

Pub. L. 108-447, div. E, title II, Dec. 8, 2004, 118 Stat. 3079.

Pub. L. 108-108, title II, Nov. 10, 2003, 117 Stat. 1288.

Pub. L. 108-7, div. F, title II, Feb. 20, 2003, 117 Stat. 256.

SUBCHAPTER VI—NATIONAL FOREST SYSTEM TRAILS STEWARDSHIP

§ 583k. Findings

Congress finds as follows:

(1) The National Forest System features a world-class trail system with over 157,000 miles of trails that provide world-class opportunities for hiking, horseback riding, hunting, mountain bicycling, motorized vehicles, and other outdoor activities.

(2) According to the Government Accountability Office, the Forest Service is only able to maintain about one-quarter of National Forest System trails to the agency standard, and the agency faces a trail maintenance backlog of \$314 million, and an additional backlog of \$210 million in annual maintenance, capital improvements, and operations.

(3) The lack of maintenance on National Forest System trails threatens access to public lands, and may cause increased environmental damage, threaten public safety, and increase future maintenance costs.

(4) Federal budget limitations require solutions to National Forest System trail maintenance issues that make more efficient use of existing resources.

(5) Volunteers, partners, and outfitters and guides play an important role in maintaining National Forest System trails, and a comprehensive strategy is needed to ensure that volunteers and partners are used as effectively as possible.

(Pub. L. 114-245, §2, Nov. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 990.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 114-245, §1(a), Nov. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 990, provided that: “This Act [enacting this subchapter and amending section 558c of this title] may be cited as the ‘National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act’.”

§ 583k-1. Definitions

In this subchapter:

(1) Administrative Unit

The term “Administrative Unit” means a national forest or national grassland.

(2) Outfitter or guide

The term “outfitter or guide” means an individual, organization, or business who provides outfitting or guiding services, as defined in section 251.51 of title 36, Code of Federal Regulations.

(3) Partner

The term “partner” means a non-Federal entity that engages in a partnership.

(4) Partnership

The term “partnership” means arrangements between the Department of Agriculture or the Forest Service and a non-Federal entity

that are voluntary, mutually beneficial, and entered into for the purpose of mutually agreed-upon objectives.

(5) Priority area

The term “priority area” means a well-defined region on National Forest System land selected by the Secretary under section 583k-3(a) of this title.

(6) Secretary

The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Agriculture.

(7) Strategy

The term “strategy” means the National Forest System Trails Volunteer and Partnership Strategy authorized by section 583k-2(a) of this title.

(8) Trail maintenance

The term “trail maintenance” means any activity to maintain the usability and sustainability of trails within the National Forest System, including—

(A) ensuring trails are passable by the users for which they are managed;

(B) preventing environmental damage resulting from trail deterioration;

(C) protecting public safety; and

(D) averting future deferred maintenance costs.

(9) Volunteer

The term “volunteer” means an individual whose services are accepted by the Secretary without compensation under the Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972 (16 U.S.C. 558a et seq.).¹

(Pub. L. 114-245, §3, Nov. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 990.)

Editorial Notes

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Volunteers in the National Forests Act of 1972, referred to in par. (9), is Pub. L. 92-300, May 18, 1972, 86 Stat. 147, which was classified generally to former sections 558a to 558d of this title, prior to being amended generally and renamed the Volunteers in the National Forests and Public Lands Act by Pub. L. 118-234, title III, §341, Jan. 4, 2025, 138 Stat. 2913. Section 342 of Pub. L. 118-234, set out as a note under section 558a of this title, provides that a reference in any law to the Volunteers in National Forests Act of 1972 shall be deemed to be a reference to the Volunteers in the National Forests and Public Lands Act. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 558a of this title and Tables.

§ 583k-2. National Forest System Trails Volunteer and Partnership Strategy

(a) In general

Not later than 2 years after November 28, 2016, the Secretary shall publish in the Federal Register a strategy to significantly increase the role of volunteers and partners in trail maintenance.

(b) Required elements

The strategy required by subsection (a) shall—

(1) augment and support the capabilities of Federal employees to carry out or contribute to trail maintenance;

¹ See References in Text note below.