

**NEW YORK STATE TRAILS COUNCIL MEETING
 NYS DEC Five Rivers Environmental Education Center
 56 Game Farm Road Delmar, NY 12054
 Saturday March 23, 2013
 11:00 am – 3:00 pm**

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to Order

Chair Jane Daniels called the meeting to Order at 11:05 am

Introductions - Around the table, people introduced themselves and stated their affiliation

Those Present were –

| | |
|---|--------------------------------------|
| 4- Wheel Drive – Todd Syska | FHWA – Maria Chau |
| All-Terrain vehicles – Moak Detraglia | HRV Greenway – Elizabeth |
| Equestrian – Carol Schmelz, Mark Wehnau and Mark | Camposchiaro |
| Gisselbrecht (for Sharon Young Slate) | Canal Corp. – John DiMura |
| Hiking- Jane Daniels and Dick Hubbard | NYSDEC – McCrea Burnham, Rob |
| Nordic Skiing – Tony Goodwin | Davies (PM) |
| Off road Bicycling – James Mitchell and Michael Vitti | NYSOPRHP – Nancy Stoner, Steve |
| On Road Bicycling – Ivan Vamos and Samantha Langton | Lewis |
| Snowmobiles – Robert Bryant, Anne O’Dell and Dominic | NYSDOH – Elaine Troy |
| Jacangelo | PTNY – Martin Daley |
| Snowshoeing – Katherine Henrikson | |
| Water Trails- Tom Casey and Mike Prescott | IMBA (International Mountain Biking |
| | Association NE Reg. Director) – Adam |
| | Coppola |

During introductions, FHWA senior planner, Maria Chau, spoke about MAP-21 and mentioned that NY retained the funding for trails.

DEC has sent a new delegate; McCrea Burnham will be replacing Justin Perry.

Correction/Approval of Minutes – September 15th, 2012 Meeting minutes were distributed before the meeting. No corrections were noted. Bob moved approval, it was seconded, all were in favor – the minutes were approved.

Introduction and approval of new delegates

McCrea Burnham was approved as the new DEC representative

Announcements

None at this time

Presentation

Martin Daley – “Speaking up for Trails”

A Powerpoint presentation on Advocacy - The presentation will be placed on the PTNY Website: www.PTNY.org

The Presentation included the definitions and criteria for Lobbying vs. Advocacy,

Restrictions were shared. Handouts were shared. Discussion continued -

The “Sunlight law” was mentioned by attendees who may be affected ... For more information on this Lobbying Law in NY State – see www.nyshcr.org/AboutUs/.../LOBBYINGPOLICIESOFAgencies.pdf

NEXT Presentation for September ... Those in attendance requested a presentation on Signs and Signage. What makes a good sign; interpretive signs; Universal Signage; requirements for Signage, etc. - The group was interested in the issue of consistency in any one location vis a vis all agencies/entities with ownership in that location. Also how signs can help create a sense of “place.”

Nancy Stoner will get a speaker, possibly Greg Smith from Peebles Island – Interpretation Unit.

Suggested titles for the Presentation are – “Pitfalls in Signage” “Creating a Sense of Place through Signage” and “Signs that give a message through Images”

