U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Recommended Trail Information Tiers and Levels

TIER 1 – The following information is required, however there are in many cases different levels of that information. Level 1 information is required, additional levels are optional per your capacity to gather and deliver that information.

1. **Basic Trail Info:**
   a. **Level 1:** List the name of each trail, hours it's accessible, on public transit route Y/N
   b. **Level 2:** List the trail type (loop, out-and-back, lollipop, etc.)
   c. **Level 3:** Parking surface type (paved, dirt, pull-off, etc.), fees, other trail uses (horses, dogs, bikes, etc.), safety considerations (nearby hunting, ticks, poisonous plants, etc.)
2. **Trailhead Location:**
   a. **Level 1:** Are trailheads within view of the parking lot (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** List approximate distance from accessible parking to trailhead
   c. **Level 3:** Give specific distances from accessible parking to trailheads and show trailheads on a map
3. **Trail Length:**
   a. **Level 1:** Give approximate length of each trail
   b. **Level 2:** Give accurate measurements of each trail
   c. **Level 3:** Highlight trails on a map
4. **Trail Width:**
   a. **Level 1:** Is the trail narrow at any point (less than xx") (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** List the average trail width and the narrowest extreme
   c. **Level 3:** Show on a map where the trail is narrower than xx"
5. **Trail Grade:**
   a. **Level 1:** Does the trail have steep sections (greater than x-degrees) (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** List how frequently and for how long the trail exceeds x-degrees
   c. **Level 3:** Show on a map where the trail grade exceeds x-degrees
6. **Trail Cross Slope:**
   a. **Level 1:** Does the trail have cross-slope sections (greater than x-degrees) (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** List the average and the highest extreme cross slope
   c. **Level 3:** Show on a map any noteworthy areas of cross slope
7. **Trail Surface:**
   a. **Level 1:** List each type of surface encountered on the trail and Y/N if there is any height difference greater than 1" when transitioning between surfaces
   b. **Level 2:** Describe locations of surface changes
   c. **Level 3:** Map locations of surface changes

8. **Obstacles:**
   a. **Level 1:** Are there obstacles on the trail that could prevent passage by someone using a mobility device or someone who cannot climb over or duck under the obstacle (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** Specify the types of obstacles one might encounter (ex: large rocks, tree roots, fallen trees, low-hanging branches, etc.)
   c. **Level 3:** Give the location of noteworthy obstacles and plot on a map
9. **Benches:**
   a. **Level 1:** Are there benches along the trail? (Y/N)
   b. **Level 2:** Approximately where and how far apart are the benches?
   c. **Level 3:** Specify locations of benches and plot on a map
10. **Water Fountain:**
    a. **Level 1:** Is there a water fountain on site? (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** Approximately where is/are the drinking fountain(s) located and how far apart are they, if more than one?
    c. **Level 3:** Specify locations of drinking fountains and plot on a map
11. **Bathrooms:**
    a. **Level 1:** Is there a bathroom located at the trailhead or along the trail (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** List the type of bathroom it is (portable, pit, running water, accessible, etc.) and distance from the accessible parking to the nearest bathroom
    c. **Level 3:** Give further details about bathroom features (child/adult changing table, whether it can accommodate a person with a disability and their companion, sink height, etc.) and map the location of all bathrooms
12. **Shade:**
    a. **Level 1:** Are there areas of shade along the trail (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** Describe the frequency and type of shade and any nuance (ex: only part of the year, etc.)
    c. **Level 3:** List or map the locations of reliable shade
13. **Contact Information:**
    a. **Level 1:** A general phone number where a person can be reached for questions/info and physical address for the trail
    b. **Level 2:** Contact information in the event of an emergency, if different
    c. **Level 3:** After hours emergency contact information
14. **Images**
    a. **Level 1:** Single photos representative of the general condition of each of the following:
        i. Entrance
        ii. Parking
        iii. Trailhead
        iv. Bathroom
        v. Water Fountain
        vi. Bench
        vii. Trail surface/average width, grade, cross slope
        viii. Shade
    b. **Level 2:** Multiple photos of each of the above that convey more specific conditions, and include:

          i.   Trail grade and cross slope changes

         ii.   Obstacles

   c. **Level 3:** Additional photos of all of the above, getting more specific with instances they will encounter on the trail

TIER 2 – The following represents the next level of service. This information is optional, per your capacity to gather and deliver that information.

