



Creating Livable Gateway Communities: INTRODUCTION TO LIVABILITY & HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEDERAL LAND LIVABILITY INITIATIVE

**A collaborative
partnership
between**

**The Conservation
Fund**

THE
CONSERVATION FUND

**FHWA's Office of
Federal Land
Highways**



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The Conservation Fund***



Conservation Leadership Network

CLN brings diverse constituencies together to forge solutions on-the-ground. Our goal is to achieve common ground for our partners using training, sustainability consulting, technical assistance and capacity building tools.

The Network is managed by The Conservation Fund and housed at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV.



Our Services

- ☐ National Courses
- ☐ Place-Based Courses & Workshops
- ☐ Distance Learning
- ☐ Leadership Forums
- ☐ Presentations
- ☐ Tourism and Livability Assessments
- ☐ Case Study Videos & Other Educational Resources



We must learn together today to practice together tomorrow!

Partnership for Sustainable Communities



FIVE YEARS OF LEARNING FROM COMMUNITIES
AND COORDINATING FEDERAL INVESTMENTS



FIFTH ANNIVERSARY REPORT

WHAT AMERICANS WANT IN THEIR NEIGHBORHOODS



WHAT DO PEOPLE WANT MORE OF IN THEIR CURRENT NEIGHBORHOODS?

48%



MORE SAFE
BIKE ROUTES

46%



MORE HOMES
FOR PEOPLE
WITH LOWER
INCOMES

45%



MORE PUBLIC
TRANSPORTATION
WITHIN AN EASY
WALK

42%

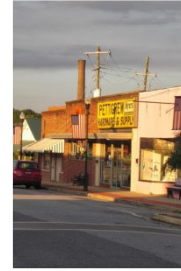


MORE SHOPS AND
RESTAURANTS
WITHIN AN
EASY WALK

Livability Principles



1) Provide more transportation choices



4) Support existing gateway communities and unique character



2) Promote equitable, affordable housing and lodging choices



5) Coordinate policies and leverage investments

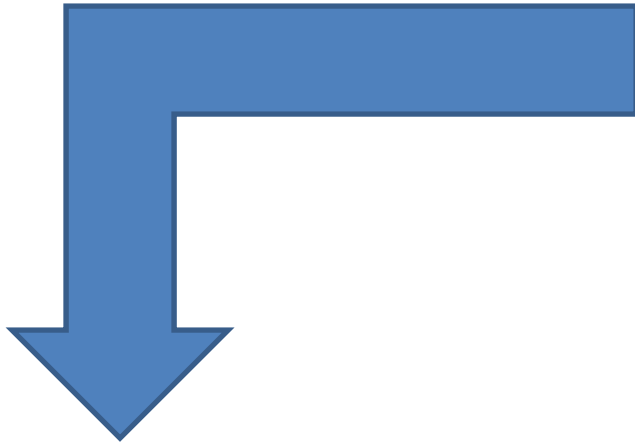


3) Enhance economic competitiveness



6) Value communities, neighborhoods and landscapes

Federal Lands Livability Initiative



2009 Partnership for Sustainable Communities:

- Created six Livability Principles

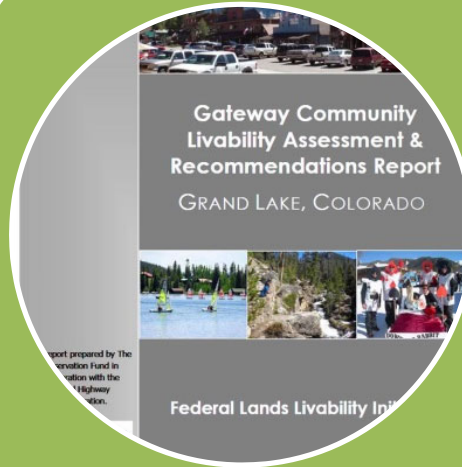
Federal Lands Livability Workgroup:

- FHWA's Office of Federal Land desired to understand how livability fits into rural and gateway communities, with particular focus on transportation.
- Asked The Conservation Fund to facilitate this process and convened a livability workgroup with representation from federal land management agencies.

