

**EQUINE TRAILS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES
AUGUST 28, 2019
1:15 – 4:30pm
MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Lab, 4125 Beaumont Rd., Rm 115, Lansing**

ATTENDEES:

ETS:

Dick Kleinhardt
Jenny Cook
Kristie Walls
Janet Holstrom (phone)

Others:

Marsha Curak - Sleep hollow
Connie Kleinhardt - BEHMI
Sally Oberg - PLHA & Kensington Trail Riders
Caryn Robinson – PLHA & Kensington Trail Riders
Susie Sulla - PLHA
Anna Lee - MSU Grad
Chad Simpson – Waterloo
Cindy Kesler – Proud Lake Trail Riders & Kensington Trail Riders
Jody – Proud Lake Trail Riders (phone)
Col. Don Packard (phone)

DNR:

Michelle Cos
Anna Centofanti
Debbie Jensen
Nicole Toman
Greg Kinser
Jill Sell
Nikki Van Bloem
Paul Yauk
Anna Sylvester
Paige (phone)
Amy Swainston (phone)

Meeting was called to order at 1: 14 PM BY Kristie Walls. Kristie stated public comments will be addressed at the end of the meeting. Committee members introduced themselves. Audience members introduced themselves.

Michell Coss introduced herself as a replacement for Miguel Rodriguez, she will be working more on the fund-raising side. Michelle explained her role involves funded resource development by recruiting volunteers around the state to help with funding. Nikki commented Michelle's background is

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networking and fund raising and will be able to focus primarily on these areas, whereas Miguel was not able to.

Kristie W. motioned for approval of June 19 minutes. Dick K. first to approve, with Jenny C. to second, rest of committee in favor. Kristie W. motioned for approval of August 28 agenda; Kristie W. suggested adding an action item C to the agenda; item 6 from the June meeting list. Dick K. first to approve, Jenny C. second to second, rest of committee in favor.

DNR Staff reports

Paul Yauk started by noting staff that are not on the agenda should have a chance to talk. RP have to opt in legislature pass to make opt out instead, is moving forward. Will generate significant revenue (8-15M\$/year) source for all park's programs. Paul Felt it would have passed last year, if speaker of house could have voted. Paul said the State budget for 2020 is not in place, if not agreed upon by October 1st, DNR will be out of work (closed). Nicole Toman commented budget agreement is decided by administration, (House, Senate, Governor). Lastly, Paul said it's been a good year with a lot of great projects happening, Shore-to-Shore being one of them.

Greg Kinser

Trail proposals that made have been approved through the project system, one being Tin Cup Spring and Old Mackinaw coming shortly. Greg said the process was slower due to the FRD chief having a chance to look at proposals in keeping with consistencies. Tin Cup approval letter has already been presented to Dick Kleinhardt. Dick Kleinhardt thanked Greg for his work on moving this request along. Old Mackinaw approval letter will be coming shortly. Kristie Walls asked what the Old Mackinaw is, and Greg stated it is the North Spur of the Shore-to-Shore (Cheboygan). Kristie asked for a timeline, and Greg is not sure of timelines, but will be implemented by way of approval process. Anna Sylvester asked if it is possible to include the Old Mackinaw in the 2020 funding budget? Anna asked to place the

Jill Sell

Jill said the RFP is out for engineering Van Buren trail and work will start this fall and winter, trails will remain open for Equestrian trail (Van Buren to Hartford).

Nikki Van Bloem

Nikki has a couple things to add. Trail Plan bids have been returned and still in the protest period for reward. Bids have been scored, and DNR is working with consultant that scored highest. Nikki is looking forward to starting the process in October as the internal kick-off-meeting. More information will come as things move forward. Nikki said January ETS meeting topic will include Trail Plan.

