

A PUBLICATION OF THE PARTNERSHIP FOR THE NATIONAL TRAILS SYSTEM



SPRING 2022

# Pathways

*Across America*

## Hike the Hill® Turns 25

*Reflections on the  
past and future of the  
annual National Trails  
advocacy event*

DIGITAL PLATFORM PROMOTES & CONNECTS LEWIS & CLARK TRAIL COMMUNITIES  
PARTNERING FOR A CONNECTED & CONSERVED LANDSCAPE ON THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL  
WAGON MASTER: HANSEN'S HANDCRAFTED HISTORY WORLD PREMIERE

# 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)



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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), over 1,300 National Recreation Trails (NRTs) including 33 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
- Over 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 over 100 major urban areas
- Nearly 1 million hours of volunteer labor help build and maintain annually

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

### RECREATION TRAILS

- Designated by Secretary of Interior or Secretary of Agriculture
- Stewardship facilitated by the nonprofit American Trails
- Over 29,000 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)



## 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

Rainbow Bridge National Monument on the Old Spanish National Historic Trail. Courtesy of the National Park Service.

#### 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** Message from the Executive Director  
PNTS Programming Update

- 5** NextGen Spotlight: Callum Cintron, Trail Apprentice

## Advocacy

- 6** Hike the Hill: 25 Years of Trails Advocacy for the Future

- 8** The Gold Sheet: Demonstrating the Value of Volunteers and Private Investment in Trails



## Capacity

- 9** Indigenous Mapping and Research Project



## Protection

- 9** Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association Helps Forest Service Maintain the Continental Divide Trail

- 10** Partnering for a Connected & Conserved landscape

- 11** Forest Service Working with Nez Perce Tribe on Place Names Along the Nez Perce (Ne-Me-Poo) Trail



## Outreach

- 11** Mini-Grant Fosters Inclusion on the North Country Trail

- 12** *Wagon Master: Hansen's Handcrafted History* World Premiere

- 13** "INSPIRE"-ing Interpretation on the Old Spanish Trail: Rob Sweeten Awarded BLM's 2021 INSPIRE Award

- 14** Digital Platform Promotes and Connects Communities Along the Lewis & Clark Trail through Geotourism

- 15** Long-Time Trails Advocate Liz Bergeron Retires

- 15** Comings and Goings

- 16** Calendar of Events



## EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Spring can feel like a new beginning. The temperature warms. People in many parts of the U.S. see blooming flowers and budding trees for the first time in months. As we shed layers of clothing and emerge from our winter routines, a page of our story has turned and adventures await.

Spring brings renewed vigor and excitement to National Scenic & Historic Trails. While the trails are active year-round, the allure of a trek into nature or a day spent walking the paths taken by others before us to learn about the history and heritage associated with trail lands becomes magnetic. Many people embark on the adventure of a lifetime as they set out on thru-hikes of long trails. PNTS members and Federal partners are hard at work to ensure safe trails and engaging programs. As I write this, Barney Mann, the Partnership's Board President, and his wife Sandy are sharing their home, showers, laundry machine, and delicious home-cooked meals each day with dozens of hikers who are making their way north on the Pacific Crest Trail. Similarly, others are offering hospitality or sharing their knowledge of special places on National Trails to help others find "their" trail. It takes a skilled, coordinated, and friendly community to ensure great experiences on trails. And we are so fortunate that so many trails professionals, volunteers, and enthusiasts are ready, willing, and able to help us enjoy the many experiences National Trails offer.



I, for one, experience a combination of awe and gratitude each year as a new season springs forth. Similarly, I and my colleagues at PNTS are impressed by and grateful for the many people who create vibrant, well-maintained and accessible National Trails. While the work is difficult, PNTS members and partners band together to advance shared goals for the System as a whole, while also ensuring world-class experiences for trail users and important economic and well-being benefits for trail adjacent communities. They dream big and make a true difference, often without recognition.

Whether you roll up your sleeves to steward or administer a trail, lend your voice as an advocate, or simply love National Trails, the PNTS team thanks you for what you do to create a vibrant, connected National Trails System for all. We encourage you to keep growing the sense of community and comradery by recruiting someone to volunteer, sharing your adventures, or encouraging someone to visit a new place on a National Scenic or Historic Trail. And finally, we hope that everyone who spends time on a National Trail this spring, whether it be a few minutes or a few months, will take a moment to appreciate the incredible resource that is the National Trails System and the people who make them great.

All the best,



## PNTS PROGRAMMING UPDATE

The Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) is committed to providing and sharing resources that help people protect and promote National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT). One way we do this is through webinars. Over the past year, PNTS has worked to increase the frequency, diversity, and accessibility of webinars to better support the trails community. Additionally, webinars are now recorded and archived on the PNTS website for the public.

Recent webinars that you can access online now include:

- **A Comprehensive Approach to Inform User Management on Trails and Public Lands.** Learn about exciting 'recreation ecology' research by the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative and partners to gain a better understanding of recreation trends to inform management and planning needs for trails and public lands.
- **Accessibility, Connectivity, and the Expansion of Recreational Opportunities with the National Digital Trails Project.** Learn about the resources provided by the National Digital Trails (NDT) project, including a web based trail planning tool that helps identify potential routes to connect existing trails and systems, a public domain dataset of Federal and State trails, and a portal for trail managers to upload data into the Nationwide Trails Dataset.
- **Increasing Youth Engagement and Diversity on National Trails.** Learn how you can engage youth and increase diversity in trail participation by hearing about successful strategies used by the Arizona Trail Association and North Country Trail Association.
- **Land Acquisition 101.** Learn the basics of land acquisition including how to start the process, what the process entails, and how Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) money can be used in collaboration with agency partners.

- **Land Acquisition 102: Identifying Priorities, Securing Funding, and Working with Partners.** Learn about the LWCF process and resources, grants, and other opportunities to help advance land acquisition projects.
- **Conservation Legacy's VISTA Programs: Programming for Diverse Conservation and Community Service Projects.** Learn how you can host an AmeriCorps VISTA member to help your organization build capacity through activities such as fundraising, grant writing, research, and volunteer recruitment.

