Trail Checklist

TRAIL INFORMATION

1 Facility/agency name:

2 Name of trail:

3 Primary uses of the trail (check all that apply):
☐ hiking/pedestrian trail ☐ biking trail ☐ horse trail ☐ interpretive trail ☐ other:

4 Describe any major attractions along the trail (e.g., waterfall, scenic vista, historic feature, etc.):

5 Signage or brochure at trailhead provides information on: ☐ no sign or brochure
☐ length of trail ☐ typical and maximum running slope ☐ typical and minimum tread width
☐ trail surface type ☐ typical and maximum cross slope ☐ map of trail ☐ other:

6 Trail amenities provided: ☐ none
☐ benches ☐ water faucet/spout ☐ trail register ☐ other:

7 Describe the type of trail (check only one):
☐ one-way or linear (out and back on same trail) ☐ loop (trail loops back to trailhead) ☐ other:

8 Length of the trail (from sign/brochure or from *AllTrails* app): _____ miles

PARKING ROUTE

9	Is there a ***continuous unobstructed route of travel*** from parking to the trailhead?	☐ yes ☐ no ☐ n/a ☐ photo
10	Describe the surface of the route of travel:	
11	Slope of route of travel (at its steepest incline):	_____ % (enter 0% if flat)
12	Width of route of travel (at its narrowest point):	_____ inches (at least 36")
13	Distance from the parking area to the trailhead: (if no accessible parking, measure distance from middle of parking lot/area to the trailhead)	_____ feet

SURFACE

14	Is the typical surface of the trail firm and stable? (see instructions)	☐ yes ☐ no ☐ n/a ☐ photo

15 Describe the typical trail surface: (check all that apply)
☐ asphalt ☐ crushed rock/stone ☐ sand ☐ wood boardwalk
☐ cinder ☐ grass ☐ stone dust/crushed fines ☐ wood chips
☐ concrete ☐ gravel/pea rock ☐ soil ☐ other:

WIDTH

Scratch Pad (to take notes throughout hike)

16	Width of the trail tread at its narrowest point:	_____ inches (at least 36")	Width:
17	How long is the narrowest point in trail?	_____ feet	

SLOPE

18	Steepest running slope or grade on the trail:	_____ %	Slope:
19	How long is the steepest running slope on trail?	_____ feet	
20	How long is the entire slope that contains the steepest slope?	_____ feet	

X-SLOPE

21	Steepest cross-slope on the trail:	_____ %	X-Slope:
22	How long is the steepest cross-slope on the trail?	_____ feet	

23	Is a 3" edge protection provided along the trail in critical areas? (e.g., bridges, boardwalks, gorges)	☐ yes ☐ no ☐ n/a ☐ photo

24 Describe any protruding objects or obstructions along the trail:

25 Comments/additional information regarding trail:

Optional Information using *AllTrails* App

APP DATA	26	**Link** to map, information, waypoints, and photos of trail:
	27	Trail Profile (insert graph from AllTrails.com after you have completed the assessment)

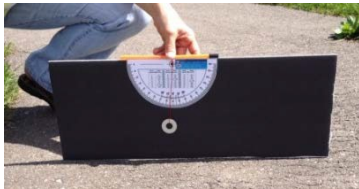# Trail Checklist Instructions and Supporting Information

Instructions

The Trail Checklist is used in conjunction with the Inclusivity Assessment Tool (for assessing restrooms, parking, etc.)

Prior to visiting the trail:
- Step 1: Research the trail on websites and trail guides (suggestions below)
- Step 2: Complete the parts of the Trail Checklist you are able to complete from the research
- Step 3: Download the free app *AllTrails* from the App Store (Apple) or Google Play (Android)
  on your smart phone (or at this link: www.alltrails.com/)
- Step 4: Gather needed tools
  - Inclusivity Assessment Tool (printed copy or online)
  - Trail Checklist (printed copy or online)
  - Smartphone or tablet
  - Clinometer/cardboard or digital level or smartphone with clinometer app/24" ruler
  - Tape measure
  - Pencil and clipboard
  - Partner if possible
- Step 5: Calibrate smartphone clinometer app and/or digital level

At the trail:
- Always start at the parking area nearest the trailhead.
- Start the *AllTrails* app at the trailhead. (you will need a data signal to use the app, either from cell towers or satellites)
- Assess the best path of travel throughout the trail.
- Accurately describe the conditions that the user will be required to negotiate along the trail.
- Always record a feature when in doubt. If using the *AllTrails* app, take a photo of every major feature using the "Mark" feature in the app.
- Measure and take photos of the steepest running slope and the steepest cross-slope on the trail; mark on map if using the *AllTrails* app. Use the "Scratch Pad" on the Trail Checklist to keep track of the running and cross-slopes you measure as you hike along.
- You learned how to measure running slope and distances in Inclusion U. To measure cross-slope, follow these directions:

To measure cross-slope: • You will need a 2-foot rigid ruler and clinometer (app on a smart phone works best; you can also use a compass or level) or a smart level. • At the site being measured, choose the best path of travel. • Lay the 2-foot rigid ruler perpendicular to path of travel. • Place your smartphone clinometer (or a compass, level or other device) on the center of the ruler. • Records to nearest .1% • Cross-slope should be 5% (1:20) maximum unless concrete, asphalt or boards, then 2% (1:48)		Homemade clinometer with 9"x24" piece of cardboard
		Smartphone/clinometer app with 24" ruler
		Digital level

- After hiking the trail, record the steepest running slope and cross-slope measurements from the Scratch Pad onto the Trail Checklist; you can note other steep sections on the trail in the "Comments" box and on the *AllTrails* map. Always make a note in the Comments Box if a section of the trail exceeds 12% running slope.
- Save your hike on the *AllTrails* app by stopping and then syncing your trip.
- Log onto the *AllTrails* website to view your trip in your "Dashboard."
- Copy the web link provided for the trip into question 26.
- Copy the trail profile from the trip webpage and insert into question 27.

