



EAST ASIA CONSERVATION & CULTURAL EXCHANGE PROGRAM SUNDAY 17 MARCH 2019 – SUNDAY 24 MARCH 2019



Appalachian Trail, Harpers Ferry, WV. From right to left: G. McHugh, O. Batkhuu, T. Purev, L. Potteiger, B. Erkhembayar.
PHOTO BY C. WILBUR

With support from the Trust for Mutual Understanding and in partnership with the Mongol Ecology Center (MEC), a QLF East Asia Conservation and Cultural Exchange Program was convened in March 2019. It was QLF's first exchange with Mongolia, and first partnership with the MEC, a non-governmental organization. The Director of Public Administration & Management in the Ministry of the Environment and Tourism of Mongolia, the Director of the Ulaanbaatar Environmental Department, and a MEC board member represented the delegation of three.

The theme of the exchange was **Sustainable Communities ~ Urban to Rural**. Sustainable communities are defined here as economically viable, environmentally and socially responsible, and culturally respectful. Conservation challenges in Mongolia include habitat loss and fragmentation, loss of biodiversity and, climate change and its impacts. In addition, wildlife plays an important role in traditional Mongolian culture, with reverence for animals and nature remaining important today, especially among rural communities.

Over the course of seven days, we had opportunities to see and hear how the protection of nature can be both an economic and community asset from federal, state, and local governments, the private, academic, and non-profit sectors and the public in New England and Washington, D.C.



U.S. Department of Interior, Washington D.C. B. Erkhembayar (left) and T. Purev
PHOTO BY O. BAKTHUU

Our meetings and site visits were with individuals encompassing a broad cross-section of professional, community, and cultural backgrounds. We learned about US organizations and their programs, and about their collaborations with other institutions and the public.

Our US hosts learned about Mongolian organizations, programs, protected areas, and cultural heritage. These informal learning experiences enhanced our understanding of the challenges, practices and processes of conservation and cultural heritage both successes and failures.

SITE VISIT OBJECTIVES

- Explore National Public Lands, Policies and Opportunities for International Cooperation
- Explore Nationwide Public – Private Partnerships in Land Protection and Nature Conservation
- Explore Multi-media Techniques in Park Information and Interpretation
- Explore NPS Professional Training and Development Programs
- Explore Public and Private Program Pedagogy in Youth Outdoor Education and Interpretation
- Explore Methodology for Public Engagement with Science and Technology
- Explore Public and Private Partnerships in Urban Park Design, Historic Preservation, Public Use and Tourism
- Explore Elements of Sustainable Building Design and Operation
- Explore Climate Change Research Projects

A program goal was to build openly, respectfully, and constructively international relationships and partnerships by engaging with various stakeholders. Outcomes from this goal include collaborative partnerships for Junior Ranger Training, re-opening the Museum of Victims of Political Persecution, development of a city park, and a QLF exchange to Mongolia.