

Cherokee Nation Code Annotated
Title 53: Parks and Recreation
Chapter 2: Cherokee National Trail System Act
§ 203. Authorized Activities and Reporting
Cite as: 53 CNCA § 203

A. Authorized Activities: The Principal Chief by his or her designee or as expressly designated herein, is authorized to:

1. Develop a strategic plan for the “Cherokee National Trail System,” (hereafter “CNTS Strategic Plan”), provided:

a. Drafting of said CNTS Strategic Plan shall be delegated to the Secretary of Natural Resources, hereafter “Secretary.”

b. Said CNTS Strategic Plan shall include but is not limited to including:

i. A proposed trail system depicted on a map of the Cherokee Nation Reservation which delineates existing trails, the approximate location of future trails and the basic land title status through which each proposed component passes;

ii. The approximate economic impact of a completed CNTS, once fully constructed, and of any completed components thereof;

iii. In consultation with Cherokee Nation Public Health, the public health benefit of a completed CNTS and any component trails thereof.

iv. The approximate investment required to complete the CNTS, including such major component trails as the Secretary deems noteworthy.

v. The identity of potential partners supportive of the CNTS development, construction and management.

vi. A recommended timeline for achieving various major milestones, as determined by the Secretary, provided that the recommended CNTS completion date should be no later than September 20, 2036.

c. In developing said CNTS Strategic Plan, the Secretary shall endeavor to develop trail routes which meet important national interests, including:

i. Connecting citizens to locations of notable natural beauty,

ii. Connecting citizens to locations of historic significance,

- iii. Achieving a level of meaningful accessibility to individuals with mobility challenges,
 - iv. Geographic and population equity, and
 - v. Opportunities to connect the Cherokee National Trail System to trail systems beyond the exterior boundaries of the Cherokee Nation reservation.
- d. Said CNTS Strategic Plan may occasionally be amended by the Secretary, subject to the requirements of this subsection of the Act.
- e. A draft of said CNTS Strategic Plan, including any amendments thereto, shall be provided to the Council and to the public for a review and comment period of no less than 60 days before issuance of the CNTS Strategic Plan in final form, a copy of which shall be provided to the Council and made available for general public access no later than December 31, 2026.
2. Acquire or lease real property to effectuate the purposes and policies of this Act.
3. Execute contracts, memoranda of understanding or other agreements with qualified third parties, administer grants to qualified third parties, or apply for grants from qualified third parties, to effectuate the purposes and policies of this Act.
4. Construct the Cherokee National Trail System and any component trails thereof, to the extent of appropriations and with no less than 60 days notice to the Council prior to the commencement of physical construction, unless any portion of such time frame is waived by resolution of the Council.
5. Delegate designations, and management, of the Cherokee National Trail System or any component trails thereof to the Secretary of Natural Resources, who shall manage said lands consistent with the Cherokee Nation Parks, Wildlands, Hunting and Fishing Reserve Act of 2021, as amended.
6. Coordinate with the Gadugi Corps program to encourage Gadugi Corps Volunteers or Gadugi Corps National Service Participants to assist in the construction and/or maintenance of the Cherokee National Trail System and any component trails thereof.
7. Utilize, as part of the funding authorized herein, funds authorized by the Public Health and Wellness Fund Act, as amended, and the Housing, Jobs and Sustainable Communities Act, as amended, to the extent any construction authorized by this Act is also authorized by those Acts.
8. Develop standardized insignia, signage and other way finding aids reflective of the purposes and policies of the Act, provided said insignia, signage and other way finding aids or any substantial changes thereto are summarized and provided to the Council and to the

public for a review and comment period of no less than 60 days prior to general usage, unless any portion of such time frame is waived by resolution of the Council.

9. Recommend the commemorative naming of any component trails of the Cherokee National Trail System, subject to approval of the Council by act or resolution.

B. Reporting Requirements

1. Annual Report: The Principal Chief or his or her designee, shall produce a “Cherokee National Trails System Annual Report,” summarizing progress by the Principal Chief to achieve the purposes and policies of this Act, provided:

a. Said annual report, commencing in fiscal year 2026, shall be issued between October 1st and December 31st and summarize the progress towards the objectives set forth in this Act for the previous fiscal year, including but not limited to:

i. Status of the CNTS Strategic Plan;

ii. Copy of the current CNTS route map as reflected in the CNTS strategic plan and any potential amendments to the route map;

iii. Status of the construction of any components of the CNTS;

iv. Summary of any insignia, signage and other way finding aids used in connection with this Act;

v. Recommendations of amendments to this Act, if any.

b. Said report shall be provided to the Council of the Cherokee Nation and made available for public inspection on Cherokee Nation’s website within 30 days of completion.

C. Attribution to the Act: Any program, activity or publication relating to achieving any of the purposes and policies of this Act shall be attributed to the “Cherokee National Trail System” or some comparable attribution as determined by the Principal Chief.

Historical Data

LA 30-25, eff. October 30, 2025.