

NONMORTORIZED ADVISORY WORKGROUP (NAW) MEETING  
MEETING MINUTES  
February 21, 2020  
Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)

**ATTENDEES:**

NAW MEMBERS

John Morrison  
Lori Hauswirth  
Mary Bohling  
Kristen Wiltfang  
Kenny Wawsczyk  
Jason Jones  
Jim DuFresne  
Andrea LaFontaine

DNR STAFF

Ron Olson  
Jacklyn Blodgett  
Paul Yauk  
Dakota Hewlett  
Nikki Van Bloem  
Anna Centofanti  
Paige Perry  
Nicole Toman  
Michelle Coss

.....

John Morrison called the meeting to order at 11:07 a.m. John Morrison serves as acting committee chair, as no chairperson has been designated yet.

**WORKGROUP RESPONSIBILITIES**

John Morrison described the Nonmotorized Advisory Workgroup as a committee that provides input and guidance on a variety of trail types, which include, hiking, biking, cross country skiing, water trails, and related land uses. Dakota Hewlett added that the trails and user groups represented by all of the DNR advisory workgroups, at some point, touch or cross over.

**COMMITTEE CONTRIBUTIONS AND PROJECT INITIATIVES**

John Morrison mentioned that NAW has been involved with providing input and support to past legislative issues, recreation passport opt-out, educating constituents, and building momentum over the past few years. Currently, NAW is evaluating a proposal for the November 2020 ballot related to changing the formula for the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Additionally, looking at ways to generate funds for trail maintenance, and finding out what other states do to leverage funding and resources. The NAW group will be working on a new funding model to align with other user groups.

**MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

Jason Jones represents natural surface non-motorized trails.  
Andrea LaFontaine represents all non-motorized trail users.  
Jim DuFresne represents trails maps.  
Lori Hauswirth represents cross-country skiing.  
Kenny Wawsczyk represents the hiking trails and communities.  
Kristen Wiltfang represents all non-motorized trails.  
Mary Bohling represents all water trails.

John Morrison recognized two newly appointed members, Andrea LaFontaine and Kenny Wawsczyk.

**BUSINESS ITEMS**

Motion was made to approve the November 15, 2019 draft meeting minutes. Motion was unanimously approved. Motion was made to approve the February 21, 2020 draft agenda. Motion was unanimously approved.

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**NAW 2020 GOALS**

John Morrison discussed changing future meetings to incorporate face-to-face meetings. Dakota Hewlett asked if any other members have goals they would like to add.

Lori Hauswirth said she'd like to explore ways to explore the creation of a new revenue source for nonmotorized trails. Mary Bohling would like to hear from each of the other user groups as to what their action orientated goals are. Jason Jones commented that the committees need to be more inclusive for all types of user trail systems. John Morrison stated the desire to partner with ETS, ORVAW, SAW, and MTAC to work together and recognize everyone's needs and accomplishments.

Andrea LaFontaine said she'd like to solicit feedback from the other user groups and determine a way to monitor and measure impacts. Lori Hauswirth said she feels the nonmotorized groups need to do a better job of telling their story and engaging our own people for user experiences. Also, reaching out to communities and help them understand the purpose for creating and maintaining the trail systems. Kristen Wiltfang said she'd like to incorporate updates from other user workgroups into the NAW regular meetings.

John Morrison said he would like to see one time a year, a joint advisory group meeting, like today. Nikki Van Bloem followed up by saying it is the goal of the DNR to have this type of meeting at least one time a year, to learn common goals, open forums for suggestions, and meet with other members from the advisory workgroups. Paul Yauk suggested to make connections today with people from other workgroups and find out about upcoming events that you may want to attend. He also appreciates all efforts made by the DNR workgroups. Dakota Hewlett said he'd like more awareness surrounding how trail topics and issues filter to the top and how it is reported. Jim DuFresne added that today's communication is more social media with broader platforms. Jason Jones concurred with Jim's comment. Mary Bohling said there are challenges with water groups, being there is not a good network, organizations, or media.

John Morrison asked the MTAC members to introduce themselves, if they were in the audience. The following MTAC members introduced themselves.

