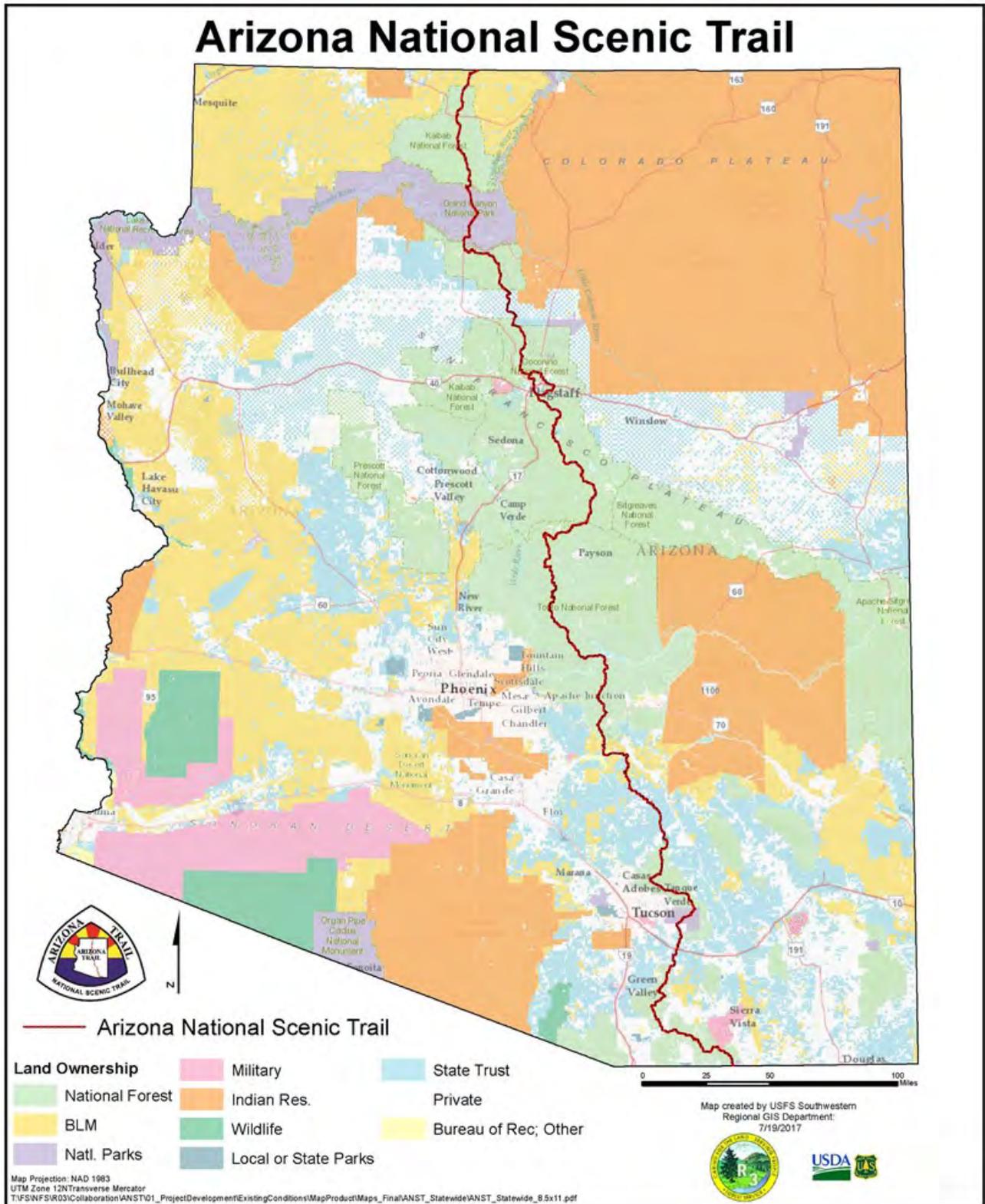


# Planning for the Future of the Arizona National Scenic Trail

## Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan

Public Scoping Document





Arizona National Scenic Trail route

## What is the Arizona National Scenic Trail?

The Arizona National Scenic Trail (Arizona Trail) stretches 800 miles across Arizona from Mexico to the Utah border, showcasing the state's diverse vegetation, wildlife, wilderness and scenery, and providing unparalleled opportunities for hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians and other non-motorized trail users. Initial conception of the Arizona Trail began with Dale Shewalter, who, in the 1980s, shared his vision of a trail connecting communities, mountains, canyons, deserts, forests, public lands, historic sites, wilderness areas, and other points of interest. The idea was embraced by trail users throughout Arizona, and by Arizona State Parks, the Forest Service, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and State, county, and local governments. The Arizona Trail Association (<http://www.aztrail.org/>), a non-profit organization established in 1994, became an organized voice for the trail, increasing awareness, raising funds, providing comprehensive trail information for trail users, and building a volunteer workforce to construct and maintain the trail. It is this sustained grassroots support that has brought the Arizona Trail to where it is today. The Arizona Trail Association continues to grow and protect, maintain, enhance, promote and sustain the Arizona National Scenic Trail as a unique encounter with the land.

When it was clear Dale Shewalter's dream was becoming a reality, the Arizona Trail Association sought national scenic trail designation. With the help of Senator John McCain and other legislators, the National Trails System Act (P.L. 90-543), through the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-11), was amended to designate the Arizona Trail a national scenic trail; one of only 11 in the nation. Because 73 percent of the trail is on National Forest System lands, responsibility for administration of the trail was assigned to the Secretary of Agriculture and subsequently delegated to the Chief of the Forest Service.



## Why do we need a comprehensive plan?

Our purpose in preparing a comprehensive plan for the Arizona National Scenic Trail, a Congressionally designated trail, is to (1) meet the legislative requirements for national scenic trails under the National Trails System Act and (2) provide a shared vision for long-term administration of the trail and coordinated management across federal and non-federal lands in order to protect the nature and purposes of the trail, the significant natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources within the trail corridor, and the nationally significant recreation experience for which the trail was designated.



