

Draft Flagstaff Regional Trail Strategy

Executive Summary

The **Flagstaff Trails Initiative** (FTI) is a community building project that's looking to take Flagstaff's trails from good to extraordinary. The diverse organizations that make up the FTI team have come together as partners to lay out a shared vision for the region's recreational trails.



Learn more about the Initiative and find the full strategy at flagstafftrailsinitiative.org

Our Purpose

Develop and implement a collaborative, cross-jurisdictional Flagstaff Regional Trail Strategy. The strategy will improve the **quality, connectivity and community support** for a sustainable trail system that balances the demand for recreation with the community's vision for conservation, development, and health.



Photo Courtesy of WH Waters

November 2019

Who is leading the Flagstaff Trails Initiative?

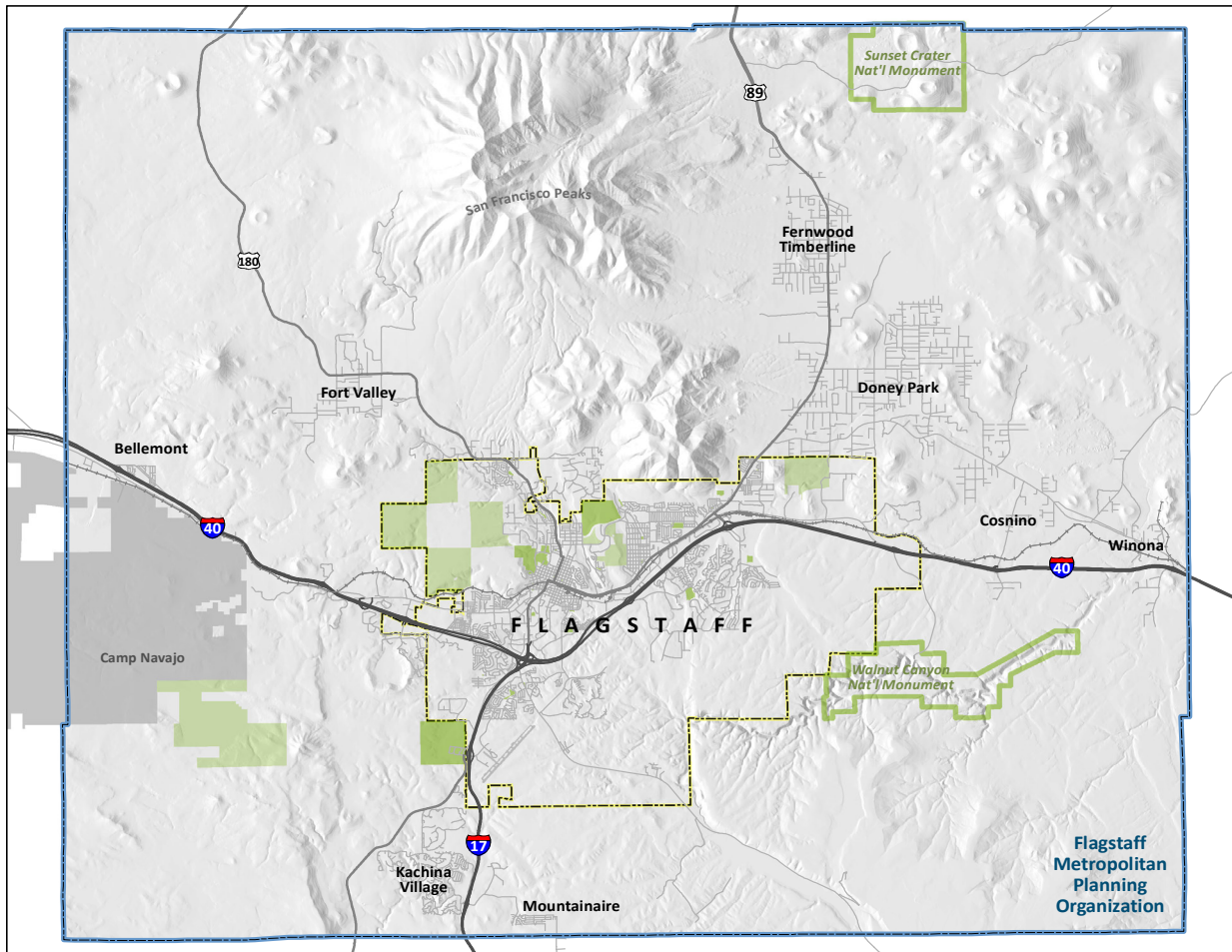
Anyone and everyone who cares about trails in Flagstaff can be part of FTI. Dozens of volunteers and hundreds of survey participants have helped shape the project.

FTI is a collaborative with a core team that includes a mix of public and nonprofit organizations: City of Flagstaff, Coconino National Forest, Coconino County, Flagstaff Biking Organization, Coconino Trail Riders, R2R Hiking Club, American Conservation Experience, National Park Service Flagstaff Area National Monuments, and Sierra Club. The project was launched in fall 2017 after securing technical assistance from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program.



