



FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL PROGRAM

STRATEGIC PLAN IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE

**A Companion Guide to the
Florida National Scenic Trail Strategic Plan;
*Connecting Florida's Public Lands***

Moving Forward to 2023

This publication was produced as a collaborative project of the USDA Forest Service, National Forests in Florida and the Florida Trail Association, with funding support provided by the USDA Forest Service.



**IMPLEMENTATION GUIDE, A COMPANION GUIDE TO THE
FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL STRATEGIC PLAN;
*CONNECTING FLORIDA'S PUBLIC LANDS***

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FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL PROGRAM, NATIONAL FORESTS IN FLORIDA

Contact: National Forests in Florida
Florida National Scenic Trail Administrator
325 John Knox Rd Suite F-100 Tallahassee FL 32303

Shawn Thomas
Administrator, Florida National Scenic Trail
shawncthomas@fs.fed.us

Web: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/main/fnst/home>



Chris A. Johns

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In January 2018, the Florida National Scenic Trail Coalition adopted an updated Florida National Scenic Trail 5 Year Strategic Plan. This plan, referred to in this document as the 2018 Strategic Plan, builds on the foundational goals and strategies identified in the 2012 Strategic Plan developed collaboratively by the Florida National Scenic Trail Coalition.

In order to meet these goals, the USDA Forest Service Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) Program created this Implementation Guide as a companion to the 2018 Strategic Plan. This document outlines each of the objectives and actions the FNST Program will take to accomplish the four goals identified by the FNST Coalition: Promote Connections, Complete the Trail, Sustainable Management and Strategic Partnerships.

The Implementation Guide consists of project worksheets, implementation timelines and methodologies used for the FNST Program to address the challenges to management of the Florida Trail. The following is a summary of the focus of the FNST Program to achieve the goals and objectives identified by the FNST Coalition.

PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

Connect citizens with the natural and cultural heritage of Florida through increasing the awareness, use and protection of the Florida Trail.

With renewed commitment from the FNST Coalition, Promote Connections has been shifted to the first goal of the 2018 Strategic Plan. The FNST Program will dedicate efforts to promotion of the trail, engaging new and non-traditional users and providing education opportunities to connect more trail users and stewards to the Florida Trail. Planned projects include:

- Statewide Public Relations Plan
- Roundtable on Diversity and Next Generation Trail Ambassadors Program
- Junior Explorer Program
- Interpretive resources and trailhead improvements

The result of these projects and the program of work associated with Promote Connections will be to attract a greater audience to use, steward and protect the Florida Trail. Objectives and actions of this goal work towards the desired outcome of the Florida Trail as a widely valued trail used to connect the diverse populations of Florida with the state's nationally significant resources.

COMPLETE THE TRAIL

Close the gaps in the Florida Trail through long-range planning, acquisition and agreements for long term protection of the Trail corridor.

Complete the Trail is the primary focus of the stakeholders of the Florida Trail. Accordingly, the FNST Coalition and FNST Program have outlined ambitious goals to finalize the planning corridor and conduct corridor location reviews for the remaining major gaps in the trail. The program of work for this goal centers around trail planning, acquisition and protection; seeking to identify, develop and protect a permanent corridor for the Florida Trail. Major planned projects under this goal include:

- Corridor Location Reviews for the Panhandle and Western Corridor Gaps
- Publishing the FNST Planning Corridor
- Land Acquisition Atlas and associated Willing Sellers List
- Trail Corridor Protection Model

The remaining gaps in the Florida Trail will be time and resource-intensive to close and can only be tackled with the ingenuity, advocacy and support of partners and stakeholders in the trail. The desired outcome of work under this goal is for the Florida Trail to be a fully designated corridor, through ownership or permanent agreement, from the northern terminus in Gulf Islands National Seashore to the southern terminus in Big Cypress National Preserve.

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Manage, monitor and maintain the Florida Trail and its associated infrastructure to ensure a high-quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

One of the most prominent accomplishments of the FNST Coalition and FNST Program to date is the continuity of management found along the trail due to coordinated management actions by land management partners. In the next five years, the FNST Program will work with partners to manage, monitor and maintain the trail to provide a contiguous and high-quality recreation experience for trail users. Projects and strategies around this goal will focus on economically, socially and ecologically sustainable management of the Florida Trail. Major initiatives include:

- Trail Inspection Protocols
- Florida Trail Resource Atlas
- Annual and Long-Term Project Priority Lists
- Optimal Maintenance Effort Analysis

Seamless management of the Florida Trail and its associated resources is an important component of the program of work for the FNST Program, FNST Coalition and partners in land management and maintenance. The desired outcome of these efforts envisions the trail to be maintained as a high-quality recreational trail accessible to current and future generations.

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage and develop a diverse community of partners in the management, promotion and completion of the Florida Trail.

Strategic Partnerships is not only a goal, but the primary tool used by the FNST Program in accomplishing the goals developed by the FNST Coalition. The 2018 Strategic Plan expands the scope of the FNST Program partnerships to reach new trail users and volunteers, conserve natural resources and protect the Florida Trail corridor. The major projects and initiatives the FNST Program will undertake in the next five years include:

- National Scenic Trail Certification and Agreements
- Biannual FNST Coalition Meetings
- Youth, Veteran and Academic Partnerships
- Land Trust and Stewardship Partner Development

The FNST Program will accomplish these projects with continued dedication to existing partnerships, such as the partnership with the Florida Trail Association, the primary steward organization of the Florida Trail. As the FNST Program works to strengthen strategic partnerships and achieve the goals of the 2018 Strategic Plan, the long-term outcome of a network of partners dedicated to the protection of the Florida Trail will be realized.



Florida National Scenic Trail

Big Cypress National Preserve to Gulf Islands National Seashore

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| FNST | Public Lands | — Major Highways |
| — Trail | ■ Federal | — Rivers |
| — Side Trail | ■ State | ■ Lakes |
| — Spur Trail | ■ Local | --- County |
| — Roadwalk | | |
| ••• Big Bend Reroute | | |
| ••• Osceola Orange County Reroute | | |

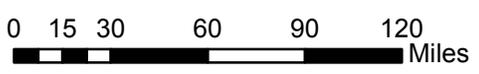


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CHAPTER 1

“Florida Trail, extending north from Everglades National Park, including the Big Cypress Swamp, the Kissimmee Prairie, the Withlacoochee State Forest, Ocala National Forest, Osceola National Forest, and Black Water River State Forest, said completed trail to be approximately one thousand three hundred miles long, of which over four hundred miles of trail have already been built.”

*-National Trails System Act
SEC. 5. 16USC1244(b)*



Chris A Johns

INTRODUCTION

The Florida National Scenic Trail, or Florida Trail for short, is a federally-designated, non-motorized, recreation trail, built through volunteerism and maintained through partnerships, in effort to connect people with natural areas of Florida. The Florida Trail is one of eleven National Scenic Trails in the United States and travels approximately 1,300 miles from Gulf Islands National Seashore in Northwest Florida to Big Cypress National Preserve in South Florida. The Trail is administered by the USDA Forest Service.

The first 5 Year Strategic Plan was developed in 2012 to address some of the largest challenges facing the Florida Trail: trail development, standardization, partnerships and promotion. Though great progress has been made, many challenges still exist and new opportunities have arisen for the Florida Trail. In 2017, the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) Coalition developed an update to the 5 Year Strategic Plan. This document serves as the companion Implementation Guide to the 2018 Strategic Plan, developed by the FNST Program to align the program of work with the strategic goals outlined by the FNST Coalition.

THE FNST COALITION

The Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) Coalition was formed in 2010 to assist in the consistent management and long-term protection of the Florida Trail. The Coalition is composed primarily of land management, academic, non-profit and other government agency partners that have a stake in the future of the Florida Trail.

The Coalition serves primarily in a support role to the trail administrator, the USDA Forest Service FNST Program. The Coalition brings a diversity of perspectives, interests, and expertise and thus ensures that the trail is a truly public asset, accessible and enjoyed by diverse constituents. Specifically, the Coalition agrees to:

- Ensure accountability to and implementation of the goals and outcomes of the FNST Strategic Plan;
- Oversee adherence to trail standards for access, safety, signage, and interpretation to achieve the optimum recreation experience;
- Serve as Trail advocates through attracting the financial and human resources necessary for Trail development, maintenance and promotion;
- Foster coordination among various interests, networks, and stakeholders throughout the State.



Florida Trail Association

CORE VALUES

To ensure the success of our program, the agency and the USDA as a whole, the FNST Program embraces the U.S. Forest Service Core Values outlined by the National Sustainable Trails Strategy in 2017. By adopting the following core values, we lay together the foundation for making sustainable trail systems a priority and ensuring pathways to public lands remain—for all people, for many generations to come.

- **SAFETY**—We value the safety of trail users, volunteers, partners and employees and are dedicated to performing our work safely and providing safe trail opportunities for all.
- **SUSTAINABILITY**—We value the land and will steward a trail system that is relevant to a changing society, is ecologically viable, and that can be sustained by current and potential partner, volunteer and agency resources.
- **COMMITMENT**—We value the strong traditions, skills and dedication of our partner, volunteer and employee workforce and will foster continued growth through training and leadership opportunities.
- **ACCESS**—We value the ability of everyone to connect to the outdoors and are committed to providing quality access through a variety of trail settings and opportunities.
- **INCLUSION**—We value everyone—trail users, partners, volunteers, employees and friends, regardless of age, ability or cultural background.
- **COMMUNICATION**—We value the exchange of information that is up-to-date, accurate, widely available in multiple formats and relevant to both trail users and those involved in sustainable trail planning, design and maintenance.
- **RELATIONSHIPS**—We value collaborative relationships and are committed to working across jurisdictional and cultural boundaries to maximize diverse skillsets and generate innovative approaches.

PLAN DEVELOPMENT

This strategic planning process began at the January 2017 FNST Coalition meeting at the St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge Education Center. Here, the FNST Coalition reviewed the accomplishments of the 2012 Strategic Plan and discussed new goals, issues to address and opportunities to consider in the development of the 2018 Strategic Plan. After this meeting, the FNST Program established the Strategic Planning Advisory Team to develop the first draft of the update based on discussion and recommendations of the FNST Coalition. The first draft of the 2018 Strategic Plan was presented and discussed at the July 2017 FNST Coalition Meeting. Further feedback for the plan was gathered through stakeholder engagement and reviewed by the Florida Trail Association, the Florida Trail's primary non-profit partner organization, land managers and other partners in November 2017. Comments were addressed and incorporated by the Strategic Planning Advisory Team. For a summary of this feedback, please refer to Appendix II. Strategic Consultation. The final draft of the 2018 Strategic Plan was adopted at the January 2018 FNST Coalition Meeting.



Abigail Chambers

2018 STRATEGIC PLAN



MISSION

The Florida National Scenic Trail Coalition meets as a collaborative body to inform better decisions and attract greater resources to advance, protect and connect people to the Florida Trail.

VISION

From the Emerald Coast to the Everglades, the Florida Trail is a fully-designated corridor, actively supported by a network of partners dedicated to the advancement and protection of the Trail. The Trail is widely-valued as a national treasure and used by current and future generations to connect with the outstanding scenic, natural, cultural and historic resources of Florida.

GOAL 1: PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

- 1.1 PROMOTE.** Connect people to the Florida Trail through coordinated promotion efforts
- 1.2 ENGAGE.** Cultivate community and cultural relevance through engaging new and non-traditional trail users
- 1.3 EDUCATE.** Provide education and interpretation opportunities to encourage learning, enjoyment and attachment to the Florida Trail

GOAL 2: COMPLETE THE TRAIL

- 2.1 PLAN.** Define the route of a complete Florida Trail that reflects on the ground conditions
- 2.2 ACQUIRE.** Acquire segments necessary for completing the Trail through fee-simple acquisition, easements or formal agreements
- 2.3 PROTECT.** Preserve the long-term integrity of the Trail corridor and surrounding resources

GOAL 3: SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

- 3.1 MONITOR.** Champion an integrated approach to collecting and sharing trail information that better serves land managers and the public
- 3.2 MANAGE.** Collaboratively and sustainably manage the trail tread and associated resources to standard
- 3.3 MAINTAIN.** Maintain the Florida Trail for recreation, conservation and enjoyment

GOAL 4: STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

- 4.1 COLLABORATE.** Foster coordination among interests, networks and stakeholders to further the goals of the Florida Trail
- 4.2 STEWARD.** Enhance partnerships to share stewardship of the Florida Trail and ensure access for future generations
- 4.3 COMPLETE.** Engage partners in the development and protection of the Trail corridor

FNST COALITION MEMBERS

**FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE

**FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAILS FOUNDATION

OSCEOLA, ORANGE AND TAYLOR COUNTIES

PRIVATE LANDS REPRESENTATIVE

SUWANNEE RIVER WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

**UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA,
SCHOOL OF FOREST RESOURCES & CONSERVATION**

**USDA FOREST SERVICE, NATIONAL
FORESTS IN FLORIDA**

US DOI FISH AND WILDLIFE

US DOI NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

DOCUMENT ORGANIZATION

This document corresponds to the Goals, Objectives and Actions outlined by the 2018 Strategic Plan update. Please refer to Appendix III. Implementation Breakdown Summary for the 2018 Florida National Scenic Trail Strategic Plan complete list of goals, objectives and actions. Each chapter consists of three parts: I. Introduction; II. Project Worksheets and III. Implementation Steps. Each introduction details the challenges and opportunities identified during the development of the plan, an overview of previous accomplishments, major deliverables associated with each objective, and performance measures tied to each goal. Next, a series of Project Worksheets outlines major projects, timelines, partners and fiscal considerations for each goal. Finally, each chapter details the implementation steps and timelines that will be used to achieve the goals of the 2018 Strategic Plan. The document concludes with a series of technical appendices which describe methodology for annual reporting, internal processes and procedures, and considerations for both the 2018 Strategic Plan and this document.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

CLR- Corridor Location Review
 FAMU- Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University
 FDEP- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
 FDOT- Florida Department of Transportation
 FGTS- Florida Greenways and Trails System
 FNST Coalition- Florida National Scenic Trail Coalition
 FNAI- Florida Natural Areas Inventory
 FNST Program - Florida National Scenic Trail Program
 FOC- Framing Our Community, Inc.
 FSU- Florida State University
 FT- Florida National Scenic Trail
 FTA- Florida Trail Association
 FY- Fiscal Year
 GIS- Geographic Information Systems
 MOU- Memorandum of Understanding
 NPS- National Park Service
 NSHT- National Scenic and Historic Trails
 NTAR- National Trail Administrators Round Table
 OGT- Office of Greenways and Trails
 OLR- Optimal Location Review
 PNTS- Partnership for the National Trails System
 UF- University of Florida
 USDA- U.S. Department of Agriculture
 USFS- U.S. Forest Service
 USFS WO- U.S. Forest Service Washington Office
 UWF- University of West Florida

CHAPTER 2

MAJOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Increase number and diversity of Florida Trail recreationists by 15% over 5 years.

LONG TERM OUTCOME

The Florida Trail is widely valued and used as a means for connecting the diverse populations of Florida with its nationally significant resources.



Rachel Skeen

PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

Connect citizens with the natural and cultural heritage of Florida through increasing the awareness, use and protection of the Florida Trail.

INTRODUCTION

Since its designation in 1983, the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) has provided citizens with meaningful connections to the unique resources found in the State of Florida. The Florida Trail is one of eleven National Scenic Trails designated by the U.S. Congress “to promote the preservation of, public access to, travel within, and enjoyment and appreciation of the open-air, outdoor areas and historic resources of the Nation (16 U.S.C. 1241-1251).” The Florida Trail and its associated resources provide an opportunity for all citizens to relate to their natural and cultural heritage. Therefore, it is the intent of the FNST Program to increase the awareness, valuation and use of the Florida Trail and its associated resources.

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

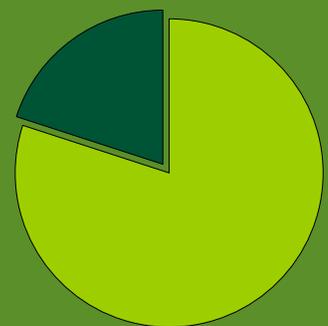
Since 2012, the FNST Coalition’s primary goal with promotion of the Trail was to ensure that users understood they were on the Florida Trail and that it was a National Scenic Trail, part of an elite group of scenic trails traversing iconic landscapes throughout the country. To measure this, the FNST Program worked with University of Florida to conduct visitor studies and found that, on average, approximately 80% of people using the trail knew they were on the Florida Trail.

With the 2012 Strategic Plan the FNST Program developed several informational resources to assist in connecting users to recreation opportunities. A calendar of Florida Trail related events was a major partner accomplishment, allowing the public to see stewardship and recreation events happening with multiple partners across the state. To improve communication about the trail, the FNST Program developed a brochure which displayed iconic photographs and detailed top destinations, according to user feedback. Furthermore, in 2016 the FNST Program published a Junior Explorer activity book to attract more youth and families to the trail.

BY 2017...

80%

KNEW THEY WERE ON THE FLORIDA TRAIL WHEN ASKED



Though great achievements were made towards connecting users with the Trail, several objectives, including interpretation and development of a public relations plan, were not addressed. There is still work to be done to connect more citizens with the outstanding resources and opportunities along the Florida Trail.

BY 2022..

15%

INCREASE IN
NUMBER &
DIVERSITY
OF TRAIL USERS

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

There are several challenges that the FNST Program and FNST Coalition must address to promote the trail. Visitation studies conducted in partnership with the University of Florida depict a relatively constant number of recreationists over the past decade, approximately 350,000 annually. In addition to a constant number of users, demographic analysis of Florida Trail recreationists depicts a lack of diversity in the type of users (specifically in age, race, ethnicity and gender). Though this quality of visitation is not unique in the outdoor recreation field, future stewardship and support of the Florida Trail depends on fostering cultural relevance and welcoming new and non-traditional users on the trail.

These challenges were brought to the forefront while developing the 2018 Strategic Plan and addressed in this goal- Promote Connections. In addition to gaining new usership, the FNST Coalition identified the need to 'foster value' in the Florida Trail. Through development of interpretive and educational programs, the FNST Program will work to actively engage new trail users and connect them to meaningful recreation opportunities that can only be found along the Florida Trail.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

Building from the success of the 2012 FNST Strategic Plan, the 2018 Strategic Plan establishes strategies and actions to promote the Florida Trail, develops a community of users vested in its permanence and educates citizens about the unique resources found along the Trail.

- **PROMOTE.** Connect people to the Florida Trail through coordinated promotion efforts
- **ENGAGE.** Cultivate community and cultural relevance through engaging new and non-traditional trail users
- **EDUCATE.** Provide education and interpretation opportunities to encourage learning, enjoyment and attachment to the Florida Trail

PROMOTE.

CONNECT CITIZENS TO THE FLORIDA TRAIL THROUGH COORDINATED PROMOTION EFFORTS

Trails are identified as one of the primary means for people to connect to their environment, their health and well-being, and their communities. Through promotion of the Florida Trail, the FNST Program hopes to both raise awareness and increase connections- connecting people to the resources and experiences they value. The FNST program will develop a Public Relations Plan that will be implemented in coordination with a variety of partners to reach new and non-traditional users. This plan will also lay out a strategy for branding, product development and distribution that will be followed for the remainder of the 2018 Strategic Plan timeline.

ACTIONS

- 1.1.1 Develop and implement a trail-wide public relations plan to promote connections to the trail**
- 1.1.2 Create informational products using a variety of platforms**
- 1.1.3 Distribute and improve access to trail promotion, education and interpretation materials**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

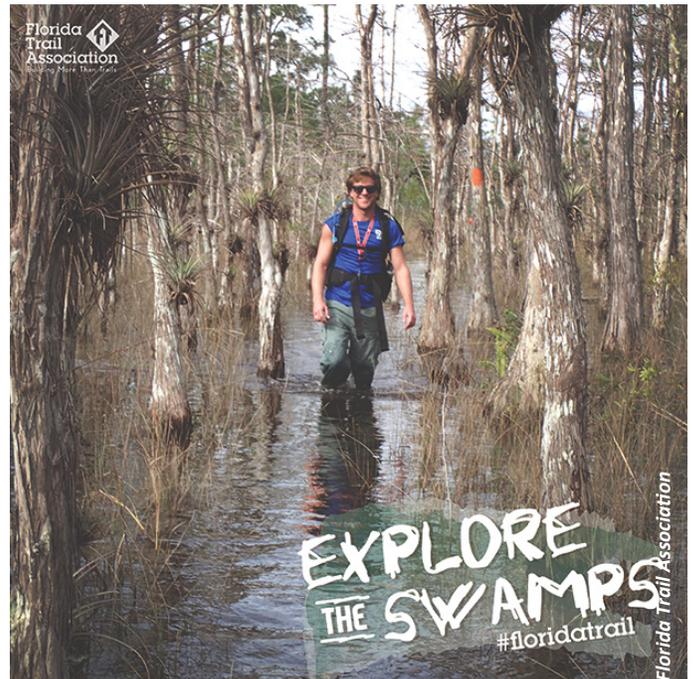
The major deliverables for this plan depend highly on the outcome of the Statewide Public Relations Plan. The current planned deliverables include but are not limited to:

- Statewide Public Relations Plan*
- Florida Trail Promotional Video
- Regional Trip Brochures and Itineraries
- Top Destination Brochures

*Denotes projects detailed in Project Worksheets

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

This objective will be measured through an expansion of the University of Florida Visitation Survey. Surveys will target users in the top destinations advertised along the Florida Trail and will be measured on an annual (or semiannual) basis. The minor performance measures are as follows:



MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Ease of Access to Trail Information	100% of users found it 'easy' to access trail information	UF Visitor Survey
New Usership	25% of new users discovered the Trail through efforts of the Statewide Public Relations Plan	UF Visitor Survey

ENGAGE.

CULTIVATE COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL RELEVANCE THROUGH ENGAGING NEW AND NON-TRADITIONAL TRAIL USERS

Engaging new and diverse audiences has historically been a challenge for many National Scenic Trails, including the Florida Trail. This objective directly addresses the lack of diversity in usership through engagement, targeted investments and outreach. The FNST Program will work to establish relationships with new user groups and identify targeted investments to make trail opportunities more accessible to a wider audience, particularly near urban interfaces. In addition, the FTA and FNST Program will work to strengthen relationships with Florida Trail Gateway Communities to promote rural economic development opportunities along the trail. The FNST Program seeks to foster a community of trail users, in both urban and rural locations, who will value and sustain the Florida Trail as a premier recreation opportunity for current and future generations. Please refer to the Appendix V. Encouraging Diversity in the Outdoors for more information about the FNST Program’s approach to meeting this objective.