Implementation of Statewide Trails Plan – Information Exchange

1. Volunteer Recognition – *How do you recognize volunteers? (Come ready to share)*

- Jane shared a can opener story, about getting a thank you in the form of a more efficient can opener. It was a recognition that was appropriate and appreciated.
- “Team Lunatics” a biking group, used to reward people who showed up for at least 10 rides in a row by giving them a small gift.
- Other examples of types and categories of rewards used by several organizations included:
 - Rewards for numbers of volunteers.
 - Categories of special efforts - take nominations for people who have done extra work.
 - Reward with a ceremony and plaque.
 - Special markings on trees, credit given to those who placed the signs.
 - Some volunteers are rewarded with stickers and food.
 - Canal Clean sweep gives t-shirts and one volunteer of the year award.
 - “Adopt a trail program” volunteers get t-shirts and hats
 - The Trail Ambassador program also gives rewards.
 - The “End to End” Canal ride gives stickers to put in your car window, once the ride is completed.
 - “Adopt a trail “program allows sections to be adopted, signs are placed on the trail with the names of the groups that adopt.
 - Put people's name in print as a thank you. Put Lists of donors and Volunteers in Newsletters
 - Mike Vitti (Off Road Bicycling) awards trail blazers with a golden shovel. He buys a new shovel and paints it gold. He also provides food on work days, certificates from bike shops and organic t shirts.
 - Vendors that support your trail can be asked to provide small useful tools.
 - Snowmobilers have a yearly luncheon and award the Snowmobilers of the year, family of the year, groomer of the year and youth of the year.
 - Finger Lakes Trail. Does end to end awards, shorter trail end to end pins, awards for outstanding volunteers include plaques and a prize, like a walking stick or other hiking aide.
 - Also reward Corporate contributors, Leadership, outreach, communication and private landowner award for allowing use of land for hiking.
 - Other items suggested were - Clothing, vests, caps, food (healthy), small gifts, punch card by mileage worked and then a small gift, stickers, volunteer names on maps/brochures, survival knife (or a small item that is pertinent to the user type), holding a lunch or dinner for volunteers including awards, patches, knit hats, letters of appreciation, framed poster of a trail.
 - Having a plaque in your agency and adding names over time is also effective.
 - A personal letter of thanks is never a bad thing..... Write them often.

Jane has offered to compile a list of all these good ideas... If you have more to add.. E- mail her at jdhikes@gmail.com

With information collected from the discussion, Jane will compile a list and circulate it in time for the next meeting. Discussion to continue so that the Council can develop a deliverable for Statewide Trails Plan: a volunteer recognition program that can be replicated for groups across the state. –

2. Training – Statewide Trails Webinars – *update from subcommittee*

The Sub-Committee is looking at doing 3 Webinars this year. Suggested subjects are: “Trails Mean Business”, “Bicyclists, Bring Business” (PTNY) and “Trails Marketing, and Interpretive Signs.” Michael Vitti sent links to archived webcasts on these topics to Nancy Stoner, as a resource suggestion. Archived Webinars can be watched at your own convenience. Linking bikes and tourism is a good marketing strategy... for instance “Bike the wine country” combines exercise on bikes and experiencing wine country and vineyards as a bike tourist.

Here are past webinars archived by the RAILS TO TRAILS organization compiled on VIMEO.

<http://vimeo.com/user3643638>

3. Trails Planning Resource list development – Bring a listing (with Internet links if available) of town, county, regional or other types of trails planning documents from your area.

An example of a compilation of local resources was sent around before the meeting. Several others brought examples. Nancy Stoner or intern will compile the lists and share them on the parks website. People who brought examples will please e-mail the document links to Nancy.

IMBA.com is a good resource for Mountain Biking.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations may also have some links to resources.

It was suggested that the Statewide Trails Council members should inform their Counties about resources that can be shared.

4. Other action item updates

Nancy Stoner reported the completion of the 2012 statewide greenway trail users count and report. Much appreciation to Eli Yearick of PTNY for coordinating the effort and writing up the report. Thanks to all the volunteers who participated and to those who helped publicize the effort. People should consider how these results can influence their local, regional and state decision-makers and better publicize trails in their areas.

Canalway Trail count is underway, also being done by PTNY. Martin Daley reports that innovative ways to identify users, repeat users and economic impact from users who are not local are being developed as part of the Project. SUNY Geneseo is their evaluation partner.

DOT has noted that they have trail counts done and can be contacted.

The statewide Trails inventory database is still in progress; an OPRHP intern is currently updating and expanding the collected data. The database was developed to include all trails in the State.

If you have information on trails – please send the information to Nancy. Nancy.stoner@parks.ny.gov

Please include:

Length, current uses, surface material, accessibility, designation, who does maintenance, ownership and contact information.

A suggestion was made to look at the National Geographic trails information (apps and locations) – on line at http://www.natgeomaps.com/trailmaps_app.html. It was noted that Saratoga County is putting all their trails on line.

