



Long Walk News - 2

Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study Continues

Background

Congress passed legislation in August of 2002 directing the National Park Service to conduct a study of the Long Walk of the Mescalero Apache and the Navajo people. This study would determine if Congress should designate the Long Walk as a National Historic Trail (NHT). Funding for the study was obtained in 2003, and contacts were made with the historic preservation departments of the Mescalero Apache Tribe in Mescalero, New Mexico, and the Navajo Nation in Window Rock, Arizona. A study team was brought together and official agreements were made with each tribe to work together on the study.

Over 25 meetings have been held in New Mexico and Arizona, including on the Mescalero Apache and Navajo reservations. The study team provided background information about NHTs and asked for public comment. People spoke very eloquently about Long Walk experiences and how those experiences relate to their families and continues to affect them today.

Awareness of and Sensitivity to the Long Walk History

The need for education about the context, events, and legacy of the Long Walk was the focus of many comments and discussions heard at the meetings. Awareness of the Long Walk ranged from those who were intimately



Navajo men at Fort Sumner, N.M., circa 1866
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-5C-87976 (detail)

connected and could tell very personal stories (descendents of participants) to those who had limited or no knowledge (younger tribal people, members of the general public living off- reservation).

Concerns were expressed about the need for education regardless of NHT designation, while others viewed possible designation as a way to commemorate, and thus educate, larger audiences about the Long Walk. Several people spoke of the Navajo World War II code talkers, and the length of time that had passed before that story and those participants were celebrated and honored. The need to educate both tribal young people and the larger nation/world about the Long Walk was

emphasized in many meetings. Some participants hoped that education about the Long Walk would lead to wider discussions about treaty history and historic and present tribal relations with the U.S. Government.

Discussions about the sensitivity and care required for any telling of the Long Walk story took several forms, ranging from the acceptance of personal responsibility and the need for healing, to the questioning of U.S. Government motives. Young and old alike spoke of the on- going “pain” associated with the Long Walk, resulting in the stories not being passed down from generation to generation.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends:

I thank you for your participation in this important planning effort. Many of you have spoken in the public meetings, provided written comments, or have talked and given your thoughts to one or more of the study team members. I urge you to continue to participate and give us your thoughts on the proposed alternatives noted in this newsletter. They are a reflection of the ideas collected from all the public comments. Let us know what you think of alternatives and which one you prefer. A draft of the feasibility study with a longer description of the alternatives will be out for public comment in early 2005. Please contact us if you would like a copy to review.

Both the study team and I appreciate the courage and openness displayed by many meeting attendees in discussing the Long Walk events. This painful history is difficult to talk about, but I hope that remembrance will lead to healing.

Sincerely,

Jere L. Krakow
Superintendent
National Trails System
Intermountain Region
National Park Service

What are the Proposed Draft Alternatives for the Study?

Four alternatives will form the basis of the Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study. They will be analyzed in the draft study as to their potential impacts. One, or a combination of these alternatives, will form the final recommendation to Congress regarding the establishment of an NHT.

Alternatives:

1. No Action – Existing Conditions.

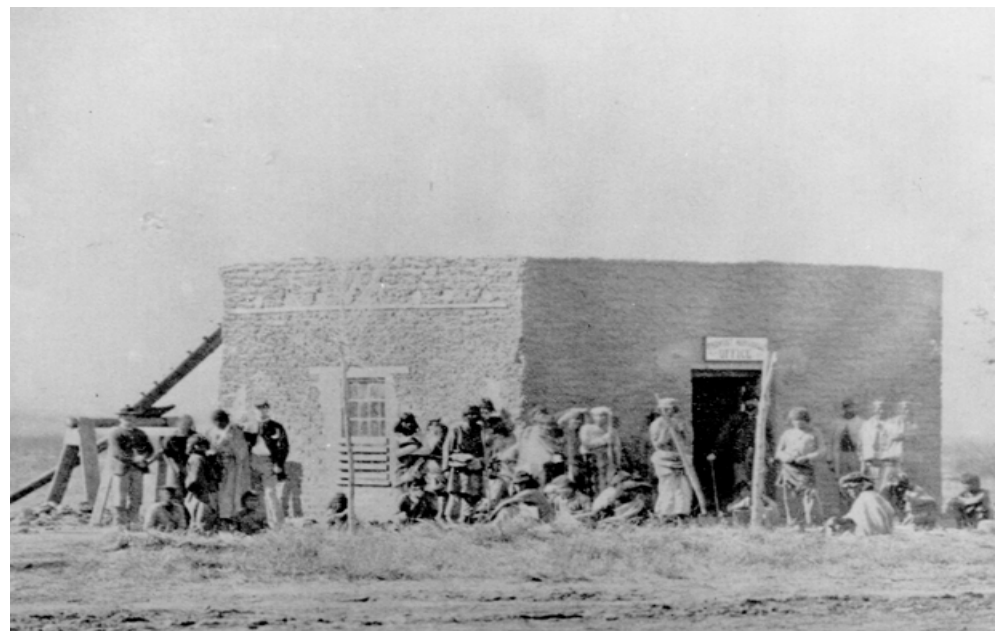
A “no action” alternative is required for an Environmental Impact Statement. No federal action would be proposed under this alternative. This alternative would not restrict the tribes or any others from taking their own actions or carrying out a program on the Long Walk.