Anna Centofanti

Anna introduced herself as the new DNR Trail Administrative Assistant and gave some background on her past work experiences. She said she is enjoying her role and working with everyone. Also, she acknowledged the nameplates and comments cards were not brought to this meeting, and will be sure they are not forgotten next time 😊

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Paul Yauk

Paul mentioned one more thing. VanBuren trail to South Haven to Hartford is still looking for a connection to Pawpaw, which will make for a great south west trail loop. This is close to being finalized, as they are working with the landowner. **KW** asked what will the mileage be? Paul and Jill estimated approximately 90 miles. **KW** asked if there are any camping facilities... yes but they are not EQ. Nikki stated this can create opportunities for campgrounds, but the need to acquire the land and build campsites can be years away.

Janet Holstrom

Courtney Lake Campground (Ontonagon Co): Ottawa National Forest (ONF) has approved 6 campsites for horses. On site visits with ONF regarding placement of High Lines and manure removal plan.

Headquarters Lake (update info courtesy of Sam Norman)

- The trails at Headquarters Lake are all marked. There are safety issues with a bridge on the northern most trail loop. The DNR maintenance staff have materials for repairs and since this is also a remote area vehicle bridge; they will get to the bridge upon completion of some other projects deemed in need of immediate attention. There are alternate routes available. (see attached map)
- The campground for Little Brevort Lakes is somewhere in the DNR administrative approval process because of some natural area issues. We are hesitant to commit time looking at trail possibilities until we know we will have a camp.
- Our USFS campground and trail project at Strong's Corner (Three Lakes Campground) and a trailer parking area north of *Raco* are still in the administrative process. I am hearing that it looks good for us. I am hoping we will be good to go by spring.

Question: Do we know the status of the Campground at Little Brevort Lake and Strong's Corner projects?

Pine Bowl (Chippewa Co.): No changes at this time.

The Marquette Co. fairgrounds connector trail to Thunder Valley: No changes, the brushing and signage have not yet been completed.

Connector trail from Lakeland to Marquette Fairgrounds: No changes.

Simar trail (Ontonagon Co): no change. Plans are to work on proposal and gather data this summer. Pine Bowl link is empty on the Pure Michigan web page. Kristie Walls asked if someone from DNR can correct that. Michelle Coss will communicate with internal DNR and take care of web page.

Dick Kleinhardt

Northern Lower Peninsula ETS Report for August 27, 2019

Camping Policies at Elk Hills and Big Oaks Campground are not honoring the equestrian folks sweat equity, and monies that made these camping facilities unique to camping with a horse. These camps have been designed exclusively for horse camping. It is inexcusable and unacceptable to allow non-horse campers to camp in our equestrian campgrounds. If this concept is not honored then many

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equestrians, after driving for hours to camp will be forced to camp somewhere in the forest or maybe even in people campgrounds. We need to avoid this scenario. Fall riding will soon be in full swing.

Tin Cup Springs campground update: getting very close for approval according to Scott Slavin.

Elk Hill Pavilion update: Real set back on timeline for building of the Pavilion. Back Country had trailers packed and many volunteers ready to head up to the Pigeon on August 14th but suddenly it had to be cancelled as the plan review did not pass muster with the State inspector. Consequently, everyone had to be notified that it was off for the time being. I placed a call to the Governor's Office to try to find out who "dropped the ball" and hold people accountable in this process. The Governor's Office was most helpful and now we are awaiting another time frame which potentially could be mid-September. After many phone calls back and forth with the State Inspector, builder and the folks at the Bureau of Construction Codes we were able to finally get the glitches ironed out. The initial blueprint plan had to be revised to include engineered trusses which will cost us more since we had already purchased the timbers to build them on site. Several other things were modified to suit the state inspector. The Pavilion will be built this fall, hopefully in a couple weeks.

Big issue nationally is the ebike issue. IMBA is advocating for usage E-bikes on non-motorized trails. This would open the door to a very dangerous precedent. There are 3 classes of E-bikes: tier 1, tier 2 and the big boy, tier 3. These bikes have an electric motor, throttle, and speeds up to 27 mph on top of the speed that you are capable of peddling. IMBA is only promoting the tier 1 bikes but that is the slippery slope. Motorized vehicles should not be on non-motorized trails. Hikers and equestrians have joined forces to stop such activity.

Dick thanked Greg for approval of Tin Cup Springs. Dick said he is looking forward to working with Scott S and very excited to move forward.

