

Non-motorized Advisory Workgroup

August 12, 2015

Points of Discussion

MTAC Meeting – July 20, 2015

Discussed:

- DNR Trails Section Reorganization (handout)
- Michigan Trails Legislative Day results (handout) – Several members commented favorably; Chair Frank recommends doing annually. Some discussion about how to do this financially and effort-wise. Maybe for now we invite legislators to the MTAC meetings.
- A challenge to the Recreational Use Act requires that we shore it up with new legislation Duffy vs. Iron Area Tourist Assoc. (Duffy, an ORV trail user, wrecked his vehicle and was paralyzed; Sued the city, lost; Appeal to the Supreme Court won (rendering Recreational Use Act useless) Jason Rollings, MTAC non-motorized representative, is sending more info. Whatever is done would have to concern landowners, tenants, lessees, etc.
- Much discussion on multiple use conflicts – ORV vs. walkers/bikers; snowmobiles vs. fat tire bicyclists. Suggestions made from public to make trails uni-directional, but Bill Manson countered that this was tried for snowmobile trails one season and DID NOT work. Too much education needed to enforce uni-direction and accidents are worse if not complied with.
- Mountain biking representative replacement for non-motorized advisory council
3 candidates have expressed interest: Steve Schnell, Jason Rollings, Brindley Byrd
- There were many ORV and snowmobile trail users at the meeting, expressing various concerns – became a public hearing of sorts, but Frank delicately handled this.
- Charge from MTAC meeting was for each advisory group to come up with their top issue of concern and report on it at the next MTAC mtg. scheduled for October 21st at the RAM Center.

Potential Top Issues of Concern for Non-motorized Trails

- Maintenance Funding (lack of)
 - Maintenance Standards (lack of)
 - Maintenance Capacity (supplement friends groups) (lack of)
- Signage – lack of
 - Types of signage needed – difficulty rating, wayfinding to destinations from trail, routing, general signage for increasing public awareness
- Liability coverage for nonprofit groups (lack of)
 - Liability coverage to help shore up recreational use act (lack of)
- Electric bikes (conflict with non-motorized trail use)
- 300 k Cap on Natural Resources Trust Fund Development Grants (remove cap)
- Trails funding in general (lack of adequate)

- Trails Promotion (lack of)
- Trail Towns (lack of organized state program)
- Water Trails program (lack of organized state program)
- Hiking program (lack of organized state program)
- Cross-country skiing (lack of organized state program)
- Other?

The final decision by the NAW committee to name Lack of Funding for Trail development and maintenance is our main concern. The one thing MTAC could possibly do about this collectively is to work on getting the cap of \$300k lifted for Natural Resources Trust Fund grants.

The committee as a workgroup could do the following things about this issue:

- 1) Communicate the needs
- 2) Work through network groups to communicate the needs
- 3) Bring new ideas for funding
- 4) Identify barriers to funding
- 5) Do a survey to see what public would tolerate
- 6) Use as a top issue for next Legislative Day