Follow up note: After further discussion, OPRHP has decided to publicize as part of the Trails Clearinghouse the existing trails listings, databases and interactive maps that are already on-line (and not continue at this time with the statewide inventory database). There are many resources publicly available that cover a great deal of the trail opportunities in the state. OPRHP will then focus on providing state park trail information either in a searchable database or interactive map. TBD.

Lunch Break –was for networking

Delegate Reports and Concerns

Jane Daniels reports that NYNJTC trails has map apps for Iphones. Also have been very involved in clean up from Hurricane Sandy, especially in Westchester County.

Ulster County, Mark Gisselbrecht reported, has a County wide trails committee that reports to the Ulster County Legislature, with designated seats for interest groups. Ulster may be the only County to have this standing committee which was created through the Legislature. More information is on the Ulster County website.

Mountain Bike updates from Michael Vitti - Jones Beach Bikeway ends about a mile away from the beach, but now there is a way to get closer to the Beach using a new seven tenths of a mile link through a parking lot.

Bethpage trail combines 3 different trail uses in a narrow right of way. Opening in Spring.

The Community of Huntington has added their trail routes to Google Maps.

Mike tested his “fat bike” on snow trails and hopes for shared use in the future. He also reminded everyone to promote “I Love My Park Day” on May 4, 2013.

Bell Helmets is offering money to fund construction of a bike park... And Wolfe's Pond Park on Staten Island is in the running. If they get enough votes on Facebook – BEFORE April 12, the park may win.

To Vote - go to the link below, choose the "Pump Track" section. And vote for Staten Island.

https://www.facebook.com/BellBikeHelmets/app_228716427271717

In Port Jefferson there is a trail project with \$ 11 million in funding, at risk because local people want a 9 foot fence between the trail and their neighborhoods. Michael Vitti is promoting completion of this trail.

James Mitchell reports that the Nature Conservancy and Finch Pruyn are cooperating to donate land to include a trail. More information is at <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/42077.html>

Adam Coppola from IMBA reports that a location in Queensbury, Lake George, just south of Prospect Mountain, there is work being done to build trails. Warren County Safe and Quality Bicycling Organization is working to help get the trails built. Adam is the new NE Regional Director for IMBA, based in Windham and working to develop trails in that area.

Bob Bryant: One of the top 6 goals for 2012 for the Saratoga County Supervisor's Trail committee (Saratoga PLAN website) is listed as being "To complete logging in Moreau State Park and work with advocates to develop an equestrian trail system."

Saratoga County is putting their trails onto their website...in progress.

Four wheel drive. No report

Mike Prescott: Blueways reports that Racquette River signage going in. Improvements have been made to carry areas.

Tony Goodwin: Nordic Skiing – Reports that the good news is "We had some" and it's still good. Barkeaters Trails Alliance has been adopted by Nordic Skiing for funding. New trails have been built in the Lake Placid and Wilmington areas.

Katie Henrikson: Snowshoeing reports a good Season.

Tom Casey: Kayaking – Hurricane Sandy has delayed kayaking development, however, some new river access may be possible. Several new locations are being worked on. In Hauppauge, Blydenburgh County Park Lake will host a trial period during which people can bring their own boats instead of having to rent them. Also a reminder to be careful about submerged debris in rivers and the Sound – as a result of Hurricane Sandy.

Anne O'Dell, Dom Jacangelo: Snowmobiling has had a good season and many out of state people have come to NY to take advantage of the snow.

Snowmobiling is also interested in the closing of some roads related to Finch Pruyn? land.

Snowmobiling is dealing with some new legislation to enforce sanctions against loud sleds.

A "No alcohol and snowmobiling" program in the works.

Next year is the Snowmobiling "Year of the Volunteer."

Moak Detraglia: ATV is working on several locations for new trails including an 18 mile system in Dansville and a 35 mile system in central New York - working with Railroad. They note that DEC does not allow access to DEC controlled land.

Dick Hubbard reported for Finger Lakes Trail and North Country Trail

They have downloadable maps on their website. www.fingerlakestrail.org/ and

<http://northcountrytrail.org/trail/states/new-york/>

The Crystal Hill Trail is complete from Bath to the PA line and is sharing space with other users.

Total mileage for the main and branch miles equal almost 877. 426 miles are related to the North Country Scenic Trails.

