

Appendix A

Federal Trail Data Standards (FTDS) Version 1 Trail Fundamentals

Trail Type ▪ Trail Class ▪ Managed Use ▪ Designed Use

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Note: The management concepts incorporated in the FTDS Trail Fundamentals are currently undergoing public notice and comment via the Federal Register under the leadership of the US Forest Service. Once this is complete and the final version published in the Federal Register, the FTDS Fundamentals will be revised as needed to reflect the final published version of these management concepts. (June, 2010)

The Federal Trail Fundamentals include four concepts that are the cornerstones of effective trail planning and management:

- Trail Type
- Trail Class
- Managed Use
- Designed Use

Identify the four Trail Fundamentals for each trail or trail segment based on applicable land management plan direction, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction.

Trail Fundamentals provide an integrated means to consistently record and communicate the intended design and management guidelines for trail design, construction, maintenance and use.

Trail Type

A category that reflects the predominant trail surface and general mode of travel accommodated by a trail

There are three Trails Types:

Standard/Terra Trail: *A trail that has a surface consisting predominantly of the ground and that is designed and managed to accommodate use on that surface.*

Snow Trail: *A trail that has a surface consisting predominantly of snow or ice and that is designed and managed to accommodate use on that surface.*

Water Trail: *A trail that has a surface consisting predominantly of water (but may include land-based portages) and that is designed and managed to accommodate use on that surface.*

This management concept allows managers to identify trail-specific Design Parameters or technical specifications, management needs, and the cost of managing the trail for particular uses and/or seasons by trail or trail segment.

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1. Inventory trails and identify the appropriate Design Parameters or technical specifications, management needs, and management costs for trail using the Trail Types.
2. Identify only one Trail Type per trail.
3. Identify the Trail Type for each trail based on applicable land management plan direction, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction.
4. Inventory both trails and Trail Types when two trails overlap, for example, when a Snow Trail overlaps a Standard Terra Trail.

Trail Class

The prescribed scale of development for a trail, representing its intended design and management standards.

Trail Classes are general categories reflecting trail development scale, arranged along a continuum.

There are five Trail Classes, ranging from the least developed (Trail Class 1) to the most developed (Trail Class 5):

- Trail Class 1: Minimally Developed
- Trail Class 2: Moderately Developed
- Trail Class 3: Developed
- Trail Class 4: Highly Developed
- Trail Class 5: Fully Developed

Use Trail Classes to inventory trails and to identify the applicable Design Parameters or technical specifications and the costs for meeting trail management standards.

1. Identify only one Trail Class per trail or trail segment.
2. Trail Class descriptors reflect typical attributes of trails in each class. Local deviations from any Trail Class descriptor may be established based on trail-specific conditions, topography, or other factors, provided that the deviations are consistent with the general intent of the applicable Trail Class.
3. There is a direct relationship between Trail Class and Managed Uses: generally, one cannot be determined without consideration of the other.
4. Identify the appropriate Trail Class for each trail or trail segment based on the management intent in the applicable land management plan, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction. Apply the Trail Class that most closely reflects the management intent for the trail or trail segment, which may or may not reflect the current condition of the trail.

For specifics on each Trail Class, refer to the National Trail Management Class matrix.

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Managed Use

A mode of travel that is actively managed and appropriate on a trail, based on its design and management.

1. Managed Use indicates management intent to accommodate a specific use.
2. There can be more than one Managed Use per trail or trail segment.
3. The Managed Uses for a trail are usually a small subset of all the allowed uses on the trail, that is, uses that are allowed unless specifically prohibited. For example, on a trail that is closed to all motorized use but open to all non-motorized use, the Managed Uses could be Hiker/Pedestrian and Pack and Saddle. The allowed uses, however, would also include bicycles and all other non-motorized uses.
4. Identify the Managed Uses for each trail or trail segment based on applicable land management plan direction, travel management decisions, trail-specific decisions, and other related direction.
5. There is a direct relationship between Managed Use and Trail Class: generally, one cannot be determined without consideration of the other. Not all Trail Classes are appropriate for all Managed Uses. For guidance on the potential appropriateness of each Trail Class to each Managed Use, refer to agency-specific guidelines and reference material.

Designed Use

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.

1. There is only one Designed Use per trail or trail segment. Although a trail or trail segment may have more than one Managed Use and numerous uses may be allowed, only one Managed Use is identified as the design driver or Designed Use.
2. Determine the Designed Use for a trail or trail segment from the Managed Uses identified for that trail. When making this determination, consider all Managed Uses that occur during all seasons of use of the trail or trail segment. Assess any essential or limiting geometry for the Managed Uses of the trail or trail segment to determine whether any trail-specific adjustments are necessary to the applicable Design Parameters or technical specifications.
 - a. In some situations, when there is more than one Managed Use identified for a trail, the Designed Use may be readily apparent. For example, on a trail with Managed Uses of all-terrain vehicle and Motorcycle, all-terrain vehicle use would be the Designed Use because this use requires wider tread widths and has lower tolerances for surface obstacles and maximum trail grades.
 - b. In other situations involving more than one Managed Use, the Designed Use may not be readily apparent, as is often the case when there are fewer differences between the applicable sets of Design Parameters than in the example above. For example, on a trail that is actively managed for hiker and pedestrian, pack and saddle, and bicycle use, pack and saddle use would likely be the Designed Use because of the three Managed

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Uses, pack and saddle use generally has the most limiting design requirements. While the Bicycle Design Parameters are very similar to the Pack and Saddle Design Parameters, the Design Parameters or technical specifications for this trail may need to be adjusted to accommodate bicycles.

Designed Use / Managed Use Types*

Hiker / Pedestrian
Pack and Saddle
Bicycle
Motorcycle
All Terrain Vehicle
Four-Wheel Drive Vehicle > 50" in Width

Cross-Country Ski
Dog Sled
Snowshoe
Snowmobile

Motorized Watercraft
Non-Motorized Watercraft

* Refer to agency-specific guidance regarding which of the Designed Uses and Managed Uses listed above are being used by a particular agency.