

A TRAIL COMMUNITY FOR ALL

Southwest Trails Conference

Santa Fe, New Mexico

October 10

2012

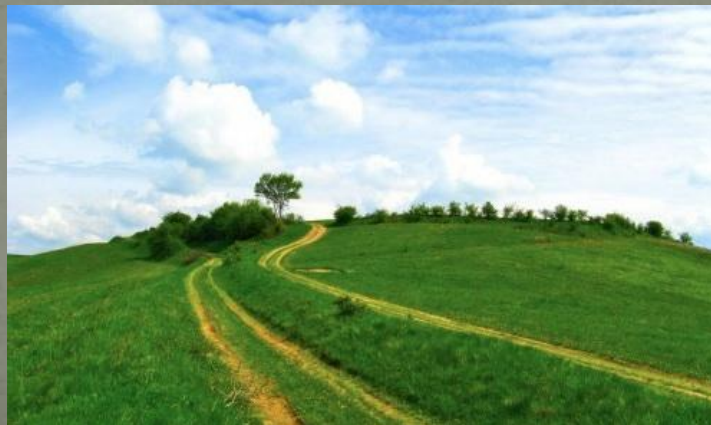
GOAL OF SESSION

- Illustrate ways that cooperation can be fostered
- Use term “WE to emphasize collaboration”; “WE” are “YOU”
- Will urge this will require a “Change in Attitude” in many circumstances
 - Return to culture of collaboration



E XERCISE

- Complete following statement:
 - “I like trails because.....”
 - Indicate whether hiker, equestrian, cyclist, motorcyclist or land manager
- Different paths to same goals?



CHALLENGES

All areas have challenges, which vary from place to place

Many Areas Are Hotbeds of Controversy

- Long history of conflict
- People have staked out positions
- Often no history of working together



PERCEPTION THAT URBAN AREAS ARE DIFFERENT

- Huge concentration of people
- Relatively small amount of open space



- Basic similarities; principles apply equally in Southwest

SUCCESSIONS INVOLVE TRAIL BUILDING, WHICH CAN BE PROBLEMATIC IN POPULAR AREAS

- Agencies sometimes reluctant to build new trails
 - Sometimes cite labor issues
 - Resource issues
 - Supervision of volunteers requires staff and funding
 - Volunteers may be “cowboys”
 - Impact on environment
- Response:
 - Agency’s “duty” to provide volunteer opportunities
 - Need to provide for increasing demand for trails to get people out of doors

LOSS OF SENSE OF COMMUNITY

- Huge issue, perhaps heart of session
- Loss of commitment to work for common good
- Important and relevant exceptions
 - Large turn-outs for trail projects
 - Sense of community grows with trail use

SOLUTION MAY REQUIRE
CHANGE IN ATTITUDE



• CASE HISTORIES

- Many examples of successful collaborative efforts
- Examples unique, but all have common elements
- Conclusion of presentation will synthesize common principles and values

SAN LUIS OBISPO

- Popular session at Cambria Conference: “Trail Partnerships – Doing Them a Different Way”
- Key groups:
 - Central Coast Concerned Mountain Bikers
 - <http://www.cccmb.org>
 - San Luis Obispo Parks, Open Space and Trails
 - <http://www.slopost.org>
- Composed of muscle-powered users and agencies
- Developed strong guiding principles of collaboration
- Addresses reality of multiple participants with multiple and sometime conflicting view points



SONOMA COUNTY

- Annadel
 - “A” Team formed because trails being loved to death
 - Hiker, equestrian, mountain biker and land manager met to create sustainable trail system.
 - Accomplish more by working together for common goals
 - Resulted in well regarded multi use trail system



Sonoma County cont.

- Sonoma County Trails Council
 - <http://www.sonomatrails.org>
 - Works in partnership with others to advocate, plan, build, and maintain a network of sustainable, shared-use public trails for non-motorized recreation
 - Solid collaboration among all muscle powered users
- Mounted Patrol
 - Equestrian unit has 50 members
 - Cycling unit, reborn in 2009 has over a dozen members
 - Key to success is positive communication between user groups, including education about needs and safety



UPPER COLORADO RIVER

- Supplies drinking water, whitewater recreation and fishing.
- Challenge of new management plan and Wild and Scenic River review caused serious conflict.
- After years of intense negotiation, agreement reached.
- Process involved dissolving barriers between organizations, new paradigms, stronger trust, good science and economic value of recreation.