NYS DEP has given permission for a significant amount of trail off the road and into the woods in the Catskills...

resulting in new trail construction. There will be new lean tos built in 4 locations.

Also, a new safety manual is being written. A safety review with volunteers is being required at the beginning of each work day. ("tailgate meetings")

Sawyer training, hiking 101, seasonal hikes and cross county trails education is available.
North Country Trail Association sued OPRHP because of the bulldozing of a segment of trail in Madison County. The lawsuit has since been dropped. More information is available from Dick.

Ivan Vamos reported on New York Metropolitan Transportation Council counts on bridges... It was noted that use of bridges by bicyclists tripled during and after the Hurricane Sandy. The Tappan Zee bridge final design in contract will include a bike/hike space on the north side of the bridge. The new Tappan Zee will, in fact, be two bridges one going east and one going west. North Bridge will be built first and include the 12 foot Bikeway. Hopefully a link from the Bridge to local parks will be made.

Carol Schmelz: Equestrian project, Niagara County escarpment.... Reports that \$300,000 has been secured to study the escarpment. This same escarpment continues into Canada where it is protected as a walking space. Equestrians do not want to be protected off the land. Carol is working to keep horses on these trails.

The subject of chain saw use around Otter creek and in other locations led to a discussion of Chain Saw use and required safety certification for chain saw users. Clarified that DEC requires GOL training (Level 1) while others (NYNJTC) may require through Level 4 (National Forest Service standard). Some solutions were shared. DEC staff do not conduct the trainings themselves but can provide contact information for organizations that do.

Agency Reports

NYS Office of Parks, Recreation & Historic Preservation (OPRHP) - Nancy Stoner Recreational Trails Program/CFA update

Nancy Stoner announced that Tom Lyons is retiring. We wish him well.

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) application process is moving ahead. Applications will be made entirely on line through the CFA process. The application itself contains helpful directions. The Program is the same, the questions are the same, but the format is different. Applicants will need to upload attachments on-line; there are no hard copies for this application process. The RTP Rating system was shared with the Council prior to the meeting. Clarification was provided about Regional Economic Development Council priorities and how they rate applications. If the RTP application is integral to the Economic council priorities then a possible 20 points can be added to the scoring of the application. Ivan expressed concern that reviewers be knowledgeable in trails development and the reasons why they are important. The regional approach also raises questions of parity across the state. Regional Economic Development Councils will have an effect on the process. Distribution of awards will include points awarded, geographic considerations, 30-40-30 category splits and not be based on statewide distribution by points only.

CFA – grants portal open application process is yet to be determined (stay tuned). The past two rounds have had open application process during early-mid summer and awards announced in December.

<http://nysparks.com/grants/consolidated-funding-app.aspx>

More information on Regional Economic Development Councils and CFA: <http://regionalcouncils.ny.gov/>

A question was asked about the amount allocated to volunteer time cited as “In Kind” contributions in the application. RTP only allows minimum wage per hour, not minimum wage plus benefits as is allowed by other States. Nancy will investigate the reason for this. The lower amount has an effect on being able to “match” funds.

Master Plans update

Final Mills-Norrie-Staatsburgh Master Plan is almost complete (Taconic Region)

Old Croton Aqueduct planning is in process – TBD what type of plan. (Taconic)

Thatcher-Thompson’s Lake SPs in process – expect draft plan in summer. (Saratoga-Capital District Region)

Rockland Lake public hearing March 27th; public comment period ends April 10th. (Palisades Region)

Sunken Meadow has been delayed due to storm impacts

Genesee Valley Greenway looking at management plan based on 2006 draft plan; public information meetings will be held in the coming months.

SCORP is on Schedule to be completed and approved by the end of the year. Will notify when draft is out.

NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) –McCrea Burnham
Adopt-A-Natural-Resource/Volunteer Stewardship Program

Rob Davies, Division Director of DEC was present. He reported that the Daniels Road tract may be acquired by next fall. Also related to Finch Pruyn land – the Rec. Plan is in process and comments will be invited in May 2013.