Additional recordings will be added as webinars are hosted. Webinar topics are intended to meet the current needs of PNTS partners. To better meet those needs, PNTS formed the Programs Committee to help develop year-round opportunities for training and peer exchange. The Committee will play a major role in providing resources for the trails community. Currently, PNTS seeks volunteers with a passion for connecting people and a desire to support trails organizations to join the Committee.

Contact PNTS Programs Coordinator Cara Yendrzeki at [cara@pnts.org](mailto:cara@pnts.org) for more information about PNTS programs and how you can get involved.



**View PNTS's webinar calendar and access recordings of past webinars here:**  
[pnts.org/new/webinars](https://pnts.org/new/webinars)

**Apply to be part of the Programs Committee here:**  
<https://forms.gle/sK1U8jFNy3RTRmHF8>

## 2021 PNTS Trail Apprentice: Callum Cintron

This column shines a light on rising leaders in public lands and outdoor recreation who participate in PNTS' Trail Intern Grants or Trail Apprentices Program (TAP). Trail Intern Grants help organizations hire interns to further their missions and expand their capacities. The TAP helps up-and-coming and aspiring outdoor professionals aged 18-28 network and discover pathways to careers in trails or similar fields.



Photo courtesy of Callum Cintron

*"Access to nature and trails for all people, regardless of race and ability is really important to me."*

"I wanted to learn about trails, how communities connect to trails, and how I can be a trail steward and protect our environment in more ways. Not only did I want to learn how to conserve trails, but how to make the trails system more inclusive," says Callum Cintron, a 2021 PNTS Trail Apprentice Program (TAP) participant. Callum entered the TAP with a passion for making the outdoors more accessible to all people.

Callum became disabled in 2018, which drastically altered their access to the outdoors. Becoming a Trail Apprentice let Callum "reconnect with nature in a new way that accommodated my current life." And though they were able to connect to the National Trails System (NTS) through the TAP, they continue to push for an even more accessible NTS which is open and welcoming.

Callum's ongoing work and volunteerism in social and environmental justice organizations demonstrate their determination to participate in changes that will have far-reaching positive impacts on the environment and humanity. Callum asserts, "As a transgender and disabled individual, I know that if we do not do this work ourselves, no one is going to do it for us. I do this work and let it consume so much of my time because it is about life. This work saves people and nature's lives."

As an Environmental and Cultural Studies major at Oregon State University, Callum is learning about and asking significant questions about access to the outdoors and climate justice. Throughout the TAP they applied those questions to the National Trails System. They questioned why there wasn't a broader diversity in trails leadership, if programs existed to help people who usually don't have access to trails gain access, and if anything was being done to increase safety for groups who have historically been harmed in the outdoors like LGBTQ+, BIPOC and Disabled communities. In the future, they will continue to ask these questions, and hope to work to implement solutions that will make the NTS truly accessible to all.

## 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.

## CONNECTING YOUNG ADULTS TO TRAILS CAREERS

27

2021-22 Trail Apprentices explored trails careers

16

Trail interns supported in 2021 through Intern Grants

13

Intern Grants awarded for trail projects in 2022

### SUPPORT YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

PNTS is connecting more young adults to opportunities to explore careers in trails than ever before. Support youth programs by donating today at [bit.ly/Spring22PW](https://bit.ly/Spring22PW)

# Hike the Hill®: 25 Years of Trails Advocacy for the Future



*Hike the Hill® is a joint effort between American Hiking Society and the Partnership for the National Trails System. It brings together the trails community to advance shared trail priorities with congressional and Federal agency leaders including trails funding, public lands management and conservation, equitable access, and other top priority issues that sustain trails and improve access to National Trails.*

From February 14-18, 2022, the Partnership for the National Trails System and the American Hiking Society hosted the 25th Annual advocacy event for National Scenic & Historic Trails (NSHT): Hike the Hill®. Like the previous 24 years, the event was a national effort attended by volunteers from across the country with the shared goal of gaining support for the National Trails System (NTS).

### **A Grassroots Coalitional Legacy**

When a coalition of 17 trail organizations (called the Committee of 17) banded together in 1991 to advocate for National Scenic & Historic Trails, they were looking toward the future of the NTS. Despite being enacted in 1968, the vision of the National Trails System Act (NTSA) had not yet been achieved, and the coalition of trail organizations saw a dire need for Federal support to ensure that it came to fruition. The NTSA envisioned “a network of trails spanning America, celebrating and cherishing our historic and scenic resources,” which would bring “recreational opportunities within easy reach of most Americans—linking them to our precious parks, forests, rivers, mountains, and historic sites” (Ridenour, 1991). Federal support—in the form of funding, assistance, resources, and organizational capacity—was needed to fully enact a trails system that achieved the NTSA’s goal of being a public good for all.

Other trail advocates proved a coalition could succeed in lobbying Congress to support trails. Advocates from the American Hiking Society (AHS) successfully lobbied for a feasibility study for the American Discovery Trail and along with the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, succeeded in advocating for legislation that became the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991. With these wins under their belt, the AHS helped the Committee of 17 unite to bring their agenda to Congress.

In the spring of 1992, Gary Werner, of the Ice Age Park & Trail Foundation, testified in front of the House Interior Appropriations

Subcommittee on behalf of the Committee of 17. Though nothing came of it, the committee regrouped and decided they would keep going back until they got what they needed. For the next two years, Mr. Werner went to DC to advocate on behalf of the trails during events with AHS, the Sierra Club, and the Wilderness Society.

By 1995, after years of operating as the Committee of 17, the coalition of trails organizations officially adopted the Partnership for the National Trails System (PNTS) as their name. Just two years later, PNTS, now a distinct non-profit organization, joined AHS in leadership of a long-form advocacy event under the direction of Gary Werner (PNTS) and Mary Margaret Sloan (AHS). Over a week, participants learned advocacy strategies, coordinated trails messaging, and advocated for trails in meetings with Federal agency leadership, individual members of Congress, and congressional committee staff. Hike the Hill®, which brought trails advocates from across the nation to Capitol Hill for Trails Advocacy Week, was born.

