

**Minutes of the  
Michigan Trails Advisory Council  
July 20, 2015**

The regular meeting of the Michigan Trails Advisory Council (MTAC) was called to order by Chair Frank Wheatlake at 10:00 a.m., on Monday, July 20, 2015, at the Doherty Hotel in Clare. The following members were present: *Frank Wheatlake, Jason Rolling, Bill Manson, Mike Foote, Jim Dickie, Nancy Krupiarz, and Sarah Nicholls.*

The following Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff was present: Barbara Graves, Jason Hartman, Todd Neiss, Anna Sylvester, and Paul Yauk.

**ACTION ITEMS**

MOTION: Mr. Mike Foote moved to approve the revised agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Bill Manson and it carried unanimously.

MOTION: Mr. Bill Manson moved to approve the revised April 7, 2015 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mike Foote and it carried unanimously.

**UPDATES**

Chair Wheatlake extended his congratulations to Mr. Paul Yauk who is the new State Trail Coordinator within Parks and Recreation.

Staffing Update – Mr. Paul Yauk discussed the next step with staffing which will be filling the U.P. trail position. This person will be the go-to person and report to him; same with positions in Bay City north and Bay City south. Position postings closed this week and interviews will be shortly after.

State Trails Plan – Mr. Paul Yauk provided a handout of the Michigan Trails Update that was previously provided to the Governor. It covers the States Trails Implementation Plan and their investments to date on what they are doing with their budget. He would like to update it yearly for the committee. They are working with water trails, ORV fee increases and improvements to the program, Silver Lake, the Oakland County adventure park possibility, advancements with the snowmobile program, new trails like Fred Meijer and Iron Belle, and working with partnerships. They are making progress on mapping; working closely with the federal government and MDOT.

Mr. Paul Yauk continued with an update on a world-class equestrian site. They are looking at sites in southern Michigan with access to roads and existing parks and trails. One site is Camp Innisfree which is 2,000 acres and has an indoor stable and riding area. It is two miles west of the Brighton Recreation area and is a few miles north of the Lakeland Trail, which can possibly connect to Pinckney (11,000 acres) and Waterloo (20,000 acres). Mr. Yauk said if this is possible, we would have a phenomenal facility that could provide a longer recreational experience for people coming in to Michigan from other states. Chair Wheatlake said that it is prudent they talk about providing recreational opportunities for everyone in the state.

Chair Wheatlake inquired about a possible snow machine trail from Pellston to Topinabee. Mr. Yauk responded that Mr. Ron Olson and he went to the president's office at the University of Michigan to speak to them. They gave them a copy of the plan that the friends group provided. They want to work with us, and in August they are going to meet at Douglas Lake and lay it out.

Mr. Yauk provided an update on the June 6<sup>th</sup> National Trails Day with the Girl and Boy Scouts. They hiked 14,000 miles, which is the equivalent of Detroit to Wisconsin seven times. The Scouts gave a presentation to the Natural Resources Commission. It was a great event that included young girls and boys from Daisy Scouts, Eagle Scouts, to Girl and Boy Scouts. The Scouts want to do something like this again in the fall and asked if they could get involved in work bees. It was very successful for everyone involved.

Chair Wheatlake asked about the Trails Staffing and Reorganization section of the report regarding greater emphasis consistent with the budget on non-motorized trail programs. What share goes to non-motorized? Ms. Anna Sylvester said that there was a funding source for the non-motorized again next year but it has been cut almost in half from what this year was. They have \$2.5M this year; she thinks it is down to \$1.25M for next year.

Mr. Jason Rolling asked if there have been any discussions about looking at funding sources for non-motorized. Ms. Nancy Krupiarz responded that the non-motorized group has been discussing it, and would like to survey other states to see what other sources are used. Their main focus right now is to preserve what they have and whatever they can do on the Recreation Passport "opt-out" rather than an "opt-in". They need to do a survey of what people would tolerate in terms of being able to pay for the trails. Chair Wheatlake said that in going back to when they wrote the Trails Plan, the "opt-out" was a legislative process, so they need to have everybody on board. Mr. Paul Yauk reported that as the program is now, they have given back almost \$850,000 to the community with the Recreation Passport funds.

