

Chapter 3

ISSUES AND CONCERNS

During the internal and external scoping process for this planning process, a number of issues were identified. Members of the general public, local units of government, state agencies, federal agencies, and other interested public gave their input on the plan at planning meetings, agency meetings, town and county board meetings, open house meetings and through letters and comment sheets. These issues are summarized below.

Why this location for the Ice Age NST?

What factors determine the location for the Ice Age NST? During the Pleistocene epoch, the glacier advanced and receded across Lantlade County many times creating the landscape that we see today. In its wake it also left numerous geologic features such as the terminal and recessional moraines, kettle ponds, glacial drainage-ways, and outwash plains. The purpose of the Ice Age NST is to preserve some of the finest features left by the last glacial advance, as well as other scenic, natural, and cultural resources, while providing opportunities for an outstanding hiking experience and educational activities. For further details on the purpose and goals for the trail, the planning process, and Lantlade County's geology see: Chapter 1—Background on the Ice Age National Scenic Trail; Chapter 4—Implementation of the Corridor Planning Process; Chapter 6—Corridor's Affected Environment: Geology; and Appendix C—NPS Purpose and Significance Statement of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail.

What are the allowable uses on the Ice Age NST?

The Ice Age NST is intended to be primarily a hiking trail. In Lantlade County, future segments will have a native surface and be between 24 and 36 inches wide. Other compatible uses may include winter activities such as snowshoeing and cross-country skiing. However, a trail segment may not be suitable for cross-country skiing, unless this activity was considered in the initial design and layout. In general, horses, bikes, and snowmobiles are not allowed on the trail except for those sections where they are an allowed use, such as state/county recreational trails like the Mountain-Bay State Trail. On private lands, occasional travel on or across the trail with motorized vehicles by the landowner or manager for the purpose of managing and using their land is permitted. If necessary, various structures such as stiles, gates, or fences can be strategically placed along the trail to discourage unauthorized uses from occurring. Hunting is permitted on many of the publicly-owned lands where segments of the trail exist, dependent upon the property type and use. Information about whether or not a publicly-owned property is open to hunting may be obtained by contacting the property manager. Hikers are advised to wear blaze orange when hiking in areas that allow hunting. Privately-owned lands are open to hunting only by permission of the landowner, and segments located on private property are often closed during the November gun-deer season. For more information see Appendix B — Trail Development and Management Standards.

Impacts to existing public lands and their use by having the Ice Age NST across them.

Some individuals expressed concerns regarding impacts to the use of the existing public state fishery and wildlife areas for the trail. Any segment of trail that is placed on public lands has the potential to cause some level of impact to the resources and use of those properties. However, in the 2005-2010 SCORP, research findings suggest that hiking and hunting can be compatible given proper planning and managed user interactions. These issues are discussed in Chapter 6—Corridor’s Affected Environment: Water Resources, Recreation Resources, and Public Health.

Impacts on natural resources by trail construction and use.

People expressed concern about the impact on natural resources that could result from the construction and use of new trail. The Ice Age NST has *A Handbook for Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance* that guides its development. If the standards are followed, the physical impacts would occur primarily when the trail is constructed and would be minor and temporary. In sensitive environments such as wetlands, the trail would either be routed around them or would go through a permitting process to construct bridges or boardwalks through them. These issues are discussed in Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Geology, Soils, Water Resources, Air Quality, Ecosystem, Invasive Species, Wildlife, Fisheries, and Threatened and Endangered Species.

Preservation of the glacial landscape

Some individuals were concerned about preserving the resources that are important to the trail’s geologic story and the scenic experience of the hiker. Through the planning process, the Core Team identified the Preferred alternative corridor that captured, what we believe to be, the best examples of geologic features left by the glacier. Working with willing landowners we will attempt to protect some portion of these resources for the trail. For further details see Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Visual Resources; and Land Acquisition and Trail Development.

Impacts on cultural resources by trail use and construction of new trail.

Impacts on cultural resources that may occur due to new trail construction was considered by some people to be an issue. As stated in 36 CFR Part 800—PROTECTION OF HISTORIC PROPERTIES, Subpart A—Purposes and Participants, 800.1 Purposes: “Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires Federal agencies to take into account the impacts of their undertakings on historic properties and afford the Council a reasonable opportunity to comment on such undertakings....” The National Park Service has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Wisconsin State Historic Preservation Office that defines methods to identify and avoid impacts to cultural resources when designing and building the Ice Age NST. For further details see Chapter 7—Impacts to Cultural Resources, and Appendix E—Memorandum of Understanding between the State Historical Society of Wisconsin and the National Park Service.

Impacts on private land and private ownership.

Some people expressed concerns regarding the completion of the trail through the county and its impact to private land. By congressional authorization, the Ice Age NST is a continuous footpath that spans the State of Wisconsin for approximately 1,200 miles and in doing so has the potential of crossing both public and private lands. Private interests may be affected by the trail in a variety of ways such as purchase of lands, community economic development, or change of land use from agriculture to conservation. These issues are discussed in Chapter 7—Corridor Impact Analysis: Communities and Businesses, Land Use and Land Ownership, Land Acquisition and Trail Development, and Tax Base and Fiscal Impacts.

