**Posting Template Guide**

The guidelines and tips offered in this document are intended to help you develop a detailed trail description that is complete and consistent with other trails listed in Connecticut Trail Finder. We suggest referencing the information on these pages while entering information in the Connecticut Trail Finder Trail Posting Template.

**Key Information:**

**Trail System Name(s):** Each trail has a unique name that corresponds to the featured trail (e.g., Farmington Canal Heritage Trail) or to the trail network or host site (e.g., Penwood State Park).

**Compiler Information:** Contact information for you (the trail compiler) to facilitate our work together developing the final trail listing.

**Maintained Uses:** Identify all the activities for which the trail is maintained and managed.

A couple notes:

- **Hiking vs Walking** – A hiking trail is narrow, has a natural surface and follows natural topography (think of the Appalachian Trail, for example) while a walking trail is wide, often with added surface to smooth the trail and either naturally flat or graded to reduce slope (think of a rail trail, for example). Although some trail networks can have both types of trails, we want to differentiate as much as possible to help people find the best experience for them.

- **Bicycling vs Mountain Biking** – Although you can use a mountain bike on many types of trails, we would like to differentiate between trails specifically built for mountain biking, (usually singletrack) from multi-use trails that allow biking and can accommodate many types of bikes. Please only choose one option unless your trail network has both rail trails-type trails and singletrack trails.

**Town(s) and County(ies):** Identify all of the town(s) and county(ies) where the trail is located. If you’re not sure, or the trail is very long and crosses many jurisdictions, don’t worry, we’ll check!

**Trail Type and Length:** If you don’t know the length, we can calculate it in GIS.

- **One-way:** A single trail with no inter-connecting trails that has trailheads at either end and can be used without backtracking. *Trail distance is reported for the unique trail.*

- **Round-trip:** A single trail with one primary trailhead that requires backtracking. *Trail distance is reported by doubling the length of the trail.*

- **Loop:** A single trail that most often has one major trailhead and does not require backtracking. *Trail distance is reported for the entire loop.*

- **Network:** Any configuration of inter-connecting trails that can be followed in multiple ways by users. *Trail distance is reported by adding together the lengths of all unique trail segments.*

**Difficulty:**

- **Easy:** Relatively flat and smooth trails that are often wide.

- **Moderate:** May have a few hills or steep sections, multiple surface types, or might be narrow.

- **Advanced:** Most advanced trails are natural surface with more difficult hills, exposed roots or slipping hazards.

- **Strenuous:** Typically single track, natural surface, narrow trails with many hills or steep sections, tight turns, exposed roots or slipping hazards or other obstacles such as stream crossings or rocky areas to traverse.

**Surface(s):** List all surfaces that a user would encounter on the trail or trail network.
Are there Fees to use the trail (yes/no)? Additional information should be elaborated on in More Information text block (see below).

Are Pets welcome (permitted/not permitted/only on leash)?

Accessibility:
If the whole trail is accessible to wheelchairs, check “Yes.” If there is one section of trail within the network that is accessible, check “Partially” and describe which trail is accessible.

Specifically for the accessible section, list the surface, width and max slope, if known. If there are multiple surfaces or variable widths, please note.

Barriers: When thinking about the trail, even if it fully conforms to ADA guidelines, are there any sections that might pose a challenge to people who use wheelchairs or have other disabilities? It is better to give more information than not enough. Think broadly.

The website can incorporate photos that show up on the trail map. If there are any barriers, such as a crossing of railroad tracks for example, take a photo and share it with us. Make sure the GPS is turned on in your phone!

Text Fields:

Trail Manager: Contact information for the land owner and/or trail manager. Be sure to include a website and email if possible. Please use an email that will not change with staff turnover, such as info@___ or trails@____. Multiple trail managers can be included in each posting. Please send a digital logo for each organization for us to include on the site. If you know of a link to an already designed map of the trail, please include.

Trail Abstract: This overview provides basic information about the trail and its unique features. Limit yourself to one sentence and no more than 250 characters. The trail abstract is the first piece of information users see when searching for and reviewing trails on the website.

Trailhead Directions: Begin the description from the nearest town or highway or other clearly identifiable starting point. Consider whether you need to offer directions from multiple directions (e.g., from the north or south). Use US or state highway numbers and then local street names to guide users to the parking lot. Each parking icon will also have a link to directions on Google Maps. If there are any errors in Google Maps (such as a road name), it is important to note that in the directions text.

Some trailheads may not be located next to the parking area, in which case you should provide additional directions to locate the trailhead. Some trail networks may also require descriptions to multiple trailheads. Be sure to note any parking restrictions here. Please write-out suffixes (e.g., Road, Street) as full words.

Trail Description: In 2-3 paragraphs, describe the trail in terms of current trail conditions, the surrounding environment, and unique features users might encounter. Precise distances, bearings, directions, intersections or high-detail navigation tips are not necessary.

Additional Information: Tell us anything else that is important for users to know about this trail, which is not well represented in any of the above areas. For example: trail expansion plans, special trail rules, fee structures, temporary closures, or information about other maps created for the trail.

Photos:

We can accept any type of image file (.jpeg, .png, etc.). If you would like the photo geo-located on the map, let us know and make sure the GPS information is incorporated in the file!
Points of Interest

The following points of interest can be included in the trail map. Please provide spatial information for the points. If you don’t have a GPS (gpx) file, KML, KMZ, Shapefile, or list of lat/longs, describe the locations. If there are accessible trail sections, please also make sure to indicate whether the points of interest are accessible, particularly parking areas and toilets.

- Bench
- Bicycle Repair Station
- Boat Launch
  - Put Marina/Ferry in notes
- Boat Launch - Accessible
- Bridge
- Campground
- Campground - Accessible
- Caution
- Cultural Attraction
- Dam
- Gate
- Group Tent Site
- Group Tent Site - Accessible
- Hand-carry Boat Launch
- Hut/Lodge/Cabin
- Hut/Lodge/Cabin - Accessible
- Kiosk/Information
- Landmark
- Lean-to Shelter
- Lookout Tower
- Natural Attraction
- Park Office
- Parking
  - Differentiate lot vs. shoulder in notes
- Parking - Accessible
- Picnic Area
- Picnic Area - Accessible
- Playground
- Portage
- Photo (if geotagged)
- Rapids/Falls
- Recreation Facility
- Scenic View
- Store
- Summit
- Swimming Area
- Tent Site
- Tent Site - Accessible
- Toilet/Restroom
- Toilet/Restroom - Accessible
- Trailhead
- Waterfall
- Wildlife Viewing
- Wildlife Viewing Platform - Accessible