ACTIONS

- 1.2.1 Engage non-traditional users to identify and develop trail opportunities that are accessible and relevant to their interests**
- 1.2.2 Incorporate user feedback to prioritize investments that connect new and diverse user groups to the trail**
- 1.2.3 Identify and implement opportunities to build a diverse community of Florida Trail recreationists and volunteers**
- 1.2.4 Enhance the Florida Trail Gateway Communities program to promote rural economic development opportunities**



MAJOR DELIVERABLES

Current projects under this objective include:

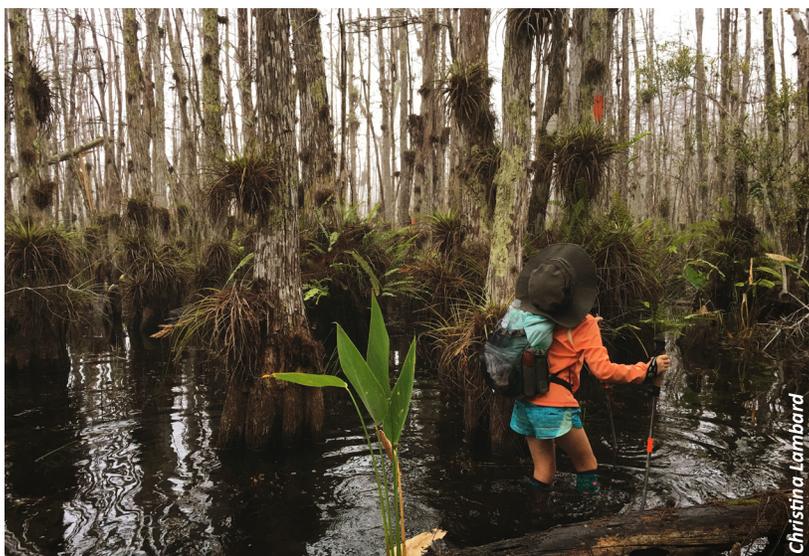
- Next Generation Trail Ambassadors Program*
- Roundtable on Diversity*
- Targeted trailhead improvements
- Florida Trail Gateway Communities Program

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Florida Trail Social Media views	Increase by 200%	FTA Social Media
FNST Related events	v2 additional events per year	Partner Survey

EDUCATE.

PROVIDE EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION OPPORTUNITIES TO ENCOURAGE LEARNING, ENJOYMENT AND ATTACHMENT TO THE FLORIDA TRAIL



Just as increasing use of the Florida Trail as a recreation resource is important, increasing valuation of the trail through interpretation of its unique resources is an equal priority. Interpretation and education are two methods of addressing value and attachment to the trail. The FNST Program will work closely with partners to develop high-quality recreation experiences through interpretation and education opportunities on the trail and in the classroom. These opportunities will be targeted to current trail users as well as the next generation of trail stewards.

ACTIONS

- 1.3.1 Foster value for the Trail through interpretation of its unique and nationally significant resources**
- 1.3.2 Develop programs to provide education and recreation opportunities to the future generation of trail stewards**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The major deliverables for this plan depend highly on the outcome of the FNST Public Relations Plan and partnerships built around education and interpretation. Efforts to promote education opportunities on the trail are already underway. The current planned deliverables include but are not limited to:

- Standard Interpretive Messaging
- Interpretive Trailhead Improvements
- Junior Explorer Program*

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Interpretive Trailhead Information	100% of Top Destination Trailheads	FNST Program Evaluation
Field Trips on the Florida Trail	10 field trips (total)	FNST Program Evaluation

PROJECT WORKSHEETS

STATEWIDE PUBLIC RELATIONS PLAN

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FTA
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST COALITION, NEXT GEN. TRAIL AMBASSADORS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

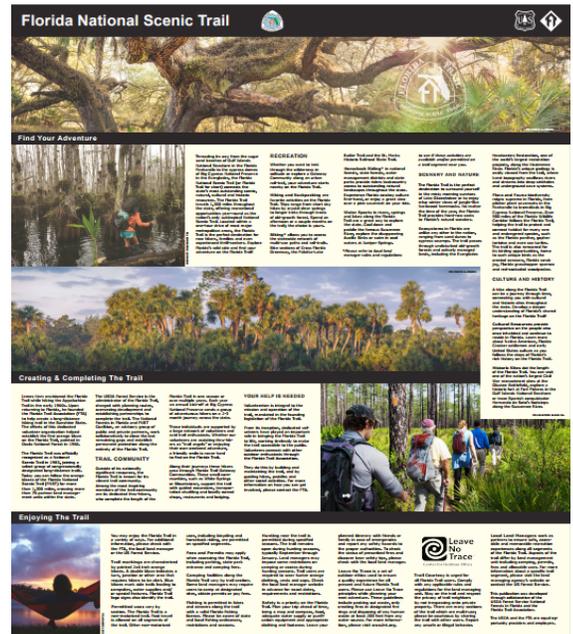
BACKGROUND

One of the objectives of the 2012 Strategic Plan goal ‘Promotion’ was to develop a statewide public relations and branding plan to promote the Florida Trail. This project remains incomplete and is an essential part of the 2018 Strategic Plan. The utility of the public relations plan is to provide the agency-led change necessary to assist grassroots promotion efforts in expanding their audience and interpreting the Trail. This coordinated effort for development and distribution of promotional materials was identified by the FNST Coalition as a need.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Program will first consult the U.S. Forest Service Office of Communications, FNST Coalition and other partners to inform the development of an FNST Statewide Public Relations Plan. The FNST Program will use this engagement to complete the Statewide Public Relations Plan, with professional assistance if deemed necessary.

When developed, this public relations plan will be used to inform Actions 1.2 and 1.3, involving the development and distribution of informational materials to improve access to the trail. The Public Relations Plan will also assist with branding of the Trail. Several products have been identified for development including a promotional video, regional itineraries and site-specific brochures. Additional informational products and distribution plans for each of these will be identified by Action 1.1 and revisited throughout the duration of the 5 Year Strategic Plan.



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Engagement for this plan will take place during FY18 with development and completion expected by FY19. Plan implementation and monitoring will occur from FY19-FY22.

ROUNDTABLE ON DIVERSITY

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FTA, FNST COALITION
CONSULTING PARTNERS	OUTDOOR AFRO, FLORIDA DIVERSITY COUNCIL AND OTHERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18

BACKGROUND

Years of visitation studies conducted by the University of Florida have shown that most visitors to the Florida Trail, like many public lands and nature based recreation resources, are demographically homogenous. The Florida Trail program, which lies at the nexus of dozens of public land management agencies, conservation organizations and outdoor non-profits, is in a unique position to begin addressing this disparity with the help of an engaged community of partners.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Roundtable on Diversity is an effort to bring partners together in the discussion of inclusivity and engagement for non-traditional, diverse users on the Florida Trail. The program will include members from non-profit organizations around the state who strive to promote diversity and engage in outdoor recreation. This Roundtable will prioritize the topic of diversity by allowing state and federal agencies, FNST partners, and consulting groups like Outdoor Afro, Florida Diversity Council, Latino Conservation Alliance and others to come together and share their perspectives, advice and expertise. Consulting partners and project leads can contribute their perspectives on and methods for engagement from which all participants can learn and grow. Overall, the Roundtable on Diversity will foster an inclusive outdoor recreation community in the State of Florida that can collaborate, share and exchange ideas for projects and state initiatives for the stewardship of Florida’s natural, cultural, scenic and historical resources.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Project development will begin in FY18 with the opportunity for recurring events throughout the 5 Year Strategic Plan.

NEXT GENERATION TRAIL AMBASSADORS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FAMU, FTA
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FSU, PNTS & OTHER EDUCATION PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY19-FY22



BACKGROUND

In January 2017, the FNST Coalition noted the lack of diversity in usership on the trail as a primary concern to be addressed in the 2018 Strategic Plan. Utilizing the Next Generation Advisory Council model developed by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, the Florida Trail seeks to develop a Trail Ambassadors program to assist in engaging new and diverse user groups on the Trail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The creation of the FNST Next Generation Trail Ambassadors Program will be spearheaded by the FNST Program in partnership with the FTA and Florida A&M University (FAMU). Project leads will reach out to underrepresented groups to invite Trail Ambassadors to the table to find pathways to increase youth involvement on the Trail, advise management decisions and trailhead investments and serve as advocates for the Florida Trail in their communities.

The program will seek to identify ambassadors from underrepresented groups including but not limited to youth and families, university outdoor recreation programs and racially and ethnically diverse outdoor recreation groups. The program will invite ambassadors for a yearly meeting to advise the FNST Program and FNST Coalition in targeted investments and actions to connect the next generation of stewards with the Trail.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Program development will take place in FY19-FY20. Implementation of recommendations will occur in FY20-FY22.

JUNIOR EXPLORER PROGRAM

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FTA
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FOC, FSU, FLORIDA PUBLIC SCHOOLS, NEXT GEN. TRAIL AMBASSADORS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY19-FY22

BACKGROUND

In April 2017, the first Junior Explorer activity book, My Florida Trail Adventure: A Kid’s Guide to Adventure on the Florida National Scenic Trail, was published. Positive feedback from this activity book has led to the next step of developing a Junior Explorer Program including further educational materials and programs.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Junior Explorer Program seeks to develop educational materials and programs that can be distributed by partners to connect youth and families to the Trail. The program will include the development of:

- Florida Trail field trip curriculum
- Interpretive programming including recreational and educational trail activities
- Outreach and management strategy for information/program requests

- Template for school resources including print resources, surveys, volunteer opportunities and photo permissions
- Development of trail interpretive programming including recreational and educational activities that can be advertised to elementary schools

Schools and educators interested in participating in the Junior Explorer program will be identified and contacted primarily by FNST partners. The program will be evaluated for improvements every 2 years with guidance from the Next Generation Trail Ambassadors program, partners and Florida Trail volunteers.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Program development FY19. Program implementation FY20-FY22.



PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

GOAL 1 PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

Connect citizens with the natural and cultural heritage of Florida through increasing the awareness, use and protection of the Florida Trail.

Objective 1.1 Promote- Connect people to the Florida Trail through coordinated promotion efforts

Action 1.1.1 Develop and implement a trail-wide public relations plan to promote connections to the trail

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Survey key partners and stakeholders regarding promotion needs, desires and opportunities	X				
B Contact R8 USFS Office of Communications to identify existing resources and information channels	X				
C Identify target audiences for Trail promotion efforts	X				
D Develop Public Relations Plan	X	X			
E Implement Plan, monitor and update, where necessary		X	X	X	X
1.1.2 Create informational products using a variety of platforms					
A Identify products to develop utilizing Public Relations Plan guidance		X	X	X	X
B Identify correct platforms for product development	X		X		X
C Develop informational products for identified platforms	X	X	X	X	X
D Develop template products to assist partner promotion efforts of Trail		X	X	X	X
1.1.3 Distribute and improve access to trail promotion, education and interpretation materials					
A Identify barriers to Florida Trail information sharing	X	X			
B Identify feasible methods of distribution with FTA and FNST Partners	X		X		X
C Identify partners to assist in distribution of promotion, education and interpretation materials	X	X	X	X	X
D Distribute print products based on Public Relations Plan and partner identified opportunities		X	X	X	X
E Publish online materials and implement opportunities to streamline distribution	X	X	X	X	X
1.2 Engage- Cultivate community and cultural relevance through engaging new and non-traditional trail users					
1.2.1 Engage non-traditional users to identify and develop trail opportunities that are accessible and relevant to their interests					
A Identify organizations and communities in outdoor recreation that do not currently have a relationship with the FNST Program or FNST Program partners	X	X			
B Contact organization, communities and leaders to build relationships	X	X	X		
C Develop Florida Trail Next Generation Ambassadors Program to identify trail opportunities for non-traditional users		X	X		
D Work with Florida Trail Ambassadors and non-traditional user organizations to support and promote relevant recreation opportunities			X	X	X
E Develop and execute Roundtable on Diversity event or similar project to engage non-traditional users	X	X			
1.2.2 Incorporate user feedback to prioritize investments that connect new and diverse user groups to the trail					
A Gather user feedback through annual surveys, partner communication and Trail Ambassadors program		X	X	X	
B Develop projects and trail investments based on feedback and industry best practices			X	X	X
C Implement projects and trail investments with focus on high-use or high-quality destinations				X	X
1.2.3 Identify and implement opportunities to build a diverse community of Florida Trail recreationists and volunteers					

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Identify Florida outdoor recreation focused communities, both online and in-person	X		X		X
B Identify opportunities to engage these communities in recreation and volunteer opportunities	X		X		X
C Implement community-building opportunities utilizing social media, outreach events and programming		X	X	X	X
1.2.4 Enhance the Florida Trail Gateway Communities program to promote rural economic development opportunities					
A Define Gateway Communities model with respect to OGT Trail Towns initiative	X				
B Identify current and targeted Florida Trail Gateway Communities	X				
C Identify economic, social and environmental benefits of Florida Trail Gateway Communities Program	X	X			
D Work with program participants to develop promotional products, identify funding sources and distribute print and online materials to connect citizens with the Florida Trail		X	X	X	X
1.3 Educate- Provide education and interpretation opportunities to encourage learning, enjoyment and attachment to the Florida Trail					
1.3.1 Foster value for the trail through interpretation of its unique and nationally significant resources					
A Identify appropriate natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources for interpretation	X	X			
B Identify partners to assist in development of trail interpretation materials including kiosks, online and print materials		X	X		
C Identify partners with active education and interpretation programs		X	X		
D Develop and distribute materials and interpretive programs to highlight the Florida Trail resources			X	X	X
1.3.2 Develop programs to provide education and recreation opportunities to the future generation of trail stewards					
A Complete and publish Spanish language version of Junior Explorer Activity Book	X				
B Develop Junior Explorer informational products and merit-badges		X			
C Distribute and implement Junior Explorer materials, programs and volunteer opportunities		X	X	X	X
D Develop field trip curriculum based on Junior Explorer Activity Book			X		
E Identify volunteers, educators and funding opportunities to implement Florida Trail field trip programs			X		

CHAPTER 3

MAJOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Remove 30 miles of trail roadwalks and add 50 designatable miles of trail to close critical gaps within the Trail corridor.

LONG TERM OUTCOME

The Florida Trail is a fully designated corridor, through ownership or permanent agreement, from the northern terminus in Gulf Islands National Seashore to the southern terminus in Big Cypress National Preserve.



Chris A. Johns

COMPLETE THE TRAIL

Close the gaps in the Florida Trail through long-range planning, acquisition and agreements for long term protection of the Trail corridor.

INTRODUCTION

The Florida Trail was first envisioned in 1966 as a continuous ‘natural footpath’ throughout the State of Florida. Since then, the population of Florida has more than doubled and the ability to connect natural and scenic lands with ease has diminished. In order to complete the planned 1,300 miles of the Florida National Scenic Trail, the FNST Program must utilize creative and collaborative approaches to close the remaining gaps. In the 2012 Strategic Plan, this was the primary goal of the FNST Coalition and FNST Program. This goal continues to be a high priority for the 2018 Strategic Plan and for the FNST Coalition and one which will require the efforts of all partners to accomplish.

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

The process of planning, development and acquisition, or agreements to certify trail as National Scenic Trail is time-intensive and complex. Over the past five years the FNST Program was able to designate 83.4 miles of the 100-mile goal. Additionally, 56.2 miles of trail roadwalks, or road walks between designated trail segments, were removed from the Trail. Along with small gains throughout the state, several large sections of Trail were added including the Choctawhatchee River Section, the Kissimmee River Re-route, Camp Blanding and White Springs trail segments. Overall, the FNST Program made great strides towards closing the gaps on the trail.

In addition to trail development, the FNST Program made significant progress in trail planning and alternatives analysis. Of the four largest gaps in the Florida Trail, the FNST Program tackled re-routes and conducted Corridor Location Reviews (CLRs) for two: the Central Florida Gap and the Big Bend. The FNST Program sought out innovative new partnerships to explore trail development opportunities in rapidly urbanizing parts of the state. These accomplishments are key to ensuring further success in trail development and acquisition in the coming years.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The landscape of public lands has shifted greatly since the 1983 FNST Comprehensive Plan was adopted. The original planning corridor is now outdated and will require updating to pursue completion of the trail. A spatial analysis of the existing gaps and trail roadwalks show approximately 300 miles of gaps, with varying degrees of difficulty for closure

BY 2017..

83.4

**MILES OF
DESIGNATED TRAIL
ADDED**

56.2

**MILES OF TRAIL
ROADWALKS
REMOVED**

BY 2022..

50 **ADD
MILES OF
DESIGNATED
TRAIL**

30 **REMOVE
MILES OF
ROADWALK**

– the most challenging areas remain in Central Florida, the Panhandle Region and Big Bend. Trail planning will continue to be an essential element of the FNST Coalition Program of Work.

The FNST Program will seek out the most effective opportunities for trail development in critical gap areas through pursuing agreements, easements and identifying opportunities for mutually-beneficial land acquisition. Though the immediate goal is to complete the Florida Trail corridor and close the remaining gaps, protection of the corridor is a necessary next step for long term success of the Trail. As the USDA Forest Service shifts towards a corridor management model in line with the practices of other National Scenic Trails, the FNST Program will work with partners to identify opportunities for further protection of the corridor by developing a corridor management model for the Florida Trail.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

The 2018 Strategic Plan objectives and actions for Complete the Trail are consistent with the framework built by the 2012 Strategic Plan. The major objectives of this area of focus include trail planning, acquisition, development and protection.

- **PLAN.** Define the route of a complete Florida Trail that reflects on the ground conditions
- **ACQUIRE.** Acquire segments necessary for completing the Trail through fee-simple acquisition, easements or formal agreements
- **PROTECT.** Preserve the long-term integrity of the Trail corridor and surrounding resources

ACQUIRE.

ACQUIRE SEGMENTS NECESSARY FOR COMPLETING THE TRAIL THROUGH FEE-SIMPLE ACQUISITION, EASEMENTS OR FORMAL AGREEMENTS

Land acquisition is an essential component of the trail planning and development needed to complete the Florida Trail. The work accomplished through this objective will address steps necessary for acquisition, agreements or easements to close critical gaps along the FNST corridor. In partnership with local, state and federal land management agencies as well as private landowners, the FNST Program will pursue acquisition opportunities within the FNST corridor to address safety concerns, close critical gaps and develop high-quality trail which can be designated as National Scenic Trail.

ACTIONS

- 2.2.1 Identify and systematically contact landowners of critical segments**
- 2.2.2 Sign certifying MOU's or license agreements, where appropriate**
- 2.2.3 Acquire critical parcels and easements, where necessary**
- 2.2.4 Pursue acquisition funding through federal, state and private grants**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The major deliverables related to trail planning are time intensive and vary highly upon on the ground conditions in segment areas. The current planned deliverables include:

- Florida Trail Land Acquisition Atlas
- Willing Sellers List
- Memorandums of Understanding and other agreements
- Fee-simple and easement acquisition
- State and Federal Land Acquisition Packages



MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Acquisition Packages	Submit 2 high priority packages annually	FNST Program Evaluation

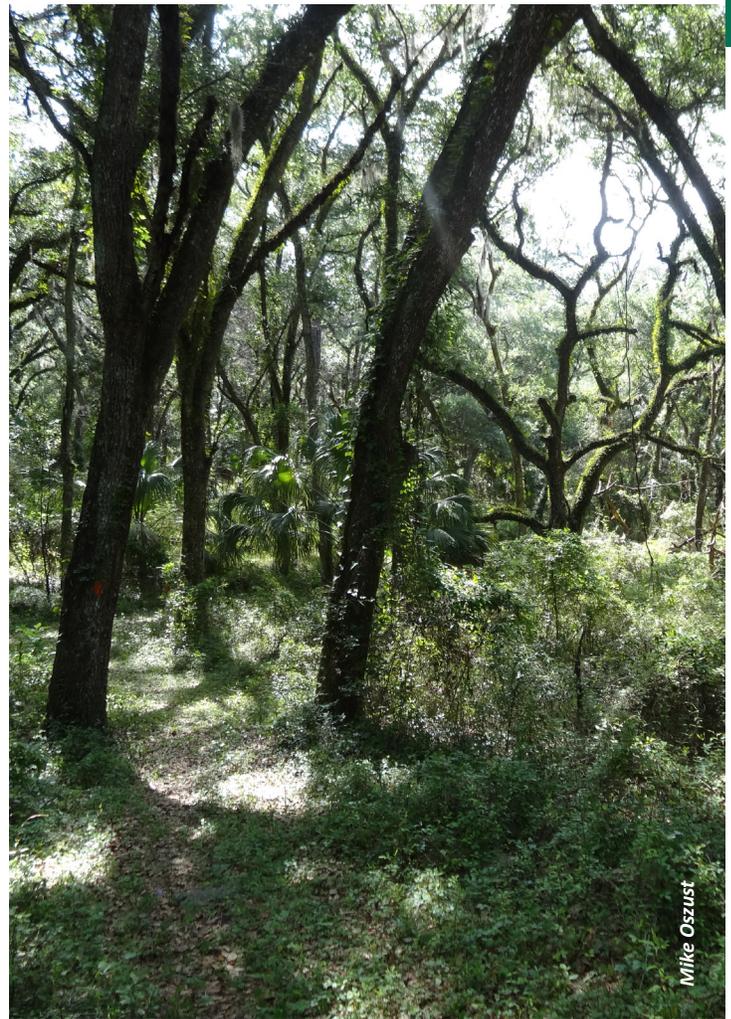
PROTECT.

PRESERVE THE LONG-TERM INTEGRITY OF THE TRAIL CORRIDOR AND SURROUNDING RESOURCES

Though completion of the trail corridor is a top priority for the FNST Program and Coalition, protection of the corridor is a necessary second step. As the U.S. Forest Service updates the Forest Plan and moves towards a model of corridor management for National Scenic Trails, identification of a trail corridor management model to implement in National Forests is a critical next step to trail protection. Additionally, under this objective the FNST Program will work to develop actions to identify and protect areas of the trail which are considered 'at-risk' from development pressures.

ACTIONS

- 2.3.1 Identify at-risk areas in need of additional protection**
- 2.3.2 Develop management and partnership actions to address at-risk areas**
- 2.3.3 Identify and implement trail corridor management in compatible areas**



Mike Oszust

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

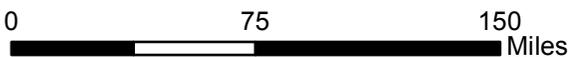
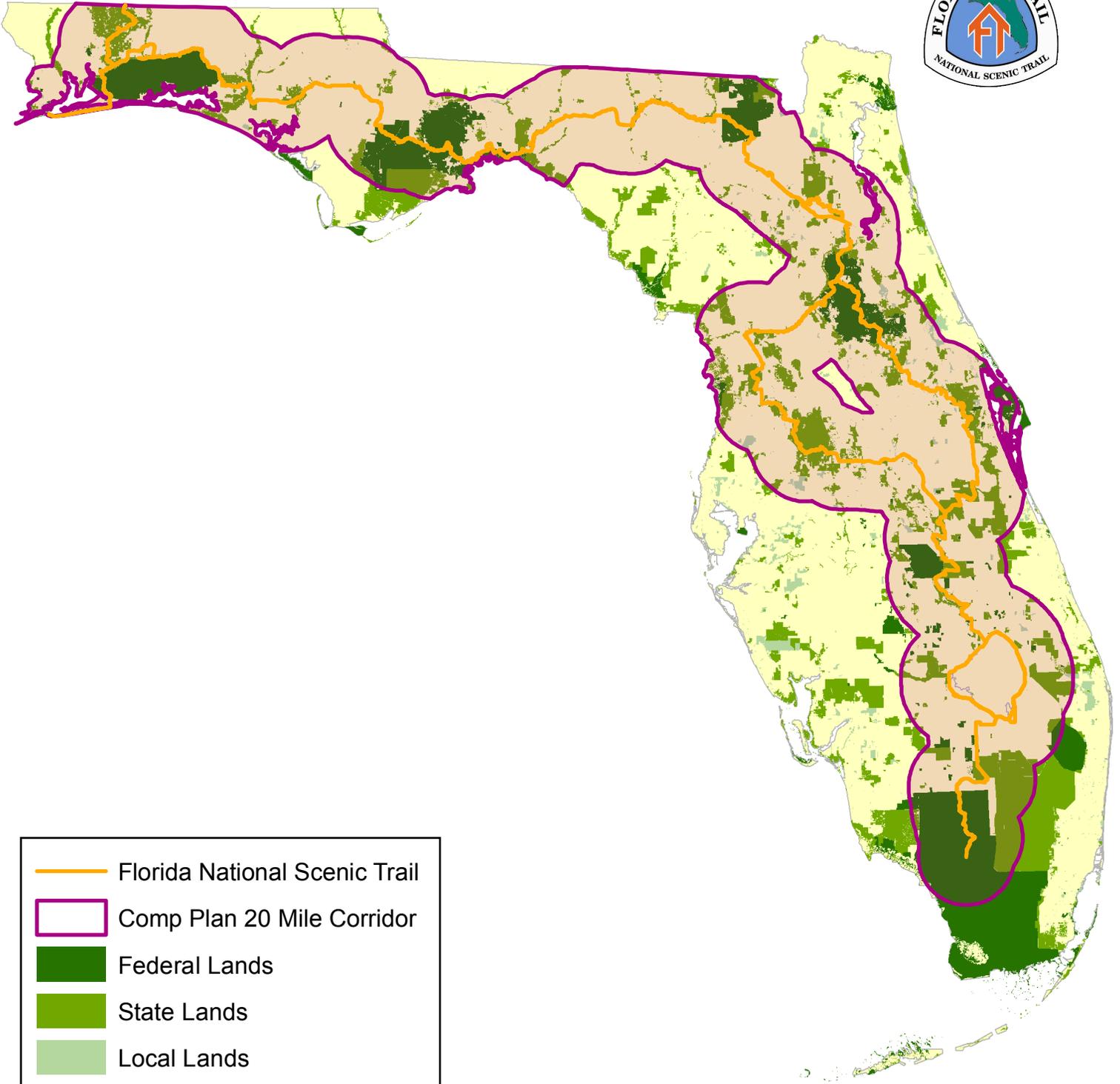
- At-Risk Segment Matrix
- At-Risk Segment Action Plan
- Trail Corridor Management Model

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

Completion of this performance measure will require close coordination with state and federal partners, particularly from U.S. Forest Service guidance.

