

The National Wilderness Workshop

As of 11.15.2021

The National Wilderness Workshop

Program Abstracts

Monday, November 15,

Name, Title and Abstract
Mark Miller, Virginia Wilderness Committee (VWC) <i>Exploring Mid-Appalachian Wilderness Landscapes:</i> A visual journey through mid-Appalachian Wilderness areas and review of recent designations and future proposals.
Lynn Cameron, VWC <i>“Hand in Glove”:</i> Wilderness Stewardship and Advocacy in the Shenandoah Mountain Campaign The proposed 90,000-acre Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area in Virginia includes 28,000 acres of new Wilderness. Active stewardship by a variety of organizations has helped build local support for new Wilderness, and excitement about new Congressional designations has engaged volunteers and supported Forest Service Wilderness management.
Bill Meadows, former Director of the Wilderness Society, Board Chair of SAWS <i>The Story of SAWS - Stewardship Advocacy in Action</i> What was the need for the blending of advocacy and stewardship in the southern Appalachians? How did the Southern Appalachian Wilderness Stewards form? What has been the success of this model? Come and find out!
Senator Tim Kaine (VA) <i>invited</i> <i>Wilderness Stewardship is Non-Partisan</i> Wilderness often gets a bum wrap as a partisan issue. Senator Kaine will explain why Wilderness is actually Non-partisan and an important resource for all of us.

Tuesday, November 16,

Name, Title and Abstract
William Rice, University of Montana; Jennifer Thomsen, University of Montana; Christopher Armatas, U.S. Forest Service; Jaclyn Rushing, University of Montana; Derrick Taff, Pennsylvania State University; Erinn Drage, Pennsylvania State University; Nathan Reigner, Pennsylvania State University; Jeremy Wimpey, Applied Trails Research Defining future directions for Wilderness Research As we approach the middle of the twenty-first century, it is imperative that we pause and assess the present and future needs for Wilderness research. This proposed session will include four 15-minute research presentations that will help generate a subsequent 30-minute discussion of the perceived gaps in Wilderness research. One of these presentations will present findings from a collaborative research effort between the University of Montana, the Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute, and the National Park Service that seeks to empirically define a research agenda for Wilderness visitor use management. Another presentation from this same collaboration will present the development of a standardized survey instrument specific to Wilderness visitor use management designed—in part—to address present gaps. An additional presentation will focus on the use of participatory mapping to

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better manage Wilderness in two national parks. A fourth presentation will present preliminary findings from visitor use pattern and wilderness character research leveraging data collection on personal electronic devices. The subsequent 30-minute discussion will include the presenters as active participants. This discussion is intended to connect Wilderness practitioners—and their perceived research needs—with Wilderness researchers.

Jason Taylor and Teresa Hollingsworth, ALWRI

Assessing future wilderness research needs through participatory perspectives and input

The Aldo Leopold Wilderness Research Institute is currently in the process of revising our science charter that will guide our research priorities for the next ten years, and a critical component of this science charter is the perspectives of diverse set of partners. We used Q-methodology to rank and sort participant viewpoints on wilderness research and we present the results of this method here.

Khale Century Reno & Peggie dePasquale

Wyoming Wilderness Association

Stories from Wild Wyoming: Stewardship as a tool for Wilderness Advocacy

The Wyoming Wilderness Association (WWA) upholds a mission to protect public wildlands through education, stewardship and advocacy. Wilderness organizations, like WWA, often work on stewardship as an aside, or separate from their advocacy work. As we move into our second Covid-19 summer and the numbers of people looking for refuge on our public lands climb, creating a culture of stewardship for the currently protected Wilderness areas is becoming equally important as efforts to designate new landscapes as big “W”. Although stated as a truth within this abstract, this shift in thinking is up for debate within the Wilderness community. Whether you are talking with donors, supporters, partners or a board of directors, the idea that taking care of the Wilderness we already have is as much of a priority as getting more protected is not yet mainstream. Opposing viewpoints say that the agencies are responsible for maintaining Wilderness areas, and although ideally this would be true, a lack of funding and resources have resulted in a concerning backlog for our nation’s wildest places. Meanwhile, organizations that stand for the protection of wildlands often stand by due to their own limited funding and resources being focused elsewhere. It turns out that tremendous work and advocacy is left to be done even after a landscape has been designated, and it is time for Wilderness organizations to begin weighing these focuses more equitably. In this presentation, WWA’s Executive and Associate Directors will utilize storytelling to present on their work to integrate Wilderness Stewardship Performance within their organization, and how they are using these projects to advocate for stewardship as one of the best tools in upholding their mission of protecting Wyoming public wildlands.

Phil Hough,

Friends of Scotchman Peaks

Friends of Scotchman Peaks Wilderness: Stewards Become the Best Advocates

Phil will describe the various ways people engage in stewardship activities in his organization. Some of our volunteers put their passion into building and maintaining trails. Others educate youth about birds, plants, mammals and their tracks. Still others become trail ambassadors to keep trails open, hikers safe and mountain goats wild. All of them put in sweat equity and develop a pride for helping keep the Scotchman wild. They get back the personal connections and develop a strong and authentic voice as advocates.