Since the first Hike the Hill® 25 years ago, the trails community has earned several important victories. Significantly, the system has nearly doubled. When Hike the Hill® began, there were 17 National Scenic and Historic Trails. Today, there are 30.

Additionally, as Steve Elkinton, past program leader for the NTS in the National Park Service, said, “Hike the Hill® raised the visibility of the National Trails System in both the Federal agencies and Congress, resulting in funding increases for the trails. It built solidarity of a wide network of trail activists all across America’s political spectrum. And brought Federal agency staff and nonprofit volunteer partners closer together.” Mr. Werner says the most effective aspect of Hike the Hill® has been, “persistently going back again, and again, and again” which “meant that both on the agency side and in Congress, we institutionally developed relationships with key people in those different entities.”



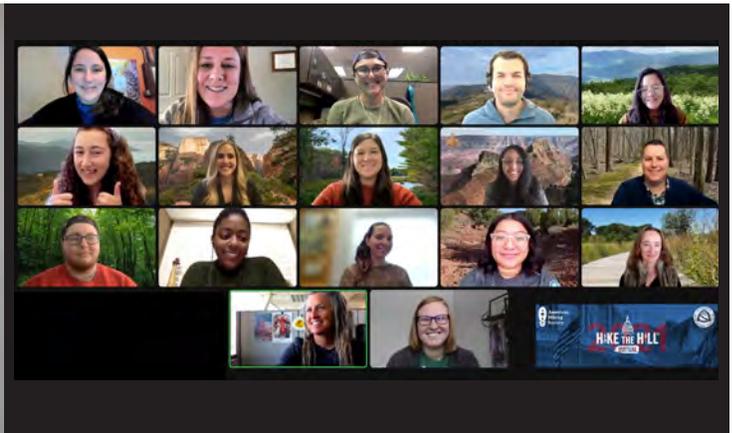
*Trail partners meet with Rick May, the new DOI Senior Advisor.*



*Trail partners at the Russell Senate building.*



American Hiking Society NextGen Trail Leaders, 2018



Hike the Hill NextGen Meet n' Greet Lunch, 2022

Future trail advocates become current trail advocates during Hike the Hill®!

PNTS Trail Apprentices, NextGen leaders, and other young adults are invited to participate, network, and learn about trail advocacy.

### The Ongoing Hike

Through consistent relationship-building with Federal agency partners and congressional members and staff, trails advocates continue the work started 25 years ago. Despite many successes, the need for trails advocacy is never gone. Mary Margaret Sloan, co-founder of Hike the Hill® and former AHS executive director points out, “There’s always a lot going on, so the challenge—then as it is now—is making the case that this is really important amongst everything else that’s happening that Congress is paying attention to.”

Hike the Hill® plays an important role in showcasing the significance and impacts of NSHT to the people who make fundamental decisions that impact trails. It is the only time when advocates from across the NSHT join in a unified effort to advance legislation, request funding, and share priorities. Through collaboration, advocates push for system-wide needs in addition to trail-specific needs, strengthening the impact of their advocacy.

#### Hike the Hill®: An Outline

The collaboration that makes Hike the Hill® so successful doesn’t start with the public event. Months before advocates arrive at Capitol Hill (in-person or virtually) a group of volunteers, and staff from PNTS and AHS, begin formulating trail priorities at the national level to highlight. As a collaborative effort, these priorities arise from needs shared by local advocates of the NSHT. Additionally, PNTS collects information about trail use, public engagement, volunteer hours donated, youth involvement, and advances in trail protection to help advocates demonstrate the value and positive impact of NSHT. This information is compiled into the annual State of the Trails report which serves as a ‘progress report’ for NSHT, and the ‘Gold Sheet’ which demonstrates investment in trails.

To empower the people who participate, the event begins with briefings on topics central to advocacy priorities each year, such as trails funding and appropriations, administrative priorities, new legislation, and shared messaging. Through these sessions, advocates gain a deeper understanding of national-level trails needs and how to effectively communicate trails priorities to different leaders. PNTS and AHS also provide advocacy resources for participants to use throughout the event. Then, the fun begins! Throughout Hike the Hill®, three types of meetings occur: 1) meetings with Federal partners to share information about agency work and plans, 2) meetings with Congressional committees to advocate for trails legislation and funding, and 3) meetings with individual Congressional members to showcase constituent support for trails legislation and funding. Together, these meetings establish important Federal relationships, show the considerable benefits of the National Trails System for the American public, and demonstrate widespread support for NSHT—on local and national scales.

You don’t need to be a policy expert or know how to set a meeting

with your Congressional member to participate. Because of the organization, resources, and training provided through Hike the Hill®, anyone can advocate for trails. And that means more voices pushing leadership to support NSHT.

#### Looking Forward

The vision of a robust and accessible National Trails System has remained central to Hike the Hill®. As we reflect on the past 25 years and look toward the future, there are opportunities to build on past successes while adapting to contemporary needs.

A major adaptation of the past two years was the change to a virtual format. Despite travel restrictions caused by Covid-19, Hike the Hill® pushed forward. And, through the forced change of setting, event organizers realized the potential of virtual meetings to make advocacy more accessible to people who otherwise would not be able to participate.

Building on the collaboration that has always been central to Hike the Hill® will include making trails advocacy accessible to new groups of people. Kate Van Waes, current AHS executive director encouraged, “bring[ing] more voices to the table . . . Bringing in other groups that traditionally haven’t been involved and broadening the conversation.” Encouraging new collaborators to participate in trails advocacy can help, as Senior Director for Programs and Advocacy of AHS Tyler Ray envisions, “continue to grow and expand participation in Hike the Hill® while staying true to the event’s purpose of bringing together the voices of the trails community as a whole and the National Trails System.”