15. **Soundscape:**
    a. **Level 1:** Are you likely to encounter unexpected, loud, abrupt noise on the trail (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** Specify the types and source of unexpected, loud, abrupt noise
    c. **Level 3:** List or map the locations of the noise

16. **Areas for Turning Around:**
    a. **Level 1:** Are there suitable areas for a mobility device to safely and easily turn around (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** List approximate location of turnaround points and how far along trail they are
    c. **Level 3:** Plot turnaround points on a map

17. **Seasonality Changes:**
    a. **Level 1:** Do trail conditions change during each season (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** List the noteworthy changes to trail conditions each season
    c. **Level 3:** List or show on a map the locations of noteworthy seasonal trail changes (ex: common areas of flooding, common slippery areas, etc.)

18. **Rating System:**
    a. **Level 1:** General trail rating (Ex: Easy, Medium, Difficult; see below for potential definitions)
    b. **Level 2:** Rating system specific to different types of disabilities (For people using mobility devices, for people with vision impairment, for people with cognitive challenges)
    c. **Level 3:** Ratings for trail sections and specific to disability type

19. **Trail Popularity**
    a. **Level 1:** Is this a popular trail (Y/N)
    b. **Level 2:** Convey where the trail is on a popularity scale (ex: High, Med, Low use)
    c. **Level 3:** Convey popularity at different times throughout the year

20. **Symbology:** Incorporate standard set of symbols to represent various trail characteristics.
    a. **Level 1:** Use symbols for most common site amenities
        i. Parking
        ii. Bathroom
        iii. Water Fountain
        iv. Trailhead
        v. Bench
    b. **Level 2:** Use additional symbols for trail conditions
        i. Obstacles
        ii. Changes to surface, grade, cross slope
        iii. Shade

21. **Adaptive equipment and other accessibility services:**
    a. **Level 1:** List any assistive devices and services available on-site
    b. **Level 2:** List and provide links to offsite resources for assistive devices and services

Sample rating system:

Easy – Hard/paved surface, minimum 3-5+ feet wide, grades 5 percent or less, cross slopes 2 percent or less. Frequent rest areas available along the trail. Individuals using mobility devices are likely able to use this trail with little or no assistance.

Moderate – Hard/paved or compacted, crushed-rock surface, average width of 3 feet, grades 5 to 8 percent, cross slopes 2 percent or less. Multiple rest areas available along the trail. Some individuals using mobility devices may require assistance.

Difficult – Compacted, crushed-rock or natural surface, some sections narrower than 3 feet wide, grades sustained at 8 to 10 percent, cross slopes 3 percent or less. Infrequent rest areas available along the trail. Constructed or natural barriers exist. Many individuals using mobility devices may need assistance.

Most difficult – Natural surface, many sections narrower than 3 feet wide, no resting areas, uneven, rocky or natural barriers exist, sustained grades 10 percent and greater, cross slopes 3 to 5 percent. Most individuals using mobility devices will need assistance.

Additional Notes:

- It might be important to add a "why" explanation on the websites, explaining why providing this type of information is important.
- Could there be a website feature that allows users to provide feedback on their trail experience to improve the accessibility info?

Sample Tier1-Level 1 "Trail At-a-Glance"

Trail Name:

Contact Phone #:

Physical Address:

Hours:

Fee:

Public Transit: Y/N

Accessible Parking: Y/N

Trailhead near parking: Y/N

Bathrooms near parking: Y/N

Water near parking: Y/N

Benches: Y/N

Shade: Y/N

Length:

Surface type:

Tall surface transitions: Y/N

Narrow sections: Y/N

Steep sections: Y/N

Cross slope: Y/N

Large obstacles: Y/N