



File Code: 2350; 1900

Date: JUL 27 2017

Dear Friends, Partners, and Visitors:

The U. S. Forest Service is initiating planning for the future of the Arizona National Scenic Trail, and we are inviting you participate during this public scoping period.

The Arizona National Scenic Trail (AZNST) traverses 800 miles from Mexico to Utah through the many diverse ecosystems unique to Arizona. This long distance trail highlights the State's topographic, biologic, historic, and cultural diversity, providing unparalleled opportunities for hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians and other non-motorized trail users.

Our planning team is currently developing a comprehensive plan for the AZNST that will guide future administration and management of the trail for the next 15-20 years. The National Environmental Policy Act requires assessment of the environmental impacts of locating the trail on federal lands and we plan to analyze the proposed action in an environmental assessment. The Chief of the Forest Service is responsible for approving the Arizona National Scenic Trail comprehensive plan.

Development of a comprehensive plan is critical to ensure the protection of the trail's key resources, values, and visitor experience. The comprehensive planning process provides an opportunity to develop a vision for future opportunities and desired conditions along the trail. By sharing your ideas and opinions about how the AZNST should be managed, you can help us shape its future.

You can view a scoping document, providing information about the proposed project and the planning effort, at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=49535>. A paper copy of the document can be requested from Laura White, Arizona National Scenic Trail Program Manager, by calling 520-388-8328.

We will host six public meetings in August throughout Arizona, where you are invited to share your ideas, ask questions, and voice your concerns. Each public meeting will be open house format and run from 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. A short presentation on the comprehensive plan will begin at 6 p.m. Meeting dates and locations are:



Tuesday, August 8, 2017	Julia Randall Elementary School Gymnasium	600 S Green Valley Pkwy. Payson, Arizona
Wednesday, August 9, 2017	Kanab City Library Multipurpose room	374 N Main St. Kanab, Utah
Thursday, August 10, 2017	Flagstaff Aquaplex Community Meeting Room	1702 N. Fourth St. Flagstaff, Arizona
Tuesday, August 15, 2017	Patrick K. Hardesty Midtown Multi- Service Center	1100 S Alvernon Way Tucson, Arizona
Wednesday, August 16, 2017	Superior Chamber of Commerce	165 Main St. Superior, Arizona
Thursday, August 17, 2017	Pyle Adult Education Center - Multipurpose Room B	655 E Southern Ave. Tempe, Arizona

We encourage you to review the scoping document and welcome your participation at the public meetings. Please send your comments about the proposed activities along with supporting information and rationale you believe will help identify issues that need to be addressed. There will be an additional public comment period, in which you can establish eligibility to object, following analysis of the project alternatives in an environmental assessment.

We encourage you to submit comments electronically using the "Comment/Object on Project" button available on the right hand side of the screen on the project webpage: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=49535>. Although always welcome, comments received by September 30, 2017 would be most helpful. If no identifiable name is attached to an electronic message, a verification of identity will be required for objection eligibility. You may send written comments to: Laura White, U.S. Forest Service, 300 W. Congress St., Tucson, AZ 85701. Hand-delivered comments will be accepted at the above address within our normal business hours of 8:00 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, excluding federal holidays. Please reference Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Planning when providing hand-written comments. Comments, including names and addresses of those who comment, will be considered a part of the public record and will be available for public review.

If you have questions regarding the proposed project, please contact Laura White, Arizona National Scenic Trail Program Manager, at 520-388-8328, or Becky Riegle, Project Lead, at 989-724-9381. We look forward to having you engaged in shaping the future of the Arizona National Scenic Trail.

Sincerely,



for CALVIN N. JOYNER
Regional Forester

cc: Laura White, Francisco Valenzuela, Cheryl Prewitt