



Chapter Start-Up Information

Starting a North Country Trail Association Chapter is simple. All you need is ten current paying members of the North Country Trail Association, and a signed Charter. Headquarters will provide the Charter, which needs to be signed by the Chapter's president. After it is signed, headquarters presents it to the Board of Directors for approval.

It is recommended that each Chapter have its own set of By-laws that define how it will operate. Headquarters will provide samples of other chapters' By-laws for reference. It is recommended that Chapter members also elect officers. Typically, these are defined in your By-laws. President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer are the standard positions held but others roles should be considered. These roles may include: Hike/Activity Coordinator, Membership Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, Newsletter Editor, etc. These positions are not required; the management of your Chapter and its activities is completely up to you and your members.

You won't need Articles of Incorporation since each chapter falls under NCTA's umbrella. Chapters are technically parts of the NCTA, so all their assets are assets of the NCTA. Chapters are not allowed to have paying members that are not members of the national NCTA. As subsidiaries, Chapters and their members are covered by the NCTA liability insurance when working on behalf of the NCTA.

The NCTA manages each new Chapter's funds from the national office. This means that Chapters submit expenses for reimbursement, or have the office billed directly. Even though the office manages the Chapter's account, each Chapter has complete control over how its funds are used. No funds are used without authorization from the Chapter.

Chapters receive funds from headquarters through a few different means. To begin, every new Chapter receives a \$250 "start-up" grant to help the Chapter get its feet on the ground. Then, as Chapters recruit new members and as previous members renew their memberships, 25% of all dues received from Chapter members revert to the Chapter's account. Chapters also may apply for "Field Grants" from the national office, in amounts of up to \$1000. Chapters also have the option to raise funds. Some restrictions may apply; therefore it is important that fund raising activities are discussed with headquarters prior to implementing. Restrictions basically ensure that Chapters don't go outside the scope of NCTA's mission, and that different groups within the NCTA don't go for funding from the same source.

The National Park Service typically outfits new Chapters with a good set of trail tools and educational material. The beginning of the 4th quarter of each year is when requests are

submitted in order for NPS to allocate their funds for the following year. Contact NCTA for assistance in this procedure.