



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 12, 2015

Hartland Public Library
110 East Park Ave.
Hartland, WI 53029
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members present:

Clayton Griessmeyer [for Robbie Webber], bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)

Leif Hubbard, *Wisconsin Department of Transportation* [non-voting]

Kricket Jewett [for Ken Carpenter], equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)

Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs*)

Skip Maletzke, tourism/business representative [non-voting]

Bryan Much, off-highway motorcycle representative (member of *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association*) [STC Chair]

Ken Neitzke, hiking representative (member of the *Ice Age Trail Alliance*)

Luana Schneider, 4-wheel drive vehicles representative (member of *Wisconsin 4-Wheel Drive Association*) [STC Secretary]

John Siegert, off-road bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*) [STC Vice Chair]

Jim White, boards and small wheels representative

Hank Wozniel [for Randy Harden], ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association*)

State Trails Council Members not in attendance

Ken Carpenter, equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)

Randy Harden, ATV/UTV representative (member of *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association*)

Phil Johnsrud, non-motorized water trails representative

Mike McFadzen, cross-country skiing representative (member of *WI Nordic Network, Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club*)

Robbie Webber, bicycling representative (member of *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin*)

Invited speakers

David Cox, *Village of Hartland*

Kris Jensen, *Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance*

Marlene Millevolte

Others present

Judy Peterson (snowmobiling/biking)

Dave Peterson (snowmobiling/biking)

WI DNR Staff present:

Brigit Brown, Daniel Buckler, Ryder Will

10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

- Much called the meeting to order. Council members and guests introduced themselves.



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10:03 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of August meeting minutes

- McFadzen submitted a written edit to the August minutes. The cross-country ski report should include the following: “CXC also has an adaptive skiing program which enables disabled people to get onto snow, including veterans from the Iraqi and Afghani wars. Some of the top skiers advance to the Winter Paralympics level.”
- Johnson moved to approve the minutes as amended. Neitzke seconded. Motion passed.

10:04 A.M. – Election of officers

- Brown reviewed the slate of nominees for Council elected positions for 2016, all continuing their roles from 2015: Much for Chair, Siegert for Vice-Chair, Schneider for Secretary. Brown called for any additional nominations from the floor. No additional nominations were made. Brown called for discussion. There was no discussion. Johnson moved to accept the current slate of officers for the 2016 Council session. White seconded. There was no additional discussion. Motion passed.

10:05 A.M. – Chair report

- Much acknowledged Johnsrud, whose term has expired and who is not seeking another term on the Council. A certificate of appreciation will be sent to Johnsrud.
- There is a solicitation distributed which seeks to find a new representative for the water trail community. The solicitation appeared in the DNR's Trail News electronic newsletter and will be sent to different water trail groups.
- Much called for Council volunteers to serve on an ad-hoc committee to review water trail applicants and report back to the Council, hopefully for the January meeting. Johnson, White and Seigert will serve on this committee.
- The road inventory project which had been presented to the Council in previous meetings has finished developing its criteria for evaluating roads. The DNR will continue to map and inventory their road network, but Much noted that no changes in road usage would occur outside of the master planning process on a property-by-property basis. The wider issue is now outside of the purview of the Council, but user groups should follow the issue at properties where they have interest.
- Much reminded the Council about the recent opening of tribal night hunting in the Ceded Territory.

10:17 A.M. – Scheduling 2016 meeting dates

- The Council discussed proposed dates for 2016 meetings. The proposed dates are: Tuesday January 12 (teleconference), Friday April 29, Friday August 12, and Thursday November 10. All agreed to the dates, though Much noted that the dates could be adjusted if necessary.

10:26 A.M. – Recreational Trails Program funding update

- Diane Conklin, DNR administrator for the RTP program, was reached via phone. She reviewed the structure of the spreadsheet distributed at the meeting documenting RTP projects. She then reviewed some things about the RTP program, such as the 50% cost share and the fact that usually projects cannot blend federal with other federal monies, or state with other state monies, but usually can blend federal and state successfully. When federal money is used, projects must take into consideration federal salary and wage requirements.
- On state properties, there can be an 80/20 match. It provides a better opportunity to spread the money around.
- Conklin announced that she will be retiring next year. She hopes that her replacement will transition into the role before she retires. Much thanked Conklin for all of her work.
- Siegert noted that there have not been many mountain biking projects in the RTP and asked why. Brown responded that it is mostly because mountain biking groups are not applying. It does not have to be a unit of government applying for the RTP grants; organizations can apply too.



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- Much said that members should explore the [RTP information](#) linked from the [Council website](#).

