



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

## Meeting Minutes

Final - as of 7/9/12

**Wednesday, April 11, 2012**

Conference Room, Department of Tourism, 201 W. Washington Ave., Madison, WI  
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**State Trails Council Members present:** Ken Carpenter, Randy Harden, Doug Johnson, Phil Johnsrud, Skip Maletzke, Bryan Much, Dave Phillips, Luana Schneider, Robbie Webber, Jim White

**State Trails Council Members not in attendance:** Mike McFadzen, Harold Schmidt

**WI DNR Staff present:** Dan Schuller, Peter Biermeier, Brigit Brown, Kris Hess, Tim Parsons, Joseph Warren

**Legislators Present:** Representative Roger Rivard, Lucas Moench (for Senator Joe Leibham)

**Others Present:** Shelly Allness, Ron Bohl, Alex Bub, Dave Peterson, Judy Peterson, David Spiegelberg, Hank Wozniel

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

- Harden called the meeting to order. Repair of minutes to clarify the merger between the Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycle Association (WORBA) and the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) with regard to membership reciprocity. Motion for approval of the January 13, 2012 meeting minutes by Much. Seconded by Maletzke. Minutes approved.

### 10:10 A.M. – Chair Report

- Harden recently attended a round table for the Wisconsin Department of Tourism. Per the discussion from the last STC meeting the agenda has been changed to have the DNR report at the beginning.

### 10:15 A.M. – DNR Report

- There has been a push at the Federal level to refocus the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF). The DNR currently gets some money from this fund. The Lake Michigan Water Trail and the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (Cross Pains to Devil's Lake segment) were the two Wisconsin projects chosen for America's Great Outdoors Initiative. Schuller passed out a handout for the Ice Age Complex at Cross Pains and a handout of the Inventory and Analysis for Wisconsin's Lake Michigan Water Trail project.
- The DNR is finalizing the Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) for 2011-2016. The draft plan will be available public review about the end of May.
- The Sporting Heritage law which recently passed the Legislature changes the way trapping, hunting and fishing take place in state parks. State Parks have previously not allowed trapping to take place, and typically deer hunting was allowed in most parks. The new law changes the dynamic by opening all parks to all hunting and trapping seasons unless closed by special approval. Schuller passed out a handout of Wisconsin ACT 168. Section 29.089, Wisconsin Statutes includes the language regarding state parks. The law does not take effect until January 2013 and the DNR needs to work through the implementation process before then. The DNR will give an update at the July STC meeting.
- The Wisconsin DNR launched a new website in February. Improvements will continue to be made.



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- Master plans in progress include the Lake Michigan Water Trail, Ice Age Complex at Cross Plains, Lower Wolf River State Fishery Area (the Wolf River State Trail goes through a portion of this property), and High Cliff State Park. The master plans for the five Door County state parks (Newport, Peninsula, Potawatomi, Rock Island and Whitefish Dunes) will begin in fall 2012. The DNR is also working on a plan overview for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area. This is the former Badger Army Ammunition Plant, adjacent to Devil's Lake State Park, which at one point was the largest ammunition plant in the world. Capital development projects in the state parks include a lot of bridge and shoreline/erosion work.
- The DNR administration and the Governor have been receptive of the concept of a motorized recreation area and the DNR continues to move forward with the concept. Biermeier stated he was attending the Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association meeting this week to hear their ideas. User groups and riders have given their suggestions as to sites that might be a possibility to hold a state motorized recreation area.
- There will be several Work\*Play\*Earth Day events at state parks in April and early May. The events have become popular over the last couple years. Volunteers help clean the parks and get them ready for summer.
- The Governor has begun making appointments to the Nonmotorized Recreation and Transportation Trails Council (NRTTC). Currently there is no funding assigned to the council. More information about the council is available online: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/parks/trails/nrttc.html>.
- The Wolf River State Trail corridor connects the communities Crandon and White Lake in northern Wisconsin. The trail is open in Forest County to ATV use. The trail is currently under development in Langlade County. The DNR is the owner of the rail corridor. The County partners have the discretion of uses and everyday management of the trail. A portion of the trail goes alongside the Wolf River State Fishery Area which has received sport fishing restoration funding. Currently, ATVs are not allowed on the portion of the trail that runs beside the fishery area. Alternative routes for ATVs are being investigated.
- Jill Mrotek-Glenzinski recently took over Tom Huber's former position at the Wisconsin Department of Transportation.

