



State of Wisconsin
GOVERNOR'S STATE TRAILS COUNCIL

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

Friday, August 4, 2017

W10170 Highway 54 E

Black River Falls, WI 54615

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)*)

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

Kricket Jewett, equestrian representative (member of *Wisconsin Horse Council*)

Doug Johnson, snowmobiling representative (member of *Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs (AWSC)*) [STC Secretary]

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

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*)

Ben Popp [for Mike McFadzen], cross-country skiing representative (Executive Director of American Birkebeiner)

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

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

State Trails Council Members not in attendance

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

Phil Johnsrud, non-motorized water trails representative

Jim White, boards and small wheels representative

Robbie Webber, bicycling representative

Invited speakers

Jon Schweitzer, Jackson County Forestry and Parks

Others present

Mitch Batuzich, *Federal Highways Administration (FHWA)*

Hank Wozniel, *Wisconsin ATV-UTV Association (WATVA)*

WI DNR Staff present

Peter Bakken, DNR - Black River State Forest

Ed Slaminski, DNR grants

Beth Norquist, DNR grants

Cameron Bump, DNR parks and recreation

Brigit Brown, DNR liaison/staff to the STC



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10:00 A.M. – Welcome and introductions

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

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

- Johnson moved to approve the minutes. Harden seconded. Motion passed.

10:05 A.M. – Chair report

- November meeting will be at Lapham Peak in Delafield. Agenda items will include-
 - Presentation to inform STC on snowmaking equipment, how they're funded currently, what they are looking for in the future. Neitzke is going to try to reserve Hausmann Nature Center at Lapham Peak.
 - Overall trail maintenance funding ([link to 2009 trail funding document](#)).
 - Presentations from North Country Trail and Ice Age Trail groups.
- Cricket Jewett has been officially appointed to the council, and John Siegert, Jim White and Ken Neitzke have been reappointed. Jim White is not interested in continuing to serve on the council.
- Much appointed an ad hoc (temporary) committee to consider use(s) to be represented by the position currently held by Jim White (boards and small wheels), and generally asked council members to encourage more people to apply. Ken Neitzke, John Siegert, and Randy Harden were appointed to the ad hoc committee.

10:10 A.M. – DNR Report

- Cameron Bump gave an update on the recreational opportunities analysis (ROA). The dates for the public meetings to gather ROA input in the Upper Lake Michigan Coastal (Brown, Door, Kewaunee, Manitowoc, Marinette, and Oconto counties) and the Great Northwest (Ashland, Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Douglas, Polk, Rusk, Sawyer, Washburn counties) regions have been set. Council members are encouraged to attend and to spread the word to constituents who may be interested as well. An online survey is available for each region, through September 8. Comments can also be sent directly to Bump, who can be reached via the ROA web page (<http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/Lands/RecAnalysis/>), which also has links to the online survey for each region. The open house meetings will be held between 4 P.M. and 7 P.M. DNR staff will provide a brief overview at each meeting both at 4:30 and 6 P.M. These open houses are designed to gather public comments, ideas, concerns, and perspectives on the existing recreation opportunities available in these regions and future needs.
- Upper Lake Michigan Coastal
 - Tuesday August 22 - Stone Harbor Resort & Conference Center, 107 North 1st Ave, Sturgeon Bay
 - Wednesday August 23 - Community Center, 901 Henriette Ave, Crivitz
- Great Northwest
 - Monday, August 28 - Hotel Chequamegon, 101 Lake Short Drive West, Ashland
 - Tuesday August 29 – The Lodge at Crooked Lake, 24271 Hwy 35 North, Siren
 - Wednesday August 30 - Community Library 418 Corbett Ave, Ladysmith



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- Brown provided an overview of the DNR's administrative code changes that went into effect August 1. Changes include updates to definitions (such as making the definition of bicycle consistent with statute and the definition of physically disabled person consistent with federal code); defining new terms (such as special event); clarifying rules regarding property closures, firewood, and mobility device permits; designation of ATV routes on DNR roads, rules regarding shooting ranges and hunting and weapons discharge; changes camping rules to prevent reservations from being moved forward over time, preventing other campers from being able to reserve certain campsites; allows the use of electric bicycles (with a 15 mph speed limit) on linear state trails that allow bikes; eliminates the list of uses of state trails to be consistent with statute, clarifies that water trails may become state trails and updates the list of state trails to include the Lake Michigan State Water Trail; updates some fees and expands fee areas (four new); and creates or updates a handful of property specific rules.
- Officer nominations will need to be submitted prior to the November meeting. Brown will send out an email soliciting nominations with a deadline for nominations.

