OR RECOMMENDED AS SUITABLE FOR  
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## **Chapter 1. Overview**

### **A. National Trail Designation Process**

Under the provisions of the National Trails System Act of 1968 (NTSA), two acts of Congress are normally required before a trail is designated as a National Scenic or National Historic Trail (National Trail). First, Congress acts to authorize a National Trail Feasibility Study (trail study), pursuant to the NTSA Section 5(b) and (c). This authorization includes assigning the responsibility for conducting the study to either the Secretary of Agriculture or the Interior. The authorized Secretary then assigns the study to the Federal agency most likely to administer the trail (interagency trailwide leadership – see National Trail administration under item D.5 of this chapter) in the event it is designated as a National Trail by Congress. Whether an agency is assigned to study or administer the trail is based on a preponderance of trail miles on lands managed by that agency. The study is then conducted by the assigned Federal agency in accordance with the direction in the NTSA Section 5(b), the trail study authorizing legislation, and other applicable laws and regulations, in consultation with interested tribes, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties. The National Trail Feasibility Study is transmitted to Congress as set forth in Section 5(b) of the NTSA.

If the study recommends the trail as "suitable" for congressional designation as a National Trail, Congress may act a second time to designate the trail. If designated by Congress, the NTSA Section 5(a) is amended, adding the trail as a component of the National Trails System.

There can be exceptions to this process. For example, the Arizona National Scenic Trail was designated without a National Trail Feasibility Study, and the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail was designated despite a non-suitable finding.

Following designation, the assigned Secretary issues an activation memorandum, assigning the trail administration responsibility to the agency with a preponderance of miles. Thus, when Congress designates a National Trail where the majority of Federal trail miles fall on BLM-managed public lands, the Secretary will typically assign the National Trail administration responsibility to the BLM. As of 2012, the BLM is responsible for serving in the National Trail administration role (interagency trailwide leadership) for the Iditarod National Historic Trail in Alaska, and shares this role with the National Park Service for the Old Spanish and El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trails. Agency requirements related to the National Trail designation process and administration responsibilities are outlined in BLM Manual 6250, National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration (Manual 6250). Additional guidance is provided in Departmental Manual 710, National Rivers and Trails Systems.

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When BLM public land miles are involved, regardless of whether the Secretary assigns National Trail administration to the BLM, the BLM Director transmits the appropriate Secretary's activation memorandum to the field as a BLM activation memorandum, notifying the BLM of the designation, the National Trail administration assignment (BLM, NPS, or USFS), and, if the BLM, the lead State Office assigned the National Trail administration role. The BLM activation memorandum includes a copy of the Secretary's activation memorandum, the enabling legislation, and references to the applicable National Trail policy(ies).

#### B. Trailwide Comprehensive Plan

Once designated, a statutorily required trailwide Comprehensive Plan (NTSA Sec. 5(e)(f)) is developed by the assigned National Trail administering agency in coordination with local land managers, such as the BLM, referred in this manual as a National Trail managing agency. The trailwide Comprehensive Plan is required to provide a plan for the acquisition, management, development, and use of the trail, including but not limited to specific objectives and practices to be observed in the management of the trail; an acquisition or protection plan; and general and site-specific development plans. The Comprehensive Plan also includes selection of a National Trail Right-of-Way, and a description of the nature and purposes of the National Trail. Where applicable, the trailwide Comprehensive Plan will be used to guide the BLM's Resource Management Plan development and implementation level planning in accordance with this policy. For more guidance on preparation of a trailwide Comprehensive Plan, see Manual 6250.

#### C. BLM Trail Management

While a trail is undergoing a National Trail Feasibility Study process or when a trail has been recommended as suitable for designation and Congress has not yet acted to designate the trail, the BLM manages the values, characteristics, and settings of the trail in accordance with Federal Land Policy Management Act of 1976, as amended (FLPMA). This policy provides guidance on management during this time, which can vary greatly in duration, before Congress acts.

After Congressional designation, the BLM conducts an inventory of designated trails under FLPMA and NTSA authorities; addresses the National Trail through the land use planning process, including the establishment of the National Trail Management Corridor; and manages and monitors the National Trail in coordination with the National Trail administering agency (which might be the BLM, if assigned), tribes, other agencies, partners, and interested parties. Note that the BLM is not directed or specifically authorized under the NTSA to identify potential National Trails for inclusion in the National Trails System through the land use planning process.

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Special provisions regarding the management of designated trails may be set forth in the enabling legislation, (e.g. the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail or the Old Spanish National Historic Trail), or subsequent congressionally authorized National Trail Feasibility Studies for trail segments associated with an existing Congressionally designated National Trail, and may result in the addition of designated trail miles.

The National Trail designation process takes anywhere from 6 to 15 years. In enacting the NTSA, Congress recognized “the valuable contributions that volunteers and private, nonprofit trail groups have made to the development and maintenance of the Nation’s trails. In recognition of these contributions, it is further the purpose of ...[the NTSA]... to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, and management, where appropriate of trails” NTSA Sec. 2(c). As such, interested publics or grassroots organizations work on, help identify the location of, and assist in managing a subject trail along with the agencies responsible for management of the trail area.

Due to the length of time the designation process entails, clear policy direction is needed during the interim period between Congress’s first action recommending study and Congress’s second action of designating the trail.

In sum, this manual describes the statutory requirements and policy guidance for managing trails under study and trails recommended as suitable, including the requirements and goals for such trails during the land use planning process. This manual also describes the statutory requirements and policy guidance for the management of designated trails, including those related to inventory, land use planning, management, and monitoring. This manual is formatted to provide guidance to managers based on what stage the trail is in as it relates to the National Trail designation process, and for congressionally designated National Trails, in the order of the steps of the land use planning process.

#### D. Key Terms Used in This Manual

The following key terms and concepts are provided to ensure understanding of the policy described in this manual. Many of these terms are repeated in the glossary. See companion policy Manual 6250.



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1. National Scenic Trail. A continuous, long-distance trail located on the ground by the land-managing agency along the congressionally designated route, in coordination with the trail administering agency. A National Scenic Trail provides maximum compatible outdoor recreation opportunity and conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, and cultural resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the areas through which such trails may pass. National Scenic Trails represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas, as well as landforms that exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic regions of the Nation. National Scenic Trails include the tread, or the trail path, and the trail setting which is included within the National Trail Management Corridor. National Scenic Trails may contain water sources or structures which are designed to support and provide for the safety of travelers along the trail.
2. National Historic Trail. An extended, long-distance trail designated by Congress that is not necessarily managed as continuous but follows as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. The purpose of a National Historic Trail is the identification and protection of the historic route and the historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. A National Historic Trail is managed to recognize the nationally significant resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass, including the primary use or uses of the trail. Federal Protection Components associated with the National Historic Trail, including high potential historic sites, high potential route segments, and auto tour routes are identified by the National Trail administering agency through the trailwide Comprehensive Plan. Properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, which may also be Federal Protection Components, may be identified along the National Historic Trail, including segments of the National Historic Trail.
3. National Trail Segment. Individual sections of a National Trail which, in combination, comprise the entire National Trail. Each segment of a National Trail may contain unique features or landforms, and variable resources, qualities, values, or associated settings.
4. National Trail Feasibility Study. Study authorized through an Act of Congress to determine the feasibility and desirability of designating a trail route as a National Trail. The completed study, including recommendations as to the suitability of trail designation, is submitted to Congress.

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5. National Trail Administration. Trailwide responsibility is assigned to the BLM or National Park Service by the Secretary of the Interior when the Department of the Interior (or USFS, Department of Agriculture) is named as the responsible lead in National Trail-specific legislation. The responsibility involves trailwide coordination, guidance, technical assistance, and consultation with the on-the-ground National Trail managers that have physical site management responsibility. National Trail administration responsibilities are fulfilled as directed in the NTSA in coordination with tribes; other National Trail administering agencies; National Trail managing agencies (including all BLM public land managers along the congressionally designated National Trail); other Federal, state, and local government agencies; private and nonprofit organizations; willing landowners; land users; and individuals (tribes, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties). National Trail administration includes leadership in the development of the statutorily required trailwide Comprehensive Plan, which provides strategic direction for National Trail administration and management, including identification of the nature and purposes of the National Trail and selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way.
6. National Trail Administrator. The National Trail administering agency assigns the National Trail administration role to an individual referred to as a “National Trail Administrator”. Each National Trail is assigned a National Trail Administrator. The National Trail Administrator reports to the associated BLM State Director, USFS Regional Forester, or NPS Regional Director, or other line officer, as delegated.
7. National Trail Manager. The on-the-ground land managing agency, landowner, or interest with the authority and/or responsibility for decisionmaking for lands under its jurisdiction. Also, the official responsible for land and water management of trail-related resources. The BLM, as National Trail manager, inventories the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or use(s); establishes the National Trail Management Corridor through the land use planning process; manages resources and uses in a manner that will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the National Trail; makes efforts to avoid incompatible activities; and monitors the National Trail.

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8. Trailwide Comprehensive Plan. Plan required by NTSA providing strategic direction and guidance for the future administration and management of a congressionally designated National Trail. The plan includes identification of the nature and purposes, goals and objectives, high potential sites and high potential segments (historic trails), and the selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way. The trailwide Comprehensive Plan does not make land use allocations and does not direct the actions of National Trail managers. The National Trail administering agency encourages and assists, but does not direct, agencies and willing landowners to achieve the strategic direction outlined within the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.
9. Resource Management Plan. Land use plans which govern BLM administered public lands, as required by Section 202 of FLPMA, and developed through the planning and environmental review process outlined in 43 CFR 1600 and 40 CFR 1500. The BLM may consider the strategic direction, the nature and purposes, and the National Trail Right-of-Way described within the trailwide Comprehensive Plan within the Resource Management Plan through the NEPA process.
10. National Trail Right-of-Way. Term used in Section 7(a)(2) of the NTSA to describe the area selected by the National Trail administering agency in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan and which includes the area of land that is of sufficient width to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or uses. National Trail Right-of-Ways identified in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan are not BLM land use allocations because the NTSA does not transfer management responsibility to the National Trail administering agency. The National Trail Right-of-Way becomes a key consideration in designating the National Trail Management Corridor in a Resource Management Plan. The National Trail Right-of-Way, in the context of the NTSA, differs from a Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) Title V right-of-way, which the BLM is authorized to grant pursuant to FLPMA authorities.

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11. National Trail Management Corridor. Allocation established through the land use planning process, pursuant to Section 202 of FLPMA and Section 7(a)(2) of the NTSA (“rights-of-way”) for a public land area of sufficient width to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that are present or to be restored. To determine the width of the National Trail Management Corridor, the BLM conducts an inventory and analyzes the National Trail Right-of-Way as a key consideration. The location and management of the National Trail Management Corridor is governed by FLPMA. The BLM uses the term “corridor” to refer to the area of public land surrounding the National Trail “Right-of-Way” which is described in section 7(a)(2) of the NTSA. The term “corridor” is used to reduce confusion between the National Trail Rights-of-Way and FLPMA Title V rights-of-way.
  
12. Relationship between the National Trail Right-of-Way and National Trail Management Corridor. The terms, National Trail Right-of-Way and National Trail Management Corridor, are both used to describe the area of land that encompasses the designated National Trail and the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the National Trail. The selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way for the entire trail is the responsibility of the National Trail administering agency in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, but is not a land use decision. The establishment of the National Trail Management Corridor is a land use allocation decision made through the Resource Management Plan, which is the responsibility of the National Trail management agency by Field Office jurisdiction along segments of the trail. Selection of the National Trail Management Corridor is guided by the strategic direction provided in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan and the inventory of the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses.
  
13. High Potential Historic Site (NTSA Sec. 12(1)). The term "high potential historic sites" means those historic sites related to the route or sites in close proximity thereto, which provide opportunity to interpret the historic significance of the trail during the period of its major use. Criteria for consideration as high potential sites include historic significance, presence of visible historic remnants, scenic quality, and relative freedom from intrusion. Under the NTSA, high potential historic sites located on federally owned land are referred to as Federal Protection Components.

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14. High Potential Route Segment (NTSA Section 12(2)). The term "high potential route segments" includes those segments of a trail which would afford high quality recreation experience, such as in a portion of the route having greater than average scenic values or affording an opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route. Under the NTSA, high potential route segments located on federally owned land are referred to as Federal Protection Components.
15. Federal Protection Component. As described in Section 3 and 12 of the NTSA, selected high potential historic sites and high potential route segments and other land- and water-based components of a designated National Historic Trail located on federally owned land which meet the National Historic Trail criteria listed in the National Trails System Act and are identified in trailwide Comprehensive Plans, Resource Management Plans, and implementation plans.
16. National Register of Historic Places. The official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties have significance to the history of the communities, states, or the Nation.
17. National Register Eligible. Includes properties both formally determined as eligible for inclusion in the National Register by the Secretary of the Interior and all other significant properties that meet National Register listing criteria. This includes any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior.
18. Auto Tour Route. Those roads that parallel the National Historic Trail and provide opportunities to commemorate the historic route as an alternate experience. These opportunities may occur inside or outside the National Trail Management Corridor. Auto tour route opportunities may include access to National Historic Trail high potential historic sites and high potential route segments located on BLM public and, other participating agency land, or lands of willing landowners. Auto tour routes are normally restricted to existing all-weather roads or paved highways and may be limited to specific use conditions.

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19. Selecting a National Trail Right-of-Way. Pursuant to Section 7(a)(2) of the NTSA, the National Trail administering agency is responsible for selecting the National Trail Right-of-Way and publishing a Notice of Availability of maps and descriptions in the Federal Register. Selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way is conducted with consideration of minimizing adverse effects on adjacent landowners or users and operations. In selecting the National Trail Right-of-Way, the National Trail administering agency obtains the advice and assistance of the states, local governments, private organizations, and landowners and land users concerned. The selection of the location and width of the National Trail Right-of-Way on lands under the jurisdiction of another Federal agency is made by agreement between agencies. Then National Trail administering agency recommends the National Trail Right-of-Way to the National Trail managing agency. The BLM, as National Trail managing agency, considers the recommended National Trail Right-of-Way through the land use planning process, as appropriate.
20. Locating National Trails. After Congress designates a National Trail and identifies the general location or "route" of the National Trail based on the National Trail Feasibility Study, the National Trail administering and managing agencies conduct an inventory(ies) to obtain more complete data for planning and management purposes. For National Scenic Trails, it might include finding optimal or alternate trail locations, and for National Historic Trails, this includes the identification of the physical locations, remnants, and artifacts where history actually occurred. Based on inventory and the recommended National Trail Right-of-Way, the National Trail managing agency further identifies the physical location of the National Trail and the National Trail Management Corridor. Major relocation of the National Trail Right-of-Way requires an act of Congress.

### 1.1 Purpose

1. This manual is provided to fulfill the requirements of and achieve the policy and purposes set forth in the NTSA and FLPMA, and other applicable laws and policies.
2. This manual provides the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) policy and program guidance on managing trails under study, trails recommended as suitable, and Congressionally designated National Scenic and Historic Trails (National Trails) as part of the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS). This manual describes the BLM's roles, responsibilities, agency interrelationships, and policy requirements as National Trail Manager.
3. This manual describes the BLM's inventory, planning, management, and monitoring policies for National Trails.

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4. This manual must be used in conjunction with the BLM Manual 6250, National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration and other related program policies. This manual does not restate those policies.

## 1.2 Objectives

1. Comply with the requirements of the NTSA; FLPMA; trail enabling legislation; and other laws, regulations, and policies.
2. Provide the methods, standards, and training for achieving National Trail purposes.
3. Manage trails that are under study and trails that are recommended as suitable through the National Trail Feasibility Study process, pursuant to FLPMA.
4. Manage designated National Trails as components of the National Trails System and the BLM's NLCS.
5. Manage the diverse network of designated trails and National Trail Management Corridors by encouraging and assisting volunteer citizen, community, and partnership involvement.
6. Manage the nationally significant scenic, historic, cultural, recreation, natural, and other landscape values (resources, qualities, values, and associated settings) and the primary use or uses (see glossary) for which the National Trails were designated.
7. Address the nature and purposes of designated National Trails through effective inventory, planning, management, and monitoring.
8. Develop and maintain relationships, and collaborate and coordinate with tribes; assigned National Trail Administrators; other Federal, state, and local agencies; private and nonprofit organizations; partners; landowners; land users; and individuals (tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties) regarding management of National Trails.

## 1.3 Relevant Authorities

1. National Trails System Act (NTSA) of 1968, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1241-1251)
2. Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended (43 U.S.C. *et seq.*)
3. Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (16 U.S.C. 7201-7203)
4. National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470)
5. National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*)

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6. Historic Sites Act of 1935, as amended (16 U.S.C. 461-467)
7. Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470aa *et. seq.*)
8. Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460I-4 through 460I-11)
9. Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972, as amended (5 U.S.C. Appendix 2 1-16)
10. Department of Transportation Act of 1966, as amended (49 U.S.C. 1653(f))

#### 1.4 Responsibility

A. *The Director, Bureau of Land Management*, through the Assistant Director, National Landscape Conservation System and Community Partnerships, is responsible for:

1. Developing the budget and establishing policy to support the management of National Trails and the enjoyment and appreciation of the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses for which the National Trails were designated.
2. Coordinating National Trails budget and policy development and implementation with other BLM programs.
3. Developing and maintaining relationships at the national level, including collaborating and coordinating with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties; and participating on the Federal Interagency Council on Trails regarding administration and management of National Trails.
4. Assigning a BLM lead state office the responsibility to coordinate management of designated trails across jurisdictional boundaries (see Illustration 1), maintaining an official National Trails Program Lead list, and upon designation, formally activating BLM National Trail management responsibilities through an instruction memorandum.
5. Directing review and data support of BLM-related National Trail Feasibility Studies, trailwide Comprehensive Plans, and land use plans addressing National Trails.
6. Setting funding priorities for the acquisition of lands or interests in lands for the protection of designated National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, as identified through the Bureau's standard prioritization process.
7. Establishing and maintaining National Trail case files.
8. Implementing the Federal Geographic Data Committee-approved Federal Trail Data Standards (FTDS) and providing geospatial and other database support.



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B. *State Directors* are responsible for:

1. Implementing the budget; developing policy direction; and providing statewide program coordination for managing National Trails, including assigning National Trails Program Lead responsibilities and data steward responsibilities, maintaining trailwide management coordination responsibilities for assigned trails (see Illustration 1), including entering into formal state or interstate agreements, and maintaining an official statewide National Trails Program Lead list.
2. Coordinating National Trails budget and policy development and implementation with other BLM programs.
3. Developing and maintaining relationships, and collaborating and coordinating with the National Trail administering agency during environmental review of proposed actions affecting National Trails, and during the land use planning process, in accordance with this policy.
4. Directing or conducting review and data support of National Trail Feasibility Studies and trailwide Comprehensive Plans, as appropriate, and recommending or approving trailwide Comprehensive Plans, where BLM lands are involved or when the BLM serves as the National Trail administering agency, in accordance with this policy.
5. Ensuring that National Trails are addressed within BLM Resource Management Plans; National Trail Management Corridors are established through the land use planning process; National Trail Management Corridors are compatible across Field Office jurisdictions; and activities within the National Trail Management Corridors are conducted in accordance with the NTSA, FLPMA, national and state policies and guidance, and Resource Management Plans.
6. Identifying priorities and requesting funding for acquisition of lands or interests in lands from willing sellers in order to further the purposes for which a National Trail is designated, consistent with other BLM resource programs, using the national prioritization process.
7. Establishing and maintaining National Trail serialized case files in accordance with this policy.
8. Implementing FTDS and maintaining the National Trail geospatial and other data and databases.