2. Establish One National Historic Trail. One NHT would be recommended to Congress for designation. The trail would include both the Mescalero Apache route and the Navajo routes to the Bosque Redondo. This NHT would have one name such

as “Long Walk” National Historic Trail. Only the generic routes would be identified; i.e., Fort Stanton to Bosque Redondo, and Canyon de Chelly to Bosque Redondo via the various routes. No “feeder” or auxiliary routes coming into the main routes would be identified.

An auto tour route would be designated following the historic route(s) as closely as possible on all weather roads.

High Potential historic sites related to the Long Walk would be eligible for a cooperative program of resource protection and visitor education. Interpretation/education would emphasize the similar experiences of the Navajo and Mescalero Apache tribes. Education for the general public would consist of overviews of the Long Walk events. Assistance for preservation and challenge cost share funds would be available.



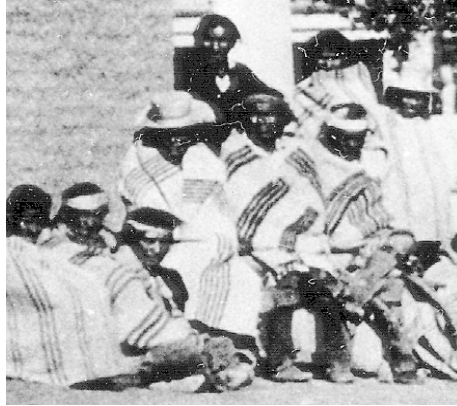
Receiving Ration Tickets at the Provost Marshall's Office, Fort Sumner, N.M.
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-SC-87966 (detail)

Proposed Alternatives (cont'd)

3. Establish two National Historic Trails. Two NHTs would be recommended to Congress for designation. One would be (Mescalero Apache) NHT and the other would be (Diné) NHT (tribes would recommend names for their respective trails).

Feeder routes into the main routes would be identified, as would the routes from each tribal area to the Bosque Redondo. The escape route of the Mescalero Apache would be interpreted, along with the escape and events avoiding recapture. For the Navajo, the route returning home would be highlighted separately from the same route used to go to the Bosque.

Auto tour routes would be established along both NHTs. Visitors would follow the routes, visit existing cultural facilities and museums, and have access to Long Walk sites open to the public. They would receive information about



Indian men on the street at Fort Sumner, N.M.
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-SC-87970 (detail)

respectful conduct while touring on the reservations and private lands.

High Potential historic sites related to the Long Walk would be eligible for a cooperative program of resource protection and visitor education, administered in consultation with tribal governments. Interpretation/education would present contextual history and

would highlight the unique experiences of the Navajo and Mescalero Apache on the Long Walk. There would be education on how the Long Walk still affects people today.

Gathering of oral histories would be encouraged with tribal input on how the information would be used. Assistance for preservation and challenge cost share funds would be available.

4. Grant Program. The tribes would administer a grant program focusing on resource protection on tribal lands and on interpretation/education projects. All decisions about strategy, level of protection, etc., would be made by the tribes.

Congress would appropriate funding for the program either directly to the tribes or through the NPS.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

What Do You Think?

This newsletter offers you the opportunity to respond to the proposed draft alternatives. Your comments and suggestions are important and may result in additions to the alternatives. They will also help in the final selection of the preferred alternative, which is recommended to Congress. You can provide your comments to the address on the immediate left.

The appropriate tribal leadership (probably the respective tribal councils) will be asked to provide the study team with official notification of which alternative(s) they prefer. Those decisions will be included in the final study to be sent to Congress. If you are a tribal member, it would be appropriate to inform your tribal council what you think about the alternatives, and which one you prefer.

Visit the Long Walk planning web site at:

<http://planning.nps.gov>
Type "Long Walk" in the search box.

This web site contains the latest information on the feasibility study.



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Planning Schedule

Write the draft study/EIS –
March – August 2004

Distribute internal review copies –
December 2004

Incorporate internal comments on
draft study/EIS –
January – February 2005

Present finding of significance to the
National Park Advisory Board –
Spring 2005

Public comment period on draft
study/EIS (90 days) –
April – June 2005

Analyze comments, complete proposed
study/final EIS –
July – August 2005

Incorporate internal comments on
proposed study/final EIS –
November 2005

Mail proposed study/final EIS –
January 2006

Protest period - 30 days –
February – March 2006

Publish final study and Record of
Decision –
April 2006

Submit study to Secretary of Interior
for transmittal to Congress –
June 2006