

A PUBLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM



Pathways

Across America

SPRING 2021

VIRTUAL SUCCESS

National Scenic and National Historic Trail organizations share their stories of challenges and perseverance in the age of Covid-19.

LAND ACQUISITION ON THE ALA KAHAKAI NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

CONNECTIVITY ANALYSIS LAUNCH

2021 HIKE THE HILL RECAP

NORTH COUNTRY 100 MILE CHALLENGE

USFS 10-YEAR SHARED STEWARDSHIP

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 four 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)

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



Unless otherwise indicated, all material in *Pathways Across America* is public domain. All views expressed herein are perspectives of individuals working on behalf of the National Trails System and do not necessarily represent the viewpoint of the Federal agencies.

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.

STAFF

Executive Director: Valerie Rupp
Operations Coordinator: Felicita 'Lis' Wight
Program Coordinator: Cara Yendrzeski
Communications Manager: Craig Baker
Contractors:
Mike Dawson, FHWA Cooperative Agreement Project Manager
Don Owen, FHWA Cooperative Agreement Technical Contractor
Gary Werner, Special Projects
Liz Wessel, Fundraising and Special Projects

EDITORIAL BOARD

Carin Farley • Bureau of Land Management
Christopher Douwes • Federal Highway Administration
Peter Bonsall • National Park Service
Brenda Yankoviak • U.S. Forest Service

CONTACT

Partnership for the National Trails System
1615 M St. NW, 2nd Floor • Washington, D.C. 20036
202.963.2910 • www.pnts.org • admin@pnts.org



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), over 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
- Nearly 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 29,000 miles through 50 States, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico
- 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



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

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 a 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

A butterfly lands on a girl's hand during an Arizona National Scenic Trail Seeds of Stewardship event in Superior, Arizona. Photo Credit: Arizona Trail Association.

INSIDE

Left: Students hike near San Francisco Peak in Northern Arizona. Photo Credit: Arizona Trail Association

Center: Father and daughter walking toward the cannons at Fort McHenry. Photo Credit: John Lam

Right: Barred owl on the Pacific Crest Trail. Photo Credit: Tyler Fox

Contents

- 4 PARTNERSHIP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR REPORT
 - National Trail Nonprofits Persevere in 2020
- 5 HIKE THE HILL® 2021 RECAP
- 6 RESOURCES
 - Connectivity Analysis Tool for Trail Land Protection Planning Launched
 - New Federal Trail GIS Schema Template Makes Data Sharing Easier

Outreach

- 7 • North Country Trail Hike 100 Challenge
- 8 • Virtual Successes
- 9 • Thru-Hiking and Covid-19
- 10 • Honor-Respect-Preserve: The Lewis and Clark NHT

Protection

- 11 • 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge
- 12 • Land Acquisition: Lessons Learned on the Ala Kahakai NHT

Capacity

- 13 • Civilian Climate Corps
 - Conservation Corps at Work
- 14 • Comings and Goings
 - Santa Fe NHT Celebrates 200th Anniversary
 - The Trek Badger Sponsorship Boosts PNTS
- 15 • Kids' Books on National Scenic and Historic Trails
- 16 EVENTS



View more photos and full versions of each article:

<https://pnts.org/new/category/pathways/>



Rose, Bud, Thorn: Growing from the Lessons of 2020-21



As the soft fuzz and bright blooms of Spring cover the Mid-Atlantic, the change of seasons harkens the end of what seemed to be

a particularly long winter—one that kept us distanced from one another due to the lingering pandemic.

It's said that change is the only constant in life. The validity of that statement has been shown to us time and again over the last year. For Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS), like so many other workplaces and organizations, it has meant re-envisioning what we do and how we accomplish our work.

During our Trail Apprentices program, we've used a reflection at the end of sessions called "rose-thorn-bud". Based on the activity of the day, program participants

identify a 'rose' (a highlight, success, or something positive that happened), a 'thorn' (a challenge experienced or an area where more attention is needed), and a 'bud' (a new idea or opportunity).

In March 2021, PNTS and its long-time partner, American Hiking Society, led the 24th annual Hike the Hill®, this year as a virtual event. While nothing will replace the valuable face-to-face interactions that occur during agency and Congressional meetings (thorn), participants enjoyed a number of enlightening and beneficial meetings, and the online format allowed us to attract a greater breadth of experts to lead topical briefings using an online format that proved to help advocates better prepare for their meetings (rose). Without the remote event, we may have never learned how much we could augment the in-person event with online, pre-event briefings (bud).

This Spring brings several additional "buds" to PNTS. From a System-wide

perspective, we heard a renewed enthusiasm for trails with long-time partners and new agency representatives noting the unique potential for National Trails to advance key initiatives for climate resilience and local economies. Within our organization, we are building our team with the addition of three staff members after relocating from Wisconsin to Washington DC during the latter half of 2020. And, as we work to increase our capacity to better support our members and the National Trails System, we're forming new partnerships with businesses, including one with The Trek that you will read about in this issue.

At PNTS, we're embracing the continued change and looking forward to growing these and other 'buds' into 'roses' for the National Trails System.

Yours in partnership,

2020 TRAIL ORGANIZATION RESULTS

National Trail Nonprofits Persevere in 2020

When Covid-19 led to the shutdown of many offices in early 2020, trail organizations were justifiably concerned about the impact that might have on their programming, volunteerism, and annual giving. Many fundraising events were cancelled or quickly pivoted to digital formats. In-person volunteer programs including important trail maintenance events were cancelled or scaled back and new protocols were put in place to ensure the safety of volunteers and staff.

Despite these setbacks, the dedication and resourcefulness of National Scenic and National Historic Trail (NSHT) organizations resulted in quite different outcomes than may have been expected.

Overall, there was a nearly 38-percent drop in the total number of active volunteers across all NSHT organizations from 2019 to 2020 (down to 13,816 in 2020 from 22,224 the previous year). However, this figure is far less shocking than it might seem at first glance. The volunteers that were able to work in 2020 increased their efforts and contributed significantly more volunteer hours per individual than the previous year. In 2019, the average volunteer contributed

44.9 hours of their time, compared to 68.2 hours per volunteer in 2020. As a result, total volunteer hours on NSHTs decreased only 5.4 percent (from 997,162 in 2019 to 942,886 in 2020)—an impressive figure, given the circumstances.

Seven organizations saw an increase in volunteerism over the course of the year and some trails introduced new technology to help them better track volunteer hours or improve reporting procedures. The Oregon-California Trails Association more effectively leveraged its online reporting portal, making it easier for volunteers to log their hours. This resulted in more reliable and accurate reporting, including 31,000 volunteer hours logged from a single volunteer-run trail center that previously had not reported volunteer hours.

Some trail organizations reported static or decreased local or State government support, yet many trails saw a notable boost in individual giving. In fact, the total value of private-sector contributions in 2020 reached a staggering \$23,146,874—an increase of over 45 percent from the record set the previous year. All told, the estimated value of private and volunteer contributions to trail

organizations in 2020 totaled nearly \$48.8 million—more than a \$5 million (or a 13.3 percent) increase from the prior year.

Though the impact of Covid-19 challenged organizations to rethink how they work and engage with the public, trail organizations demonstrated their resourcefulness by finding ways to pivot and remain connected to their support networks by focusing on digital outreach efforts. At the same time, many volunteers were motivated to invest more time and donors increased their support when organizations truly needed it.

