

North Country National Scenic Trail  
“TAILGATE SAFETY SERIES”



**POTENTIALLY VIOLENT PERSONAL ENCOUNTERS**

Although it is unlikely to happen, trail workers and users should be vigilant to the possibility of encountering a potentially violent person while in the field. Irrate or aggressive recreationists, people under the influence of alcohol or drugs, people suffering from mental or emotional challenges, or even people engaged in criminal activity (i.e.: illegal dumping on public lands, clandestine drug labs, marijuana cultivation, etc.) may all potentially react to your presence with violent behavior.

- Use the “buddy system” whenever possible. Working or hiking in groups of two or more is a smart safety practice in any situation
- Ensure that someone knows where you will be working/hiking before you hit the trail, and what time you are expected to return
- Act in a polite and non-threatening manner as you encounter unknown individuals
- Do not try to reason with people who seem overly distraught, angry, or irrational in their speech or body language
- Leave the area as soon as possible
- Report the encounter to your supervisor and/or local law enforcement authorities

References:

Safety and Health for Field Operations Manual, BLM—1112-2

Six Minutes for Safety, [http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp\\_sixminutes.php](http://www.nifc.gov/sixminutes/dsp_sixminutes.php)