MT. RAINIER PARTNERSHIP

- A climbing accident on the mountain brought a climber and a ranger into a partnership that resulted in great changes to park. The process involved important ideas:
 - open and honest dialog
 - empathetic listening
 - informal communication / meetings
 - identify common ground that is not necessarily about land management issues
 - acknowledge when common ground is not possible
 - don't be afraid to push and be pushed
 - be passionate, but don't take things personally
 - be willing to compromise for a solution, but don't compromise your values
 - reach out to groups that are unusual/atypical partners
 - helps for advocates to push for park improvements; bring attention



ARNOLD RIM TRAIL ASSOCIATION

- Conceived in early 2000's to promote trail development
- Collaborates with everyone
 - Hikers, equestrians, mountain bikers, Chamber of Commerce and businesses
 - Everyone enjoys respect
- Triumph of collaboration, environmental restoration and connectivity <http://arnoldrimtrail.org/>



BIG SANDY BRIDGE

- 15 year, award winning effort to install bridge over San Joaquin River
- Coalition headed by Central California Off-Road Cyclists
 - Included: Back Country Horsemen; Fresno County Sportsman's Club; Sierra Foothill Conservancy; San Joaquin river Intertribal Heritage Educational Corp.; River Tree Volunteers, Sierra Club and Caltrans
- Collaboration involved 68 volunteers from 8 groups, who contributed over 4100 hours
- Model of collaboration



BIG SANDY CREEK BRIDGE IN PLACE

SIERRA BUTTES TRAIL STEWARDSHIP

- Volunteer driven 501(C)3, formed in 2003
- Maintain and enhance trail systems in Plumas and Sierra Counties
- All users, industry and local businesses at table
- Has paid staff and 29,000 hours volunteer labor
- Maintain over 30 trails, created 25 miles new trails
- <http://sierratrails.org>



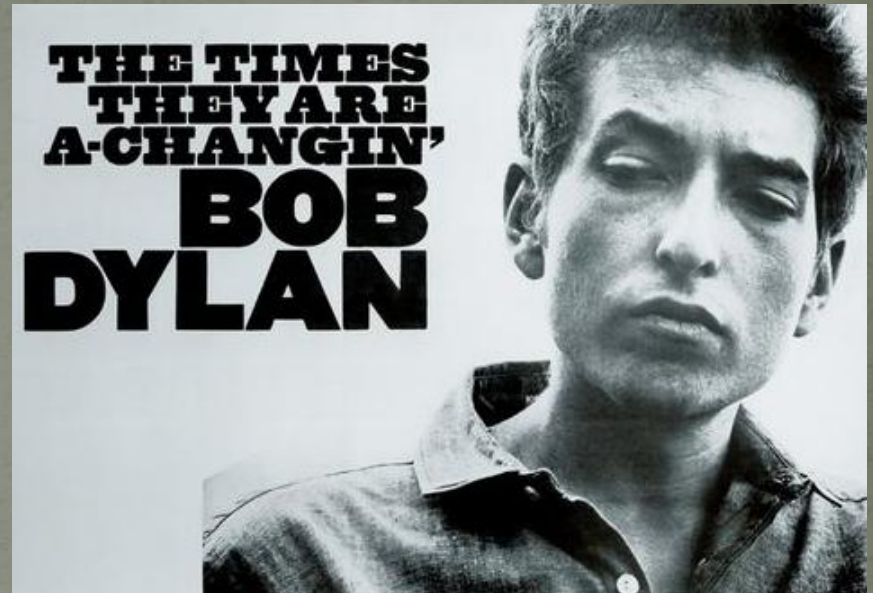
SUMMARY OF HISTORIES

- Groups at different stages of development
- There are a great many more examples
- Share basic principles
 - Collaboration
 - Respect
 - Listening to all points of view

SYNTHESIS OF APPROACHES

HEART OF THE MATTER

- Change in Attitude required
- Will offer tangible tools
- Change in Attitude is difficult and will require patience
- Requires change in behavior
- Will require self examination



CREATE STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

- Connect people to outdoors
- Restore landscapes and ecosystems
- Reduce social conflict
- Draw youth to outdoors



PARTNERSHIP

"You give me half the fish, and I tell my Mom to let you live."