Caryn mentioned she has seen ebikes on the trails in the southern regions. Nicole said legislature defines an ebike as a bike, and it is not considered motorized. Legislations specified only class I are allowed to be operated on improved surface trails and not natural surface trails. If ebikes are on natural surface trails, they can be issued a citation. Kristie feels it is competitive advantage for the groups to oppose use of the ebikes on MB trails. Dick referring to the liability and issues that can arise on horse trails. Nicole pointed out that drones are not allowed in horse EQ facility and can receive citation. Paul asked Anna S to send land use order out to committee members, Jill recalls it was in the last meeting, and she will check.

Kristie brought up suggestions for CAMIS for sites that have camping. Can corrals be a dot with square around? Anna S says now is the time to address this change, she will work with Trevor. Anna S said CAMIS may not have capability to change maps, as written into our contract, Anna S will contact Krista and find out if it is in the pipeline.

Kristie Walls reporting for Amy Scharmen in her absence

ETS Report - SE – August 2019

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Most of my groups do not have updates as it's slow between the months of June and August, but I have two groups I'd like to focus on where in the process their proposals for trail expansion or separation are. Proud Lake is on the agenda, Ortonville is not. They are both in active contact with their park managers about the process.

I'd like to bring up one new item which concerns all the groups helping to maintain the trails throughout the state. I'd like to see the DNR link to the trail associations who maintain the trails. I see MTRA is listed with and without website links on the camps they help maintain, Yankee Springs is also mentioned on their page, but none of our other groups are. Also, some camps have good descriptions while some have none, is that something trail groups could/need to assist with? The Waterloo page lists their rental stable while Brighton does not. https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79659_83915-454135--,00.html

Brighton Rec –

Highland –

Maybury Trail Riders –

Ortonville – Their new trail proposal seems to be under active consideration, and they are hoping for approval soon so they can start developing the new trail this year. This proposal will put them at about 11 miles total reaching the DNR's goal for parks to have at least 10 miles of trails for equestrians to enjoy. They would like to apply for a grant in 2020 which could help cover the costs for new trail development and fund materials needed to repair poor drainage areas on the existing trails. We would love to have more information about where it is in the process and if it's a go so the work can get started asap. Nikki said she is not sure where this is at now, her guess stewardship. Amy has been communicating with Nikki and Karen is receiving updates. Karen has been talking to the park supervisor. Proud lake will be discussed later in the meeting.

Pinckney –

Pontiac Lake –

Proud Lake Trail Riders – On the agenda today is discussion about separating the equestrian trails from the bike trail, i.e., creating new trails for bike riders. This can be saved for later in the agenda. The questions we would like answered are... Is this part of the rattlesnake protection area? Because the trail riders have been told it is not. Where exactly is it in the study phase? Are there any hold ups and if so, what are they and what can be done about them? Is separation of the two users still going to happen? If trail density is an issue, what are the specifics, protocol on that and what can be done about it? Same for other issues? Since this has been in talks for so long but we still don't have a plan for separation, we wanted to make sure it truly is moving forward towards separation of the two users because it is too dangerous to continue to share these trails. Cindy Kesler, the president of Proud Lake Trail Riders plans to join us at the ETS meeting August 28th, 2019.

Trail Towns – I have not received any correspondence as to a new meeting being held to discuss trail towns. Pinckney Trail Riders did compose a letter of support for Pinckney being designated a trail town.

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Southeast Michigan Trail Group Events Facebook Group – All events are being advertised on the group and hopefully this is bringing more riders to events and awareness about our parks and all the work our volunteers do.

Jenny Cook

Allegan State Game Area Friends of Allegan County Equestrian Trails System (F.A.C.E.T.S.) and Allegan Pleasure Riders maintain and support this area with trail maintenance, donated hitching posts, picket poles, gravel, sand, over \$10,000 for a pavilion, fire rings, mounting blocks, guard rails, big blue park entrance signs, etc. They are passionate and proud of this area.

Bass River Recreational Area has had generous equestrian activity throughout the summer. There are dedicated equestrians in the area that are planning to start a Friends Group.