What area does the Flagstaff Regional Trail Strategy cover?

The Strategy focuses on trails in and around Flagstaff, Arizona. The planning area extends from Belmont to the west, Winona to the east, Sunset Crater Volcano National Monument to the north and Mountainaire to the south. It includes trails managed by the City of Flagstaff, Coconino National Forest, National Park Service and Coconino County Parks and Recreation. The area includes over 400 miles of official trails and roughly 330 miles of unauthorized trails that are not part of the formal system.



Overall Goal

Elevate Flagstaff's trail system from good to extraordinary

- ✓ Use the *Flagstaff Regional Trail Strategy* to consolidate trail plans, proposals and concepts into a single regional document and conceptual map
- ✓ Prioritize a set of shared actions and investments for the next 5 years
- ✓ Take a collaborative and integrative approach to trail development - "Plan+Build=Balance"

We have ten goals, each with specific strategies:

Trail Planning

- A Improve trail quality and sustainability
- B Address the current and future demand for non-motorized and motorized trail activities
- C Improve connectivity between Flagstaff and the Flagstaff Urban Trails System (FUTS), regional open space and outlying Coconino County communities

Conservation and Restoration

- D Balance trail development and management with community conservation and natural resource goals with an emphasis on restoration
- E Ensure historic and prehistoric sites, including known American Indian sacred places and traditional cultural properties, are preserved and protected for their cultural importance

Education and Outreach

- F Create a safe and fun experience for all trail users
- G Educate, inform and involve the community in trail stewardship
- H Use trails to build the next generation of youth stewards

Financial Sustainability

- I Improve the financial sustainability of trail management
- J Integrate trail planning and management with tourism and economic goals

What does the strategy propose?



Photo Courtesy of WH Waters

what comes first

- ✓ Complete the trail **projects and plans currently in the works**
- ✓ Focus on elevating trail quality by **launching three projects that realign unsustainable trail segments: Humphrey's Trail; Arizona National Scenic Trail on Anderson Mesa, and Rocky Moto Trail**
- ✓ Use the new **Flagstaff Trail Fund and 501c3 nonprofit to raise funding and resources**
- ✓ Launch a **trail etiquette, "share the trails" and Leave No Trace education campaign**
- ✓ Establish a **volunteer restoration program** and hold several events in 2020
- ✓ Launch formal planning processes for the top two areas in need: **Mount Elden/Dry Lake Hills and Observatory Mesa**

A Trail Plan for the Future

Teams of “citizen planners” worked alongside trail professionals during the planning process. They combed through public feedback before recommending a future for the region’s trail system that was sensitive to important natural and cultural resources. From improved trailheads to missing connections and new trails, these projects seek to elevate the trail system for users of all types.

[Visit the FTI Interactive Map and proposed strategy for a full project listing.](#)

