



## Summit 2022 - Draft Summary

May 6-7, 2022

Cottonwood, Arizona



### [Network for Arizona Trails Website](#)

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## Introduction

The third annual **Summit for Arizona Trails** was held at the historic Community Club House in Cottonwood, Arizona on Friday, May 6th, and Saturday, May 7th. The Summit was organized by the steering committee of the Network for Arizona Trails with the help of additional volunteers.

Nearly 100 trail planners, users, and managers and advocates from across the state came together to network and discuss shared challenges and opportunities for trails and outdoor recreation in Arizona. Participants included representatives from nineteen organizations, fourteen local governments, eight trail-related businesses, and six state or federal agencies.

The following summary was prepared by Southwest Decision Resources and contains a record of the topics and discussions covered over the course of the two days.

## DAY 1 (AFTERNOON)

### Opening

#### Welcome

Following an opening from Wendy Lotze and Tahnee Robertson, a warm welcome back was provided by the local host - City of Cottonwood Mayor Tim Elinski, also co-chair of the Verde Front Sustainable Recreation Collaborative.



#### Introduction to the Summit - Framing Our Success

Wendy Lotze, the coordinator of the Network for AZ Trails, provided an introduction to the summit and framed the success of the network with a presentation "Embracing Diversity, Practicing Humility and Welcoming our Community."

## Meet and Greet: Getting to Know Our Larger Trail Community

Participants then had the opportunity to get to know others at their tables through a dynamic round-robin sharing: 1) name and affiliation, 2) what brought you here, and 3) what work are you most excited about.



## Sharing Successful Strategies

### Topic Presentations

Short presentations of successful strategies were provided to introduce the group to the different Trails Café topics. These topics were selected based on results of the pre-summit participant survey. Those with power point presentations are linked below.

- A. [Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration and Planning](#): Verde Front, Eastern AZ Trails Collaborative and other examples - *Tahnee Robertson and Julia Sittig, Southwest Decision Resources*
- B. [Equestrian Trail Success: BCH/Forest Service Partnership](#)  
*Craig Ferdig, Back Country Horsemen Chapter of AZ*
- C. Hiking Trail Success: Hotshots Memorial Trail Project  
*Ken Sliwa, AZ State Parks and Trails*
- D. [OHV Trail Success: Red Rock OHV Conservation Crew \(RROCC\)](#)  
*Matt Caldwell, Tread Lightly*
- E. [Trails Design and Planning: Process for Reroutes](#)  
*Shawn Redfield, Arizona Trail Association*
- F. [Volunteer Engagement: McDowell Sonoran Conservancy Pathfinders](#)  
*Brian Whitehead, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy*
- G. Grants and Funding: Creating a Trail Fund or other strategies  
*Kevin Adams, Red Rock Trails Fund, and Jeff Schmidt, AZ State Parks*
- H. Skills Training: Shared Resources and Using Media  
*Wendy Lotze, Network for AZ Trails, and Brian Stultz, Wild AZ*
- I. Access and Policy  
*Rebecca Antle, ASA4WDC and Bev Showalter, County Line Riders of Catalina*
- J. Trails and Environmental Considerations  
*Matt Roberts, Flagline Trails, and James Gregson, ACE*

### Trails Café

In this first of two in depth discussion opportunities, participants each selected three of the topics above. In three rounds of small group work sessions, participants brainstormed and documented on a single large topic sheet (see photo) their current efforts, challenges, successes, and cool ideas for the future.



## **A. Cross-Jurisdictional Collaboration and Planning - Tahnee Robertson and Julia Sittig, Southwest Decision Resources**

### **Current Efforts**

- Outdoor recreation planning through the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)
- Statewide Office of Outdoor Recreation planning, organization and messaging
- Volunteer trail advocacy at various levels, from attending events to Board of Director participation
- Collaboratives across the state are developing shared values, visions and goals for local areas
- Park Rx efforts are connecting local and federal agencies with doctors in Yavapai County
- The Sun Corridor Trail is being routed to connect Douglas, AZ with Las Vegas, NV through many Arizona communities

### **Challenges**

- Local trail organization staff capacity
- Lack of trail infrastructure for organized events (example: mountain bike trails for races)
- Lack of information (websites) on outdoor recreation to guide visitors on what to do and where to go
- Broad educational efforts lack information to strategically provide materials at the state level, including:
  - Where visitation should be encouraged
  - How tourism can connect with local land managers
  - How to learn from and support visitors coming into the state
- Limited tourism capacity in some areas