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Trail Corridor Protection Model	Develop	FNST Program Evaluation

2018 FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL 20 MILE PLANNING CORRIDOR



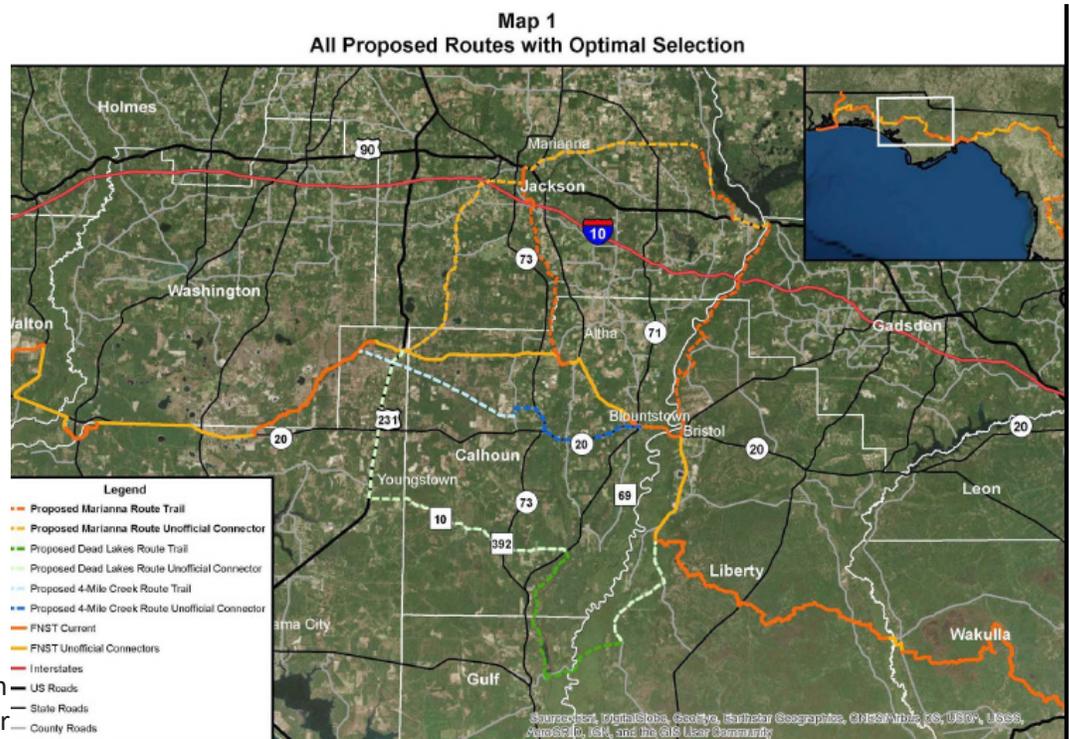
PROJECT WORKSHEETS

MAJOR GAP CORRIDOR LOCATION REVIEWS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST COALITION, FTA, FNAI, FSU AND OTHER PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY20

BACKGROUND

Of the approximately 300 miles of remaining gaps in the Florida Trail, the largest and most challenging is located in the Panhandle. In 2017, the FNST Program commissioned an initial study of gaps along the Trail through a partnership with Florida State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning (FSU DURP). This study began to identify challenges and opportunities for trail development within the gap and yielded a public opinion survey regarding use, planning and trail development on the Florida Trail. Additionally, selected study areas within the Western Corridor are being prepared for optimal location review.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Panhandle Gap Corridor Location Review (CLR) will identify and examine alternative routing options from Apalachicola National Forest west to Eglin Air Force Base. The FNST Program in conjunction with a team of experts and stakeholders will spend three field days analyzing viable corridors for the trail. The FNST Program’s staff time will be dedicated to analyzing spatial, biological, cultural and economic data for the proposed alternatives within the corridor. The CLR report will select a final trail development corridor for the gap and be published through the USFS.

In addition, the FNST Program and FTA will have renewed focus on the Western Corridor. Long-term routing for the entire corridor as well as specific gap areas will be prioritized. Initial studies will focus on the existing and potential opportunities within the Western Corridor that highlight the nature and purpose of the Florida Trail.

The CLR process requires stakeholder input to identify and select a final corridor. The FTA will identify a team of stakeholders and trail volunteers to develop one of the priority corridor alternatives. In addition, the plan will undergo a period of public comment and review and will be published on the FNST website and in the FTA quarterly Footprint publication. Furthermore, the FNST Program will document the valuation for each alternative through development of an explicit alternatives analysis matrix to ensure clarity and transparency in the alternative decision.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

All identified CLRs will be completed and adopted during FY18-FY20.

FDEP OGT PRIORITY AND OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, OGT
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST COALITION, FTA
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

Florida’s Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) has been a long time partner of the Florida National Scenic Trail. OGT is responsible for maintaining the official database of state-wide priority and opportunity recreational trails network known as the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS). The Florida Trail is designated within the priority network of the FGTS which allows for state expenditure of funds to be allocated to support the goals and objectives of closing gaps and securing land associated with the Trail. Priority and opportunity mapping updates occur every three years and the FNST Program works closely with OGT to refine routing in line with state processes.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST program will work closely with the FTA and FNST Coalition partners to submit minor and major routing adjustments during the state OGT planning and mapping updates, allowing maximum potential for new partnerships and land acquisition funding. This publicly accessible mapping series allows for public and private input which is an integral component to exploring options that close trail gaps and create a permanent, protected corridor for the Florida Trail. Updates will be shared annually.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Cycle begins in 2017. Updates will continue annually FY18-FY22.

FLORIDA TRAIL LAND ACQUISITION ATLAS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST COALITION, NPS, FNAI, FDEP, LAND TRUSTS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY20

BACKGROUND

In 2004 the FNST Program completed a first draft of a Land Acquisition Atlas which identified parcels which the trail crossed that were not under agreement or ownership. Additionally, a preferred routing study was published in 2003 in partnership with the FDEP. As the location of the planning corridor evolves based on current conditions, there is a strong need for an update and expansion of the Land Acquisition Atlas.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Land Acquisition Atlas will be developed by the FNST Program over the next three years to identify priorities in acquisition, agreements and easements along the trail corridor. The FNST Program will undergo a spatial analysis of natural communities and property ownership along the trail to identify and prioritize parcels for potential acquisition. In addition to spatial analysis, with assistance from partnerships or contractors, the FNST Program will identify opportunities for designation, agreement or acquisition that reflect current conditions. This analysis will enlist the help of key land management partners to identify shared acquisition priorities then rank each parcel by the type, feasibility and potential timeline of acquisition. This document will be shared with FNST Coalition to further collaborate and partner in the completion and long-term protection of the FNST corridor.



Framing Our Community

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Preliminary research will occur from FY18-FY19. Land Acquisition Atlas development will occur during FY20.

WILLING SELLERS LIST

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, NPS, OGT AND OTHER PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY20-FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Program and FTA have depended upon word of mouth and the time-consuming process of searching individual property appraiser sites to locate willing sellers in the preferred corridor. To meet the goals of closing gaps and permanent protection, the FNST Program must develop an efficient system to identify willing sellers and negotiate acceptable acquisition timelines in our areas of concern.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Florida’s rapid growth and development, particularly within rural areas and the Central Florida region, will be addressed with a dynamic and comprehensive list of willing sellers around the state. The FNST Program will utilize a multifaceted matrix to prioritize properties and include a framework for landowner communication and engagement. Factors such as preferred routing and gap review analysis will play critical roles in targeting willing or potential sellers. However, some flexibility will be required during the planning phases in order to negotiate trail routing that considers the availability of permanent protection and optimal routing opportunities. The willing sellers list will be developed in conjunction with the land acquisition and priority routing studies.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

FY20-FY22. The project will evolve as a product of regularly dedicated staff time.

AT-RISK SEGMENT MATRIX

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FNST COALITION
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, LAND TRUST PARTNERSHIPS, NPS, FDOT
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

Growth, development and the loss of natural areas within the Florida Trail corridor threaten the continuity of the Trail and as a result present major safety concerns and even deteriorate the integrity of the National Scenic Trail designation. The FNST Program must act to curtail the loss of connectivity to natural landscapes, mitigate for major obstacles and secure at-risk segments. The FNST Program will rely heavily on our active partners and advocates to identify major threats to the Florida Trail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

With strategic plan implementation will come an immediate call to action for our partners to assist the FNST Program in identifying immediate threats to the integrity and protection of the Florida Trail. The FNST Program will accumulate all available data and develop an at-risk segment matrix during FY18-FY19 which will be continually updated and acted upon. This matrix will enable us to target specific partners and elevate critical needs to agency leadership. The goal

is to identify and eliminate detrimental impacts to the connectivity, nature and purpose of the Florida Trail, including energy corridor development and changes in underlying land ownership. Public involvement and commitment will be a necessary byproduct of the successful outcome of actionable items within the at-risk matrix.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Identification and study of at-risk segments from FY18-FY22. Partnership management actions and recommended mitigation measures developed beginning in FY21.

TRAIL CORRIDOR PROTECTION MODEL

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	USFS NSHT, NTAR
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY 21-FY22

BACKGROUND

The USFS National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHTs) and National Trail Administrators Roundtable (NTAR) concur that to properly manage and protect the outstanding qualities of a National Scenic Trail, management should include both the trail tread and trail corridor. Protection of trail corridor resources will result in benefits including economic development, recreation amenity creation, public education opportunities and resource conservation. As the route of the trail tread is finalized, the identification and management of the trail corridor must become the next priority to protect its intrinsic resources for generations to come.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Program will work closely with other USFS NSHTs and NTAR as trails around the nation develop a standard corridor management model in the coming years. The FNST Program will work with land managers from the National Forests in Florida to implement a pilot corridor management model on USFS lands, in accordance with the updated Forest Plan. Implementation of a corridor protection plan will require close coordination with state and local partners to identify an appropriate corridor width and develop management actions. Protection of the corridor will take incompatible uses, changing land use, development, natural resource management and preservation of scenic resources into consideration. By FY22, it is anticipated that the corridor protection model will begin to be implemented on non-USFS lands, with this work becoming a focal point for the next 5 Year Strategic Plan.



Framing Our Community

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Anticipated development of management model in conjunction with NTAR, USFS WO from FY18-FY20. Compatibility analysis from FY20-FY22 and implementation from FY21-FY22.

INTEGRAL LARGE-SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	LAND MANAGERS, FTA, FOC
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

Completing the Florida Trail is an endeavor that requires planning, partnering and developing large-scale infrastructure projects which span major waterways and roadways. These multi-tiered projects are further complicated by the fact that they will most likely require the support and collaboration of the underlying landowner as well as state and federal regulatory and permitting agencies. The availability of adequate funding and dedicated staff time towards project planning will limit the capacity to implement projects.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

There are three identified large-scale infrastructure needs on the Florida Trail necessary for the connectivity and completion of optimal routing. These include:

- **Yellow River Bridge, Eglin Air Force Base** – located on the NW Boundary of Eglin Air Force Base, the Yellow River is a navigable waterway and a major connection barrier for the Florida Trail. This project will eliminate a 20-mile roadwalk and enhance partnership with Eglin AFB and their commitment to the Florida Trail.
- **Econlockhatchee River Bridge, Little Big Econ State Forest** – located in the Little Big Econ State Forest this bridge will connect new Florida Trail routing across the recreationally navigable Econlockhatchee River. This preferred alternative routing option was determined in partnership with land managers and the FTA. The proposed infrastructure will eliminate roughly 3 miles of trail within the USFS Mills Creek Woodlands (470 acres).
- **Pedestrian Overpass SR528 “Beachline Expressway,” Central Florida Expressway Authority** – a planned expansion of the Beachline Expressway will impact the Trail in the Central Florida Region. The FNST Program is working with the Central Florida Expressway Authority to develop plans for a pedestrian overpass.



IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

- **Yellow River Bridge, Eglin Air Force Base:** FY18 feasibility assessment; FY19-FY20 planning, design and environmental review
- **Econlockhatchee River Bridge, Little Big Econ State Forest:** FY18 planning, design and environmental review; FY19 implementation and construction
- **Pedestrian Overpass SR-528 “Beachline Expressway,” Central Florida Expressway Authority:** FY21 feasibility assessment; FY22-FY23 planning, design and environmental review

GOAL 2 COMPLETE THE TRAIL

Close the gaps in the Florida Trail through long-range planning, acquisition and agreements for long term protection of the Trail corridor.

Objective 2.1 Plan- Define the route of a complete Florida Trail that reflects on the ground conditions

Action 2.1.1 Analyze routing alternatives through stakeholder participation and formal trail relocation reviews

<i>Task Description</i>	<i>FY18</i>	<i>FY19</i>	<i>FY20</i>	<i>FY21</i>	<i>FY22</i>
A Develop routing alternative for outstanding Corridor Location Reviews (CLRs) through stakeholder engagement	X		X		
B Conduct CLRs and evaluate preferred alternatives for gaps including but not limited to the Panhandle and Western Corridor	X	X	X		
C Identify person or organization to serve as consulting partner in trail relocation review and development		X			
D Identify top ten priority gap areas to conduct OLR based on current trends, on the ground conditions and stakeholder preference		X	X		
E Conduct OLRs for top priority gap areas			X	X	X

2.1.2 Coordinate routing with long range planning of other land management agencies

A Update FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) State priority maps and opportunity maps	X	X	X	X	X
B Research and develop database of long-range acquisition plans for major state partners including Water Management Districts, FWC, State Parks and State Forests		X		X	
C Identify mutually-beneficial areas for long-range acquisition plans and communicate overlapping interests with partners through sharing Land Acquisition Atlas information			X	X	X
D Identify and assist in management plan updates for all local, state or federally managed lands along the Florida Trail	X	X	X	X	X
E Develop and utilize communication channels for land management partners to notify FNST Program of emerging trends and changes in landscape of Florida public lands	X	X	X	X	X

2.1.3 Prioritize acquisition needs and large-scale infrastructure for trail connectivity based on current trends

A Identify trail areas not covered under agreement	X	X			
B Define parcels in these trail areas and identify the quality of underlying landownership	X	X	X		
C Develop Land Acquisition Atlas to prioritize areas ready for acquisition or agreement in critical gaps areas along the trail			X		
D Update and share Land Acquisition Atlas with partners to inform long range planning and acquisition based on current trends				X	X

2.1.4 Identify the optimal Florida Trail planning corridor

A Identify trail gaps which may require planning and development outside of current planning corridor	X				
B Utilize CLR process to define appropriate corridors for trail development	X	X	X		
C Identify planning corridor for entire length of the Florida Trail				X	
D Publish preferred planning corridor with guidance from USFS SO, RO and WO				X	X
E Publish Florida National Scenic Trail Right-of-Way in Federal Register					X

Task Description

FY18 FY19 FY20 FY21 FY22

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
2.2 Acquire- Acquire segments necessary for completing the Trail through fee-simple acquisition, easements or formal agreements					
2.2.1 Identify and systematically contact landowners of critical segments					
A Identify landowners of critical segment parcels identified in Land Acquisition Atlas			X		
B Work with NPS, FTA Staff and land management partners to systematically contact landowners regarding willingness for acquisition, easement or agreement	X	X	X	X	X
C Develop Willing Sellers List to correspond to Land Acquisition Atlas			X	X	X
D Update Willing Sellers List every two years				X	
2.2.2 Sign certifying MOU's or license agreements, where appropriate					
A Identify underlying land management agencies or partners for trail areas not under agreement	X	X			
B Develop MOUs or license agreements for these parcels	X	X	X	X	X
C Sign MOUs or license agreements for these parcels	X	X	X	X	X
2.2.3 Acquire critical parcels and easements, where necessary					
A Identify immediate opportunities for land acquisition through Land Acquisition Atlas	X	X	X	X	X
B Identify partners to collaboratively develop acquisition packages for parcels or easements in critical trail segment areas for all acquisition cycles	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify titleholder for acquired parcels	X	X	X	X	X
2.2.4 Pursue acquisition funding through federal, state and private grants					
A Identify all feasible private, local, state and federal grant funding opportunities for land acquisition		X	X	X	X
B Develop application template for each grant funding opportunity that will be pursued annually		X	X		
C Identify potential parcels for acquisition for each grant funding opportunity			X	X	X
D Develop and submit application packages for high priority parcels and trail areas annually	X	X	X	X	X
2.3 Protect- Preserve the long-term integrity of the Trail corridor and surrounding resources					
2.3.1 Identify at-risk areas in need of additional protection					
A Identify potential risks to the trail and trail corridor	X	X	X	X	X
B Spatially define at-risk areas by trail segment, trail corridor and/or parcels	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify trail areas at-risk for impacts of climate change					X
2.3.2 Develop management and partnership actions to address at-risk areas					
A Consult with partners to identify local, state and federal best practices and partner actions to address at-risk areas	X	X	X	X	X
B Develop a model for FNST Program management actions in case of escalation of threats to trail corridor			X		
C Develop threat-specific best practices and recommended mitigation measures for threats to the trail corridor				X	X
D Work with permitting agencies to develop communication channels for anticipated permitted actions within the FNST corridor				X	X

<i>Task Description</i>	<i>FY18</i>	<i>FY19</i>	<i>FY20</i>	<i>FY21</i>	<i>FY22</i>
2.3.3 Identify and implement trail corridor management in compatible areas					
A Work with NTAR and USFS WO to inform development of trail corridor management model	X	X	X		
B Identify areas in USFS National Forests in Florida land that are compatible and/or required to implement trail corridor management model			X	X	X
C Work with USFS National Forests in Florida to pilot areas for trail corridor management model and identify associated challenges and opportunities				X	X
D Utilizing trail corridor management model and underlying landowner participation to develop Trail Corridor Protection Plan					X

COMPLETE THE TRAIL

TIMELINE

CHAPTER 4

MAJOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

100% of the Florida Trail is managed to a high standard annually to provide maximum potential for recreation, conservation and enjoyment.

LONG TERM OUTCOME

The Florida Trail is maintained as a high-quality, iconic, long-distance trail enjoyed by current and future generations.



Framing Our Community

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Manage, monitor and maintain the Florida Trail and its associated infrastructure to ensure a high-quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

INTRODUCTION

Sustainable management of the Florida Trail is one of the major components of the program of work for the FNST Program. To ensure the Trail is available to and enjoyed by current and future generations, activities in monitoring, management and maintenance of the trail must be completed by the FNST Program as well as its partners. The 2018 Strategic Plan has several focal points in addition to the typical management actions required of the FNST Program.

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

The development of a standardized management plan for the Florida Trail has been one of the greatest accomplishments of the FNST Coalition and the 2012 Strategic Plan. Through categorizing each trail segment along the length of the Trail into trail classes, the FNST Program and land management partners were able to ensure continuity in management of the trail. This continuity and increased coordination in management improved the quality of spatial data available for the Florida Trail, allowing the U.S. Forest Service to publish and regularly update an ArcGIS Online map platform. Additional mapping and spatial analysis also stemmed from greater coordination in trail management.

Several of the major accomplishments in trail Standards occurred due to strengthened partnerships with nonprofit partners, the FTA and Framing Our Community (FOC), which spearheaded trail maintenance and infrastructure projects throughout the state. Additionally, the FNST Program developed both the Northern and Southern Termini of the Florida Trail, at Gulf Islands National Seashore and Big Cypress National Preserve, respectively. By the end of the 2012 Strategic Plan, 100% of the Florida Trail was considered managed to standard.

THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

Beginning in 2018, the FNST Program will refocus the former 'Standards' goal on economically, socially and ecologically sustainable management of the Trail.

BY 2017...

100%

**OF THE FLORIDA
TRAIL WAS MANAGED
TO STANDARD**

BY 2022...

100%

**WILL BE MANAGED TO
A HIGH STANDARD***

Defined below

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO 'MANAGE TO STANDARD'?

The Florida Trail is a unique resource that is anything but standard, so the FNST Program has developed an approach to reporting 'standard' management requirements.

Management of the Trail encompasses several facets of trail administration including trail data, information, maintenance and compliance with safety and higher-level regulations. In conjunction, management of each trail segment largely relies on coordination and strong partnerships with underlying land managers and stewardship partners. To sustainably manage the Trail, management needs to move beyond annual maintenance to include higher level goals for the trail. Therefore, an essential distinction in the 2018 Strategic Plan is the definition of a trail segment which is managed to standard.

A trail is managed to standard when it is well-maintained, safe to use, regularly monitored, provides up-to-date information and is included in land management policy. The FNST Program considers a trail to be 'managed to standard' if it meets the following criteria based on the USFS National Quality Standards for Trails (FSH 2309.18, Sec 15, Exhibit 01):

1. **National Standards:** The Trail meets NSHT Standards outlined by the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241-1251), Forest Service Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives Guidebook (1623-3801-MTDC), and applicable USFS guidance.
2. **Safety and Security:** All identified health and safety concerns on the trail are addressed with management actions.
3. **Resource Setting:** The Trail does not conflict with surrounding resources
4. **Condition of Facilities:** The Trail has been maintained to target frequency in coordination with the land manager. Capital improvements meet applicable land management guidelines.
5. **Designated and Managed Uses:** The appropriate trail class is assigned, annually evaluated and allowable uses for the trail are defined.
6. **Information Availability:** All trailheads display consistent Florida Trail messaging.
7. **Partner Management:** The Florida National Scenic Trail is included in the Unit Land Management Plan and/or on the land manager website.

Not all criteria are applicable for all trail segments. For example, trail segments that are managed by state or federal land management partners will be held to a different standard than trail segments on private land. Please see Appendix VII. Management to Standard for more detailed information on calculation methodologies and reporting management of the trail.

