

**Guide to Partnership  
Certification Along  
National Historic Trails**

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National Trails Intermountain Region  
National Park Service

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# The National Historic Trails

(Trails administered by the NPS's Intermountain Region are noted in *italics*)

<b>National Historic Trail</b>	<b>Agency/Region</b>	<b>Office Location</b>
Ala Kahakai	NPS/Pacific West Region	Kailua-Kona, Hawaii
<i>California</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>
Captain John Smith Chesapeake	NPS/Northeast Region	Annapolis, Maryland
<i>El Camino Real de los Tejas</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>
<i>El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region and BLM/New Mexico</i>	<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>
Iditarod	BLM/Alaska	Anchorage, Alaska
Juan Bautista de Anza	NPS/Pacific West Region	Oakland, California
Lewis and Clark	NPS/Midwest Region	Omaha, Nebraska
<i>Mormon Pioneer</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>
Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo)	USFS/Region 1	Orofino, Idaho
<i>Old Spanish</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region and BLM/New Mexico</i>	<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>
<i>Oregon</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>
Overmountain Victory	NPS/Southeast Region	Blacksburg, South Carolina
<i>Pony Express</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Salt Lake City, Utah</i>
<i>Santa Fe</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>
Selma to Montgomery	NPS/Southeast Region	Hayneville, Alabama
Star-Spangled Banner	NPS/Northeast Region	Annapolis, Maryland
<i>Trail of Tears</i>	<i>NPS/Intermountain Region</i>	<i>Santa Fe, New Mexico</i>
Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route	NPS/Northeast Region	Annapolis, Maryland

## ***Introduction***

The partnership certification<sup>1</sup> of sites and segments associated with America’s national historic trails is an authority outlined in Section 7 of the National Trails System Act (16 USC 1241-1251). It is a tool used by Federal trail administrators to officially recognize trail resources on non-Federal lands. The outcome of certification is not simply a paper certificate acknowledging a property’s link to trail history, but an ongoing partnership between the property owner/manager and the trail administrator. These partners work together to preserve the trail resource and make it accessible, as appropriate, to the visiting public.

Along a national historic trail there typically are many types of partnerships. Each trail is administered by one or sometimes two Federal agencies (the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service), which coordinate trail-wide partnerships, planning efforts, and similar activities. Actual on-the-ground management of trail properties, however, is accomplished by many types of landowners along the trail: Federal and state land management agencies, regional and local park authorities, departments of transportation, and private landowners. Non-Federal owners or managers of properties associated with a national historic trail can choose to enter a certification partnership with the administering agency. The purpose of such partnerships is to meet the needs of the resource (e.g., stabilization, preservation, archeological investigations, landscape planning), the landowner (e.g., conditions of public access and use, concurrent land uses), and the visiting public (e.g., meaningful interpretation, signing, safe access).

Certification begins with a conversation between the property owner/manager and the trail administrator about the historical significance and management needs of a particular trail-related property. As shared interests emerge, the land owner/manager and trail administrator may agree to enter a voluntary partnership to manage and interpret the site for visitors. Commitment to that partnership is formalized with a simple, legally non-binding agreement that says that the parties will work together toward those general mutual goals. The administering agency provides a certificate and trail logos designating the property as a national historic trail certified site or segment.

Trail certification cultivates civic pride and community identity, promotes a public preservation ethic, and stimulates heritage tourism. It also presents the Federal trail administrator with opportunities for public service and fosters productive public/private partnerships—increasingly a priority for Federal agencies. With these accomplishments, certification benefits the public, landowners and site managers, and the administering Federal agency. It also establishes a formal record of all non-Federal site owners and managers officially recognized as on-the-ground trail partners.

*Note:* This certification guide is an informal document that has been written primarily for National Trails-Intermountain Region. However, copies may be provided to anyone—including other Federal and state agencies, partners, and others—who may wish to have detailed information about the National Historic Trail certification process.

*A glossary of terms commonly used in the certification process is provided in Appendix A.*

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<sup>1</sup> “Partnership certification” is the proper term that describes the relationship, as noted in this publication, between Federal agencies and their non-Federal partners, but for descriptive simplicity, the term “certification” is also used.

## **Purpose of and Need for this Guide**

Therefore, it is the purpose of this document to provide guidance for the consistent development and management of certification agreements between Federal national historic trails offices and their non-Federal partners. This guidance is intended to allow maximum operational flexibility and to offer a range of preferred approaches rather than delineate a strict protocol.

## ***Legal Authority for Partnership Certification***

Certification of non-Federal properties on national historic trails is authorized by Section 7(h)(1) of the **National Trails System Act** (P.L. 90-543), which states:

When deemed to be in the public interest, [the] Secretary may enter written cooperative agreements with the States or their political subdivisions, landowners, private organizations, or individuals to operate, develop, and maintain any portion of such a trail either within or outside a federally administered area. Such agreements may include provisions for limited financial assistance to encourage participation in the acquisition, protection, operation, development, or maintenance of such trails, provisions providing volunteer in the park or volunteer in the forest status ... to individuals, private organizations, or landowners participating in such activities, or provisions of both types. [16 USC 1242 §7(h)(1)]

Section 3(a)(3) of the Act establishes that Federal agencies would control segments of historic trails within existing Federal areas. Federally owned or controlled segments of national historic trails are declared by the Act to be “Federal protection components,” and hence are ineligible for certification. This section also, however, provides a legal basis for certification when it states that “The appropriate Secretary may certify other lands as protected segments of an historic trail upon application from state or local governmental agencies or private interests involved if such segments meet the national historic trail criteria established in this act and such criteria supplemental hereto as the appropriate Secretary may prescribe.” Through certification, non-Federal parties (as noted in Section 7(h)(1), above) may choose to work with the appropriate federal trail administrator to manage their trail properties as officially recognized parts of a national historic trail.

## ***Purposes of Certification***

Congress established each national historic trail for the purpose of identifying and protecting an “historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment” [16 USC 1242 §3(a)(3)]. Certification, in turn, extends national trail identity and status to non-Federal trails resources. Therefore, the purpose of certification, narrowly defined by Congress in this section of the Act, is to afford recognition of non-federal trail remnants and associated artifacts, and to make them available for public use and appreciation. Certification, as it applies to sites as well as segments, is also provided for in Section 7(h) of the Act. Certification is not *exclusively* for the benefit of the property owner/manager, even if the property is a significant, privately

owned resource in need of protection or stabilization. Instead, certification is a public program that should provide some public benefit. Therefore, conditions of certification should include some allowance for “public use and enjoyment” – a way for people to experience parts of the trail that otherwise would be unavailable for visitation.

## ***Criteria and Guiding Principles for Certification***

### **Certification Provisions**

The National Trails System Act either directly or indirectly provides for three types of certified sites: trail segments, historic sites, and interpretive facilities.

