

A PUBLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM



# Pathways

*Across America* **SPRING 2020**

## CHANGING WITH THE TIMES

*Trail partners adapt to  
physical distancing and  
virtual opportunities  
amid COVID-19*

**HIKE THE HILL RECAP • LAND PROTECTION SUCCESSES • ELECTRONIC TOUR SITES  
NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM COUNCIL UPDATE • FALL WORKSHOP PLANS CONTINUE**

# Pathways

## Across America

*Pathways Across America* is the only national publication devoted to the news and issues of America's national scenic and historic trails. It is published quarterly by the **Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS)** under cooperative agreements with five Federal agencies.



**Department of Agriculture (USDA):**  
U.S. Forest Service (USFS)

**Department of the Interior (DOI):**  
National Park Service (NPS)  
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

**Department of Transportation (DOT):**  
Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)



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### ABOUT US

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that connects member nonprofit trail organizations and Federal agency partners to further the protection, completion, and stewardship of the 30 national scenic and historic trails within the National Trails System.

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## BUILDING COMMUNITY

# National Trails System

Congress passed the National Trails System Act, signed into law by President Lyndon B. Johnson on October 2, 1968. Today, the National Trails System is composed of 11 National Scenic Trails (NSTs), 19 National Historic Trails (NHTs), almost 1,300 National Recreation Trails (NRTs) including 21 National Water Trails, and more than 2,000 Rail Trails. These trails provide outdoor recreation opportunities, promote resource preservation and public access, and encourage the appreciation of the great outdoors and America's history and cultural diversity.

## PATHWAYS NATIONWIDE FOR DISCOVERY, LEARNING, AND UNDERSTANDING

**Strengthening communities** through heritage and ecotourism, public involvement, and community collaboration.

**Enhancing access** to natural areas and historic treasures through innovative interpretation and outreach efforts.

**Facilitating public-private partnerships** for preservation of history, natural environments, and human health through outdoor recreation.



### SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAILS

- Authorized by Congress
- Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **Partnership for the National Trails System**
- Total 55,000 miles through 50 States and the District of Columbia in wild, rural, suburban, and urban areas, connecting with every distinct ecological area or biome in the country
- Connect and travel through 70 wildlife refuges, 80 national parks, 90 national forests, 100 BLM field office areas, over 120 wilderness areas, numerous State and local parks, trails, and other protected areas, and 100 major urban areas
- Over 1 million hours of volunteer labor to build and maintain annually

### RECREATION TRAILS

- Designated by Secretary of Interior or Secretary of Agriculture
  - Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **American Trails**
  - Total 28,000 miles through 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
- [www.americantrails.org](http://www.americantrails.org)

### RAIL TRAILS

- Part of 1983 amendment to National Trails System Act
  - Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit **Rails-to-Trails Conservancy**
  - Total 22,000 miles through 50 States and the District of Columbia, and 8,000 miles in progress
- [www.railstotrails.org](http://www.railstotrails.org)



Click the National Trails System tab to view a map and learn about our partners:

[www.pnts.org](http://www.pnts.org)



## KEEPING HISTORY ALIVE



## PRESERVING BIODIVERSITY

### 11 NATIONAL SCENIC TRAILS

The National Scenic Trails (NSTs) represent some of the most magnificent long-distance hiking trails anywhere in the world. Virtually every major ecosystem in the country is traversed by an NST, including deserts, temperate rainforests and deciduous forests, tundra, mountains, prairies, wetlands, and rivers. NSTs offer natural corridors for wildlife preservation and unspoiled views, and they create fitness and outdoor leadership opportunities for all ages.

- Appalachian NST
- Arizona NST
- Continental Divide NST
- Florida NST
- Ice Age NST
- Natchez Trace NST
- New England NST
- North Country NST
- Pacific Crest NST
- Pacific Northwest NST
- Potomac Heritage NST

### 19 NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

The National Historic Trails (NHTs) may be foot or horse paths, travel routes, roadways, or a combination of several modes of travel designated as a route retracing a part of American history. Many NHTs have interpretive centers and regular events to immerse you in the past. While historic trails may run through urban and suburban settings, they also boast wilderness and hiking opportunities as beautiful and diverse as the NSTs.

- Ala Kahakai NHT
- California NHT
- Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT
- El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro NHT
- El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT
- Iditarod NHT
- Juan Bautista de Anza NHT
- Lewis and Clark NHT
- Mormon Pioneer NHT
- Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) NHT
- Old Spanish NHT
- Oregon NHT
- Overmountain Victory NHT
- Pony Express NHT
- Santa Fe NHT
- Selma to Montgomery NHT
- Star-Spangled Banner NHT
- Trail of Tears NHT
- Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route NHT

### Cover Photographs

#### FRONT

Saguaro cacti on a starry night in the desert near the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail. Photo Credit: Bob Wick

#### INSIDE

Left: Jill Jensen and John Cannella, NPS, explore the Lobanillo Swales along the El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT. Photo Credit: Steven Gonzales, ELCAT  
Center: Joe McCauley with Chesapeake Conservancy and Rappahannock Tribal Chief Anne Richardson are featured in the Partnership's new land protection case study. Photo Credit: Don Owen, PNTS  
Right: A grouse hen with chicks on the Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail in Kaniksu National Forest, Idaho. Photo Credit: Bob Wick

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View more photos and full versions of each article:  
[www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/](http://www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/)



# Navigating times of change for the Partnership

**G**reetings from Madison, WI. I imagine many within the PNTS family and community have never visited the Partnership's office—a light and airy second floor suite we share with an international microfinance organization. We are located downtown, just several blocks from the majestic Capitol Square and Lake Monona, one of the city's five stunning, signature lakes.



**Karen Crossley**

I'm celebrating the first third of my nine-month engagement with PNTS, beginning my short-term service at the staff leadership helm on January 21, 2020. I'm learning a lot about our extraordinary National Trails System and the myriad dedicated people who

support it. I feel especially grateful to have had the opportunity to meet in person and see at least some of you in action at Hike the Hill in February in Washington, D.C. Quite an extraordinary opening voyage for me!

Further applying the nautical metaphor, I feel the PNTS ship is sailing forward into an open water era and through choppy seas given the COVID-19 pandemic creating trauma and hardship for all. We're all working together, guiding our boat into an uncertain future, with a new headquarters in Washington, D.C. later this year, where and when the possibilities for innovation, creativity, and reinvention seem boundless. Excitement, boldness, courage, fear, vulnerability, risk, and more might describe some of the feelings bubbling up among us, associated with this dramatic period of change for our organization and the challenging times

we all face in the world. We must embrace this time and opportunity, as best we can, and continue working to achieve our shared vision for the National Trails System.

I encourage us to be guided by the words of John F. Kennedy: "Change is the law of life and those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future." As we sail on, the Partnership looks forward to advancing an established collection of programs and services, learning more about the value we're delivering (are we on the right course and providing what you most need and want?) and seeking input and feedback about what we can do even better. Stay tuned, keep sailing with us, welcome and relish the journey. I feel honored to know you, work closely with you, and learn from you. Thank you for your commitment to PNTS.

*Karen J. Crossley*

by **Kathy DeCoster**, *Advocacy and Policy Director*  
Partnership for the National Trails System

**T**alk about trial by fire! I began my tenure as the Partnership's Advocacy and Policy Director in late January 2020 by testifying before Congress on trail funding needs, followed immediately by the whirlwind that is Hike the Hill! While I was familiar with the activities of the Partnership and its member organizations from a three year stint as a member of its Board of Directors, I learned very quickly that the trails community has a unique and powerful voice with our Federal agencies and in the halls of Congress. It is very clear that we have the opportunity to harness the collective strength of the Partnership and its member organizations to even greater effect, and I am happy to be working with so many of you to bring that to fruition.



