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The Peoples Path: Conflict and Cooperation in the Acquisition of the Appalachian Trail

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SARAH MITTFELDT

the people's path:
**CONFLICT AND
COOPERATION**

IN THE ACQUISITION OF THE APPALACHIAN TRAIL

ABSTRACT

When Congress passed the National Trails Act of 1968, the Appalachian Trail shifted from being a regional grassroots endeavor to being part of the national park system. As the National Park Service began to acquire land for the corridor, private citizens who once maintained the trail through informal handshake agreements became directly involved in one of the most complex federal land acquisition programs in U.S. history. Local communities responded to the unusual public-private partnership in a variety of ways—from cooperation to contestation. This analysis reveals the relational, complex, and fluid nature of the categories of “public” and “private” and demonstrates how a dynamic interplay of power and authority between different interests blazed the way for the kinds of public-private partnerships that have come to characterize twenty-first century environmental policy.

STRETCHING 2,175 MILES from Springer Mountain in Georgia to Mount Katahdin in Maine, the Appalachian Trail is known as America's most famous footpath. At first glance, environmental historians might assume that an exploration of the project's past would reveal well-trodden ground—debates about wilderness and competing recreational interests in the American

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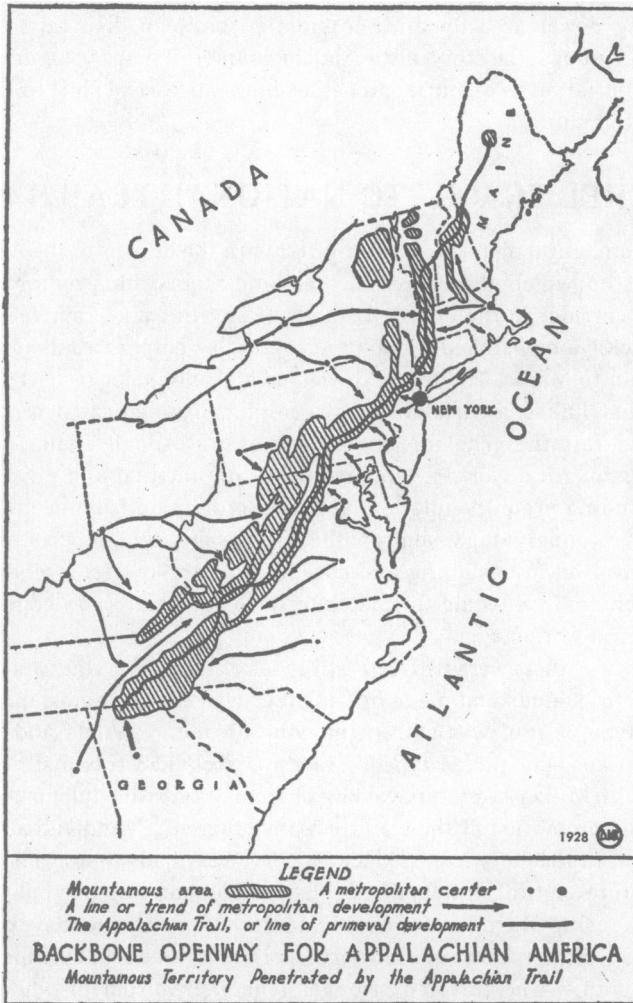
hinterlands. Yet the history of the Appalachian Trail has implications that extend well beyond the corridor's narrow boundaries. The acquisition of land for the corridor in the late 1970s and early 1980s relied on a dynamic interplay of power and authority between a wide range of public and private interests. The project was supported by southern Baptist ministers and MIT professors, postal clerks, and American presidents. At the same time, the project was resisted by chicken farmers and property rights advocates, land developers and libertarians. The social struggles and political alliances that occurred in reaction to economic, political, and environmental change are as much a part of this recreational landscape as the thin, terrestrial strip that it protects.

Because of the countless number of hours volunteers have worked on the trail since its conception in 1921, the trail is commonly referred to as "the people's path." Since 1925, members of the Appalachian Trail Conference (now Appalachian Trail Conservancy), a volunteer-based nonprofit organization, have worked to protect and manage the trail. When the National Park Service began an intensive land acquisition program for Appalachian Trail in 1978, the agency built on the trail's legacy of civic engagement by involving long-time volunteers in virtually all aspects of the acquisition program—from scouting new routes, to locating landowner data, to initiating contact with landowners, and in many cases, mediating land transactions between private owners and Park Service representatives. When private citizens started to perform some of the traditional functions of state officials and as state officials tried to navigate complex negotiation processes in local communities, the boundaries between "public" and "private" authority often blurred. Out of this liminal state came a powerful new institutional model for land conservation: the public-private partnership.

An exploration of efforts to protect the Appalachian Trail corridor in the late twentieth century provides deeper understandings of the complex relationship between centralized state-based conservation efforts and decentralized grassroots social action. It forces us to reexamine how we understand the categories of "public" and "private," not just in terms of how they define ownership boundaries, but also in terms of how power dynamics associated with these categories function in political debates about the control of land and resources. This essay builds on historian Peter S. Alagona's recent call for colleagues to "think of public and private not as distinct categories of analysis or spaces on a map, but as historical processes that involve continual construction, transgression, contestation, negotiation, transformation, and even cooperation."¹ The creation of the Appalachian Trail corridor did not rely primarily on technical expertise, scientific knowledge, and formal bureaucratic processes, as several scholars have described state-based conservation efforts.² Nor did the project solely rely on local knowledge, volunteerism, and grassroots organization. Instead, the Appalachian Trail project relied on the interaction of these two types of political action and involved an interdependent power structure between state and citizen agents.

Using a relational framework to examine the interaction of state-based and community-based action in the acquisition of the Appalachian Trail provides a

Figure 1. Benton MacKaye's Regional Planning Scheme for the Eastern Seaboard.



Credit: Published in Benton MacKaye, *The New Exploration: A Philosophy of Regional Planning*. Map originally published in 1928 by Harcourt, Brace and Company, republished by the Appalachian Trail Conference in 1990. Used with permission from Harley P. Holden, MacKaye's literary executor.

deeper understanding of underlying power dynamics involved in large-scale conservation initiatives in the late twentieth century. As political and financial support for large-scale federal land acquisition programs diminished in the 1980s, the public-private partnership model for protecting land and resources emerged.³ These institutional links were built on strong cooperative relationships that were tested by a range of resistance. Citizen engagement in large-scale conservation projects like the Appalachian Trail took the forms

of leadership and support as well as organized opposition. Like the Appalachian Trail itself, the path toward public-private partnership was long and tortuous. By revealing power as a dynamic interaction between disparate, sometimes antagonistic groups, the story of the Appalachian Trail helps us understand conflict and negotiation as essential processes in the historical shift toward public-private partnership.

“SQUIRREL TRACK” TO NATIONAL TRAILS ACT

Many environmental historians are familiar with the origins of the Appalachian Trail; less is known about the complicated land acquisition program created to protect the corridor in the late 1970s and 1980s.⁴ In 1921, Progressive forester Benton MacKaye envisioned a two-thousand-mile footpath that would stretch from Georgia to Maine. The footpath was part of a broader project in regional planning that linked a series of local communities dedicated to small-scale forestry and farming. The initial purpose of the Appalachian Trail was to provide jobs for rural workers, opportunities for spiritual and physical health for an expanding urban population, and land protection from profit-motivated exploiters.⁵ Although MacKaye proposed that government experts like himself would be involved in designing and coordinating the project, he believed that the Appalachian Trail would ultimately rely on the local knowledge of citizen volunteers and workers.