C. *District and Field Managers* are responsible for:

1. Implementing and coordinating National Trail budget and policy implementation, including coordination with other BLM programs.

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2. Assigning and providing program coordination and management for National Trails, including National Trails Program Lead responsibilities and data steward responsibilities, and maintaining any trailwide management coordination responsibilities for assigned trails.
3. Developing and maintaining relationships and collaborating and coordinating with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties, regarding management of National Trails, and the National Trail administering agency (when requested).
4. Inventorying and monitoring National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.
5. Establishing National Trail Management Corridors through the land use planning process, and incorporating management actions for National Trails in accordance with applicable laws and policy.
6. Ensuring that activities within National Trail Management Corridors are conducted in accordance with FLPMA, the NTSA, the BLM budget and related policies, and Resource Management Plans, including the consideration of guidance contained in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.
7. Ensuring efforts are made to manage National Trail resources on shared trail boundaries in accordance with applicable laws and in a manner compatible with the respective landowners and management entities and in coordination with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties.
8. Acquiring lands or interests in lands from willing sellers, as appropriate and consistent with policy direction established by the Director, to further the purposes for which a National Trail is designated, consistent with other BLM resource programs.
9. Establishing and maintaining National Trail serialized case files in accordance with this policy.
10. Implementing FTDS and providing geospatial and other database support.

#### 1.5 References

1. Executive Order 13195, Trails for America in the 21st Century
2. Secretarial Order 3308, Management of the National Landscape Conservation System
3. Secretarial Order 3319, Establishment of a National Water Trails System
4. Departmental Manual, Part 301, Chapter 5, Partnership Policy

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5. Departmental Manual, Part 710, National Rivers and Trails Systems
6. BLM Manual 1203, Delegation of Authority
7. BLM Manual 1601, Land Use Planning
8. BLM Manual 1626, Travel and Transportation Management
9. BLM Manual 6120, Congressionally Required Maps and Legal Boundary Descriptions for National Landscape Conservation System Designations
10. BLM Manual 6250, National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration
11. BLM Manual 8100, The Foundations for Managing Cultural Resources
12. BLM Manual 8110, Identifying and Evaluating Cultural Resources
13. BLM Manual 8120, Tribal Consultation Under Cultural Resource Authorities
14. BLM Manual 8140, Protecting Cultural Resources
15. BLM Manual 8320, Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services
16. BLM Manual 8353, Trail Management Areas – Secretarially Designated National Recreation, Water, and Connecting and Side Trails
17. BLM Manual 8400, Visual Resource Management
18. BLM Handbook, 1283-1, Data Administration and Management
19. BLM Handbook 1601-1, Land Use Planning
20. BLM Handbook 1790-1, National Environmental Policy Act
21. BLM Handbook 2100-1, Acquisition
22. BLM Handbook 8120-1, General Procedural Guidance for Native American Consultation
23. BLM Handbook 8342-1, Travel and Transportation Management
24. BLM Handbook 8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory
25. BLM Handbook 8431-1, Visual Resource Contrast Rating
26. BLM Handbook 9114-1, Trails

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27. BLM, Surface Operating Standards and Guidelines for Oil and Gas Exploration and Development, The Gold Book
28. BLM Technical Reference 9113-1, Travel and Transportation Management: Planning and Conducting Route Inventories
29. Bureau of Land Management 2007 Collaboration Desk Guide
30. BLM publication, Knowing Your Nonprofit Partners: A Desk Guide for Federal Employees
31. Federal Geographic Data Committee, Federal Trail Data Standards, FGDC-STD-017-2011
32. The National Landscape Conservation System 15-Year Strategy, 2010-2025: The Geography of Hope
33. National Scenic and Historic Trails Strategy and Work Plan, 2006
34. Trails for America: Report on the Nationwide Trails Study, 1966
35. The National Trails System Interagency Memorandum of Understanding, 06-SU-11132424-196
36. Applicable Trailwide Comprehensive Plans

## 1.6 Policy

### A. Statement of Programmatic Policy

#### 1. *Principal Laws, Purposes, and Provisions.*

- i. Trails under study, and trails recommended as suitable, as well as congressionally designated National Trails, are managed as public lands under FLPMA and other applicable laws. Congress' Declaration of Policy provision in FLPMA states that "it is the policy of the United States that the public lands be managed in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use." FLPMA Sec. 102 (a)(8).

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- FLPMA also provides that the BLM “shall manage the public lands under principles of multiple use and sustained yield, in accordance with the land use plans developed by him under Section 202 of this Act when they are available, except that where a tract of such public land has been dedicated to specific uses according to any other provisions of law it shall be managed in accordance with such law.” FLPMA Sec. 302(a).
- ii. In 2009, the Omnibus Public Lands Management Act (OPLMA) was signed into law, and established the National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS or System) “[i]n order to conserve, protect, and restore nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations.” OPLMA (Sec. 2002(a)). Areas including congressionally designated National Scenic and Historic Trails are components of the System. The BLM manages the System “(1) in accordance with any applicable law (including regulations) relating to any component of the system... and (2) in a manner that protects the values for which the components of the system were designated.” OPLMA Sec. 2002(c).
  - iii. Congress’ Statement of Policy provision in the National Trails System Act of 1968 states that “[i]n order to provide for the ever-increasing outdoor recreation needs of an expanding population and in order to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation, trails should be established (i) primarily, near the urban areas of the Nation, and (ii) secondarily, within scenic areas and along historic travel routes of the Nation which are often more remotely located.” NTSA Sec. 2(a). A stated purpose of the NTSA “is to provides the means for attaining these objectives by instituting a national system of recreation, scenic and historic trails, by designating the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the initial components of that system, and by prescribing the methods by which, and standards according to which, additional components may be added to the system.” NTSA Sec. 2(b).

The NTSA’s Statement of Policy also provides that “the Congress recognizes the valuable contributions that volunteers and private, nonprofit trail groups have made to the development and maintenance of the Nation's trails. In recognition of these contributions, it is further the purpose of the NTSA to encourage and assist volunteer citizen involvement in the planning, development, maintenance, and management, where appropriate, of trails.” NTSA Sec. 2(c).

- 2. *Management Standard for Trails not yet Congressionally Designated that are under National Trail Feasibility Study (trails under study) or that have been Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation through a National Trails Feasibility Study (trails recommended as suitable).*

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- i. Through the land use planning and associated NEPA processes, for trails under study or for trails recommended as suitable, the BLM shall consider management actions and alternatives that maintain the values, characteristics, and settings of trails under study and trails recommended as suitable, pursuant to FLPMA (see Chapter 2 of this manual).
  - ii. In evaluating a proposed action on or along a trail under study or along a trail recommended as suitable, the BLM shall consider alternatives to the proposed action that avoid adverse impacts to the values, characteristics, and settings of such trails (see Chapter 2 of this manual).
3. *Management Standard for Congressionally Designated National Scenic and Historic Trails (National Trails).*

- i. *Nature and Purposes.* To the greatest extent possible, the BLM shall manage National Trails so as to safeguard the nature and purposes of the trail and in a manner that protects the values for which the components of the System were designated, recognizing the nationally significant scenic, historic, cultural, recreation, natural, and other landscape values (hereinafter referred to as resources, qualities, values, and associated settings) of the public land areas through which such National Trails may pass, and the primary trail use or uses.

The BLM will effectively manage National Trails by conducting stewardship responsibilities which include inventory, planning, management, and monitoring, including land or easement acquisition, protection, development, maintenance, training, and operations.

- ii. *Substantial Interference and Avoidance of Incompatible Activities.* As set forth in Section 7(c) of the NTSA, “National scenic or national historic trails may contain campsites, shelters, and related-public-use facilities. Other uses along the trail, which will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, may be permitted by the Secretary responsible for administration of the trail. Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide sufficient access opportunities to such trails and, to the extent practicable, efforts shall be made to avoid activities incompatible with the purpose for which such trails were established.” NTSA Sec. 7(c).

Through the land use planning and NEPA processes for proposed actions on National Trails, the BLM may permit uses that will not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the National Trails. To the extent practicable, the BLM shall make efforts to avoid activities that are incompatible with the purposes for which such trails were established. NTSA Sec. 7(c). As such, subject to valid existing rights, the BLM may, through the appropriate NEPA analysis, approve, reject, deny, prohibit, minimize, and/or mitigate proposed actions.

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- a. As part of the NEPA analysis for the proposed action, the BLM will evaluate whether the proposed action would substantially interfere with or be incompatible with the nature and purposes of a National Trail (hinders or obstructs), and will consider the following:
- (1) *For all National Trails:*
    - (i) The extent to which the proposed action would affect the BLM's ability to effectively manage the nature and purposes of the trail, trail resources, qualities, values, uses (including public access and enjoyment) and associated settings.
    - (ii) The extent to which a proposed action would require a major relocation of the National Trail Management Corridor in order to provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass, or the primary use or uses of the trail.
  - (2) *For National Scenic Trails:*
    - (i) The extent to which the proposed action would affect the purposes for which the trail was designated.
    - (ii) The extent to which the proposed action would result in long-term or permanent disruption to the continuous nature of the trail.
    - (iii) The extent to which the proposed action would affect opportunities for maximum outdoor recreation potential.
    - (iv) The extent to which the proposed action would affect the conservation or enjoyment of resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass, including noteworthy characteristics or landforms of the region.
  - (3) *For National Historic Trails:*
    - (i) The extent to which the proposed action would affect the characteristics that made the trail worthy of designation.
    - (ii) The extent to which the proposed action would affect the Federal Protection Components, including high-potential historic sites or high potential route segments located on public land.

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- (iii) The extent to which the proposed action would affect designated National Historic Trail properties, including remnants and artifacts from the associated period of use that may be eligible or listed on the National Register and/or determined by the National Trail administering agency to qualify as possible high potential historic sites or high potential route segments.
    - (iv) The extent to which the proposed action would limit the agency's ability to manage the trail for the purpose of identifying and protecting the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment, including interpretation, education, appreciation, and vicarious experiences.
- iii. *Inventory.* The BLM shall conduct and maintain a standardized inventory of the trail-related resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that support the nature and purposes of the National Trail. The inventory will be used in order to establish a National Trail Management Corridor through the land use planning process. Until such time as a National Trail Management Corridor is established through the Resource Management Plan in accordance with this policy, an inventory shall be conducted for proposed actions within the National Trail viewshed. Inventory results inform future NEPA analyses for land use plans and for proposed actions by identifying the area of potential adverse impact, including the resources, qualities, values and associated settings and the primary use or uses present in that area.
- iv. *Land Use Planning.* Through the land use planning process, the BLM shall establish a National Trail Management Corridor for a public land area of sufficient width to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that are present or to be restored. Through the land use planning process, the BLM shall establish allowable uses, management actions, and necessary restrictions for the National Trail Management Corridor; and coordinate with and consider all BLM resource programs and uses within the National Trail Management Corridor to achieve National Trail goals and objectives.
- v. *Management.* In the management and stewardship of National Trails and National Trail Management Corridors, the BLM will encourage, assist, and establish cooperative relationships, partnerships, and stakeholder involvement to increase efficiencies, improve awareness and communication, promote consistency, and expand participation in the management of the National Trails. The BLM will manage National Trails in coordination with tribes, the National Trail administering agency, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties.
  - a. The BLM will consider the following National Trail characteristics in National Trail management:



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(1) *National Scenic Trails*

- (i) Desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas, as well as landforms that exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic region.
- (ii) Sustainable and premier trail-related opportunities.
- (iii) The highest possible scenic value.
- (iv) Relative freedom from intrusion.
- (v) Natural conditions, scenic and historic features, and the primitive character of the trail area.
- (vi) Sustainable trail and resource conditions.
- (vii) Opportunities for high-quality, primitive nonmotorized recreation experiences, including providing, where appropriate, campsites, shelters, and related public use facilities and continuous and sufficient public access.
- (viii) Avoidance, insofar as practicable, of highways, motor roads, mineral rich areas, energy transmission lines, commercial and industrial developments, range fences and improvements, private operations, and any other foreseeable activities that do not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes and are compatible with National Trail purposes.
- (ix) Human health and safety.

(2) *National Historic Trails*

- (i) The original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance to maximize vicarious experiences and provide resource protection.
- (ii) Historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment.
- (iii) Sustainable and premier trail-related opportunities.
- (iv) Selected land and water-based components, not necessarily continuous on the ground.

- (v) Federal Protection Components (selected land and water based components of a historic trail on federally owned lands which meet national historic trail criteria established in the NTSA), including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
    - (a) *High potential historic sites*: opportunities to interpret the historic significance of the trail during its period of major use and to identify and protect (NTSA Section 3(a)(3)) the visible historic remnants and scenic quality and to provide relative freedom from intrusion (NTSA Sec. 12(1)).
    - (b) *High potential route segments*: opportunities for afford high-quality recreation experiences, identify, and protect (NTSA Sec. 3(a)(3)) the scenic integrity of the trail setting, and afford opportunities for vicarious experiences (NTSA Sec. 12(2)).
    - (c) Opportunities for a developed trail to meet objectives.
  - (vi) Properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
  - (vii) Human health and safety.
- b. *FLPMA Rights-of-Way*. The Secretary, through the BLM, “may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the National Trails System in accordance with the laws applicable to...[the BLM public lands]...[p]rovided [t]hat any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way shall be related to the policy and purposes of... [the National Trails Systems Act].” NTSA Sec. 9(a). To the greatest extent possible, for National Scenic and Historic Trails, the BLM shall consider locating proposed rights-of-way outside of Federal Protection Components, high potential historic sites, high potential route segments, and for National Scenic Trails, to areas of comparative disturbance, in accordance with this policy. The BLM may approve proposed rights-of-way, subject to terms and conditions that are related to the policy and purposes of the NTSA. Through the NEPA process for proposed rights-of-way, the BLM may permit rights-of-way that will not substantially interfere with National Trail purposes, and shall make efforts, to the extent practicable, to avoid rights-of-way that would be incompatible with the purposes for which the National Trail was established, in accordance with law and this policy.
- c. *Environmental Review Process*

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- (1) As congressionally designated components of the NLCS and National Trails System, a categorical exclusion may be used only when the proposed action serves the nature and purposes of the National Trail and it can be clearly demonstrated and documented that the proposed action has no adverse effect upon the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses, unless another provision of law applies (43 CFR 46.215).
- (2) As part of the NEPA analysis for a land use plan that includes a National Trail(s) within the planning area, and for any implementation-level activities proposed along a National Trail or within a National Trail Management Corridor, the BLM shall:
  - (i) For each alternative, describe and analyze the potential impacts to the nature and purposes of the National Trail, and the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.
  - (ii) Describe the impacts to the national significance of National Trails, based on NHPA National Historic Landmark criteria and other NTSA criteria, as well as impacts to the significance of properties that are eligible or listed on the National Register, as applicable.
  - (iii) Ensure adequate public involvement in the BLM's management activities through the NEPA, land use planning, and/or other applicable processes. If the NEPA analysis includes an EA, the BLM will provide at least 30 days public notice prior to the decision.
  - (iv) Coordinate with the National Trail administering agency during the environmental review and land use planning processes, regarding the establishment of the National Trail Management Corridor.
  - (v) To the greatest extent possible, consider opportunities for mitigation to a level commensurate with the adverse impact to the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses of the National Trail.
  - (vi) Include the following in the Decision Record or Record of Decision:
    - (a) Whether the proposed action will substantially interfere or will be incompatible with the nature and purposes of the National Trail, including the resources, qualities, values or associated settings or the primary use or uses.

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- (b) A description of the action taken to authorize or deny an activity or the application of any best management practices or mitigation measures.
  
- d. *Mitigation.* For National Trails, mitigation means to eliminate or moderate, to the greatest extent possible, intensity and duration of the adverse impact to the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses of the National Trail from incompatible multiple-use activities.
  - (1) Mitigation includes rectifying, reducing, or eliminating the impact over time and/or compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.
  - (2) Onsite mitigation and design considerations can include moving the project location, minimizing the scale, camouflaging the proposed activity with visual screening techniques, or similar actions.
  - (3) Priority for mitigation should occur onsite first; secondly, in the general National Trail region; and lastly within the state (for multi-state National Trails) where the project is being proposed. Regardless of physical location, mitigation of project impacts must benefit the National Trail and should remain within the National Trail Management Corridor. Where onsite mitigation (along the National Trail) cannot adequately compensate for the adverse impact, offsite mitigation may include consideration of monetary compensation for public lands along the National Trail, and should be analyzed, incorporated, and carried out in accordance with all applicable laws and policies.
  
- e. *Monitoring.* The BLM shall monitor the conditions of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail on public lands or interests in lands; the effects of decision implementation; and in order to identify new and emerging issues.

## 1.7 File and Records Maintenance

A. Offices managing National Trails must establish and maintain National Trail serialized case files in accordance with this manual and BLM Manual Section 6120. Recordkeeping requirements are mandated by Executive Orders 12866 and 13353, the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501), and the guidelines of the BLM Paperwork Schedule program. The serialized case file shall, as practicable, contain:

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1. The official map depicting the congressionally designated trail, the National Trail Right-of-Way, the National Trail Management Corridor, including boundaries and descriptions, and any subsequent amendments to the National Trail Right-of-Way or National Trail Management Corridor, portraying, at a minimum, the responsible office area of jurisdiction.
2. For the National Trail Management Corridor, either a determination that a boundary evidence review is not required signed by the Authorized Officer, or the appropriate Standards for Boundary Evidence Certificate(s) signed by the State Office Chief Cadastral Surveyor.
3. A copy of the NTSA; National Trail-specific enabling legislation; legislative history; National Trail Feasibility Study; any Historic Context Study and Report; National Register eligible and listed property information including completed Multiple Property Documentation Forms; Federal Protection Component information, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments; the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, Resource Management Plan, and subsequent implementation plans; all trail inventory and monitoring data; relevant activation memorandums; and memorandums of understanding or agreements.
4. Detailed information related to the designation and stewardship responsibilities of the National Trail.
5. Documentation regarding management issues associated with the National Trail or the National Trail Management Corridor.
6. Documentation regarding the rationale for recommending National Trail relocation within the corridor, including applicable plan amendments.

B. After the National Trail Management Corridor is established through the planning process, the National Trail Management Corridor shall be portrayed on the Master Title Plats and on the Geographic Coordinate Database.

C. The following maps shall be available for public inspection in the affected BLM offices: the official map depicting the congressionally designated trail, maps of the National Trail Management Corridor established in the Resource Management Plan, and any subsequent National Trail Management Corridor amendments, portraying, at a minimum, the responsible office area of jurisdiction.

D. Public Land Statistics, stewardship asset reports, Department of the Interior strategic plan performance measures, program elements and workload measures, other trail reports, and lists maintained by National Trail Program Leads may be used to report designated National Trails program and planning status, issues, opportunities, and accomplishments.

## 1.8 Data Standards and Management

A. National Trail Program Leads, staff, and data stewards should coordinate data collection, ensure National Trail data are documented in BLM corporate databases, including geospatial standards and LR2000, compile and maintain the National Trail case file, and ensure the National Trail is portrayed on the Master Title Plats.

