

Working with Land Protection Partners session moderated by Clare Cain

What brought you here?

- NET – partnership is the only way to protect the trail as the non-profit and agency cannot do it alone
- NCT – partnerships are critical with ~1,900 miles of trail still to develop – much on private land
- AZT – want to learn what other trails have done to build partnerships, shared agendas w/o compromising relationship with land management partners
- To learn more about Partners and the trails
- TPL – to find out what other trail organizations are doing
- CDT – learn more from other trails
- PHT – learn more
- PCTA – to learn more as they expand from trail tread protection to protection of the visitor experience
- ATC – to talk about the issue but to avoid duplication with the session to be held on Wednesday

Challenges faced by trails:

- High land costs
- Lack of funding
- Long timelines for federal acquisition and missed opportunities
- Concern with increased federal footprint out West (“land grab”)
- Local politics and concern over land acquisition/protection
- No way to purchase key parcels in a timely manner
- Expansion of a private conservation buyers program
- Languishing in Congress of the Complete America’s Great Trails Act
- Permanent protection on State lands in certain places (e.g. NM) where they may be sold at auction to the highest bidder or where a trail is moved for a mine project
- Cascading effect of losing private access for key parcels (one lost property negating access to several others)
- In areas with lots of small parcels working comprehensively is tough

Opportunities:

- Economics of trails and bringing info to local communities – involve local tourism bureaus in building support for trails
- LWCF earmarks have worked in the past but are no longer possible in DC
- Re-authorization and full funding of the Land & Water Conservation Fund

- Funding for infrastructure projects will be supported under the new administration – fold trails into these projects
- Trails should develop an overall private land protection strategies working with conservation partners
- Private donations of land by individuals should be encouraged
- Capacity of trail groups that are land trusts
- Building partnerships and sharing info on trail protection needs with local towns has borne fruit in CT
- Land trusts are looking for private properties with conservation values to protect and National Scenic Trails automatically meet the IRS criteria for conservation values.
- Be sure to tell these local conservation groups what exactly you want protected – develop protection criteria (e.g. not just access, but protection of the trail experience)
- We should be working with sportsmen's/conservation groups (e.g. Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation) to gain their support for enhancing access for their members.
- We should all be seeking mitigation money from utility projects that impact our trails – (these projects need to avoid, minimize, mitigate, or compensate)
 - o We can all expect more utility projects given the recent election
 - o How to quantify impacts – AT example from Delaware Water Gap Nat. Rec. Area is being used as an example
 - o Best practices for appraising conservation impacts are being developed
 - o The AZT is using an economic impact study to help determine the value of the trail experience and impacts to it from a mine project

NTS GIS Network- 2016 Review

Network Statistics from 2016 (as of 11/15/2016) by the numbers:

7 - Number of presentations this year (no January, May, October, November or December call)

7 - Federal and State Agencies represented:

1. NPS
2. BLM
3. US Forest Service
4. USDOT
5. USGS
6. Missouri State Parks
7. Argonne Laboratories

3 - University Partners/Participants

1. North Carolina State University
2. University of Rhode Island
3. University of New Mexico

27 - National Trails and Friends/Partners/Trail Affiliations represented:

1. National Trails Intermountain Region (9 NHT's)
2. Lewis & Clark NHT
3. Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT
4. Trail of Tears NHT
5. Nez Perce NHT
6. Arizona NST
7. Overmountain Victory NHT
8. Juan Bautista de Anza NHT
9. Potomac Heritage NST
10. Pacific Northwest NST
11. Appalachian Trail NST
12. Continental Divide Trail Coalition
13. Santa Fe Trail Association
14. Oregon-California Trails Association
15. Old Spanish Trail/Pony Express NHT
16. Selma to Montgomery NHT
17. Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route NHT
18. Mark Twain National Forest
19. Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument

Call with most attendees: July (24 total participants – not counting NTS GIS Network moderators)

Stephanie Cooper and Jonathan Jew – Great Basin Institute/Bureau of Land Management, Utah
Producing User-Friendly Geo-Referenced PDF Maps for Visitors to BLM Lands in Utah

52 - Total number of unique participants in calls (not including moderators)