There are several challenges to management of a long-distance, sub-tropical recreation trail. First, management relies on availability of current information on the condition of trail infrastructure. Next, the Florida Trail passes through a variety of subtropical ecosystems, many of which experience rapid vegetative growth throughout the year. As volunteer stewardship is the primary source of maintenance for the Florida Trail, it is important that the FNST Program work in conjunction with partners to ensure the Trail is maintained for year-round enjoyment without expanding needs beyond volunteer desires or capabilities. In order to meet these challenges, the FNST Program must work with partners to find collaborative methods for monitoring, managing and maintaining the Florida Trail.

During the next five years, the FNST Program will develop a more robust array of datasets to better monitor trail assets and conditions. The program will use this information to collectively identify and develop project priorities in conjunction with partners along the trail. Furthermore, maintenance activities will be informed and improved to maximize potential for recreation, conservation and enjoyment.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

The 2018 Strategic Plan objectives focus on monitoring, managing and maintaining the Florida Trail and associated resources in a sustainable manner.

- **MONITOR.** Champion an integrated approach to collecting and sharing trail information that better serves land managers and the public
- **MANAGE.** Collaboratively and sustainably manage the trail tread and associated resources to standard
- **MAINTAIN.** Maintain the Florida Trail for recreation, conservation and enjoyment

MONITOR.

CHAMPION AN INTEGRATED APPROACH TO COLLECTING AND SHARING TRAIL INFORMATION THAT BETTER SERVES LAND MANAGERS AND THE PUBLIC

One of the greatest challenges to management of a statewide resource is the availability and accuracy of spatial information about the trail. To address this need, the FNST Program will develop several new databases to aid in trail management including a resource atlas, designated and managed recreation uses, and infrastructure database. Work under this objective will assist the FNST Program and partners in managing and maintaining the trail with relevant, accurate and up-to-date trail information. Additionally, this objective allows for opportunities to gather useful trail data utilizing collaborative and cost-effective approaches to ensure management issues are addressed in a timely manner.

ACTIONS

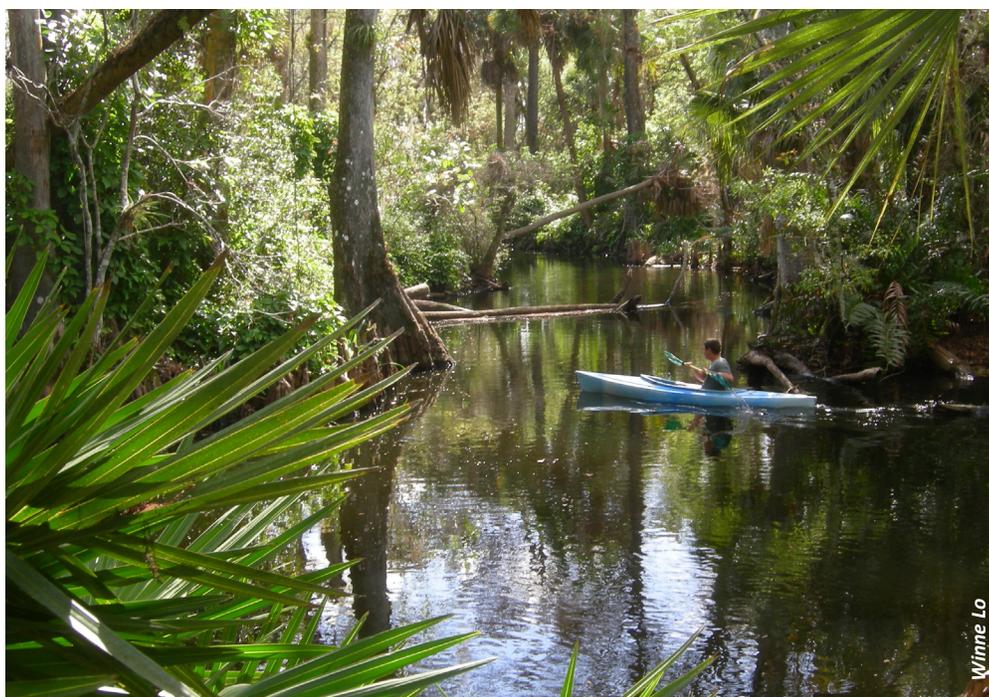
- 3.1.1** Develop and manage spatial databases for trail infrastructure, allowable recreation uses and resources within the Florida Trail corridor
- 3.1.2** Develop protocol for annual trail inspections and reporting
- 3.1.3** Utilize innovative approaches to collect trail data with partners, land managers and the public

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

- FNST Resource Atlas*
- Designated and Managed Uses Recreation Dataset
- Trail Infrastructure Database
- Trail Inspection Protocol*

*Denotes projects detailed in Project Worksheets



MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
FNST Databases	100% Updated annually; FNST Official KMZ files published annually	FNST Staff

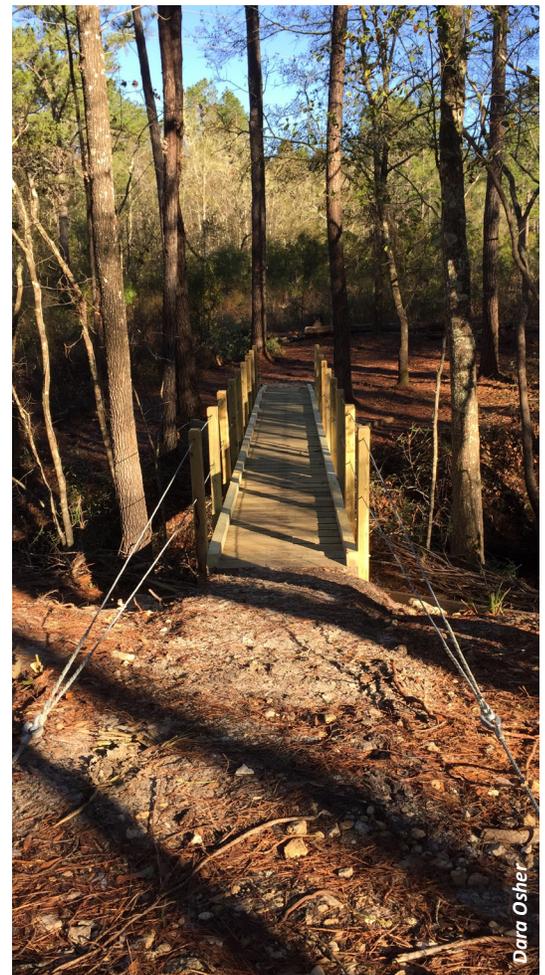
MANAGE.

COLLABORATIVELY AND SUSTAINABLY MANAGE THE TRAIL TREAD AND ASSOCIATED RESOURCES TO STANDARD

Sustainable management of the Florida Trail is of utmost importance to both goals of attracting new users as well as maintaining the Trail for long term enjoyment of future generations. To manage the Trail collaboratively, trail information must be shared and used to develop and coordinate annual work plans. Additionally, trail management will include working with partners to incorporate Florida Trail standards into their respective land management plans.

ACTIONS

- 3.2.1 Ensure trail management data is accessible to land managers for project development and priority setting**
- 3.2.2 Set annual priorities for trail and infrastructure projects based on up-to-date trail information and critical needs**
- 3.2.3 Coordinate and implement annual work plans with partners to ensure a safe and well-managed trail**
- 3.2.4 Work with land management partners to include Florida Trail standards in their management plans**
- 3.2.5 Identify land management partners for long term management of acquired parcels**



MAJOR DELIVERABLES

Current projects under this objective include:

- Cloudvault accessible FNST Databases
- Priority Project Lists*
- Statewide up-to-date MOU
- Stewardship agreements with Land Management partners

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURES

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Project Priority List	Projects completed within 2 years and annually reviewed by FNST Coalition	FNST Program Evaluation
Management Information	100% of applicable databases shared annually with partners	FNST Program Evaluation

MAINTAIN.

MAINTAIN THE FLORIDA TRAIL FOR RECREATION, CONSERVATION AND ENJOYMENT

Trail maintenance is an essential activity of the 2018 Strategic Plan to ensure the recreation, conservation and enjoyment of the Florida Trail. This work will be accomplished through partnership with the primary stewardship partners of the Florida Trail, the FTA, as well as land management partners where applicable. Though 100% of the Florida Trail is currently maintained to standard, some segments may require more maintenance effort due to vegetative growth rates, climate or level of use. Ensuring the Trail is accessible and enjoyable to use is of critical importance for attracting new users and keeping long time recreationists on the trail.



ACTIONS

3.3.1 Maintain the Florida Trail to standard with respect to individual trail segment maintenance needs

3.3.2 Work with land managers to incorporate basic trail and infrastructure maintenance into their programs of work

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

- Trail Maintenance Activities
- Annual Reporting of Maintenance Activities
- Target Maintenance Frequency Analysis *

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Trail Maintenance	100% of Florida Trail maintained to target frequency	FTA, FNST GIS Staff

PROJECT WORKSHEETS

FLORIDA TRAIL RESOURCE ATLAS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, LAND MANAGEMENT PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY21-FY22

BACKGROUND

Several goals outlined by the 2018 Strategic Plan, such as interpretation and promotion, require accurate spatial information on the resources, uses and features along the Florida Trail. The FNST Program will develop spatial databases to inform the management of the Florida Trail. Compilation of these data resources into a Resource Atlas will assist the FNST Program in making timely management decisions, increasing effectiveness of partnerships and developing interpretive resources.

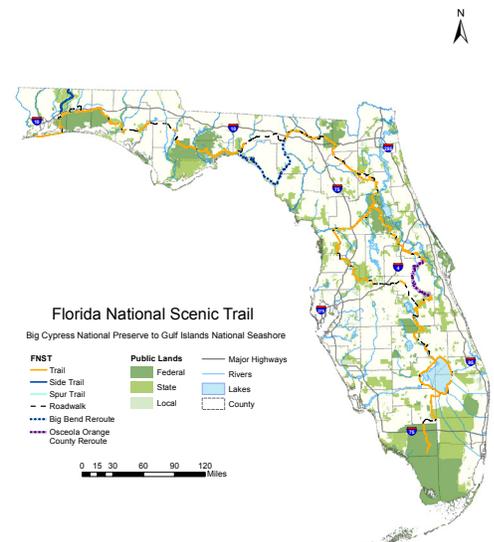
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

From FY18-FY20, the FNST Program will work to develop and regularly update spatial databases that illustrate the natural, scenic, historic and cultural features of the Florida Trail. Additionally, infrastructure, designated and managed recreation uses will comprise the primary data used throughout the atlas. This publication will incorporate data from partner contributions.

This Resource Atlas will create an inclusive guide for use by the Florida Trail’s array of partners and the public. Input from land managing agencies and trail volunteers on trail resources will be verified and incorporated. The Resources Atlas will detail data collection methodologies, data available for public use, and citizen science opportunities and applications.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Creation of spatial datasets from FY18-FY20. Completion by FY21 with annual updates.



TRAIL INSPECTION PROTOCOL

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FTA
CONSULTING PARTNERS	VETS WORK (OR EQUIVALENT), LAND MANAGERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY19-FY22

BACKGROUND

Trail inspection and maintenance occurs on an annual cycle, with every section of the Trail being covered at least once. In recent years, annual trail inspection responsibilities have fallen to FTA staff and volunteers. The ability to track such inspections is limited; therefore, this project aims to develop a trail inspection protocol that will allow the FNST Program and FTA to keep a written record of trail inspections. The goal of this protocol is for the USFS to take a more active role in trail inspections, safety hazard assessments, infrastructure condition and interpretive materials.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The development of the trail inspection protocol will establish who is responsible for on the ground inspection, not simply the agency or land manager, but the individual(s). A schedule of annual inspections for trail segments will allow a consistent monitoring schedule for trail and infrastructure conditions, interpretive materials, trailheads and campsites. The trail inspection write-up will be in the form of a checklist, so no aspect of the Trail is forgotten. Digital and paper copies of the forms can be created to accommodate any difference in available technology of the inspectors. Standards outlined in USFS Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives (1623-3801-MTDC) for inspections will be utilized in development of protocols.

A mechanism for submitting the findings in these trail inspections will be developed so all individuals that participate can contribute to one location. Other options, like Cloudvault, will be assessed for gathering information. Opportunities exist for partners, including the Next Generation Trail Ambassadors program, partnered universities and hiking groups, to assist with trail assessments.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Protocol development will begin in FY19 while technical support and management are anticipated to occur throughout FY19-FY22.

PRIORITY PROJECT LISTS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST COALITION
CONSULTING PARTNERS	LAND MANAGERS, UNIVERSITY PARTNERS, PLANNING COUNCILS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	1 AND 5 YEAR CYCLES

BACKGROUND

The trail tread and infrastructure, maintenance and construction needs for a 1,300 mile trail corridor are significant. While most projects are handled at the ground level, some due to their size, complexity, or role in statewide initiatives require collaboration and sharing of resources to be accomplished.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

To keep with annual actions listed in the Implementation Guide, Priority Project Lists will be maintained to ensure timely



completion and effective coordination of major projects within the Florida Trail corridor.

Project proposal forms will be easily accessible on the FNST website for year-round submission. While immediate safety concerns will be addressed sooner if possible, projects will be reviewed and prioritized at the January FNST Coalition Meeting. Projects will be divided into two lists: Annual Projects, those that can be completed within a year and has available funding, and Priority 1-5 year projects for which funding and resources will be identified in the following year.

Projects have historically focused on physical trail and infrastructure projects. The goals of the

FNST Program have expanded to include an emphasis on outreach and education opportunities, and projects considered for federal funding and cooperative implementation will also expand to include these proposals. Priority Projects will:

- Address an immediate safety concern
- Replace or constructs a trailhead or kiosk
- Provide education and engagement opportunities for new users of the Florida Trail
- Provide trail connectivity and closes gaps in the Trail corridor

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Projects will be reviewed on an annual basis. Projects will be divided into 1 and 5-year cycles.

TARGET MAINTENANCE FREQUENCY ANALYSIS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM, FTA
CONSULTING PARTNERS	LAND MANAGING PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY19

BACKGROUND

Rapid vegetation growth in certain trail segments requires some portions of the Trail to be maintained more frequently than the current rate. Currently, maintenance is tracked through a centralized system utilized by FTA for volunteers to record the location, mileage and number of hours spent maintaining the Trail. This analysis will build upon the work already captured by volunteers and determine locations that require higher frequency of maintenance.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In FY19, the FNST Program will consult with participating land managers and FTA volunteers to document Trail sections which require higher target frequency or maintenance effort. Additional information will be collected either using the current reporting mechanism or a post-maintenance public survey. Once the field season has ended, all data will be

compiled and evaluated in a suitability-like analysis determining target frequency for maintenance of each section of the Trail. Included in the analysis, but not limited to, will be the above collected information, natural community type, trail classes and allowable uses. The results from the analysis will then be used to create a Maintenance Effort Map or similar product that may be used by the FNST Program, FTA and land managing agencies to assist in maintenance plans for the future seasons.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Initial data collection in FY19.
Creation of Maintenance Effort Map
or similar product by FY19.



GOAL 3 SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Manage, monitor and maintain the Florida Trail and its associated infrastructure to ensure a high-quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

Objective 3.1 Monitor- Champion an integrated approach to collecting and sharing trail information that better serves land managers and the public

Action 3.1.1 Develop and manage spatial databases for trail infrastructure, allowable recreation uses and resources within the Florida Trail corridor

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Update trail infrastructure database detailing infrastructure that is managed and maintained by the FNST Program	X	X	X		
B Develop allowable recreation uses dataset	X			X	
C Develop spatial database for scenic, natural, historic and cultural resources. Work with partners to identify relevant interpretive information to include in database	X	X			
D Manage spatial databases to ensure all data is up-to-date and accurate	X	X	X	X	X
E Compile database information to produce FNST Resource Atlas				X	X
3.1.2 Develop protocol for annual trail inspections and reporting					
A Work with partners in trail inspection to identify issues, feasibility and opportunities for reporting	X				
B Develop annual trail inspections and reporting protocol		X			
C Provide technical support and hardware for trail inspections and reporting		X	X	X	X
D Manage annual trail inspections and reporting information through updating spatial databases		X	X	X	X
3.1.3 Utilize innovative approaches to collect trail data with partners, land managers and the public					
A Identify feasible citizen science and other innovative opportunities to engage partners, volunteers and the public in trail data collection			X	X	
B Identify programs, tools and methodologies to collaborate in trail data collection with land management partners		X	X	X	
C Work with partners to implement data collection methods				X	X
D Monitor effectiveness and adapt, where needed			X	X	X
3.2 Manage- Collaboratively and sustainably manage the trail tread and associated resources to standard					
3.2.1 Ensure trail management data is accessible to land managers for project development and priority setting					
A Publish official trail corridor, connectors, trailheads, campsites and allowable uses on USFS website annually		X	X	X	X
B Share all trail management databases with land management partners annually through Pinyon		X	X	X	X
C Share FNST corridor location with state and local permitting agencies including FDEP and FDOT to ensure the FNST Program is notified of potential impacts	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.2 Set annual priorities for trail and infrastructure projects based on up-to-date trail information and critical needs					
A Develop list of priority projects through consultation with trail management data, partners and stakeholders.	X	X	X	X	X
B Identify annual project priority list based on safety concerns, opportunities and infrastructure needs	X	X	X	X	X
C Develop realistic timelines for identified projects based on partner feedback and consultation with permitting agencies, if necessary	X	X			
D Review project priority list with FNST Coalition annually	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.3 Coordinate and implement annual work plans with partners to ensure a safe and well-managed trail					
A Work with FTA Regional Representatives to ensure land managers are informed and engaged in annual maintenance plans	X	X	X	X	X
B Adapt program of work schedule based on land management partner feedback	X	X	X	X	X

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
B Identify annual project priority list based on safety concerns, opportunities and infrastructure needs	X	X	X	X	X
C Develop realistic timelines for identified projects based on partner feedback and consultation with permitting agencies, if necessary	X	X			
D Review project priority list with FNST Coalition annually	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.3 Coordinate and implement annual work plans with partners to ensure a safe and well-managed trail					
A Work with FTA Regional Representatives to ensure land managers are informed and engaged in annual maintenance plans	X	X	X	X	X
B Adapt program of work schedule based on land management partner feedback	X	X	X	X	X
C Work with infrastructure and trail development partners to complete infrastructure projects identified by annual project priority list	X	X	X	X	X
D Develop and implement statewide signage and wayfinding plan			X	X	X
3.2.4 Work with land management partners to include Florida Trail standards in their management plans					
A Develop standard 'FNST Standards Description' to be included in management plan updates	X				
B Develop schedule of management plan updates by trail segment and companion calendar with notifications	X	X			
C Work with land management partners to include standard FNST Standards Description or adapt standard description to be included in management plan for each trail segment	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.5 Identify land management partners for long term management of acquired parcels					
A Identify suitable partners for long term management of parcels acquired by the FNST Program	X	X	X	X	X
B Work with land management partners to develop management actions for acquired parcels	X	X	X	X	X
3.3 Maintain- Maintain the Florida Trail for recreation, conservation and enjoyment					
3.3.1 Maintain the Florida Trail to standard with respect to individual trail segment maintenance needs					
A Identify varying levels of maintenance effort needed by trail segment in conjunction with the FTA		X	X	X	X
B Maintain each trail segment to standard in accordance with necessary level of effort		X	X	X	X
C Report maintenance annually	X	X	X	X	X
3.3.2 Work with land managers to incorporate basic trail and infrastructure maintenance in to their programs of work					
A Identify applicable infrastructure and basic trail maintenance tasks that can be easily incorporated into land manager programs of work	X	X	X	X	X
B Discuss program of work additions with land managers and FTA Regional Representatives	X	X	X	X	X
C Report, monitor progress and adapt, where needed	X	X	X	X	X

CHAPTER 5

MAJOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

The Florida Trail Partnerships Program maintains high performing relationships that proactively contribute to development, maintenance or promotion of the Florida Trail.

LONG TERM OUTCOME

The Florida Trail is supported by a network of land management, conservation and stewardship partners dedicated to the protection of the Florida Trail.



STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage and develop a diverse community of partners in the management, promotion and completion of the Florida Trail.

WHAT IS A PARTNERSHIP?

The Forest Service regularly works in partnership with other entities, including tribes, states, federal agencies, nonprofits, businesses and communities to further the sustainable management of our nation's forests and grasslands. Federal policy defines partnerships as "arrangements that are voluntary, mutually beneficial and entered into for the purpose of mutually agreed upon objectives."

In practice, partnerships expand far beyond formal relationships by building communities around common goals. FNST Program partners, for instance, work together towards the completion, management and promotion of the Florida Trail and fostering a community of stewards for its long-term protection.

While the FNST Program National Forests in Florida are designated administrators of the trail, only 15% of the Trail lies on Forest System lands. Unlike other National Scenic Trails where the majority of their trail corridor lies under federal ownership, only 44% of the Florida Trail is on federal lands and the remainder split between state, local and private partners. The Florida Trail is, quite literally, built on partnerships. Partnerships with land managers are critical for building and managing the trail tread and many of its associated natural, scenic, cultural and historical resources. A variety of partners are ultimately necessary to steward and utilize those resources.

THE PAST FIVE YEARS

The FNST Program worked to expand, strengthen and formalize partnerships along the trail to accomplish the goals and objectives of the 2012 Strategic Plan. A primary achievement of the partnerships program was the development and continuation of the FNST Coalition. The 2012 Strategic Plan outlined a new partnership model for the Florida Trail, transitioning from

WHAT ARE COST-SHARE AGREEMENTS?

Cost-Share Agreements are the most common form of agreement used to share resources when cooperatively implementing projects with the Forest Service. Just like the name implies, project "costs" are shared between partners. This does not mean that both partners are required to contribute cash towards a project. For example, a partner may leverage staff time and equipment, or other in-kind donations, in-lieu of funding. Minimum requirements are:

- Mutually beneficial project
- Both partners contribute
- 80:20 minimum match - FS: Partner

BY 2017...

10%

**OF THE TRAIL
WAS UNDER FOREST
SERVICE MOU**

BY 2022...

100%

**OF THE TRAIL
WILL BE UNDER
AGREEMENT AND
PARTNERSHIPS
PROGRAM
WILL BE HIGH
PERFORMING***
Defined in Appendix VIII

FTA-based certification agreements to USFS standard Memorandums of Understanding (MOU). By the end of 2017, approximately 10% of non-USFS trail mileage was converted to a USFS approved MOU. Academic partnerships provided studies ranging from visitation and marketing to economic valuation studies on the trail. Additionally, the FNST Program developed many innovative new partnerships with private, local, state and federal partners to both manage and develop the Trail.

FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

The FNST Program will work to identify current and future partner capacity to oversee mutually beneficial projects which can be funded through formalized partnerships. Building and strengthening these partnerships through cost-share agreements is an essential element of the goal. The scope of these projects will go beyond the day to day management of trail tread to include completing the trail, managing and protecting the trail corridor, conserving and interpreting the natural, scenic and historic resources along the trail and fostering a diverse community of users and stewards of the Florida Trail.

In addition to broadening the scope of partnerships, the FNST Program will continue to collaborate with the FNST Coalition and FTA to further the goals of the Florida Trail. The FNST Program will seek to identify and overcome barriers to effective partnering by using nontraditional funding sources, providing improved communication and sharing successes to build a community of practice around the trail. It will be through partnerships that the FNST Program will be able to achieve many of the short-term objectives, otherwise infeasible without broad statewide support, for management and promotion of the Florida Trail, including its long-term completion and protection.