B. Trail data and data collection, including maps, must comply with the Department of the Interior data management systems, FTDS, related national BLM geospatial standards, NLCS data standards, and other data standards and management policies, including those addressing sensitive cultural resources data. Data management will be consistent with standards outlined in national programmatic agreements, state protocol agreements, and state data sharing agreements, including BLM-State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) cultural resources data sharing partnerships and agreements to share SHPO digital data of inventory and resources, consistent with SHPO standards and BLM-SHPO protocols.

C. The BLM should establish uniform mapping through an associated database or system to manage and track National Trail information related to the management corridor, inventory, planning, monitoring, land status, acquisition of lands or interests in lands, and similar information. The mapping and database should document National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings as required by this policy, by other BLM programs, and by interagency applications developed through the Federal Interagency Council on Trails. The BLM will manage and analyze data, including maps, property records, historic research, and maintenance schedules.

D. The BLM will share data with various agencies, organizations, partners, and the public in accordance with policy standards, data sharing agreements, and established protocol.

## **Chapter 2. Management of Trails Under National Trail Feasibility Study and Trails Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation, but Not Yet Designated**

This chapter outlines BLM inventory, land use planning considerations, management provisions, and protocol for proposed actions which may affect trails under National Trail Feasibility Study (trails under study) and trails recommended as suitable for National Trail designation (trails recommended as suitable) through the National Trail Feasibility Study. Policy for conducting National Trail Feasibility Studies is found in BLM Manual 6250, National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration.

### **2.1 Identification and Documentation of Trails Under National Trail Feasibility Study and Trails Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation**

A. The BLM will maintain a list of trails that have been authorized by Congress which are under study and trails that have undergone the study process and are either recommended as suitable or not suitable.

B. The BLM is encouraged to identify and document trails under study and trails recommended as suitable using the protocols outlined in Chapter 3 of this manual (Congressionally Designated National Trails-Inventory). The information will be maintained and updated in a case file and data management systems. This information may be collected or analyzed for management purposes as the BLM makes land use planning and implementation-level decisions.

### **2.2 Land Use Planning Considerations for Trails Under Study and Trails Recommended as Suitable for Designation**

A. Field Offices shall conduct a land use plan evaluation (see BLM Handbook H-1601-1) to determine if significant trail values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail was identified for study, are appropriately managed.

B. Land use planning decisions for trails under study and trails recommended as suitable should take into account the significant trail values, characteristics, and settings so as to not compromise potential future congressional action to designate these trails as National Trails. The land use plan that includes such trails within the planning area will:

1. Identify and document the trail under study and the study trail route(s) and the trail and trail route(s) recommended as suitable, using the protocols outlined in the inventory chapter of this manual (Chapter 3).
2. Identify goals and objectives for trails under study and for trails recommended as suitable.
3. Consider the following in the formulation and analysis of alternatives:

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- i. Management of the values, characteristics, and settings and the purposes for which a trail is being studied or has been recommended as suitable.
  - ii. Retention of public lands under study or recommended as suitable in public land ownership.
  - iii. Methods to avoid adverse impacts to the trail tread or trace and setting, including minimizing or mitigating techniques and the development and application of best management practices.
  - iv. Closure or restriction of areas to maintain the trail under study or the recommended trail.
4. Consider appropriate management actions in accordance with BLM's multiple use mandate for the trail in the event it is found unsuitable or in the event it is not designated as a National Trail, including potential management of the area as a different special management area, or for uses other than trail purposes.
  5. Identification of the need for future planning should designation occur.

### 2.3 Site-Specific/Implementation-Level Management of Trails Under National Trail Feasibility Study and Trails Recommended as Suitable for Congressional Designation

A. For site specific implementation level decisions, the BLM may consider, as part of the authorization of a proposed activity along a trail under study or recommended as suitable, imposing best management practices (BMPs) (see examples in Appendix 1) for specific uses in order to maintain the values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail is being studied or for which the trail was recommended as suitable. The BLM may consider including monitoring, proactive trail conservation and/or protection project work, and use of design features that minimize adverse impacts from proposed activities. The BMPs will be analyzed through the NEPA analysis that accompanies the decision on the proposed activity.

B. The BLM should consider, where appropriate and pursuant to the applicable laws and regulations and policies that apply, use of temporary closures to restrict the use of public lands and resources to maintain the values, characteristics, and settings of the trail under study or the trail recommended as suitable. Closures shall follow all BLM regulatory requirements, including environmental review, timeframe and extent of closure, approval, and public notification (e.g. 43 CFR 8341.2 and 43 CFR 8364.1).

C. The BLM may encourage and assist partners, volunteers, and volunteer organizations in planning, developing, maintaining, and managing trails under study and trails recommended as suitable. Volunteer project work may occur after the partners or volunteers have received any required training, after approval of any necessary agreements between the BLM and the partner or volunteer(s), and after project work has been analyzed and approved by the BLM. Volunteer projects should:



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1. Be coordinated across offices and jurisdictions to ensure compatibility.
2. Be in conformance with the Resource Management Plan.
3. Serve an identified resource need.
4. Not detract from the values, characteristics, and settings for which the trail is being studied or has been identified as suitable.

D. While the BLM does not identify trails that may qualify for designation, the BLM may provide information and technical assistance to partners (NTSA Sec. 11(b)(1)) on trails. Any such information or assistance shall occur according to agency policies and processes. The BLM does not advocate for or against either directly or through partners any proposed legislative designations. The BLM State Public Affairs Office and WO Legislative Affairs should be informed of any potential Congressional designations.

E. Requests for reporting will be followed in accordance with the standards outlined in section 1.7 File and Records Maintenance of this manual.

#### 2.4 Protocol for Proposed Actions which May Affect Trails Under National Trail Feasibility Study and Trails Recommended as Suitable for National Trail Designation

A. The BLM Field and/or State Office National Trail Program Lead shall coordinate with the assigned National Trail Feasibility Study agency to request information that may be used during the environmental review process for proposed actions along trails under study or trails recommended as suitable.

B. The BLM Field and/or State Office National Trail Program Lead shall coordinate with the proposed project lead and affected BLM resource programs to identify National Trail and other resource program requirements, such as cultural resource inventory and consultation requirements.

C. The NEPA analysis for the proposed action will consider existing data, including data from the completed National Trail Feasibility Study, data provided to the BLM by the agency conducting the National Trail Feasibility Study, or additional data collected as necessary for alternative formulation and analysis. In evaluating whether to approve the proposed action, the NEPA analysis, will:

1. Describe the values, characteristics, and settings of trails under study and trails recommended as suitable in the affected environment section of the NEPA document.
2. Analyze and describe any impacts of the proposed action on the values, characteristics, and settings of trails under study or trails recommended as suitable.

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3. Consider an alternative that would avoid adverse impacts to the values, characteristics, and settings of the trail under study or recommended as suitable and/or incorporate and consider applying design features (see examples in Appendix 1) to avoid adverse impacts.

D. When the proposed action is anticipated to have a significant adverse impact, there must be coordination between the BLM State Office and the assigned National Trail Feasibility Study agency office. If the anticipated significant adverse impact cannot be avoided, the BLM State Office must contact the BLM Washington Office so that coordination with the study agency headquarters office can be initiated.

### **Chapter 3. Congressionally Designated National Trails - Inventory**

This chapter outlines BLM requirements for inventory and assessment of designated National Trails. The affected BLM Field Offices, upon designation of a National Trail by Congress, conducts and assesses a field inventory of the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail for the public land areas through which such trails may pass. This chapter outlines inventory by individual landscape element, including scenic, historic, cultural, recreation, natural, and other landscape elements, and the assessment of that inventory for National Trail purposes.

#### **3.1 General Requirements**

The BLM shall:

- A. Conduct an inventory in accordance with FLPMA Section 201 and the NTSA, National Trail policy, resource program policy, Federal Trail Data Standards (FTDS), related national geospatial standards, and route inventory standards.
- B. Use the inventory to make informed decisions regarding proposed uses within National Trail areas, to identify opportunities to safeguard the nature and purposes of National Trails, and to allocate the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail during land use planning (NTSA and FLPMA).
- C. Use the inventory to establish a National Trail Management Corridor through the land use planning process.
- D. Conduct inventory within the National Trail viewshed to identify the area of potential adverse impact for proposed actions, until such time as a National Trail Management Corridor is established.
- E. Recommend to the National Trail administering agency for inclusion in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, data regarding Federal Protection Components (land and water based components of a historic trail), including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments, identified or discovered through the inventory process.

#### **3.2 Data Documentation and Standards**

To the greatest extent practicable, the BLM shall:

- A. Document the inventory in accordance with National Trail policy; resource program policy, requirements, and standards; Federal Trail Data Standards (FTDS); related national geospatial standards; route inventory standards; and other formally established Department and BLM data standards.

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B. Map the inventory for each landscape element, using geographic information system (GIS) technology at a consistent scale. Include maps and descriptions of the inventory findings in the serialized National Trail case files.

C. Collect the data using the following standards:

1. Metadata collected for all inventory data, including photographs.
2. Data collected in formats that are compatible with BLM nationally approved GIS configurations.
3. Data formats consistent across resource programs, including scale and horizontal accuracy levels, to the greatest extent practicable.
4. Geospatial data including attribute information and metadata.
5. Global Positioning System (GPS) data including data dictionary attributes for line and point features found in Illustration 2 and 3. In addition, for significant historic properties that may be eligible for the National Register, include:
  - i. GIS data from previously recorded sites found through a records search.
  - ii. Data from archival and data searches, including previously inventoried areas and areas with a high probability of containing trail-related resources that have retained historic integrity.

### 3.3 Coordination of the National Trail Inventory and Data Sharing

The BLM will coordinate the trail inventory on an ongoing basis across offices and states to ensure consistency and information sharing. The National Trail inventory will be conducted in coordination with the National Trail administering agency and in cooperation with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties in accordance with policy, agreements, and protocol. To the greatest extent practicable, the BLM:

A. Should establish a system or database to share National Trail inventory data across BLM offices and states, as practicable. The information shared will, in part, help inform the BLM of extent of aggregate trailwide influences, both protective and surface disturbing, to the National Trail and the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses.

B. Will coordinate, as practicable, inventory efforts with tribes, affected agencies, partners and interests, SHPOs, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to maximize efficiencies. The inventory shall be conducted in accordance with protocol agreements, and in a manner that is compatible with confidentiality provisions in the National Historic Preservation Act and Archaeological Resources Protection Act.

C. Should report National Trail inventory results relating to identification of potential National Register-eligible resources in a digital format consistent with the BLM-SHPO cultural resources data sharing partnership for the relevant state.

D. May offer technical training and/or limited financial support to improve capacity, in accordance with applicable law, to tribes, affected agencies, partners, or interested parties who are interested in participating in National Trail inventory (NTSA Sec. 7(a)(1)(B), 11(b)(1), and 11(c)).

### 3.4 Initiating the National Trail Inventory Process

To the greatest extent practicable, the BLM shall:

A. Divide public land areas undergoing a National Trail inventory into inventory analysis units by National Trail segment, and depict on a map. An inventory analysis unit is a polygon encompassing discrete segments of the National Trail, and the associated viewshed, based on similar conditions. National Trail segments are individual sections of a National Trail which, in combination, comprise the entire National Trail. The boundaries should follow natural or manmade landscape features.

1. For National Scenic Trails, inventory analysis unit boundaries should be based on distinct trail segments, breaks in landform, jurisdictional boundaries, or manmade features such as roads.
2. For National Historic Trails, inventory analysis unit boundaries should be based on distinct high potential historic sites and high potential route segments or groupings of sites and segments, jurisdictional boundaries, distinct trail segments, breaks in landform, or manmade features such as roads.

B. Conduct a viewshed analysis for each inventory analysis unit to determine landscape features that are seen, seldom seen, and not seen from the National Trail. The extent of the viewshed analyzed may be limited by site-specific conditions, including cultural and landscape modifications, land status, and topography. The foreground, middle ground, and background of the viewshed from the National Trail must be identified. The viewshed will be determined through the aid of a computer-based visibility analysis from specific inventory observation points (IOP). Inventory observation points will be located:

1. At existing recreation and interpretive developments and at critical points that reflect how a trail visitor interacts with the trail, including developed areas and natural features such as overlook points, access points, trailheads, switchbacks and resting places, pullouts, natural topographic breaks, major landforms, and changes in landscape form.
2. At areas with sensitive resources, qualities, values, and associated settings.

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3. At regularly spaced intervals along the National Trail tread, trace, and/or management corridor to ensure no gaps in the viewshed analysis.
4. For National Historic Trails, inventory observation points will be identified for National Trail-related National Register eligible and listed properties; other significant historic trail-related features such as river crossings, graves, and inscription sites; high potential historic sites and high potential route segments; auto tour routes; and trails that facilitate public access and opportunities for vicarious experiences (potential connecting or side trails. See BLM Manual 8353).

C. Baseline information should be compiled from, but not limited to, the National Trail Feasibility Study, trailwide Comprehensive Plan, Resource Management Plan, historic context study and reports, and Field Office resource program data to determine what information is known about the National Trail conditions; trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses of the trail and to determine what gaps in data remain. Inventory should be conducted to obtain additional data to supplement existing baseline data and to obtain an accurate depiction of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail in the trail area.

D. The inventory should capture data about developments, facilities, and landscape or cultural modifications, within the National Trail area that may support or adversely impact National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.

### 3.5 Conducting the National Trail Inventory

A. All National Trail landscape elements for each National Trail segment within the National Trail inventory analysis unit must be inventoried, and the baseline condition of individual resources, qualities, and values and associated settings should be recorded. The associated settings are determined for each inventory analysis unit, based on the resources, qualities, and values present.

B. The inventory record will include the inventory analysis unit boundary, location of high potential historic sites, high potential route segments, cutoffs, variants, braided routes, the trail tread or trace, distance zones, viewsheds, resource settings, setting variables, landscape-defining characteristics, landscape features, other applicable resources associated with the trail or that support National Trail purposes, and a record of negative findings, as applicable. The inventory also identifies existing compatible and incompatible land uses and valid existing rights on public lands.

C. Inventory will be conducted and documented in a manner sufficient to determine potential National Register eligibility, to support statements of eligibility for listing on the National Register, to nominate properties for listing on the National Register, as practicable, and to consider other resource program-specific designations through the land use planning process, such as areas of critical environmental concern or recreation management areas, as warranted.

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D. The BLM will inventory each National Scenic and Historic Trail in accordance with the FTDS National Trail fundamentals (see Appendix 2). In addition, the BLM will inventory each National Historic Trail in accordance with the FTDS National Historic Trail condition categories (see Appendix 4 and 5).

1. The FTDS National Trail fundamentals addresses the physical condition and any existing uses of the National Trail area, including the four trail fundamentals of trail type, trail class, managed use, and designed use (see Appendix 2).
2. The FTDS National Historic Trail condition categories include documentation of the historic location and the presence or lack of visible trail remnants and/or artifacts that provide evidence of the historic route (see Appendices 4 and 5).

E. To the greatest extent practicable, the inventory shall be conducted for each of the following landscape elements. National Trail resources, qualities, and values, and the primary use or uses for each landscape element must be inventoried and assessed prior to determining the extent of the associated settings. The inventory of the associated settings is based on the documentation of resources, qualities, and values, and the primary use or uses.

1. *Scenic Resources, Qualities, and Values, and the Primary Use or Uses.* The scenic resources, qualities, and values, and the primary use or uses inventory includes:
  - i. A viewshed analysis (computer based-modeling), including a scenic quality analysis, a sensitivity-level analysis, and a delineation of distance zones for scenic values, and documentation of the elements of the landscape that are seen, seldom seen, and not seen from the National Trail, including the foreground, middle ground, and background of the viewshed of the National Trail.
  - ii. Documentation of the primary use or uses within the viewshed that support the nature and purposes of the National Trail and characteristic landscape.
2. *Scenic Setting.* The scenic settings are the geographic extent of the visual landscape elements that influence the trail experience and contribute to resource protection. The scenic inventory includes:
  - i. A description of the overall landscape character, existing visual conditions, and a scenic quality analysis using the BLM's visual resource management program policy.
  - ii. For National Scenic Trails only, identify significant scenic or high visual qualities of the area through which such trails may pass.
  - iii. For National Historic Trails only, identify areas with high scenic quality that support the nature and purposes and/or relative freedom from intrusion within and adjacent to high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.

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3. *Historic and Cultural Resources, Qualities, and Values, and the Primary Use or Uses.* The historic and cultural resources, qualities, and values, and primary use or uses inventory includes (see BLM Manual Section 8110):
- i. Minimum standard cultural resources program and specific state-required historic and cultural resource inventory, including consultation with tribes to obtain data regarding properties of traditional cultural or religious importance. Determinations should be made for National Trail-related historic properties regarding eligibility for nomination to the National Register or possible high potential historic sites or high potential route segments.
  - ii. For all National Trails, the historic and cultural resource inventory should include a cultural resource program Class I existing information inventory to determine presence of nationally, regionally, and locally significant National Trail-related historic resources and to determine the quality of existing inventory data. For significant properties identified through the Class I inventory, the BLM should conduct a cultural resource program Class III intensive field inventory to locate and verify nationally, regionally, and locally significant National Trail-related cultural properties that may be eligible for the National Register. For vast unsurveyed areas, the BLM may conduct a cultural resources Class II probabilistic field survey to characterize the probable density, diversity, and distribution of significant cultural properties, followed by a Class III inventory in selected locations. The need for and nature of additional research to identify resources should be determined in consultation with the SHPO.
  - iii. For National Historic Trails only, a comprehensive field inventory should be conducted to identify, locate, and verify high potential historic sites and high potential route segments. The inventory may include the location of high potential historic sites or high potential route segments. In addition to these minimum requirements, Field Offices may employ additional information gathering techniques, including:
    - a. Reconnaissance survey.
    - b. Subsurface probing.
    - c. Test excavation.
    - d. Predictive modeling.
    - e. Remote sensing, such as radar or light detection and ranging (LiDAR), or use of other technology.
  - iv. Information from the National Trail administering agency or trail groups, associations, and other interested parties.



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- v. Historic context studies or reports, including cultural and historic resource data of the National Scenic Trail area, and National Historic Trail-related cultural and historic resource data.
  - vi. Documentation of the historic and cultural primary use or uses that occur within the viewshed, including National Trail-related scientific uses, historic interpretation, protection, and recovery.
4. *Historic and Cultural Settings*. The historic and cultural settings are the geographic extent of the historic and/or cultural landscape elements that influence the actual and vicarious trail experiences. The historic and cultural settings inventory includes:
- i. *For all National Trails*:
    - a. The historic character or character-defining qualities of the trail, including the sum of all visual aspects, features, materials, and spaces associated with the history of the cultural landscape.
  - ii. *For National Historic Trails*:
    - a. The surroundings and viewsheds of the high potential historic sites and segments, including elements that complement, support, or otherwise corroborate the period of historic significance for the trail and those elements that do not fit the period of trail significance or are otherwise visually intrusive.
    - b. The existing condition of the historic landscape, including descriptions of elements that support or contribute to the historic character; and those that detract from or do not contribute to the historic landscape because they are not compatible in look and feel with the historic use, or because they do not date to the period of historic significance, or both.
    - c. Contributing landscape features may include historic trail modifications or engineering features constructed by the original trail users.
5. *Recreation, including Travel Management Opportunities, Resources, Qualities, and Values, and the Primary Use or Uses*. The recreation resources, qualities, and values, and the primary use or uses recreation inventory includes:
- i. Identification of current recreation demand and visitor data, such as:
    - a. Visitor use trends and/or the amount of visitors/visits.
    - b. The types of visitors.
    - c. Where visitors are coming from.