This demonstrates a flexible and resilient NSHT community that involves committed individuals who tirelessly give of themselves to maintain, protect, and advocate on behalf of our National Trail System.



The 2020 Gold Sheet is available for review and download on our website.

www.pnts.org/new/our-work/reports/

Hike the Hill 2021: Addressing a New Administration



In March 2021, PNTS and its long-time partner, the American Hiking Society, led the 24th annual Hike the Hill® as a virtual event. Even a pandemic couldn't hinder Hike the Hill®, nor could it hamper participants' enthusiasm or the event's efficacy.

What is normally a week-long, in-person affair occurred over the course of three weeks of virtual meetings. Hike the Hill® featured eight briefing sessions to help prepare participants for individual meetings with Federal agency representatives and members of Congress, seven meetings with federal agency leaders, and five meetings with Congressional Committee staff.

Meetings were framed in a way that reflected key priorities of the Biden-Harris Administration concerning climate resilience, economic recovery, COVID-19 recovery, and equity. Increased support and funding for the NTS can help the new administration achieve their goals in these areas in the following ways:

- Prioritizing the acquisition of the nearly 20,000 miles of still-unprotected NTS trails, as well as additional side trails and viewsheds, can advance the "30 by 30" initiative, which aims to protect 30 percent of America's land and freshwater resources by the year 2030 for climate resiliency.
- Making National Trails more accessible and welcoming to all visitors and prioritizing opportunities to better represent America's indigenous and tribal communities and its cultural diversity.
- Providing increasingly popular outdoor recreational space and public health benefits during the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Supporting economic recovery efforts, particularly in rural "trail towns" and urban neighborhoods that receive tourism dollars from the NTS visitors.

This year's Hike the Hill® also included increased participation by some up-and-coming voices. In addition to a NextGen Meet n' Greet Luncheon facilitated by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's NextGen Advisory Council, two PNTS Trail Apprentices were featured during meetings with agency leadership: 27-year-old Robin Bruns of Clifton Forge, VA spoke at the US Forest Service meeting with Chief Vicki Christiansen, and 26-year-old Nathan Begay of Albuquerque, NM took the floor during a meeting with Bureau of Land Management leadership.

Though the 2021 Hike the Hill® event officially ended on March 25, as always, PNTS' advocacy work continues. This year's virtual event was a challenge we were excited to tackle. We look forward to the next year of action and advocacy with all of you, as well as our next opportunity to Hike the Hill® together.



PNTS Trail Apprentices Robin Bruns (top) and Nathan Begay (bottom) spoke during virtual leadership meetings for the annual Hike the Hill event. Both photos courtesy of the subjects.



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

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.

Save The Date
 National Trails
 Virtual Fall Workshop
 November 1st - 5th, 2021
www.pnts.org/new/our-work/workshops

Connectivity Analysis Tool for Trail Land Protection Planning Launched

Fifty years after the passage of the National Trails System Act, many critically important landscapes and resources of the National Trails System lack any legal protection.

Between 2013 and 2017, PNTS participated in a Collaborative Landscape Planning Program of the four Federal land-managing agencies (National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) that sought to identify critically important unprotected landscapes and corridor protection opportunities along National Scenic and Historic Trails.

This National-Trails-System-wide effort resulted in identification and protection of thousands of acres of land along many units of the National Trails System, significantly increasing the resiliency, sustainability, and accessibility of National Trails. The success of this effort led to the realization that an ongoing, National-Trail-System-wide project to identify trail protection needs would be of great value, which led to the development of a project to conduct a "Connectivity Analysis" for the entire National Trails System.

In 2018, PNTS and FHWA entered into a cooperative agreement to assist in providing the National Trails System information, corridor protection, and training to build capacity to better administer, manage, and sustain National Trails. A key component of that agreement was the development of a Corridor Protection Connectivity Analysis for National Scenic and Historic Trails. PNTS subsequently contracted The Trust for Public Land to conduct an integrated GIS analysis that would help identify and map National Trail protection throughout the entire system.

This Connectivity Analysis was designed to:

- Identify the status of land protection—specifically, areas needed to provide continuous conserved corridors for National Scenic Trails and conserve high-potential historic sites and high-potential route segments and other resources for National Historic Trails.

- Provide a Decision Support Tool to help trail administrators and managers assess and categorize these areas.

- Provide web-based tools that permit Trail Administrators, managers, and the public to view the status of conservation for all National Scenic and Historic Trails.

The Connectivity Analysis consists of two separate tools: a Decision Support Tool and a 3D Public Viewer.

The Decision Support Tool is designed for internal use by the National Trail Administrators, managers, and National Trail Organization representations. It provides a wealth of GIS data and analytical tools to help users identify, analyze, and depict GIS data for potential land protection projects. It is password protected and requires authorization by a designated agency or organizational representative.

The 3D Public Viewer is a basic tool that members of the public can use to view a map or visually "fly" a National Scenic or Historic Trail. This site is meant to provide a general sense of the locations of National Scenic and Historic Trails as overlap conserved and unconcerned lands (or cross or follow rivers and other public waterways). The site includes a disclaimer directing the public to National Trail-administering agencies and organizations for further information.

The initial version of this Connectivity Analysis, which is now complete, provides important information at a national-level scale that can help National Trail-administering agencies and National Trail Organizations make decisions about trail protection for the 30 National Scenic and Historic Trails designated by Congress.

Specifically, it will help PNTS, its member organizations, agency partners, and the National Trail System Council begin to quantify the needs for National Scenic and Historic Trail protection; identify potential opportunities for trail protection; and engage other partners, including State and local government agencies, land trusts, conservation organizations, and historic preservation organizations that share common ground in conserving lands along National Scenic and Historic Trails.

Webinars will be offered periodically for representatives of Trail managers and organizations interested in using the tool.

To view the 3D Public Viewer: web.tplgis.org/nts_conserved_publicviewer/

The Decision Support Tool can be accessed at the following website:

web.tplgis.org/nationaltrails/secure/

NOTE: Access to the Decision Support Tool site must be approved by the National Trail agency administrator or National Trail organization manager (usually, the Executive Director).

Contact your National Trail agency administrator or National Trail organization manager for instructions on how to create a login.

Trails Community Resources



www.pnts.org/new/resources/

COVID-19 UPDATES

Since March 2020, PNTS has been compiling national scenic and historic trail organization responses, guidelines, policies, event cancellations, related news articles, and resources.

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Since June 2020, PNTS has been compiling tools for allies, recent statements, and points-of-view to help us all become more aware, informed, and better equipped to take action. Please join us.

FORUM

PNTS launched its National Trails System Forum in 2017. The purpose of this forum is to encourage dialogue and the sharing of best practices amongst trail partners. Log in today!

WEBINARS

Since March 2020, this page has also included dozens of additional webinars hosted by other organizations that focus on COVID-19, equity, and trail-related topics. Some are recorded.

If you would like something shared to these pages, please email the PNTS Communications Manager at communication@pnts.org.

New Federal Trail GIS Schema Template Makes Data Sharing Easier

There are 30 Congressionally designated National Scenic and Historic Trails (National Trails) covering more than 55,000 miles in total. The National Trails connect with 70 Wildlife Refuges, 80 National Parks, 90 Bureau of Land Management areas, 90 National Forests, 123 Wilderness Areas, and 100 major metropolitan areas (PNTS website, 2020). There are many additional miles of trail across the country.