## Why here and why now?

The National Trails System Act (NTSA) requires the Forest Service, as the agency charged with administering the Arizona Trail, to prepare a trail-wide comprehensive plan and submit the plan to Congress. As indicated on the map that accompanied the enabling legislation for the trail ([https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd542320.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd542320.pdf)), the more than 800-mile route travels from Mexico to Utah through the Coronado, Tonto, Coconino, and Kaibab National Forests, Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Parks, Coronado National Memorial, Walnut Canyon National Monument, public lands administered by the Tucson and Arizona Strip Bureau of Land Management Field Offices, Oracle State Park, Arizona State Trust lands, and county, municipal, and private lands. We need a comprehensive plan to guide the long-term administration and management of the Arizona Trail as a single entity and to represent an “all lands” shared vision for trail connectivity, stewardship, and services along the length of the trail across all jurisdictions.

## The comprehensive plan will:

- Establish trail-wide guidance to define how resources are to be protected and visitor uses and experiences are to be achieved;
- Consider the concerns, expectations and values of the public and landowners along the trail and define the role of managers and partners to ensure management decisions promote the efficient use of public resources; and
- Provide direction for addressing the unique challenges and demands of protecting the resources, qualities, values and associated settings of the trail and its corridor, and the outstanding opportunities for a diversity of non-motorized recreation experiences.

## What will the comprehensive plan contain?

The National Trails System Act requires we develop a comprehensive plan for the acquisition, management, development, and use of a national scenic trail, and establishes direction for comprehensive planning.



### Key components of this comprehensive plan will:

- describe the nature and purposes of the trail, including primary trail uses and the desired trail experience;
- describe the trail corridor, including significant natural, historical, and cultural resources to be preserved;
- delineate the minimum management corridor needed to protect the Arizona Trail and its associated resources, qualities, values and uses;
- identify objectives and practices for protecting the trail and its corridor;
- provide guidelines for trail standards, facility development, trail marking, and visitor capacity;
- provide recommendations for protecting lands through acquisition, easements or agreements that include details for cooperating with local landowners to manage the trail.

## How do we accomplish our vision for the future?

Planning for the future of the Arizona National Scenic Trail is a decision-making process, and comprehensive planning is the broadest level of decision-making for national trails. Our comprehensive planning team will conduct the environmental analysis necessary to establish the comprehensive plan in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The comprehensive plan is a long-term programmatic plan designed to provide guidance and recommendations for future actions that would be pursued through local agency land management plans, project-specific NEPA analyses, and agreements with land owners and land managers.

An essential element in developing the comprehensive plan is involving you, the public, to help us determine the range of resource conditions and visitor experiences that should be achieved and maintained over time. With the help of land managers, partners and interested groups, tribes, and individuals, we will explore options and opportunities for the Arizona Trail and develop a successful comprehensive plan.



## Preliminary Concerns and Opportunities Identified

One of the first steps in any planning process is the discovery phase in which we gather initial ideas about what the plan should address. We began the process of identifying issues and opportunities for the trail in 2011 and 2012, by interviewing Arizona Trail supporters, users, and land managers. We conducted four public workshops and two workshops with Arizona Trail Association members. Through the collaborative energies of these trail users, stakeholders, advocates and members of the general public, together with federal, state, and local agencies, we defined significant values and identified trends, challenges, and opportunities associated with the Arizona Trail.

Feedback from this initial public sensing, along with the assessment of current conditions conducted by our interdisciplinary planning team, have helped us to identify a preliminary set of issues and opportunities related to the Arizona Trail. The following topics, together with other concerns and opportunities that may be identified, could be addressed as part of the comprehensive planning effort.

- Portions of the designated route are located on motorized routes (roads and trails);
- Some current management designations along the route include uses that substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail;
- The unavailability of potable water makes portions of the trail unusable for several months of the year;
- In some sections, insufficient or inconsistent trail maintenance and signing pose safety concerns and detract from national scenic trail values;
- Equestrian and mountain bike use is not adequately accommodated along the length of the trail;
- Trail use and events on the Arizona National Scenic Trail are increasing and need to be managed in a way that does not detract from the trail experience and opportunities for all users;
- Other existing or proposed land uses along the designated route create impacts that damage scenic resources and the recreation experience of visitors in the short term and, in some cases could permanently damage the values for which the trail was designated.
- Connecting the trail to nearby communities supports economic growth and community development.

Land managers and the Arizona Trail Association continue to make significant improvement to the Arizona Trail through re-alignments and improved signage, access, and maintenance. Non-the-less, these core challenges remain, as well as the opportunities principal to future management decisions.

## The Proposed Action

The National Environmental Policy Act and the implementing regulations for each of the federal agencies with responsibilities for the Arizona National Scenic Trail require assessment of the potential environmental impacts of management actions on federal lands. Our proposal addressing the need to take action, our evaluation of the relevant environmental effects, and the components of the comprehensive plan that require NEPA analysis, apply to those portions of the trail traversing federal lands. The proposed action would guide the coordinated, long-term administration and management of federal lands within the trail corridor, and on non-federal lands where the Arizona National Scenic Trail exists within federally managed rights-of-way or easements, or where it is managed through intergovernmental or cooperative agreements.

### Elements of the proposed action include:

- Nature and purposes unique to the Arizona National Scenic Trail, including the desired key characteristics of the trail experience and the primary trail uses [NTSA Sec. 7(c)];
- Recommended trail route relocations that provide for maximum outdoor recreation potential and for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities along the route [NTSA Sec. 3(a)];
- Connecting and side trails to provide additional public access or additional recreational opportunities [NTSA Sec. 6; FSM 2353.32];
- A trail management corridor of sufficient width to manage the trail in accordance with its nature and purposes and provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the associated significant resources [NTSA Sec. 3(a)];
- Objectives and practices for managing the trail corridor, including the identification of significant natural, historical, and cultural resources to be preserved, to ensure the values for which the trail was established remain intact [NTSA Sec. 5(e); EO 13195];
- An identified carrying capacity and/or the process and criteria for determining carrying capacity of the trail and a plan for its implementation [NTSA Sec. 5(e)].



