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Comments: We are encouraged by the North Country Trail Association's involvement in the Forest Plan revision process and the acknowledgement of the North Country National Scenic Trail in this draft Assessment document.

It is critical to the North Country Trail Association that the Forest Plan addresses a designated Management area for the NCNST. The Memorandum Of Understanding mentioned in this Draft Assessment document between US Forest Service Eastern Region, National Park Service Midwest Region, and the North Country Trail Association specifically establishes that USFS shall "as Forest Plans are revised or amended, include the Trail as a discrete Management Area, to afford the Trail with the appropriate status and planning action required as a federally designated entity" This language in the MOU is also supported by the direction of the 2012 Planning Rule.

The aforementioned MOU also outlines that "NPS and NCTA will be invited to fully participate in those components of the forest planning process pertinent to the Trail." We look forward to a continued working relationship with the Wayne National Forest throughout this planning process to ensure the Forest Plan addresses the nature and purposes for which the North Country National Scenic Trail was established.

One edit to the information included about the NCNST: With the passage of the 2019 John Dingell Conservation, Management and Recreation Act, the North Country Trail now passes through 8 states and extends from North Dakota to Vermont.