SUMMARY OF OBJECTIVES

Since 2012, the Florida Trail Partnership Program has expanded to include an increased number and diversity of partners to meet the complex needs of the Trail and its associated resources. The 2018 Strategic Plan will focus on collaboration, stewardship and developing mutually-beneficial opportunities for trail development.

- **COLLABORATE.** Foster coordination among interests, networks and stakeholders to further the goals of the Florida Trail
- **STEWARD.** Enhance partnerships to share stewardship of the Florida Trail and ensure access for future generations
- **COMPLETE.** Engage partners in the development and protection of the Trail corridor

COLLABORATE.

FOSTER COORDINATION AMONG INTERESTS, NETWORKS AND STAKEHOLDERS TO FURTHER THE GOALS OF THE FLORIDA TRAIL

Continued collaboration with the FNST Coalition is an integral component of maintaining valuable communication with partners, identifying threats and opportunities on the trail and pursuing mutually-beneficial projects to manage and protect the Trail. The FNST Coalition model has been a productive way of engaging partners in the management of the Florida Trail, and semi-annual meetings will continue through the lifespan of the 2018 Strategic Plan. Additionally, the FNST Program will pursue new, and work with existing, partners in academia, volunteer management and recreation to accomplish the expanded goals of the strategic plan. From economic and ecological value studies to diversifying users, partnerships are a key tool for meeting the objectives of the plan. Collaboration is only effective when both parties are able to communicate relevant and timely information. The FNST Program has identified improved communication channels as a programmatic need in order to stay current with regional happenings, management changes and threats to the trail.

ACTIONS

- 4.1.1 Continue to work with the FNST Coalition to proactively address the largest challenges facing the Florida Trail**
- 4.1.2 Build and strengthen relationships with academic, land management, volunteer and recreation partners**
- 4.1.3 Improve and overcome real and perceived barriers to effective partnering to further the goals of the Florida Trail**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

- Semi-annual FNST Coalition Meetings*
- Academic Partnerships*
- Contribution to Partner Publications

*Denotes projects detailed in Project Worksheets



MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Partner Satisfaction	100% Partners are 'highly satisfied' with information received by FNST Program and regional information provided to FNST Program	Partner Survey

STEWARD.

ENHANCE PARTNERSHIPS TO SHARE STEWARDSHIP OF THE FLORIDA TRAIL AND ENSURE ACCESS FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

Continued collaboration with the FNST Coalition is an integral component of maintaining valuable communication with partners, identifying threats and opportunities on the trail and pursuing mutually-beneficial projects to manage and protect the Trail. The FNST Coalition model has been a productive way of engaging partners in the management of the Florida Trail, and semi-annual meetings will continue through the lifespan of the 2018 Strategic Plan.

Additionally, the FNST Program will pursue new, and work with existing, partners in academia, volunteer management and recreation to accomplish the expanded goals of the strategic plan. From economic and ecological value studies to diversifying users, partnerships are a key tool for meeting the objectives of the plan. Collaboration is only effective when both parties are able to communicate relevant and timely information. The FNST Program has identified improved communication channels as a programmatic need in order to stay current with regional happenings, management changes and threats to the trail.



ACTIONS

- 4.2.1 Continue to strengthen relationship with, and invest in building organizational capacity of, the FTA to assist with protection, promotion and completion of the trail**
- 4.2.2 Build relationships with other trail volunteer and recreation groups around the state, with focus on new and diverse user groups**
- 4.2.3 Engage the next generation of conservation stewards through youth, veteran and academic programs**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

- FTA Annual Work Plan
- Stewardship Partner Development*
- Youth, Veteran and Academic Corps Programs*

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Volunteer Hours	Increase hours by 50% over 5 years	Volunteer Hour Reporting

COMPLETE.

ENGAGE PARTNERS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION OF THE TRAIL CORRIDOR

Partnerships are an essential component of completing the Trail, enhancing the ability of the FNST Program to identify critical properties, meet with landowners, sign access agreements or acquire lands to protect the Trail corridor. Limited state and federal budgets for land acquisition have made mutually-beneficial land acquisition a necessity. Under this objective, the FNST Program will coordinate with major land managing partners to identify and pursue acquisition opportunities along critical gaps of the trail. Additionally, in areas where the Florida Trail is well established, the FNST Program will work with partners to develop measures to assist in protecting the corridor for decades to come.

ACTIONS

- 4.3.1 Maintain and establish agreements with land management partners based on individualized partner capacity and trail needs**
- 4.3.2 Engage in mutually-beneficial land acquisition for the purposes of completing and protecting the trail corridor**
- 4.3.3 Enhance partnerships and build capacity to further long-term protection of the trail.**

MAJOR DELIVERABLES

The current planned deliverables include:

- MOUs and Certification Agreements
- State and Federal Land Acquisition Proposals
- Land Trust Partnership Development



Rachel Skeen

MINOR PERFORMANCE MEASURE

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Underlying land agreements	100% of existing FNST is under FS MOU or other official agreement	FNST Program Evaluation

PROJECT WORKSHEETS

FNST COALITION MEETINGS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM MANAGER
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST COALITION
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Coalition was formed in 2010 to assist in the consistent management and long-term protection of the Florida Trail. The Coalition is composed primarily of land management, academic, non-profit and other government agency partners that have a stake in the future of the Florida Trail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Coalition meets as a collaborative body to inform better decisions and attract greater resources to advance, protect and connect people to the Florida Trail. The FNST Coalition will ensure accountability to, and implementation of, the 2018 Strategic Plan; oversee adherence to trail standards; attract financial and human resources to the Trail and foster coordination within the State. The expertise and proactive participation of the FNST Coalition is critical to tackling the largest challenges on the trail such as increasing diversity of users, closing the trail gaps and ensuring consistent management along the trail.

To best support the 2018 Strategic Plan the FNST Coalition will:

- Support the Florida Trail through identifying, attracting and communicating opportunities for trail development, protection and promotion
- Facilitate annual Request for Projects and prioritize projects for federal funding
- Recruit new member(s) with expertise in conservation, land acquisition and community engagement

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Semiannual Meetings. January meeting will include Strategic Plan annual accomplishment report; working meeting in June/July. Members will be surveyed every two years to monitor effectiveness.

ACADEMIC PARTNERSHIPS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FSU, UF, FAMU, UWF
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Program has engaged a variety of academic institutions to support graduate level interns, academic studio projects and independent research on the Florida Trail. Working with universities has provided the FNST program with new information about the Trail and its resources, while also engaging the next generation of conservation stewards and natural resource professionals in field work. For example, the University of Florida has completed visitor use studies since 2002, helping to identify patterns in trail usage and demographic information. In 2016 and 2017, graduate students from Florida State University’s Department of Urban and Regional Planning completed landscape scale routing studies for critical gaps in the trail and place-based economic impact studies.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Several key goals of the FNST Strategic Plan are well suited for engaging the next generation of conservation stewards through academic programs. The FNST Program will develop annual work plans with a variety of student programs geared towards conservation education through the Junior Explorer program, diversifying the user base of the Florida Trail through Next Generation Trail Ambassadors and completing critical project work, such as closing gaps and interpreting resources. Over the 5-year timeline, the FNST Program will engage two new academic institutions in critical projects on the Florida Trail.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

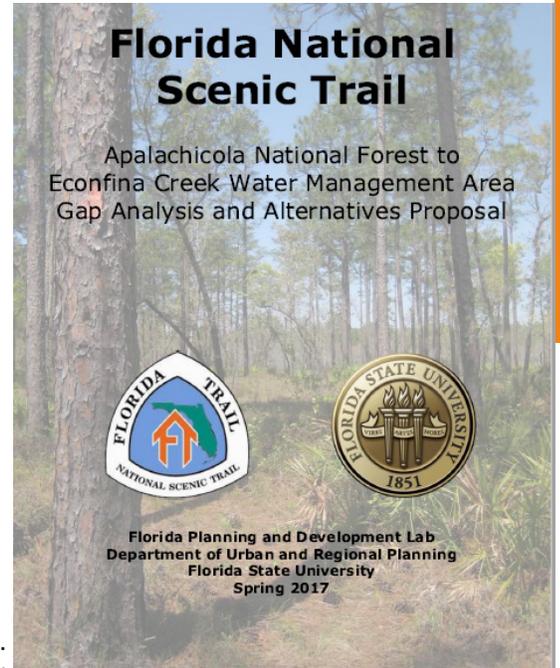
Programs will be evaluated on an annual basis.

YOUTH AND VETERAN CORPS PROGRAMS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, VETSWORK, AMERICORPS, 21ST CENTURY CONSERVATION CORPS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Program has historically engaged youth, veteran and conservation corps programs in the construction and maintenance of the trail and related infrastructure. These programs play a key role in keeping trails maintained and accessible across the country, while also providing work experience in the natural resource field and fostering future stewards of the nation’s public land legacy.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Program will build upon existing youth and veteran corps programs by providing access to federally supported corps programs to our land management partners, increasing our capacity to host individuals statewide. In addition to hosting trail crew programs to support trail and infrastructure maintenance and construction, individual development positions such as Resource Assistants and VetsWork Interns will focus on key resource and community engagement projects. Youth and veteran corps programs will:

- Provide members the opportunity to work and learn alongside natural resource employees in a wide range of natural and environmental projects;
- Assists youth to develop a lifelong ethic of environmental stewardship and civic responsibility through team-based work projects and individual placements;
- Work to instill young adult awareness and appreciation of the public lands legacy and of the nation’s natural, cultural and historic resources;
- Utilize existing funding and employment channels such as Pathways, Americorps scholarships and 21st Century Conservation Service Corps programs.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Program applications will be submitted annually through FY22.

STEWARDSHIP PARTNER DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, LAND MANAGEMENT PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

The Florida Trail exists today because of the tireless efforts of the FTA volunteers who advocated for the Trail’s National Scenic Trail designation in 1983 and continue to build and maintain the trail tread to this day. The Florida Trail, like every National Scenic Trail, thrives as a result of a dedicated community of volunteer stewards who advocate for public land trails and their protection, spend thousands of hours building and maintaining trail tread and recreation resources and provide education and outreach services to trail users.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Program will work to build relationships with volunteer and recreation groups around the state with an emphasis on new and diverse users. This will entail seeking more racially and ethnically diverse user groups as well as organizations with differing recreation interests such as wildlife or cultural history. The FNST Program will work with the FTA and land management partners to identify and implement new volunteer opportunities on the trail.

New partnerships will expand beyond traditional trail maintenance activities to include:

- Engaging new outdoor recreationists and providing workshops and activities that make nature based recreation more accessible
- Utilizing citizen scientists to provide interpretation of the unique natural, scenic and cultural resources of the Florida Trail
- Develop advocates for land conservation and protection of the FNST corridor

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Identification of compatible organizations in FY19 and FY21. Development of opportunities and partnerships from FY20-FY22.

FLORIDA TRAIL CERTIFICATION PROGRAM

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FNST LAND MANAGERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

According to the FNST Comprehensive Plan of 1986, segments of trail must go through a certification process to become part of the Florida National Scenic Trail. For portions of the Florida Trail outside of the boundary of the National Forests in Florida, a variety of tools are used to certify trail including memorandums of understanding (MOU), real estate licenses and conservation easements.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

In order to ensure that the entire length of the Florida Trail is certified and protected under the National Trail System Act, MOU's need to be updated on a 5-year cycle and licenses and easements monitored annually for compliance to their respective terms and conditions. Of the 28 agencies under MOU, 19 currently need to be updated.

As new portions of the Trail are prepared for certification, MOU's, real estate licenses and conservation easements will be created, where appropriate. Applications for certification as part of the Florida Greenways and Trails System will also be provided for private landowners seeking assistance with liability protection for allowing public access. A minimum of four certifying agreements will be updated each year.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Starting in FY18 and continuing through FY22, a minimum of four (4) certifying MOU's will be updated each year and new agreements will be processed as they are identified.

STATE AND FEDERAL LAND ACQUISITION PROPOSALS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FEDERAL AND STATE LAND MANAGERS, CONSERVATION TRUSTS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY19-FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Program has historically had a very successful land acquisition program, especially at the height of Federal Land and Water Conservation and Forever Florida Funding in the early 2000's. During this time the USFS National Forests in Florida acquired 4,672 acres for the Florida Trail with nearly \$18 million in federal and state funding. While every viable public land routing opportunity within the Florida Trail corridor has been maximized, the majority of the remaining gaps lie under private ownership. Therefore, acquisition, in addition to easements and access agreements, will be critical tools in completing the Florida Trail.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The USFS National Forests in Florida will work closely with fellow land management agencies and conservation trusts

to develop mutually beneficial land acquisition proposals for submission to federal and state land acquisition funding programs. The FNST Program will research existing funding opportunities and work to develop templates to decrease effort needed for applications, with the goal of submitting two applications for high-priority trail areas annually. Current funding opportunities include:

- Forever Florida and Land and Water Conservation Funding
- Federal Highway Administration
- Private organizations

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Identification of additional funding opportunities will occur in FY19. Joint applications will be pursued from FY20-FY22.

STEWARDSHIP AGREEMENTS

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	FTA, LAND MANAGEMENT PARTNERS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18- FY22

BACKGROUND

The FNST Program utilizes a variety of tools to develop and protect the trail corridor including primarily partnership agreements, real estate licenses, and conservation easements but also willing-seller land acquisition when public or cooperative private land options are unavailable. The U.S. Forest Service acquired land to close critical gaps within the trail corridor when other tools for trail acquisition were unavailable. The majority of these parcels are not contiguously located to the Apalachicola, Osceola and Ocala National Forests and as a result, are difficult to manage utilizing existing Forest staff and resources.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Many of the FNST owned parcels are located near state-owned conservation lands. The FNST Program will work closely with State land management agencies to identify current FNST parcels in proximity to their lands with mutually beneficial habitat management and watershed restoration goals. Utilizing the Good Neighbor Authority and traditional Cost Share agreement tools partners will be able to cooperatively manage the lands associated with the Florida National Scenic Trail, and protect the natural, scenic, historic and cultural resources of the trail corridor.

Promoting shared stewardship through increasing partnerships and volunteerism is one Forest Service Chief Tooke’s Five National Leadership goals, and a key component of the FNST Strategic Plan. The Good Neighbor Authority will be a critical tool in achieving this goal as it allows for the Forest Service to enter in to cooperative agreements or contracts with States to allow state partners to perform forest management and watershed restoration services on National Forest System lands.

Future land acquisitions for the FNST will be closely tied to long term stewardship and management capacity. Fostering capacity for the current inventory of FNST parcels now is necessary both for the proper management of those resources, but also to serve as a building block for developing the partnership capacity to complete the trail, and manage its associated resources for current and future generations.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Identification of FNST parcels with partner stewardship potential in FY19 and FY21. Development of partnership agreements and cooperatively developed stewardship goals from FY20-FY22.

LAND TRUST PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT LEAD	FNST PROGRAM
CONSULTING PARTNERS	THE NATURE CONSERVANCY, TRUST FOR PUBLIC LAND, RAILS TO TRAILS CONSERVANCY, FLORIDA CONSERVATION TRUST, OTHER LAND TRUSTS
IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE	FY18-FY22

BACKGROUND

Land and conservation trusts work closely with land managers to protect and conserve natural resources and maintain functioning ecosystems and iconic landscapes for current and future generations. The FNST Program identified land trust partnerships as a need during the 2012 Strategic Plan but did not formalize any relationships during the five-year period.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FNST Program will begin to build partnerships with land and conservation trusts active in the protection of Florida’s natural resources and identify key areas of shared interest. Through these partnerships the FNST Program seeks to foster advocates for the protection of the Florida Trail statewide, while also developing mutually beneficial land acquisition projects that further the completion of the Florida Trail and the protection of its key natural, scenic, cultural and historical resources. Projects may include:

- Highlighting the Florida Trail as a conservation corridor in partner publications
- Including the Florida Trail in conservation organizations long term acquisition priorities
- Supporting identification of willing sellers for key land acquisitions

A new conservation and land trust partner will be engaged on an annual basis so that at least five (5) new partners are engaged on the Florida Trail during the implementation of this plan.

IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

Identify potential partnerships in FY19. Engage land trust partners beginning in FY20-FY22.



GOAL 4 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage and develop a diverse community of partners in the management, promotion and completion of the Florida Trail.

Objective 4.1 Collaborate- Foster coordination among interests, networks and stakeholders to further the goals of the Florida Trail

Action 4.1.1 Continue to work with the FNST Coalition to proactively address the largest challenges facing the Florida Trail

<i>Task Description</i>	<i>FY18</i>	<i>FY19</i>	<i>FY20</i>	<i>FY21</i>	<i>FY22</i>
A Conduct semi-annual meetings to address trailwide issues and foster support for projects and initiatives	X	X	X	X	X
B Report annual progress on 5 Year Strategic Plan to FNST Coalition at first annual meeting	X	X	X	X	X
C Survey FNST Coalition members to monitor effectiveness of meetings and FNST Program initiatives, make adjustments where	X		X		X
4.1.2 Build and strengthen relationships with academic, land management, volunteer and recreation partners					
A Identify and regularly update points of contact for each trail segment or management unit	X	X	X	X	X
B Contact all land managers every two years to identify desired management actions, threats to the trail and trail opportunities		X		X	
C Build new and maintain existing relationships with academic partners included but not limited to state colleges and universities, local school districts and environmental education organizations	X	X	X	X	X
D Identify mutually-beneficial projects and activities to be implemented through cost-share and formal agreements			X	X	X
4.1.3 Improve and overcome real and perceived barriers to effective partnering to further the goals of the Florida Trail					
A Contribute to FTA Footprint and other partner publications to update volunteers on major initiatives and challenges	X	X	X	X	X
B Develop communication channels to identify regional happenings and connect regional land managers		X	X	X	X
C Identify and implement actions to improve partnership model based on partner feedback		X	X	X	X
D Measure and report partnership impacts such as resources leveraged under agreements	X	X	X	X	X
4.2 Steward- Enhance partnerships to share stewardship of the Florida Trail and ensure access for future generations					
4.2.1 Continue to strengthen relationship with, and invest in building organizational capacity of, the FTA to assist with protection, promotion and completion of the trail					
A Continue weekly Trail Ops calls with FTA and FNST Program Staff to identify and address challenges and opportunities on the trail	X	X	X	X	X
B Collaboratively develop and assist in implementation of FTA Annual Program of Work	X	X	X	X	X

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
C Aid the FTA Staff and Board in building organizational capacity to assist in promotion efforts	X	X	X	X	X
D Aid the FTA Staff and Board in building organizational capacity to assist in efforts to complete and protect the trail	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.2 Build relationships with other trail volunteer and recreation groups around the state, with focus on new and diverse user groups					
A Identify Florida-based trail volunteer and recreational groups with a focus on new and diverse user groups		X		X	
B Work with FTA and land management partners to build relationships with these groups to promote recreation, education and outreach opportunities on the trail			X	X	X
C Work with FTA and land management partners to identify and implement new volunteer opportunities on the trail			X	X	X
4.2.3 Engage the next generation of conservation stewards through youth, veteran and academic programs					
A Identify applicable existing youth, veteran and academic programs that could benefit the FNST Program		X		X	
B Pursue opportunities to engage youth, veterans and students with these programs, where feasible		X	X	X	X
C Identify and communicate benefits of 21st Century Job Corps and equivalent programs to assist in professional development of youth, veterans and students	X	X	X	X	X
4.3 Complete- Engage partners in the development and protection of the Trail corridor					
4.3.1 Maintain and establish agreements with land management partners based on individualized partner capacity and trail needs					
A Maintain and update existing agreements between USFS and land management partners	X	X	X	X	X
B Pursue new agreements between USFS and landowners based on individual partner capacity and trail needs	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify and implement opportunities to improve and streamline agreements model with partners	X		X		X
4.3.2 Engage in mutually-beneficial land acquisition for the purposes of completing and protecting the trail corridor					
A Identify mutually-beneficial land acquisition opportunities through regional partner communication and Land Acquisition Atlas research		X	X	X	X
B Pursue joint applications for land acquisition grants with land management partners		X	X	X	X
C Assist local, regional and state agencies by providing supporting documentation for land acquisition grants which connect to and support the Florida Trail corridor	X	X	X	X	X
4.3.3 Enhance partnerships and build capacity to further long-term protection of the trail					
A Identify new partnerships with local, state and federal agencies to assist in protection of the Florida Trail corridor		X	X	X	X
B Identify partnerships with land trusts and NGOs to assist in protection of the Florida Trail corridor and associated resources		X	X	X	X
C Identify partnership actions which could further long term protection of the Trail			X	X	X
D Build and enhance partnerships with organizations and			X	X	X



TECHNICAL APPENDICES



Chris A. Johns

APPENDIX I. CONSISTENCY WITH APPLICABLE FEDERAL AND STATE STRATEGIC PLANS

RELATIONSHIP TO USDA STRATEGIC PLANS

The FNST Program and Strategic Planning Advisory Team consulted applicable federal and state strategic plans during the development of the 2018 Strategic Plan. The 2018 Strategic Plan and this document both support and elaborate on higher-level federal goals outlined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and U.S. Forest Service (USFS). This appendix details the elements of the plan that are concurrent with the following federal and state agency strategic plan goals and objectives.

Consulted federal plans include:

- USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan: FY 2015-FY 2020
- USDA Forest Service National Strategy for a Sustainable Trails System
- USDA Strategic Plan FY2014-FY2018

USDA STRATEGIC PLAN FY 2014 - 2018

The FNST Program works to protect land through conversion to conservation easements, agreements and fee-simple acquisitions, directly furthering Objective 2.1 of the USDA Strategic Plan which seeks to improve forest and grassland health through natural resource management. Indirectly, this plan also addresses the promotion of healthy diet and physical activity behaviors (Objective 4.2) through promoting rural economic development opportunities throughout the state (Goal 1). Please refer to the USDA Strategic Plan [here](#).

USDA FOREST SERVICE STRATEGIC PLAN: FY 2015-2020

As the FNST Program is administered by the USDA USFS, the 2018 Strategic Plan contributes both directly and indirectly to several of the strategic goals outlined in the most recent USFS strategic plan. The 2018 Strategic Plan contributes to the following objectives: C, Conserve open space; E, Strengthen communities; F, Connect people to the outdoors; and G, Advance Knowledge. The areas where the FNST Program contributes to and elaborates upon the USFS Strategic Plan are providing opportunities for citizens to connect to their natural and cultural heritage as well as open space conservation. Please refer to the USDA Forest Service Strategic Plan [here](#).

USDA FOREST SERVICE NATIONAL STRATEGY FOR A SUSTAINABLE TRAILS SYSTEM (NSSTS)

The 2018 Strategic Plan and Implementation Guide most closely follows the goals and objectives outlined by the 2016 National Strategy for a Sustainable Trails System (NSSTS). The strategy aims to increase stewardship resources, foster leadership intent and manage the trails system in a sustainable manner to ensure a lasting trails legacy for

generations to come. Though the entirety of the 2018 Strategic Plan is in line with the NSSTS, there are several key areas where the FNST Program will be working to achieve national goals. Please refer to the 2016 NSSTS [here](#).

