

Network for Arizona Trails
Statewide Zoom Call on Trails and COVID (#8)

Monday, September 28 12 pm to 1 pm
“Ancestral Lands and GAOA”

Join Zoom Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85162594318>

Meeting ID: 851 6259 4318

Passcode: 181274

Phone option: (669) 900-6833

~ Agenda (Notes below)~

- | | |
|---------|--|
| 12:00pm | Introductions and Orientation to Zoom |
| 12:05pm | Round Robin Updates <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Land Managers - local, state, federal● Network for Arizona Trails Steering Committee |
| 12:15pm | Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps - <i>Shandiin Nez, Program Coordinator</i> |
| 12:30pm | Great American Outdoors Act - <i>Laura White, National Forest Service</i> |
| 1:00pm | After meeting chat opportunity (15 min) |

Notes:

12:05 - Started

Tom Thurman - Yavapai County - Fire update on Sears - massive fire involving 15-20 miles of the Maricopa Trail

Brady VanDragt - GAOA funding update on trail projects. Cinder Hills OHV, Flagstaff Trails Initiative, Multi-forest deferred trail maintenance project, AZT maintenance project, FY22 project proposals are due October 23rd, Coconino has a number of trail projects that they're submitting. Some Region 3 wide proposals are also in the works, focusing on veteran and youth crews.

Ann Hutchinson - Black Canyon Heritage Park opening October 2nd.

Jan Hancock - check in on the Sears fire report

Dana Backer - Coronado National Forest - Bighorn Fire, Catalina district. Some of the trails outside of the burn scar have been opened. Working to open the Arizona Trail, and evaluating the larger system to remove hazard trees and engaging conservation corps crews. GAOA - hoping to get trail funding for the Sierra Vista and Nogales districts.

Wendy - update on the adoption of the Charter for the Network for AZ trails

Shandiin Nez -

Guiding principles of the Ancestral Lands Program:

- Community Development
- Sovereignty
- Cultural Revitalization
- Empowerment
- Leadership

Began the program in 2008 out of Acoma Pueblo in NM. Now have offices in Navajo, Zuni and Hopi communities as well as in Albuquerque working with urban native youth. They're community-based approach. Their model unites the Southwest Conservation Corps, Land Management Agencies and the Tribal Government. The core of their work is in the 4 corners area, but they have projects nationwide.

Ecological restoration and land stewardship projects are a big part of their work. Invasive species and agricultural work, fencing and native species reintroduction. They also do recreational infrastructure development and maintenance including lots of trail projects.

Recruit teams of 4-5 trained up in safety, project work, front country and backcountry living. They develop their member's personal, community and environmental development. They get interpersonal skills needed to thrive in the future: professional development, interpersonal skills, and employable skills improvement. The program emphasizes the development of community with each other and establishing a community into the future. They also learn a lot about the environments they work in including LNT and principles of conservation.

Shandiin shared some of the economic impact of the program. \$1.7 million in economic development in Indian Country in 2017. \$225,000 in AmeriCorps Education awards.

2020 projects include Oak Creek Canyon Recreation area with the Forest Service; Glen Canyon, Horseshoe Bend mitigating erosion with the NPS; Chiricahua National Monument with NPS - doing native plant restoration and trail maintenance with an all woman crew.

Collaborates with BLM, Nature Conservancy, Tribal Governments, AmeriCorps, USFS and others.

Shandiin shared contacts for the program and for expanding partnerships with the Ancestral Lands Crew.

The screenshot shows a Zoom meeting interface. The main content is a slide with a background image of a person in a yellow hard hat and a blue shirt working in a field. The slide text is as follows:

For more information, to discuss partnerships or collaborations contact:

Website: www.sccorps.org/ancestrallands
Facebook: @AncestralLands
Instagram: @AncestralLands

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The slide also features the Ancestral Lands Conservation Corps logo, which is a circular emblem with a mountain, sun, and water, surrounded by the text "ANCESTRAL LANDS CONSERVATION CORPS".

On the right side of the Zoom window, there is a vertical list of participant video thumbnails. From top to bottom, the names are: Tahnee Roberts..., Wendy Lotze, Ari..., Kent Taylor-Pl..., Elizabeth & Bill..., Shandiin, Ancestr..., a phone icon with the number 16023215461, and Karts Huseoni... At the bottom of the Zoom window, there are controls for Mute, Stop Video, Participants (47), Chat, Share Screen, Record, Reactions, and a red Leave button.

Steve - White Tank Mountains Conservancy - Question. Working in restoration especially in the post-fire environment. Are there links on your website with guidance for how to do work in these environments. = Shandiin - Their partners typically provide the training for the methods used for fire restoration.

Judy - Arizona Indian Gaming Association - Her son participated in the program with AZCC and seeing these projects as a tribal member has a lot of meaning. The opportunities for young people are amazing.

Laura White - Great American Outdoors Act

The Act gives us an unprecedented opportunity to get funding to address deferred maintenance on trails. Signed into Law on August 4th. Establishes the National Parks and Public Lands Legacy Restoration Fund. This is focused largely on deferred maintenance on all of our public lands.

The fund is capped at \$1.9billion. The Forest Service gets 15% of that - up to \$285M. 65% of that funding must be spent on non-transportation projects (transportation assets are roads, bridges, tunnels, culverts, parking lots). Trails and trail bridges fall into this category, as do

recreation sites, visitor centers and buildings. The funds are dependent upon congress passing an appropriations bill, but once it's funded we can spend it over that 5 year period. It could be 2022 before that is actually done. There is a 60-40% split for the funding between the Washington office and the Regions. However, some larger projects even completed in the regions can still fund out of the Washington office. Regions will have authority to choose what to spend that 40% of funds, and there are strategies for moving projects between the two pots.

For FY2021, there is already a complete list of projects for both the WO and the regional offices. We need to have a list of 2022 projects by mid-October, so there's a big rush for that. This is to include it in the President's budget. These projects will need to be ready for implementation (funds can be used for NEPA and planning as well), consistent with plans and meet the "sideboards". This includes reduction of infrastructure deferred maintenance, promoting management of American's forests, contribute to rural community economic development, improve visitor experience, improve visitor access, ensure health & safety and leveraging external agencies and resources. We can consider trails that are not currently sustainably designed being re-designed and rebuilt in a way that makes them less maintenance, thus reducing potential for future deferred maintenance. This opens the potential for reroutes and new trails in places.

The FS will need to be able to quantify which projects qualify as deferred maintenance, but the leadership is looking for ways to get future projects into a database so that they can be counted.

Wendy - question about how fire restoration might play into that. Laura: the impacts from fires last long beyond when the BAER funds dry out, and how can those impacts be included in deferred maintenance listings.

Kent - How do partners figure into this? Laura: work with your local FS offices and work with them on your concerns. Offices are looking for projects now to include in the 2022 list.

Tahnee - Working together to identify projects (e.g., collaborative trails planning in/around the Apache-Sitgreaves and the Rim Country)

Kari Roberg, AOT: Thank you for the presentation! So helpful! If anyone needs stats on tourism/economic impact or visitor info for their GAOA applications, Arizona Office of Tourism is happy to provide that. kroberg@tourism.az.gov