So that you can better understand how each of these elements fits into the comprehensive plan, we have described each of them in more detail, below.

## Nature and Purposes

The nature and purposes of a national scenic trail define the ideal trail setting and the context for what types of uses and activities are appropriate for the trail and its corridor. The nature and purposes are critical to the proper protection and management of national scenic trails and can be derived, in part, from Sec. 3(a)(2) and Sec. 7(c) of the National Trails System Act.

The nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail broadly define the desired key characteristics of the trail setting and experience and establish the context for appropriate activities and uses for the trail and its management corridor. In developing the nature and purposes, we have looked to the basic intent of the National Trails System Act, subsequent executive orders, elements of legislative history, and to the original vision for the Arizona Trail for guidance. If you are interested in how we established the nature and purposes of the trail, you can view the background document on the project website.

### **Nature:**

---

The Arizona National Scenic Trail is a primitive, non-motorized long-distance route that preserves and showcases the unique and diverse scenic, natural, historic and cultural treasures of Arizona and our nation. The Trail experience provides opportunities for quality recreation, self-reliance and discovery within a corridor of open space defined by the spectacular natural landscapes of the state.

---

### **Purposes:**

- 
- Connecting deserts, mountains, forests, wilderness, canyons, communities, and people;
  - Linking existing and new trail segments to form a continuous pathway south to north across the state;
  - Providing high quality recreation and educational experiences for Arizona's residents and visitors;
  - Promoting land stewardship in the development and use of the trail in a way that cultivates appreciation and protection of the State's natural and cultural resources as a legacy for future generations;
  - Promoting multiple non-motorized trail uses, primarily hiking, horseback riding, mountain biking, and cross-country skiing on a shared trail while observing local land management objectives;
  - Continuing the existing model of public-private partnership to create and maintain a long-distance trail.
  - Offering wildness, remoteness and solitude while providing opportunities for day use as well as longer treks.
-

## Trail Route Relocations

A segment of a national scenic trail corridor may be relocated to preserve the nature and purposes for which the trail was established and to promote sound multiple-use management. We may need to relocate segments of the designated trail route in order to provide for the nature and purposes of the trail and to harmonize with existing land management plans.

An ‘optimal location review process’ has been drafted for the Arizona Trail, which establishes the framework for locating or relocating segments of the trail. Arizona Trail partners may initiate the optimal location review process to resolve situations where the trail experience and character are impaired due to:

- land uses and developments that alter the recreation setting and scenery;
- severe ecosystem disturbance events such as floods or fires;
- safety concerns;
- conflicts with motorized vehicles or other uses incompatible with the trail’s nature and purposes;
- trail sustainability and maintenance issues; or
- unique circumstances such as newly identified habitat for an endangered species.

Potential trail route relocations will be recommended in the comprehensive plan, but individual decisions to relocate specific segments of the trail will be made by relevant managing agencies under separate NEPA review and using the Arizona Trail optimal location review process, which will be part of the comprehensive plan.

## Connecting and Side Trails

Connecting and side trails may be established, designated, and marked as components of a national scenic trail to provide additional public access or additional recreation opportunities. Connecting and side trails must support the resources, qualities, values, associated settings, and the primary use or uses of the national scenic trail.

A connecting trail may provide access to a national scenic trail from an urban area, local community, or remote trailhead built specifically to access the national trail. A connecting trail may connect national recreation, scenic, and historic trails to one another or provide a loop experience for a national trail. A side trail provides an additional single point of public access to a special feature that enhances a visitors experience as they travel the national trail.

A process for approving future connecting and side trails will be part of the comprehensive plan. We will identify existing trails to be designated as connecting and side trails to the Arizona Trail using the approval process from the comprehensive plan, including review of federal agency, State, county and municipal trails plans, and in coordination with the Arizona Trail Association. A preliminary list of potential connecting and side trails is located in appendix A.

## Trail Management Corridor

The trail management corridor is the area managed to provide for the conservation and enjoyment of the nationally significant scenic, historic, natural, or cultural qualities and to ensure that the values for which the trail was established remain intact. The corridor is an area similar to a management area found in programmatic land management plans, managed primarily for the Arizona Trail experience and used to focus administration, management and protection for the trail, its nature and purposes, and its associated qualities, values and settings.

We are proposing a minimum corridor width of ½ mile either side of the centerline of the trail (one mile wide) on federal lands. We could propose a management corridor of greater than one mile where we have identified significant resources, so those features that enhance and protect the trail setting and experience are incorporated in the management area. These might include such things as important viewsheds, outstanding geologic formations, or cultural sites.

For lands managed through cooperative agreements with State and local government agency jurisdictions, or on private lands, the corridor will be defined by a number of factors, including the boundaries and terms of legal rights-of-way or easements, terms of cooperative agreements, and local policy and ordinance documents.

## **Objectives and Practices**

Objectives and practices provide fundamental direction to ensure the national scenic trail values are preserved and the nature and purposes of the trail are realized. The objectives and practices define conditions to be achieved and practices used to maintain the desired characteristics of the trail experience and protect resources across management boundaries. They direct the overall management of the trail and guide the development of land management plan standards and guidelines and site specific project planning within the trail corridor. Objectives and practices may apply to the entire trail or they may apply only to certain landscape settings, visitor opportunities, or land allocations across the trail.

Objectives and practices provide comprehensive direction to inform the development of federal land management plan components, and to guide the oversight and protection of the trail on non-federal lands.

Objectives and practices specific to the Arizona Trail will be developed as a part of this proposal through public and agency contribution, and analysis of resource conditions and social impacts related to the desired trail experience. A list of preliminary objectives and practices is located in appendix B.