#### A. General Provisions and Requirements

The National Trails System Act establishes three broad criteria that must be met by a prospective national historic trail to qualify for authorization to the system. The Act further requires that certified properties meet those same criteria (“The appropriate Secretary may certify other lands as protected segments of an historic trail *...if such segments meet the national historic trail criteria established in this Act...*”). Criteria for national historic trails, as stated in Section 5(b)(11) of the National Trails System Act, are as follows:

- (A) *It must be a trail or route established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use. The route need not currently exist as a discernible trail to qualify, but its location must be sufficiently known to permit evaluation of public recreation and historical interest potential....*
  - (B) *It must be of national significance with respect to any of several broad facets of American history, such as trade and commerce, exploration, migration and settlement, or military campaigns. To qualify as nationally significant, historic use of the trail must have had a far-reaching effect on broad patterns of American culture. Trails significant in the history of Native Americans may be included.*
  - (C) *It must have significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation....*
- [16 USC 1244]

These specifications were written for the national historic trails (and, by implication, the entire length of those trails) and not for individual trail sites and segments. In fact, it is extremely difficult for individual trail properties to fulfill each of these requirements as written. Rather, certified properties should be *consistent* with these umbrella criteria.

Under Part A, a trail “must be established by historic use and must be historically significant as a result of that use.” It follows, then, that a non-Federal trail-related site or segment must be associated with the historic use of a national historic trail in order to be certified. (See Appendix A for definition of “Association.”) A property that is located along a national historic trail but is not associated historically or thematically with trail *use* or history does not meet the criterion.

Although specific language in the National Trails System Act does not provide for the certification of historic sites, the Act's delineation of high potential sites (as well as historic segments) in Section 5(e)(1) suggests that Congress has a continuing interest in demarcating trailside historic sites. Federal agency staff, in response to Congress's interest, sanctions certification for both historic segments and historic sites, and it also sanctions sites in the trail's vicinity that interpret the trail and its resources.

Part A also requires a trail to be historically significant as a result of its historic use, and Part B requires it to be of "national significance," a concept drawn directly from the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA). (The NHPA also provides for state and local levels of significance.) Generally, "significance" means that a property is eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Under the NHPA, a property is National Register-eligible if it meets one or more of the following four criteria:

1. It is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of national, state, or local history.
2. It is associated with the lives of persons who are significant in the past of our nation, state, or local area.
3. It embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction.
4. It has yielded or maybe likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Once a property is determined to be eligible, then its level of historic significance—national, state, or local—may be evaluated. To be nationally significant—and thus qualify under Criterion B, as noted above—a property must be related to historic events, trends, or persons of national importance. An example of a nationally significant trail property is Nauvoo, Illinois, where the Mormon Pioneer National Historic Trail begins. Followers of the Mormon prophet Joseph Smith, Jr. began settling Nauvoo in 1839. Smith's assassination in 1844 triggered an American religious war and forced a mass exodus of Mormons from Nauvoo two years later. Mormon emigration to Utah in turn had profound influence on the ensuing settlement of the rest of the West. Because of its significance in American history, privately-owned Nauvoo is now a National Historic Landmark. The Bingham-Waggoner Home and Estate, a residence located in Independence, Missouri (along the Santa Fe, California, and Oregon trails), is a National Register property significant at the state level. The Tremonti-Rice House, a historic residence in Raytown, Missouri, and also located along the above three trails, provides an example of a National Register-listed property that is significant at the local level.

An authorized national historic trail is, by definition, of national significance. However, many trail sites and segments, *evaluated as isolated, individual properties*, may be determined significant only at a local or state—not national—level of significance. Some historic locations associated with a trail might not be National Register-eligible nor significant at any level because the historical integrity of physical trail remnants or setting has been destroyed, yet those locations might still be of interpretive interest. An overly narrow interpretation of this stipulation relative to trail-associated sites and segments would result in very few properties being eligible for certification.

In considering this criterion, then, a national historic trail may be conceptualized as a linear cultural landscape (or rural historic district). Within this context, sites and segments along its

length should be evaluated as contributing resources to that landscape or district and not as individual, isolated properties. A “contributing” resource to a national historic trail would be one that a) independently meets one or more of the four National Register eligibility criteria; b) was present during the trail’s period of significance or historic use; c) relates to the significance of the trail; and/or d) has good information value (including interpretive value) relating to the trail. Following this line of reasoning, a non-Federal trail property that somehow contributes to the overall significance of a national historic trail would be eligible for certification. A number of these properties are listed in the trail’s comprehensive management plan (CMP) as a high potential site or segment.

Eligibility criterion C simply requires that a certified site or segment have some potential recreational use and/or historic quality that can be interpreted for and appreciated by the public. It must also provide for public access (at least to some extent) and also provide accessibility to those persons subject to the Americans With Disabilities Act, as specified below (see page 11).

## B. Historic Sites and Segments and the “High Potential” Concept

Section 5(e)(1) of the National Trails System Act introduces the terms “high potential historic sites” and “high potential route segments.” Later, in Section 12, subsections 1 and 2, it provides definitions that offer (but do not mandate) further guidance in determining what kinds of individual properties may be eligible for certification:

- (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.*
  - (2) *The term “high potential route segments” means those segments of a trail which would afford 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.*
- [16 USC 1251 §12(1-2)]

The Act directs the Secretary to submit a comprehensive management plan (CMP) for each national trail, and further directs that high potential sites and high potential segments be identified and listed in those plans [16 USC 1244(e)(1)]. However, those “high potential” lists are compiled based on information available when the CMP is being drafted, and so should not be regarded as complete, conclusive, or final. Lists may be amended to add or remove properties, as appropriate. That point is important because it highlights why a CMP list of high potential sites and segments should not be regarded as a complete list of certifiable trail properties, but rather as a work in progress that will be either augmented or reduced based on subsequent research findings. *The Act does **not require** that a property be identified in a CMP as a high potential site*

*or segment in order to be eligible for certification.* In fact, the Act does not link “high potential” designation with certification at all.

The high potential designation itself is not subject directly to National Register eligibility criteria or level of significance guidelines, although the “high potential criteria” cited in 16 USC 1251 §12(1-2) above are certainly consistent with those criteria and guidelines. Many high potential properties do, in fact, meet National Register listing criteria, but others might not. As a result, not all high potential sites and segments are necessarily eligible for certification, and not all certified properties are eligible for listing as high potential sites and segments. Certification and high potential designation are two distinct processes.

National Register eligibility and significance criteria should be considered during evaluation of historic (not purely interpretive) properties for certification. To be certified, a site or a segment (high potential or not) ideally retains either visible vestiges of trail *or* characteristics of open space or vista similar to those that existed during the trail’s period of significance. However, a trail site or segment without physical traces of use may be eligible for certification if it is along the documented historical route of travel. Because national historic sites and segments were created by actual historical use, by definition they are historically and geographically associated with one or more trails.

