

# **Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership**

## **Final Report**

### **Communications Strategy and Brand Identity Development**

Prepared by Elise Annes and Emily Boedecker

Momentum Communications



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For logo files and usage requirements, please contact ATLP's manager, Cassidy Lord, at [clord@appalachiantrail.org](mailto:clord@appalachiantrail.org).

# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## Communications Strategy and Priorities



Prepared by Elise Annes and Emily Boedecker of Momentum Communications  
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### Context

The ATLP is a young partnership and is in the transition phase from start-up to growth. With its grassroots as a 'Friends of' organization and now with the support of two established and critical partners the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the National Parks Service, the partnership is poised to launch a branding and communication effort.

Becoming a growth-stage operation means focusing on standardizing and deepening programs to meet the needs of the partners large and small, adapting the structure and processes, and investing in the capacity, systems, and resources to support that growth.

Strong, frequent and value-added communications are an essential component of the transition to the growth phase and are essential components of a successful partnership. Not only is this the means by which you establish who you are and share the goals and progress of the partnership, it is a vital tool to increase the engagement of partners in the network, to demonstrate the value of the partnership, and to generate content which then feeds the strength and success of your communications.

Clarifying the relationships and standing with the two main partners, ATC and NPS, is a foundational element of communications. ATLP, ATC and NPS need to consistently communicate the same message about the role of the partnership, its relationship to NPS and ATC, and the conservation goals and outcomes it is pursuing. In particular, is ATLP an independent partnership working to accelerate the same, overlapping or complementary goals of the ATC and NPS, or is it a funded and supported program of the ATC or NPS? This has implications for decision-making, funding and priority setting as well as the messaging and implementation of a communications strategy.

The following strategy recommendations include launching the recently developed logo and brand identity, building the systems the partnership needs, and recommendations for specific communications channels.

## Communications Strategy Recommendations

1. **Clearly articulate the benefits of being a part of the ATLP.** This means creating a clear vision and priorities for ATLP for the next three to five years, and the benefits of participation.
  - a. The Steering Committee must define ATLP's value, backed up with specific examples of activities.
  - b. The partnership can leverage the network to build connections, share expertise, pool resources for short term and long-term goals, and build a positive brand association that resonates across the region and with important partners.
  - c. Define what being a participant/partner means. It can be as simple as I'm interested and the organization gets access to content, members of the partnership and use of the logo, or it could be an alignment of conservation objectives, or a minimum commitment of engagement.
  
2. **Launch the logo** and the core messages as the hook for reaching out with enthusiasm and excitement about what the partnership can accomplish. Use the vision, priorities and benefits with the logo launch.
  - a. Start with the low hanging fruit: circle back to those that participated in the survey and interviews, attended an annual meeting, received newsletters, and have engaged in any way with ATLP.
    - i. Lead story in e-newsletter with invitation to send on to others.
    - ii. E-mail focused launch communication.
    - iii. Invitation to attend an online session to learn more, or to access recording of the session.
  - b. Expand the network to those who are or have dipped their toes into the partnership and see potential for more.
    - i. reach out to other conservation partnerships
    - ii. identify potential partners and schedule introductory session
    - iii. look for conference opportunities to present the visions, priorities and benefits of being an active participant in the partnership.
  
3. **Collect testimonials and other communications assets** (such as quotes, photos) to use in various social media platforms, newsletters, press releases, emails, etc. Testimonials are authentic comments from your partners that offer specific, concise and relevant proof points for the value ATLP is delivering. This form of communication is an inexpensive but effective marketing tool.
  - a. Start with the steering committee and have those organization representatives share why they are at the table.

- b. You may have these testimonials organized by ATLP region (consider using the mountain ranges people naturally identify with, the Allegheny, Whites, Blue Ridge etc.), by topic, or by audience. While a simple spreadsheet can help to organize data, think ahead to the size of partnership you aspire to have, and the volume of contacts and communication assets you will be managing - see CRM recommendation.
4. **Consider using a CRM (customer relationships management system)** to build vital infrastructure to manage the relationship with partners. Either the ownership of this asset should be with the Partnership, or there should be agreement in place with how ATC and ATLP contacts can be utilized by each other. While there is a start-up investment in learning how to use a platform and entering information, it is a very useful way to keep track of relationships, generate communications outreach, tie into websites, social media, and other platforms, promote events, and should the partnership engage in fundraising in the future, a CRM system is essential. There are many, many CRM systems out there.
  - a. Here is an article on what to consider in a CRM.  
<https://blog.fundly.com/choosing-nonprofit-crm/>
  - b. Here are a few articles comparing some of the offerings for nonprofits. Note, most are for profit businesses so they often have 'preferences'.  
<https://www.nutshell.com/blog/best-crms-for-nonprofits>.  
<https://fitsmallbusiness.com/best-crm-for-nonprofits/>
  - c. Software Advice is a division of Gartner. A preliminary recommendation with parameters we could provide at this time suggests ATLP look at:
    - i. Network for Good | [Read Reviews](#)
    - ii. DonorPerfect | [Read Reviews](#)
    - iii. Bloomerang | [Read Reviews](#)
    - iv. Neon CRM | [Read Reviews](#)
    - v. Trail Blazer Non-Profit Manager | [Read Reviews](#)
5. **Create a central place for sharing information** across the partnership that allows for discussions. Partners interviewed shared that the ability to connect with peers and experts is a value the partnership can provide. Connecting in-person ranked slightly higher than social media or an online newsletter. While in person is by necessity infrequent, a simple way to build the network and relationships is with a platform such as Slack Connect. It is an inexpensive way to communicate across organizations. Partners can share files, chat with each other, and you can have different channels with more focused conversations. The great thing about Slack is that it has a searchable archive. So, let's say an organization is working on a communications campaign and recalls something from months ago that someone shared, they can search it. Chats can happen real time as well if some organizations want to ask a question and get some pretty immediate responses.  
<https://slack.com/resources/using-slack/getting-started-with-slack-connect>

6. **A website** was noted by survey respondents as the top way in which the respondents connect with partners. Create a website with a user-centered design for partners. This does take staff resources, time and an investment so it is understandable that it won't happen overnight. If you start with other means of communicating with the partners such as Slack, that is a great way to create a two-way communication option and to generate content that will enable you to populate a website.
7. **Social media** is rapidly overtaking, or has overtaken, traditional media as a primary source of news and it needs to be thoughtfully developed and stewarded. Survey respondents ranked use of social media as important as an online newsletter. Craft a social media plan that focuses on a few channels, generating content and gaining followers takes frequency and consistency so focus first on just 1 or 2 social media channels. Survey respondents identified the top three channels as FaceBook, Instagram and YouTube. Create those accounts with consistent ATLP naming and branding. Build up 4-6 weeks of high quality posts before launching that include lots of opportunities to tag and be shared by partners with the larger followings, and specifically get these partners onboard with sharing and promoting your new channel.
8. **Create a calendar** (we will send you some examples) to make it as easy as possible to plan and implement your communications tactics. What is nice about this is that you'll have all the critical dates, projects, and plans laid out so everyone can see them and others can help out! Estimate 2-4 hours a week once channels are established to seek out/generate content and to format/post to various channels.
9. **Create, Share and Use a Boilerplate or Template for ATLP.** A boilerplate is a consistent message that is the overview of who the ATLP is and what you do that is part of the brand's message and overall communications strategy. ATLP and the partners use this boilerplate verbatim on materials, websites, press releases, etc. The short paragraph should be clear, concise and easy to use for all partners.

A couple of boilerplate examples:

**The Trust for Public Land** creates parks and protects land for people, ensuring healthy, livable communities for generations to come. Millions of people live within a ten-minute walk of a Trust for Public Land garden, park or natural area, and millions more visit these sites every year. Visit The Trust for Public Land at [www.tpl.org](http://www.tpl.org)

The **Vermont Land Trust** saves the land that makes Vermont special. Since 1977, we have protected farmland and forestland from subdivision and development – knowing that once farms and forests are gone, they rarely come back. We want our children, grandchildren,

and future generations to enjoy local food, farming, clean air and water, hiking, hunting, forestry, and sugaring. <https://www.vlt.org/>

10. **Letter to the editor.** Write an annual letter to the editor that can be placed by organizations in local papers across the landscape. Think about an influencer each year that you can use. For instance, it could be the President of ATC or the National Park Service or from one of the State Agencies, or from a smaller organization. You can think out of the box too. How about Greta Thunberg or Dolly Parton?
11. **Newsletters** can take a lot of time and it is unclear if they are being widely read. Consider sharing newsletters that are shorter and more frequent. Use titles that clearly communicate what is in the newsletter - grant opportunity, science you can use, success to share. If you use the newsletter as a place to share information about grants, tips or other helpful information this can encourage people to open and read it. When evaluating a CRM system, look at the features/plugin that can assist you in creating and sending out a newsletter, and that assist you in repurposing content for different channels.
12. **Annual meeting** Attending a conference in person is a big commitment of time and resources. Answer clearly, who is our target audience for the annual meeting, and what are attendees getting at the ATLP annual meeting that they cannot get anywhere else? What can you provide that is an add-on value that attendees might otherwise have to pay for (such as training)? Who can attendees hear from if they attend the annual conference that they would not normally have access to? And of course, video and record appropriate content, in bite-sized lengths, to share the conference with those who did not attend to entice them to attend the following year.
13. **Advocacy Training** is something that ATLP can offer as a benefit to the network. ATC, NPS, and some of the other organizations in the partnership have experience in this work at the state and federal level. Effective advocacy and making the most of limited capacity and resources is important for nonprofit organizations. The organizations in the region that are working on the ground in communities have an opportunity to share what they know with policy-makers. The training is beneficial to all size nonprofits but particularly for the smaller organizations. They will see the direct benefits of what the partnership can offer in this area.

# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership



## Updated Messages Based on ATLP Communications Committee Feedback and Input

### ATLP messages about the importance of the partnership and the work that organizations can do together (top 6 identified by Communications Committee)

1. *ATLP is a regional conservation network stitched together for a healthy landscape doing the work that no organization can accomplish alone.*
2. *There is value in the ATLP for organizations in the Appalachian corridor - the network can support your work and conservation goals.*
3. *This landscape has unique and great importance and will flourish for people and nature if it remains a connected landscape. With many shared goals our network can have a greater impact when we work together.*
4. *All are welcome in the partnership and are part of the story of having an impact in the connectedness and vitality of the landscape, including organizations across boundaries and issues and both locally and regionally.*
5. *The future and health of the Appalachian Trail Landscape is based on a vision of connections, a patchwork of places and stories that connect to protect what is important to everyone who lives, works, plays and visits.*
6. Inspired by the work of many organizations across the Appalachians, the ATLP fosters connections and action in our shared work to conserve this critically important ecological corridor.

### The short phrases that frame what ATLP does as foundation for their identity (top 4 identified by Communications Committee)

- ATLP - A Network Within the Region that Connects People, Nature and Place
- ATLP - Together, creating connections between Appalachian landscapes, watersheds, and communities.
- ATLP - Connecting People and Nature Across the Appalachian Landscape
- ATLP - Partnering with all those who care about the future of our region.

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## **Priorities for the how the partnership organizations can work together (identified by CC as priorities)**

### **1. Convening**

Finding ways to continue to convene partners and allow the network and individual organizations to find the best ways to collaborate will further the objectives of the partnership.

Communication that occurs face to face is still the most powerful even today. It is how we best create connections and collaborations.

### **2. Listening, Sharing Stories, Amplifying the Messages**

Telling the stories of the Appalachian Trail Landscape, that's something that ATLP can do coupled with the brand identity and core messaging. There is powerful potential here for ATLP to share how the parts of what happens in the corridor add up to the larger story and are critical to the continent and the globe.

### **3. Expanding the Diversity of Organizations in the Partnership**

The ground up partnership is important, perhaps especially in a place like the Appalachian Corridor where there are lots of jurisdictions, perspectives, diverse opinions and approaches. What ATLP can bring to the table is ways to help advance goals that are shared, even if each and every specific goal is not shared.

### **4. Funding, Policy, Advocacy**

Advocating for policy and funding the local priorities is something that a partnership or network like ATLP can assist with. For funders and policy makers there is a benefit for being part of a recognized and trusted partnership.

### **5. Brand Identity and Communications How-To**

Once the brand identity, core messages, and strategies are agreed upon, these can be put into a tool kit and organizations can attend an in person or online training to use them. This is a way to make it as easy as possible for the work to be used.

# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## Findings Report for Communications Strategy and Brand Identity Development



July/August 2023

### Summary

On April 15, 2023, in Asheville, North Carolina the ATLP Steering Committee gathered for a brand identity, marketing and communications retreat led by Momentum Communications. In a series of lively and thoughtful conversations the Steering Committee reached a shared understanding of the meaning and purpose of a brand strategy. Together, the group explored the various audiences and personas of the ATLP including their values and motivations and identified successful outcomes for the communications brand strategy and identity work. This work was led by Momentum Communications, with input from the Communications Committee (CC), and ATLP facilitation from Cassidy Lord, the Landscape Partnership Manager.

The first essential decision that the Steering Committee and the Communications Committee made was to identify the primary target audience for the brand strategy. The ATLP landed on the target audience as **organizations with potential to join the partnership. The audience also includes current partners with potential for deepening the engagement with ATLP. Both audiences will help to expand the breadth and depth of the ATLP network.** The category of organizations is described as those with nonidentical but overlapping interests of protecting the natural, wild, working, scenic, cultural, economic, and diverse attributes of the Appalachian Trail Landscape.

The steering committee articulated that the tent for the network is wide and that organizations can find themselves a part of the efforts of ATLP by seeing that there are many shared values and mutual benefits to their work to protect the landscape and agree that collaboration is critical for the future sustained health of the region that spans 14 states, impacts millions of people and has global significance. While the scale of the importance is great, the landscape's protection starts with both regional and local connections, relationships, and resources.

The role of brand, communications and marketing are core to the broader goals of the ATLP. At its foundation, the brand strategy and identity goals must be aligned with the strategic goals identified in the ATLP strategic plan and the ATLP charter. The outcomes of a brand strategy and identity are:

- 1) To support a greater understanding among conservation partners that there is great importance and benefits of a connected landscape, and we must protect the AT landscape to enhance the user experience and support biological diversity.

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2) To support messages and a brand identity that broadens the breadth and depth of the conservation partners and deepens the relationship with current partners. With this outcome, create a more inclusive and collaborative partnership that shares in caring about the importance of the landscape.

3) To develop a comprehensive communications strategy that identifies messaging and channels that more effectively engages potential partners and deepens the relationship with current partners to communicate the importance of collaboration to achieve landscape outcomes.

The in depth interviews with 17 organizations was an opportunity to learn more about these organizations in the landscape and build connections with ATLP. There is an opportunity beyond this communications effort to invite those organizations to be more actively involved in the partnership now that they provided feedback and discussed overlap of their goals in the Appalachian corridor.

### **Gathering Input and the Findings Report**

Elise Annes and Emily Boedecker of Momentum interviewed 18 individuals from 17 organizations. The list of organizations interviewed: Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation, Staying Connected Initiative, Follow the Forest, Appalachian Regional Commission, Nikwasi Initiative, Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust, Black Family Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, South Mountain Partnership, Land Trust for Tennessee, Southeastern Partnership for Forests & Water, Pennsylvania DCNR, Virginia DNR, Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands, and National Park Service

The goals of the interview and survey were to learn about these organizations that are nested in the landscape, understand how the ATLP goals overlap with theirs, and how the network can support their work with branding and strategic communications. We learned that with the shared goals for the work of the organizations in the ATLP landscape, there are opportunities for focusing communications efforts in a way that amplifies the collective impact of the network, and ultimately protecting all that is special and valuable about the Appalachian Trail Landscape.

### **Survey Summary**

The survey responses came from 47 organizations in the Appalachian corridor and there was a range in budget, number of staff, and primary mission and program focus. All of the organizations with the exception of one said that they are a partner of the ATLP. One organization reported that they were not sure if they were a partner. The organizations described that they embrace the goal of protecting and enhancing the A.T. experience and supporting community based conservation in the A.T. Landscape. The audiences of these organizations were similar to those we interviewed and included: Members, Donors, Public Funders, Landowners, Government Officials (local, state, tribal or federal), Local/State Conservation Partners, and the public.

The missions of the organizations and conservation goals had a range depending on the scope, area served, and the area where the organization is located. Most of the organizations that responded to the survey have a purpose that falls into the category of conservation, ecological or recreational. A few are focused on wildlife conservation, natural plant communities, economic development and justice and equity within their primary mission.

The survey respondents rated very high (an average of 4.7 on a 5-point scale) as seeing the protection of the A.T. Landscape as a part of their conservation strategy.

Respondents were also asked, which of the following elements of implementing an ATLP communications strategy would be most helpful to your work?

The elements that ranked, on average, the highest (4.3 - 4.4) were:

- Having a graphic that conveys the message and importance of the landscape
- Helping to express the urgency of what is at stake if we do not act
- A message that is adaptable to a wide range of conservation priorities
- Demonstrating the bigger picture of why conservation is important

The elements that ranked, on average, in the mid tier (3.9 - 4.1) were:

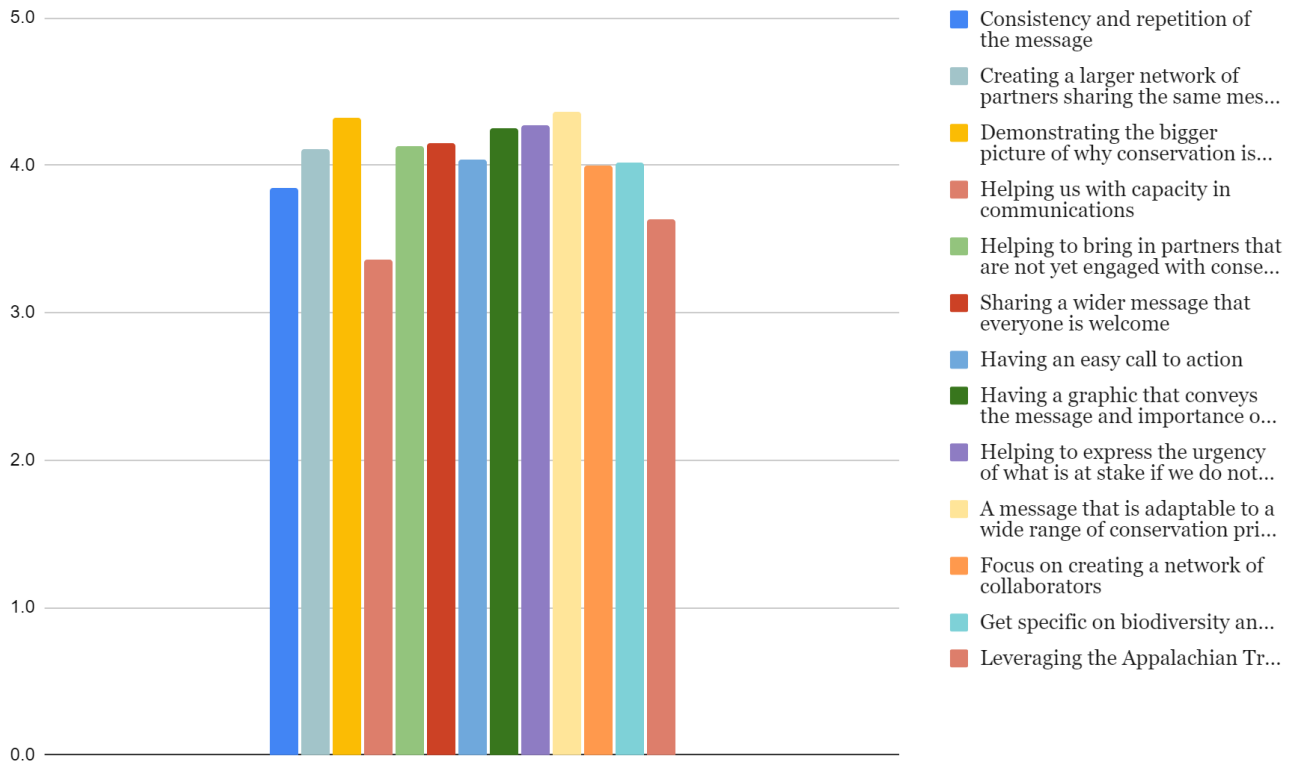
- Consistency and repetition of the message
- Creating a larger network of partners sharing the same message
- Helping to bring in partners that are not yet engaged with conservation
- Sharing a wider message that everyone is welcome
- Having an easy call to action
- Focus on creating a network of collaborators
- Get specific on biodiversity and species migration