Ft Custer Recreational Area will have a Fall Campout September 12-15. Please join us!

There will be four days of fun celebrating our 100-year Anniversary with t-shirts and special activities. Our members, John and Daryl Ann Letts will provide camp breakfast Saturday and Sunday mornings with homemade pancakes, hot off the griddle, real maple syrup, eggs and sausages. Saturday night we will have an auction and potluck dinner. Donations are always welcome.

The All-Year Campground at Ft Custer continues to move through the approval process. We are thankful for the interest and support including the picnic tables and fire rings.

Dog sledding continues to grow at Ft Custer and has become a year-around activity. We should indicate “everyone yields to dog shedders” when making our “Yield” signs.

The SW MMBA would like to schedule a sanctioned race on Sunday, May 17, 2020. It is the same day FCHFA has scheduled the Spring Campout. We are planning a meeting to find a solution.

There continues to be trail maintenance from the FCHFA. The July volunteer efforts include values of \$6457.64

DNR Staff, Tony Trojanowski appreciates our equestrian group. He expressed we are self-sufficient, resourceful and helpful to Ft Custer.

Fort Custer Horse Friends Association Schedule

August 21, Wednesday 9:00am Workday and Potluck

September 11, Wednesday 9:00am Board meeting and Workday

September 12-15 Fall Camp Out

September 28, Saturday 9:30am Ride and Potluck

October 2, Wednesday 4:30-6:30pm Board meeting - Galesburg Library

October 6, Sunday, 9:30am Ride and Potluck

October 11-13 Octoberfest Come out and volunteer!

October 26, Saturday 9:30am Ride and Potluck

November 3, Sunday 9:30am Ride and Potluck

November 6, Wednesday 4:30-6:30 Board meeting - Galesburg Library

November 14, Thursday 9:30am LAST scheduled Ride and Potluck

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November 15-30 Firearm Gun Deer Season. Avoid riding in the park, especially early and late in the day

December 7, Saturday 3:00pm Christmas Party at Kal-Val optional gift exchange

January 8, 2020 Wednesday 4:30-6:30 Board meeting - Galesburg Library

Shoreline Horseback Riding Report (submitted by Jenny Cook 8-21-19)

Due to high Lake Michigan water levels, there are no Fall 2019 shoreline horseback riding events planned on State land. DNR staff are moving forward with recommendations to Chief Sections for Special Use Permits Shoreline Riding Events at Muskegon State Park and possible on-line Permits at Silver Lake State Park.

Michigan equestrians have scheduled a meeting with Sleeping Bear National Shoreline Rangers and Deputy Superintendents for early November.

Indiana Dunes National Park continues to plan for more shoreline horseback riding opportunities.

Cleveland Ohio Mounted Police are planning four guided beach rides with Cleveland Metropark Mounted Police at Edgewater Beach on Sunday, September 15th.

PRICING

- General Beach Ride - \$125
- Sponsor General Beach Ride - \$250
- VIP Beach Ride - \$175
- Sponsor VIP Beach Ride - \$300

SUNSET VIP BEACH RIDE:

In addition to the guided tour of Edgewater Beach with our own Cleveland Metroparks Mounted Police, VIP participants will experience the wonder of a sunset over Lake Erie while on horseback. This one-of-a-kind opportunity has very limited spots for registration, so sign up quickly! Limited to riders ages 21 and up only.

With each Sunset VIP registration, riders will receive a 2019 Beach Ride t-shirt, a 2019 Commemorative Pin, digital photos of you & your horse, AND dinner sponsored by Cantina Laredo with 2 beverage tickets.

*All riders must wear a helmet in order to participate. This is a rain-or-shine event.

INDIVIDUAL SPONSORSHIP:

In addition to your ride registration, we would like to extend the opportunity for you to further support the Cleveland Metroparks Mounted Police with a solo sponsorship. For an additional fee, you may include your family name or business name on our 2019 Beach Ride t-shirt. All proceeds directly support the amazing horses of the Cleveland Metroparks Mounted Police. Individual sponsorships can be included in your ride registration.