McCrae Burnham reported the following:

Statewide:

The Department has made use of volunteers for a wide range of activities using Office of Natural Resource Policy #1 the AANR agreements. This policy is still in full affect and will remain in place.

The Department is writing a new policy that will create the Volunteer Stewardship Program, pursuant to the powers set forth in ECL § 3-0301. We hope to have the new policy out for public comment later this spring. We hope the Volunteer Stewardship Agreements will have the same feel as the AANR Agreements, but we will have some changes, the big one being supervision. Also, Health and Safety requirements and Volunteer Application forms (more formal but not onerous).

Random site visits by staff to check on compliance with Department rules.

The ATV policy has been submitted to DEC Executive with a draft outreach plan for public review and comment. Predicting a time frame in which the policy might be released is difficult, as the commissioner and governor both have multiple other issues, all of which need to be prioritized.

Backcountry Stewards – we will have 24 on board for the summer

Assistant Forest Rangers – the Department will have 12 in the field this summer.

The Department will be holding a Ranger Academy in which we hope to train 18 new Rangers.

Region 3:

With the help of the NY/NJ Trail Conference, a newly constructed 7 mile section of the Long Path is open from Terrace Mtn. to Phoenica.

Region 4:

The Department now owns Mt. Hayden property. We will be working on a Rec Plan.

Elm Ridge – IMBA is going to take a look at the area and try and help the Department lay out a sustainable trail.

Region 3 and 4: the New Catskill Map and Guide should be out this summer.

Region 5:

Gilmantown Snowmobile/Multi Use Trail (Jessup R. Wild Forest & Conservation Easement lands)

Moose River Plains to Raquette Lake - Still needs some work (Moose River Plains Wild Forest)

Northville-Lake Placid Trail - numerous trail projects along the whole length of the trail

Newcomb to North Hudson trail is still being laid out and needs design work.

Region 5/6:

North Country Scenic Trail – The Department has an internal draft being looked at by a number of Regional staff. We hope to be able to have that proposal out for public comments this summer.

Region 7:

Hopeful to improve the water supply at Brookfield and Tinkers Falls Projects

Region 8:

We do expect to be working on improving the existing Six Nations trail system

Region 9:

The Department will be working on improving access to the Onondaga Escarpment.

Other

FHWA – Maria Chau - Maria introduced herself, but could not stay for the entire meeting.

National Parks Service – Karl Beard was not present due to federal budget sequester.

Canal Corporation – John DiMura

The Clean Sweep is in April, there are 90 events scheduled. 1500 people have registered.

Related to gaps in the Canalway Trail – the gap between Lockport and Amherst - will go out to bid in Fall 2013. The gap near the City of Rome goes to bid this summer. A 1 mile gap in Lyons will be completed this summer, also the Little Falls gap. The section from Fairport goes out to bid this summer. Champlain Canal Lock 9 going out to bid in 2014. Several Kayak launches have been funded.

Hudson River Valley Greenway – Beth Campochiaro

Beth reports that the Hudson River is a national water trail as designated last summer.

The Greenway has a grant to develop a smart phone optimized trail map app.

The “Cycling the Hudson Valley” guidebook is out.

Hudson River Valley Ramble is in September. The event happens on all weekends except Labor Day.

The Ramble is estimated to generate \$21 million yearly in participation, tourism, hospitality and retail.

July 20 and 21 are Hudson River days on the water.

In Early June, Heritage days celebrate heritage and culture. Follow the Path through history on weekends. This can be a cross promotion with National Trails Day. June 1, 2013.

Parks and Trails NY – Martin Daley

Martin reports that a trails economic impact study has been completed. Trailfinder is almost optimized. Volunteer awards applications are due by March 26. More information is available at <http://www.ptny.org/>

Old Business

none

People were welcomed to stay, talk and network.

Meeting adjourned at 3 pm

Next meeting date/location: September 21, 2013 – Saratoga Spa State Park, Saratoga Springs.

New start time will be 10:30 am. In order to complete the meeting by 3

2013 events to plan

I Love My Park Day (Parks and Trails NY) – May 4

National Trails Day (American Hiking Society) – June 1

National Public Lands Day (National Environmental Education Foundation – September 28, see <http://www.publiclandsday.org/>