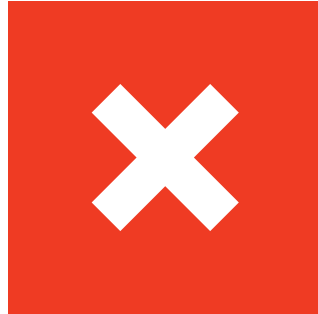


TRAILBLAZER SPOTLIGHT

Trailblazers in Conservation represents a level of commitment from industry partners and others that support the mutual interests of science-informed wildlife management and conservation, and hunter ethics and advocacy.

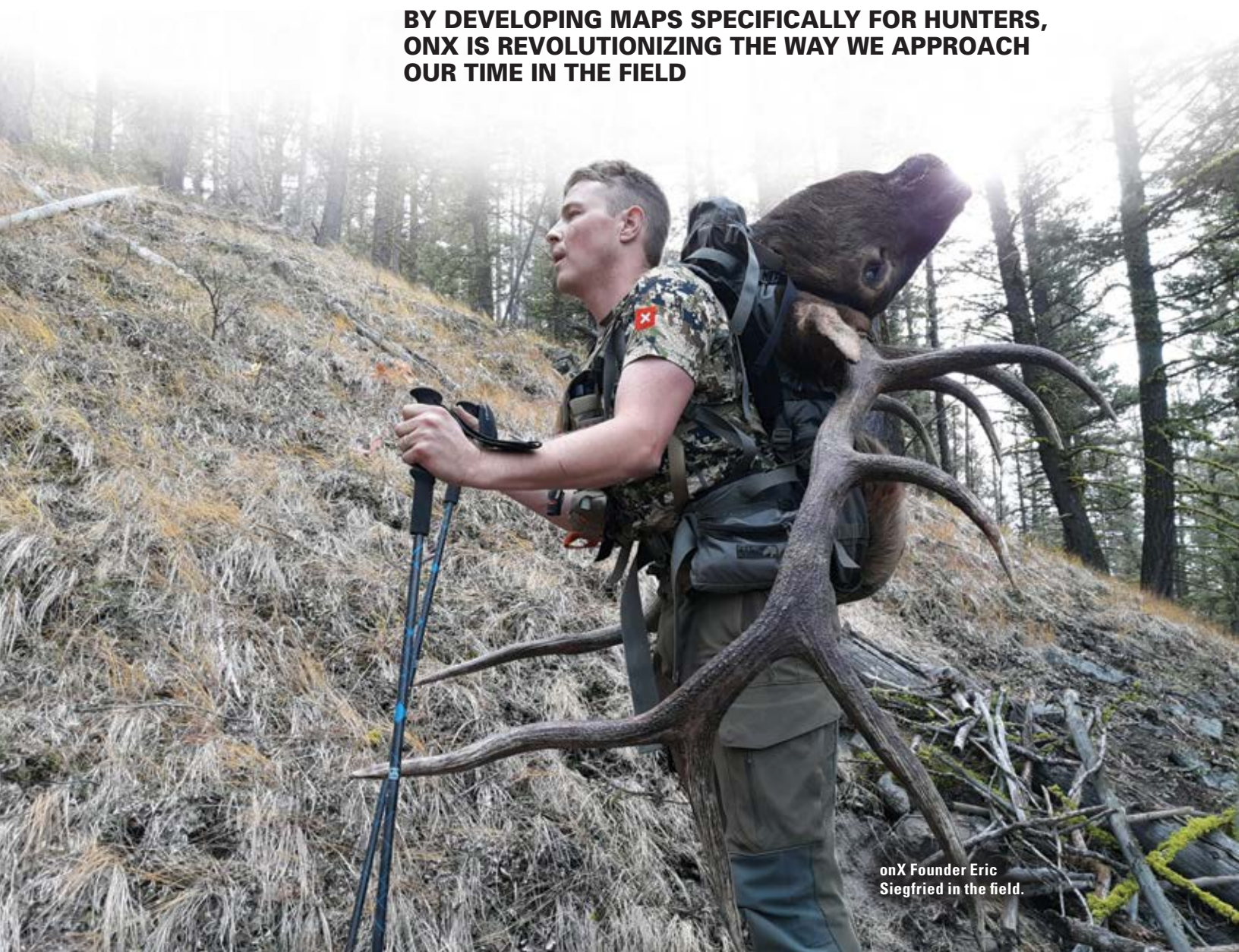
ON



HUNT

CHANGING THE WAY WE HUNT

BY DEVELOPING MAPS SPECIFICALLY FOR HUNTERS,
ONX IS REVOLUTIONIZING THE WAY WE APPROACH
OUR TIME IN THE FIELD



onX Founder Eric Siegfried in the field.