Because advocacy is never done, more voices and more accessible ways to advocate throughout the year will be important moving forward. Valerie Rupp, executive director of PNTS states: “Moving forward, I’m excited for PNTS, AHS, PNTS member organizations, and other trails and outdoor recreation advocates to build on the success of Hike the Hill® to come together more frequently throughout the year - making Hike the Hill a key touchpoint in a continuum of cooperative action. While the ‘fly-in’ aspect may only be feasible for people on an annual basis, we’ve learned to hold effective meetings virtually, making it easier to continue the conversations as a larger group of partners on an ongoing basis while also increasing accessibility to interested stakeholders who have not been a part of our advocacy work in the past.”



Learn more about Hike the Hill® here:

[pnts.org/new/our-work/hike-the-hill](https://pnts.org/new/our-work/hike-the-hill)

Access trail reports here:

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

# The Gold Sheet: Demonstrating the Value of Volunteers and Private Investment in Trails

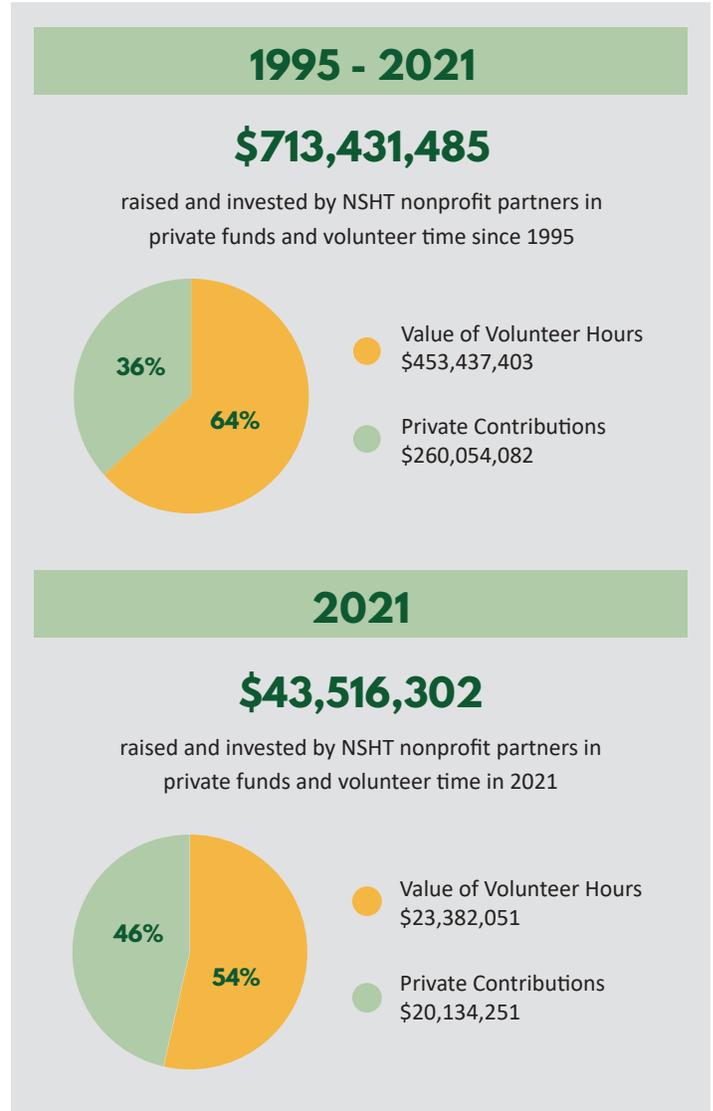
When we say we can't do it without you, we mean it. Volunteers and private donors not only give their time and money to trails, but they showcase the immense value of National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT) to the public. The ability to demonstrate both monetary and time investment in NSHT provides a major advocacy tool. It shows that governmental investment in trails is desired, appreciated, and useful to the broader American public.

To demonstrate the value of volunteer hours and private investment in Trails, the Partnership for the National Trails System compiles an annual report called the Gold Sheet. It summarizes the private dollars invested and hours of volunteer time contributed to build, interpret, and sustain the 30 NSHT. Using the yearly national rate for volunteer time calculated by the Independent Sector, the Gold Sheet translates volunteer hours into monetary value. Combined, the value of volunteer work and private donations demonstrate the total private leverage to Federal investment in NSHT.

The Gold Sheet is compiled each year in tandem with the annual Hike the Hill® event. It is an invaluable tool for advocates who are addressing Federal government leaders and members of Congress. Gary Werner, former executive director of PNTS and co-founder of Hike the Hill® argues that the Gold Sheet, "was the single most important thing we've ever pulled together in terms of advocacy. We could show in dollars and cents—terms that resonate with Congress—that we, as private partners with the federal agencies, were directly providing annually one and a half times the resources that Congress was appropriating to sustain the National Trails." And, Hike the Hill® is not the only time the Gold Sheet helps advocate for trails. It can be used year-round to demonstrate the value of NSHT to local, state or tribal leaders; potential partners; and prospective donors.

While the Gold Sheet is a powerful tool for advocacy, its value comes from your generous support. We cannot thank our partners, donors, and volunteers enough for investing their time and talent to ensure everyone can enjoy National Trails.

 **Access the 2021 Gold Sheet here:**  
[bit.ly/2021GoldSheet](https://bit.ly/2021GoldSheet)



2022 BADGER SPONSORSHIP  
**THANK YOU**

**1,562**  
Participants

**\$24,603**  
Raised for PNTS

**THE TREK**  
and gear sponsors:

Enlightened Equipment	Zpacks	Point6	Montbell
North x North	Thrupack	Bedrock Sandals	Jetboil
Arc'teryx Equipment	Sawyer	Six Moon Designs	Vargo
Gossamer Gear	Big Agnes	Feathered Friends	FarOut
Granit Gear	Katabatic	Town Shirt Co.	BUFF

## Indigenous Mapping & Research Project

"Historically, cartography and maps have been used as an instrument of colonization which has been severely detrimental to adequate representation of Indigenous peoples. Oftentimes, Indigenous peoples and communities are left out of any conversation where consultation should be factored in," states Kiana Estate-Gashytewa (Zuni/Hopi). Knowing this and working to create spaces that uplift and value Indigenous voices, the Indigenous Mapping and Research Project launched in January 2022.