The elements that ranked, on average, the lowest (3.4 - 3.6) were:

- Helping us with capacity in communications
- Leveraging the Appalachian Trail brand

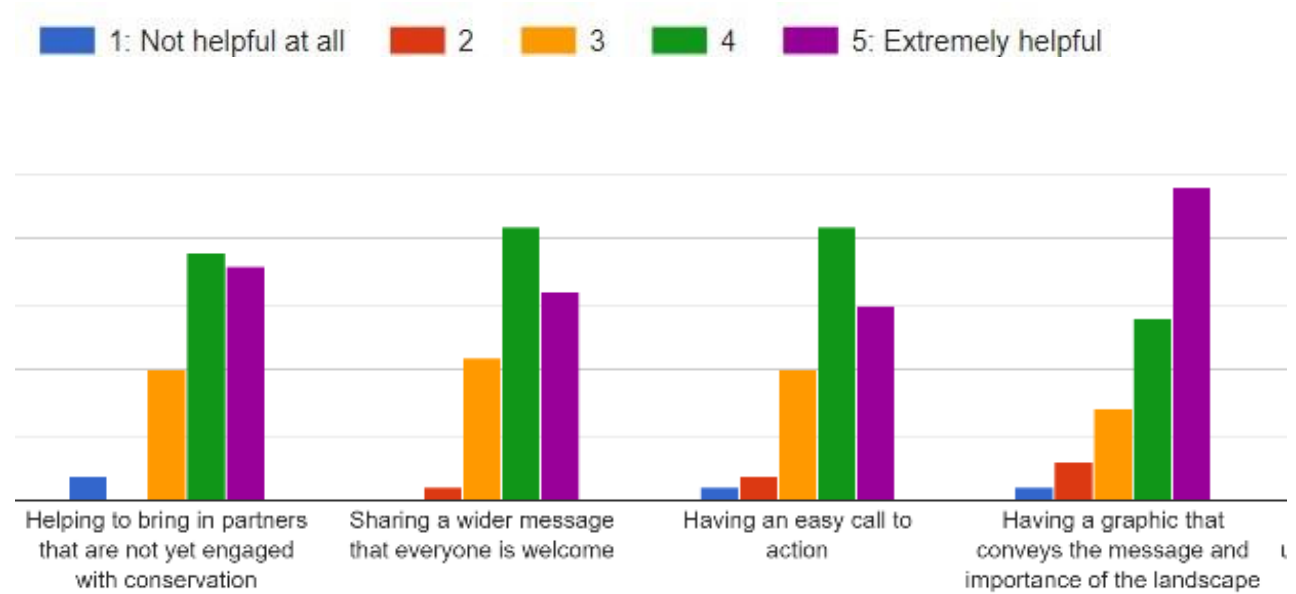
**Which of the following elements of implementing an ATLP communications strategy would be most helpful to your work? (Ranking 1-5 from not helpful at all to extremely helpful).**

Average response for each element.



**Which of the following elements of implementing an ATLP communications strategy would be most helpful to your work? (Ranking 1-5 from not helpful at all to extremely helpful).**

Frequency of response for each element



## High Level Takeaways from Partner Audience(s)

There was recognition and agreement that the core objectives of ATLP are worthwhile and valued by the individuals at the organizations that we spoke with. When considering the conservation goals, successes, challenges, and each organization's *Why* (described above) there is clear overlap with many of the organizations with ATLP that include accelerating conservation, elevating the importance of the east coast climate corridor, ensuring an equitable landscape by understanding values, and creating an active and inclusive partnership.

An important point to make is that the depth of overlap in goals is in most cases directly proportional to the scale and scope of the organization itself. For instance, there are not many organizations working across the entire Appalachians. Those organizations at that scale have more in common with ATLP and articulated their understanding of the value of the protection of the landscape and importance of a broader network that the partnership convenes. For landscape scale organizations such as Follow the Forests, TNC, or the Blue Ridge Parkway, as examples, there is more clarity in how the goals are connected and the mutual support that the ATLP and their organization can provide in the area of communications.

### Segments of the Partner Audience

Within the group of current and potential partners surveyed and interviewed, segments of this audience emerged more clearly. One approach is to develop communications strategies and messaging for each segment, however it should be noted that this increases the complexity of implementation. This and other approaches will be discussed with the CC.

*Conservation Current/Large Scale* - engaged partners working at the landscape scale and partnerships of other organizations. High level of technical conservation literacy. Strong alignment with ATLP goals

*Conservation Current/Regional and Local* - engaged partners working at the local or regional scale. Conservation focused, conservation literate, often part of other partnerships.

*Emerging Conservation* - partners in the conservation sector who are learning about ATLP, where there is strong alignment with the goals, and interest in understanding more about the value of increasing engagement with the partnership.

*Emerging Economic/Heritage/Cultural* - potential partners, less conservation focused, importance of demonstrating value of conservation, and working with the network, to support their primary goals.

## Landscape Scale Organizations

More specifically, for the landscape scale organizations they care about expanding the network, sharing learning about what they are each doing, building support from funders and government officials, and engaging the communities with a larger vision of landscape protection for climate resilience and wildlife corridors. Many of the staff of these organizations also spoke about the protection of resources for equitable access and community vitality but they also recognize that they are not operating at the level that can make a local difference. The equitable landscape is still important to these groups that operate at this scale but they haven't necessarily shifted their practices and approaches and they don't have the capacity to operate at the grassroots level to listen and respond as they know they should in the communities where they work. Still, there were several specific examples of partnering with indigenous groups or recreational access opportunities while partnering with local organizations that are leading in that space.

For organizations at the larger scale there is a clear connection to how the partnership can influence decision makers and they articulated that there is more power in communicating similar messages with important audiences. They use terms in their communication that are similar to ATLP and each other such as connectivity, landscape scale, Appalachia region, and climate resilience. These organizations also want to protect the highest priority areas, elevating the recognition of the Appalachian Trail Landscape as a climate corridor and critical at the national and global levels.

## Capacity and Engagement

Some of the feedback of the individuals we spoke with and that answered the survey is that they don't have the capacity to be involved in the network or have limited capacity. This was true for organizations at all scales. At the same time, many of the individuals understand the strengths of the partnership and are willing to think about how they can select the areas of most impact in terms of dedicating their time and efforts to the partnership. How ATLP engages with partners and the value they derive from that engagement is a critical component of the cost/benefit analysis for partners.

The areas that came up in terms of impact of their involvement in the partnership with this limited capacity include:

- i. sharing the successes
- ii communicating consistently with overlapping audiences
- iii using common language and stories to amplify what is happening in the landscape
- iv. finding ways to use the brand identity in development.

***The organizations also reflected on how the partnership could support them in terms of the communications messages (the work we're doing now), the brand identity, and convening the organizations in the corridor to share and learn from each other.***



The input made it clear that creating a clear set of requests and interactions is important for each of these groups. A strategy for these organizational audiences includes more than the communications work. We recommend that there are specific ways to use leadership, influence, relationships, and connections in a coordinated way that achieves mutual goals with efficiency. In our recommendations we will suggest strategies that do this. It is a combination of using resources and efforts in a proven successful and defined way and communicating that with the organizations. We also recommend that there may be two sets of strategies that are specific to the scale of the organization. This means that the local, grassroots groups have a different and fewer set of strategies for engagement. This will make it more likely that they will be involved.

### **Local Organizations**

The organizations with a local scope or that work more directly at the grassroots level have a different sense of the overlap. The values of these organizations that we spoke with are related to what is important to their communities whether it is economic and social justice, fair access, local community vitality, the protection of cultural and natural resources, economic development or the enjoyment of recreation. The local organizations or those with a more specific scope of mission use different language, have more narrowly defined goals, and tighter boundaries on their efforts. This doesn't mean that they can't benefit from the communications strategies and brand identity but they are not in a position to take action to the same extent or at all in some cases.

### **Emerging/Non-traditional Partners**

For the BFLT, the NEFOC (and BRPF seemed to say this too) they don't think about Appalachia in the same way. Using conservation or talking about the entire region is not how these organizations communicate or think about their work. They are working to reverse injustices, generate wealth, support land ownership, steward the resources and support the connection to the land and landscape for those who live in their region.

There was overlap with the Nikwasi Initiative in terms of acknowledging the history of land ownership and finding ways to reconnect these groups to the land in ways that they have historically and culturally connected to it. The term used by Ebonie Alexander from BFLT was that the outreach and communications must be culturally competent. This means having respect, and using language, that demonstrates awareness for those who have been in that place for generations. The messages need to be aware of the cultural beliefs and values and how these may be different for different groups. The communities of color are not monolithic and language is different for different cultures. This theme of local knowledge, local language and local stories was echoed by other organizations as well. This begs the question that we considered, does this mean we need different messages for different groups? More on this in our recommendations.

The local organizations or organizations that work with groups that have been marginalized and disconnected from the land face some similar issues and care about land protection and stewardship, but use different language and have different goals. The idea of connecting and sharing information with the ATLP is interesting to them if communications can help with their objectives.

### **Federal Partners**

For NPS, they are a unique and important partner that sees that the ATLP goals are hugely interconnected to their mission. They are supportive of the communications objectives and use similar language to ATLP. They see their goals at the unit and regional scale as communicating about resilience from climate change, connected landscape, wildlife protection, and recreational access on a broader scale. On a more pragmatic side they are motivated to develop relationships and policies, and invest time, effort and resources to help advance landscape scale protection because it is both a responsibility and an imperative.

### **Economic Development Organizations**

For the economic development organizations and state organizations they see the overlap in terms of communicating the balance of the environment, recreation and economic, cultural and tourism and figuring out how to say that both are important and compliment each other. These organizations see that protection of the landscape is intertwined with the goals and they look at ways to communicate that larger picture while at the same time using terms that are most closely related to their mission and their audience. They use more human-centric models of communication such as what the protection of the land and resources means for local economies and the quality of life of those who live, work and play in the region.