Mr. Bill Manson asked for updates on the snowmobile/ORV coordinator positions. Ms. Anna Sylvester reported that Mr. Jason Fleming and she are working on two coordinator positions, one for motorized programs and one for non-motorized programs and these positions will report to Paul Yauk. Ideally they want to have them before October 1. Mr. Richard Kennedy is becoming the Grant Coordinator and then there will be a Program Coordinator who will meet with the clubs. Mr. Steve Kubisiak's position now is the two motorized programs fused together for grants and then the program manager will be fused together as another position; both will work closely together.

Ms. Nancy Krupiarz reported that there was a lot of good feedback at Legislative Day, with about 119 participants from all uses. The main goal was to educate on each of the trail systems we have in Michigan; stressing the economic, health, and recreation benefits. They had over 100 meetings with legislators and the three things they pushed were preserving the Natural Resources Trust Fund for the purposes for which it was intended, the importance of trail promotion, and their interest in developing each trail systems to the fullest extent. They received a lot of feedback from the legislature on cross-awareness of the trails. She thinks it was well worth doing. Bill Rustem, Ron Olson, and Paul Yauk were speakers. Because legislators serve for a short time, she was thinking that each of the trail types could do their own Legislative Day on the off-years and then all come together the next year. Chair Wheatlake thinks they should educate newbies on a bi-annual basis and annually have an interface with the folks going out there.

## **PUBLIC APPEARANCE**

Mr. Floyd Morris, via conference call, said the state land where he lives in Secord Township in Gladwin County is not posted for ORV use, but the mud holes there are so tore up that his horses cannot get through them, and when it gets bad they cut trees down to go around them. His issue is the misuse of lands with ORV riders. Chair Wheatlake asked for his phone number in which he provided. Chair Wheatlake will have someone from the department call him, and will also pass this on to the Chair of the ORV workgroup.

Mr. Don Packard, member of the Michigan Horse Council, asked Mr. Paul Yauk if they are any closer to contracts with Camp Innisfree. Mr. Yauk said right now they have the grant application in and will know in December if they get the funding. Funds will be available next spring. Then they will go back to the Girl Scouts Council and start negotiations for that property in the spring.

Mr. Leslie Sharp asked the committee if the building of a premier scramble area in Oakland County was going to take away from the rest of the trail system in respect to budgets, because the rest of the trail system is suffering for maintenance. Mr. Paul Yauk responded that it will put more money in the system, not take it out. Chair Wheatlake clarified that capital acquisitions are different than maintenance monies and that not every trail gets pristine care. He said they will address those questions with the ORV committee.

Chair Wheatlake read a statement that was sent to the committee from Mr. Steve Esselink, who is a member of a small group of dirt bikers who regularly use ORV trails. They would like to make all Michigan ORV trails unidirectional/one-way. The reason for this request is to make the trails safe and reduce head-on collisions and accidents. Mr. Bill Manson replied that back in the late 70s and early 80s they had a lot of DNR trails that were on loops and were one-way on different forests, but they had more head-on collisions then. Not too long after that they made everything two-way traffic. What happens is, if there are no one-way signs every hundred feet and a person comes in from another trail, he or she doesn't know they are on a one-way going the wrong way. Chair Wheatlake referred this to the ORV committee to have someone respond back to him.

