

Trails Specialist Full Performance Level Competency Self-Assessment

1. Trail Construction Competency		No or Little KSA	Have Performed this Competency	Very Experienced	Know of Resources	Need Resources	Notes
Construction Specifications	Understand and apply common construction specifications/trail management objectives such as corridor height/width, tread width, cross/outslope, protrusions, obstacles, and compaction.						
Corridor Clearing	Clear the corridor (brushing, logging out, hazard tree removal, rock/stump removal) in preparation for construction using proper pruning techniques.						
Hand-Built Trail Construction	Using hand tools, construct a trail with a full bench, raised tread, and/or combination that meets the construction specifications.						
Mechanized Trail Construction	Safely use and maintain mechanized trail construction equipment (e.g., mini-excavators, skid steers, trail dozers, compactors) to construct trail that meets construction specifications.						
Trail Finishwork	Utilize tools, often mechanical to meet specifications for final tread surface and backslope preparation and compaction, construction spoils, and erosion control stabilization.						
Water Management/Drainage Features	Construct drainage features that decrease erosion, including grade reversals, berms, ditches, and sheet drains.						
Water Crossing Structures	Construct a water crossing structure (e.g., puncheon, turnpike, bridge) to span drainageways or wetland areas and raise the trail above the high water line while maintaining uninterrupted hydrology beneath the constructed feature.						
Retaining Walls	Install the appropriate treadway hardening technique for a trail given the slopes, soils, available material (e.g., wood, rock, gravel) and designed use, including advanced hardening techniques (e.g., turnpiking, rock culverts, boulder causeway, rock drains).						
Tread Hardening	Install the appropriate treadway hardening technique for a trail given the slopes, soils, available material (e.g., wood, rock, gravel) and designed use, including advanced hardening techniques (e.g., turnpiking, rock culverts, boulder causeway, rock drains).						
Trailside Structures / Dispersed Recreation	Build and maintain trailheads, parking lots, kiosks, sanitary facilities, camping facilities, traffic barriers, and directional signage.						
Decommissioning Trails	Demonstrated ability to plan and implement the closure, reclamation, and revegetation of a trail segment.						

2. Trail Maintenance Competency

Maintenance Specifications	Understand and apply common maintenance specifications/trail management objectives such as corridor height/width, tread width, cross/outslope, protrusions, obstacles, and water management techniques.						
Inventory & Assessment	Demonstrate ability to assess trail conditions, identify causes of trail degradation (e.g., water, grades, soil conditions, users, and/or use patterns), and appropriate actions to address the deficiencies.						
Corridor Clearing: Power tools	Safely use chainsaws and other power tools in trail development and maintenance and resource management.						

