

6/29/10

**CWC Comp Rec Plan  
Advisory Group Meeting**

Tuesday, June 29th at 6pm in Meeting Room 2 of the Land Services Building  
(322 Laurel Street, Brainerd, MN 56401)

In attendance: Tad Erickson, Roger Bentley, Greg Larson, Linda Lawrie, Dave Clute, Holly Wolter/Jerry Wolter, Jack McAllister, Daniel Olmschenk, Larry Wannebo, John Reynolds, Gail Brecht\*, Alan Steiff\*, Bill Keefe\*, Bob Manning\*, Brett Hardy\*, Kathy Bernier\*, Larry Moses\*, Rosemary Franzen\*, Russell Heittola\*, Shawn Roberts\*, Tom Whitehead\*, Katie Fernholz\*\*, Bryan Pike\*\*\*, Kirk Titus\*\*\*

\* - advisory group member, \*\* - project coordinator, \*\*\*-Land Services Department Staff

Agenda

- Welcome/overview
- Presentation of “Non-Motorized Summer Trails”
- Brainstorming “Present” & “Missing”
- Next steps/public comment

Approval of notes from April 21<sup>st</sup> (Motion B. Keefe, Second A. Steiff, Approved)

Presentation made by Bryan Pike, Crow Wing County Land Services Department regarding non-motorized summer trails. Presentation posted at:

<http://www.dovetailinc.org/files/62910CWCsm.pdf>

Brainstorming:

Ground Rules

For the Advisory Group:

- One person speaks at a time
- All share ideas, everyone participates
- Questions welcome for clarification
- No one may criticize another
- Ideas may be reviewed for themes
- Feelings may be expressed
- Discussions are about positions not personalities
- Listen respectfully and sincerely, try to understand others

For Facilitator:

- Make participants comfortable
- Share/enforce ground rules
- Communicate with each participant
- Act neutral
- Stay positive
- Allow thinking time
- Avoid lengthy comments, verbal rewards, leading or loading questions, or know-it-all tone

What is present that supports summer non-motorized trails? (What does CWC have?)

*Includes comments from the Advisory Group and public input*

- Designated trails (15 routes)
- Mowing contract (twice per year)
- Gated access
- Nearly 60 miles, 7,500 acres non-motorized trails
- Heavy hunter use in fall
- Positive feedback from users
- Diverse non-motorized uses (hiking, hunting, horses, mtn biking)
- Signs/maps at gates
- Hiker walking trails
- Ski trails available for horses
  - Larson Lake, etc.
- Clubs/partnerships on maintenance
- Spread out (N to S)
- Concentration along 210 corridor
- Where more people there is greater use
- Trails also in SE - non-designated
- Public access to public land
- Grass – could be hayed?
- Lake access
- Paved roads that aren't used
- Capability of dual-use (seasonal)
- Low/no public safety issues
- Great natural landscape
- Topographically, wetlands, forests
- Low cost maintenance, \$70/mile
- No enviro impact issues
- Not doing a lot of maintenance (e.g. to support biking/walking at Larson Lake)
- Not supporting whole range of non-motorized activities
- Lack of user groups helping with maintenance
- User groups could be engaged
- User group fees
- Ski permits/fees (Daily \$4-5, 3-yr. individual \$28)
- G/A ski pass
  - French Rapids
  - Larson Lake
  - Not at Wolf Lake
- Need G/A application for Wolf Lake (lack of state funds)
- French Rapids maintenance done with ski fees (remove trees, etc.) (Nordic ski club maintains trail)
- Application for Wolf Lake G/A funds
- Birds and wildlife abundance
- Wild turkeys
- Botanical diversity
- Public support for trail network
- Large blocks of county land
- Also smaller areas/diversity
- Land department that cares about trails
- Good potential for economic development
- Diverse lodging
- Information accessible to public
- Gates, trail names, quiet solitude
- Maps (show areas of public property)
- Maps with locations
- Info for people new to area
- Website (maps at website), could be more user friendly
- Trail descriptions (Twnshp/Section/Range)
- State website with map links
- Lots of public land, undeveloped trails, wetlands and small lakes
- Many trails in addition to designated trails
- Opportunities for trails on non-CWC lands
- Opportunity with Gull Lake trail system
- Opportunities for trails connecting county lands to Community Center in Crosslake
- Scenic overlooks
- Large pines, white-red-jack
- Great county to draw people to/tourism
- Guidelines for trail design to reduce maintenance