Mr. Leslie Sharp addressed the committee again. He stated he lives in South Branch and rides a 50" machine, but the trails are so narrow and rutted out he cannot ride. He said side-by-side machines are getting wider and wider and suggested opening two-track trails to wider machines. He asked why we don't do what the national forest did and bulldoze and widen them. Chair Wheatlake asked if the ORV committee is taking any position on the extra wide machines and approaching the Forestry Department about trying to utilize more of the trails that we have, or just 4-wheeler vs. the larger use. Mr. Paul Yauk responded he thinks all of those things are on the agenda. Mr. Sharp said we still have the 50" trails, but widen them up and open up the existing state forest two-tracks for the wider machines. Mr. Paul Yauk said they did get an increase for ORVs and they are looking at that and they are opening up some sites where you have larger vehicles. Chair Wheatlake said the system is more complicated than what he is asking and that he would have other people that would disagree and not want the trails open, so they have to have balance. From a monetary perspective, the ORV fees went from \$3.3M to \$4.9M last year and they will be able to develop some of this, but with only an additional \$1M, they are not going to be able to take care of 3,000 miles of trails. It has to be prioritized and you cannot expect to snap your fingers and make it happen.

Mr. Sharp was asked what happens when he meets another person coming at him, in which he replied that that is his point for widening the trail. Chair Wheatlake said a 6' Bulldozer is 72" wide. You have two 50" machines and you still haven't solved the problem. It is going back to this group, they will come up with recommendations, they will discern what trails are available. He understands they have some big machines and they respect that. They understand the frustration, and these are things that need to go through the ORV workgroup.

Mr. Paul Mulder of the Great Lakes Four Wheel Drive Association said that at the trail maintainers meeting this spring one of the things they talked about was the fact that some trails were not being maintained. An idea that was floated around by the department is trail maintainer groups would be certified to inspect other trails, because ORV techs cannot physically inspect every trail in Michigan. In Leoda, he keeps it 50" plus and he maintains 55 miles there. It is one of the heaviest used trails in the state and they have very few head-ons because the corners are brushed correctly and things are done correctly. Last year they had a

tornado touch down in Crapo Creek and had to remove a quarter mile of trees. In the process he found 32 signs missing on 22 miles of trail that had not been maintained correctly. Ms. Amy Swainston in Roscommon is trying to work through things. They are trying to get the route open from the trail head at Jonesville over to Old 27. They got it through the process, it went almost to the Director's desk, and then somebody ran over a rattlesnake, took the snake to the department and was told it was a Massasauga. Because it is a Massasauga, it had to go all the way back down the process to look at the rattlesnake habitat. Two weeks ago when he talked to Ms. Swainston, it had eight desks to go across before he can open it up. On top of that, he has 32 signs to put in the ground, plus the five miles of route that he has already brushed, not getting paid for, to get the route ready to open. So if the approval comes from Mr. Yauk, they can have it open in two weeks. Ninety percent of the other people are not doing that, because they get fed up. They got the fee increase, but as the trail maintainer he does not get any more money per mile right now than he did six years ago.

Chair Wheatlake said the process and the interaction between the public and the department has improved, and to continue to work through the ORV group and the department; they will come up with changes, but it takes a while to make that happen. Mr. Paul Yauk added that the worst thing they can do is sit back and say nothing; stay involved. They are listening and are going to make changes. Chair Wheatlake said that he personally respects people like him who go out and spend all that time doing that.

A member from the audience asked if there was any way he can get a booklet that has the regulations and where you can ride and where you cannot ride. Mr. Paul Mulder replied to go to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), Parks & Trails tab, ORV/ATV Riding in Michigan link, tabs at the bottom right hand side of the page. Licensed dealers are supposed to have the booklets, but he has found that 90% of them do not. Mr. Jason Rolling said Marquette was a pilot program for the trails design; there is going to be a portal where the whole state can input force-fed information in a data form. You should be able to download this in the very near future. They have seen some of the pilot pieces and it is looking good. On your phone or computer, you will be able to self-populate all the routes that meet your needs.

Mr. Dan Wilhelm said he has a personal interest in the Houghton Lake to the Jonesville bridge route, and because of a rattlesnake getting run over, people are still getting tickets. It is not a recognized ORV route, so they are trying to get to his establishment. Chair Wheatlake confirmed with staff that the Massasauga is endangered. He said the frustration with rattlesnakes in that area is like the frustration people have in the U.P. with wolves. Once the endangerment comes in to place under the National Environmental Protection Act, we have to dot our "I's" and cross our "T's" and make those things happen, and it can be frustrating. Mr. Wilhelm asked if there was any chance it is going to happen this year. Ms. Anna Sylvester said it has gone to the stewardship agencies and the federal agencies to see what kind of workarounds need to happen or if it can be open. She knows that if it cannot happen, Ms. Swainston will be looking at some kind of workarounds. Chair Wheatlake requested the issue be kept on the ORV agenda.