10:40 A.M. – Presentation on Hartland as an Ice Age Trail Community

- David Cox, the Village of Hartland Administrator, gave a presentation about Hartland becoming the first Ice Age Trail Community through the Ice Age Trail Alliance (IATA).
- Cox reviewed the history of the project to promote the village's identity and link it to the trail. The Village's Conservation and Outdoor Recreation Plan had been previously worked upon to inventory and establish trails throughout Hartland. The Ice Age Trail, which goes right through town has been highly used, but many people did not know that it was the IAT and that it is linked to a large network of trails outside of the Village. The Village asked UW-Milwaukee to help design ways to incorporate the IAT and other trails into the character of the Village.
- With leadership from the Hartland Business Improvement District, as well as village residents, a program to enhance awareness of the IAT and other trails was started. They wanted to use the IAT to "brand" the downtown. Cox then reviewed some of the ways the trail is incorporated into Village events, like parades and educational programs.
- Cox said that the Village just celebrated the IATA designation at a ceremony in October. He emphasized that through designation, the Village could highlight its relationship to the trail and capitalize on it. It is a mutually beneficial, symbiotic opportunity for the trail as well as the Village.
- Council members asked about whether the Village has provided a budget for the project, about programming and if there was a cost for designation. Cox said that there is not a specific budget for the project, but that the IAT is incorporated into events and outings already established. There was a one-time fee of \$2,500 paid to the IATA. In exchange, the IATA provides staff resources, signage, decals and other things.
- Marlene Millevolte, an artist and promoter of the trail in Hartland, spoke about the benefits the trail has brought to the Village as well as the improvements made downtown with the promotion of the IAT. For instance, she has painted a large Ice Age themed mural on the front of her downtown business. Millevolte will continue to apply for grants to improve the corridor and find more art for it. Together, they can make Hartland a really special place.

11:12 A.M. – Presentation on the "Walk the Wauk" hiking incentive program

- Kris Jensen of the Waukesha/Milwaukee County Chapter of the Ice Age Trail Alliance reviewed the hiking incentive program to the Council. Of the 20 IAT chapters, nine of them have hiking incentive programs. The Walk the Wauk program started in 2007. People who apply have to pay a small cost and they try to complete each segment of the IAT within Waukesha County. It is meant to motivate people to visit places that they might otherwise not visit. Each year, the Milwaukee/Waukesha chapter have about 75-110 people sign up each year, with about 30% not completing the segments through the year. Most people who sign up are not IATA members, though that is encouraged by the individual chapters, particularly because \$5 of each membership from that chapter goes to the chapter for different purposes.
- Each person who signs up receives print outs of the IATA atlas and companion guides for the chapter area, excerpted from the wider statewide resources. If one completes all segments, one receives a Walk the Wauk patch, an award certificate, an IAT sticker and IAT bookmark. People can also register their dog and if the dog completes the segments, it gets a bandana designed by the National Park Service.
- Jensen promoted the [Summer Saunters](#) program which encourages summer school students to get outside and go hiking.
- Wozniel asked about different promotional events used by the program, or the IATA chapter in general. Jensen said that First Day Hikes are always very popular, as well as hikes and other trail uses during National Trails Day. There are also many work days and organized outings on the trail in Waukesha and across the state. Wozniel said it sounds like a great opportunity for Boy Scout trips and projects. Neitzke said that the Kettle Moraine State Forest – Southern Unit has hosted a lot of scouting



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trips and projects, but he is unsure about the northern kettles. The DNR and IATA chapters are involved with those outings.

11:40 A.M. – Lunch

12:11 P.M. – Morning review

- Much reviewed the morning's presentations and the Council discussed the importance of partnerships between communities, businesses and trail networks. Communities are always looking for tourist dollars, and so it is a perfect opportunity for trail user groups to form partnerships.

