



# Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study



## The National Park Service Launches Feasibility Study of the Buckeye Trail for Inclusion in National Trails System

### Greetings!

The National Park Service (NPS) is conducting a feasibility study to provide information to Congress about the feasibility and suitability of designating the Buckeye Trail as a national scenic trail.

The Buckeye Trail is an existing system of trails creating a loop extending approximately 1,454 miles from Lake Erie to the Ohio River, including the farmland of northwest Ohio, the Bluegrass region of southwest

Ohio, the Black Hand sandstone cliffs of the Hocking Hills region, and Hills of Appalachia. The trail was established from 1959 to 1980 by the Buckeye Trail Association, a nonprofit organization that currently administers the trail. More than half of the Buckeye Trail route overlaps the North County National Scenic Trail route as it passes through Ohio.

### About the National Park Service



The National Park Service preserves unimpaired the natural and cultural resources and values of the national park system for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations. The National Park Service cooperates with partners to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation

throughout this country and the world. The National Park Service is a bureau within the Department of the Interior and manages more than 400 park units that comprise the national park system. Administration of park units occurs in many ways, from traditional units that are federally managed to nontraditional units that rely on partnerships and may have little, if any, federal landownership.



## What Is a National Scenic Trail?

National scenic trails are designated routes that traverse some of the most breathtaking landscapes in the United States, providing unique opportunities for hiking, biking, and experiencing nature. These trails are recognized for their outstanding scenic, natural, and recreational values, often showcasing diverse ecosystems, picturesque vistas, and cultural heritage along their paths.

Managed by various federal and state agencies, national scenic trails, like the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail, offer well-maintained paths that attract outdoor enthusiasts from across the country. National scenic trails often intersect with local communities and provide significant economic benefits through tourism. Currently, there are 11 national scenic trails: Appalachian, Arizona, Continental Divide, Florida, Ice Age, Natchez Trace, New England, North Country, Pacific Crest, Pacific Northwest, and Potomac Heritage.

## What Is a Trail Feasibility Study?

Feasibility studies provide recommendations to Congress regarding the feasibility and suitability of designating a national trail, based on nine criteria outlined in the National Trails System Act of 1968. By objectively examining criteria, feasibility studies objectively assess how well the trail aligns with National Trails System Act requirements, which emphasize public access and the preservation and conservation of the trail's unique characteristics.

According to the National Trails System Act of 1968, as amended, "such studies shall be made in consultation with the heads of other Federal agencies administering lands through which such additional proposed trails would pass and in cooperation with interested interstate, state, and local governmental agencies, public and private organizations, as well as landowners and land users concerned." Public involvement is a critical component of the feasibility study process, as it ensures that the perspectives and needs of the public and stakeholders are considered and integrated into the study.

Opportunities for public input on the "Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study" will include community meetings and a public comment period.

An NPS team has been assembled to prepare the "Buckeye National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study." The findings of the study will be transmitted by the NPS Director to the Secretary of the Interior, who will then submit the study, along with a management recommendation, to Congress.

The completed feasibility study provides an informational analysis for Congress to use at its discretion, with the findings being nonbinding. If the study results in a positive finding and a recommendation from the Secretary of the Interior that the Buckeye Trail deserves inclusion in the national trails system, Congress may choose to act on that recommendation, although there is no established timeframe for legislative action.