In 2011, the Federal Trail Data Standard (FTDS) established a standardized set of trail terminology that can be consistently applied to trail data, enabling trail information to be shared across multiple agencies and partners. The FTDS addresses the universal need for trail data standards to efficiently manage trails, including National Trails, across the country.

Through discussions, it has come to the forefront that, in order to share information across multiple GIS systems nationwide, there needs to be agreement on how to implement and utilize the FTDS for ease of sharing and aggregating trail GIS data nationwide.

Using the FTDS as the foundation, a Federal Trail GIS Schema template has been developed that can be utilized by agencies

and partners to establish a unifying and common trail GIS data structure. As the FTDS was intended, the Federal Trail GIS Schema is meant to be applied to trails of all kinds, including National Trails. The Federal Trail GIS Schema will allow for national aggregation of publicly facing trail data from multiple agencies and partners into a common schema GIS database, such as the USGS National Digital Trails Project.

The Federal Trail GIS Schema was designed as a framework and a minimum requirement of core fields for all trail spatial data. During the schema design, the focus was on utilizing this template schema as a tool for aggregating publicly facing trail data. Keeping publicly facing data in mind, not all attributes from the FTDS were included. The schema is flexible enough to allow for additional custom fields to be added at the trail GIS manager's discretion, including any additional FTDS fields not included in the Federal Trail GIS Schema.

The Federal Trail GIS Schema includes a geodatabase template containing two different line geometry feature classes, as well as a point geometry feature class. The first line geometry feature class template is called Core, which includes the minimum

attribute fields required for all trails. The second feature class template is called Extended Core, which includes the Core fields as well as the minimum attribute fields required for National Scenic and Historic Trails. The third feature class template is called NHT Sites and includes the minimum attribute fields required for all National Historic Trail Site locations.

Each feature class schema includes an additional framework, known as feature level metadata, for documenting the lineage and quality of the geospatial data at the feature level. These templates are a starting point. Adding additional attribute fields are encouraged.

Overall, a Federal Trail GIS Schema would make it achievable to have better GIS coordination and collaboration between agencies and partners for various trail projects, efficient sharing of authoritative trail data with the public, and better GIS decision-making support for trails.

Please visit communities.GeoPlatform.gov/ngda-transportation/federal-trail-gis-schema-working-group for more information and to download the current draft documentation and draft GIS geodatabase template.

Outreach

by Kate Lemon, *Marketing + Communications Coordinator*
North Country Trail Association

Hike 100 Challenge

Since 2016, thousands of North Country Trail (NCT) users have signed up for and completed the annual Hike 100 Challenge, one free program offered by the North Country Trail Association (NCTA). Each year this challenge renews but the rules remain the same: Hike any 100 miles on the North Country National Scenic Trail between January 1 and December 31. Trail users can explore 100 unique miles or revisit the same mile 100 times; log mileage over weeks or months, or during one big adventure; walk, snowshoe, run, ski, day hike, or backpack. Once they've completed their 100 miles on the NCT, participants submit a completion form to receive a commemorative patch and certificate of completion. A new patch design is released each year.

In 2020, partially thanks to the NCTA's rule change of #HikeFromHome that temporarily allowed non-NCT miles to count toward the Challenge, over 4,200 participated in Hike 100 and over 2,500 completed it.

The Trail provided reprieve. While the national battle against coronavirus doubles down, with travel restrictions lifted and many employees slowly returning to offices, the Hike 100 Challenge hasn't lost popularity. As of the end of February 2021, nearly 4,000 were signed up and over 30 had already completed the challenge. The



North Country Trail was discovered or rediscovered by many, and it continues to hold value.

To add appeal to the program, the NCTA selects random participants each month to receive free gear and one finisher annually to receive a grand prize package. Jennifer Bieniek was the 2020 finisher chosen as the grand prize winner.

"I recently began hiking in 2019 as a way to do some low-impact exercise after surgery. I fell in love with it quickly!" explained Jennifer. "I realized that I had missed out on this wonderful way to find peace! My

kids joined me soon. I have three kids (two teenagers and a four-year-old). I live within 15 minutes of the North Country Trail and am still astonished that most people from my area that I speak to about it have never heard of it. I plan to continue our adventures!"

Learn more at northcountrytrail.org/hike-100-challenge. Share your adventures on social media using @northcountrytrail and #hike100nct.

by Alivia Acosta, Volunteer Development Coordinator

Appalachian Trail Conservancy

The Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) invited people from across the country to join them on an amazing Appalachian Trail (AT) Ed-Venture Series.

Starting in Georgia and traveling all the way north to Maine, each session was led by environmental educators providing exciting content across diverse disciplines that connect curriculum and students to the AT. These interactive sessions were hosted live via Zoom, shared simultaneously on Facebook Live (which allowed for participation from around the world), and then published to YouTube for access at any time. There were over 500 registrations to the live events and over 4,500 views of the various recordings on YouTube as of February 1, 2021.

Although the series made it to Maine on March 3, 2021, the ed-venture continues! The next ATC Ed-Venture Series will cover a wide range of topics; from how heritage and history can be expressed through art and creative writing to the importance of acknowledging native lands.

In September 2020, the ATC partnered with Walk the Distance for a special promotion. Walk the Distance is an iOS phone app tied directly to your phone's health data, tracking how many steps you have taken and allowing individuals to experience the Appalachian Trail from Georgia to Maine by incorporating virtual stops along the 2,193.1 miles of the Trail. These virtual stops feature iconic Trail locations, viewpoints and vistas, as well as history about those locations and some of the Trail Clubs that look after particular Trail sections. For the special promotion, folks would receive the app after donating \$5 or more to the ATC. It resulted in more than 10K in donations with roughly 850 people taking part in the promotion.

The ATC also offered virtual training opportunities for its volunteers in lieu of a historically bi-annual in person meeting centered around volunteer leadership. This

flagship virtual training was called the Volunteer Leadership Academy. It offered pathways of learning for volunteers to select from based on topics of interest or areas of expressed need.

The online sessions offered a collaborative learning environment where participants were provided with opportunities for network-capacity building by sharing knowledge and practicing skills. The three learning pathways that were hosted and identified based on findings from the 2020 Club Listening Session Report were: Engaging New People, Organizational Leadership, as well as AT Cooperative Management & Project Leadership.

Beyond virtual training for volunteers, the ATC is excited to announce the launch of a clearinghouse for Appalachian Trail volunteer opportunities in the form of the Volunteer Engagement Platform (VEP). The platform aggregates projects and volunteer roles from across 14 States to make it easier for current and aspiring volunteers to get connected and remain engaged in their own personal volunteer experiences throughout the Trail.

Check out current volunteer opportunities that are available throughout the Trail by visiting the VEP at appalachiantrail.org/waystovolunteer.

ATC continues to advise long-distance hikers to postpone their hikes until 2022 or until the Center for Disease Control (CDC) has deemed the pandemic under control. Despite recommendations, registrations for long-distance hikes and other data resources indicate a higher number of individuals may be attempting thru-hikes this year as hikers will be sharing the Trail with those who postponed their journeys in 2020.