Through the project, the Partnership for the National Trails System, Bureau of Land Management, US Forest Service, Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps, and other partners are developing basic resources to help Federal agencies that administer National Trails and their nonprofit trail organization partners advance National Trails System knowledge of Ancestral Lands and help them increase partnerships and

collaboration with Indigenous Communities along National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT).

Led by Project Coordinator, Kiana Etsate-Gashytewa, a toolkit and a publicly accessible map will be created in 2022. The map will be an interactive GIS map that will overlay Indigenous territories and languages with the National Trails System map. The toolkit will be a collection of data that will provide resources for Trail Administrators or Managers, staff, and partners to collaborate with local tribes through meaningful materials. The database will compile the resources, contacts, and documents from the project.

PNTS and its Federal agency partners are developing webinars to complement the project such as an overview of the history of related laws and the difference between Tribal consultation and engagement with Indigenous communities or Tribal nations.

# Protection

## Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association Helps Forest Service Maintain the Continental Divide Trail

by Curt Nappl, Zone Recreation Staff Officer  
US Forest Service

As the Continental Divide Trail (CDT) winds its way through the Rocky Mountains, entering Wyoming and Yellowstone National Park (YNP), it heads west in eastern Idaho. From there the trail meanders to the northwest straddling the Idaho/Montana border as it heads west through the rugged Centennial Mountains.

A section of the CDT just north of Boundary Creek in western Wyoming to Monida Pass along Interstate 15 in southern Montana is almost 100 miles of high mountain adventure. It offers a wide variety of wildlife including, pristine lakes, grand views, and diverse vegetation.

The CDT here is located in the Ashton/Island Park & Dubois Ranger Districts of the Caribou-Targhee National Forest. Public lands with all the solitude and wildness you could want in every direction--exactly what you would want in a section of this classic western trail! Within this gorgeous landscape is also a story to be shared about a partnership to be recognized and respected and a love for the CDT.

The Montana Mountain Bike Alliance (MMBA) first reached out to the Forest Service (FS) in 2006-2007 about helping maintain the section of trail in the Lionhead, a prominent peak just west of Highway 20 near the Idaho/Montana border. In 2015, Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association (SWM MBA) was formed and one of their bigger ambitions was to formally adopt the CDT single track from YNP to Monida Pass. SWMMBA formally adopted the CDT from YNP to Monida Pass in 2017. The love of mountain biking, public lands, and volunteer service ensured that 7 years later, SWMMBA has grown to have 10 Volunteer Board Members, 50 Key Volunteers, and 2500 members!

SWM MBA does everything from rebuilding a switchback, clearing up



Southwest Montana Mountain Bike Association (SWM MBA) at Targhee Divide. Courtesy SWMMBA.

to 30" diameter trees, installing trail signage, and improving drainages to help maintain the CDT. Occasionally livestock is used to haul hand tools and other supplies, while chainsaws are hauled along the trail in a slightly different way. The volunteer hours are used annually for grant matches that the Forest Service uses to keep the trail in tip-top shape.

Another FS employee and I had the opportunity to ride the CDT from Mile Creek in Montana to the Targhee Divide in Idaho last fall with a few members of SWMMBA. They had Passion, drive, enthusiasm, gratitude, and positivity. And to be 100% honest, SWMMBA is exactly the type of group we are so fortunate to have to help maintain the CDT for future generations.

## Partnering for a Connected & Conserved Landscape

Essential Funding for Land Protection Provided by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

by **Katie Allen**, Director of Landscape Conservation

*Appalachian Trail Conservancy*



*Aerial view of York Pond looking at Grafton Notch in Maine. Photo by Jerry Monkman. Courtesy of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy*

From Georgia to Maine, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC) works tirelessly to protect, manage, and advocate for the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (A.T.). As the trail meanders across scenic peaks, lush valleys, deep forests, and even through several towns, it offers an unparalleled opportunity for anyone who wishes to experience the famous footpath. The Trail both challenges and inspires, leaving people changed forever.

As much as we are dedicated to the Trail, we are equally as dedicated to protecting the benefits the Trail provides through its existence as one of the largest landscape conservation projects in the United States. All life depends on conserved and connected lands, and across its 2,194 miles, the trail connects a variety of wild, scenic, and culturally significant landscapes. Understanding there are real threats to those landscapes due to climate change, forest fragmentation, and incompatible development, the ATC is committed to protecting the long-term resiliency of the Trail by ensuring these vital lands are conserved to provide clean water, clean air, thriving communities, and outdoor access for all.

This is no small feat, and it takes a coordinated, collaborative network of partners to preserve the lands that connect the landscape. In coordination with the National Park Service, the ATC oversees the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership (ATLP). This partnership is charged with delivering on the unfinished business of protecting resilient lands across the A.T. landscape. More than 100 partners have joined this network, which brings together additional resources and capacity to facilitate greater protection of the A.T. landscape, in turn safeguarding the experience of anyone finding themselves on the A.T. in pursuit of respite from busy cities, fresh air, and expansive views of pristine natural corridors

“The Appalachian Trail was created through partnerships, and through the work of the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership, collaborative land conservation continues today,” said Katie Allen, the ATC’s Director of Landscape Conservation. “Working together, we can protect the iconic values of the Appalachian Trail landscape.

Those values—such as clean air and water, abundant recreational opportunities, and ties to rich cultural heritage and history—have a direct impact on the health and wellbeing of those who live, work, and play within this landscape.”

An essential part of the partnership is the ATC’s Wild East Action Fund, which provides grants to conservation partners to assist in land protection. Since its establishment in 2018, the ATC’s Wild East Action Fund has awarded almost \$2 million to aid in the protection of more than 80,000 acres across 14 states. To date, the Fund has leveraged more than \$80 million as conservation groups from Maine to Georgia work to conserve high-priority lands vital to a protected A.T. landscape.

In March, the ATC announced the permanent protection of 21,300 acres of land in Grafton Forest by ATLP partners in Maine. Adjacent to the Trail and serving as a link between conserved lands in Maine and New Hampshire, this landscape conservation success will increase recreational access to the A.T., essential natural resource connectivity, and will protect the Trail’s scenic beauty. An exceptional demonstration of ATLP partnership in action to support the A.T. and surrounding landscape.

