



ALSPT North Management Group Meeting **Monday, August 26, 2024 from 3:00 - 4:30PM via Zoom**

Recording:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/rec/share/wMggOZiC-dm1auz-milSmiB0tuP1Z3XDRCqR6oulupp1jWBo3ggG-atVPL4X6ps.pKvvrjBWFtp6dYN2?startTime=1724699411000>

Passcode: !tUQ?7BH

Attendance:

Jocelyn Lahey, Tara Cleary, Paul Provost, Tyra Penn-Gesek, Steve Sokoloski, Shalyn Zappulla, Delia Fey, Chris Roberts, Bruce Donald, Jordan Lumpkins, Jason Hyland, Elaine Sistare, Jim Larkin, Carly DeLuca, Bruce Fitzback, John Guskowski, Christian Smutnick, Matthew Quinn, Kevin Grindle, Jeremy Hall, Amy St.Onge, Mike Lambert, Mallory [Last Name], S Heminway, Monique Wolanin, Brian Hess, Kim Bradley, & Maureen Nicholson

Welcome

Introductions

Purpose - The purpose of the ALSPT Regional Alliance is to:

- Establish regular communications, maintenance, and project review meetings with CT DEEP and Alliance members
- Consider mutual aid needs for safety and emergency management
- Develop, review, submit grant applications as a regional collaborative
- Establish consistency in wayfinding signage
- Work with local and federal legislators to put ALSTP on the table for discussion
- Improve trail use experience to improve eco-tourism opportunities
- Speak as one voice for ongoing maintenance agreements with CT DEEP and for marketing the ALSPT region

Roles and Responsibilities

The formation of the ALSPT Regional Alliance is supported with a CT DEEP Rec Trails Grant. CT RC&D will act as a facilitator, complete required grant reporting, assist with communications, outreach, and marketing, and keep the Alliance meetings focused to accomplish the Work Plan.



Chapter 7 of the ALSPT Master Plan discusses roles, responsibilities, and leadership. The ALSPT Regional Alliance should initially be made up of appointed representatives from the twelve towns along the trail. As the organization formalizes itself, bylaws should consider defining membership and board of directors' seats.

The ALSPT North Management Group Representatives:

- Interim Chairperson – Bruce Donald (Until December 2024)
- Interim Secretary – Christian Smutnick
- Thompson – Tyra Penn-Gesek (Administrative) & Paul Provost (Maintenance)
- Putnam – Bruce Fitzback
- Pomfret – Maureen Nicholson
- Hampton – John Guskowski
- Windham – Jordan Lumpkins
- Chaplin – No attendees from Chaplin present. Will need to confirm representative.

Work Plan Major Tasks (2024-2026)

- Appoint 1-2 Representatives from each town along the Air Line Trail
- Establish a regular meeting schedule for the ALSPT Regional Alliance as well as North and South Management Groups
- Develop a 2025 Work Plan for the ALSPT Regional Alliance
- Update and maintain online interactive trail mapping, possibly through a special project with UCONN DX Labs
- Hold a public workshop to gather input from the community Host a public event in the fall of 2025 bringing all 12 towns together to raise awareness about the benefits of trail use
- Establish bylaws for the ALSPT Regional Alliance

Air Line State Park Trail Website

There were a number of topics discussed related to the Air Line State Park Region website. An up to date, easy to use, and well known site can improve brand awareness and share expected trail conditions, new infrastructure, maps, events, trail stories and trail journeys, allow for reporting and/or feedback from trail users, etc.



Meeting participants recommended the following website updates:

- Trail maps showing options for horse trailer parking where one can safely unload horses and access the trails.
- Local lodging options for visitors
- “What to do on the trail” options for users with specific interests like biking, riding, walking, etc. where the trail information for that user-group is in one place.
- ADA Accessibility
- Spanish Translation
- Replace pixelized photo
- Rather than trying to keep the “Explore the Region” pages up to date, link the specific town’s tourism sites
- Include side trails on the Trail Finder map
- Include on the Trail Finder map those properties or trails that are off limits
- Include options for routes/trips (trail journeys)
- Could survey website visitor on what improvements they suggest

A few comments/suggestions were made about the long term maintenance of the website and funding for said maintenance. Eastern Regional Tourism District has a grant that may be able to assist with marketing/promo for social media, video, etc.

Air Line State Park Regional Alliance – Next Meeting in September

The focus of the September meeting for the Regional Alliance will be maintenance agreements & protocol, mutual aid agreements, project updates, and reporting of trail conditions & closures.

Q&A

In preparation for the September meeting, an attendee recommended that each town provide a short summary of maintenance or project work that is (or will be) affecting the trail.