### C. Interpretive Facilities

Another broad class of certifiable properties, usually termed “interpretive facilities” (but also sometimes called “visitor centers,” “interpretive centers,” and “interpretive sites”) comprises facilities that interpret or otherwise provide substantial information about, or interpretation of, historic trails. Examples include visitor centers, museums, and other venues with significant trail related information, orientation, or interpretation.

Interpretive facilities are not mentioned in the text of the Act as specifically eligible for certification, but they sometimes are certified because of their contributions to public understanding and appreciation of national historic trail resources. Certification of interpretive sites and centers, however, is deemed permissible under the Act. No interpretive facility can be certified unless it is near a specific national historic trail and has existing interpretive media (waysides, films, programs, brochures, etc.) that are thematically related to that trail.

### **National Historic Trails Certification Eligibility Criteria**

From the three criteria established by the Act for national historic trails, and the definitions of high-potential sites and segments, it is possible to derive five necessary conditions for certification of a national historic trail property:

- 1. The property must be non-Federally owned and managed.**
- 2. The property must have direct and significant historical and/or thematic associations with a national historic trail.** Definitions of “historical association” and “thematic association” are provided in Appendix A.

*Note: The following examples are not intended to serve as exclusive lists, but only to provide a clearer understanding of historical and thematic associations. Trails staff may always exercise professional judgment in determining whether a property has direct historical or thematic association with a national historic trail.*

Examples of properties with **direct historical association** with national historic trails include: trailside campsites, cemeteries, isolated graves, and inscriptions created during a trail's period of significance; ruts, swales, and water crossings; and natural features such as springs, trees, streams, or rock formations mentioned in historic trail documents. Further examples include trail junctions; buildings, streets, sidewalks, and structures, and ruins thereof, that existed along the trail corridor during the trail's period of significance; residences of persons linked to the trail, provided that the building was occupied by that person during his/her use of the trail, or was purchased with money earned by commercial use of the trail, or is otherwise associated with both the person and the trail; and locations of significant events associated with trail history. Places where Native American peoples interacted with other users of a trail and traditional cultural properties associated with trail history also might have direct historical association with national historic trails. Properties most closely associated with people significant to a national historic trail would also qualify, so long as those properties are located within the immediate vicinity of the historical trail right-of-way.

Examples of places lacking direct historical association might include: residences of persons who were historically linked to the trail, where those residences did not exist during the trail's period of significance, or were not constructed by money gained by commercial use of the trail, or were not otherwise connected both to the persona and the trail; and post-trail commemorative statuary, murals, markers, or monuments with no associated interpretive media or physical evidence of trail use. Further examples include sites lacking sufficient physical, oral, or documentary evidence of historical association with trail use; and developed locations with no remaining vestige of trail use, destroyed or significantly impaired trail setting, *and* judged by trails personnel to have little potential for meaningful interpretation.

Examples of **thematic association** include facilities and parks with exhibits and/or programs that interpret trails or the broader topics of westward expansion, communications, civil rights, Indian removal, or other themes relating to authorization of the relevant trail; that present Native American or other minority perspectives on a trail or its impacts on that group; or that inform the public about lifeways of indigenous groups who were impacted by the use of the trail (e.g., tribal visitor centers or museums). Further examples include art museums with permanent Western art exhibits having a particular focus on trails-related topic; and overlooks or sites with trail exhibits, and roadside parks or pullouts with wayside exhibits interpreting the trail corridor.

Commercial exhibits (e.g., promoting the sale of trail-related art, books, clothing, or other goods) alone do not establish thematic association for a facility. Commercial exhibits are, however, permissible *in conjunction with* interpretive exhibits and programs. Business venues (including those with a trail-related name, menu, or architectural or decorative theme) that do not provide accurate trail information or interpretation *as a primary function* should not be considered thematically related to a trail. For example, the Wagon Wheel Café cannot be certified simply because it has Old West decor and provides trail tour brochures. National Park Service certification should not be made available solely for commercial marketing or advertising purposes.

Likewise, a purely commemorative structure without interpretation and not associated with a trail-related historic or interpretive site, is not eligible for certification.

**3. The property must be made available to some degree for public interpretation and appreciation.** This requirement is derived from 16 USC 1244 §5(b)(11), which states that a national historic trail must have “significant potential for public recreational use or historical interest based on historic interpretation and appreciation....”

*Available* means that the owner/manager agrees to permit at least occasional public viewing of the property. Availability does *not* necessarily mean that the public must be allowed free and unlimited access to the property, although some certified property owners do provide for that kind of access. Owners and managers may set visiting hours, require advance arrangements for visitation, charge admission, deny access at certain times of year, use their property for agricultural, commercial, and other purposes, limit visitor group size, place some areas of their property off-limits to visitors, require guides, prohibit vehicle access, and set other reasonable limits for visitor use of their property. The Federal trail administrator should be highly flexible in accommodating the property owner’s preferences with regard to public use of a site.

*Available* further means that a property or adjacent viewing area can physically and legally be entered by visitors, *and* that entering the property or viewing area does not pose an unreasonable safety risk to the public.

Examples of *available* properties include: a site in an agricultural field that is entered, with the owner’s permission, by crossing a fence and walking across undeveloped land; a closed and secured or occupied historical building that can be observed from surrounding grounds, but not entered; a private museum with entrance fees; and a public visitor center offering outdoor guided tours.

Examples of *unavailable* properties include: a site that is surrounded by property owned by non-partners and that has no access easement; property located along a busy highway without off-road parking or safe crossings; property that is protected by dogs or regularly occupied by potentially aggressive livestock, such as bulls; an unstable, open building or structure that poses a potential safety hazard; and property on which abandoned wells, mines, or dumps are located on the site or along access to the site. Unavailable properties do not qualify as certified sites.

**4. The property must meet accessibility requirements mandated by Federal law, where applicable.** Under certain circumstances, a property opened to public visitation must be made accessible to individuals with disabilities. However, this does not mean that *all* certified sites must be fully handicap-accessible; nor does it mean that handicap-accessibility *must* entail construction of wheelchair ramps or installation of elevators.

Undeveloped trail segments, sites, and privately owned and occupied buildings are not required to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. ADA standards apply to relevant state, local, and private facilities, as described below. However, even when ADA compliance is not mandated by law, the Federal trail administrator should encourage accessibility accommodations in those places where they reasonably could be provided without adverse impacts to trail resources, setting, or land use practices. The NPS can assist property owners and managers with assessing accessibility needs and can provide technical assistance with planning for those project needs.