**Kathy DeCoster**

Over the past few months, our advocacy and policy efforts in Washington, D.C. have been very successful, due in large part to the experience, knowledge, and enthusiasm that individual trail organizations bring to the table. The Partnership's annual Hike the Hill event in early February—sponsored in partnership with the American Hiking Society—was another resounding success! The relationships cultivated and enhanced during the hundreds of visits to Capitol Hill and various Federal agencies set the table for ongoing effective outreach on budget and policy issues affecting the National Trails System and beyond. It's impressive what we can do!

The challenges presented by the coronavirus pandemic are consuming all of Congress' time, and that could be the case for the foreseeable future. It doesn't mean our bread-and-butter issues won't be addressed. But the fact that our national trails are so closely tied to local communities and economic vitality make it likely that we'll play a role in economic recovery efforts going forward. We have so much to offer, and I'm excited to have the opportunity to move a trails agenda forward over the coming months.

*Kathy DeCoster*

by **Barney "Scout" Mann**, *Board President*  
Partnership for the National Trails System

**G**reetings from Washington, D.C. That is no typo. I live in San Diego, but one of our daughters needed help with our two-year-old grandson while preparing for the arrival of their new baby. We found ourselves on an empty plane hours before the California governor issued his stay at home order. My wife and I typically host Pacific Crest Trail hikers in the day or two before they start the trail. This year over 1,200 signed up. We went through a series of changes: first adopting a robust set of practices to keep everyone safe, then canceling the first two weeks, and finally canceling the season. We then spent five days scrambling to take care of hundreds of packages already at our house, making runs to the post office, and comforting hikers from at least six feet away. Miraculously, the night before we flew to D.C. we had everyone squared away.



**Barney Mann**

All of us are adjusting plans, and here at the Partnership that is certainly true. I can't tell you how proud I have been of our Partnership staff, our members, our committees, the Board and Trail Leaders Council. In the midst of the building crisis, Kathy DeCoster, Morgan Sommerville, the Advocacy and Policy Committee, and so many Partnership members rallied around an opportunity for full funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. A bipartisan bill was introduced in the Senate, and the Partnership was one of the lead groups that helped secure 59 cosponsors.

So many of us were set to visit Ghost Ranch in New Mexico for the Spring National Trails Workshop in May, and there too, our leadership team, including Teresa Martinez, RG Absher, Karen Crossley, and Andrea Ketchmark, decided the safest and best course was to cancel. A survey is being taken to decide the next best steps for future training opportunities, including the Fall Workshop. I can also report that the Partnership leadership transition remains on track. We are seeing a wide range of qualified applicants for the permanent Executive Director. More than ever, this is a time for each of us to pull together, to advance the interests of the trail closest to your heart, and to advance all of them as a whole via the Partnership.

*Barney Scout Mann*



## Happy Trails, Gary Werner!

Photo Credits: PNTS

Left: PNTS Board President Barney Mann, left, and Trail Leaders Council Chair RG Absher, center, present Gary Werner, right, with a quilt of all 30 national trail logos upon his retirement as PNTS Executive Director in Washington, D.C. in February. Right: After Hike the Hill, Gary "passes the *Pathways* baton" to Interim Executive Director Karen Crossley in Madison, WI.

## About Us



### MISSION

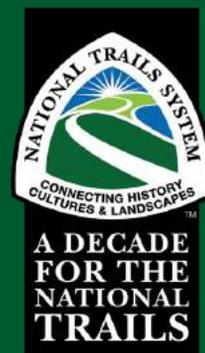
To empower, inspire, and strengthen public and private partners to develop, preserve, promote, and sustain the national scenic and historic trails.

### VISION

PNTS envisions a world-class system of national scenic and historic trails that preserves natural and cultural values and provides recreational benefits for all.

### PURPOSE

The purpose of PNTS is to promote and support the efforts of national scenic and historic trail organizations, to secure public and private resources, and to serve as a collective voice for policy and action that supports national scenic and historic trails.



### GOALS

1. Outreach and public awareness
2. Resource protection and trail completion
3. Capacity building

## TRANSITION TASK FORCE UPDATE



View the full position description:  
<https://vista.li/PNTS-ED>

## PNTS launches job search for new Executive Director

The Partnership for the National Trails System seeks a dynamic, entrepreneurial, and visionary Executive Director to build on the organization's 27-year legacy of accomplishments and guide its work to the next level of success.

The Partnership seeks a leader who can oversee and participate in all aspects of the organization. The ideal candidate will bring strong administration and operational skills, coupled with a readiness for learning and relationship building; gaining an understanding of the Partnership's history and current position; and developing a rapport with the staff, board, members, and strategic partners. They will demonstrate leadership, vision, and an entrepreneurial spirit, building on the organization's current strengths and advancing our work to the next level.

The ideal candidate will demonstrate excellent leadership, fundraising, and partnership building skills. If you are a skilled leader and manager, thrive on collaborating with diverse stakeholders, and are passionate about the nation's history, culture, and landscapes, we hope you will consider applying.

This position is based in the Washington, D.C. area and requires some national travel. The anticipated start date for the position is Fall 2020. Applications will be considered until the position is filled. The Partnership for the National Trails System is an equal opportunity employer and invites individuals who bring a diversity of culture, experience, and ideas to apply.

Salary range: \$60,000-\$75,000 plus healthcare benefits allowance.

To inquire about this opportunity, please contact Mary Stelletello, Principal, Vista Global Coaching & Consulting at [mary@vistaglobalcc.com](mailto:mary@vistaglobalcc.com). To apply or nominate an individual, please send a cover letter and resume by email only to [EDSearch@pnts.org](mailto:EDSearch@pnts.org). All correspondence will be held in the strictest confidence. No phone inquiries, please.

### The Partnership's collaborations, major activities, and signature programs include:

- The annual Hike the Hill® multiday action aimed at increasing congressional and Federal agency leader awareness and adequate funding of the National Trails System;
- An annual multiagency Land and Water Conservation Fund collaboration;
- Multiyear Action Plan for National Scenic and Historic Trail management;
- National Trails System Gap Analysis and Corridor Projection Project;
- Monthly webinars and biennial convenings for members of the National Trails community;
- Apprentice and internship programs to introduce young adults to the National Trails System; and
- Publication of the *Pathways Across America* quarterly journal.

### Elements of the Statement of Inclusion, adopted by the Partnership Board of Directors and Trail Leaders Council in February 2020:

- The Partnership will foster an inclusive National Scenic and Historic Trails community that values and engages the perspectives and contributions of all individuals beyond social, political, and cultural boundaries;
- The Partnership will identify barriers that prevent people from accessing trails and their resources;
- In championing a culture of justice, diversity, equity, and inclusion, the Partnership aspires to cultivate greater strength and resilience within the Partnership and beyond our network.

# Transition and momentum for trails

More than 100 people representing 40 trail organizations and advocates from throughout the country traveled to Washington, D.C. this February to "Hike the Hill." Now in its 23rd year, Hike the Hill® is a joint effort between the Partnership for the National Trails System and the American Hiking Society (AHS) aimed at making congressional and Federal agency leaders more aware of funding and other needs that sustain the National Trails System.

The event began on a bittersweet note with a reception honoring the retirement of Gary Werner, longtime PNTS Executive Director. The trails community presented Gary with a quilt of all 30 national scenic and historic trails. The reception was a wonderful gathering of trail advocates, agency partners and others celebrating Gary's exceptional career over many years.

"I really do think this is a celebration of us as a community. And the kind of kindness that you're displaying toward me tonight is simply a recognition of the kind of kindness and dedication and generosity you all give every single day to what you're doing," Gary said.