Livability Initiative Components



1. Conduct
Livability
Assessment Site
Visit



2. Compile
Livability
Assessment &
Recommendations



3. Convene Action
Planning Workshop

Selected Communities



Saginaw, Michigan area & Shiawassee
National Wildlife Refuge



Sweet Home, Oregon & Willamette
National Forest

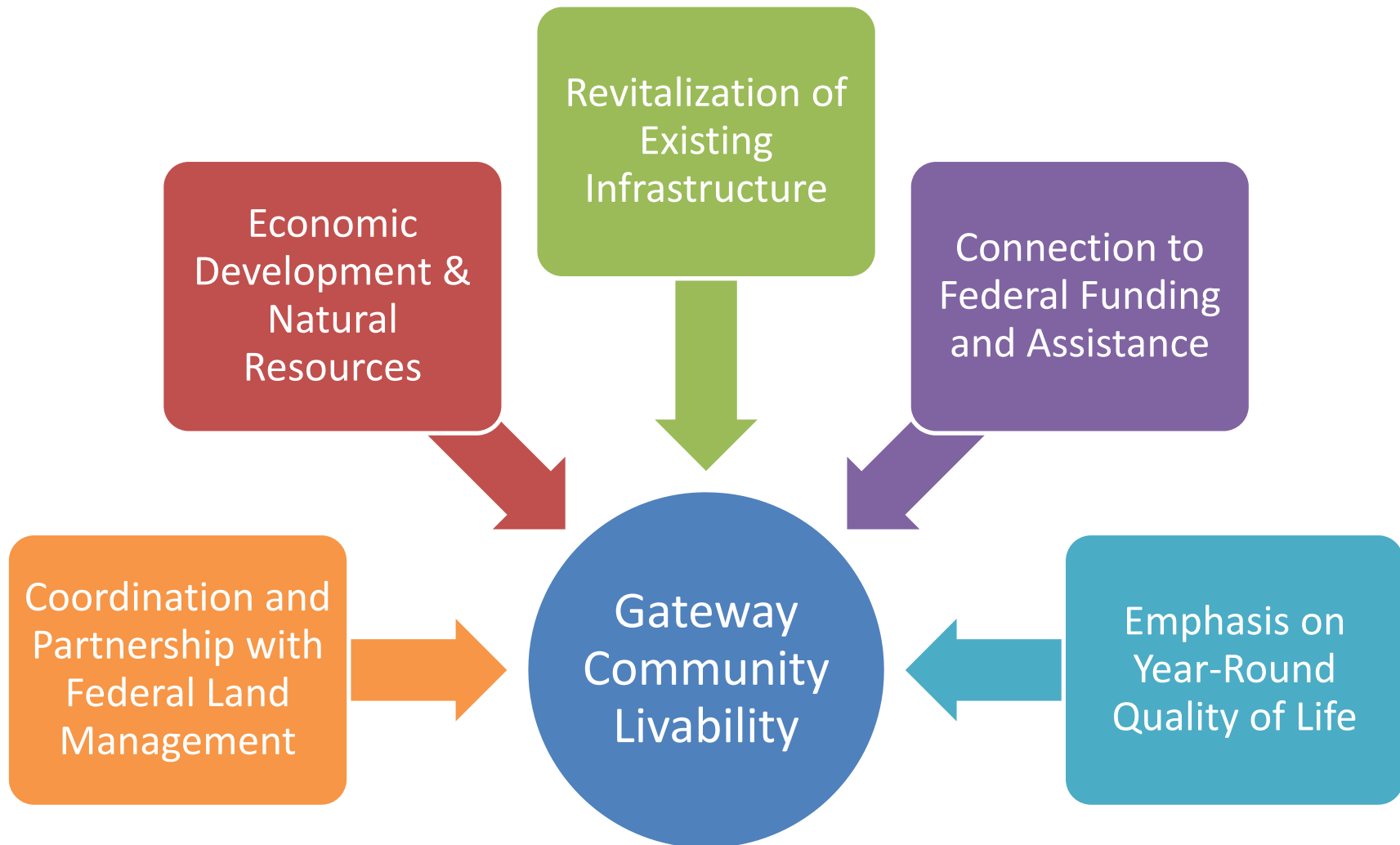


Calhoun Falls, South Carolina & USACE
Russell Lake Project



Grand Lake, Colorado & Rocky
Mountain National Park and Arapaho
National Recreation Area

Key Assessment Findings & Community Action





2014



**Gateway Community
Livability Assessment &
Recommendations Report**
GRAND LAKE, COLORADO



This report prepared by The
Conservation Fund in
collaboration with the
Federal Highway
Administration.

