



## Ohio Environmental Council

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NPS BNST Feasibility Study Team

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### **Ohio Environmental Council Comments on Buckeye Trail National Scenic Trail Study**

On our own behalf and that of our thousands of members and supporters throughout the state of Ohio and Beyond, the Ohio Environmental Council (“OEC”) submits the following comments on the National Park Service’s Buckeye Trail National Scenic Trail Feasibility Study.

The OEC is thrilled to express our enthusiasm for the designation of the Buckeye Trail as a National Scenic Trail. The Buckeye Trail is an outstanding scenic, recreational, historic, and cultural resource of national significance. We believe its designation is both feasible and suitable.

Circumnavigating Ohio, the 1,454 mile Buckeye Trail weaves from Lake Erie to the Ohio River, through the farmland of northwest Ohio, the hills of Appalachia, the Black Hand sandstone cliffs of the Hocking Hills region, and through the Bluegrass region of southwest Ohio. The Buckeye Trail is a state and national treasure epitomizing the strength of connectivity: connecting our communities, our people, and Ohio’s vast and wondrous ecosystems.

Since 1959, the Buckeye Trail has strengthened our state by expanding opportunities for education, ecological stewardship, economic growth, outdoor recreation, and access to our state’s incredible natural and cultural resources. The BT continues to put Ohio’s forests, watersheds, and trails on the map as national treasures. The impacts of the Buckeye Trail span the state, strengthening and supporting revitalization efforts of communities across Ohio.

The Buckeye Trail is an incredible example of what can be accomplished when people come together. Designation as the 12th National Scenic Trail would greatly enhance the awareness of Ohioans and visitors that Ohio has a world-class long distance circumferential trail. The Buckeye Trail provides access to Ohio’s great outdoors within 90 minutes of every Ohioan. This recognition and awareness will help to build upon and increase investment in this state treasure through volunteerism, membership, promotion of hiking destinations, and partnership projects for years to come.

Approximately 70% of the Buckeye Trail is used by a section of the North Country National Scenic Trail; its own recognition as a National Scenic Trail will further enhance both these trails and the lives of the people and communities who benefit from them.

For all of the foregoing reasons, both individually and collectively, the OEC respectfully requests that the National Park Service recommend the Buckeye Trail for National Scenic Trail designation. We appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

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