

CRITERIA FOR DESTINATIONS WHO WISH TO APPLY FOR STATUS AS NORWEGIAN SCENIC PATH

DEVELOPED BY THE NORWEGIAN DIRECTORATE OF NATURE MANAGEMENT IN COOPERATION WITH INNOVATION NORWAY (VISIT NORWAY) AND RESOURCE GROUP CONSISTING OF AMONG OTHERS ASCENT TROLLTUNGA

The criteria are set to ensure that the destinations wishing to gain status as a Norwegian Scenic Path have carefully considered the implications of work undertaken on the site in terms of land ownership, regulations, public plans and strategies, local support and in particular considerations for the natural resources in the area. The set of criteria is developed for destinations who are in a particular position as having an exceptionally high number of hikers, a large proportion of whom are international guests. The high number of guests lead to an unusually high degree of wear on the destination, including erosion, damage to local flora and fauna but also other wear on the local community in terms of logistical challenges linked to traffic, parking, rubbish and rescue operations for local volunteer first responders.

Where international guests make up large numbers, additional challenge may arise based on language requirements and cultural differences in terms of the correct way to prepare and equip for hikes in Norwegian mountains. Most of the locations relevant to the Norwegian Scenic Path initiative are heavily featured in digital channels, either intentionally promoted by local tourist organisations or simply spread by the public via SoMe. Regardless of how the exposure began, the spread through social media mean that the promotion of the locations are beyond anyone's control and that visitors will continue to arrive regardless of whether active promotion is ended. This type of exposure lead to a type of visitor not normally associated with hiking and nature interest. The purpose for their trip is the "bragging rights" and the ultimate selfie taken in the most photogenic location. While the visitors bring economic activity to a region they also cost the local government and landowners greatly and special provisions must be made in ways not normally extended to hikers in the Norwegian outdoors.

These locations cannot be seen as untouched but must be managed with a view to limit the damage done to both nature and man in the area. The authorisation and the criteria set aims to set a "best practise" standard for this type of upland management.

CRITERIA

Norwegian Scenic Paths are day trips of varying length and degree of difficulty, all over Norway. The paths show a varied landscape with high experience value.

To be authorised as a Norwegian Scenic Path, the destination must fulfil the following criteria:

1.0 LOCAL SUPPORT:	Yes
1.1 The necessary agreements are made with local land owners	
1.2 Status as a Norwegian Scenic Path is approved in local political levels for inclusion in municipal strategies and area plans	
1.3 Status as Norwegian Scenic Path is included in the region's tourism master plan.	
1.4 If the path enters or is on the border of a protected area, the relevant ombudsmann (national park, municipality, county of government ombudsmann) must be involved in the work.	
1.5 If the local municipality is not the applicant, the local municipality/municipalities must support the application.	
1.6 The responsibility and plans for management for the path and auxiliary facilities must be clearly allocated, including financial responsibility	
2.0 VISITOR MANAGEMENT	
2.1 The path has a high number of visitors, a large share of whom are international tourists.*	
2.2 A comprehensive visitor strategy has been produced	
2.3 A visitor survey has been carried out, which shows who the visitors are and what they wish to do	
2.4 A counter has been put in place so that the annual visitor number can be documented	
2.5 An evaluation has been carried out to establish whether the high number of visitors impact the area's natural qualities.*	

2.6 A monitoring system is put in place to evaluate the area's tolerance limit.	
2.7 Information on the path, adapted to the visitor is readily available in several languages and adapted for digital distribution.	
2.8 The signposting provides the visitor with information on the path's level, equipment required, fitness levels required and estimated time use and length of the path and other relevant information	
2.9 Toilets are available near the starting point and the need for toilet or other sanitary facilities along the path has been considered.	
3.0 SIGNAGE/MARKING/FACILITATION:	
3.1 Signposting, marking, vegetation clearance and maintenance of the paths must follow the guidelines in the Directorate for Nature Management's guidelines "Naturvennlig tilrettelegging for friluftsliv".	
3.2 Signposting indicate that the area is a Norwegian Scenic Path.	
3.3 If the path is fully or in part in a protected area or border zone, any restrictions in protected areas are made clear to the hiker.	
3.4 Signage on or linked to the path includes information on the area's particular natural and cultural qualities	
3.5 Information material describing the area's particular natural and cultural qualities are available.	
4.0 PARKING/TRANSPORTATION There is a plan outlining how to increase the number of visitors arriving by public transport	
5.0 SAFETY/FIRST RESPONSE/RANGERS ON THE PATH	
5.1 The need for mountain guards or rangers in peak months/special holidays is assessed annually.*	
5.2 A strategic plan with a zero vision for rescue operations has been produced.	
5.3 A first response plan with risk assessment has been made.	
6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE/MEASURES:	
6.1 All measures hold a high level of standards for architecture and design, including the adaptation of path, toilets etc.*	
6.2 All installations to be designed with the landscape in mind, taking natural values and experience qualities, size and visibility into consideration.*	

6.3 There is a plan for the maintenance and running of any installations such as toilet, parking facilities etc.	
6.4 All measures have the necessary permissions of landowners and in relation so public plans and regulations.	
6.5 There is a plan for the removal of outdated installations.	
6.6 All initiatives to be adapted to local climatic conditions. *	
7.0 SHARING KNOWLEDGE	
7.1 The authorised areas will make available resources to share their experience and will attend seminars and meetings to exchange competence and skills	

*** Expand your answer to the points below:**

2.1 The path has a high number of visitors, a large share of whom are international tourists.	
2.5 An evaluation has been carried out to establish whether the high number of visitors impact the area's natural qualities.	
5.1 The need for mountain guards or rangers in peak months/special holidays is assessed annually.	
6.1 All measures hold a high level of standards for architecture and design, including the adaptation of path, toilets etc.	
6.2 All installations to be designed with the landscape in mind, taking natural values and experience qualities, size and visibility into consideration.*	
6.6 All initiatives to be adapted to local climatic conditions.	