PLAN HIGHLIGHTS

77

distinct trail projects, ranked by priority

51

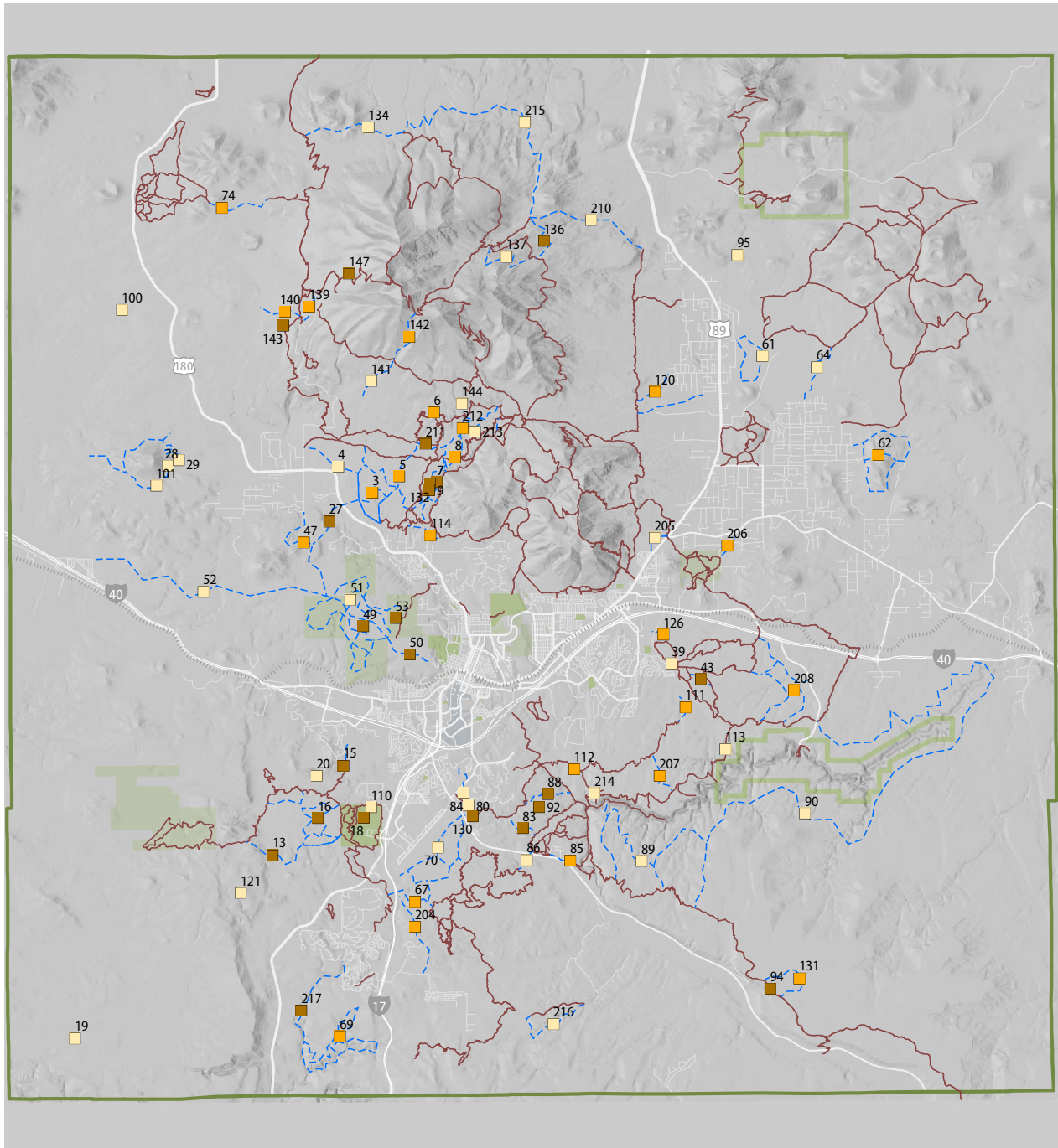
miles of high priority trails and connections

4

high priority trailheads

4

areas identified as priorities for tackling unauthorized trails



Trail development and connectivity recommendations

- Trail projects - priority
 - 1 High
 - 2 Medium
 - 3 Low
- Proposed trails
- Existing trails



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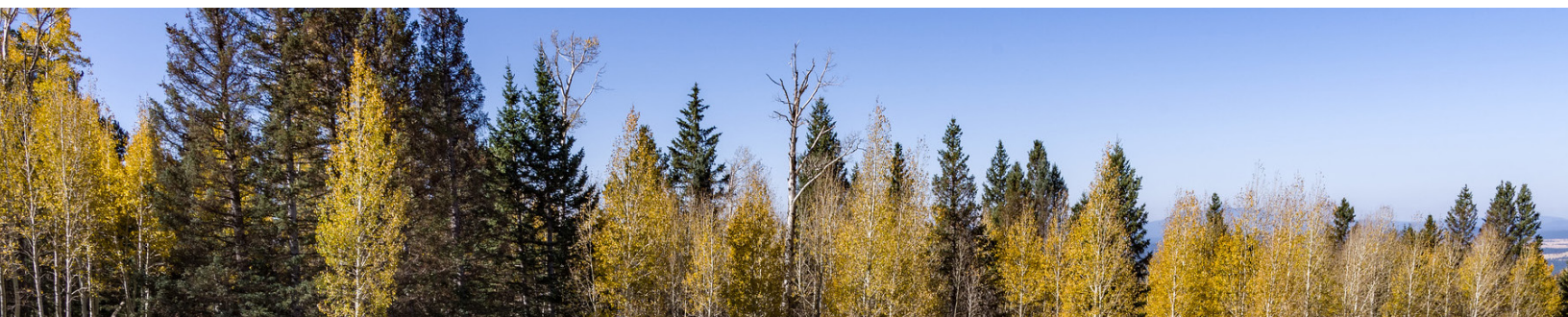


FLAGSTAFF TRAILS INITIATIVE

How was the strategy produced?

We emphasized engagement, welcoming anyone to join and participate. Over the course of two years, beginning in late 2017, we reached out to engage trail users, interested organizations and the public at large. We used surveys, workshops and open houses to learn about the issues and get early feedback on our ideas.

To pull it all together in the strategy, our team relied on a decision making approach that used consensus and dialogue.



What's next?

We invite you to review the draft *Flagstaff Regional Trail Strategy* and provide your feedback from **December 2019 through February 2020.**

After the review period, we will craft a final version and a related interorganizational agreement that will be presented to the organizations and agencies on the FTI core team including the Flagstaff City Council and Coconino County Board of Supervisors. The agreement will document support for the recommendations contained within the strategy and outline steps for their consideration and implementation.

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Realizing this vision will require raising the bar of community support for trails.

Learn more and support FTI by visiting flagstafftrailsinitiative.org