



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

FINAL - as of 10/28/11

Friday, July 8, 2011

George W. Mead State Wildlife Area, S2148 County Highway S, Milladore

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members Present: Ken Carpenter, Randy Harden, Tom Huber, Jim Joque, Dave Phillips, Skip Maletzke, Mike McFadzen, Bryan Much, Luana Schneider, Robbie Webber

State Trails Council Members Not In Attendance: Tom Thornton

Wisconsin DNR Staff Present: Dan Schuller, Brigit Brown, Cameron Bump, Lavane Hessler, Tim Parsons, Mary Rose Teves, Joseph Warren

Others Present: Terry Coplien, Greg Farnham, Doug Johnson, Dave Peterson, Judy Peterson, Gene Roberts, Frank Schier, Hank Wozniel

10:00 A.M. – Introduction, Agenda review/repair and approval of April meeting minutes

- Harden called the meeting to order. Approval of the April 5, 2011 meeting minutes by Webber. Seconded by Maletzke. Minutes approved.

10:10 A.M. – Chair Report

- Harden presented Jim Joque and Tom Huber with certificates of appreciation for their service and time on the council. Tom Thornton was unable to attend the meeting and will receive his certificate at a later date. Joque has served on the State Trails Council since 2007, Thornton since 2004, and Huber since 1993.
- There are two STC bills in the legislature, one in the Senate and one in the Assembly. Harden and others have testified in favor of the bills as proposed by the STC. A vote on either bill will not happen until the Legislature is back in session in the fall.

10:15 A.M. – State Trails Council Member Reports

- *Users with Disabilities.* There have not been conflicts reported concerning the recent federal ruling to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) about Power-Driven Mobility Devices (PDMDs) on trails. The DNR has received six applications since January. The DNR is working on a statewide assessment for the Ice Age and North Country National Scenic Trails, and property managers are working on assessments at the property level.
- *Off-Highway Motorcycles.* Much attended the sustainable trailbuilding school at the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest. Off-Highway Motorcycle groups are continuing to work on a registration program to generate trail funding. Groups are looking to add OHMs to the allowed uses on the Nicolet and Wolf River state trails and have added to the master plans for the trails. User groups are also looking to add OHMs to other trails where ATV use is allowed. Much toured some motorized recreation areas in Indiana and Kentucky, and took photos of the different parks. Much stated there are some underserved areas of the state for OHMs, and private land owners have opened some land for singletrack trails. There was a hill climb at Kewaskum in June. Several motorized recreation areas also have hill climbs. Much has mapped out some motorcycle routes in the northern forests that users can use with GPS.



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles.* Schneider attended the hearings on the State Trails Council bill hearings. A few of the private motorized parks, such as at Rib Lake and the Mole Lake Indian Reservation, have received some minor flooding and are doing repairs. Schneider toured a 3000-acre motorized park in Arkansas.
- *Bicycling.* The state budget kept the \$5 million in the biennium to supplement the federal Transportation Enhancement money. There is a big demand for bike/ped infrastructure. There is currently no transportation budget at the federal level, the previous bill expired. Depending on the federal budget, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) and Safe Routes to School programs could be cut. Summer is the peak season for bicycling. A sustainable trailbuilding course was held in La Crosse.
- *Tourism/Business.* The Department of Tourism will be increasing their marketing for Wisconsin, and will be advertising for outdoor activities rather than specific areas of the state. Overall Wisconsin's lodging industry is doing fairly well in the economy. Maletzke stated he noticed an increase in equestrian, biker and hiker use in the Nicolet National Forest.
- *Hiking.* Phillips has been on walking trips in Scotland the last two years, where a Right to Roam law allows walking through land which does not have to be on a trail or path. The country has some national trails like the Ice Age Trail, but the Right to Roam law is a different philosophy from the U.S. Walking is England's main recreational activity.
- *All-Terrain Vehicles.* ATV registration numbers are starting to go back up. Legislators have been asking WATVA about the Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) program.
- *Equestrian.* The electric campsites at the Horseriders Campground at the Southern Kettle Moraine State Forest opened this summer. The local horse group raised funds to electrify the campsites. The American Horse Council convention was held in Washington D.C. The convention brings together breeders, industry people, state horse councils, racers, vets and others from around the country to meet with legislators on national issues. It is a good opportunity to build coalitions with other groups. There was a good turnout for the sustainable trailbuilding class at the Kettle Moraine Forest, with a mix of volunteers and staff, and even four attendees from Michigan.
- *Cross-Country Skiing.* Skiing groups are partnering with the Veterans Administration to make it possible for veterans with disabilities to have access to sit skis. The resort where the American Birkebeiner is held is in receivership. Skiers are using the asphalt trails for roller skiing to train throughout the summer. Roller skiing is also becoming a bigger sport in the United States, and is already very popular in Europe. Sheboygan County continues to work with legislators on the Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program.
- *Department of Transportation.* Transportation Enhancements remain unchanged at this time. The DOT will wait to see if any changes at the federal level affect the Safe Routes to School program. The state bike/ped funding was included in the budget at about a net drop of \$1.5 million for each year of the biennium. The DOT is interested in having someone serve on the council and may be able to send someone to the October STC meeting at Black River Falls.