Mr. Ted Richard said he is from the thumb area and he and his family are snowmobile, ORV, and horse riders. They do a trip to Wisconsin frequently and he wants to make a point that Wisconsin trails "suck" compared to Michigan trails. He said they went to South Dakota with their horses last year and spent three weeks in the Black Hills. His observation is that there is no designation and everybody is on the trails and they were very surprised at how polite the trail users were to each other. The ORV riders would see a horse and stop so they could ride by them; it is unbelievable how their system in South Dakota worked.

Mr. Richard's question on the snowmobile end is about Chassell Trail 15 (to Houghton) and what is going on with it. Mr. Bill Mason responded that it is a grade that is technically open to

snowmobiles but it is not groomed because the trail ends in to the parking lot of the maintenance facility for the Michigan Tech College. Chair Wheatlake said it is open from Chassell; the old railroad. They abandoned that section of railway that goes through downtown, so now it is stopped and there is no legal access. Chair Wheatlake said they are aware of it and he can understand why they do not want to groom one direction; it is not cost effective to turn around and groom back.

Mr. Richard continued that the Trail Riders Association of Michigan rides everywhere in the United States. They take their rigs and are gone for a month at a time. They ride out of state because they run in to so much resistance with the Michigan trail riders. They go to the Pigeon River and you cannot get in their park because there is a lock on it. You go to Lumberman's Monument and you cannot get in there because there is a lock on it. What do they have to do to have these places where they can pull their rigs in and ride the trails? Who do they talk to and where do they get started? Mr. Mike Foote responded that the Equine Trails Subcommittee reports to the Michigan Trails Advisory Council. He suggested that they leave their names and numbers with him and he will talk to Mr. Paul Yauk. He said it is a complex situation because he is talking about two or three different trail systems. Ms. Anna Sylvester added that most of them are open. Johnson's Crossing is not open, which might be the one he is referring to, but there is Elk Hill, and there is also some dispersed camp sites in the Pigeon River that you can use.

Chair Wheatlake read an update from Mr. Ron Olson: "The Pigeon River Committee recommended another six miles of equestrian trails be open in Pigeon River last night. The Advisory Council accepted the recommendations; eleven new trail connectors and additional campgrounds." Chair Wheatlake continued that they are working on trying to do these things, but you cannot snap your fingers and expect them to be done instantaneously. Mr. Foote said that is a very common thing that is brought up by the horse people. He thinks one of the advantages if you go to Shawnee, or any of the others, is they have large trail systems. They also have several private campgrounds that cater to these areas. Michigan does not have that. We have two in the state, maybe three. That is one of the things that we lack, so that is part of the reason that people go there is because they have such an extensive system that they can go down there and spend a week. It is hard to do that in Michigan unless you want to really re-loop, so that is one of the things that we will have to work on and that is going to take time. Chair Wheatlake added that the federal forests are also working with us on all trails so this is what the Trails committee was created for. We are trying to turn a battleship and it does not happen in a year.

Mr. Wallace Gregg spoke to the committee and said he likes to go to the U.P. and ride with his side-by-side. He also rides in Clare and other places. He received a county map at an ORV class he took, and on the map it was highlighted where they cannot ride. It was great, but he cannot find an updated one. He was told to get it on-line, but he does not have a computer. If he goes to the U.P., he always gets one from the County Road Commission, which is excellent. Would it be possible for them to highlight on these maps where they cannot ride? Everybody can get a county map, so we pay a couple dollars. Chair Wheatlake said we cannot spend county money but one of the biggest most contentious issues we have is being able to come up with mapping for all types of trails. Mr. Jason Rolling added that that is the whole point of making the open database. What the pilot program has done is it is designing a place where you as a community can force feed the data into that site and it will self-populate and build that mapping into the program. The only thing you need to do is go to a library and print off the map. Mr. Paul Yauk added that as soon as you print something, shortly after it is out of date. He said everything we do is going to be a week old, but using the open portal on the computer you will have current information on hand.