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- d. The types of activities in which visitors participate.
  - e. The National Trail-related primary use or uses.
  - f. What the participants and affected communities want from National Trail resources.
  - g. The existing economic benefits of tourism.
- ii. Identification of current supply, including what other service providers (to include business and nonprofit organizations) are currently doing to achieve National Trail objectives and what management practices are employed by other agencies to achieve National Trail purposes.
  - iii. Existing National Trail-related recreation infrastructure, including education and interpretive developments, and other recreation developments.
  - iv. For National Scenic Trails only, opportunities for maximum outdoor recreation potential, consistent with the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
  - v. For National Historic Trails only, identification of recreation use or interpretive or educational opportunities includes:
    - a. High potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
    - b. Opportunities for public use and enjoyment.
    - c. Opportunities for vicarious experiences.
    - d. FTDS category NHT3 (see appendices 4 and 5) recreation and/or interpretive trails, roads, or sites, including those assisting with potential auto tour routes and connections to specific trail sites and segments.
  - vi. Cultural modifications, including those that are National Trail related, and other developments and facilities inventoried to a level of detail sufficient to determine potential effect within the inventory analysis unit.
  - vii. Travel systems inventoried in accordance with BLM route inventory standards and include classification of routes as roads, primitive roads or routes, or trails.

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- viii. Access, connectivity, and manageability opportunities, including potential Connecting and Side Trails (see BLM Manual 8353). Each identified access, connectivity, and manageability opportunity will include a map and description of the opportunity, the National Trail purposes served if the opportunity is pursued, constraints, and any other pertinent conditions. Sufficient access for private landowners will be identified, as warranted.
6. *Recreation Settings*. The recreation settings are the geographic extent of the recreation landscape elements that influence the trail experience. The recreation settings inventory includes:
- i. Identification of physical, social, and operational recreation settings in accordance with the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum and recreation setting characteristics (see BLM Manual 8320, Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services).
7. *Natural (including Biological, Geological, and Scientific) Resources, Qualities, and Values, and the Primary Use or Uses*. The natural resources, qualities, and values, and the primary use or uses inventory includes:
- i. Resource program inventory for those resources identified as supporting or promoting the National Trail nature and purposes or recreation experiences, including vicarious experiences for National Historic Trails. Inventory follows the minimum inventory requirements for each BLM resource program to the greatest extent practicable, and may include:
    - a. Forest or rangeland health inventory.
    - b. Noxious or invasive species inventory.
    - c. Threatened and endangered species inventory.
    - d. Habitat inventory.
    - e. Soil, vegetation, water, air, or riparian resource inventory.
  - ii. *For National Scenic Trails only*:
    - a. The physical representation of desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest or other areas.
    - b. Landforms that exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic regions of the area.

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- iii. For National Historic Trails only, landscape-defining National Trail-related characteristics immediately surrounding and within the viewshed of high potential historic sites and high potential route segments or satellite areas, such as landmarks or landscape features identified by the original trail users.
  - iv. Other natural resource qualities or National Trail-related primary use or uses.
8. *Natural (including Biological, Geological, and Scientific) Settings.* The natural settings are the geographic extent of the natural landscape elements that influence the trail experience and contribute to resource protection. The natural settings inventory includes:
- i. Landscape-defining characteristics, including prominent or distinctive aspects, qualities, and characteristics of the landscape.
  - ii. For National Scenic Trails only, the extent of the landscape settings that represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, and forest areas.
9. *Other Landscape Elements.* Other landscape elements are considered within the viewshed of the National Trail that support or detract from the trail experience. The inventory of other uses and the features or settings of other landscape elements in the trail area includes:
- i. Developments, facilities, and landscape modifications (cultural modifications) within the National Trail area, such as a seeding project, wind farm, campground, or communication site, including the purpose and uses of and extent of the cultural modification.
  - ii. Existing land uses and valid existing rights. The uses and rights should be documented, including case file or reference numbers and a description of the right or use (e.g., its term and extent), and the right or use depicted on a georeferenced map.
  - iii. Surface, subsurface, and other interests in land ownership identified within each inventory analysis unit. The interests in land ownership type noted, and the land ownership portrayed on a map.
  - iv. Other setting variables within the viewshed, including sights, sounds, smells, and other experiences that may impact trail experiences.

### 3.6 Assessment and Use of the National Trail Inventory

A. Upon completion and to the greatest extent practicable, the results of the National Trail inventory are combined and assessed to describe and portray the overall condition, presence, and extent of the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings by the BLM at the Field Office, including:

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1. Evaluation of the quality and extent of the identified resources, both individually and cumulatively, and the level to which the resources support the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
2. Evaluation of the quality and extent of the identified resources, both individually and cumulatively, to the level which supports National Trail characteristics:
  - i. For National Scenic Trails, each landscape element, or resource, quality, value, and associated setting, identified through the inventory will be assessed to determine how the landscape element supports or detracts from the characteristics of the National Scenic Trail, including:
    - a. The presence of unique landforms and the degree to which the landform exhibits significant characteristics of the physiographic region.
    - b. Sustainable and premier trail-related opportunities.
    - c. High scenic values.
    - d. Relative freedom from intrusion.
    - e. Natural conditions, scenic and historic features, and primitive character of the trail area.
    - f. Sustainable trail and resource conditions.
    - g. Opportunities for high-quality, primitive nonmotorized recreation experiences, including capability to provide campsites, shelters, and related public use facilities and continuous and sufficient public access.
    - h. Absence of highways, motor roads, mineral rich areas, energy transmission lines, commercial and industrial developments, range fences and improvements, private operations, and any other foreseeable activities.
    - i. Human health and safety.
  - ii. For National Historic Trails, each landscape element identified through the inventory will be assessed to determine how the landscape element supports or detracts from the characteristics of the National Historic Trail, including:
    - a. The presence and intactness of the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance.
    - b. The presence and intactness of the historic route and historic remnants and artifacts.

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- c. Sustainable and premier trail-related opportunities.
  - d. Selected land and water-based components.
  - e. Opportunities to maximize vicarious experiences and resource protection.
  - f. Presence of Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
    - (1) *High potential historic sites*: opportunities to interpret the historic significance of the trail during its period of major use and to identify and protect (NTSA Section 3(a)(3)) the visible historic remnants and scenic quality and to provide relative freedom from intrusion (NTSA Sec. 12(1)).
    - (2) *High potential route segments*: opportunities for afford high-quality recreation experiences, identify, and protect (NTSA Section 3(a)(3)) the scenic integrity of the trail setting, and afford opportunities for vicarious experiences (NTSA Section 12(2)).
  - g. Opportunities for a developed trail to meet objectives.
  - h. Properties potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.
  - i. Human health and safety.
3. The Field Office will brief the State Office regarding inventory findings, and the State Office should brief the BLM Washington Office on general findings.
4. Data regarding possible Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments identified through the inventory process, after assessment, will be recommended to the National Trail administering agency for inclusion within updates to the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.

## **Chapter 4. Congressionally Designated National Trails - Land Use Planning**

This chapter outlines BLM land use planning requirements for congressionally designated National Trails and the National Trail Management Corridor. Through the land use planning process, where a designated trail is within the planning area, the BLM establishes National Trail Management Corridor, and will set forth allocation decisions, management actions, and necessary restrictions for resources and resource uses within that National Trail Management Corridor in order to effectively manage the nature and purposes of National Trail and the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses.

### **4.1 General Requirements**

#### *A. Addressing Designated National Trails through Land Use Planning*

1. As soon as practical after activation, the BLM must address designated National Trails through the land use planning process.
2. Designated National Trails may be addressed through a land use plan amendment, or a Statewide Trail Management Plan or a programmatic multi-state effort which amends applicable Resource Management Plans.
3. Regardless of the type of land use planning process undertaken, the BLM shall establish a National Trail Management Corridor(s) and identify management goals, objectives, and actions for each designated National Trail.
4. National Trails shall be clearly identified as a specific resource or discipline, in its own unique section throughout the various chapters of the Resource Management Plan - not contained within and across multiple disciplines.
5. Resource Management Plan decisions should be compatible across BLM jurisdictions, as applicable, to provide for trailwide management consistency.

#### *B. Relationship between the National Trail Right-of-Way in the Trailwide Comprehensive Plan and the National Trail Management Corridor in the Resource Management Plan and Associated Provisions*

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1. As set forth in Section 5(e) of the NTSA, the trailwide Comprehensive Plan addresses the nature and purposes and the plan for the acquisition, management, development, and use of the trail. The National Trail Right-of-Way is addressed in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, and/or Federal Register notice (see Manual 6250, National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration). The National Trail Right-of-Way includes the area of land that is of sufficient width to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses. The National Trail nature and purposes and the National Trail Right-of-Way are key considerations in establishing the National Trail Management Corridor in a Resource Management Plan.
2. The BLM shall include consideration of, as appropriate, the following from the Trailwide Comprehensive Plan into the land use plan that addresses the National Trail: the nature and purposes of the National Trail; the National Trail Right of Way; the Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments; and other key provisions. See the special provision for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail in the NTSA Sections 5(e) and 5(f) regarding high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.

*C. Resource Management Plan Consistency with Other Congressionally, Presidentially, or Administratively Designated Areas*

1. Where multiple NLCS designations overlap, the BLM must comply with all applicable statutes. The more protective management requirements will likely apply, subject to evaluation on a case by case basis. For example, where designated Wilderness overlaps with a designated National Historic Trail, no motorized vehicles or equipment may be used in the area of overlap unless they are the minimum necessary to administer the area for the purpose of the Wilderness Act.
2. Within these areas, the BLM shall support the nature and purposes of the designated National Trail pursuant to the NTSA and as a unit of the National Landscape Conservation System.

*D. Coordination Requirements for Designated National Trails*

1. Under Section 2(c) of the NTSA, the BLM shall proactively encourage and assist involvement by tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties.
2. The BLM, as the trail managing agency, shall coordinate with the National Trail administering agency. The National Trail administering agency or other affected Federal agencies may serve as cooperating agencies in the land use planning/NEPA processes.



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3. When National Trails cross state or Field Office boundaries, the BLM shall coordinate with other BLM offices and jurisdictions to ensure compatible land use planning decisions.

#### 4.2 Requirements for Designated National Trails in Land Use Planning

A. *Analysis of the Management Situation.* As part of the “analysis of the management situation” (see 43 CFR § 1610.4-4) the BLM shall:

1. Review and summarize management direction from the National Trail enabling legislation, and should consider any relevant legislative history provisions (in consultation with the Office of the Solicitor), and applicable direction contained in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.
2. Conduct a National Trails program review and evaluation of Resource Management Plan decisions to determine:
  - i. To what extent National Trails are addressed in support of the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses in the trail area.
  - ii. To what extent authorized actions have adversely affected the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses of the National Trail.

#### B. *Affected Environment*

1. The BLM shall include a description of the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses. This information may be found within the National Trail-enabling legislation, National Trail Feasibility Study, the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, and the National Trail inventory.
2. If the trailwide Comprehensive Plan is silent on the nature and purposes, the affected State Office(s) shall coordinate with the National Trail administering agency to identify, establish, and describe the National Trail nature and purposes for the Resource Management Plan.
3. The BLM shall include information and data regarding the National Trail Right-of-Way selected by the trail administering agency. This also includes, for National Historic Trails, high potential historic sites, high potential route segments, auto tour route, National Register eligible properties that support the significance of the trail, and other potential Federal Protection Components.

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C. *Development of Designated National Trail Goals and Objectives.* Goals and objectives for the National Trail shall be identified based on the NTSA, enabling legislation, legislative history (in consultation with the Office of the Solicitor), the nature and purposes of the trail, supporting information from the National Trail Feasibility Study, trailwide Comprehensive Plan, and National Trail inventory. The nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses will be clearly described. At a minimum, the following goals and objectives should be considered for National Trails:

1. *For all National Trails*

- i. Safeguard the nature and purposes; and conserve, protect, and restore the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses.
- ii. Provide premier trail visitor experiences for public benefit.
- iii. Maximize opportunities for shared National Trail stewardship.
- iv. Reduce the potential for uses that substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the National Trail (see Chapter 1, 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy).
- v. Avoidance of activities that are incompatible with the purposes for which the National Trail was established (see Chapter 1, 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy).

2. *For National Scenic Trails*

- i. Provide for maximum compatible outdoor recreation potential.
- ii. Maintain the continuous nature of the National Scenic Trails.
- iii. Maintain the special environments and landforms that support trail visitor experiences.

3. *For National Historic Trails*

- i. Identify and manage the historic route and historic remnants and artifacts for public use, enjoyment, and vicarious trail experiences.
- ii. Identify and manage high potential historic sites or high potential route segments, including the recommendation of additional Federal Protection Components.
- iii. Other goals and objectives may include:
  - a. To restore altered landscapes to an identified trail-era condition.

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- b. To conserve, protect, and restore landscape elements that are evocative of the period of use to the extent allowed by law.
4. National Trail management objectives will be established for each trail segment. National Trail management objectives should describe the desired future condition for that segment, with consideration for how that segment relates to the entire National Trail.

*D. National Trail Management Corridor Alternative Formulation and Analysis*

1. A National Trail Management Corridor is a land use plan allocation which is based on the Section 7(a)(2) of the National Trails System Act “rights-of-way” selected in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan. The National Trail Management Corridor for the trail includes a public land area of sufficient width within which to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that are present or to be restored.
2. The National Trail Management Corridor shall be of sufficient width to constitute a manageable administrative unit that is identifiable on the ground, in consideration of the following:
  - i. Congressionally designated National Trail route; the nature and purposes of the National Trail; the selected National Trail Right-of-Way recommended by the trail administering agency in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan; the inventory of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses; proposed or existing land uses; valid existing rights; surface, subsurface, and other interests in land; land tenure; and relevant resource assessments or information.
  - ii. For all National Trails, the National Trail Management Corridor alternatives should consider:
    - a. Including all public lands and interests in lands containing resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that support the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
    - b. Including other Federal lands, state trust lands, private lands, and/or other interests in lands, including split estate, that contain National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses. Although these lands may be included within the management corridor, they are not and shall not be subject to BLM management. Interested landowners may voluntarily elect to participate in National Trail management on private or state lands through a cooperative agreement or other instrument with the BLM.

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- c. Minimizing the adverse impacts, to the extent practicable, on adjacent landowners, users, and operations.
  - d. Opportunities to harmonize with and complement any established multiple-use plans for that specific area in order to insure continued maximum benefits from the land, while minimizing conflict.
  - e. The potential of reasonably foreseeable development for multiple-use activities within the National Trail Management Corridor including scale, visibility, and duration with regard to National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.
  - f. Including recommendations for National Recreation Trails, including National Water Trails, and Connecting and/or Side Trails (see BLM Manual 8353) within the National Trail Management Corridor.
  - g. Compatibility across Field Office and state jurisdictional boundaries.
- iii. A National Scenic Trail Management Corridor should be located to avoid, insofar as practicable, highways, motor roads, mineral rich areas, power transmission lines, commercial and industrial developments, range fences and improvements, private operations, and any other foreseeable activities that would be incompatible with the purposes of the trail, the natural condition, and use for outdoor recreation. Width or location may vary across alternatives to avoid these cultural modifications and include the consideration of the National Trail criteria listed in 1.6.
- iv. For National Historic Trails, the management corridor need not be continuous through the planning area. A National Historic Trail Management Corridor will include Federal Protection Components, including the high potential historic sites and high potential route segments identified in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan. The corridor will include those areas that meet the criteria established in the NTSA; the designated route that contains evidence of history, including artifacts and remnants; National Register eligible and/or listed properties; and proposed supporting development actions or uses, such as access trails, overlooks, and interpretive sites. As a special provision, National Register eligible properties inventoried but not yet assessed may be included as part of the National Historic Trail Management Corridor if determined likely to contain significant cultural resources from the period of use. The National Historic Trail Management Corridor need not be continuous and may encompass high potential historic sites and high potential route segments as satellite areas for landmark features observed by early travelers or similar circumstances that clearly warrant separation.
3. In establishing the boundaries of the National Trail Management Corridor, the BLM field offices must consider the following:

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- i. The width of the National Trail Management Corridor, based on the presence of the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses. The BLM may consider different sizes or configurations of land within the National Trail Management Corridor through the alternative development and analysis process; however, all National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings must be contained within the National Trail Management Corridor.
  - ii. The National Trail Management Corridor boundary should be based on the associated natural or manmade physical landscape features in the following order of precedence: ridgelines, rivers, washes, and toe-of-the-slope (where well-defined as in desert environments); turning points, such as peaks, buttes, and geologic features; roads, primitive roads or routes, and railroads; and lines of the Public Land Survey System. Measures, such as footage, mileage, and contour intervals, shall be discouraged. If certainty in location of a corridor boundary may become an issue (e.g., in a case of a flat or ill-defined ridgeline bordering an incompatible land status or usage), then lines of the Public Land Survey System should be considered.
  - iii. National Trail management corridor boundaries should be compatible with neighboring BLM Field Offices and other National Trail land managers and should edge-match, where possible.
  - iv. The National Trail Management Corridor boundary shall be described and delineated in accordance with BLM mapping policies, and prepared for referencing as the proposed and final National Trail Management Corridor(s) in the Federal Register notices required for the draft and final Resource Management Plan.
4. To the greatest extent possible, during the land use planning process, utility corridors, energy development zones, and exclusion areas for solar, wind, oil and gas, and similar types of uses should be considered simultaneously with the establishment of the National Trail Management Corridor to ensure National Trail protections and energy development objectives are compatible.

E. *Trail Management Guidance by Resource Program.* To the greatest extent possible, the BLM will consider the following guidance when making resource-specific decisions, subject to valid existing rights, within the National Trail Management Corridor allocation:

1. *Scenic and Visual Resources.* The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following management decisions for scenic and visual resources for National Trails:

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- i. Designating visual resource management (VRM) classes based on the National Trail visual resource inventory and based on the desired future condition of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the areas through which such trails may pass. To retain or improve the integrity of the associated settings and scenic values for which the National Trail was designated, the BLM should consider establishing VRM classes at the most protective level practicable to meet National Trail scenery management objectives. As stated in M8400 Visual Resource Management, .06 A.2. “Visual management objectives (classes) are developed through the RMP process for all Bureau lands. The approved VRM objectives shall result from, and conform with, the resource allocation decisions made in RMP’s.”
  - a. VRM Class I or II designation for National Scenic Trails, where not adversely impacted by existing cultural modifications; and National Historic Trail Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites; high potential route segments; and other qualifying areas.
  - b. Designating other significant National Historic Trail properties that may be eligible or listed on the National Register from the period of use as VRM Class I and II within the management corridor. These properties may include the National Historic Trail tread or trace, areas that support the nature and purposes, associated settings, sites developed for National Trail interpretation, and National Trail-related recreation access trails or sites.
- ii. Whether the National Trail Management Corridor should be classified as VRM Class III or classes which are more visually protective, to retain or improve the existing visual setting of the areas along a National Trail where permanent cultural modifications currently exist.