With the knowledge acquired over the past year, ATC has been providing those who remain adamant about hiking the Trail with the resources and information needed when facing the new set of challenges of long-distance hiking during a global pandemic.

by Tom Vaughan, Treasurer

Overmountain Victory Trail Association

In the words of Robert Burns: "... In proving foresight may be vain: The best laid schemes o' Mice an' Men Gang aft a' gley, An' lea'e us nought but grief an' pain, For promis'd joy!"

Our best laid plans went astray in 2020, and it HURT! That is, until we took a deep breath, looked at each other and said 'This is the opportunity we have been waiting on!'

For years we had been talking about developing a series of videos that told the Story of the Overmountain Men and their trek along what is now the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail. We tell the Story in-person to well over 25,000 people each year, including over 15,000 youth.

Our group of reenactors will go about anywhere, any time to tell how we won the Revolutionary War, but we are limited, both in available program time, audiences, and personal time. And now, we couldn't present nearly as many programs due to Covid-19 restrictions, so we set about to make videos.

Our first thought was just to tell the Story of the Overmountain Men. We soon realized we could tell a much broader story of frontier life, key people such as Mary Patton and Mrs. McDowell, and those left behind, in addition to the commanders. The first video we released had over 5000 views in just a few days! We had a new audience—over 50,000 and counting!

We have now produced over 20 videos, with most in the 5–7-minute time range, with plans for at least 20-30 more, and are coordinating with Standards-of-Learning. We are setting up a YouTube channel which will be available to teachers year-round to draw upon in support of classroom needs.

by William Caldwell, Park Guide

Overmountain Victory NHT

Over the course of 2020 and into 2021, the Covid-19 pandemic presented two large challenges to "traditional" interpretive programs for the Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail (OVNHT): the inability to provide staff for in-person hikes and talks, and a growing number of people choosing to explore the OVNHT as a way of recreating safely in outdoor spaces.

The National Park Service staff sought to accommodate the growing number of trail users virtually through social media with a number of video programs from Park Rangers, informative posts highlighting trail sections and their accessibility, and video interviews with historians diving deeper into the story behind the OVNHT and its role in the American Revolution. In 2020 alone, 159 virtual programs were shared through social media resulting in over 160,000 viewers learning more about the story of the trail and how they can safely access and enjoy the recreational opportunities offered along the 330-mile trail corridor.

These programs have plans to continue into 2021, educating virtual viewers of the many opportunities to safely explore the OVNHT and connect, not only with nature, but with the rich story that took place nearly 250 years ago.

by **Kate Marks Hardy**, *Partnership Coordinator/Trail Manager*

Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail

With all the 2020 school and public outreach programs for the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail (SSBNHT) cancelled due to Covid-19, Trail staff looked to collaborate with other organizations to reach audiences virtually.

First was a Facebook Live event with the U.S. Coast Guard Mid-Atlantic in June. For the video, the Coast Guard featured its annual event of placing the seasonal red, white, and blue Francis Scott Key buoy in the Patapsco River at a place some historians believe Key was anchored when he was inspired to write the U.S. national anthem. The event featured the live action of the buoy being placed into the river, followed by the playing of the national anthem and a short interpretation program by Trail staff. The video had 208,000 views.

In July, a second Facebook Live event was done in partnership with Cool Progeny, a Baltimore-based organization that promotes



Child running to Fort McHenry Historic Monument and Shrine on the SSBNHT. Photo Credit: John Lam

local family-friendly activities and events. The virtual event was part of their Summer Adventure Program lunchtime series and it featured two Trail partners for the video, both conducting short programs for youth viewers. The video received 1,600 views.

The Trail also partnered with staff from the National Mall in August to collaborate on a 10-day Facebook series that discussed the British invasion of Washington, D.C. The invasion route is part of a Trail segment and several partner sites were highlighted. In total, the series had a reach of 71,467.

Trail staff also worked with rangers at Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine to film, edit, and post four videos that featured Trail locations as part of the Fort's virtual Defenders' Day event in September. The videos received 488 views.

Thru-Hiking and Covid-19

by **Francesca Governali** *Community Engagement Coordinator*

Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Covid-19 had a significant impact on much of the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) in 2020 and we continue to adapt as vaccines are rolled out and guidance in our trail States changes. We saw a significant drop in long-distance hikers last season thanks to the many who made the responsible decision to postpone their thru-hikes last year. While our Gateway Communities felt the impacts of limited hikers, they also experienced upsurges in local outdoor recreation.

As this season begins, we continue to urge long distance users on the trail to consider the risks of starting a trip during the pandemic. We are currently not running our Southern Terminus Shuttle and are not maintaining water caches in the bootheel of New Mexico—two services that usually provide support for individuals beginning their thru-hikes. While we regret that we can't safely assist hikers to their preferred terminus at this time, the spirit of the CDT has always included room for adaptation, alternative routes, and exploration. Travelers who had intended to start a trip at Crazy Cook might consider starting at other locations or holding off on starting their trip.

With the start of the next hiking season, CDTC continues to follow all local, State, and national health experts on what activities are permitted during the Covid-19 pandemic, including the State-level guidance we share on our website. Whether trail visitors are planning an afternoon trail ride or a multi-day backpacking trip, we ask them to make sure they're up to date on these requirements and recommendations, which may vary day to day, county to county, or State to State.

We are still running adjusted forms of our volunteer programs, and have implemented new guidelines for those helping on our trail work projects, including smaller group sizes and no longer permitting volunteers to share food or tools.

While we look forward to an eventual return to normal, we want to send a warm reminder that the trail isn't going anywhere. No vacation is worth compromising your health or the health of others.

by **Luke Kloberdanz**, *Director of Philanthropy*

Ice Age Trail Alliance

For all trail organizations nationwide, 2020 provided more twists and turns than a series of switchback climbs. With thousands turning to trails for mental and physical health, our organizations faced unprecedented pressures. Naturally, determining whether or not to support thru-hikers as the pandemic spread across the nation was one of these challenges.

Many factors played into the myriad decisions linked to this issue, including the anticipated number of hikers, local regulations, and a host of other considerations. The Ice Age Trail Alliance made the decision, along with its partners, to remain open for business with limited support of thru-hikers and a strong emphasis on hikers being able to be self-supported.

This early decision by the Alliance allowed three successful thru-hikes reported to the organization, along with 28 completed section hikes. All of these accomplishments, especially during a challenging year, were amazing. Two of the three thru-hikes, however, were record-breakers.

The first, Coree Woltering, set the fastest known time (FKT) for the trail, completing the journey in 21 days, 13 hours, and 35 minutes in the summer heat. The other, Emily Ford, was the first woman to thru hike the IAT in winter. Emily and her companion sled dog, Diggins, completed the Trail in 69 days. Both Coree (@coreewoltering) and Emily (@emilyontrail) recorded their hikes on Instagram.



Coree Woltering (left; photo credit Dream Lens Media) and Emily Ford (right; photo credit Paula Tonn) made IAT history in 2020.

Honor-Respect-Preserve For Lewis and Clark Veterans and Tribal People

Wreaths Across America, a nonprofit organization, is inspirational in more ways than showing respect to American Veteran Graves in National Cemeteries. The now-famous picture of snow-covered graves in Arlington National Cemetery with green wreaths and red bows placed at each grave is a classic picture of respect and honor.

