Sirirat Suksusiang 2011: Hiking Trail Assessment and Database Development for National Parks in Chiang Mai Province. Master of Science (Parks, Recreation, and Tourism), Major Field: Parks, Recreation, and Tourism, Department of Conservation. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Phatchanuch Wongwathana Foster, Ph.D. 238 pages.

Three objectives of this study were 1) to explore physical characteristics, conditions, and patterns of uses; 2) to assess potential of physical recreation resources of the hiking trails; and 3) to develop a database for the hiking trails and assess users' satisfaction of the database. The study areas included 10 hiking trails in five national parks of Chiang Mai Province.

The results showed all hiking trails had the distances between 3 - 12 kilometers. Seven trails are for day use. A guide is needed for many trails. Most of the trails' highlights found in this study are consisted of nature scenery, rare plant or endemic species, forest types, birds and butterflies, as well as distinctive landforms such as waterfalls and caves. The best time for visitations is during November to December. The existing facilities found on the trails are only for safety concerns. Hiking group size ranged from 10 to 15 people per group. Most of the trails showed moderate slope (10-20 %). The rapid assessment of current conditions revealed that root exposure and soil erosion were the most concerned . Hiking trail potential assessment were evaluated by using 19 indicators. Weighting score equations were applied to the data analysis. There were four hiking trails with high potential : Hot Spring-Kiew Lom Trail, Yod Doi Fah Hom Pok Trail, Ban Lek Nai Pa Yai Royal Project Trail and Yod Doi Wiang Pha Trail. These trails were located in Doi Fah Hom Pok National Park and Doi Wiang Pha National Park, which had recreation resources value and various of recreation activities.

Hiking trail database were developed and using the web browser through the internet connection to reach the general users. After using the web to assist their decision to choose the trail for their recreation, the users were asked to evaluate the database. The results of users' satisfaction were high ($\bar{x}$ = 2.43).

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