### **Successes**

- Bundling projects for the NEPA process improves efficiency for land managers
- Having projects listed as priority can help get grants (Prescott)
- Agreed upon prioritization criteria and collective evaluation for cross jurisdictional project planning
- Collecting trail use data for project prioritization
- Cost sharing to support multijurisdictional collaboratives
- Organizations partnering with Statewide agencies to share valuable local connections
- Co-funding of facilitation and coordination is effective to keep efforts moving
- Collaboratives last through staff turnover of participants

### **Cool Ideas for the future**

- The Network for Arizona Trails works with local trail organizations for problem solving and support
- The Network for Arizona Trails shares lessons learned via statewide collaborative efforts

- Convene a conversation across collaboratives with the Arizona Office of Tourism to identify issues and desires related to tourism across the state
- Connect individuals to collaborative planning efforts
- Promote areas that are not crowded to address influx of outdoor recreation use
- Involve City and County governments in outdoor recreation conversations

## **B. Equestrian Trail Success - Craig Ferdig, Back Country Horsemen Chapter of AZ**

### **Current Efforts**

- Backcountry Horsemen (BCH) works on a national level on a variety of projects
  - Trout Ladders in Oregon
  - Packing in water and supplies for trail projects
  - Emergency response
  - 2.5 chapters in Arizona
  - Trail construction (Almosta trail system)
- Bisbee improving pathways for multi use

### **Challenges**

- More equestrian trail events needed to generate enthusiasm
- Equestrian demographic:
  - Demographic is aging
  - Affordability of owning horses
  - Individuals with specialization in packing is rare
- Equestrian related trail damage- trail use during/after post frost and rain events creates animosity with other users
  - Education campaigns needed for sharing the trail and preventing injuries related to horses
- Improved trail signage to educate all users, communicate liabilities and ways to get involved
- Unlicensed vendors take horses out during all conditions, even when trails are wet
- More people on the trails (capacity)
  - Access and parking for equestrian trails continues to get more difficult
- Better contact strategies for equestrian users in local areas needed

### **Successes**

- Almosta trail system:
  - agreement with Homeowners Association for an easement for trailheads
  - easement for approximately 1 mile of trail to reach Forest Service land
  - Developing relationships with land managers, local trail organizations and property owners to develop robust relationships and improve access
- Backcountry Horsemen supports wilderness trail work for conservation corps and trail organizations
- Equestrian trail resource: *Equestrian Design Guidebook for Trails, Trailheads, and Campgrounds*

### **Cool Ideas for the Future**

- BCH can assist with fire clean up, equipment clean up in wilderness areas
- Conservation Corps can help train sawyers as tradeoff for BCH packing in water for projects
- BCH can provide stock training for conservation corps to generate interest with younger demographic
- Online community (social media, email lists) for stewardship reminders, monitoring and trail condition reports
- Memorandum of understanding (MOU) for equestrian trail stewardship events
- Relationship development at local level to increase education and awareness campaigns

## C. Hiking Trail Success - Ken Sliwa, AZ State Parks and Trails

### Current Efforts

- Trail design and construction efforts blending maintenance levels with desired experiences
- Sun Corridor Trail: technology (smartphone apps) being developed

### Challenges

- Land ownership and easements for trail connections is difficult to navigate
- Volunteers with lack of experience want to design trails
- Needs for partners/collaboration - Connect neighboring communities with 'Friends' groups
- Lack of trail information - Inside vs. outside the immediate community
- Balancing experiences for different user types on non-motorized trails

### Successes

- Granite Mountain Hotshots trails are well supported by AZ State Parks and Trails
- Taking advantage of the terrain to provide experience for those who don't know what they want in an experience

### Cool Ideas for the Future

- Every trail has a story to tell
- Create opportunities for users to experience a trail in their own way
- Blend classic trail signage at trailheads with access to smartphone apps

## D. OHV Trail Success - Matt Caldwell, Tread Lightly

### Current Efforts

- Research for low-impact signs for campsites to encourage good behavior
- Pipe rail fence construction for a more durable and long-lasting boundary at staging areas
- AZ Game and Fish video for responsible OHV use is live
- Tread Lightly has hired a 2 person trail crew

### Challenges

- Influx of new users, many from out of state
  - users with less investment in a place are often contributors to negative impacts
- Terminology is not always understood (off-road vs. off-trail)
- OHV renter education and management are not currently working
- 'OHV Area' means different things in different places. In California, you are not expected to stay on designated routes, it's often different in Arizona
- Blocked roads in high-use areas may result in lost access
- Forest Service does not have the capacity to respond to reports of mis-use
- Damage to formerly pristine areas
- Funding for enforcement does not last
- Volume of use in any given area dictates issues
- Obstacles to direct use can become playgrounds

