



USFS ADA rules

- Even though we have no USFS land their rules are likely to set the pattern for the future.
- USFS rules based on Access Board rules (1999 – stalled for approval in OMB)
- Comments due to ATC by Dec 12, to USFS by Dec 24.



USFS ADA rules

- The proposed rules are posted at www.nynjtc.org/issues/ADA/
- USFS rules do not need OMB approval
- Rules only apply to new or “altered” trails
- “Altered” means purpose changed, not maintenance activity.



USFS ADA rules

- Maintenance should improve accessibility when opportunities arise
- The rules apply to all trails but there are broad classifications for deviation from the rules



USFS ADA rules (deviations)

1. Compliance would harm cultural, historic, religious or significant natural features
2. Compliance would substantially alter the physical or recreation setting of the trail class, designated use, managed use, or not comply with land or resource management plans



USFS ADA rules (deviations)

3. Compliance would require construction methods or materials that are prohibited
4. Compliance would not be feasible due to terrain or prevailing construction practices.



USFS ADA rules (limiting factors)

- Grade exceeds 20% for 40 ft or more
- Surface is neither firm nor stable for 45 ft or more
- Width is 18 inches or less for 20 ft or more
- Obstacle of 30 inches or more in height exists across full width of trail



USFS ADA rules (exemptions)

A trail segment is exempt if one of the general exemptions hold.

- One or more deviations hold or one or more limiting factors hold
- If deviations are granted for over 15% of the length of the segment then the technical provisions do not apply beyond the first deviation



USFS ADA technical specifications

- See web site for details



USFS Outdoor Recreation Accessibility Guidelines

- These affect firerings, shelters, tent platforms, privies, etc. which only affect our AT committees
- Backcountry sites are NOT exempt from these provisions.



ATC comments

- Training is essential
- Project level decisions are essential
- Facilities are not addressed adequately (“middle of nowhere” problem)
- Document should be standalone without reference to other standards
- Improving “accessibility devices” not addressed



ATC comments

- There are many missing definitions
 - Firm and stable surfaces
 - Measuring methods
 - Changes in the “setting” undefined
 - Outdoor recreation access route



ATC comments

- Costs have not been adequately addressed
 - Building costs
 - Maintenance costs
 - Cost of losing volunteers due to the complexity of the job