

APPALACHIAN TRAIL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP
**Thinking Globally: Science & Policy Drivers for Large-Landscape
Conservation in the Appalachians**
September 22, 2022 | Helpful Links & Participant Feedback

Helpful Links

Wild East Action Fund

- <https://appalachiantrail.org/our-work/conservation/landscape/wild-east-action-fund/>

Virtual Session 1 Recording:

- https://appalachiantrail-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/g/personal/dbruffey_appalachiantrail_org/EVRHPm3ONulCh8-1V8PMseMBMsHfQBS_W3p-jWVwcyFh3g?e=EI688x

ATLP's Strategic Plan

- https://appalachiantrail.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/07/ATLP_Strategic_Plan_2022_2024.pdf

Conserving an Intact and Enduring Appalachian Landscape: Designing a Corridor in Response to Climate Change (2022):

- <https://appalachiantrail.org/our-work/conservation/landscape/building-an-appalachian-climate-corridor/>

Resource Links from Presentations:

- Claire Jantz: Director, Center of Land Use and Sustainability at Shippensburg University
 - Appalachian Trail Natural Resources Assessment: <https://appalachian-trail-natural-resource-condition-assessment-clus.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Gary Tabor: Executive Director, Center for Large Landscape Conservation
 - CLLC website: <https://largelandscapes.org/>
- Sacha Spector: Program Director for the Environment, Doris Duke Charitable Foundation
 - DDCF website: <https://www.ddcf.org/>

ATLP eNews - Beyond the Boundary... signup now!

- <http://eepurl.com/dme7zn>

ATLP's Landscape Conservation webpage

- <https://appalachiantrail.org/our-work/conservation/landscape/>

ATLP email

- Atlp@appalachiantrail.org

Intro Survey Feedback

There is a lot of federal funding that has recently been made available through federal policy. (Great American Outdoors Act, Inflation Reduction Act, American Infrastructure Act, etc.)

What do you/your organization need to better access this funding?

- 004 Guidance on eligibility. There are so many programs with money now, a "fact sheet" or something like that would be helpful so we know what programs we can pursue.
- 005 Better access through facilitated help
- 006 A willingness for some of our federal and state partners to pursue the funding. And prepare to compete for any competitive grants.
- 007 Training would be greatly beneficial due to lack of knowledge of funding resources and potential project eligibilities.
- 008 Grant/project workflows - streamline/clarify the process
More funding to federal agencies so they have more capacity to support grants
- 009 help disseminating the opportunities, understanding the management of the grant, reimbursement, etc
- 010 A streamlined process for acquiring funds across the funding opportunities "common app"
- 011 Better understanding of how and when these funds will be dispersed. Where are the opportunities for conservation groups? Where are the opportunities for conservation organizations to partner with municipalities? It would be great to get it distilled down to a summary of action steps and/or items to keep an eye out for.
- 012 Better, clearer, straightforward information on how to access it.
- 013 Knowledge of which federal funding program to prioritize and timelines for RFPs
- 014 Less red tape at the federal level, \$ allocated for required due diligence costs (survey, appraisal, etc.), more funding in a pooled fund that can be quickly and easily deployed, more staff at the federal level to manage projects.
- 015 Matching Funding and grant writing
- 016 Here to listen, won't likely be involved in writing funding grants
- 017 N/A, though I'd love to hear other folks' answers

Breakout Room Feedback

How can the ATLP best support science and policy efforts to further land conservation at the regional, landscape, and international/global scale?

- 001 creating local conservations through the AT Communities
- 002 Ensuring communications is organized and that we are raising the awareness of the importance of this region. Op-eds and blogs on the need for this region, significance of the trail and ecosystem. ATLP should be providing a service to its members and that includes communications and getting this story and report out.
- 003 This is a rural landscape and we need to acknowledge the concerns of rural communities and climate change does not work in some landscapes. We need advice and discussion to ensure that we do not shut things off before we are even able to get to people to table. Focusing on different values- sea level rise versus climate change. Finding people who were skeptical in the past and who have come around to conservation.
- 004 technical assistance is a helpful attribute to obtain guidance and insights to put conservaiton dollars into NGO's to conserve land
- 005 Advocate for increased staffing of the realty divisions at the state and federal levels.
- 006 Implement the Smithsonian's Changing Landscapes Initiative.
- 007 Local policy is driving fragmentation, so focused and strategic work needs to be done at that scale. Work with municipal leaders to advocate. Partners at the local level (land trust/local municipalities) can often act more quickly and support easement and reduce fragmentation gradually.
- 008 This is a campaign or not. If it is it needs a toolkit and communications strategy to be able to use the report. Otherwise, it will sit on the shelf- this has to be sold and we need to have common language. How much are partners using the report, how much land trusts using it? There has been no guidance on how to use it and how to apply it.
- 009 Advocate for states and federal agencies to encourage NGOs to aggregate parcels and landowners for greater ecological connectivity and larger acreage/\$.
- 010 Integrating the local community and economic development opportunities in the AT land, through local stakeholder engagement (local businesses, landowners, land trusts, decision makers). Using models and examples of where it's worked in other parts of the country and world will be helpful.
- 011 Often the challenge is convening and achieving conservation across boundaries. Kittatinny ridge example - providing resources across municipalities and research to

