



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, November 10, 2016

City-County Government Center
160 S. Macy Street
Fond du Lac, WI 54935
10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

State Trails Council Members present:

Dave Cieslewicz [for Robbie Webber], road bicycling representative (Executive Director of the *Bicycle Federation of Wisconsin (BFW)*)

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 (AWSC)*)

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

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

Rich Ramsey [for John Siegert], off-road bicycling representative

Jim White, boards and small wheels representative

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

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 (WATVA)*)

Phil Johnsrud, non-motorized water trails representative

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

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

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

Invited speakers

Sam Tobias, *Fond du Lac County Planning and Parks Department*

Others present

Laura DeGolier, *Park Watch of Fond du Lac*

Pete Doll

Mary Haysin

Jeff Lohry, *Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association*

Tom Shuppe

Mitch Winder, *Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association*

WI DNR Staff present:

Brigit Brown, Daniel Buckler, Kelly Raleigh Moses, Bobbi Winebar



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10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

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

10:05 A.M. – Agenda review/repair and approval of August meeting minutes

- McFadzen moved to approve the August minutes. Johnson seconded. Motion passed.

10:06 A.M. – Election of Council officers

- Brown reviewed the standing nominations for 2017 Council officer positions – Chair: Bryan Much, Vice Chair: Ken Neitzke, and Secretary: Doug Johnson.
- Brown suggested joining the three nominations as one slate of candidates. No Council members were opposed. It was moved to accept the slate of officers for 2017. All approved.

10:07 A.M. – Chair report

- Much discussed the need to identify 2017 meeting dates. Brown noted that the next Council meeting should be before a Recreational Trails Program staff meeting on Tuesday, January 10. Tentative dates for 2017 meetings are: Monday, January 9 (teleconference); Thursday, April 27; Friday, August 4; and, Thursday, November 9.
- Much and Buckler reviewed a new method of Council members submitting their travel vouchers at the meetings.
- Much handed out information about the procedure for applying for a position on the Council and encouraged all Council members to reach out to people they may know in the appropriate user groups to encourage them to apply. The goal is to send multiple names to the Governor's Office (ideally three names could be submitted). Council members said they would seek out applicants. Brown encouraged people to sign up for Trail News to keep abreast of information, including about the Council.
- Much noted that the public comment period is open to all and that the Council is often able to include public comment during Council discussions instead of always restricting it to the designated comment period.

10:22 A.M. – Fond du Lac County trails and initiatives

- Tobias introduced himself and discussed the extensive trail and secondary road system in Wisconsin in general, and Fond du Lac County in particular. There is a 259-mile snowmobile system in Fond du Lac County, 38 miles of which are on State Trails (Eisenbahn, Wild Goose and Mascoutin Valley).
- Tobias talked about the [Fond du Lac Loop](#) which is a bicycle and pedestrian pathway through the County. The Loop is only possible by a partnership with a lot of people and organizations. For example, 2.5 miles of trail are on a utility right-of-way, which had been railroad.
- Tobias noted that grant funding is very important to regional recreation. Recent projects included the \$115,000 replacement of an 80-ft clear span bridge in the City of Fond du Lac. But grants are equally important for small projects, such as a \$300 pet waste disposal project.
- Future plans were brought up, including the hopeful completion of the Mascoutin Valley State Trail between Ripon and Rosendale.
- Responding to an inquiry from the public, Tobias and Brown discussed what railroad abandonment actually entailed, and detailed partnerships with utilities that often exist on former railroad corridors.

10:40 A.M. – Recreational Trails Program update

- Winebar noted that DNR staff are revamping guidance documents, including eliminating unnecessary questions on applications. When available, the current application will be available on the [DNR website](#).



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- Winebar passed out a Recreational Trails funding spreadsheet detailing allocations to motorized, non-motorized and diversified projects.
- Winebar said that Recreational Trails Funding has been able to fund 78 projects in the state for 2016.
- A question from the public was raised about where the money was being dispersed. Winebar said that there is a meeting in July when allocation recommendations are made about RTP funds for the scored applications that were received.
- A question was raised about an application submitted one year getting tweaked and resubmitted again. Winebar said that different phases of a project *might* be able to be submitted separately, but they would have to be substantially different.
- More information about the Recreational Trails Program can be found [here](#).