Thomas Dunn, ORV  
Jason Rolling, Non-motorized  
Steve Davis, Non-motorized  
Jenny Cook, Equestrian  
John Matonich, MTAC Chair

**UPDATES**

***Equine Trails Subcommittee (ETS) Trail Etiquette***

Dakota Hewlett talked about ETS signage and trail etiquette. This topic is centered around equestrians and when other user groups encounter them on a trail. The discussion talked about how to interact on trails and possible reactions from horses. Dakota Hewlett brought up how the DNR can promote safety through signage. Members of the committee responded by saying a communication campaign through marketing and outreach will increase the knowledge over all our user groups.

***Nonmotorized Sign Handbook***

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Nikki Van Bloem mentioned Anna Lee, a student from MSU who will be assisting the DNR in the development of a trail signage nonmotorized sign handbook, which will incorporate all nonmotorized use types. The handbook should be completed by Fall of 2020. Jason Jones pointed out that seasonal fat-tire bike grooming etiquette needs to be included. Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) and Law Enforcement Division (LED) campaigns for Ride Right, Water Safety, and overall safety and responsible behavior should be considered.

Wayfinding will be incorporated into the handbook. The book will convey a simple systematic message over all nonmotorized trails. Mary Bohling asked if water trails will be included in this book. Paul Yauk said there is a push for more water trail education, and it will be considered. Dakota Hewlett said, for the most part, the handbook will apply to trails on State Land. The handbook will be a living document where changes and modifications can be made at any time. Nikki Van Bloem suggested our student, Anna Lee meet with small groups to make suggestions for the handbook. Ron Olson noted the funding is not in place for new sign campaigns, but we need to look at what is in place now and how we can utilize those funds in place. Dakota Hewlett said Anna Lee is exploring what other states are doing for their signage. Paul Yauk wants to keep it simple and clear.

#### ***MATAG (Mid-America Trails & Greenways) Conference***

The MATAG conference is held every other year. The group is made up of 9 states. This conference has not been in Michigan in 15 years, but will be in Michigan Aug 30 - Sept 2, in Grand Rapids. A lot of the groups are nonmotorized, but they will have other sessions that include motorized trail topics as well. The theme is justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion, also health and environment. The first day will consist of field trips. There will be sixteen sessions over a couple days. More information to come. Sponsorships are being developed with other organizations in Michigan for this event. Mary Bohling asked where more information can be found. John Morrison said the call for sessions is open now, and the deadline is March 6. April will open conference registration. Kristen Wiltfang asked if staffing is needed, John Morrison said yes, and he will reach out to committee members. The website is [MATAG.ORG](http://MATAG.ORG).

#### ***Pure Michigan Trails and Towns***

Pure Michigan Trails is a brand and name which promotes towns and trails. Paul Yauk attended the recent Governors Conference on Tourism, where he spoke about the Pure Michigan Trails and Trail Towns Designation. Recognition is getting out and tourism is increasing. This week, at the Governor's Conference, awards were given to trails and trail towns that had applied for this recognition. The trails which received an award were 1.) Canada Lakes Pathway; 2.) Haywire Grade, the oldest state trail in Michigan; and 3.) Kal-Haven Trail. The towns which received an award are 1.) Reed City; 2.) City of Cheboygan; and, 3.) Orion Township. John Morrison asked what comes after the designation. Paul Yauk replied, you get the State recognition, signage, and partnership with DNR and Pure Michigan. Kenny Wawczyk said he is not sure what trail town means, as some of his trail, North Country National Scenic Trail, is designated as a Pure Michigan Trail. John Morrison mentioned you get the social media on the Pure Michigan website. Mary Bohling asked how many applications were received. Paul Yauk replied quite a few. Nikki Van Bloem mentioned some communities that did not receive any recognition, which had applied, should consider banding together because of the similarities. John Morrison noted because of the funding that was cut, people think Pure Michigan is going away. Paul Yauk assured the program is not going away, the funding that was cut is for ad campaigns. John Morrison said we need to get the message out that this program is not going away. Andrea LaFontaine asked if metrics are being gathered

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from the communities that have received this recognition. Paul Yauk said not yet, but we will be working on gathering that information, this is the second year for this type of award. Dakota Hewlett asked Paul Yauk to expand on the water trails grant program and Paul said more to come, as they are still developing the program. **2020 NAW Meeting Dates**

John Morrison confirmed the already established meeting dates, with the exception of a change for at least one face-to-face meeting.