The trails community also welcomed Karen Crossley, Interim Executive Director, and Kathy DeCoster, PNTS Advocacy and Policy Director.

From February 9-13, 2020, we met with leaders of three Federal land management agencies, congressional staff, and members of Congress to discuss the opportunities for and challenges facing our NTS and the need for increased funding and enhanced partnerships. Some of the main issues or pieces of legislation discussed include full and dedicated funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund, increasing and allocating funding for the national trails, and addressing the maintenance backlog across public lands, including the U.S. Forest Service deferred maintenance, through the Restore Our Parks and Public Lands Act.

PNTS and AHS also held a Hike the Hill Party at the REI D.C. flagship store on Tuesday, February 11, for local trail leaders, organizational partners, congressional staff, and agency officials to celebrate public lands and trails, beginning with a land acknowledgement. In attendance at the Hike the Hill Party for the second year in a row was Vicki Christiansen, Chief of the U.S. Forest Service. Christiansen thanked students from the Environmental Charter High School in Los Angeles, CA (hosted by the Pacific Crest Trail Association), for sharing their voices in the meeting the day before.



Photo Credit: Kathy DeCoster, PNTS

Hosted by the Pacific Crest Trail Association, students from the Environmental Charter High School in Los Angeles, CA shared their trail volunteer experiences during a meeting with PNTS partners and the U.S. Forest Service, including Chief Vicki Christiansen, second from right.

"I'm just thrilled with your enthusiasm, and it makes my heart sing how you all are growing the next generation—and it's not perfunctory, it's real. You all are a real example of shared stewardship and how we build capacity and we build sustainability and we really, really get serious about what's important for our future," she said.

Chief Christiansen met with many trail representatives to announce the U.S. Forest Service's 10 Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge and hear from trail advocates about work they are already doing that can help advance collaboration and advance trail needs. At the start of the meeting, Chief Christiansen marked Gary Werner's retirement by presenting him with a commemorative Chief's office door knocker.

Near the conclusion of the event, Barney Mann, PNTS Board President, shared a special recorded message for the Chief from a woman named Sharon Francis, who witnessed the National Trails System Act being signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson on Oct. 2, 1968. Chief Christiansen later wrote about this moment on her Leadership Corner blog.

Hike the Hill advocates also had an important meeting with National Park Service Acting Director David Vela, who talked with the group about the future of the agency and how the National Trails System can play a role, and invited input from attendees on work they are doing along national trails.

During our meetings with agency leaders and on Capitol Hill, we discussed the importance of increasing Federal funding for the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Service trails programs with specific line items in their budgets, which would help leverage our ability to care for, connect, and protect our NTS.

In 2019 alone, for every Federal dollar provided the return on investment equaled 1.5:1—thanks to volunteer stewardship of the trails. In total, over 22,000 volunteers contributed nearly one million hours of service within the NTS, which equates to a value of over \$25 million. Additionally, private contributions from the national trails organizations for the NTS totaled over \$15 million. As incredible as these contributions are, they are not enough to fully develop and sustain our trails.

Full funding of the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and greater funding for the agencies' trail programs by Congress will help to provide means to close missing links, protect high-priority recreational and historic areas, and fund additional maintenance and necessary resources to already existing trails.

Now, more than ever, it's important for Congress to hear our voice. Collectively, our voices will help to ensure the use and protection of these trails for many generations to come. There is much work yet to be done to make the national trails fully usable and beneficial to all Americans, and you can help us complete and sustain the National Trails System! Your contribution helps us to protect land and resources along the national scenic and historic trail routes, educate children and young people about the trails, and support the work of citizen stewards who build and maintain these trails.



View the full article, a list of participating organizations and agencies, photos of Gary Werner's retirement reception, and the audio recordings from Sharon Francis:  
[www.pnts.org/new/resources/blog](http://www.pnts.org/new/resources/blog)



# CONTRIBUTIONS MADE IN 2019

## TO SUPPORT THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM BY

### NATIONAL SCENIC AND HISTORIC TRAIL ORGANIZATIONS

Trail Organization(s)	Active Volunteers	Volunteer Hours	Value of Volunteer Hours	Private Contributions
Ala Kahakai Trail Association and E Mau Nā Ala Hele	423	423	\$10,757	\$8,725
Anza Trail Foundation and partners	276	11,133	\$283,112	\$90,350
Appalachian Trail Conservancy	5,867	210,923	\$5,363,772	\$7,579,015
Arizona Trail Association	2,271	22,389	\$569,352	\$736,500
Chesapeake Conservancy and partners	-	-	-	\$170,000
Connecticut Forest & Park Association and Appalachian Mountain Club	478	4,249	\$108,052	\$36,000
Continental Divide Trail Coalition and partners	420	42,000	\$1,068,060	\$621,564
El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association	55	8,860	\$225,310	\$70,543
El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro Trail Association	19	980	\$24,921	\$2,975
Florida Trail Association	623	23,379	\$594,528	\$521,627
Ice Age Trail Alliance	2,376	82,880	\$2,107,638	\$1,141,000
Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance	1,800	15,000	\$381,450	\$8,994
Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc., and partners	215	70,378	\$1,789,713	\$115,050
Mormon Trails Association and partners	-	-	-	\$25
Natchez Trace Parkway Association	60	1,200	\$30,516	\$6,700
National Pony Express Association	1,260	32,812	\$834,409	\$8,575
National Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route NHT Association, Inc. (W3R-US)	218	11,714	\$297,887	\$8,290
Nez Perce Trail Foundation	7	7,500	\$190,725	\$1,500
North Country Trail Association	1,058	83,300	\$2,118,319	\$654,300
Old Spanish Trail Association	449	27,610	\$702,122	\$12,000
Oregon-California Trails Association	400	104,806	\$2,665,217	\$713,350
Overmountain Victory Trail Association	400	30,363	\$772,131	\$96,156
Pacific Crest Trail Association	2,038	106,444	\$2,706,871	\$3,119,796
Pacific Northwest Trail Association	221	19,620	\$498,937	\$105,813
Potomac Heritage Trail Association	15	4,000	\$101,720	\$30,000
Santa Fe Trail Association	1,098	72,546	\$1,844,845	\$64,250
Trail of Tears Association	177	25,158	\$621,151	\$11,700
<b>Totals</b>	<b>22,224</b>	<b>997,162</b>	<b>\$25,357,830</b>	<b>\$15,934,798</b>

**Notes:** Value of volunteer time calculated using the national 2018 value of volunteer time (\$25.43/hour) by the Independent Sector. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2019 government data used to calculate the 2019 value may be delayed. We will update the value of volunteer hours on our website when the 2019 per hour value is announced by the Independent Sector. Some, but not all, trail organizations include Federal reimbursement rates for miles driven for volunteer work as part of their private contributions. Volunteer Stewardship activities include, but are not limited to: trail building and maintenance, outreach event development, youth engagement, public education, development of interpretive materials and sites, removal of invasive species, habitat restoration, land protection, historic research, reenactments, archaeological studies, and community partnership development.