That inspiring scene at Arlington was the genesis for the Lewis and Clark Trust efforts to find partners to place wreaths at the graves of Lewis and Clark First Regiment of Infantry Veterans, their support team including York and Tribal People that provided invaluable assistance.

The simple act of respect for graves of human beings that facilitated the first successful military exploration of America is the minimum that we could accomplish. Their scattered graves and monuments deserve recognition, as well as an opportunity to provide a teaching moment in communities near the graves.

The year 2020 was an especially challenging year when the world was

essentially closed by an international pandemic. Our educational program had been canceled for the year and we had no idea how a wreath laying would be received by veteran organizations, history-focused organizations, libraries, interpretive centers, National Society Daughters of the American Revolution and National Society Sons of the American Revolution Chapters, or families of the veterans and Tribal People we wanted to honor. The response was a resounding "Yes, we want to participate," as seen in the attached pictures.

A special salute goes to VFW Post 1202 Ponca City Oklahoma. Their public response and desire to invite other organizations, including the Nez Perce Trail Foundation—represented by Matt Norwak—shows true leadership and respect for the Nez Perce People and their connection to the Lewis and Clark Story.

We recognize there are expedition members that have no known grave markers or the grave is lost to time. Research is underway to find those sites and local organizations to assist with future respectful ceremonies that honor the individual and their contribution to establishing a continental nation.

In a world of unrest, Honor and Respect are still values that help us preserve the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail and the national story of Lewis and Clark for future generations.



Top: York; Courtesy: Filson Historical Society;
Bottom: Nez Perce Indian Burial Ground Memorial; Courtesy: Nez Perce Trail Foundation

▶ *Wreaths Across America is adapted from a longer article by Jim Mallory. To see the full article, along with many more photos from wreath ceremonies, please see the online edition of Pathways Across America: www.pnts.org/new/category/pathways/*

Corrections

PNTS would like to issue the following corrections for Pathways Across America Winter 2020/2021:

Page 12: Ala Kahakai NHT

Under "Signs", the Department of Hawaiian Homelands (DHHL) was incorrectly listed as Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

Page 12: Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT

Highlights were incorrectly assigned to Chesapeake Conservancy, the trail's nonprofit partner. Highlights should have been assigned to the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT Trail Staff.

Page 14: Oregon-California NHTs

Under "Internet", the newly launched website was actually for the Trails Head Chapter of OCTA, which can be seen at: www.trailshead.org

A Message to Existing and New Partners and Volunteers with the Forest Service

by Meckenzie Helmandollar-Powell

US Forest Service

Hello valued trail partners and volunteers.

The Trail Challenge is a challenge for all of us who care for and receive benefits from trails—including you—to achieve more sustainable trails. You are invited to help with any element of the Trail Challenge.

There are many ways you can apply your dedication and skills. You can offer your assistance and skill in the traditional way of helping to maintain and improve trails on the ground or express your interest in becoming a certified sawyer to help with downed-tree and brush removal. You can also offer to help coordinate the work of existing volunteer and partner groups, write grants to accomplish specific projects, or help increase outreach and education about sustainable trails.

As you contact your local Forest Service recreation and trail managers to offer your support, you'll likely notice that their capacity to engage with you varies from unit to unit. Many recreation and trail program managers have limited time to engage with individual volunteers. They might direct you to work with an existing partner organization or ask you to take a leadership role in bringing various partner groups together and build on successful examples of individuals and groups coming together following a collective impact model.

Another way you can help is to share with local Forest Service leaders about how important sustainable trails are to you and help them find creative ways to integrate trails into other unit priorities.

Forest Service 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge

The Forest Service is inviting agency employees, partners, and volunteers alike to share in the leadership of achieving sustainable National Forest System trails through implementation of the 10-Year Trail Shared Stewardship Challenge¹.

The Trail Challenge was officially launched in February last year by Forest Service Chief Vicki Christiansen. It implements portions of the agency’s National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System and the National Forest System Trails Stewardship Act of 2016². The Trail Challenge focuses the energy of employees, partners, and volunteers—collectively referred to as the trails community—over the next decade to achieve a more sustainable trail system that is socially valued and economically viable, and that supports ecological resiliency.

Main outcomes of the Trail Challenge include better trails that are easier to access, an adequate trail workforce, and good trail information to inform decisions and communicate about trails. A big part of that work will be engaging and sharing leadership with local communities and stakeholders in trail priorities and institutionalizing equity, diversity, and inclusion principles in all aspects of the collective work. The effort is also being supported by development of online toolboxes with trail success stories, best practices, reference documents, an online, progress-tracking dashboard, and by improving Forest Service trail data and reporting systems.

The Trail Challenge is based on a collective impact learning model³, consisting of three implementation phases and ten elements or focus areas, each element having corresponding outcomes and metrics to track progress and demonstrate accountability. Starting this year in phase one, national forests and grasslands are encouraged to use the Trail Challenge as a tool to collaborate with communities to focus planning and implementation of the Great American Outdoors Act (GAOA) of 2020⁴. Additionally, a national coalition of trail partners is also forming. Organizations and individuals representing trail user and interest groups are encouraged to contact the Trails Move People Coalition⁵ to understand how they can support raising awareness about the value of trails.

In recent months, we are all seeing how important National Forest System recreation and trail opportunities are to individuals and communities. People are seeking out respite on trails

1: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/10YTC>
2: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/trails-stewardship-act>
3: <https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/what-collective-impact>
4: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/gaoa#:~:text=The%20USDA%20Forest%20Service%20is,on%20national%20forests%20and%20grasslands>
5: <https://www.americantrails.org/trails-move-people>
6: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/working-with-us/partnerships>
7: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/organization>
8: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/managing-land/trails/10YTC>

in record numbers during the ongoing pandemic and many land management agencies are greeting more new and non-traditional trail users than ever before. Trail managers are adapting by working with communities to understand shared priorities for local trail access and to strategize long-term solutions that help all trail visitors to feel welcome on their public lands.

The agency is inviting partners and volunteers to offer their assistance both on and off the trail. A good first step to becoming a partner or volunteer with the Forest Service is by visiting their online Partnership Resource Center⁶ or by contacting your local national forest or grassland office⁷. Each Forest Service region is also anticipating inviting employees, partners, and volunteers to initiate wide-spread implementation of the Trail Challenge this spring and summer.

Visit the Forest Service’s Trail Challenge web page⁸ for more information about the Trail Challenge or contact the national trail program manager at wo_trail_program@usda.gov.



