Summary
The kick-off partner workshop for the Flagstaff Trails Initiative was held at the Murdoch Community Center on Monday, March 26 from 10 am to 2:30 pm. Approximately 50 participants representing more than two dozen organizations and agencies attended the workshop.

The workshop began with welcoming remarks from Mayor Coral Evans, Coconino County Supervisor Art Babbott and US Forest Service Flagstaff District Ranger Mike Elson.

The role of the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program as project facilitator and technical resource was presented. Southwest Decision Resources is also providing facilitation and project support.

The Flagstaff Trails Initiative core team delivered a presentation (included as an appendix) on the purpose of the project, background, key partners, geographic scope and preliminary ideas since the project launched in fall 2017.

Workshop participants were divided into small groups and asked to “map” the context of the trails and outdoor recreation in the planning area and identify trends and factors related to recreation, the environment and the community/economy. Results of this exercise can be found as an appendix.

Building from this information, each group then identified priority topics that FTI should emphasize. After each small group shared their focus topics, the facilitation team grouped these ideas into four broad categories that will guide the next steps of FTI:

- trail system planning
- conservation and restoration
- education and outreach
- financial sustainability
In the afternoon, participants were asked to review the preliminary goals of FTI and suggest needed changes or additions. Participants spent time individually, then joined progressively larger discussion groups before sharing their collective ideas with all participants.

Lastly, participants provided feedback on the effectiveness of the workshop and advice on next steps for FTI including additional partners to engage and when to initiate public engagement. The group recommended an additional workshop in the near future for those who couldn’t attend as well as refinement of project goals, outputs and process before moving forward with broader engagement.

Before, during and after the workshop participants were encouraged to review a regional trail system map and identify successes, opportunities and concerns. Participants were also asked to self-identify as interested in joining one of the four “focus topic” groups.

**What Priority Topics should FTI focus on?**

- **User education**
  - Etiquette / signage
  - **Include tourism**
  - Specific to user-type
  - Collaborator clearinghouse
- **Environmental Impacts**
  - Trail design
- **Funding / Resources**
  - REI
  - NAU
  - Volunteers
  - Grant writing
- **Funding**
  - Fees/taxes → Increase funding for trails
- **Involvement beyond funding**
  - Volunteers / voluntourism
  - stewards
- **Identifying user needs**
  - Specific
  - Decrease user conflict
  - Decrease environmental impacts
- **Planning for connectivity**
- **Planning for increased use of trails**
- **Managing growth and change**
- **Better trail access**
- **Special events**
  - infrastructure
- **Existing conditions**
  - Better understanding
- **Establish a 501c3 – leader**
  - Events
  - Technology changes
- **Engaging NAU and youth**
  - Internships
  - Grant opportunities
- **Access**
  - Dispersing use
    - Private property
    - Unauthorized trails
- **Sustainability**
  - Maintenance
  - Closing trails
  (how/education)
Goal Discussion – What goals need to be changed, added or emphasized?

- **Additions**
  - Start non-profit to secure funds
  - Regional Trails Coordination group. Set up a coordinating long-term group
  - Find mentor organizations
  - Look at Archeological / Ancestral values
  - Use CVB for business owners involvement and funding for trails. Plus, include hotel owners
  - Talk more to business owners. Join trail planning with economic goals
  - Start “travel management plan” integrating needs and partners
  - Take unauthorized trails through same process as authorized
  - Consider how do we identify authorized vs un-authorized trails
  - If planning to close trails, provide alternates.
  - Consider how do we handle maintenance / trash problems

- **Changes**
  - Re-word goal about events to define which types are “appropriate”
  - Consider opportunities to utilize youth to help and provide exposure to create strong base
  - Need to find more long-term funding than grants. Explore options – event fees, donations and get developers involved

- **Emphasis**
  - Work with neighborhoods about access – avoid problems by involving them
  - Strategic Education and develop stewardship
  - Educate, inform, and involve – push up
  - Share resources. Add, I.D. Goals and resources. Focus on tiered approach
  - Need community involved in order to keep this going long-term
  - Regional document and partnership document
  - Work on how to get groups together
Meeting Plus/Delta

Positive
- Positive energy
- Want to see success
- Input / synergy is good
- Diversity of group!
- Needs legal stance to keep moving forward
- Big step, given the history
- Bridge to work together on other things
- Make space for dissent; good group

- Good job with planning core team / facilitators

Improvements
- No cake for Brian Grube's birthday
- Tribal outreach needs to continue, not here today
- NAU…needs to be here
- Refine goals …skeletal structure of where we are headed
During the March 26th FTI workshop, participants were divided into small groups and asked to “map” the context for the Flagstaff Trails Initiative by identifying trends and factors related to recreation, the environment and the community/economy. The groups were also asked to identify areas of uncertainty. Results of this exercise can be found below.

