



Long Walk News - 2

Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study Continues

Background

In August of 2002 the U. S. Congress passed legislation that directed that a study of the Long Walk of the Mescalero Apache and the Navajo People be done to determine if it should be designated by Congress as a National Historic Trail (NHT). Once funding was obtained in 2003, contact was made with the historic preservation departments of the Mescalero Apache Tribe in Mescalero, New Mexico, and the Navajo Nation in Window Rock, Arizona. A study team was brought together and official agreements were made with each tribe to work together on the study.

Over 25 meetings were held in New Mexico and Arizona in cities and towns and on the Mescalero Apache and Navajo Reservations. The study team provided some background information about national historic trails and asked for public comment. People spoke very eloquently about the experience of the Long Walk and how that experience relates to their family and continues to affect them today.

Awareness of and Sensitivity to the Long Walk History

The need for education about the context, events, and legacy of the Long Walk was the focus of many discussions and comments heard at the meetings. Awareness of the Long Walk ranged from those who were intimately



Navajo Men at Fort Sumner, N.M., circa 1866
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-5C-87976 (detail)

connected and could tell very personal stories (descendents of participants) to those who had limited or no knowledge (younger tribal people, members of the general public living off- reservation). Concerns were expressed about the need for education regardless of national historic trail designation, while others viewed possible designation as a way to commemorate, and thus educate larger audiences about the Long Walk. Several people spoke of the Navajo World War II code talkers, and the length of time that had passed before that story and those participants were celebrated and honored. The need to educate both tribal young people and the larger nation/world about the Long Walk was emphasized in many

meetings. Some participants hoped that education about the Long Walk would lead to wider discussions about treaty history and historic and present tribal relations with the U.S. Government.

Discussions about the sensitivity and care required for any telling of the Long Walk story took several forms, ranging from the acceptance of personal responsibility and the need for healing, to the questioning of U.S. Government motives. Young and old alike spoke of the on- going “pain” associated with the Long Walk, resulting in the stories not being repeated from generation to generation.

Message from the Superintendent

Dear Friends:

I thank you for your participation in this important planning effort. Many of you have spoken in the public meetings, provided written comments, or have talked and given your thoughts to one or more of the team members. I urge you to continue to participate and give us your thoughts on the proposed alternatives noted in this newsletter. They are a reflection of the thoughts and ideas collected from all the public comments. Let us know what you think of them and which one you prefer. A draft of the feasibility study containing a longer description of the alternatives will be out for public comment in early 2005. Please contact us if you would like a copy of the draft to review.

Jere L. Krakow
Superintendent
National Trails System
Intermountain Region
National Park Service

What are the proposed draft Alternatives for the Study?

Four alternatives will form the basis of the Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study. They will be analyzed in the draft study as to their potential impacts. One or a combination of these alternatives will form the final recommendation to Congress as to the establishment of a national historic trail.

Alternatives:

1. No Action – Existing Conditions. A “no action” alternative is required for an Environmental Impact Statement. No federal action would be proposed under this alternative. This alternative would not restrict the tribes or any others from taking their own actions or carrying out a program on the Long Walk.

2. Establish One National Historic Trail. One National Historic Trail would be recommended for designation to Congress. It would include both the Mescalero Apache route and the Navajo routes to the

Bosque Redondo. This NHT would have one name such as “Long Walk” National Historic Trail. Only the generic routes would be identified, i.e.: Fort Stanton to Bosque Redondo and Canyon de Chelly to Bosque Redondo via the various routes. No “feeder” or auxiliary routes into the main routes would be identified.

An auto tour route would be designated following the historic route(s) as closely as possible on all weather roads.

High Potential Historic Sites related to the Long Walk would be eligible for a cooperative program of resource protection and visitor education. Interpretation/education would emphasize the similar experiences of the Navajo and Mescalero Apache Tribes and would be directed toward the general public and limited to overviews of the Long Walk events. Assistance for preservation and challenge- cost share funds would be available.



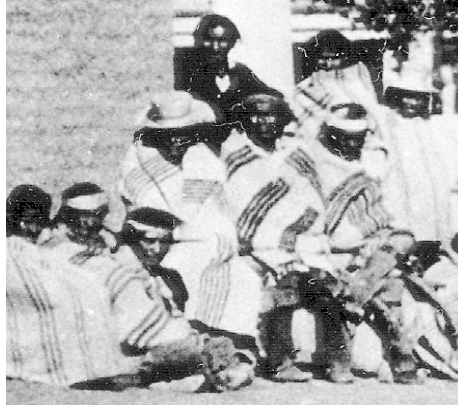
Receiving Ration Tickets at the Provost Marshall's Office, Fort Sumner, N.M.
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-SC-87966 (detail)

Proposed Alternatives cont'd

3. Establish two National Historic Trails. Two National Historic Trails would be recommended for designation by Congress. One would be (Mescalero Apache) NHT and the other would be (Dinè) NHT (tribes would recommend name for their respective trails).

Feeder routes into the main routes would be identified, as would the routes from each tribal area to the Bosque Redondo. The escape route of the Mescalero Apache would be interpreted along with the escape and events avoiding recapture.. for the Navajo the route returning home would be recognized separately from the same route used to go to the Bosque.

Auto tour routes would be established and visitors could follow the routes, visit existing cultural facilities, museums, and have access to Long



Indian men on the street at Fort Sumner, N.M.
Courtesy: National Archives, 111-SC-87970 (detail)

Walk sites open to the public. They would receive information about the protocol of visiting and touring on the reservations and private lands.

High Potential Historic Sites related to the Long Walk would be eligible for a cooperative program of resource protection and visitor education administered in consultation with tribal

governments. Interpretation/education would present contextual history and would highlight the unique experiences of the Navajo and Mescalero Apache on the Long Walk. There would be education on how the Long Walk still affects people today.

Gathering of oral histories would be encouraged with tribal input on how the information would be used. Assistance for preservation and challenge cost share funds would be available.

4. Grant Program. The tribes would administer a grant program focusing on resource protection on tribal lands and on interpretation / education projects. All decisions about strategy, level of protection, etc., would be made by the tribes.

Congress would appropriate funding for the program either directly to the tribes or through the NPS.



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Long Walk National Historic Trail Feasibility Study

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The National Park Service cares for the special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

What do you Think?

This newsletter offers you the opportunity to respond to the proposed draft alternatives. Your comments and suggestions are important and may result in additions to the alternatives. They will also help in the final selection of the preferred alternative that is sent to Congress. You can provide your comments to the address on the immediate left.

The appropriate tribal leadership (probably the respective tribal councils) will be asked to provide the study team with official notification of what alternative(s) they prefer. That decision will be included in the final study to be sent to Congress. It would be appropriate to inform your tribal council member what you think about the alternatives and which you prefer.

Visit our planning website at:

<http://planning.nps.gov/>

Type "Long Walk" in the search box. This will bring up the latest information on the Study.



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Planning Schedule

Write the draft study/EIS –
 March –August 2004

Distribute internal review copies –
 December 2004

Incorporate internal comments on
 draft study/EIS –
 January – February 2005

Present finding of significance to the
 National Park Advisory Board –
 Spring 2005

Public comment period on draft
 study/EIS (90 days) –
 April – June 2005

Analyze comments, complete proposed
 study/final EIS –
 July – August 2005

Incorporate internal comments on
 proposed study/final EIS –
 November 2005

Mail proposed study/final EIS – January
 2006

Protest period - 30 days –
 February –March 2006

Publish final study and Record of
 Decision –
 April 2006

Transmit study to Secretary of Interior
 for Transmittal to Congress –
 June 2006