

2020 – 2022 PUBLIC LANDS TRANSPORTATION FELLOWS PROGRAM

Presented by: Ella Weber
Parker River & Eastern Mass NWR



WEBINAR LOGISTICS

- Duration is 12:00 – 1:00 PM EST
- Webinar is recorded and archived. For quality of recording, please stay muted during the presentation
- At the end, there will be time for Q&A
- Please feel free to use the chat to ask questions or provide comments



WEBINAR GOAL

- To document and archive the work completed by the PLTF at Parker River and Eastern Massachusetts National Wildlife Refuge Complexes from 2020–2022. This includes lessons learned, and tips and tricks for applying these to other USFWS units.



AGENDA

- Introduction
- Projects
- Long-Term Needs
- Next Steps
- Q & A



PLTF PROGRAM INTRODUCTION

- Began in 2012
- Modeled after NPS Transportation Scholars Program
- Currently serves USFWS and NPS
- Full time, paid fellowship with benefits
- 12 to 24 month position with the possibility of extension
- Locations across the U.S. at select National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges



OUR FELLOWS...

- Provide transportation and planning support to National Parks and National Wildlife Refuges
- Develop transportation solutions that preserve valuable resources and enhance visitor experience
- Experience work at park/refuge, regional office, and national headquarters levels
- Work, learn and grow through orientation, conferences, guest lectures, and mentorship



TODAY'S PRESENTERS



Carl Melberg

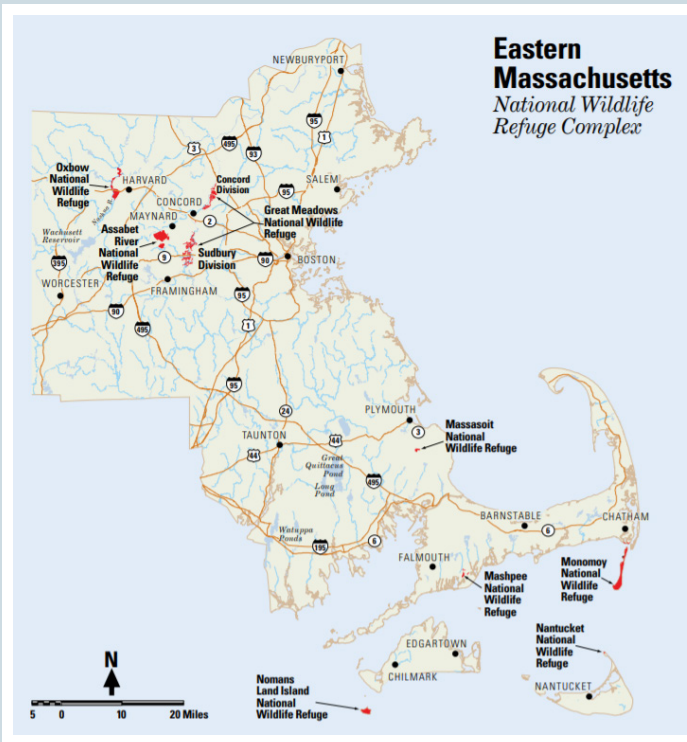
Regional Transportation Coordinator
Northeast Region



Ella Weber

Public Lands Transportation Fellow
Parker River & Eastern Mass NWRC

SETTING THE SCENE



SETTING THE SCENE



CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

- Developed new relationships with local planning & public works departments
 - *Concord / Great Meadows*
Improving connection via Reformatory Branch Trail
 - *Newburyport / Parker River*
Pending FLAP for downtown & commuter rail connections
 - *Devens / Oxbow*
new public trail and interpretive panels
 - *Newburyport / Parker River*
Developed proposals for bike lanes on turnpike