## Missing

- Website enhancements
- GPS coordinates
- Communication gap between government/county/state DNR/cities
- “Master Plan” involving all governments
- Getting people here/economy goals
- One website with all trails
- Concept focused on “green recreation”
- Lack of parking/no parking
- Present: dead-end trails/Missing: connecting trails, loops, signs with names
- More frequent maintenance
- Not user friendly
- Interpretive displays/overlooks along trail
- Strategy for what non-motorized trails are intended to offer – target user group identified
- Collaboration amongst non-motorized user groups
- Length – short for riding (bikes/horses want – 7 to 15 miles)
- Short trails – want to know about other ungroomed trails in area/connections
- Designate parking for trailers/horse riders
- Adequate signs along main routes directing users to trail
- Knowledge of existing trails
- Facilities – none? Restrooms/outhouse
- General rules signs/no camping/dumping at trailheads
- Overnight parking
- Signs not at all properties
- Costs for monitoring/enforcement (need information – staff time, cost)
- Costs for clearing trees, trail building, information
- Actual hiking trails/mostly hiking on forest roads
- Nothing is single-track for hiking/riding
- French Rapids user created “cow path”
- Narrow trails in woods/near water
- Recreation user data/visitor statistics/use
- Sustainable trail vs. cow path
- Plan for trail building
- Healthy recreation trails – includes exercises/obstacles (had at park)
- Trails geared toward kids (encourage to get out)
- Trails for handicapped users
- Backpacking/remote campsites
- User fees
- County trail pass/user fees/licenses could support more mowing/maintenance
- Canoe portage trails
- Water trails
- A place at website with GPS-ed logging roads/forest roads (e.g. for horse riding)
- Emergency markers/GPS locations
- Leave some areas alone/wilderness areas
- Cost info – what is total with all maintenance, littering, public nuisance? Missing info of full costs to keep trails open
- What is being used a lot on other lands (county could reduce pressure)
- Info about areas beyond county lands
- Info about what county could provide that is missing elsewhere
- Cuyuna Mtn Bike Assoc may fill a niche; others still need to be addressed?
- Opportunities for local users
- Info about what’s missing on the landscape and can county provide it
- Superior Hiking Trail
- Don’t have to compete with trail areas
- “Regional Trail Destination” requires variety for users/visitors with concentration in an area (e.g. WI model)

- Offer different views, forest types, experiences
- Impact analysis of recreation trails and users (environment, soils, wildlife, residents)
- Parameters for trail uses/user groups
- Info about economics/budgets
- Mowing budget
- Education about allowed trail uses
- Collaboration with Boy Scouts, STS, clubs on maintenance
- Areas free of noise from snowmobiles/ATVs
- Enforcement of ATV regulations on non-motorized trails
- “limited” classification of forest land
- MOU with state to allow COs to enforce ATV regs on cnty lands
- Remote campsites on remote lakes
- GPS downloads on website to remote lakes and campsites
- Public awareness of public land availability
- Trails aren’t near paved roads (limited access/parking)
- Measures of use (guest books at ski trails – could use at other trails)
- Brochures for gated/non-motorized trails (like what ski trails have)
- Lost dirt bike trails by new runway at the airport
- Snack bars
- Formalized trailheads – amenities
- Signage/Maps
- Volunteer maintenance
- Educational opportunities –schools-interpretive
- Campsites, backpacks
- Horse area
- Trail center
- Connections to state and other trails
- Dog off-leash trails
- Resource Mgmt signs – explaining mgmt activities
- Wildlife observation sites
- Trail structures (bridges, benches, lookouts)
- Rules/Regulations/Enforcement
- Identify and Logo (Branding/Marketing)
- Greer Lake Campground/Hiking Trail
- Cuyuna Mt Bike Trail
- Need trail description narratives – terrain, vegetation
- Need driving directions