“Best Partnership Practices” from Outdoor Alliance Conference:

UNDERSTAND PARTNERSHIPS AS SYSTEMS

- Partnerships with several interests tend to be sturdier
- People invest resources in partnership not out of “altruism”, but because they want a return on their investment.
- Fit diverse interests in systematic relationship

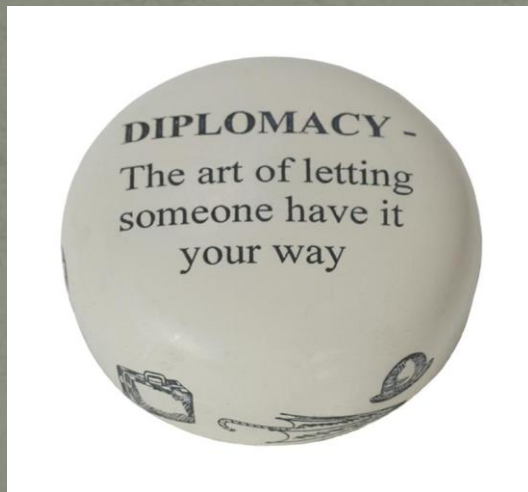
GIVE PARTNERSHIPS CARE, MAINTENANCE AND INVESTMENT

- Conventional justification for public-private partnerships is overstretched agencies can use private partners to fill gap
 - Do “more with less”
- Better to say true value is capacity to do work.
 - Do “more with more”
- Like machines, partnerships require care and maintenance



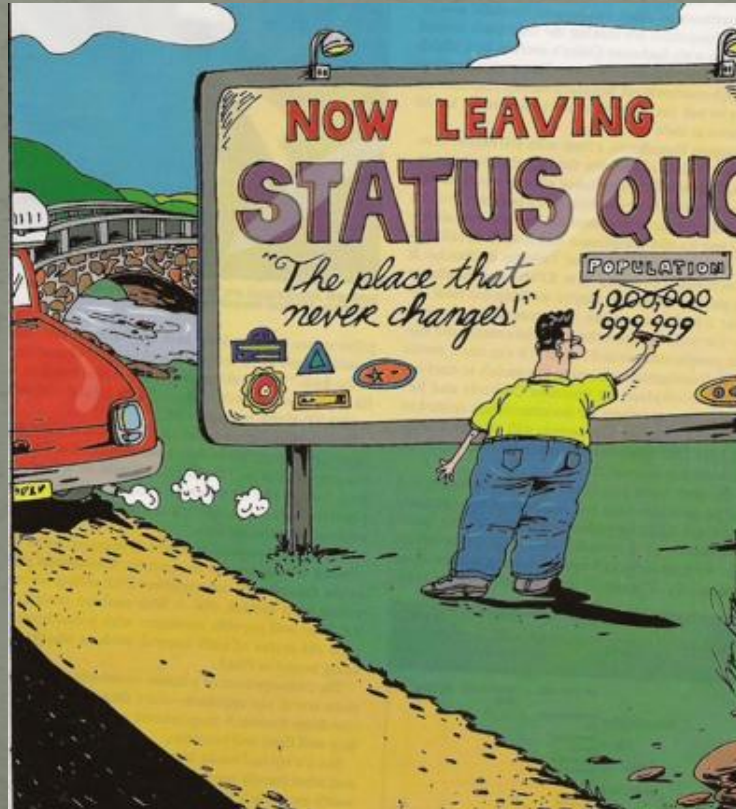
CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIP MINDSETS AND BEHAVIORS

- Interests over positions; diplomacy over conflict
- Willingness to experiment and take risks
- Healthy dose of empathy, respect and goodwill
- Understand needs of others



PARTNERSHIP MINDSETS AND BEHAVIORS (cont.)

- Laws and regulations support vision of partnership, rather than as a bunker to maintain status quo.



Outdoor Alliance Presentation at IMBA Summit

- Entitled “Human Powered Recreation and Outdoor Alliance”
- October 11
- Presentation 3B, 2:00 pm in Kearny
- See outdooralliance.net/partnership



CELEBRATE SHARED VALUES



- Most often, members of trail family want same thing
 - Outdoor experience
 - In nature
 - Sustainable trails
 - Safe experience
- Conflict not inherent incapability among different trail activities
 - Avoid conflict by finding confluence of goals

EVERYONE AT TABLE

- Essential for sense of community
- Proactively reach out to those not there
- Understand everyone's points of view
 - Accommodate where possible

KNOW AS INDIVIDUALS

- In addition to group identity
- Encourage respect
- Learn about others' use of trails