### Successes

- The mapping app 'Onyx' warns users about driving in neighborhoods when in the app
- Color coded flags to identify rental companies for potential mis-use of public lands
- Tread Lightly is working with automotive companies to educate on responsible recreation, and is reviewing footage of ads to make sure bad OHV practices are not presented
- Require OHV renters to watch education videos after strapping in for their ride

## Cool Ideas for the Future

- Multiple variations of communication for signage, from large imagery (maps, photos) to comprehensive text
- Youth education requirements for individuals under age 18 to become certified for safe OHV use (Utah has this in place)
- Use technology to reach younger users for relevant OHV messaging
- Geofencing to inform people on their phones when they cross into unauthorized areas
- Re-branding the importance of access as protecting the fun, as opposed to only negative ramifications

## E. Trails Design and Planning - Shawn Redfield, Arizona Trail Association

### Current Efforts

- Installation of rollover gates for non-motorized trail access
- Emphasize safety and risk management in trail design
- Managing unauthorized trails using signage, trail features, education, and user involvement
- Trail organizations collaborating with land managers for future trail planning
- Local collaboratives for cross-jurisdictional planning



### Successes

- Learning from others and resource sharing is critical
- Gain knowledge from boots on the ground observation
- Utilize American Trails website and Forest Service resources for ideas and specifications

### Challenges

- political support for new projects
- Unauthorized trails don't help when trying to work with land managers
- Designating unauthorized trails

### Cool Ideas for the Future

- Use trail cameras to learn who, what, when and where
- Involve public for trail planning ideas
- "Stop- your app is wrong" signage

## F. Volunteer Engagement - Brian Whitehead, McDowell Sonoran Conservancy

### Current efforts

- City of Scottsdale provides funding, writes grants and solicits donations for volunteer program
- City of Scottsdale has volunteers at each trailhead to coordinate efforts and events
  - Variety of volunteer roles: citizen science, trailhead ambassador, office work

### Challenges

- Developing leadership in volunteers
- Possible liability issues with youth volunteers
- Diversity in volunteers
- Engaging current membership to get more involved in volunteer roles

- Length of volunteer commitment- open ended or defined amount of time

### **Successes**

- Develop a committed and passionate volunteer base first, then grow the program
- Job shadowing and defined amount of hours for volunteer training
- Word of mouth recruitment
- Periodic reviews for volunteers, not as formal as for employees
- Not requiring membership for volunteers to contribute time
- Provide training to volunteers, examples: First Aid, Sonoran Desert 101 (City of Scottsdale)
- Software: 'Golden', 'Volgistics' - volunteer management for smaller organizations

### **Cool Ideas for the Future**

- Volunteer recognition and incentives
  - annual parties, special lectures
  - free t-shirts and other items to be purchased at cost
  - lunch and snacks
- Engage groups who want to be more involved and develop programs based on volunteers' interests
- Identify the most passionate volunteers to be leaders, volunteers asking other volunteers to do the work as opposed to staff
- Reduce barriers to increase diversity

## **G. Grants and Funding - Kevin Adams, Red Rock Trails Fund, and Jeff Schmidt, AZ State Parks**

Note: more detailed notes not taken at this table

### **Current Efforts**

- AZ State Parks and Trails grants
  - Workshops held to inform potential applicants
- Red Rock Ranger District implementing ASPT OHV grants in Sedona

### **Challenges**

- Understanding the available options for trail projects in Arizona
- Many trail projects lack funding
- Equipment for trail projects difficult through grants
- Lack of understanding on grant application requirements, grant cycles, and time needed to write proposals

### **Successes**

- Arizona Trail Association utilizing the State Heritage Fund for trail conservation

### **Cool Ideas for the Future**

- Arizona grant opportunities compiled on a website (Network for AZ Trails?) with links and due dates

## **H. Skills Training - Wendy Lotze, Network for AZ Trails, and Brian Stultz, Wild AZ**

Note: more detailed notes not taken at this table

### **Current Efforts**

- Technical trail skills trainings for conservation corps and trail associations

### **Challenges**

- Capacity for training needs for volunteer crews
- Chainsaw certifications for volunteers
- Recruitment and retention of skilled trail workers

### **Successes**

- Arizona Trail Association's Trail Skills Institute

## **Cool ideas for the Future**

- Clearinghouse for training information/resources/available trainers
- Standardization of skills training into a nationally recognized curriculum