In assigning VRM classifications, describe how activities managed to this scenic level support the nature and purposes of the National Trail and how uses are managed to avoid visual conflict. This requirement also applies to areas where a proposed VRM Class III may extend beyond the boundary of the National Trail Management Corridor, so as not to diminish the National Trail visual setting. The influence that the visual setting has on the National Trail is not to be undervalued.

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For those areas along a National Trail that inventory at a VRI Class IV but are devoid of permanent cultural modifications, alternatives should consider classification as VRM Class III or classes which are more visually protective, to retain or improve the existing visual setting. VRM Class IV should not be considered for use within National Trail Management Corridor as “The objective of Class IV is to provide for management activities which require major modifications of the existing character of the landscape. The level of change to the characteristic landscape can be high. These management activities may dominate the view and be the major focus of viewer attention” (BLM Manual 8400, Visual Resource Management, and BLM Manual H-8410-1, Visual Resource Inventory).

- iii. The maintenance of naturally appearing landscapes that are associated with the National Scenic or Historic Trail, regardless of scenic quality rating, to provide premier recreation experience opportunities.
2. *Cultural and Historic Resources.* The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following management decisions for cultural and historic resources for National Trails:
- i. The identification, preservation, and protection of significant cultural resources and significant historic properties that support the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
  - ii. The significant National Historic Trail properties from the period of use that may be eligible or listed on the National Register within the management corridor.
  - iii. Where cultural use allocations are made for cultural properties, sites, and settings along a National Trail, the “discharged from use” management allocation should not be considered when the property supports the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
  - iv. How historic settings, and those characteristics which support the historic setting, can be managed in a manner that supports the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
  - v. The establishment of priorities for identified, specific geographic areas within the National Trail corridor for additional National Trail-related cultural and historic resource inventory and evaluation.
  - vi. The nomination of significant National Trail-related properties that qualify for listing on the National Register in accordance with National Register criteria, and, where appropriate, National Historic Landmarks.

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3. *Recreation and Visitor Services.* The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following management decisions for recreation and visitor services for National Trails:
  - i. Designating recreation management areas within the National Trail Management Corridor where needed to effectively manage the National Trail. Each recreation management area should be of sufficient size to provide for effective National Trail-related recreation management. Recreation management area boundaries may differ from the National Trail Management Corridor boundaries. Recreation management areas should be designated for areas within the National Trail Management Corridor to:
    - a. Delineate visitor use areas and to direct use to areas within the National Trail Management Corridor and to provide for National Trail-specific recreation activities, experiences, benefits, and recreation setting characteristics.
    - b. Maintain National Trail-related activities and associated qualities and conditions and provide recreation management commensurate with other resource programs and uses.
  - ii. Emphasizing high-quality recreation opportunities; relative freedom from intrusion; opportunities for vicarious experiences; and conservation, protection, and restoration of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings.
  - iii. Establishing the desired recreation setting characteristics for the National Trail Management Corridor based on the Recreation Opportunity Spectrum/recreation setting characteristics inventory (see BLM Manual 8320, Planning for Recreation and Visitor Services), regardless of designation as recreation management area(s).
  - iv. Establishing the process and guiding principles for determining visitor capacity for sites, areas, and/or certain activities within the National Trail Management Corridor. The actual establishment of visitor capacity will occur at the implementation planning level.
4. *Travel and Transportation Management.* The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following management decisions for travel and transportation management for National Trails:
  - i. Designating areas as open, limited, and closed in accordance with the provisions of the NTSA and the policy provided within this manual for National Scenic and/or Historic Trails.



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- ii. Establishing travel management area(s) for the National Trail Management Corridor based on site-specific resource conditions and land use plan goals and objectives and to ensure continuity of travel systems. Travel management areas may extend to adjacent public lands beyond the National Trail Management Corridor.
- iii. Establishing route designations, where feasible, including identification of specific roads, primitive roads, and trails, consistent with BLM travel and transportation management policies. If route designation is deferred to the implementation-level plan, then the Resource Management Plan shall prioritize travel management area(s) that encompass the National Trail Management Corridor to be the first travel management area(s) to complete a travel management plan within the planning area.
- iv. BLM should consider closing, re-routing, and/or rehabilitating routes that do not meet National Trail goals and objectives.
- v. The National Trail primary use or uses will be identified within each travel management area.
- vi. *National Scenic Trails.* The BLM must consider closure of National Scenic Trails to motorized use through the land use planning process, following Section 7 (c) of the NTSA, the regulations at 43 CFR 8351.1-1), and the enabling legislation for specific trails, such as the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail. Motorized use on roads may be allowed only if certain regulatory exceptions are met. The BLM shall address the following within the Resource Management Plan when designating areas as open, limited, and closed, or establishing route designations, as applicable:
  - a. National Scenic Trails should be managed primarily for foot travel. Other forms of travel may be allowed in accordance with applicable law, policy, and guidance in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.
  - b. National Scenic Trails are normally closed to motorized vehicle use. No one shall operate a motorized vehicle along a National Scenic Trail except when necessary to meet emergencies; where the authorized officer determines that the adjacent landowners and land users have a need for reasonable access; or on roads that are designated segment of the trails and are posted as open to motorized vehicles (see NTSA Section 7(c) and 43 CFR 8351.1-1).

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- c. To the greatest extent possible, roads under the BLM’s jurisdiction (BLM Manual 1626 travel management definition) will not be used as segments of National Scenic Trails. Coordination with the National Trail administering agency must occur prior to any decision to use a road for National Scenic Trail purposes. For places where roads must be used as designated segments, they must be posted as “open to motorized use” to the applicable standard (see 43 CFR 8351.1-1) and “measures taken to ensure visitor safety.” This measure is emphasized for the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail per the regulations promulgated at 43 CFR 8351.1-1 by the Secretary based on the enabling legislation for this trail.
- d. If necessary, through the land use planning process, primitive roads (BLM Manual 1626 transportation linear features definition) may serve as National Scenic Trail segments for safety or resource protection, after consultation with the National Trail administering agency, on an interim basis until a nonmotorized trail segment is either available or constructed and if the motorized use does not cause adverse impacts. Primitive roads may not be used as National Scenic Trail segments for the purposes of convenience in satisfying the requirement for a continuous trail or regarding funding concerns. A quality visitor experience must remain a primary objective. Plan decisions using primitive roads must state the reason, timeframe for use, measures the agency will take to assure a quality experience, and plans for future construction. For places where roads must be used as National Scenic Trail segments, they must be posted as “open to motorized use” (43 CFR 8351.1-1).
- e. For roads and primitive roads under the BLM’s jurisdiction (BLM Manual 1626 travel management policy definition) that are designated segments of the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail, motorized use may continue where it was allowed on designated segments at the time of designation, as long as it was authorized through the land use planning process. If a proposed use will substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, it may not be permitted.
- f. Because National Scenic Trails are designated and managed primarily for non-motorized uses and because BLM Backcountry Byways are designated and managed for motorized vehicle use, National Scenic Trails should not be designated as BLM Backcountry Byways.
- g. The Resource Management Plan should establish considerations for the relocation of National Scenic Trail segments. A substantial relocation of the National Trail Right-of-Way shall be by Act of Congress accordance with section 7(b) of the NTSA. Considerations may include:
  - (1) Maintaining the nature and purposes of the National Trail.

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- (2) Improved public access.
- (3) Addressing or improving public health and safety.
- (4) Achieving resource conservation or protection requirements or needs.
- (5) Improved setting quality, including scenic, recreation, and natural areas.
- (6) Improved sustainability of the trail.
- (7) Suitable water sources.
- (8) Reduced conflict with motorized use.
- (9) Reasonable separation from residential, commercial, and industrial development that could impair the desired experience of the trail visitor.
- (10) Improved manageability based on land status.

- vii. *National Historic Trails*. BLM should consider limiting motorized use on National Historic Trails through the land use planning process. The Resource Management Plan will also include monitoring requirements and should consider the following:
- a. Whether motorized use on roads or primitive roads or routes under the BLM's jurisdiction (BLM travel management policy definition) was allowed on the National Trail at the time of designation.
  - b. Whether to incorporate auto tour routes from the trailwide Comprehensive Plan. The BLM may recommend alterations or additional routes to the National Trail administering agency as a result of planning.
  - c. Consider whether Backcountry Byway Type I and II designations may be used to direct visitor use and to support auto route identification and management for National Historic Trails. Any proposed Backcountry Byway designation must be similar in nature to the designated National Trail, must support the nature and purposes, and not promote or introduce incompatible uses.
- viii. The BLM, in coordination with the National Trail administering agency, may identify and recommend Connecting and Side Trail designations for routes that would adjoin two points along a National Trail, or that provide additional points of public access between National Trails. Proposed Connecting and Side Trails may be located within or outside the National Trail Management Corridor (see BLM Manual 8353).

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- ix. Consider appropriateness of transportation infrastructure for commodity programs within the National Trail Management Corridor.
5. *Lands and Realty*. The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following management decisions for lands and realty decisions for National Trails:
- i. Including only those actions necessary to achieve National Trail purposes and objectives, such as:
    - a. Identifying sufficient access needs to and/or along the National Trail and the National Trail Management Corridor, including:
      - (1) lands needed to connect National Scenic Trail segments or complete the National Scenic Trail Management Corridor, and
      - (2) lands needed to access to high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
    - b. Identifying acquisition needs for lands and/or interests in lands, through purchase, easements acquisition, and exchange. Priorities for acquisition include those private lands offered by willing sellers within the National Trail Management Corridor and lands needed to connect National Trails.
      - (1) Pursuant to NTHSA Section 7(g), direct Federal acquisition for National Historic Trail purposes is limited to those areas indicated by the National Trail Feasibility Study report or the trailwide Comprehensive Plan as high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
      - (2) If there is a willing seller, the legal description of lands identified for acquisition should be included within the Resource Management Plan.
    - c. Identifying lands that contain National Trail resources, qualities, values, or associated settings that should be prioritized for withdrawal, subject to valid existing rights.
      - (1) The Resource Management Plan should identify recommended withdrawal areas, including the legal description and a map of such lands.
      - (2) Non-Federal lands which would be petitioned for withdrawal, if acquired, should be identified.

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- d. Reviewing areas currently withdrawn to determine compatibility with the goals and objectives of the National Trail. Based on the review, the BLM may propose to extend or relinquish the area withdrawals. The Resource Management Plan should identify how lands would be managed if any withdrawal is relinquished for areas within the National Trail Management Corridor in accordance with 43 CFR 2300 and BLM land use planning policies.
  - e. Retention of public lands within a National Trail Management Corridor in accordance with Section 203 of FLPMA, as classified in accordance with 43 CFR 2420, and ensure public lands within the National Trail Management Corridor are not contained on Resource Management Plan disposal lists.
  - f. Identifying whether to make lands within the National Trail Management Corridor available for Recreation and Public Purposes Act sales or leases in accordance with Section 212 of FLPMA.
  - g. Identifying and prioritizing public lands within the National Trail Management Corridor which require a cadastral survey.
- ii. The BLM will identify and prioritize National Trail Management Corridor lands actions. Prioritization will occur in a manner commensurate with other resource programs. The BLM should identify:
- a. Circumstances under which use or development of lands within the National Trail Management Corridor may be granted.
  - b. Stipulations, and terms and conditions for uses within the National Trail Management Corridor, including best management practices identified in Appendix 1.
  - c. Considerations for evaluating proposals and granting authorization for foreseeable or temporary use and development, including those for removal and site restoration once the use terminates. Siting of support infrastructure such as access roads or routes, monitoring facilities, communications sites, testing equipment and staging areas for commodity programs is discouraged within the National Trail Management Corridor.
  - d. The BLM should identify FLPMA Title V right-of-way avoidance and exclusion areas within the National Trail Management Corridor. Locations for right-of-way crossings, terms and conditions for construction and maintenance, revegetation requirements, and locations of ancillary facilities should be identified within the National Trail Management Corridor through the land use planning process.

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- (1) The Secretary, through the BLM, “may grant easements and rights-of-way upon, over, under, across, or along any component of the national trails system in accordance with the laws applicable to...[the BLM public lands]...[p]rovided, [t]hat any conditions contained in such easements and rights-of-way shall be related to the policy and purposes of” the NTSA. NTSA Sec. 9(a).
  - (2) Through the land use planning process, and in order to further the purposes of the National Trails, when the BLM determines which lands may be suitable for transportation, utility, or other FLPMA Title V rights-of-way corridors in an area that includes a National Trail, the BLM should consider designating such corridors in areas where existing transmission lines, pipelines, highways, and improved areas are located; comparably disturbed areas; or the area of least potential adverse impact.
  - (3) The BLM should consider locating transportation, utility, or other FLPMA Title V rights-of-way locations in a manner which avoids Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
  - (4) The BLM should consider establishing areas that contain Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments, as exclusion areas or closed to development.
6. *Minerals.* The land use plan and associated NEPA analysis should consider the following for minerals management decisions for National Trails:
- i. In accordance with 43 CFR 3400.2, coal leases shall not be issued on Federal lands within the National System of Trails. Lands within the National System of Trails are unsuitable, subject to valid existing rights, for all or certain stipulated methods of coal mining involving surface coal mining operations. 43 CFR 3461.0-7; 43 CFR 3461.5; 43 CFR 3461.1. BLM should assess whether lands within the National System of Trails are unsuitable for coal mining pursuant to 43 CFR 3461.5(a). In accordance with 43 CFR 3461.1, Federal lands with coal deposits that would be mined by underground mining methods shall not be assessed as unsuitable where there would be no surface coal mining operations.

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- ii. In accordance with BLM Handbook 1601-1, Appendix C., Section II, part G, H, I, J, and K; and Section 204 of FLPMA, in the land use plan the BLM should consider whether to identify the following areas to be recommended for closure (through a withdrawal) to mineral entry, leasing, and mineral material sales: the National Trail tread or trace; National Historic Trail high potential historic sites and high potential route segments; sites developed for National Trail-related interpretation; National Trail-related recreation sites; and other areas where it has been determined that National Trail-related resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses would be lost due to mineral exploration and development or cannot be adequately protected with even the most restrictive plans of operations.
- iii. The BLM should consider whether other areas within the National Trail Management Corridor may be designated closed to leasing, or open to leasing subject to constraints required to achieve National Trail purposes, goals, and objectives. These constraints may include timing limitations, seasonal and controlled surface use restrictions, and no-surface-occupancy stipulations. In evaluating potential leasing constraints, consider the following:
  - a. Lease stipulations necessary to achieve National Trail objectives should be established for areas identified as open to leasing.
  - b. Circumstances for granting exceptions, waivers, or modifications to lease stipulations, and associated documentation and public notification requirements, should be identified in the Resource Management Plan.
- iv. The Resource Management Plan will identify if and to what extent constraints for new leases identified within the Resource Management Plan will apply to areas currently under lease within the National Trail Management Corridor (BLM H-1601-1, Appendix C, section H), subject to valid existing rights.
- v. The Resource Management Plan will identify the long-term objectives for reclamation of areas within the National Trail Management Corridor which are currently under development. These long-term objectives will guide reclamation prior to abandonment, subject to valid existing rights.
- vi. The BLM will identify terms required to maintain the nature and purposes of the National Trails and to manage National Trails and the National Trail Management Corridor resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses.
- vii. The BLM will identify locations within the National Trail Management Corridor that are closed to mineral materials sale and disposal.

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7. *Livestock Grazing.* Livestock management decisions on National Trails or within the National Trail Management Corridor including determination of forage allocations, grazing systems, range improvements, season of use, and stocking rates, will be designed to ensure compatibility with National Trail objectives and should consider:
  - i. Design of range improvements to ensure a low level of contrast with the characteristic landscape.
  - ii. Design of range improvements to prevent adverse impact to the recreation experience and trail conservation, including water sources, fencing, stock driveways, and salting areas.
  - iii. Placement of range improvements outside the National Trail Management Corridor.
8. *Forestry.* Any harvest, reforestation, and forest development allocation decisions on National Trails or within the National Trail Management Corridor should consider National Trail management objectives; and design criteria to ensure compatibility with resources, qualities, values, and associated setting and the primary use or uses, including addressing the characteristic landscape, mimicking landscape-level patterns and features, and minimizing potential impacts to the recreation experience.
9. *Wildland Fire and Fuels Management.* Decisions regarding fire and fuels management on Trails should consider the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.
  - i. Fire management allocation decisions will include consideration of avoiding the following priority areas:
    - a. The National Trail tread or trace.
    - b. National Historic Trail high potential historic sites and high potential route segments.
    - c. National Register eligible and listed sites.
    - d. Sites developed for National Trail-related interpretation.
    - e. National Trail-related recreation sites and built environment.
  - ii. The Resource Management Plan should identify areas within the National Trail Management Corridor where wildland fire management uses may be allowed, under what conditions, and in what locations. Suppression tactics and fuels management decisions should avoid impacts to National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.



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- iii. Should fire and/or fire suppression activities adversely affect National Trail resources, qualities, values, or associated settings, National Trails will be included as part of fire stabilization and rehabilitation efforts.
10. Alternatives shall describe how management decisions within the National Trail Management Corridor will help achieve the goals and objectives for the National Trail.

4.3 Environmental Consequences of Planning Decisions on Designated National Trails and the Approved Resource Management Plan

A. For each alternative, the analysis of environmental consequences shall address how the land use planning decisions will achieve:

1. The nature and purposes of the National Trail.
2. National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings.
3. National Trail primary use or uses.
4. The National Trail from the cumulative or trailwide perspective.

B. The Record of Decision that accompanies the approved plan shall describe the planning decisions for the National Trail and the National Trail Management Corridor.

C. National Trail Management Corridor descriptions and maps shall be prepared and referenced in the Draft, Proposed, and Approved Resource Management Plan, in accordance with BLM Manual 6120 and agency National Trail standards and processes for inclusion in the respective Federal Register notices. The reference in the Federal Register shall include key information on the prepared and available maps, boundaries, and descriptions.

## **Chapter 5. Congressionally Designated National Trails - Management**

This chapter outlines BLM guidance for the management of National Trails, including activation; protocol for proposed actions within designated National Trails areas; implementation-level planning for designated National Trails; and National Trail stewardship program responsibilities.

### **5.1 Designated National Trail Activation**

Activation is the official notification to BLM field offices that Congress has designated a new National Scenic or Historic Trail. The activation memorandum promotes awareness of the designation, and includes a copy of the enabling legislation, status of any trail administration delegations, and reference to program policy requirements. The Washington Office will issue the activation memorandum to the State, District, and Field Office levels in accordance with the responsibilities outlined in Chapter 1 of this manual.

### **5.2 General Requirements**

A. The BLM shall, when required by the BLM Washington Office, prepare and submit annual reports to specified standards, including National Trails System annual reports; congressionally or agency required reports; and National Trail program management reports, such as performance, budget, partnership endeavors, workload accomplishments, and operations issues, pursuant to the National Trails System Memorandum of Understanding, 06-SU-11132424-196, BLM programmatic requirements, and in accordance with the provisions in Section 1.7 File and Records Maintenance of this manual.

B. The BLM shall implement standard agency program procedures to identify, manage, and account for funding provided to meet performance and management objectives for each National Trail.