10:33 A.M. – Highlights from Council member reports (linked at end of minutes as an appendix)

- *ATV / UTV* – No highlights beyond written submission.
- *Cross-Country Skiing* - No highlights beyond written submission.
- *Equestrian* - No highlights beyond written submission.
- *Four-Wheel Drive* - No highlights beyond written submission.
- *Hiking* - No highlights beyond written submission.
- *Off-Highway Motorcycles* - Much noted that the OHM event just west of Madison opened for registration at midnight and was filled by noon the same day (about 300 riders).
- *Snowmobile* - No highlights beyond written submission.

10:38 A.M. – Recreation opportunities in Jackson County and the Black River State Forest

- Jon Schweitzer, Jackson County Forestry and Parks, provided an overview of the recreation in Jackson County, including 100 miles of ATV trail, 26 miles of singletrack, 300 miles of snowmobile, and 15 miles of hike/bike trail. Reviewed several county parks, including the very popular Wazee Lake. The county has is moving into promoting nonmotorized, paddling opportunities at Robinson Creek, Morrison Creek, and the Upper Black River.
- Jackson County has also undertaken ATV master planning effort to review and plan for long-range approach to trail rehabilitation and maintenance. It includes considerations for invasive species, wetland mapping, and other considerations and is reviewed and amended every three years.



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- Peter Bakken, DNR – Superintendent of the Black River State Forest, one of nine northern state forests was founded in 1957. It is largely surrounded by other public lands (county forest) and has one “modern” campground (Castle Mound). Use at the campgrounds has been steadily growing. The forest also allows backpack camping in non-designated sites. The forest has 34 miles of ATV trails and 46 miles of snowmobile trails.

10:55 A.M. – Overview of award-winning Jackson County trail project

- Jon Schweitzer and Beth Norquist, DNR grants specialist provided information about the Black River ATV Trail Connector project. A synopsis of all of the funding sources highlights the high level of coordination needed to make this project happen. In 2012, Jackson County requested an ATV grant for \$778,150.00 to improve the ATV trail system for safety reasons at the intersection of Highways 94 & 54.

○ October 2012	ATV Funds	\$194,535
○ September 2013	RTP Funds	\$ 45,000
○ November 2013	Motorized Stew Funds	\$ 56,000
○ September 2014	Snow Funds	\$100,000
○ December 2014	ATV Funds	\$194,538
○ October 2015	RTP funds	\$200,000
○	City of Black River Falls	\$ 50,000
○	Jackson County	\$200,000

Grand Total \$1,040,073

11:36 A.M. – Public comment

- Ed Slaminski noted that the DNR grants staff met last week and agreed on funding 44 projects. The permanent position for managing the RTP program at DNR has been posted and they hope to have someone hired into the position soon.
- Luana Schneider suggested that Jackson County may have suggestions for a nonmotorized water trail representative.

11:40 P.M. – Lunch

12:10 P.M – Tour of Jackson County trails

3:25 P.M. – Adjourn

- Motion to adjourn by Jewett. Seconded by Johnson. All approved. Meeting adjourned.

Appendix – User Group Reports (submitted before meeting by Council Members)

STC User Group Reports – August 2017



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Four-Wheel Drive

The Four Wheel Drive Community has been quite active even with several trail riding cancellations due to rains where use would have damaged the trails.

In regard to the Recreation Opportunity Analysis the group has been actively involved in responding by letters or e-mails and going to meetings. We intend to continue to do the same for the upcoming region meetings.