1. (presenter) Aaron Seifert, Arizona Trail Association, GIS Director, Flagstaff, AZ
2. Helen Scully, NPS Washington Office, Program Specialist, National Trails System
3. Katy Bradford, Student Conservation Association, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail

4. Stu Gregory, USFS Region 4 (Intermountain), RIDB Program Manager, Salt Lake City, UT
5. Jill Jensen, NPS, Archeologist, National Trails Intermountain Region, Salt Lake City, UT
6. Dan Wiley, NPS Chief of Integrated Resources Stewardship, Lewis & Clark NHT, Omaha, NE
7. Kristin Van Fleet, NPS, Landscape Architect, National Trails Intermountain Region, Santa Fe, NM
8. Dan Parker, Contractor with Recreation Information Database
9. Julie Molzahn, USFS Region 1 (Northern) Natural Resource Specialist, Nez Perce NHT/Arizona NST, Plains, MT
10. Reese Hirth, NPS, Geographer, Midwest Regional Office, Omaha, NE
11. David Fothergill, USFS Region 1 (Northern), Forest Landscape Architect/Pacific Northwest NST, Townsend, MT North Fork of the Flathead, Hay Creek
12. Laura White, USFS Region 3 (Southwest), Trail Administrator, Tucson, AZ
13. Matt Robinson, NPS, GIS, Appalachian NST, Harpers Ferry, WV
14. Naomi Torres, NPS, Juan Bautista de Anza NHT, San Francisco, CA
15. Don Briggs, NPS Superintendent, Potomac Heritage NST Harpers Ferry, WV
16. Charlynn Smith, North Carolina State University, Overmountain Victory NHT, Raleigh, NC
17. Kerry Shakarjian, Continental Divide Trail Coalition GIS Program Manager (NPS/FS affiliate)
18. (presenter) Matt Schulte, GISP – Senior GIS Analyst at Parsons, Santa Fe Trail Association, St. Louis, MO
19. Akaisha Allen, graduate student University of New Mexico
20. Stafford Hazelett, Oregon-California Trails Association (OCTA), Portland, OR
21. Greg Matthews, USGS Cartographer, Denver, CO
22. Jim Kuiper (Argonne National Laboratory), Lemont, IL
23. Don Owen, Partnership for the National Trail System, Washington, DC
24. Peter Bonsall, NPS GIS Specialist, Conservation and Outdoor Recreation, Washington, DC
25. Frank Norris, NPS, Historian, National Trails Intermountain Region, Santa Fe, NM
26. Mike Elliott, NPS, Culutral Resource Specialist, National Trails Intermountain Region, Santa Fe, NM
27. Josh Foster, NPS, GIS Specialist, Appalachian NST, Harpers Ferry, WV
28. Steve Schell, Missouri State Parks, Trail of Tears NHT, Missouri
29. Jessica Cressman, Environmental Contractor with Data Center at University of Rhode Island, Washington-Rochambeaux Revolutionary Route NHT, Kingston, RI
30. BriAnna Weldon, NPS, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Juan Bautista de Anza NHT, San Francisco, CA
31. Candace Bogart, USFS Region 3 (Southwestern), Regional GIS Program Manager, Albuquerque, NM
32. Reece Hirth, NPS Midwest Regional Office, GIS Specialist, Omaha, NE
33. Bob Pierce, USGS, Product & Services Lead, Roswell, GA
34. Daryl Dudley USDOT
35. Jonny Jew, BLM Utah State Office, GIS Tech, Old SpanishTrail/Pony Express NHT, Salt Lake City, UT
36. Joshua Gregg, USFS, GIS Specialist, Arizona NST, Albuquerque, NM
37. Stephanie Cooper, BLM Utah State Office, Geospatial Mapping Intern, Salt Lake City, UT
38. Ryan Branciforte, Trailhead Labs, San Francisco, CA
39. Rebecca Knudson (did not get affiliation)
40. Roland Duhamel, Environmental Contractor with Data Center at University of Rhode Island, Washington-Rochambeaux Revolutionary Route NHT, Kingston, RI
41. Peggy Deaton, BLM New Mexico State Office, GIS Specialist, Albuquerque, NM
42. Alex Yetsko, BLM, GIS Technician/Data Management, Colorado
43. Sueanne Cmeheil-Warn, USFS, GIS Specialist, Mark Twain National Forest, Rolla, MO
44. Martin Visarraga, BLM New Mexico State Office, Geographer/GIS Specialist, Albuquerque, NM
45. Ben Kort, NPS Southeast Region Geospatial Team, GIS Intern Ben Kort, Atlanta, GA
46. Maricela Avalos, NPS Southeast Region Geospatial Team, Geographer, Atlanta, GA
47. Al Sandoval, BLM New Mexico State Office, Data Administrator, Albuquerque, NM

