

# MEETING GUIDE

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## *APPALACHIAN TRAIL LANDSCAPE PARTNERSHIP 2025 ANNUAL MEETING*

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ROANOKE, VIRGINIA  
APRIL 21–24, 2025

# THANK YOU TO OUR ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORS!

## HOSTING SPONSORS



**Appalachian Trail  
Conservancy**



## ATLP SUPPORTERS



**CENTER FOR ORGANIZATIONAL AND  
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENT**  
VIRGINIA TECH.



## ATLP ALLIES



**Appalachian Trail  
Landscape  
Partnership**

Connecting People, Nature, and Place

# PACKET CONTENTS

- *Travel Information & Lodging Details for Hotel Roanoke*
- *Event Highlights*
- *Local Information & Recommendations*
- *Wayfinding Maps of the Conference Center*
- *Final Agenda*
- *Speaker Bios*

*All event updates and details will be posted to the ATLP Annual Meeting Website: <https://appalachiantrail.org/our-work/conservation/landscape/partnership/2025-meeting>*

## GETTING TO HOTEL ROANOKE

We are excited to welcome you to Hotel Roanoke on April 21st! All meeting sessions and events (except for the Field Trip/Service Project) will take place on site at the hotel.

**The Hotel Roanoke & Conference Center**  
**110 Shenandoah Avenue NW**  
**Roanoke, VA 24016**

**For those arriving by air:** There is a complimentary on-demand shuttle service to Hotel Roanoke. When you arrive, call 540 - 985- 5900 for pick up. Shuttle Service will depart the Hotel for the airport on the "15s" & "45s" of each hour between 5am - 11pm for all departing flights.

The Hotel is conveniently located less than 10 minutes from the Roanoke Airport and Amtrak Rail Station. Uber, Lyft, Taxi are all available for transportation to and from transportation hubs. Overnight Self-Parking is available at Hotel Roanoke at \$18 per day. Day parking for commuters is \$12 per day. (See included map)

## ON-SITE LODGING DETAILS

Check in for on-site lodging is at **4pm** on your day of arrival.

Check out for on-site lodging is at **11am** on your day of departure.

This packet includes a hotel map for parking and venue information.



# SPECIAL NETWORKING EVENTS

## Monday, April 21st: Welcoming Happy Hour Reception

Arrive early to meet up with fellow ATLP partners for a pre-meeting reception happy hour from 4-6pm at Hotel Roanoke. More details will be provided upon registration.

## Tuesday, April 22nd: Share Fair Reception, Networking Social & Dinner

All participants invited to host a table for their organization! Bring materials to share as folks network during a Networking Social before Dinner. Dinner provided for all participants on the evening of April 22nd.

## Thursday, April 24th: Optional Field Trip & Service Project

*Give Back During Earth Week in the A.T. Landscape!*

Join for field trip to the newly established pedestrian bridge and shuttle service to enhance public safety and access to the popular Appalachian Trail destination – McAfee Knob. Attendees will then venture out in the A.T. Landscape to partake in invasive species removal and support stewardship efforts to restore the landscape.

# MEALS & LOCAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Breakfast items, Lunch, and snacks and beverages will be provide to all attendees on Tuesday and Wednesday at Hotel Roanoke.

Dinners after Monday's Reception and on Wednesday evening will be "on-your-own". In addition to the great restaurant at Hotel Roanoke, there are a lot of great local restaurants within walking distance of the Hotel. See below and check out even more things to see and do in the Roanoke area at [Visit Virginia's Blue Ridge](#).

### Dinner Spots:

[Billy's](#)

[Three Notch'd](#)

[Jack Brown's](#)

[Nawab](#)

[Well Hung Vineyards](#)

[Six and Sky Rooftop Grill](#)

### Coffee Spots:

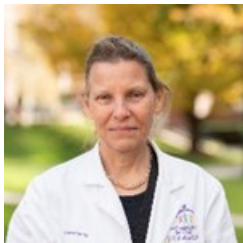
[Mill Mountain Coffee and Tea](#)

[On the Rise Bread](#)

[Scrambled](#)

# KEYNOTE PRESENTATIONS

## Tuesday, April 22nd: "Climate Change, Your Brain, & The Next 100 Years" with Dr. Ann-Christine Duhaime



Dr. Duhaime is a senior pediatric neurosurgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital and is the Nicholas T. Zervas Distinguished Professor of Neurosurgery at Harvard Medical School. She is the author of *Minding the Climate* (Harvard University Press) and was awarded the Sustainability Book of the Year in 2023 by Project Syndicate. While climate change presents an enormous challenge, Dr. Duhaime will help us understand what we know about the brain's reward system to help us change our own behaviors and those we influence to tackle this large-scale, intergenerational crisis, and to provide hope for a better future.

