



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Final - as of 4/11/12

Friday, January 13, 2012

Room 613, GEF 2 Building, 101 S. Webster Street, Madison

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members Present: Ken Carpenter, Randy Harden, Doug Johnson, Phil Johnsrud, Skip Maletzke, Mike McFadzen, Bryan Much, Dave Phillips, Harold Schmidt, Luana Schneider, Robbie Webber, James White

WI DNR Staff Present: Dan Schuller, Peter Biermeier, Brigit Brown, Tim Parsons, Jeff Prey, Joseph Warren

Others Present: Mike Wollmer

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

- Harden called the meeting to order. Motion for approval of the October 28, 2011 meeting minutes by Webber. Seconded by Phillips. Minutes approved. Motion for approval of the December 8, 2011 meeting minutes by Webber. Seconded by Johnson. Minutes approved.

10:10 A.M. – Chair Report

- The recommendations for Bryan Much, representing Off-Highway Motorcycling, and Harold Schmidt, representing Off-Road Bicycling, will be sent to the Governor's office for approval. If both positions are approved, there will be 11 voting members serving on the Council.

10:15 A.M. – Overview of STC Purview

- Following the December STC meeting, Harden stated that some newer members inquired as to the purview of the STC. Much put together language which relate to the council's responsibilities from state statute and the STC bylaws, and will send out to members. Harden stated he would like to discuss the topic at the April meeting.
- Harden stated one of the charges of the STC is to provide advice and consultation to the Department of Natural Resources. Harden asked if the DNR report should be given more time for council members to ask questions. The STC discussed ideas for getting feedback on DNR reports.

10:30 A.M. – State Trails Council Member Reports

- *Snowmobiling.* There has been limited snowfall across Wisconsin this winter and some areas that depend on snowmobile tourism are suffering economically. There is work on a bill in the Legislature (SB365) to modify how the current snowmobile registration and trail pass structure. The bill would propose a structure similar to Michigan. Brown noted there is confusion between the snowmobile trail pass and the state trail pass, and it would be helpful if this could be taken into account with wording regarding the snowmobile trail pass. The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC) will hold their winter director's meeting in Tomahawk.
- *Cross-Country Skiing.* Three areas in Wisconsin have snowmaking capabilities and there is need for more. Youth programs are important for getting new skiers interested in the sport. For the programs to be successful there needs to be positive experience, good equipment, and groomed trails and coaching. If any of the aspects are absent, skiers may not be interested in staying in the programs. Several



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programs are doing well across Wisconsin, including those in Milwaukee, Green Bay, Iola, and Rhinelander/Minocqua. Wisconsin also is fortunate to have many elite athletes come out of the programs. Copper Falls State Park is becoming a big destination for skiers. Many Olympic athletes have come out of Wisconsin, Minnesota and the Midwest. McFadzen stated it was important for user groups to continue to contact their legislators regarding hunting and trapping in state parks.

- *Equestrian.* Winter is a slower season for equestrians. Users are holding annual meetings. Planning is underway for the equestrian-sponsored Trail Building School in June. There will be four trail building schools in Wisconsin in 2012. Equestrian groups have concerns about the amendment to Senate Bill 226 regarding hunting and trapping in state parks. Groups have expressed that much of their concerns come from the language that takes the public out of the master planning process.
- *Tourism/Business.* The Governor's Conference on Tourism will be held in March in Green Bay. The conference is a great way to network with people from around the state. The Department of Tourism website, travelwisconsin.com, is heavily promoting Wisconsin winter sports. Recreation-based lodging is doing well as people are taking shorter vacations.
- *Off-Highway Motorcycles.* Off-road motorcycling is a year-round sport. Ice riding is becoming very popular. Groups are continuing to work on OHM registration legislation. A bill could potentially be introduced during the 2012 Legislative Session.
- *Hiking.* Phillips has received a lot of comments from the hiking community from users concerned about the amendment to Senate Bill 226 regarding hunting and trapping in state parks.
- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles.* Winter is also a slower season for off-highway and 4-wheel drive vehicle groups. WOHVA, W4WDA and other groups are planning rides for the summer season.
- *Bicycling.* Bicycling is seeing a growing number of users riding in winter. Cyclocross is a rapidly growing sport and the USA National Cyclocross Championship was held in Verona in early January. The event coordinators plan to hold the National Championship in Verona again next year. The Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) Bike Summit will be held February 21 at the capital and provides the bicycling community a chance to discuss bike funding and laws with state legislators. Webber will be attending the National Bike Summit in March in Washington D.C. The city of Madison has begun issuing winter bicycling reports for trail and road conditions.
- *Off-Road Bicycling.* The Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycle Association (WORBA) will be incorporated into the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) in 2012. BFW is working on an agreement with the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) to create a single membership option; if someone joins IMBA, they will be offered free membership in the BFW. There will be two sessions to discuss mountain bike issues at the Bike Summit.
- *Water Trails.* Johnsrud attended a meeting for planning river trips and met with a diverse group of water trail users. Generally, the groups are not organized at a state-wide level. Canoeing, kayaking, and water recreation is increasing in popularity. Johnsrud will be meeting with groups and individuals to try to define what can be done at a state-wide level. Schuller stated the DNR is looking to advance water trails in the next several years.