Renee Patrick,

Oregon Natural Desert

Association

Oregon Natural Desert Association – Individual Stewardship Program

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When Covid hit many volunteer based programs stopped. ONDA has initiated a new program of independent volunteer stewards who can work by themselves or in sheltered groups to do valuable stewardship work. With one season under our belt the program has been successful in returning people to the field.

Dr. Diana Christopulos, Appalachian Trail Conservancy
Rupert Cutler, former U.S. Undersecretary of Agriculture
Pete Larkin, former Chief of Staff, Rep. Bob Goodlatte (R-Va) tent.
Gwen Mason, Regional Director, Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va) tent.

Magnifying Your Advocacy Impact

How can you organize staff and volunteers for maximum impact when advocating for wilderness stewardship? This session provides a template for analyzing opportunities and developing effective strategies for influence. It is a primer on the art and science of effective advocacy from presenters with decades of experience in business, government and nonprofit management.

Wednesday, November 17

Name, Title and Abstract

Lisa Ronald – Wildlands Communications Director at the University of Montana’s Wilderness Institute and former journalist

Shelton Johnson – Park ranger at Yosemite National Park, author, poet, playwright and actor in a stage production about Yosemite's African American military history entitled "Yosemite through the Eyes of a Buffalo Soldier, 1903"

Tangy Wiseman – Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers Specialist for the Forest Service Washington Office and former Hispanic Access Foundation fellow

Transforming Writing, Photography and Speech: Retooling Your Wilderness Communications for Increased Inclusivity

Amid exploding racial tensions, an on-going global pandemic, and skyrocketing public lands visitation, the wilderness community is further challenged to embrace and institutionalize equity, diversity, justice and inclusion. Although true transformation is indeed broad, this session focuses on the applications of a new tool to examine and improve inclusivity in wilderness communications. Through interactive exercises and examples, participants will learn about the Wilderness Community Inclusive Communications Guide and how to apply it to language, images, speech and video for communications that better resonate with diverse and traditional wilderness users.

Melanie Luce,
White Mountain Collective

How Collective Impact is creating sustainable trails in the White Mountains

How can like minded organizations pull together to achieve and maintain sustainable trail systems? Too many organizations are working in isolation from one another. Collective impact brings people together, in a structured way, to achieve social change, trails are not an exception.

With a common agenda, shared measurement, fostering mutually reinforcing activities, and encouraging continuous communication and a strong backbone organization, it is possible to “raise all ships” and add much needed capacity to trail stewardship.

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Learn how the White Mountain Trail Collective is implementing the Collective Impact Model to add capacity to it's partners and change the way we do trail work in the White Mountain National Forest.

Dan Williams

Anna Zawisza

Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado

Developing Sustainable Wilderness Stewardship Volunteer Programs

Increasing public engagement in wilderness stewardship continues to be presented as a solution to the rising magnitude of increased outdoor recreation, over-use and damage of wilderness resources, and stagnant or declining land management budgets. However, limited resources exist that help groups, organizations, and agencies understand how to effectively engage volunteers to accomplish high quality work in wilderness areas and on public lands. This workshop focuses on practical ways for organizations and agencies to start, improve, and/or expand the volunteer stewardship sector with greater organizational reliability and consistency across volunteer programs and in technical skill and leadership practices. This presentation makes the strong case that both the quality and quantity of boots on the ground volunteer efforts can and will be increased when volunteer organizations, and agencies working with volunteers, understand and apply a set of best practices and easily adaptable tools aimed at strengthening volunteer program infrastructures, ultimately resulting in a stronger, more professional, and sustained volunteer stewardship network. Hands-on best practices for volunteer management, along with tools and guides for growing and sustaining successful volunteer programs, will be provided. The workshop will include a discussion on volunteer program models that more effectively reach new and more diverse populations.

Session participants, both live and virtual, will complete an organizational assessment to help them understand their unique challenges and opportunities and will then join others who are interested in exploring similar topics in a framed discussion to develop solutions. Participants will work through one identified challenge and leave with concrete ideas of how to address the challenge within their organization or agency.

Nathan Reigner, Penn State

Indigenous Wilderness Stewardship: From Time Immemorial to Tomorrow;

Indigenous people from the equator to the poles have actively managed the lands and waters they inhabit (or inhabited) since time immemorial. In colonized landscapes, including North America, Indigenous management has been largely marginalized, at least in government-based administration, by western science-based management. In doing so, benefits gained from western science-based administration are accompanied by disenfranchisement of Indigenous and local populations, their disconnection from integrated socioenvironmental systems upon which their cultures are based, and interruption, and in some cases termination, of resource stewardship systems and legacies.