## Wednesday, April 23rd: "Reimagining Rural Policy for the 21st Century" with Tony Pipa

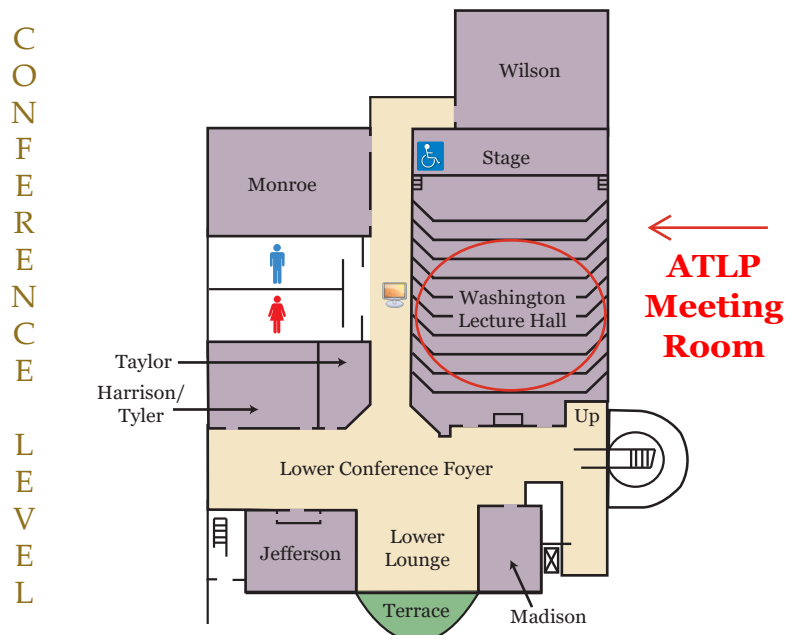
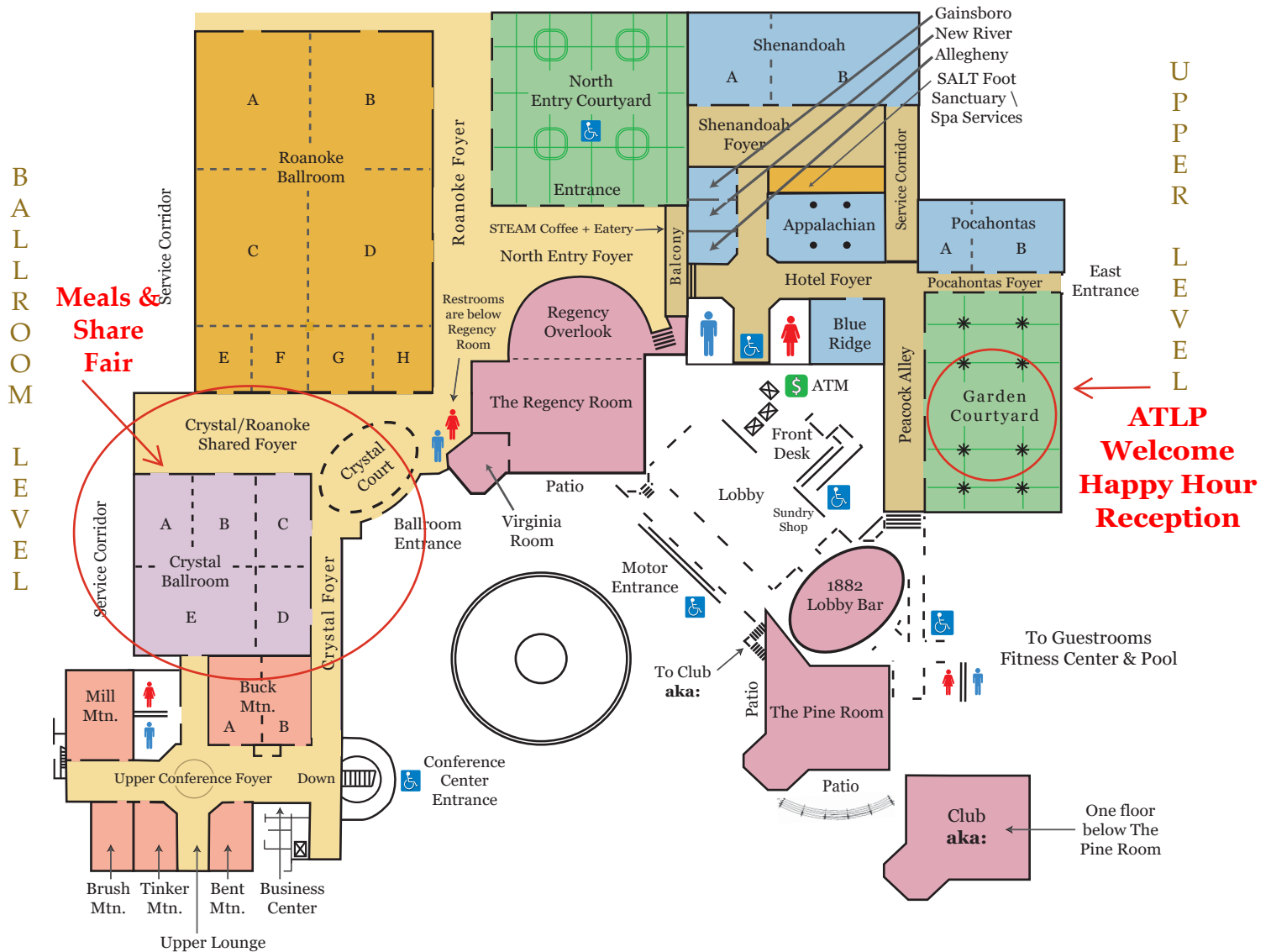


Tony Pipa is a senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution. Tony launched and leads the Reimagining Rural Policy Initiative, which seeks to modernize and transform U.S. policy to better enable equitable and sustainable development across rural America. Tony will engage in a dialogue about the shifting trends in rural policy and how Appalachia can maintain resilient, thriving communities at multiple scales.



# THE HOTEL ROANOKE & CONFERENCE CENTER

110 Shenandoah Ave • Roanoke, VA 24016 • (T) 540-985-5900 • (F) 540-853-8290 • [www.HotelRoanoke.com](http://www.HotelRoanoke.com)



## Accommodations & Services

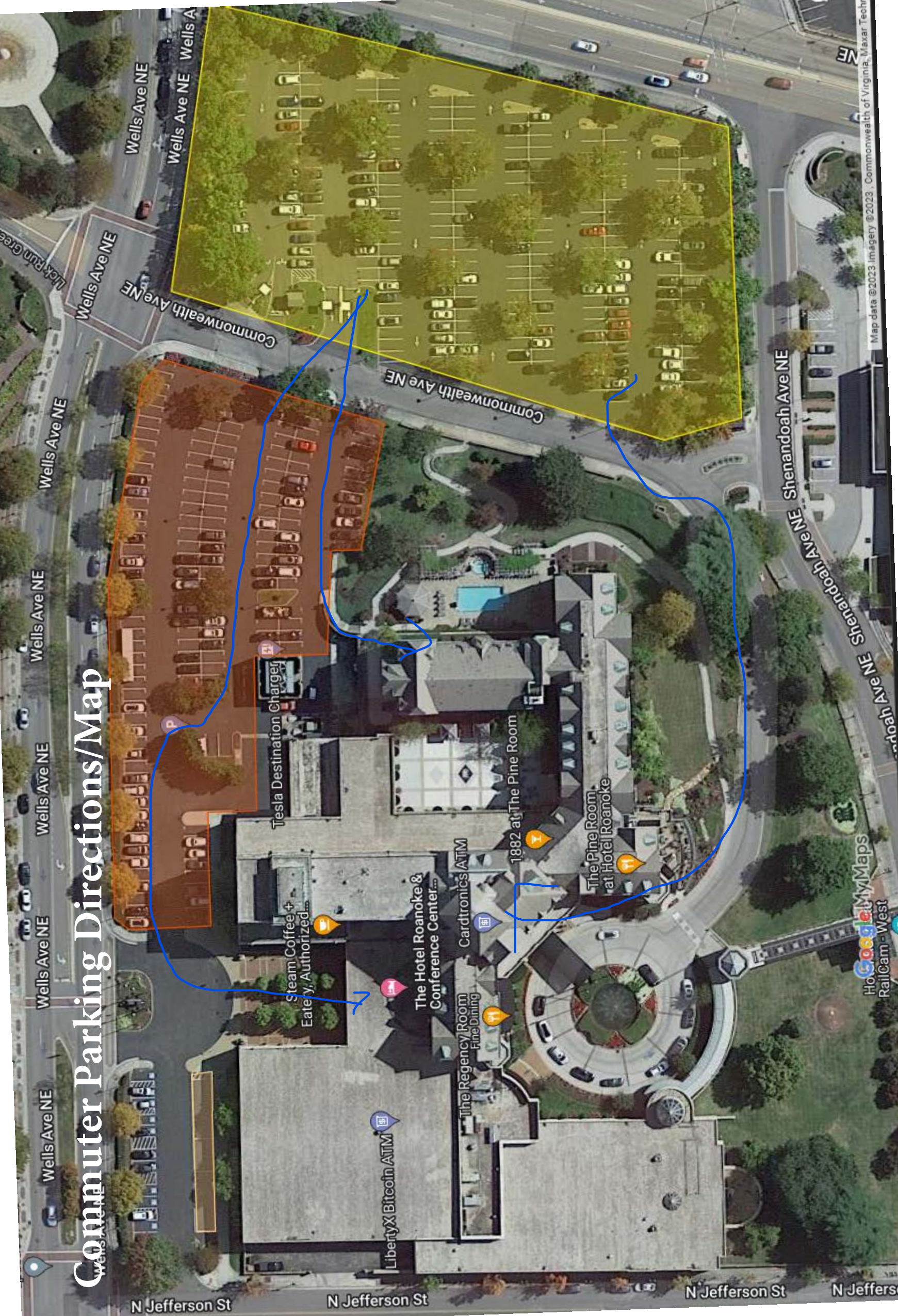
- 63,000 square-foot state-of-the-art conference center
- 329 elegant guest rooms, including 19 suites
- High-speed internet, wired and wireless availability
- The historic Regency Room
- The Pine Room & 1882 Lobby Bar
- Club aka:
- Complete fitness center & outdoor pool
- Complimentary shuttle with Roanoke-Blacksburg Reg. Airport