## **Visitor Capacity Parameters**

Identifying visitor capacity, or carrying capacity, of the trail is required by the National Trails System Act and is an important tool for achieving and maintaining desired conditions. Visitor capacities may vary across time (e.g., season, day of week) and from site to site and segment to segment, depending on the desired conditions and issues of the specific area.

Visitor capacity provisions will be identified through public and agency contribution, and analysis of resource conditions and social impacts related to the desired trail experience. These provisions will include specific visitor use management objectives and practices that are related to desired conditions for the Arizona Trail, including the general types and levels of visitor use that can be appropriately accommodated by the Trail without adversely affecting the nature and purposes of the trail. The general visitor capacity will be an approximation, given the Arizona Trail is hundreds of miles in length and crosses multiple jurisdictions, and visitor capacity research and data may not exist. Where applicable, visitor capacities may be defined by site, segment, or area.

We will develop an implementation plan for addressing the identified visitor capacities as a component of the comprehensive plan. The implementation plan will incorporate monitoring and studies to identify and refine visitor capacity numbers and ranges along identified segments of the Arizona Trail, and identify priority segments for study.

Currently, Grand Canyon and Saguaro National Parks have established user capacity limits for overnight camping along the trail route.



## The Planning Schedule

As we move through the planning process and development of the comprehensive plan, it is critical that we continue to work with all interested parties to build on successes and adjust areas of concern. There will be several opportunities to provide ideas and comments. General time frames of our planning activities and opportunities for formal comment periods are listed below.

<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Planning Activity</b>	<b>Opportunity to Participate</b>
2011 to present	<b>Planning start up</b> Assemble planning team; complete public sensing; outline preliminary issues and concerns; map the process; gather existing condition data	Ask to be added to our project mailing list
Summer – Fall 2017	<b>Identify project context</b> Reaffirm the national significance of the trail; gather public input on the desired visitor experience and resource conditions; continue to gather data	<b>Scoping comment period</b> Read the purpose and need and proposed action and send us your comments
Winter 2017-2018	<b>Identify issues and develop alternatives</b> Based on data and input from agencies, partners and interested groups and individuals, develop possible options for desired future conditions and management along the trail	Visit the project website to view a newsletter on the topics raised and how those topics fit into alternatives for trail management
Winter 2018-2019	<b>Present the draft comprehensive plan and environmental assessment</b> Release a draft comprehensive plan and analysis of potential impacts of the proposed action and alternatives	<b>30 day legal comment period</b> Read the draft comprehensive plan and environmental analysis and send us your comments
Fall 2019	<b>Present the comprehensive plan, environmental assessment and draft decision notice</b> Release the comprehensive plan and environmental assessment, revised and adjusted based on public and internal review, comments and environmental analysis; present a draft decision	<b>Opportunity to object</b> Read the final comprehensive plan, environmental analysis, and draft decision. You have the opportunity to submit an objection if you feel we have not given your previous specific written comments adequate consideration
Winter 2019-2020	<b>Sign the decision notice and implement the comprehensive plan</b>	Enjoy the Arizona National Scenic Trail; hike the trail and/or become a trail partner



## Appendix A – Potential Connecting and Side Trails

### Arizona National Scenic Trail potential connecting and side trails

Trail Name / #	Passage # - Name	Jurisdiction	Values	Comments
<b>Connecting Trails</b>				
Sabino Canyon Trail 23	11 - Santa Catalina Mountains	Santa Catalina RD, Coronado NF	AZT connection to Sabino Canyon Recreation Area	Extremely popular connection urban population
Wilderness Bypass multiple trails & numbers	11 - Bypasses Santa Catalina Mountains	Santa Catalina RD, Coronado NF	The only route for equestrians and mountain bikes to go around wilderness and equestrian impassable trail	Popular for downhill mountain bike use.
Legends of Superior Trail (LOST)	18 - Reavis Canyon	Globe RD, Tonto NF and private	Access to gateway community of Superior, historic area	A re-route is planned that will avoid impacts from highway realignment
Frazier Trail 120	19 - Superstition Wilderness	Mesa RD, Tonto NF	Access from Frazier CG and Roosevelt Lake to AZT	Important equestrian access site for Superstitions
Navajo Spring Trail	30 - Mormon Lake	Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF and private	Access to gateway community of Mormon Lake Village	
Proposal - Walnut Canyon National Monument connection	31 - Walnut Canyon	Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF and Walnut Canyon NM	Authorized connection to the National Monument	This would require construction of single track trail and approval by Forest Service and National Park Service
Tusayan Greenway	37 - Grand Canyon South Rim	Tusayan RD, Kaibab NF and private	Important access to gateway community of Tusayan.	Paved and entering urban area
<b>Side Trails</b>				
Coronado Peak Trail	1 - Huachuca Mountains	Coronado National Memorial	Views of Mexico	
Miller Peak - Trail # 105	1 - Huachuca Mountains	Sierra Vista RD, Coronado NF	Highest point in Huachuca Mountains; views of Mexico, San Rafael Valley, San Pedro Valley	
Ramsey Canyon Trail 122	1 - Huachuca Mountains	Sierra Vista RD, Coronado NF and private	Connects to The Nature Conservancy's Ramsey Canyon Preserve	Potential if TNC is in favor
Mt Lemmon - 12	11 - Santa Catalina Mountains	Santa Catalina RD, Coronado NF	Highest point in Santa Catalina Mountains	
Aspen Loop Nature Trail - 93	34 - San Francisco Peaks	Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF	Access and outstanding fall colors	

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Trail Name / #	Passage # - Name	Jurisdiction	Values	Comments
Battle of Big Dry Wash	28 - Blue Ridge	Mogollon Rim RD, Coconino NF	Connection to interesting historic site	Current route follows road. This would require construction of single track trail.
Mormon Mountain Trail to Peak	30 - Mormon Lake	Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF	Views of Mormon Lake area	
McMillan Mesa Trail, Buffalo Park Loop	33 - Flagstaff resupply	Flagstaff Parks	Dale Shewalter Memorial	
Humphrey's Peak	34 - San Francisco Peaks	Flagstaff RD, Coconino NF and private	Highest peak in Arizona.	Sacred site

