

Recreation Trail and Walkway (feet)

DEFINITION

A pathway prepared especially for pedestrian, equestrian, and cycle travel.

SCOPE

This standard applies to walkways and trails constructed in recreation and scenic areas.

PURPOSE

To provide users of recreation areas with travel routes for activities such as walking, sightseeing, horseback riding, and bicycling; to prevent erosion; and to preserve and protect soil, plant, animal, and visual resources.

CONDITIONS WHERE PRACTICE APPLIES

This practice applies to lands where prepared paths, trails, and walkways are needed for effective and safe use of the recreation resources.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Water Quantity

1. Impacts of impervious walkways and trails on increased surface runoff.
2. Changes in deep percolation with increased surface runoff. Consider evaporation losses before infiltration, evapotranspiration changes with decreased infiltration, and average changes in root zone storage.

Water Quality

1. Changes in ground water quality caused by decreased dissolved chemical infiltration.
2. Potential changes in erosion and sediment yield caused by increased runoff and temporary increases in erosion during construction.
3. Effects of dissolved chemicals in runoff resulting from recreation activities.

Design Criteria

Visual resources. Special attention shall be given to saving and maintaining key trees and other vegetation that have scenic value, provide shade, reduce erosion and runoff, provide den and food for wildlife, or add to the visual quality of the area.

Grade. Sustained grades shall be dictated by good judgment for the purpose intended, considering the topography, and shall not exceed 10 percent.

Width. Generally the minimum tread width shall be 4 ft. The width in cuts for pedestrian trails on sidehill sections may be reduced to 3 ft. if greater width would increase the cost materially or adversely affect the visual resources.

Side slopes. Cut and fill slopes shall be stable for the soil or soil material.

Drainage. Adequate drainage shall be provided. A raised or elevated trail or walkway may be required for wet sites that cannot be drained.

Erosion control. Plans shall include provisions for control of erosion. Disturbed areas shall be established to vegetation as soon as practicable after construction. If soil or climatic conditions precludes the use of vegetation, and protection is needed, non-vegetative means, such as mulches or gravel, may be used. Seedbed preparation, seeding, fertilizing, and mulching shall comply with recommendations in technical guides.

Bridges. Bridges shall be designed for the maximum expected loading with an adequate factor of safety.

Surfacing. If surfacing is required for a firm trail, the surfacing material may be pit or creek-run gravel, concrete, asphalt, or other material that can withstand the traffic and the elements at the site.

RECREATION TRAIL AND WALKWAY SPECIFICATIONS

Walkways and trails shall be constructed to a planned grade and cross section. All drainage structures and surfacing shall be installed according to plans and detailed specifications. Safety features, including signs, guardrails, safety fences at key locations, and removal of existing fences, shall be according to the plans.

Construction operations shall be carried out in such a manner that erosion and air and water pollution are minimized and held within legal limits.

The completed job shall present a workmanlike finish.