= Wheelchair accessible ramp or lift



# Commuter Parking Directions/Map







# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## Annual Partner Meeting

### Agenda

April 21 – 24, 2024  
Hotel Roanoke – Roanoke, VA

#### MONDAY, April 21

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##### Welcome Happy Hour / Reception

4:00 – 6:00 PM

Location: Hotel Roanoke Courtyard  
Cash Bar + Light Refreshments

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#### TUESDAY, April 22: Appalachian Trail Landscape Resilience

\*ALL SESSION LOCATED IN WASHINGTON LECTURE HALL (unless otherwise noted)\*

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8:00 – 9:00 AM

##### Registration / Check-In

Breakfast refreshments & drinks available

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##### Welcome / Keynote Address

**Introductions & Agenda Review:** Bill Potapchuck, Community Building Institute & Katie Allen, Appalachian Trail Conservancy / Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

9:00 – 10:15 AM

**Welcome:** Matthew Wells, Director, Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

**Keynote Address – “Climate Change, Your Brain, and the Next 100 Years”**  
Ann-Christine Duhaime, MD, Pediatric Neurosurgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital; Professor of Neurosurgery, Harvard Medical School

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##### Session 1: Celebrating 10 years of the ATLP

10:15 – 10:45 AM

##### Speakers:

Katie Allen, Appalachian Trail Conservancy / Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership  
Ed Clark, National Park Service, Appalachian National Scenic Trail  
Ron Tipton, Partnership for National Trails System  
Sandi Marra, Appalachian Trail Conservancy  
+ Special Recognition of ATLP Leadership Past & Present

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10:45 – 11:00 AM

##### BREAK

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|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| <p><b>11:00 – 12:00 PM</b></p> | <p><b>Session 2: Science &amp; Data Tools Advancing Conservation Action in the Appalachian Trail Landscape</b></p> <p>Innovative research and emerging data tools on important topics like old growth forest mapping, fish and bird habitat health, and functional ecosystem priorities to further our understanding of nature in Appalachia.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b><br/> <i>Bill Potapchuk, Community Building Institute (moderator)</i><br/> <i>Ben Shamgochian, Our Climate Common</i><br/> <i>Seth Coffman, Trout Unlimited</i><br/> <i>Dr. Pete Mckinley, The Wilderness Society</i><br/> <i>Abigail Weinberg, Open Space Institute</i></p> |
| <p><b>12:00 – 1:00 PM</b></p>  | <p><b>Lunch</b><br/> Location: Crystal Ballroom<br/> <i>Lunch Provided. Dietary accommodations available</i></p>  |
| <p><b>1:00 – 1:45 PM</b></p>   | <p><b>Session 3: Federal &amp; State Policy Trends in Conservation &amp; Recreation: A Policy Briefing</b></p> <p>A status update on federal and state policy on conservation, ecological connectivity, and outdoor recreation.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b><br/> <i>Katie Allen, Appalachian Trail Conservancy / Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership (moderator)</i><br/> <i>Erin Sito, Wildlands Network</i><br/> <i>Maribel Casteneda, Confluence of States and Our Virginia Outdoors</i></p>   |
| <p><b>1:45 – 2:45 PM</b></p>   | <p><b>Session 4: Community Resilience &amp; Recreation Access: Preparing for Natural Disasters: Lessons from Hurricane Helene</b></p> <p>Panelists will share lessons learned from Hurricane Helene, highlighting effective practices in disaster preparedness, equitable recovery, and fostering long-term resilience.</p> <p><b>Speakers:</b><br/> <i>Dan Ryan, Appalachian Trail Conservancy (moderator)</i><br/> <i>Ed Clark, National Park Service, Appalachian National Scenic Trail</i><br/> <i>Mathew Wells, Virginia Department of Conservation &amp; Recreation</i><br/> <i>Allison Smith, MADE X MTNS</i></p>                          |
| <p><b>2:45 – 4:00 PM</b></p>   | <p><b>Peer Learning &amp; Exchange Breakout Discussions</b><br/> Location: Monroe &amp; Wilson Rooms</p>  |
| <p><b>4:00 – 4:15 PM</b></p>   | <p><b>End of Day Reflections</b></p>  |
| <p><b>4:15 – 5:00 PM</b></p>   | <p><b>Break/Share Fair Set Up</b><br/> Location: Crystal Ballroom Foyer</p>   |



|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| <b>5:00 – 6:00 PM</b> | <b>Share Fair Reception / Networking Social</b><br>Location: Crystal Ballroom Foyer<br>Cash Bar & Light Refreshments  |
| <b>6:00 – 7:00 PM</b> | <b>Dinner</b><br>Location: Crystal Ballroom<br>Cash Bar & Buffet Dinner Selection<br><i>Dinner Provided. Dietary accommodations available</i><br><br><i>A Celebration of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's 100<sup>th</sup> Birthday with Sandi Marra, President &amp; CEO of ATC</i> |

## **WEDNESDAY, April 23: Expanding Partnership Connections**

**\*ALL SESSION LOCATED IN WASHINGTON LECTURE HALL (unless otherwise noted)\***

|                         |  |
|-------------------------|--|
| <b>9:00 – 9:20 AM</b>   | <b>Morning Reflections &amp; Agenda Review</b>   |
| <b>9:20 – 10:00 AM</b>  | <b>Keynote Dialogue: Reimagining Rural Policy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century</b><br><br><i>Tony Pipa, The Brookings Institution</i>   |
| <b>10:00 – 11:00 AM</b> | <b>Session 5: Community – Centered Conservation &amp; Economic Development in the Appalachian Trail Landscape</b><br><br>Learning about the intersection of conservation and economic development from ATLP partners and their to support communities striving to balance ecological health and economic vitality.<br><br><b>Speakers:</b><br><i>David Rose, The Wilderness Society (moderator)</i><br><i>Shyla Miller, Appalachian Trail Conservancy</i><br><i>George Ivey, Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation</i><br><i>Joel Houser, Open Space Institute</i>   |
| <b>11:00 – 11:15 AM</b> | <b>BREAK</b>   |
| <b>11:15 – 12:15 PM</b> | <b>Session 6: Access, Culture and Health: Protecting Landscape Connection</b><br><br>Exploring connection to landscapes and place through the lens of access, culture, and community health at various scales and how to cultivate new perspectives on conservation success.<br><br><b>Speakers:</b><br><i>Maya Alexander, Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley (moderator)</i><br><i>Dr. Alexa Sutton Lawrence, Indigenous East</i><br><i>Lucas Tyree, NDPonics</i><br><i>Xavier Tramaine, Humble Hustle Company, Inc.</i><br><i>Jay Leutze, Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy &amp; Appalachia Rising</i> |