For MacKaye, there were two different types of footpaths. One was outside the range of motor sounds and made by “amateur walkers”—a “squirrel track” type. The other type of trail was within the zone of motor sounds and created by government labor—a “graded type.”⁶ MacKaye explained this distinction in an argument with Myron Avery, a naval lawyer from Maine who did more actual construction and promotion of the trail than any other single individual in the project’s history. In the early 1930s, MacKaye and Avery had a notorious falling-out over the future of trail development. Their argument was not only about the trail’s relationship with roads and scenic drives, as eloquently explained by historian Paul Sutter, but also about the political processes by which the trail was to be built.⁷ Avery favored stronger federal involvement while MacKaye emphasized a more decentralized, loosely-structured grassroots approach that would be gently supported by a benevolent government. By the 1920s and 1930s, hiking clubs had developed strong roots throughout New England, and trail aficionados embraced MacKaye’s plan for a long-distance trail.⁸ In their effort to create a continuous path from Georgia to Maine, however, they left MacKaye’s plans for social and economic reform by the wayside.⁹ Led by Myron Avery, the Appalachian Trail Conference grew as an umbrella organization for an extended network of influential outdoor enthusiasts and local hiking clubs. The organization succeeded in blazing an initial two-thousand-mile route by 1937. On public lands, particularly in the southern national forests, the Civilian Conservation Corps and other state workers played an important

Figure 2. The Completed Appalachian Trail, 1937.



The Appalachian Trail Conference used a federated structure of local clubs to promote trail-building efforts in the 1920s and 1930s. Without federal authority, the project relied on the ability of trail volunteers to cultivate positive relationships with local landowners. Credit: Map created by the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club.

role in building the Appalachian Trail in the 1930s. On private lands, the initial route relied on informal, handshake agreements between volunteers with the Appalachian Trail Conference and landowners. These protective measures would prove to be insufficient during the postwar era.

After World War II, roads and cities sprawled, timber production boomed, and Americans' desire for outdoor recreation swelled. As a result of postwar pressures, many miles of the original Appalachian Trail were obliterated or relocated onto roads. Trail advocates realized that the informal agreements that had historically protected the trail would no longer suffice. In order to maintain the

Figure 3A. Hikers Bound from Georgia to Maine on the Appalachian Trail Near Roanoke, Virginia, Early 1970s.

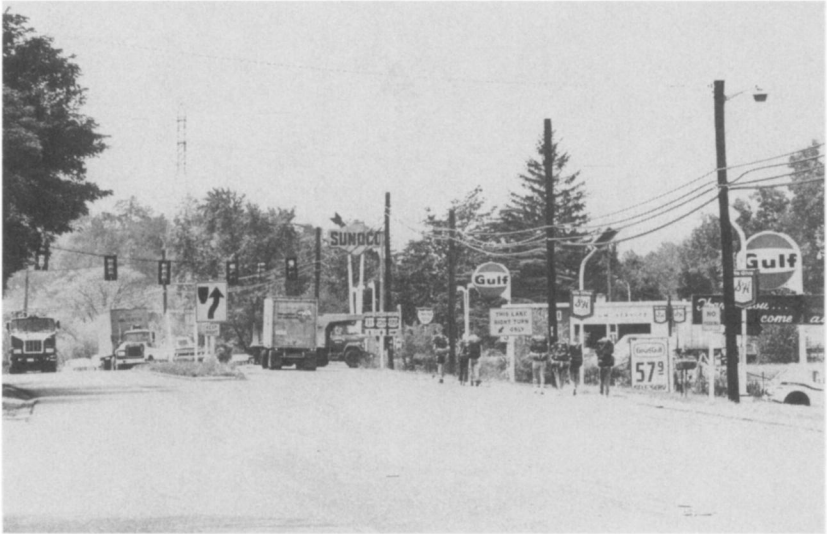


Figure 3B. Road Walk through Cumberland County, Pennsylvania, circa 1978.



Postwar developments, including new road and housing construction shown in Figure 3, threatened the continuity of the trail and the safety of hikers. Although Congress passed the National Trails Act in 1968, without adequate funding and federal leadership, these postwar pressures escalated during the 1960s and 1970s. Credit: Photos by Richard Frear. Courtesy of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

continuity of the trail, members of the Appalachian Trail Conference sought stronger federal involvement through legislative measures. When Congress passed the National Trails Act in 1968, the project shifted from being a somewhat loosely organized, regionally based grassroots endeavor to being part of the national park system—at least on paper.¹⁰ Because of insufficient funds and bureaucratic buck-passing between different levels of government, however, little was accomplished during the decade that followed the 1968 Act.¹¹ In 1978, Congress dramatically amended the 1968 Act to expedite land acquisition for the Appalachian Trail corridor. The amendment increased appropriations from five million dollars to ninety million dollars, expanded the power of condemnation from twenty-five acres per mile to 125 acres per mile, enlarged the average width of the corridor from two hundred feet to one thousand feet, and mandated that the acquisition program be completed within three years.¹² The 1978 amendment gave the park service the necessary funds and authority to pursue the land acquisition program for the Appalachian Trail in a more aggressive manner.

CHANGING PRIORITIES, POLICIES, AND PRACTICES

The passage of the 1968 National Trails Act and its amendment in 1978 was not just a major transition in the Appalachian Trail's history; it was part of a key shift in the history of national park management and policy. At that time, the park service moved from carving parks out of the public domain in the West to the much more complex task of creating public recreational spaces in densely populated, privately owned lands near urban areas, primarily in the East. In the 1930s, Congress established Smoky Mountain National Park and Shenandoah National Park, and park enthusiasts in the East worked to establish other units. In 1937, Congress authorized Cape Hatteras National Seashore in North Carolina, but because of limited funds and political momentum to support federal land acquisition, proposed park units like Cape Hatteras remained as “paper parks”—parks that primarily existed as lines drawn on maps without any actual territorial jurisdiction.¹³ As a result, most national parks in the early twentieth century existed in the western states, where there were fewer hurdles to acquiring land.

As public demand for outdoor recreation surged during the 1950s and 1960s, however, Congress passed several key pieces of legislation to improve existing parks and expand the national park system.¹⁴ In 1961, Congress approved the appropriation of money from offshore oil leases to acquire land to create the Cape Cod National Seashore. This precedent enabled the federal government to play a larger role in land acquisition for parks and recreation areas. The Land and Water Conservation Fund, established in 1965, provided a necessary mechanism for funding land acquisition for several new types of national

parks, including national seashores, recreation areas, trails, and wild and scenic rivers.

By the 1970s, the park service had garnered strong legal, financial, and political support for land acquisition, and the agency began to plan park development projects that would have seemed unrealistic in the 1950s. In 1972, the park service acquired two of its largest holdings within major U.S. cities—the Golden Gate and Gateway National Recreation Areas in San Francisco and New York, respectively. In 1978, the same year that Congress amended the 1968 National Trails Act, Congress passed the National Park and Recreation Act. This act established fifteen new units in the national park system—most of which were in or near cities and concentrated on the East Coast. These examples reflected a changing priority for federal land acquisition efforts—putting parks and protected areas closer to where the bulk of the population lived, worked, and owned land.

To facilitate the expansion of the national park system, the park service implemented a series of “get tough” policies in 1977. These policies emerged out of a growing concern about the rising costs of scenic land. As demand for vacation homes, ski resorts, and other types of private development increased in the late 1970s, many conservationists and officers within the park service perceived the need to take a more aggressive approach to land acquisition.¹⁵ The “get tough” acquisition policies primarily applied to inholdings within existing parks. An example of one of these policies was a provision that gave the park service the power to condemn a property if a park inholder attempted to improve or develop a structure on an unimproved property. Such action would prevent the agency from having to pay for the increased property value at a later date.¹⁶ The “get tough” policies of the late 1970s hastened acquisition processes and expedited the use of eminent domain in park projects around the country.¹⁷

In the agency’s attempt to bring parks to the people, the park service’s acquisition programs spurred an unprecedented degree of cooperation between public and private agents in the late 1970s. It also caused a great deal of conflict and resistance among landowners. For example, in 1978, an article in *Newsweek* described the story of Herb Van Deven, a schoolteacher in Arkansas who had moved to the banks of the Buffalo River in the Ozark Mountains. Along with several neighbors, Van Deven fought the park service’s plans to create the Buffalo National River. Landowners like Van Deven claimed that such efforts were a violation of individual property rights, and they complained about “annoying telephone calls from park officials ... late-night visits from government land acquisition officers, and ... strong-arm tactics.”¹⁸ Van Deven’s statement reveals that efforts to expand and improve parks and recreation areas in the 1970s were matched by growing concerns among many citizens who believed that the park service used unfair and aggressive tactics to implement policies that infringed on private property rights.