# Collaborating during COVID-19

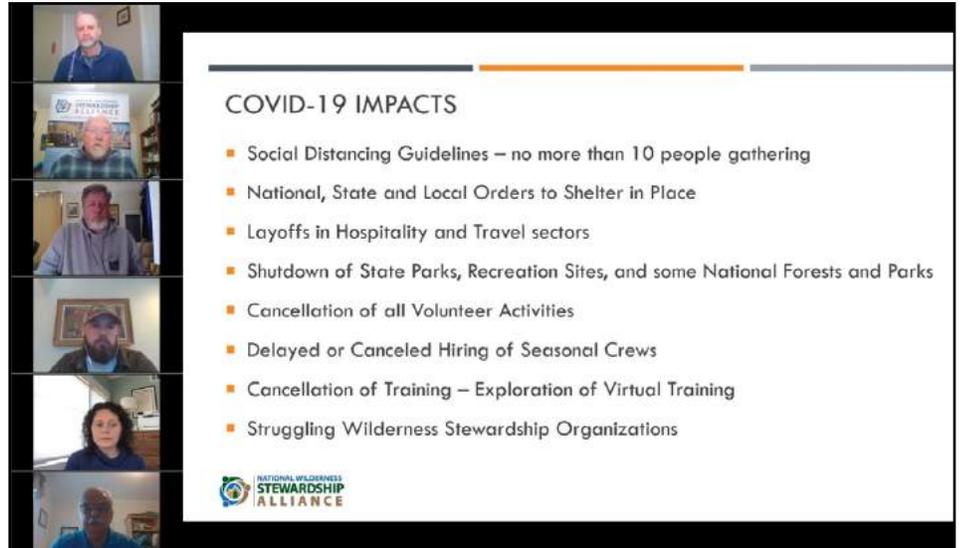
Trails community shares resources, adjusts to change amid global pandemic

Maybe COVID-19 won't spread throughout the whole country. I think many Americans held onto that hope until March 11, 2020, when the World Health Organization declared the novel coronavirus a global pandemic. Time seemed to slow that week as the reality of this dire situation, and words such as "social distancing" and "self-quarantine," began to sink into our psyche. We were bombarded by news updates and social media notifications as events were being postponed or canceled, school districts were closing, and businesses were scrambling to figure out how to retain employees and continue providing services safely so they wouldn't have to shut their doors.

As gathering indoors was no longer deemed safe, many government and public health officials urged citizens to get outside and use natural resources. Being in nature holds innumerable benefits for our well-being, but several parks, trails, and remote communities were overwhelmed by unanticipated numbers of people—some of whom were traveling great distances to and from the nation's hotspots for the virus. Overcrowded parking lots and summits unfortunately meant more people were leaving behind trash and potential traces of the disease on surfaces such as picnic tables, privies, and shelters. The need for clear communication and consistent messaging around responsible outdoor use and maintaining good hygiene during a pandemic was not being met, in part because the blueprint for doing so didn't really exist.

Two days later, Sandi Marra, President and CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), organized an online video meeting with national scenic trail nonprofit leaders to discuss the impact of the crisis on their staff, volunteers, members, donors, and trail users (especially in regard to thru-hikers) and begin developing guidance for visitors. Just one month earlier, these Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) member organizations had all been together in Washington, D.C. to advocate for national trails funding and other issues during Hike the Hill.

By listening to the ATC's experience with handling norovirus outbreaks along the trail in past years and sharing their own stories from the field, this virtual network felt supported to craft best practices and broadcast them to their trail communities



Screenshot from YouTube (recording available at <https://bit.ly/356rJGm>)

The National Wilderness Stewardship Alliance hosted an online town hall conversation, "The Impact of Covid 19 on the Wilderness Stewardship Community," on April 2, 2020. Panelists represented the U.S. Forest Service, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, and Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards.

since many organizations lacked initial guidance from their Federal agency partners.

The following week, in an attempt to keep the broader community apprised of the quickly evolving situation, PNTS launched a webpage to track COVID-19 updates and resources for national scenic and historic trails. That eventually included the disappointing news about the cancellation of the Spring National Trails Workshop, scheduled for May at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico. Realizing that information sharing might not happen in person for quite some time, PNTS also expanded its webinars webpage to become a hub for all trail- and nonprofit-related online learning opportunities from a variety of host organizations.

What became apparent is that no two trails are alike in their responses to COVID-19. While some are trying to discourage all types of trail use and volunteer work, others are encouraging people to safely enjoy or help maintain their local trails. That's because each trail is unique, attracting different types of users and crossing several jurisdictions that can change their rules or "stay-at-home" orders without much notice.

Our 30 national scenic and historic trails cross all 50 States and D.C., more than 100 Bureau of Land Management areas, over 230 major urban areas and Trail Towns,

and nearly 400 national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and nationally designated wilderness areas—each with their own guidelines. And unlike a park that can try to prohibit people from entering in vehicles by closing a gate, trails can be accessed from multiple points by foot making them very difficult to close or monitor.

The disparity we're seeing between trail responses does not equate to division. Yes, there are challenges we need to address, but growing pains are expected as our diverse National Trails System enters into the next 50 years of public-private partnerships.

We have persevered through temporary government shutdowns before, and we are already finding creative ways to adapt during COVID-19 lockdowns now. Let's learn from these experiences so that when it is finally safe to resume trail activities (and if or when it's necessary to pause them again), we remember the value of collaborating within and beyond the trails community to sustain our remarkable natural, cultural, scenic, and historic resources. We are all in this together.



PNTS is updating these pages with COVID-19 related trail resources to the best of its ability:  
[www.pnts.org/new/covid-19-updates-for-national-scenic-and-historic-trails/](http://www.pnts.org/new/covid-19-updates-for-national-scenic-and-historic-trails/)  
[www.pnts.org/new/webinars/](http://www.pnts.org/new/webinars/)

# Digital Junior Rangers

Student project brings historic trails to life online



The Digital Junior Ranger team visits the End of the Oregon Trail Interpretive Center in Oregon City, OR in November 2019. Channeling their inner stoic pioneer are Dr. Melanie Armstrong, Jennifer Fenwick, Madeline Foster, Ashley O'Hara, Corrine Truesdell, and Amanda Botsford. Not pictured, but also part of the team, are Hannah Schaefer Tibbett, John Kraft, Kaleb Vierra, and Delaney McManus.

Photo Credit: Digital Junior Ranger team

Do you love junior ranger programs? So do we! We are the Digital Junior Ranger team—a mixture of graduate, undergraduate, and high school students from Gunnison, CO. We're guided by Dr. Melanie Armstrong, Professor and Public Lands Coordinator in the Environmental Management graduate program at Western Colorado University.



We are working on creating multiple Digital Junior Ranger prototypes in partnership with the National Park Service (NPS) and National Historic Trails (Intermountain Region). These prototypes are the blueprints of Digital Junior Ranger programs, which will influence the final product.

Over the last two years, the Digital Junior Ranger team has been traveling around the country to conduct national historic trails research, including visiting museums and interpretive centers, talking with experts, and even taking our prototypes to test them at schools, nonprofit organizations, and homeschool groups to get feedback from students, teachers, and parents.

These junior ranger programs are similar to those you may have experienced at NPS sites such as Grand Teton or Yellowstone National Parks, but ours are a little different because they are all digitally accessible.

Due to COVID-19, our ability to visit schools and share our programs with people has been limited, so we also created

a website and social media channels to connect with the public. You can access a mixture of activities that we have created and incorporated from other resources, including games, quizzes, and crafts. For each activity on the website, there are also surveys available so we can have direct insight about whether or not you enjoyed the activity, what you learned from it, and ways to improve it. Asking these questions will help us immensely to understand what makes an effective, engaging, and worthy Digital Junior Ranger program.

Because of the pandemic, many people have had to work or learn remotely from home. Our Digital Junior Ranger team took advantage of this unique opportunity to come up with a three-part virtual series using Zoom in April. The interactive events included small discussions, journaling activities, and more. The target audience was ages 9-14, however, all were welcome to attend.

Our project grant is ending at the end of the Spring 2020 semester, and it will soon be time to analyze and compile our data and research. We will be furnishing a report for the NPS this summer with our recommendations for the new Digital Junior Ranger program.