|                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| <b>12:15 – 1:15 PM</b> | <b>Lunch</b><br>Location: Crystal Ballroom<br><i>Lunch Provided. Dietary accommodations available</i>   |
| <b>1:15 – 2:15 PM</b>  | <b>Peer Learning &amp; Exchange Breakout Discussion</b><br>Location: Monroe & Wilson Rooms  |
| <b>2:15 – 2:30 PM</b>  | <b>BREAK</b>  |
| <b>2:30 – 3:00 PM</b>  | <b>Discussion Report Out, Reflections &amp; Next Steps</b>  |
| <b>3:00 – 4:00 PM</b>  | <b>Session 7: Scaling-Up in Appalachia: Regional &amp; State Efforts for a Connected &amp; Protected Eastern Seaboard</b><br><br>This session highlights a selection of impactful, Appalachian-focused conservation projects and examines how they complement and reinforce each other to achieve broader regional goals.<br><br><b>Speakers:</b><br><i>Deb Davidson, Center for Large Landscape Conservation (moderator)</i><br><i>Todd Fearer, Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture &amp; Appalachian People &amp; Places: A Conservation Collaborative</i><br><i>Sally Palmer, The Nature Conservancy - Appalachians</i><br><i>Dr. Claire Jantz, Pennsylvania Department of Conservation &amp; Natural Resources</i> |
| <b>4:00 – 4:30 PM</b>  | <b>Closing Remarks &amp; Next Steps</b><br><b>Special Presentation &amp; Announcements for Field Trip / Service Project Attendees</b>   |
| <b>4:40 PM</b>         | Open to all! Overview presentation on the VA-311/AT Pedestrian Bridge Crossing by <b>Assistant Director of Planning at Roanoke County, Megan Cronise</b> and other partners on how the project came to be! Additional preparation announcements will be shared for all attending the Thursday Field Trip & Service Project.   |

## THURSDAY, April 24: Field Trip & Service Project

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
|                          | <b>Optional Field Trip &amp; Service Project</b><br><br>Location: McAfee Knob Pedestrian Bridge & Appalachian Trail<br><br><i>Lunch &amp; Transportation Provided. Dietary accommodations available</i>   |
| <b>8:00 AM – 2:00 PM</b> | <b>Give Back During Earth Week in the A.T. Landscape!</b><br><br>Site visit of newly established pedestrian bridge and shuttle service to enhance public safety and access to the popular Appalachian Trail destination – McAfee Knob. Attendees will then venture out onto the A.T. Landscape to partake in invasive species removal and support stewardship efforts to restore the landscape. |







# Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

## Annual Partner Meeting Attendee List

April 21-25, 2025 | Roanoke, VA

| Name                | Organization:  | Email                                 |
|---------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| Tiffany Ahalt       | Visit Hagerstown & Washington County CVB                   | tiffany@visithagerstown.com           |
| Maya Alexander      | Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley                         | malexander@shenandoahalliance.org     |
| Mackenzie Alexander | Forest Stewards Guild                                      | malexander@forestguild.org            |
| Ben Alexandro       | Chesapeake Conservancy                                     | balexandro@chesapeakeconservancy.org  |
| Katie Allen         | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                              | kallen@appalachiantrail.org           |
| Laura Belleville    | National Forest Foundation                                 | lbelleville@nationalforests.org       |
| Paula Benke         | Roanoke County   | pbenke@roanokecountyva.gov            |
| Kevin Brandt        | Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation                              | kbrandt@brpfoundation.org             |
| Maribel Castaneda   | Confluence of States & Our Virginia Outdoors               | maribel@vcnva.org                     |
| Julia Chain         | South Mountain Partnership & Appalachian Trail Conservancy | jchain@appalachiantrail.org           |
| Diana Christopulos  | Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club                             | dianak16@earthlink.net                |
| Seth Coffman        | Trout Unlimited  | seth.coffman@tu.org                   |
| Greg Costello       | Center For Large Landscape Conservation                    | gregcostello@largelandscapes.org      |
| Megan Cronise       | Roanoke County   | mcronise@roanokecountyva.gov          |
| Richard Daileader   | Appalachian Trail Conservancy (Board of Directors)         | rjdaileader@gmail.com                 |
| Deb Davidson        | Center For Large Landscape Conservation                    | deb@largelandscapes.org               |
| Grayson Davie       | New River Land Trust                                       | gis@newriverlandtrust.org             |
| Chris DeFiore       | Forest Stewards Guild                                      | cdefiore@forestguild.org              |
| Marissa Edwards     | Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards                   | marissaedwards@wildernessstewards.org |
| Joshua Ellington    | Virginia State Parks                                       | david.bryan@dcr.virginia.gov          |
| John Eustis         | New River Land Trust                                       | nrlt@newriverlandtrust.org            |
| Todd Fearer         | Appalachian Mountains Joint Venture                        | tfearer@abcbirds.org                  |
| Andrew Fotinos      |  | afotinos@gmail.com                    |
| Diogo Freire        | Green South Foundation                                     | diogo@greensouthfoundation.org        |
| Brian Fuller        | Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation           | brian.fuller@dcr.virginia.gov         |
| Larry Garretson     | Wildlife Center of Virginia                                | lgarretson@wildlifecenter.org         |
| Alexandra Giorgos   |  | aagiorgos@gmail.com                   |
| Zachary Greenberg   | The Pew Charitable Trusts                                  | zgreenberg@pewtrusts.org              |
| Sarah Hagan         | Forest Stewards Guild                                      | shagan@forestguild.org                |