- ❖ May 7, 2020
- ❖ August 6, 2020
- ❖ November 19, 2020

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

*Dale Freeman via phone*

Dale Freeman suggested that MDOT update their regional Road and Trail Bicycling maps more often. Some of the bike maps have not been updated for a long period of time (9 years). John Morrison said MDOT is aware of this issue and are talking about changing the process. Any maps they print are outdated as soon as they are distributed.

Jason Jones said open source data is being submitted from outside sources. How do we make the live/real time information available in one central location? Paul Yauk said it is a struggle and something that is being worked on. Jason said someone needs to reach out to the private sector to figure out how this information can be shared. Jason said he has heard the sharing of this information has already been partnered with other organizations or sectors. Jim DuFresne suggested geo referencing PDF maps to identify locations while on trails, however it can be more complicated to put together. Andrea LaFontaine suggested to loop in Brad Garmon. Ron Olson said we need to be careful of what programs to use, as access to maps can include people adding their own trails that are not approved trails.

Kristie Walls, from the audience, said she has a person that has been uploading trails to Trailforks, an app for trail maps, for which she was designated as an ambassador. Dakota Hewlett said they have a public data portal set up for that, and please contact him.

Paige Perry asked the advisory group to please fill out survey she provided to evaluate the two-day joint advisory group meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 12:19pm

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## Updates for Trails Advisory Groups meeting, Feb 21-22, 2020

### **North Central LP (Paige Perry)**

#### MULTI-PROGRAM PROJECTS

- Alpena to Hillman Phase 1 to Herron with 2 bridges- newest update involves a new rule for wetlands mitigation. Currently working with EGLE and MDOT to determine status.
- Little Black River Bridge on the NCST temporary 8' wide bridge in place to avoid winter reroute onto ~2 miles of city streets. Design is engineered and bids came in significantly over cost estimates. Still seeking funding to construct new.
- Gaylord South Trail outcry over the control structures installed to separate trail from RR seems to have subdued. Gaylord Area Snowmobile Club, Otsego County, City of Gaylord Chamber, Lake State Railway and DNR (specifically club contact Scott Thompson) have done a great job coordinating a consistent message to the public in terms of transparent information on the resurfacing project and the snowmobile public.
- Rogers City Spur Proposal
  - 'Bypass' Trail proposal was approved contingent on MDOT and PIRC permissions. MDOT permissions received. PIRC denied. Many thanks to Dave Campo of PIST and Matt Treinen DNR Contact! There is good momentum now to continue to pursue a hybrid multi-use proposal using some Carmeuse (that would trade for DNR owned corridor) and some MDOT.
  - Swan River Bridge on Rogers City Spur is slated for engineering in 20. Construct in 21-22.
- MDOT initiated meeting to discuss realignment of NWST along US 31 due to upcoming road project

#### NAW

- Event Permits: Great Lks Relay, Fundraiser in the Jordan Valley
- Trail Proposals: 3 for NCT keep stalling... Still trying to keep moving (will get finalized before spring!)
- Pathway 'you-are-here' maps: Working to finalize new template for next batch of pathway signs
- Norway Ridge EGLE Permit for multi-site maintenance is nearing final approval (many thanks to Local DNR Contact Blake Gingrich at PH Hoeft SP)
- Project Bridges on
  - NCT/IBT- Carp River Bridge - engineering cost estimates and structural options are being reviewed currently with NCTA, consultant
  - HCP - Black River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (1:3) for brand new build (this bridge was removed 3 years ago due to structural instability)
  - HCP - Pigeon River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (2:3) for evaluation, likely removal of existing and rebuild (this bridge was repaired 7 years ago and is twisting again due to poor design)
  - Pickerel Lake Pathway - Pickerel River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (3:3) for design only (hoping that staff and volunteers can remove current footbridge and replace in kind)

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**ETS**

- Trail Proposals: Inspiration Point EQ Pathway and Horse Camp proposal near Cheboygan pending

**SAW**

- JVTC Pinney Bridge Rd: Letter sent to JKVTC to explain Right of Way questions brought up at last SAW meeting
- Event Permits: Vintage Snowmobile out of Indian River FOE and Petoskey Snowmobile Club
- Incident Reports: Derailment of train in Otsego Co, Single snowmobile impact to posts, Snowmobile stuck in RR Switch