- 48.** Andrew Callens, NPS, Acting Site Manager, Selma to Montgomery NHT, Selma, AL
- 49.** Starr Woods, BLM, Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument, New Mexico
- 50.** Sarah Rivera, NPS, Cartographic Technician, 9 National Historic Trails and Route 66, Salt Lake City, UT
- 51.** Emily Zvolanek, Argonne National Laboratory, GIS Analyst, Lemont, IL
- 52.** Erica Schachtell, USFS Region 5 (Pacific Southwest), GIS Analyst, Vallejo, CA

Thank you all for a great year! Hope to see you again in 2017!

As always, we're open to suggestions for additional topics for discussion or presentations. Please contact Ryan Cooper, Matt Jagunic, and/or Derek Nelson with your suggestions!

Use GIS to Support Land Acquisition Programs

- Screen shot or scan plat book, import to GIS to understand landownership
- Talking on ARC desktop versus online
- Don't do viewshed in online
- PCTA shared how they have acquisition
- Value of online version
- GIS specialist pool – share GIS staff across organizations
- Best practice to develop documented processes and procedures
- CDTC uses ARC Map for printed maps, sharing & conversions uses Quantum GIS (open sources)
- Q-GIS has analysis function in the basic package
- CDTC Guthrie – rough gap analysis (50-60 mile road walks) , connection with county tax assessors thru gateway community program, first parcel purchased for CDT via LWCF, focused on core gap areas, interested in cheap easy software
- PCTA – line discrepancy project and story mapping for land acquisition
- National GIS working group not fulfilling needs of non-profit partners, what could the partnership do?
- Shawn – partnered with state for data and position, took corridor and land owner data to review acquisition needs. Florida Forever priority conservation acquisition for state, enhances acquisition cases, state park priority acquisition
- Matt – Ducks Unlimited conservation data
- Shawn – Google Earth Pro for volunteers, can load county data
- Nathan – New agreement with PNTS, can share data, data.gov, boundary, trails, roads, data, better GIS coordination in Co=Op for partnership
- Matt – how do we better participate with federal partners? Firewalled out from participating
- Rec.gov more of a repository
- Can the PNTS host the webinars, more inclusion of the partners and partner needs?
- More regular connection with GIS colleagues around country
- Clare – hard time getting data sets from pipeline, energy/power companies – any success on getting data?
- Matt – ask NPS regional office
- Guthrie – get easement info from cities, counties for right-of-way
- Shawn – check EA for project
- Dee – Wind Turbine data is available from advocacy group
- Guthrie – FOIA for data
- Nathan – FERC
- Matt – Cell tower data would be helpful
- Dee – viewshed info is helpful, cell tower data via ARC GIS online, living atlas category
- Matt – examples of viewshed analysis
- Shawn – ran analysis then field visited, felt comfortable with the data
- Dee – canopy element important to include
- Guthrie – LDAR data, extract ground layer from veg layer, NASA working on LDAR dataset for entire country
- Matt & Guthrie – explained LDAR
- Dee – pool of GIS contacts and for non-GIS contacts
- How do we have regular ongoing conversations? Let's make it happen, doesn't need to be presentations, let's just talk, bring up idea during wrap up

- Nathan – need accurate trailhead data for transportation connections
- Dee – Trust for Public Lands has great model for creating tools for public lands, turned her on to advanced GIS
- Guthrie – list partners doing similar work and similar data

National Scenic Trails Workshop
Thursday, November 17, 2016
Trail Land Acquisition, Approaches and Strategies Discussion Notes

Identifying and working with willing sellers/ closing the gaps in protected lands along your trail

- **How do you reach out to a willing seller and get them to the table?** The group discussed tools that can be used to identify important parcels for acquisition and willing sellers. Acquisition priorities can be determined through gap analysis and then you can start with the low hanging fruit- self identified willing sellers. Find landowners who are actively looking to sell their parcels now through real estate agents or online real estate services like Zillow. If none of your acquisition priorities are currently on the market you can try reaching out to some high priority landowners. This is usually best done through personal outreach and where possible using local connections that can make an introduction for you. Build a relationship with that landowner, communicate with them about the importance of their property to your trail, and build trust.