## **I. Access and Policy - Rebecca Antle, ASA4WDC and Bev Showalter, County Line Riders of Catalina**

### **Current Efforts**

- Work with AZ Game and Fish as partners for access considerations
- Engaging elected officials and those running for office to act on our behalf to protect trails
- Trails are Common Ground initiative has emerging educational programs
- Funding is available through AZ State Parks for safety and environmental education

### **Challenges**

- Side by side OHV's are harming efforts and the work that motorized groups have been doing for years
- Educating new users
- Irresponsible use can lead to lost access
- Manufacturers display irresponsible use in their advertising

### **Successes**

- Participation in initial public scoping ensures you can comment on final drafts
- Casa Blanca Canyon Trailhead: Private landowners are not always oppositional

### **Cool Ideas for the Future**

- Involve more youth in outdoor activities. Partner with organizations that have youth-based missions; examples: 4H, Boys and Girls Club, State Parks Campout
- Spend time building relationships with local City and County representatives
- Integrate trails and open spaces into master plans
- Make educational opportunities available at hubs and locations where trail users are shopping or using
- Bring back the Growing Smart Program (currently sunseting) that provides matching funds to purchase AZ State Lands that are identified as having high conservation value
- Increase the trail ambassador programs
- Involve more young adults in leadership roles as part of succession planning for recreation organizations
- Engage younger audiences by:
  - Direct invitations to individuals and groups
  - Frequent reminders and encouragement
  - Help with transportation to events

## **J. Trails and Environmental Considerations - Matt Roberts, Flagline Trails, and James Gregson, ACE**

### **Current Efforts**

- Ongoing support and encouragement for education to trail users
- Educate, engineer, and enforce

### **Challenges**

- Some places are not appropriate for trails and access. There is a need to balance providing appropriate access with meeting the needs of trail users to protect sensitive areas
- Trail user damage could close access to areas
- Trail use is growing, with COVID being a recent contributor- how much trail is enough?
- Social media is driving increased use and increased bad behavior (off-trail use)

### **Successes**

- Trails are the conduit to provide our access to nature if the human impact is concentrated and appropriate for the landscape
- Intentional trail design for expected demand

- Design trails to maximize sustainability for the landscape
  - Plan for where the water is coming from to reduce erosion and effects on the ecosystem

### Cool Ideas for the Future

- Sheriffs Departments should be made aware of OHV education grants
- Updated trail policy in terms of climate change
- Trail planning responds to rapidly changing demands via ongoing review and an iterative process
- Education presented as marketing campaigns to generate buy-in

## Evening Networking

Many participants reconvened at a local brewery (THAT Brewery) for informal networking.

## DAY 2 (MORNING)

### Welcome and Day 2 Kickoff

Kent Taylor (Pinal County) welcomed the group to the second day of the summit. Participants noted that they felt relieved in discussions from the day prior learning that they weren't the only ones dealing with the tough issues associated with trail planning, development, and management in Arizona. The breakout sessions helped participants learn from one another and build stronger relationships to work together in the future.



### Matchmaking session

Participants were given an opportunity to share any specific questions or challenges and other participants with relevant solutions/information could respond and/or volunteer to meet with them afterwards. Challenges and ideas that were raised, and the responses, included:

- **Teaching and training people about responsible trail use and caring for trails**
  - A good resource for this is AZ State Parks
  - Webinars for the American Trails can help people feel better informed and be better prepared to write a grant
- **Rerouting a Historic Trail (Blue Ridge Trail)**
- **Removing invasive species and putting water back in a creek**

- Sequencing is challenging; with this process, there are lots of balls in the air. \$2.25 million dollars was received to put water back in a creek
- Work has been conducted with Americorps and AZCC to remove invasive species from the creek and create a fire break
- A challenge for this project is having a number of different funders with different requirements and different timelines
- Resources suggested included:
  - Natural Channel Designs
  - Friends of the Verde River in Cottonwood does invasive species removal
  - Melissa McMaster is a Flagstaff riparian restoration expert
  - Maricopa County Parks has worked with the National Park Service Species Removal Teams in the Cave Creek Wash
  - Central Arizona Conservation Alliance (CAZCA) Restoration Program
  - Rivers, Trails, Conservation Alliance (RTCA) program out of the National Park Service offers free technical assistance for conservation and recreation planning. A person is assigned to a project for two years
- **Becoming a part of the [World Trails Network](#) and creating an International Friendship Trail in AZ**
  - This could help foster a culture of hiking, economic development, tourism, and more for small communities and foster cultural understanding and exchange
    - There could be a partnership with a trail in Mexico
- **Arizona Birding Trail:** Craig Anderson provided an update about the AZ Birding Trail
  - A steering committee is in place to develop the trail
  - There are 85 million birders in North America, and this number continues to grow. In Arizona alone, there were 840,000 birders that visited in 2010, adding approximately \$50 million dollars to the Arizona economy
  - The Birding Trail is a web-based trail that provides links to all the sites in a single location. Users can click on a specific site to find out what birds can be found there as well as what amenities and resources are available in the local community for birding, lodging, etc.
    - There are 300 sites in AZ that have been identified as valuable birding sites
  - This initiative needs more partners stepping up; it connects watchable wildlife opportunities with existing trails, etc. It is 85% done
  - Several participants shared resources, including:
    - The City of Peoria has an outreach coordinator who is promoting birding
    - Maricopa County Parks and Recreation has been receiving lots of recommendations to create web-based park maps. This could be done for the AZ Birding Trail to improve the user experience. There are GIS contacts from ASU that may be willing to help
    - The NAU GIS lab and master certificate program would also likely be willing to help
- **Indigenous Engagement in the Santa Rita Mountains:** Matt Nelson (ATA) provided an update
  - The whole mountain range is designated as a culturally significant place
  - The initiative created interpretive sign with the information that the tribe decided to share with the public
  - It is often noted that the “First process in Indigenous erasure was cartography”
    - AZ has the most offensive site names (thousands) listed in the United States