NEVER BADMOUTH OTHERS



- Limited time, money and energy
- Different needs and priorities
- Do not waste resources on conflict, including:
 - Name calling
 - Arguing
 - Staking out turf
 - Complaints to media
- Do not badmouth others
 - At group meetings
 - At meetings with agencies
 - In blogs

SUPPORT LAND MANAGER

- Ascertain problems and issues
- Never badmouth

PROJECTS BENEFIT ALL

- If not possible, benefit left out group in another project

ESTABLISH ORDER TO PROCESS

- WHY?
 - Mission of endeavor-what is desired change?
- WHAT?
 - Goals or objectives of competing interests-where is common ground?
 - Want to ride/hike from point A to point B
 - Want to enjoy nature
 - Want safe experience
 - Want to ride single track
- HOW?
 - Different agencies follow different rules
 - Must learn “rules of game” and navigate process properly

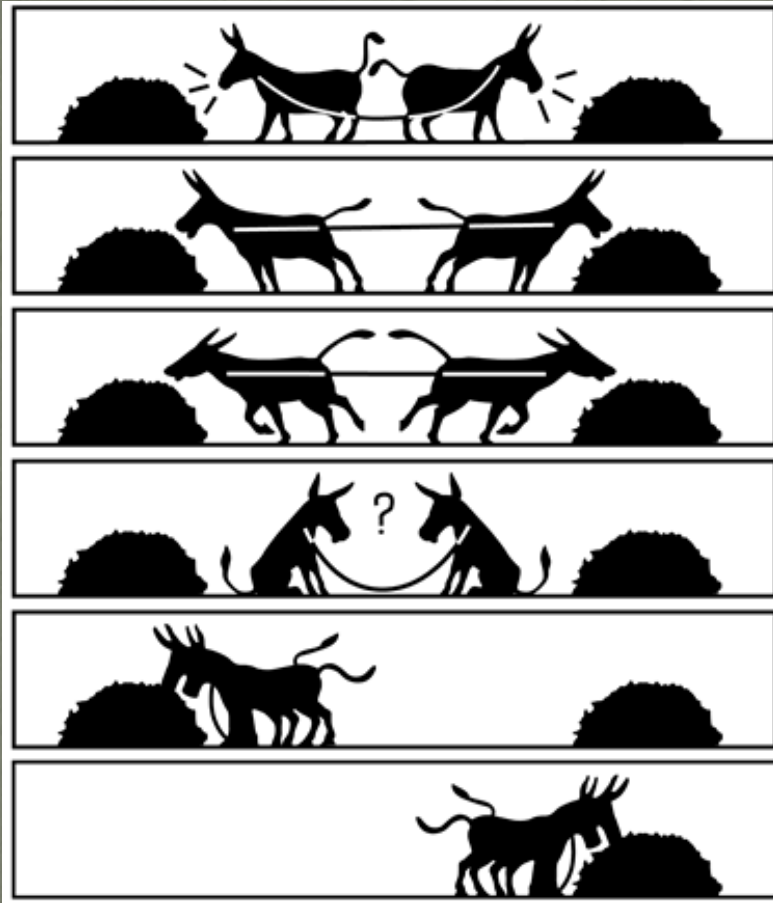
BE IN THE TRAIL COMMUNITY

- Join other groups, not your own
- Involve self in issues of other groups
- Include environmental issues
- Acquisition and preservation of open spaces
- Funding and finance of agencies

CREATE COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES

- Local trail committees to collaborate with land managers

COMPROMISE NECESSARY



- No one will get all they want
- Leap of faith required
- Chicken and egg thing: who plays nice first?

TAKE SMALL STEPS

- Success stories often take place in small communities
- Culture of cooperation will work in all communities
- Start by identifying small or limited location, community, land manager, or trail system
 - Work to create cooperative trails effort for that specific “community”



CELEBRATE SUCCESSES!

- Institutionalize new order
- Identify champions for this cause and rally behind them
- Top leaders are role models by their behavior
 - Participate in joint activities
- Publicly reward collaboration
 - In media
 - At meetings
 - To agencies
 - On blogs

CHANGE IN ATTITUDE, MAYBE EVEN A CHANGE IN CULTURE REQUIRED

- Suggest change in:
 - Thought
 - Behavior
 - Action
- Change rules of trail meetings
 - Resulting rules a product of extensive collaboration
 - Simple in final content
- Patience will be required