Landowners’ opposition to federal land acquisition programs in the East was not a new phenomenon, but it differed from earlier resistance in several key

ways. Because of efforts to acquire land for the Great Smoky Mountain National Park and the Shenandoah National Park in the 1930s, mountain residents were required to leave their homes. In the case of Shenandoah, many of the residents were subsistence farmers who did not necessarily own land outright. These poor mountain farmers lacked the resources to organize opposition to the park service.¹⁹ Many who did own property were willing to sell their land, and some were even grateful for the opportunity to sell after several years of drought and a decline in soil fertility in the early 1930s. Unlike earlier federal initiatives to acquire land, in some areas, resistance to park acquisition in the 1970s was fueled by a larger growing concern about the expanding power of the federal government and its infringement on civil liberties—particularly in relation to property rights. Also, after a couple of decades of covering civil rights protests, the media had become adept at reporting stories about everyday citizens struggling with large centralized power. Despite the growing demand for public recreational spaces, national coverage in newspapers and other media outlets helped those who opposed park acquisition programs gain public support. Leaders of the fledgling property rights movement used the media and the tactics of grassroots organization that evolved in the 1960s to organize against the park service's land acquisition programs.

In a concerted attempt to defend property rights against National Park Service's land acquisition programs, Charles S. Cushman, a landowner within the borders of Yosemite National Park, organized the National Park Inholders Association in 1978.²⁰ Cushman believed that federal acquisition programs in late 1970s were no longer subject to "any checks and balances." In his view, the park service had "leaned over backwards to accommodate the environmentalists" and had become "arrogant and cavalier" when dealing with inholders.²¹ In 1978, Cushman traveled around the country to meet with landowners and to bring national media attention to the stories of property owners who had been affected by the shift in park policy and land acquisition tactics. These stories caused concern for Appalachian Trail project participants—citizen volunteers, landowners, and public officials alike.

Most trail volunteers were grateful for greater federal support, and they realized that many sections of the trail would have been lost without federal intervention. Yet the park service's new, tougher policies and the potential use of eminent domain concerned many long-time trail advocates. Also, the formal bureaucratic nature and somewhat paternalistic structure of the park service differed from the loose, informal processes that had historically characterized relationships between the Appalachian Trail Conference and its local club affiliates. For example, after Congress passed the 1968 Trails Act, new laws required that all relocations of the Appalachian Trail had to be reviewed and approved by the park service. These regulations tended to delay trail managing activities and frustrated long-time volunteers who had cultivated strong relationships with local landowners. In 1977, after spending "countless hours" with one disgruntled landowner in Vermont who wanted the trail relocated to a different

part of his property, Earl Jette of the Dartmouth Outing Club acknowledged his slight resentment of the new policies. As a trail-maintaining club, he explained, the Dartmouth group did not have “power to relocate [the trail] without being told by the park service to do so (this is what happens when the Federal Government enters the picture!)”²²

In the following year, Jette received letters from four landowners requesting that the trail be taken off their properties. The landowners maintained that they had been very satisfied with their previous agreement with the Dartmouth Outing Club. They wrote to Jette that the removal of the trail from their land was “simply a protest against the National Park Service, the Congress, and the federal government for their attempt to destroy a long-standing partnership between the landowner and the hiker.” The landowners maintained that “if the National Park Service would be flexible and innovative instead of rigid and reactionary in its approach,” the forty-year-old partnership that existed between the landowners and the trail community could continue.²³ Such exchanges became increasingly common, as landowners were given no assurances that condemnation would not be used on their land. Looking to avoid confrontation with the federal government altogether, some owners decided to act preemptively and removed the trail from their lands.

Initial concerns about reactions to the park service’s acquisition program caused the agency to proceed cautiously with its plans to protect the corridor and to reevaluate carefully the acquisition process. Because of the trail’s unique geography and its close proximity to settled areas, the Appalachian Trail required a different approach to land acquisition and protection than the aggressive, top-down approaches the park service had previously used to acquire inholdings in existing parks or new units within the national park system. Instead of relying on a strictly top-down approach, the agency involved private citizens and long-time volunteers in nearly every stage of the acquisition program. The scale and intensity at which private citizens were involved in the land acquisition program for the Appalachian Trail were unprecedented. The agency hoped that continuing the project’s history of grassroots involvement would prevent smoldering sparks of opposition from igniting. Park officials also hoped that citizen involvement would reduce the costs of the acquisition process and improve the efficiency of the program. In the process, coordinated efforts between members of the Appalachian Trail Conference and the park service helped to forge a new approach to land conservation—public-private partnership based on interdependent sources of power and authority. This path toward public-private partnership was fraught with both conflict and surprising alliances.

ACQUIRING THE CORRIDOR

The primary purpose of the park service’s land acquisition program for the Appalachian Trail was to relocate sections of the trail that were being

threatened by roads or other developments. Unlike traditional efforts to determine park boundaries, where an outer ring drawn on a map designated the border of property to be acquired and the park service's job was to then fill in the circle, the design of the Appalachian Trail corridor was more flexible, in terms of both the tools employed by the agency's real estate experts and the processes by which the agency pursued acquisition. By maintaining this flexibility in the face of conflict and through the process of negotiation, the Park Service, the Appalachian Trail Conference, and their partners were able to create a 2,175-mile space that succeeded in meeting the needs and desires of local places while simultaneously promoting a large national agenda.

To determine the corridor's boundaries after the 1968 Trails Act, the park service hired professional aerial photographers to fly over the trail and to take pictures of the large, white plastic panels that volunteers had dragged out to the woods and placed along the existing route. These images provided the basis of an official state-by-state map of the Appalachian Trail that was published in the *Federal Register* in 1971.²⁴ By 1978, when Congress allocated sufficient funds to purchase land for the Appalachian Trail, many sections of the 1971 route had already been lost. To determine a potential route after 1978, the park service hired surveyors to perform a center-line survey. The center-line survey was a single dotted line drawn across segment maps that contained information about property boundaries and ownership patterns. The entire trail consisted of about five hundred to six hundred segment maps, and project leaders with the Appalachian Trail Conference and park service used these maps to determine which owners would be contacted and where the trail would ultimately go. These decisions depended on ownership patterns of a given area and landowners' attitudes towards the project. In many cases, if one owner didn't want the trail on her property, there were usually neighbors nearby who were willing to sell land or a right-of-way easement. As a result, the trail would shift to an adjacent property. Roughly following the center-line survey, the flexible design of the corridor was an attempt to adapt to local landscapes and landowners' desires—to locate the footpath along the path of least resistance.

The park service used several legal tools to acquire land for the trail, including simple fee acquisition, easements, exchanges, donations, and eminent domain. The purpose of having a variety of options was not only to reduce costs for the program, but also to provide flexibility with landowners; thus, to maintain positive relations with local communities along the trail. The purchase of easements was one of the most commonly used tools in the acquisition of the Appalachian Trail corridor. Typically, an easement would limit public recreational activity to a narrow right-of-way, and most of the land in the broader corridor would still be owned and controlled by the landowner, with only minor restrictions on land use. Park officials avoided using a standardized easement document for all cases and instead tried to tailor agreements to meet the particular desires of landowners.²⁵ The park service's Appalachian Trail project manager, David Richie, explained that the wording of easements was often

intentionally vague. He wrote, "Words like 'good and accepted' are designated to allow for evolution in acceptable practices rather than to fix restrictions according to current practices.... They are intended to avoid red tape. Basically, we have tried to devise an easement that is no more restrictive on landowners than is necessary to provide for the Trail and to avoid incompatible development close to it."²⁶

The use of easements during the Appalachian Trail acquisition program was particularly effective because it meant that conserving corridor lands did not necessarily eliminate all forms of economic production. In some areas, easements were designed to promote certain land uses that would "preserve an attractive setting for the Trail."²⁷ For example, when farmers in Pennsylvania's Cumberland Valley expressed concern about the "possible expropriation of farmland by bureaucrats in a \$90 million dollar attempt to soothe the aesthetic sense of the three hundred or so individuals who hike the whole trail," Appalachian Trail advocates emphasized that certain farm practices, including the use of farm equipment, herbicides, and other activities necessary to keep farms productive and competitive, would be allowed to continue.²⁸ According to the 1981 Management Plan for the Appalachian Trail, agricultural use of corridor lands that conserved "pastoral scenery" was "not only compatible, but desirable," as were certain forms of timber harvesting.²⁹ In this way, protective easements played a key role in maintaining flexibility and adapting to landowner's needs and desires.