Community/Economic Trends and Factors

**Development**
- Concern about new development
- Development of vacant lands
- NMBY trailhead opposition
- Lands that were available purchased for development and access is lost

**Transportation**
- Opportunity for bike-friendly businesses
- Increase in bike commuters – need to plan for it

**Signage/education/etiquette**
- Trail etiquette
- Signage
- Better trail communication/education
- Increase need for educational involvement (Alpine Leadership Academy)
- Public education
  - Events
  - Type of trails for type of use
- No easily understandable trail interface
  - Level of difficulty
  - Who can use which trail?
- Better information system for trails info
- Increase is inaccurate trail information which impacts trail conditions, creates user conflicts and has environmental impacts
- No universal unified messaging
- Phone mapping – crowd sourcing
- Marketing of opportunities – FB, Instagram, social media

**Population/Demographics/Tourism**
• Population increase
• Increase in visitors (especially international)
• More older people than younger (everywhere in the nation)
• More trails – more public
• Increase in tourism (Peaks/Elden)
• AirBnB – decentralized tourism
• Lifestyle migrations – people move here for connectivity and specialized niche recreation
• PHX population increase
• Population growth
• Increase in Latinx participation, involvement and awareness
  o Increase ins bi-lingual, international tourist and Hope, Navajo and others – add languages and ASL
• Flagstaff reliance on outdoor tourism

Northern Arizona University
• Increase in # of students
• Instilling stewardship in non-residents
• Increase their involvement
• Dr. Pam Foti – geography and planning interns and classes
• NAU population increase (18-22 yr olds recreating) – What is NAU’s role? (support? Funding?)
• Large increase in NAU student population but the population is people with less money

Funding/Budgets/Financial
• Funding
  o BBB money for FUTS
• Continued pressure for funds
• Fees
• Fees? Taxes? Levies? Need money for restrooms and trail development
• Budgets dropping
• Association outdoor gear fee with trail impact

Other trends and factors
• Trail-based events
  o Economic driver
  o Too Many?
• Ongoing need for maintenance
• User conflicts
• Business catering to trail hikers and bikers
• Shuttles?
Environmental Trends and Factors

**Climate**
- Less water and snow – effects of that
- Drought, forest health, fire
  - How these impact access/use
- High altitude – increasing temperatures
- Drier conditions – more erosion, more fires, less snow
- Climate change

**Wildlife**
- Bisecting wildlife corridors
- Loss of and impacts to wilderness experience on Humphreys/tourism
- Wildlife interactions – in city, on trail
- Wildlife: connectivity, displacement, fragmentation
- Wildlife are shifted around, condensed, not seen anymore (need education re: how to behave around wildlife)
- Increase of dogs off-leash, chasing wildlife
  - Enforcement

**Trail Design/impacts**
- Trail erosion (motorized) and trail placement
- Trail design and sustainability (watershed, topo)
- Social trails in Dry Lake Hills
- Schultz Creek trail – is widening
- Trash on the trail is rarely an issue in Flagstaff
- Sacrifice zones kept out of sensitive soils/areas
- Proliferation of trail impacts
- Increase motorized use – increase impact
- Difference in trail impact in wilderness
- Parking – restroom facilities/refuse services

**Environmental**
- Environmental compliance and timeframes and money
- Reclaimed water
- Thinning of forest/different users as it thins
- Changes in vegetation
- Protect water resources
- Archeological, ecological concerns
- Endangered species and species of concern

**Responsible use education**
- Access, signage, trail behavior, etiquette
- Trail etiquette
- Unauthorized use

**Other trends and factors**
- Size of trail events
- Time and effort to do it right
Recreation Trends and Factors

**Trail Etiquette/Education/Signage**
- Education trends on trails
- Teaching trail etiquette and stewardship
- Not enough information to disperse use across trailheads and visitors centers
- Signage

**Technology**
- Difference in technology (motorized)
- E-bikes
- Increase in e-bike use
- Technology – keeping pace with this
- Technology
- Becoming more mechanical

**Events**
- Increase in events (races, etc.) – where to park?
- Events (special use – need for facilities)
- More organized events
- More large organized events

**Types of Recreation Use**
- Trail running increase
- Mountain bike increase
- Bike – packing, increase in use
- Trekking
- Increase in equestrian use
- Accessibility – disabled users increase
- More “sport” use of trails – running mecca
- Increase in mountain bike activity and motorized
- Types of recreation (canyoneering, climbing/bolting, bird watching, foraging, sledding/snowplay, bike packing)
- Increase in motorized trail use, rhino/razor, UTV and motorcycles
- Interactions between different users

**Desired Activities and Experiences**
- Need technical trails
• Need for longer, easier trails
• People are looking for a lot of different experiences
• Athletic vs. natural
• Increase in outdoor recreation activities
  o Soft adventure, like simple walks and extreme like mountain biking/climbing
• More young families camping
• Destination hiking/branding of trails
• Speed of recreation
• Disassociating from nature while recreating

**Impacts**
• Dogs (and poop) – leashes/no leashes
• Keeping minimum impacts and LNT alive
• Humphreys Trail use increase and is concentrated

**Population/Demographics**
• Aging population/demographic changes
• Population boom

**Other trends and factors**
• Are social trails necessary (positive or negative)
• AZ Department of Tourism promoting the state as an outdoor “paradise”
• Funding maintenance needs to grow
• Known = lost
• Magnitude (numbers) of recreation
• Social popularity of certain recreation
• Campground capacity falling
• Legislation development for recreation use on state trust land, planning for the future