All new commercial establishments and places of public accommodation (such as libraries, museums, and visitor centers) already are required to comply with ADA standards. Most museums and visitor centers have made these accommodations as required by law; however, some smaller facilities have not. The Federal trail administrator should encourage and help partners retrofit their facilities and programs to make them more accessible, and in some cases, trails staff can help plan minor modifications to improve accessibility. Otherwise, if a facility that legally should meet ADA requirements does *not* meet them and has no plans for compliance, then that property is not accessible and should not be certified until the deficiency is resolved.

In addition, Federal trail administering agencies must comply with Sections 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, which requires programmatic accessibility to interpretive media and programs. This requirement must be met when an executive branch Federal agency funds new programs, media development, or exhibits. It is the legal responsibility of the agency, not the certified partner, to see that programmatic accessibility requirements are met. Programmatic accessibility generally means ensuring that mobility impaired persons are provided access to a facility or exhibit, or that the same information is made available to them in an accessible location; that visual information is presented in formats accessible to those with visual impairments; and that audible information is presented in formats accessible to those with hearing impairments.

Again, these requirements apply to *new* programs and exhibits that are *funded* by the Federal agencies. Certified partners should be reassured that national historic trail certification will not require retrofitting *existing* exhibits and programs. However, if the Federal agency assists, for example, with interpretive wayside exhibits for a site, then those exhibits must be designed to meet the programmatic accessibility requirements of the Rehabilitation Act.

Due to the complexity of the laws and regulations and the tremendous variability of certified sites and partner needs, individual landowners or managers should consult with NPS accessibility experts on a case-by-case basis.

**5. The person or organization requesting certification must be the legal owner of the property, have the legal owner's authorization to pursue certification, or be the owner's designated manager of the property.** Properties will not be certified by a Federal administrator without the knowledge and permission of the owner. On the other hand, National Park Service staff play an active role in the certification process as well. Communication and cooperation is a key element both in the property certification process and in maintaining the partnership after the property has been certified (see the "How to Certify: Procedures" section below).

### **General Principles for Nomination and Management of Certified Properties**

Through the years, Federal national historic trail administrators have developed additional general principles that guide their overall approach to developing and sustaining certification partnerships. These include:

- **Outreach** -- The trail administrator generally should publicize its site certification program to make potential partners aware of its existence and to invite them to participate. Some trails, crossing mostly public lands, are already largely protected, interpreted, and made accessible by Federal land managers. In those cases,

owner/managers of trail properties on adjoining non-Federal lands should be advised of the certification opportunity, and encouraged to look into the program. Other trail corridors cross largely non-Federal lands. Trail resources along those corridors typically are not available to the public, and usually do not receive the benefit of professional planning, interpretation, and resource protection. Federal trail administrators should actively market their certification programs to the owner/managers of such properties.

- **Types of Properties** -- The site certification program should be as inclusive as possible, accommodating a wide variety of trail-related property types, settings, and conditions. Priority for certification should be accorded to protected non-Federal high potential sites and segments that are named in a trail's comprehensive management plan, but only so long as current research has not diminished the historical importance of that site or segment.
- **Streamlining** -- Property documentation, agreement development, and overall program management requirements should be streamlined to minimize staff and property owner/manager workload.
- **Development** -- Each certified property should be evaluated by Federal trails staff in cooperation with the landowner/manager to determine what, if any, level of planning and development of visitor facilities might be beneficial to accommodate resource protection and public use. However, certification should not be construed to *require* development or improvement of non-Federal properties, except when such development would be mandated by law.
- **Benefits** -- Certification confers to certified partners some special benefits or recognition that are not otherwise available to the public. (See the "Benefits of Certification" section below.) In general, however, Federal staff should be willing to work with all trails partners to interpret and protect trails properties, regardless of their certification status
- **Standards and Flexibility** -- Certification agreements ideally should be formalized with a simplified, standard agreement form rather than a complex, individualized, legal document (see example in Appendix B). However, agreements are flexible, and forms can be adapted as necessary to the particular circumstances for which they are employed. If a partnership is to be documented for a property/site that is not eligible for certification, the trail office can use a cooperative agreement or memorandum of understanding to formalize the relationship.
- **Term of Partnership** -- The length of term of a certification agreement should be indefinite. (In practice, certifications approved since approximately 2004 have typically been approved for an indefinite period, while older certifications have typically been valid for three to five years.) From time to time, signed agreements should be reviewed and partners should be contacted to evaluate how well an agreement is working, and to determine whether any modifications to the agreement are in order.

## ***Benefits of Certification for Trails Partners***

The NPS has a relatively inclusive approach toward certification. The agency, for example, provides trail logos both to certified partners and to other parties that demonstrate a legitimate, non-commercial need for them. The agency also awards Challenge Cost Share Program (CCSP) funds to both certified and non-certified trail partners, and it also assists any party that requests professional technical advice. The agency now attempts to cultivate broad public recognition of national historic trails via a wide distribution of trail logos (to cite one specific example), and more generally it fosters goodwill and trails advocacy among all trails partners whether they are certified or not.

Despite that relative sense of equality, certifying a property offers three specific advantages to the landowner or manager.

- NPS managers may be more inclined to provide various forms of technical assistance to certified partners than to others. This includes, for example, the distribution of CCSP funds, the provision of logos and directional signs. The agency is also more likely to recognize certified partners in various NPS media. Certification, in fact, is one of the primary criteria that NPS staff use in determining technical and financial assistance.
- Owners or managers of certified sites are eligible to receive and distribute trail brochures, site bulletins, and similar items, and their sites will be publicized on the agency's website.
- On a more intangible level, becoming a certified partner gives landowners and managers a sense of Federal validation and recognition in the community and region, and it conveys a larger sense of legitimacy, both of the property's historical importance and of its public values.

In this and other ways, the agency recognizes certification as an ongoing relationship with its partners, and it strives to favorably maintain that relationship as a way to attain mutually-desired goals related to trail preservation, site preservation, and interpretation.

## ***Costs and Concerns***

### **Costs**

No direct costs are incurred by the landowner/manager in certifying a property. However, if certified partners wish to improve resource accessibility, protection, preservation, interpretation, etc., expenses may arise. Some costs associated with such projects may be mitigated with the help of the Federal partner agency, which can provide limited expert assistance from its staff of interpreters, planners and other technical specialists. Funds cannot be provided for property administration, but only for projects and special events. In addition, if a project proponent can provide in-kind or monetary matching from non-Federal sources, a qualified project may be eligible for challenge cost share funds and for grants from other organizations. (Generally, challenge cost share funding is available for qualified projects regardless of whether or not the project property is a certified trail site.)

### **Personal Liability**

A big concern to landowners is their potential liability if they open their historic trail properties to the public. Fortunately, most states have excellent recreational tort liability waiver laws that

protect landowners from such liability when they make their lands available to the public for recreational purposes. These laws, however, provide limited protection to the landowner, regardless of whether a fee is charged for use of the property.

