

# NATIONAL WATER TRAIL SYSTEM

## INSTRUCTIONS F O R APPLICATION



**Overview:** The information collected in the NWTS Application is used by reviewers to determine if a water trail should be moved forward for designation. Anything that you feel reviewers need to know about your trail should be included in the initial application. However, if your trail is selected to be moved forward there will be opportunities to refine and modify application materials. The NWTS Application contains seven sections. Each section asks for information concerning the water trail being nominated. After a brief overview of the application process and resources, each section will be described and, where appropriate, clarifications and references to toolboxes will be made.

**Getting Started:** The NWTS Application is an online form hosted on the American Trails website, through a partnership with the NWTS and the National Park Service. Text is directly entered into the online form. You may use this document as a checklist to gather data for the online application. Basic information is entered on the application website, and supporting materials (maps, photos, etc.) can be uploaded but must be in standard electronic formats.

**Submitting the Application:** When all information has been entered into the NWTS Application and all supporting materials have been uploaded, the entire package can be reviewed online. Please review your application for completeness, accuracy, and proper spelling before submitting and edit as needed. The final submit button is on the online application.

**Toolboxes:** The NWTS website contains a 'Toolbox' page. There are two toolboxes within that page: Best Management Practices (BMP) Toolbox and Mapping Toolbox. The BMP toolbox contains exemplary examples of how water trails can be managed. The Mapping Toolbox contains resources and examples for trail managers who do not have access to geospatial software or systems. The toolboxes serve to help both applicants and existing water trail managers.

**NWTS Application, by Section:** The following information directly corresponds to sections you will find in the NWTS online application. **Section Overview:** • [Trail Information](#) • [BMP](#) • [Contact Information](#) • [Owner Consent and State Support](#) • [Photo, Map and Logo](#) • [Additional Supporting Materials](#) • [Signature Page](#)

**SECTION 1: TRAIL INFORMATION** This section asks for basic water trail information, detailed information and visitation and fee information.

### **Basic Water Trail Information**

#### **Water trail name**

**Water trail location** -Provide brief description of where the trail is located, particularly in relation to landmarks. Someone who is not familiar with the water trail should be able to roughly know where the trail is located after reading this section.

**Latitude and Longitude** - Provide a latitude and longitude coordinate that is representative of your water trail. This could be at the center of your trail or at any other location along the trail. This information will be used to create a map "pin" of your trail to be included on the NWTS website, if the trail is designated.

**Directions to water trail** - Provide directions to the water trail that will be useful to the majority

of users. The goal of this section is to give users a more detailed idea of where the trail is located.

**City(-ies), Township(s) crossed by the water trail** - Those which touch the water trail and are also highly associated with the water trail.

**County(-ies)**

**State(s)**

**Congressional District(s)**

**Short description of the water trail** - Provide a quick 'snap shot' of the water trail. This should allow a reader to gain a broad level understanding of what the water trail provides. This information will be used in press releases and also on the NWTs website if the trail is designated.

**Long description of the water trail** - Provide a more thorough overview of the water trail. This should reiterate what is in the 'short description' and also highlight what makes the trail nationally significant and what sets the trail apart from others. As appropriate, describe the water trail's history and evolution including concept, lay-out, partnerships, historic uses, political uses and special events. Describe the water trail's main features and the benefits it provides to users.

#### **Detailed Water Trail Information/Trail Details**

**Length of water trail** - Provide the total length of the water trail open for public use, in miles and identify if the trail is a loop. If multiple trail segments at times use the same 'path' only count that length once.

**Other existing designations** - If your water trail has already been designated by other agencies or organizations please list them. For example, if a state designation has been granted please list the name of that designation.

**Allowed Uses and Activities** - Select any of the listed uses and activities that pertain to the water trail. If the water trail includes uses and activities not listed, please provide them in the 'Other' section. If you feel clarification is needed provide additional information in 'Notes.'

**Water trail & surrounding surfaces** - Select any of the listed water trail types and surrounding surface types that apply to the water trail.

#### **Visitation Information/Visiting and Fees**

**Open dates** - Enter the time period for which the water trail is open, using month and day ranges.

**Times of operation** - Select specific times within the above time period that the water trail is open. If there are specific seasonal closures such as a particular weekend or time period when the water trail will be closed please list this in 'Seasonal Closures.'

**Fees** - List fees where appropriate. If one of the fee times does not apply to the water trail please enter zero.

**Accessibility Information Available?** - Please answer by selecting all of the information sources currently available for the water trail which contain accessibility information.

**Visitation and fee notes** - If there is anything else that you feel is important to share concerning visitation and fees that the application does not cover, please write it in the space provided.