National Elements

(Nationally Led)

- A **Establish Trails Advisory Group:** Implement a Trails Advisory Group composed of agency employees who give advice and timely input to the Chief on emerging trail issues. (Trail Strategy Action 1.4)
- B **Evaluate Trails Program:*** Evaluate trail programs at all levels of the agency to identify refinements/improvements needed to increase field capacity and to shift toward collaborative trail stewardship. (Trail Strategy Action 2.2)

Unit Elements

(Unit Led)

- C **Achieve Sustainable Trail Systems:*** Make sure that trail systems are sustainably designed, well maintained, used for their intended purpose, and valued and supported by trail users and communities. (Trail Strategy Actions 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.4)
- D **Promote Cross-Program Integration:** Identify opportunities to integrate agency program areas to meet trail restoration and stewardship objectives. (Trail Strategy Action 5.3)
- E **Meet Data Standards:** Meet minimum standards of trail information on all Forest Service units, including accurate and readily available spatial data. (Trail Strategy Action 6.3)

Optional Unit Elements

(Unit Led)

- F **Support Outdoor Recreation Economy:*** Work with local communities, partners, and industry to understand and leverage how trail systems can support rural and urban economic health and growth where appropriate and through strategically targeted investments. (Trail Strategy Action 3.3)
- G **Increase Outreach and User Ethics:*** Build upon successful outreach and user ethics programs, including work done by partners and foundations, to engage and motivate future stewards of public lands. (Trail Strategy Action 3.4)
- H **Expand Use of Service and Job Corps:*** Expand integration of 21st Century Conservation Service Corps, Job Corps, and similar youth and veteran programs to increase the benefits of trail stewardship. (Trail Strategy Action 3.5)

Partner Elements

(Invited)

- I **Invite Shared Partner Leadership:*** Encourage establishment of a multipartner group—championed by nongovernmental organizations, academia, Indian Tribes, and other agencies and entities—to contribute shared leadership in carrying out the trail strategy. (Trail Strategy Action 1.5)
- J **Invite Trail Endowment:** Advocate with the nongovernmental organization and partner community to establish a national trail endowment, pursue nontraditional funding sources, and invite contributions to help leverage resources to carry out the trail strategy. (Trail Strategy Action 4.5)

Land Acquisition: Lessons Learned on the Ala Kahakai NHT

The Ala Kahakai Trail Association (ATA) has found itself a landowner in the last several years, but not in a way that most acquire lands. We were very reluctant to engage in land ownership as the responsibility and long term commitment required us to change our vision to include saving parts of the trail. It all began about 10 years ago when a community member asked us if we would take on the responsibility of going after State funds to purchase land in an area where our trail traversed.

Our Board had several long discussions before agreeing and the top of the discussion was if we were ready to tackle owning property and all that it entailed. We were new at the game and had no expertise to guide us, but we were able to purchase 35 acres in Kaiholena, Kohola. The property was purchased with State Legacy Land, Hawaiian Island Land Trust, and the Dorrance Family funds. We were also gifted with 100 acres as a donation from an off-island developer who embraced our mission and entrusted us with the task of protecting many archaeological sites and trails on the property.

Then we got a new member on board who had a desire to save some of his ancestral lands in Kau. It was this board member who started our journey into land

protection and preservation of, not only the trail, but all of the cultural resources that were abundant in the trail corridor. Taking his lead, we were able to have in fee 2300 acres and about 800 acres in conservation easement. We are presently securing the closing for another 1300 acres and are in the process of trying to secure approval for another 1800 acres.

In all of these instances, we did not want to be the first in line to acquire the lands but, as the landowners were going to sell and no other organization came forward from the community to apply for funding, ATA took on the challenge of trying to save these lands. All of the funding that we applied for came from the State Legacy Land Fund and the Hawaii County PONC fund.

The application was very extensive and we were fortunate to secure the help of Trust for Public Lands. Their expertise and guidance was crucial in maneuvering through the legal issues as well as how best to bring our projects to the commissioners who would rank our projects. This journey is now in its fifth year for the Kau lands, but it has been worth all the hard work everyone has given.

What are some of the lessons we have learned from the process? The process starts with a simple "yes" or "no" to tackle

the acquisition. If "yes," each member of the Board must be committed to see the process through. Leaning on each other when things get difficult helps to lighten the load on any one Board member and to defuse any anxiety that issues may cause. The process is lengthy and it's important not to get discouraged by obstacles placed in your way. Get a core group of people outside of the Board to help with formulating a strategy on how best to serve the land and its resources. Get community input and buy in. It can be very challenging to engage with diverse members of the community but, remember, they will be the stewards long after we are gone, and they will be the fiercest supporters of any preservation and protection effort.

Mistakes have been made as we struggled to maneuver through this process. Still, we have accepted our shortcomings and continue to strive to do our best to protect our trail and the history, stories, and people that make up our beloved Alanui or—known by more modern terms—the Ala Kahakai Trail. We now have a seat at the table to discuss any and all matters on lands that we have control over. That is the biggest takeaway and long-term protection we can offer the next generations.

STEVEN GONZALES

Returning board member, Steven Gonzales, is Executive Director of El Camino Real de los Tejas National Historic Trail Association. In addition to his work with the Partnership, he has promoted National Parks and the Camino Real in two PBS documentaries and has served as an advisory committee member for the creation of the Texas Historical Commission's Hispanic Heritage Guide of Texas.



<https://pnts.org/new/team/steven-gonzales-2/>

ANDREA KETCHMARK

Andrea Ketchmark has been the Executive Director of North Country Trail Association since 2017, following eight years as their Director of Trail Development. She has a degree in Natural Resources Recreation and Tourism from Colorado State University. In addition to holding several leadership roles within PNTS, she is a graduate of the Great Lakes Leadership Academy.



<https://northcountrytrail.org/about-us/staff/>

PNTS Welcomes New Board Members

KRISTIN MURPHY

Kristin Murphy is the Government Affairs Associate for Audubon Great Lakes based in Chicago, IL. Prior to that, she was the Campaign Coordinator for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition in DC, and got her Master of Environmental Management degree from Duke University. Kristin was an inaugural member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Next Generation Advisory Council.



<https://gl.audubon.org/contact/kristin-murphy>

TONY RICHARDSON

Tony Richardson is the Director of Public Lands Engagement at the National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF) in Washington, D.C. In that role he is responsible for managing National Public Lands Day, one of the largest single-day volunteer efforts for America's public lands. Tony is passionate about connecting people to nature, particularly people from underrepresented communities.

Tony previously served on the ATC's Next Generation Advisory Council, and has participated in multiple Hike the Hill® events.

LIZ THOMAS

Liz Thomas has logged more than 20,000 miles on the trail. She completed the Triple Crown and held the record for Women's self-supported Fastest Known Time on the Appalachian Trail from 2011-2015.

Liz is the Editor-in-Chief for Treeline Review, columnist for Backpacker Magazine, and frequent public speaker on the topic of long-distance hiking.



www.eathomas.com
www.treelinereview.com

Civilian Climate Corps

Secretary Haaland promises to work to advance President Biden's vision

On Tuesday, March 16, 2021, Deb Haaland took the oath of office to become the 54th Secretary of the Department of the Interior—making history as the first Native American to hold the office.

“I am proud and humbled to lead the dedicated team at Interior as we seek to leave a livable planet for future generations. Together, we will work to advance President Biden’s vision to honor our nation-to-nation relationship with Tribes, address the climate and nature crises, advance environmental justice, and build a clean energy future that creates good-paying jobs and powers our nation,” she said about the position.

Her statement reflects President Biden’s Executive Order (EO) on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad (EO 14008). As

such, one of Sec. Haaland’s most immediate projects will be a collaboration between the Departments of Interior, Agriculture, and other relevant agencies, to develop a plan to establish a Civilian Climate Corps Initiative.

