

Network of trails now spans the country

By Brooke Warren and Paige Blankenbuehler, High Country News

A network of long trails crisscrosses the West, through open deserts and wild forests. Many trails follow historic routes where people made pilgrimages or embarked on exploratory expeditions.

The National Trails System, managed by the National Park Service, has officially designated some of these extensive trails.

Under the National Trails System Act, passed in 1968, national scenic trails and national historic trails are long-distance paths designated by acts of Congress. National recreation trails and connecting and side trails may be designated by the secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture with the consent of the federal agency, state or political subdivision involved.

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