The most controversial tool that the park service had the authority to use was the power of eminent domain. Condemnation proceedings rarely occurred, however. When they did, it was usually for the purpose of clearing title or establishing just compensation. Condemnation was unappealing to the park service not only because of the public uproar it created, but because it was expensive, time consuming, and tedious. In other park acquisition programs, the agency often had the ability to wait the three to five years it took to settle condemnation proceedings. According to the 1978 amendments, however, the acquisition of the Appalachian Trail corridor lands was to be completed in three years. Furthermore, while waiting for one condemnation proceeding to settle in court, adjacent tracts could become unusable as neighboring landowners sold, logged, or developed their land. Such actions on adjacent parcels would lead to missing links along the route and render the acquisition of the condemned property obsolete. Because of the trail's long, slender shape, acquisition of one property was often contingent on the successful negotiation of a neighbor's property. Condemnation was good neither for maintaining landowner relations nor for the logistics of time and finance. When it was used, physical, budgetary, social, and political sacrifices were made.³⁰

Even though eminent domain was not used frequently, in a way the federal authority that it embodied represented the antithesis of the informal, handshake agreements that had established the footpath in the 1930s. Some landowners perceived the prospect of condemnation as an unwarranted threat to

their individual rights and to their way of life. In order to avoid controversy surrounding the use of eminent domain and the growing concerns about the “strong-arm tactics” of the park service, the agency primarily relied on volunteers and employees of the increasingly professional Appalachian Trail Conference to initiate conversations with landowners about the array of acquisition options available to them. Long-term volunteers often knew the local terrain and political dynamics more intimately than their federal partners did, and the park service hoped that basing decisions largely on the knowledge and experience of citizen volunteers might help overcome the negative images of federal acquisition programs that had spread throughout the national media.

The park service and the Appalachian Trail Conference worked together to select knowledgeable individuals to serve as local coordinators for the program.³¹ Coordinators were responsible for finding property suitable for relocations within an entire state or a large section of a state. This involved contacting and interviewing landowners, often in conjunction with park service representatives. As the acquisition program progressed, local coordinators found themselves in situations that ranged from negotiating easements over brownies and coffee in landowners’ kitchens, to mediating sometimes contentious community forums in public buildings. In each state, coordinators began by comparing the existing trail, the route published in the 1971 *Federal Register*, and other plausible alternatives.³² According to Elizabeth Levers, a retired school administrator and the Appalachian Trail coordinator for New York, agency officials simply gave her a bundle of maps and told her to “go out and find where you want to put it [the trail]... Put that on the map and give it back to us. And then we’ll look it over and consider what we can do.”³³ In recalling his work with Levers, Robert (Bob) Proudman, a long-time trail builder and advocate who helped coordinate the land acquisition program, smiled and noted that Levers would drive state officials and Appalachian Trail Conference employees “kind of nuts” because she was “friendly, talkative, and *totally* determined. [S]he would work harder than any of the staff would—sixteen hour days, seven days a week. And she knew every landowner in Dutchess County, New York.”³⁴ Like many other coordinators in the acquisition program, Levers used her position as a private citizen to soothe landowners’ anxiety about the federal land acquisition program. Coordinators like Levers were able to gain local support for the project by demonstrating genuine concern for landowners’ ideas and opinions and framing the program as a community-based initiative rather than a federal mandate.

How coordinators approached landowners—and in particular, how they positioned their quasi-public authority in the land acquisition program—greatly influenced landowners’ reactions to the program. While some citizen coordinators clearly communicated with landowners and clarified their role from the outset, in other areas, initiation of the land acquisition program by citizens

Figure 5. Elizabeth Levers, New York Trail Coordinator, 1965.



Long-time trail volunteers like Liz Levers played a critical role in implementing the National Park Service's land acquisition program for the trail in the 1970s and early 1980s. Credit: Photo by Frank Oliver. Courtesy of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

added to the program's complexity and to landowners' hesitancy to support the project. In some cases, landowners became confused about coordinators' authority and their relationship with the federal government. Such confusion caused initial resistance in some areas and delayed the land acquisition program. For example, Pennsylvania's Cumberland County became one of the most contentious areas involved in the program when the park service and Appalachian Trail Conference tried to relocate approximately twelve miles of the existing trail off county roads and onto fertile farmland. Although many factors caused the conflict in the valley, several participants involved—landowners, park service officials, and Appalachian Trail Conference representatives

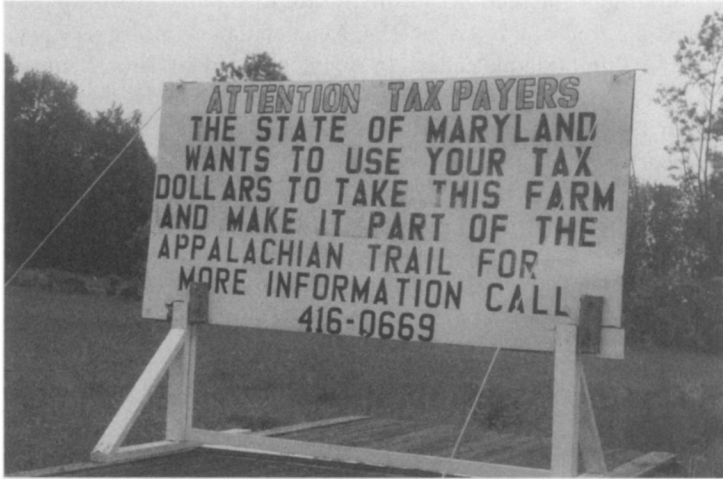
alike—acknowledged that local resistance was unintentionally caused, in part, by a dedicated trail advocate's initial handling of the program.³⁵

Thurston Griggs, the section coordinator for the Mountain Club of Maryland, was responsible for a stretch of the Appalachian Trail in Pennsylvania—including the Cumberland Valley. In 1977, he worked with Pennsylvania's Department of Environmental Services, the National Park Service, and the Appalachian Trail Conference to plan an alternative to the existing road route in the Cumberland Valley. In May 1978, Griggs sent out what became a locally infamous letter to landowners, notifying them of the National Park Service's intent to relocate the trail through the Cumberland Valley. Griggs's letter provided little explanation of the program or his role as a citizen volunteer. Instead, he simply told landowners that “[w]ithin a matter of months, the government will approach you about acquiring an interest in this corridor.”³⁶ The letter was short and somewhat curt, and it seemed to indicate that the federal government had already selected a final route and was going to establish it regardless of local opinion.

Griggs's cavalier approach caused a major upset with the landowners, and local media were quick to sensationalize the story. An article in the *Carlisle Evening Sentinel* characterized Griggs's attitude as being “We don't give a damn what you think or what you have. We're going to take what we want.”³⁷ One landowner recalled that she would never forget Mr. Griggs and the way he presented himself—“It was like, ‘here comes Big Brother comin’ in to take your property.”³⁸ While Griggs, who received no compensation for his efforts in the valley, perceived his work as a benevolent act serving the greater interests of society, landowners who had no history with the project—and who may have mistaken Griggs as a park service official—perceived the initiative as a threat to their personal property rights. Although he was not a public agent, as an outsider to the community, Griggs wielded a kind of authority that was perceived as equally threatening to local landowners. Even though thirty-one of the fifty-four landowners who responded to Griggs's letter said that they would be willing to sell land or easements, Griggs's approach—or at least the way it was portrayed in the media and perceived by members of the local community—seemed to create an inhospitable climate for future negotiations.