We are finding that some of the public forests are being significantly closed down for traversing due to the invasive species issues in particularly Garlic Mustard. Not sure what will be left of the more primitive trails that we prefer.

Wisconsin Off-Highway Vehicle Association's Executive Director attended the Trail Master Certification Training. A Safety and Education training was held for a South Eastern Wisconsin group which was very well received and plans are to have many more of these training programs in the future. Also in October there will be a 4WD Clinic held by a Madison area local club for the first time with a test program this year for a very limited group with hopes of expansion in the future.

Two of the larger events; The Jeep Jamboree event was held in July at Mole Lake with a very good turnout and the Great Northern Trailride to be held in August at a new site at Apple Valley. There have also been several other smaller trail ride activities that have occurred and more still coming throughout the state all on private property mostly for only single clubs. There are a couple of new private property trails being worked on that hopefully will generate availability to more of the public users in the future.

No further update on a 4WD Park or legislation at this time.

Also there have been some mud drags, obstacle courses and pulls occurring. In addition many have participated in events, parks and trails out of the state including Utah, Colorado, Arkansas, Minnesota, Tennessee, Illinois, Missouri, etc.

There are different charity events being held by various clubs with one of the more noteworthy being the Veteran's Run coming up in October.

Off-Highway Motorcycles

The more formal development of the off-highway motorcycle program is progressing nicely with the implementation of the off-highway motorcycle law. Although the law is in place, we are still in need of the supporting administrative code that must be developed by the DNR to enable complete implementation of the program. This is a 31 month process so we are anxious to see it completed on time as we may not be able to pay our way on some trail projects until the code is in place. We have a single track motorcycle trail construction project underway in Vilas County. In support of that project, the Wisconsin Off-Highway Motorcycle Association hosted a Trail Master Certification Course in Vilas County to teach the skills required to develop and construct a sustainable trail. Local club members and officials attended the course together. Formal dual sport motorcycle events are



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ever increasing in popularity with registrations sometimes filling up shortly after they are announced. There is a great demand for more off-highway motorcycle riding opportunities in Wisconsin. GPS guided off-pavement motorcycle rides continue to be popular during the summer riding season. The Central Adventure Motorcycle Riders Rally is based in Boulder Junction 4-13 August. Riders come from around the US and Canada to participate in fellowship and informal rides in the area. Some GPS guided paths on primitive roads in the Northern Highland American Legion State Forest are particularly popular as are other routes in county, state, and federal forests in the region.

Snowmobiles

July 21-23 saw the running of the 41st annual World Championship Snowmobile Watercross in Grantsburg WI. Several thousand spectators gathered to watch over 100 racers from the US and Canada compete for the Title.

Snowmobile Grass Drag season is getting underway with races taking place around the State. The 51st annual Haydays event takes place just across the border in Northbranch, MN on the 9th and 10th of September with competitors from around the world. Wisconsin's largest snowmobile grass drag and swap meet event takes place outside of Wausau on September 23rd and 24th.

Volunteers from clubs around the State are working on trails, many of them multi-use, clearing down trees from summer storm damage and doing regular summer brushing and clearing.

Snowmobile legislation submitted at the beginning of the year continues on a positive path and we are hopeful it will be passed during this legislative season.

Action to make the Stower 7 Lakes Trail a shared use trail has finally been started in Polk County. This 14 mile rail corridor has been closed to motorized traffic since it opened, based on a statute interpretation, for about 10 years. Two years ago the statute was changed, removing any ambiguity from the list of allowed uses. This year the NRB approved the DNR rule change to follow State statute. The County is in the process of doing its part to bring multi-use on this rail grade back to reality. All interested parties, motorized and non-motorized, are watching the progress intently.

Early indications are for a fabulous upcoming winter season. Let's hope so for all the snow lovers around Wisconsin.

Equestrians

Trail riding is in full swing, when we can get out between the storms, and wet conditions. With the recent storms several of the popular destination parks have been closed due to flooding. I've seen people looking for alternate places to go that did not get hit as hard, so all in all they are still out there riding, and using parks that may not get as much use normally.