Each organization sees the value of a partnership. They see what ATLP brings to the table as part of ATC and as the network. They articulated these areas as credibility, consistency of message at all scales, funding potential, advocacy and policy opportunities, demonstrating successes at both the landscape and local scale, sharing and learning, convening, and reaching different audiences. They recognize the value of a strong brand of a trusted partner and a network that uses common messages and that supports each other. They also see this effort as an opportunity to communicate the Appalachian Trail Landscape to many audiences, while keeping in mind the diversity of those who work in the landscape. They see that a common set of messages is challenging. There are ways to partner and be a part of the network that doesn't mean using the same messages, using the same image, communicating where there is overlap, or using all of the strategies. This selective process is another way to achieve the communications goal rather than having a complete and distinct set of messages for each segment of ATLP's partner audience.

## The Audiences of Organizations

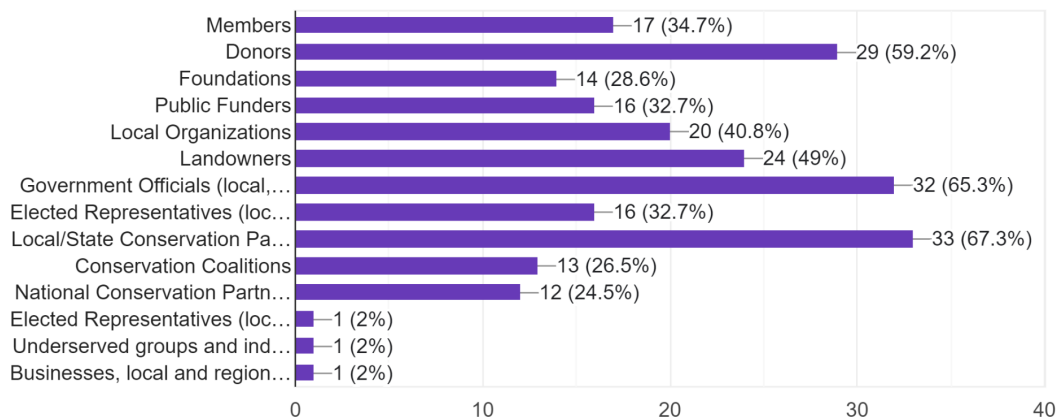
The audiences are as varied as the different organizations. The audience demographics, psychographics, geographics, are a range. In general, the audiences are similar to the personas that were discussed at the Steering Committee meeting in Asheville and include conservation and land trust organizations, funders of all sizes, federal government, members of congress, state and local lawmakers, NGOs working on different primary issues in the region, landowners, and the general public (people who live, work and visit the communities).

The brand identity and communications strategy in this effort is specifically to broaden and deepen the partnership and communicate with the organizations with potential to join the partnership and ATLP network. It is still important for the brand identity and communications strategies to be a fit for the organizations' audiences as well. While it is not a goal to reach the general public and some of the audiences, specifically, it is a good idea to have an identity that opens a door broadly, without narrowing too much. This means finding the areas of the most similarity with the most partners (possibly) and recognizes the diverse values and attributes of the Appalachian Trail landscape.

Survey respondents identified their most important audiences as:

To accomplish your work, who are the most important audiences you need to reach? Please select up to five that you consider to be your primary audiences.

49 responses



## How can the Partnership Work Together

*Opportunities for the organizations to work with the ATLP in strategic communications (and a few other ideas that were shared are noted).*

In terms of communication, ATLP is helpful with the work the partnership is doing right now, developing insight into the breadth of organizations working across the Appalachians and finding consistent messages and offering a brand identity that helps communicate the goals of organizations working in this landscape. Using communications and the process to expand the network is also helpful for the organization that are already dipping their toes into the partnership but see potential for more.

### Convening

There is communication value in the convening that ATLP does with the partnership as a way to share success stories and the work of different organizations in the landscape. Finding ways to continue to convene partners and allow the network and individual organizations to find the best ways to collaborate will further the objectives of the partnership. This includes how sessions are organized, facilitated and what structure is utilized to maximize learning and engagement to deliver value to the partners. Expanding the annual meeting, or finding a different gathering, is an important component of continuing to strengthen relationships, build trust and share goals. The communication that occurs face to face is still the most powerful even today. It is how we best create connections and collaborations.

### Listening, Sharing Stories, Amplifying the Messages

Telling the stories of the Apps Corridor, that's something that ATLP can do coupled with the brand identity and core message. There is powerful potential here for ATLP to share how the parts of what happens in the corridor add up to the larger story and are critical to the continent and the globe in a number of different ways including climate adaptation and resilience, wildlife connectivity, the working landscape, and diverse and inclusive connections. The act of communicating starts with an ear to the ground and listening. The stories are not ATLP's but the collection of other stories of individuals in the region. The stories are shared and this amplifies the important messages that are key to the long term success of ATLP and all of the organizations nested in the corridor that care about protecting it.

### Expanding the Diversity of Organizations in the Partnership

The ground up partnership is important, perhaps especially in a place like the Appalachian Corridor where you've got lots of jurisdictions and perspectives and diverse opinions and approaches. What ATLP can bring to the table is ways to help advance goals that are shared, even if each and every specific goal is not shared.

It is not easy to expand a network that is serving such a large and diverse region. Challenges in the differences need to be thought of as opportunities. The network at this time can

communicate what it is possible to build, and what can be achieved, recognizing that all of us collectively form something much greater than any one organization.

The ATLP steering committee is off to a strong start, connections have been made and will grow through the reach of the organizations already in the partnership.

### **Funding, Policy, Advocacy**

Advocating for policy and funding the local priorities is something that a partnership or network like ATLP can assist with. For funders and policy makers there is a benefit for being part of a recognized and trusted partnership. This is a different audience and outside the scope of this effort but it was a clear priority for the organizations we spoke with and participated in the survey.

In terms of how a brand identity can help, ATLP can support the organizations with a strong, inclusive message, and harvest local stories from the organizations on the ground to help amplify their reach and prestige. This region is rich in stories and has a legacy of storytelling. ATLP can amplify the stories, as mentioned above, to influence policy makers and funders.

### **Brand Identity and Communications How-To**

Once the brand identity, core messages, and strategies are agreed upon, these can be put into a tool that organizations can use or attend a training to learn about how the brand identity can support their work.

ATLP's goal is to support partners (some of these orgs do not have professional communicators), that understand the importance of shared messages, communications strategies and tactics to meet their goals. The consistency of message and channel use across all-sized organizations is a great first step for organizations with limited capacity but want to be part of ATLP.

**Communications planning template.** This is a way to provide an organizing and planning tool for communication and how to consider different channels, timing, audience connections, and ways to know if they are successful. The template can provide a list of questions that reminds them to start with why, think about their audience and plan when and how to use the message. Some of the template information could include a boilerplate language that all of the organizations in the partnership can use in press releases and on their websites.

**Shared Online Network,** utilizing an online platform to share success stories, funding opportunities, scientific data, and to connect with peers in the network.

**Content 'tips'** may include writing style guides for press releases or social media posts, how to choose a great image guide, tips for shooting engaging videos and how to tell an engaging story.

**Evaluation** seems complicated and time intensive for some but there are methods that provide feedback and data that can be helpful and are not difficult to access.

**Channel(s) Selection.** A how-to guide to identify the most appropriate methods of communication for different purposes. This will enable the user to match the outcome they want to achieve with the best channel(s) to achieve it and avoid the ones that won't.

## Messaging and the Value of the Landscape

*How do you articulate the value of the landscape? What messages do you use that are successful?*

Overall we heard that the Appalachian Trail corridor is uniquely important because it's situated within an area that has both really important ecological, cultural and economic values. Unlike areas in the west or other regions in the US, it is an area that has been heavily settled. There are a lot of people who live, work and recreate within the corridor and that come to expect the benefits it provides.

Here are a number of messages that have been successful for the organizations we spoke with, who participated in the survey, and that came out of our research. We are not quite at the brand identity and core message recommendations but getting closer!

Many organizations that participated in the survey and interviews are focused on the protection and values of the Appalachians at a statewide or regional scale. Many of these organizations communicate about the resilience of a connected landscape. The East Coast Climate Corridor strongly overlaps with the message of some organizations that work in the entire landscape, that is certainly what TNC's effort is focusing on. Other parts of the message at this level include the Appalachian landscape as a critical wildlife corridor, offering specific migration patterns for terrestrial species as climate changes impact the environment and that the A.T. Landscape serves as a critical and massive carbon sink.

The message that works for many of the organizations is the connection of landscape and place with the human identity. Success derives from meeting people where they are in terms of what they care about and connect with them at that level. They look at what it means for the everyday life of those who live, work and play in the region and how their existence relates to the importance of protecting the landscape.

The Black Family Land Trust and Northeast Farmers of Color both talked about history, family's legacy, leaving the land (and wealth) for the next generation, and taking care of the land like your ancestors did. They don't use the word conservation, although they use those tools. When those that have been impacted by systematic racism and a "land grab" hear protection,

conservation or preservation they think their land will be taken away. This message also resonated with those who remember losing land to ‘feds’ more recently, and who strongly identify with the Appalachian region. The advice these organizations provided was that the way to connect is to listen, use the language that resonates, and reflect on what it was like historically and how things will be in the future for people and the place.

Many other organizations that operate with an audience that are not environmentalists or conservationists also use human centric values to communicate. These can be layered on top of the other values. Some examples such as water quality, enjoying birds and other wildlife, protecting the habitat for pollinators for gardens and farms, and promoting successful local economies because of world class and accessible recreational opportunities in their region.

Many organizations of different sizes talk about their messages as place-based. They have stories that include both people and wildlife. These organizations start with a local story, and can relate it to the regional or landscape scale.

The message was also clear that bringing in voices and messages from outside the region, that don’t relate to what’s happening locally, does not work. If the message is someone else’s label, from away, it won’t feel authentic and won’t be used.

The partnership or network message that works well for groups within the region is communicating that the ATLP is building something collectively that is greater than any one organization doing their work or communicating individually.