Upon request, Federal trails staff may try to help identify the relevant tort liability laws effective in a potential partner site's state, and refer the trail partner to it. However, staffers must not attempt to offer legal advice or interpretation. Instead, they should defer to private legal professionals if the trail partner requests clarification or advice. A website from the NPS's Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance program that may be of some assistance in this area is as follows: <<http://www.nps.gov/nrcr/programs/rtca/helpfultools/recusebrochures/index.htm>>

Another avenue for liability protection is provided by the National Trails System Act itself. Under the terms of the Act, a landowner may be enrolled as a Volunteer-in-Park (VIP) and/or a Volunteer-in-Forests (VIF), and receive coverage under the Federal Tort Claims Act and Workman's Compensation in case of injury for approved certified site activities. This pertains *even when a volunteer is working for the trail on his or her own lands* and regardless of whether that property is certified under the National Trails System Act.

VIP or VIF status is extended by the National Park Service and USDA Forest Service to private individuals, not to employees of other agencies, businesses, or non-profit organizations. Persons working on a trail on behalf of another agency, business, or non-profit organization are protected by that entity's insurance. VIP and VIF status requires a signed volunteer agreement form and a job description that specifies the volunteer's trail-related duties.

### **Property Rights and Responsibilities**

No property rights are transferred to the Federal government as a result of certification. Certification does not establish a government right-of-way, easement, or other kind of legal interest in the property, and the Federal trail administrator can neither require nor prohibit development of a certified property. A landowner or manager can continue motor vehicle use, agricultural activities, occupation, and other customary land uses, and the owner or manager may also charge admission and set reasonable restrictions on visitor use of the certified property.

While private property rights are not affected by certification agreements, the landowner/manager is asked to consent to certain parameters of the partnership. (See "public interpretation and appreciation" section [#3] on page 9.) Parameters include allowing for reasonable and safe access to the property, as worked out by mutual agreement between the landowner and administering trail office; advising the trail administrator about planned changes of ownership, land use, or development that could impact the condition of a trail segment or the public use of a historic site; and protecting and preserving trail resources on the property. These parameters are not specifically spelled out in the written certification agreement, but they should be discussed with the partner.

The certification agreement between the landowner/manager and the Federal trail administrator can be terminated by either party for any reason at any time. For instance, the administrator might end the partnership if on-site development impacts trail resources or discourages visitation; or the owner might terminate the agreement if he or she plans to adopt a new, incompatible use for it. If a certification agreement is terminated or if it lapses, the administrator may request the return of signs and other agency-provided materials.

Legally, certification agreements cannot encumber subsequent owners of the property. When a property changes hands, the existing certification agreement will remain in force unless the new owner wishes to terminate it. Alternatively, a new agreement can be arranged if the new owner wishes to participate in the site certification program.

Should a property owner want to ensure continual public access to and appreciation of a certified property, he or she could arrange for a public access easement, possibly in conjunction with a conservation easement, to the Federal trail administrator, a state agency, or a local land trust. This would ensure long-term or even perpetual public access to trail resources while keeping the property in private stewardship. Trail personnel may be able to assist with investigating and implementing such arrangements.

### **Planning and Development**

Many certified properties may benefit from an appropriate degree of visitor facility development to accommodate visitor use and preservation goals. The Federal trail administrator may assist the owner/manager with planning, designing, and constructing such accommodations where they are appropriate and where they do not unduly impact the historic character of the site or its setting. However, developing or improving a certified property is not a condition for certification. Trail staff recognizes, too, that some properties are best left untouched to avoid introducing modern intrusions into an historic setting or interfering with the owner's use of the land.

The range of desirable visitor facility development is highly variable, depending on site conditions, current property use, and the landowner's preferences. Certified partners are encouraged to work with agency personnel, as time and resources permit, to evaluate their property, discuss appropriate levels of visitor use, and identify any potentially beneficial and appropriate improvements that facilitate the visitors' ability to experience the trail, such as signage, parking, interpretation, and pedestrian pathways. Federal agency staff may be able to assist in this effort, and these personnel may be able to identify any potential environmental, cultural, and accessibility compliance issues. If the property owner/manager wishes to proceed with planning and development, the trail administrator may be able to provide further technical assistance and other kinds of help. The trail administrator may assist with obtaining permits, when staffing and time permit. It is ultimately the owner's responsibility, however, to obtain any required permits and to ensure that the plan meets state and local zoning, construction, accessibility, and other requirements.

Interpretation of certified properties is strongly encouraged, but interpretation does not necessarily demand the installation of onsite signs and wayside exhibits. Interpretation also can be provided by guides conducting escorted tours, publications, and internet web sites.

### ***How to Certify: Procedures***

Information about certification is available from printed brochures, agency national historic trail web sites, and trails staff. Property owners and managers may independently inquire about certification, or trails staff and others may invite them to consider certifying their property.

The certification process for national historic trails consists of the following steps:

1. State or local governments, or private landowners or managers, will contact the Federal trail administrator by mail, phone, email, or in person to inquire about certification. Any available information concerning the property's historical or thematic association with a national historic trail should be provided at this time, or soon afterward, to help determine the property's eligibility as a certified site.
2. Trails staff will visit the property with the landowner or manager to evaluate the resource, collect information, identify any potential safety issues, and identify any interpretive and development needs and potential compliance issues. Federal trails staff should fill out a Property Contact Information and Certification Evaluation Form (see Appendix B).
3. As appropriate, partners and staff will identify any urgent planning, management, and public use objectives for a site or segment, and any restrictions they may wish to place on visitor use of the property. The optional Property Data and Planning Form (Appendix B) may be useful in this process.
4. The owner/manager and a designated Federal official will then sign a simple certification agreement, in which they agree to work together for the benefit of the resource, the public, and the property owner/manager. Federal officials, at that time, will provide a copy of the agreement (see Appendix B) to the property owner or manager.
5. The owner or manager and a designated Federal official may participate, as appropriate, in signing ceremonies, press events, and other public notifications.
6. Post-certification actions may include historical and other technical assistance, site and interpretive planning, design and development, project compliance, and other mutually agreed-upon endeavors.

The amount of time required to certify a property is highly variable, depending on the nature of the property and the concerns of the certifying partner. If trails staff are already familiar with the property and have an established relationship with the partner, certification might consist of an exchange of documents for signing and filing, taking only a few hours of work time. If the property needs to be examined and assessed by trails staff, and/or if the certifying partner has numerous concerns about the process or requires extensive legal review of the written agreement, the certification process can be work-intensive and stretch out over weeks or months. Usually, though, on-site evaluation of the property and completion of the agreement can be expected to take two to four workdays.

Likewise, the amount of time required to properly maintain a certified partnership is variable. An active partner who requests technical assistance might require several work days (or even weeks) per year; others may prefer to have little contact with trails staff. Ideally, trails staff will make time at least to make occasional telephone contact with all certified partners.

