

# **Traits of Successful Water Trails** (System Support)

## **✓ PHYSICAL SUPPORT (Facilities and Infrastructure)**

- § Safe and legal launch and landing sites and facilities (general guidelines: every 5-8 miles for long-distance, wilderness paddling/camping trails; every 1-2 miles for urban, day-use trails)
- § Safe and ample trailhead parking (at launch sites)
- § Places to rent boats and equipment and learn about safety
- § Lock-up facilities for boats and equipment at community access points
- § Facilities for storing small, non-motorized boats along the trail
- § Places to stay overnight (camp sites, hotels, B&Bs)
- § Places to visit and explore along the trail (such as interpretive sites, museums, restaurants, retail stores, hiking trails, parks and picnic areas, bird and wildlife viewing spots)

## **✓ ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT (Coordination and Management)**

(Most trails need a Partnership/ Organization with leaders to carry out a plan of action)

- ◆ Possible ROLES for a Partnership/ Organization to Coordinate and Manage a Water Trail:
  - § To serve as a clearing house
  - § To provide a regional voice
  - § To serve as a liaison with Stakeholders, Neighbors, Officials, Landowners, and Public (communities, park boards, tourism offices, outfitters, recreation groups, politicians, etc.)
  - § To develop and implement an action plan
  - § To pool resources and set priorities
  - § To.....
  - § To.....

◆ Possible TASKS for a Partnership/ Organization to Coordinate and Manage a Water Trail

§ Agree on an **ACTION PLAN** (with vision, goals, recommended actions, and a time frame)

§ Develop a **MASTER PLAN** for the Water Trail  
(inventory of existing resources, recommendations for future)

§ Produce and distribute **MAPS** of the Water Trail

§ Advocate **SAFETY** along the trail

-establish a regional system of signs marking launch, landing, and camp sites

use permits for overnight trips?

-promote boating regulations

-develop a trail etiquette (code of ethics)

-provide emergency contact information

§ Promote **EDUCATION and STEWARDSHIP** along the trail

- Work to instill an environmental awareness of the river corridor
  - ESA messages

- water quality, wildlife habitat, and other resource protection messages

- respect for private property rights

- Provide trail orientation and wayfaring information

- Promote and coordinate stewardship activities
  - resource monitoring and inventorying

- habitat restoration work

- remove invasive species

- clean-up events

-adopt-a-trail for sections/ reaches of the river

- Provide interpretation of sites and resources along the trail

◆ Coordinate **VOLUNTEERS and SERVICE PROGRAMS**  
(for stewardship, education, marketing, etc.)

-community and school efforts

-Earth Share

-Student Conservation Service

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◆ Organize **PROMOTION and PUBLICITY**

-establish a regional identity (logo) for the trail

-produce a trail overview and regional map showing trail sections or reaches based on geography, jurisdictions, landscape character, etc.

-assemble a media/press kit (flyer, photos, human interest stories, etc.)

-put out a newsletter or Monthly Calendar of Events

-sponsor trail dedication events

-sponsor on-going trail events

-encourage and support local and regional history and stories  
(Native Americans, Pioneers, Early Explorers, Settlers, Transportation/Shipping,  
Fishing/Processing, Timber, Community Treasures, etc.)