- Put a value on outdoor recreation and ensure that funding is allocated to managing and supporting outdoor recreation
- The network has been key to getting agencies and stakeholders on board with this

### **How would the Office of Outdoor Recreation be managed?**

- It could be managed, wholly or partially, by a university
  - AZ has a unique legislative structure that creates problems for putting the office in some departments. West Virginia and New Hampshire are doing theirs at the university level. The University is doing things like:
    - Helping with marketing
    - Facilitating outreach across the state with communities that want to transition from extraction to outdoor recreation
    - Coordinating across agencies and organizations
    - Putting recreation into high schools and community colleges as career pathways
  - There are pros and cons to a university structure (e.g., high overhead rates)
  - Can it both/and? Government level and university level? New Mexico and Oregon work like this
  - There must be coordination so that the office is not working in a bubble
- A high enough level in the government would be helpful for ensuring efficiency and collaboration
  - Governor direct involvement might be really key. However, a governor appointment is risky because funding can change based on government changes. It would need to be set up as a permanent office
  - This office needs some sort of built-in enforced cooperation mechanism for state agencies; a governor may be able to help enforce this cooperation
    - There will be cross-benefits that incentivize collaboration for agencies as well
  - Having a commission/board oversee the office (political buffer) so that the governor doesn't have so much power would be important. There need to be protections built in for funding, mission, and staff. As long as the board/commission is in place there is more continuity (e.g., AZ Fish and Game Department)

### **Where would the office live?**

- Ideally, it resides on its own with an advisory commission/board. This depends on the politics though
- AZ doesn't have state-level of economic development like other states, so it doesn't work there (even though the focus of the message is economic development, especially in rural AZ)

### **What would be the scope?**

- Liaison between government, outdoor recreation industry, and the public
- Also a convener between others that need to be in on the discussion (e.g., other state agencies/offices)

### **What is the timeline for this effort?**

- After the resolution, should we be pushing at the state level currently to move this effort forward?
  - People that are politically in-tune said that it would be dead on arrival due to a lack of interest from the current governor. The results of the November elections may change this

## **2. Volunteer coordination on the state level**

Note: despite a high level of expressed interest in volunteerism, this topic was addressed in other groups and this discussion table had only few participants.

- Convene conversations on volunteer-related aspects/topics as part of statewide virtual meetings and have more sharing on lessons learned, etc.

- Use the network to elevate volunteer interests across the state
- Send out a survey regarding volunteers

### 3. Technology - Recreation Impact Monitoring System app (RIMS)

#### Background on RIMS

- RIMS was presented at the American Trails conference. It is a volunteer app, developed in 2019, where people can record conditions when they're out in the field.
  - The cultural resources field has developed similar tools (Example:: Utah has developed an app for their archaeological site stewards)
- Algorithms create dashboards customized for land managers based on their priorities for trail work. The standards for trail conditions and surveys are based on standards from US government agencies
- The app allows the collection of surveys and photos as well as editing of features. You can report violations, conditions, and more. The data goes directly to land managers
- CO Mountain Club developed this tool which has expanded throughout the US. You can load base maps for specific areas, and available base maps are based on the number of users, etc. However, no base maps are available for AZ yet
- You can download the app at no cost
- The basic fee is \$600/year, but it has a sliding scale based on the data used