## Appendix B – Preliminary Objectives and Practices

Reference #	Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail
	<b>Trail Corridor</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
1	The Arizona Trail is protected as a continuous off-road corridor for superlative recreation, in a desirable location, buffered (or relocated) wherever possible from developments and activities incompatible with the nature and purposes of the trail. Diversity in land character and land use along the trail corridor will be sustained.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
2	Land management plans (private, municipal, county, State, federal) will provide guidance to protect the Arizona Trail corridor.
	<b>Practices:</b>
3	Trail corridor protection strategies shall closely follow the authorities of the National Trails System Act (16 USC 1246), using public lands whenever possible. Partners are encouraged to identify, evaluate, and preserve trail-related resources. State, local, and private parties are encouraged to protect the trail. In cases of federal land acquisition, the minimum width corridor necessary to protect the trail shall be acquired.
4	To protect resources directly associated with the Arizona Trail, a management corridor of no less than one-half mile either side of the centerline of the Arizona Trail shall be designated on federal lands, and on non-federal lands when supported by cooperative agreements with land owners, local policy, and ordinance documents.
5	Work with the Arizona Trail Association, adjacent landowners, partner groups, governments, and agencies to maintain the trail corridor and natural character of the surrounding landscape. Consider working with land trust(s) to acquire conservation easements in areas where private land is critical to scenery.
6	Adjacent land uses that complement the protection, education, and interpretation of the Arizona Trail and the natural, historic, scenic, and cultural resources within the trail corridor shall be encouraged.
7	Actions or activities within the portions of the trail that cross through federal wilderness areas will not conflict with the purposes of the Wilderness Act.
8	Adverse effects of Arizona Trail activities on adjoining landowners and land users shall be minimized.
9	New temporary and/or permanent road or motorized trail construction across or adjacent to the Arizona Trail corridor should be avoided unless needed for resource protection, access to private lands, or to protect public health and safety.
10	Where the Arizona Trail corridor aligns with important wildlife corridors, consider expansion of the Arizona Trail corridor to protect the wildlife corridors.
	<b>Trail Alignment, Relocation, and Acquisition</b>
	<b>Objectives:</b>
11	Realign or relocate the trail when natural, cultural or historic resource impacts cannot be mitigated, including in areas where threatened and endangered species are the management priority.
	<b>Practices:</b>

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
12	Route location and relocation will follow the Arizona Trail Optimum Location Review process.
13	Acquire private inholdings within the Arizona Trail corridor if there are risks to scenery, especially in foreground areas (½ mile from the trail), where landowners are willing to sell.
14	Relocate sections of the Arizona Trail for purposes of special-status species and/or critical habitat protection only when other mitigation alternatives are found to be not possible, as determined through NEPA analyses.
15	Where heavy impacts to soils or hydrology cannot be avoided or mitigated sufficiently, relocate the Arizona Trail to provide a new corridor emphasizing proper trail drainage and minimizing effects to soils.
16	Interim trail location or temporary alignments may be recognized as the Arizona Trail until the trail's permanent, single-track location is established or reestablished for a given segment.
	<b>Connecting and Side Trails</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
17	All designated connecting and side trails are compatible with the nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
18	Identify and mark designated connecting and side trails as part of the Arizona Trail.
19	Facilitate an open process for application and evaluation of additional connecting and side trails every 2 years.
	<b>Practices:</b>
20	All designated connecting and side trails will be marked, signed and identified on the ground and in public materials as part of the Arizona Trail system.
21	All designated connecting and side trails will be constructed and maintained to Arizona Trail trail standards, which will include the development of a Trail Management Objective.
	<b>Trail Condition and Maintenance</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
22	The Arizona Trail corridor is sustainable with no major soil erosion, water drainage, or water quality concerns caused by the use and management of the trail or other land uses within the corridor.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
23	Develop trail management objectives for the length of the Arizona Trail in coordination with land managers and the Arizona Trail Association.
24	Trail databases will reflect the Arizona Trail on all trail segments and will use Federal Trail Data Standards.
25	Use monitoring and condition assessments to identify and prioritize areas that require actions to address erosion and drainage problems; identify relevant sustainable trail design best management practices needed for remediation.
	<b>Practices:</b>
26	Trail Management Objectives will reflect the non-motorized nature of the Arizona Trail and will accommodate equestrians and mountain bikes outside of wilderness and other areas where these uses are restricted by agency policy.

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
27	Maintain the Arizona Trail tread to minimize erosion and discourage shortcutting.
28	Identify areas of unstable soils. Prioritize trail maintenance in those areas that have maintenance issues to help ensure trail sustainability. Restore the trail and trail corridor where there are existing trail erosion and drainage problems and impacts.
29	Consult management plans (municipal, county/state, federal) to provide guidance to protect hydrology and soils within the Arizona Trail corridor.
30	Near towns and developed recreation facilities, the Arizona Trail may become a more accessible and highly developed route with access to amenities via connector trails.
31	Allow use of trail machines for the purpose of maintaining or constructing the Arizona Trail, when approved by the local manager, to achieve sustainable design objectives.
	<b>Facilities</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
32	Infrastructure and facilities are rarely seen and are constructed in such a way as to be compatible with the scenic, natural, historic, and cultural qualities for which the trail was established.
33	Visitor facilities enable visitors to learn about and experience the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
34	Facilities are installed in a way that provides a safe environment for public, forest users, livestock and wildlife.
	<b>Practices:</b>
35	Develop only the minimum facilities necessary to allow an enjoyable visitor experience. Such facilities should not interfere with the chief purposes and uses of the trail.
36	Recreation and trailhead facilities should blend into the surrounding landscape, use indigenous materials, and conform to accepted trail design and construction standards.
37	Trailheads are conveniently placed and, where equestrian use is common, provide sufficient parking space for vehicles pulling trailers.
38	Accessibility shall be provided where appropriate. All structures open to the public shall be fully accessible and if not they will be retrofitted as funding becomes available.
39	In areas where cross country travel should not occur, install physical barriers such as boulders, ripped soils, or ditches. Where these measures are not sufficient, install signs or fencing.
40	Install pack stock friendly gates at all fence crossings.
41	Remove facilities that are no longer useful or desired and restore natural conditions.
	<b>Signage</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
42	Signing along the Arizona Trail fosters appropriate public use and enjoyment.
43	Signage is unobtrusive and sufficient for Arizona Trail visitors to find nearby recreation sites, trailheads, and access points.

