

**Minutes
Nonmotorized Advisory Workgroup
May 22, 2018**

NAW members present: John Morrison, Andrea Ketchmark, Jim DuFresne, Kristen Wiltfang, Melissa Werkman, Lori Hauswirth, and Bob Wilson. Absent: Mary Bohling.

DNR-PRD staff: Paul Yauk, Nikki Van Bloem, Barbara Graves, Megan LeMarbe, Jeff Kakuk, Rob Katona, Paul Gaberdiel, Kim Kennedy, and Anna Sylvester.

Guests: Lori Eschenburg, Blueways of St. Clair; Mike Smith, MDOT; Claire Stevens, MDOT.

WELCOME

Chair John Morrison called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves.

ACTION ITEMS

Bob Wilson moved the approval of the May 22, 2018 meeting agenda. It was seconded by Andrea Ketchmark and it carried unanimously.

Bob Wilson moved the approval of the February 7, 2018 meeting minutes. It was seconded by Melissa Werkman and it carried unanimously.

BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

State Trails Implementation Plan Evaluation – Chair Morrison thanked Melissa Werkman for all the work she put into the spreadsheet. The evaluation was reviewed and commented on. Nikki Van Bloem said she would like to know from the workgroup what ways the workgroup can help accomplish some of the objectives in the plan. Chairman Morrison would like better communication from the department on the achievements. To engage the community for support, Bob Wilson will forward some ideas to share with everyone. Melissa Werkman would like to propose for the next meeting that they revisit how NAW can be help in addressing the objectives.

Sharing Information Between the Nonmotorized Communities – Chair Morrison thanked Andrea Ketchmark for starting the spreadsheet of contacts and sharing it with the group. Andrea said it is the first step at trying to identify who they want to communicate with and engage.

UPDATES

P.A. 288 of 2016 – Anna Sylvester gave an update of the forest roads inventory project. The Northern Lower Peninsula inventory is complete and the maps have been posted. The Upper Peninsula and Southern Lower Peninsula will be completed by December 2018. The Upper Peninsula is currently in the first public comment period. Comments

can be made at michigan.gov/forestroads for more information. The Southern Lower Peninsula is about a month behind the Upper Peninsula, by design. Stakeholder meetings will be next week.

Roundtable Updates

John Morrison – WMTGA is working on a capital campaign that will one, help fund a regional wayfinding system, and two, fund the paving of the final 29 miles of the White Pine Trail. Eleven miles are being paved this year. Interurban Trail between Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids – the planning document for the project is complete. They have a meeting with the stakeholder in a few weeks.

Lori Eschenburg for Mary Bohling – Last year they opened up Krispin Blueway, their 17th blueway. Paddle for River Day will coincide with Free Fishing Weekend on June 10; they are hoping for 50 or more paddlers. They have eight handicap accessible kayak launches in their county and they hope to open up 2 to 3 more in the next few years. They have a Facebook page and website; trying to attract paddlers from out of state and around Michigan. They are going to be mentioned in an article this summer for the Island Loop route. Have been dealing with no wake issues - the Secretary of State has agreed to post all their no wake signs at 44 locations. They have a sturgeon festival the first Saturday in June, where about 7,000 people come to celebrate the sturgeon; Fridays are dedicated to school kids. They just received a grant through the Office of the Great Lakes to do a strategic plan.

Jim DuFresne – They are mapping as much and as fast as they can. They mainly focus on hiking trails and backpacking routes. They are hoping to have preliminary discussions with Paddle Antrim to do a water trail map.

Kristen Wiltfang – MDOT is constructing a bridge over M-5 for the Michigan Air Line Trail. For a video, go to Mairlinetrail.com. The trail manager has done a great job keeping track of the construction progress and the Trail Council is working to secure funding for the overall trail surfacing. There are three water trails that are popular for paddling in Oakland County-Huron, Shiawassee and Clinton Rivers. The Shiawassee has applied for a National Water Trail designation. The Clinton River is starting the application process and the Huron was designated in 2015. SEMCOG is doing a 360-degree imagery mapping project for trails and water trails around Southeast Michigan. They are going to begin data collection this summer share it with trail users and municipalities to showcase the unique trails in the region.

Melissa Werkman – They have a new board of directors with the restructure. She is thrilled that they have brought on people that are committed to mountain biking statewide. This new board will globally think more about marketing their trails, corporate engagement, state-level policy, engaging with their retail partners, and somebody to help support them administratively in terms of human resources, etc.

Melissa Werkman (for Lori Hauswirth) – Lori is now the executive director of the Noquemanon Trail Network (NTN) in Marquette. She represents their nordic trails as well as their single-track mountain biking trails. Marquette was just named “Best Small

Town for Adventure” by USA Today reader poll. The City of Marquette is soliciting proposals for development of 12+ acres of the Heartland lands which are traversed by some of the existing NTN South Trails. The hope is the developer and city will work closely to adapt trails to this new development...this pressure will continue as the city tries to fill the tax gap from the upcoming closure of Presque Isle power plant. Last groom of the year goes to NTN partner, Friends of Valley Spur who groomed ski trails up until April 29th. NTN is working with DNR on efforts to protect Forestville lands and trails that connect to Little Presque Isle/Harlow Tract. Steve Davis, Chair of the NTN single track trails was named to the Michigan Trails Advisory Council (MTAC).

E-bikes – Nikki asked the group for general feedback. Melissa has not heard anything. John has seen them out there, people are asking him about them; does not very often hear negative things. He heard talk that Kent County wanted to ban them from certain trails, but he has not seen anything go through about it. Most is positive.

Michigan State Waterways Commission Paddle Sport Registration – Lori Eschenburg went to the meetings and it was set aside temporarily. At the same time, the legislature passed a resolution saying they would not support it. Waterways wants to benchmark what other states have done as far as paddle sport programs and implementation. They also want to educate and listen to what the public has to say. The timeline is unidentified, but they are to revisit in the future.

Chair Morrison and Melissa Werkman expressed their disappointment that there was no communication about Bob Wilson and Steve Davis being appointed to the Michigan Trails Advisory Council (MTAC). Chair Morrison asked Nikki how the appointment process works. Melissa Werkman said the appointment of Steve Davis was also a surprise to them. They had actually petitioned the governor’s office to reserve a spot for them when one opened. Nikki deferred them to Paul Yauk. Melissa would like the appointment process on the next agenda for Paul Yauk to address.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 3:35 p.m.