Wisconsin Horse Council in May dispersed \$16,000 for trail grant projects around the state. Including projects to expand a trail system, work on erosion control, and improve amenities in several parks.



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The National Equestrian Trails Conference will give several hundred trail riders and trail supporters from across the country a ride of their lives educational conference in the scenic state of Arizona. This 3 day conference is being held for the first time west of the Mississippi River and promises to bring attendees from many national agencies and organizations including FHWA, USDA, FS, BLM, BCHA, AQHA, ELCR, AERC, NATRC, AHC, CSHC and many equine breed groups for an exciting national gathering for significant and new educational information. Will be held November 2 -4 2018 and is looking for sponsors, and is the only national equestrian trails conference of its kind.

Trails school at PdC was successful and received great reviews from attendees. Wisconsin Horse Council – Trails Committee is looking forward to hosting our 13th Trail School next year! The American Horse Council is currently conducting an Economic Impact Study nationally, and Wisconsin has also purchase a break out study, so that we can get a better picture of the impact the industry has in our state. The survey runs through mid-August, and results should be returned by early 2018. The last economic impact study was done over 10 years ago.

There is a new friends group working on trails in the Breed area, hope to have trails open by next year.

WHC has printed up brochures “Sharing the Trails Safely with Horses” and are available for all users, please let me know if you would like some to distribute.

ATV / UTV

Like other types of trail systems, the ATV trails in certain parts of Wisconsin have been underwater and damaged in multiple locations this year. Hopefully Mother Nature will let up soon.

Regardless, the systems that have remained open report a lot of positive trail tourism as riders have actively found the systems that have been able to stay open. Our clubs remain active with special rides and events taking place around the state.

Our state association held a Northeastern Regional Ride & Meeting in Marinette County, (Dunbar to be exact) this past July. At these settings, the local clubs in that region send representatives to discuss regional type issues and concerns in a facilitated environment. The Northwestern Regional is set to take place in Rice Lake on August 12.

During these gatherings, our organization also presents issues and concerns for discussion, debate and input. Topics this year include:

1. Updates on our Safety Enhancement Program funding
2. Progress report on the next generation of trail patrol being formalized during this challenging fiscal time
3. Insights and possible different requirements pertaining to signing requirements currently being worked on by lawmakers in conjunction with our legislative committee
4. Strategies regarding winter use by ATVs, possibly going to a “winter trail pass” proposal



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Our ORV Council needs a way to accurately determine ATV (and UTV) use on winter shared trails in order to make fiscally sound decisions related to projects in that arena.

WATVA's VIP Ride is scheduled for September 8th, taking place at the Dyracuse Recreational Park in Adams County. This is always a rewarding, fun, and educational event with many different VIPs participating.

New clubs continue to form, new routes and trails continue being planned and implemented throughout different parts of Wisconsin. Our clubs have actively been following and attending the ROA process as it unfolds.

Cross-Country Skiing

The ROA (Recreational Opportunities) Analysis and Non-motorized statute has caused consternation from many in the non-motorized community. As the DNR rolls out this process there is increasing concern that informal roads used by hikers, snowshoers, bird watchers, back country skiers and others will be used for motorized use. This has been further exacerbated by potential loss of non-motorized trails in NW Wisconsin. The Stower to Seven Lakes Trail has been coveted by local motorized groups even though multiple municipalities want it to remain non-motorized. This points to the problem of co-management of trails by DNR and county sponsors. The DNR allows the counties to do whatever they want and historical use is disregarded.

The WI Youth Ski Program continues to grow and integrate with local schools, communities, and ski clubs. Approx. 1000 youth participated in the 2016 ski season.

The CXC Nordic Rocks for Schools has been very successful. This is the introductory/first step in the Nordic skiing pipeline. CXC supplies all the equipment, using skis that are easy to use during a typical school physical education class. This introduces children to skiing in a safe environment with their friends and teachers. One of the 2017-18 program goals is to connect Nordic teams and clubs to the 'Nordic Rocks' schools. This connection will assure skill progression and development, as well as support the growth of teams and clubs.