The Grafton Forest Conservation Project is led by the Forest Society of Maine and Northeast Wilderness Trust, with the ATC providing essential funding through the Wild East Action Fund to help the project succeed. The Fund is made possible through the generosity of private donors, and those who contributed can share in this conservation success, knowing that the permanent protection of these lands is a direct impact of their generosity.



**For more information about how to contribute to and learn about funded projects, visit:**

[appalachiantrail.org/wildeastactionfund](http://appalachiantrail.org/wildeastactionfund)

## Forest Service Working with Nez Perce Tribe on Place Names along the Nez Perce (Ne-Me-Poo) Trail

Adapted from Press Release

US Forest Service

The Nez Perce (Ne-Me-Poo) National Historic Trail, administered by the Forest Service, is working with the Nez Perce Tribe (Niimípuu, pronounced Ne-Me-Poo) on establishing signage and interpretation for significant sites and areas. Niimípuu place names are a reminder of the accountability that the Niimípuu have to the land and its resources. The relationship Niimípuu have maintained over generations is fundamental to their existence and the Law which governs their actions upon the landscape provides the basis for this to occur. It is through this understanding of “relationship” that Niimípuu people derive culture and identity. Therefore, the place names project will play an important role in meaningfully interpreting sites along the trail while honoring the stories they tell.

**Winter Village Sites** (‘elwínikinwees - winter encampment, winter lodge) are usually situated along junctions of rivers and creeks. Occupied during the coldest months, winter village sites were sheltered in canyon valleys where driftwood could be easily accessed for fuel. Nearby winter village sites include the current Kamiah, Idaho (qémye - proposed etymology is qéemu Indian hemp), and Lewiston, Idaho (simíinikem - where two rivers meet).

Winter sites were also situated near spring Chinook fisheries and sites of early-season root crops, such as qeqiit (wild potato) and qáaws (biscuit root). Individual family groups dispersed to different area campsites (wic’éenwees) near fishing, root grounds, and hunting areas.

**Family group/band** (‘inéek’nikt) **gathering area** sites were particularly valued because of unusually abundant resources and opportunities for groups to gather socially. These include the current Weippe area games gathering site (‘oyáyp), the current Bruce’s Eddy/

North Fork Clearwater chinook fishery (timíimap), and the current Wallowa Lake/Blueback Fishery (‘iwéetem).

**Geological features and landmarks** were associated with oral traditions (tiwáatit) and historical narratives. Basalt formations are often associated with tiwáatit. They serve to prompt stories and accountability. Numerous legend sites throughout aboriginal Niimípuu occupied and accustomed areas will receive attention from the project.

Fundamentally, Niimípuu cultural identity and lifeways are not superimposed over the landscape, rather it is the Law and resources which provide for and facilitate the transmission of the beliefs and values that are foundational to the Niimípuu identity. Because of this understanding, aboriginal place names which were interpreted and passed on by elders (titéeq’is) have significance to Niimípuu understanding of this Land and their place upon it.



*The Heart of the Monster, a geological feature associated with Nez Perce oral traditions. Courtesy of the National Park Service.*

# Outreach

## Mini-Grant Fosters Inclusion on the North Country Trail

by Kate Lemon

North Country Trail Association



*Bus for Outdoor Access & Teaching (BOAT) participants. Courtesy of BOAT.*

The North Country Trail Association's (NCTA) Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) Committee awarded a mini-grant to the Bus for Outdoor Access and Teaching (BOAT) to attend the Michigan Ice Fest in the Upper Peninsula (UP) this February. BOAT partnered with Detroit Outdoors, who, alongside at least five additional Detroit organizations, recruited a diverse audience of Detroiters to attend the program. Of the 28 participants, 24 identified as people of color.

This trip was meant to introduce a group normally recreating in the Detroit area to the UP, the North Country National Scenic Trail (NCNST), ice climbing, and other winter activities. The group successfully navigated blizzards, subzero temperatures, and long days exposed to the elements.



**Learn more about BOAT and Detroit Outdoor here:**

[theboatbus.com](http://theboatbus.com) and [detroitoutdoors.org](http://detroitoutdoors.org)

**Apply for a Mini-Grant to promote JEDI on the North Country Trail here:**

[northcountrytrail.org/jedi](http://northcountrytrail.org/jedi)

# Wagon Master: Hansen's Handcrafted History World Premiere

Film is the latest documentary from the Oregon-California Trails Association

by Travis Boley

Oregon-California Trail Association

**W**agon Master: Hansen's Handcrafted History had its red-carpet premiere on Wednesday, March 30, 2022. The documentary, produced by the Oregon-California Trails Association and Knowledge Tree Films, premiered at the Luxury 5 Cinemas following a reception at the Carnegie Center in Mitchell, South Dakota. The event was filmed so everyone could enjoy it later. Through an agreement with South Dakota Public Broadcasting, the program will air over the next three years.

Wagon Master follows Doug Hansen, proprietor of Hansen Wheel & Wagon in Letcher, South Dakota. Doug and his team of a dozen craftsmen restore and build wagons and stagecoaches. Outside of Amish craftsmen living in small villages that dot the American countryside, Doug is one of the few people in the United States who is keeping this 19th-century transportation technology alive. He has supplied wagons and stagecoaches (as well as repair services) to numerous movies and television shows, including the stagecoach used in Quentin Tarantino's *The Hateful Eight* and wagons used for *Dances With Wolves* and popular shows like *Yellowstone* and *1883*. His team also builds and restores wagons for museums and corporate businesses as well as for people who want to own a wagon.

The documentary, funded through a grant from the South Dakota Humanities Council, was the latest in a series of professional video productions created by OCTA.