### **11:00 A.M. – Department of Tourism Presentation**

- Shelly Allness and David Spiegelberg, with the Wisconsin Department of Tourism, gave a presentation to the council highlighting the Department and the role it plays in promoting trails and recreation in the state. The biggest reason people come to Wisconsin is for the state's outdoor resources. The Department of Tourism works with local units of government, user groups and businesses on marketing efforts. The department manages the Wisconsin Welcome Centers along the Interstate and State Highways. The department's website, <http://www.travelwisconsin.com/>, allows people to see what the state has to offer and to make their personalized trip itinerary. The website features a blog and there have been several celebrity guest writers. The blog and other social media services are important for engaging younger people. Allness passed out a copy of the Tourism Activity Guide which the department publishes and is available for free. Travel Green is an initiative of the Department to promote smart, environmentally friendly business practices and is the first state-sponsored travel green certification program in the nation.
- More information about the Department of Tourism's grants and other projects for tourism businesses is available at <http://industry.travelwisconsin.com/>.



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### 12:45 P.M. – Recreational Trails Program (RTP) Update

- For the most recent RTP obligation, funding was authorized for 79 local trail projects throughout the state. For the second cycle in a row, all eligible grant applications were funded. Applications for the next cycle are currently being prepared and are due back by May 1, 2012. The application will be part of the Stewardship Local Units of Government booklet; as well as posted online: <http://dnr.wi.gov/Aid/RTA.html>.
- For the next grant cycle, 2/3 of the money will be available for the larger projects (\$200,000 max grants), and the remaining 1/3 of the money will be available for the standard \$45,000 max grants.
- The rating and ranking meeting will be in mid-June. Grants could possibly be available in early fall, in time to start some work for the 2012 construction season. Competition is expected to be greater for grant funds this year, as there is less money in the grant pool, and the bulk of the funding will go to a smaller group of projects due to the larger grant cap. There will roughly be \$1.9-million for local trail grants this year. For next year (2013 grant applications), the grant cap will revert to \$45,000.

### 1:10 P.M. – STC Purview Discussion

- Following the December STC meeting, Much put together language from state statute and the STC bylaws, which relate to the council's responsibilities. The language was sent out to council members. STC members are appointed by the Governor and give advice and consultation to the DNR.
- Much stated that his interpretation of the statutes, mission and bylaws is that they allow council members to advise the DNR, but presenting information to someone outside of the DNR should not be done by a member acting in a role as a representative of the STC. Webber stated that she was unsure if all council members interpreted the language the same way. Much stated that resolutions could be passed on by user groups to others outside the DNR.
- Council members discussed the option of a minority opinion at times when resolutions are not passed unanimously. Phillips stated there are also times when the STC advised the DNR on issues the department does not agree with. Carpenter stated that for resolutions, the vote is recorded in the minutes and any objections to the resolution should be noted in the minutes, rather than having a minority opinion. Biermeier stated the council might also consider drafting letters as an option in lieu of a formal resolution. Much stated the letter would also work for users groups. The STC will keep the purview discussion on the July meeting agenda.

### 1:30 P.M. – State Trails Council Member Reports

- *Off-Highway Vehicles.* On August 17-18, 2012, the Wisconsin All-Terrain Vehicle Association (WATVA) will be hosting a dirt and snow techniques and equipment show. All user groups, motorized or non-motorized, are welcome to participate. The Permanent Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV) registration program was signed into law on April 2. The grant program for ATVs is about \$450 to \$600 a mile. For UTV trails, the total is about \$700 per mile. WATVA is working with the DNR to have a free ATV registration weekend in 2013 that will coincide with the Wisconsin free fishing weekend and state parks open house day.
- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles.* There were some good winter rides and now summer season trail riding is getting ready to start. Most trails are on private property, and the main issue is the insurance for private riding areas. The Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association (WOHVA) will be holding chainsaw training on April 12 as part of their annual OHV enthusiast workshop in Mole Lake. The Wisconsin 4-



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Wheel Drive Association (W4WDA) will be holding their Spring Fling in May. OHV groups are working with the National Forests on their trail systems.

