

Minutes
Nonmotorized Advisory Workgroup
February 7, 2018

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

DNR-PRD staff: Paul Yauk, Nikki Van Bloem, Barbara Graves, Emily Meyerson, Megan LeMarbe. Jeff Kakuk joined via telephone.

Guests: Carol Fulsher; Weston Hillier, Office of the Great Lakes. Claire Stevens from MDOT joined via telephone.

Andrea Ketchmark, acting Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:03 p.m. and asked everyone to introduce themselves. She asked if anyone wanted to make a public statement. There was no public comment.

ACTION ITEMS

Mary Bohling moved to approve the February 7, 2018 meeting agenda. Melissa Werkman seconded and it was supported unanimously.

Melissa Werkman moved to approve the November 17, 2017 meeting minutes with a minor spelling change. Kristen Wiltfang seconded and it was supported unanimously.

Sharing Information Between the Nonmotorized Communities - At the last meeting the workgroup discussed how to better coordinate communication. At the time Andrea made the offer to pull together a Google spreadsheet that they could all start populating. She did start the spreadsheet and will send it to everyone by the end of the week. A goal for the next meeting will be to have a list started of groups.

BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

State Trails Implementation Plan – Paul Yauk said their 5 year plan is expiring and they want to be proactive with the update. Nikki would like them to look at the nonmotorized portion and come back to the next meeting with their assessment of where they are on each point. It was agreed that Nikki will send Melissa a spreadsheet similar to the one the ETS uses and Melissa will put the goals in the spreadsheet and share it with everybody. They can spend their time in the interim rating them before the next meeting in May. Links to the other trail plans will be forwarded to the workgroup.

UPDATES

Legislative Update – Paul Yauk gave a brief update on legislative items. Carol Fulsher wanted to know how to get updates. Paul referred them to the MTGA Capitol Trails Connection where you can sign up for updates:

http://michigantrails.org/getinvolved/capitol-trails-connection/?mc_cid=d26eeeb693&mc_eid=71d94c458b.

P.A. 288 of 2016 – Paul reported that the Northern Lower Peninsula inventory is finished. Signs will be inserted when the ground thaws. The Upper Peninsula and Southern Lower will be done by January 2019. You can find more information at: https://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-350-79119_79148_80679---,00.html

Iron Belle Grants and Progress – Nikki reported that round 4 of Iron Belle grant applications came out in December and 55 were received and sorted through. There was \$500,000 to issue out in grants; they had \$1.3 million in requests. In combination with DNR staff and their local facilitators they determined their final selections. Dakota Hewlett is processing these and will have the information out in March.

E-bikes – Legislation went into effect a few weeks ago. The workgroup discussed feedback.

NEW BUSINESS

Michigan State Waterways Commission Paddle Sport Registration Proposal – Mary Bohling said there was a webinar on January 18 about the Waterways Commission proposing a paddle sport registration. She is receiving a lot of inquiries about it and wants to know if there has been any interaction with the Waterways Commission. Paul and Nikki referred her to Dennis Nichols, the chairman of the Waterways Commission. Mary wants to make a formal proposal to the Commission that the workgroup be engaged in the process. Nikki will engage someone from the Planning Unit in their office who works with the Commission to see if they can give an update at the next NAW meeting.

Roundtable Updates

John Morrison – They are working with the three MPOs and MDOT and trying to put together a wayfinding system in the Grand region, for trails and the bike infrastructure, that is going to take people from trails onto the roads and back to the trails again. It will meet all DNR and MDOT standards.

Melissa Werkman – In their strategic plan they looked at gaps in the map where around the state they were lacking not only in trails but also knew that they had a population of users without a formal chapter to support any development there. In light of that, they are bringing three new chapters under their umbrella: Shoreline Cycling Club, Central Michigan Mountain Biking Association, and Thunder Bay Trails Association.

Lori Hauswirth – She has been with Noquemanon Network for a month, so she has some outreach to do. The snow has been great in the U.P. and variable in the south. The ski marathon two weeks ago . . . the only hiccup was the bridge was closed for falling ice. They had about 1,400 skiers. She thanked everyone for bringing her on the committee.

Jim DuFresne – They have been approached by some people who want to promote the Allegan State Game Area, so they are developing a series of trail maps. The first map is almost done, out of a series of four. He hopes to see people at the Quiet Water Symposium. He is speaking there and will have a booth.

Kristen Wiltfang – The Shiawassee River Heritage Water Trail applied for a national water trail designation and they are waiting to hear back. It has spring boarded them into collaborating together; working with the local communities to talk about maintenance and starting the networking amongst folks all the way from Holly to the National Wildlife Preserve. They have started construction on the bridge over M-5 for the Michigan Air Line Trail, which will connect the West Bloomfield Trail, the M-5 Metro Trail, and the Huron Valley Trail, which will be a big part of the Great Lake to Lake Trail. They are still waiting to hear back from MDOT on the Transportation Alternatives Program grant.

Andrea Ketchmark – They are working on closing gaps on the NCT, working with the DNR on Iron Belle trail initiatives, and Ken Wasik is working hard with their chapters doing planning. As an organization they are also trying to make progress on their strategic plan goal to prepare for the next generation by reaching out to youth and diverse populations. They are recruiting for an intern position that will be tasked with building a youth coalition and to expand outreach to different communities. If you know of anybody looking for an internship, please let her know. This year is the 15th anniversary of the National Trail System Act. She wants Michigan to celebrate their national scenic trail with the North Country. The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act was also this year as well. Both communities are celebrating together. Yesterday they recognized Barbara Nelson-Jameson, who is retiring from RTCA. Unfortunately, she heard that the National Park Service have not made a decision on whether or not to fill that position. She is trying to pull together some folks to advocate for that position.

Mary Bohling – Michigan Sea Grant just got funding for coastal zone management to do a 3-year program for aquatic invasive species. Paddling stewards programs have been reporting on 12 water trails in Michigan to create a group of folks who are going to go out and identify invasive species and then report it into the system. In 2019, they will actually be having 12 workshops across the state of Michigan to get the volunteers out there and get them trained. The goal is to hand the program off to the local entities so they can continue the programs afterwards. They are going to supply them with information and toolkits so they can train additional volunteers.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.