Since 2007, CXC has held summer residency programs in conjunction with the summer training in Cable, Wisconsin. After a successful transition in 2016, the residency program has been moved to Marquette, Michigan.

The Birke continues the Phase II fund raising and improvements program. This includes plans for the new OO Nordic Center - a gateway to facilitate a wide variety of outdoor activities for people of all ages and abilities as well a place for people to gather, organize, rally, and educate. Trails continue to be a focus including the creation of the new Korte start area, an initial investment in snowmaking equipment, and an additional wide Pisten Bully 400. The infrastructure additions of warming shelters at Timber Trail & Gravel Pit, drilled wells at all warming shelters, and the new Hwy 77 underpass at Fish Hatchery, will improve the efficiency of all Birkie events and the safety of participants, volunteers, and all others who utilize our extensive 107k trail system throughout the year.

Interest in snow-making for ski trails continues to grow due to a warming climate. Green Bay, the Birke and other trail systems are exploring snowmaking. Lapham Peak saved their ski year because



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of the snow-making capability. Snowmaking has become an economic development issue for some communities as skiers flock to these trail systems. There will likely be a push for state funding to support it.

Hiking

On the heels of the Prestigious United States Forest Service Eastern Region Honor Award for Volunteerism and Service that the Ice Age Trail Alliance received in early March, the Ice Age Trail Alliance won three of six categories for the George and Helen Hartzog Awards for Outstanding Volunteer Service. This recognition from the National Park Service reflects the commitment of IATA members and dedication of IATA volunteers and staff:

<http://www.iceagetrail.org/wp-content/uploads/Hartzog-Mobile-Skills-Crew-2017.pdf>

Hertzog Volunteer Group Award:

Ice Age Trail Volunteers have been building the 1,000-mile Ice Age Trail since 1958-- long before it became a National Scenic Trail in 1980. In those 59 intervening years, new trail tread found its way on the ground in a variety of ways, through both individual effort and teamwork alike. But in 2002, when the Ice Age Trail Alliance formalized the "Mobile Skills Crew" (MSC) methodology of approaching trail construction and maintenance, the future of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail (Ice Age NST) took on a vibrant, cutting-edge optimism that has grown exponentially each year since. This past trail season of FY 2016, MSC has achieved a level of professionalism that reaches far beyond simply building new trail route-- MSC encompasses systematic and professional-level training of its members, it has established new partnerships and connected diverse communities, and it has earned the reputation among local governments and businesses as a solid and reliable partner whenever and wherever an Ice Age Trail project is taking place.

The goal of every Mobile Skills Crew (MSC) event is to create and steward a sustainable footpath of national significance that fosters new discoveries and broadens our collective connection to the outdoors. Exemplifying an ethos of "Trail Building is People Building," the 2016 MSC project season demonstrated passion, enthusiasm, and a deep sense of community amongst the 841 volunteers who gave 20,837 volunteer hours in creating, supporting and protecting the Ice Age NST.

From April to the end of October, at 10 events, volunteers and Ice Age Trail Alliance staff succeeded in opening four new Dispersed Camping Areas, building six bridges spanning 114 feet, crafting 11 elevated boardwalks and puncheons totaling 1,323 feet, fashioning 20 rock walls stretching 289 feet, shaping more than two miles (12,550 feet) of constructed treadway, opening for public use five new miles of the Ice Age NST, and significantly improving 21 additional miles of the Ice Age NST by clearing blowdowns, repairing existing wetland structures, building erosion control features and upgrading a broad array of trail signage features. Over 9,000 meals were prepared to fuel multi-generational volunteer trail building and stewardship efforts from the MSC field kitchen. Dedicated training sessions lasting between ½-day and four days were attended by: 24 VIP's (Crew Leadership and Trail Skills); 43 VIP's (Chainsaw Safety); 27 VIP's (First Aid / CPR); 14 VIP's (Property Monitoring); and, 17 VIP's (Camp Chef).



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The Mission Statement of the Mobile Skills Crew program is, "to educate and empower volunteers to build, maintain and steward the Ice Age NST."