THE
CONSERVATION FUND



Federal Lands Livability Initiative

Gateway Community Livability Assessment

ASSESSMENT TO ACTION!

Principle: Provide more transportation choices

West Portal Bridge Rehabilitation

Major access route to Rocky Mtn NP trailheads and other public lands and in poor condition

- \$1.7M valuation
- Work Sept 2018-July 2019 (expected)
- Funded by general revenues and CDOT grant
- Includes lead paint removal, replacement of decking and guardrails, roadway approach enhancements

Engineer: Alfred Benesch and Co.

General Contractor: Structures, Inc.

Reporting Agency: CDOT

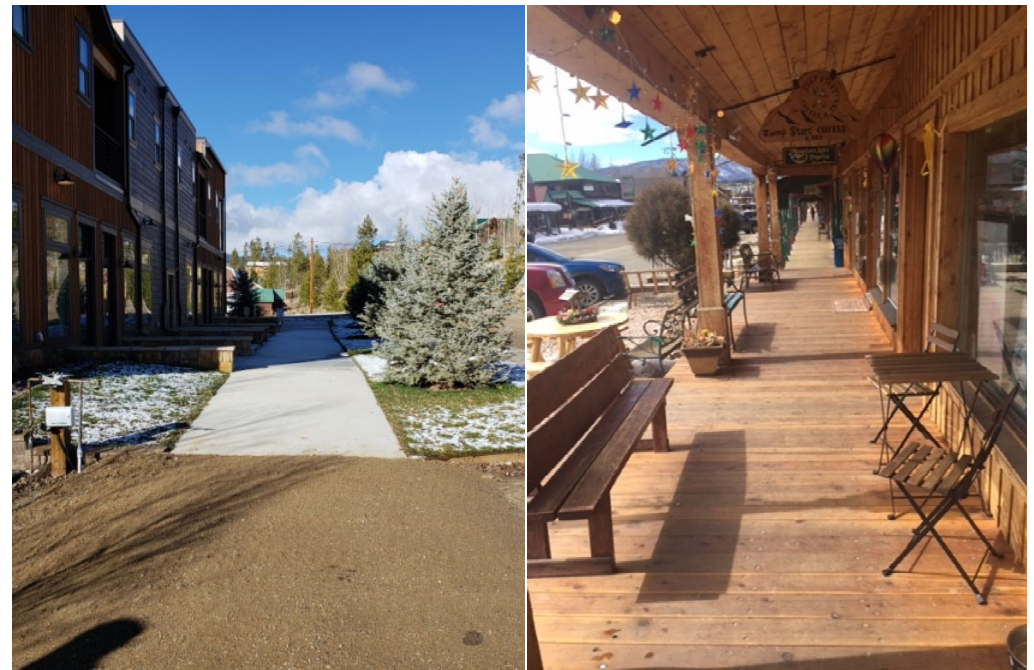


Federal Lands Livability Initiative

Principle: Multiple

Connectivity Projects – Grand Ave Streetscape Improvements

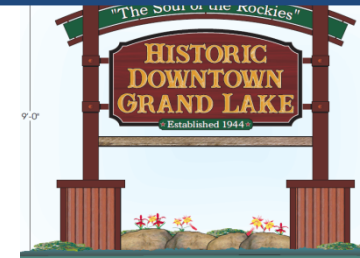
- \$4.3M Bond Measure (passed in 2016)
- Multi-phased project
- Includes four+ blocks of new and upgraded boardwalks, multiuse path from downtown to entrance, 6' sidewalk on south side of Grand, and new paving.
- Funding from bond, Dept. of Local Affairs & Energy/Mineral Impact Assistance Fund Grant