Learn more about Digital Junior Rangers:

[www.digitaljuniorrangers.weebly.com](http://www.digitaljuniorrangers.weebly.com)

[www.facebook.com/DigitalJuniorRangers/](https://www.facebook.com/DigitalJuniorRangers/)

## Exploring Trails Virtually

### GEOTOURS

During this time of physical distancing, geocachers are also advised to follow local mandates and safety recommendations. So enjoy the Santa Fe Trail Association's Geotour from the comfort of your home by touring the sites online instead. Read history lessons associated with more than 70 caches that are placed along the **Santa Fe National Historic Trail**.

### 360-DEGREE VIDEO

Even though the thru-hiking season has come to a halt on trails like the **Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail**, you can still be inspired by watching a Seattle hiker's journey. John "AppleJack" Betz recorded his 2018 PCT thru-hike using a 5K resolution 360-degree video camera and produced a two-hour video with scenic highlights from the trail accompanied by music.

### HIKING APP

Now is not the time to be on the **Appalachian National Scenic Trail**, but you can make progress toward the more than 2,000-mile goal—along with your friends—using the "Walk the Distance" smartphone app, which tracks your walking/running distance (daily steps) and provides checkpoints with A.T. photos.

### HIDDEN VISITOR STAMP

The National Park Service created a new virtual visitor stamp that is hidden somewhere on the **Lewis and Clark National Scenic Trail** website. People can click around [www.nps.gov/lecl](http://www.nps.gov/lecl) to find out more about the people, places, and stories of the trail and eventually find the stamp, which can be printed for passport books.

### DIGITAL PUZZLES

The Florida Trail Association is sharing new puzzles online for people to solve and enjoy from home using a computer, tablet, or smartphone. These virtual puzzles feature incredible photos and artwork so wherever people are, they can take a journey through the **Florida National Scenic Trail** landscape.

### JUNIOR RANGER ACTIVITIES

Several trails offer learning activities for youth, which are especially useful while schools are closed. For example, kids can download a Junior Explorer handbook in English or Spanish about the **Arizona National Scenic Trail**, fill out a questionnaire to become a Junior Web Ranger, and watch "Fridays with a Ranger" videos about the **Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail**.



Links to these and more examples:

[www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/](http://www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/)

# Electronic Tour Sites

Enhancing visitor experience on two historic trails

The Lolo Trail National Historic Landmark (NHL) encompasses the Nez Perce (Nee-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail (NPNHT) and Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (LCNHT) through the Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests of north central Idaho. To highlight these historically and culturally significant places, Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests initiated its Historic Routes Project with the goal of installing Electronic Tour Sites at various locations along the trails. As part of a pilot project being tested out by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) National Technology and Development Program, six Electronic Tour Sites were installed in the summer and fall of 2019 at backcountry entry points along the Lolo Trail NHL and at Lolo Pass Visitor Center.

An Electronic Tour Site is essentially a hotspot in the backcountry, where one would normally not have any network connection, that enables visitors to download brochures, maps, podcasts, and more from onsite Wi-Fi. Content featured on each site can be customized to meet the specific needs of the trailhead or section of the Lolo Trail. The NPNHT Auto Tours are featured on these electronic sites, as well as other pertinent content to the trail, Nez Perce, Lewis and Clark, local history, and general information about the region and the forests. Each digital kiosk unit costs approximately \$1,000, including hardware, programming, and installation. The project has been funded through an initial grant and USFS funds.

As the project moves further into implementation, more specific interpretive content will be developed for individual sites, guided by the recently completed Interpretive Plan. Initial content that is currently uploaded to these sites is in the form of brochures, topographic maps, and pilot podcasts that were readily available. Additional Electronic Tour Sites pertaining to the Nez Perce and Lewis and Clark NHTs are planned for installation in 2020 at four community and front country indoor locations surrounding the trails, and five additional outdoor and backcountry locations.

## Site Specifics

### MUSSELSHELL MEADOWS

This NPNHT trailhead illustrates the importance of Nez Perce culture and Lewis and Clark emerging from Lolo Trail NHL onto Weippe Prairie.

### BEAVER DAM SADDLE

This main Lolo Trail entrance emphasizes trapping, hunting, mining, and changes after Lewis and Clark's journey opened the west to American expansion.

### SADDLE CAMP

One of the main access points to NPNHT and LCNHT that shows the importance of the Lolo Trail as a historic trade route with the Nez Perce and Kootenai-Salish Tribes.

### POWELL JUNCTION

The eastern entrance for Lolo Trail NHL provides ecosystem information and highlights how fire has shaped the landscape along the trail.

### LOLO PASS VISITOR CENTER

The indoor kiosk describes the cultural importance of the Lochsa Wild and Scenic River, Lewis and Clark's trek across the Lolo Trail, and the Nez Perce War of 1877.

### LOCHSA LODGE

The indoor kiosk describes the cultural importance of the Lochsa Wild and Scenic River, Lewis and Clark's trek across the Lolo Trail, and the Nez Perce War of 1877.



Photo Credits: USFS

Above: Historic Routes Project Manager Chrysann Jaeger, a 2018 PNTS Trail Apprentice, with the indoor Lolo Pass Visitor Center Electronic Tour Site. Below: An example of user instructions for the site.



Left: The Beaver Dam Saddle Junction Electronic Tour Site and interpretive signs, featuring a solar panel on the upper left corner. Mounted on the back of the post is a router, thumb drive with coding, and other electronic regulatory hardware.

Learn more about the project:  
[chrysann.jaeger@usda.gov](mailto:chrysann.jaeger@usda.gov)  
[fs.usda.gov/detail/nezperceclearwater](https://fs.usda.gov/detail/nezperceclearwater)



# Closing Ice Age Trail gaps

Land purchases preserve rare native ecosystems and geological features

Over the past year or so, the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA), Dane County, and the City of Madison have collectively purchased 86 acres of land and conservation and trail right-of-way easements covering an additional 152 acres along the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Each of these three land purchases closes an approximately half-mile long gap in the trail while preserving up to a half-mile wide corridor along the trail in the heart of Dane County, home to over 600,000 people and Wisconsin's fastest growing county. Meanwhile, Groundswell Conservancy, a local regional land trust, purchased another five acres protecting part of the view shed of the trail.



Photo Credit: Kevin Thusius, IATA

The view from atop one of the Ice Age Trail Alliance's most recent land purchases, "Mammoth's Back," looking over Black Earth Creek in Wisconsin, where just beyond the great ice sheet stopped and retreated.

Each of these conservation purchases helped to implement the "Ice Age National Scenic Trail Corridor Protection Plan for Dane County," adopted in 1992 by the National Park Service, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, and the Dane County Board of Supervisors. The plan authorizes local and State government to permanently preserve land along the adopted alignment of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. The City of Madison has incorporated sections of the planned trail corridor in its master plan.

The land purchase by the IATA was funded with money from the Wisconsin Stewardship Fund, the Dane County Conservation Fund, and donations from dozens of individuals. Dane County also provided some funding for the land purchased by Madison.

Besides closing gaps in the Ice Age Trail otherwise threatened to be permanent by

residential development, the three purchases also preserve rare native ecosystems and geological features. The land purchased by the IATA includes a solitary hill—called "Mammoth's Back"—that preserves a native short grass prairie remnant, an island in a sea of agriculture. This land also buffers wetlands and a stretch of Black Earth Creek, a nationally renowned trout stream, already protected earlier by the IATA. Madison's 40-acre parcel is mostly old growth oak forest, one of the larger patches of such woodland in the highly fragmented landscape of Dane County.

In addition to providing a half-mile long right-of-way easement for the Ice Age Trail, Dane County's conservation easement covering a quarter section of land prevents residential development and protects the rural character of the landscape. The easement also protects a pond surrounded

by wetland just beyond the moraine, marking the furthest advance of the Wisconsin glaciation. This wetland and pond complement a similar nearby pond in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Shoveler Sink Waterfowl Protection Area. Both of these areas are part of the 1,700-acre Cross Plains Ice Age National Scientific Reserve.

