

# PACIFIC NORTHWEST NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL ADVISORY COUNCIL

## Advisory Council Purpose and Objectives

From the beginning of the National Trails System in 1968, Congress recognized that citizen involvement was critical to the development of long-distance trails and that it continues to be an important part of what makes these trails special. The National Trails System Act requires that each newly designated trail establish an Advisory Council comprised of a mix of citizens and government agency representatives.

The Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail (PNNST) Advisory Council will:

- be comprised of about 20 members,
- represent points-of-view from along the entire 1,200-mile length of the trail, and
- meet about twice annually beginning in April 2015.

The Council's primary objective is to advise and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Chief of the US Forest Service, on matters relating to the long-term vision for the PNNST and development of a PNNST Comprehensive Plan (CP). The CP is required under the National Trails System Act, and will be approved by the Regional Forester of the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region and then submitted to Congress.

## Scope of Activities

The Advisory Council is part of a larger planning process coordinated by the US Forest Service. In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the CP involves an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will be prepared by Forest Service staff. The general public will also have opportunities to provide comments through the NEPA process.

The unique role of the Advisory Council is to serve as a venue where citizens and representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and government agencies can talk together to develop recommendations and ensure that planning reflects the diverse public interests across the trail. These recommendations are expected to include:

- statement of the nature and purposes for the trail,
- trail uses,
- refinements to the trail route,
- trail corridor and rights-of-way, and
- priority future projects.

Nominees should understand that this work will focus on broad, trail-wide issues. Site-specific concerns, like trail condition, facilities, or uses in a specific location, are not the work of this Council and are best addressed through local land managers.



for the greatest good

## **Interests to be represented**

The Council will consist of approximately 20 members and provide a balanced and broad representation across the following interests:

### Non-government

1. Nationally recognized trails organizations;
2. Regionally recognized trails organizations;
3. Outdoor recreation with an emphasis on hiking;
4. Outdoor recreation with an emphasis on pack and saddle stock;
5. Gateway communities;
6. Nationally or regionally recognized environmental organizations;
7. Archaeological and historical preservation and/or interpretation;
8. Nationally or regionally recognized wildlife organizations;
9. Commercial timber and forest products;
10. Tourism and/or commercial outfitters and guides;
11. Environmental education;
12. Youth engagement and employment; and
13. Private landowners.

### Government

14. The Regional Forester of the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region, or a designee;
15. The Regional Forester of the US Forest Service Northern Region, or a designee;
16. The Regional Director of the Pacific West or Intermountain Region of the National Park Service (NPS), or a designee.
17. At least one representative of Native American tribal governments;
18. One representative of the State of Montana, selected from recommendations by the Governor;
19. One representative of the State of Idaho, selected from recommendations by the Governor; and
20. One representative of the State of Washington, selected from recommendations by the Governor.

## **Duties of Advisory Council Members**

Advisory Council members will play an active role in developing recommendations for the Regional Forester of the US Forest Service Pacific Northwest Region specific to the development of a Comprehensive Plan for the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail.

Council members are not expected to come to the first meeting with expertise in planning or trail issues. However, members should take an interest in the PNNST, including how the trail may impact other public values and resources. Members will make good-faith efforts to work

with other Council members to contribute to the long-term vision for administration and management of the PNNST. Members will be expected to share their points-of-view, listen to and consider other perspectives, and ask for more information when it is needed.

To ensure that this is an effective Advisory Council, members are expected to attend each meeting, participate in discussions, and complete any pre-work and follow-up tasks. To make the most of these brief opportunities to get together as a Council, members should arrive ready to focus on the work of the Council and do their best to minimize distractions.

### **Time Commitment**

Five or six meetings held twice yearly (spring/fall) for the approximately three-year duration (2014-2017) of the planning process. The first Council meeting is scheduled for April 2015. This will be a two-day, in-person meeting in one of the communities near the trail. Future meetings may be conducted in person or remotely via webinar or conference calls, depending on Council business and preference of the Council members. When the CP is finalized, the Council's work will be complete.

### **Expenses**

Council members do not receive pay, but they may be reimbursed for travel expenses to Council meetings. We aim to keep meeting costs low while providing a productive working environment for the Council.

### **Nomination Process**

Those interested may nominate themselves for the Council by submitting:

- nominee's resumé
- completed background information form AD-755 (<http://go.usa.gov/TB6k>)
- indication in AD-755 #11, or elsewhere in the nomination packet, of which [interest\(s\)](#) the applicant is willing and qualified to represent (*please note: the overwhelming number of applications received to date have been for the recreation [hiker] interest*)

This packet should be sent to Matt McGrath, US Forest Service, 2930 Wetmore Ave, Suite 3A, Everett, WA, 98201 or electronically at [mtmcgrath@fs.fed.us](mailto:mtmcgrath@fs.fed.us).

### **Selection Process**

Advisory Council nominees will be recommended by the Forest Service based on interest, experience, location, and ability to represent a range of perspectives from along the length of the Trail. Final Council membership will be approved by the Department of Agriculture.