

Developing Your Trails Management Competencies



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Objectives

1

**Gain familiarity with
competencies relevant
to Trails Specialists**

2

**Conduct a Trails
Specialist competency
self-assessment**

3

**Review and share out
resources for
developing Trails
Specialists
competencies**

Competencies Context

Competencies specify the “how” of performing job tasks, or what the person needs to do the job successfully.



Knowledge is a body of information applied directly to the performance of a function.



Skill is an observable competence to perform a learned psychomotor act.



Ability is competence to perform an observable behavior or a behavior that results in an observable product.

Competencies for Trails Specialists



- **Review the Trail Competency Framework report**
- Developed by Eppley Institute For Parks and Public Lands, American Trails, USFS, NPS, BLM, and other trails professionals
- Google: Trail Competencies
- 6 Competency Groups
- Entry, Full Performance, Expert levels

Competencies by Competency Group

Trail Construction

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Construction Specifications | 7. Water Crossing Structures |
| 2. Corridor Clearing | 8. Retaining Walls |
| 3. Hand-Built Trail Construction | 9. Tread Hardening |
| 4. Mechanized Trail Construction | 10. Trailside Structures / Dispersed Recreation |
| 5. Trail Finishwork | 11. Decommissioning Trails |
| 6. Water Management/Drainage Features | |

Trail Maintenance

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. Maintenance Specifications | 5. Tread Maintenance - Hand tools |
| 2. Inventory & Assessment | 6. Tread Maintenance - Mechanized Equipment |
| 3. Corridor Clearing: Power tools | 7. Drainage Features/Water Management |
| 4. Corridor clearing: Hand tools | |

Project Preparation

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Land Use Plan Alignment | 4. Stakeholder Engagement |
| 2. Define Purpose and Need of Project | 5. Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) Principles |
| 3. Corridor Planning | |

Competencies by Competency Group

Project Planning & Design

- | | |
|----------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Project Cost Estimation | 5. Trail Plans |
| 2. Implementation Plan | 6. Interpretation |
| 3. Trail Specifications | 7. Permitting |
| 4. Design | 8. Universal Design/ADA Accessibility |

Project & Crew Management

- | | |
|---------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Crew Recruitment | 4. Jobsite Risk Management |
| 2. Crew Management | 5. Performance Management |
| 3. Jobsite Safety | 6. Field-based Resource Protection |

Program Administration & Leadership

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| 1. Program Budgeting | 6. Inspections/Monitoring |
| 2. Communications | 7. Partnership and Collaboration |
| 3. Contract Administration | 8. Policy/Directives/Law |
| 4. Education and Public Outreach | 9. Visitor Use Management and Monitoring |
| 5. Funding/Grants | 10. Agreement Development |



2

Assess Your Own Trails Management Competencies

Work through a
self-assessment of your
Trails Specialist competencies

Objectives



Review the Trails
Specialist Full
Performance Level
Competency Self-
Assessment

- 
- Conduct self-assessment.
 - Rate yourself from:
No/little KSA, Have
performed this
competency, Very
Experienced.

- 
- Make notes if you know of resources to learn about these OR if you need resources.
 - If you know of resources, please note that and plan to share later.
 - We will then work through resources to acquire KSAs.
 - This week you will gain experience in some of these, which ones. . . .

3

Review and Share Out Resources for Developing Trails Specialists Competencies

- Learn about resources to further develop your competencies



Major Sources



- Major Forest Service Resources
- American Trails
- Partnership for National Trails
- Local trails stewardship groups near you
- Others and your sources

Please be thinking of things we may have missed and please share them at the end.

Forest Service Sources



Forest Service Manual and Handbook sections:

- Trail, River and Similar Recreation Opportunities: FSM 2350
- Trails Management Handbook 2309.18
- Travel Management FSM 7710
- Grants & Cooperative Agreements: FSM 1580 & FSH 1509.11 (10)
- Planning (NEPA, Forest Planning): FSM 1920 & FSH 1901.12 (20), FSH 1909.15
- Land Ownership: FSM 5400 and multiple FSH sections
- Land Ownership Title Management: FSM 5500 and multiple FSH sections
- Health and Safety Handbook: FSH 6709.12
- <https://www.fs.usda.gov/im/directives/>

Forest Service Sources



- **FS National Trails Program Sharepoint Site**
<https://usdagcc.sharepoint.com/sites/fs-nfs-ntprg>
- Including the Tips and Tools Section
- **National Technology and Development Program**
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/t-d/>
- **Sign and Poster Guidelines for the FS (EM7100-15)**
https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/stelprd3810021.pdf
- **Standard Trail Plans and Specifications:**
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trail-management-tools/trailplans>
- **Trail Maintenance and Construction Notebook:**
https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/trail-maintenance-notebook.pdf

Forest Service Sources



- **Recreation Heritage Visitor Resources Integrated Business Systems**
<https://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/rhwr/ibsc/tr-cost.shtml>
- **NRM Trails Support:**
<https://fsweb.nrm.fs.fed.us/support/docs.php?appname=trails>
- **FSTAG: Forest Service Trail Accessibility Guidelines**
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/FSTAG-2013-Update.pdf>
- **National Saw Program:**
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trail-management-tools/national-saw-program>
- **Rigging for Trail Work: Principle, Techniques, and Lessons from the Backcountry**
- **Regional and forest program managers, and Trail Advisory Group representatives**

Forest Service Sources



- **National USFS website – NF System Trails**
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails>
- **Forest Service Interactive Visitor Map** (zoom in) <https://www.fs.fed.us/ivm/index.html>
- **National Forest and Grasslands App – Currently available in the both the Google Play Store and Apple App Store**
- **USGS – Trail Mapping Tool -**
<https://www.usgs.gov/national-digital-trails/data>

Other Resources and Your Sources



- **Trails Skills Project** <https://www.trailskills.org/>
- **Interagency Visitor Use Management**
<https://visitorusemanagement.nps.gov/>
- **National Trails System:**
<https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationaltrailssystem/index.htm>
- **Partnership for the National Trails System:**
<https://pnts.org/new/>
- **American Trails:** <https://www.americantrails.org/>
- **Professional Trail Builders Association (PBTA):**
<https://www.trailbuilders.org/>
- **International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA):** <https://www.imba.com/>

Other Resources and Your Sources



- **AMC's Complete Guide to Trail Building and Maintenance, Fourth Edition.**
- **Lightly on the Land, The SCA Trail Building and Maintenance Manual, Second Edition.**
- **SAWS WSI (Cradle of Forestry in NC put on by Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards)**
- **Northern Rockies Wilderness Skills Institute, and others. . . .**
- **College Trail Certificate Programs**
North West Arkansas Community College – Trail Technician Certificates
Vermont State University – Sustainable Trail Building Certificate

Your Sources