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

11:00 A.M. – Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program Presentation

- Mary Rose Teves, DNR, Director for the Bureau of Community Financial Assistance, and Lavane Hessler, DNR, Stewardship and Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grant Manager, updated the council on changes to the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program. Teves and Hessler gave an overview of nature-based outdoor activities, the grant review process, different grant types, and examples of some projects that have been awarded funding.
- Handouts included an overview of the PowerPoint presentation, the Stewardship Fund Grant Review and Approval for Land Acquisition flow chart, and an example of a proposed Stewardship grant submitted to the Natural Resources Board for ratification. Information and updates for the Stewardship Program are available on the DNR website:
 - <http://dnr.wi.gov/stewardship/>
- Tim Parsons updated the council on the Recreational Trails Program (RTP). The Grants program is currently in the process of ranking and rating projects for RTP. The Grants program will package the projects around mid-August, and will then meet with DOT to look at matching funds with other grants. Applicants will be notified of their projects after that.

12:45 P.M. – Bylaws Subcommittee Report

- The subcommittee has been looking at updating the bylaws to address transparency, organization of the meetings, and public participation. The committee will propose revisions to explain that both council members and the public can request agenda items, and having only items which have been publically noticed on the agenda open for discussion. The bylaw revisions will also look at having public comment during each agenda item, similar to the process for the Natural Resources Board, possible sign-up with registration slips for identifying representation and for speaking on items similar to the NRB meetings, possible revisions to include a public comment section for items not on the agenda, and looking at the timeframe for posting the meeting agenda.
- The subcommittee will introduce some proposed bylaws changes at the October meeting and the council will vote on the changes at the January STC meeting.

1:00 P.M. – Application Review Subcommittee Report

- The Application Subcommittee (Carpenter, Maletzke and McFadzen) reviewed applications for the open positions on the State Trails Council between the April and July STC meetings.
- On behalf of the subcommittee, Carpenter motioned to recommend Harold Schmidt as the representative for Off-Road Bicycles, James White as the representative for Boards and Small Wheels, and Phil Johnsrud as the representative for Water Trails. Seconded by McFadzen. Motion passes.
- The Bureau of Parks and Recreation will send a letter to the Secretary asking for official appointment of all non-voting positions and will communicate with the Governor's office on appointment of the voting members.
- The Snowmobile representative position is open, and the STC is soliciting applications for the position.