## **BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

Landowners with trails on their property - In speaking with Jason Fleming, Paul Yauk does not have the legal policy on liabilities and benefits on private lands, so he is going to have to come back to it. Mr. Jason Rolling said he is the director for the Noquemanon Ski Marathon and is on the Noquemanon Trail Network Board, so land use is a big deal for him. They just purchased just shy of 190 acre easement to help secure that, but it has been a huge problem and in the liability piece and it is a concern. He asked Mr. Yauk to look at Duffy vs. Iron Area Tourist Association. It was a personal injury that happened on a trail. It applies specifically to ORVs, but he thinks it is an issue across the board. What happened was the Iron Area Tourist Association was maintaining a trail on public property, and someone was on an ATV (Duffy), wrecked the ATV, and was paralyzed from the neck down. Duffy sued the trails and the city, stating that the trails were not properly maintained. The courts overturned it basically using the protection of the Recreational Use Act of 1994, Act 451. They appealed it and the appeals court ruled against it; basically overturned the Act. Now we have precedence. Mr. Rolling read part of the ruling which stated, *“Protections offered by the Recreational Land Use Act apply only to the traditional premises processes identified in the legislation and the fact that it is landowners, tenants, or lessees.”* He said that those are three specific titles and that the Marquette land use agreements they have licenses to operate and build mountain bike trails in Marquette, but this is not protected now by this, as far as he reads it. Section 73301 of Act 451, excerpt 324-81133 -- this is where the ORV associations basically had changes to the law based on this. It states, *“Each person who participates in the sport of ORV riding excerpts a risk associated with that sport . . .”* and riding an ATV is inherently dangerous and you take the responsibility. There is nothing in the act for non-motorized vehicle use.

Chair Wheatlake asked if they can get an A.G. opinion. Mr. Rolling said there is e-mail surrounding it, but they haven't been able to link-up a conference call yet. Chair Wheatlake said that as important as this is to the State of Michigan we should get the A.G.'s opinion about all trails and we have to think about from a department perspective that we are asking for more people to participate. We need to figure out how they can exonerate them from prosecution. Mr. Rolling said the way they look at it right now is they have three basic things: landowners, tenants, and lessees. Since they are a licensing of that property, to him, the contracts would need to say that we are a lessee of the public property. Chair Wheatlake said he thinks it is more profound than that. You have volunteers out there to cut trees down to open things up and somebody comes past and you have your earphones on and a tree falls, so are they going to be liable? He thinks it should be a priority and report back to them at the next meeting.

Mr. Bill Manson thinks the snowmobilers are well covered. Snowmobile laws have already been tested, that you as a snowmobiler know that it is inherently dangerous and that is gone all the way up through the court system and has been upheld. That has really reduced their lawsuits that have come in from snowmobilers. Chair Wheatlake said we need a disclaimer for all. Mr. Rolling said the biggest issue for him is that the Recreational Land Use Act was overturned and that is the precedence. Mr. Paul Yauk asked for Mr. Rolling to show him what he as and they will talk. Mr. Yauk will check in to this.

Non-motorized Advisory Workgroup - Replacement of Mountain Biking Representative – Mr. Paul Yauk and Ms. Nancy Krupiarz will provide a recommendation to the Chair.

ORV Revenue - Mr. Paul Yauk shared a report on ORV revenues with the committee that showed revenues have gone up because of the new fee increase. Chair Wheatlake said it is interesting to see the number of sales with no pushback and the growth they have seen. Mr.

Yauk said they addressed an issue and now they are in the process of putting those dollars back out in the field.