share knowledge. Meet communities where they are and support development in the right place to support economic growth across a municipality.

- 012 A coordinated federal policy effort that engages ATLP partners. Like, an annual policy agenda.
- 013 Current use programs need to be supported.
- 014 Coordination around resources so we are making sure they are spread across the region. Working at smaller regional approaches is key- as working across the large scale of the whole AT is daunting and maybe not work.
- 015 Feds and states can give monies to landowners (tax breaks) who are managing for natural systems (not harvesting).
- 016 Authentic engagement and partnership with Tribes and Indigenous-led Organizations _early_ in planning process.
- 017
 - state/fed grant connections and knowledge to access funds
 - connections to high-capacity national/regional organizations/efforts
 - advocacy from regional partners to support very local efforts
 - policy implementation improvements (e.g., expedite land transaction resources at state level; appraisal and surveyor issues)
 - regional/national data and bringing it to a local level; and what are local gaps and what needs to be ground-truthed locally?
 - housing vs. conservation intersections and partnerships
- 018
 - Having folks that are more involved with land planning, land use, aware of and engaging with the ATLP could be a value add for sharing information, enhancing the network and looking at ways to help people connect for actual work on the ground using resources.
 - We need everyone beating the same drum to garner as much resources as possible to activate the conservation work.
 - Lots of science to draw from, but the work that the Smithsonian is doing with land use change and helping to visualize that change more proactively – we need more social science into the equation
 - Try to get more diversity in the organizational members and bring them in the process in a number of different ways

- Policy is most important part because there isn't a secret method to getting the public on board, but we'll be on that road forever if we try to get the public involved

- We need to deal with bureaucratic red tape and we need to find a way to solve it to help organizations do their work more efficiently, like the Highlands Conservation Act where money can go directly to the organization and doesn't have to go through an approval process, need to go through and look at what will work best. We need to cut the red tape and make it easier to spend money.

019 By communicating a shared vision for the big picture landscape corridor in our diverse localities, with locally relevant ideas for implementation. The mega-corridor will be an emergent property of many independent efforts...if we keep the vision in focus.

020 - local ground-truthing processes can be shared with other partners/regions

021 National Park Service- 2% of the land mass in the lower 48- they have a role and what they have to offer is a strong and respected voice and important conservation programs. National trail system, national heritage areas, national rivers, etc. that are woven through this whole region. LWCF at state level, NPS plays a big role in administering this program- so they could help guide the land that is prioritized to be protected. Communications is also something they could do and they could do more to nail down the role of the landscape as a climate corridor. They are also working on a one-stop shop to complement the conservation atlas that is underdevelopment. The states are key on this- communications are state dependent and need to fit into the context of challenges and culture. State funding is also part of this and the SWAPs.

022 Inventory all the funding programs and how to apply that are embedded in the IRA and Infrastructure laws.

023 Set a common policy agenda and coordinate policy efforts more closely. Provide support like talking points, legislative priorities, etc.

024 Group 6

ATLP is likely to be the critical implementing body for protection of the Appalachian Landscape, as well as an inspirational model. ATLP could/should be a driver of regional and sub-regional partnerships. Regional partnerships are where implementation will truly be achieved.

Regional models tied into the ATLP should be additive rather than duplicative. Regional partnerships can strategize based on local needs, momentum, issues, interests.

Making people part of the solution - Can we tailor the message, language, input, and level of engagement to the appropriate audiences. Technical conversations are appropriate for some but climate conversations may not be the best way to engage

many. Water is likely the best variable for engaging the general public and those who live within the landscape.

025 Remember that when we think about local communities, local government officials and citizens on the right side of the political aisle do support what we do and are opposed to "bad development." At the same time, in some cases, the focus on rural economic development has resulted in support for activities (like warehouse development) that work against nature-based/place-based economic development.