**ORVAW**

- Event Permits: Six Days of Michigan, Rites Of Spring -working with Elissa Buck to establish ROS into a multi-year event permitting pilot
- Grading Contracts for next summer – working to secure agreements/ contracts to work in 2 additional maintenance grades on dual use Routes that have been historically graded only once in late fall

**Northeastern LP (Amy Swainston)**

**NAW**

- Greg Kinser attended last Grayling Trail Committee Group (interest in Pure Mi Trail designation for water trail, crack repair of existing non-motorized trail); as well as meeting with Road Commission and Township supervisors for local community fundraising for Iron Belle trail progress within the County
- Assisted City of Clare by providing a letter of commitment from RTP funds for the MDNR match of \$300,000 to complete a 2.5-mile gap in the Pere Marquette trail which is a match to a TAP grant
- NEMCOG – Sunrise Committee is wrapping up preliminary plans for extending a bicycle / pedestrian path from Alpena to Oscoda.
- Continuous work by NEMCOG in wrapping up preliminary plans for Roscommon, Ogemaw. Continued detailed preliminary plans and designs for Iosco, Crawford.
- Recently Trails have been getting some snow resulting in improved groomed ski trails and reducing the hard packed – icy conditions. (Ogemaw, Tisdale, Mason Tract)

**SAW**

- Trail inspection of the Thumb area trails was done in early Feb. and substantial signage was done to all the trails to be open for the February snow systems. Efforts are continuing to update the maps to align with current land rights and Trail proposal information.
- Kalkaska county snowmobile – groomer incident/accident; speed was noted as the contributing factor in the initial report.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)

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**ETS:**

- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where Shore to Shore trail encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species near Grayling.

**ORV:**

- A wheeled motorized activity form (PR0358) was created to facilitate notification of the activity by the organizer to the Department and to allow for staff review of the activity to determine whether the event permit criteria has been met. This form establishes a consistent mechanism for organizers to provide basic activity information for evaluation. Staff were provided the form in Feb. and will be posted on the DNR Website soon.
- Concern expressed by clubs seeking request for reimbursements (RFR) to reduce backlog of requests and follow thru with reimbursement requests. This may be resolved with MAGG but there is a need to define and standardize ways to keep sponsors in the loop of who's has / has not approved the RFR. I.E.:If it has been received by Trail Specialist; if it has been checked; approved for payment to Lansing. Locally I have responded to RFR confirming receipt and included the club when approved – processed on to Lansing.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)
- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where ORV trails encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species. (Leota, Old State House)
- ORV Jonesville Bride – have consultant hired to look at bridge and evaluate current condition and improvements for connectivity.

**MTAC:**

Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails that are dual designated.

**Northwestern LP (Scott Slavin)**

Current priority project list funded or partially funded for 2020

**Non-Motorized Projects:**

1. East Branch of the Hersey River culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Ashton MI East Branch Hersey River
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out.
  - c. Cost: 1.1 million
  - d. Funding: "funded" Project was part of the 11-mile paving project from Reed City to Leroy. The remaining funding for the paving project will be used for culvert replacement.
  
2. Rogers Farm Pond culvert replacement

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- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Stanwood
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out
  - c. Cost: \$382000
  - d. Funding: "funded" using a trust fund grant and part of a 3 million MEDC grant.
3. Cold Creek culvert replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, South of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: "funded" using MEDC grant for 3 million.
4. Byers Creek culvert replacement
- a. Location White Pine Trail, south of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: "funded" using MEDC grant for 3 million.
5. Tustin culvert replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Tustin
  - b. Status: Engineering and design underway
  - c. Cost: \$ 500,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" funding has been provided form the snowmobile supplemental fund.
6. Reed City Covered Bridge replacement
- a. Location: White Pine Trail, Reed City
  - b. Status: Bridge inspection report and conceptual design is complete.
  - c. Cost: 1.2 million
  - d. Funding: "not funded" Bridge inspection/conceptual design was funded. Additional funding for replacement has been pursued with TAP grant and NRTF grant, both unsuccessful.