CONNECTING WITH COMMUNITY

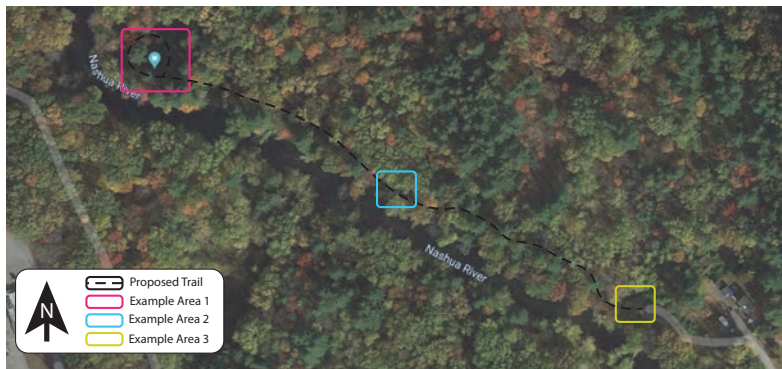
- Created new community group connections & ongoing partnerships
 - *Safe Routes to School*
Planned bike events Great Meadows & Parker River
 - *Outdoor Afro / Eastern Mass*
Organized 4 programs including birding, journaling, archery, & fishing
 - *AMC / Parker River*
Created northern terminus for Bay Circuit Trail with AMC
 - *Public Library / Parker River*
Created stories in the garden & refuge walk series



SPOTLIGHT: OXBOW NWR TRAIL

- Community-identified need for river access in Ayer
- Original project intent was a kayak and canoe launch
- Partners: community members, MassDevelopment, Nashua River Wild & Scenic Stewardship Council, & Mass Department of Conservation & Recreation
- Coming soon: 0.5 mile trail, bike connections, pollinator habitat, & interpretation





Example Area 1

Trail will loop around in existing clearing. Potential trail amenities include simple seating (ADA compliant), an interpretive panel, and regulatory and/or wayfinding signs. See illustrative examples below.



Example Area 2

Trail surface will be earthen and feature no added substrate or surfacing. Path width and slope will comply with best practices for accessible trails. Trail edge to include regulatory and/or wayfinding signs.



Example Area 3

Trailhead will be established at edge of existing parking lot. Possible trailhead amenities include a pollinator garden, bike racks, an interpretive panel, a trail map, and regulatory and/or wayfinding signs.



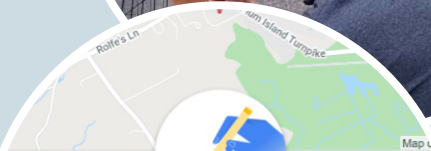
LESSONS LEARNED & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Follow the community energy! A small project can have a big impact
- Document, document, and then document some more
- Start talking with partners & staff across programs early
- Be flexible, be patient, and be solutions-oriented



IMPROVING SAFETY & ACCESS

- Identified and implemented short-term built solutions for improving safe access
 - **Great Meadows**
Secured funding & contracting for new lot paving
 - **Parker River**
Organized work day to improve crosswalks at Hellcat
 - **Parker River**
Provided feedback on road paint, markings, & signage
 - **Great Bay & Parker River**
Corrected Google Maps errors and reached out to town & state DOTs about wayfinding



Hi Ella

People are noticing the place that you updated

You changed the name of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center, which has now been seen more than 60,000 times. Thanks for making such a valuable edit to the map.

[See your edits](#)

IMPROVING SAFETY & ACCESS

- Conducted research, outlined recommendations & reports, & shared public info
 - *Volpe / Parker River*
Short- and long-term solutions for improving gatehouse flow & operations
 - *Volpe / Parker River*
Conducted safety study with volunteers to identify issues & possible solutions
 - *Parker River*
Created refuge road safety Facebook series
 - *Monomoy & Great Meadows*
Created digital Story Maps



SPOTLIGHT: ROAD SAFETY STUDY

- Responding to anecdotal reports from visitors and staff concerns
- Continued increased use by more and different users with different needs and desires
- Partners: Volpe Center & Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge
- Combined observations, conversations, site analysis, and data from traffic counters and speed limit radars