### **Multiple-Trail Certifications**

Where national historic trails overlap, cross, or otherwise coincide, appropriate properties may be eligible for multiple-trail certification. To the greatest extent possible, trails staff will certify such properties *under a single agreement* for all the trails with which it is historically or thematically associated. Single agreements for properties on multiple trails will be sought, even

if these trails are administered by separate agencies. In all of these instances, the property owner or manager would receive a single certificate acknowledging the property's participation in the certification program.

### **Maintaining the Partnership**

As noted above, responsibilities of the trails office to the certified partner do not end with the signing of the agreement. Trails staff need occasionally to contact partners to monitor their satisfaction with the arrangement and to identify potential impacts of site visitation to the on-site resources. The partner may periodically be asked about site conditions, identification of new trails resources on the property, impacts of visitation, anticipated land use changes, and any safety, resource, or other issues that might arise. The partner should be afforded opportunities to advise the Federal trail administrator of any changes in conditions of visitation, such as visiting hours or entrance fees, so that those changes can be incorporated into trails publications and web sites. In addition, agency staff need to keep partnership files updated with new resource or ownership information, and cross-referenced (where appropriate) to Challenge Cost Share Project files.

It is important for Federal agency staff to stay in touch with partners and that they continue to ask partners how the NPS can assist them. It is hoped that certification will commence a process that will build each partner into a supporter and friend of national historic trails.

# Appendix A

## Glossary

A consistent policy or protocol begins with an explicit, shared, and well-defined terminology. The following definitions are derived from a combination of sources, including the National Trails System Act, *NPS Management Policies*, National Register Bulletins, and professional handbooks and texts.

**Accessible:** A property is accessible if it meets the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act and/or the Rehabilitation Act. Federal properties must conform with Uniform Federal Accessibility Standards and include providing reasonable accommodations for persons with mobility, vision, or hearing impairments. Accommodations may include visual presentation of aurally-delivered information for hearing-impaired persons, and audible presentation of visually-delivered information for vision-impaired persons.

**Act:** National Trails System Act (16 USC 1241-51)

**Administration:** Each national trail is administered by one or more Federal agencies. That agency is responsible for the funding and staffing necessary to operate the trail. It is further responsible for exercising trail-wide authorities from the NTSA and its own organic legislation for such functions as coordination among and between agencies and partnership organizations, planning, marking, certification, resource preservation and protection, interpretation, cooperative and interagency agreements, technical assistance, and limited financial assistance to cooperating government agencies, landowners, interest groups, and individuals. Trail administration provides trail-wide coordination and consistency. NTSA Section 7 provides authority for many of these administrative functions.

**Association:** The tie between the resource and its cultural context.

**Historical association:** The link between the property and actual use of the trail during the trail's period of significance. Association may be demonstrated by historical documentation, oral tradition, oral history, and folklore, and/or by physical evidence of one-time events and repeated activities that occurred on or near a trail, in connection with the trail's historical uses.

a. *Historical documentation* consists of written and graphic sources of information; e.g., contemporary letters, journals, photos, drawings, published trail guides, survey reports, maps, advertisements, books, newspaper articles, etc.

b. *Oral tradition* consists of reported statements from the past that are passed orally from generation to generation; e.g., American Indian accounts of encounters with emigrants.

c. *Oral history* consists of statements of an individual's personal recollections; e.g., an elderly individual who recalls seeing trail-related graves in his youth at a location where visible evidence of graves no longer exists.

d. *Folklore* consists of widely held ideas about the past that are not based on personal experience or documentary or physical evidence. Folklore alone might not be strong enough evidence to establish an historical association, but it can be considered along with other lines of historical evidence.

e. *Physical evidence* consists of cultural remains and environmental conditions, detectable by the eye, instruments, or pattern analysis, that are consistent with trail uses; e.g., artifact scatters, inscriptions, ruts, swales, fire rings, graves, geophysical survey data, aerial photography, vegetation patterns, etc.

***Geographical association:*** Located in the general vicinity of a congressionally authorized NHT route or auto tour route; or in the case of a landmark or natural feature, that the property would have been observable from the authorized NHT route during the trail's period of significance.

***Thematic association:*** Providing public interpretation or non-commercial exhibits primarily focused on a national historic trail, trail-related resources, setting, or history, or other trail-related topics.

**Auto Tour Route:** Most national historic trails today are traced by Auto Tour Routes, which typically follow highways and local roads. Auto Tour Routes sometimes exist within historic trail corridor, but often only approximate the historic route of travel. Generally, they are marked with the trail's marker logo.

**Availability:** The physical and legal ability to enter a property or adjoining viewing area. This means that there is no physical barrier, such as a fence or canal, or legal barrier, such as lack of right-of-way across adjoining land, that excludes the general public from viewing the property. Likewise, there is no obvious hazard, such as an uncapped well or unstable building, on the property.

**Certification:** The administrative process whereby non-Federally owned properties along national historic trails are identified and recognized for their historical and/or thematic association with one or more national historic trails. Certification is undertaken for the purpose of officially recognizing protected historic trail properties, making them available for public use, and enhancing the public's enjoyment and understanding of them. (This concept is also being used to track completed and recognized segments of some national scenic trails.)

**Certification Agreement:** A simple, non-binding agreement between a Federal agency and one or more partners, which formalizes a good-faith arrangement to work together toward common goals, such as protecting and interpreting an historic property.

**Compliance:** Generally, conformance with the requirements of a law, regulation, or policy. However, the term is commonly applied specifically to the review of potential impacts of Federal undertakings on the environment and on cultural resources (as in "NEPA compliance" and "106 compliance").

**Comprehensive Management Plan (CMP):** These legislatively required planning documents are essential blueprints to the complex resource management, development, interpretation, interagency collaboration, and partnerships endemic to national scenic and historic trails. They are to be completed within two complete fiscal years of a trail's establishment. Legal requirements for such plans are outlined in National Trails System Act §5e-f. These plans also can be used for additional trail-wide planning issues, as necessary.

**Federal Protection Component:** These portions of trail, as defined in National Trails System Act § 3(a)(3), are “those selected land and water based components of a historic trail which are on federally owned lands and which meet the national historic trail criteria established in this Act...”. These should be defined in and listed in a trail’s CMP.

**High Potential Segments:** Trail segments (see definition of “segment,” below) that “afford [a] high quality recreation experience in a portion of the route having greater than average scenic values and affording an opportunity to vicariously share the experience of the original users of the historic route” [National Trails System Act §12(2) (see subchapters 5.1 and 8.5)].

**High Potential Sites:** “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” [National Trails System Act §12(1) (see subchapters 5.1 and 8.5)].

**Historic Routes:** Many national historic trails commemorate nationally significant movements of people across the landscape. The route of travel is the actual line of movement as documented through maps, journals, and other accounts. It is a continuous line, although remnant sites and segments may be only fragmentary. Most national historic trails today are traced by Auto Tour Routes, which only approximate the actual route of travel.