In this session, our facilitated panel will:

- Present examples of Indigenous wilderness and wild land/water resource management.
- Describe the processes by which Indigenous people do in fact manage and steward resources that may appear to be wild to western, scientific, and state administrative observers.
- Discuss the need and processes for integrating Indigenous resource management and stewardship practices into administrative wilderness and wild land/water management.
- Vision alternative futures in which truly co-produced and co-administered management and stewardship are present in wilderness and wild lands.

It is our objective and desired outcome from this session that attendees will:

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- Appreciate that many wilderness areas have been actively managed for time immemorial by indigenous people.
- Learn about existing Indigenous-managed wilderness areas and wild land/water resources.
- Understand the connections and disconnections between western science-based administration and Indigenous stewardship approaches.
- Expand commitment to decolonize wilderness stewardship.
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Thursday, November 18th

Name, Title and Abstract

Andrew Rogers, Dr. Yu-Fai Leung

Smartphones in Wilderness: Avenue for Access or Inherently Incompatible?

In traditional wilderness conceptions, smartphones and similar devices are generally considered inappropriate. For some, a smartphone's presence may be an affront on the wilderness itself. Use of a smartphone by one wilderness user can ruin the wilderness experience of another user. However, a new generation of wilderness users, such as those not introduced to wilderness by mentors, learn about these places through the web and then rely on their phones to get them there and guide them through the area. For these users, smartphones represent an avenue for access. In this sense, smartphones increase accessibility and inclusivity of wild places, which is widely recognized as a major priority and may yield a more diverse base of wilderness users. How do wilderness advocates, managers, and users reconcile these potentially conflicting approaches to wilderness use? By immersing themselves in the mindsets of two archetypal wilderness users (based on [Rogers & Leung, (2021). "More helpful than hurtful"? Information, technology, and uncertainty in outdoor recreation. Leisure Sciences, DOI: 10.1080/01490400.2020.1871132]), participants in this session will compare and contrast traditional and smartphone-oriented wilderness users and their experiences. The goal is to facilitate conversation that recognizes both points of view in spite of apparent incongruence. As reliance on smartphones has become the norm in daily life, it is important for wilderness advocates, managers, and users to consider these ideas and where we want to go in the future.

Ryan Branciforte

App Based Techniques to Conduct Wilderness Visitor Surveys in Yosemite

Not unlike many other natural areas, visitation to wilderness in Yosemite has both increased dramatically and changed substantially in recent years. Use of the Pacific Crest Trail and John Muir Trail are among the primary drivers of these changes. These changes in wilderness travel patterns may be changing the character of Yosemite Wilderness. Revisiting and revising the model travel patterns was needed to inform and support Wilderness management, and specifically the park's overnight permit program.

In 2019, the National Park Service and partners initiated a study to provide Yosemite managers with an updated model of wilderness travel patterns for Yosemite Wilderness. Leveraging OuterSpatial, an organization powered mobile app, NPS and partners instigated the development of an app based solution for collecting travel and camping location data from overnight wilderness visitors along with data characterizing wilderness visitors camping experiences and perspectives.

Despite the challenges related to fires and the pandemic, the initial pilot rollout occurred in the fall of 2020 and another more expansive plan is in place for 2021. The process, tooling, and approach developed for this effort can be leveraged by other land managers looking to engage their

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visitors in app based surveys and data collection.

Leandra Taylor
Eboni Preston
Hannah Malvin

The Bridge Project

The Bridge Project - Bringing Equity into the Hiring Process for Conservation Organizations: After a successful inaugural year, the Bridge project shares the impetus behind it's formation, successes from the first two rounds of hiring, lessons learned and a path forward to continue to serve as a critical nexus for diversifying conservation organizations by establishing equitable hiring practices.

The Bridge Project: The Bridge Project is a public-private partnership to create an inclusive and innovative hiring pathway that will embolden and diversify conservation employment practices. Launching on May 11 and 12, 2021 with a virtual two-day peer learning and hiring event, we will work to close the gap between qualified potential employees and employers in the conservation field. Our goal is to build learning and create relationships for long-term solutions by bringing together leaders from across the sector.

Christy Hyman, Kedge Consulting

Researching the History of Place with attention to Indigenous and Afro Communities

Ever wonder which native communities were once supported within your local area. This workshop will help you trace the native American history of an area and create an appropriate statement of Place.

Friday, November 19

Name, Title and Abstract

Jay Erskine Leutze
LWCF Coalition

Conservation Advocacy from the Ground Up

"From Rocky Fork and Big Yellow Mountain to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue." Jay Leutze will detail the successful 14-year campaign to pass the Great American Outdoors Act. Jay started his career negotiating land deals along the Appalachian Trail corridor in North Carolina and Tennessee. One of those transactions became the #1 ranked priority for acquisition by the US Forest Service in 2007. The need for \$34 million in federal funds for the project took Jay to Washington for the first time. He soon teamed up with the Land and Water Conservation Fund coalition to use the Rocky Fork project as Exhibit A demonstrating how broken the public land funding mechanism had become. Along the way he learned a lot about how to navigate the halls of Congress. In 2021 he was one of four conservationists invited to the White House for the signing of the Great American Outdoors Act into law.