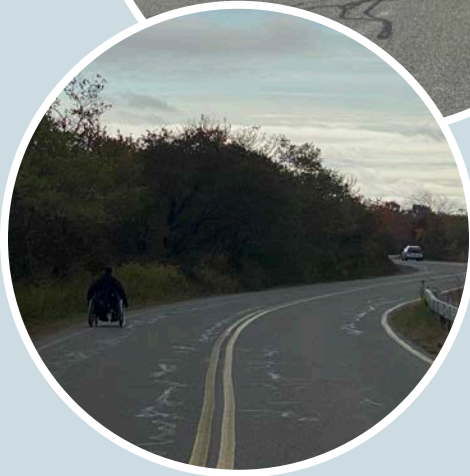


Timestamp:	3:30	3:32	3:37	3:40	3:42	3:44	3:55	3:55	3:58	4:00	4:01	4:06	4:10	4:11	4:15
Direction heading? Entering (E); Exiting (X); Unclear (U)	U	X	E	E	X	U	X	E	E	X	X	X	X	E	E/X
Who were the main actors?															
Vehicle/driver	4	1	1	3		3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
Vehicle/parking															
Bicyclist		1		2				1							
Pedestrian					1										2
Other mode: Wheelchair (W); Other (O)															
Children?															
Vehicle-Specific Questions															
Speed? Fast (F); Acceptable (A); Slow (S)	A	F	A	A		F	F	A	S	F	F	A	F	S	A
Did the vehicle... (check those that apply)															
Leave their travel lane?			1									1			
Stop suddenly in the middle of road?									1					1	1
Stop suddenly on the shoulder?															
Follow another vehicle too closely?															
Fail to yield at a crossing or intersection?	1														
Pass unsafely around another vehicle, bike, or ped?		1						1							
Park outside of designated parking area? (where?)															



LESSONS LEARNED & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Visitor motivation matters – is the road a destination or a means to an end?
- Most people want to do the right thing (and think other people do too!)
- Perceptions differed from reality, but perceptions still matter
-
- Need social and built interventions
- Volunteers are great! Be flexible & be appreciative



EXPLORING NEW TECHNOLOGY

- Identified and implemented short-term built solutions for improving safe access
 - ***Lot Spot – Parker River***
Developed plan for lot monitoring and phone app alert system for visitors
 - ***ChargePoint – Parker River***
Established public EV charging station and assisting with national fee collection issues
 - ***VMS – Parker River***
Purchased and developing plan for advance warning sign that gatehouse staff can update remotely



EXPLORING NEW TECHNOLOGY

- Increased capacity for data analysis and evaluation from existing technology
 - **Parker River**
Periodically downloaded and analyzed data from digital speed limit signs
 - **Parker River**
Digitized and analyzed data from traffic counters going back to 2010
 - **Parker River**
Solicited solar reports, costs, and design specs for future digital crosswalk systems



SPOTLIGHT: EV CHARGING STATION

- Gap in public EV infrastructure on Plum Island
- Support “zero emission” recreation to and around Parker River NWR
- Be the guinea pig for the region!
- Relied on internal and external expertise, funding, and emotional support
- Thought it was going to be a “quick win!”



\$51,687

Quote before incentives

\$34,477

Quote before in-house labor

\$8,522

Final quote

Line Item:	Description	Price
1	Site Work: Labor and Equipment, Trench ~100' in sand/gravel	\$ 23,125
2	Site Work: Materials, Includes Bollards, Concrete Pad, Sand for conduit backfill	\$ 2,357
3	Electrical Work: Labor for 3 days	\$ 9,748
4	Electrical Material: ~130' of conduit and wire, breakers	\$ 5,214
5	Engineering/Project Management	\$ 2,286
6	Qty 1 ChargePoint CT4021-GW1 2 Port Bollard Style Charger Gateway , With Cord Mgmt.	\$ 7,210
7	1 year assure Warranty program for 2 EVCS's	\$ 740
8	1 Year Cloud for 4 Ports	\$ 658
9	Startup and Activation through ChargePoint	\$ 349
* Total		\$ 51,687
Potential NGRID Infrastructure Incentive		\$ (10,000)
Potential EVIP Incentive (Public Access Charging Grant)		\$ (7,210)
Tax Exempt		
*Customer total		\$ 34,477

Line Item:	Description	Price
1	Site Work: Labor and Equipment, Trench ~100' in sand/gravel	\$ -
2	Site Work: Materials - Concrete Pad	\$ 1,214
3	Electrical Work: Labor for 2-12hr days	\$ 5,977
4	Electrical Material: ~130' of conduit and wire, breakers, handhole	\$ 6,136
5	Engineering/Project Management	\$ 2,286
6	Qty 1 ChargePoint CT4021-GW1 2 Port Bollard Style Charger Gateway , With Cord Mgmt.	\$ 7,210
7	1 year Assure Warranty program for 1 EVCS	\$ 740
8	1 Year Cloud for 2 Ports	\$ 658
9	Startup and Activation through ChargePoint	\$ 349
* Total		\$ 24,569
Potential NGRID Infrastructure Incentive		\$ (10,000)
Potential EVIP Incentive (Public Access Charging Grant)		\$ (6,047)
Tax Exempt		
*Customer total		\$ 8,522