***Here is a snapshot of messages and themes we heard:***

- Vibrant, healthy communities
- The land and water that people and animals depend on.
- The world we rely upon is vanishing and it is an urgent task to save the best of what is left.
- Protecting the land based economy
- Protect and preserve the natural beauty and ecological integrity for public benefit and enjoyment.
- Recreation for physical and mental well being
- Incredible biodiversity and forests of the Appalachians; importance to species movement in a changing climate; importance to people who live, work, and play in the Appalachians and rely on healthy drinking water.
- Connecting people with nature through trails and quality outdoor experiences.
- Providing this important resource for everyone to enjoy.
- Some of the “simple” concepts shared: communities, connectivity, water, wildlife, local economy, legacy, culture, history, values, and place.
- The Land Ethic
- The Green Bible

- Merging the terrestrial and aquatic connectivity into the messaging, connecting the protection of the landscape to water quality, health, safety and climate resilience.
- The region plays a historical role for many, and has generations of families and groups that have stewarded the land.
- One organization used the term the spine of the East Coast, the nerve center that keeps our lungs working. If they can breathe, the species have a shot.
- The backyard of the A.T.
- Indigenous groups talk about the impact of changes to the landscape (with climate change)
- The return on investment of the protection of places is important. If we protect a place, we have access to it, and that is an investment for years to come and generations.
- People like to hear stories about the success of the local economy as it relates to conservation. People within the landscape such as the man with an apple orchard, the brew pub business, the bike trip experience, etc.

Many individuals provided feedback for the ATLP that they appreciate that the message and brand identity (and ATLP) goes beyond the trail. While recreation and hiking is a unifying factor, it is possible to bring in more organizations if ATLP's brand encompasses other values.

We heard that simple and consistent are important, with whatever message is used.

In terms of the name, a point that was raised a few times is that landscape is a term that is visual for many but when the word partnership is added it can be confusing. The visual is important such as a map or an image that explains what we're talking about with the ATLP.

The connection with an Appalachian identity varied among respondents, and was influenced by their location. The Appalachian Trail is well known and understood, but that does not necessarily translate to identifying with an Appalachian landscape throughout the region ATLP is serving. In addition to the pronunciation differences of Appalachians north to south, organizations may have more connection to their local mountain ranges such as the Blue Ridge, Allegheny, Greens and Whites.

Advice from TNC, "we finally realized we can't be all things to all people. Our message became more specific about what we can do and provide to partners. Getting specific about what the partnership is and what it is not helps with clarity."

The Wild East term had mixed feedback. Some love the idea of wild, but wonder, what does it mean? Many organizations said that wild as a term can be isolating for certain audiences. Wild can seem opposed to economic development, and local needs and choices. There are groups shared that they are not comfortable with the term wild or being in this setting because of historic issues and trauma.

NPS communication shared that their messages work best and resonate when they emphasize that the values for which National Park units were created depend on this broader scale. It is



more than just maintaining a trail or making sure that you have restrooms when you visit the park. They emphasize that the bigger picture is that the park may not be there in the future if we don't consider issues at the landscape scale. NPS voiced that they are excited about this branding work and will use the feedback and input in their communications across the region.

One of the things that is important in the messaging is recognizing and articulating with cultural competency and awareness of the cultural beliefs and values and how these may be different for different groups. The communities of color are not monolithic and language is different for different cultures.

### **This report was produced by Momentum Communications LLC**

Momentum Communications, LLC is a strategic planning, marketing, communications and organizational development firm serving mission-driven organizations. Our goal is to help organizations clarify their vision and goals, establish measures of success, and develop the tools, skills and resources needed to achieve those goals. Momentum offers consulting strategy, training, workshops, and coaching.  
<https://www.momentumvt.com/>

## APPENDIX

- List of interview respondents
- Interview notes (available in shared folder)
- List of survey respondents
- Graphics from survey responses

### List of Interview Respondents

Organization
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
Staying Connected Initiative
Follow the Forest
Appalachian Regional Commission
Nikwasi Initiative
Northeast Farmers of Color Land Trust
Black Family Land Trust
The Nature Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
South Mtn. Partnership
Land Trust for Tennessee
Land Trust for Tennessee
Southeastern Partnership for Forests & Water
Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources
Virginia Department of Natural Resources
Virginia Department of Natural Resources
Maine Bureau of Parks & Lands
National Park Service

## List of Survey Respondent Organizations

NATLP
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Vermont Land Trust
Piedmont Environmental Council
Friends of Pine Grove Furnace State Park
Mainspring Conservation Trust
Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture
Green Mountain Club
Hawk Mountain
Lands Trails and Parks LLC
Wildlands, Woodlands, Farmlands & Communities
DCNR-Bureau of Recreation & Conservation
Southeastern Partnership for Forests & Water
Trust for Public Land
The Nature Conservancy
High Peaks Alliance
UNH Extension/Nature Groupie
Audubon Mid-Atlantic
Friends of Michaux State Forest
Hanover Conservancy
National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring
Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Northeast Wilderness Trust
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation
Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy
National Parks Conservation Association

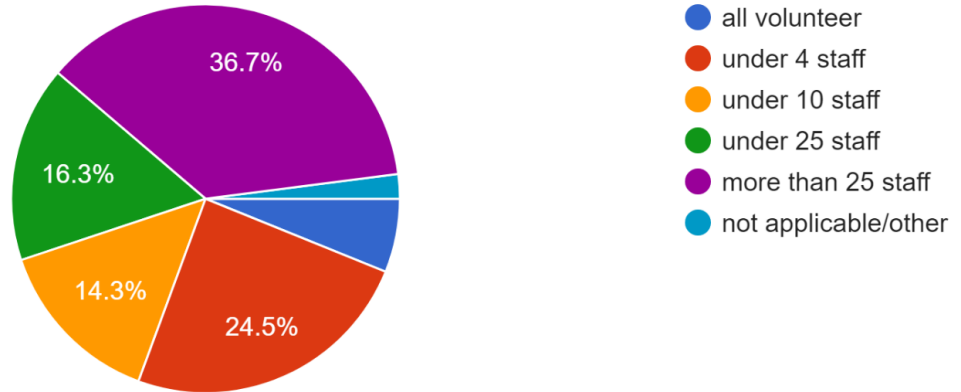
Woodlands Partnership of Northwest Massachusetts
Nikwasi Initiative
Pennsylvania's Office of Outdoor Recreation
New River Land Trust
Appalachian Mountain Club
NPCA
Salisbury Association and Cornwall Conservation Trust and Sharon Land Trust
Central Pennsylvania Conservancy
Georgia Appalachian Trail Club
Berkshire Natural Resources Council
South Mountain Partnership Initiative [part of ATC]
Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust
Open Space Institute
PA Landscape Program, including South Mountain Partnership
Williamstown Rural Lands
Old Dominion Land Conservancy
The Nature Conservancy
Wildlands Conservancy
New York-New Jersey Trail Conference
Wildlands Network
Piedmont Environmental Council
Catoctin Land Trust
Northeast Wilderness Trust

## Graphic Representation of Survey Responses

Note, other pertinent graphs are included in the main body of the report.

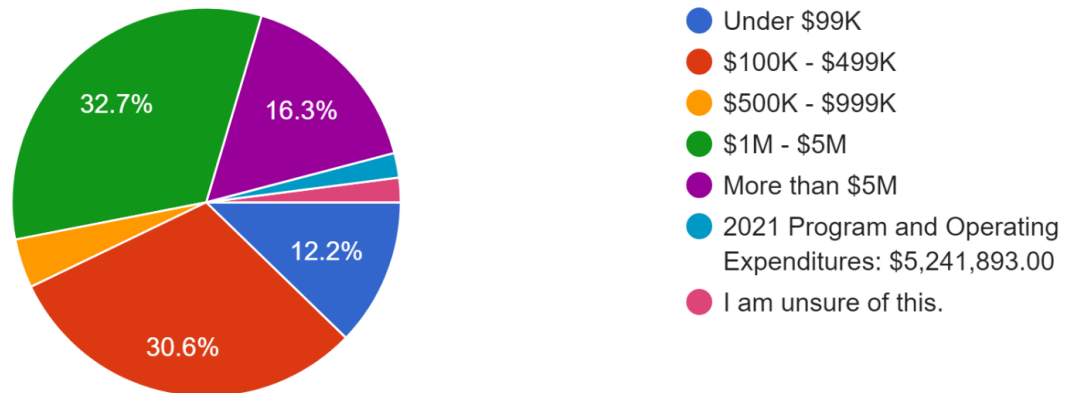
### How large is your organization?

49 responses



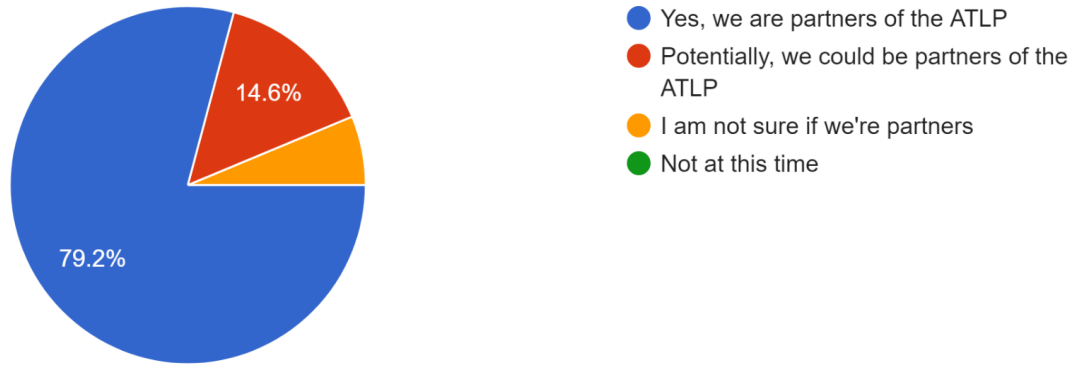
### What is your organization's operating budget?

