***PROSPECTIVE NCT LANDOWNER OUTREACH LETTER  
SAMPLE TEMPLATE*** *(on page 2)*

*INSTRUCTIONS/ ADVICE ON USE:*

* Fill out the blanks in the form.
* Place the filled-out letter in an UNMARKED ENVELOPE (an envelope that does not contain the NCTA logo). On the bottom of the envelope, include a handwritten note “RE: Your land at [*insert address of property*]”. The reason we do not prefer using NCTA envelopes for this type of outreach is that they are often mistaken for a generic solicitation of donations, and are thrown out unopened. Including the landowner’s property address on the bottom of the envelope also helps get their attention and shows them that the letter is not a generic solicitation.
* Please include the hand-written abbreviation “NCTA”, your chapter, and your name in the return address at the top left side of the envelope.
* Consider including a simple map with your letter using NCTA’s online trail GIS application or other online GIS service (could even be a Google Map printout with an “X” marking the location of the property). The map does not have to be fancy; it only has to simply show the landowner what property you are referring to (some landowners may own more than one parcel of land in any given area, and may be confused if you are not specific).
* If you need additional assistance in crafting the letter, please reach out to your Regional Trail Coordinator or NCTA’s Director of Trail Protection.

*DATE*

To:  
*NAME(S)  
ADDRESS*

Dear *NAME(S)*

I am writing about your property in *TOWN/COUNTY/STATE*, *STREET ADDRESS*, in relation to its importance to the **North Country National Scenic Trail** (NCNST). I’m wondering if I could speak to you about the possibility of your hosting a section of the NCNST on your land.

The 4,800-mile NCNST is America’s longest congressionally approved National Scenic Trail. The trail provides exemplary non-motorized recreational opportunities to millions of people across eight northern states (ND, MN, WI, MI, OH, PA, NY, and VT). The **North Country Trail Association** (NCTA) is the non-profit organization responsible for promoting, protecting, and building the NCNST. We work closely with the National Park Service, state agencies, non-profit organizations, and private landowners to secure a continuous off-road route for the trail. While much of the NCNST has already been built, there are still many gaps to close.

Right now, we’re working on [*DESCRIBE HOW THE LAND FITS INTO OUR TRAIL ROUTE, AND WHY IT IS IMPORTANT TO THE NCT*]. We believe that a route through your land, with your permission, might be the most ideal and efficient way to close the trail gap in that area.

NCTA uses a variety of tools in working with private landowners. The simplest tools are **trail use agreements** (these can be canceled at will), **temporary use licenses**, or **permanent trail easements**. We are also open to negotiating a **conservation easement**, or a **purchase of land**. The latter two options could include compensation for the full value of the land or conservation easement, or tax deductions where land or a conservation easement on land is gifted in part or whole.

Hosting the trail on your land (through a trail use agreement, license, trail easement, or conservation easement) does not mean that you would be giving up the right to use your land. We would also like to assure you that any access you might grant to NCTA for trail use is covered under robust state laws that protect private landowners from liability where recreational access is granted to the public (since the trail’s inception in the 1970s, no private landowner has ever been sued in the course of providing public access for the NCNST). We may also be able to offer additional assurances.

Would you be willing, however briefly, to have a conversation with me about access to your land? I’m glad to *[INCLUDE ALL THAT APPLY:* meet with you in person, set up a phone call, or set up a Zoom meeting] at your convenience.

Respectfully,

*YOUR NAME, CHAPTER AFFILIATION  
CONTACT INFORMATION (PHONE AND EMAIL)*

www.northcountrytrail.org