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
	<b>Objectives:</b>
44	The trail route is uniformly marked with the trail's official logo as outlined in the trail marking guidelines in the comprehensive plan.
	<b>Practices:</b>
45	A uniform trail route marker is used throughout the trail [7c].
46	Signing on private lands will be coordinated with the landowners.
47	Side and connecting trails will have a marker that differentiates them from the main trail.
48	Connecting road segments, or interim trail segments, are marked linking non-motorized trail tread segments.
49	Where practicable, identify and mark mechanized use bypass routes around sections of the Arizona Trail, in coordination with the Arizona Trail Association, where such use is precluded by law or policy.
50	All agencies should display the Arizona Trail logo on facilities, and at access points and interpretive sites.
51	Ensure that Arizona Trail signs (trailhead, trail, road, etc.) are maintained in good condition. Signing should comply with managing agency guidance. Where no such guidance exists, follow Forest Service Sign and Poster Guidelines.
52	The Arizona Trail administrator will provide signs and markers for all non-federal trail segments.
53	Signs developed for detours, seasonal closures, restrictions, or safety purposes will be highly visible and placed along the trail to provide sufficient notice of route changes and safety concerns to trail users.
54	Placement of memorials will follow existing federal, state and local policies.
	<b>Information and Interpretation</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
55	Visitors understand and appreciate the Arizona Trail's history, significance and unique place within the State of Arizona.
56	Trailside interpretation and related interpretive services fully communicate the Arizona Trail story to the public.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
57	All public information will provide the visitors a sense of the Arizona Trail nature and purposes.
58	Public information will be coordinated among Arizona Trail partners, including the Arizona Trail Association, to provide consistency and user-friendliness.
59	Arizona Trail interpretive sites are developed at the lowest possible cost in partnership with federal agencies, the State of Arizona, local governments and the Arizona Trail Association.
	<b>Practices:</b>
60	Public information (including maps, brochures, books, interpretive sites, etc.) will be kept accurate and up to date.
61	Information describing the Arizona Trail is provided at facilities and access points along the trail.
62	Public trip-planning services will be provided to ensure a quality visit to the trail and its associated sites.

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail
63	Coordinate information services and publicity among partners, including sand with the Arizona Trail Association, to enable the public to plan and optimize their Arizona Trail experience.
64	Public understanding of both land management roles and private landowner rights along the trail will be fostered.
65	Provide advance public notification, including notifying the Arizona Trail Association, when planned project activities, detours, seasonal closures, restrictions, or safety purposes, require closure of the Arizona Trail in order to minimize visitor impacts.
66	<p>Develop informational, interpretative and other outreach methods to increase public awareness of and protection of resources, including, but not limited to the following, as necessary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• discouraging cross-country travel or stopping in sensitive areas or during sensitive periods;</li> <li>• minimizing trash, debris, and other attractants to wildlife scavengers, predators, and competitors;</li> <li>• mitigating conflicts with livestock grazing along the trail, including signage on gates instructing visitors to leave gates the way they find them</li> <li>• preventing the introduction of noxious weeds presence and minimizing harm to natural environments;</li> <li>• promoting of Leave-No-Trace principals.</li> </ul>
67	Promote weed free hay, pellets or processed grain among equestrian users to prevent spread of weeds.
68	A coordinated, consistent, and flexible interpretation program will be based on trail-wide themes, reflecting Arizona Trail significant resources, recent research and cultural history.
69	On-site managers will be responsible for individual interpretive site development.
70	When possible, interpretive services shall be the responsibility of local jurisdictions and organizations.
71	Collaborate with, tribes, communities and preservation partners to identify cultural landscapes, Arizona Trail segments and cultural resources suitable for education interpretation and public use.
72	Select materials for signs that are vandal-resistant and minimize maintenance costs.
73	Where appropriate provide signing and information in English and Spanish.
	<b>Visitor Use</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
74	The level of visitor use is compatible with the nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail and complements the significant natural, historical and cultural resources.
75	Visitor use capacity is managed to preserve and protect the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
76	Monitor visitor use on the Arizona Trail using such indicators as volume, type, temporal use patters, and visitor attitudes/preferences.
77	Complete site specific studies in high visitor use areas to determine proper use levels, management actions, and public outreach efforts to prevent degradation of the visitors trail experience as well as prevent impacts to natural and cultural resources.
78	Identify, by applicable trail segments, a visitor capacity to provide a baseline for effective monitoring and management.