11:05 A.M. – Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Update

- Seventy-nine new trail grants were issued for local units of government totaling about \$2.4 million, and forty-two state trail projects totaling about \$1 million were issued. The DNR will be putting the



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application booklets together for the next round of grants. The next round of grants will include 2/3 of funds reserved for larger-scale projects and 1/3 reserved for smaller projects with a \$45,000 cap. There is uncertainty on the Federal level concerning RTP and how much funding will be allocated to the program. There are proposals that could consolidate the various federal trail funding programs; but nothing has been determined. In April the DNR will have an idea of the number of applications being submitted. Reading and ranking of the applications will be in June.

11:20 A.M. – Motorized Recreation Area Update

- The DNR has been looking at sites around the state that could adequately serve as a destination for off-highway vehicle users, that is close to southern Wisconsin, that is in an area that could use the economic benefits from the tourism, and that could potentially serve other recreation activities as well. The DNR would be looking at developing the area for a family experience. The DNR is looking at funding options, and at ways to how the recreation area could be self-sustaining financially. Schneider stated that off-highway vehicle groups would be willing to assist and lend support where they would be needed.

11:35 A.M. – DNR Update

- The master plan for Point Beach State Forest will be going to the Natural Resources Board for approval later this month. The proposed plan has a lot of support. Proposals include adding an equestrian trail to the forest, separating the Ice Age Trail from the cross-country ski trails, and providing a new campsite for the Ice Age Trail and Lake Michigan water trail.
- The Lake Michigan water trail project for Wisconsin is the work of several agencies, communities and other partners. The goal of the trail is to provide more and better access to Lake Michigan along Wisconsin's shoreline. Access points on the trail will be based towards sea kayaking. Eventually the trail will be region-wide and include Michigan, Indiana and Illinois. The Lake Michigan Water Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail were the two Wisconsin projects chosen for America's Great Outdoors Initiative. The DNR will apply for designation as a National Recreation Trail, and it will also go to the NRB for a State Trails designation.
 - http://dnr.wi.gov/master_planning/lakemichigan/
- The Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) will be planning a public review in April, with finalization of the plan in July 2012.
- Other projects in the beginning planning stages include the Mukwonago River Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest (former Rainbow Springs property), and the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant in Sauk County.
- Three potential amendments to master plans are being discussed, at the request of user groups; to allow off-road bicycling at Rib Mountain State Park and Hoffman Hills State Recreation Area, and to allow for a snowmobile trail at Blue Mound State Park. All three proposals would need to go through a public involvement and review process. An amendment to a master plan would mean the activity is a new use not addressed by the original plan. A variance to a master plan means the use is considered within the scope of the original plan.
- The DNR is working on a special events policy to address the growing number of athletic and other special event requests coming in from event organizers. The DNR is looking to accommodate these requests where appropriate. The policy will help determine the level of the Department's involvement in the event as well.



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- Information about the Power Driven Mobility Devices (PDMD) regulations for ADA has been posted the DNR website.
- Several proposed land acquisitions benefitting trails will be going to the Natural Resources Board in the coming months.
- The DNR Secretary's office has been a very strong advocate for the State Park System and has asked Schuller to put together the strategic direction for the State Park System for the next two years. Schuller stated council members could send any comments to him.

11:50 A.M. – Public Comment

- Mike Wollmer, Executive Director for the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA), stated it was important for the different trail organizations to discuss issues together. Wollmer stated the IATA has over 3,500 members, and put in thousands of volunteer hours, mostly on state land. The IATA has been asked by other trail organizations for consultation on trail building projects. Wollmer thanked the council for their work and stated that he hoped to regularly attend STC meetings.

12:00 P.M. – Adjourn

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