|                        |   |                                 |
|------------------------|---|---------------------------------|
| Kathryn Herndon-Powell | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | kherndon@appalachiantrail.org   |
| Katie Hess             | South Mountain Partnership & Appalachian Trail Conservancy  | khess@appalachiantrail.org      |
| Liz Hillard            | Wildlands Network   | liz@wildlandsnetwork.org        |
| Mary Hodges            | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | mhodges@appalachiantrail.org    |
| Bill Holman            | Appalachian Trail Conservancy (Board of Directors)          | holmanbill59@gmail.com          |
| J.T. Horn              | The Trust for Public Land                                   | jt.horn@tpl.org                 |
| Jeffrey Hunter         | National Parks Conservation Association                     | jhunter@npca.org                |
| George Ivey            | Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation                               | givey@brpfoundation.org         |
| Claire Jantz           | Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources | cjantz@pa.gov                   |
| Jessica Lawrence       | Friends of Southwest Virginia                               | jlawrence@myswva.org            |
| Jay Leutze             | Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy                  | jayerskine01@gmail.com          |
| Rex Linville           | Land Trust Alliance   | rlinville@lta.org               |
| Sandra Marra           | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | smarra@appalachiantrail.org     |
| Conner McBane          | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | cmcbane@appalachiantrail.org    |
| Jonathan McCoy         | Botetourt County  | jmccoy@botetourtva.gov          |
| Pete McKinley          | The Wilderness Society                                      | peter_mckinley@twc.org          |
| Shyla Miller           | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | smiller@appalachiantrail.org    |
| Linda Mulheren         | Roanoke Appalachian Trail Club                              | president@ratc.org              |
| Brendan Mysliwiec      | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | brendan.mysliwiec@gmail.com     |
| Suzanne Neal           | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | sneal@appalachiantrail.org      |
| Timothy Noviello       | Wildlands Network   | tim@wildlandsnetwork.org        |
| Maxwell Olsen          | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | molsen@appalachiantrail.org     |
| Jen Otey               | Friends of Southwest Virginia                               | jotey@myswva.org                |
| Sally Palmer           | The Nature Conservancy                                      | spalmer@tnc.org                 |
| Matthew Piccarello     | Forest Stewards Guild                                       | matt@forestguild.org            |
| William Potapchuk      | Community Building Institute                                | bill@communitytools.net         |
| Max Raphelson          | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | mraphelson@appalachiantrail.org |
| William Rawlyk         | Open Space Institute  | brawlyk@osiny.org               |
| David Rose             | The Wilderness Society                                      | david_rose@twc.org              |
| Ron Rosen              | NY-NJ Trail Conference                                      | raisinron@gmail.com             |
| Simon Rucker           | Maine Appalachian Trail Land Trust                          | srucker@matlt.org               |
| Dan Ryan               | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | dryan@appalachiantrail.org      |
| John Seebach           | The Pew Charitable Trusts                                   | jseebach@pewtrusts.org          |
| Ben Shamgochian        | Our Climate Common  | benjsham@gmail.com              |
| Kyle Shenk             | The Conservation Fund                                       | kshenk@conservationfund.org     |
| Katrina Shindledecker  | Hudson Highlands Land Trust                                 | katrina.shindledecker@hhlt.org  |
| Erin Sito              | Wildlands Network   | e.sito@wildlandsnetwork.org     |
| Allison Smith          | WNC MADE X MTNS Partnership                                 | allison@madexmtns.com           |





|                  |   |                                |
|------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| Peter Spadaro    | Pennsylvania Department of Conservation & Natural Resources | pspadaro@pa.gov                |
| Frank Stovall    | Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation            | frank.stovall@dcr.virginia.gov |
| Alexandra Sutton | Indigenous East   | lexasutton@gmail.com           |
| Ron Tipton       | Partnership for the National Trails System                  | rtipton1948@gmail.com          |
| Eliza Townsend   | Appalachian Mountain Club                                   | etownsend@outdoors.org         |
| Xavier Tremaine  | Humble Hustle Company                                       | thehumblehustleco@gmail.com    |
| Lucas Tyree      | NDPonics  | hello@ndponics.org             |
| Elizabeth Ward   | Land Trust Alliance   | eward@lta.org                  |
| Abigail Weinberg | Open Space Institute  | aweinberg@osiny.org            |
| Matthew Wells    | Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation            | Matthew.Wells@dcr.virginia.gov |
| Brian Wills      | Appalachian Trail Conservancy                               | bwills@appalachiantrail.org    |







## Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership

### Annual Partner Meeting

### SESSION SPEAKERS

**April 21 – 24, 2024 | Roanoke, VA**



**Maya Alexander**

Community Engagement Manager  
Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley

Maya is driven by a personal mission to help all people access nature and outdoor spaces, and to nurture their own relationships with the natural world. She earned a degree in Psychology from Salisbury University and spent several years as an environmental educator with organizations like the National Aquarium and Chesapeake Bay Foundation. She brings her experience as an educator to her current role as Community Engagement Manager at Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley, connecting people with conservation efforts in the Valley.

While a Maryland native, the mountains of Virginia have long called to her, and she's grateful to call the Shenandoah Valley home. In her free time, she enjoys hiking, camping, and spending time with family.



**Katie Allen**

Director of Landscape Conservation  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Katie Allen serves as the Director of Landscape Conservation to support the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's mission to see the Appalachian Trail and its surrounding landscape are protected forever for all to enjoy. At ATC, she oversees the coordination of the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership, a collaborative of over 100 partners working to connect the wild, scenic and cultural wonders of the Appalachian Trail and its surrounding landscape; the Wild East Action Fund, a grant program that promotes the protection of land and capacity building of partners in the Appalachian Trail Landscape; and the Appalachian Trail Community Program(TM), a designation program for communities along the trail to promote their dedication to stewardship of the AT, outdoor recreation economic development, and conservation of natural and recreational resources. Prior to joining the ATC, Katie was the Director of The Conservation Fund's Conservation Leadership Network (CLN) leading a range of services related to rural economic development, strategic conservation planning, and market-based conservation finance. She holds a Master of City and Regional Planning degree in

Environmental and Land Use Planning from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and a Bachelor of Science degree in Communications from Boston University. Katie serves as a coordinating committee member of the Network for Landscape Conservation. She also provides technical support for the joint EPA and USFS program, Recreation Economies for Rural Communities. Katie has always loved to be outdoors and exploring nature on foot, on horseback, or paddling through waters near her home in Shepherdstown, WV, across the country and abroad.



**Maribel Castañeda**  
Manager  
Confluence of States and Our Virginia Outdoors

Maribel is a passionate coalition builder with over a decade of experience in local and state government. She is currently the Manager of the Confluence of States supporting a network of 20 state offices of outdoor recreation and the Manager for Our Virginia Outdoors, a coalition focused on promoting Virginia's outdoors for all. She previously served as the Director of Appointments and Director of Latino Outreach for Governor Northam. Maribel is an avid outdoors enthusiast from Harrisonburg, Virginia and grew up exploring the natural beauty of the Blue Ridge Mountains. She loves camping, hiking, and running.



**Ed Clark**  
Superintendent, Appalachian National Scenic Trail  
National Park Service

Clark's National Park Service career spans several decades and includes work at both the park and national level. He began his role as superintendent of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail in late 2023. Prior to this role, he served as the Pacific West Region's senior project manager supporting complex projects such as Colorado River water issues, Lake Mead water levels, and statewide permitting efforts. In addition to serving in key park planning positions, Clark previously served as the superintendent of Gettysburg National Military Park and Eisenhower National Historic Site for five years where he built strong partnerships and provided strategic leadership for one of the nation's premiere civil war battlefields. Previously, he served as superintendent of Manassas National Battlefield Park, where he provided service-wide leadership for the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War and the broader Civil War to Civil Rights commemorative efforts. He has also served as the acting associate regional director for operations for the National Capital Region of the National Park Service and the acting national coordinator for National Heritage Areas. Among other posts prior to Manassas, Clark was deputy chief ranger at Shenandoah National Park and a supervisory park ranger at the Blue Ridge Parkway.