- **Relevancy-** Connect with diverse communities and trail users. One of the primary goals of the 2018 FNST Strategic Plan is to promote connections between the public and the resources on the Florida Trail. In order for the Florida Trail to be stewarded by generations to come, the FNST Program will work to ensure that the voices for the trail reflect the changing demographics of the nation. Through engaging new and diverse user groups, as well as targeting investments to increase trail opportunities near urban centers, the Florida Trail will work to attract a more representative trail audience. Additionally, the FNST Program will continually identify the economic benefits of the Florida Trail and expand the use of job corps programs to attract youth, veterans and students to public service in outdoor recreation.
- **Sustainable Systems-** Collaboratively create and achieve a common vision. The FNST Program will work to implement 10 Year Stewardship Plans defined by the USFS with assistance from partners and volunteers. The collaborative management of the Florida Trail between land management partners, the FTA and the USFS is currently an exemplary model for shared stewardship in management of a federal recreation resource.
- Additionally, the 2018 Strategic Plan directly addresses the following goals:
 - **Information-** Provide readily available, up-to-date and credible trail information
 - **Leader intent-** Cultivate leadership desire for and commitment to a sustainable trail system
 - **Agency Process and Culture-** Maximize opportunities for effective partnering and trail stewardship

RELATIONSHIP TO STATE STRATEGIC PLANS

In addition to consistency with federal plans, the 2018 Strategic Plan supports major partners in their strategic goals and objectives throughout the state. This includes the following plans:

FLORIDA FOREST SERVICE

The 2018 Strategic Plan aligns with the several objectives and strategies the Florida Forest Service identified in Forest Resources — 2010 Florida’s Statewide Strategies. Issue 2: Forest Fragmentation- Objectives 4.1 and 4.2 seek to reduce forest fragmentation through addressing incompatible utility placement and land use and targeted acquisition. Additionally, Issue 4: Meeting the Challenges of Climate Change- The strategies under Objective 2.1 advocate for protection and conservation of forested lands through conservation easements and other acquisition measures. Efforts of the FNST Program to Complete the Trail through targeted land acquisition to create a continuous and protected corridor assist in prevention of forest fragmentation. Furthermore, actions of complete the trail will address incompatible uses such as energy corridors and nearby land uses which threaten forest health.

FLORIDA FISH AND WILDLIFE CONSERVATION COMMISSION (FFWCC)

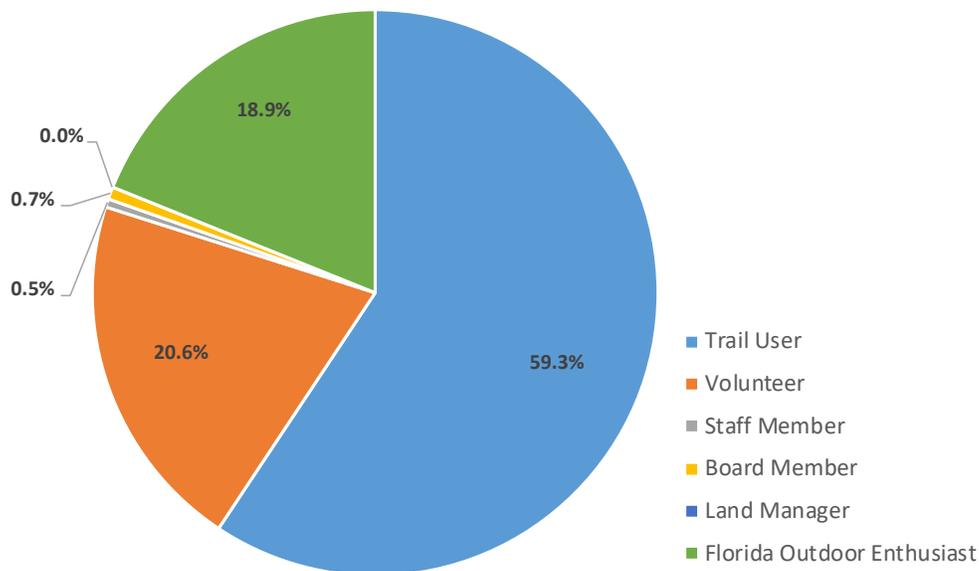
The FFWCC Agency Strategic Plan 2014-2019 outlines themes, goals and strategies which address the multifaceted reach of the agency. The FNST Program of Work and Strategic Plan align with several goals in Theme 2, Interactions with Fish and Wildlife, Including Fishing, Hunting, Boating and Wildlife Viewing, including promoting and enhancing outdoor experiences and developing wildlife-viewing opportunities on public lands. The strategies outlined in Promote Connections and Sustainable Management address the desire to connect future generations to public lands, natural resources in a manner which emphasizes sustainability.

APPENDIX II. STRATEGIC CONSULTATIONS

The FNST Program regularly consults and meets with stakeholders associated with the Florida Trail. Although these consultations are conducted for many purposes, they affect the development of our strategic plan goals, objectives, strategies and outcomes. This strategic plan was also developed in accordance with guidance provided by USDA. A summary of the partner and stakeholder feedback for the plan is provided below.

STAKEHOLDER FEEDBACK

FIGURE II.1. Respondent Relationship with the Florida Trail



The FTA developed a survey to gather stakeholder feedback on strategic plan initiatives, program of work and vision for the Florida Trail in the next five years and beyond. The survey was advertised in several locations online and was available for 30 days starting October 1, 2017. In total, there were 438 responses.

The survey was primarily completed by people who identified themselves as trail users (59%), volunteers (20.6%) and Florida outdoor enthusiasts (18.9%) (Figure II.1). Respondents had been recreationally using the trail ranging from less than one year to over ten years, with the most respondents using the trail for over ten years (29%) (Figure II.2). The majority of respondents were not volunteers (53%) but for those that were volunteers, there was similar representation for volunteers for all provided time periods (Figure II.3).

FIGURE II.2. Respondent Number of Years Volunteering on the Florida Trail

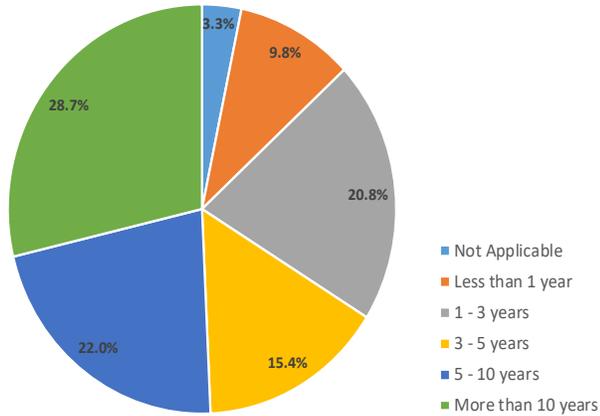
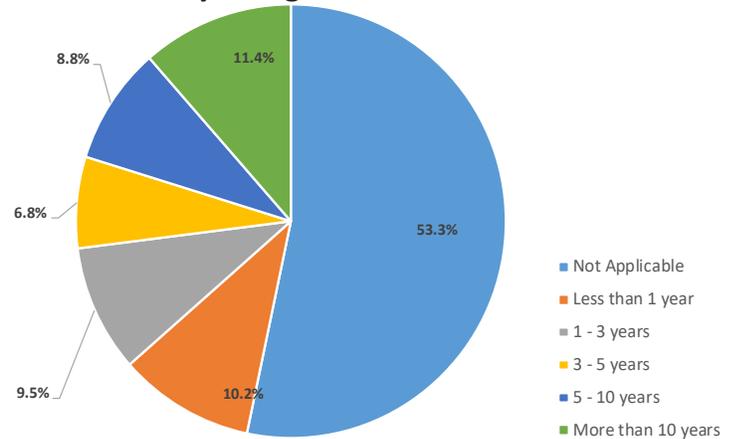


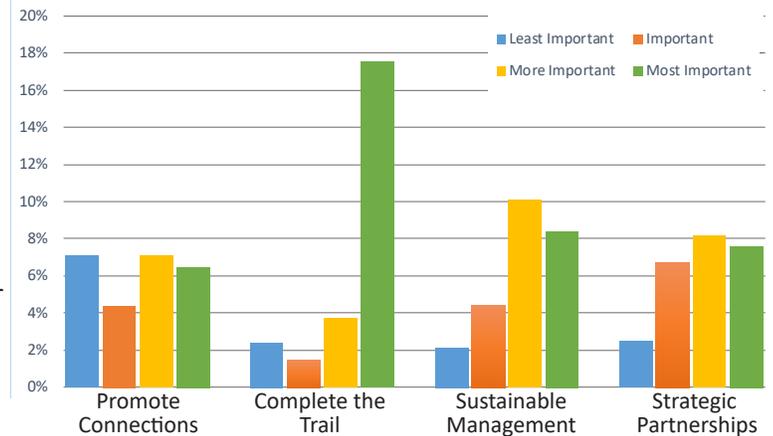
FIGURE II.3. Respondent Number of Years Recreationally Using the Florida Trail



STRATEGIC GOAL LEVEL OF IMPORTANCE

Survey respondents overwhelmingly ranked Complete the Trail as the most important goal for the 2018 Strategic Plan. The remaining goals were ranked in order of importance as follows: Sustainable Management, Strategic Partnership and Promote Connections (Figure II.4). This ranking is aligned with the views of respondents on the greatest challenges for the Florida Trail in the next five years.

FIGURE II.4. Respondent Ranked Order for Level of Importance by Goal



CHALLENGES TO THE FLORIDA TRAIL

In total 56% of survey respondents thought the greatest challenge to the trail involved issues discussed within the Complete the Trail goal and program of work (Figure II.5). 25% of the survey respondents listed completion of the trail corridor as their largest concern with rapid urbanization and private development (15%), elimination of roadwalks (9%) and land acquisition (7%) also listed as concerns. Sustainable Management of the trail including the year-round maintenance (12%), preserving access to the trail (3%) and limiting the allowable recreation uses of the trail (2%) was the second greatest challenge according to survey respondents. Promotion of the trail and organizational issues, such as aging volunteer population and recruitment, were each seen as the largest challenges for 7% of respondents.

When asked about longer term challenges facing the trail, the issues respondents were most concerned about shifted and several new issues arose. The greatest concern was urban development and shifting land uses to encroach on the Florida Trail (17%) (Figure II.6). Other shifts in the next ten years include the greater importance of promotion of the trail (6%) and specifically inclusion of future generations (4%) as the trail comes closer to completion. Furthermore, new challenges such as long-term protection of the trail corridor (6%) and climate change and sea level rise (2%) were seen as increasing threats to the trail. Overall, survey respondents felt that completion of the trail was the most important issue for the next five years with concern shifting towards protection, encroachment and development, and promotion of the trail in the next ten years.

FIGURE II.5. Response Frequency for Perceived Greatest Challenges to the Trail in the Upcoming 5 Years

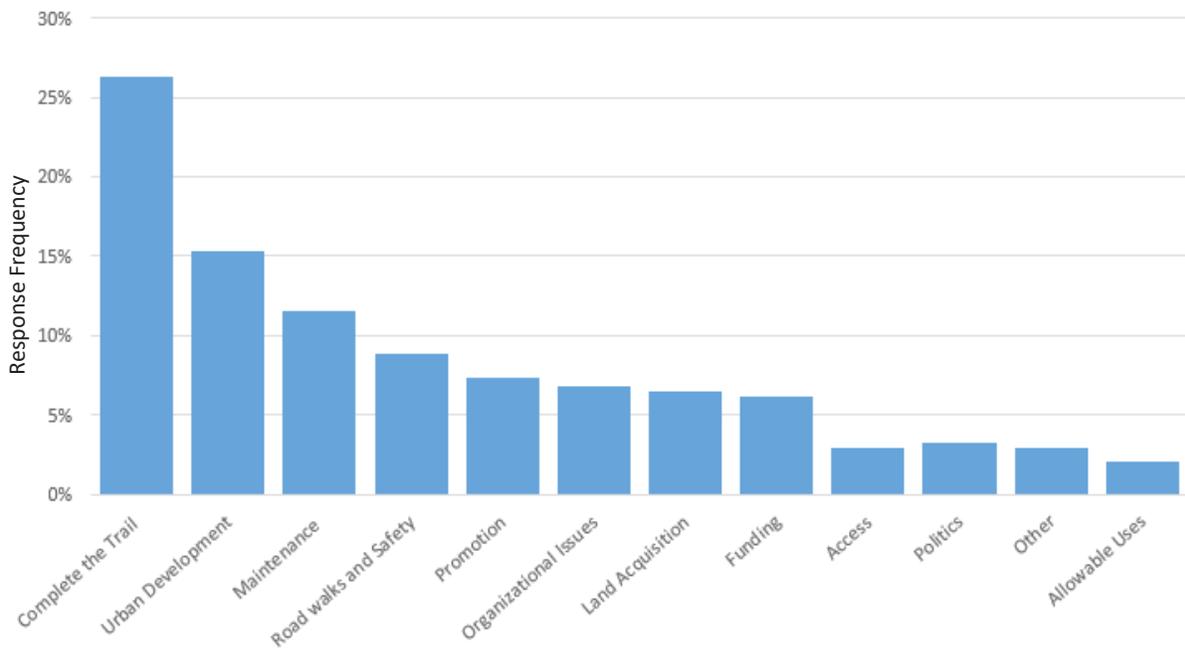
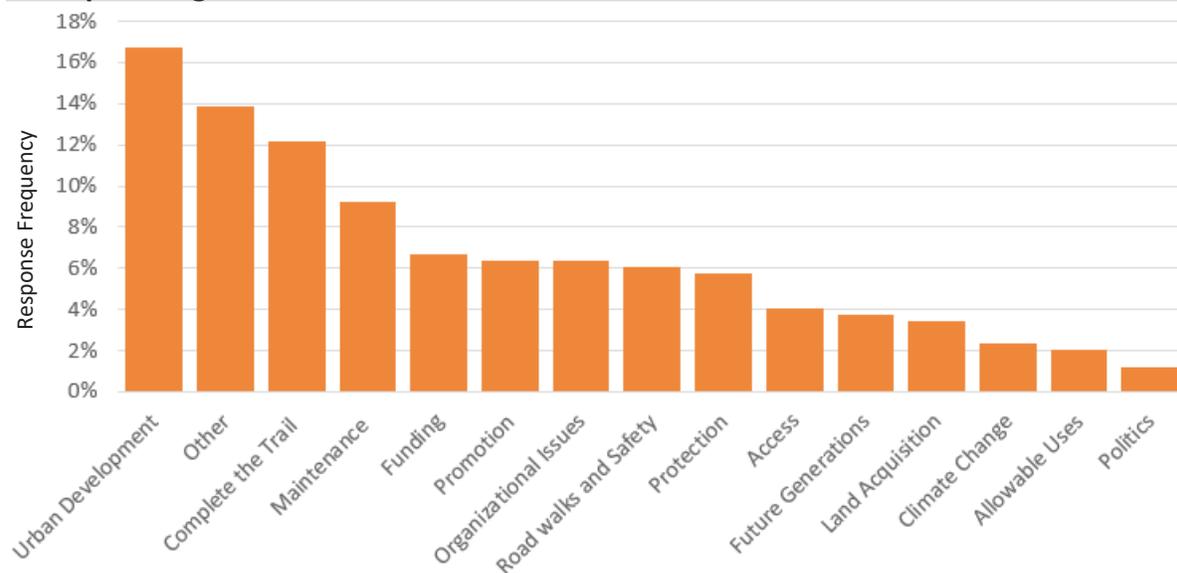


FIGURE II.6. Response Frequency for Perceived Greatest Challenges to the Trail in the Upcoming 10 Years



TRAIL ADMINISTRATION AND PROGRAM OF WORK

When asked what survey respondents would like to see the trail administrators do to address the aforementioned challenges, the majority felt that working towards completion of the trail through land acquisition, partnerships and increased funding would be the greatest benefit (29%). However, this was closely followed by the need to promote awareness of the trail and educate citizens about the trail (20%). Respondents also wanted to see trail administrators take actions to protect the trail corridor and associated resources through advocacy for conservation and changes in land use policy (11%). The majority of suggested ideas that are allowable under the program of work are currently addressed within the Implementation Guide. In total, the FNST Program addressed 78% of program of work requests identified through the survey and distributed site specific projects to applicable partners to develop project requests. For the many suggested actions which were not allowable, including lobbying for additional financial support and reducing development impacts on public lands and natural areas, the FTA may work to address these with member and partner organization support.

APPENDIX III. IMPLEMENTATION TIMELINE

GOAL 1 PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

Connect citizens with the natural and cultural heritage of Florida through increasing the awareness, use and protection of the Florida Trail.

Objective 1.1 Promote- Connect people to the Florida Trail through coordinated promotion efforts

Action 1.1.1 Develop and implement a trail-wide public relations plan to promote connections to the trail

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Survey key partners and stakeholders regarding promotion needs, desires and opportunities	X				
B Contact R8 USFS Office of Communications to identify existing resources and information channels	X				
C Identify target audiences for Trail promotion efforts	X				
D Develop Public Relations Plan	X	X			
E Implement Plan, monitor and update, where necessary		X	X	X	X
1.1.2 Create informational products using a variety of platforms					
A Identify products to develop utilizing Public Relations Plan guidance		X	X	X	X
B Identify correct platforms for product development	X		X		X
C Develop informational products for identified platforms	X	X	X	X	X
D Develop template products to assist partner promotion efforts of Trail		X	X	X	X
1.1.3 Distribute and improve access to trail promotion, education and interpretation materials					
A Identify barriers to Florida Trail information sharing	X	X			
B Identify feasible methods of distribution with FTA and FNST Partners	X		X		X
C Identify partners to assist in distribution of promotion, education and interpretation materials	X	X	X	X	X
D Distribute print products based on Public Relations Plan and partner identified opportunities		X	X	X	X
E Publish online materials and implement opportunities to streamline distribution	X	X	X	X	X
1.2 Engage- Cultivate community and cultural relevance through engaging new and non-traditional trail users					
1.2.1 Engage non-traditional users to identify and develop trail opportunities that are accessible and relevant to their interests					
A Identify organizations and communities in outdoor recreation that do not currently have a relationship with the FNST Program or FNST Program partners	X	X			
B Contact organization, communities and leaders to build relationships	X	X	X		
C Develop Florida Trail Next Generation Ambassadors Program to identify trail opportunities for non-traditional users		X	X		
D Work with Florida Trail Ambassadors and non-traditional user organizations to support and promote relevant recreation opportunities			X	X	X
E Develop and execute Roundtable on Diversity event or similar project to engage non-traditional users	X	X			
1.2.2 Incorporate user feedback to prioritize investments that connect new and diverse user groups to the trail					
A Gather user feedback through annual surveys, partner communication and Trail Ambassadors program		X	X	X	
B Develop projects and trail investments based on feedback and industry best practices			X	X	X
C Implement projects and trail investments with focus on high-use or high-quality destinations				X	X
1.2.3 Identify and implement opportunities to build a diverse community of Florida Trail recreationists and volunteers					

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Identify Florida outdoor recreation focused communities, both online and in-person	X		X		X
B Identify opportunities to engage these communities in recreation and volunteer opportunities	X		X		X
C Implement community-building opportunities utilizing social media, outreach events and programming		X	X	X	X
1.2.4 Enhance the Florida Trail Gateway Communities program to promote rural economic development opportunities					
A Define Gateway Communities model with respect to OGT Trail Towns initiative	X				
B Identify current and targeted Florida Trail Gateway Communities	X				
C Identify economic, social and environmental benefits of Florida Trail Gateway Communities Program	X	X			
D Work with program participants to develop promotional products, identify funding sources and distribute print and online materials to connect citizens with the Florida Trail		X	X	X	X
1.3 Educate- Provide education and interpretation opportunities to encourage learning, enjoyment and attachment to the Florida Trail					
1.3.1 Foster value for the trail through interpretation of its unique and nationally significant resources					
A Identify appropriate natural, cultural, historic and scenic resources for interpretation	X	X			
B Identify partners to assist in development of trail interpretation materials including kiosks, online and print materials		X	X		
C Identify partners with active education and interpretation programs		X	X		
D Develop and distribute materials and interpretive programs to highlight the Florida Trail resources			X	X	X
1.3.2 Develop programs to provide education and recreation opportunities to the future generation of trail stewards					
A Complete and publish Spanish language version of Junior Explorer Activity Book	X				
B Develop Junior Explorer informational products and merit-badges		X			
C Distribute and implement Junior Explorer materials, programs and volunteer opportunities		X	X	X	X
D Develop field trip curriculum based on Junior Explorer Activity Book			X		
E Identify volunteers, educators and funding opportunities to implement Florida Trail field trip programs			X		

GOAL 2 COMPLETE THE TRAIL

Close the gaps in the Florida Trail through long-range planning, acquisition and agreements for long term protection of the Trail corridor.

Objective 2.1 Plan- Define the route of a complete Florida Trail that reflects on the ground conditions

Action 2.1.1 Analyze routing alternatives through stakeholder participation and formal trail relocation reviews

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Develop routing alternative for outstanding Corridor Location Reviews (CLRs) through stakeholder engagement	X		X		
B Conduct CLRs and evaluate preferred alternatives for gaps including but not limited to the Panhandle and Western Corridor	X	X	X		
C Identify person or organization to serve as consulting partner in trail relocation review and development		X			

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
D Identify top ten priority gap areas to conduct OLR based on current trends, on the ground conditions and stakeholder preference		X	X		
E Conduct OLRs for top priority gap areas			X	X	X
2.1.2 Coordinate routing with long range planning of other land management agencies					
A Update FDEP Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) State priority maps and opportunity maps	X	X	X	X	X
B Research and develop database of long-range acquisition plans for major state partners including Water Management Districts, FWC, State Parks and State Forests		X		X	
C Identify mutually-beneficial areas for long-range acquisition plans and communicate overlapping interests with partners through sharing Land Acquisition Atlas information			X	X	X
D Identify and assist in management plan updates for all local, state or federally managed lands along the Florida Trail	X	X	X	X	X
E Develop and utilize communication channels for land management partners to notify FNST Program of emerging trends and changes in landscape of Florida public lands	X	X	X	X	X
2.1.3 Prioritize acquisition needs and large-scale infrastructure for trail connectivity based on current trends					
A Identify trail areas not covered under agreement	X	X			
B Define parcels in these trail areas and identify the quality of underlying landownership	X	X	X		
C Develop Land Acquisition Atlas to prioritize areas ready for acquisition or agreement in critical gaps areas along the trail			X		
D Update and share Land Acquisition Atlas with partners to inform long range planning and acquisition based on current trends				X	X
2.1.4 Identify the optimal Florida Trail planning corridor					
A Identify trail gaps which may require planning and development outside of current planning corridor	X				
B Utilize CLR process to define appropriate corridors for trail development	X	X	X		
C Identify planning corridor for entire length of the Florida Trail				X	
D Publish preferred planning corridor with guidance from USFS SO, RO and WO				X	X
E Publish Florida National Scenic Trail Right-of-Way in Federal Register					X
2.2 Acquire- Acquire segments necessary for completing the Trail through fee-simple acquisition, easements or formal agreements					
2.2.1 Identify and systematically contact landowners of critical segments					
A Identify landowners of critical segment parcels identified in Land Acquisition Atlas			X		
B Work with NPS, FTA Staff and land management partners to systematically contact landowners regarding willingness for acquisition, easement or agreement	X	X	X	X	X
C Develop Willing Sellers List to correspond to Land Acquisition Atlas			X	X	X
D Update Willing Sellers List every two years				X	
2.2.2 Sign certifying MOU's or license agreements, where appropriate					
A Identify underlying land management agencies or partners for trail areas not under agreement	X	X			
B Develop MOUs or license agreements for these parcels	X	X	X	X	X
C Sign MOUs or license agreements for these parcels	X	X	X	X	X
2.2.3 Acquire critical parcels and easements, where necessary					

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Identify immediate opportunities for land acquisition through Land Acquisition Atlas	X	X	X	X	X
B Identify partners to collaboratively develop acquisition packages for parcels or easements in critical trail segment areas for all acquisition cycles	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify titleholder for acquired parcels	X	X	X	X	X
2.2.4 Pursue acquisition funding through federal, state and private grants					
A Identify all feasible private, local, state and federal grant funding opportunities for land acquisition		X	X	X	X
B Develop application template for each grant funding opportunity that will be pursued annually		X	X		
C Identify potential parcels for acquisition for each grant funding opportunity			X	X	X
D Develop and submit application packages for high priority parcels and trail areas annually	X	X	X	X	X
2.3 Protect- Preserve the long-term integrity of the Trail corridor and surrounding resources					
2.3.1 Identify at-risk areas in need of additional protection					
A Identify potential risks to the trail and trail corridor	X	X	X	X	X
B Spatially define at-risk areas by trail segment, trail corridor and/or parcels	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify trail areas at-risk for impacts of climate change					X
2.3.2 Develop management and partnership actions to address at-risk areas					
A Consult with partners to identify local, state and federal best practices and partner actions to address at-risk areas	X	X	X	X	X
B Develop a model for FNST Program management actions in case of escalation of threats to trail corridor			X		
C Develop threat-specific best practices and recommended mitigation measures for threats to the trail corridor				X	X
D Work with permitting agencies to develop communication channels for anticipated permitted actions within the FNST corridor				X	X
2.3.3 Identify and implement trail corridor management in compatible areas					
A Work with NTAR and USFS WO to inform development of trail corridor management model	X	X	X		
B Identify areas in USFS National Forests in Florida land that are compatible and/or required to implement trail corridor management model			X	X	X
C Work with USFS National Forests in Florida to pilot areas for trail corridor management model and identify associated challenges and opportunities				X	X
D Utilizing trail corridor management model and underlying landowner participation to develop Trail Corridor Protection Plan					X

GOAL 3 SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

Manage, monitor and maintain the Florida Trail and its associated infrastructure to ensure a high-quality recreation experience for current and future generations.