- Parks and Trails NY Trail Finder: **http://www.ptny.org/trailfinder/Default.aspx**
- Rails-to-Trails Wheelchair Accessible Trails: **http://www.traillink.com/activity/wheelchair-accessible-trails.aspx**
- Trail Explorer (UTAP assessed trails): **http://www.trailexplorer.com/tew/home.cfm**

What types of trails should I assess?

- Trails that are designated accessible
- Paved trails
- Trails designated as easy or family friendly
- Trails that originate from campgrounds for day use
- Popular short day hikes
- Trails less than 2 miles in length
- Trails to unique tourism attractions
- USFS Class 4 and 5 trails

Definitions

Edge Protection: Edge protection is a raised curb, wall, railing, or other projecting surface that defines the edge of a travel surface and helps keep people and assistive devices from accidentally falling off the edge. Edge protection is not required for accessibility on trails. However, if edge protection is provided on a trail to improve safety or for other reasons, it should be designed appropriately for the site and must be at least 3 inches (75 millimeters) high.

Firm and Stable: A firm trail surface resists deformation by indentations. A stable trail surface is not permanently affected by expected weather conditions and can sustain normal wear and tear from the expected uses between planned maintenance. What sort of surface is firm and stable? In general, if the answer to both of the following questions is yes, the surface is probably firm and stable.

- Could a person ride a narrow-tired bicycle across the surface easily without making ruts? (The bicycle tires are similar to large rear wheels of a wheelchair.)
- Could a folding stroller with small, narrow plastic wheels containing a 3-year-old be pushed easily across the surface without making ruts? (The stroller's wheels are similar to the front wheels of a wheelchair.)

Minimum clear width: The narrowest point on a trail. A minimum clear width is created when significant obstacles, such as utility poles or tree roots, protrude into the trail and reduce the design width.

Slope: Slope represents the proportion of vertical rise to horizontal length and can be represented as a ratio, percentage, or in degrees (see table below).

Running slope: Slope in the direction of travel (see A in photo to right).

Maximum slope or grade: The steepest grade that exceeds the typical running grade. The distance over which a maximum grade occurs significantly influences how difficult a section of trail is to negotiate.

Cross slope: Slope perpendicular to the direction of travel (see B in photo to right).

Maximum cross-slope: The highest or steepest cross-slope of a trail that exceeds the typical running cross slope of the path. The distance over which a maximum cross slope occurs significantly influences how difficult a section of trail is to negotiate.

Conversion Chart for Slope

rise: length	percent	degree
1:8	12.50%	7.13
1:10	10	5.71
1:12	8.33	4.76
1:13	7.69	4.40
1:14	7.14	4.09
1:15	6.67	3.81
1:16	6.25	3.58
1:17	5.88	3.37
1:18	5.55	3.18
1:19	5.26	3.01
1:20	5.00	2.86
1:50	2.00	1.15

Trail: A pedestrian route developed primarily for outdoor recreational purposes. *A pedestrian route developed primarily to connect elements, spaces, or facilities within a site is not a trail.*

Trailhead: An outdoor space that is designated by an entity responsible for administering or maintaining a trail to serve as an access point to the trail. The junction of two or more trails or the undeveloped junction of a trail and a road is not a trailhead.

Trail Surface Obstacles: Trail tread imperfections, such as rocks, roots, holes, stumps, steps, downed logs, and structures, that are beyond the acceptable range of tread roughness and challenge level for the trail and that obstruct one or more managed uses of the trail.

Exceptions to trail accessibility in the new Guidelines for Outdoor Developed Areas :

1. Compliance is not practicable due to terrain.
2. Compliance cannot be accomplished with the prevailing construction practices.
3. Compliance would fundamentally alter the function or purpose of the facility or the setting.
4. Compliance is limited or precluded by any of the following laws, or by decisions or opinions issued or agreements executed pursuant to any of the following laws:
   - Endangered Species Act
   - National Environmental Policy Act
   - National Historic Preservation Act
   - Wilderness Act
   - Other federal, state, or local law the purpose of which is to preserve threatened or endangered species; the environment; or archaeological, cultural, historical, or other significant natural features

References and Additional Resources

- American Trails Accessible Trails at **http://www.americantrails.org/resources/accessible/**
- National Center on Accessibility at **http://www.ncaonline.org/index.shtml**
- Universal Trail Assessment Process at **http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/a-summary-of-accessibility-standards-for-federal-outdoor-developed-areas**
- U.S. Access Board Accessibility Standards for Federal Outdoor Developed Areas at **http://www.access-board.gov/guidelines-and-standards/recreation-facilities/outdoor-developed-areas/a-summary-of-accessibility-standards-for-federal-outdoor-developed-areas**
- U.S. Forest Service Accessibility Guidebook for Outdoor Recreation and Trails at **http://www.fs.fed.us/recreation/programs/accessibility/htmlpubs/htm06232801/toc.htm**
- U.S. Transportation Department Federal Highway Administration Recreational Trails Program Accessibility Guidance at **http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/recreational_trails/Guidance/accessibility_guidance/**