

RED EMERALD RESILIENCE TRAINING PROGRAM



UTAH OFFICE OF TOURISM | INSTITUTE OF OUTDOOR RECREATION AND TOURISM

TAKEAWAYS AND RESOURCES

SESSION 9: HOW TO EFFECTIVELY PARTNER WITH LOCAL AND REGIONAL GOVERNMENTS ON ISSUES THAT IMPACT THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

PANELISTS

- Betsy Byrne - Landscape Architect, [National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program](#)
- Elaine Gizler - Director, [San Juan County Economic Development and Visitor Services](#)
- Andrew Leary - Director of Sustainable Tourism and Partnerships, [Leave No Trace](#)
- Cory MacNulty - Associate Director, Southwest Region, [National Parks Conservation Association](#)

WATCH THE FULL SESSION

HIGHLIGHT REEL (COMING SOON)

WHAT DO TYPICAL PARTNERSHIPS LOOK LIKE?

There are often many roles & layers within a partnership:

- [Leave No Trace's \(LNT\)](#) role is typically that of an education consultation-type relationship. LNT works with its partners to determine what logical alignment exists between LNT and the destination, organization, or the community.
- [National Park Service - Rivers, Trails, and Conservation Assistance Program's \(RTCA\)](#) role is often that of a convener or facilitator, that functions largely in the early planning stages of community projects to identify all possible stakeholders.
- [As a Destination Marketing Organization \(DMO\), San Juan County Economic Development and Visitor Services](#) works with a network of partners within the primary and neighboring counties, communities, federal agencies, and sovereign nations.
- [National Parks Conservation Association's \(NPCA\)](#) role as a national organization, varies depending on the project, serving as the partnership leader, convener, facilitator, or as a stakeholder.

HOW ARE PARTNERSHIPS SUSTAINED OVER TIME?

Some partnerships are quick to form, others take decades. Initial groundwork may include:

- Laying the foundation & understanding the history of the community and if any sources of conflict may exist therein.
- Stating what's important & building shared values.
- Meeting with stakeholders early and often.
- Understanding partners' needs and perspectives and recognizing where goals align and where they might differ.
- Planning for the future of the partnership, what is the purpose, capacity, and accountability?
- When issues are identified earlier in the growth curve, this helps for a more manageable and successful outcome.

ENCOURAGING A COMMUNITY VISION

Locals are often the most financially and emotionally invested in a community project, but can exist along a spectrum of engagement levels, where:

- Some just want to be informed & know what's going on,
- Some want to give input & help with decision making,
- Others want to be part of the process & help implement, (i.e. the "community champions")

The most successful partnerships are those where the communities are kept well-informed and stay engaged.

POWER OF THE LOCAL VOICE

["Do It Like a Moab Local,"](#) is an award-winning example of a community engagement project directed by the Grand County Office of Tourism. Many notable highlights include:



- A consistent message expressing local values, traditions, and customs that fostered community engagement across the entire region.
- An effective marketing campaign including local video productions, billboards, outreach through local businesses, and t-shirts that explained to visitors what was expected of them while visiting the county.
- An impassioned local voice together with LNT as partner, led the region on how to treat, enjoy, and respect their beloved public lands in light of the exploding visitation, ultimately educating both visitors and locals alike.

HOW DO NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS BUILD LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS?

- The tourism industry is generally peer-to-peer, where representatives of national organizations find themselves part of the same associations or boards across regions.
- When national organizations and state tourism offices share their messages along side each other, this can reinforce and expand the existing network of partners.

SUCCESSFUL CROSS-JURISDICTIONAL AND REGIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

The [National Parks Conservation Association \(NPCA\)](#) is an organization that works closely with local partnerships across the U.S., including three located just outside of [Zion National Park \(ZNP\)](#), each focused on resolving or managing a range of concerns related to increased tourism in the area:

- The [Zion Region Collaborative](#), is a community-led collaborative, initially formed by the [GNAR Initiative](#), made up of communities near the south entrance to ZNP, addressing long-standing challenges associated with the large numbers of visitors, public transportation, and multi-use trails within the park.
- The [Zion Regional Recreation Management Plan](#) is a combined effort with ZNP, neighboring public land agencies, local communities, & counties, aiming to create sustainable recreational opportunities in the area.
- The [East Zion Initiative](#) is a private land owner partnership with ZNP hoping to create a new gateway community at the park's east entrance.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH SOVEREIGN NATIONS

As with any relationship, partnerships take time and investment in addition to recognizing:

- Every indigenous culture and community is unique.
- Spending time in the community, going to Visitor Centers (if one exists) and attending Tribal Council meeting (when guests are allowed) can be helpful to understand and build rapport with Sovereign Nations.
- Partnerships are built on meaningful engagement, complete with introductions, opportunities to ask questions, and effective communication.
- [American Indian, Alaska Native Tourism Association \(AIANTA\)](#) is as an important partner to LNT, NPS, and other groups when tourism-based matters are involved on or near sovereign lands.



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