## Priorities

- Visitor use information/numbers
- Mountain biking opportunities (limited by tall grass)
- Restrooms/water (problems at merchants, SuperAmerica at Merrifield)
- Info at website (like DNR site, locations, facilities, etc.; interactive map/trail descriptions, rankings, difficulties, usage narrative) (work with region 5)
- Information/access to maps at website
- More advertising, marketing/promotions
- Make real hiking trail areas with connections/parameters
- Extension of existing trails for greater mileage
- Single concept focused on recreation in CWC to create positive image of recreation, “healthy – enviro-friendly – multi-use – dynamic – cost-effective – sustainable (financially)”
- Info improvements to increase awareness of what is already available
- Need cooperation between all government (local, state, county) and use to promote tourism (address lack of awareness)
- All of the above – facilities, parking for trailers, restrooms, water
- Collaboration
  - Encourage public to recognize potential
  - Develop sense of pride/responsibilities to maintain and use
  - Information dissemination
- Maps for those without web access/places to get maps (hard copies)
- Solitude areas large enough to be quiet
- Formalized, developed and planned trailheads
- Better knowledge/mapping of all trails (whether maintained or logging roads, etc)

## Public Comments:

T. Erickson: Region 5 recently completed a recreation facilities study for Crow Wing County. In the process of developing a regional trails map project. Region 5 has an on-going effort to develop a one-stop shop for trail maps in the region.

*Update: Recreational facilities study is now available at:*

<http://www.dovetailinc.org/files/RecFacInventoryCompressed.pdf.zip>

K. Titus: The Land Services Department has been involved with the Region 5 projects and is checking the accuracy of the map. Also working with Outdoor Heritage Council funded project to inventory all trails in the state.

J. McAllister, Cuyuna Heritage: Want to see canoe portage trails addressed, and when will the May field tour information be available at website?

K. Fernholz: Tour information will be posted as soon as possible.

*Update: May 27<sup>th</sup> field tour information is now available at:*  
<http://www.dovetailinc.org/files/CWCFieldTourInfo52710bsm.pdf>

L. Wannebo: There are additional specific trail types, including potential birding trails with local Audubon Chapter and eco-trails that are 5-10 mile loops through diverse habitat. It is important to feature water resources of Crow Wing County. Multi-use can mean multi-abuse. Can discourage use based upon names, such as hiking being combined with hunter walking trails. Need more specific names for certain markets; important distinctions for labels, marketing, etc. Need to identify market – local, regional, state, national, etc. Can't be all things to all people. Limited by natural resources and assets.

L. Lawrie: I'm unclear about plans to expand trails. Based on this meeting, will non-motorized trails be expanded or not?

K. Fernholz: There will be 4 more monthly meetings for the project. Each meeting will have a similar format as this meeting and will address specific types of recreational trails and uses. As the planning process is completed the trails needs and priorities will be identified.

D. Clute, DNR: Looking for trailheads where people can meet, interact and gather with formalized trail, safe parking, and signs for directions. Adds opportunities for marketing, user group collaboration, logos, community pride, etc. A bigger trail system offers a full mix of benefits and logical starting point to support positive message.

Adjourned 8:10pm

Next meeting: 6pm, July 27<sup>th</sup> – Agenda: Non-Motorized Winter Trails

For more information about the project visit:  
<http://www.dovetailinc.org/content/crow-wing-county-recreation>

Or contact:  
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