- *Wheels/Small Boards.* No report.
- *Tourism/Business.* Maletzke attended the Wisconsin Governor's Tourism Conference in March in Green Bay. Marketing strategies and social media were topics of discussion. The 2013 Tourism Conference will be held in Madison at the Monona Terrace.
- *Equestrian.* There are three trail building schools held this summer. STC members can contact Carpenter or Brown if interested in attending. Horse groups are working with the DNR on master planning. The Point Beach State Forest master plan was recently completed and included a trail connection for equestrians. The Midwest Horse Fair is April 20-22, 2012 in Madison.
- *Off-Highway Motorcycles.* Off-highway motorcycle groups are continuing to work with legislators on a sticker program. In Forest County, the Nicolet and Wolf River trails are open to off-highway motorcycles. In June, there will be a trail ride in Wabeno on National Forest and private land. Much toured motorized parks in Indiana. The parks benefit the communities where they are located. Much also toured Big Bend Ranch in Texas where riding is permitted. Photos and descriptions of all the parks Much toured are available at [www.cannonshot.net](http://www.cannonshot.net).
- *Hiking/Walking.* Phillips recently took a trip from Madison, to Chicago, Washington D.C., New York and back to Madison all without using a car. Phillips stated there has been a big increase in the facilities for walking and bicycling. Phillips stated these facilities were first controversial, but now accepted.
- *Snowmobiling.* Johnson passed out an Annual Report of the Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC). It was a disappointing winter season for snowfall totals. Some counties did better than others from an economic standpoint. There were 10 snowmobiling fatalities, the lowest number in 20 years. Legislation that would have increased money to the snowmobile fund ended in committee in January. AWSC partnered with *Discover Wisconsin* to produce a 20-minute show promoting snowmobiling in Wisconsin.
- *Bicycling.* Federal transportation money funding is on a continuing resolution that has been extended to June. Federal programs for trails include Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails Program (RTP) which funds the State Trails Council, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program, and Safe Routes to Schools. Madison has a bike share program that is designed to let people check out and use a bike for short trips. The program is getting popular in larger cities. More local communities are funding trails themselves as they are unsure if state and federal money will be available. The state bike summit had over 400 people. Winter bicycling, including deep snow biking, is gaining popularity. Bicyclists have expressed safety concerns regarding hunting on state park lands.
- *Water Trails.* Phil Johnsrud was recently appointed to the State Trails Council as the nonmotorized water trails representative. Johnsrud stated he is also heavily involved in cross-country skiing and belongs to the local snowmobile club. Johnsrud stated he is a long-term user of the Wolf River and that the area has put a lot of effort to make the Wolf River a premier non-motorized river and fishery area. Johnsrud stated there are a lot of ATV trails in the county, and would like to see the Wolf River State Trail remain non-motorized.



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- *Cross-Country Skiing.* The 2011/2012 ski season was a letdown due to minimal snow across most of the state. North-central and northwest Wisconsin had good conditions for most of the season. Youth ski participation was excellent throughout the state with southern programs doing more dry land training. Early reports indicate ski and apparel vendors had strong early season sales. The American Birkebeiner Ski Race had record numbers in almost all events. (Report submitted prior to the meeting).
- Phillips stated that Minnesota has a trail pass just for cross-country skiing where all money goes for grooming of trails. Brown stated that Minnesota has a separate fund from skiing that funds the other trails, which Wisconsin does not have.
- *Off-Road Bicycles.* The Wisconsin Off-Road Bicycling Association (WORBA) and the Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW) are now merged. Several mountain bike groups around the state have applied for or are International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) chapters. The BFW recently held a conference call with Wisconsin mountain biking representatives to discuss developing a statewide plan for off-road biking. The IMBA Trail Care Crew will be in the state August 23-26 in Rhinelander, and September 6-9 in the Green Bay area. The crew may also be coming Milwaukee and Manitowoc in late summer. People interested can register at [www.imba.com](http://www.imba.com). (Report submitted prior to the meeting).

### **2:45 P.M. – Public Comment**

- Alex Bub with the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association stated he met with the County Foresters and the DNR to discuss reopening Kobby Ridge Park in Clark County. The park may potentially reopen in June after some maintenance and trail work is complete.
- Dave Peterson stated the Wolf River area is turning back into gem for fishing. Peterson stated the rail grade the Wolf River State Trail is on travels through a sensitive area along the Wolf River and wetlands and supports keeping the section of trail as non-motorized. Peterson stated he understands that motorized users want to connect their trail systems and hopes alternatives can be found to the rail corridor along the Wolf River.
- Judy Peterson stated she is a member of the White Lake Historical Society and would also like to see the Wolf River State Trail remain as a non-motorized trail in Langlade County. There is a parking area less than a mile for Hollister Road that allows people who are disabled access to enjoy the trail and area.

### **3:00 P.M. – Adjourn**

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