As tension over trail relocation in the Cumberland Valley escalated, several landowners and farmers in the area organized a group called CANT—Citizens Against New Trail. The purpose of the group was to oppose the relocation of the Appalachian Trail off the existing road route. In 1979, Charles Cushman, leader of the National Park Inholders Association, came to the Cumberland Valley to help landowners organize and to ensure that the park service avoided intimidation, condemnation threats, and communication failures—attributes that he claimed were characteristic of the agency's acquisition programs in other parts of the country. Cushman worked with a group of about ninety members of CANT and encouraged them to seek support from lobbying groups like the American Farm Bureau. He also helped them

Figure 6. Local Landowners Express Their Concerns about the Federal Land Acquisition Program.



Credit: Photo courtesy of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

connect with other landowner groups that had formed along the trail, such as Nail the Trail in Philipstown, New York, and the Appalachian Trail Landowners Organization in Connecticut. After meeting at federal hearings in Washington, DC, these landowner groups formed the Appalachian Trail Interstate Coalition. By organizing themselves and aligning their concerns with the emerging property rights movement, landowners along the Appalachian Trail sought connection with a broader grassroots resistance effort. They hoped to use the power of organized private interests to check what they perceived as an unjustified expansion of public power.

In addition to linking up with other property rights groups, landowners who resisted the acquisition program sometimes found support from surprising non-local sources. As the Appalachian Trail Conference became a more professional advocacy organization in the 1960s and 1970s, the popularity of the Appalachian Trail skyrocketed and a new breed of trail user emerged. Although many hikers upheld the image of the wholesome, Boy-Scout-leading civic leader of earlier days, young people who identified with the counter-cultural revolution of the 1960s and 1970s viewed the trail as a place to live out their anti-establishment ideals and alternative lifestyles. Times had changed, noted the *Washington Evening Star*, “[T]he wilderness ha[d] become real estate and the earnest back-packed nature lovers of another day have been followed by hippies making whoopie in the ramshackle and poorly maintained shelters along the trail.”³⁹ Although most hikers supported efforts to protect the corridor, many were also sympathetic to the concerns of people in whose backyards they had been camping and walking. In reaction to the relocation of the

Appalachian Trail in the Cumberland Valley, Warren Doyle, an outspoken hiker and founder of the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association, claimed that he was “tired of the ‘roadaphobics’ who feel it is their patriotic mission to remove the trail from all roads regardless of the repercussions.”⁴⁰ Noting that road-walking had long been part of the Appalachian Trail experience, Doyle stated that “I doubt if Benton MacKaye will roll over in his grave if the trail across the Cumberland Valley remains where it is.”⁴¹ After several conversations with members of CANT, Doyle sent a letter to Russell Dickenson, director of the National Park Service, to express his concern about how the park service’s land acquisition program might affect relationships between hikers and landowners.⁴²

When hikers like Doyle contacted the park service about their concerns, project leaders were surprised to learn that in some cases, hikers’ priorities differed from the park service’s plans for protecting the trail. Project Manager David Richie noted that while most hikers seemed to appreciate the natural environment surrounding the trail, for many through-hikers, the Appalachian Trail was “a social experience in the out-of-doors” as opposed to a “wilderness hiking experience.”⁴³ Even though Richie expressed gratitude for hikers’ constructive criticism, he maintained that the park service was legally obligated to uphold the conservation objectives outlined in the 1968 Trails Act.⁴⁴ The range in hikers’ attitudes toward the park service’s land acquisition program reflected the diversification of the trail community—in terms of their ideas about both what a protected long-distance trail should look like and how trails should be protected. Furthermore, hikers’ sympathy toward landowners added a surprising twist to debates over where and how to relocate the trail, particularly in the Cumberland Valley.

Although the park service attempted to alleviate the concerns of landowners and those who sympathized with them about the acquisition program, their concerns were often more effectively addressed when messages came from private landowners in other communities along the trail who had experienced similar situations. In this sense, the power of persuasion was rooted not in the expertise of the centralized state, but in the shared experience of everyday citizens. At a heated public meeting in Cumberland County, trail advocates shared a letter from a New Hampshire farmer. The letter explained how one of Hanover’s last remaining farms had been protected through the combined efforts of the park service, trail volunteers, and concerned landowners. Instead of having federal officials tell local residents the benefits that they would reap by having the trail rerouted through their community, the message was often more powerful when it came from neighbors, fellow residents, or private citizens in similar situations. Using success stories from other communities along the trail was an important way that advocates sought to localize this national project.⁴⁵

Appealing to other local residents’ desires for protected open space also helped trail advocates overcome landowners’ resistance to the acquisition program. Local conservationists who lived in a particular area but were not necessarily hikers played an important role in shaping local opinion toward

the project. For example, when Mrs. Laurence Benander learned that the Cumberland County commissioners were resisting plans to relocate the trail through her county, she wrote a letter to the editor of the *Harrisburg Patriot News*. Benander stated, “[T]he federal government seems ready, willing, and able to spend approximately 6.6 million dollars in our county to preserve some green space for us. I cannot believe that my elected county commissioners ... actually intend to reject this stroke of good luck.”⁴⁶ She was concerned about the county’s rapid development and argued for stronger protection of the area’s natural resources, including the county’s rich agricultural land. Benander pointed out that farming was much more compatible with the Appalachian Trail than industrial development, and she predicted that in a few years, landowners “who currently claim to be preserving their lands for agricultural use will ... be seen selling it to developers for large but temporary profits which will eventually cost the rest of us in terms of pollution, higher school taxes, and a lower quality of life.”⁴⁷ Carol Witzerman, another Cumberland County resident who shared Benander’s concerns, formed the group PRO-TRAIL—Pennsylvanians Rallied on a Trail Route Advocating Improved Location. The group was comprised not of long-distance hikers, but of local green space advocates. As an alternative to the route Thurston Griggs and the Appalachian Trail Conference had proposed, PRO-TRAIL proposed a route that made partial use of an old railroad right-of-way in the eastern part of the Valley. PRO-TRAIL’s involvement in the Appalachian Trail relocation effort demonstrated that conflict about the trail was not solely between local and outside forces or between private landowners and the federal government; it also involved conflict between private citizens within communities.

After years of dialogue, a thin corridor was established through the Cumberland Valley. Like many other parts of the trail, the final route often differed from coordinators’ initial proposals. It also often differed from the official route published in the 1971 *Federal Register*—the template that the National Park Service had used during the beginning of the acquisition process. The trail, in effect, became the physical embodiment of both the conflict and the cooperation between local landowners, citizen volunteers, Park Service officials, and a wide range of other interests—both local and nonlocal, public and private.

THE PATH OF PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP

As the land acquisition program for the Appalachian Trail gained momentum in 1981, President Reagan stepped into the Oval Office and appointed James Watt as the secretary of the interior. When Watt called for an immediate moratorium on federal land acquisition, it was clear that the landscape of national conservation policy had shifted. Under the mantra of “creative conservation,” the Reagan administration was less interested in protecting land through federal acquisition and more interested in keeping land in productive, private

ownership and on the local tax rolls. Hints of this new era emerged in the 1970s, as a growing number of Republican politicians responded to Congress's generous allocations for park projects like the Appalachian Trail and environmental protection efforts. In 1978, Ted Stevens, who was then a senator from Alaska, argued that while many people feared gun control or "thought control," he believed that "land control" by large federal agencies like the park service would ultimately "have more to do with controlling the behavior of the American public ... than anything else." Stevens was concerned about the park service's land acquisition policies—particularly in the West—and the "dwindling supply of land in private ownership." Alluding to George Orwell's famous novel, he noted that if the trend continued, "1984 will be upon us sooner than we think."⁴⁸