#### What are the potential benefits of this app?

- There are a lot of advantages of having a statewide system of trail conditions. The more information we have on conditions, the easier it is to address issues
  - An example application for RIMS is the USFS doing campsite surveys at Cochise Stronghold. They used Survey123, which is easy to use, but didn't allow the tracking of line data
- Stewardship report function would be especially useful to report
- It would be useful for trail users to have a way to tell land managers about violations and issues – signs could be posted on trailheads, etc.
  - One issue is updating the QR codes and people changing the QR codes
  - Also, not every place has cell service
  - Could encourage people to download the app ahead of going out.
- The Modernizing Access to Our Public Land Act requires federal land management agencies to standardize geographic data on outdoor recreation and provide maps describing the types of uses permitted on each trail. Development of this tool could help support compliance with this act

#### Where to get maps and information to support the app?

- State Parks is supposed to be mapping all the trails in AZ; these should be put into the app when done
- AZGEO might be a good place to find base maps; this is a GIS repository for datasets throughout the state
- All the areas in AZ have mapped their trails. Why can't anyone just gather what there already is?
- All the trail conditions data have been gathered for motorized trails in AZ in preparation for TMPs. We need to get it all gathered for other trails

- Would State Parks support getting someone to herd the cats to get the data together and get buy-in from land managers? Also need the tool to be housed somewhere
  - The State Office of Outdoor Recreation would be a great place to house this
- Some user groups use ArcGIS field maps – it feeds right into ArcGIS Online. Most nonprofit groups have it; ArcGIS online costs \$100/year for a nonprofit
  - Regular trail users don't have ESRI products. It would be good to have an accessible, free way for anyone to log information

#### **Additional questions and considerations for the use of this app**

- Successful use of this tool would involve buy-in from land managers, identification and gathering of base map data, and engagement of recreationists in using the app/reporting conditions
- USFS would like complaints to be logged/organized separately from other substantive data. Is there a way to do that?
- Funding for developing this app in AZ could be eligible for an ASPT RTP grant

## **4. User Impacts**

### **Positive User Impacts**

- More users want to be stewards, and there is user ownership of their trails
- Positive engagement among the community and users on trails (e.g., Maricopa Trail)
- Quartzite Off-Road- promotes tourism/off-road safety, with approximately ~200-600 people attending monthly meetings
- Positive tourism money (e.g., AZ Peace Trail ~675 miles( multiple counties), trails in Superior, trails in Camp Verde)
- City Council support for trails and economic impact
- Using videos to educate new and old users
- Trail volunteer programs
- Youth trail programs with health benefits
- More NGO involvement with agencies for trail stewardship

### **Negative User Impacts and Solutions**

- Social trail proliferation
  - Strava is part of the issue (e.g., time going down trails)- the solution could be blocking impacted social trails
  - People are posting on social media with GPS coordinates which can contribute to this issue
  - Solutions:
    - Personal engagement with those different individuals
    - Using social media
    - Giving "Leave No Trace Card"
    - Positively using technology can encourage people to stay on authorized trails
    - Blocking impacted social trails
- Impact of litter
  - Solution:
    - You pack it in, pack it up, pick up after others to address the issue

- Install a baggy pick-up station for dog walkers
- User conflicts between horseback riders and hikers.
  - Solution:
    - Community engagement to share different issues and perspectives
    - Use social media to educate folks and interpretive signage
- Educating users to be responsible on the trail
- Accessibility, portals into trails
- Impacts of motorcycles to single-track trails
  - Solution
    - Education/enforcement
    - Engineering to restrict access
- Increased trail use, requiring more maintenance and managers
- Wildfire impacts to trails
  - Solution:
    - Educate people to be more responsible users
    - Write columns to inform people how to be more responsible
- Getting diverse communities out on the trails (e.g., in Superior)

## 5. Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

### Discussion Takeaways

- At the SCORP table, the group discussed the themes that have been generated from stakeholder sessions conducted in the summer/fall of 2021 and 3 data sets (invested public users, a random sample of Arizona households, and recreation providers) that will guide the 2023 SCORP document
- The group discussed some suggestions for improvements to the statewide planning process and upcoming opportunities to get involved

## 6. Climate Change and Trails

### Considerations for Climate Change and Trails

- Design intelligent trails
  - Integrate them into education, signage, and engagement
  - Use flexible design
  - Integrate Traditional Ecological Knowledge
  - Design to fail
  - Create disaster recovery trail builders
  - Integrate into the handbooks and instructions required for trail-building
  - Create fire breaks
- Office of Outdoor Recreation (*see topic 1*)
  - Need it to create consistent messaging across platforms and organizations
  - Need a recreation public relations professional
- What is a resilient trail?
  - Ridgeline
  - Not built based on vegetation alone
  - Mid-slope
  - Using washes strategically
- Messaging and communication