12:19 P.M. – DNR Report

- Ryder Will gave an update to DNR master planning underway. He commented that most of the dates for the MP processes are very tentative. [Blue Mound State Park](#) will have its draft MP amendment out within a few weeks. It is of particular importance to snowmobilers and mountain bikers. [Menomonee River Area](#) will be started the first quarter of 2016. The [Sauk Prairie Recreation Area's](#) public comment period is closed; comments are posted to the web. The MP for Door County properties will be starting soon, maybe the first quarter of 2016. [Rib Mountain State Park](#) is undergoing an amendment for the ski hill. Tower Hill State Park has been rolled into the [Lower Wisconsin State Riverway](#) process. They're hopefully looking at the first quarter in 2016 for the first round of public comment. That could have a lot of equestrian and off-road projects. In other, non-Parks related MPs, [Woodboro Lakes Wildlife Area](#) is complete and the plan for [Glacial Lake Grantsburg Properties](#) is either complete or close. The comments are closed and a summary posted for the [Sugar River Planning Group properties](#). Flambeau River State Forest is undergoing a MP variance related to ATVs/UTVs. The [Mukwonago River Unit of the Kettle Moraine State Forest](#) comment period is closed. Next year the MP process may start for Dodge County properties, most of which are wildlife. [Powell Marsh Wildlife Area](#) is in its beginning phases. Northwest Barron County is very early in its process and the northern state forests will undergoing a project in 2017.
- Will reminded Council members about fee changes effective January 1, 2016. Annual vehicle admission fees will be going up \$3. Daily passes will be increasing \$1. Annual trail passes will be \$25 and daily trail passes will be \$5. He also cleared up a nomenclature problem, saying that the reduced rate sticker is often known by people as the "half-price" sticker, but it is not half-price.
- Will told members that the DNR is undergoing an alignment process, but there was not much information about it currently. Will is the first person to temporarily fill Peter Biermeier's position as a Section Chief within Parks and Recreation. He will be in that position for six weeks on an acting basis. Parks has just started the interview process for hiring the next Parks Bureau Director.
- Brigit Brown updated the Council on appointments. She recently spoke to somebody in the Governor's office and she was reassured that Council appointments are on their radar.
- Brown then encouraged all trail user groups to promote the four day trail training course hosted by the Wisconsin Horse Council. The course is basically free to attendees, with the state working with the sponsoring organization to fund the trail training. Some RTP funds are used.
- Brown also noted that applications for [Transportation Alternatives Program](#) are available as of October 30. The program is through the Department of Transportation using federal highway monies. It is the single largest source for trail funding. Applications are due by January 29, 2016.
- The [Bikeways Project](#) is still on track to finish up in the next few months. It is a joint DNR, DOT and Bike Fed project to identify, create and promote a network of mapped bicycle routes in the state. The team finished the second round of public meetings and Wikimaps submissions.

12:39 P.M. – State Trails Council member reports

- *Mountain Biking / Off-Road Bicycles.* Siegert reported that on November 6, the Wisconsin BikeFed held their [bike summit](#) in Appleton, for the first time holding it outside of Madison. About 200 people



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were present, about 50 of whom were mountain bikers. There were also many panel sessions dedicated to mountain biking.

- *Equestrians.* Jewett noted the continued expansion of [Trailmeister](#), a national website for equestrians compiling trail and camping information. Trailmeister will be at the Midwest Horse Fair in April. As was mentioned in the DNR Report, the Wisconsin State Horse Council will be hosting the four-day Trail School. Right now they are in the planning stage and are looking for participants. The Horse Council has a [trail grant program](#). Over the past year, they have been able to grant \$17,000, and over the last 17 years \$260,521 has been granted for equestrian programs. Jewett asked Council members about successful information dispersal to user group members. Much said that communication with off-highway motorcyclists is mostly done online. Johnson said they have a snowmobile magazine and that four times a year, there are meetings of snowmobile representatives from all 72 counties. They also send out emails directly to the 600+ snowmobile clubs. Brown noted to Jewett that in the past, equestrians have been strong advocates of shared use trails, but lately there have been comments from equestrians contrary to that previous support for shared use. Jewett said that it is mostly a demographic issue, but that the Horse Council remains a strong advocate for shared use trails and will help encourage people to support them.
- *Road bicycling.* Griessmeyer said that we are entering the end of the road bicycling season. Many cyclists now switch to indoor riding or to mountain biking. He discussed some of the motivations for road cycling, whether it is for transportation to work, for recreation, for charity, etc, and noted a few large organized rides which have taken place in Wisconsin over the summer and fall. The [League of American Bicyclists](#) recently awarded the City of Madison platinum status as a bike friendly city, and they awarded UW-Madison gold status as a bike friendly university. Wisconsin went from second place in a listing of most bike-friendly states to being eighth now. Siegert then also promoted the Santa Cycle Rampage in Milwaukee, the BikeFed's [Fed Up with Winter](#) event, and noted that many mountain bikers use [Ray's MTB Indoor Park](#) in the winter.
- Jason Wilke spoke about Wauwatosa's [recently opened skate park](#) and that Waukesha is finishing paving the [Bug Line Trail](#). There were a number of different funding sources to pull that off. [Minooka Park](#) in Waukesha County has really taken off as a local mountain biking destination. The Menomonee River Trail opened up today. It travels from northern Wauwatosa down to the village.
- *Boards/Small Wheels.* White said that in the winter time there are a lot of places to skate indoors, such as the [4 Seasons Skate Park of Milwaukee](#). But there are not a lot of people on trails. Many people transition to ice skating. There are about 20 indoor ice skating facilities around the state open to the public. They can be very popular. For instance, [Pettit National Ice Center](#) in Milwaukee draws thousands of people between Christmas and New Years. These facilities usually attract families and teenagers. Brown said that the DNR will be experimenting with porous asphalt on the Badger State Trail to fix cracks, because sometimes the rubber substance used to fill cracks makes it even worse for small wheels. White said he would be happy to skate over the asphalt once it is applied to test it.
- *Hiking.* Neitzke said it was a great summer for hiking. National Trails Day was a success. The celebration started 23 years ago by the American Hiking Society and is always the first Saturday in June. Originally just a hiking day, it has grown across many uses. The Ice Age Trail Alliance completed five major projects across the state in the summer and fall. At Lapham Peak, 226 volunteers constructed one mile of trail. The project used \$15,000 of recreational trails money for equipment and other things. People worked on the North Country Trail all summer long. They finished five miles of new trail in Copper Falls State Park. Michelob sponsored [a national competition for trails](#). The top two winners in voting would win \$25,000 for the sponsoring organization. The Ice Age Trail won first place, and so IATA get \$25,000. Under the current state budget, the IATA took a \$75,000 hit. IATA