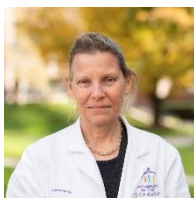
**Seth Coffman**  
Chesapeake Bay Project Manager  
Trout Unlimited

Seth is the Chesapeake Bay Project Manager of Trout Unlimited's Mid Atlantic Cold Water Habitat Restoration Program focused on the implementation of watershed scale restoration efforts in Virginia. Seth is responsible for implementing stream and riparian corridor restoration in Virginia's Shenandoah Valley. Day to day he is responsible for landowner outreach, and project management including scheduling, budgeting, and reporting. He also coordinates data collection and analysis, partner communication and conservation practice implementation. Seth has a Master of Science in Biology from James Madison University and a Bachelor of Science in Fisheries Science from Virginia Tech. Seth has 2 decades of experience monitoring and restoring cold water fisheries and has worked with Trout Unlimited for the past 16 years implementing and monitoring watershed scale restoration efforts.



**Deb Davidson**  
Chief Strategy Officer  
Center for Large Landscape Conservation

As Chief Strategy Officer at the Center for Large Landscape Conservation, Deb Davidson directs program development, fundraising, external relationships, and numerous networks to advance the organization's connectivity conservation programs. Her work in conservation for more than 25 years has largely focused on the protection of wildlife corridors and large landscapes, with a specialty in network development, connectivity policy, and science in North America.



**Ann-Christine Duhaime, MD**  
Pediatric Neurosurgeon, Massachusetts General Hospital  
Professor of Neurosurgery, Harvard Medical School

Dr. Duhaime is a senior pediatric neurosurgeon at the Massachusetts General Hospital and is the Nicholas T. Zervas Distinguished Professor of Neurosurgery at Harvard Medical School. Her neuroscience research investigates mechanisms, pathophysiology, imaging, and treatment of injury in the immature brain, using translational and clinical approaches to study injuries occurring in infants and young children, including those seen most commonly in child abuse. The work also investigates plasticity, recovery, and return of brain function in children and adolescents during maturation.

Dr. Duhaime also has a longstanding interest in the relationship between brain and behavior, and in environmental issues. She is a Faculty Associate of the Harvard University Center for the Environment. Beginning with a fellowship at the Radcliffe Institute in 2016 she has explored the neurobiology of reward circuitry and plasticity and its relevance to pro-environmental behavior, and also worked with a diverse team to design a prototype advanced "green" biophilic pediatric hospital.

Her book on this work, *Minding the Climate* (Harvard University Press), was awarded the Sustainability Book of the Year in 2023 by Project Syndicate. She now serves as Associate Director of the Massachusetts General Hospital Center for the Environment and Health, supervising the Research pillar, serves as Associate Editor-in-Chief of the *Journal of Climate Change and Health*, and through the Harvard Global Health Institute is pursuing interdisciplinary collaboration on the intersection of climate change, war, and health.



**Todd Fearer**

Coordinator

Appalachian Mountain Joint Venture & Appalachian People & Places: A

Conservation Collaborative

American Bird Conservancy

Todd joined the AMJV in 2010 as the Science Coordinator and became Coordinator in 2012. Prior to working with the AMJV, he was an assistant professor at the University of Arkansas' School of Forest Resources. He received his B.S. in Wildlife and Fisheries Science with minors in Forest Science and International Agriculture from Penn State University. He then went on to obtain both his M.S. and Ph.D. in Wildlife Science from Virginia Tech. Todd's office is located in the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center. In 2024, Todd assumed a coordinator role for the Appalachian People & Places Conservation Collaborative, formerly known as the Appalachian Keystone Initiative, a public-private partnership to develop a conservation implementation plan for the Appalachian Mountain region.



**Joel Houser**

Director of Capital Grants

Open Space Institute

Joel Houser is the Director of Capital Grants for the Open Space Institute (OSI). Joel oversees OSI's land conservation grant programs from Alabama to Maine and also serves as OSI's field coordinator in the southeast. Additionally, he provides technical assistance to organizations and communities developing science-based strategic conservation plans to address climate change. Before joining OSI in 2016, Joel served as the Southeast Conservation Director for the Land Trust for Tennessee (LTTN). For LTTN, Joel worked to acquire properties for Tennessee State Parks and Wildlife Management Areas. Preceding that, Joel was the Executive Director of Crabtree Farms, a nonprofit teaching farm in Chattanooga, Tennessee. He serves in leadership positions on the boards of Crabtree Farms and Thrive Regional Partnership. Joel holds both bachelor's and master's degrees in environmental science from the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. He lives and works in southeast Tennessee.





**George Ivey**

Program Director, Blue Ridge Rising  
Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation

George Ivey was born and raised in Asheville, North Carolina, living just a mile through the woods from the Blue Ridge Parkway. He spent a summer as a busboy in the restaurant at the Parkway's Pisgah Inn in the 1980s and cycled the Parkway's 469 miles over eight days in 2004. Now he serves as the Program Director for Blue Ridge Rising, the Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation's initiative to unite and serve the gateway communities of the Parkway's 29 counties in Virginia and North Carolina. George's career includes positions with Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, The Nature Conservancy, and the North Carolina Arboretum, as well as eight years as a consultant. His consulting work included a wide variety of fundraising and project management, ranging from agriculture projects in Western North Carolina to training programs for public lands staff and their partners in Iceland. George earned a political science degree at Duke University and a master's degree in parks, recreation, and tourism through N.C. State University. George lives in Flat Rock, North Carolina, with his wife and two children.



**Claire Jantz, PhD**

Deputy Secretary of Conservation & Technical Services  
Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation & Natural Resources

Dr. Jantz serves as the Deputy Secretary of Conservation and Technical Services at Pennsylvania's Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. Her deputation includes the bureaus of Conservation and Technical Services and Geological Survey and DCNR's Conservation Landscape Program. In her role as Deputy Secretary, Claire supports the implementation of DCNR's strategic priorities around climate; diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging; and outdoor recreation. She represents DCNR at the National Association of State Outdoor Recreation Liaison Officers, Chesapeake Conservation Partnership, the Appalachian Trail Landscape Partnership, among others. Claire holds a master's and PhD in Geography from the University of Maryland and prior to joining DCNR she served over 18 years as a faculty member in the Geography-Earth Science Department and director of the Center for Land Use and Sustainability at Shippensburg University.

**Jay Leutze**

Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy & Appalachia Rising

Jay Leutze was raised in Chapel Hill, NC, and lives in the Southern Appalachian Mountains on the North Carolina-Tennessee border. Trained as an attorney, he has become a leading voice for state and federal conservation funding for investment in public lands. He is a Trustee and Acquisition Specialist for Southern Appalachian Highlands Conservancy, one of the nation's most established land trusts. He is the author of *Stand Up that Mountain: The Battle to Save One Small Community in the Wilderness Along the Appalachian Trail* (Simon & Schuster, 2012). He is a national spokesman for the Land and Water Conservation Fund Coalition and has testified before Congress on the need for increased funding for public land conservation. He is frequently asked to be a guest lecturer on

conservation. In 2012, he was awarded North Carolina's highest civilian honor, The Order of the Longleaf Pine, for his contribution to the conservation of land and water in his home state. He was the winner of the 2013 North Carolina Governor's Conservation Communicator of the Year Award and was named Outstanding Conservation Advocate by the Roosevelt-Ashe Society.



**Sandra Marra**  
President & CEO  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Prior to taking on the role of ATC President and CEO, Sandra "Sandi" Marra has taken on a wide range of roles in service of the Trail and the Conservancy. She has been an A.T. volunteer for over 40 years and is an Honorary Life Member of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club. In addition, she is a life member of the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association (ALDHA), a Founding Member of the Appalachian Trail Museum, and, in 2009, was the recipient of the Appalachian Scenic Trail 25-year Service Award.