There is great power, potential, and inspiring success in these partnerships between local, State, and Federal governments and private individuals and organizations persistently working together to preserve and enhance the Ice Age National Scenic Trail. Much like the inexorably moving glaciers that not so long ago sculpted the landscape of southern Wisconsin, the persistence of these partners is piece-by-piece preserving a landscape of learning and delight for those who walk the trail just minutes from Wisconsin's capital.

## ELCAT awarded grant for erosion control at Lobanillo Swales

by Steven Gonzales, Executive Director

*El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association*

El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association (ELCAT) and the National Park Service-National Trails office are pleased to share that the trail has received a \$10,000 grant from the National Park Foundation to improve the Lobanillo Swales hiking trail. Located in deep east Texas, about 20 miles from the Louisiana State line, the property is owned by ELCAT and it is the only site on the trail exclusively focused on El Camino Real de los Tejas.

The grant will help fund the installation of erosion control devices at key spots on the quarter-mile trail at the site, as well as to reinforce the driveway entrance of the property. Local partners will provide \$10,000



of in-kind support to the project in the form of materials, machines, and labor. A member of the Professional TrailBuilders Association will construct the erosion control features.

With the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, it is uncertain when the work will begin, but ELCAT, local partners, and other key parties are planning toward the initiative.

The Lobanillo Swales represent human pathways imprinted into the landscape over three centuries of time. The swales are the best-known physical remnants of a path that has long existed as one of the most ancient roads in American history. The property was purchased in June 2013 and it underwent nearly five years of planning and study before opening to the public in April 2018. The swales are listed in the National Register of Historic Places and as a State of Texas—State Antiquities Landmark.



# A decade in the making

## Temporal Gulch Passage reroute approved to provide safer alternative for AZT

Over the past decade, the Arizona Trail Association (ATA) has been working to find a safer, more scenic alternative to the trail's current alignment near the town of Patagonia, AZ, which includes three miles of paved roads and 12 miles of dirt roads. The segment between Harshaw Road Trailhead and Walker Basin Trailhead is among the most disliked of the entire Arizona National Scenic Trail (AZT). This is in stark contrast to the town of Patagonia itself, which is one of the most beloved trail towns and a majority of thru-hikers report they're likely to visit again.

Due to lack of public land surrounding Patagonia, it has been difficult to secure easements allowing the AZT to cross private property, especially when there are numerous private landowners. So the trail remained on Harshaw Road (paved) and Temporal Canyon Road (dirt), which wasn't ideal but wasn't all that bad either. That changed when increased mining activity south of Patagonia transformed a quiet rural road into an industrial route. Up to 50 large trucks travel along Harshaw Road each day, carrying chemicals, explosives, and other hazardous materials to support mining operations. The importance of moving the AZT off Harshaw Road had never been more important for the safety of long-distance trail users (who have to walk or ride along Harshaw Road for three miles) and day trippers driving to and from the trailhead.

A potential route was discovered near Big Casa Blanca Canyon that would only cross two parcels of private land, owned by Wildlife Corridors and Hubday Minerals. Once approval was secured, the ATA began working with the Coronado National Forest and other agencies to take the necessary steps to approve the trail project, including comprehensive biological and cultural surveys.

After years of hard work and determination, the ATA received approval to proceed with the Temporal Gulch Passage Reroute Project in late March 2020. Coronado National Forest Supervisor Kerwin Dewberry signed the Decision Memo authorizing trail construction, with concurrence from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that the trail project is not likely to adversely impact threatened and endangered species.

The project includes 32 miles of new trail construction, connecting existing AZT near Red Rock Ranch Road (AZT mile 44.5) with Gardner Canyon (AZT mile 71.1). In addition to scenic, sustainable singletrack through beautiful biomes in the Canelo Hills and Santa Rita Mountains, this project also includes a connector trail from Temporal Gulch Trailhead to the new AZT. The entire project lies outside designated wilderness, allowing mountain bikers to enjoy the new trail.

Volunteers will be needed to help with trail construction after the COVID-19 crisis has subsided, and donors are being sought to help fund professional trail construction in the more remote areas. With ample community support, we hope to finish the last mile of trail construction before 2025.



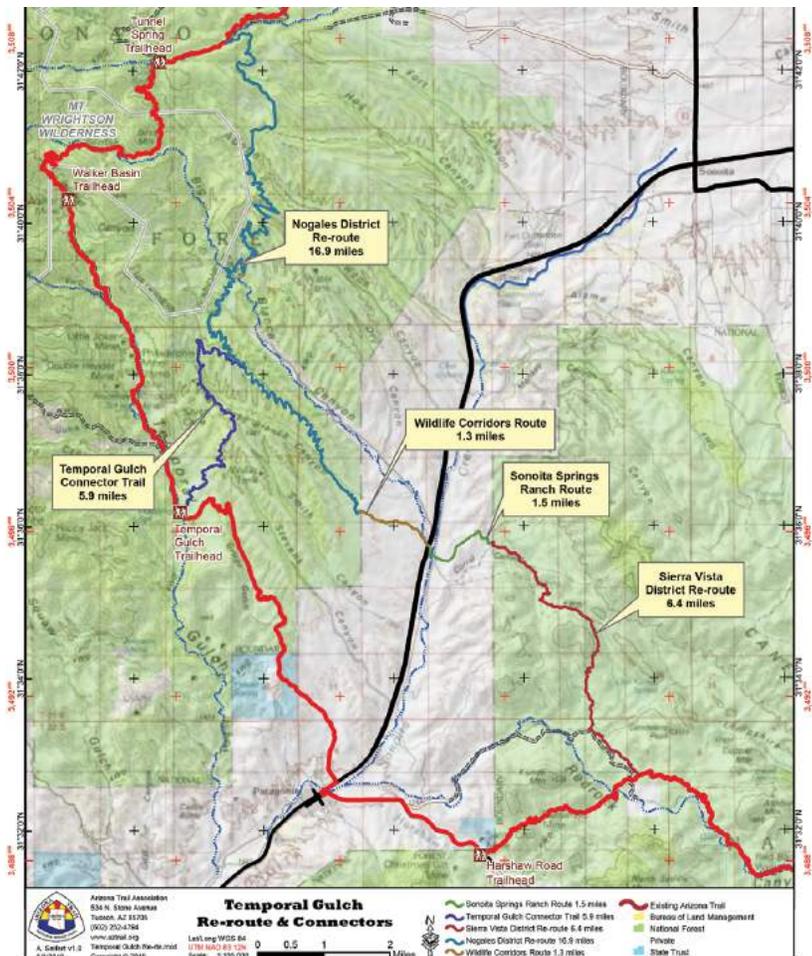
Left: The current Arizona National Scenic Trail follows Temporal Canyon Road for 12 miles, and is a popular route for off-highway vehicles, hunters, locals accessing the landfill, and others.

Photo Credit: Shannon Villegas

Right: Trail construction on the Temporal Gulch Passage reroute project is anticipated to begin in 2020 to replace 15 miles of paved and dirt roads with 32 miles of sublime trail. The goal is to finish the project by 2025.



Photo Credit: Zach MacDonald



Learn more and opportunities to support this project:

[www.aztrail.org](http://www.aztrail.org)

## Three national historic trails welcome new leadership with NPS

The National Park Service (NPS) welcomes new faces to the national historic trails community.

Joining Superintendent Steve Sims at Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary Route National Historic Trail (WARO) is Johnny Carawan, who officially became WARO's Trail Administrator in June 2019. He has 20 years of military service and 17 years of experience with the NPS. His background includes a variety of areas from law enforcement, fire and safety, volunteers and partnerships, park operations, and fee and business program management.