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asked their members to help make up the cost and they received an overwhelming response. The American Hiking Society solicits outings in January for the National Trails Day events in June.

- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles.* Schneider said that there was a lot of trail riding happening this summer. Though there are some 4WD trails on county and other public lands, most trail riding is on private property. This is an issue because of the vulnerability of loss of private property mostly due to sale of property and new owners not willing to continue allowing usage of 4WD trails that were maintained by the 4WD club on the property. Many property owners appreciate the maintenance that trail riders do to keep the lanes/trails open and clean. Schneider said that a main concern of hers is access to public lands as much as possible and keeping them sustainable. Schneider noted that the application for the Forest County Off-Road Park has been withdrawn and the project will not be pursued anymore. The group promoting it is looking for a new site outside of Forest County. There is a 4WD group working with a horse group in the Columbus area to have a ride together next summer to promote the shared trails concept. Also, the Wisconsin Four Wheel Drive Association is working on next summer's Wheels to Heal event.
- *Department of Transportation.* Hubbard mentioned that the [Transportation Alternatives Program](#) grant application is out now. He said potential applicants should read it over closely. The DOT has been hearing a lot on roundabouts relative to snowmobiling. How to get sleds and groomers through roundabouts? There is also a national focus on pollinators due to a decrease in pollinator numbers. Heads of departments of transportation and others are working on a national initiative to improve pollinator habitat.
- *Snowmobiling.* Johnson said that [Assembly Bill 434](#) passed both houses, and the Governor signed it this week. The bill cleaned up a number of issues:
 - In the snowmobile community, trail passes do not need a trail pass shown on snowmobiles 35 years or older.
 - For dealers it is difficult to show plates on rental machines. Now they have stickers which would suffice.
 - Whoever purchases a normal trail pass, they could ride with the receipt until they receive their trail pass, though the passes have been arriving in the mail very quickly for registrants.
 - Residents and non-residents could register their antique snowmobiles.

The annual Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs fall workshop was held recently. They had about 550 people attend this year. There they crowned the new Miss Snowflake. Johnson reviewed to the Council that club member trail passes need to be done through the association. That's how it is verified that they are indeed club members. Trail passes through this process are processed very quickly. Since July, over 19,000 club member trail passes have been requested. Johnson said that though there is no snow yet, there are a lot of trail users on land clearing out brush. Additionally, land access is important to maintain and so communication with land owners is vital. Brown asked how much they are tapping into a land owner incentive program? Johnson said that it is discussed each year. The third annual [Celebrate Wisconsin](#) snowmobile event will be February 13-14.

- *All-terrain vehicles.* Wozniel said that their landowner incentive program was taken out during the legislative process. It existed for ten years, but nobody used it. The money was put into the standard ATV/UTV fund and is used for easements. There is precedent for the ATV/UTV community to participate in National Trails Day. Local clubs did demonstration rides that day and eventually pushed legislation to make the weekend free for riding. The next WATVA VIP Ride is September 9, 2016. Wozniel invited all Council members to it. The [Woodboro Lakes Wildlife Area](#) master plan was



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approved which included ATV sections. Wozniel praised the efficiency of the master plan process for that property. The Wisconsin ATV/UTV Association was notified by the U.S. Forest Service that the Flambeau Trail will be open to all UTVs by May 2016.