Land Use Orders – Ms. Anna Sylvester said they just approved a land use order to allow ORVs to operate within the Bewabic State Park near Iron Mountain, to connect to the trails there. This is their 5<sup>th</sup> state park campground opened to allow ORVs to ride on the campground roads to connect to trails. It has been successful at the other four campgrounds.

Mr. Manson said they had a meeting with the Director and requested that he research what possibly would be a land use order blanketing all marked, groomed, snowmobile trails - no wheeled vehicles between December 1st and March 31<sup>st</sup>. He asked Mr. Yauk to put it on his 'to-do' list and to ask Trevor VanDyke about it. Mr. Manson continued that they have been talking about that legislation and they realize that our trails are a multitude of different roadways, private lands, and public lands. What they are looking for is something to put some teeth in the DNR law. They spent thousands of dollars maintaining a trail only to have it undone.

Mr. Jason Rolling said in the U.P. they have some land use agreements between some of the snowmobile clubs and they are building snow bike trails on the sides of it. He is a little concerned that the law does not specifically state "motorized". Mr. Manson replied that he would probably oppose him on that because the guys that are riding five-tired bikes say they hear them coming and they get off to the side of the road, but on their twisting trails he worries about running over one of them. Chair Wheatlake said this is a conflict and to keep the communication going between the two committees on the issues that are out there.

## **COMMITTEE REPORTS**

### Off-Road Vehicle Advisory Workgroup

- Continued work on the opening of forest roads in the upper Lower Peninsula.
- Working with the clubs and groups on Remove the Sign plan – removing the ORV signs off the trees and on to carbon fiber posts.
- The subcommittee, with the Department's help, will be trying to get some metrics on ORV usage on the free riding weekend on June 12.
- Oakland County joint adventure with the Department to open an ORV park in southeast Michigan continues to move forward.
- Mapping was discussed again.
- Bewabic State Park land use order for ORVs.

### Snowmobile Advisory Workgroup

- They are doing oil sample kits on all of their equipment to get a baseline due to three engine failures on equipment during the seasons. They have hired Bader and Sons to collect and analyze it.
- They are continuing to delve into the Permanent Trail Easement fund update, working with Jacklin Blodgett. She has some liaisons for the Secretary of State and Treasury. There seems to be some discrepancy on what they feel should be in the fund and where that is going. The Permanent Trail Easement fund is \$8 of every registration.
- New business: more training programs for grooming; the grooming cost analysis was finished; out of 6,500 miles of trails last year 440,067 miles were groomed, which is low because of no snow until January 10th. Money left over was used to purchase 10 groomers/drags and four drags; spent about \$2.4M. Mr. Richard Kennedy and the Lansing staff have done a good job keeping them where they are supposed to be.

- Mesick – Met with Director Creagh and Director Steidel. One of the big things that they have been working on for ten years between Cadillac and Mesick and over the Manistee River and toward Benzie/Manistee area. Part of this grade is owned by MDOT Rail; part of it is owned by the DNR. They have not been able to get together. MDOT Rail lets Cadillac Winter Promotions use part of the grade so it is groomed to Uma, but then because of the bridge there, there is fighting over who has to deck the bridge and redo it. That would be a great connector. Senator Booher has a file on it too and he is staying very involved.
- They are looking at snowmobile law under the rental section; it needs to be updated. Right now it says if any dealer decides to rent sleds he/she must carry \$20,000 worth of liability insurance and have a permit. They are going to be looking at that and at the same time looking at charging more for a trail permit for those rental units because the cost of sleds and the cost of being out there, more and more people are starting to rent.
- Other legislation – the MSA has been proposed and they still do not have any legislator to sign on to it because it contains a fee increase.

#### Non-motorized – Nancy Krupiarz

- Legislative Day – shortly after they met and had a debriefing on the event.
- They had an update on the Iron Belle Trail and a lot of questions were asked about it.
- They have been discussing E-bikes and their potential implications in the future. Some states have been encountering proposed legislation to allow e-bikes on all the trails. It is something they need to be proactive on and see what they can do. She thinks there was legislation proposed in Michigan that is starting with a definition of what is an E-bike.
- Thunder - Hills Pathway – they discussed how that was resolved and were pleased with how the DNR worked it out.