Objective 3.1 Monitor- Champion an integrated approach to collecting and sharing trail information that better serves land managers and the public

Action 3.1.1 Develop and manage spatial databases for trail infrastructure, allowable recreation uses and resources within the Florida Trail corridor

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Update trail infrastructure database detailing infrastructure that is managed and maintained by the FNST Program	X	X	X		
B Develop allowable recreation uses dataset	X			X	
C Develop spatial database for scenic, natural, historic and cultural resources. Work with partners to identify relevant interpretive information to include in database	X	X			
D Manage spatial databases to ensure all data is up-to-date and accurate	X	X	X	X	X
E Compile database information to produce FNST Resource Atlas				X	X
3.1.2 Develop protocol for annual trail inspections and reporting					
A Work with partners in trail inspection to identify issues, feasibility and opportunities for reporting	X				
B Develop annual trail inspections and reporting protocol		X			
C Provide technical support and hardware for trail inspections and reporting		X	X	X	X
D Manage annual trail inspections and reporting information through updating spatial databases		X	X	X	X
3.1.3 Utilize innovative approaches to collect trail data with partners, land managers and the public					
A Identify feasible citizen science and other innovative opportunities to engage partners, volunteers and the public in trail data collection			X	X	
B Identify programs, tools and methodologies to collaborate in trail data collection with land management partners		X	X	X	
C Work with partners to implement data collection methods				X	X
D Monitor effectiveness and adapt, where needed			X	X	X
3.2 Manage- Collaboratively and sustainably manage the trail tread and associated resources to standard					
3.2.1 Ensure trail management data is accessible to land managers for project development and priority setting					
A Publish official trail corridor, connectors, trailheads, campsites and allowable uses on USFS website annually		X	X	X	X
B Share all trail management databases with land management partners annually through Pinyon		X	X	X	X
C Share FNST corridor location with state and local permitting agencies including FDEP and FDOT to ensure the FNST Program is notified of potential impacts	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.2 Set annual priorities for trail and infrastructure projects based on up-to-date trail information and critical needs					
A Develop list of priority projects through consultation with trail management data, partners and stakeholders.	X	X	X	X	X
B Identify annual project priority list based on safety concerns, opportunities and infrastructure needs	X	X	X	X	X
C Develop realistic timelines for identified projects based on partner feedback and consultation with permitting agencies, if necessary	X	X			
D Review project priority list with FNST Coalition annually	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.3 Coordinate and implement annual work plans with partners to ensure a safe and well-managed trail					
A Work with FTA Regional Representatives to ensure land managers are informed and engaged in annual maintenance plans	X	X	X	X	X
B Adapt program of work schedule based on land management partner feedback	X	X	X	X	X
C Work with infrastructure and trail development partners to complete infrastructure projects identified by annual project priority list	X	X	X	X	X

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
D Develop and implement statewide signage and wayfinding plan			X	X	X
3.2.4 Work with land management partners to include Florida Trail standards in their management plans					
A Develop standard 'FNST Standards Description' to be included in management plan updates	X				
B Develop schedule of management plan updates by trail segment and companion calendar with notifications	X	X			
C Work with land management partners to include standard FNST Standards Description or adapt standard description to be included in management plan for each trail segment	X	X	X	X	X
3.2.5 Identify land management partners for long term management of acquired parcels					
A Identify suitable partners for long term management of parcels acquired by the FNST Program	X	X	X	X	X
B Work with land management partners to develop management actions for acquired parcels	X	X	X	X	X
3.3 Maintain- Maintain the Florida Trail for recreation, conservation and enjoyment					
3.3.1 Maintain the Florida Trail to standard with respect to individual trail segment maintenance needs					
A Identify varying levels of maintenance effort needed by trail segment in conjunction with the FTA		X	X	X	X
B Maintain each trail segment to standard in accordance with necessary level of effort		X	X	X	X
C Report maintenance annually	X	X	X	X	X
3.3.2 Work with land managers to incorporate basic trail and infrastructure maintenance in to their programs of work					
A Identify applicable infrastructure and basic trail maintenance tasks that can be easily incorporated into land manager programs of work	X	X	X	X	X
B Discuss program of work additions with land managers and FTA Regional Representatives	X	X	X	X	X
C Report, monitor progress and adapt, where needed	X	X	X	X	X

GOAL 4 STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Encourage and develop a diverse community of partners in the management, promotion and completion of the Florida Trail.

Objective 4.1 Collaborate- Foster coordination among interests, networks and stakeholders to further the goals of the Florida Trail

Action 4.1.1 Continue to work with the FNST Coalition to proactively address the largest challenges facing the Florida Trail

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
A Conduct semi-annual meetings to address trailwide issues and foster support for projects and initiatives	X	X	X	X	X
B Report annual progress on 5 Year Strategic Plan to FNST Coalition at first annual meeting	X	X	X	X	X
C Survey FNST Coalition members to monitor effectiveness of meetings and FNST Program initiatives, make adjustments where necessary	X		X		X
4.1.2 Build and strengthen relationships with academic, land management, volunteer and recreation partners					
A Identify and regularly update points of contact for each trail segment or management unit	X	X	X	X	X
B Contact all land managers every two years to identify desired management actions, threats to the trail and trail opportunities		X		X	

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
C Build new and maintain existing relationships with academic partners included but not limited to state colleges and universities, local school districts and environmental education organizations	X	X	X	X	X
D Identify mutually-beneficial projects and activities to be implemented through cost-share and formal agreements			X	X	X
4.1.3 Improve and overcome real and perceived barriers to effective partnering to further the goals of the Florida Trail					
A Contribute to FTA Footprint and other partner publications to update volunteers on major initiatives and challenges	X	X	X	X	X
B Develop communication channels to identify regional happenings and connect regional land managers		X	X	X	X
C Identify and implement actions to improve partnership model based on partner feedback		X	X	X	X
D Measure and report partnership impacts such as resources leveraged under agreements	X	X	X	X	X
4.2 Steward- Enhance partnerships to share stewardship of the Florida Trail and ensure access for future generations					
4.2.1 Continue to strengthen relationship with, and invest in building organizational capacity of, the FTA to assist with protection, promotion and completion of the trail					
A Continue weekly Trail Ops calls with FTA and FNST Program Staff to identify and address challenges and opportunities on the trail	X	X	X	X	X
B Collaboratively develop and assist in implementation of FTA Annual Program of Work	X	X	X	X	X
C Aid the FTA Staff and Board in building organizational capacity to assist in promotion efforts	X	X	X	X	X
D Aid the FTA Staff and Board in building organizational capacity to assist in efforts to complete and protect the trail	X	X	X	X	X
4.2.2 Build relationships with other trail volunteer and recreation groups around the state, with focus on new and diverse user groups					
A Identify Florida-based trail volunteer and recreational groups with a focus on new and diverse user groups		X		X	
B Work with FTA and land management partners to build relationships with these groups to promote recreation, education and outreach opportunities on the trail			X	X	X
C Work with FTA and land management partners to identify and implement new volunteer opportunities on the trail			X	X	X
4.2.3 Engage the next generation of conservation stewards through youth, veteran and academic programs					
A Identify applicable existing youth, veteran and academic programs that could benefit the FNST Program		X		X	
B Pursue opportunities to engage youth, veterans and students with these programs, where feasible		X	X	X	X
C Identify and communicate benefits of 21st Century Job Corps and equivalent programs to assist in professional development of youth, veterans and students	X	X	X	X	X
4.3 Complete- Engage partners in the development and protection of the Trail corridor					
4.3.1 Maintain and establish agreements with land management partners based on individualized partner capacity and trail needs					
A Maintain and update existing agreements between USFS and land management partners	X	X	X	X	X

Task Description	FY18	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22
B Pursue new agreements between USFS and landowners based on individual partner capacity and trail needs	X	X	X	X	X
C Identify and implement opportunities to improve and streamline agreements model with partners	X		X		X
4.3.2 Engage in mutually-beneficial land acquisition for the purposes of completing and protecting the trail corridor					
A Identify mutually-beneficial land acquisition opportunities through regional partner communication and Land Acquisition Atlas research		X	X	X	X
B Pursue joint applications for land acquisition grants with land management partners		X	X	X	X
C Assist local, regional and state agencies by providing supporting documentation for land acquisition grants which connect to and support the Florida Trail corridor	X	X	X	X	X
4.3.3 Enhance partnerships and build capacity to further long-term protection of the trail					
A Identify new partnerships with local, state and federal agencies to assist in protection of the Florida Trail corridor		X	X	X	X
B Identify partnerships with land trusts and NGOs to assist in protection of the Florida Trail corridor and associated resources		X	X	X	X
C Identify partnership actions which could further long term protection of the Trail			X	X	X
D Build and enhance partnerships with organizations and governments to assist in the long term protection of the Florida Trail Corridor			X	X	X

APPENDIX IV. 2018 STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE MEASURES

A major component of the reporting for the 2018 Strategic Plan is the development of performance measures to track the success of FNST Program initiatives. Utilizing performance measures will increase the ease and transparency of reporting for the FNST Program. This appendix details the performance measures used, methods for calculation and reporting.

PERFORMANCE MEASURE OVERVIEW

The 2018 Strategic Plan includes two different categories of performance measures, major and minor. Performance measures are termed 'Major' if they align with an entire goal. For example, one of the major performance measures for Promote Connections is to increase the number of recreational trail users by 15%. Performance measures are termed 'Minor' if they align with an identified objective. For example, the minor performance measure for the Maintain objective is "100% of the Florida Trail is managed to a high standard annually to provide maximum potential for recreation, conservation and enjoyment." Collectively, these major and minor performance measures will allow the FNST Program to measure the success of 2018 Strategic Plan-based initiatives and report to the FNST Coalition.

METHODOLOGY

Each performance measure will be reported annually by the end of each federal fiscal year period (September 30) unless otherwise noted. Formulas for calculation of each performance measure are described below. Please refer to the attached Annual Reporting Spreadsheet for more details on exact units of measure and formulas for each annual measure.

ANNUAL MEASURE

Annual measure for each performance measure will be reported uniquely for each major and minor performance measure. The unit of measure and formula for calculation is detailed in the Annual Reporting Spreadsheet. This number will be displayed as a number or percentage, depending on the performance measure. For example, the diversity in trail users will be measured by:

$$\text{Annual Measure} = \frac{(\# \text{ of Non-white users} + \# \text{ of Non-white Hispanic users})}{\text{Total \# of trail users}}$$

ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT

The annual measure will then be divided by the identified five-year target measure, 15% increase in this case, to obtain the Annual Achievement rate. The Annual Achievement rate will be reported for each major and minor performance measure.

$$\frac{\text{Annual Measure}}{\text{5 Year Target Measure}}$$

SUMMARY ACHIEVEMENT RATE

The FNST Program will report annual achievement rates for each performance measure every year of the Strategic Plan. A summary achievement rate for each goal will be obtained through averaging the annual achievement rates for both major and minor performance measures for the goal. For example, the annual Summary Achievement Rate for Promote Connections would be measured as follows:

$$\text{Promote Connections} = \frac{(\text{Sum of Annual Achievement Rates for Performance Measure \#1-\#8})}{\text{Total \# of Promote Connections Performance Measures}}$$

This number will be used to report annually to the FNST Coalition on the overall performance of the FNST Program and identify opportunities and challenges for the program annually.

COLLECTION METHODS

To obtain performance measure metrics, the FNST Program will utilize several collection methods including visitor and partner surveys, FTA reporting and FNST Program evaluations. The following is an outline of each collection method:

VISITATION STUDIES

The University of Florida will be contracted to conduct Visitation Studies with a focus on promotion efforts. These studies will collect and report data on demographic information, ease of trail information access and new usership. University of Florida will report this data annually.

PARTNER SURVEYS

In order to quantify the effectiveness of the Partnerships Program, the FNST Program will develop a statewide partner survey. This survey will be distributed annually to gauge satisfaction with communication channels, success of promotion efforts, issues with program management and other partnership facets.

FTA AND PARTNER REPORTING

The FTA Staff and Board develops, discusses and reports out on program achievements on an annual basis. The FNST Program will work with the FTA to define standards and timelines for measurements including trail maintenance, social media usage and volunteer hour reporting. The FNST Program will work with other partners to report on performance measures, as applicable.

FNST PROGRAM EVALUATION

The majority of performance measure metrics will be obtained through internal reporting and spatial analysis. Each performance measure is delegated to an FNST Program staff member for annual reporting. The following denotes FNST Program Staff responsible for collection of performance measure metrics: (I) FNST Program Intern; (G) FNST Program GIS Technician; (P) FNST Program Partnerships Coordinator. Staff members have been assigned to each of the performance measures detailed in the summary below. Reporting takes place by the end of each fiscal year and information will be available for review by FNST Coalition members.

SUMMARY OF PERFORMANCE MEASURES

PROMOTE CONNECTIONS

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Number of Trail Users*	15% Increase in Trail Visitation	UF Visitor Survey
Diversity of Trail Users*	15% Increase in Ethnic/Racial Composition of Visitors	UF Visitor Survey
Ease of access to trail information	100% of users found it 'easy'	UF Visitor Survey
New usership	25% new users discovered the trail through efforts of the Statewide Public Relations Plan	UF Visitor Survey
Florida Trail Social Media views	Increase by 200%	FTA Social Media
FNST Related events	2 additional events per year	Partner Survey
Interpretive trailhead information	100% of Top Destination Trailheads	FNST Program (I)
Field Trips held on the FNST	10 field trips	FNST Program (I)

COMPLETE THE TRAIL

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Trail Roadwalks*	Remove 30 miles	FNST Program (G)
Scenic/Designated Trail*	Increase by 50 miles	FNST Program (G)
Planning Corridor Development	100% identified and published	FNST Program (I)
Land Acquisition Plan	Plan developed and shared with partners annually	FNST Program (P)
Trail Corridor Protection Model	Develop and publish	FNST Program(P)

SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Managed to Standard*	100% of Trail managed to standard annually	FNST Program (P), FTA
FNST Databases	100% Updated annually;	FNST Program (I)
FNST Official KMZ files published annually	FNST Program (G)	FNST Program (P)
Project Priority List	Annually vetted by Coalition and projects completed within 2 years	FNST Program (P)
Management Information	100% of applicable databases shared annually with partners	FNST Program (G)
Trail Maintenance	100% of FNST maintained to required maintenance level	FTA, FNST Staff (G)

STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

MEASURE	TARGET	METHODOLOGY
Partner Contribution*	100% of FNST partners proactively contribute to Trail development, maintenance, or promotion of the FNST.	FNST Program (P), FTA
Partner Survey	100% Partners are 'highly satisfied' with information received by FNST Program and regional information provided to FNST Program	FNST Program (I)
Volunteer Hours	Increase hours by 50% over 5 years	FNST Program (P)
Underlying land agreements	100% of state and federal underlying land under certification or agreement	FNST Program (P)
Management Information	100% of applicable databases shared annually with partners	FNST Program (G)
Trail Maintenance	100% of FNST maintained to required maintenance level	FTA, FNST Staff (G)

* Denotes Goal Performance Measures for each goal

The following denotes FNST Program Staff charged with responsibility for collection of performance measure metrics: (I) FNST Program Intern; (G) FNST Program GIS Technician; (P) FNST Program Partnerships Coordinator

APPENDIX V. ENCOURAGING DIVERSITY IN THE OUTDOORS

The Promote Connections goal identified in the 2018 Strategic Plan aims to increase awareness and use of the Florida Trail, furthering the national dialogue on diversity and inclusivity in outdoor recreation. The success of this goal will be measured by a 15% increase in both trail visitation and ethnic/racial composition of Florida Trail visitors. To accomplish these objectives, improve ease of access to trail information, and increase new and non-traditional usership, the FNST Program will work with a variety of partners to develop deeper connections to the Trail as a premier recreational resource in Florida.

Generally, diversity encompasses respect and tolerance for the differences encountered in others including dimensions of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, age, physical abilities, religious beliefs, political beliefs or other ideologies. Efforts through the Promote Diversity goal will seek to engage youth and families, young adults and retirees in addition to organizations focused on recreation opportunities such as birding, water sports and wildlife viewing. For purposes of exploring diversity in outdoor recreation, this appendix is limited in its scope, although the Florida National Scenic Trail (FNST) Program seeks to provide an inclusive, welcoming community for all users interested in the Florida Trail.

This appendix focuses on identifying current conditions of racial and ethnic diversity in outdoor recreation, the significance of these demographic measures and what other organizations and agencies are doing to address the issue. Finally, this document outlines the planned actions of the FNST Program, FNST Coalition and Florida Trail Association (FTA) to promote a more diverse and inclusive community on the Florida Trail.

THE ISSUE

In the last ten years in the United States the number of participants in outdoor recreation has increased to 144.4 million with the total number of outdoor outings reaching around 11 billion. Nevertheless, with almost half of all citizens participating in outdoor activities, minority groups experience the lowest participation rates. Visitation studies conducted by state and federal agencies, such as the U.S. Forest Service and National Park Service, have captured this racial disparity around the nation. This phenomenon is seen on the Florida Trail as well with racial minority groups represented in less than 5% of the total recreationists and less than 4% for ethnic minority groups.

There are many reasons why people do not participate in outdoor recreation. The 2016 Outdoor Participation Report study found that lack of interest and time were the top reasons that citizens do not engage in outdoor recreation, with lack of skills or people to accompany them being the second largest barriers. However, in addition to these barriers, studies have found that discrimination, poverty and differences in cultural value systems contribute to lack of participation in minority groups. Additionally, lack of community, transportation, awareness of recreation opportunities, security or generally feeling unwelcome have also been identified as constraints.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Shifting demographics mean that the future stewardship and protection of the nation's natural, cultural, scenic and historical resources will be passed on to a more diverse United States. Additionally, encouraging diversity is important

for many reasons, including: fostering innovation, understanding the interdependence of cultures and the natural environment and creating an inclusive community that reflects and adapts to the needs of a changing population. According to the U.S. Census, the United States will become a majority-minority nation by 2043. By 2060, the Hispanic and Asian populations are projected to double while the African American population size is expected to comprise roughly 15% of the nation's total. Engaging ethnically and racially diverse audiences in outdoor recreation is essential to ensuring the future stewardship of public lands.

WHAT ARE OTHERS DOING?

Different agencies and organizations are striving to find methods to promote connections to the outdoors and better understand how to manage for a diverse population. Research has shown that non-traditional users seek certain benefits in outdoor recreation. These include trail investments such as safe and regularly maintained trailheads, multilingual information, increased and clear signage and access to local recreation opportunities. Additionally, diverse populations prefer recreation opportunities which are low cost, provide access to historical and cultural resources, include wildlife education and are available for multi-generational families.

The organizations highlighted below represent a sample of national efforts to establish a more diverse and inclusive community of outdoor recreationists.

OUTDOOR AFRO

“Outdoor Afro has become the nation’s leading, cutting edge network that celebrates and inspires African American connections and leadership in nature.”

Outdoor Afro is a national non-profit organization that “celebrates and inspires African American connections and leadership in nature” by establishing leadership networks around the United States. With more than 60 leaders in 28 states, Outdoor Afro is devoted to connecting Black people with nature. Florida’s Outdoor Afro community has leaders in Miami, Jacksonville, Tallahassee and Tampa. At the July 2017 FNST Coalition meeting the Tallahassee Outdoor Afro leader gave a presentation on diversity, galvanizing state and federal agencies to connect to local groups and organizations that encourage, welcome and create community for diverse users interested in outdoor recreation. For further information, please visit www.outdoorafro.com.

LATINO CONSERVATION ALLIANCE

“Latinos are passionate about enjoying the outdoors and hold a strong belief that we have a moral obligation to protect it for future generations.” -- Maite Arce, President and CEO of the Hispanic Access Foundation

The Latino Conservation Alliance (LCA) is the first Latino environmental coalition in history. Established in 2014, it is comprised of six coalition organizations dedicated to “clear air and water, sustainable energy practices, the protection of public lands and national monuments and access to these resources” that are of increasingly critical importance to the Hispanic and Latino communities of the United States. The leaders of the LCA act as representatives of Latino communities everywhere that depend on the future of public lands to “practice generations-old traditions” and enjoy access to the outdoors. For more information on the LCA and its member organizations, see <http://www.hechoonline.org/latino-conservation-alliance>.

APPALACHIAN TRAIL CONSERVANCY (ATC) NEXT GENERATION ADVISORY COUNCIL

“We are committed to nurture and protect this sacred space through education and inspiration...and work to ensure that tomorrow’s generations will experience the same mesmerizing beauty we behold today.”

Comprised of a diverse group of millennials ages 18 to 30, the ATC Next Generation Council (NextGen) advises the ATC and affiliated organizations on strategic questions and projects on the Appalachian Trail. The Next Generation Advisory Council supports the ATC through communicating about the relevancy of the ATC to a broader audience; advocating for stewardship of the Appalachian Trail; forging new partnerships with youth and multicultural organizations; and supporting innovative projects to expand access to Appalachian Trail resources. NextGen prioritizes contributions from individuals with a variety of backgrounds and experiences, a diverse group in aspects including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, national origin, color, religion, sex, political affiliation, and gender identity. For further information, see www.appalachiantrail.org.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

The FNST Program, FNST Coalition and FTA are working together to identify methods for engaging new and nontraditional users on the Florida Trail. As the administrators, advocates and stewards of the trail, these organizations will work to spark an interest, make resources accessible and create positive experiences for new and returning recreationists.

