

Minutes of the
Equine Trails Subcommittee
July 14, 2014

The regular meeting of the Equine Trails Subcommittee (ETS) was called to order by Chair Sandra Batie on July 14, 2014 in the J. Edward Hutchinson conference room in Constitution Hall , 525 W. Allegan, Lansing MI 48933. The following committee members were present:

Sandra Batie
Gabrielle Hume
Sarah Nicholls
Dick Kleinhardt
Mike Foote
Joni Gleason – By teleconference

The following Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff was present:

Special Appearance by Keith Creagh
Jim Radabaugh
Matt Lincoln
Earl Flegler
Darlene Moore
Anna Sylvester – By teleconference

WELCOME

Chair Batie welcomed everyone and reviewed meeting protocol; public and committee introductions followed. Joni Gleason will be in attendance as well as Anna Sylvester by teleconference.

Director Keith Creagh came to the ETS meeting as it was started. He came to the meeting to thank Chair Sandra Batie for all of her service on the Equine Trails Subcommittee. Chair Batie has decided to step down from the ETS effective August 15, 2014. Director Creagh praised Ms. Batie for her tireless efforts in leading and representing all of the equine community's in Michigan. She was a very important key to completing the 2011 Recommendation Report of the ETS that was pivotal to the development of the MTAC's 2013 Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan and the 2014 State Trails Implementation Plan. The Director asked for an answered several questions from ETS members.

AGENDA

Approval of the March 6, 2014 Meeting Minutes

Motion: Mike Foote moved to approve the March 6, 2014 minutes of the ETS.

The motion was seconded by Sarah Nicholls and approved unanimously.

Approval of July 14, 2014 Meeting Agenda

Motion: Gabrielle Hume moved for approval of the July 14, 2014 agenda and Mike Foote seconded the motion. The agenda was unanimously approved.

The ETS subcommittee put together a project of lists they will recommend to be funded with MNRTF

11-133 funds. This list is before the committee today for approval. The original total of the projects on this list is \$219,000. Chair Sandra Batie told the committee that since the list was drafted, she received a request from Anna Sylvester to add an additional \$1,000 to the allocation of \$3,000 to Hopkins Creek for purchase of 2 additional toilets that need to be replaced, bringing the total allocation for Hopkins Creek to \$4,000 and the project list total to \$220,000 and the Upper Lower Peninsula grant total to \$102,000.

Motion: Recommendation of the Hopkins Creek Reallocation and Reallocation of the MNTRF 11-133 balance was moved by Gabrielle Hume and seconded by Dick Kleinhardt. The Reallocation was unanimously approved.

Chair Sandra Batie's provided two handout to members at the beginning of the meeting which included the projects that are to be funded with the MNRFT 11-133 funds and their cost. There was an additional handout from Gabrielle Hume to revise Sandra Batie's recommendation of the motion for the MNRFT 11-133 funds. It was agreed that both handouts would be included in today's agenda and packet material for the record.

Motion: To include both handouts to the agenda and packet materials was put forth by Dick Kleinhardt and Sarah Nicholls seconded. It was unanimously approved.

There was discussion to reallocate a balance that may be left in the trust fund of \$57,000 + to Pinckney for additional work that needs to be done. While the total amount of the work needing to be done (that is approved but not funded) is in excess of that amount; Pinckney would have to come up with their own funding for the additional amount over and above the \$57,000. Matt Lincoln cautioned that we need to include a buffer in the balance for the projects approved and funded in the event they go over the cost amount approved. The committee's general consensus is that at this time they will not approve any additional funding for Pinckney but return to this matter at the next meeting in September.

Jim Radabaugh talked about other ETS Equestrian Related Grants:

RIF 12-05 Equestrian Trails Mapping. (\$25,000) These funds will allow for an intern (Summer of 2014) to develop and create digital mapping of equine camps and trails. DNR is discussing with the MSU Forestry program the hiring of a GIS(Geographic Information System) knowledgeable student to facilitate this mapping.

RIF 11-10- Statewide Trail Planning (\$100,000) and the RIF 10-58 Equine Recreation Facility Study (NE Lower Peninsula) (\$75,000). Jim explained that both of these grants were issued early on when the committee was started and over the years, the need for these specific grants is no longer. He recommended that both of these grants should be lapsed and the funds returned.

