

Overview of the Chuska Rim Route

Presented by NavajoYES and the Navajo Trails Task Force

In collaboration with Navajo Parks & Recreation, Navajo Division of Transportation and the Office of Navajo President & Vice President

August 2019



Background and Benefits of the Chuska Rim Route

On behalf of the Navajo Nation nonprofit organization NavajoYES and with the support of the Navajo Parks, NDOT and the Office of Navajo President and Vice President, the following initiative is presented for your awareness and potential involvement. The “Chuska Rim Route” is an exciting and impactful project that will highlight one of the most scenic areas of the Navajo Nation and have multiple benefits.

The “Chuska Rim Route” as presented will provide significant benefits for local families, Navajo Nation residents, visitors and small businesses, with a primary focus on the promotion of a healthy lifestyle. The Route will:

- Promote personal health of area residents and Navajo Nation residents;
- Encourage community wellness as a whole;
- Foster and strengthen the social fabric and family togetherness;
- Provide opportunities to experience some of the Nation’s most stunning country to local residents and visitors alike;
- Offer a nearby, attractive and safe venue for events and races;
- Benefit local families and small businesses;

The Route: Along the “spine” of the Chuskas on the Chuska Rim Route

The Navajo Trails Task Force is working with local chapters and the Navajo Nation to develop trails and routes for people to enjoy outdoor recreation as a means of promoting healthy communities through bicycling, hiking, trail running and walking. In the Chuska Mountain region, we are seeking to designate various existing public roads as mountain bike "routes" for active individuals and families who would like to explore some of the Chuska highcountry but may not be familiar with these areas. The designated route will improve the experience for all trail users.

Next Steps:

- Our initial step will focus on road N30 from Narbona Pass – north to Cove and south to Camp Asaayi. The designation of this road as “open to bikes” would entail zero new trail or road construction, but would solely allow bikers to enjoy the mountains in the same manner as vehicles. The roads are already open to the public for driving or biking, but this designation makes the use of these roads for bikes even more readily available.
- The Task Force will be creating highway signage (particularly at road crossings, such as Buffalo Pass, Narbona Pass and Bowl Canyon Recreation Area. The addition of roadside trailposts, signage and benches along Route 30 will add to a safe and positive experience. Trailheads will be established at several locations, such as Cove Chapter, Buffalo Pass, Narbona Pass, Camp Asaayi and Mexican Springs as a means of encouraging more people to get out and experience these areas.
- Local families in the future may opt to develop and offer campsites, bed and breakfast hogans, guide services, bike repairs, and other amenities as they see fit. The Task Force will not be involved in this process and will have no financial stake in any of these developments.

Project Partners

The Navajo Trails Task Force is all-volunteer organization that is overseeing and promoting trails efforts across the Navajo Nation. The Task Force was established in 2015 as a partnership among various tribal entities, chapters and organizations interested in developing trails across Dine' Bikeyah. NavajoYES, a 501(c)3 nonprofit recognized by the Navajo Nation since 1994, spearheaded the creation of the Task Force and remains at the fore of the movement. The mission of NavajoYES is to "promote community wellness, lifelong fitness and youth empowerment in communities across the Dine' Nation."

President Nez and OPVP are very supportive of initiatives that promote healthy living, and believe that this trail initiative is a positive and creative effort in that direction. Council Delegate Amber Crotty is also in support of the effort. Navajo Parks & Recreation, Division of Transportation, many chapters and other tribal entities are engaged in the promotion of the Chuska Rim Trail project.

We look forward to working with you on this effort. You can reach us at (928) 429-0345 if you have any questions or would like to discuss the topic further.

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