



308 Mountain Bike Policy

According to the National Park Service Foundation Document for the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), "The nature and purposes of the North Country National Scenic Trail is to provide a non-motorized trail offering world-class walking and hiking experiences within a protected trailway and landscape through the northern heartlands of America." As such, whatever may conflict with building, maintaining, and protecting a world-class walking and hiking trail would not be consistent with the National Park Service Document and would be opposed by NCTA.

Access to the trail is achieved through partnerships with federal, state, local land managers, nonprofit organizations, and corporate and private landowners. In some instances the managing authorities of these segments permit other non-motorized uses of the trail. Additional uses, such as mountain biking, may present both environmental and safety risks, and have the potential to damage the trail tread and create conflict between users. These risks depend on a number of factors including the topography, soil composition, design and construction techniques, and level of use. The NCNST is also at risk from infrastructure and development pressures, risk factors shared with other groups seeking access to outdoor recreation opportunities. When consistent with the NPS Nature and Purpose statement, the NCTA will partner with other groups committed to conserving public lands to protect the human powered outdoor experience, striving to establish and maintain positive relationships grounded in common advocacy and prevention and resolution of user conflict.

The following conditions serve to guide managers and NCTA as to when mountain biking may be appropriate on the NCNST within the context of the Foundation Document:

1. Mountain bike use of the trail segment is mutually agreed upon between chapters, partners, and land managers. The segment trail maintainers do not object to mountain bike use.
2. Trail is designed and constructed to support mountain bike use, while still providing a world-class hiking experience.
3. Bike use will support environmental sustainability and not degrade the environment.
4. Trail can be used safely by both hikers and bikers including the ability for bicyclists and pedestrians to safely pass each other without either being forced to the shoulder or off the trail to avoid a collision. Appropriate signage is in place to support safe use.
5. For each NCNST segment open to bicycle use, there is an IMBA chapter affiliate, or other biking organization that will partner with the NCTA chapter or affiliate to promote and supervise respectful, joint use of the trail as posted.