Motion: To lapse the funds from the RIF 11-10 and the RIF 10-58 grants with return of the funding to the trust. This recommendation was moved for vote by Mike Foote and seconded by Gabrielle Hume. The recommendation was voted for unanimously.

Pigeon River and Clinton Ionia Shiawassee Trail connector, multi-users
Review of the RIF and RTP Equine Trail Related Grants – Jim Radabaugh

Chair Batie indicated that the floor will now be open to elect a new Chair for the ETS as she is stepping down as of August 15, 2014.

Chair Batie told the committee that Joni Gleason wanted to remain as Vice-Chair.

The floor was opened to nominations for Chair. Gabrielle Hume nominated Dick Kleinhardt for Chair. Dick Kleinhardt declined the nomination. Sarah Nicholls nominated Mike Foote, Mike Foote accepted the nomination. Dick Kleinhardt nominated Gabrielle Hume. Gabrielle Hume accepted the nomination.

A vote was then taken to elect as chair either Mike Foote or Gabrielle Hume. Chair Batie moved for votes on the appointment of Mike Foote: the vote was 4 yeas for Mike Foote and two nos.

Thus there was a majority of votes to elect Mike Foote as the Chair of the Equine Trails Subcommittee as of August 16, 2014

PUBLIC APPEARANCE

Following some public questions, Chair Batie informed all that Matt Lincoln is the designated person to contact with questions about EQ trails and facility projects.

Barbara Yockey was represented through Gabrielle Hume. The Polly Ann Trail survey was done. Barbara Yockey wants to ensure that funds used for trail surfacing purchase a surfaces that are equestrian friendly. Jim Radabaugh stated that the costs are in excess \$3 million dollars. Surfacing will be limestone.

Committee Reports:

Gabrielle Hume- has not heard from Donna Stine with respect to how to proceed on developing trails in the thumb area, and she has advised Director Creagh that she has not been moving forward since she has not heard from Ms. Stine.

Sarah Nicholls -discussed the tourism five year strategic plan. She also said that the Five year Strategic Plan Committee will be going on August 26-28 Marquette to study the Iron Ore Heritage Trail.

Mike Foote – The approved pavilion is going very slowly at Fort Custer. Matt Lincoln said that he believes the issue has to do with engineering permits for the structure.

Ionia –There was some discussion of whether electricity to some of the campsites at Ionia was a priority with the Ionia Equestrian association. Mike Foote said he would check into it and report back.

Joni Gleason – Assisted by Joan Duncan, Ms. Gleason gave updates with respect to the various projects and signs in the UP.

Dick Kleinhardt – gave a brief update as to both the Gladwin and the Pigeon River Country State Forest EQ issues.

Sandra Batie –Noted that the MTAC is asking each user group to review criteria for the selection of connector trails and to nominate connector trails important to their user group. Chair Batie shared a rough draft of such criteria and suggested it should be an agenda item at the ETS September meeting. She also noted the importance of the State Trails Implementation Plan in all future trail and facility decisions. There is also some MTAC interest in determining ways to obtain revenues from non motorized uses as well. Chair Batie noted she remains on a subcommittee of the MTAC on forest management guidelines/standards for trails for a couple of more meetings.

UPDATES/ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Matt Lincoln – Anna Sylvester Reports were made on various EQ projects including Big Oaks, Thunder Valley, Brighton, and other projects recommended for reallocation funding.

Sandra Batie – Chair Batie provided an update as to density guidelines in consideration of new trail proposals in parks and recreation areas. She said there has been a meeting of her and some Sleepy Hollow Association officers with Debbie Jensen, Anna Sylvester, Matt Lincoln and other DNR representatives. The main discussion was that these are guidelines and will not be used in a mechanical way to determine whether a new trail will be approved. Debbie Jensen handed out a list of other items considered in addition to density. Chair Batie said she will provide some advice on this list before August 15 to Ms. Jensen, and she will keep Mike Foote informed.

Jim Radabaugh- provided an update on Equine Related Legislation.

There was a package of 6 bills signed June 26, 2014. Gabrielle and Dick were involved in some of the language in the legislation. The 2 page summary Includes the name change of the Michigan Snowmobile Trails Advisory Council to be changed Michigan Trails Advisory Council. And the Equine Trailways Subcommittee to be the Equine Trails Subcommittee.