THE FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL PROGRAM

- Roundtable on Diversity: joins state and federal agencies with local groups and organizations in an open discussion on diversity to understand and promote diversity in Florida’s outdoors.
- Next Generation Trails Ambassador Program: identifies ambassadors from underrepresented groups to find pathways to increase youth involvement on the Trail, advise management decisions and serve as advocates for the Florida Trail in their communities.
- Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University (FAMU) partnership: engages the next generation of conservation stewards through academic programs to help the FNST Program develop annual work plans with a variety of student programs that emphasize conservation education, diversity and inclusion, and efforts to complete the Trail.
- Investments in trailheads, interpretive and educational materials that address recommendations outlined by trail ambassadors, partners and the Roundtable on Diversity.
- Funding will be made available for project-based work promoting diversity and inclusivity.

THE FNST COALITION

- Ensure that diversity-related initiatives incorporated by partners and agencies are a topic of group discussion at FNST Coalition meetings.
- Include dialogue regarding the role of partners in addressing diversity and inclusivity on the Florida Trail to assess opportunities and challenges to diversity on the Florida Trail.
- Promote connections between agencies and partners interested in planning events that include non-profit outdoor recreation organizations like Outdoor Afro, the Latino Conservation Alliance and others.

THE FLORIDA TRAIL ASSOCIATION

- Create FTA website section that publicizes the Diversity Strategic Action Plan and organizational commitment to enhancing diversity and inclusion on the Florida Trail.
- Enable translation capability on website- FTA website can be viewed in 18 languages.
- Form a Diversity Advisory Council of internal and external community stakeholders to monitor organizational progress on the Diversity Strategic Action Plan.
- Emphasize an inclusive community on the FNST that can teach the skills and abilities needed to engage in outdoor recreation and trail maintenance.
- Partner with outdoor recreation organizations and specialists (i.e. REI, university/college outdoor recreational student groups, Florida Outdoor Academy, Outdoor Afro and others) to provide educational, inclusive and diverse opportunities with FTA volunteer work parties on the Florida Trail.
- Enhance existing social media outreach for encouraging outdoor exploration on the Florida Trail.

APPENDIX VI. COMPLETE THE TRAIL

Trail planning is an essential function of the FNST Program. This appendix outlines several clarifications and methodologies that the FNST Program will adopt to improve both the quality and transparency of the planning process. The majority of the program of work under Complete the Trail is highly site-specific and will require targeted analysis and local expertise to complete planning, agreements and acquisition to complete the Florida Trail. This appendix outlines updates and general procedures which the FNST Program will use to improve its planning and trail development work.

ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS ON THE TRAIL

Corresponding to Action 1.1, the FNST Program will utilize trail relocation reviews in the form of Optimal Location Reviews (OLRs) and Corridor Location Reviews (CLRs) to analyze routing alternatives on the Florida Trail. In 2015, the FNST Program established procedures for and conducted the first CLR in the Twin Rivers State Forest to Aucilla River Gap located in the 'Big Bend' region of Florida. Since its release, feedback from stakeholders, land management and academic partner Florida State University Department of Urban and Regional Planning (FSU DURP), has been compiled and analyzed to improve the process. These procedures are detailed in the Florida National Scenic Trail Location Review Process Guidelines available on the Resource Management section of the FNST Program [website](#). Changes to the procedures are detailed below.

CLARIFICATION ON DIFFERENCES BETWEEN OLR AND CLR METHODOLOGY

The FNST Program will utilize OLRs and CLRs to complete alternatives analysis during the 2018 Strategic Plan and work plan. There are several differences between the two; primarily, the length and complexity of the gap being analyzed. If the gap is considered 'major,' meaning over 25 miles in length or with more than two landowners, a CLR will be used; however, if the gap is less than 25 miles, or managed by a single land manager, than an OLR will be used. The output of the two processes also differs as the product of a CLR is a trail corridor rather than the location of the trail tread. Identifying the corridor is the first step towards looking at trail tread placement and analyzing remaining minor gaps and roadwalks. There are several major gaps on the Florida Trail, including the Panhandle Gap and Western Corridor, which are scheduled in the FNST Program of Work to be analyzed prior to FY21. Finally, the level of analysis differs between utilizing landscape level spatial analysis rather than time intensive viewshed analysis to study the proposed alternatives. Please refer to the table below for a summary:

STAKEHOLDER REVIEW AND ENGAGEMENT

Transparency in decision-making for a public good such as the Florida Trail is essential to the sustainability of the trail in the long term. Each trail location review is conducted by a Review Team composed of FNST Program staff, FTA staff, local land managers and regional land managers in the case of corridor reviews. In addition to engaging a Review Team

FIGURE VI.1 FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL ROUTING OVERVIEW

This map depicts the Florida Trail routing as of January 2018 including the two most corridor relocations identified by alternative analysis, the Big Bend and Central Florida relocations. Future alternative analysis on the trail is scheduled for the Western Corridor and Panhandle Gaps within the 5 Year Program of Work.



Florida National Scenic Trail

Big Cypress National Preserve to Gulf Islands National Seashore

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| FNST | Public Lands | — Major Highways |
| — Trail | ■ Federal | — Rivers |
| — Side Trail | ■ State | ■ Lakes |
| — Spur Trail | ■ Local | - - - County |
| - - Roadwalk | | |
| ••• Big Bend Reroute | | |
| ••• Osceola Orange County Reroute | | |

0 15 30 60 90 120 Miles

in each analysis, the FNST Program will improve these processes by increasing transparency, utilizing local knowledge and engaging stakeholders in the following ways:

- Consult with a long-distance hiker representative as part of the CLR Process
- Work with FTA to ensure one (1) of the analyzed alternatives is developed by trail users and volunteers
- Publish the OLR/CLR study and synopsis online and in the FTA’s Footprint Magazine and/or other similar publications

VALUATION OF TRAIL CRITERIA

Weighted multicriteria analysis will continue to be the primary means of analysis for each CLR. Rather than identifying score points for each criterion through discussion and qualification by the Review Team, each criterion will be scored through quantifying a series of subcriteria. Subcriteria will be awarded points through spatial analysis, research and observation by the Review Team. For example, to measure the subcriteria ‘Amount of Roadwalks’ for an alternative route, spatial analysis would calculate the total miles of roadwalk and award between 0 to 4 points based on this number. The more miles of roadwalk present in a corridor, the less points this corridor will receive in the ‘Functionality’ criteria. Figure VI.1 is an example developed by FSU DURP to assist in quantifying criteria for the Panhandle Gap. This scoring method will serve as an example in developing future OLRs/CLRs; however, it is important to note that qualitative analysis by the Review Team will continue to have a strong impact on the outcome of the analysis.

FIGURE VI.2. Example Subcriteria Score Method for OLR and CLR Weighted Criteria Analysis

Criteria	Subcriteria	Score Method	Total Points	Score Points	Range	
Unique Physical and Cultural Environments	Natural Communities					
	Biodiversity	Number of Natural Communities	2	0	0-2	
				1	3-5	
				2	6+	
	Altered Landscape	Miles of Altered Landscape	4	0	41+	
				1	31-40	
				2	21-30	
				3	11-20	
	Cultural Environment	Historic and Cultural Sites	Number of Cultural Sites	2	0	0
					1	1-2
					2	3+
		Trail Towns	Number of Trail Town Possibilities	2	0	0
1					1-2	
2					3+	
3					4+	
Broad Range of Recreation Interests	Recreation Opportunities	Number of Recreational Opportunities	4	0	0	
				1	1-2	
				2	3-4	
				3	5-6	
	Potential for Camping	Number of Camping Locations	3	0	0	
				1	1	
				2	2	
	Spur Trail Opportunities	Number of Spur Trail Options	3	0	0	
				1	1	
				2	2	
3				3+		
Functionality	Safety					
	Amount of Roadwalk	Miles of Roadwalk	4	0	41+	
				1	31-40	
				2	21-30	
				3	11-20	
	Speed on Roadwalk	Miles of Roadwalk with Speed Limit	2	0	21+	
				1	11-20	
				2	0-10	
	Obstacles	Number of Obstacles	4	0	2+	
				1	1	
2				1		
3				0		
Resource and Private Land Impact	Impacts to Landowners	Number of Impacted Landowners	5	0	21+	
				1	16-20	
				2	11-15	
				3	6-10	
				4	1-5	
	Public Conservation Land	Number of Acres of Conservation Land	5	0	0	
				1	1-10,000	
				2	10,001-20,000	
				3	20,001-30,000	
				4	30,001-40,000	
Minimize Costs	Trail Miles	Total Trail Mileage	4	0	71+	
				1	56-70	
				2	41-55	
				3	31-40	
	Total Land Acquisition Needs	Miles of Needed Acquisition	4	0	0-30	
				1	15+	
				2	11-14	
				3	5-10	
	Major Infrastructure Costs	Major Infrastructure Projects	2	0	0-4	
				1	0	
2				2+		
3				1		

FDEP OGT PRIORITY AND OPPORTUNITY MAPPING

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) Priority and Opportunity mapping updates are a key method for the FNST Program to coordinate long range planning and land acquisition priorities with land management and recreation partners throughout the state. The FNST Program will continue to publish the preferred corridor, defined through CLRs and site-specific OLRs, to update the FDEP OGT maps annually. Please visit our [website](#) to download current KMZ and shapefiles of the preferred FNST Corridor.

LAND ACQUISITION EVALUATION CRITERIA

One of the components of the FNST Program of Work by FY20 will be the development of a Land Acquisition Atlas which defines, prioritizes and shares the acquisition priorities for a complete Florida Trail. This document will be developed and maintained in order to coordinate and share land acquisition priorities with partners in acquisition. Prior to completion of this document, the FNST Program will research long range acquisition plans and optimal boundaries for government agencies including but not limited to:

- Water Management Districts (5)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- FDEP Division of Recreation and Parks
- Florida Forest Service
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Department of the Interior National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Florida-based land trusts
- Local governments

In addition to coordination with these local, state and federal agencies, the FNST Program will prioritize acquisition, planning and development around parcels which meet criteria the criteria below. Additional criteria may be developed after research and coordination with partners.

- Meets the nature and purpose of the Trail outlined by the FNST Comprehensive Plan of 1986 including but not limited to:
- Meets the intent of Congress to locate the FNST so that it “emphasize(s) nationally significant scenic, historic, natural and cultural features.”
- Emphasizes permanency and protection
- Provides a continuous outdoor recreation trail
- Promote outdoor recreation for a variety of users
- Occurs near existing publicly owned lands or within the optimal boundary of another land management agency
- Identified as ‘at-risk’ of incompatible uses as outlined by the At-Risk Segment Matrix

APPENDIX VII. MANAGEMENT TO STANDARD

PART I. MANAGEMENT TO STANDARD METHODOLOGY

As the Trail Administrator, the FNST Program is tasked with management of the Florida Trail to meet the standard of a National Scenic Trail. The third goal of the 2018 Strategic Plan, Sustainable Management, addresses the roles in monitoring, management and maintenance of the trail. This appendix clarifies the meaning of ‘manage to standard’ on a trail crosses through over 80 land management units, dozens of ecosystem types and each region of the State of Florida. The language of the goal is as follows:

“100% of the Florida Trail is managed to a high standard annually to provide maximum potential for recreation, conservation and enjoyment.”

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO ‘MANAGE TO STANDARD’?

The Florida Trail is a unique resource that is anything but standard, so the FNST Program has developed an approach to reporting ‘standard’ management requirements. Management of the trail encompasses several facets of trail administration including trail data, information, maintenance, and compliance with safety and higher-level regulations. In conjunction, management of each trail segment largely relies on coordination and strong partnerships with underlying land managers and stewardship partners. To sustainably manage the trail, management needs to move beyond annual maintenance to include higher level goals for the trail. Therefore, an essential distinction in the 2018 Strategic Plan is the definition of a trail segment which is managed to standard.

A trail is managed to standard when it is well-maintained, safe to use, regularly monitored, provides up-to-date information and is included in land management policy. This standard depends on the underlying land ownership of the trail segment and therefore some segments are held to a higher standard due to their level of management. The FNST Program considers a trail to be ‘managed to standard’ if it meets the following criteria based on the USFS National Quality Standards for Trails (FSH 2309.18, Sec 15, Exhibit 01):

1. National Standards: The Trail meets NSHT Standards outlined by the National Trails System Act (16 U.S.C. 1241-1251), Forest Service Trail Fundamentals and Trail Management Objectives Guidebook (1623-3801-MTDC), and applicable USFS guidance.
2. Safety and Security: All identified health and safety concerns on the trail are addressed with management actions.
3. Resource Setting: The Trail does not conflict with surrounding resources
4. Condition of Facilities: The Trail has been maintained to target frequency in coordination with the land manager. Capital improvements meet applicable land management guidelines.

5. Designated and Managed Uses: The appropriate trail class is assigned, annually evaluated and allowable uses for the trail are defined.
6. Information Availability: All trailheads display consistent Florida Trail messaging.
7. Partner Management: The Florida National Scenic Trail is included in the Unit Land Management Plan and/or on the land manager website.

METHODOLOGY

To monitor progress, the FNST Program will monitor several key aspects of trail management to determine whether the trail is managed to standard. Management will be measured by trail segment. A score will be assigned to each trail management aspect based on the trail segment’s performance within the category; the higher the score, the closer to standard. Total scores for each trail segment will be measured by the sum of all categories. Each of these categories will be compiled with spatial analysis software.

Table VII.1 Trail management aspects and scores for measurement of Management to Standard

TRAIL MANAGEMENT ASPECT		SCORE
1	National Standards Trail meets NSTA and USFS Standards for NSHT trail design and signage	Yes = 2 No = 1
2	Safety and Security Major health and safety concerns addressed with management actions?	Yes = 2 No = 1
3	Resource Setting Trail does not cause unacceptable damages to resources?	Yes = 2 No = 1
4	Condition of Facilities Target maintenance frequency achieved in coordination with land manager? Capital improvements meet applicable land management standards?	Yes = 2 Maintained, but not to target frequency=1 No= 0
5	Designated and Managed Uses Appropriate trail class is assigned, annually evaluated and designated uses for the trail are defined?	Yes = 2 2 of 3 components met = 1 No=0
6	Information Availability Trailhead displays consistent Florida Trail messaging. FNST Standard and consistent messaging	Y= 2 No, but information is up to date= 1 No = 0 Not applicable = 0
7	Partnership Management FNST in Trail Unit Management Plan and/or information platform (website)?	Yes = 2 No = 1 Not applicable = 0

To measure the standard of management, the total score will be measured by the management of the trail segment. Management types include federal government; state government; local government or non-governmental organization; or private landowner/conservation easement. Trail segments are measured by management rather than trail class as it is a function of land management partner capacity and resources, not a function of trail location or design. For example, an established state partner will have more capacity to assist with information availability and trail monitoring than a private landowner. A range for acceptable scores for each level of management has been developed below.

Table VII.2 Level of management scores for each of three (3) management types

MANAGEMENT TYPE	LEVEL OF MANAGEMENT		
	HIGH STANDARD	MEDIUM STANDARD	LOW STANDARD
Federal or State Government Agency	14-12	11-8	7-0
Local Government or Non-Governmental Organization	14-10	9-6	5-0
Private Landowner or Conservation Easement	14-8	7-4	3-0

The level of management will be reported on a bi-annual basis for each trail segment. The total percentage of trail segments managed to a ‘high standard’ will be reported each year to track achievement of the Sustainable Management Goal. As the 2018 Strategic Plan and associated work plan ease the burden of reporting, the aspects used to measure this goal may change slightly to reflect the changing needs of the trail and national level guidance.

PART II. FLORIDA TRAIL DATA STANDARDS:

The collection, management, and storage of Florida Trail data is vital to administration of the FNST Program. In order to maintain an organized and cohesive trail database, the FNST Program follows standards defined by the U.S. Forest Service. Below is an overview of the general operating procedures for the FNST Program.

USFS TRAIL DATA STANDARDS OBJECTIVES:

- Follow a standard structure for linking descriptive and spatial information stored within geographic information system (GIS); data is to be organized by categories, components, themes, layers, coverages, features, and attributes.
- Core data structures are to comply with Forest Service standards for spatial parameters: projection, area extent, accuracy requirements, and resolution.
- Attributional data is tailored and representative of the geographic features with precedence placed on the agencies GIS Core Data Dictionary.
- Data is to be collected as accurately and precise as the project warrants, by following collection parameters.

For further detail, please refer to the [U.S. Forest Service Handbook 6609.15](#)

QUALITY ASSESSMENT AND CONTROL

Data Assessment - Quality assessment is the process of evaluating and assessing the relevancy and validity of the data quality, format and structure. Each factor is assessed during a phase of the data’s lifecycle to determine if the data is and will remain compliant with the established standards.

Data Control - Data collected from volunteers, partners and FNST staff undergoes an internal process of quality control (QC). QC allows data managers to maintain oversight of the data, determine if collection procedures were followed and uphold overall data quality. QC is data profiling, which includes eliminating inconsistencies and duplicates, correcting missing data and amending misspelled or inaccurate information. The data quality assurance/quality control process is paramount to an accurate and up-to-date representation of the Florida Trail and corresponding databases, ensuring that the data depicts the real

GIS CONFIGURATION

The FNST Program follows trail data standards defined by the USFS for National Scenic Trails. The GIS Configuration for the FNST Program is as follows:

- **Software** - ArcGIS 10.4, ArcCatalog
- **Standard Projection** - NAD_1983_StatePlane_Florida_North_FIPS_0903_Feet
- **Datum** - North American 1983 (NAD83)
- **Units of Measure** - Standard units of measure are utilized. The State Plane projection is in US Feet.

world trail conditions.

DATA COLLECTION AND MANAGEMENT

Data Collection -Data collection methodologies are determined on a project by project basis. Prior to the start of a project, methodologies, scope and scale of the data collection and management will be defined. The FNST follows these general guidelines for data collection:

- **Project research**- Define goals, objectives and parameters and determine methodologies and technologies needed for the collection process.
- **Develop a data dictionary** - Identify data to be collected and define the data parameters.
- **Data collection test** - Test the collection methodologies and incorporate necessary adjustments to the system. Establish a concise data collection workflow and provide training on collection methods.
- **Project Implementation** - Launch project and assess the validity of data collection, as needed.
- **Data download / Post processing / QC** - Conduct post processing to improve accuracy, where needed. Rectify any erroneous data.

Data Management- Each piece of data that is collected and stored represents a cost in terms of time, database capability and storage. Sufficient consideration is made at different stages of a databases lifecycle, to assess the cost benefit relationship of the data. By managing data through its lifecycle, the FNST Program is able to assess the data from collection to when it becomes obsolete. Management practices extend to the distribution of the data to appropriate users in order to maintain the integrity of the data and the resource.

REPORTING

Annual reporting is conducted to assess the trail for a variety of factors including trail mileage, location and maintenance. Trail mileage is a significant component of reporting because it demonstrates the progression of the trail. The addition and removal of road walks and trail features constantly affects the mileage of the trail; therefore, having the latest and most accurate mileage is important for on the fly reporting. Anytime the FNST layer is altered, the mileage of the trail is also updated. Updates to the trail databases and KMZ files are performed quarterly or as needed, ensuring that the data follows a schedule and reflects current and accurate information. Reporting is done on an annual basis and provides a snapshot of the Florida Trail for the year.

Land managers and partners can contact the FNST Program and request mileage reports for their land units. This allows the managers to properly report the length of trail that lies within their managed lands.

To download current KMZ files or view the ArcGIS Online map of the Florida Trail and associated resources, please visit the Maps & Publications section of our [website](#).

METADATA

Metadata provides information about data or the dataset including information on data origin and content. Metadata can be accessed for all data used by the FNST Program. Metadata typically includes a summary, description detailing important features and background information, collection methods and credits, data extent and scale range.

INCOMING DATA

Data collected by partners and volunteers is critical to understanding up-to-date and accurate conditions of the Florida Trail tread, corridor and associated resources. The trail is a dynamic feature, prone to changes, reroutes and periodic updates to trailheads and campsites. To keep FNST Program data and datasets current, the FNST Program encourages partners to provide data from the trail in these formats: shapefile, geodatabase or KMZ.

PART III. TRAIL MAINTENANCE STANDARDS:

FTA maintains the trail to standard in accordance with U.S. Forest Service and FNST Program Standards, for more information on trail construction and maintenance procedures, visit the FTA website at <http://www.floridatrail.org/ftatrailmanual/> .

APPENDIX VIII. STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships are both a goal of the 2018 Strategic Plan as well as one of the most powerful tools available for completing FNST Program initiatives over the next five years. The partnerships which make management, development and promotion of the trail possible range from formal, those documented by written agreements, to informal, such as cooperatively advocating for projects that would benefit the Florida Trail. The major performance measure for partnerships is:

“The Florida Trail Partnerships Program maintains high performing relationships that proactively contribute to Trail development, maintenance or promotion of the Florida Trail.”

To measure the performance of the partnerships program, the FNST Program must rely on both qualitative and quantitative measures. This appendix details how the FNST Program will define the success of partnerships and report this to the FNST Coalition.

METHODOLOGY

During the 2018 Strategic Plan, the FNST Program will quantify success of the partnership program through measuring the performance of the program with the following categories:

- High Performing
- Functional
- Needs Improvement

These categories will be measured through multicriteria analysis of the four (4) performance measures for Strategic Partnerships. These measures include:

- New Usership (correlated to Promote Connections goal)
- New Trail Miles (correlated to Complete the Trail goal)
- Volunteer Hours (correlated to Sustainable Management goal)
- Partnership Agreements (correlated to the Strategic Partnerships goal)

WEIGHTED SCORES

The Annual Achievement Rate for each of the above performance measures, a percentage from 0 to 100%, will be weighted and summed to identify the annual Program Score. Please refer to Appendix IV. 2018 Strategic Plan Performance Measures Methodology for calculations and methodology of the annual achievement rates for each performance measures. The weights for each performance measure are on a scale of 1 to 10 and described in the following table:

TABLE VIII.1 Partnerships Program performance measures and corresponding weights

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	WEIGHT	EXPLANATION
New Usership	2	An increase in visitation is often a result of several factors which make is a useful programmatic measure. New users are engaged through ensuring easily accessible information to the public, partner events and activities and a successful social media presence.
New Trail Miles	1	Developing new trail requires a high level of partnership and collaboration at the federal, state, local, private and NGO level.
Volunteer Hours	1	Increasing volunteer hours is an indicator of increased recruitment and activities for current partners and engaging new partners in stewardship.
Partnership Agreements	2	The amount of trail protected by Memorandum of Understanding, USFS Certification Agreements or other partnership instrument is one of the most important metrics to display the protection and permanence of the Florida Trail.

These weights will be multiplied by the Annual Achievement Rates of each performance measure to identify the Weighted Score for each minor performance measure. For example, if the Annual Achievement Rate is 50% for New Usership, with a weight of 2, then the Weighted Score will be 100.

$$\text{Weighted Score} = (\text{Annual Achievement Rate} \times \text{Weight}) * 100$$

PROGRAM SCORE

Each minor performance measure weighted score will be summed to develop the Program Score. The program score for each performance category is detailed below.

TABLE VIII.2 Partnerships Program performance category by program score

PERFORMANCE CATEGORY	PROGRAM SCORE
High Performing	600 - 301
Functional	300 - 151
Needs Improvement	150 - 0

EXAMPLE PARTNERSHIPS PROGRAM SCORE CALCULATION

Below is an example of a Program Score Calculation to clarify the Partnerships Program performance methodology.

TABLE VIII.3 Partnerships Program performance category by program score

PERFORMANCE MEASURE	ANNUAL ACHIEVEMENT RATE	WEIGHT	WEIGHTED SCORE
New Usership	50%	2	100
New Trail Miles	75%	1	75
Volunteer hours	80%	1	80
Partnership Agreements	40%	2	80
		Total	235
		Program Score	Functional