**Interpretation:** Verbal, graphic, photographic, and/or written informational presentations that link “specific and tangible artifacts, buildings, and places with ideas, events, and concepts” relating to a national historic trail. Interpretive media “provide visitors with relevant [trail] information, and facilitate more in-depth understanding of—and personal connection with—[trail] themes and resources.” (NPS *Management Policies*, p. 74).

**Interpretive (Visitor) Center:** A site, typically including a building or an outdoor interpretive complex, where orientation information and/or interpretive exhibits are provided to visitors. Trails may be the exclusive focus of a visitor center, or may be one of several topics addressed there. Exhibits in or at a certified interpretive center must be primarily informational and interpretive, not commercial or fictitious in nature. (Commercial exhibits, such as book sales displays, are permissible *in conjunction with* interpretive exhibits.) Museums, interpretive centers, and interpretive sites are not mutually exclusive, and a certified property may include one or all of these elements. Interpretive centers are not required to be adjacent to an authorized national historic trail, but must be in reasonable proximity and must be thematically associated with a trail in order to be eligible for certification.

**Interpretive Site:** Outdoor venues with substantive interpretive media that provide visitors with the opportunity for understanding and enjoyment of a national historic trail. Sites may include interpretive complexes (such as walking trails with wayside exhibits or significant trail-related sculptural exhibits), commemorative parks, and interpreted trail overlooks. Simple highway pullouts with historical signs or “generic” wayside exhibits (i.e., exhibits that touch on broad topics and are not specific to that location or to historical events that occurred at that site) typically are not eligible for certification. Interpretive sites interpret trail history, setting, or historic events and activities, but are not themselves trail sites or segments (see definitions below). Museums, interpretive centers, and interpretive sites are not mutually exclusive, so a certified property may include one or all of these elements. Interpretive facilities are not required

to be adjacent to an authorized national historic trail, but must be in reasonable proximity to a trail in order to be eligible for certification.

**Management:** Many government and private entities own or manage lands along each national trail. Management responsibilities include inventorying and mapping resources, managing visitor use, planning and developing trail segments or sites, and site-specific compliance; and providing appropriate public access, site interpretation, trail maintenance, parking, resource preservation and protection, and viewshed protection.

**Museum:** For the purposes of national historic trail certification, a museum is a building that houses exhibits of objects, dating to a national historic trail's period of significance, that were used or carried on the trail, *and* whose relationships to the trail are identified to the public; *or* that exhibits objects or replicas of objects that were typical or illustrative of items used or carried on the trail; *and* that provides public interpretation of those exhibits. Museums, interpretive centers, and interpretive sites are not mutually exclusive, so a certified property may include one or all of these elements.

**National Historic Trails:** These are "extended trails which follow as closely as possible and practicable the original trails or routes of travel of national historic significance" [National Trails System Act §3(a)(3)]. National historic trails do not have to be continuous, can be less than 100 miles in length, can include land and water segments, must be authorized by Congress, and must meet all three criteria provided in the National Trails System Act §5(b)(11).

**National Trails System Act (NTSA):** This Act was passed as Public Law 90-543 and signed by President Johnson on October 2, 1968, after several years of negotiations. It has been amended more than 20 times since. The category of national historic trails was added in 1978.

**Partnership Certification (Agreement):** see Certification (Agreement). Also see clarifying note on the introductory page.

**Period of Significance:** The span of years, identified in a trail feasibility study or comprehensive management plan, during which a trail was used for its primary purpose, and for which it has received national recognition. For example, the period of significance for the Oregon National Historic Trail is 1841-1867, the period during which the trail was primarily used for emigration.

**Segment:** Section of trail, route, or other corridors of authorized NHT. Segments can include ruts, swales, non-natural grade changes caused by historical use, or other visible evidence of passage; and they also can include stretches of the known historic route that no longer show evidence of historic use.

**Site:** Location of a significant event, historic occupation or activity, or building or structure (including both standing buildings/structures and historical archeological remains, or ruins), that is historically associated with a national historic trail. A site need not exhibit visible surface evidence of trail-related use. A site also may be a natural landmark, feature, or traditional cultural property with historical, temporal, and geographical association with a national historic trail.

**Trail Corridor:** The historic route, commemorated as a national historic trail, taken by people across the landscape. It is a continuous line, although remnant sites and segments may be only

fragmentary. The width of a trail corridor is variable, depending on how travelers and their vehicles spread out across the landscape and what alternative routes or cutoffs they may have taken. Trail corridors may include all of the properties, resources, facilities, and views associated with a trail—what the traveler saw or would see if on the trail today.

**Trail Marker:** Each national trail is marked by “an appropriate and distinctive symbol” as authorized in the National Trails System Act § 7c.

**Volunteer in the Forest (VIF):** An officially registered and recognized individual who contributes time and energy to helping programs associated with the USDA Forest Service.

**Volunteer in the Park (VIP):** An officially registered and recognized individual who contributes time and energy to helping programs associated with the National Park Service.

#### Abbreviations:

ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
BLM	Bureau of Land Management
CMP	Comprehensive Management Plan
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
NHPA	National Historic Preservation Act
NHT	National Historic Trail
NPS	National Park Service
NTSA	National Trails System Act
P.L.	Public Law
USC	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USFS	USDA Forest Service
VIF	Volunteer in the [National] Forest
VIP	Volunteer in the Park

# Appendix B

## **Forms and Fact Sheets**

- ✓ *Partnership Certification Agreement (example)*
- ✓ *Property Contact Information Form (required)*
- ✓ *Certification Evaluation Form (required)*
- ✓ *Property Data and Planning Form (optional, useful for planning purposes)*



## Partnership Certification Agreement

[Note: words in *italics* are modified for each specific agreement]

### *Joe's Ruts* *My hometown, Kansas*

Type of Property: *Historic Site*

Owner: *Joe Trailowner*

#### General

This agreement represents the Secretary of the Interior's certification, under section 7(h) of the National Trails System Act, that *Joe's Ruts, located 5 miles north of Highway 56 four miles west of Myhometown, Kansas*, meets the national historic trail criteria established by the National Trails System Act and any supplemental criteria prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior.

The National Park Service and *Joe Trailowner* agree voluntarily to strive to achieve the highest level of resource protection and visitor appreciation of trail resources and history at the historic site, as provided for in the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan for the *Santa Fe National Historic Trail* for "...the identification and protection of the historic route and its historic remnants and artifacts for public use and enjoyment." (National Trails System Act 16 U.S.C. - 1241 et seq. Section 3(a)(3)).

Through this agreement, the National Park Service and the *Joe Trailowner* agree, if mutually deemed appropriate, to work jointly on planning, interpretation, resource management, and other matters that relate to the Santa Fe National Historic Trail at the historic site and to strive to meet the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Management and Use Plan for the Trail.