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail
	<b>Practices:</b>
79	Visitor use monitoring and capacity studies will be developed by an interagency working group adhering to the best practices developed by the Interagency Visitor Use Management Council. This monitoring will including an assessment of user types and trends using existing visitor use monitoring programs as available. Include specific sites targeted for Arizona Trail visitation monitoring.
80	Consider visitor use limitations only when other mitigation are determined to be unsuccessful through monitoring.
81	Implement measures to minimize user conflicts.
	<b>Recreation Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
82	The Arizona Trail is continuous from the Mexican border to Utah which allows hikers, equestrians and mountain bikers to travel the full length of the trail to experience the beautiful scenic resources found within the unique ecosystems of Arizona.
83	The Arizona Trail provides both short and long distance non-motorized recreation opportunities in mainly remote and primitive settings representative of the dramatic natural landscapes and varied vegetation of Arizona.
84	The Arizona Trail provides users with a diversity of outstanding recreational experiences that highlight the diverse natural, cultural and heritage resources that are unique to the State of Arizona.
85	The Arizona Trail corridor is managed to provide a recreation opportunity spectrum setting of primitive in areas that are remote and away from development, and semi-primitive non-motorized in areas near urban centers or where development is present.
86	The Arizona Trail provides users with an opportunity to experience solitude and unconfined recreation and other characteristics associated with wilderness areas.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
87	Visitors are provided a wide range of appropriate non-motorized recreational opportunities to fully experience the Arizona Trail.
88	Coordinate a coherent Arizona Trail recreation experience which serves a wide diversity of users.
89	Safe public recreation, enjoyment, appreciation, and understanding of the trail and its related sites shall characterize the visitor's recreation experience along the trail.
90	The desired recreation opportunity spectrum classes (summer and winter) shall compliment the desired settings and opportunities along the Arizona Trail.
91	Recreational experiences shall reflect the recreation opportunity spectrum that is appropriate for each trail segment.
92	Where practicable, identify equestrian and mountain bike bypass routes around sections of the Arizona Trail where such use is restricted by law or policy.
93	Resolve travel management designations on Arizona Trail sections that conflict with the non-motorized use objectives.
94	Relocate the Arizona Trail off of existing roads.
	<b>Practices:</b>

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
95	Management actions should not result in recreation setting changes from less to more developed, particularly within the foreground (½ mile) of the Arizona Trail.
96	Federal, state and local agencies shall prohibit motorized use, including over the snow, on the Arizona Trail except as provided under the NTSA (Sec. 7(c)), or where the trail tread is located concurrently with an open road.
97	When developing or revising travel management plans, agencies shall strive to reduce the miles of existing motorized routes within ½ mile of the Arizona Trail and avoid designating new motorized routes.
98	When developing or revising travel management plans, agencies shall consider closing existing motorized routes that cross or parallel the Arizona Trail.
99	The Arizona Trail shall not be re-located onto motorized routes.
	<b>Scenery Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
100	High-quality natural scenery is preserved along the Arizona Trail
101	A consistent identity (look and feel) of trail facilities is recognized across the trail alignment for a continuous long distance trail experience.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
102	Restore scenery where there are existing impacts.
103	In developed areas and locations where preservation or restoration is not possible, minimize scenic impacts to the trail corridor.
104	Address all areas mapped as visual priority 1 to protect scenery. Address visual priority 2 issues as opportunities present themselves.
105	Develop design guidelines for trail facilities and utilize as facilities are constructed or replaced. Build on styles the Arizona Trail Association and agencies have already implemented, such as the use of weathering steel for gates.
106	Advocate for dark skies initiatives throughout regions of the state of Arizona the Arizona Trail passes through.
	<b>Practices:</b>
107	To protect or enhance the scenic qualities of the Arizona Trail, management activities should be consistent with, or make progress toward achieving, scenic integrity objectives of high or very high within the foreground of the trail (up to ½ mile either side).
108	Protect scenic resources identified for each passage. Evaluate impacts and threats identified and work to resolve each. Use scenic character descriptions and viewshed mapping during project planning and NEPA analyses.
109	Ensure a landscape architect or recreation specialist with knowledge of scenery management is involved in proposed projects that would impact scenery visible from the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Special Uses Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
110	The nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail are protected when considering proposals for activities in and near the trail's corridor.
	<b>Objectives:</b>

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
111	Evaluation of new special uses on the Arizona Trail will take into account time of year, duration of the event or authorization, potential effects on trail users, and the cumulative impact of other ongoing events and special uses in that region of the Arizona Trail corridor.
112	Special use activities are coordinated with managing agency recreation/trails staff, the Arizona Trail Administrator, and the ATA, to provide for proper protections and potential mitigations for the Arizona Trail and its users.
	<b>Practices:</b>
113	Where commercial use of the Arizona Trail is consistent with its nature and purposes, permits for the activities will be issued by the local land managing agency.
114	To ensure compatibility with Arizona Trail values, issue only temporary recreation special use permits in the absence of monitoring of effects of the permitted activity on Arizona Trail desired conditions or objectives.
115	When evaluating competitive event applications, consider whether the event objectives can be met by utilizing other trails in the area entirely or partially to lessen impacts on Arizona Trail users and on the trail. Ensure monitoring and remediation requirements for physical impacts caused by events are stipulated in permits.
116	Do not authorize outfitter and guide activities that would cause substantial interference with the purposes of the trail or displacement of trail users.
117	New permits shall not be issued for motorized events on or crossing the Arizona Trail; existing permits should be reviewed for compatibility.
118	Avoid placement of new utility corridors and communication facilities across the trail by choosing alternate locations. If there is no feasible alternate location, co-locate with existing utility corridors and facilities.
119	Bury transmission lines where feasible.
120	Impacts from new utility corridors must be sufficiently mitigated to preserve and protect the nature and purposes of the trail and the long distance trail experience.
121	Consider trail relocation as a means of mitigation where no other alternatives exist.
122	Linear utilities and rights-of-way should be limited to a single crossing.
	<b>Heritage/Cultural Resource Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
123	Significant cultural and historical features along the Arizona Trail are preserved.
124	Culture and history is interpreted along the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
125	Conduct cultural inventories of identified cultural resources in areas where there have been no previous inventories or inventories are incomplete.
126	Historic properties will be evaluated for their eligibility to the National Register of Historic Places.
127	Identify and develop management recommendations for all cultural and heritage resources along the Arizona Trail. Preserve and protect archaeological resources in situ where ever practical