The packet of the bills was included in the agenda packet of materials for today's meeting. There was broad non-partisan support in both the House and the Senate.- presented a map and a two page summation of the Governor's Showcase Trail and the Trail Proposal. He noted that there are sections where horses will be allowed.

-explained the rather complicated process of appointments to the ETS and to the MSTAC (aka MTAC). ETS appointment is by the Director and the MTAC is appointed by the Governor.

-noted that four ETS members' terms are expiring. Jim Radabaugh told the affected ETS members to let him know if he/she is interested in continuing as an ETS member. Dick Kleinhardt asked about the identification of the regions that ETS representatives. He asked why the central area is so small relative to the others. Chair Batie explained how the areas were originally divided, but noted that the identification and boundaries of the regions is totally an artifact of the committee. Thus the boundaries can be changed by the committee.

All present thanked Chair Batie for her four years of service. Meeting adjourned by majority vote at 4:30 pm

Handout #1

Handout for the ETS July 14, 2014 Meeting
[DRAFT on 6-14-14 by Batie]

The ETS recommends to the DNR that the projects listed below be funded with MNRTF 11-133 funds (Statewide Equestrian Initiative). The total of recommended funding is \$219,000. Furthermore, ETS requests that such funding take place as soon as possible so project work can start this season. ETS also requests that when the DNR alerts equestrian associations/Friends to the availability of these funds, they inform the EQs that ETS requested this use of the MNRTF grant, and that the funds must be expended by August 1, 2015. The projects so recommended are:

In the UP (\$18,000 total):

Headquarters Lake 10 sites --\$5,000

Fire rings

Picket poles

Cedar River Campground improvements-- \$3000

Little Brevort North Campground Improvements-\$5000

Picket Poles

Fire Rings

Signs and Posts- \$5000

Thunder Valley trails

Trails between Negaunee & Ishpeming.

20 miles on the Iron Ore Heritage Trail

In the Upper Lower Peninsula (\$101,000 total):

Elk Hill ---\$13,000

ADA Mounting Block

Gravel

Picket posts

Elk Hill- Pigeon River Water Access Slope Repair ---\$15000

Hardwood Lake--\$3000

Gravel on pumping station Road

Stoney Creek --\$10,000

Two Vault Toilets

Gravel

Picket Poles

Bulldozing

Four Mile Camp-- \$5000

10 Picnic Tables

4 Fire Rings

Picket posts

Big Oaks--\$27,000

3 Vault Toilets/walkway
Picket Posts and Gravel
Picnic Tables
Fire Rings
Big Oaks --\$25,000
Contractual Services (create sites)
Hopkins Creek Campground - \$3000
Picket poles

In the Southern Lower Peninsula (\$100,000 total):

Ionia (IORO 5013)- \$20,000
Crossing at Sessions Creek
Maybury (MAY06002)- \$30,000
Expanded parking lot
Pinckney (PCK 13001)-\$10,000
Toilet
Pinckney (PCK 13002)- \$20,000
Well and handpump
Brighton ((BRA 13008)-\$20,000
Campground improvements

Handout #2

Ms Hume's suggested revision to Batie recommendation of motion

The ETS recommends to the DNR that the projects listed below be funded with MNRTF 11-133 funds (Statewide Equestrian Initiative). MNRTF 11-133 has a current available balance of \$277,161. The total of recommended funding is \$219,000. Any remaining funds will be used for small EQ campground/trail projects throughout the state as project approvals allow.

Furthermore, ETS requests that such funding take place immediately to ensure that the projects are started, completed, and paid before the August 1, 2015 deadline.

ETS recommends that appropriate DNR unit managers communicate as soon as possible with the associated EQ association/ Friends group, if applicable, so project work can start this season (2014).

ETS recommends that all EQ-Friends groups work cooperatively with DNR staff to perform as much of the work as possible to keep costs within budget, and return any unspent funds for other projects.

EQ-Friends groups should be alerted immediately by both the appropriate ETS regional representative and by DNR unit/park managers, so the volunteers can be proactive in accomplishing these projects to improve Michigan State Parks and Recreation Areas and Forest Campgrounds.