- *Tourism.* Maletzke said that it has been a good year for tourism. The Department of Tourism saw a slight increase in their budget. Together with other funds, they managed to operate a \$6-7 million advertising budget. Reports from hoteliers and resort owners has been satisfactory. Hotels and resorts are showing higher rates than expected. The state recently passed reform of Wisconsin's room tax. The League of Municipalities was not happy with it, but there will be extra funding for tourism in the state. There is a lot of interest in northern properties for access to state trails. In Oconto County, a trails task force is installing ~600 trail locator signs. They display the U.S. National Grid coordinates. The task force is trying to spread the USNG signs through northern Wisconsin to make it accepted by everybody. The task force has been a great success, bringing 20-25 people to each meeting representing many different user groups.
- *Off-highway motorcycles.* Much noted the success of the August adventure motorcycle ride starting in Vilas County and traveling throughout the area, including the Northern Highland-American Legion State Forest and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. Boulder Junction now promotes itself as a dual sport destination. Next year, the ride and rally will move from Eagle River to Boulder Junction. Motorcycling was originally not included in the [Sauk Prairie Recreation Area](#) master planning discussions. But in the last version of the master plan, some repurposed equestrian and mountain biking trails are slated to be used for dual sport motorcycles for up to six days a year (two 3-day weekends). Much recently presented to the Conservation Congress about off-highway motorcycling recreational interest. There was a DNR official who went to the recent Bucky 7 Dual Sport event and spoke to many people, investigated motorcycles' footprint, and just learned and understood more about motorcycles. Much then showed aerial imagery of a motorized park in Rockford, IL as an example of motorized recreational opportunities successfully incorporated into a town.
- *Cross-country skiing.* McFadzen was not in attendance, but he submitted a report before the meeting. El Niño typically doesn't bode well for Midwest snows, so snow loving types are keeping their fingers crossed. The youth ski programs are flourishing across the state, with participants in the thousands. This bodes well for the future of cross-country skiing which has seen stagnant growth recently. An unforeseen benefit of the youth teams is that it is drawing more parents into cross-country skiing. Youth ski team work-outs have started with dry-land training then morph into on-snow practices (hopefully). Over 10,000 skiers have now registered for the American Birkebeiner Ski Race from Cable to Hayward, which is its maximum capacity, so registration is closed. Many changes have occurred including a new start area, and areas of trail have been widened. Not ski related, but there is an expanding amount of groomed fat bike trails in the Cable area, possibly reaching 30 miles this year. Construction has started on 4km of lighted ski trails in Green Bay, now that the fundraising goal has been met. The 5 year plan includes 10k of lighted trails and snow-making. A great partnership has been developed between the ski clubs and Brown County. Fox Lake Nordic has reorganized their efforts to enhance grooming with new trail access. Future plans include a new ski chalet and better parking.

2:14 P.M. – Mapping initiatives

- Much introduced the mapping discussion, saying that council members should see successful mapping applications that other user groups are using, and that they should be able to make suggestions to the DNR about what they might supply to user groups in terms of applications or data. What is working well? Where is that information? What private companies are there to incorporate data?



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- Siegert and Buckler discussed the functionality of the MTB Project within the mountain biking community.
- Much and Wozniel showed [VVMapping](#) and [RiderX](#) which are very good resources for the motorized community.
- There has been some pushback from local clubs against statewide or national mapping initiatives like RiderX because the clubs like their maps and are able to raise funds through selling their own maps.
- Buckler gave some examples of DNR applications, such as the [Lake Michigan State Water Trail](#).
- Council members agreed that the role of the DNR should focus on data collection and distribution, and make it available to users. There are many mapping applications, devices and programs already existing, but quality data is not readily available in many places, including in state parks.

3:13 P.M. – Public comment

- Dave Peterson from Langlade County spoke about recreation and invasive species. Peterson said that invasive garlic mustard appeared where motorcycles had been. He wondered why the council didn't spend more time discussing invasive species. Much pointed out that user groups have been involved with invasive issues for quite some time. Wozniel, who had been involved with the DNR's best management for invasives project, shared information about garlic mustard being commonly spread by wildlife and all recreational users.
- Brown encouraged Peterson and others to look at the [DNR's invasive species Web page](#) as well as its [best management practices](#) for recreational users.

3:18 P.M. – Identify future agenda items

- Nomination for water trails user group representative

3:18 P.M. – Adjourn

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