



## 303 Policy on End to End Marking and Mapping

### **Policy Statement**

The North Country Trail Association will strive to create continuity and clarity of trail marking and wayfinding for the entire route of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

NCTA will sign the route on the ground according to NPS policies and guiding documents. In addition, NCTA will identify a continuous route for the Trail on all NCTA map products.

### **Identifying and Mapping the route**

NCTA's GIS department will map the route, to include off-road and on-road segments, on all map products, print and online.

- All off-road trail routing decisions should be made in accordance with NPS route planning guidance.
- Sections shared with affiliates will be mapped only with their advance agreement.
- NCTA will distinguish between off-road trail and on-road segments in our data and on all map products.
- NCTA will assign road walks in between sections of off-road trail.

### **Identifying road walks**

Between sections of completed off-road trail, NCTA will assign suggested road walks. These routes are generally not certified, therefore not official North Country National Scenic Trail, but are meant to give hikers a suggested route that upholds the integrity of the overall trail route and the need for hikers to access amenities.

Choosing a route for road walks will be the responsibility of the local managing agencies, chapters, and affiliates with assistance from NCTA and NPS staff as needed. Road walks should be chosen based on safety first. The following factors should be considered: availability of sidewalks, adequate width of shoulders, flow and speed of traffic and line of sight.

Hikers should be aware of all risks of hiking on-road sections of the trail and should follow local laws and best practices for pedestrian use of public roads. On-road sections are suggestions only. Hikers can choose their own route to fit their needs.

## **Marking the route**

### **The Off-Road Trail**

- The Trail should be marked according to the *North Country National Scenic Trail: A Handbook for Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance* and subsequent guidance.

### **Road Walks**

- Upon approval of the managing authority (property owner, agency, etc.), road walks should be marked with the standard blue blazes, recommended as follows:
  - Priority should be given to blazing at intersections, major turns and near where the trail enters/exits the road.
  - Utility poles and other infrastructure should not be marked without permission of the owner of that infrastructure.
- Additional directional, informational, safety and other signage may be necessary and should be coordinated with agencies and appropriate NPS policies and/or guidance. See *North Country National Scenic Trail: A Handbook for Trail Design, Construction, and Maintenance* for a list of signs.

## **Changing the route**

Any change to the route requires notification to appropriate NCTA trail management staff and GIS Department.

NCTA shall remove of all blazes and signage on the route that is being abandoned as well as restoring the trail route to a natural condition.

A proposed reroute of certified trail should be reviewed by appropriate NCTA staff and approved by the National Park Service to ensure the proposed change is in line with the approved route.