

MINUTES FINAL
Governor's State Trails Council Meeting
Monday, October 10, 2005
Town of Morse Town Hall
402 2nd Avenue, Mellen, WI 54546
10:00 A.M. - 2:00 P.M.

State Trails Council Members Present: Mike McFadzen, Ken Carpenter, Tom Huber, Alison Dwyer, Dave Phillips, Tom Thornton, Randy Harden, Martha Schouweiler, Ramsey Lee (via telephone)

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Staff Present: Peter Biermeier, Bill Morrissey, Kent Goeckermann, Terry Jordan, Brigit Brown

Others present: Representative Gary Sherman, Doug Johnson, Ron Bergin, John Schnorr, Ken Linzmeyer, Pat Jablonski, Karen Jablonski

Agenda review/repair and Approval of July meeting minutes

- Approval of minutes Thornton, Phillips moved. Approved.

Chair Report

- *Agreement to Serve on the Wisconsin Governor's State Trails Council* (document) was handed out. This was approved at the July meeting. McFadzen asked STC members to fill out and return to Brigit Brown.
- McFadzen outlined the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program that was part of the federal highway budget passed August 10, 2005.
- Tom Huber and Dave Phillips will take nominations for 2006 STC officers. Officers will be voted on at the January meeting.
- Martha Schouweiler was introduced as the new representative to the STC as a Water Trails representative. Schouweiler's interests include paddling, mushing and she currently works with Nicolet College outdoor education program.
- 2006 meeting dates:
 - Monday January 30, 10-12 p.m. telephone
 - Tuesday May 2, 10-3 p.m. Madison
 - Friday July 14, 10-2 p.m. Hartman Creek State Park
 - Friday October 20, 10-2 p.m. Whitefish Dunes State Park (**NOTE: Date has since been changed to October 27**)

- Governor's Office is fine with allowing delegates to attend STC meetings for STC members not able to attend but would not allow these delegates to have voting rights.
- Northern Highland American Legion (NHAL) Master Plan Summary was passed out to attendees. Some of the trail highlights from the revised master plan: addition of a horse campground, reroute of a mountain bike (MTB) trail (Raven) and addition of a new MTB trail. Snowmobile and Cross-Country miles would remain about the same. Currently, horse use is allowed anywhere in the Forest not posted closed to horses.
- Randy Harden brought up the potential for STC to discuss route funding to local municipalities from the ATV maintenance funds. Harden also mentioned a bill sponsored by Rep. Merceau that would open up town roads within five miles of an ATV trail to trails.
- McFadzen asked if Council would be interested in making a motion to support the NHAL master plan. Phillips, Harden moved to support such a resolution.

***Be It Resolved** that the STC supports the Trails Portion of the NHAL Master Plan.* Resolution passed unanimously. The resolution will be sent to the Natural Resources Board, NHAL superintendent Dennis Leith, legislative Natural Resources Committees, and the Governor's Office.

Phillips emphasized the importance of ensuring that the ATV and Snowmobile areas on the property must be connected to routes or trails outside of the property so that those uses aren't limited to a concentrated area on the property. McFadzen will relate this message to the NHAL superintendent.

DNR Report

- Bill Morrissey reviewed the direction of the Wisconsin State Park System Strategic Plan currently underway. A key element of the planning will be looking at Wisconsin in comparison to other State Park Systems. Morrissey also said that many of the public meetings resulted in comments from attendees about raising fees for out of state visitors. Morrissey pointed out that although population and thus demand for campsites has risen, the size of the Wisconsin Park System has not. Thus, the answer to meeting demand from Wisconsin citizens as well as out of state visitors is to increase the number of campsites.

DNR Report continued later in meeting.

Power Lines and Trails

- David Siebert, Director of the Office of Energy appeared via telephone. Siebert reviewed the mission of the Office of Energy, which is essentially to streamline energy transmission and supply projects. The Office of Energy (OOE) was created to supply "one stop shopping" for businesses undertaking energy

transmission projects issues such as permitting for wetland issues and other natural resource issues involved in Transmission Line projects. The OOE deals mostly with the American Transmission Company (ATC), which was created by an act of the Wisconsin legislature and supplies a majority of Wisconsin power. Siebert projects a huge building boom for transmission lines in Wisconsin as transmission infrastructure is created to meet demand. ATC alone projects \$3 billion in new transmission line projects over the next 10 years. Siebert reviewed the draft document *DNR Involvement in the Review Process for Major Transmission Line Projects* (document). McFadzen stated that the STC's major concern is that these planned lines will criss-cross trail corridors throughout the state. One current major project is the Central Wisconsin 345 project. At this point, ATC has proposed two routes for the project.

OOE has responsibility for bringing all natural resource issues to the table in dealing with ATC.

McFadzen emphasized that it is the responsibility of the STC to represent trail users, and that STC can do this both within the Department and externally. Dave Phillips asked Siebert if it was his assertion that the STC get involved with each proposed project. Siebert stated that yes, this might be desirable. McFadzen emphasized that the STC does not want to be in a situation where they learn about a project when the line is already sited. Brown asked Siebert where in the process outlined in the document it would be appropriate for her to be notified of projects which she could review and then notify the STC as appropriate. Siebert responded that step number three on the document would be appropriate, but as a result of a question by Ken Carpenter, did note that there are often several steps that ATC takes before the DNR gets involved, that would precede the steps outlines on the document.