It's the busiest time of year at onX headquarters, a three-level building tucked into the outdoor hub of Missoula, Montana. Work meetings segue into exchanges of scouting information, and Friday afternoons often involve cooking fresh game on the office grills. Autumn is fast approaching, and while it's a time of hustle and planning, it's also a time of reflection. Members of the onX team reflect on past hunts and what led them to work in the industry itself. For onX Founder Eric Siegfried, it's a reminder of how far the company—and the way we spend time outside—has come.

"As a person who grew up using paper BLM maps and national forest maps to scout and navigate hunting lands, there is a special place in my heart for traditional cartography and navigation techniques," Siegfried shares. "Gone are the days of outdated paper maps and wasted time triangulating your location to figure out where you are on the map. Ubiquitous GPS, cellular data and cloud-based mapping technologies will enable a real-time, activity-specific location experience in the outdoors. When onX is done, the world will know a map only as a historical object that was once used for navigation and will be immersed in an entirely new location experience while navigating the outdoors."

Hunting is a lifestyle rooted in tradition. Many hunters can track the act of hunting—the lifestyle of hunting—back to parents, grandparents and beyond. Even for those without the familial history, there's a strong sense of custom and tradition when we take to the field. The cadence of preparation for the season, the rhythm of being outside in the elements, the time spent with friends and family in pursuit of game, and the primal satisfaction of providing meat for oneself and one's family—these feelings continue to draw us into the hunt season after season, year after year.

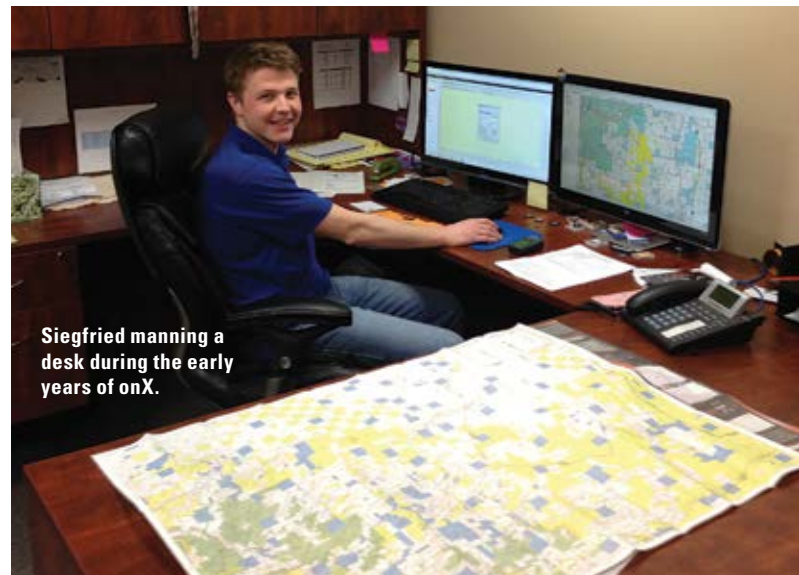
But just as surely as we cling to this tradition, we embrace the new—new methods of hunting, new locales to chase game, new technologies that helps us better our game. It's this spirit that galvanized Siegfried, to look for a better way to hunt.

Raised in the sweeping, sage-laden landscape of eastern Montana, Siegfried grew up stalking mule deer and pronghorn in the vastness of the Great Plains. But when his career took him to Missoula, in the western reaches of the state, he found himself faced with an unexpected challenge. Western Montana was home to dark timber, craggy mountains and nebulous private land boundaries.

"Over the years, I watched more and more elk stick tighter to private land. During those years in the early 2000s, I had a few experiences where I couldn't determine the true property boundary while I was out hunting the edges of public lands, despite having researched it thoroughly on my paper maps and Google Earth while at home," he notes. "It was those experiences, among others, that led me to realize the necessity of having the land ownership data on your GPS while you were in the field."

