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**File Code:** 2350**Date:** February 12, 2020**Route To:****Subject:** Agency-wide Launch of 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge**To:** All Employees

I am pleased to announce the launch of the 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge and invite your leadership to engage employees, partners, volunteers, and stakeholders nationwide to implement the challenge together over the next decade. In alignment with U.S. Department of Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue's priority of **promoting shared stewardship by increasing partnerships and volunteerism** and our national priority of **enhancing recreation opportunities, improving access, and sustaining infrastructure**, the Trail Challenge is a call to action to increase our collective capacity to care for trails and increase on-the-ground results through shared stewardship of trails.

With 159,000 miles of trails, the Forest Service manages the nation's largest trail system, including thousands of miles of Congressionally-designated national scenic, historic, and recreation trails. National Forest System trails are well-loved and well-used—providing access and connecting people with our nation's forests and grasslands, fostering partnership and volunteerism, and generating health and economic benefits to communities. These trails depend on the support and energy of employees, volunteers, partners, and communities nationwide.

On February 11, 2020, I announced the launch of the 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge with trail partners from around the country who attended "Hike the Hill" events here in Washington, D.C. The challenge catalyzes the Forest Service to engage other Federal partners, State and local governments, communities, Tribes and Tribal organizations, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders (collectively known as the "trails community") through shared stewardship to prioritize, invest, and innovate to achieve a more sustainable system of trails. The Trail Challenge focuses on accomplishing ten of 26 actions outlined in the Forest Service National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System, developed in partnership with the trails community and in alignment with the National Forest System Trail Stewardship Act of 2016.

Implementation of the Trail Challenge will be an Agency focus over the next decade. I ask you to look for ways to lead out on this challenge—inspiring, innovating, and working with employees, partners, and communities across boundaries to achieve a sustainable trail system for the benefit of all. With your leadership, and in partnership with the broader trails community, we can and will increase our collective capacity to care for trails and achieve on-the-ground results for the millions of visitors we all serve.



The enclosed 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Overview and Launch and Learn Insert publications, along with associated guidance and resources, are available on the new [10-Year Sustainable Trail Stewardship Challenge](https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/10YTC) webpage (<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/10YTC>). Additional implementation guidance and informational webinars will follow this spring. For more information about the 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge please contact Jeff Mast, Assistant National Trails Program Manager, at (414) 297-3295, or [jeffrey.mast@usda.gov](mailto:jeffrey.mast@usda.gov), or Meckenzie Helmandollar-Powell, National Forest System Trails Specialist, at (928) 228-1896 or [meckenzie.helmandollar-powell@usda.gov](mailto:meckenzie.helmandollar-powell@usda.gov).

*/s/ Victoria Christiansen*  
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Chief

Enclosures (2)