No truer Mission Statement could ever be written-- since 2002, the Mobile Skills Crew has hosted 13,408 volunteers on 146 project events, and generated a total of 265,351 volunteer hours toward making the Ice Age NST a reality.

The Ice Age Trail Alliance Annual Conference was held April 27 – 29 in Chippewa Falls. A few hundred IATA members gathered for hikes on the Ice Age Trail, Strategic Planning Sessions, Keynote Speakers, Leadership training as well as camaraderie. The highlight was the awards banquet on Saturday night when Dan Watson the acting National Park Service Superintendent of the Ice Age National Scenic Trail announced the Hartzog Awards as well sharing with the members present that the Ice Age Trail Alliance and its volunteers have now become the Gold Standard for all of the National Scenic Trail and will be used as the model for volunteer recruitment, volunteer training and the MSC method of trail building.

The Ice Age Trail MSC season is in full swing were (3) trail projects on April 7th. There will be (9) major MSC trail across the state this season including the replacement of 700 feet of trail boardwalk in the South Kettle Moraine on the Waukesha County portion of the Ice Age Trail.

<http://www.iceagetrail.org/volunteer/mobile-skills-crew-program/>

In May, Director of Trail Operations for the Ice Age Trail Alliance, Tim Malzhan, was honored with the prestigious Outstanding Trail Leader Award by American Trails. The award was presented at the 23rd International Trails Symposium on Sunday, May 7, 2017. American Trails honors the contributions of leaders who are working for the advancement of trails across the country and around the world. The Outstanding Trail Leader awards recognizes individuals who have made compelling and significant contributions to the trails movement in their home states— advocating, designing, building, maintaining, promoting, adapting technologies, and a myriad of activities.

The North Country Trail Association has been equally busy this spring and summer with their Annual Beat the Bugs trail clean-up in preparation for the summer hiking season, trail re-routes as well as offering guided hikes. The Chequamegon Chapter of the North Country Association completed the Rainbow Lake Wilderness Re-Routes on Saturday, July 8th. This was probably their most ambitious trail effort for the year and likely the most time consuming. Chapter Volunteers began the project on Saturday, May 6th after receiving final approval from the USFS for the two Re-Routes. It would take an additional 5 volunteer efforts to finish the task with over a one hour walk to start the building of new trail and over a one hour walk out after working, for a large part of each day. A shortcut to the work area does not exist so volunteers had to do over a one hour walk in, just to start. This also means over a one hour walk out after working. Because this is a wilderness section of NCT volunteers can only use hand tools and need to carry everything in that will be needed (not even a single wheeled cart is allowed). A few dedicated NCTA volunteers spent another three full days of trail building that involved removing years of downed trees, lopping, stump and sapling removal and the beginning of building trail tread. This section of NCT needed a re-route because it is often soggy and sometimes underwater.

<http://northcountrytrail.org/che/wp-content/uploads/2013/04/Rainbow-Lake-Wilderness-Re-Route-Trail-Report1.pdf>



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June 3rd is National Trails Day. National Trails Day is the only nationally coordinated event designed to unite all muscle-powered trail activities with the goal of connecting more people to trails. Every trail beckons adventure and has a story to share with any person willing to discover it, and American Hiking Society believes these trail experiences can improve the lives of every American.

National Trails Day was held nationwide on June 3rd. Each year, on the first Saturday of June, American Hiking Society and the trails community invite Americans of all ages and abilities to find their own adventure and discover their unique story at one of the thousands of events hosted throughout the country. There were a number of events held around state. Turnout was relatively good given that portions of the state saw significant rainfall during some of the events. Despite the heavy rain, The City of Delafield held its official ribbon cutting of becoming an official Ice Age Trail Community.

Despite the all of the rain and severe weather that has occurred so far this summer, trail users are getting and enjoying trails even in urban areas. In the Menomonee Valley in the City of Milwaukee, the Menomonee Valley Partners is promoting an event to “Walk with the Mayor” to encourage citizens to walk 100 miles in 100 days with the Mayor of Milwaukee with events being held on ten Hank Aaron State Trail in the Menomonee Valley.