026 Outreach strategy - we have a tendency to talk to like-minded people and organizations. We need to stretch ourselves to engage with new stakeholders (local officials, economic development officials). We can't achieve our goals by land conservation alone.

Recommendation: conduct a network analysis of the ATLP. This assessment of the social system would highlight gaps between science and policy goals and the capacity of the network to address challenges.

027 Need to ground efforts in the science, but there is a lack of appreciation for what the science is saying. Local communities have a tendency to take their local landscapes for granted. Connections to those communities need to be strengthened to raise awareness about the global importance of their landscapes, and to support alternative pathways for economic development that are compatible with the resources.

028 Conversations at the community level through the AT Communities at the local town level to create pathways of two-way communication.

Science does not change people's minds. Listening within the communities and getting to know what matters to people and individuals within a community.

Information at the public level that is actionable.

Helping defog climate change and bring to each individual the understanding

Making the issues relatable such as Humane Society showing the poor conditions of animals to move people to get on board.

What about the communities within the communities, the housing community, the people of color, aged populations, etc. Not just the recreational community.

What does change people's minds? The recreational aspect gives people a tactile connection to the science.

Knowledge is important but is insufficient.

Building constituency at the local level. If WE were strong we would not have the climate issue that we are facing now. We are lacking the depth. Land conservation has been led by and related to by a certain kind of person.

Connect the science and the experience to what matters to individuals. Quality of life is something that matters to everyone – man woman and child.

Siloization is our challenge.

- 029 Land conservancies have re-oriented to more deeply engage with local communities. While large land conservation opportunities are still important, there has been a realization that local communities are where landscape decisions are made. These may be good models for how to engage with local communities/policies.
- 030 Funding should be pushed down to local and regional efforts where there is a real capacity need. Funding that supports staffing and consultants is especially important. Support for grant writing/identification of opportunities, because small organizations may not have this capacity.
- 031 The project orientation problem might be solved with a policy advocacy role for the ATLP, to present to funders and federal decision makers the argument that funding streams need to be adjusted to meet capacity needs.
- 032 Continue to communicate and lean in to the regional collaboration that's critical for achieving long-term resilience
- 033 -Posted Policy Priorities to focus efforts (be it action, science, or communication)
-Ways to know who is doing what and not repeat efforts
-Help knowing how to access the federal money (especially at regional level) - Help agencies know how to connect as well
-Supporting Land Use Change Modeling Efforts
- 034 Challenges:
Policy barrier: land trusts lack capacity at the local level
Data to combat these challenges: Point to Use of Parks - helpful to get additional capacity
Some communities even rural/ag don't necessarily have the access to the outdoors (trail etc.) Data being used: Natural Heritage Assessments, TPL Access to Outdoors!
- 035 The tie to natural resource based economy. A top down approach will not work for much of this- landscape level partnerships is key.
Could we map the Catalyst Fund grantees- overlaid with the ATC- we now have 60 across the nation- could these serve as a key way to disseminate and support this work? Providing them with tools and ways to support the Climate Corridor concept.

- 036 In PA we have an old "cost of community services" report. 10 years old. Would be great to have that updated. For example, commercial/industrial/residential development cost more than the revenue that comes in.
- 037 Can the ATLP build capacity to support the leadership and implementation of regional partnerships?

Can the ATLP be a driver for smart and efficient movement of funding. Even with large amount of funding coming available, mechanisms for access and getting that into the hands of partners, is not entirely clear or simple.
- 038 Find out from more locally active groups what the hot topics, projects and values are for various groups of local stakeholders, and find ways to connect large scale landscape protection and restoration goals to speak to local needs and concerns.
- 039 Coordinate with other regional landscape-scale collaboratives to both minimize reinventing the wheel and increase efficiencies/synergies to achieve shared goals/outcomes.
- 040 Support the Environmental Advisory Council network in PA. Managed by WeConservePA. EAC members are official local government representatives and the gateway to municipal work.
- 041 Invest in social behavior change model and rolling out.

Meeting Chat

- Cliff McCreedy: Hello, Cliff McCreedy, National Park Service, US Biosphere Network
- Jeff Hunter - NPCA: Jeff Hunter, Southern Appalachian Director, National Parks Conservation Association. based near Asheville, NC.
- Cody Barnhart: Cody Barnhart, Franklin County Planning Department
- Jason Beale - Cen. PA Cons.: Jason Beale, Central PA Conservancy, Exec. Director
- Katie Allen (she/her), ATC: Thanks for joining everyone! Good morning from Katie Allen, Director of Landscape Conservation, Appalachian Trail Conservancy
- Charles Chester: Charlie Chester, Brandeis U
- Zac Cole | NY-NJ Trail Conference: Good morning, Zac Cole, NY-NJ Trail Conference. This is my first meeting, great to meet you all.
- Bill Potapchuk (he/him), CBI: Welcome Zac!