When 1984 did arrive, however, the National Park Service and the Appalachian Trail Conference embarked on another unprecedented endeavor in the history of U.S. land policy. Although the pace of land acquisition for the Appalachian Trail slowed dramatically in the 1980s, with help from the Trust for Appalachian Trail Lands—a land trust formed by trail advocates in 1982—the agency was able to continue its efforts to protect the corridor.⁴⁹ Although there had been a few controversial areas along the trail, in general, the park service viewed the Appalachian Trail acquisition program as a major success and sought ways to continue its strong partnership with the Appalachian Trail Conference. In 1984, the park service delegated the managerial responsibility of the total seventy thousand acres of land to be acquired to its nonprofit partner organization.⁵⁰ The delegation of authority included the management responsibility for all corridor lands outside of existing public areas—about 30 percent of the entire trail. Under the new arrangement, the Appalachian Trail Conference would maintain the trail and shelters, monitor the corridor boundaries, and work with the trust to raise private funds for additional acquisitions. The park service would maintain legal authority for acquired properties. The agency would also be responsible for initially surveying the corridor boundaries, removing existing structures, ensuring NEPA compliance on any major relocation, budgeting federal dollars, and coordinating law enforcement efforts.⁵¹ Thus, the park service would primarily perform legal and federal administrative functions, while the Appalachian Trail Conference and its local club affiliates would be responsible for on-the-ground management and administration as well as the development of creative new programs to protect the corridor.⁵²

As the Appalachian Trail Conference began to take on its new responsibilities as a land managing agency, it again relied on the knowledge and experience of long-time trail workers while also learning new forms of expertise from its government partners. Through this exchange, the boundaries between public and private continued their often blurry existence. In addition to being responsible for blazing and maintaining a thin trail through the woods, employees and volunteers with the Appalachian Trail Conference

learned how to assess resource impacts and prioritize land management initiatives. The conference also became more skilled in raising funds and working with members of adjacent communities to protect and manage corridor lands. During the 1980s and 1990s, the organization became proficient in certain functions that were once the domain of federal land managing agencies like the park service. In doing so, the organization became a powerful force in the national conservation arena, and in 2005 the Appalachian Trail Conference changed its name to Appalachian Trail Conservancy to reflect the organization's commitment to broader land protection goals.

Since the 1990s, the Appalachian Trail corridor has not only proved to be an important biological resource for wildlife, water quality, and land health, it has become an economic asset to rural communities and a conduit for community planning initiatives. As traditional natural resource industries began to decline in the late twentieth century, outdoor recreation became a billion-dollar industry. The trail brought new forms of small-scale industry—hiker hostels, equipment shops, and bed-and-breakfasts—to places like Hot Springs, North Carolina, and Damascus, Virginia.⁵³ People who once resisted the project began to view the Appalachian Trail as an economic, cultural, and physical asset to their regions. The trail has brought members of rural towns together to work with the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and other outside partners to plan for the economic and cultural sustainability of their communities. For example, in 2006, the Appalachian Trail Cumberland Valley Gateway Community Forum brought together long-time trail workers such as Bob Proudman and Cumberland Valley residents such as Sheldon Brymesser, a local farmer who helped organize CANT (Citizens Against New Trail) in the late 1970s and early 1980s. Like other recent initiatives along the trail, the purpose of this forum was to promote compatible land uses along the corridor, including sustainable development and the conservation of farmland, open space, and recreation areas. The forum in the Cumberland Valley demonstrates how local attitudes toward the Appalachian Trail have shifted over time in reaction to broader changes in the economic geography of rural America.

Initiatives like the Cumberland Valley Gateway Community Forum also reveal that, in a sense, the Appalachian Trail has come full circle. After almost ninety years since Benton MacKaye proposed his vision for Appalachian Trail as a project in regional planning, the trail is beginning to address some of the broader themes in MacKaye's original plan: the protection of natural resources and the promotion of economic sustainability, health, and quality of life.⁵⁴ Like other stages in the Appalachian Trail's past, these goals will most likely reach fruition by combining the horizontal, dendritic roots of grassroots social action with a strong central tap root of state support. Like other large-scale land protection efforts, the management and conservation of the Appalachian Trail corridor will not solely depend on federal bureaucracies, but will build on the dynamic interaction among a wide range of interests and the coordinated efforts of both public and private agents.

CONCLUSION

By establishing important precedents for public land policy during the twentieth century and serving as a premier example of public-private partnership, the Appalachian Trail project helped to blaze the way not only for other long-distance trails, but for land conservation and environmental policy in the twenty-first century. Today, we live in an era of public-private partnerships. It is not likely that we will ever see the kind of federal leadership and use of the eminent domain power for acquiring new national trails, parks, or conservation areas that we did in the twentieth century. Instead, we see land trusts working in conjunction with state agencies or the thousands of “friends” groups across the country—private and nonprofit organizations working in collaboration with public partners. The partnership between the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and the park service has served as a model for other initiatives by demonstrating that grassroots social action and state support can be combined to achieve large-scale conservation goals, but this dynamic relationship invariably involves conflict as well as cooperation.⁵⁵ Although other national scenic and recreational trails have not received the same level of federal funding that was allocated to the Appalachian Trail in 1978, trail enthusiasts working on Wisconsin’s Ice Age Trail, the Florida Trail, and other national trails look to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy-National Park Service partnership as an institutional model for coordinating trail building efforts. Like the case of the Appalachian Trail, future partnerships will operate within a mosaic of values, navigating their own tortuous paths through conflict and cooperation.

In addition to serving as a model for other conservation partnerships, the history of the Appalachian Trail also reveals important insights about the relationship between grassroots social action and state-based conservation in the late twentieth century. An analysis of how the categories “private” and “public” were employed during the construction of the Appalachian Trail offers a complex view of the relationship between the centralized state and decentralized citizen actors. Many scholars, such as James Scott in *Seeing Like a State*, have characterized state-based conservation efforts as relying solely on technical expertise, scientific knowledge, and formal bureaucracies. Yet the history of the Appalachian Trail demonstrates a greater range of resistance, as well as a greater range of support and cooperation, among disparate groups. Power and authority between groups were often relationally defined, and the boundaries between the categories “public” and “private”—and the related categories of “amateur” and “expert”—frequently blurred during processes of conflict, cooperation, and negotiation. By demonstrating how power operated as a relational force among disparate groups, the story of the Appalachian Trail challenges old public-private dichotomies and exemplifies new ways of approaching and using authority. Taking the adaptive, hybrid approach associated with public-private partnerships like the Appalachian

Trail may be the surest path to protecting the resources we rely on, and the landscapes that we love.

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NOTES

I would like to thank Mark Cioc and the anonymous reviewers of this journal for their thoughtful suggestions. I am also grateful for insightful comments provided by Nancy Langston and William Cronon on previous drafts of this research.

1. Peter S. Alagona, "Homes on the Range: Cooperative Conservation and Environmental Change on California's Privately Owned Hardwood Rangelands," *Environmental History* 13 (April 2008): 328.
2. James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998); Karl Jacoby, *Crimes against Nature: Squatters, Poachers, Thieves, and the Hidden History of American Conservation* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001); Benjamin Heber Johnson, "Conservation, Subsistence, and Class at the Birth of Superior National Forest," *Environmental History* 4 (January 1999): 80-99; Louis Warren, *The Hunter's Game: Poachers and Conservationists in Twentieth-Century America* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997). In their investigations of political dynamics involved in early conservation efforts in the United States, these scholars have portrayed state officials as powerful outsiders going into rural communities to exert their political authority on disempowered locals. This essay attempts to build on this scholarship by exploring changes in the relationship between the state and rural, resource-dependent communities in the later half of the twentieth century.
3. Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring: The Transformation of the American Environmental Movement* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2005); Robert Gottlieb, "The Next Environmentalism: How Movements Respond to the Changes That Elections Bring—from Nixon to Obama," *Environmental History* 14 (April 2009): 298-308; Eve Endicott, ed., *Land Conservation through Public/Private Partnership* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1993); Sally Fairfax, *Buying Nature: The Limits of Land Acquisition As a Conservation Strategy, 1780-2004* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005). Gottlieb and others suggest that this shift was, in part, due to the increasingly powerful link between civic engagement and environmental stewardship and the professionalization of environmental advocacy groups.
4. Larry Anderson, *Benton MacKaye: Conservationist, Planner, and Creator of the Appalachian Trail* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002); Paul Sutter, "A Retreat from Profit': Colonization, the Appalachian Trail, and the Social Roots of Benton MacKaye's Wilderness Advocacy," *Environmental History* 4 (October 1999): 553-484; Paul Sutter, *Driven Wild: How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement* (Seattle: University of Washington