10:49 A.M. – DNR Report

- Brown said that a current package of requests for changes in state law and administrative code related to DNR properties is going to the Natural Resources Board in January. Some of those proposals include topics such as:
 - Updating the definition of a bicycle to make consistent with the Department of Transportation.
 - Updating the definition of a physically disabled person.
 - Firewood in DNR campgrounds.
 - Eliminating some abilities to cheat the camping reservation system.
 - The limited use of electric bicycles on some properties.
 - Special event policies on state land.
 - Including water trails as eligible to be designated as a state trail.
- Brown said that park managers have been tasked with entering data about the roads within their properties by summer 2017.
- Brown then listed off some additional projects that are at different stages of completion:
 - The Sauk Prairie Recreation Area Master Plan is going to the NRB in December for approval.
 - The proposed Great Sauk State Trail would run through Sauk Prairie. The designation of the Great Sauk as a State Trail is going to the NRB in December.
 - The DNR and partners are trying to close the gap on the west end of the Glacial Drumlin State Trail between Madison and Cottage Grove.
 - The DNR and DOT are trying to make a connection in Winona between Wisconsin and Minnesota.
 - The Bikeways Plan is to go out for public review in early 2017. The plan identifies long distance bicycle routes in Wisconsin.
 - The DNR and DOT are working together to make roundabouts more trail friendly.
- McFadzen asked who he and Council members could contact about the Road Inventory process. Brown suggested consulting the [website](#).
- A member of the public noted that there are a lot of E-Bike use requests on the Fond du Lac Loop. Brown said that Tobias is the contact for Fond du Lac County, but on DNR lands there is a process to receive approval. See the [website](#).
- Brown recapped a meeting that the DNR had convened about storm damage and the FEMA reimbursement process. Many snowmobile trails and the North Country Trail were heavily affected by storm damage. In the Chequamegon-Nicolet National Forest, Morgan Falls and St. Peters Dome will probably be closed this winter.

11:06 A.M. – Wisconsin Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) update

- Johnson said that on September 8 there was a SCORP meeting with a lot of user input. A survey was online and Johnson encouraged Council members to contact their user groups about that survey.
- Johnson and Brown discussed that one of the major focuses of the SCORP is the methodology for gathering data from and about users.



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- Johnson noted that a complicating factor in data collection is equipment rental. Is ownership a true way to track usership? How are rentals incorporated?

11:16 A.M. – Initiatives and ideas from a recent trails conference

- Much discussed some of the big ideas and useful topics discussed at the [2016 Annual Joint Conference of the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council and the International Off-Highway Vehicle Administrators Association](#) he attended. These topics included:
 - Story maps - a great way of making a huge amount of content available in a visually appealing way.
 - Different taxes being used to pay for recreational opportunities.
 - Economic impacts of OHV recreation.
 - OHV education programs.
 - The use of new technologies to help with trail planning and maintenance. Example from the Tillamook State Forest in Oregon. They use LiDAR to plan out their trails ahead of time and then step out into the woods to validate their plans. It is much more efficient than starting their planning “from scratch” in the field.
- Much also discussed a recent Oconto County effort to mark trails with the U.S. National Grid.

11:32 A.M. – Lunch

12:05 P.M. – Biennial review of Council structure

- Much reviewed the history of the Council structure and how it is supposed to reflect changing recreational trail uses. He said that there are spheres of general activity: non-motorized/non-mechanized, non-motorized/mechanized, and motorized. There might be some uses that aren't specifically represented, but they fall under the sphere of a representative.
- White said that many uses probably fall between the cracks. His user-group might be able to best capture assorted uses, such as mobility impairments.
- It was noted that the structure should possibly ensure that every trail use has a representative specifically assigned. Much responded that that is the idea of the spheres.
- The Council discussed whether the 11 seat holders are the right groups. Can we visibly demonstrate that we are considering all these different uses? It might be useful to list uses so these user groups know they have a place to reach out. The primary person could cover all of the secondary uses.
- Much recommended three Council volunteers to take these issues and develop more information. An in-progress update could be given in January and then in April fully discuss and decide upon the issue of primary seats and reasonable representation of any significant uses. Furthermore, the Council will discuss the need to associate individuals with those uses or otherwise detail to whom users could contact on the Council. McFadzen, White and Schneider will make-up that ad-hoc committee and will lead the discussion on the topic in January and April.

