

Northwoods Regional ATV Trail System Oversight Committee Meeting
(formerly the 70-Mile Trail Project)

Tuesday, February 9, 2010

6 PM

Quadna Mountain Resort, Hill City, MN

In Attendance: Frank Turnock*, Bob Marcum*, Robin Baker*, Katie Fernholz**, Len Hardy*, Warren Spawn*, Mark Jacobs*, Maynard Ahonen*, Harlan Kingsley*, T.J. Gustin*, Jon Korpi*, Andrew Brown*, Ross Wagner*, Larry Moses, Ken LeVoir, Jack Halverson, Sam Johnson, Randy Frederick, Wes Catlin, Mark Fossum, Larry Best, Hollie Hanson, Roger Bently, Bill Keefe

* = *Committee Member* **=*project coordinator*

AGENDA

6:10 PM – Call to Order

Brian Napstad was not in attendance; Mark Jacobs agreed to Chair the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Agenda (Motion by L. Hardy, Second by R. Baker, Approved)

Approval of 11/17/09 Meeting Minutes (Motion by W. Spawn, Second by H. Kingsley, Approved)

Review of Old Business

- The most recent Progress Report was mailed to 194 project area businesses and interested parties at the end of November. The report was also emailed to the project contact list (197 email addresses) and posted at the project website.
- The project website has been updated to include the trail name – Northwoods Regional ATV Trail System and the domain name www.northwoodstrail.net has been purchased (\$20 for 2 years). Visitors to “northwoodstrail.net” will be directed to the existing project website. (The domain “70miletrail.net” remains active.)

Construction Planning/Legislative Sub-Committee Updates

- A grant of \$155,000 has been awarded by the DNR and the Parks and Trails Legacy Grant Program to support the next stages of the project. The grant is time sensitive with work to be completed by June 2011. The grant application included letters of support from local communities within the project area, including Palisade, McGrath, and Remer. Aitkin County is also working with the DNR to renew the current project grant contract.
- The project is out of funds for trail construction until the new agreement is completed and the new grant paperwork is finished. There are some outstanding bills.
- Representatives from the project attended a joint legislative committee to provide

project information. SF2289 requests bonding money to continue the project and would require a 50% local match.

Logos, Maps and Trail Signs

- The committee reviewed draft logos prepared by Tidholm Productions of Aitkin. Motion to accept the second logo design with darker green and lighter blue for better contrast and addition of the trail name (Motion by H. Kingsley, Second by F. Turnock, Approved). The committee will have another chance to review the logo via email before it is finalized.
- The committee reviewed different sign styles and materials and discussed the need to consider the potential costs of sign theft or vandalizing. The DNR standards for marking and signs along trail routes will be used and MN DOT guidance will be needed for signs along the highway. Signs and maps are to be completed this spring. Sign development is funded through the Yamaha and Polaris grants. A signs subcommittee was formed: Bob Marcum, Andrew Brown, Ross Wagner, Len Hardy and Joseph Majerus.

Phase I Status

- Lawler Loops – plan to open late spring; need to do in-trail signage.
- Moose River Connector – plan to be open late spring with small areas of geoblock to install and signage (the county forest road 54-6 on which the route will travel is open to recreational ATV use from May 15 – Oct 31 and for the hunter/trapper exemption)
- Solana Forest Loop - hope to open by Fall 2010

Phase II Update

- Itasca County is working on the connection in Goodland and should have it figured out later this summer. Also meeting with the county engineer to look at using roads in areas dominated by private land.
- If some of the original Phase II routes can't be worked out, there are some potential alternatives, including a connection from Remer to the UPM Trail or from Blind Lake Trail to the Soo Line.
- The project needs an EAW for Phase II and so the proposed trail alignments should be developed by the County Land Departments by June 1st, so that the EAW process can move forward.
- May need to explore trailhead connections using roadways in dialogue with the County Engineers. Itasca used a road on a 1-year trial basis as a trail connection and monitored impacts. Use of the roadway has been extended for an additional year. Use of roads would need to focus on trailhead connections and criteria/parameters for road use and not just open any roads anywhere. Committee asks that the project coordinator invite the County Engineers and Sheriffs Departments to participate in a discussion of the potential of using county road right-of-way for connecting trails at the next meeting (3/16/10, 6 pm). (Motion R. Marcum, Second A. Brown, Approved).

Schedule Next Committee Meeting

The next meeting will be Tuesday, March 16th at 6pm at Quadna Mountain Resort, Hill City, MN

Agenda for the Next Meeting to Include:

- Planning for Grand Opening Events for Phase I Routes

Public Comments

Q: When will we have new maps?

A: Thinking of doing a small printing of Phase I routes before spring (e.g, 2,000 copies) and a larger printing after all routes are done.

Comment: Over the Hills Gang from Outing printed 4,500 maps and passed out 3,000 so far. Some DNR maps lack information about local services and businesses and this information should be included on the maps.

S. Johnson, DNR Acquisition and Development Specialist with Trails & Waterways: Bob Moore will be less involved, and I'll be attending more meetings. It would be helpful to have maps on the wall at the meeting with routes and progress to-date. A treasurer's report would be helpful. Is there a plan for maintenance?

M. Jacobs, Aitkin County: Had recent meeting with clubs to talk about role of clubs as eyes and ears to monitor trails conditions. Have applied for grant-in-aid funds for trail maintenance. Would like to see the Alliance have a role in maintenance work and coordinating with individual clubs. Could use Ambassadors to monitor trails and trail user interactions.

Comment: Ambassadors have made a big difference and play an important role in monitoring, and information about their effectiveness is posted at the DNR website.

Comment: Trail users communicate trail conditions and concerns to club members and ambassadors, and talk to local business owners.

Larry Moses: Crow Wing County Clubs are having the Spring Fling on April 18th at the old waterfall on 371 from 1 pm – 4 pm with speakers at 3 pm (\$12.50 for the meal).

7:24 PM Adjourn (Motion by R. Wagner, Second W. Spawn, Approved)

*For directions to the meeting location, call: (218) 697-2880 or visit:
<http://www.quadna-resort.com/>*