

Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail Office

Fiscal Year 2014 Activities:

1 October 2013 – 30 September 2014

OPERATIONS & COMMUNICATIONS

- developed FY14 work plan, financial plan, budget cost analysis and interpretive media plan
- facilitated 2013 Trail network “Roundtable” and planned 2014 Trail network “Roundtable”
- revised POHE GIS w/assistance from **APPA** GIS Specialist & **GeoCorps America** intern (edit attribute table, clean up centerline, add local data, produce KML file, and package for POHE Atlas)
- participated in NPS National Capital Region trails coordination group & edited position description
- coordinated project planning and reviews with NPS and other federal staff in National Capital Region and Northeast Region parks and in the **Chesapeake Bay Program Office**
- participated in various local and regional trail group meetings, including the Potomac Heritage Trail Association, Garrett Trails, USAG Fort Belvoir, Loudoun, Prince William County PHT Committee, Southern Maryland Heritage Area Coalition, Potomac River Heritage Tourism Alliance
- provided **American Hiking Society** staff with background for presentations at the Partnership for the National Trails System workshop on national scenic trails
- Wrote articles for :
 - “Selected for Funding: A segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail in Prince William County” in Virginia DCR Long-Distance Trails e-newsletter
 - “Potomac Heritage NST Partnerships Enable Multi-Purpose Trail Linkages” in *Pathways* (Partnership for the National Trails System, Summer 2014)
 - “Hiking Program Connects Parks to the Past in *Inside NPS*”
- distributed POHE unigrid brochures to various visitor centers, historic sites and tourism offices
- provided new Trail Passport stamps to sites at Fort Pitt Museum, Connellsville, West Newton, Ohiopyle, Rockwood, Meyersdale and Laurel Ridge State Park Complex, PA
- addressed approximately 50 requests for information
- executed agreements for office space and interpretive media assistance
- reviewed progress to implement “transitional management assistance program” recommendations

TRAIL PROJECTS

- participated in steering committee to complete a Potomac segment plan for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake NHT (planning process, workshops; interviews with stakeholders, editing; etc.)
- reviewed alternatives for USBR1, parts of which are congruent with POHE bicycling route
- reviewed and edited content for *USMC Base Quantico Joint Land Use Study* (Prince William, Stafford & Fauquier counties, VA)
- reviewed final draft for Federal Highway Administration redesign Route 1 vicinity of US Army Garrison Fort Belvoir

- reviewed Prince William County VA application for Federal Public Lands Access Program funds
- facilitated discussions to eliminate gaps in the Trail network within Loudoun County in the vicinity of Harpers Ferry NHP
- facilitated conversations among contracting, grants, project and legal staff for NPS, AMTRAK and the Allegheny Trail Alliance
- facilitated discussions to eliminate gaps in the Trail between SRNP & GRFA
- consulted with staff of **USAG Fort Belvoir**, **Northern Virginia Regional Commission**, and the **National Capital Planning Commission** on a process to determine potential Trail segments within the Garrison
- assisted with and edited **Potomac River Heritage Tourism Alliance** strategic plan, which includes promotion of the PHT on-road bicycling route in southern Prince George's County, MD
- reviewed and edited map for proposed non-motorized trail network in Garrett County, MD, and vicinity as a potential segment of the PHNST

