

National Scenic Trail (Feasibility Study and Criteria)

Here is a [link](#) to the National Trails System Act, and below is the study component/criteria snippet from it related to National Scenic Trails (excludes criteria #10 and 11 for proposed NHTs):

(b) Additional national scenic or national historic trails; feasibility studies; consultations; submission of studies to Congress; scope of studies; qualifications for national historic trail designation

The Secretary of the Interior, through the agency most likely to administer such trail, and the Secretary of Agriculture where lands administered by him are involved, shall make such additional studies as are herein or may hereafter be authorized by the Congress for the purpose of determining the feasibility and desirability of designating other trails as national scenic or national historic trails. Such studies shall be made in consultation with the heads of other Federal agencies administering lands through which such additional proposed trails would pass and in cooperation with interested interstate, State, and local governmental agencies, public and private organizations, and landowners and land users concerned.

The feasibility of designating a trail shall be determined on the basis of an evaluation of whether or not it is physically possible to develop a trail along a route being studied, and whether the development of a trail would be financially feasible. The studies listed in subsection (c) of this section shall be completed and submitted to the Congress, with recommendations as to the suitability of trail designation, not later than three complete fiscal years from the date of enactment of their addition to this subsection, or from November 10, 1978, whichever is later. Such studies, when submitted, shall be printed as a House or Senate document, and shall include, but not be limited to:

- (1) the proposed route of such trail (including maps and illustrations);
- (2) the areas adjacent to such trails, to be utilized for scenic, historic, natural, cultural, or developmental, purposes;
- (3) the characteristics which, in the judgment of the appropriate Secretary, make the proposed trail worthy of designation as a national scenic or national historic trail; and in the case of national historic trails the report shall include the recommendation of the Secretary of the Interior's National Park System Advisory Board as to the national historic significance based on the criteria developed under the Historic Sites Act of 1935 (49 Stat. 666; 16 U.S.C. 461);
- (4) the current status of land ownership and current and potential use along the designated route;
- (5) the estimated cost of acquisition of lands or interests in lands, if any;

- (6) the plans for developing and maintaining the trail and the cost thereof;
- (7) the proposed Federal administering agency (which, in the case of a national scenic trail wholly or substantially within a national forest, shall be the Department of Agriculture);
- (8) the extent to which a State or its political subdivisions and public and private organizations might reasonably be expected to participate in acquiring the necessary lands in the administration thereof;
- (9) the relative uses of the lands involved, including: the number of anticipated visitor-days for the entire length of, as well as for segments of, such trail; the number of months which such trail, or segments thereof, will be open for recreation purposes; the economic and social benefits which might accrue from alternate land uses; and the estimated man-years of civilian employment and expenditures expected for the purposes of maintenance, supervision, and regulation of such trail;