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
128	Develop a programmatic agreement for the long-term management of the cultural resources along the Arizona Trail in partnership with all of the land managing agencies, the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation and the Tribes.
	<b>Practices:</b>
129	Locational and other sensitive information about archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties will be considered confidential and treated in accordance with current regulations, policies and laws (National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 800).
130	Archaeological data will be managed by the land manager or land managing agency using current standards (National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 800).
131	Proposed ground disturbing activity conducted along the trail will be subject to review by a professional archaeologist associated with the land managing agencies in consultation with the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office and associated tribe or tribes, if appropriate (National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 800).
132	All archaeological inventories will be conducted by archaeologists who meet the Secretary of Interior Professional Qualification Standards (National Historic Preservation Act, 36 CFR 800).
133	Encourage research to enhance knowledge; understanding and appreciation of the Arizona Trail related resources and their historical significance.
134	Engage with affected tribes and communities to identify and protect areas of local ethnographic and historical interest within the Arizona Trail corridor.
135	Collaborate with, tribes, communities and preservation partners to promote protection of heritage and cultural resources and to identify cultural landscapes and cultural resources suitable for education interpretation and public use.
136	Permit traditional practitioners to access tribal cultural properties or other important areas for ceremonial use and privacy to conduct ceremonies
137	Preserve the significant visual qualities of tribal cultural properties consistent with the tribal cultural property eligibility determination.
	<b>Energy and Minerals Exploration Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
138	Energy and mineral exploration, development and management is consistent with the nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
139	Evaluate impacts to the Arizona Trail corridor in terms of whether they substantially interfere with the trail's nature and purposes when assessing new energy and mineral development.
	<b>Practices:</b>
140	No new surface occupancy (energy or minerals) shall occur within the Arizona Trail corridor
141	Controlled surface use stipulations shall be used within the trail corridor on federal lands and on non-federal lands where federal subsurface rights exist.
142	Agencies shall work with proponents and leasers to design and maintain facilities to preserve the visual integrity of the corridor and adjacent area.

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	<b>Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail</b>
143	Local agencies should cooperate with existing energy and mineral operations to develop mitigation measures to minimize impacts to the Arizona Trail.
144	Local agencies should partner with private landowners to protect the Trail corridor in areas of energy or mineral development.
145	Prioritize patented claims for land acquisition where owner is willing to sell.
	<b>Wildlife, Range, and Botanical Resources Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>
146	Location, use and maintenance of the Arizona Trail will be compatible with threatened, endangered, and sensitive species management. Location, use and maintenance of the Arizona Trail will be compatible with threatened, endangered, sensitive, and other desired species management direction, including agencies land management plans, and approved species guidance documents.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
147	Location, use and maintenance of the Arizona Trail will be compatible with existing livestock management boundaries and management direction, including agencies land management plans, and approved livestock permitted authorizations and guidance documents.
148	Noxious weed inventories/spread and treatment would be coordinated across jurisdictions and implemented by local agencies through their weed management plans.
149	Mitigate conflicts between trail use and livestock movements within the trail corridor.
	<b>Practices:</b>
150	Vegetation may be managed to conserve wildlife. Habitat improvements are generally complimentary to the Arizona Trail visual management and recreation opportunity spectrum guidance. However, habitat management necessary for the protection of threatened or endangered species will take precedence. An inventory of proposed, endangered, threatened and sensitive species within the trail corridor is conducted and maintained.
151	To enhance the Arizona Trail environment, wildlife and fish habitat improvements for sensitive species and desirable native species are allowed. Existing wildlife openings, such as meadows, may be maintained provided there is no conflict with land use plans. Expansion of existing openings and/or creation of new openings may occur when compatible with Arizona Trail values by using compatible methods.
152	Consider seasonal closures, restrictions, or designation of “no stopping zones” in segments of the Arizona Trail for the purposes of threatened, endangered or sensitive species protection when deemed necessary by monitoring and if no other mitigation is feasible. If seasonal closures or restrictions are required, alternative temporary routes shall be identified and clearly marked.
153	Comply with managing agency restrictions on use of goats or sheep for pack livestock to protect bighorn sheep populations.
154	Construct range improvements within the Arizona Trail corridor only if no other locations are practicable or, in the case of water improvements, strive to develop improvements that will be accessible to pack and saddle stock through agreements with permittees/lessees.
155	Where signage on livestock gates is not effective, consider installation of pedestrian gates and/or mountain bike cattleguards or the installation of self-closing gates.
	<b>Forest Health and Restoration Management</b>
	<b>Goals:</b>

Arizona National Scenic Trail Comprehensive Plan  
Public Scoping Document

Reference #	Draft Goals, Objectives and Practices for the Arizona National Scenic Trail
160	Forest health and restoration management activities within the Arizona Trail corridor protect the nature and purposes of the trail while observing best management practices for minimizing scenic and physical impacts of vegetation treatments on the trail and its corridor.
	<b>Objectives:</b>
161	Utilize timber harvesting, prescribed or managed fire and other treatments within the trail corridor when necessary to achieve forest health restoration objectives.
162	Mitigate impacts of forest health projects on the nature and purposes of the Arizona Trail and its corridor. Utilize a landscape architect or recreation specialist with knowledge of scenery management to develop mitigation measures and coordinate project planning with the Arizona Trail administrator.
163	Minimize short and long term impacts of planned vegetation treatments on Trail infrastructure and use.
	<b>Practices:</b>
164	Within the visible foreground of the Arizona Trail, mitigate short-term impacts of forest health projects to scenic integrity utilizing scenery management techniques such as screening and feathering to minimize visual impacts within and adjacent to the trail corridor.
165	The Arizona Trail shall not be used for landings or as a temporary road for any purpose.
166	Hauling or skidding along the Arizona Trail tread should be allowed only: 1) where the Arizona Trail is currently located on an open road or to address hazard tree removal, and 2) where no other haul route or skid trail options are available. Design criteria should be used to minimize impacts to the trail infrastructure and to repair the Arizona Trail to the same or better condition than before the operation began.
167	Utilize applicable design features and mitigation measures in the implementation of vegetation management projects.
168	Manage fire on or in the watersheds of the Arizona Trail using minimum impact suppression tactics or other tactics appropriate for the protection of values and resources for which the trail was designated.
169	Avoid use of the Arizona Trail for fireline.
170	To protect the trail integrity, use of heavy equipment for fireline construction within the trail corridor is permitted only on existing motorized routes.
171	Request a recreation/trail resource advisor when managing or suppressing a fire within the Arizona Trail corridor.