In August 2019, NPS selected Kate Marks Hardy as Partnership Coordinator/Trail Manager for the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, and Hampton National Historic Site. Previously, Kate was a visual information specialist at the NPS Chesapeake Bay Office for seven years. She holds a bachelor's degree in history and master's degree in nonprofit management. In January 2020, Tina Cappetta left her position as Superintendent of the three sites to become the next Superintendent of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal National Historical Park. During her tenure, she oversaw the launch of several impactful trail programs, including the partnership paddle project and Trail Stewards.

In April 2020, the NPS selected Dr. Joy G. Kinard as Superintendent of the Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, Tuskegee National Historic Site, and Tuskegee Institute National Historic Site. She will work with partners from the three sites. Joy's 20-year NPS career reflects an abiding interest in the preservation and advancement of stories pertinent to African-American and American heritage. Joy holds a bachelor's degree in social work and sociology, master's degree in history, and Ph.D. in U.S. history with a minor in public history and Caribbean studies.



Johnny Carawan



Joy Kinard



Kate Marks Hardy



Tina Cappetta

### BLM selects new NHTIC Director

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) selected Dennis Kuhnel to be the Director of the National Historic Trails Interpretive



Dennis Kuhnel

Center (NHTIC) in Casper, WY in October 2019. The NHTIC is a 11,000-square-foot facility that educates and interprets the legacies and stories of the National Historic Trails in Wyoming.

Dennis began his Federal agency career in 2007 as a Park Ranger in the National Park Service, and later worked in Cultural Resources Management, Interpretation and Visitor Services and Outdoor Recreation for the BLM and as a District Ranger for the U.S. Forest Service. He has also been the Director at the USFS Hudson-Meng Education and Research Center and the USFS National Grasslands Visitor Center.

Dennis enjoys the outdoors, reading, and spending time with his two Gordon Setters, friends, his wife, Katy, who is a BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner, and their three children.

### New England Trail (NET) changes NPS leadership

After 31 years with the National Park Service (NPS), and 10 years with the New England National Scenic Trail (NET), NET Trail Administrator Charlie Tracy retired in September 2019.

NPS transferred NET administration to Kelly Fellner, Superintendent of Springfield Armory National Historic Site and Coltsville National Historical Park, who has worked in the NPS for over 30 years. She holds a bachelor's degree in history and anthropology and a master's degree in public history and museum administration.

The NET also welcomed new NPS Trail Administrator Andrew Long. Andrew comes from a leadership and management background in the U.S. Marine Corps. After earning his MBA, Andrew helped plan and establish Coltsville NHP. He is an avid outdoorsman and history nerd, and thrilled with the opportunity to work with the trail community.

Kelly and Andrew are excited for this new chapter for NET, as both parks and the trail share many of the same partners, stories, and opportunities.



Charles Tracy



Kelly Fellner



Andrew Long

### New Executive Director at Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

The Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (LCTHF) hired Sarah Cawley as its new Executive Director, a position held by Lindy Hatcher since 2012.

Sarah began her role at the LCTHF's headquarters in Great Falls, MT, on January 2, 2020. During the last three years, Sarah was the Executive Director of the nonprofit Sawtooth Interpretive and Historical Association in Stanley, ID. She is a 2016 graduate of the State University of New York, majoring in environmental education and interpretation with a minor in recreational and visitor management.

Sarah became interested in the LCTHF through her curiosity about the Lewis and Clark Expedition: "I've been intrigued by the explorers and what there is to learn about them beyond the historical signs that we see along roadsides. I've backpacked parts of their trail and studied such topics as the botany and Native American cultures they reported about in their journals. Their story is an important part of our country's history that all Americans should know about."



Sarah Cawley

## Thirteen trail intern grants awarded

The Partnership for the National Trails System, in collaboration with the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and U.S. Forest Service, is pleased to announce grant recipients for their 2020 National Trails System Intern Grants.

The Intern Grants will create opportunities for young adults to become involved, or further their involvement, with our national trails.

Thirteen grants totaling \$129,899 were awarded in 2020. Each grant awarded was approximately \$10,000. These grants will be matched with over \$87,431 in partner non-Federal cash funds, \$999,103 of in-kind contributions, and \$145,987 in other Federal funds. These grant opportunities will help to strengthen the capacity of the organizations and agencies to help administer and manage the national scenic and historic trails.

Questions can be directed toward Leah Steinberg at [leah.steinberg@gmail.com](mailto:leah.steinberg@gmail.com).

## 2020 Recipients

### NATIONAL HISTORIC TRAILS

- California National Historic Trail
- El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail
- Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail
- Oregon National Historic Trail
- Pony Express National Historic Trail
- Santa Fe National Historic Trail

### NATIONAL SCENIC TRAILS

- Appalachian National Scenic Trail
- Arizona National Scenic Trail
- Continental Divide National Scenic Trail
- Florida National Scenic Trail
- New England National Scenic Trail
- North Country National Scenic Trail
- Pacific Northwest National Scenic Trail

## FEDERAL PARTNERS

by Jeff Mast, Assistant National Trail Program Manager

U.S. Forest Service

## National Trails System Council update

Greetings trail friends and colleagues! Thank you to all of you who were able to join the National Trails System Council (NTSC) in-person meeting that took place during Hike the Hill in Washington, D.C. The NTSC took a great deal away from what you shared and appreciates the amazing passion for national trails that was in the room. Here is our April 2020 update.

### CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

As with the rest of our country and the world, the coronavirus is continuing to dominate work among council member agencies. Typically, NTSC would be meeting more often than present, trying to carry forward actions and needs of the Council and those raised by partner entities, but the current climate is definitely impacting those work items in the short term.

### QUARTERLY COUNCIL MEETING

The next quarterly meeting of the NTSC, which will be Council members only, is to be held in the April to June timeframe according to our memorandum of understanding. Council members are discussing how to best go about this interagency meeting in light of competing priorities associated with the coronavirus.

### PERSONNEL CHANGES

This is a time of great change for the National Trails System Council, with each of the three "Level 1" administering agencies having leadership changes. It is unknown when these positions will be filled permanently, but points of contact are provided who will be fulfilling Council member roles for the foreseeable future.

#### U.S. Forest Service (Current Chair):

- Jaime Schmidt, National Trail Program Manager, retired in April 2020.
- Current agency lead (will serve as Chair until the end of FY20): Jeff Mast, Assistant National Trail Program Manager (202-253-4912 or [jeffrey.mast@usda.gov](mailto:jeffrey.mast@usda.gov)).

#### National Park Service (FY21 Chair):

- Rita Hennessy, Program Lead for Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trails Systems, retired in late December 2019.
- Current agency lead: John Cannella, Acting Program Lead for Wild and Scenic Rivers and National Trails Systems (505-660-5480 or [john\\_cannella@nps.gov](mailto:john_cannella@nps.gov)).

#### Bureau of Land Management (FY22 Chair):

- Deb Salt, Program Lead for the National Scenic and Historic Trail Program, retired in late January 2020.
- Current agency lead: Kevin Keeler, Acting Program Lead for the National Scenic and Historic Trail Program (907-903-5699 or [kkeeler@blm.gov](mailto:kkeeler@blm.gov)).