C. As soon as practical after activation, the BLM shall establish a National Trail Management Corridor through the land use planning process (see chapters 3 and 4 of this manual). Until such time that the National Trail is addressed in a Resource Management Plan, the trail shall be managed, as appropriate, in accordance with the designating legislation and according to the policy, procedures, and protocols outlined in this manual.

D. The BLM shall provide notice to the public, interested parties, and/or affiliated organizations of unauthorized actions which affect the National Trail. The BLM shall take appropriate action in accordance with applicable law and regulations to address unauthorized actions.

E. The BLM shall participate with the National Trail administering agency in the development of the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, including providing data about National Trail and public land resources in the trail area, participating in the development of strategic direction for the National Trail, and reviewing the trailwide Comprehensive Plan prior to completion.

### 5.3 Protocol for Proposed Actions which May Adversely Impact Designated National Trails

#### A. *Upon Receipt of a Proposed Action*

1. Where a proposed action is found to be inconsistent with the purpose for which the National Trail was designated, the BLM shall consider rejecting applications for proposed projects or denying approval of the action pursuant to FLPMA, the NTSA, and other applicable law and policy.
2. The BLM may not permit proposed uses along National Trails which will substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, and the BLM shall make efforts, to the extent practicable, to avoid authorizing activities that are incompatible with the purposes for which such trails were established (see Chapter 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy).
3. If the BLM chooses not to defer analysis of a proposed action, the BLM shall follow the applicable procedures and protocols outlined in this manual.

#### B. *Determining the Scope of Analysis*

1. The BLM shall consider the significance of the Congressional designation as a National Trail (P.L. 90-543), as a unit of the NLCS (P.L.111-11), and public and private contributions and volunteer efforts along a National Trail when evaluating whether to approve a proposed action along the designated trail. The BLM shall manage the National Trails and the areas through which such National Trails may pass in a manner that recognizes the national significance of the trails and the individual or collective significance of National Historic Trail Federal Protection Components, including high potential historic sites and high potential route segments. The national significance of National Trails must be considered in the local, regional, and national context under the NTSA and NHPA, as applicable.
2. If a National Trail Management Corridor has not been established in a land use plan, the BLM should undertake the following:
  - i. A viewshed analysis to evaluate whether the proposed action is contained within the viewshed.
  - ii. If within the viewshed, and likely to cause adverse impact, a BLM National Trail inventory and assessment is required, and should be broad enough to be able to identify reasonable alternative project locations with potentially less or no adverse impact. Upon inventory, the area of potential adverse impact shall be delineated, encompassing the resources, qualities, values and associated settings and the primary use or uses identified.

- iii. The BLM will identify, within the area of potential adverse impact, any adverse impacts to the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings; and the primary use or uses for the affected environment, alternative formulation and analysis, and environmental consequences (see chapter 3 of this manual).
  - iv. The BLM shall consider alternatives which support National Trail purposes in accordance with this policy. The BLM will consider alternatives which direct the proposed project outside the area of potential adverse impact or to a comparably disturbed or culturally modified area, such as areas already containing transmission lines, pipelines, highways, or improved roads.
3. Where National Trails have been addressed through land use planning process in accordance with Chapter 4 of this policy, the National Trail Management Corridor shall serve as the area of consideration for the purposes of the NEPA analysis, and alternatives must be consistent with the Resource Management Plan. Note: in determining land use plan conformance for proposed projects with established National Trail VRM classes, the term key observation point (KOP) replaces the term inventory observation point (IOP); however, the policy in section 3.4. B. 1-4 of this manual still applies.

*C. Notification Requirements*

1. For projects that may adversely impact the National Trail, the National Trail Administrator, the BLM State Office National Trail lead, or leads (for multistate proposed actions and trails); and a primary National Trail partner organization representative (in accordance with applicable law) will be invited to attend pre-authorization or pre-application meetings, as applicable.
2. Notice shall be provided through the Field Manager to the affected Deputy State Directors and the NLCS Division Chief of any proposed action, within the viewshed of the National Trail prior to establishment or within the established National Trail Management Corridor, that has the potential to substantially interfere with the nature and purposes, or constitute an incompatible activity (see Chapter 1, 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy), to the level that may cause significant adverse impact to the nature and purposes; resources, qualities, values or associated settings; or the primary use or uses of a designated National Trail.
3. The BLM will provide appropriate public notice pursuant to NEPA for the proposed action. If the NEPA analysis includes an EA, the BLM will provide at least 30 days public notice prior to making a decision.

4. If there is a finding of significant impact in the Environmental Assessment, the BLM Director and NLCS Assistant Director shall be briefed by the State Director 30 days prior to the release of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision.

#### 5.4 Implementation-Level Planning for Designated National Trails

A. The BLM may develop implementation plans, consistent the Resource Management Plan and the NTSA, for National Trails at the BLM field office or statewide level. Implementation plans may consider multiple resources. Implementation plans, if developed, should carry forward provisions of the Resource Management Plan (or comparable land use plan level document, e.g. Statewide trail plan, programmatic multi-state amendment effort) and trailwide Comprehensive Plan.

1. National Trail implementation plans should include management direction for any remaining inventory needs, operations, interpretation and education, signing and uniform marking, visitor capacity, science and research, travel management, development, monitoring, and site-specific management needs to achieve Resource Management Plan goals and objectives for the National Trail.
2. Implementation actions, where feasible, should be planned in coordination with tribes, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties to coordinate BLM and other entities' National Trail operations to ensure consistency, maximize efficiencies, and share resources and other support as needed. This planning will direct on-the-ground management actions and projects necessary to implement the land use and will identify and encourage collaborative and partnership opportunities to support National Trail operations and programming.
3. Operational needs should be included within the implementation plan.
  - i. Operational needs should include the actions and projects that the BLM may undertake to achieve National Trail management purposes, and prioritize those actions and projects. National Trail operational needs may be addressed for timeframes covering one or multiple years. Operational needs should be reviewed annually to ensure needs are accurately reflected and remain current prior to commitment of resources. Operational needs should address the following:
    - a. Priorities for inventory, monitoring, research, and other data collection activities.
    - b. Infrastructure and other development projects.
    - c. Maintenance activities.
    - d. Outreach, training, interpretation, and education activities.

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- e. Partnership and volunteer efforts, including associated capacity-building activities.
  - f. Discussion of supplementary rules, emergency actions, and other regulatory actions that may be needed.
  - g. Updating databases.
  - h. Priorities to acquire lands or interests in lands to achieve National Trail purposes.
4. Prioritized acquisition needs should be included within the implementation plan.
- i. The BLM should include realty actions, such as acquiring lands or easements, under a willing seller policy. The BLM may acquire, from willing landowners or other parties, lands and access to lands that contain or improve National Trail resources, qualities, values, and/or associated settings or the primary use or uses through donation, exchange, purchase, or other methods.
    - a. Lands within the management corridor shall be acquired in fee, if possible, and if necessary, to assure use of the lands for the purposes which they are acquired.
    - b. The authority of the Federal Government to acquire fee title may be limited by the National Trail-enabling legislation.
    - c. For National Historic Trails, direct Federal land acquisition for trail purposes shall be limited to areas identified as high potential historic sites and high potential route segments within the associated National Trail Management Corridor.
    - d. The BLM is authorized to acquire whole tracts notwithstanding the parts of such tracts that may lie outside the area of the National Trail-related acquisition.
    - e. The BLM will consider state and local government National Trail priorities for the acquisition of lands and other real property rights when developing and submitting land acquisition priorities during the BLM's national prioritization process.
5. Interpretation and education program actions should be included within the implementation plan.
- i. Interpretation provisions from any trailwide interpretation plan developed by the National Trail administering agency.

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- ii. The BLM will provide and enhance National Trail experience opportunities through the development of interpretive, education, and outreach programs for visitors, and as these opportunities are provided, will protect cultural, historic, and natural resources that are sensitive to visitor use.
  - iii. The BLM will provide interpretive information for enjoyment of trail visitors. The BLM will interpret the historic and other aspects of the trail to protect and enhance understanding, enjoyment, and appreciation of National Trails.
  - iv. Interpretation must be related to the nature and purpose of the National Trail.
  - v. The BLM may provide National Trail interpretation to the public, at the lowest possible cost, emphasizing site-specific National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses. The BLM will enter into agreements with the state and other stakeholders which provides for shared responsibility in maintaining National Trail interpretive sites.
  - vi. For National Scenic Trails, the interpretation should consider addressing the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the areas through which such trails may pass.
  - vii. For National Historic Trails, the interpretation should consider addressing the historic significance of the trail; the visible historic remnants; high potential historic sites; high potential route segments; and other resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses. Interpretation should emphasize specific sites along the trail, focusing on place and event-based history.
  - viii. The BLM will ensure that interpretation programs share a consistent message, design, and maintenance standard along the National Trail and are coordinated with the National Trail administering agency to the extent necessary.
  - ix. The BLM should consider use of off-site interpretation and collaboration with gateway communities to reduce impacts to National Trail settings.
  - x. The BLM may participate in providing, placing, and maintaining markers and interpretation on non-public lands in accordance with written agreements with willing landowners.
6. National Trail signing needs should be included within the implementation plan.
- i. The BLM will provide navigational signing and other information for the safety of trail visitors and to protect resources.

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- ii. The BLM will maintain a continuous and marked National Scenic Trail route on public lands to maintain trail identity, to the extent practicable.
  - iii. Signing needs will incorporate provisions from any trailwide sign plan developed by the National Trail administering agency.
  - iv. Signing considerations include the types and locations of signs required for navigation, education, interpretation, and enforcement, and must incorporate the NTSA required uniform markers.
  - v. The BLM, for National Historic Trails, will mark and maintain auto tour routes identified within the Resource Management Plan, and/or identified within the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, in coordination with the National Trail administering agency.
  - vi. The BLM may include non-public land signing needs in the sign plan in accordance with written cooperative agreements.
  - vii. Any surveyed boundary signage must be located within 1 foot of any boundary. It is prohibited to install surveyed boundary signage on an approximate or set-back line.
7. Where road, primitive road, and trail travel management designations are not made in the land use plan, they should be addressed within the implementation plan, or within Field Office travel management plans and should meet all required process and product requirements as described in the BLM's travel and transportation management policies.
- i. Travel management objectives should be established for all routes within the National Trail Management Corridor. Route management objectives will describe the intended purpose of the route in providing access and/or recreational outcomes to support the National Trail; will concisely describe the management intention for the route, including clearly defined activity types, modes of travel, and seasons or times for allowable access or other limitations; and will describe any design, operations, and maintenance (see Appendix 5).
  - ii. Individual routes may be identified to support:
    - a. Sound resource management.
    - b. Public access needs.
    - c. Development opportunities, including interpretation, trailheads, campsites, and water sources.



- d. For National Historic Trails, the opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route.
- iii. Motorized vehicle use is prohibited for National Scenic Trails; however, some specific regulatory and legislative exceptions may apply. Motorized vehicle use may be limited or prohibited on National Historic Trails (see Section 7(c) of the NTSA and 43 CFR 8351.1).
  - a. National Scenic Trails are closed to motorized use. Motorized use on roads may be allowed if certain criteria are met.
  - b. Motorized use may be allowed along National Historic Trails, and must be monitored.
  - c. Agreements may be established to further describe sufficient or reasonable access considerations, including access agreements with willing landowners to provide access across non-public lands to or along National Trails.

#### 5.5 National Trail Site-Specific Management Considerations

A. The following National Trail management considerations assist the BLM in the management of the National Trail on the ground/at the site-specific level. Proposed management actions must undergo a NEPA analysis, and must include public involvement, in accordance with this manual.

1. Campsites, shelters, and related-public-use facilities may be contained on National Scenic or Historic Trails.
2. Reasonable efforts shall be made to provide sufficient access opportunities to such trails, and reasonable access for adjacent landowners.
3. The BLM discourages competitive or commercial recreation uses along the National Trail unless the proposal clearly demonstrates that the use does not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the National Trail, is compatible (see Chapter 1, 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy), and the proposal serves an identified trail resource or trail visitor services need.
4. The BLM may remove impediments in managing the National Trails such as unnecessary physical structures and barriers to use or access that do not enhance National Trail resources, qualities, values, or associated settings or the primary use or uses, as practicable.

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5. The primary National Trail use or uses takes precedence over other discretionary trail uses. Types of discretionary uses include bicycling, cross-country skiing, day hiking, equestrian activities, jogging, trail biking, back packing, snowmobiling, surface and underwater activities, and vehicle use. Accessibility for individuals with disabilities is prescribed by law and regulation.
6. Where necessary, notice may be provided to permittees or lease operators of the presence of a congressionally designated National Trail and the BLM's responsibility not to permit uses along trails that would substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, and also to make efforts to avoid activities incompatible with the purposes for which trails were established, to the extent practicable, while respecting valid existing rights.
7. The BLM may incorporate design features and best management practices for National Trails as described in Appendix 1 to guide project implementation within the National Trail Management Corridor, as applicable.
8. The BLM will conduct lands actions according to the following guidance and in accordance with NEPA:
  - i. Public lands and realty actions within the National Trail Management Corridor will be considered in accordance with Section 203 of FLPMA, Section 212 of FLPMA, and 43 CFR 2420.
  - ii. The BLM will consider, for lands or interests in lands acquired for National Trail purposes and those lands under formal agreement, management of those lands or interests in lands in a manner consistent with adjacent public lands within the National Trail Management Corridor.
  - iii. In accordance with the provisions on "exchanges" in FLPMA and associated regulations, when the U.S. accepts title to lands through an exchange that are within a National Trail, those lands "shall immediately be reserved for and become a part of the unit or area [e.g., the National Trail] within which they are located, without further action by the Secretary, and shall thereafter be managed in accordance with all laws, rules, and regulations, [and land use plans] applicable to such unit or area [e.g., FLPMA and the NTSA]." FLPMA Sec. 206(c), 43 CFR 2200.0-6(f).
  - iv. Non-Federal lands which meet National Trail policy withdrawal requirements and which are acquired by exchange or purchase may be petitioned for withdrawal pursuant to 43 CFR 2310 concurrently with the acquisition process. If petitioned for withdrawal, the BLM shall describe both the acquisition and segregation of those non-federal lands within the planning and environmental review.

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- v. Pursuant to FLPMA Section 203(a), the Secretary does not have the authority to sell a tract of public lands where such tracts are units within the National Trails System. Furthermore, where public lands are conveyed by the Secretary, through the BLM, pursuant to the public land laws (e.g., a sale or exchange under FLPMA), the Secretary, through the BLM, may reserve a right-of-way for National Trail(s) that are located within that conveyance to the extent necessary and pursuant to the NTSA. Specifically NTSA Section 7 (h)(2) states “Whenever the Secretary of the Interior makes any conveyance of land under any of the public land laws, he may reserve a right-of-way for trails to the extent he deems necessary to carry out the purposes of this Act.”

The NTSA Section 7(h)(2) reservation of a right-of-way for National Trails in a conveyance instrument (patent) is different from a FLPMA Title V right-of-way and is more akin to an easement. The Secretary may exercise his authority under NTSA Section 7(h)(2) (to reserve a right-of-way for trails upon a conveyance of land under the public land laws) even where the applicable land use plan identifies the area as available for disposal but has not addressed the presence of a National Trail in the area. When such a reservation is made, the following should be considered:

- a. For National Scenic Trails, the optimal trail route, as certified by the National Trail administering agency; segments with high scenic values; segments containing high quality primitive outdoor recreation opportunities; and critical public access points and/or routes.
  - b. For National Historic Trails, high potential historic sites and high potential route segments, identified National Register eligible historic properties from the period of use; segments and/or areas critical to providing a vicarious experience; and critical public access points, developed trails, and/or routes.
9. Wildland fire rehabilitation efforts, including funding requests, may identify National Trail stabilization, rehabilitation, and restoration needs.
  10. Major relocation of a National Trail shall occur only through an Act of Congress under the NTSA. The BLM may relocate the National Trail if the relocation is minor, and implemented in accordance with considerations identified in the Resource Management Plan and in conformance with any considerations or coordination requirements identified in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan.

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11. The BLM will not relinquish management jurisdiction of National Trail units to other Federal agencies; however, specific stewardship responsibilities, such as trail maintenance, may be transferred to other Federal agencies to improve efficiency and must occur through agreements. Management jurisdiction relinquished, or having the appearance of having been relinquished, prior to release of this policy will be remanded. Agreements regarding transferred stewardship responsibilities will ensure law enforcement responsibility is clear. The BLM may accept National Trail management jurisdiction or stewardship responsibility for other Federal lands through the appropriate process. Any transfer of stewardship responsibilities from the BLM and any transfer of management jurisdiction responsibilities to the BLM must include the following in the transfer documentation:
  - i. The specific lands and National Trail segment, including a map and description.
  - ii. Terms and conditions of the transfer.
  - iii. Defined maintenance and management responsibilities for the BLM.
  - iv. Specific requirements and responsibilities for private land easements.
  - v. The timeframe for the transfer.
  - vi. A statement that the management of the transferred segment is subject to the laws, regulations, and policies of the BLM, if so intended.
  - vii. Specified law enforcement responsibilities.
  - viii. A description of any exceptions.
  - ix. Requirements for a periodic review of the agreement.
  - x. An agreement termination clause.
12. The BLM may issue temporary closures and/or supplementary rules subject to the applicable regulations and policies; and may promulgate and/or revise regulations (NTSA Section 7(i)) which govern the use, protection, management, development, and administration of the National Trail on public lands.
13. Except for designated protected components of National Historic Trails, no land or sites located along a designated National Historic Trail or along the Continental Divide National Scenic Trail is subject to the provisions of section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act (49 U.S.C. 1653(f)) unless such land or site is deemed to be of historical significance under appropriate historical site criteria such as those for the National Register.

14. For additional detail on management provisions, refer to NTSA.

#### 5.6 National Trail Stewardship Program for Designated National Trails

A. The BLM should conduct stewardship responsibilities to meet defined National Trail goals and objectives through development of a National Trail stewardship program. A National Trail stewardship program may:

1. Build stewardship capacity for partnerships and volunteers.
2. Coordinate, develop, and provide partner and volunteer training.
3. Educate communities and public land visitors through outreach and programs such as A Trail to Every Classroom.
4. Expand funding capabilities through grants, cost-share, transportation, and other programs
5. Identify and provide project and collaborative opportunities to partners and volunteers, in accordance with applicable law and policy, including projects to:
  - i. Manage the National Trail.
  - ii. Share education and outreach material.
  - iii. Engage youth and families in National Trail experiences.
  - iv. Develop and maintain National Trail-related infrastructure.
  - v. Acquire lands or interests in lands to achieve National Trail purposes.
  - vi. Employment opportunities for youth, veterans, and other key segments of the public sector.

B. The BLM will actively seek and recruit partners, volunteers, and other stakeholder involvement in fulfilling National Trail purposes, including developing and implementing a robust outreach program targeted at youth, communities, state and local government, National Trail interests, environmental stewardship interests, and historic preservation interests.

1. The BLM will pursue partnerships with organizations having missions that overlap with agency National Trail objectives, and may support partner organizations as they organize, establish, and operate to support the BLM and National Trail purposes. Partner organizations may include, but are not limited to, National Trail clubs, organizations, friends groups, and cooperating associations.