12:30 P.M. – Exercise to select trail safety and etiquette messages

- Brown said that she is looking for Council input on concise language for etiquette signs along trails. She projected 16 messages and asked Council members to suggest edits to those messages. She then asked the Council members to select their favorite message, and then the five others that they also liked. The messages with the most votes are below:
 - Stay right, pass left
 - Alert others before passing
 - Treat all trail users with respect and courtesy
 - Stay on the trail
 - Tied for fifth
 - Control your speed. Be prepared to slow down and stop.



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- Pack it in, pack it out. Pick up litter.
- Respect public and private landowners' property

12:50 P.M. – State Trails Council member reports

- *Department of Transportation* – Hubbard had no report.
- *4-Wheel Drive Vehicles* – Schneider expressed gratitude to Tim Duenkel who was her replacement at the previous Council meeting. She noted that there is a perennial problem of not having enough 4WD trails in Wisconsin. She said that there had not been much news regarding the [Wisconsin Off-Road Vehicle Park](#) previously proposed for Forest County. She said that there is a new 4WD representative working on 4WD legislation in the state.
- *Snowmobiles* – Johnson said that there were over 200,000 registered snowmobiles in Wisconsin last year. Last year was the first year with the new snowmobile pass, and 134,072 trail passes were issued. The passes have brought additional money into the snowmobile segregated fund. Over 7,000 people were certified in snowmobile safety, with about half of those being done online. These trainings were conducted by 835 volunteer safety instructors. Almost all of the instructors come from local clubs, and the trainings are usually organized through community educational departments. The Governor's Snowmobile Council considered 65 projects this year, amounting to \$4.9 million. About \$2.5 million was able to be funded. Storm damage in the northwest has been extensive. Most trails will be repaired before snow flies, but some trails will not be open this year. The Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs had their fall workshops recently. Celebrate Wisconsin will be held February 19-20 in Siren.
- *All-terrain vehicles* – Wozniel noted that road routes have become more prevalent recently and it is a challenge to maintain an inventory of road routes open to all-terrain vehicles (ATV) and/or utility task vehicles (UTV). The [Trail Ambassador](#) program is entering its third generation, with beta-testing being currently conducted. Wozniel said that the program establishes its own dispatch system and can alert people if users are having problems, whether it be safety or maintenance issues. In the fall, safety instructors from the ATV/UTV and snowmobile communities met with the DNR to discuss the DNR's [Go Wild](#) website and how to gain access for registering safety classes. Updates to the safety programs and laws were also reviewed. Wozniel noted that in previous meetings of the Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Council, money was set aside in anticipation of any need for storm damage repairs. It was a wise move, as money was later tapped for that purpose. Lastly, Wozniel said that ATV/UTV representatives were at the trail recovery meeting Brown discussed in the DNR Report.
- *Equestrians* – Jewett said the American Horse Council wants to survey the country to better understand trail uses and mileage. They are looking to sponsor a Get on the Trails program. She said she has been approached by multiple people looking at county parks and trying to establish horse and multi-use trails on them. A group at Governor Dodge State Park is trying to get a new campground. The master plan called for moving the current campground to a different location. The group is working with the manager to move the campground. Jewett said that the [Midwest Horse Fair](#) will be held April 21-23. Lastly, Jewett noted that 2016 was a very bad hay year and many horses have been sold cheaply or abandoned outright.
- *Hiking* – Neitzke reported that the Ice Age Trail Alliance and North Country Trail Association have been very busy into the fall. There continues to be a lot of clean-up work on the North Country Trail from storm damage. Most of the damage on the NCT occurred a few weeks after the main storm when



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a wind storm hit. Social media has been very important to both organizations. They are sometimes finding more traffic on their Facebook pages than their regular websites.