*Joe Trailowner* retains all legal rights to the property and nothing in this agreement is to be construed as granting any legal authority to the National Park Service over the property or any action by *Joe Trailowner*.

The agreement may be canceled by either party at any time by providing written notice to the other party. The National Park Service and *Joe Trailowner* agree, whenever possible, to identify issues or concerns to allow for resolution.

This agreement will remain in effect unless cancelled by either party, or until the ownership of the property is transferred to another entity.

#### Signatures

I hereby agree to a partnership with the National Park Service for *Joe's Ruts, an historic site on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Joe Trailowner*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

On behalf of the Secretary of the Interior, I agree to a partnership with *Joe Trailowner* for *Joe's ruts, an historic site on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail*.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Aaron Mahr Yáñez, Superintendent  
National Trails System – Intermountain Region

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**National Trails System Certification Program**

**Property Contact Information** (required)

*Date:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Property Name:* \_\_\_\_\_

*County:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Primary Contact:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone:* (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_

*Mailing Address:* \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

*Email:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Contact is (check one)* \_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_ Designated manager \_\_\_\_ Other (explain)

*Secondary Contact Name (optional):* \_\_\_\_\_

*Phone:* (w) \_\_\_\_\_ (h) \_\_\_\_\_

*Contact is (check one)* \_\_\_\_ Owner \_\_\_\_ Designated manager \_\_\_\_ Other (explain)

*Property owner's name and contact info, if different from contact:*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Name of property owner*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*Phone/email*

\_\_\_\_\_  
*City and state of residence*

**National Trails System Certification Program**  
**Certification Evaluation Form** (required)  
(For staff use)

Evaluator (name and home office)\_\_\_\_\_

Date:\_\_\_\_\_

Property:\_\_\_\_\_

**1. Property is (check all that apply):**

an historic site       a trail segment (> ½ mile)       an interpretive facility  
(museum, visitor center, etc.)

**2. National Historic Trail(s) associated with the property:**

\_\_\_\_ In the opinion of the evaluator, this property meets all criteria for certification as part of an authorized national historic trail.

\_\_\_\_ In the opinion of the evaluator, this property does not meet all criteria for certification as part of an authorized national historic trail. It is deficient because

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature, agency evaluator

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**National Trails System Certification Program**

**Property Data & Planning Form** *(optional)*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Property Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name and title of person(s) providing site information (including NPS staff):

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Site Manager (name and title), if different from above:

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**1. Site Type (check all that apply):**

trail site       trail segment (> 1/2 mile)       interpretive site

interpretive center     other (describe)

**2. Address and location of property (continue on back and attach map or sketch, if needed):** \_\_\_\_\_

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**3. National Historic Trail(s) associated with the property:**

**4. Estimated area (size) of property or distance or trail segment to be certified:**

**5. Type of ownership (check one):**

private landowner     non-profit organization     city       county

state       business organization     other (explain)

**Property Data (2/5)**

**Property** \_\_\_\_\_

**6. Property description**

*A. Setting (check all that apply):*

<b>Present</b>	<b>Setting</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Setting</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suburban/residential
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business district	<input type="checkbox"/>	Industrial district
<input type="checkbox"/>	Urban	<input type="checkbox"/>	Marine, river, or lake
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/>	Park
<input type="checkbox"/>	School grounds/ campus	<input type="checkbox"/>	Roadside attraction/facility
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic district	<input type="checkbox"/>	

*B. Historic features related to NHT (check all present):*

<b>Present</b>	<b>Historic Feature</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Historic Feature</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ruts/swales/track	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic paved street or road
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic walkway, stairs, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic railroad
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic signs, lampposts, etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bridge or bridge site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ferry site	<input type="checkbox"/>	Boat Landing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Grave, cemetery	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spring/waterhole
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic building, open to public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic building, closed to public
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic structure, open to public	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic structure, closed to public
<input type="checkbox"/>	Building or structure ruin	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic campsite
<input type="checkbox"/>	Natural landmark	<input type="checkbox"/>	Stone alignment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic natural landscape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic agricultural landscape
<input type="checkbox"/>	Blazed tree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cairn
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**6. (Property description, continued)**

*C. Facilities and exhibits related to NHT currently on-site (check or apply rating as applicable to all that are present): 1 - nearly exclusively trail-related; 2- significantly trail-relate; 3 - moderately trail-related; 4 - only slightly trail-related*

<b>Rating</b>	<b>Facility/feature</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Facility/feature</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Facility/feature</b>
<input type="checkbox"/>	Orientation exhibit	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT trailhead	<input type="checkbox"/>	Wayside exhibits
<input type="checkbox"/>	Outdoor exhibits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Statuary/artwork	<input type="checkbox"/>	Museum exhibits
<input type="checkbox"/>	Plaques, markers	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nature trail	<input type="checkbox"/>	Paid interp staff
<input type="checkbox"/>	Volunteer staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interactive exhibits	<input type="checkbox"/>	Research library
<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT-related directional signs	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT-related cemetery	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT-related interpretive trail
<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT logo	<input type="checkbox"/>	Commem. Monmt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	NHT-related film
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Property Data (3/5)**

**Property** \_\_\_\_\_

*D. Other accommodations (check all that are present):*

<b>Present</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
	Off-road parking		Roadside parking
	Hardened walkway		Dirt/gravel trail
	Viewing platforms		Public restrooms
	Shade shelter		Potable water
	Trash cans		Public phone
	Outdoor seating		Indoor seating
	NPS passport stamp		camping
	Picnic facilities		Food service
	Vending machines		Wheelchair accommodations

**7. List current and intended continuing uses of the property (e.g., grazing, cultivation, fallow, commercial, visitation, etc.):**

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**8. Check all interpretive or visitor needs that apply:**

<b>Needed</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>	<b>Needed</b>	<b>Accommodation</b>
	Site plan/design (limited, moderate, extensive)		Trail brochure and passport stamp station
	Historic research/documentation		NHT vehicular directional signs
	Wayside exhibits		Site bulletin
	Parking		Trail construction
	Wheelchair accommodations		Trail site identification sign
	Trail site shelter		Restroom
	Fencing/screening		

**Property Data (4/5)**

**Property** \_\_\_\_\_

**9.** Describe any safety concerns (e.g., parking, traffic, livestock, electric fences, open wells, unstable buildings, etc.):

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**10.** Describe any accessibility concerns (e.g., no ramps, no hardened trails, narrow doorways, interior stairs, etc.):

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**11.** Describe any imminent changes (unrelated to certification) in the use or development of the property.

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**12.** List any known or potential threats to historic resources such as ruts, graves, etc. (e.g., vandalism, development, erosion, unauthorized vehicle traffic):

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