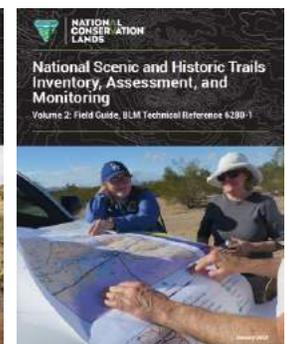
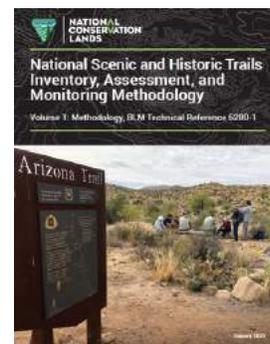
## BLM publishes Technical References on Inventory, Assessment, and Monitoring

by Kevin Keeler, Acting Program Lead for the National Scenic and Historic Trails

Bureau of Land Management

The Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) National Trails Program released two companion Technical References on Inventory, Assessment, and Monitoring Methodology (IAM) for National Scenic and Historic Trails in January 2020. The Methodology (Volume 1) and Field Guide (Volume 2) provide a detailed, consistent, and repeatable approach for the collection of baseline data to fulfill the management needs of the National Trails System Act.

The standardized process is aimed to be useful for all Federal, State, or locally managed segments of national trails. Supporting components, such as model data standards and mobile field data gathering applications, are also being developed and will be available in the future. Development of the technical references was supported through an interagency agreement between the BLM and Federal Highway Administration.



Download the technical references for national trails:  
<https://www.blm.gov/programs/national-conservation-lands/national-scenic-and-historic-trails>



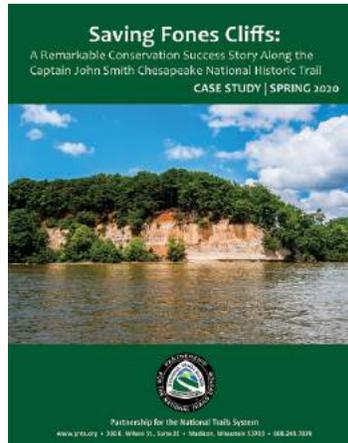
## PNTS publishes new land protection case study

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) has published its second case study about trail land protection efforts.

"Saving Fones Cliffs: A Remarkable Conservation Success Story along the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail," relays the 15-year sustained effort by conservation organizations to acquire Fones Cliffs in eastern Virginia in 2018. The following year, The Conservation Fund conveyed the property to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for inclusion in the Rappahannock River National Wildlife Refuge.

The cliffs, located in the heart of the ancestral home of the Rappahannock Tribe near the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT, are also home to one of the largest concentrations of bald eagles in the continental United States.

Rappahannock Tribal Chief Anne Richardson said, "Now, we can walk the land of our ancestors. We can feel the spirit of the people that lived here, worked here, and worshiped here. This land is sacred to our Tribe. Thanks to all the partners who understand how essential land preservation is to our very existence."



Download the publication to read the full story of how Fones Cliffs was conserved:

[www.pnts.org/new/our-work/reports/](http://www.pnts.org/new/our-work/reports/)

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Ron Tipton

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RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

**National Historic Trails Representative:**

James L. Mallory • Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc.

**National Scenic Trails Representative:**

Mike Wollmer • Ice Age Trail Alliance

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

Margaret Gorski • Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

Sandi Marra • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Teresa Martinez • Continental Divide Trail Coalition

## PNTS considers virtual options for Fall Workshop

The Partnership for the National Trails System and National Trails Workshop planning committee members are very much aware of the coronavirus pandemic and limitations placed on travel and gatherings to protect the health and welfare of individuals and communities. We will continue to monitor this crisis very closely over the coming weeks.

At the time of this publication, the Fall Workshop is still scheduled for October 26-30, 2020, at Spartanburg, South Carolina, with the Overmountain Victory Trail Association (OVTA) as the host organization. Virtual options are also being considered.

On March 20, 2020, amid growing concerns of COVID-19, we decided by consensus among PNTS leadership and workshop leads to cancel the Spring Workshop scheduled for May 18-22, 2020 at Ghost Ranch in New Mexico. We want to recognize Teresa Martinez, Executive Director of the Continental Divide Trail Coalition, and the Spring Workshop team who worked hard and produced an agenda with great vision. We know this group will do what they can to help ensure that the work and ideas are not lost in our future events.

### 2020 Workshops

May 18-22  
New Mexico



October 26-30  
South Carolina

CANCELED

SCHEDULED

On April 13, 2020, we collected survey input from the trails community to help inform our future plans for workshops.

On April 17, 2020, a call for presentation and session proposals went out from RG Absher, Fall Workshop Committee Chair with the OVTA.

Submission forms, due May 15, 2020, also ask whether or not presentations or sessions could be done virtually on October 27-29, 2020 if the need arises.

The Fall Workshop will focus on integrating best practices among organizations and highlight strategies related to the following overarching themes: advancing justice, equity, diversity, inclusion; expanding partnerships within and beyond trail corridors; and increasing capacity through organizational development.

Please direct questions to RG Absher at 336-902-1760 or [absher-r@juno.com](mailto:absher-r@juno.com).

### TRAIL LEADERS COUNCIL

**PNTS Trail Leaders Council Chair:**

RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

**National Historic Trails Representative:**

James L. Mallory • Lewis and Clark Trust, Inc.

**National Scenic Trails Representative:**

Mike Wollmer • Ice Age Trail Alliance

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

Elizabeth Stewart • Anza Trail Foundation

Bridget Likely • Appalachian Mountain Club (NET)

Morgan Sommerville • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Matt Nelson • Arizona Trail Association

Susan Shingledecker • Chesapeake Conservancy

Clare Cain • Connecticut Forest & Park Association (NET)

Teresa Martinez • Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Jim Wolf • Continental Divide Trail Society

Marcie Davis • E Mau Nā Ala Hele (Ala Kahakai NHT)

Steven Gonzales • El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association

Kelly Wiener • Florida Trail Association

Judy Bittner • Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance

Sarah Cawley • Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

Ron Andersen • Mormon Pioneer Trail Association

Tony Turnbow • Natchez Trace Parkway Association

Pat Hearty • National Pony Express Association

Ellen von Karajan • National Washington-Rochambeau

Revolutionary Route Association, Inc. (W3R-US)

Jim Zimmerman • Nez Perce Trail Foundation

Andrea Ketchmark • North Country Trail Association

Reba Wells Grandrud • Old Spanish Trail Association

Bill Martin • Oregon-California Trails Association

Justin Kooyman • Pacific Crest Trail Association

Jeff Kish • Pacific Northwest Trail Association

Ric Francke • Potomac Heritage Trail Association

Marcia Will-Clifton • Santa Fe Trail Association

Deloris Gray Wood • Trail of Tears Association



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## Event Calendar

[www.pnts.org/new/events/](http://www.pnts.org/new/events/)



Event dates/details are subject to change.

June 3-13, 2020	National Pony Express Association Annual Re-Ride	Sacramento, CA-St. Joseph, MO	<a href="http://www.nationalponyexpress.org">www.nationalponyexpress.org</a>
June 6, 2020	American Hiking Society's National Trails Day	Nationwide	<a href="http://www.americanhiking.org">www.americanhiking.org</a>
August 2020	North Country Trail Association Celebration	Virtual	<a href="http://www.nctacelebration.org">www.nctacelebration.org</a>
September 14-17, 2020	SORP National Outdoor Recreation Conference	Knoxville, TN	<a href="http://www.2020norc.org">www.2020norc.org</a>
September 19-23, 2020	38th Annual Oregon-California Trails Association Convention	Elko, NV	<a href="http://www.octa-trails.org">www.octa-trails.org</a>
September 24-26, 2020	Santa Fe Trail Rendezvous	Larned, KS	<a href="http://www.santafetrail.org">www.santafetrail.org</a>
October 13-17, 2020	National Wilderness Workshop	Merced, CA	<a href="http://www.wildernessalliance.org">www.wildernessalliance.org</a>
October 26-30, 2020	National Trails Fall Workshop Hosted by the Overmountain Victory Trail Association	Spartanburg, SC	<a href="http://www.pnts.org/new/our-work/workshops/">www.pnts.org/new/our-work/workshops/</a>

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