WMTC Partner Crews building stone steps along the Crawford Path
What is Collective Impact?

“Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of important actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem”
It’s All About Change!

Collective Impact as a tool to bring about community change has seen remarkable growth in usage since 2011. Collective Impact has been used successfully with a variety of local issues and has raised the consciousness of how community groups interact as well as the approaches that can lead to long-term innovation.
Where to Start?

Three conditions must be in place before launching a collective impact initiative: an influential champion, adequate financial resources, and a sense of urgency for change. Together, these preconditions create the opportunity and motivation necessary to bring people who have never before worked together into a collective impact initiative and hold them in place until the initiative’s own momentum takes over.
Partners - Combining Voices

USFS - White Mountain National Forest; Helped Form WMTC
National Parks - RTCA; Helped Form WMTC

More Partners Coming together!
New Hampshire State Parks
The Access Fund
20+ Volunteer Trail Clubs
AND GROWING
What is Involved in Collective Impact?

Five Elements of Collective Impact

1) Common Agenda
2) Shared Measurement
3) Mutually Reinforcing Activities
4) Continuous Communication
5) Backbone Organization (WMTC)
WMTC’s Role - the Backbone

The backbone organization serves six essential functions:

1) PROVIDING OVERALL STRATEGIC DIRECTION
2) FACILITATING DIALOGUE BETWEEN PARTNERS
3) MANAGING DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS
4) HANDLING COMMUNICATIONS
5) COORDINATING COMMUNITY OUTREACH
6) MOBILIZING FUNDING
Problem still relatively unknown to public, need for education and advocacy

Overburden orgs/clubs/volunteers

Funding decreasing - not enough to hire professional crews, offer trainings, tools

Stewards (responsible for 90%) aging out

Backlog or Deferred Maintenance, (increased use, “wear and tear”)

Less stewardship engagement leads to a lack of knowledge transfer
Trail management is fragmented

- Across USFS, AMC and over 21 local trail clubs - no coordinated effort; all lack one or more resources; “lone wolf” mentality
- Level 1 maintenance is done by volunteers with most lacking skills and training in sustainability; no continued management; aging out
- Other maintenance is largely deferred
- Hold Ups - NEPA; Identify Capacity Needs

Data Sharing
Cost Codes
Trail Maintenance Need Tracking
Training and Education
Organizational Progress and Growth

- As of 2019 deferred maintenance is estimated at $35M in the White Mountains
Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Participants’ activities must be differentiated while still be coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action. WMTC works with partners via a steering committee to work on a plan of action.
It’s about Team Work!

All participants have a shared vision for change, including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions.

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures that efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable.

Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and create common motivation.

Creating and managing collective impact requires dedicated staff with specific skills to coordinate participating organisations and agencies.

Participant activities must be differentiated while still being coordinated through a mutually reinforcing plan of action.
The Challenges

- Requires trust, cooperation and breaking down silos
- Need to manage the “Collaboration Trolls” of control, competition and commitment
- Doesn't happen quickly; “Buy In” can be difficult
- Can be hard to fund
- Must involve communities “Do with, not do to”
- Disrupts power hierarchies
Important Reminder: It’s Not Personal

Having a small but comprehensive set of indicators establishes a common language that supports the action framework, measures progress along the common agenda, enables greater alignment among the goals of different organizations, encourages more collaborative problem-solving, and becomes the platform for an ongoing learning community that gradually increases the effectiveness of all participants. Mutually reinforcing activities become very clear once the work of many different organizations can be mapped out against the same set of indicators and outcomes. Mutually shared measurement is essential, and collaborative efforts will remain superficial without it.

Shared measurement systems also require strong leadership, substantial funding, and ongoing staffing support from the backbone organization to provide training, facilitation, and to review the accuracy of data.
Accomplishments to Date (COMBINED 2018, 2019 AND 2020)

**PROJECT FUNDING** - $1,050,000.00

**TIME** - HOURS IN-FIELD - 30,540 | WEEKS IN-FIELD - 42 | CREW WEEKS - 120

**PERSONELLE** - CREW/STAFF - 1,780 | VOLUNTEERS - 220 | 25 or younger 150+

**TRAIL IMPACT** - SCREE WALL BUILT 3945' | TRAIL CLOSURE OR RUBBLING 2.8 MI | OVER TRAIL POSITIVELY IMPROVED 10 MILES | BOG BRIDGES INSTALLED 525’ | STEPS, CHECKSTEPS, STEPSTONES 850 | WATERBARS INSTALLED 100 | 2 MILES OF CCC ERA TRAIL RESTORED
FINAL THOUGHTS

● WE CAN’T CHANGE THE WORLD BY OURSELVES; LET’S DO IT TOGETHER
● COLLECTIVE IMPACT IS ONE WAY OF WORKING TOGETHER
● INCLUDE A COMMUNITY-LED APPROACH
● IT’S A TOOL NOT A STRAIGHT JACKET - USE AND ADAPT!!!
Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System

A sustainable trail system is a holistic network of diverse physical and social resources comprised of actual on-the-ground routes and associated community health and economic benefits.
World-Class System of Trails

- 158,600 miles of motorized and non-motorized trails:
  - 31,900 miles in designated wilderness
  - 10,000 miles of national scenic, historic, and recreation trails
- 84 million people annually recreate on National Forest System trails

Major Economic Contribution of Recreation on National Forests and Grasslands

- 143,000 jobs annually supported by recreation and tourism spending
- More than $9 billion in annual visitor spending
Trails connect people with each other, their community, their heritage, and their public lands through an outstanding, valued, and sustainable system of trails.
Three Spheres of Sustainability

National forests and grasslands have more than 158,000 miles of trails. That is a huge resource... a huge opportunity... and a huge challenge that we cannot meet alone.
– Former Forest Service Chief, Thomas L. Tidwell
Core Values

Safety
Sustainability
Commitment
Access
Inclusion
Communication
Relationships
Sustainable Systems

Collaboratively create and achieve a common vision.

**Challenge:** Many trails are not socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable, including many legacy trails that were not well designed or located and are not being used for their intended purpose.

**Aspiration:** Trail systems are sustainably designed, well maintained, used for their intended purpose, and valued while being supported by trail users and communities.
Sustainable Systems

Actions

Create Shared Understanding: How to better balance the desire for more opportunities for current and emerging trail uses with the need for a sustainable trail system.

Identify Sustainable Trail Systems: Collaboratively identify socially, ecologically, and economically sustainable trail systems across Forest

Implement 10-Year Stewardship Plans: Develop and carry out regional-, forest-, or district-level 10-year plans to steward the majority of trails with assistance from partners and volunteers.

Assess Proposed Trails: Evaluate new trail proposals to make sure they are sustainable and supported by adequate stewardship resources.

Invite Trail Endowment: Advocate with partners to establish a national trail endowment, pursue nontraditional funding sources, and invite contributions to help leverage resources to
Thank You

For Additional Information Visit the National Strategy for a Sustainable Trail System Web site:  