49 responses



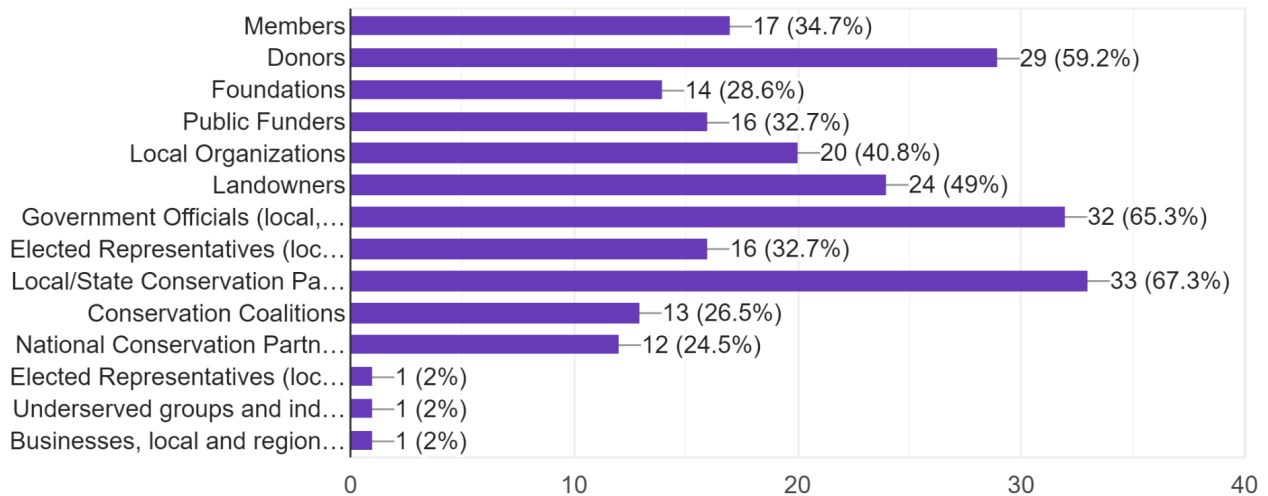
Do you see yourself and/or your organization as a partner of the ATLP?

48 responses



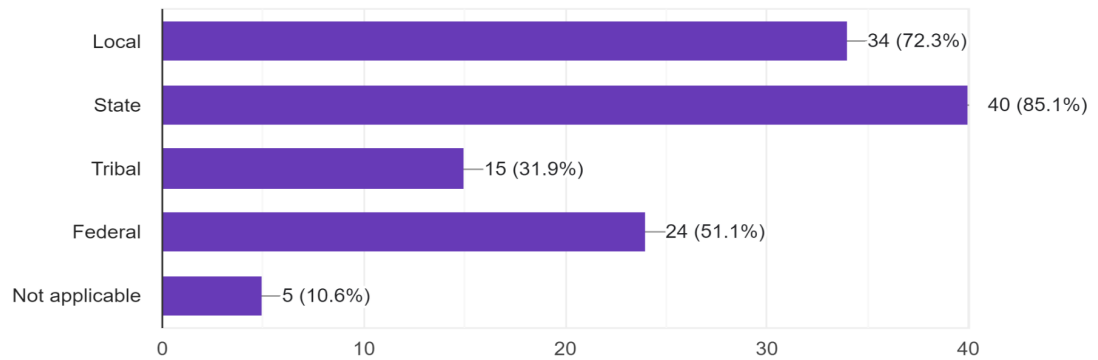
To accomplish your work, who are the most important audiences you need to reach? Please select up to five that you consider to be your primary audiences.

49 responses



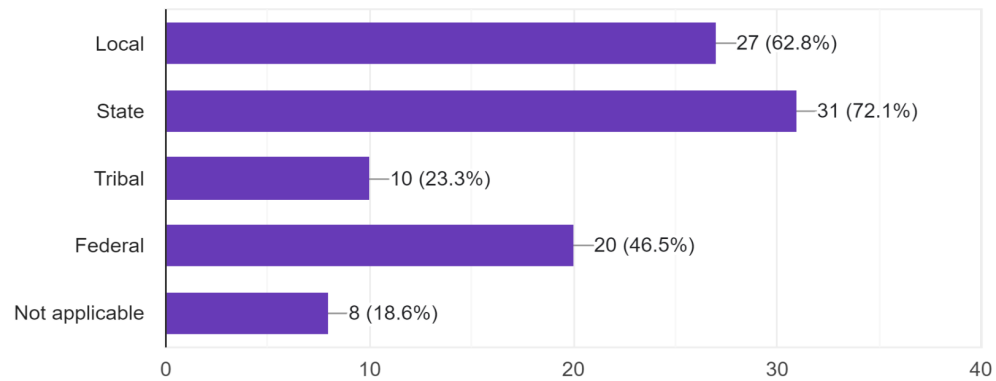
If Government Officials are an important audience for you, at which level of government do you engage?

47 responses

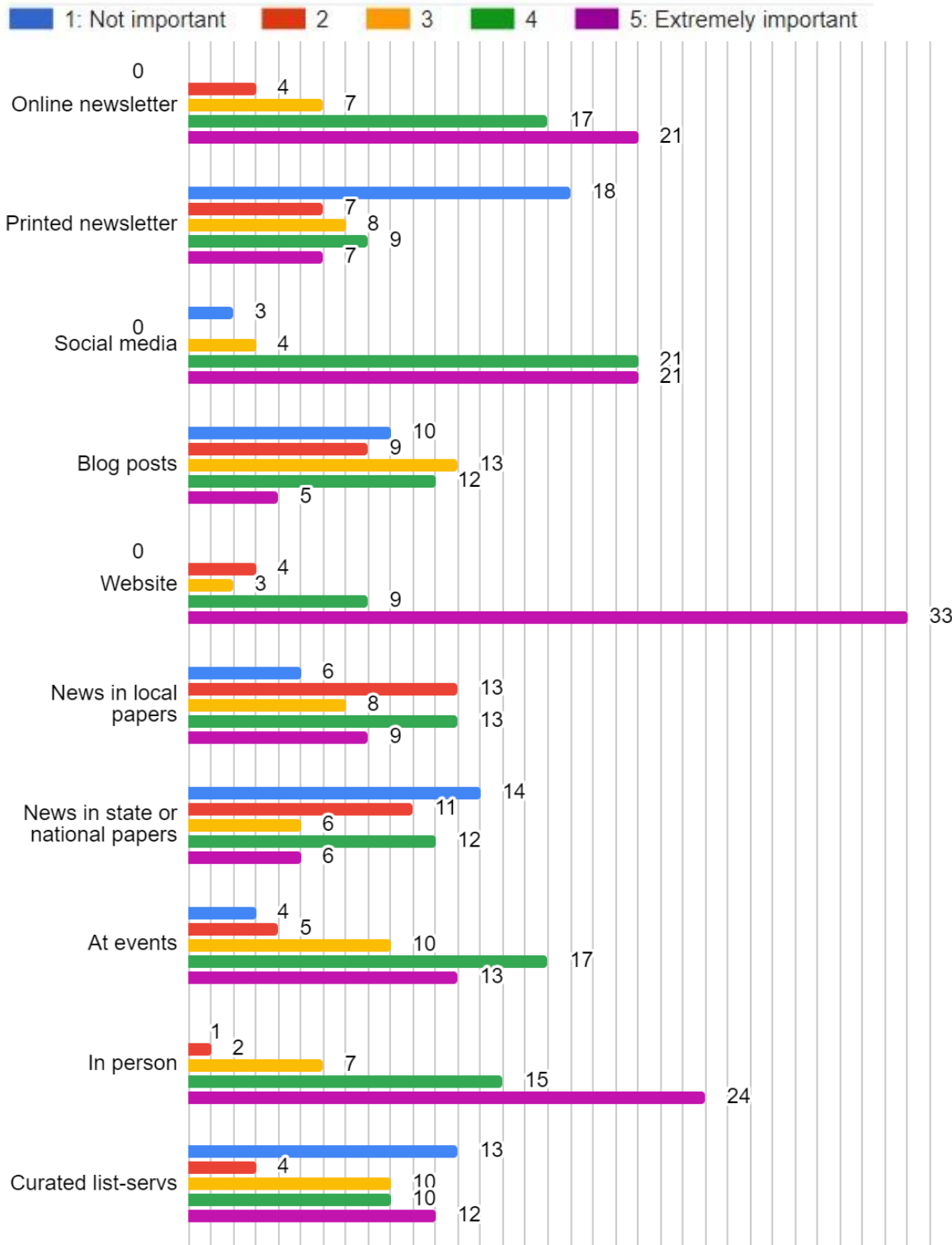


If Elected Officials are an important audience for you, at which level of government do you engage?

43 responses



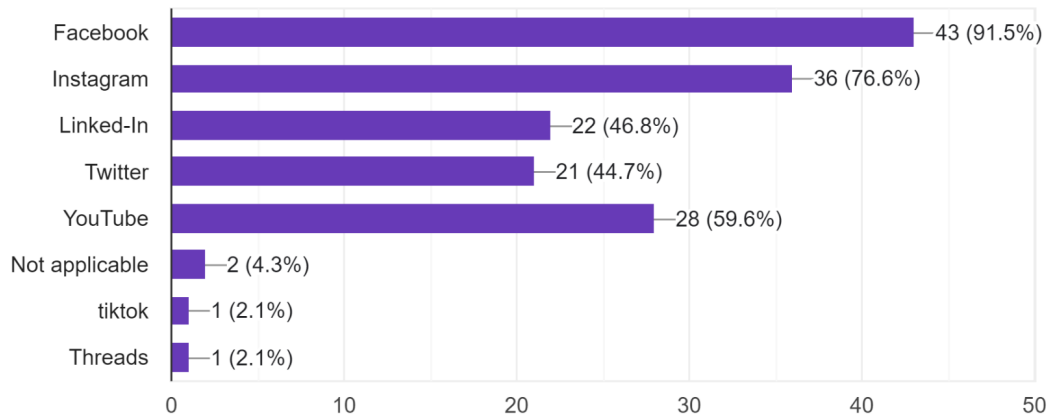
### How does your organization best communicate with partners and other audiences?