2. The BLM will encourage the participation of qualified youth conservation or service corps in stewardship responsibilities, including construction and maintenance of trails, and other trail-related projects such as trail inventory including obtaining baseline condition information, monitoring, planning, protection, development, operations, and education.
3. The BLM will provide and foster opportunities for increased citizen volunteer engagement in achieving National Trail purposes and will proactively introduce citizens to the National Trails and the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail. For each state and for each National Trail, the BLM may promote opportunities for:
  - i. An adopt-a-trail program.
  - ii. National Trails Day, National Public Lands Day, and Earth Day projects and activities.
  - iii. Hands on the Land National Trail sites, Project Archaeology, a Trail to Every Classroom and other education programs with curricula focusing on National Trails.

C. The BLM will strive to build capacity and leverage resources for the purpose of fulfilling stewardship responsibilities for each National Trail by establishing mutually supportive partnerships which are formalized through cooperative or other appropriate agreements. Supportive partnerships at the national, state, regional, and local level are encouraged. Trailwide agreements are effected by the lead state.

1. The BLM will actively pursue written cooperative and/or other appropriate agreements with partners to mutually establish partnership purposes, objectives, priorities, roles, responsibilities, operating procedures, strategies, agreement timeframes, and reporting requirements.
2. The BLM may provide limited financial assistance (NTSA Section 7 (h)(1)), as resources are available and in accordance with applicable law, to partners through financial assistance agreements, including cooperative agreements, and will promote the use of matching funding aid programs to maximize and leverage resources to achieve National Trail purposes.
3. The BLM will encourage state and local government efforts to enter into voluntary written cooperative and/or other cooperative agreements with landowners, private organizations, or individuals, which could lead to securing the necessary real property rights in a National Trail Management Corridor and assist with subsequent management. The BLM may assist these efforts through, but not limited to:

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- i. Letters of support. Letters may support the efforts to donate money or convey real property interests and must not endorse the organization.
  - ii. Surveys of the property.
  - iii. Property value estimates.
  - iv. Case file work.
  - v. Descriptions of how securing real property rights will help achieve the nature and purposes of the National Trail.
  - vi. Descriptions of why the property is important in achieving National Trail purposes.
4. Inventory of the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the property.
  5. The BLM may work with willing landowners in voluntary efforts to establish land practices on private property within or adjacent to the National Trail Management Corridor.

D. The BLM may develop a training program addressing the policies and stewardship responsibilities for National Trails, and for trails that may qualify for designation as components of the National Trail System.

1. The training program may be made available to partners, volunteers, and other stakeholders and interests. The training program will incorporate BLM policy and safety requirements for fulfilling stewardship responsibilities; education regarding the NTSA and National Trail visitor ethics; and specific National Trail goals, objectives, and priorities. All stewardship responsibilities must occur in accordance with National Trail land use and implementation plans and other BLM policy.
2. The BLM may provide training to qualified partners and volunteers to help the BLM fulfill National Trail stewardship responsibilities.
3. The BLM may cooperate with other National Trail agencies to establish training opportunities and standards to ensure consistency across the National Trails System.
4. The BLM may provide technical assistance and guidance to tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties to enhance the capabilities of these stakeholders to execute stewardship responsibilities. All technical assistance and guidance will occur in accordance with agency policy standards, and at the professional level, where required, such as for archaeology education and training.

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5. In accordance with Section 11 (c) of the NTSA, the BLM may make available appropriate BLM facilities, equipment, tools, and technical assistance to volunteers, volunteer organizations, and other qualified partners and interests, subject to applicable restrictions, in order to fulfill stewardship responsibilities (see also Section 5.5 C.2. of this manual).

E. The BLM may develop, expand, and maintain a National Trail science and research program in coordination with the National Trail administering agency, other partners, and interested parties.

1. The BLM will encourage participation in the development and implementation of National Trail-related research projects with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties. The BLM will ensure that the results of these research projects are made available for the purposes of promoting knowledge and discovery, refining research methods, and developing best management practices for the conservation, protection, and restoration of the National Trails. Examples of research projects include:
  - i. Conducting historic context studies.
  - ii. Conducting cultural resource stabilization projects.
  - iii. Conducting oral histories.
  - iv. Determining the influence of migration on settlement patterns of the United States.
  - v. Quantifying native and invasive species distribution along National Trail routes.
  - vi. Quantifying heritage or recreational tourism impacts on rural communities.
  - vii. Quantifying social, economic, and/or biological impacts from long distance trail recreation uses.
  - viii. Determining visitor satisfaction with National Trail-related recreation opportunities.
  - ix. Determining appreciation and comprehension of American History by National Trail visitors.
  - x. Determining the impact on visitors from on-site and off-site National Trail-related interpretation and education programs and related efforts.
  - xi. Determining use of National Trail Management Corridors as wildlife migration corridors, use, or concentration areas.



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- xii. Determining sociocultural trends in resource use.
- xiii. Other topics that support the nature and purposes or the resources, qualities, values, or associated settings and the primary use or uses of the National Trail.

## **Chapter 6. Congressionally Designated National Trails - Monitoring**

This chapter outlines BLM considerations for monitoring National Trails. The BLM monitors National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail on public lands or interests in lands, the effects of management actions, and to identify new and emerging issues. Monitoring efforts are coordinated across BLM offices and states to ensure consistency and information sharing. The monitoring of National Trails contributes to workload and performance measure reporting and accountability.

### 6.1 Designated National Trail Monitoring

To the greatest extent practicable:

A. The BLM will monitor the changes to baseline conditions of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that have been identified through inventory as supporting the nature and purposes of the National Trail.

B. The BLM will monitor the impacts that Resource Management Plan implementation and other approved projects have on National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses, including determining the effectiveness of design features, project stipulations, and mitigation measures on a regular basis as the Resource Management Plan and projects are implemented.

C. The BLM shall monitor resource uses or surface disturbing activities that occur along the National Trail.

D. The BLM will monitor acquired lands and interests in lands to ensure those values for which they were acquired are actively protected.

E. The BLM will monitor visitor use and associated visitor capacities as part of the BLM visitor use monitoring program.

F. The BLM will ensure monitoring is prioritized and occurs regularly and systematically, as feasible.

G. The BLM will use appropriate monitoring data to determine if management practices are effective or require modification.

H. When monitoring results demonstrate that actions taken to minimize and mitigate adverse impacts are not effective, management techniques may be adjusted through adaptive management.

I. The BLM shall coordinate, as practicable, monitoring efforts with tribes, affected agencies, partners, interested parties, SHPOs, and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to maximize efficiencies.

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J. Where tribes, other agencies, partners, or interested parties are interested in participating in National Trail monitoring, the BLM may offer technical training and/or limited financial support, in accordance with applicable law, to improve capacity.

## 6.2 Data Documentation Standards and Coordination of Monitoring and Data Sharing

A. The BLM shall document all monitoring efforts in accordance with the data and documentation standards described in this manual. The BLM shall use FTDS and other formally established data standards during the monitoring process.

B. National Trail monitoring forms will include the following provisions:

1. National Trail name.
2. Resource name.
3. Date.
4. Name of person conducting monitoring and position or affiliation.
5. Management corridor site and/or segment location monitored, including general description and legal description or GPS coordinate.
6. Acreage and/or mileage monitored.
7. General observations.
8. Uses and activities observed.
9. National Trail condition, including specific resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the trail.
10. Photographic evidence of National Trail condition.
11. Potential incident of substantial interference, incompatible activities, or adverse impacts (see Chapter 1, 1.6 Statement of Programmatic Policy).
12. Summary and recommendation to Field Manager.

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C. All incidents of substantial interference, incompatible activities, or adverse impacts shall be reported to the Field Manager and resolved through the appropriate administrative or legal process. The BLM will coordinate with the National Trail administering agency on substantive incidents to seek input regarding options for resolution. Efforts to resolve incidents of substantial interference or adverse impacts shall be documented in the case file. For substantial interference, incompatible activities, or adverse impacts, the following, at a minimum, shall be documented within the monitoring section of the serialized case file:

1. National Trail name.
2. Resource name.
3. Date.
4. Name of person reporting the incident and position or affiliation.
5. Management corridor site and/or segment location where the incident occurred, including general description and legal description or GPS coordinate.
6. Acreage and/or mileage affected.
7. General observations.
8. Uses and activities observed.
9. Evidence of new disturbance observed.
10. Photographic evidence of the disturbance or activity.
11. Level of interference to the nature and purposes caused by the uses and activities.
12. Impacts to specific resource, quality, or value or associated trail setting.
13. Any mitigation measures used to immediately reduce or avoid adverse impacts to resources.
14. Proposed mitigation measures or resolution to interference.
15. Summary and recommendation to Field Manager.

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D. When monitoring results demonstrate that the Resource Management Plan decisions are not effective in achieving National Trail policy requirements or Resource Management Plan objectives, the land use plan decisions should be amended or implementation actions adjusted, subject to valid existing rights, as warranted.

E. Data may be shared with tribes, affected agencies, partners, and interested parties in accordance with formally established data sharing agreements and protocols.

## Glossary of Terms

### -A-

*activation.* Term used to initiate official field notification of the designation of a National Trail and/or the National Trail administration role, as assigned, under the National Trails System Act. Term usage is consistent with the National Park Service.

*associated settings.* The geographic extent of the resources, qualities, and values or landscape elements within the surrounding environment that influence the trail experience and contribute to resource protection. Settings associated with a National Scenic or Historic Trail include scenic, historic, cultural, recreation, natural (including biological, geological, and scientific), and other landscape elements (see resources, qualities, and values).

*auto tour route.* Those roads that parallel the National Historic Trail and provide opportunities to commemorate the historic route as an alternate experience. These opportunities may occur inside or outside the National Trail Management Corridor. Auto tour route opportunities may include access to National Historic Trail high potential historic sites and high potential route segments located on BLM public and, other participating agency land, or lands of willing landowners. Auto tour routes shall normally be restricted to existing all-weather roads or paved highways and may be limited to specific use conditions.

*avoid.* Subject to valid existing rights, agency action taken pursuant to applicable law, to the greatest extent possible to prohibit, deny, minimize, or mitigate activities on public lands that are incompatible with National Trail purposes under the National Trails System Act (see compatible and incompatible activities).

### -C-

*certification.* The administrative process whereby nonfederally owned properties along National Historic Trails are identified and recognized by the trail administering agency for the historical and/or thematic association with one or more National Historic Trails through signed certification agreement. Certified properties may be eligible for the National Register.

*certification agreement.* A nonbinding agreement between the trail administering agency and one or more partners, including state and/or local government or private land owners. The agreement formalizes a good-faith arrangement to work together toward common purposes for the National Historic Trail, such as conserving, protecting, restoring, and interpreting a historic property.

*compatible activities.* Allowable uses and management actions on public lands that harmonize, or have been minimized or mitigated in order to harmonize, with the National Trail nature and purposes.

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*Comprehensive Plan.* Statutorily required plan providing strategic direction and guidance for the future administration and management of a congressionally designated National Scenic or Historic Trail. The plan includes identification of the nature and purposes, goals and objectives, high potential sites and high potential segments (historic trails), and the selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way.

*congressionally designated trail route.* General route designated by Congress as the National Trail. It is depicted on the official map or National Trail Feasibility Study referenced in the National Scenic or Historic Trail enabling legislation. For National Historic Trails, this is the NHT 1 attribute in the Federal Trail Data Standards (see reference section of this manual).

*Connecting Trail.* Secretarially designated trails that complement National Recreation, Scenic, or Historic Trails by providing additional points of public access between such trails or connecting to such trails (see Side Trail).

-E-

*edge-matching.* The process of matching National Trail Management Corridor boundaries across BLM jurisdictions, ensuring compatibility in an identifiable and manageable boundary. Includes ensuring allowable uses, management actions, and necessary restrictions within the National Trail Management Corridor at Field Office boundaries are compatible across jurisdictions to seamlessly achieve National Trail objectives.

-F-

*Federal Interagency Council on Trails.* A longstanding interagency working group (since 1969, and reestablished by Executive Order 13195 in 2001) operating under an interagency memorandum of understanding with core membership composed of the Department of the Interior, BLM, National Park Service, and Fish and Wildlife Service; the United States Department of Agriculture, Forest Service; the United States Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration; and the United States Department of the Army, United States Army Corp of Engineers. The Council's mission is to share information with agency and nonprofit partners, coordinate program decisions, and make policy recommendations among all appropriate Federal agencies to foster the development of America's National Trails System.

*Federal Protection Component.* As described in Section 3 and 12 of the National Trails System Act, selected high potential historic sites and high potential route segments and other land- and water-based components of a designated National Historic Trail located on federally owned land which meet the National Historic Trail criteria listed in the National Trails System Act and are identified in trailwide Comprehensive Plans, Resource Management Plans, and implementation plans.

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*Federal Trail Data Standards.* A core set of standardized trail data attributes with corresponding definitions and values applicable to tabular and spatial data, approved by the Federal Geographic Data Committee on September 30, 2011. The standards are applicable to all trails, including National Scenic and Historic Trails, managed by the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and BLM.

-H-

*high potential historic site.* Historic sites related to the route or sites in close proximity thereto which provide opportunity to interpret the historic significance of the trail during the period of its major use. The criteria for consideration of sites as high potential historic sites include historic significance, presence of visible historic remnants, scenic quality, and relative freedom from intrusion. High potential historic sites are assumed to contain remnants, artifacts, and other properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, pending evaluation. Under the National Trails System Act, high potential historic sites located on federally owned land are referred to as Federal Protection Components.

*high potential route segment.* Segments of a trail which would afford a high-quality recreation experience in a portion of the route having greater than average scenic values or affording an opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of a historic route. National Historic Trail high potential route segments are assumed to contain remnants, artifacts, and other properties eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, pending evaluation. Under the National Trails System Act, high potential route segments located on federally owned land are referred to as Federal Protection Components.

*historic context study and report.* In-depth documentary research on the historic sites and trail segments focused on the period of use. Documents trail resource research, identification, location, assessment, and evaluation. The information contained in the report is used for planning and is a precursor to the National Register nomination process.

*historic route.* Trail location where historic events are known to have occurred as evidenced by historic remnants or artifacts or through research and subsequent identification. For National Historic Trails, this is the NHT 2 attribute in the Federal Trail Data Standards (see reference section of this manual).

-I-

*identification.* For both National Trail administration and management, the requirement to identify, document, and evaluate National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or uses, which support the nature and purposes of National Trail designation (see inventory section of this manual).

*incompatible use.* An activity that affects (hinders or obstructs) the nature and purposes of a designated National Trail (see substantial interference).



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*major relocation.* A significant change in the location of the designated National Trail that would substantially depart from the Congressional route, established National Trail Right-of-Way, or Management Corridor, requiring an Act of Congress.

*Management Corridor.* See National Trail Management Corridor.

*maximum compatible outdoor recreation potential.* A criterion for determining the location of a National Scenic Trail. The recreation potential is tempered by the capacity of the area to sustain such use.

*Multiple Property Documentation Form.* The National Register of Historic Places Multiple Property Documentation Form (NPS 10-900-b) nominates groups of related significant properties for listing on the National Register. The form serves as a basis for evaluating the National Register eligibility of related properties. When nominated and listed in the National Register of Historic Places, the Multiple Property Documentation Form, together with individual registration forms, constitutes a multiple property submission.

-N-

*National Historic Landmark.* Nationally significant historic places designated by the Secretary of the Interior that possess exceptional value or quality in illustrating or interpreting the heritage of the United States (see National Historic Landmark criteria).

*National Historic Landmark criteria.* A set of criteria used to evaluate the national significance of a property pursuant to the Historic Sites Act of 1935 and the National Historic Preservation Act (see National Park Service Cultural Resources National Register Bulletin, How to Prepare National Historic Landmark Nominations).

*National Historic Trail.* A congressionally designated trail that is an extended, long-distance trail, not necessarily managed as continuous, that follows as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance. The purpose of a National Historic Trail is the identification and protection of the historic route and the historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment. A National Historic Trail is managed in a manner to protect the nationally significant resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass, including the primary use or uses of the trail.

*National Historic Trail criteria.* Criteria, established in Section 5(b) of the National Trails System Act which must be addressed within the National Historic Trail Feasibility Study in order for a trail to be considered for designation.

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*National Recreation Trail.* Trail designated by the Secretary of the Interior, or delegated officer, through a standardized process, including a recommendation and nomination by the BLM. National Recreation Trails provide a variety of compatible outdoor recreation uses in or reasonably accessible to urban areas or high-use areas.

*National Register eligible.* Includes properties both formally determined as eligible for inclusion in the National Register by the Secretary of the Interior and all other significant properties that meet National Register listing criteria. This includes any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in, or eligible for inclusion in, the National Register of Historic Places maintained by the Secretary of the Interior.

*National Register of Historic Places.* The National Register is the official Federal list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects significant in American history, architecture, archeology, engineering, and culture. National Register properties have significance to the history of the communities, states, or the Nation.

*National Scenic Trail.* A congressionally designated trail that is a continuous and uninterrupted extended, long-distance trail so located as to provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses of the areas through which such trails may pass. National Scenic Trails may be located so as to represent desert, marsh, grassland, mountain, canyon, river, forest, and other areas, as well as landforms that exhibit significant characteristics of the physiographic regions of the Nation.

*National Trail.* For purposes of this manual, National Trail refers only to congressionally designated National Scenic or Historic Trails.

*National Trail Administration.* Trailwide responsibility assigned to the BLM or National Park Service by the Secretary of the Interior when the Department of the Interior is named as the responsible lead in National Trail-specific legislation (see National Trail Administrator). The responsibility involves trailwide coordination, guidance, technical assistance, and consultation with National Trail managers that have physical site management responsibility. National Trail administration responsibilities are fulfilled as directed in the NTSA in coordination with tribes; other National Trail Administrators; National Trail managing agencies (including all BLM public land managers along the congressionally designated National Trail); other Federal, state, and local government agencies; private and nonprofit organizations; willing landowners; land users; and individuals (tribes, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties). National Trail administration includes leadership in the development of the statutorily required trailwide Comprehensive Plan, which provides strategic direction for National Trail administration and management, including identification of the nature and purposes of the National Trail and selection of the National Trail Right-of-Way.

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*National Trail Administrator.* Individual delegated the responsibility to conduct National Trail administration when the BLM or National Park Service is assigned this responsibility by the Secretary of the Interior (see National Trail Administration). The responsible agency assigns the role to an individual to perform National Trail administration duties (BLM Manual 1203, Delegation of Authority).

*National Trail advisory council.* Council established to advise the Secretary that is charged with the administration of the National Trail with respect to matters relating to the trail, including the selection of a National Trail Right-of-Way in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan, standards for the erection and maintenance of markers along the trail, and the administration of the trail.

*National Trail Feasibility Study.* Study authorized through an Act of Congress to determine the feasibility and desirability of designating a trail route as a National Scenic or Historic Trail.

*National Trail Inventory.* The official record and the process used in developing the record of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses.

*National Trail Management Corridor.* Allocation established through the land use planning process, pursuant to Section 202 of Federal Land Policy and Management Act and Section 7(a)(2) of the National Trails System Act (“rights-of-way”) for a public land area of sufficient width within which to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses that are present or to be restored.

*National Trail manager.* The agency, landowner, or interest (see certification) with the authority and/or responsibility for decisionmaking for lands under its jurisdiction. Also, the official responsible for land and water management of trail-related resources.