- Where do we send people?
- Seasonal Closures
  - Closing trails/forests on a seasonal basis
  - Fires restrictions on a seasonal basis

## 7. Diversity and Equity

### Ideas for Increasing Diversity and Equity in Trails Throughout AZ

- Develop volunteerism
- Increase trail use
- Conduct more (and better) tribal engagement
  - Increase grant applications from tribes
  - Increase outreach to tribes for volunteer engagement
  - AZ Office of Tourism Tribal Liaison can assist with tribal relationships
- Utilize stronger statewide collaboration to learn from each other and strengthen initiatives
  - Provide case studies on a website, share inclusive events on website
    - Example: Feliz Paseos Trails Park- Trails built for a variety of needs
    - Example: Latino Conservation Week- can submit events to their website to advertise for low-cost, family-friendly events
- Create messaging that is not exclusive; how do we make messaging inclusive and welcoming to everyone?
- Enhance accessibility of trails and access to information in an equitable way
  - Engage all ability levels- partner with Adaptive wildlife, Ability 360, Ancestral Land, Indian Youth Service Corps
  - Provide trail data on what users will encounter in signage (HETAP process. Must share the data and make it available
  - Make existing trails accessible as far as you can; even 500 feet matters
  - Consider the proximity of trails to communities; not everyone can drive an hour up Mt. Lemmon
  - Re-evaluate AZ Birding Trail for existing accessibility to provide information
  - Educate on the importance of accessible trails with improved messaging
  - Bring trails and nature to diverse neighborhoods
  - Provide public transportation to trailheads
    - Start small, start local, where people already live
- Use exposure-based youth programming
  - 21st-century youth programming- outdoor recreation-based after-school programming
  - Fleet of bikes to travel from school to school for after-school events
  - Verde Valley Wheel Fund, a trilingual school in Flagstaff for inclusive youth opportunities
- Provide DEI training and messaging
  - Use the Network monthly meetings to provide DEI training
  - Can the Network be used to pool funding for DEI training? Partner with Corps Network with existing tribal liaison for training?
  - Leave No Trace has researched messaging strategies- can we adapt to DEI efforts?
- Use DEI Engagement and Outreach Best Practices
  - Are you willing to go back? Multiple outreach efforts are often necessary
  - Ensure all voices are included, what is missing? Who is missing? No token representation
  - Names- who do we honor in naming trails?

- Be respectful. Don't make assumptions. Don't assume you know the answer
- Acknowledge past histories- understand differing use patterns and how to connect everyone to the trails/outdoor recreation
- Utilize existing organizations that already have diversity initiatives
- Embrace Urban Trails
  - Need to bring in companies that are already designing, planning, and building urban trails
  - Need a mix of recreation and transportation intent for trails

## 8. E-Bikes

### Questions and Comments Raised about E-Bikes

- E-Bikes are growing and are likely here to stay
- What are the rules for e-bikes? (USFS, BLM rules specifically)
  - Forest Service has new rules- Special Exemptions/Process
  - Can there be a special exemption for E-Bikes on USFS lands (Wilderness) - to create motorized single-track trails? What would that process be?
  - Bypass segments?
  - How do people apply for special E-Bike use on designated trails? Want more information!
    - Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists has a resource guide
- Enforcement of E-bikes leads to challenges
- There are mobility concerns
  - ATA-National Scenic Trail (No E-bikes)
- Need more information on E-Bikes themselves
  - What distance can E-Bikes go?
  - What is the difference between Class 1, 2, and 3?
  - How are E-Bikes charged?
  - What are the most popular types?
- Will E-Bikes be allowed on the Sun Corridor Trail?
- E-Bike education
  - Use commercials to educate riders? Or the bike vendors should help educate
  - User behavior? Education - etiquette?
- We should be actively planning for the use of E-bikes and other future uses
  - Natural resource damage questions? More impact on resources? Research hasn't supported that so far
  - Capacity issues - will E-Bikes bring even more use to our already well-used (loved to death in some cases) trails?
  - Review the "Living Streets" program - can it accommodate extra uses and traffic?

