

# Operating in Tandem: A Brief Guide to Partnership Best Practices





# Public Lands Alliance

## **Our Mission**

*To connect, strengthen, and represent the nonprofit partners of America's public lands*

## **Our Community**

*More than 175 nonprofit organizations*

*Our members' agency partners include  
California State Parks*

## **Our Impact**

*For more than 40 years, fostering connections, providing capacity building, and advocating for our community*



# Who Is This Guy?



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# Our Agenda

## Define Success

## The Operational Ecosystem

## Some Thoughts on Best Practices

- Develop a Shared Vision, Driven by Mission
- Value Integration and Communication
- Good Relationships and Fair Process Drive Partnership Tools
- Share and Celebrate Success



## Definitions of Success

**How do you define a  
successful partnership?**



## Definitions of Success

My favorite definition:

*Partners are comfortable exerting influence on one another without demanding control and have clear avenues to do so*



## The Operational Ecosystem

**What organizations  
make up your  
ecosystem of  
operations?**



# The Operational Ecosystem

## Who is involved?

**Specifically From:**

***State Parks***

***Nonprofit Organizations***

***Concessioners***





## The Operational Ecosystem

**Policy Makers,  
Managers, and Field  
Practitioners must be  
active and engaged**



## Some Thoughts on Best Practices

- Develop a Shared Vision, Driven by Mission
- Value Integration and Communication
- Good Relationships and Fair Process Drive Partnership Tools
- Share and Celebrate Success



# Develop a Shared Vision, Driven by Mission

Develop long range three to five year plans to resulting in leveraged, integrated priorities

Identify best use of partner resources to achieve shared missions based on policies and skills

Conduct annual high-level strategy discussions

Gather and share information about visitors, other stakeholders, and relevant internal and external data



# Value Integration and Communication

Partnership is managed through most likely ultimate decision-maker

Liaisons are identified within each partner org to ease collaboration and communication

Partners participation is regularly invited in routine senior management meetings

Integrated project teams drive key initiatives and emerging strategies/projects



# Value Integration and Communication

Include partner in orientation workshops, creating joint curriculum as appropriate

Organize events that share knowledge (e.g. brown bag lunches) to encourage cross-collaboration

Establish co-location of offices where feasible



# Good Relationships and Fair Process Drive Partnership Tools

Agreements between the land management agency and the nonprofit organization are current and relevant.

Collaborate on annual work plan

Conduct quarterly and annual joint reviews of work plans and make adjustments as needed.

Accountability pre-determined for agreed-upon tasks and outcomes so that expectations are clear, understood, realistic, and appropriately resourced

Create and agree upon process for dealing with disagreements in a timely, constructive manner



# Good Relationships and Fair Process Drive Partnership Tools

Collaborate on policies, for example...

- Donor Stewardship

Gift acceptance policies

Donor recognition - in park and out of park

- Scope of sales



## Share and Celebrate Successes

Frequently and consistently seek opportunities to publicly acknowledge each other for their contribution and/or role in programs, projects or operations.

Internal:

- Leadership lunches that acknowledge collaboration success, reaffirms partnership.
- Establish an awards program that recognizes excellence in your site's partnerships.





# Share and Celebrate Successes

## External:

- Annual communication plan developed/implemented by partners
- Joint press releases that highlight partnership successes
- Partnership is featured across media platforms available to all partners



**Let's Talk**

**Questions?**

**Comments?**



**Call Me!**

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