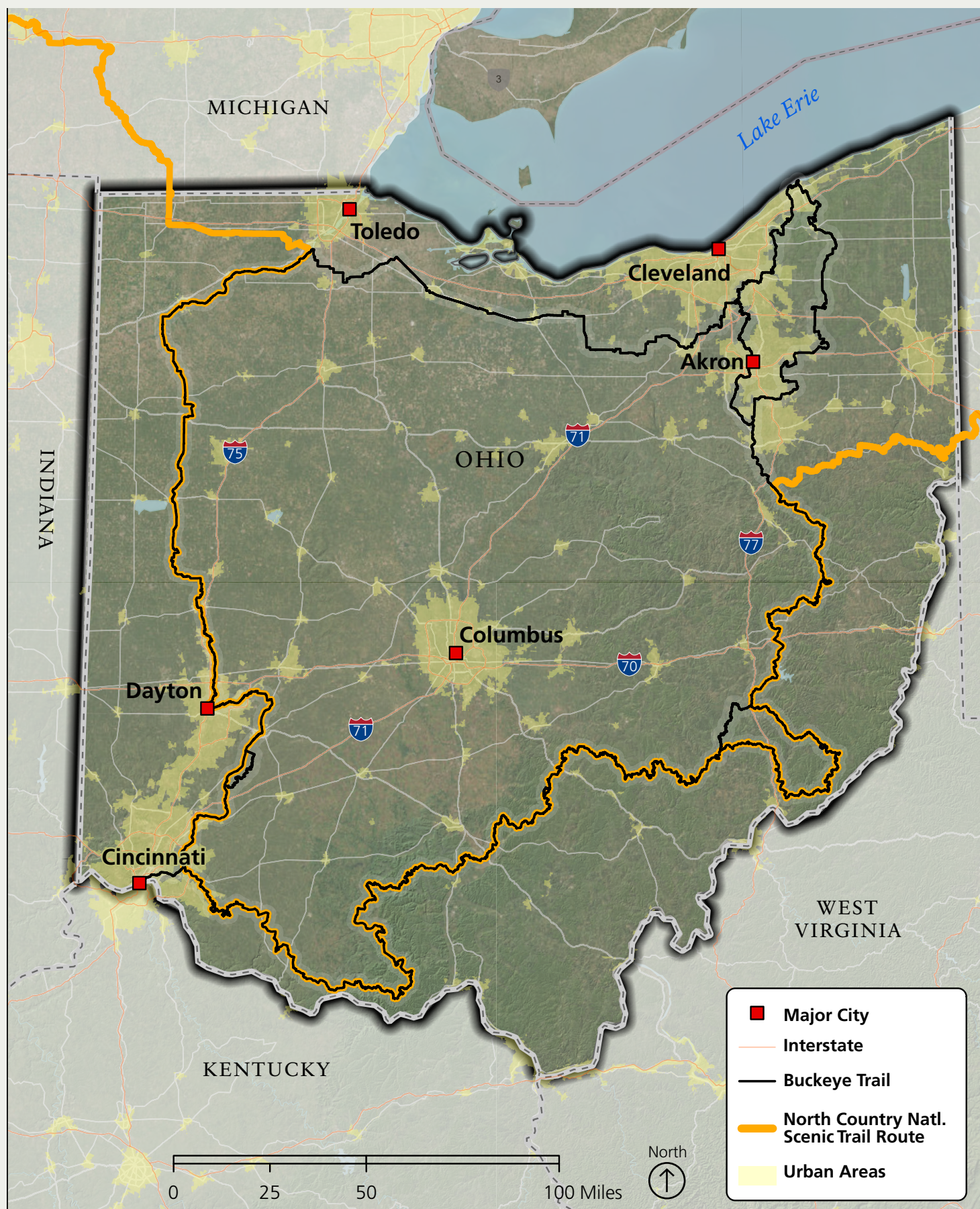
## When Will I Learn the Results of the Study?

Congress directed the study to be completed within three years. The National Park Service began the study in fall 2023 and will share it with the Department of the Interior for their review and approval before the study's transmittal to Congress. The National Park Service will publicly release a study report after it has been transmitted to Congress.





## Study Area Map



Map of the Buckeye Trail in Ohio and the North Country National Scenic Trail route, which uses the Buckeye Trail for most of its Ohio segment



## How to Participate and Learn More

### Online

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To submit comments and learn more, visit the project website at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/buckeyetrailfs> and click “Open for Comment.” Comments will be accepted from January 6 to February 19, 2025.

### In-Person Public Meetings

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The National Park Service will hold public meetings to present an update on the study and answer questions. Meeting dates, times, and locations are listed below, with more information posted in advance at <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/buckeyetrailfs>.

#### JANUARY 13, 2025

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Cuyahoga Valley National Park, Hines Hill Conference Center  
1403 West Hines Hill Road  
Peninsula, OH 44264

#### JANUARY 14, 2025

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Henry County Hospital, Heller Community Room  
1600 E. Riverview  
Napoleon, OH 43545

#### JANUARY 15, 2025

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Dayton Aviation Heritage National Historical Park, Huffman Prairie Flying Field Interpretive Center  
2380 Memorial Road  
Dayton, OH 45433

#### JANUARY 16, 2025

4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. – Digital Futures Building, Level 1 Conference Room  
3080 Exploration Avenue  
Room 140  
Cincinnati, OH 45206

#### JANUARY 17, 2025

3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. – Athens Community Center, Rooms B and C  
701 E. State Street  
Athens, OH 45701

### Virtual Public Meeting

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#### JANUARY 23, 2025

5:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. EST  
Check the project website for the meeting link:  
<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/buckeyetrailfs>