This new Civilian Climate Corps—considered a modern upgrade of the Civilian Conservation Corps established by President Franklin D. Roosevelt as part of his New Deal in 1933—per the EO, is to be focused on “mobilizing the next generation of conservation and resilience workers and maximize the creation of accessible training opportunities and good jobs. The initiative shall aim to conserve and restore public lands and waters, bolster community resilience, increase reforestation, increase carbon sequestration in the agricultural sector, protect biodiversity, improve access

to recreation, and address the changing climate.”

Sec. Haaland's full statement can be viewed here: <https://www.doi.gov/news/statement-deb-haaland-becoming-54th-interior-secretary>



Learn more about President Biden's Executive Order on Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad at the link below.

www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/01/27/executive-order-on-tackling-the-climate-crisis-at-home-and-abroad/

Conservation Corps at Work

AmeriCorps VISTA provides much needed experience and staff

by **Francesca Governali** *Community Engagement Coordinator*

Continental Divide Trail Coalition



As of June 2020, I had never hiked on the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) and knew very little about this 3,000+ mile National Scenic Trail beyond

its existence and reputation for being an extremely challenging route through the Rocky Mountains.

Now, nine months later, I have spent many days on the CDT and my knowledge of this trail that spans five States and crosses some of the highest elevation and most remote terrain in the West has grown vastly to include understanding of the many landscapes it crosses and the broad community it connects.

Thanks to an AmeriCorps VISTA position, I joined the Continental Divide Trail Coalition (CDTC) last year to work on community engagement and education. This one-year position has provided the opportunity to dive into community outreach (virtually of course) all along the

trail, build educational materials about the CDT and its landscapes, hone grant-writing skills, learn more about the National Trails System, and much more.

One of the projects that I’ve been most excited about is creating day and overnight hike guides for more accessible and beginner-friendly hikes on the CDT. These hike guides are part of CDTC’s ongoing effort to make the trail more accessible to folks who are looking for short day or overnight hikes on the CDT rather than thru or section hikes.

In addition to producing a valuable resource for our community and materials to share with a new audience, this project has offered an opportunity for me to explore the CDT in detail. From investigating the mileage of connector trails to create loops with the CDT, to understanding the geography of communities along the trail, to working with community members to refine local trail descriptions, building these guides has been both an exciting way for me to contribute to CDTC and the trail community as well as learn more about this trail

that CDTC is dedicated to completing, protecting, and promoting.

Thanks to the AmeriCorps VISTA program, CDTC is able to add capacity to the small staff. Additionally, in recent years, CDTC has benefitted from having two seasonal field instructors through Southwest Conservation Corps. These AmeriCorps and Conservation Corps positions provide much-needed staff and work capacity for CDTC and experience for the individuals who are offered the positions. While I only have three months left in my service term, I continue to feel grateful for the opportunities to learn from and connect with people and places along the Divide and to engage with the National Trails Systems that being an AmeriCorps VISTA and staff member of CDTC offers.

Francesca is the current Community Engagement Coordinator for CDTC serving via AmeriCorps VISTA. She is also a member of the 2020-21 PNTS Trail Apprentice Program cohort.

Kym Hall Selected as National Capital Area Director

Kym Hall, a 34-year veteran of the National Park Service (NPS), has been selected as the National Capital Area director. She will begin her new role in the coming weeks as she transitions from her current role as the superintendent of several parks in Southeast Virginia.

“Throughout her career, Kym has effectively managed complex resource management projects and strengthened park relationships with community partners, stakeholders and legislators,” NPS Deputy Director for Operations Shawn Bengé said. “Her background in special park regulations, policy, and ability to navigate sensitive and controversial park issues positions her well to lead the parks and programs in the greater DC area.”

The National Capital Area director is responsible for 16

superintendents who manage hundreds of park areas in the District of Columbia, Maryland, Virginia, and West Virginia, an approximately \$350 million budget, and more than 1,000 employees. The area's nearly 65,000 acres of Federal parkland include some of the most famous places in the world, such as the White House, Antietam National Battlefield, and the Jefferson Memorial. More than 54 million visitors travel to the area's national parks for recreation, education, inspiration and relaxation each year.



Kym Hall



Dave Moore Named Star-Spangled Banner NHT Superintendent

Deputy Regional Director Debbie Conway has named David H. Moore as superintendent of Fort McHenry National Monument and Historic Shrine, Hampton National Historic Site, and the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail, all based in Baltimore, Maryland. He begins his new role on April 25, 2021.

“These three sites are iconic both to the nation and the people of Baltimore” said Conway. “David’s broad experience within the National Park Service has uniquely positioned him to manage

these extraordinary places and build relationships with the diverse communities that surround and support these sites”.

“Together, Fort McHenry, Hampton and the Star-Spangled Banner Trail provide a uniquely Chesapeake lens to America’s history,” said Moore.



Dave Moore

ANNIVERSARY

by National Park Service

Adapted from Federal agency emails and news releases

The Santa Fe Trail Celebrates 200th Anniversary

Two hundred years ago, a group of Americans ventured west from Franklin, Missouri to trade in Santa Fe (then Mexico). The route they forged would grow into a commercial highway within a web of trade routes that extended to the East coast, Mexico, and Europe. Now known as the Santa Fe Trail, the path brought together cultures in collaboration and conflict, forever changing lives and landscapes of the west.

To commemorate the anniversary, a variety of activities hosted by National Park Service (NPS) partners are planned. More than 50 in-person and virtual events will occur along the length of the trail—from Missouri to New Mexico—throughout 2021. Visit the NPS bicentennial website (nps.gov/safe/planyourvisit/santa-fe-trail-bicentennial.htm) and the Santa Fe Trail Association (SFTA) website (santafetrail200.org) to find a complete list of events, ranging from living history presentations to concerts, planned by

SFTA and other NPS partner organizations.

All in-person events are subject to change to accommodate Federal, State, and local health and safety guidance.

As part of the anniversary, the NPS National Trails Office has welcomed the inaugural cohort of the Santa Fe Trail NextGen Council, a group of young adults who will provide recommendations for engaging young, diverse audiences in stories, sites, and stewardship of the Santa Fe Trail.

Throughout the year, you can virtually participate in anniversary activities, learn about trail stories, and engage in conversations with trail enthusiasts.

Join the commemoration virtually on the Santa Fe National Historic Trail website (nps.gov/safe) or on social media on Facebook (@SantaFeTrailNPS), Instagram (@nationaltrailsnps), and YouTube (@NationalTrailsNPS).

SPONSORSHIP

by The Trek

Adapted from thetrek.co: Badger Sponsorship Winners

The Trek Badger Sponsorship Boosts PNTS

The Badger Sponsorship is a yearly sweepstakes created and hosted by thetrek.co—a website dedicated to shining a spotlight on the journey of thru-hikers. Since the inception of their site, thetrek.co has held a giveaway aimed at providing aspiring thru-hikers the opportunity to win extensive prize packages.

In 2021, thetrek.co decided to use their sweepstakes to raise money for the Partnership for the National Trails System. Between February 15th and March 1st, they encouraged hikers to enter to

win one of 13 different prize packages valued at \$1,600 each.