Federal Lands Livability Initiative

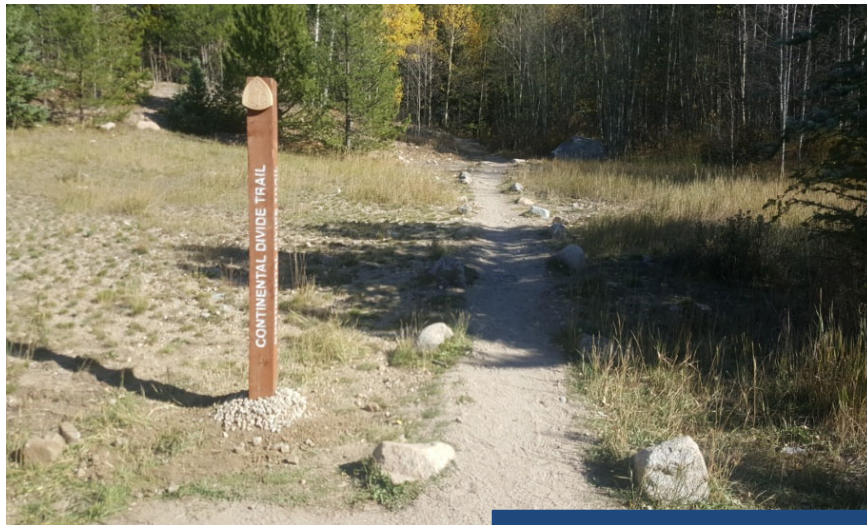
Principle: Multiple

Way-finding Projects



Continental Divide Trail Signage

- Designated as Gateway Community in 2018
- Partnered with USFS and CDTC to install 7 new Continental Trail sign posts along 2-mile segment
- Branding downtown boardwalks with CDT logo



Historic Downtown Gateway Sign

- Based on 2014 Wayfinding Master Plan
- Located at north intersection of Grand Ave and Jefferson St (on glacial moraine)
- \$10K project cost
- In process of installation



Federal Lands Livability Initiative

Principle: Multiple

Grand Lake Creative District

- Grand Lake was designated as the 22nd Colorado Creative District in July 2018
- CO Creative Industries Division--a branch of the CO Office of Economic Development and International Trade
- Supports innovators, creators, change-makers and dreamers who improve quality of life and make Colorado creative.
- Focus on strengthening the vitality of visual, performing and literary arts through promotion, resources and funding opportunities.
- Believe in bold innovation and the invaluable contributions the arts bring to this beautiful state.



Principle: Multiple

SPACE TO CREATE: Awarded to Grand Lake

- Space to Create: 1st state initiative whose mission is to:
 - **develop affordable housing and work space**, including commercial space, for artists and arts organizations and
 - position Colorado as the nation's leader in **artist-led community transformation** in rural communities.
- Grand Lake was the 4th community of 9 to receive this award.
- ArtSpace Consulting Organization will facilitate the development of an affordable live/work facility in Grand Lake.
- Led by the CO Office of Economic Dev't's CO Creative Industries, the CO Dept of Local Affairs, the Boettcher Foundation and ArtSpace Consulting Firm.



Federal Lands Livability Initiative

Key Assessment Findings

COORDINATION AND PARTNERSHIP WITH FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCIES

Trends:

- Gateway communities and neighboring public land managers agree—public lands are assets that help define community character and contribute significantly to local economic resiliency and overall livability
- Gateway Communities contribute to public lands as well

Recommendations:

- Participation in local economic development and livability planning is integral to the success of the community
- Better communication and understanding of how federal land management contributes to and supports the local economic health of a region

Sweet home, OR

Community Action & Results

Grand Lake, CO:

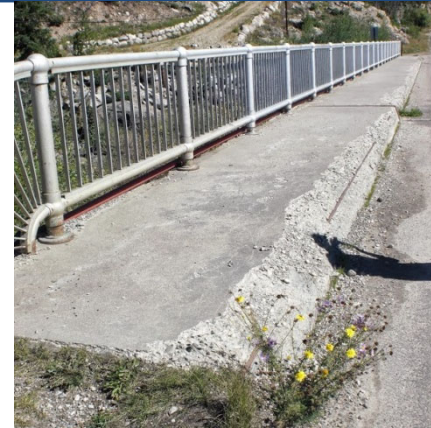
Coordinated with NPS to complete an IGA with CDOT for repairs on the West Portal Bridge which provides multimodal access to three federal land trailheads.

Saginaw, MI:

Public review of development plan the Green Point Area (formerly Germania Golf Club) property at Shiawassee NWR to include livability elements & connection to neighborhoods

Sweet Home, OR:

Ongoing efforts to protect the Cascadia Cave in cooperation of USFS, landowners. A significant spiritual gathering place along the South Fork Santiam River for the Confederated Tribes of Grande Ronde, Siletz, and Warm Springs.