Ever the pragmatist, Siegfried began to manually compile and load public land data onto his personal GPS, working to develop a workable resource for his own hunting pursuits. He was driven by the fact that a large amount of promising hunting land was accessed by minimal, murky or disputed access and the fact that, sometimes, land viewed as private was actually public.

"I had done some research online and found many others creating topo maps for Garmin GPS units," he reflected, talking about the process itself. "They had all the standard USGS (United States Geological Survey) quadrant map data



Siegfried manning a desk during the early years of onX.

nailed, but they were missing the public land data that the national forest maps and BLM (Bureau of Land Management) maps had. If I could figure out how to create a colored background for the public lands similar to a BLM map, and improve on the road and trail data that most maps had, I'd have something that my fellow hunters and I would absolutely love. So I started comparing public land data from different sources, picked the best one, and figured out how to compile all the data into a file that could be loaded onto a microSD card and subsequently displayed on the Garmin GPS unit."

In the process, he realized the importance of this data for fellow hunters and outdoors-folk. Utilizing his degree in engineering from Montana State University in Bozeman, he began to mass produce his personal GPS chip, first bringing the product to market in 2009. The chips were first marketed online using search engine marketing and at retail stores in the Rocky Mountain States including Sportsman's Warehouse, Cabela's, and Scheels (many of whom the brand still works with today). In early 2010, the GPS chips were showcased at various trade shows across the West.

Within months, the name "onX" became synonymous with user-friendly, quality GPS map data. OnX continued to grow and thrive, soon moving to an office space in Missoula and hiring more experts to help grow the engineering, GIS (global information system), marketing, customer success, finance, product and other teams. In 2013, the company premiered the onX Hunt App, offering the first GPS mapping database with comprehensive land ownership maps in an app format. This revolutionary move allowed hunters to have accurate, up-to-date information conveniently in their smartphones and effectively changed the way many hunters approached both scouting and their time in the field.

After nearly a decade of heading the ambitious company, Siegfried has recently decided to turn his focus to the big picture. onX is now home to nearly 100 employees in two offices—one in Missoula, one in Bozeman—and received \$20.3 million of Series A venture capital investment in February 2018, led by Boston-based Summit Partners. Growth continues as new industry partnerships and initiatives are tackled daily, and the diverse team is working to stay well ahead of what is now a more competitive marketplace.

Changing times call for changing strategies, and onX recently welcomed Laura Orvidas, a 19-year Amazon veteran, to the position of CEO. It's a move Siegfried wholeheartedly supports. Orvidas joins the onX team following her career at Amazon, where she served as vice president of consumer electronics. She brings extensive experience in fields ranging from finance to operations to e-commerce.

"Laura's expertise in growing leaders, attracting talent and creating a people-focused growth culture was far beyond what we could have hoped for," he noted in a formal press release.

"We are truly blessed to have Laura as our CEO to lead us through our next phase of growth while remaining focused, first and foremost, on our customers."

Siegfried will remain onboard as founder, based in the Missoula office and still active in the day-to-day business. He's excited to spend more time focused on working to enhance the off-pavement location experience, as well as leading advocacy efforts for public lands and access. He's excited to help tell the stories of land trusts and access projects; to garner more awareness and support for emerging and ongoing access projects.

It's just one more chapter in the ever-evolving landscape of hunting—a landscape that has proven to be quite the home for Siegfried and onX. Currently the company's maps encompass 985 million acres of public land and more than 121 million private properties. Hunters and outdoorsmen are able to use their mobile phones as a GPS, tracking their movements, delving through different topographic maps with unique applications for hunting, fishing, hiking and more. An onX membership provides access to the Hunt App, or can be accessed on a traditional GPS device with a purchased, pre-loaded chip, including free updates for current members.

For those who have been with the company for many years, this is a time of change, but also of opportunity. Matt Seidel, the product owner for onX Hunt, notes that it's the customer who is at the root of it all. "From my first day at onX, we prioritized customer service and helping our customers with such a technical product," he shared. "I'm happy that, over the last eight years, onX has kept the tradition that customer service is so important. It's amazing to see all of the great feedback we get from customers and the success stories they have using our maps to find opportunities."

And, as they say, this is just the beginning. With more products underway for the years to come, onX will continue to work for its customers, following the company mission to help hunters and outdoor enthusiasts "Know Where You Stand." ■



Siegfried enjoys introducing new hunters to the sport, and supporting those in all stages of their hunting career.