- Press, 2002), 142-93; Robert Gottlieb, *Forcing the Spring*; and Ben Minteer, *The Landscape of Reform: Civic Pragmatism and Environmental Thought in America* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2006), 81-113.
5. Benton MacKaye, "An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning," *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* (October 1921): 325-30. Also see Benton MacKaye and Lewis Mumford, *The New Exploration: A Philosophy of Regional Planning*, rev. ed. (1928; 1956; Urbana-Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1962).
 6. Myron Avery to Benton MacKaye, September 10, 1934. Box 167. Papers of MacKaye Family; ML-5, Rauner Special Collections Library, Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH.
 7. Sutter, "A Retreat from Profit."
 8. Laura and Guy Waterman, *Forest and Crag: A History of Hiking, Trail Blazing, and Adventure in the Northeast Mountains* (Boston: Appalachian Mountain Club, 1989). In this comprehensive volume, the Watermans provide a detailed history of recreational trails and hiking in New England. MacKaye's plans for the Appalachian Trail in 1921 were inspired by existing trail networks in the White Mountains and Vermont's Long Trail. Stretching from the Massachusetts border to Canada, Vermont's Long Trail was the country's first long-distance trail. The Appalachian Trail was the country's first long-distance trail that was national in scope.
 9. Ronald Foresta, "Transformation of the Appalachian Trail," *Geographical Review* 77 (January 1987): 76-85.
 10. *National Trails System Act*, Public Law 90-543, 90th Cong., 2d sess. (October 2, 1968): S. 827. The 1968 National Trails Act established the Appalachian Trail and the Pacific Crest Trail as the first two national scenic trails in the system. The secretary of the interior was to lead efforts to protect the Appalachian Trail and the secretary of agriculture was in charge of the Pacific Crest Trail. The secretaries would consult with state and citizen partners through advisory councils such as the Appalachian National Scenic Trail Advisory Council. Where the trail crossed public lands, the advisory council would work with the land managing agency involved to establish a right-of-way. On private land, the secretary was to encourage states or local governments to enter into written cooperative agreements with landowners or to acquire the lands outright. This article deals primarily with land acquisition negotiations on private lands. For a detailed administrative history of the advisory council, see Charles H. W. Foster, *The Appalachian National Scenic Trail: A Time to Be Bold* (Needham, MA: Charles Foster, 1987).
 11. Sally K. Fairfax, "Federal-State Cooperation in Outdoor Recreation Policy Formation: The Case of the Appalachian Trail," (PhD diss., Duke University, 1973); John S. Davis, "The National Trails System Act and the Use of Protective Federal Zoning," *Harvard Law Review* 10 (1986): 189-255. In her dissertation, political scientist Sally Fairfax analyzed the effectiveness of the federal government's attempt to coordinate trail building efforts along the Appalachian Trail. Fairfax found that the initial stages of the acquisition process went smoothly in states with strong channels of communication and close relationships between local clubs and state officials. Conversely, politically weak links between volunteers and the state resulted in physically weak links—and occasionally gaping holes—in sections of private land along the 2000-mile route.
 12. *An Act to Amend the National Trails System Act*, Public Law 95-248, 95th Cong. 2d. sess. (March 21, 1978): H. 8803.
 13. Cameron Binkley, "The Creation and Establishment of Cape Hatteras National Seashore: The Great Depression through Mission 66," special report prepared for

- Southeast Regional Office, Cultural Resource Division, National Park Service, August 2007. Also see Conrad L. Wirth, *Parks, Politics, and the People* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980). Congress eventually established Cape Hatteras National Seashore in 1953 after state and local entities had acquired enough land to create legally this new unit of the National Park System.
14. Alfred Runte, *National Parks: The American Experience*, 2nd ed. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987). These legislative measures provided support for the park service's Mission 66 program. For more on Mission 66 and its impacts on park projects, see Ethan Carr, *Mission 66: Modernism and the National Park Dilemma* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007); William N. Noll, "Mission 66: The National Park Service Program for the Revitalization of America's National Parks, 1955-1966" (master's thesis, Kansas State University, 1997).
 15. Joseph L. Sax, "Buying Scenery: Land Acquisition for the National Park Service," *Duke Law Journal* 4 (Sept. 1980): 709-40; Joseph L. Sax, "Helpless Giants: The National Parks and the Regulation of Private Lands," *Michigan Law Review* 75 (Dec. 1976): 239-74.
 16. House Committee on Appropriations, *Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriation Bill, 1979*, report prepared by Sidney Yates, 95th Cong., 2d. sess., (1978): House Report 95.
 17. When applied to land acquisition in the western states, the park service's new policies added fuel to a political wildfire that had been burning out West since Congress passed the Federal Land Policy and Management Act in 1976. The 1976 act dictated policies for grazing, mining, and ranching by private interests on public lands, and historians of public land management argue that it helped incite the "Sagebrush Rebellion." Although political dynamics involving park development in the East differed from those in the West, there was shared fundamental concern about the loss of local and state power to the federal government. For more on the reactions to federal land management policies in the West during the late 1970s and early 1980s, see R. Mcgreggor Cawley, *Federal Land, Western Anger: The Sagebrush Rebellion and Environmental Politics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1993); Christopher McGrory Klyza, *Who Controls Public Lands?: Mining, Forestry, and Grazing Policies, 1870-1990* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1996); Howard E. McCurdy, "Environmental Protection and the New Federalism," in Sheldon Kamieniecki, ed., *Controversies in Environmental Policy* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1986).
 18. "Land Grab by the Parks," *Newsweek*, August 14, 1978, 21. For examples of landowner resistance to park service acquisition efforts in other areas, see Susan Willoughby, "Award Whets [Voyageurs] Park Resistance," *Duluth New-Tribune*, June 25, 1978; David Averill, "Ranger's Son Battling: Cushman Opposes Policies of the National Park Service," *Traverse City Record Eagle*, July 31, 1978; Jim Foley, "Ire in Wilsonia: Property Owners Seek Relief from NPS 'Harassment,'" *The Fresno Bee*, April 5, 1978; Robert Jones, "Policy Shift Angers U.S. Park Residents," *Los Angeles Times*, June 11, 1978.
 19. Charles M. Perdue and Nancy M. Perdue, "Appalachian Fables and Facts: A Case Study of the Shenandoah National Park Removals," *Appalachian Journal* 7, nos. 1-2 (Autumn/Winter 1979-1980): 84-104; C. M. and N. M. Perdue, "'To Build a Wall around These Mountains': The Displaced People of Shenandoah," *The Magazine of Albemarle County History* 49 (1991): 48-71. For more on the history of removals in the Smoky Mountains, see Durwood Dunn, *Cades Cove: The Life and Death of a*

Southern Appalachian Community, 1818-1937 (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1988).