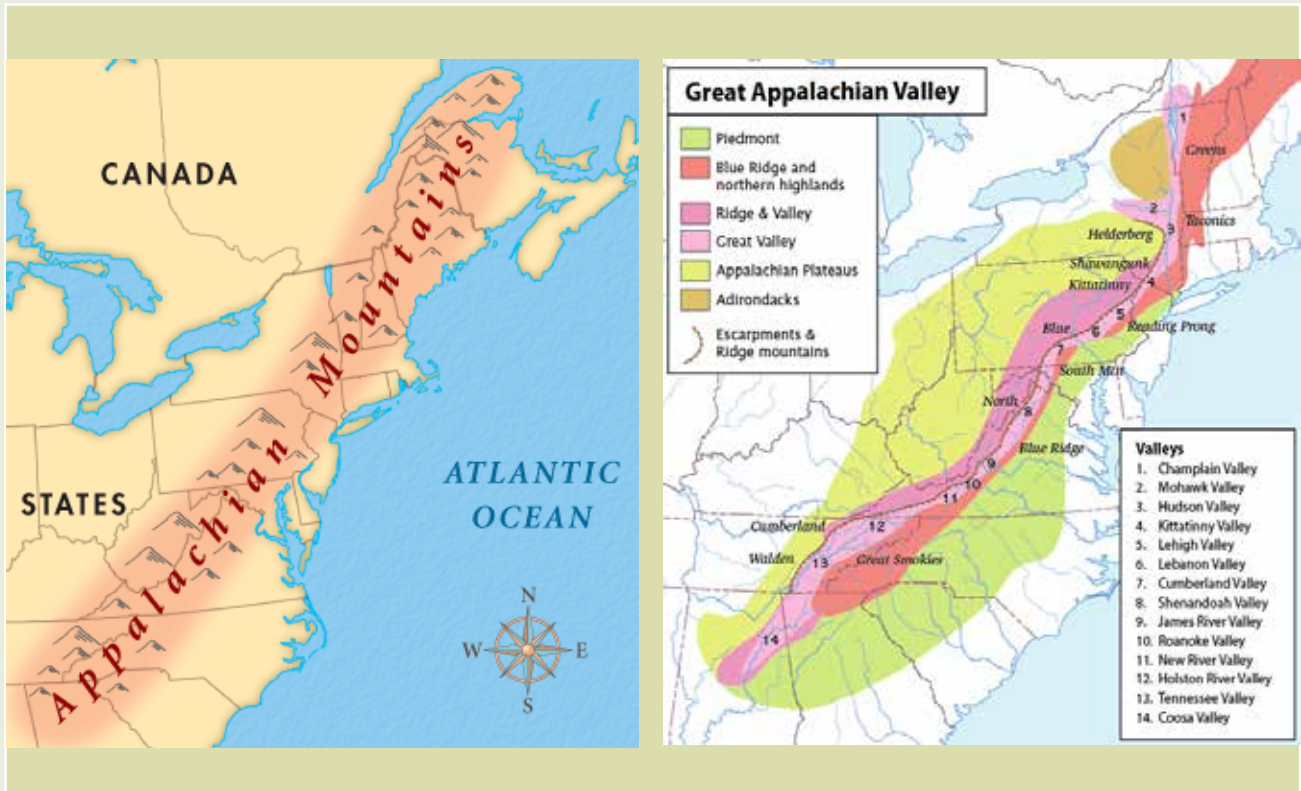




### If you checked that social media is important, which social media platforms do you use?

47 responses





# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

Logotype Package | Guidelines for Use

Prepared by Laughing Bear Associates Design





## Some helpful guidelines for use of the logo.

It is fundamentally important to maintain a consistent overall treatment of the logo and color palette across platforms. This will heighten the visual recognition of the organization and provide a good foundation for all publications and other uses.

A simple clean visual approach enhances readability and facilitates communication, allowing for individual messaging to be highlighted. To this end, a number of iterations of the logo are assembled for use, and, one or another of them, should meet most needs.

While the logo is designed to be used in most foreseeable applications, occasional anomalous situations will occur. If the guidelines absolutely cannot be strictly applied, use your common sense and adhere as closely as possible — or simply opt not to use the logo in that case.

Also, elements of the logo package are intended to appear in concert with partnering organizations and some guidelines might need to be tweaked accordingly.

Please note: Folders for each permutation of the logo shown in these guidelines include jpegs, pdfs, pngs, and eps files and are to be found in the accompanying material.

ATLP principal logo: icon + name + tagline



ATLP\_Icon + name + tag\_CMYK



ATLP\_Icon + name + tag\_BW

ATLP principal logo: icon + name + no tag



ATLP\_Icon+name\_no tag\_CMYK



ATLP\_Icon+name\_no tag\_BW

ATLP principal logo: icon only



ATLP\_Icon only\_CMYK



ATLP\_Icon only\_BW

---

ATLP principal logo: name only

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**

ATLP\_Name\_no tag\_CMYK

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**

ATLP\_Name\_no tag\_BW

---

ATLP principal logo: name + tag

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**

**Connecting People, Nature, and Place**

ATLP\_Name+tag\_CMYK

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**

**Connecting People, Nature, and Place**

ATLP\_Name+tag\_CMYK\_BW

# ATLP color palette

## PRINCIPAL COLORS (colors of logo icon)



**Blue**  
C=100; M=20; Y=0; K=40



**Green**  
C=40; M=0; Y=100; K=40



**Gold**  
C=0; M=20; Y=100; K=10

---

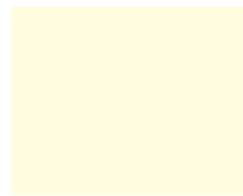
## RECOMMENDED TINTS OF PRINCIPAL COLORS (for sidebars and boxes)



**Blue (tint)**  
C=100; M=20; Y=0; K=40  
60% tint



**Green (tint)**  
C=40; M=0; Y=100; K=40  
35% tint



**Yellow (tint)**  
C=0; M=0; Y=100; K=0  
15% tint

---

## RECOMMENDED ACCENT COLORS (to be used sparingly)



**Burnt Orange**  
C=0; M=69; Y=100; K=24



**Red**  
C=15; M=100; Y=100; K=20



**Purple**  
C=75; M=100; Y=100; K=36

## COLOR PALETTE (background colors)

The logo should appear on a white background, or either on a light or neutral background. Always make sure there is good contrast between the background color and the logo image.

### Examples of recommended background colors for CMYK



White



Blue, 5% tint



Green, 10% tint



Gold, 5% tint



Yellow, 10% tint

### Examples of recommended background tints of black for greyscale



White



Black, 5% tint



Black, 10% tint



Black, 15% tint



Black, 20% tint



# ATLP fonts and useage

## PRINCIPAL FONT FAMILY

### ITC Franklin Gothic

Source of fonts: <https://fonts.adobe.com/fonts/itc-franklin-gothic>

#### PRIMARY HEADLINES:

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership**

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnDm*

***Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership***

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnDmit*

#### SECONDARY HEADLINES SUBHEADS AND PULLQUOTES:

**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership**

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnMd*

***Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership***

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnMdit*

#### SIDEBAR TEXT:

Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnBk*

*Appalachian Trail  
Landscape Partnership*

*ITCFranklinGothic LT Pro CnBkit*

---

## SUGGESTED TEXT FONT

### VOID

Refer to the accompanying style guide for text fonts

# Sample use of fonts

*Note: Disregard the text font in this example. Refer to the accompanying style guide for appropriate text fonts.*



*basketior, an vim basketior, an vim basketior, an vim basketior, an vim basketior, an vim*

## Duo te sonet, his id habeo aperiri.

**No patrioque moderatius voluptatibus duo, et brute doming dolores**

Dolor sit amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque vidisse facilisis at. Duo te sonet persequeris, his id habeo aperiri.

Postea perfecto prodesset ne pro, mea ne persecuti sadipscing, vim appetere platonem adversarium an. Sensibus evertitur accommodare usu et.

Dolor sit amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim

mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque vidisse facilisis at. Duo te sonet persequeris, his id habeo aperiri.

Postea perfecto prodesset ne pro, mea ne persecuti sadipscing, vim appetere platonem adversarium an. Sensibus evertitur accommodare usu et. .

Dolor sit amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque vidisse facilisis at.

**Fugit simul numquam id has, quis mazim epicurei ad**

Postea perfecto prodesset ne pro, mea ne persecuti sadipscing, vim appetere platonem adversarium an. Sensibus evertitur accommodare usu et. Dolor sit amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque vidisse facilisis at. Duo te sonet persequeris, his id habeo aperiri.

### Duis etcho nordi

Suas quaeque deleniti eos te. Duis dolore ea mei, per nulla ubique cotidieque id. Commodo pericula mnesarchum id ius, in habeo noster aliquam quo, debet occurreret no eam puas quaeque deleniti eos te. Duis dolore ea mei, per nulla ubique cotidieque id. Commodo pericula mnesarchum id ius, in habeo noster aliquam quo, debet occurreret no eam puas quaeque deleniti eos que id. Commodo pericula mnesarchum.

amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque vidisse facilisis at. Duo te sonet persequeris, his id habeo aperiri. amet, sit ex nulla assentior, an vim mollis laboramus. Te erat nulla epicuri est, labore philosophia sea id. Nihil ancillae sit no, est iriure deterruisset ei, mea reque

# Some helpful basic guidelines for use of the logo

For the sake of visual consistency and ease of placement here are a few does-and-don'ts for the basic use and treatment of the logo:

- The logo should never be stretched or condensed



*Do not condense.*



*Do not stretch.*



- If the tagline is used in conjunction with the icon and/or organization name it should appear as designed.



*Tagline should always appear as designed, and not moved about willy nilly.*

- If used together, the icon and the ATLP name should appear as designed.



*The size relationship of the icon to the type should appear as designed.*

## Some typical treatments



**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**



# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## Style Guide

### Accompaniment to the Logo Guidelines

#### Letterhead

##### Logo in Header

- 1” wide
- 0.3” from the top of the page
- 8 pt. space after
- Insert in Header with “Different First Page” checked so it only appears on the first page

##### First Line

- Always says “Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership”
- 18 pt. font, Franklin Gothic

##### Second Line

- Purpose of document/meeting
- 16 pt. font, Franklin Gothic

##### Third Line

- Date/Time of meeting or other necessary information
- 14 pt. font, Franklin Gothic

#### Text

*Always use Sans Serif fonts for accessibility*

##### Headings:

- Font: Franklin Gothic Book, bold, underlined
- Color: Logo Blue (Hex# 005A80)
- Size: 11 pt.