Before *Wagon Master*, OCTA won a small grant from the Missouri Humanities Council (MHC) to create the short film *Wilson's Creek: History Along the Wire Road*, about the road through Wilson's Creek Battlefield outside of Springfield, Missouri. This was an early wagon road that connected St. Louis to southwest Missouri and northwest Arkansas. The corridor was used, in part, by the Cherokee during forced relocation along the Trail of Tears. In the 1850s, it was the route of the Butterfield Overland Stage. Connected to Ft. Smith, Arkansas, it was an important route for emigrants to California. It was also the site of the second major battle of the Civil War.

With the money received from MHC, we were able to create a 13-minute video. However, we quickly realized we had more than enough great footage to elongate this into a 25-minute piece that would be attractive to PBS. To stretch it to this length, however, we need to raise another \$5,000 to engage our video editor with further work. We were recently awarded a grant in that amount from the Midwest Trust of Kansas.

*History and Change on the Old Spanish Trail* was OCTA's first video production made by a professional film crew. It was created through a partnership with the Amargosa Conservancy, a land trust that preserves



Movie premiere poster for *Wagon Master*. Courtesy of the Oregon-California Trails Association

pristine sections of the Mojave Desert along the Amargosa River just south of Death Valley. The film examined the evolution of the Old Spanish Trail, its millennia of use by Native Americans, its use as a mule-pack trade route between Santa Fe and Los Angeles, its improvement by Mormons for use as a wagon road, and finally, its role in the California Gold Rush.

This 25-minute documentary now streams on KVCR out of San Bernardino for the next five years, meaning our name will have millions of impressions all over Southern California until 2025. It is also streaming on First Nations Experience (FNX), a station managed by and for Native Americans that broadcasts in 25 states with over 75 million subscribers.

These documentaries were created with the help of Sun Runner Media and Knowledge Tree Films. Grants from State humanities councils made these features possible and allowed OCTA to go from no-budget or small-budget videos to professionally created films.

OCTA is in the beginning stages of a massive fundraising campaign, so increasing our name recognition is a high priority for us right now. We believe that these projects help get our name and brand in front of more people than ever. OCTA will continue creating high-quality content to augment our fundraising and recruiting activities and poise the association to remain competitive in the world of historic preservation.

## PNTS Intern Grant in Action

OCTA began its foray into video productions with the help of Sam Sullivan, a digital media intern hired with the Trail Intern Grant from the Partnership for the National Trails System. Sam, a recent graduate of William Jewell College in Liberty, Missouri, had experience in digital media and excellent internship opportunities that helped him gain experience in an area where OCTA needed help. Together, we set out to populate our new YouTube channel with short videos focused primarily on sites in Kansas and Missouri. We covered historic sites, trail pioneers, and African-Americans on historic trails. Later, we were able to travel to Arizona and create a slew of videos along the Southern Route as well.



**View & subscribe to Oregon-California Trails Association's (OCTA) YouTube Channel here:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC5CyC-R68Izhwww1f57V-yQ>

**Stream OCTA documentaries for free here:**

*History and Change on the Old Spanish Trail*  
<https://vimeo.com/614009867>

*Wilson's Creek: History Along the Wire Road*  
<https://vimeo.com/662101191>

*Wagon Master: Hansen's Hand-Crafted History*  
<https://vimeo.com/670298718>

## "INSPIRE"-ing Interpretation on the Old Spanish Trail: Rob Sweeten Awarded BLM's 2021 INSPIRE Award

by **Carin L. Farley**, *National Scenic and Historic Trail Lead*  
*Bureau of Land Management*

The Old Spanish National Historic Trail Co-Administrator from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Robert "Rob" Sweeten received the agency's 2021 Inspirational Interpretation and Resource Education "INSPIRE" Award. The INSPIRE Award recognizes BLM employees who have made significant contributions to BLM programs, initiatives, projects, and events through innovative interpretation and education.

Rob recognized the complexity of interpreting a trail of this length and sought an innovative and creative solution that utilized an app to connect signs, new wayside interpretive panels, and kiosks to create continuity. The Explorer APP is a GIS-based platform for interpretation and direction-finding. The new kiosks and app don't just tell people the story of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail, but also ask the visitor to engage further through questions. For instance, at Head Rock located along the Cottonwood Wash hiking trail, a historic sketch from the mid 1800s is presented next to a picture of the rock formation known as Head Rock. The visitor is asked if they would have been able to identify Head Rock and known to turn West at this location. Elements of the interactive app help bring the trail to life and transport the visitor back in time. Visitors are asked if they would reroute around difficult landscapes and think about what it would be like to have to cross a raging river without modern equipment.

As an advocate for youth engagement and employment, Rob worked closely with several interns over the past few years to implement the project. Rob was honored at the National Association for Interpretation National Conference in December. The BLM will release the Explorer App (3 years in the making) to the public this summer.



*New signage on the Old Spanish Trail connected by the Explorer App.  
Courtesy of the Bureau of Land Management.*



**Learn more about the project and Explorer App here:**

<https://www.blm.gov/policy/ib-2022-011>

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# Digital Platform Promotes & Connects Communities along the Lewis & Clark Trail through Geotourism

by Ryan Parsons

*Lewis and Clark Travel*



*People enjoying Lewis Lookout near Dillon, Montana on the Lewis & Clark National Historic Trail. Courtesy of the National Park Service.*

If you were tasked with promoting thousands of destinations and individual businesses along a 4,900-mile, 16-state stretch of land – how would you do it?

It's a daunting and seemingly impossible task, but leaders at the National Park Service (NPS), Solimar International, and the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) have a solution: the travel-friendly, tech-advanced *Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail (LCNHT) Experience*.

In collaboration with public and private stakeholders along with Native American communities, LewisandClark.travel was born: an interactive trip planning website to link the communities and experiences along the route of Lewis and Clark's 1803-1806 expedition. This geotourism project allows accommodations, restaurants, visitor information centers, parks, boutiques, museums, scenic vistas, and more to become stewards of the trail through an engaging and interactive web platform. Additionally, it helps potential visitors plan meaningful trips connected to history and local communities from Pittsburgh to Oregon's Pacific Coast.