Chair Wheatlake requested Ms. Krupiarz get him a name for a biking representative. He said based on what Mr. Paul Yauk put together from last year they have 80 miles of state rail trail improvements and 120 additional miles coming, and spent \$13.5M out of their budget.

#### Equine

- Mr. Mike Foote reported they are all set on the grants. He wanted to check on the WIP for the electricity in the campground in Ionia. If it does go through, it will be a good starting point for some of the other equestrian campgrounds.
- A draft definition of corral was provided to Ms. Anna Sylvester.
- They had a great presentation from Dr. Christine Hanaburgh on Pittman-Robertson funds. She did an excellent job at clearing up some misunderstandings.
- Ms. Anna Sylvester reported that they need a couple of signatures for Big Oaks trails, 25 miles of trails, northeast of Lewiston that would connect to the campground.
- Upgrades slated for some of the equestrian recreation areas.
- The general consensus in the equestrian community is they are noticing that things are moving forward and that the DNR has been exceptionally helpful.

#### Tourism

They plan to develop an Equine Tourism Marketing Plan by replicating what they did for bicycles. The Equine Plan will be all kinds of disciplines. They will be having a series of three meetings which will be a chance for people to have input in the development. Hopefully it will be completed by early spring.

Ms. Krupiarz said they will think about what they want to do for the next Legislative Day and Chair Wheatlake suggested passing out an invitation to them so they can see what we do.

Bill wants to make sure the Federal U.S. Forest Service and LAW are invited to the next meetings and would like an update on the work program for snowmobiles for next year.

Mr. Jim Dickie asked about the Silver Lake priority project to which Ms. Anna Sylvester reported that there are now two vouchers – dune-ready and parking. Dune-ready gets right in line for the dunes. They have volunteers from the community that are helping get people parked and are also helping with the line. When there is a breakdown in the up ramp to the dunes, people might wait up to an hour, which is the longest they have had. They are working with the DEQ to open up another entrance, so there will be two ways to get in, and also double the parking lot so that those who have to trailer their vehicles in have better parking. She said it has been working smoothly. With parking lot vouchers you used to have to wait Friday night in line or Saturday night in line for Sundays. Now they have it were they give out 75% of the Sunday vouchers on Friday night so you don't have to stand in line twice if you are going to be there all weekend. They save the other 25% for people that may be out there Friday and are just there Saturday and Sunday so they don't have to do that extra waiting.

Chair Wheatlake suggested that part of each future subcommittee report they have one item of concern and what they are doing to correct it.

Mr. Paul Yauk wanted to share that he went to a Federal meeting earlier this year in Portland, Oregon where 40 of the 50 states were present. He was asked to give an overview of Michigan's system and after the overview a fellow from Washington D.C. said that we are their "poster child" of doing things right and that we have a great system here in Michigan. No other state in the country has as complicated and diverse system of trail users, we work well with our subgroups, and we work well with MDOT. He thought we were doing a great job. Mr. Yauk said it was a tribute to the trail users of Michigan.

Chair Wheatlake state that as we talk about trails, we need to think about how we can evolve and be dynamic as we change, what it is we are trying to accomplish, and also look at the technology changes. Each subcommittee needs to talk about these things and work through them.

Chair Wheatlake asked where we are at in working with Forestry on opening up more trails. Ms. Anna Sylvester said she thinks that as more trail proposals come up, the Recreation Specialist are entering them and she thinks there is a little more collaboration, and she thinks that when it is possibly to do, we do it. LaGrande is one that they will have to revisit because that is becoming a wildlife gem. She said there were so many comments on the trail proposal right away that the process was halted and they are going back and seeing what they can do.

Mr. Bill Manson asked the department staff if snowmobiles were being added to the travel management rules on all federal property. Staff did not know but will research.

MOTION: Mr. Manson moved to adjourn the meeting at 1:25 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Foote and it carried unanimously.