



VISITOR USE MANAGEMENT CASE STUDY

Triple Crown/Appalachian Trail

KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Adaptive Strategies for Camping and Trails
- Proposed Parking and Overcrowding Solutions
- Broader Objective of Scenic Evaluation

SUMMARY

In the summer of 2023, the interagency draft Visitor Use Management Plan for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail and the Virginia Triple Crown segment was publicly released for comment. The primary goal of the Visitor Use Management Plan is to preserve natural resources while providing safe and enjoyable experiences at these destinations.

The draft plan addresses challenges such as camping impacts, trail conditions, parking and roadway congestion, crowding at viewpoints, and various monitoring issues. The proposed plan envisions a 15 to 20-year timeline for implementation with outcomes focusing on resource preservation, enhanced visitor experience, and sustainable facilities. The multifaceted challenges underscore the need for effective management to ensure the long-term sustainability of the area.

FACTS

8x The number of VA Triple Crown Segment visitors between 2011 & 2015

600 Visitors to McAfee Knob Section of ATNST per day in peak season

MANAGEMENT OUTCOMES

The VUM plan draft outlines proposed comprehensive management strategies for camping, trail conditions, parking, roadway congestion, and overcrowding. Camping monitoring would involve periodic surveys, with adaptive strategies like constructing side-hill campsites and hardening existing ones. Trail conditions would be monitored through baseline inventories, standardized data collection, and periodic mapping of unauthorized trails. Adaptive strategies would include promoting off-peak visitation and improving accessibility. Parking and roadway congestion would be addressed with strategies such as reservation systems and shuttle services. Overcrowding would be managed through data collection to refine visitor use thresholds, guiding changes to permit systems and distribution. The broader objective includes ongoing evaluation of scenic viewpoints across the Appalachian Trail and Virginia Triple Crown segment.

MORE INFORMATION

[2023 VUM Plan Draft](#)