By the end of the sweepstakes, the Badger Sponsorship had raised \$13,855 for PNTS and had given away lots of incredible equipment—including water filtration systems, tents, quilts, technical jackets, camp shoes, and more—to 13 lucky hikers.



thetrek.co/2021-badger-sponsorship-the-winners

BOOKS

by **Elizabeth Goss, Author**

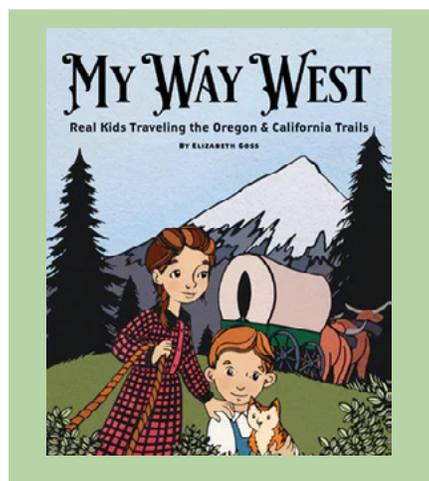
My Way West

Between 1841 and 1884, more than 40,000 kids traveled west across North America on the Oregon and California Trails. These young emigrants had extraordinary experiences on their journeys, but they were ordinary people. Some were picky eaters, some had favorite games and beloved pets.

I created *My Way West* to capture the individuality of these kids and show how different the trail experience could be depending on an emigrant's luck and circumstances.

My Way West pairs quotes from the letters, diaries, and memoirs of real young emigrants with fascinating details about what going west was actually like. Readers will taste bread made from crickets and acorns with 7-year-old Benjamin Bonney, face the dangers of quicksand with 11-year-old Etty Scott, and follow 12-year-old Owen Bush all the way to Oregon, only to discover that African Americans are no longer allowed to settle there.

I've used papercuts to bring this story to life. They give the book a very unique visual quality. They're deliciously detailed and designed to bring even reluctant readers in for a closer look.



Elizabeth Goss is an illustrator, author, and professional papercutter. She has a passion for history and loves poking through old books in dusty libraries. Elizabeth lives with her family in Portland, Oregon. To learn more about her and her work, please visit lizabethgoss.com.

www.lizabethgoss.com

by **Leonard M. Adkins, Author**

All About the Appalachian Trail

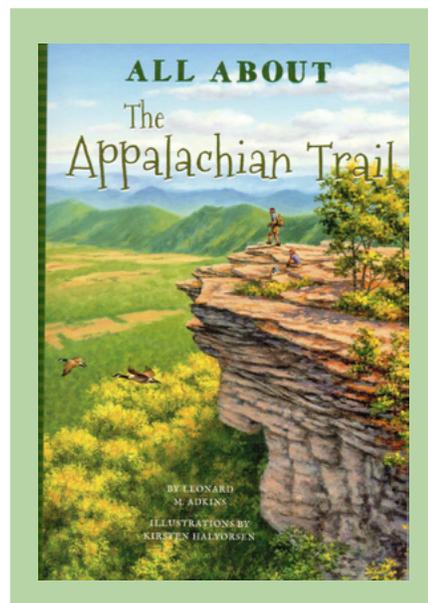
There are a few colorfully illustrated books about the Appalachian Trail for very young children. However, *All About the Appalachian Trail* is the very first written for readers in grades 4-8 that provides a complete overview of the world famous hiking trail. It is designed for children 9-13 years of age and their parents, teachers, and librarians to enjoy together.

The book covers it all: the route, history, geology, and animals of the trail, along with chapters about hiking equipment and Leave No Trace ethics.

There's even a profile of the trail's most famous users—thru-hikers—and quotes designed to not only inspire everyone to take a hike, but to also volunteer to help maintain and protect the trail.

In addition, there is a free downloadable Teacher's Guide with Common Core Standards, sample questions, and activities to stimulate further discussion and knowledge of the trail.

All About the Appalachian Trail is published by Blue River Press.



Leonard M. Adkins has hiked more than 20,000 miles exploring the pathways and backcountry of North America, Europe, New Zealand, and the Caribbean. Among his many long-distance hikes are five traverses of the entire Appalachian Trail.

www.habitualhiker.com



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President:

Barney Mann

Vice President - Governance:

Luke Klobberdanz • Ice Age Trail Alliance

Vice President - Development:

John Hoffnagle

Treasurer:

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

Treasurer:

Liz Thomas • Treeline Review

Trail Leaders Council Chair:

RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

National Historic Trails Representative:

Steve Gonzales • El Camino Real de los Tejas Historic Trail Association

National Scenic Trails Representative:

Andrea Ketchmark • North Country Trail Association

At-Large Board Members:

Jim Muschett • Rizzoli International Publications

Kristin Murphy • Audubon Great Lakes

Ron Tipton

Sandi Marra • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Tony Richardson • National Environmental Education Foundation

TRAIL LEADERS COUNCIL

PNTS Trail Leaders Council Chair:

RG Absher • Overmountain Victory Trail Association

Ron Andersen • Mormon Pioneer Trail Association

Judy Bittner • Iditarod Historic Trail Alliance

Clare Cain • Connecticut Forest & Park Association

Sarah Cawley • Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation

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

Ric Francke • Potomac Heritage Trail Association

Steven Gonzales • El Camino Real de los Tejas NHT Association

Richard Waller • Old Spanish Trail Association

Deloris Gray Wood • Trail of Tears Association

Pat Hearty • National Pony Express Association

Andrea Ketchmark • North Country Trail Association

Jeff Kish • Pacific Northwest Trail Association

Justin Kooyman • Pacific Crest Trail Association

Bridget Likely • Appalachian Mountain Club

James Mallory • Lewis & Clark Trust Inc.

Bill Martin • Oregon-California Trails Association

Teresa Martinez • Continental Divide Trail Coalition

Matt Nelson • Arizona Trail Association

Kaleo Paik • Ala Kahakai Trail Association

Lou Ritten • Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation

Susan Shingledecker • Chesapeake Conservancy

Morgan Sommerville • Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Elizabeth Stewart • Anza Trail Foundation

Tony Turnbow • Natchez Trace Parkway Association

Kelly Van Patten • Florida Trail Association

Ellen von Karajan • National Washington-Rochambeau

Revolutionary Route Association, Inc. (W3R-US)

Marcia Will-Clifton • Santa Fe Trail Association

Jim Wolf • Continental Divide Trail Society

Mike Wollmer • Ice Age Trail Alliance

Jim Zimmerman • Nez Perce Trail Foundation



Pathways Across America
Partnership for the National Trails System
1615 M Street NW, Second Floor
Washington, D.C. 20036

www.pnts.org

Have you recently moved? Changed jobs? Gotten a new email?
Please contact us at admin@pnts.org so we can keep our database up-to-date. Thank you!

Event Calendar

www.pnts.org/new/events/



Event dates/details are subject to change.

Apr 22 - May 21	CDTC Trail Days 2021	Virtual	continentaldividetrail.org/trail-days-2021
Sept 12 - 16	38th Annual OCTA Convention	Elko, NV	octa-trails.org/convention-information
Sept 23 - 26	Santa Fe Trail Association Symposium – 200th Anniversary Commemoration	La Junta, CO	2021sfts.com
Nov 1 - 5	PNTS National Trails Virtual Workshop	Remote	pnts.org/new/our-work/workshops

Connect



Facebook and Twitter:
[@PartnershipNTS](https://www.facebook.com/PartnershipNTS)



Instagram:
[@nationaltrailssystem](https://www.instagram.com/nationaltrailssystem)



Pathways and e-News:
communication@pnts.org



Webinar Topics:
admin@pnts.org