**Priority Topics**

**Education**
• User education – signage, etiquette, messaging to local and tourists
• Public Educations – an app that show level of difficulty, has centralized info and who can use what trails
• Better info, education, mapping for tourism, Airbnb, PHX and locals
• Education
  o Bar code, signage, increase in inaccurate trail info, trail conditions, creates conflicts

**Funding/Capacity**
Involvement beyond funding – volunteers, community engagement, voluntourism/school groups
- Funding
- Engaging NAU and youth
- Establish 501c3 – leader that allows innovation
- Funding stream
- Funding
- Financial
  - Fees, takes, associating outdoor gear fee with trail impacts

Environmental impact
- Trail design, know that more people will use them
- Resource Protection
- Sustainability/Maintenance
  - Protect water resources, method for closures for weather, restrooms/facilities

Planning
- Planning for connectivity – incorporating outlying areas, access trails to neighborhoods, greenways for the Rio
- Understanding current conditions
  - Trail types
  - Connectivity
  - Unauthorized to authorized
- Planning for increased use of trails
- Infrastructure for events/commercial recreation
- Managing growth/change

Trail Access and Types
- Addressing all types of users’ needs
- Maintaining community-wide trail access – more trailheads needed
- Trail stewardship for the region (FUTS and AZ Trail have it because of branding)
- Access – historic trail use vs. new private ownership
  - Legal – coordinated effort for access on multiple jurisdictions
  - Private – easements
Uncertainties

Funding/Economy
- Funding sources
  - Construction
  - Maintenance
  - Promotion/education
- Money/funding
- Economy (impacts on recreation)
- Fees for trail use/permits (a la fossil creek)
- Financial and need to develop and sustain trailheads – what are the needs per location (e.g. equestrian trailer space)

Population
- What are the draws/needs/potential impacts of PHX population growth?

Mapping/Signage/Education/Information
- Use of trail as recreation vs. lifestyle (alt. form of transportation)
- Crowd sourced maps and GIS resources
- Where are the visitors getting trail information?
- Education (passive vs. active)

Unauthorized Trails/Use/Enforcement
- Social trails – are they and issue and if so, where?
- Legal enforcement of illegal trail uses
- Enforcement/on the ground management

Access and Management
- Will we need more amenities at trailheads? i.e. trash, bathrooms
- Method for management: closures for weather, etc.
- Access for long-term use vs. new ownership – lack of easements
- Coordinated effort to tackle public access on multiple jurisdictions

Type of Use Trends
- Is outfitter-guide use coming to Flagstaff?
- Technology
- Mechanized uses
- Are the trends actually going to happen at the stated rate?
Other Uncertainties
- Large fire and responses/impacts
- FWPP/4FRI contractors and timelines
- Wildlife response
WHY TRAILS?

Trails make Flagstaff a Desired Place to Live and Visit

- Quality of Life / Employment Draw
- Tourism and Economic Development
- Support a Healthy & Active Lifestyle
- Community Interest / Engagement
- Environmental Appreciation / Conservation
WHY TRAILS?

Every regional plan and vision identifies trails as an important community asset that should be enhanced…

yet

…no holistic and strategic effort to specifically address trails for nearly 20 years…

and

…few dedicated resources available for trail stewardship or maintenance
come together to frame up the...

FLAGSTAFF TRAILS INITIATIVE

...as a means to broaden collaboration and working relationships with health, business, tourism, youth, tribal, conservation and community interests
This is a trail
These are trails
This is a trail
These are trails
This is a trail
Unfortunately, these are trails
WHERE?
SO WHAT IS IT?
collaborative multi-jurisdictional all hands - all lands inclusive planning initiative working to improve the region’s recreational trails
FTI goals and outputs are in formation. They will be shaped by leadership, stakeholders, and public input.
WHAT IS IT? PRELIMINARY PURPOSE

Improve the quality, connectivity, and support for trails in the Flagstaff region

Potential Output

a regional effort that consolidates a variety of trail ideas and concepts into a single regional document that guides projects and stewardship across multiple jurisdictions

See Preliminary Goals handout for detailed descriptions
SO WHAT? IDEAS in FORMATION:
Creating a way to share resources

PUBLIC LANDS
COMMUNITY PLANS

BLURRING BOUNDARIES to IMPROVE
and CARE for FLAGSTAFF’s TRAILS
SO WHAT? IDEAS in FORMATION:
Planning and data
SO WHAT? IDEAS in FORMATION: Protecting environmental quality
SO WHAT? IDEAS in FORMATION: Ensuring financial sustainability
WHEN?

Project was awarded technical assistance (not funding) from the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance program in fall 2017

Fall 2017 to Winter 2018: Monthly “core planning team” meetings to define project scope and process

Spring through Summer 2018: stakeholder and public outreach

Summer 2018 – Fall 2019: data analysis, planning, ongoing engagement, education, document preparation
Our Request

- Your engagement and excitement
- Lend advice and expertise
- Consider joining a focus topic subgroup
http://flagstafftrailsinitiative.org/

Trails – Connecting People and Places...