If your business or organization would like to partner with the

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event in another manner, please contact Sgt. Jessica McNally by email at jsm1@clevelandmetroparks.com or by phone at 440-221-7629.

MTAC Report (submitted by Jenny Cook 8-21-19)

We are celebrating our 100th Year of State Parks with many activities.

Cheboygan, Ft Custer and Tin Cup Springs Campgrounds are waiting approvals.

Holly Oaks ORV Park in Oakland County has opened.

Partnerships and volunteer efforts are appreciated.

Houghton County still has huge flooding issues.

There will be more marketing, focused on education and safety.

January _?_ Snowmobile Legislative Ride to Mackinac Island

June 1 is National Trails Day

June 7 is National Hike Day

June 22 is Michigan Mountain Biking Day

August 6 & 7 Statewide free ORV days

August 19 is Michigan Water Trails Day

September 11 next MTAC meeting in Marquette

September 12 NRC meeting in Marquette

September 22-29, 2019 is Trails Week, Statewide

September 25 Statewide Trail Rally in Lansing on Capital lawn 8am -2pm

September 26 Equestrian Trails Legislative Day in Lansing

September 28 Public Lands Day

Paul Yauk acknowledged Jenny as an ETS rep on MTAC and thanked her for a great job! Jenny said her enjoyment is horses. Also noted is the Volunteer of the year will go to Jenny on Sept 25 at the State Capital. All types of trail users will be present. Kristie Walls said it is important for people to be there and advocate at this time to declare how important it is for the legislation to be aware of Equine's needs.

ACTION

Campground Policy

Nicole indicated that the past issues of the campground policy mostly related to the fees being charged and fees for deposit. Those areas were reviewed, and changes were made to align with current practice.

Nicole indicated that no state campground is exclusive to one group or another; however, campgrounds are developed to facilitate certain groups. By adding signage, it will help people understand equestrian liability. State does hear the concerns by the EQ groups. Today more people tend to camp rustic. The state has looked at implementing land use orders that will prohibit usage in equestrian campgrounds to reduce and eliminate activities that do not lend themselves well to horses. Dick says very strong point is EQ group was restricted to camp sites throughout the state, which will hold a minimum number of campers per camp site. He also mentioned that a land use order was signed taking those camp sites away. Taken opportunities for EQ riders to not have a camping site available after long drives, and packing. The EQ group asked, at what point do we **not** allow people to camp at horse camps. Heart of

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the issue is people (non-horse) are camping at horse camps, and Dick wants to see restrictions. Kristie Walls can't take her horse to a people campground. Kristie Walls says there is discrimination that she cannot camp in a people campground, yet people can camp in a horse campground, which limits space for EQ users. Karen wants to know who to talk to about changing this land use to EQ only at the horse camping facilities. EQ group asked if signs state no people camping allowed, Nicole said no there is not signage that prevents other uses. Nicole explained the process of implementing a LUOD, which requires each division chief to sign off, and currently she does not feel exclusive use of one area for one group would be supported by all of the Division Chiefs. Nicole did mention that a LUOD could be prepared placing restrictions on certain activities that would not be allowed in EQ campgrounds. For instance; these types of activities are not allowed at this campground. Karen said there are not many EQ camps left and she will stand up to fight for restrictions. Other states have designated campgrounds that are free. Dick stated how can they put in place restrictions on people campers that do not follow EQ behaviors. It is a liability aspect which should not allow people into horse camps. Nicole reiterated that the campground names will not change and will continue to indicate that they are equestrian campgrounds. The understanding of somehow that these campgrounds were exclusive use for EQ groups, is false. Jenny said that the EQ groups concerns are liability for people getting hurt and safety issues. EQ groups understand horse's behaviors while people who are not familiar will receive a reaction from the horse, which cannot be foreseen. Dick indicated that it may be time for him to contact the Governor to address this issue. Nicole asked that the group give her time until next meeting to talk to director to see if there is a desire to implement EQ only campgrounds. Nicole says her argument will be does it make sense where we are today, and should we look at changes. Anna S said state parks where they had EQ campgrounds was managed to be exclusive. Karen asked Nicole talk to your director. Mr. Olson will sign a camping policy very soon. Chad- people do not understand horse's behaviors and are at risk for injury and stated the implications can be death to a horse. Anna S said state forest lands is where this has evolved. Jenny asked to stress the safety and Dick concurred safety and liability. Kristie Walls added if a horse does not have a rabies shots and bites someone, it will need to be put down to test for rabies. Anna S concurred that the EQ groups do not want their horses to hurt anyone, and the stress of having people in the campgrounds creates anxieties for them. Nicole ended the discussion, reviewing the changes into the camping policy. She appreciates everyone's patience in this matter.