Key Assessment Findings

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & NATURAL RESOURCES

Trends:

- Not dependent on traditional industry recruitment
- Economic multiplier effect impacts local dollars generated

Recommendations:

- Benefits from partnership with federal land managers (sustainable forest product harvesting, value added products, outdoor recreation)
- Investments in regional transportation integral to tourism; partnership efforts would be essential to accustom local and regional residents to use transit
- Relies on consistent access to global markets; need for rural infrastructure upgrades

Downtown Grand Lake, CO

Community Action & Results

Grand Lake, CO:

Hosted the Ride the Rockies event for the first time in its 31-year history. More than 2,000 riders and entourage arrived on June 15th and stayed at the Grand Lake Center.

Sweet Home, OR:

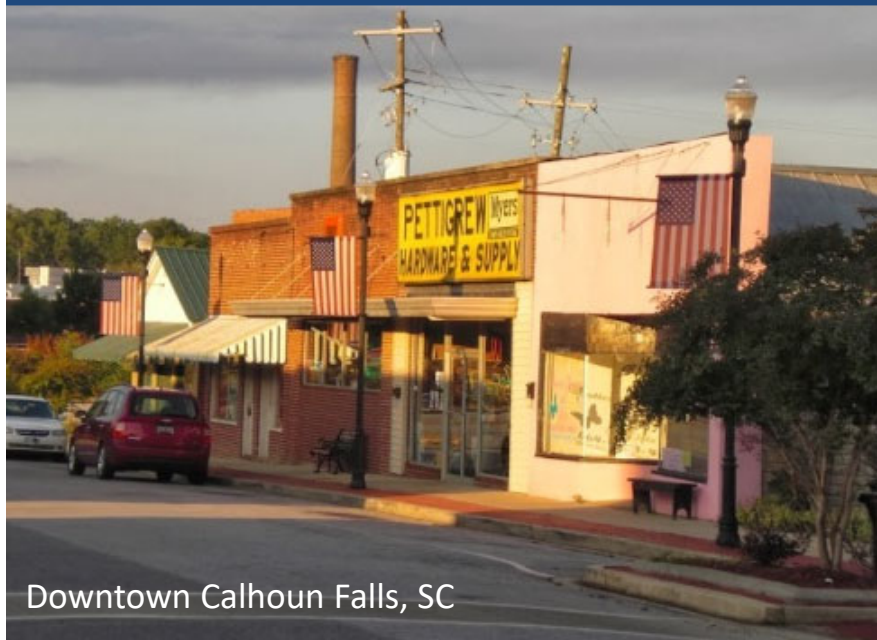
Development of summertime weekend bicycle transit service to destinations within Willamette National Park, now in operation for its second year.

Saginaw, MI:

Incorporation of livability principles into the Great Lake Bay Convention and Visitors Bureau strategic plan and informing decision related to tourism and asset development for residents and visitors.



Key Assessment Findings



Downtown Calhoun Falls, SC



Closed GM Malleable Iron Plant in Saginaw, MI

REPURPOSING OR REVITALIZATION OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE

Trends:

- Remnants of declining industries (excess roads, saw mills, textile mills, etc.) and vacant sites/buildings
- Need for access to recreation, affordable housing, new business

Recommendations:

- Capitalize on growing trends in tourism, retail, service sectors
- Repurposing can be opportunity for conservation and restoration
- Opportunity to prioritize investments in downtowns and abandoned mill sites

Community Action & Results



Grand Lake, CO:

Acquisition and rebirth of the former elementary school as the Grand Lake Center.



Calhoun Falls, SC:

Revitalization of silos in center of the town as a gateway welcome.



Key Assessment Findings

CONNECT COMMUNITIES TO FEDERAL FUNDING AND ASSISTANCE

Trends:

- Gateway communities lack the resources and connections to navigate the federal grant process
- Economic development and transportation priorities in gateway communities are different than traditional communities

Recommendations:

- Federal, state, and regional funding and assistance agencies should adapt priorities to meet the needs and character of gateway communities
- Assistance priorities focus on bicycle/pedestrian improvements, trail creation and connections, wayfinding signage, expanded public transportation, downtown revitalization, entrepreneur and small business recruitment and development

Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge, MI

Community Action & Results



Saginaw, MI:

Submission of FLAP award to James Township/DOT/FWS for the debilitated Hart Road will receive funding for road reconstruction in 2016.