Before joining ATC, Sandi led her own consulting firm, providing strategy and development services for nonprofits including strategic planning, board development and training, board-staff relations, and change-management support to boards and executive staff. Her prior experience includes leading organizations in both executive staff and board roles. In 2015, she left her position as Chief Operating Officer of St. Coletta of Greater Washington, a large nonprofit organization supporting educational and service programs for developmentally disabled children and adults. During her 13-year tenure, the organization more than doubled in size, becoming one of the premier Special Education Public Charter Schools in the District of Columbia as well as offering adult services in both Virginia and Maryland. Prior to St. Coletta, Sandi worked for a variety of both nonprofit and private sector organizations providing strategic, operational and human resource management. Sandi now lives in Harpers Ferry with her husband, just a short walk from ATC Headquarters and the Appalachian Trail itself.



**Pete McKinley, PhD**  
Senior Conservation Biologist  
The Wilderness Society

Dr. McKinley joined The Wilderness Society in 2010, having worked in northeastern conservation and ecological research for the last 20 years. Prior to joining the Wilderness Society, Peter served for three years as the Director of Forestland Conservation at the Forest Society of Maine, a statewide land trust. His previous positions include two years as a staff conservation biologist at New Hampshire Audubon, five years as a researcher on forest songbirds and commercial forest management at the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences, five years as the Vice President of Operations and Ecological Planning for a progressive timber management company, overseeing their Forest Stewardship Council Certification and collaboration with conservation organizations, and a

year as an environmental consultant that included authorship of an ecological report on the High Peaks region of Western Maine, funded in part by The Wilderness Society.

Peter holds a B.A. in biology from Colby College, a Masters degree from Indiana University and a Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of New Brunswick. Peter's weekend hikes and paddles with family and friends span interior and coastal New England, enjoying the physical challenges, poetic moments and biodiversity of mountains and sea.



**Shyla Miller**

Community Conservation Innovator Fellow  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Originally hailing from Morganton, North Carolina, Shyla Miller is a recent graduate of UNC-Chapel Hill, having earned her degree in May 2024. During her master's program, Shyla developed a specialized focus in public policy, with a particular interest in the crucial intersection between environmental sustainability and human well-being. Building upon her academic foundation, Shyla began a Community Conservation Innovator fellowship with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in the summer of 2024. In this role, she is currently dedicated to developing a community-centered conservation initiative within the A.T. Communities Program, contributing to the preservation and engagement surrounding the Appalachian Trail.



**Sally Palmer**

Director of External Affairs - Appalachians  
The Nature Conservancy

Sally is a veteran of The Nature Conservancy with over 25 years' experience leading strategic conservation initiatives at state, regional, and federal scales in the U.S. In her current role, Sally leads the design and execution of federal agency engagement strategies across eighteen states and advocates for Congressional support of policies and funding that invest in natural resources and communities across the Appalachian region. She works actively to build and support coalitions to advance public policy and funding initiatives, including opportunities to leverage private capital investments in the Appalachians towards conservation outcomes. She was a member of the 2014 task force which updated "Conservation by Design," The Nature Conservancy's approach to implementing the organization's strategic direction. Sally received her B.A. in Biology from Vanderbilt University and her M.A. in Ecology from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.



**Anthony Pipa**

Senior Fellow – Global Economy and Development, Center for Sustainable Development  
The Brookings Institution

Tony Pipa is a senior fellow in the Center for Sustainable Development at the Brookings Institution. Tony launched and leads the Reimagining Rural Policy initiative, which seeks to modernize and transform U.S. policy to better enable equitable and sustainable development across rural America. He also launched and leads the Local Leadership on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) initiative, which explores the approach cities and local institutions are taking to solve local problems while driving progress on global policy and transnational issues.

Tony has three decades of executive leadership experience in the philanthropic and public sectors addressing poverty and advancing inclusive economic development in the U.S. and globally. He served as chief strategy officer at the U.S. Agency for International Development and held multiple senior policy positions at the agency. He also led the U.S. delegation at the U.N. to negotiate and adopt the SDGs, serving as U.S. special coordinator for the Post-2015 Agenda at the U.S. Department of State. His work on the international stage built upon a legacy of philanthropic leadership to advance community and economic development. While at the Triangle Community Foundation, he created one of the first programs nationwide focused on helping donor advisors maximize their philanthropic impact. He served as founding CEO of the Warner Foundation in Durham, North Carolina, focused on improving race relations and economic opportunity in the state, and subsequently helped launch the Foundation for Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. He has played a principal role in the start-up of multiple philanthropic ventures focused on addressing poverty and improving distressed communities.

Tony serves as treasurer of StriveTogether, as a senior associate research fellow in the Global Cities program at the Italian Institute for International Political Studies, and as a member of several task forces and advisory committees. He grew up in rural Elysburg, Pennsylvania, in the heart of anthracite coal country and attended Stanford University, graduated from Duke University, and earned a Master of Public Administration at the Harvard Kennedy School.



**Bill Potapchuk**

Founder & President  
Community Building Institute

Bill Potapchuk is President and founder of the Community Building Institute (CBI), an organization created to strengthen the capacity of communities and organizations work collaboratively, inclusively, and equitably healthy, sustainable futures. His work over the past three decades has spanned a wide array of policy arenas and work with nonprofits, community groups, philanthropy, and every level of government. In recent years, his work has focused on community development, early childhood education, democracy reform, and large landscape conservation. Potapchuk has been affiliated with all of the previous incarnations of the Carter School starting with the Center for



Conflict Analysis and Resolution in 1987. Potapchuk is widely published. He has co-authored chapters in significant textbooks for the field, including the Deliberative Democracy Handbook, Consensus Building Handbook, and the Collaborative Leadership Fieldbook, and a wide array of monographs and journal articles.



**David Rose**

Strategic Partnership Manager, East  
The Wilderness Society

Prior to joining The Wilderness Society, David was the founder and principal curator for Sally Blagg, a faith-based Southern Siouan family foundation. Over the past two decades, his work has centered curating safe spaces in the urban environment for dialogue between urban indigenous families, subsistence farmers, merchants, artists, artisans, and the institutions that impact their lives.

He holds a BA in Urban and Public Policy from SUNY Buffalo and has studied historic preservation at the University of Pennsylvania; from 2011 - 2022 David studied the impact of industrial development on urban indigenous health in the first federal city-county in the United States, Philadelphia County (PA). He has spent the past several years working to ensure that urban business improvement districts (BIDs) in New York and Pennsylvania make room for indigenous agribusiness as well as local artists and artisans; his advocacy work, even now, is in linking the 'urban green' to the wilderness through biophilic streetscape design and historic preservation efforts. David's work is inside of the Saura matrilineal tradition. He works to preserve cultural landscapes on his ancestral lands in the Sauratown Mountains; he is a small farmer, father, art collector, equestrian enthusiast, map maker and landscape designer. David brings a deep passion for indigenous urban dwellers overcoming fears and engaging in the healing qualities of the wilderness. He lives on a small homestead in the Yadkin River Valley.



