

## 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 is classified generally to section 558a et seq. of this title. 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;
- (2) provide meaningful opportunities for volunteers and partners to carry out trail maintenance in each region of the Forest Service;
- (3) address the barriers to increased volunteerism and partnerships in trail maintenance identified by volunteers, partners, and others;
- (4) prioritize increased volunteerism and partnerships in trail maintenance in those regions with the most severe trail maintenance needs, and where trail maintenance backlogs are jeopardizing access to National Forest lands; and
- (5) aim to increase trail maintenance by volunteers and partners by 100 percent by the date that is 5 years after November 28, 2016.

**(c) Additional requirement**

As a component of the strategy, the Secretary shall study opportunities to improve trail maintenance by addressing opportunities to use fire crews in trail maintenance activities in a manner that does not jeopardize firefighting capabilities, public safety, or resource protection. Upon a determination that trail maintenance would be advanced by use of fire crews in trail maintenance, the Secretary shall incorporate these proposals into the strategy, subject to such terms and conditions as the Secretary determines to be necessary.

**(d) Volunteer liability**

**(1) Omitted**

**(2) Additional requirement**

Not later than 2 years after November 28, 2016, the Secretary shall adopt regulations implementing this section. These regulations shall ensure that the financial risk from claims or liability associated with volunteers undertaking trail maintenance is shared by all administrative units.

**(e) Consultation**

The Secretary shall develop the strategy in consultation with volunteer and partner trail maintenance organizations, a broad array of outdoor recreation stakeholders, and other relevant stakeholders.

**(f) Volunteer and partnership coordination**

The Secretary shall require each administrative unit to develop a volunteer and partner co-

ordination implementation plan for the strategy which clearly defines roles and responsibilities for the administrative unit and district staff, and includes strategies to ensure sufficient coordination, assistance, and support for volunteers and partners to improve trail maintenance.

**(g) Report**

**(1) Contents**

The Secretary shall prepare a report on—

- (A) the effectiveness of the strategy in addressing the trail maintenance backlog;
- (B) the increase in volunteerism and partnership efforts on trail maintenance as a result of the strategy;
- (C) the miles of National Forest System trails maintained by volunteers and partners, and the approximate value of the volunteer and partnership efforts;
- (D) the status of the stewardship credits for outfitters and guides pilot program described in section 583k-5 of this title that includes the number of participating sites, total amount of the credits offered, estimated value of trail maintenance performed, and suggestions for revising the program; and
- (E) recommendations for further increasing volunteerism and partnerships in trail maintenance.

**(2) Submission**

Not later than 3 years after November 28, 2016, the Secretary shall submit the report required by paragraph (1) to—

- (A) the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry and the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources of the Senate; and
- (B) the Committee on Agriculture and the Committee on Natural Resources of the House of Representatives.

(Pub. L. 114-245, §4, Nov. 28, 2016, 130 Stat. 991.)

CODIFICATION

Section is comprised of section 4 of Pub. L. 114-245. Subsec. (d)(1) of section 4 of Pub. L. 114-245 amended section 558c of this title.

**§ 583k-3. Priority trail maintenance program**

**(a) Selection**

In accordance with subsections (b) and (c), not later than 6 months after November 28, 2016, the Secretary of Agriculture shall select no fewer than 9 and no more than 15 priority areas for increased trail maintenance accomplishments.

**(b) Criteria**

Priority areas shall include a well-defined region on National Forest System land where the lack of trail maintenance has—

- (1) reduced access to public land;
- (2) led to an increase, or risk of increase, in harm to natural resources;
- (3) jeopardized public safety;
- (4) resulted in trails being impassible by the intended managed users; or
- (5) increased future deferred trail maintenance costs.

**(c) Requirements**

In selecting priority areas, the Secretary shall—