

IMBA World Summit
Santa Fe, New Mexico, USA
Presentation Proposal



Title: Mountain Bikers Changing the World – One Town at a Time

“The Gallup Project”

Background: Gallup, New Mexico and its citizenry have dramatically transformed its image from “Drunk Town, USA” to the “Adventure Capital of New Mexico”, mostly lead by a motley crew of mountain bikers, visionaries, and “get ‘er done” types.

Gallup and McKinley County is a rural community in the Four Corners region. Gallup has survived as a commercial, transportation, and service hub, and its international reputation for American Indian arts & culture. Despite having some of the nation’s worst socioeconomic statistics, Gallup and its surroundings are rich in natural and outdoor treasures. In 1999, a group of 150 community members attended a forum to define an economic development strategy for Gallup and surrounding area. The concept of building on the current assets and ‘everything good that Gallup has to offer’ rose to the top. This asset-based community development focus lead to a homegrown initiative around developing and promoting adventure tourism as an economic driver for the area. The primary focus of adventure tourism has been on creating a world class and one-of-a-kind singletrack trails experience for mountain bikers.

McKinley County – Quick Stats:

- *Population:* 70,000
- *Service Area:* 5,500 sq. miles
- *Population Density:* 12 people per sq. mile
- *Diversity:* 75% - Native American
- *Taxable Land:* Only 19%, over 80% is owned by Federal/State/or in Trust Status
- *Poverty:* Ranked amongst poorest counties nationwide

Over ten years later Gallup-McKinley County has:

- Adopted a Trails & Open Space Master Plan into both the City and County’s Master and Comprehensive Plans;
- Invested about \$10M of trails and infrastructure improvements, including local, State, Federal, private, and tribal resources;
- Attracted tourists and spawned economic development, including events, business start-ups, and expansions;
- Created safe places to play and free places to exercise to combat childhood obesity epidemic in our area;
- Executed a joint partnership agreement with US Forest Service to develop 250+ multi-use, singletrack trails in the Zuni Mountains;
- Awarded a National Recreational Trail designation for its High Desert Trail System, which is all on private land; and
- Awarded the 2013 and 2014 Mountain Bike 24-Hour National Championships.

Currently Gallup is attracting:

- *Adventure Tourists (annually):* **32,000** users from outside 50 miles;
- *Mountain Biking Events Economic Impact:* **\$750,000** over last 5 years

This session is aimed to help participants learn about:

- How to build community consensus and leverage that politically?
- How to build partnerships across various jurisdictions, including the ranching community?
- What are the essential roles that are needed for success?
- How to leverage funding at all levels to advance what you can’t do for free?
- How to build an advocacy group and a trail crew that is motivated to do some heavy-lifting?
- Understanding how to get your US Senator on the trails?
- Lessons Learned from the Gallup experience.

Presenters:

Patricia A. Lundstrom, NM State Representative (D-9) and Adventure Gallup & Beyond Board Member, who has lead this initiative from the first forum to present day. As a Legislator, she invested State funding into infrastructure improvements and spearheaded legislation in 2011 to proclaim Gallup as New Mexico's Adventure Capital.

Bob Rosebrough, attorney, author, former Mayor, and future County Commissioner, who co-wrote the book that started it all "The Gallup Guide" and who as Mayor orchestrated attention and resources into this movement, including a \$6M+ quality-of-life bond issue.

Karl Lohmann, director of the Youth Conservation Corps program and Gallup Trails Board Member, who created and employs a 50+ youth trail crew that have seasonal green jobs and learn workforce skills, as well as, build some of the best trails in the nation.

Lindsay Mapes, entrepreneur and owner of Zia Rides and Turquoise Timing, who started several businesses and events based on the trails developed in the Gallup area, including 12-Hour Dawn 'Til Dusk Endurance Race, the High Desert Screamer, and 24-Hours in the Enchanted Forest.