2020 Meeting Dates

Kristie will come back with dates after subcommittee meeting next week

Nikki said the January dates may concern her, as these meetings follow MTAC dates and their schedule is unknown as of now.

Kristie asked if a 5th meeting should be added to next year in order to get trail plan through?

Signage workgroups

DNR person needs to be identified and how to get it started? Dog Sledders (Jenny) do signs exist? Kristie said the signage committee should select which signs should be at locations. Greg said keep in mind trails expand out beyond state parks, dog sledding is not common use, it can be a potential use.

Etiquette, behaviors, yields, (safety and education should be consistent with all signs throughout the state. Kristie agreed there should be consistency with these signs. Paul is looking at safety for all group

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users. We will get it out electronically. Chad asked if they will they take place of other signs; NO they will be posted at staging areas. Greg said they will be a form of different land use signage, more designed to educate, and safety precautions. The signs will be designed to impart knowledge and advocate for safety. Anna S noted she saw a sign on some social media page, "just say hay". Nikki said let's work on first phase, by identifying some DNR people to help with this. Anna S suggested Scott Slavin, as the trail specialist, that is identified as horse knowledgeable. Kristie asked if the DNR can come back to the group by October 16, next meeting with the people identified for this signage group.

Proud Lake Area

Debbie

get map from Debbie

Will work on resolving discrepancy's on maps reflecting incorrect information, possibly has not been updated with additional miles of trails.

Primary reason to separate trails is safety

25 intersections currently and analyzing hazards

Debbie will be sharing same information with Mbikers, as they have proposed these changes

KW can potential direction be put into giving Mbikers old trails and let EQ's keep new trails to avoid safety hazards

Next steps are to look at the issues and formulate a way to make this work. Have to consider all trail users, not just Mbiker and EQ's. Karen- can both groups sit down together soon? Yes, DNR is ready - Debbie, Jody, and Nikki talked last week. Info needs to go to Mbikers to give them a chance to digest it, after that a joint meeting will take place between EQ's and Mbikers, will be up to Jody and John to schedule. Chad are bikers ready to give up access in order to implement this plan, YES. Karen waiting for DNR to make next move. Jenny uses Map My Ride to use for comparison. KW great idea to separate trails, if horse trails are the best to on map how is it determined which group gets which trail. Karen that is the point of having the joint meeting.

Next steps

GIS on ground

joint meeting

Shore to Shore

Amy Swainston

Stew had started the work on S2S, he published maps. People who participated in these rides before said you can come across hazards on state land and it is difficult to warn of hazards. Stew highlighted areas of concern. Please provide feedback if there are any areas needing modifications, eventually these maps will post on our DNR website.

Krisite Walls comments from Chris Rainer

page 2 Johnson's - Johnson crossing camp

page 3 - grammatic

Identify water holes, most campgrounds have their own maps

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ETS approval in order - section chiefs will meet next month and vote on approval

Has document been run past MTRA ? Amy can check the schedule and encourage board to review

Anna to review document for grammatic S2S

Nikki recommends highlight changes, scan and send to DNR Amy will match internal document, or send to Anna C

Kristie will copy Chuck on DNR Amy's email, so she has his address

Kristie motioned to adjourn the meeting at 4:03 pm, and Dick first to approve, Jenny to second, rest of committee in favor.

Next meeting confirmed.

Public comment - none

Dick had a last comment about the vision back in the day, an is grateful public members take the time to come and support these meetings. It helps resonate the purpose. He feels relationships between the EQ group and DNR has improved.