*National Trail Right(s)-of-Way.* Term used in Section 7(a)(2) of the National Trails System Act to describe the corridor selected by the National Trail administering agency in the trailwide Comprehensive Plan and which includes the area of land that is of sufficient width to encompass National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings. The National Trail Right-of-Way, in the context of the National Trails System Act, differs from a Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) Title V right-of-way, which is a grant issued pursuant to FLPMA authorities. It becomes a key consideration in establishing the National Trail Management Corridor in a Resource Management Plan. See also National Trail Management Corridor.

*National Trails inventory standards.* The standards the BLM must meet as it conducts National Trail inventory, assessments, and documentation of National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses in the management role.

*National Trails management standards.* The standards the BLM must meet as it manages the National Trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or uses.

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*National Trails monitoring standards.* The standards the BLM must meet as it monitors National Trail inventory; resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses; effectiveness of implementation of Resource Management Plan decisions; projects within the National Trail Management Corridor; and acquired lands.

*National Trails planning standards.* The standards the BLM must meet as it conducts land use planning to establish the National Trail Management Corridor and to address all programs and uses within the management corridor.

*National Trails Program Lead.* Individual assigned by the Director, State Director, or Field Manager the responsibility to provide coordination and information-sharing, effect trailwide management, and manage operational issues for National Trails, including communication with the National Trail Administrator, other BLM National Trails Program Leads, and associated trail organizations.

*National Trails System.* Congressionally authorized system of trails recognized through the authority of the National Trails System Act, containing National Scenic and Historic Trails, National Recreation Trails, Connecting and Side Trails, and authorities applied to rail-trails.

*National Trails System Act.* Public Law 90-543, as amended and codified in 16 U.S.C. 1241-1251, which establishes the National Trails System.

*nature and purposes.* The term used to describe the character, characteristics, and congressional intent for a designated National Trail, including the resources, qualities, values, and associated settings of the areas through which such trails may pass; the primary use or uses of a National Trail; and activities promoting the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of National Trails.

-P-

*primary use or uses.* Authorized mode or modes of travel, and/or activities identified in the National Trails System Act, enabling legislation, or legislative history, through the trailwide Comprehensive Plan or approved Resource Management Plan.

-R-

*resources, qualities, and values.* The significant scenic, historic, cultural, recreation, natural (including biological, geological, and scientific), and other landscape areas through which such trails may pass as identified in the National Trails System Act (see associated settings).

*Right(s)-of-way.* See National Trail Right(s)-of-Way.

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*Side Trail.* Secretarially designated trails that complement National Recreation, Scenic, or Historic Trails by providing additional single points of public access to special features along such trails (see Connecting Trail).

*Statewide Trail Management Plan.* State-level Resource Management Plan amendment that establishes a National Trail Management Corridor and allowable uses, management actions, and necessary restrictions for resources and resource uses within the management corridor.

*stewardship responsibilities.* As National Trail Administrator or National Trail Manager, agency obligations to conduct inventory, monitoring, planning, administration, management, land or easement acquisition, protection, development, maintenance, training, and operations of the National Trails. These responsibilities may be conducted in partnership with tribes, affected agencies, willing landowners, partners, and interested parties.

*substantial interference.* Determination that an activity or use affects (hinders or obstructs) the nature and purposes of a designated National Trail (see nature and purposes).

-T-

*trail segment.* Distinct sections of a trail, categorized based on similar trail conditions, management goals and objectives, manageability, settings, ownership patterns, presence of high potential route segments, National Register eligible properties, and landscape-scale control points or trail access points.

-U-

*uniform marker.* A distinctive symbol or logo used to mark and officially represent each National Trail, developed and monitored by the National Trail administering agency.

**Appendix 1 - Design Features and Best Management Practices for  
National Trails and Associated Resources**

1. Use best science and technology to achieve objectives.
2. Projects proposed within the National Trail Management Corridor will be designed and located in a manner that is compatible with trail purposes.
3. Minimize visual contrast of project through use of project design such as use of low profile buildings; siting using the natural topography to hide or screen development; reducing the aerial extent of impact by clustering developments; use of vegetative screening; mimicking the line, form, and texture of the surrounding landscape; painting infrastructure, using colors that camouflage the development and prevent glare; and other techniques developed to address the site specific conditions.
4. Use of native plant species within the National Trail Management Corridor.
5. Weed prevention and treatment, including early detection and rapid response.
6. Avoid the use of dye, restrict administrative vehicle travel off of designated routes to minimize spread of exotic and invasive species within the National Trail Management Corridor, and consider alternate treatment methods such as use of backpack sprayer.
7. Locate wild horse and burro gather sites outside of the National Trail Management Corridor.
8. Avoid locating non-commercial woodcutting areas within National Trail Management Corridor.
9. Location, design, and rehabilitation of access routes for harvest purposes and forest projects.
10. Use of selective harvesting to minimize disruption to the characteristic landscape.
11. Avoid creation of new livestock trails within the National Trail Management Corridor.
12. Herd livestock at designated National Trail crossings.
13. Limit use of salt and developed water sources to specifically defined areas to reduce visual impacts and control livestock distribution.
14. Herd livestock instead of using fences or use removable electrical fences.
15. Remove fences where they are no longer needed.
16. Design livestock developments to be visually harmonious with the National Trail setting.
17. Locate temporary facilities, including water troughs and sheep wagons, in a manner that minimizes contrast with the characteristic landscape.
18. The BLM may establish visitor use capacity at sites, areas, and/or in certain activities within the National Trail Management Corridor, based on the monitoring and assessment of impacts including the visitor experience.
19. Use snow cover and frozen ground to armor trail segments against traffic associated with proposed activity.
20. Avoid bulldozer use, or using the National Trail as a fireline, and other similar measures, during fire suppression.

**Appendix 2 – Federal Trail Data Standards Trail Fundamentals**  
(See inventory chapter of this manual)

Federal Trail Data Standards  
Federal Geographic Data Committee

<b>FTDS - Trail Fundamentals</b>
<b>Trail Type</b> – Reflects the predominant trail surface and general mode of travel accommodated by a trail. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Standard/Terra Trail</li><li>• Snow Trail</li><li>• Water Trail</li></ul>
<b>Trail Class</b> – Prescribed scale of trail development for a trail, representing its intended design and management standards. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Trail Class 1: Minimally Developed</li><li>• Trail Class 2: Moderately Developed</li><li>• Trail Class 3: Developed</li><li>• Trail Class 4: Highly Developed</li><li>• Trail Class 5: Fully Developed</li></ul>
<b>Managed Use</b> – mode of travel that is actively managed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management.
<b>Designed Use</b> – the managed use of a trail that requires the most demanding design, construction, and maintenance parameters and that, in conjunction with the applicable Trail Class, determines which Design Parameters or technical specifications will apply to a trail.

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**Appendix 3 – Federal Trail Data Standards National Scenic and Historic Trails  
Management Corridor Concept**  
(see inventory chapter of this manual)

Federal Trail Data Standards  
Federal Geographic Data Committee

<b>Trail Code</b>	<b>Trail Category</b>
NST	National Scenic Trail (Congressionally Designated)
NHT1 Designated Route	Route(s) congressionally designated as the National Historic Trail
NHT2 Heritage Resources	NHT associated heritage resources (routes and/or sites)
NHT3 Recreation and/or Interpretive Trail/Road/Sites	NHT associated recreation or interpretive route and/or sites



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**Appendix 4 – Federal Trail Data Standards National Historic Trail Condition Categories**  
(See inventory chapter of this manual)

Federal Trail Data Standards  
Federal Geographic Data Committee

<b>FTDS – NHT Condition Category</b>	<b>Description</b>
NHT I - Location Verified, Evident, and Unaltered	The trail route is accurately located and verified from written and cartographic records, terrain limitations, and/or archaeological evidence. The visible trail remnant retains the essence of its original character that relates to the historic period for which the trail was designated and shows no evidence of having been either impacted by subsequent uses or altered by other improvements.
NHT II - Location Verified and Evident with Minor Alteration	The trail route is accurately located and verified from written and cartographic records, terrain limitations, and/or archaeological evidence. The visible trail remnant retains the essence of its character that relates to the historic period for which the trail was designated, but shows minor evidence of alteration by subsequent use, development, or natural events.
NHT III - Location Verified with Little Remaining Evidence	The trail routes is accurately located and verified from written and cartographic records, terrain limitations, and/or some archaeological evidence. Due to weathering, erosion, vegetative succession, development, etc., trail traces are insignificant, although some evidence remains (e.g. wagon wheel impact evidence such as rust, grooved, or polished rocks).
NHT IV - Location Verified and Permanently Altered	The trail route's location is verified from written and cartographic records, or by terrain limitations, although little or no archaeological evidence remains. The trail has been permanently altered or obliterated by human-caused or natural events, leaving no evidence of its original appearance.
NHT V - Location Approximate or Not Verified	The trail route's location cannot be accurately verified from written or cartographic records, or archaeological evidence. The trail is either so obliterated or unverifiable that its location is only approximately known.
NHT VI - Location Verified with Historic Reconstruction	The trail route is accurately located and verified from written and cartographic records, terrain limitations, and/or archaeological evidence. The trail segment has been deliberately reconstructed, at its original location, to appear as it did during the period of maximum historic importance.

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**Appendix 5 – Federal Trail Data Standards National Trail Management Classes**  
(See planning chapter of this manual)

<b>Trail Attributes</b>	<b>Trail Class 1 Minimally Developed</b>	<b>Trail Class 2 Moderately Developed</b>	<b>Trail Class 3 Developed</b>	<b>Trail Class 4 Highly Developed</b>	<b>Trail Class 5 Fully Developed</b>
<b>Tread &amp; Traffic Flow</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread intermittent and often indistinct.</li> <li>• May require route finding.</li> <li>• Single lane, with no allowances constructed for passing.</li> <li>• Predominantly native materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread continuous and discernible, but narrow and rough.</li> <li>• Single lane, with minor allowances constructed for passing.</li> <li>• Typically native materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread continuous and obvious.</li> <li>• Single lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volume in places where there is no reasonable opportunity to pass.</li> <li>• Native or imported materials.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread wide and relatively smooth, with few irregularities.</li> <li>• Single lane, with allowances constructed for passing where required by traffic volume in places where there is no reasonable opportunity to pass.</li> <li>• Double lane where traffic volume is high and passing is frequent.</li> <li>• Native or imported materials.</li> <li>• May be hardened.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tread wide, firm, stable, and generally uniform.</li> <li>• Single lane, with frequent turnouts where traffic volume is low to moderate.</li> <li>• Double lane where traffic volume is moderate to high.</li> <li>• Commonly hardened with asphalt or other imported material.</li> </ul>
<b>Obstacles</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles common, naturally occurring, often substantial, and intended to provide increased challenge.</li> <li>• Narrow passages; brush, steep grades, rocks and logs present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles may be common, substantial, and intended to provide increased challenge.</li> <li>• Blockages cleared to define route and protect resources.</li> <li>• Vegetation may encroach into trailway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles may be common, but not substantial or intended to provide challenge.</li> <li>• Vegetation cleared outside of trailway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles infrequent and insubstantial.</li> <li>• Vegetation cleared outside of trailway.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Obstacles not present.</li> <li>• Grades typically &lt; 8%.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Constructed Features &amp; Trail Elements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures minimal to nonexistent.</li> <li>• Drainage typically provided without structures.</li> <li>• Natural fords.</li> <li>• Typically no bridges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures of limited size, scale, and quantity; typically constructed of native materials.</li> <li>• Structures adequate to protect trail infrastructure and resources.</li> <li>• Natural fords.</li> <li>• Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures may be common and substantial; constructed of imported or native materials.</li> <li>• Natural or constructed fords.</li> <li>• Bridges as needed for resource protection and appropriate access.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures frequent and substantial; typically constructed of imported materials.</li> <li>• Constructed or natural fords.</li> <li>• Bridges as needed for resource protection and user convenience.</li> <li>• Trailside amenities may be present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Structures frequent or continuous; typically constructed of imported materials.</li> <li>• May include bridges, boardwalks, curbs, handrails, trailside amenities, and similar features.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Signs<sup>2</sup></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identification signing limited to junctions.</li> <li>• Route markers present when trail location is not evident.</li> <li>• Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent.</li> <li>• Destination signing, unless required, generally not present.</li> <li>• Information and interpretive signing generally not present.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identification signing limited to junctions.</li> <li>• Route markers present when trail location is not evident.</li> <li>• Regulatory and resource protection signing infrequent.</li> <li>• Destination signing typically infrequent outside wilderness areas; generally not present in wilderness areas.</li> <li>• Information and interpretive signing uncommon.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Route markers as needed for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Regulatory and resource protection signing may be common.</li> <li>• Destination signing likely outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness areas.</li> <li>• Information and interpretive signs may be present outside of wilderness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identification signing at junctions and as needed for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Route markers as needed for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Regulatory and resource protection signing common.</li> <li>• Destination signing common outside of wilderness; generally not present in wilderness areas.</li> <li>• Information and interpretive signs may be common outside wilderness areas.</li> <li>• Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Route identification signing at junctions and for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Route markers as needed for user reassurance.</li> <li>• Regulatory and resource protection signing common.</li> <li>• Destination signing common.</li> <li>• Information and interpretive signs common.</li> <li>• Accessibility information likely displayed at trailhead.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Typical Recreation Environments &amp; Experience<sup>3</sup></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural and unmodified.</li> <li>• ROS: Typically Primitive to Roded Natural.</li> <li>• WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural and essentially unmodified.</li> <li>• ROS: Typically Primitive to Roded Natural.</li> <li>• WROS: Typically Primitive to Semi-Primitive.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Natural and primarily unmodified.</li> <li>• ROS: Typically Primitive to Roded Natural.</li> <li>• WROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Transition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be modified.</li> <li>• ROS: Typically Semi-Primitive to Rural</li> <li>• WROS: Typically Portal or Transition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be highly modified.</li> <li>• Commonly associated with visitor centers or high-use recreation sites.</li> <li>• ROS: Typically Roded Natural to Urban.</li> <li>• Generally not present in wilderness areas.</li> </ul>
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**Illustration 1 - National Trail Administration and State Management  
Coordination Assignments**

(See overview chapter of this manual)

<b>Name of Trail</b>	<b>National Trail Location</b>	<b>National Trail Administering Agency</b>	<b>BLM State Management Coordination</b>
Arizona National Scenic Trail	Arizona	U.S. Forest Service	Arizona
California National Historic Trail	California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Wyoming	National Park Service	Nevada
Continental Divide National Scenic Trail	Colorado, Idaho, Montana, New Mexico, Wyoming	U.S. Forest Service	New Mexico
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail	New Mexico	BLM – New Mexico National Park Service	New Mexico
Iditarod National Historic Trail	Alaska	BLM - Alaska	Alaska
Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail	Arizona, California	National Park Service	Arizona
Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail	Idaho, Montana	National Park Service	Montana
Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail	Wyoming	National Park Service	Wyoming
Nez Perce National Historic Trail	Idaho, Montana, Wyoming	U.S. Forest Service	Idaho
Old Spanish National Historic Trail	Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah	BLM - Utah National Park Service	Utah
Oregon National Historic Trail	Idaho, Oregon, Wyoming	National Park Service	Oregon
Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail	California, Oregon	U.S. Forest Service	California
Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail	Washington	U.S. Forest Service	Oregon
Pony Express National Historic Trail	Nevada, Utah, Wyoming	National Park Service	Utah
Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail	Maryland, Virginia	National Park Service	Eastern States
Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail	Virginia	National Park Service	Eastern States

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**Illustration 2 - Recommended Data Dictionary Attributes for Line Features**  
(see inventory chapter of this manual)

<b>Name</b>	<b>Description</b>
Unique_ID	Abbreviation of the associated trail name combined with the OBJECTID # and date recorded; not pertinent to line features; used as a place holder from FTDS (“National Trail Designation”), each trail has its own unique identifier in the FTDS
Trail_Name	Name of the trail or the segment name, i.e Hudspeth’s Cutoff/California Trail
Other_Trail	Used for additional description of trail segment when necessary
Trail_Cond_Cat	Classification categories based on condition and level of preservation needed, i.e. Unaltered, Used, Verified, Altered, and Approximate
Environment	Type of environment. Create a “pick list” for the area to be inventoried, e.g. in AZ, it would be “desert, transition, alpine” etc.
Environ_De	Additional description of environmental conditions, when necessary. 20 characters or less.
Veg_1	The dominant plant type for the area. Create pick list, using scientific or common names
Veg_2	The second most common plant type for the area. Create pick list.
Veg_3	The third most common plant type for the area. Create pick list.
Veg_Des	Additional description of vegetation, if necessary. Create pick list.
Direct_Imp	Presence or absence of direct impacts (Yes/No)
Direct_1	The main source of a direct impact for the trail segment, if present
Direct_2	The secondary source of a direct impact for the trail segment, if present. Pick list, e.g. “road, erosion, livestock developments, water catchments” etc.
Direct_3	The tertiary source of a direct impact for the trail segment, if present. Create pick list.
Direct_Des	A quick description of the direct impacts
Indirect_I	Presence or absence of indirect impacts (Yes/No)
Indirect_1	The main source of an indirect impact for the trail segment, if present
Distance_1	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Indirect_2	The secondary source of an indirect impact for the trail segment, if present
Distance_2	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Indirect_3	The tertiary source of an indirect impact for the trail segment, if present
Distance_3	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Indirect_D	A quick description of the indirect impacts
Date_Recorded	The date the data was collected
Recorder	The name of the person recording the data
Comments	Additional comments necessary for description
Comments	Additional comments necessary for description. Less than 30 characters
Corridor	NHT 1, NHT 2, NHT 3, NST, Undetermined
Trail Surface	Pick list from FTDS, e.g. “gravel, asphalt”, etc.
Photo Points	Include direction, number from digital camera; designate “landscape” or “signage” etc.

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**Illustration 3 - Recommended Data Dictionary Attributes for Point Features**  
(see monitoring chapter of this manual)

Name	Description
Unique_ID	Abbreviation of the associated trail name combined with the OBJECTID # and date recorded. From FTDS.
Assoc_Trail	Name of the trail or the segment name, i.e. Hudspeth’s Cutoff/California Trail
Other_Trail	Used for additional description of trail segment when necessary
Features	Type of the artifact or trail marker. Use pick list, e.g. “cultural site, campsite, mine, reinforced tread, scenic overlook”, etc.
Feat_Des	Description of the feature
Direct_Imp	Presence or absence of direct impacts (Yes/No)
Direct_1	The main source of a direct impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Direct_2	The secondary source of a direct impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Direct_3	The tertiary source of a direct impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Indirect_I	Presence or absence of indirect impacts (Yes/No)
Indirect_1	The main source of an indirect impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Distance_1	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Indirect_2	The secondary source of an indirect impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Distance_2	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Indirect_3	The tertiary source of an indirect impact for the associated trail segment, if present. Use pick list.
Distance_3	The impacts approximate distance from the trail
Date_Recorded	The date the data was collected
Recorder	The name of the person recording the data
Comments	Any additional comments needed to facilitate descriptions of diagnostic artifacts. Limit to 30 characters.
Photo_Point “sign” “landscape”	The name of the associated photos with that particular feature. Get number from digital camera; use cardinal directions.
Hotlink	The address location of each photo to facilitate hyperlinking.