##### Subheadings:

- Font: Franklin Gothic Book, bold
- Color: Logo Green (Hex# 5F7E28)
- Size: 11 pt.

##### Content:

- Font: Franklin Gothic Book
- Color: Black
- Size: 11 pt.

#### Layout

##### Spacing

- 8 pt. space after headings and between sections and paragraphs
- No space before a bulleted list unless it’s directly below a heading

Use normal margins (1” on all sides)

## Discussing ATLP

Use “the” in front of ATLP

- Ex: The ATLP is proud to announce the 2023 WEAFF recipients...

Capitalize Landscape when discussing the A.T. Landscape

- Ex: We’re working to conserve the functional connectivity of the Landscape...

Capitalize Partnership when discussing the ATLP

- Ex: The Partnership strives to be a representative microcosm of the Landscape we represent...

Use periods when discussing the Trail

- This: A.T.
- Not this: AT

## Additional Guidance

### Use Oxford commas

### Avoid run-on sentences

- If a sentence is longer than 1.5 lines, break it up
- Sentences can be longer than 1.5 lines if they’re describing something technical that requires a longer sentence.

### Longer Documents

- If a document is long enough to have a table of contents, link the heading in the table to the location of that section in the document
- If a document is longer than 2 pages, add the logo with our name in the footer (see below)
  - Select “Different First Page” so it doesn’t appear on the first page
  - Place the logo 0.3” from the bottom
- If a document is longer than 5 pages, include page numbers on the right side of the footer, in line with the top of the logo (see below)

*Author: Cassidy Lord*



# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## ATLP Audience Matrix

October 2023



The ATLP is a close network of partners working together to build an inclusive mission, vision and strategy that catalyzes landscape conservation at a scale and pace much greater than individual partner successes. The mission, vision, and core values of the ATLP demonstrate how strategic conservation and protection of the Appalachian Landscape can provide 1) equitable public access to the benefits nature provides, and 2) community and ecological resilience in the face of climate change and other threats.

**Our Mission: The mission of the ATLP is to connect the wild, scenic, and cultural wonders of the Appalachian Trail and its surrounding landscape.**

### Outcomes

1. There is a greater understanding among conservation partners that we must protect the Appalachian Trail landscape and the importance and benefits of a connected landscape.
2. Understanding that working together, as partners in this landscape, we can accomplish more than working independently as organizations.
3. Sharing efforts, learning from each other, and using a regional brand will help us all communicate and support things that each organization cares about such as funding, policy, advocacy, broad engagement and conservation outcomes.

The continuum on the partnership:

- 1) No engagement, listening and dialogue
- 2) People are engaged, invited to participate, there is dialogue (not just one way)
- 3) Partnerships and relationships are created, exist. Trust is built, communication is open, easy.
- 4) Partners take specific action or partners join the steering committee, attend events, etc.
- 5) Partners conservation objectives, projects and outcomes include and shared with ATLP objectives

Target Audience	Desired Outcome	Motivation of Audience/Message to Audience	Challenges to Reach Desired Outcome	Where/how to reach?
<b>Organizations that are already part of the partnership with some depth (steering committee member, regular attendee at annual meeting or webinars, contributes/reads newsletter)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Strategic and accelerated conservation, an active and diverse partnership.</li> <li>● A participatory approach to coordinated conservation and protection.</li> <li>● Increase recruitment of organizations that are vital to deliver on strategic outcomes.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See the value in the network and the network needs to deliver on these expectations such as making connections, sharing learning, providing funding opportunities, sharing scientific data, working on conservation goals with peer organizations.</li> <li>● Already at the table, see the value, and want to help recruit and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Organizations have their own specific goals, demand on time, and are challenged to contribute meaningfully and consistently.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● eNewsletter</li> <li>● In-person events (annual meeting)</li> <li>● Online, organized networking through a platform such as SLACK</li> <li>● Social media to spark engagement</li> </ul>



		strengthen the partnership.		
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**Organizations with potential to join that are primarily conservation focused.**

<b>Target Audience</b>	<b>Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Motivation of Audience</b>	<b>Challenges to Reach Desired Outcome</b>	<b>Where/how to reach?</b>
<p><i>Conservation large to mid-sized organizations and those focused on landscape scale conservation - engaged partners working at the landscape scale. High level of technical conservation literacy. Strong alignment with ATLP goals</i></p>	<p>Alignment of goals with ATLP: conservation outcomes, benefits of a partnership i.e. supports funding, advocacy, communicating success, and engagement with communities in the landscape.</p>	<p>a. For organizations at this scale there is a clear connection to how the partnership can influence decision makers. There is more power in communicating similar messages with important audiences.  b. Recognize the language that they share with ATLP: connectivity, landscape scale, Appalachia region, and climate resilience.  c. These organizations want to protect the highest priority areas, elevating the recognition of the Appalachian Trail Landscape as a climate corridor and critical at the national and global levels.  d. Landscape scale organizations care about expanding the network, sharing learning about what they are each doing, building support from funders and government officials, and engaging the communities with a larger vision of landscape protection for climate resilience and wildlife corridors. e. Care about equitable access and community vitality but recognize that they are not operating at the level that can make a local difference.</p>	<p>Organizations have their own specific goals, demands on time, and are challenged to contribute meaningfully and consistently.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Word of mouth from Steering Committee and from ATLP</li> <li>● eNewsletter</li> <li>● In-person events (annual meeting)</li> <li>● Online, organized networking through a platform such as SLACK</li> <li>● Social media to spark engagement</li> </ul>

Target Audience	Desired Outcome	Motivation of Audience	Challenges to Reach Desired Outcome	Where/how to reach?
<p><b>Smaller conservation-focused organizations.</b></p> <p><i>Conservation Current/Regional and Local</i> - engaged partners working at the regional or local scale. Conservation focused, conservation literate, and often part of other partnerships.</p> <p>These partners in the conservation sector know a little about ATLP, and some have indicated interest in understanding more about the value of increasing engagement with the partnership.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Alignment in goals with ATLP locally and regionally. Have conservation outcomes that are at a smaller/local scale, see some benefits of a partnership for outcomes in terms of funding for specific projects, some engagement for those who care about the scale that ATLP operates in.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Share conservation values.</li> <li>Collaboration is a tool to learn from other organizations, share best practices and have access to tools and funds.</li> <li>Can they achieve something with partners that is not possible with their organization's size.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small organizations limited by capacity and funding.</li> <li>Too many partners to choose from with the challenge of staff capacity and funding to operate and do programs/projects.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>eNewsletter</li> <li>Website</li> <li>In-person events and programs geared toward their scale.</li> <li>Training opportunities - how they can learn from others in the network, tap into the network's skills and expertise.</li> <li>Ways to communicate specifically to influencers or government officials - example of an Advocacy Day</li> </ul>

Target Audience	Desired Outcome	Motivation of Audience	Challenges to Reach Desired Outcome	Where/how to reach?
<p><i>Emerging Economic/Heritage/Cultural</i> - potential partners, less conservation focused, if at all. Organizations with potential to join the partnership that are not conservation focused but primarily focused on economic development, justice and equity, or indigenous communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Build local economy, vital communities, and connections for individuals to economic, cultural and social capital/resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The focus is on how the landscape creates opportunities and connections outside of environmental and wildlife purposes.</li> <li>Trail assets and natural resources are viewed as economic assets, drivers of tourism and impacting the attractiveness of the town/region as a desired location for businesses and residents.</li> <li>They are working to reverse injustices, generate wealth, support land ownership, steward the resources and support the connection to the land and landscape for those who live in their region.</li> <li>The local organizations work with groups that have been marginalized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It is important to demonstrate the value of working together. Clarity of where goals overlap.</li> <li>Need to articulate how conservation, and working with the network, supports economic and cultural goals.</li> <li>Using conservation or talking about the entire region is not how these organizations communicate or think about their work.</li> <li>Concern that larger scale organizations are pursuing their own goals and seem out of touch with local goals and challenges.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>social media</li> <li>Website.</li> <li>In-person event/program geared toward their concerns and goals.</li> <li>Local speakers, panels,</li> <li>SLACK channel for these organizations specifically to add value. Create partnerships that are useful where there aren't currently partnerships.</li> </ul>

		and disconnected from land. As organizations they face some similar issues and care about land protection and stewardship, but use different language and have different goals.		
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Target Audience	Desired Outcome	Motivation of Audience	Challenges to Reach Desired Outcome	Where/how to reach?
<b>Government Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Need to demonstrate their success and the benefits of the use of public funding and efforts.</li> <li>● Political support.</li> <li>● Funding for their work and staff.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● See partner engagement as the best way to use time effectively to build support.</li> <li>● Important to demonstrate leadership in the region - in their state but also in multi-state region.</li> <li>● See broader goals of landscape partnership as mutual to their goals of a connected landscape, recreation for residents/constituents, water quality, mitigation of climate change impacts.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Politics can be fickle such as change in the funding landscape and agency priorities when administrations change at both the state and federal level.</li> <li>● Need to work around or through the bureaucracy or challenges of government institutions.</li> <li>● Siloed government operations and goals narrows focus/interest.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● eNewsletter</li> <li>● Website</li> <li>● In-person events and programs</li> <li>● Letters to Editor</li> <li>● Gather group of government officials</li> <li>● Advocacy Training</li> </ul>

Messages:

- A Network Within the Region that Connects People, Nature and Place
- Partnering with all those who care about the future of our region.
- Organizations at all scales are welcome to join.
- The value of the partnership is to do more together than we can each accomplish alone.
- Specifics on network, funding, policy, advocacy, and communication - need goals, outcomes and tools that are concrete and demonstrate value.

**Next Steps of ATLP Steering Committee:** Messages need proof points for each audience.

How does/can/will ATLP create connections, broaden support, increase funding, amplify stories of success, and conserve important resources?

For example: For organizations working at the landscape scale in the Appalachia:

- ATLP will accelerate conservation by...
- ATLP will elevate the importance of the east coast climate corridor through...
- ATLP connects the dots for important federal and state funders...
- ATLP has brought/brings funders and funding to the table for conservation efforts.