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7. 29-mile paving project Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - b. Status: Culvert replacement is underway, RFP's need to be submitted for engineering and design.
  - c. Cost: Estimated cost 8-9 million
  - d. Funding: "not fully funded" 3 million has been acquired by a MEDC grant and is being utilized to repair several culverts that need to be repaired prior to paving. The remaining balance of MEDC grant will be used for engineering and design.
  
8. Lewis Bridge Abutment project
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Elberta
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete, Natural Rivers Permit is out for review
  - c. Cost: \$79,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" RTP funding and friends group matching grant has been utilized to fund the project.
  
9. Re-Surfacing project Crystal Lake Segment
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Beulah
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete
  - c. Cost: \$300,000
  - d. Funding: "partially funded" Friends group received a NRTF grant for \$150k, RTP grant for \$150,000 has been submitted.
  
10. Betsie Valley Trail Master Planning design
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Frankfort to Copemish
  - b. Status: Conceptual design being completed by Johnson and Hill
  - c. Cost: \$40,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" Friends of the BVT funded this project.
  
11. Sign Project Pere Marquette Trail
  - a. Location: Baldwin to Clare
  - b. Status: A project request needs to be submitted
  - c. Cost: \$100,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" RTP funding has been allocated to this project.

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12. Cadillac Pathway single track development
  - a. Location: Cadillac Pathway, Cadillac
  - b. Status: Mapping underway for 12 miles of new single track
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: NMMBA and DNR seeking grants

**Snowmobile Program**

13. Bear Creek Swamp re-route
  - a. Location: Free Soil, Lake and Mason Counties
  - b. Status: EPA permit for construction is out for review
  - c. Cost: \$130,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" Funding was provided from the snowmobile program.
14. Fife Lake re-route/Easement acquisition
  - a. Location: Fife Lake, Trail 5
  - b. Status: Re-route construction is completed; easement acquisition has been requested.
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: "unfunded" Request for use of snowmobile easement fund has been requested.
15. Manistee River Bridge decking project
  - a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Mesick
  - b. Status: Inspection and scoping report has been completed, decking project is on hold
  - c. Cost: 1 million
  - d. Funding: "unfunded" Inspection and scoping report was funded with RTP dollars. Engineering/design need to be funded along with construction this is estimated to be 1 million.
16. Kaleva to Chief snowmobile easement purchase
  - a. Location: Chief
  - b. Status: Property acquisition is underway and scheduled for presentation to the NRC for approval.
  - c. Cost: \$80,000 for property and \$100,000 for land clearing and capping of the surface.
  - d. Funding: "funded" Snowmobile acquisition fund has been utilized to fund this project.

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**Off Road Vehicle Program**

17. Missaukee Junction ORV trail reroutes
  - a. Location: Cadillac
  - b. Status: Project was complete in 2019 but a portion of trail was obliterated by a timber harvest
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: FRD will utilize timber sale management fund to complete the reroute on the obliterated trail.
  
18. Missaukee County 2 unnamed creek bridge replacements
  - a. Location: Missaukee County, Miss-kal trail
  - b. Status: Engineering and designing is underway
  - c. Cost: \$500,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" funded with 2019 supplemental.
  
19. Sharman RD Trail Head construction
  - a. Location: Grand Traverse County, Grand Traverse Motorcycle Trail
  - b. Status: Trail proposal is still under review
  - c. Cost: \$20,000
  - d. Funding: "funded pending proposal" The site is a natural gas pumping station that has been de-commissioned. The gas company will be helping to grade, gravel and improve the access road.

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**FROM: PAUL GABERDIEL**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

Workgroup updates,

**MTAC-** Haywire Grade has been awarded the 2020 Pure Michigan Trail award. The Haywire is also celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a rail trail this year. Events celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be snowmobile, Equestrian, Bicycling and ORV. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ETS-** Haywire Grade 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event will on June 6, 2020.

**NAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary biking event will be on August 22, 2020. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ORVAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary ORV event will be on October 3, 2020.  
Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**SAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Snowmobile event will be February 29, 2020.  
Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail.  
Ride Right campaign placemats have been distributed to 7 food locations for last weekend, working on distribution to 4 more for this weekend.

Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events participation registration can be done online at [www.visitmanistique.com](http://www.visitmanistique.com)