2. Trail Maintenance Competency Continued		No or Little KSA	Have Performed this Competency	Very Experienced	Know of Resources	Need Resources	Notes
Corridor clearing: Hand tools	Use hand tools to safely remove small standing trees, hazard trees, fallen logs, brush, vegetation, rocks, or other impediments to trail tread construction to the specified trail corridor width and height.						
Tread Maintenance - Hand tools	Restore trail to its designed specifications for tread width, cross/outslope, protrusions, and obstacles using hand tools.						
Tread Maintenance - Mechanized Equipment	Restore trail to its designed specifications for tread width, cross/outslope, protrusions, and obstacles using mechanized equipment (e.g., compactors, miniexcavator, skid steer, trail dozer).						
Drainage Features/Water Management	Construct/restore trail drainage features that decrease erosion, (e.g., knicks, grade dips, grade reversals, berms, ditches, and sheet drains).						
3. Project Preparation Competency							
Land Use Plan Alignment	Identify elements of the general management, forest, or comprehensive resource management plans as they relate to the trail project.						
Define Purpose and Need of Project	Use primary data (e.g., stakeholder outreach, trail use data, trail counters) and secondary data (e.g., planning documents, natural and cultural resource survey information, and site-specific resource limitations including soils, hydrology, geology, slope) to define the purpose of the proposed project and the need that it will meet.						
Corridor Planning	Identify potential areas (broad corridors) that meet the purpose and need of the project. Work with staff and partners to assess the proposed corridor(s) by analyzing resource data and management plan alignment.						
Stakeholder Engagement	Identify all the external interested individuals, agencies, and private organizations to inform an outreach strategy. Integrate public education opportunities throughout planning, construction, and maintenance efforts.						
Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Principles	Engage with local and regional communities, as well as groups representing ethnically, socially, and economically diverse populations, to address specific trail management issues.						
4. Project Planning & Design Competency							
Implementation Plan	Accurately interpret specifications, construction process notes, and construction documents to develop an implementation plan based on available labor and funding.						
Trail Specifications	Identify trail elements (i.e., tread material, width, height, grades, and structures) that are appropriate for the intended use, resource conditions, budget, and stewardship capacity.						
Design	Delineate the trail alignment, width, height, grade and structures appropriate to the intended trail use.						
Trail Plans	Transfer field-delineated trail design (location, alignment, structures), along with construction process, materials, notes, special conditions into a document that will guide the trail development process.						
Interpretation	Identify specific interpretive and educational opportunities on trails to contextualize the visitor experience (e.g., history, habitats, scenery, flora/fauna), and make recommendations for interpretive method.						
Universal Design/ADA Accessibility	Use universal design principles, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and the Architectural Barriers Act accessibility standards to design, layout, and lead construction of accessible trail and trail facilities.						

5. Project & Crew Management Competency		No or Little KSA	Have Performed this Competency	Very Experienced	Know of Resources	Need Resources	Notes
Crew Recruitment	Perform inclusive and proactive recruitment and hiring (i.e., hiring beyond basic knowledge, skills, and abilities) of diverse crew members and staff.						
Crew Management	Work closely with agency/organization personnel and volunteers to schedule, assign specific tasks and general duties, ensure appropriate safety and operational equipment is assigned, and provide overall management of personnel in carrying out assigned project work.						
Jobsite Safety	Demonstrate ability to create a site- and task-specific job hazard analysis and manage a safe job site.						
Jobsite Risk Management	Develop a jobsite specific plan for risk management that includes engaging law enforcement, local EMT, search and rescue, and other public safety capabilities.						
Performance Management	Create and utilize a systematic approach for oversight of agency/organization personnel and volunteers to ensure skills, knowledge, and behaviors meet agency/organization standards for high quality trail operations, the implementation of trail management goals, safe operations, and overall effectiveness.						
Field-based Resource Protection	Communicate inventory, regulations, and field practices related to resource preservation (e.g., plant and animal species common to the area, invasive species, and threatened resources) to avoid damage during trail projects, and/or maintenance.						

6. Program Administration & Leadership Competency

Program Budgeting	Determine the overall costs of programs including tools, consumables, volunteer and staff time, equipment, materials.						
Communications	Effectively communicate trail and partnership information to trail administrators, trail managers, and the public.						
Education and Public Outreach	Develop and conduct workshops, seminars and other training for employees, public and private sector partners, and others on management issues and policy, direction, and guidelines. Empower others to competently and safely sustain the trail.						
Funding/Grants	Align trail projects and their specific goals to grant funds. Grant administration includes grant writing, project reporting, financial tracking, and funding/funder communication.						
Inspections/Monitoring	Monitor and document use and trail conditions to determine impacts on natural, social/experiential, historic, and cultural resources.						
Partnership and Collaboration	Demonstrate awareness of the capabilities of both (1) one's own agency/organization as well as (2) partners. Develop the capacity to work with a variety of user groups and partners to identify and promote various interests related to trails.						
Visitor Use Management and Monitoring	Manage trails for a variety of uses and visitor experiences while meeting trail objectives. Monitor use to evaluate the trail experience (i.e., "Does the trail meet visitor expectations and agency/org. mission?").						