

**Site:** NOCO

**Year:** 2007

**Vision Statement**

The National Parks Centennial provides an opportunity to look beyond the day-to-day work of establishing and managing the North Country National Scenic Trail. It gives us the opportunity to review the long-range goals of providing superlative recreational and educational experiences to the many users and potential users of the Trail.

The Centennial Vision for the North Country National Scenic Trail is to substantially expand the miles of trail that are established and open to public use, and to establish educational/interpretive facilities along the completed segments of the trail. Approximately 2,600 miles of the 4,600-mile trail route lack the permanent protection that would ensure the public's right to use and enjoy the trail for generations to come. An important element of this vision is to expand public awareness of the trail and the outdoor recreation opportunities it provides through onsite interpretive wayside exhibits at all existing segments of the trail.

The North Country National Scenic Trail is today a series of disconnected segments along its 4,600-mile route. By bringing greater public awareness to the North Country Trail, public use of the trail and support for connecting the segments together is likely to increase. This public support will help to attract the resources needed to complete and protect the trail for present and future generations.

**Park/ Superintendent/ Program Manager**

Thomas L. Gilbert, Superintendent

Site: NOCO

STEWARDSHIP

Provide inspiring, safe, and accessible places for people to enjoy - the standard to which all other park systems aspire.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

By protecting lands for the North Country National Scenic Trail and establishing additional segments with interpretation, the National Park Service and its partners will help to ensure that premier outdoor recreation opportunities--exploring the nationally-significant resources of the "North Country" by day hiking or long-distance backpacking--will be available for present and future generations. The trail established within these lands will be built and maintained to the highest levels of sustainability.

The work described currently is supported by OFS and/ or PMIS

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STEWARDSHIP

Encourage children to be future conservationists.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

Protecting and completing additional segments of the North Country National Scenic Trail and increasing its visibility through interpretive panels and maps at each segment will help bring children in closer contact with the natural world around them, providing them with understanding and appreciation for the environment and the natural processes that operate within it. Through hiking and interpretive experiences, children will gain an understanding that they are part of this environment and therefore have a stake in its sustainability and preservation.

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RECREATION

- Encourage collaboration among and assist park and recreation systems at every level—federal, regional, state, local—to help build an outdoor recreation network accessible to all Americans.
- Rehabilitate over 2,000 miles of trails within or connected to national parks, including trails accessible to those with disabilities.

By protecting lands for the North Country National Scenic Trail and establishing new segments with increased visibility through interpretive panels and maps, the National Park Service and its partners will help to ensure that premier outdoor recreation opportunities--exploring the the special places of the "North Country" along its route by day hiking or long-distance backpacking--will be available for present and future generations. The trail established within these lands will be built and maintained to the highest levels of sustainability. Trails will be built to meet current accessibility standards.

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RECREATION

- Establish "volun-tourism" excursions to national parks for volunteers to help achieve natural and cultural resource protection goals.
- Increase annual volunteer hours by 100 percent, from 5.2 million hours to 10.4 million hours.

The North Country National Scenic Trail is built and maintained by an extensive network of volunteers who are members of the North Country Trail Association and its affiliates. In Fiscal year 2006, they provided approximately 35,000 hours of volunteer service to the North Country Trail. The National Park Service encourages and supports the efforts of the Association volunteers through the Challenge Cost Share program and other forms of assistance.

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RECREATION

Focus national, regional, and local tourism efforts to reach diverse audiences and young people and to attract visitors to lesser-known parks.

Other Park/ Program performance goal(s)

The North Country National Scenic Trail is a national park area that is lesser known than the more prominently promoted National Park System units, yet it provides important opportunities for recreational and educational experiences that connect people to the land. Working with partners to complete protection of lands and construction of the North Country Trail, along with interpretive signing and maps at all established segments, will make the Trail and the opportunities it provides more visible to citizens of, and visitors to, our country.

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EDUCATION

Impart to every American a sense of their citizen ownership of their national parks.

Increase visitors' satisfaction, understanding, and appreciation of the parks they visit.

One of the outstanding characteristics of America's long-distance National Scenic Trails is the way they bring the National Park Service--its mission, its values, its resources--closer to so many people as they thread their way through our rural landscapes and our communities. Many more people have a connection with the National Park System on a "local" basis because of this characteristic and their sense of ownership is thereby enhanced. Thus, for many people exploring the North Country National Scenic Trail is exploring their local areas, thereby increasing their appreciation of the trail and its resources and fostering a connection with our national system of parks and trails. The goal of significantly advancing the protection of lands for the North Country National Scenic Trail and establishing new segments will make this local connection a "reality" for those who live near it.

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