Key Assessment Findings

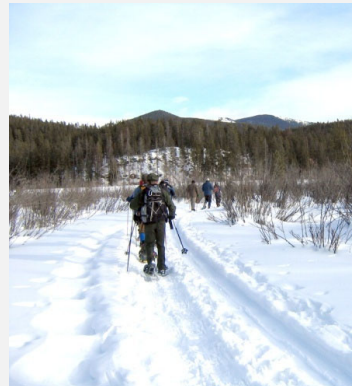
EMPHASIS ON YEAR-ROUND QUALITY OF LIFE

Trends:

- Seasonal economies put pressure on local businesses to survive on peak seasons
- Second-home markets make year-round living unaffordable

Recommendations:

- Enhancing year-round access to public lands, improving walking and biking trails, revitalization of downtowns, and sustainable year-round business recruitment are recommended
- Partnership efforts would be essential to accustom to an emphasis on year-round quality of life



Community Action & Results

Grand Lake, CO:

- Launch of a customer service training program that is open to professionals statewide and attracting visitors in shoulder seasons.
- Creation of Grand Creatives to spur and support creative business enterprises and economic development.
- Sales tax was up 10% in 2015.



Calhoun Falls, SC:

- Secured Rural Business Enterprise Grant to support delivery of a Tourism Hospitality and Small Business training for local businesses.



Regional Transportation Coordination Benefits

- Connecting transportation processes with local leaders and priorities
- Better understanding of gateway community priorities and opportunities
- Promotes integrated agency assistance targeted to rural livability
- Highlights “win-win-win” investment scenarios for communities, federal land managers, and transportation agencies
- Model for providing tools and resources to the community—creating local roadmaps for success

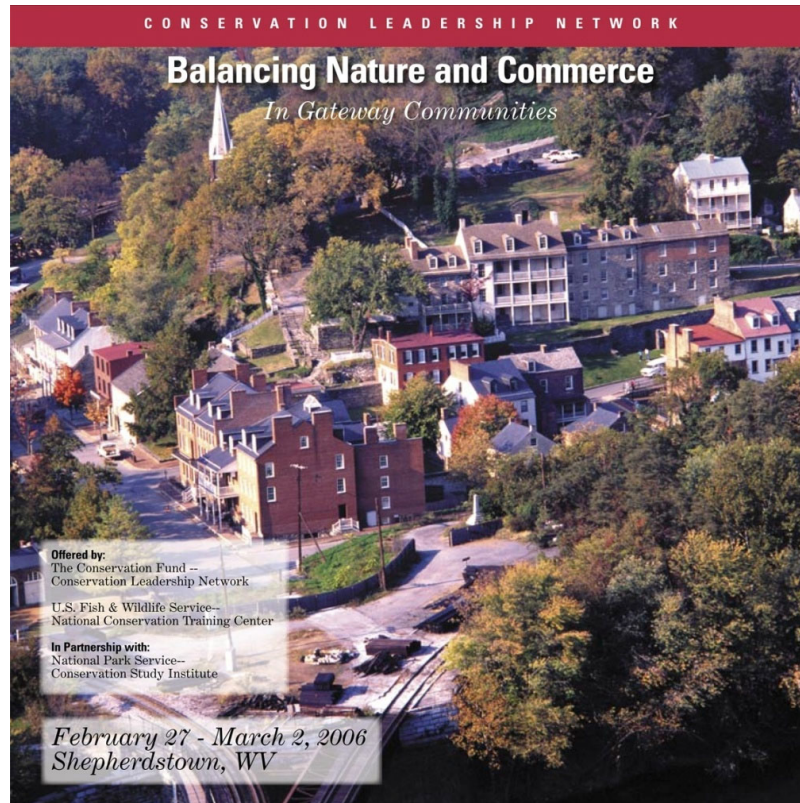
Looking Forward

Balancing Nature and Commerce in Rural Landscapes & Gateway Communities

January 31-February 2, 2016

National Conservation Training Center

Shepherdstown, WV



More than 800
Communities and
5,000+ Individuals
trained since 1999

Conservation Leadership Network

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