20. The organization is now known as the American Land Rights Association, and it has become one of the most powerful property rights groups in the county. See <http://www.landrights.org/>.
21. Averill, "Ranger's Son." Cushman maintained that although he was critical of park service policies, he was not an enemy of the park service. His father had been a park ranger in Yosemite, and as a boy, Cushman had dreamed of working for the agency.
22. Jette to Anna Bingham, September 9, 1977, Box DO 1 (65), Dartmouth Outing Club Records, Rauner Special Collections, Dartmouth College Library, Hanover, NH (hereafter cited as DOCR).
23. Sylvia and John Doten, Susan and Hugh Hermann to Jette, January 19, 1978, Box DO 1 (65), DOCR.
24. Department of Interior, National Park Service, "Appalachian National Scenic Trail, Proposed Route," *Federal Register* 36, no. 27 (February 9, 1971): 2676-768.
25. "NPS Prepares New Easement Policy," *The Register: A Newsletter of the Appalachian Trail* 1 (December 1978). Also, Robert Proudman, interview by author, May 3, 2007; David A. Richie to Associate Director, Management and Operations, August 31, 1978, Box 2-5-1, Correspondence, USDO, ATPO, 1.78-12.79, Appalachian Trail Conservancy Archives, Charlestown, WV (hereafter cited as ATCA). Also see Appalachian Trail Route Alternatives, Cumberland Valley, Pennsylvania, Draft Discussion Paper, April 21, 1983, Cumberland County Archives, Carlisle, PA, (hereafter cited as CCA).
26. David A. Richie to Edward J. Koenemann, Planning Director for Vermont's Agency for Environmental Conservation, December 19, 1978, Box 2-5-1, Correspondence, USDO, ATPO, 1.78-12.79, ATCA. Richie also noted that they were making an effort to keep "legal jargon" to a minimum and to keep easements as user-friendly as possible.
27. David A. Richie to John Rausch, Cumberland County Commissioner, October 16, 1978, CCA.
28. "Path through the 'Wilderness'," *Pennsylvania Farmer*, August 9, 1980. Local farmers such as Sheldon Brymnesser, whose family had farmed in the area for over seventy-five years (and who continues to farm and participate in local planning initiatives), wanted agricultural operations to remain viable and profitable. Many farmers in the valley believed that "a man-made wilderness ... [was] a conflict in terms," and they wondered how a wilderness footpath like the Appalachian Trail would affect a predominantly agrarian landscape.
29. National Park Service, Appalachian Trail Project Office, "Comprehensive Management Plan for the Protection, Management, and Use of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail," Harpers Ferry, WV, September 1981.
30. David A. Richie to Editor, *The Lakeville Journal*, October 12, 1979, Box 2-5-1, Correspondence, USDO, ATPO, 1.78-12.79, ATCA.
31. Coordinators were typically members of the Appalachian Trail Conference or members of a local trail maintaining club. In some cases, they were professional planners. Most received compensation from the National Park Service.
32. National Park Service, Appalachian Trail Project Office, "Preliminary Pre-Acquisition Planning Project," June 15, 1977, Box DO 1 (65), DOCR. Local coordinators made note of public land, large corporate ownerships, and smaller individual parcels. Once a route was selected, coordinators recorded data on the local terrain, vegetation, topography, scenic features, historic sites, and other

- significant aspects of the area for every five-mile section. They also developed corridor width recommendations and reviewed all the information before submitting it to the park service's Appalachian Trail Project Office. The agency's real estate specialists then began the more formal and legal aspects of land acquisition.
33. Elizabeth Levers, interview by Glenn Scherer, 1992, transcript, New York-New Jersey Trail Conference Archive, Mahwah, NJ (hereafter cited as NYNJTCA). New York was the first state to begin the pre-acquisition process. Although the trail to the west of the Hudson River was relatively well established, to the east—particularly in Putnam and Dutchess Counties—the trail was on rapidly developing land and roads. Like other areas, the main mission for the acquisition program was to remove the trail from roads and onto safer and more scenic areas in the woods.
 34. Robert Proudman, interview by author, May 3, 2007. Bob Proudman began building trails for the Appalachian Mountain Club (AMC) in 1965. In 1979, the AMC contracted him to assist the park service's land acquisition program. He continues to work for the Appalachian Trail Conservancy today.
 35. David Richie to Don Fenicle, October 30, 1978, Box 2-5-1, Correspondence, USDOI, ATPO, 1.78-12.79, ATCA.
 36. Thurston Griggs to "Dear...", May 10, 1978, CCA.
 37. Karen Lynch, "Angry Citizens Take Trail Fight to Silver Springs," *Carlisle Evening Sentinel*, June 29, 1978.
 38. Pamela Fenicle, interview with author, May 15, 2007.
 39. Richard Wilson, "City Feet Tread on Feelings in the Blue Ridge," *Washington Evening Star*, September 9, 1971.
 40. "Viewpoint V: Warren Doyle, 10,000-miler, ALHDA Coordinator, ATC Life Member," n.d., Private Collection of Dr. Warren Doyle, Lees-McRae College, Banner Elk, NC (hereafter cited as WDC). Also Warren Doyle, interview by author, February 10, 2007.
 41. *Ibid.*
 42. Though he was critical of National Park Service's land acquisition policies, Doyle maintained that he "seldom, if ever, criticize[d] the condition of the footway" and was "always appreciative of the trail workers' efforts." These quotes were written on letter from Karen Wade to Warren Doyle, Jr., January 4, 1983, WDC.
 43. David A. Richie to Griggs, November 15, 1982, WDC.
 44. David A. Richie to Doyle, January 12, 1983, WDC; Karen Wade to Warren Doyle, January 4, 1983, WDC. Many hikers supported efforts to relocate the trail off roads, of course. Doyle's letter to Dickenson angered some fellow hikers and long-time Appalachian Trail Conference volunteers such as Ed Garvey. Garvey was concerned that the Appalachian Long Distance Hikers Association (ALDHA) had gotten a reputation for being "a 'radical' group," and he wanted the hiking community to be taken "a little more seriously by the Appalachian Trail Conference and other trail organizations, both public and private." Ed Garvey, Ron Tipton, Dave Sherman, Malcom Eckhardt to Members of ALDHA, September 7, 1985, WDC. Also see Ed Garvey to Doyle, March 19, 1985, WDC.
 45. National Park Service, Appalachian Trail Project Office, *Appalachian Trail Report*, 1985, 38.
 46. Mrs. Laurence Benander to Editor of the *Harrisburg Patriot News*, July 22, 1985, CCA.
 47. *Ibid.*
 48. Proceedings and Debates of the 95th Cong., 2d sess., (August 8, 1978), *Congressional Record* 124, no. 123.
 49. Maurice J. Forester, "Volunteers and the New Federalism," *The Register: A Newsletter of the Appalachian Trail* 4 (December 1981). The Trust for Appalachian Trail Lands

worked collaboratively with the park service to negotiate contracts with owners, buy properties, and then transfer the land to the park service or the Appalachian Trail Conference. Although the Nature Conservancy and the Trust for Public Lands existed at that time, the Trust for Appalachian Trail Lands was the first land trust to protect trails and one of the first regional land trusts in the country.

50. Appalachian Trail Conference, "Management of 'Residual' NPS-acquired A.T. Lands by the Appalachian Trail Conference," November 9, 1983. Folder: Delegation NPS-ATC Signing Ceremony-1984, Box: Ray Hunt Papers, ATCA. Since the acquisition program began in 1978, the park service had acquired forty thousand acres of land and planned to purchase the remaining thirty thousand acres by 1986. Today, over 99 percent of the trail is federally owned.
51. National Park Service, "New Role for Trail Conference," *Courier: The National Park Service Newsletter* 29 (March 1984).
52. Robert Williams, "'Thinking Outside the [Corridor] ...'" *Appalachian Trailway News* (November-December 2002).
53. Interviews by author with Payson Kennedy (March 15, 2007), Nancy and Jeff Hoch (March 16, 2007), John Shores (April 2, 2007), Dave Patrick (April 11, 2007), Elmer Hall (March 24, 2007). Many of these new entrepreneurs were Appalachian Trail hikers themselves and are deeply committed to the conservation and protection of local resources that contribute to the trail experience. Small business owners play a critical role in building local support for the trail.
54. For more on regional planning efforts associated with the Appalachian Trail, see: http://www.appalachiantrail.org/site/c.mqLTIYOWGIF/b.4806019/k.A826/Regional_Planning.htm.
55. Warren Brown, "Public/Private Land Conservation Partnerships in and around National Parks," in *Land Conservation through Public/Private Partnership*, ed. Eve Endicott (Washington, DC: Island Press, 1993), 118. According to Brown, the Appalachian Trail project was on the "leading edge of creativity in land protection" in the 1990s and served as an example to other public-private partnerships.