United States Department of Agriculture

Forest Service
Recreation, Heritage, and Wilderness Resources
Pacific Northwest Region

CHARTER

1. Committee's Official Designation

Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Advisory Council

2. Authority

The Charter for the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail Advisory Council (Council) is hereby established pursuant to the implementation of Section 5(d) of the National Trails System Act (Act) (Pub. L. 90-543) as amended through (Pub. L. 111-11) (16 U.S.C. §§ 1241 to 1251), and the Secretary of Agriculture in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) as amended, 5 U.S.C. App. 2.

3. Objectives and Scope of Activities

The Council will advise and make recommendations to the Secretary of Agriculture, through the Chief of the Forest Service, on matters relating to the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail (Pacific Northwest Trail), as described in the Act.

4. Description of Duties

The Council will be solely advisory in nature. Advice or recommendations of the Council will be given only with respect to the matters relating to the Pacific Northwest Trail. All activities of the Council will be conducted in an open, transparent, and accessible manner. The Council will be asked to provide advice on the selection of rights-of-way, standards for the erection and maintenance of markers along the Trail, and the administration of the Trail.

5. Agency or Official to Whom the Committee Reports

The Council reports to the Secretary of Agriculture through the Chief of the Forest Service.

6. Support

Clerical and other administrative support will be provided by the USDA Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Region.

7. Estimated Annual Operating Costs and Staff Years

Estimated annual operating costs of the Council are $60,000. Expenses will be borne by the Forest Service each year. Federal staff support is estimated at 0.25 staff year per year, including all direct and indirect expenses.

Members of the Council shall serve without compensation, but may, in performance of their duties away from home or regular places of business, be allowed reimbursement for travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, as authorized in 5 U.S.C. 5703. All expenses will be subject to the approval of the Designated Federal Officer.

8. Designated Federal Officer

A permanent Federal employee is to be appointed in accordance with Agency procedures and will serve as the Designated Federal Official (DFO). The DFO will approve the meetings of the Council and any subcommittees, prepare and approve all meeting agendas, attend all Council and any subcommittee meetings, adjourn any meeting when the DFO determines adjournment to be in the public interest, and chair meetings when directed to do so by the official to whom the Council reports.

9. Estimated Number and Frequency of Meetings

The Council will meet at least once annually, or as often as is necessary to complete its business. A majority of the Council members must be present to constitute an official meeting. The Council and any subcommittee shall not hold any meetings except at the call of, or with the advance approval of, the DFO. Attendance may be in-person, or by telephone or other electronic means.

All meetings will be open to the public, and all proceedings and relevant documents will be posted and made accessible to the public.

10. Duration

Continuing.

11. Termination

The Charter will expire 2 years from the date it is filed, unless it is renewed prior to that date in accordance with FACA, Section 14. The Council will not meet or take any action without a valid current charter.

12. Membership and Designation

12a. This Council will be fairly balanced in its membership in terms of the points of view represented and the functions to be performed. Steps will be taken to encourage fresh points of view, such as establishing staggered membership terms and limiting the number of renewed memberships. The Council will consist of approximately 20

members (not more than 35) who provide balanced and broad representation within each of the following interests:

- The Regional Forester of the Pacific Northwest Region, Forest Service, or a designee;
- The Regional Forester of the Northern Region, Forest Service, or a designee;
- The Regional Director of the Pacific West or Intermountain Regions, National Park Service, or a designee; and
- The State Director of the Oregon/Washington Bureau of Land Management, or a designee.

And other representatives appointed by the Secretary to 2-year terms:

- A representative of the State of Montana (selected from recommendations by the Governor);
- A representative of the State of Idaho (selected from recommendations by the Governor);
- A representative of the State of Washington (selected from recommendations by the Governor);
- At least one representative for Tribes;
- At least one representative of county governments or gateway communities;
- At least one representative of a nationally recognized trails organization;
- At least one representative of a regionally recognized trails organization;
- At least one representative of outdoor recreation (hiking);
- At least one representative of outdoor recreation (pack and saddle stock);
- At least one representative of a nationally or regionally recognized environmental organization;
- At least one representative of archaeological and historical interests;
- At least one representative of a nationally or regionally recognized wildlife organization;
- At least one representative of the timber industry;
- At least one representative of the tourism industry and/or commercial outfitter interests;
- At least one representative of environmental education interests;
- At least one representative of youth engagement and employment interests; and
- At least one representative of private landowner interests.

Nominees will be sought through an open and public process that includes, but is not limited to, nominees submitted by tribal governments, county and state governments, community based/non-governmental organizations, and individuals who represent the interests of the public served by National Forest System programs and land resources. One member may represent multiple interests.

12b. Equal opportunity practices, in line with USDA policies, will be followed in all membership appointments to the committee. To ensure that the recommendations of the committee have taken into account the needs of the diverse groups served by the Department, membership shall include to the extent practicable, minorities, women, and persons with disabilities.

12c. The USDA prohibits discrimination in all of its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, political beliefs, genetic information, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program.

12d. Of these members, one person who is recognized for his or her ability to lead a group in a fair and focused manner, and who has been briefed on the mission of the Council will be designated to be the Chairperson. A co-chairperson may be assigned, especially to facilitate his or her transition to become the Chairperson in the future.

12e. Ethics Statement

To maintain the highest levels of honesty, integrity and ethical conduct, no member of the Council or any subcommittee shall participate in any "specific party matters" (i.e., matters are narrowly focused and typically involve specific transactions between identified parties) such as a lease, license, permit, contract, claim, grant, agreement, or related litigation with the Department in which the member has a direct or indirect financial interest. This includes the requirement for Council or subcommittee members to immediately disclose to the DFO (for discussion with USDA's Office of Ethics) any specific party matter in which the member's immediate family, relatives, business partners or employer would be directly seeking to financially benefit from the Committee's recommendations. Members of the Committee shall be required to disclose their direct or indirect interest in leases, licenses, permits, contracts, or claims grants, or agreements that involve lands or resources administered by the Forest Service, or in any litigation related thereto. For purposes of this paragraph, indirect interest includes holdings of a spouse or a dependent child.

All members will receive ethics training to identify and avoid any actions that would cause the public to question the integrity of the Council's advice and recommendations. Members who are appointed as "Representatives" are not subject to Federal ethics laws because such appointment allows them to represent the point(s) of view of a particular group, business sector or segment of the public.

Members appointed as "Special Government Employees" (SGEs) are considered intermittent Federal employees and are subject to Federal ethics laws. SGEs are appointed due to their personal knowledge, academic scholarship, background or expertise. No SGE may participate in any activity in which the member has a prohibited financial interest. Appointees who are SGEs are required to complete and submit a

Confidential Financial Disclosure Report (OGE-450 form) and, upon request, USDA will assist SGEs in preparing these financial reports. To ensure the highest level of compliance with applicable ethical standards USDA will provide ethics training to SGEs on an annual basis. The provisions of these paragraphs are not meant to exhaustively cover all Federal ethics laws and do not affect any other statutory or regulatory obligations to which advisory committee members are subject.

13. Subcommittees

The Forest Service has the authority to create subcommittees. Subcommittees must report back to the parent Council, and must not provide advice or work products directly to the Agency.

14. Recordkeeping

The records of this Council, formally and informally established subcommittees, or other subgroups of the Council, shall be handled in accordance with General Records Schedule (GRS) 6.2 or other approved Agency records disposition schedule. These records shall be available for public inspection and copying, subject to the Freedom of Information Act, 5 U.S.C. 552. Information about this Council is available online at:

http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/pnt/working-together/advisory-committees

15. Filing Date

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