**SECTION 2: BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES** This section is an opportunity to describe, in detail, how the water trail is exemplary. The seven BMP categories have been identified by the NWTs as important benchmarks of a National Water Trail. For each category describe how your trail addresses the BMP. To see examples of previous NWTs BMP responses, see the 'Best Management Practice Toolbox' on the NWTs website.

**Mission Statement** - In this section provide a mission statement for the water trail that is reflective of the seven BMP categories. This is an opportunity to showcase the outstanding qualities of the water trail and the ways it is managed.

**Recreation Opportunities** - Please describe how the water trail provides public access points that accommodate a diversity of trip lengths and a variety of opportunities for recreation and education. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Education** - Please describe how the water trail provides opportunities to learn about the water body's ecosystem, including its natural and human history and associated cultural heritage, as well as boating skills and outdoor ethics education. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Conservation**- Please describe how the water trail provides opportunities for communities to develop and implement strategies that enhance and restore the health of the local waterways and surrounding lands. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Community Support** - Please describe how local communities provide support and advocacy for the maintenance and stewardship of the water trail. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Public Information** - Please describe how the water trail managers provide the public with accessible and understandable water trail information, including details for identifying access and trail routes; cultural, historic, and natural features; hazards; and water quality. Also describe how the water trail is promoted to the community and broad national audience. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Sustainability and Trail Maintenance** - Please describe how the water trail managers demonstrate the ability to support routine and long-term maintenance investments on the water trail. Also describe how facilities are designed, constructed, and maintained incorporating sustainability principles. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**Planning** - Please describe how the water trail managers maintain a water trail plan that describes a vision, desired future conditions, and strategies to strengthen best management practices. Give specific and all-inclusive examples and explanations.

**SECTION 3: CONTACT INFORMATION** This section asks for contact information for the agency or organization managing the water trail. If the trail is designated as an National Water Trail, the Trail Managing Agency or Organization will appear on the NWTs certificate, along with the trail's name. If there are multiple managing agencies and/or organizations, please provide the same information for each in subsequent contact information fields (following pages).

**Applicant Contact Information** - This section asks for standard contact information. As previously stated, please provide the same information for all managing agencies or organizations.

**Designation Letter** - If the trail is designated as an NWT, a letter of designation will be delivered along with the NWTs Certificate to the street address of the managing agency/organization. The Trail Manager's name will be on the letter. However, if you would

like a different name (e.g. department head, mayor, president of the organization, etc.) and/or address to appear on the letter, please enter the information here. below. The information collected in this section will appear on the official designation letter.

**SECTION 4: OWNER CONSENT & STATE SUPPORT** In this section documents which fill the two requirements of owner consent and state support should be listed and described. In this section, please upload the appropriate documents to address the following requirements if they apply to your trail:

1. All public and private property owners of trail lands or waters must give written consent to this application. (\*Not required if the applicant is the sole owner of the property).
2. Trails on State, local government, or private land (anything other than Federal) must have a statement of support from the State Trails Administrator/Coordinator.

**SECTION 5: PHOTO, MAP & LOGO** In this section a representative water trail photograph and water trail map should be provided. These materials will be used in press releases and on the NWTS website. If you do not have the below products or information, please refer to the 'Mapping Toolbox' located on the NWTS website. This toolbox includes detailed instructions on how to create a map product and determine an X,Y coordinate using free internet programs. Examples are also provided.

**Photographs** - At least one photograph which is representative of the water trail needs to be submitted with the application. Multiple photographs can be submitted, and are encouraged.

**Maps** - In addition, at least one map of the water trail needs to be submitted. The map should provide basic location information of the water trail and access points as well as nearby landmarks such as cities and roads.

**Logo** - If available, a logo specific to the water trail should be provided as well.

The photographs, maps, and logo need to be of high-resolution and quality. A brief description of what is contained in each item that will orient the reader should be provided, as well as photo credits.

**Mapping Information** - A single X, Y coordinate for the water trail needs to be provided in Section 1 of the application. The coordinate system or source of the X, Y coordinate also needs to be provided. This information will be transformed into a single point on a map within the NWTS website. The coordinate should be representative of your trail's overall location (the center line of the trail system, the main access point, etc.). Including a file of additional access point coordinate information is encouraged.

**SECTION 6: ADDITIONAL APPLICATION MATERIALS** This section outlines how the application and all supporting materials should be submitted for review. In this section you may upload more photos and maps, brochures, letters or resolutions of support, mapping information and additional websites. A description of the types of supporting materials is provided.

**SECTION 7: SIGNATURE PAGE** The signature page certifies that the trail is available and open for public use. Please read and ensure each statement is true, then sign and upload a scanned version of the document.