Jason Latham: Jason Latham and Patrick Sullivan, Rangeley Lakes Heritage Trust in Rangeley Maine

Paul Elconin: Paul Elconin, Program Officer, Conservation, Fidelity Foundations (Northern Forest)

Julia Rogers: Julia Rogers, Senior Land Protection Manager at the Housatonic Valley Association. Great to meet y'all.

Andrea Reese: Andrea Reese, consultant based in Virginia. I think a lot of orgs need funding access with fewer administrative hurdles.

John Canan: John Canan here from Brunswick, Maryland. A.T. Community Volunteer Conservation Steward

David Lillard: Hello all. David Lillard, Catoctin Land Trust

John Canan: and Katie my background photo is between Harpers Ferry and Brunswick

Emma Weaver: Emma Weaver, Conservation Grant Program Assistant, Virginia Outdoors Foundation

Faren Wolter, USFWS (she/her): Faren Wolter, Social Scientist and Science Coordinator USFWS (Ches Bay Field Office)

Don Owen: Don Owen, Senior Executive Consultant, Lands Trails and Parks, Unison, Virginia

Hannah Larson: Hi everyone, Hannah Larson, Appalachian Conservation Associate at The Nature Conservancy

Diana Christopulos: Diana Christopulos - Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club and Blue Ridge Land Conservancy

Kris Gilbert: Kris Gilbert, unaffiliated but interested

Ron Rosen: Ron Rosen (volunteer) at NY-NJ Trail Conference. Good morning everyone!

Jeremy Dertien: Jeremy Dertien, Clemson University

John Canan: Hey Don Ownen

Michaela Weglinski: Michaela Weglinski, Local Conservation Communications Intern, Changing Landscapes Initiative at Smithsonian's National Zoo and Conservation Biology Institute

Tom McAvoy: Conservation Supervisor, Roanoke ATC

Craig Fergus: Craig Fergus, GIS Lab Manager, Smithsonian Conservation Biology Institute

Jackie Dagger: Hi all, Jackie Dagger, Program Manager for the Vermont Outdoor Recreation Economic Collaborative, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks and Recreation and Agency of Commerce and Community Development

Edward Warren: Edward Warren, Hudson Highlands Land Trust

Greg Jacob: Greg Jacob, Sr Policy Advisor for The Nature Conservancy in New York.

Max Olsen (he/him)
ATC & NATLP: Hello all!

Lisabeth Willey,
USFWS: Lisabeth Willey, Science Coordinator, Science Applications, USFWS (based in Hadley, MA)

Karen Russell: Karen Russell, Heart of Maryland

Christine Laporte: Christine Laporte, Wildlands Network, Asheville NC

Diana Christopulos: State scale credibility - why is Maine low?

Simon Rucker: It is largely a working forest area

Diana Christopulos: So data are private or not reported?

Faren Wolter, USFWS
(she/her): Maine is also managing for invasive insect impacts

John Canan: thx Max

Max Olsen (he/him)
ATC & NATLP: 

Claire Jantz, SU-CLUS: @Diane - "Credibility" when it comes to the Breeding Bird Data is related mostly to the sample size achieved in each region.

Diana Christopulos: Thx

Claire Jantz, SU-CLUS: @ Faren, yes, we looked at invasive species both through the Forest Inventory data and through EDDMaps - it's a landscape-wide issue, although some areas are getting hit harder than others

John Canan: Bravo Gary

Sacha Spector - DDCF:

1. Create More Parks and Safe Outdoor Opportunities in Nature-Deprived Communities
2. Create More Parks and Safe Outdoor Opportunities in Nature-Deprived Communities
3. Support Tribally Led Conservation and Restoration Priorities
4. Expand Collaborative Conservation of Fish and Wildlife Habitats and Corridors
5. Increase Access for Outdoor Recreation
6. Incentivize and Reward the Voluntary Conservation Efforts of Fishers, Farmers, and Forest Owners
7. Create Jobs by Investing in Restoration and Resilience

John Canan: I have to step away for a few minutes

Gary Tabor CLLC: I want to thank Kat Lyons for leading the CAG efforts for CLLC and ATC.

Diana Christopulos: Excellent presentations'

Sacha Spector - DDCF: +Gary

Tom McAvoy: How do you manage a forest to be more climate resilient?