To get a landowner to the table to negotiate a sale of their property, it is certainly helpful to have a set land acquisition process and established policies. By having a set process and policies in place, you show the landowner that you are operating at a professional level and will be a good partner to work with in protecting their property. You will also be able to lay out for them what to expect from your process and give them a sense of the acquisition timeline from the start of the process. Again, this will help them to feel like this a professional deal, you are a knowledgeable partner, and will help avoid surprises in your negotiations.

Building trust and open communication with the landowner is key in getting them to agree to a deal, and will also help if there are bumps in the road along the way. Nearly every transaction will run into an unforeseen complication, and the better the relationship you have with the landowner, the more willing they will be to think creatively and stick with the deal.

- **How to use volunteers?** Using volunteers to approach landowners as part of the land acquisition process can be very beneficial as well as very risky. Volunteers often have deeper local relationships and can open doors to talking with landowners about acquiring their properties. The group acknowledged that this type of relationship building is an appropriate role for a volunteer, but that they should not be directly involved in the negotiations for real estate.
- **How do you deal with an unwilling seller on an important parcel?** The various success stories of dealing with unwilling sellers from the group was centered on developing relationships with the landowner. Spending time with them in-person, listening to them and letting them know that if they are ever interested in selling to contact you. Property changes hands approximately every 7-11 years, so, if you build a relationship with the owner and let them know that you are interested in acquiring their property, you might be the first person they call when they eventually decide to sell.

Recognition of your trail in local and regional plans

The group discussed the importance of having your trail recognized in county and state level plans. This type of recognition in the local, regional and state plans may open up new sources of funding and provide additional partners in your efforts to protect and manage land around your trail.

Uncertainty around Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) money in the coming years

TPL reminded us that in the last election, in various states with conservation bond measures on the ballot, people overwhelmingly voted to tax themselves for open space and land protection. The group discussed the need to work with partners from the conservation community, the recreation/outdoor industry, and hunting and fishing organizations to continue to advocate for LWCF.

There was also a discussion around putting effort into completing our trail planning during any potential down years for LWCF. This might be the opportunity to complete our Optimal Location Reviews and other planning efforts, so, that when funding for LWCF does recover we will be ready to act.

Land Trust Alliance 3rd party certification

- **Is Land trust Alliance Accreditation something our trail groups should be seeking if we are doing land acquisition work?** In order to apply for accreditation your group has to have completed 2 acquisition projects. Accreditation takes resources and staff time to complete and is an intensive process that will make you evaluate the entire organization. The Accreditation process is extremely valuable, and many land trusts have found it to be beneficial to their organizations. The process requires you to evaluate and assess all of your organization's policies and procedures against the indicator practices in the LTA Standards and Practices to ensure that you are operating at the best standards for the industry. For organizations that are not ready for accreditation, you can still use the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices as guidelines to set up policies and procedures for your land acquisition activities. You can also find an Organizational Assessment online that will help you do an internal assessment of how you are doing compared to the Standards and Practices. Link to get the internal assessment- <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/publication/assessing-your-organization> and the link to the Land Trust Alliance Standards and Practices- <http://www.landtrustalliance.org/topics/land-trust-standards-and-practices>
- **Suggestion for topic at next NTS Workshop-** An overview and discussion of the Land Trust Alliance's Standards and Practices

How to best manage scattered parcels along your trail that have not been connected yet

There was also a discussion on how do we help manage disperse parcels that may have been acquired by an agency partner for the trail, but are not yet connected to other lands managed by the agency. This was an area where we thought volunteer monitors could be really useful. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy has a program where they use volunteers to monitor the

conditions of properties and their boundaries and look for encroachments. They have a training manual and forms that they use for this volunteer monitoring program, and would be happy to share those resources with other organizations.