

70-Mile Trail Oversight Committee Meeting

Tuesday, October 6, 2009

6 PM

In Attendance: Frank Turnock*, Laurie Westerlund*, Robert Marcum*, Katie Fernholz**, Jon Korpi*, Len Hardy*, Brian Napstad*, Mark Jacobs*, Maynard Ahonen*, Frank Turnock*, Warren Spawn*, Pete Seelen, Fred Kamrowski, Gilbert Eigsberg, Darlene Turnock. Larry Moses, Roger D. Bently, Jack Halverson, Ken LeVoir, Jerry Pawlak, Jim Berg
* = *Committee Member* **=*project coordinator*

AGENDA

6:10 PM – Call to Order

Approval of Meeting Agenda with the addition of Trail Name Selections earlier in the agenda (Motion by W. Spawn, Second by J. Korpi, Approved)

Approval of 8/11/09 Meeting Minutes with edits of two typos on page 2 (Motion by L.Hardy, Second by F. Turnock, Approved)

Review of Old Business

- The Aitkin County presentation on the Lawler Loops Update from the August meeting has been prepared as an online video and is available at the project website and at YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gWxK3ELywu8>).

Trail Name Selections

- To support the development of trail signs and maps for the trail system, a trail system name is needed. The names currently under consideration for the overall trail system are:

1. Central Connection Trail
2. Minnesota Central Trail
3. Minnesota 70
4. The Aitkin-Itasca Timber Cruiser
5. Aitkin-Itasca ATV Trail System
6. Aitkin-Itasca Rails to Trails System
7. Great Northwood's ATV Trail System of Aitkin and Itasca Counties
8. Great Aitkin Itasca Trail System
9. Great River Heritage Trail
10. Heart of Mn ATV Trail
11. Mid Mn ATV Trail
12. ATV Rails Trail
13. Aitkin Rails Trail
14. AitItsca ATV Trail

The committee members were provided copies of this list and asked to indicate their top three choices.

The top results of the committee voting were:

- Aitkin-Itasca ATV Trail System (4 votes)
- Minnesota Central Trail (3 votes)
- The Aitkin-Itasca Timber Cruiser (3 votes)
- Great Northwood's ATV Trail System of Aitkin and Itasca Counties (3 votes)
- Mid Mn ATV Trail (3 votes)

Decision to narrow trail name considerations to these top five. (Motion by F. Turnock, Second R. Marcum, Approved)

Amendment of proposed name to "Northwoods Trail System". (Motion by W. Spawn, Second J. Korpi, no objections to name amendment).

The committee will take the five names under consideration with the goal of deciding on the name at the next meeting (November 17th). The committee would like to have a name that provides information about where the trail is located and that can be easily nicknamed. The committee does not want to use individual's names. It was noted that county names and locations might not be well known to potential trail users.

Trail System names under consideration for the next committee meeting:

- Aitkin-Itasca ATV Trail System**
- Minnesota Central Trail**
- The Aitkin-Itasca Timber Cruiser**
- Northwoods Trail System**
- Mid Mn ATV Trail**

The committee also agreed to change the name of one of the Lawler Loop trails to "Dead Moose Loop".

Construction Planning Sub-Committee Update

- The Aitkin and Itasca County Phase I trail construction is nearly complete, pending weather delays. Tour held in September with DNR personnel, Senator Saxhaug and others to review process. There is generally strong support for the project and continued funding for Phase II. Plans are for a grand opening of Phase I routes in the spring or summer of 2010. The completion date for the Solana Forest Loop is not set and will depend upon construction conditions. By spring 2010, about 47 miles of trail will be completed for Phase I. The miles and alignments for Phase II may change the final project total.

Phase II Update

- There is a meeting planned in Goodland Township next week to evaluate possible route. No update on the Hill City connection. There is a meeting on October 15th to evaluate the Big Sandy Route and possibilities with a local property owner. To move forward with Phase II, the committee needs trail route alignments, wetland delineation, and a completed EAW process. Phase II will also need additional funding. The trails program, a grant application to the Lessard-Sams Outdoor Heritage Council and other appropriations may be needed. It may also be

appropriate to approach ATV manufacturers for additional support. The construction experiences with Phase I provide additional information for estimating costs. It is likely that it would have been less expensive to fill wetlands and buy wetland credits but the project chose to use geoblock wherever possible to minimize environmental impacts. The geoblock company has indicated increased inquiries for their product as a result of the project and now has a distributor in Minnesota (Chanhassen).

Legislative Sub-Committee Update

- The committee has not met as a group or with legislative members, as the legislature is not in session. The group needs to develop good estimates of remaining project costs, including potential needs for easement acquisition. There may be some concerns about the sources of public funding and how the state collects and allocates these funds. Information about how much money is available, how it is generated and how it is distributed is available from the DNR.

Schedule Next Committee Meeting

The next meeting of the 70-Mile Trail Oversight Committee will be at 6pm on Tuesday, November 17th at the Long Lake Conservation Center.

Public Comments

L. Moses: Crow Wing County approved a grant-in-aid trail proposal along Hwy 371 and a contract with Dovetail Partners to plan recreation trails. Trails at Camp Ripley are being expanded to support recreation opportunities for military residents. It is named the “Crossroads Trail” and may connect to the Soo Line. There are now 9,200 registered ATVs in Crow Wing County.

B. Napstad: At a recent meeting, counties reported opening up county roads, especially in the northwestern part of the state, to allow riding on roads and shoulders to avoid riding in wet ditches and wetland areas along roads.

F. Turnock: Pine and Carleton County are working to identify connecting roads between trails.

K. Levoir: Businesses are supportive of trails and starting to see revenues. Need to balance the downsides and work with club to promote responsible riding. Developed signs to put at businesses and promote trail safety and staying on trails. Still working to get maps updated.

M. Jacobs: ATV damage in recent months with conservation officers working in every corner of the county. We need to get a handle on these riders. Incidences by Hill City include damage to a Lake, and we need to make an end to this.

Committee Note: Congratulations to Frank and Darlene on 42 Years of Marriage!

7:40 PM Adjourn (Motion L. Hardy, Second W. Spawn, Approved)