Charles Chester: Thanks for great presentations. Stepping off as not able to talk

Faren Wolter, USFWS (she/her): Really great talks. With numerous regional landscape conservation collaboratives and conservation blueprints emerging, I would enjoy brainstorming ideas for bridging those because capacity to fully engage in multiple initiatives will be taxed

Christine Laporte: I am sorry, I must take another meeting. Enjoyed the presentations and discussions and look forward to ways to contribute. Cheers

Max Olsen (he/him) ATC & NATLP: Thanks for participating Christine!

Cassidy Lord, ATC: Thanks, Christine. I'm glad you could join us.

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: What are the ideal catalyzing functions of nested networks like the regional conservation partnerships (RCPs) and the ATLP to get these new conservation dollars on the ground in ways that engage new communities and partners? Why aren't these functions happening now to the needed level? How do we meet these needs?

Cliff McCreedy, NPS, US Biosphere Network: Yes, geographic social network analysis of entities on the landscape would help us get to scale and do outreach.

Deb Davidson, CLLC and NLC: NLC could map the Catalyst Fund grantees - landscape collaborative we have in the region. And add in the RCP landscape collaboratives and others we know of.

Sacha Spector - DDCF: That's a fantastic question Bill - I'd love to hear your thoughts on how RCPs or other networks can achieve the results you describe.

Cliff McCreedy, NPS, US Biosphere Network: Our group has a similar comment.

David Lillard, Catoclin Land Trust: In the Heart of Maryland, we adopted the report as our plan. It provides the unifying vision.

Cassidy Lord, ATC: That's a great use of the report, David. Thanks for sharing.

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: Highstead, RCP Network, Northeast Forest Network are crafting shared messaging to support state and regional calls to action dealing with increasing forest carbon stores following a report out next month. Big experiment. On a shoe-string budget. We can share results.

Jeanne Ortiz, Audubon Mid-Atlantic: Agree about A.T. Communities

Cliff McCreedy, NPS, US Biosphere Network: Agree that quality of life and place are the universal values that bring people together.

Jeanne Ortiz, Audubon Mid-Atlantic: People love birds. We partnered with ATC/A.T. Community on a native garden and A.T. walk.

John Canan: That is awesome Jeanne, where was that?

Jeanne Ortiz, Audubon Mid-Atlantic: Duncannon, PA. Planting at a historic tavern.

John Canan: oh yes, duncannon is rockin' it

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: RCPs partnering to sustain bird pops with Cornell and Audubons from ME to PA. <https://www.birds.cornell.edu/landtrust/northeast-bird-habitat-initiative/#ebird-map>

Claire Jantz, SU-CLUS: Hear hear!

Jennifer Melville: I completely agree with Deb and this is a meaningful way to build relationship and partnership

Sacha Spector - DDCF: +1 Deb

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: We need info/hand-holding on how we can access these funds and how our partners can.

Jennifer Melville: There is an effort among Maine funders to help hire grant writers and experts to support towns and Tribes

David Lillard, Catoclin Land Trust: Agree, Bill.

John Canan: I have to run for an outside meeting. Many thanks for this gathering, presentations, and our discussions

Faren Wolter, USFWS CBFO: Not just capacity to access funds, small or underrepresented groups also need grant administration and reporting support

Deb Davidson, CLLC and NLC: 100% agree with access of funds is only the first step. but then using them and ensuring durable conservation outcomes is the key. That means capacity in the long-term to ensure stewardship in the long-term.

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: Do we need to focus on developing demonstrations of how locally-driven conservation can move forward with these increased pots of federal funding?

Sacha Spector - DDCF: ALL LANDS ON DECK!

Jeanne Ortiz, Audubon Mid-Atlantic: Need more conservation-minded local elected officials, at least in PA. One way is to support/establish Environmental Advisory Councils. They often move on to supervisor/council positions.

Bill Labich (he/him), Highstead, RCP Network: Great idea, Jeanne

Claire Jantz, SU-CLUS: It's REALLY HARD to get funding for relationship building!

Jennifer Melville: +1 to Jeanne!

David Lillard, Catoclin Land Trust: Thank you!

Faren Wolter, USFWS CBFO: Need to encourage institutional change with some grantees who only count measurable ecological outcomes as success metrics. I'm working in this with USFWS

Cliff McCreedy, NPS, US Biosphere Network: YAY!

Katie Allen (she/her), ATC: Thank you all! We look forward to building on this conversation with future gatherings!

Sacha Spector - DDCF: thanks!

Liz Willey, USFWS: thanks~