



NORTH COUNTRY TRAIL ASSOCIATION STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2015

Condensed Version

HISTORY: The North Country Trail Association (NCTA) was founded in 1981, and is the primary partner of the National Park Service (NPS), which administers the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST). The NCTA consists of members, chapters and affiliated organizations united in achieving its mission. This Strategic Plan, developed and adopted by the NCTA board of directors in 2010, is designed to guide the work efforts of NCTA staff and volunteers.

MISSION STATEMENT: The North Country Trail Association develops, maintains, protects, and promotes the North Country National Scenic Trail as the premier hiking path across the northern tier of the United States through a trail-wide coalition of volunteers and partners.

VISION STATEMENT: The North Country Trail Association (NCTA) will be the primary organization charged with **developing, maintaining, protecting, and promoting** the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST). The NCTA will coordinate, unite, and empower volunteers and partner organizations, land owners, and agencies along the length of the trail to fulfill its mission.

Our vision for the North Country National Scenic Trail is that of the premier footpath of national significance, offering a superb experience for hikers and backpackers in a permanently protected corridor, traversing and interpreting the richly diverse environmental, cultural, and historic features of the northern United States.

The NCTA will:

1. Develop a corridor of consistently and clearly marked treadways, blending with local character as appropriate.
2. Maintain the NCNST through highly successful partnerships among the various entities, providing funding, management, and service.
3. Protect, permanently whenever possible, the NCNST as a public hiking trail

showcasing and interpreting the rich variety of historical, cultural, and environmental features in the northern United States

4. Promote the NCNST as a continuous hiking trail of the highest caliber with foot traffic accorded the highest priority to the exclusion of other uses except in short, specifically designated segments.

AREAS OF FOCUS: Four areas are identified around which the Strategic Plan's goals and objectives are organized:

1. **Building and Maintaining the NCNST**
2. **Growing Membership**
3. **Promoting Public Awareness of the NCNST**
4. **Developing and Strengthening NCTA's Financial Position**

STRATEGIC PLAN, 2010-2015

1. **Building and Maintaining the NCNST:** Build NCTA's capacity to plan and protect, build and maintain the North Country Trail by 2015.
 - A. Plan and Protect the North Country Trail through state and federal advocacy, standardization and management of trail data, and developing land protection strategies.
 - B. Build 150 miles of new trail through chapter and affiliate education and capacity building.
 - C. Ensure all existing trail is being maintained through encouraging better records and increasing chapter maintenance capacities.
2. **Growing Membership:** Increase NCTA membership to 4600.
 - A. Achieve 25% annual gain and 85% renewal rates by employing marketing, outreach and best practices approaches, targeting both retention of current members and recruitment of new members.
3. **Promoting Public Awareness of the NCNST:** Increase recognition of the NCTA in the seven states by 50% using multiple media outlets.
 - A. Develop NCTA Marketing Plan based on marketing best practices.
 - B. Establish Maps production as key NCTA service and revenue generator.
 - C. Produce the NCNST Guidebook.
 - D. Establish and maintain NCTA website as a premier communications tool.
 - E. Maintain *North Star* as essential membership communications vehicle.
 - F. Develop NCTA's communications plan.
 - G. Establish and Integrate Corporate Sponsorship plan.
4. **Developing and Strengthening NCTA's Financial Position:** Reach and maintain an annual \$1.5m budget.
 - A. Increase amount of NPS contribution.
 - B. Grow national advocacy capacity.
 - Increase unrestricted dollars to \$270k annually.
 - C. Increase restricted dollars to \$330k annually.