**Dan Ryan**

Vice President of Conservation & Government Relations  
Appalachian Trail Conservancy

Prior to joining the ATC, Dan served as the Director of Conservation for the Georgia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy (TNC), based in Atlanta. While in this role, he oversaw the work of a large, diverse, and geographically dispersed team focused on protecting the region's lands, water, & oceans and tackling climate change.

Dan spent more than a decade with the North Carolina Chapter of TNC building its longleaf pine conservation program, for which he was awarded the Governor's Conservation Achievement Award as Forest Conservationist of the Year. He also worked for two land trusts and is a proud Returned Peace Corps Volunteer, serving as an agroforestry volunteer in Bolivia.

Dan holds a Bachelor of Science in Ecology from the University of North Carolina Asheville and a Master of Public Administration from the University of North Carolina Wilmington.



**Ben Shamgochian**  
Research Associate  
Our Climate Common

Ben Shamgochian is a research associate with Our Climate Common where he has focused on forest ecology in commercial forest landscapes. For the past three years he has been working with Dr. John Hagan to map late successional and old growth (LSOG) forests in the unorganized townships of Maine. Working with remote sensing data, Ben developed a hectare resolution map of LSOG forest for 10 million acres of the Maine North Woods. This work is the first of its kind in the Northeast and stands as a practical model for the mapping of old forests in other regions. With this mapping completed, Our Climate Common has turned its attention to developing conservation tools and strategies to further the conservation of these LSOG stands. Ben holds a B.S. in Biology from Tufts University.



**Erin Sito**  
Director, US Public Policy  
Wildlands Network

Erin researches, develops, and promotes laws that support habitat connectivity at all levels of government. Prior to Wildlands Network, she was a private practice attorney, specializing in renewable energy-related transactions, regulatory law, and litigation. Erin earned her JD from Oregon Law. While there she clerked with the Bonneville Power Administration and the Regional Solicitor's Office for the Department of the Interior. She also was the Environmental Caucus Fellow in the 2019 Oregon Legislative Session.



**Allison Smith**  
Economic Recovery Corps Fellow  
MADE X MTNS

Allison Smith is an Economic Recovery Corps Fellow serving the Western North Carolina (WNC) MADE X MTNS Partnership. Passionate about community-driven growth, Allison is experienced in infrastructure improvement, comprehensive planning, and stakeholder engagement. Allison received her Master of Public Administration degree and B.A. in English from West Virginia University. In her free time, you can find Allison enjoying North Carolina's beautiful outdoor spaces.



**Alexa Sutton Lawrence, PhD**

Founder

Indigenous East & Kedge Consulting, LLC

Dr. Alexa Sutton Lawrence, founder of Indigenous East and Kedge Consulting, LLC, works with environmental nonprofits to address equity issues. She serves on the board of NDPonics and is a member of the Saponi Nation of Ohio. Her work centers on protecting important cultural sites for Indigenous, African American, and Afro-Indigenous communities. In her thesis, "Seeking Home in the Ohio Country," Alexa delves into the migration history of the Yesáh community. With a Ph.D. in biodiversity ecology and over 14 years of experience, she specializes in conservation and natural resource management, focusing on Indigenous and marginalized communities. Her dual advanced degrees are in environmental science and humanities. Alexa's background includes wildlife and fisheries sciences with an emphasis on wildlife reintroduction. She fosters impactful environmental change through authentic relationships among scientists, communities, and legislators, and excels in science communication on global wildlife conservation.



**Ron Tipton**

Board Member

Partnership for the National Trails System

Ron Tipton has spent most of the past 40 years as an advocate for public land preservation, national park protection and for the Appalachian Trail. A graduate of the George Washington University National Law Center, from 1978 to 2013 he was part of the advocacy and/or management team of four non-profit national conservation organizations: The Wilderness Society, National Audubon Society, World Wildlife Fund, and National Parks Conservation Association. (NPCA). From 2013 to the end of 2017 Ron served as the President & CEO of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. Ron retired from ATC at the end of 2017 and joined the Partnership Board in 2020.



**Xavier Tremaine**

Founder & Executive Director

The Humble Hustle Company, Inc.

Born in December 1990 in Roanoke, VA, Xavier grew up in a culture of service and community love. He founded the Imagine Me Mentoring Program in 2013 to empower youth, persevering for years before securing an official contract in 2018.

After finishing his football career at Old Dominion University, Xavier returned to Roanoke to uplift his community. In 2015, he launched the Humble Hustle Co., a nonprofit providing vital programs for underprivileged families, including leadership development for young Black girls and outdoor education for Black youth.

Xavier's work inspires others to turn their dreams into actionable goals. As Douglas Pitzer, a mentor in Roanoke, states, "He's a visionary when it comes to helping others." Xavier believes true fulfillment comes not from what we gain, but from what we contribute to our communities.

**Lucas Tyree**

Founder & Managing Director  
NDPonics

NDPonics is an indigenous-founded-and-led non-profit in Virginia. NDPonics shares the same values as other indigenous people around the world - to protect and enhance the natural habitat we live in, which in turn ensured our survival for tens of thousands of years. NDPonics is dedicated to purchasing, preserving, and restoring lands in this mountainous region of the Blue Ridge in Virginia, containing areas of spiritual and historic significance to the indigenous people of the hills. Through our partner non-profits, we seek to support indigenous self-reliance and traditional ecological havens through land conservation, cultural rejuvenation, enabling food production, energy self-sufficiency, and energy efficiency in BIPOC communities in Virginia, North Carolina, and Maryland.



**Abigail Weinberg**

Vice President for Science & Conservation Policy  
Open Space Institute

Abigail Weinberg is Vice President for Science & Conservation Policy for the Open Space Institute (OSI). She translates science to conservation practice and policies to inform foundations, state and federal agencies and land conservation organizations. Abby develops strategies for how forestland conservation can offer wholistic solutions to climate change, community resilience, water quality and other pressing issues. Her work has informed the placement of hundreds of millions of dollars invested by OSI, foundations and state agencies. Abby has a Master of Forestry degree from the Yale School of Forestry and bachelor's degree from St. John's College (the "Great Books School"), Santa Fe.



**Matthew Wells**

Director  
Virginia Department of Conservation & Recreation

Matthew Wells became DCR director March 21, 2022. He has a background that brings together policy, politics and advocacy, with over two decades of experience in the public, private and nonprofit sectors. Immediately before joining DCR, he was Senior Regional Manager for State Government Relations for WestRock, a global leader in sustainable fiber-based packaging solutions, where he oversaw the company's legislative interests in environmental stewardship and sustainability, forestry, economic development and other issues across multiple states. He also brings substantial experience in state government, having held senior analyst and special advisory positions with Virginia's departments of Motor Vehicles and Alcoholic Beverage Control. A strong proponent of water quality improvements and land conservation, Wells has been a leader in Virginiaforever, a



nonprofit coalition that brings the business and environmental communities together to advocate for shared natural resources funding priorities. There, he led a diverse group of environmental advocates and business leaders working to encourage greater spending on environmental programs by the Virginia General Assembly. Wells holds a degree in foreign affairs from the University of Virginia and a certificate in sustainability from Virginia Commonwealth University.