Tom Thornton asked whether it wouldn't be of advantage to use the Attorney General Office for clarification on these issues. Siebert said that at this time the OOE was waiting for direction

Siebert stated that the job of the OOE to bring issues to the table for transmission projects and that the STC is someone that OOE will need to go to for information on projects. Siebert offered for ATC members to contact him directly with questions about projects and said that an OOE web page is in development. Brown will send out a link to the OOE web page.

The proposed Resolution on this topic was moved by Phillips and seconded by McFadzen. Discussion on the resolution centered on whether the resolution should be amended to clarify the extent to which the STC opposes use of trails for transmission line location. Resolution stands as proposed. Passed unanimously.

- **Representative Gary Sherman** was introduced. Representative Sherman thanked the STC and commented on the unique collection of uses represented on the STC. He is opposed to the Arrowhead to Weston line (ATC project).
- McFadzen reviewed the economic, health, community and environmental benefits via a Power Point presentation.

DNR Report (Conclusion)

- Brown announced that the Trail Safety and Etiquette brochure has been published and is available to trail users. Copies are available at the front table.
- Peter Biermeier reviewed the ATV Stakeholder meeting held September 17. Multiple sides of the ATV issue were represented and the discussion at the meeting was productive. Biermeier went on to cover the logging issue. AB254 has been introduced which would have the effect of providing more review of state lands by DNR Foresters (currently DNR Foresters mainly work with private landowners). This may change the aesthetics of Park System properties (including State Trails). The Park System is working on priorities for timber management on Park System lands. Phillips stated that it is possible to log along trails and improve the aesthetics of a forest. However, now trees are logged for worth as opposed to logging trees that would allow for old growth. There is much room for cooperation and coordination between forest management and recreational trails/forest aesthetics. Phillips noted that on a recent hike on the Ice Age Trail he noticed how Taylor County Forests have maintained a practice of logging that protects the trails. Along other parts of the trail, this was not the case. Slash was left on the trail and on the forest floor. Ron Bergin commented on forestry practices along trails in the northern part of the state. Tom Thornton also commented on how cuts have really gone well, or very poorly. Representative Sherman commented that forestry practices have improved considerably over the years.

Brown commented that it is important to know logging plans for an area where a trail is planned – trails in working forests can be sustainable but future logging operations can effect the layout and design of the trail, for example if the overhead forest cover will change in five years as a result of timber extraction.

- Brown covered the Federal Surface Transportation budget. The budget is called SAFTEA-LU (Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users), totals \$286.5 billion dollars over six years and includes \$24 billion in earmarks including \$418,740,600 for Wisconsin.

Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP)

- Biermeier updated the STC on the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) effort currently underway. SCORP is about 2/3 of the way done and will eventually lay out the direction of recreation for the state of Wisconsin for the years 2005-2010. Tom Huber commented on how this SCORP

really seemed to include areas outside of the state, which will help make it a better plan. Phillips commented on the methodology used for gathering data for this plan: rather than targeting users with surveys for SCORP, a wider audience of the general population has been surveyed to come up with user demand and activities that citizens currently participate in.

Bylaws

- Brown reviewed the proposed bylaws, which have not changed since the July 11, 2005 STC meeting. Major changes to the bylaws: defining quorum, allowing members unable to attend meetings to send delegates to STC meetings, clarifying roles and agenda content. Bylaws moved Phillips, seconded Thornton. Passed unanimously.

Discussion regarding representation from the Governor's Office at Council meetings

- Carpenter entered for discussion that the Governor has been very progressive in promoting protection of natural resources, but the Governor has not been talking about recreation. Phillips said that some of these areas, in particular one recently purchased by the Nature Conservancy (via State Stewardship dollars) is a unique block of land that was owned by one family who wanted to preserve the land and would likely not have sold the land if motorized recreation, for example, were to be allowed there. Carpenter emphasized his point is that the Governor does not emphasize recreation when talking about public land, specifically lands purchased with Stewardship dollars. McFadzen stated that he would contact the Governor's Office and encourage them to attend STC meetings. Phillips commented that it would be a good idea to also ask for legislative representatives to attend STC in order to ensure balanced representation.

Brown stated that she will be working on the idea of a trails caucus in the WI State Legislature.

Harden and Carpenter suggested also getting user groups lobbyists together.

Public comment

- Gary and Lynette Rayvis: Commented on the problems that they have with ATVs in this area. ATVs are allowed on city streets, but they do not respect the local laws or private property and local enforcement ignore the problem. Randy Harden will meet with these folks after the meeting.
- John Schnorr: Ron Potter of the MN DNR (and manager of Gilbert OHV Park in northern Minnesota) will be speaking at the WOHVA conference in June. Schnorr asked if the STC would be interested in sending a letter to Forest County the positive aspects of an OHV Park/Intensive Use Area. The STC members generally were in favor of the concept but not ready to take a formal stance until they know more information about the proposal.
- Member of the North Country Trail (NCT) Association asked if there were motorized and non-motorized representatives on the Council and if non-motorized

users were present at discussions of motorized uses such as the Intensive Use Areas. She went on to state that the better the NCT is maintained, the more motorized users are on the trail (illegally). Randy Harden will also speak with this person after the meeting.

- Meeting adjourned.