State of Wisconsin GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

1:15 P.M. – Rock River Trail Initiative

- Greg Farnham, Commissioner, Lake Sinissippi Improvement District, Hustisford, WI and Frank Schier, Editor and Publisher of the Rock River Times, Rockford, IL spoke to the council about the proposed Rock River Trail in southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois. Handouts included a copy of the July 6-12, 2011 edition of *The Rock River Times* and a map of the proposed Rock River Trail and Watershed.
- The Rock River Trail has the potential to be both a water trail with a series of access points in the river, and also a road route that follows the river. The trail is also unique as it travels between two states. Farnham and Schier have received letters of support for the trail from counties in both states. The Rock River Trail also has the potential to connect to other existing state trails. Camping opportunities are limited along the river. Farnham and Schier are working with counties and cities to increase camping, and add signage along the trail.
- The STC offered their support for the Rock River Trail. Phillips suggested an option for the trail could be to seek designation as a National Recreation Trail. Farnham and Schier stated they would be willing to come back to the STC at a later date to present an update of the trail's progress.

1:45 P.M. – DNR Report

- About \$25 million of the Stewardship funds in the coming year will be for capital development projects. The Bureau of Parks will receive some of this money and will use for infrastructure and other projects. Additional money will be used for hunting access for less-developed properties, such as trailheads, parking lots, and signage.
- The DNR is continuing work on the establishment of a motorized recreation area. The DNR is also continuing work on the 2011-2016 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). SCORP is needed to receive Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) funding. The Federal government is debating how LWCF funding should be spent nationwide. The first "Walk with Walker" event was held at High Cliff State Park. The next event will be in the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest.
- Master plans in progress include Point Beach State Forest, the Ice Age Reserve at Cross Plains, Door County state parks, and the former Badger Army Ammunition Facility adjacent to Devil's Lake State Park. The DNR Secretary is interested in decreasing the timeframe for master planning for all state properties. The DNR is also developing hunting proposals for State Ice Age Trail Areas. The proposals will go out for public comment in fall and meetings will be held at locations around the state. The DNR will then take the proposals to the Natural Resources Board. Some time after the hunting proposals go to the NRB the DNR will begin the formal master planning for the State Ice Age Trail Areas.
- Wisconsin State Parks are working with the National Association of State Park Directors in the Youth Ambassador Program. Wisconsin's Youth Ambassador is Natalie Koffarnus. Natalie returned from service overseas and will begin visiting Wisconsin's Parks and posting blogs, photos, and essays on the America's State Parks Website:
<http://www.americasstateparks.org/index.php>
- The DNR is continuing to work on guidelines for compliance with water regulations for trail projects. There are five different sets of water regulations trail projects have to take into consideration.



State of Wisconsin **GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL**

- The Wisconsin State Park System Trail Crew will do trail assessment work at Devil's Lake State Park, and will then begin work at Amnicon Falls State Park.

2:30 P.M. – Future Wisconsin Trails Conference

- The STC discussed the possibility of hosting a Wisconsin Trails Conference at a future date which would provide a cross reference of all trails, and emphasize the value of trails in the state. User groups would need to take the lead on organizing and staffing the event. The Department of Tourism and DNR could be partners. Maletzke stated the event could be planned to correspond with the annual Wisconsin Tourism Conference. The conference could offer different workshops. The STC will keep this topic on the agenda.

2:45 P.M. – Public Comment

- Doug Johnson, Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) President, updated the council on some snowmobiling issues. The AWSC Director's meeting will be held in July. AWSC participated in the Washington D.C. Fly-In to advocate for snowmobiling. The International Snowmobile Congress was hosted in Calgary, Canada, and was attended by more than 300 people from around the world, including all of the snow-states in the United States. The 2013 Congress will be held in Green Bay. AWSC is working with *Discover Wisconsin* to produce a half-hour video to focus on snowmobiling in Wisconsin. Snowmobiling is also seeing an increase in youth membership. There was severe weather in Burnett and Douglas counties in far northwest Wisconsin which caused a lot of downed trees across the trails in that area. It is estimated to take months to clean the area. A small provision in the Governor's Budget Bill corrected the out of state permit increase, allowing the full amount of the increase to go directly to the Supplemental Grooming Fund, eliminating the 13.10 process, and speeding up the reimbursement payment process.

3:00 P.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Webber. Seconded by Phillips. Meeting adjourned.