- *Small wheels* – White had no report.
- *Off-road bicycling* – Ramsey asked what the state is going to recommend regarding bike usage and winter grooming. Brown replied that the DNR is working on state-wide guidance for grooming on DNR properties. Right now, if bicycles are allowed on the trail and it is not specifically disallowed in the winter in the master plan, then bicycles are allowed in the winter. There was then a discussion between Brown and Ramsey about a bike club in Platteville which partnered with the snowmobile clubs in order to access some private lands. It was emphasized that bikes cannot go onto snowmobile trails unless specifically permitted by the landowner.
- *Road bicycling* – Cieslewicz spoke about the [Route of the Badger](#), a Rails-to-Trails Conservancy project to tie together a seven-county trail network through southeast Wisconsin.
- *Cross-county skiing* – McFadzen said he would speak during his later presentation.
- *Off-highway motorcycles* – Much said that he was chosen as the first State Coordinator for the American Motorcyclist Association. He was also named the state partner of the year with the National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council.

1:33 P.M. – New devices related to snow trails

- Johnson spoke about the ability of people to convert vehicles such as ATVs into tracked vehicles and people think they can take them on snowmobile trails. However, only purpose-built snowmobiles can be used on snowmobile trails. Johnson then spoke about advances with internal combustion engines so that air pollution is greatly reduced along snowmobile trails. He noted that some of the vehicles used for maintenance are up to the land manager, but sometimes the land manager does not have the legal authority to use something. The master plan is what dictates what can and cannot be used. Johnson then discussed a few new winter vehicles developed by different companies.

1:55 P.M. – Winter recreation in the Kettle Moraine State Forest

- McFadzen gave an overview of the different units of the Kettle Moraine State Forest and spoke about the myriad recreational opportunities the “Kettles” offer. He then more particularly discussed the network of skiing trails in the Northern and Southern units, emphasizing the Greenbush Recreational Area and work done there by the Northern Kettle Moraine Nordic Ski Club.
- McFadzen then discussed the different equipment used for ski trail grooming. He identified pros and cons of different vehicles that the Ski Club has used, including a track UTV, an untracked UTV and a snowmobile. He then spoke about the potential of using a motorcycle to groom trail for fat bikes, specifically identifying the use of a [Rokon to pull a custom roller](#).
- McFadzen then shared with the Council a quote from the superintendent of the Northern Unit, Jason Quast. Quast had underscored the importance of volunteers in building and maintaining the great trail network that he oversees.
- McFadzen finished his presentation by talking about trail user conflicts. He said that, though there are issues between trail users, it is pretty minimal based on the visitation and the number of user groups. He said that organizations representing these user groups are vital to maintaining trails and for reducing any potential conflicts.

2:21 P.M. – Off-Highway Motorcycle orientation and new OHM law

- Much provided an overview of the off-highway motorcycle user group.



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- He differentiated between the different types of motorcycles used off-highways, including: limited use, dual sport, trials, ice riding, and adventure.
- Much then discussed the creation, validation and sharing of motorcycle routes via common geographic file formats and user websites. Much maintains OHM route information [here](#).
- He also highlighted ideal locations for riding and commented on different events in which the OHM community participates.
- Lastly, Much spoke about the newly enacted law that creates an off-highway motorcycle program within the DNR. The law established an OHM sticker program to generate revenue to build and sustain trails.
- Ultimately, the desired end state of the law as well as Much's activism is to create more single track motorcycle trails, more riding opportunities closer to where riders live, increase access to existing motorized trails, and for the OHM community to be recognized as responsible users of public lands.

2:51 P.M. – Public comment

- No public comment.

2:52 P.M. – Identify future agenda items

- Ad-hoc committee on Council structure to present in-progress update in January, and then present more fully in April
- Representatives from the Ice Age Trail and North Country Trail to present in April.
- SCORP update potentially in January.
- Possible unicycle discussion in January.

2:57 P.M. – Adjourn

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