INTERPRETATION

- edited content for and funded fabrication of Mason Neck Gateway Kiosk interpretive panels on national trails at **Meadowood SRMA**
- added Trail pins, patches and bookmarks to inventories at Trail-related NPS bookstores
- edited and produced new interpretive panels for installation at White's Ford Regional Park
- revised and published, with assistance from RTCA Program Community Fellow, *Hiker's Guide to the CWDW: Self-Guided Tour from Fort Reno to Fort Totten* and participated in AHS-NPS Fort Stephens Day hike
- participated in steering committee to develop common interpretive plan (phase I) for POHE/STSP/RFNSB (RFP reviews; workshop; edits)
- created and funded a shared seasonal interpretive media position with Chesapeake and Ohio Canal NHP:
 - surveyed CHOH staff about knowledge of and comfort with introducing visitors to the Trail network
 - increased Trail Facebook and other social media posting for both CHOH and Trail highlighting stories that featured both CHOH and the Trail network with approximately 2-5 posts daily
 - created a new page on the CHOH web site featuring the relationship of the Towpath within the Trail network and invited users to explore the trail network
 - increased connections with other Trail-related organizations
 - promoted Trail-related events throughout the Trail corridor
 - created new content for nps.gov pages, and
 - attended and posted about multiple events at Trail partner sites, including Mason & Dixon Line Park dedication along the Great Allegheny Passage, Old Town summer fest, social media campaign for Lee's Retreat, Williamsport, Battery Kemble-Fort Stephens walk with American Hiking Society, March to Falling Waters, Wildlife on the AT at Harpers Ferry, Wilderness 50th Anniversary at Ferry Hill
 - produced a two-minute video providing an overview of the Trail network

- provided production files for and reviewed BLM horizontal orientation exhibit on the Trail at Douglas Point SRMA
- drafted Tidal Potomac inn-to-inn tour for review by Adventure Cycling Association
- promoted the PHT bicycling route in Prince George's County as part of "Celebrating with Pride on the Potomac" and PISC International Migratory Bird Day events
- drafted travel itinerary for a middle Potomac paddling/hiking excursion
- drafted Trail network "**Find your Park Challenge**" Centennial project
- procured 10,000 official Trail brochures for distribution to various Trail-related sites
- applied for assistance to revise completed the official NPS Trail brochure
- initiated POHE shared interpretive media archive
- developed a resource package for a Trail network film
- completed design and fabrication of a Trail regional orientation panel for installation at **George Washington Birthplace NM**
- reviewed and edited Braddock's Road project description
- submitted request to **Eastern National** for assistance with publishing a tidal Potomac River Water Trail map set
- edited text for *America's Great Hiking Trails* (Rizzolli, 2014)

ADMINISTRATION

Memoranda of Understanding (N=5):

- through an agreement with the **Northern Virginia Regional Commission**, drafted, edited and fully executed MOU, effective through 30 September 2019, among 17 agencies to recognize 72 miles of the Trail segments in Northern Virginia, to authorize use of the Trail marker, to foster coordination among Trail partners, and to promote Trail experiences
- drafted MOU to re-authorize use of the Trail marker and re-affirm, as part of the Trail network, the **Southern Maryland** Potomac Heritage Trail Bicycling Route
- edited and endorsed MOU among **USAG Fort Belvoir, National Capital Planning Commission, Northern Virginia Regional Commission**, and the NPS PHNST Office to evaluate alternatives for a natural surface trail between Grist Mill Park and Pohick Bay Regional Park
- revised MOU, proposed among five agencies and organizations, to recognize non-motorized trail network in **Garrett County, MD**, and vicinity as a potential segment of the Trail network
- drafted MOU to recognize a **tidal Potomac River water trail** as a segment of Trail network, serving as a formal means of coordination among NPS, state and local water trails interests as well as CAJO & STSP stories

Managed existing agreements with (n=7):

- the **Northern Virginia Regional Commission** for revision of a Trail corridor analysis; execution of an MOU recognizing Trail segments; and assistance with local Trail projects (completed)
- the **Regional Trail Corporation** to support phase I plan and design for permanent mile markers along the Great Allegheny Passage
- **Garrett Trails** for coordination with Army Corps of Engineers, for an event to identify a potential Trail route and for circulation of an MOU to recognize such route

- the **Potomac Conservancy**, through the Chesapeake Bay Program Office, for a partnership with the **Southern Maryland Heritage Area Consortium** to draft phase one of a common interpretive plan for the Trail & the Religious Freedom National Scenic Byway corridor (including graphic identity & route marking)
- **American Hiking Society** to document a hike on a route connecting the Civil War Defenses of Washington; propose revisions to the existing, on-line hiking guide; complete a scope of work for a series of guides to a continuous hiking route exploring the CWDW; and organize a discussion among non-federal Trail stakeholders to outline a plan for sustained coordination
- the **International Institute for Tourism Studies, George Washington University** for research and recommendations to promote the Trail network
- **Federal Highways Administration Eastern Lands** for Mason Neck Gateway kiosk project