The newly launched website was created through a geotourism stewardship program overseen by the NPS brings together tourism partners at local, state, and national levels along the trail to showcase what makes their destinations a great place to visit. The website allows searching for a variety of experiences and locations from unique local history museums to a scenic riverfront sunset. Whether traveling the entire length of the Trail or taking a short day trip, the travel experience

can be greatly enhanced by the possibilities highlighted on the website.

As a trail without physical markers, local communities are the lifeblood of the *LCNHT Experience*. These communities have an incredible opportunity for free exposure and a boost in tourism by partnering with the program. Communities can list themselves on the website, place Lewis and Clark autoroute signs, and get involved in community enhancement programs.

As more partners join the *LCNHT Experience*, the site continues to grow with information on local hotels, campsites, and tourism boards, which continue to foster visitation along the trail. People who are interested in the Lewis and Clark expedition or want to learn more about American and Native American history are textbook fans of the trail, but the geotourism program pushes the trail's reach even further. This "next frontier" is to connect with the everyday traveler; someone who might just be passing through a town along the trail.

The *LCNHT Experience* engages communities along the trail as "stewards" of its mission. Communities are buying into tenets of the trail like resource preservation, public enjoyment, recreation, and historic significance. This trail is for everyone - families hoping to teach their kids about history, outdoorsy couples looking for the best hikes, avid brewery visitors, and more. The ultimate goal is to encourage all travelers to have a great appreciation for the places along the trail, reinforcing the second arm of the NPS mission: to extend the benefits of natural and cultural resource conservation and outdoor recreation throughout the United States and the greater world.

In line with LCNHT's mission to commemorate the Lewis and Clark Expedition through the identification, protection, interpretation, public use and enjoyment, and preservation of historic, cultural, and natural resources along the trail, this project exemplifies the geotourism approach. To create partnerships through geotourism and LewisandClark.travel, the trail needs to create value for all stakeholders along the trail. The value arises from community promotion and association with the NPS, as well as being a part of a bigger, common goal of sustainability.

## What Is Geotourism?

Geotourism is a forward thinking approach to tourism that aims to enhance communities in a sustainable way by giving them the tools to define what is special and unique about their homes. Geotourism is tourism that sustains or enhances the geographic character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the wellbeing of its residents. It encompasses a range of travel experiences including culture and heritage, history, food, nature, adventure, the outdoors, water, music, and arts. Ultimately, geotourism is about the preservation of the essence of a place, accomplished by uplifting and listening to the people who live in the tourist locales.



**Visit the interactive platform at:**

[LewisAndClark.Travel](https://LewisAndClark.Travel)

# Longtime Trails Advocate Liz Bergeron Retires



Liz Bergeron speaking at the National Trails System 50th Anniversary reception

“Liz will always be remembered as a contributor to not only the Pacific Crest Trail Association, but to the Trail Community as a whole.” - Mike Wollmer, Ice Age Trail Association

Over many years of dedicated service and work, Liz Bergeron has cemented herself as one of the great trails advocates. Not only did she serve on the PNTS Board of Directors, but she guided PNTS in leadership as the board president for six years.

Liz served as the Executive Director and CEO of the Pacific Crest Trail Association (PCTA) from 2001 to 2022. In this position, she grew the organization from a small staff to a large and

successful organization that is the primary nonprofit steward of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (PCT). Under her direction, PCTA expanded to 35 staff members who manage over 2,000 volunteers. Barney Scout Mann, PCTA Past Board Chair and current PNTS Board Chair points to Liz’s many accomplishments guided by her passion for trails: “In 2001, when Liz Bergeron came to the Pacific Crest Trail Association, its annual budget was a few hundred thousand and you could count the employees on one hand. Today the annual budget is over a dozen times larger and I don’t have enough fingers and toes to count the employees. This is but one slice of the passion, care and devotion Liz has brought to the PCTA and the trail.”

As she grew the organization, she significantly raised public awareness of the PCT while simultaneously reducing the impacts of increased trail use, implemented a successful land protection program to acquire and permanently protect PCT lands, and led the growth of the organization’s trail operations program to better protect the trail.

Liz also provided system-wide support and guidance. She shared her experiences with others in the trails community through mentorship to ensure that the successes of the PCT could be applied to other trails. She also participated in the development of Hike the Hill®, the annual advocacy event for National Scenic and Historic Trails which has positively impacted the entire trails community.

In April of 2022, Liz retired from her position in PCTA. And though she is taking a step back from leadership in the trails community, her influence will not soon be forgotten. From all of her friends at PNTS, we thank her and wish her happy trails.

## COMINGS AND GOINGS

We Welcome...

- Justin Fisch, an environmental and energy attorney, as a PNTS Board Member
- Jamie Loucky, Chief Impact Officer for the Washington Trails Association, as a PNTS Board Member
- Oforiwaah Pee Agyei-Boakye, a Ph.D. student in geography and environmental advocate, as a PNTS Board Member
- Larry Short as the Trail Leaders Council representative for the Santa Fe National Historic Trail
- Megan Wargo as the Acting Director of the Pacific Crest Trail Association
- Jason Chavez as the Development Director for PNTS
- Ashley Wheeler as the Communication Coordinator for PNTS

Submit 'Comings and Goings' at your organization for publication in Pathways' print or online versions to: [communication@pnts.org](mailto:communication@pnts.org)



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

## Event Calendar

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



*Event dates/details are subject to change.*

June 6-16	Annual Pony Express Re-Ride	St. Joseph, Mo to Sacramento, CA	<a href="http://nationalponyexpress.org">nationalponyexpress.org</a>
July 8-16	American Solar Challenge on the Oregon Trail	Independence, MO to Twin Falls, ID	<a href="http://americansolarchallenge.org">americansolarchallenge.org</a>
August 18-19	Mormon Pioneer Trail Symposium	Council Bluffs, IA	
August 28 - September 2	Oregon-California Trails Association 40th Annual Convention	Casper, WY	<a href="http://octa-trails.org">octa-trails.org</a>
November 2-4	2022 National Trails Workshop	Albuquerque, NM	<a href="https://bit.ly/NTWorkshop22">bit.ly/NTWorkshop22</a>

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