LESSONS LEARNED & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Start early and use your resources
- Contracting is hard and there are a lot of rules...find someone who knows how it works
- (Many) fellows projects have high scalability for other refuges and hatcheries
- Be patient, be flexible, and know when to ask for help



ENHANCING CAR-FREE OPPORTUNITIES

- Identified and implemented short-term built solutions for improving safe access
 - ***Parker River***
Planned 'Refuge Open Streets' event with local bike, kayak, and safety organizations to highlight benefits of active transit at the refuge
 - ***Parker River***
Developed trial shuttle route and logistics for regular (monthly) "Tram Tuesdays"
 - ***Parker River***
Spearheaded summer trial of riverboat tours with volunteers and local captain



ENHANCING CAR-FREE OPPORTUNITIES

- Exploring novel technology and shuttle case-studies at other public lands
 - **Parker River**
Conducting research on autonomous shuttle use and possible trial opportunity
 - **Parker River**
Reviewing and revising existing Volpe shuttle report to include up-to-date options and new issues
 - **Great Meadows**
Assisting with Minute Man NHP FLAP application for shuttle and Great Meadows trail connection



SPOTLIGHT: RIVER- BOAT TOURS

- Challenging for visitors to access the salt marsh
- Staff capacity and safety concerns related to paddling programs
- Created on a trial basis
- Exploring different locations, routes, timing, and messaging
- Opportunity to engage volunteers and Friends



LESSONS LEARNED & KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Trial projects are a great way to learn – a lot to change for this summer!
- Need to think critically about defining access and audiences
- Balancing access, site integrity, and public outreach is a (fun) challenge
- Have a contingency plan
- Volunteers are (once again) great!



ASSISTING WITH REGIONAL PROJECTS

- Supporting RTC work at refuges across the region
 - *Umbagog*
Assisting with scoping and project management for new boat launch and trail
 - *Rachel Carson*
Developing cost-estimates and projects specs for possible trail and boat launch
 - *Great Dismal Swamp*
Provided support for FLAP application with NC Parks & Rec for road improvements



ASSISTING WITH REGIONAL PROJECTS

- Applying refuge-level projects to a regional scale
 - *Intra-Agency Connections*
Mapped all FWS and NPS public units and identifying possible connections and opportunities to share resources
 - *Public EV Charging Model*
Created regional toolkit on developing public EV charging stations, and decision tree for managers to identify funding



ASSISTING WITH HQ PROJECTS

- Supporting HQ transportation division
- *Cycling Compatibility*
Created a toolkit to guide refuge managers and staff through the Finding of Appropriateness and Compatibility Determination process for cycling, with a focus on reaching new audiences & enhancing the "Big 6" in new ways



LONG-TERM TRANSIT NEEDS

- Increased support to “high-needs” refugees that are excited about transportation & access but lack capacity
 - *Rapidly Changing Tech*
Requires dedicated personnel to research, trial, implement, and evaluate
 - *Increasing urbanization*
Calls for need to build stronger relationships with planning depts & local/regional transit authorities
 - *Climate Change & SLR*
Creates need to anticipate changes in access and proactively respond



LONG-TERM TRANSIT NEEDS

- Ability to create toolkits & studies in house that can be shared regionally
 - **Reduced Costs**
Third-party consultants require increased time to familiarize themselves with refuge needs & mission
 - **Resource Sharing**
Need for means of quickly and easily sharing lessons-learned between refuges with similar needs
 - **Support Future Fellows**
Help refuges identify their needs/desires, & if they're a good candidate for a fellow



THANK YOU!



CONTACT INFORMATION

Fellow Projects

Ella Weber
ella_weber@fws.gov
517-643-1772

Fellowship Program

Jaime Sullivan
jaime.sullivan2@montana.edu
774-571-3505

