SESSION TITLE: Interagency-Agency Consistency

CONVENERS: Mike Dawson, facilitator & Kent Wimmer – Scribe at Large

PARTICIPANTS: Dan McKeague**,** Steve Elkinton**,** Megan Eno**,** Karen Lutz**,** Steve Dudley**,** Jim Wolf**,** Karen Neidringhause**,** Deb Salt**,** Francisco Mendoza**,** Dean Gettinger

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS and/or RECOMMENDATIONS:
Partners for NST's: Federal, state, local, private and other partners

Issues calling out for interagency consistency:

- Signs and Markers
- Boundary Markers
- Trail data standards
- Trail manager job descriptions
- Resource Inventories
- Trail experience

Can the NPS, USFS, BLM, USFWS work together to develop consistent policies for NSHTs due to conflicting legislative mandates, policy manuals, directives, land management plans and training and orientation of staff?

Do the Under Secretaries know about consistency problems? No or not likely

How do we establish interagency consistency between land management units?

If agency leaders don't talk to each other, how do we get them to be consistent? The trail on the ground should be the focus.

Are there standards for agency partner agreements? No generally, but BLM is trying.

Steve Elkinton's partnerships chart: can't reproduce here

Is increasing accountability procedures at odds with our ability to implement partnerships?
Grants and agreement procedures - Private partners need to know the circulars as well the agency staff.

What are the hurdles to implement partnerships? Each of these compounds the others:

- Interior Comptrollers saying that $ can't be spent outside of agency land boundaries
- Solicitors are saying are NSTs a primary mission of the agency
- Bean counters with their account rules based agenda – no connection to agency missions or the value of the work done
- Agency culture
- Personal attitudes
- Cooperative agreements are treated as contracts
- Restrictions on sole source agreements

- Reimbursable agreements are problematic because of billing issues and accounting errors between agencies and partners
- Have the organizations done their full duty to collect, document and report its hours and accomplishments.

How do you work successfully with budget and agreements folks?

- Get to know them and treat them as part of your team
- Invite them to join or see a trail project they helped to fund, meet the volunteers
- Help them do their job – volunteer to be a Detailer in their office
- Identify mutual needs and goals and work with them upfront to design the agreement and project scope. Instead of developing a trail, develop a youth stewardship program which builds a trail. Focus of benefits such as citizen stewardship instead of miles of trail maintained.

Actions Items for what the Feds should do to promote consistency:

- Develop consistent standards for managing lands the NSTs pass through
- Develop consistent training and certification processes
- Fund the PNTS to host a list-serve to facilitate communication between and among agencies and organizations
- Mtg with Craig Crutchfield of OMB and agency budget, grants & agreements, and Bernie Winegard of NFF to inform them of interagency consistency issues.
- Set up a separate NSHT agency – probably not going to get traction.
- Define the maximum recreation potential for NSTs along with conservation requirements.
- Training and education leads to enhanced consistency
- Develop desk manual for trail managers
- Provide online and onsite training that are offered in modules that can be tailored to meet local needs.

RECOMMENDATION for PNTS ACTION: none listed