New agreements (N=6)

- cooperative agreement with **Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority**, effective through
- task agreement with the **Geological Society of America** to extend the term of a GeoCorps America Intern, providing assistance to refine and expand Trail GIS
- project agreement with the **NPS Denver Service Center**, to research and develop formal guidelines for Trail route marking and graphic identity;
- task agreement, through the RM CESU, with the **Social & Economic Sciences Research Center, Washington State University**, to develop a methodology to assess Trail segment users (experience, demographics, expectations, etc.), as well as the value of the Trail designation to management partners
- task agreement, through the CW CESU, with the **International Institute for Tourism Studies, George Washington University**, to assist with coordination among staff of heritage tourism offices, Trail management partners and volunteer organizations to promote an annual series of events throughout the Trail network leading up to the NPS Centennial in 2016
- task agreement with the **Northern Virginia Regional Commission** to assist member jurisdictions in the Trail corridor with promotion of Trail experiences and with with planning, design and funding applications to eliminate gaps in the Trail network between Loudoun Heights and Locust Shade Park

compliance activities (N = 6):

- edited content for plan/DEIS “USMC Base Quantico Joint Land Use Study”
- consulted with GAP managers and declined comment on proposed cell tower vicinity of Dunbar PA
- commented on Fairfax Water plan to develop quarry along Occoquan, removing pedestrian access to the Town of Occoquan
- reviewed draft EIS for USAG Fort Belvoir Real Property Master Plan
- commented on South Capitol Street Project/Frederick Douglas Bridge FEIS
- participated in FHWA Route 1 widening consultations

miscellaneous:

- submitted revised legislative package to remove prohibition in Trail authorizing legislation to designate Trail segments in West Virginia
- participated in ten Call to Action projects and NPS Centennial discussions
- completed various annual reports (National Trails System MOU data; Servicewide Interpretive Report; Diversity; Performance; etc.)
- provided letters of support: Living Shoreline Project at Leesylvania State Park, VA; Prince Georges County, MD, Bike Maryland grant to sign the PHT on-road route; Prince William County, VA, Federal

Lands Access Program grant application; Center for Adventure and Experiential Learning, Garrett Community College, MD, as a member of the Chesapeake CESU

- completed mandatory training
- participated in various NPS National Capital Region discussions (Regional Leadership Council, Interpretive Management Advisory Group, Trails Coordination; etc.)

Trail Office FY14 budget:

Total approved funding:	\$385,700
Operational expenses (personnel, office, travel, etc.):	\$232,083
Project expenses (planning, cartography, interpretive media, Roundtable, etc.):	\$153,617
ratio of personnel costs to total approved funding:	57.8%

Project funding:

Federal Lands Access Program funds (to Prince William County, VA - for design and construction of a Trail segment within and connecting between the Ripon VRE station and Featherstone National Wildlife Refuge	\$585,000
20 % Fee Demo Funds for Trail route marking/graphic identity	\$ 25,000
Federal Lands Highways Category III - change order, design and construction to add bicycle parking at Mason Neck Gateway	\$ 28,000

MORE INFORMATION:

The Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail network:

- embraces portions of five physiographic provinces within 37 local government jurisdictions in four states, bridging two major watersheds over the Eastern Continental Divide;
- includes 710 miles of existing and planned trails and routes recognized as segments (659 miles completed);
- could include approximately 560 additional miles of trails and routes on land and water; and
- connects with the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Captain John Smith National Historic Trail (NHT), Washington-Rochambeau Revolutionary NHT and Star-Spangled Banner NHT; nine national recreation trails (including the Potomac River Water Trail); the East Coast Greenway and U.S. Bicycle Route 1; 18 NPS areas, four National Natural Landmarks and many National Historic Landmarks.

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