## Next Steps

Topical next steps - Each Trails Café group reported their main takeaways and next steps:

- **Group 1: Office of Outdoor Recreation**
  - Join the WG to advance efforts towards creating an Office of Outdoor Recreation
  - Strategize next steps with the governor and other state leaders for the office
- **Group 2: Volunteer Coordination**
  - Convene conversations on volunteer-related aspects/topics as part of statewide virtual meetings and have more sharing on lessons learned, etc.
  - Use the network to elevate volunteer interests across the state

- Send out a survey regarding volunteers
- **Group 3: Technology**
  - Get Coronado National Forest to pilot RIMS program
    - Address questions about functionality, confidentiality, etc.
  - State parks is also interested, there may be potential for an RTP grant to fund this
- **Group 4: User Impacts**
  - Volunteers are key and needed to support reducing user impacts
  - Need resources for enforcement of trail users
  - Mitigation of undesigned/social trails should be pursued
  - Fire risks should be addressed
  - Leave No Trace perspective- Recommended signage and posters to push out and keep consistent messaging across the state
    - Play off of Appreciate AZ
- **Group 5: SCORP**
  - Provide feedback. Draft available for public comment in June
  - Reach out to get involved with implementation
- **Group 6: Climate Change and Trails**
  - Designing intelligent trails and what they look like
  - Involve the Office of Outdoor Recreation (when created)
  - Define resilient trail
  - Develop messaging and communication about this
  - Create a seasonal closure message
- **Group 7: Diversity and Equity**
  - A lot of people are needed to engage and connect with new communities and show our commitment to them before expecting any reciprocating action. Being respectful and learning from other communities is necessary
  - Create a database of resources of successful and not successful case studies
- **Group 8: E-Bikes**
  - Education is needed; provide resources for education about E-bikes, definitions, what agencies are doing, and regulatory things
  - E-bikes are probably here to stay so we need to try to find the best ways to manage that, being proactive when possible

Network-wide next steps:

- Participate in the monthly statewide virtual forums (3rd Monday of the month from 12-1pm; open to all interested topics/discussions). See NAzT website for more info and Zoom link.
  - Future topic suggestions:
    - ADA trails
    - Water trails
    - Bird trails
    - Connecting trails
    - Following up on next steps item- progress reports
  - Respond to survey

- Topical Working Groups
  - These were developed during the first summit, some are active, some topics still pending
  - Additional Working Group on the following topics were suggested in this summit:
    - Technology/RIMS
    - Climate Change
    - Diversity and equity
    - International Friendship Trail
    - Communications
    - Internships
- Please join the steering committee and help plan the next summit
  - Contact Wendy if interested in steering or leading a Working Group
- Next Summit
  - Location
    - Moving around the state?
    - Superior next year?
    - Pinal county?
    - Support for continued Cottonwood location
  - Add an expo component with the latest and greatest of trail tools
  - Market and outreach the summit in a way that draws in young professionals looking to join
    - Schedule **after** finals week
    - Create mentorship opportunities as part of the network
    - Advertise internships
    - Go directly to students and present about education resources as well as opportunities in outdoor recreation
- Start informal regional get-togethers (~2 hours at a brewery to facilitate regional connections)

## Participants

95 representatives of trail groups, organizations, and agencies from across the state and beyond - [link](#).

Thank you as well to the Summit Steering Committee, additional helpers at the event, and our sponsors.

### Steering Committee:

Beth Keune - AZ Game and Fish Department  
 Bev Showalter - County Line Riders of Catalina  
 Brian Poturalski - U.S. Forest Service  
 Claire Miller - City of Phoenix  
 Kent Taylor - Pinal County Open Space & Trails  
 Kirk Astroth - Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists  
 Mark Loeth - American Conservation Experience  
 Rebecca Antle - ASA4WDC  
 Rich Smith - Tonto Recreation Alliance  
 Tahnee Robertson - Southwest Decision Resources  
 Wendy Lotze - Arizona Trail Association

*Thank you also to additional group facilitators:*

Brian Stultz - Wild AZ  
Brian Whitehead - McDowell Sonoran Conservancy  
Craig Ferdig - Backcountry Horsemen Chapter of AZ  
Dawn Collins - AZ State Parks  
Jake Swanson - Southwest Decision Resources  
Jeff Schmidt - AZ State Parks  
Jessica Archibald - Southwest Decision Resources  
Julia Sittig - Southwest Decision Resources  
Ken Sliwa - AZ State Parks and Trails  
Kevin Adams - Red Rock Trails Fund  
Matt Caldwell - Tread Lightly  
Matt Roberts - Flagline Trails  
Matt Nelson - AZ Trail Association  
Mickey Rogers - AZ State Parks  
Shawn Redfield - AZ Trail Association

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Southwest Trail Solutions  
Arizona Trail Association  
Sonoran Desert Mountain Bicyclists  
Southwest Decision Resources  
Arizona State Association of 4 Wheel Drive Clubs Inc.  
Nash Power Sports  
Singletrack Trails  
City of Cottonwood

