



**Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Agenda and Background Notes  
Tuesday February 13th @ 2:30 – 4:30 pm (via Zoom)**

Participants:

- Committee members present: Clark, Kitchell, Lang, Mattson, Rothe, Schalla (for Finn)
- Committee members absent: Ballou, Huinker
- Trails Subcommittee present: Wegerson
- Communications Subcommittee present: none
- Others present:

Agenda

1. **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!**

- a. Steve Ballou from NPS – Apostle Islands National Lakeshore
- b. Garry Schalla from Ashwabay Alliance representing Finn

2. Ad hoc Subcommittee Report Final Recommendations for Revised Vision & Mission statements:

**DECISION:** The Committee approved the following revised statements.

**ACTION:** These will be reported to the Trails Subcommittee and shared at the Trails Forum on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

***Vision Statement:*** *Bayfield Peninsula trails enhance individual and community wellbeing by connecting people with nature and each other. With a primary focus on silent sports and inspired by a strong land stewardship ethic, we collaborate with all trail users to advance social, environmental, and economic sustainability.*

***Mission Statement:*** *To sustain and create a high-quality network of diverse trails within the Bayfield Peninsula with active community engagement and support.*

Focus Topics

3. Annual MOU Review: The Committee reviewed the MOU. Suggested changes have been incorporated into a revised draft which is being circulated via email for a final review.

- a. **ACTION:** The BAT Comm members are being asked for their preference on the following: Should the Bayfield Area Trails volunteers be referred to as “volunteers” or “stewards (BATS)?”

4. Proposed Concept for a Long-term Plan (DRAFT concept paper was attached to agenda materials): Key points of feedback included:

- a. We need to be clear about what we need, and the expected outcomes and products.
- b. BAT has matured to a point where we are ripe for this process and product.
- c. **DECISION:** The Committee approved moving forward with applying for the Apostle Islands Area Community Fund (AIACF) grant as well as NPS technical assistance program.
- d. **ACTION:** Kitchell will apply to AIACF and NPS by March 1<sup>st</sup>.

Ongoing Activities Reports

5. Trails Subcommittee Report & Input from BAT Comm:

- a. Wegerson & Kitchell reported on icy and muddy trail conditions. Trail closures addressed by Town & City below.
- b. Ad hoc committee on Management & Maintenance Standards is working on a draft
- c. Trails Forum & Dedications:
  - i. Planning underway
  - ii. Logistics are coming together, including tents, tables, chairs; refreshments; tours; parking, etc.
  - iii. Speaker options:
    - 1. Economic benefits of trails: Kirsten Finn (WI Bike Fed.), Steven Deller, Regional Development Economist from UW Madison social scientist
    - 2. Keys to successful “grassroots” organizations and volunteerism – Peter Nordgren
    - 3. Natural history: Fitz (geology); Ryan Magana – DNR regional ecologist & good speaker
    - 4. Accessibility: Jeff Rennie
  - iv. Break-out groups (**30 min.**): purpose is to gather input for the long-term plan: each table will have a master map showing existing trails and potential new linkages. Participants will be asked for feedback on existing trails as well as new potential trails, including all types of silent sports (e.g. bikes, horses, mushing). Question: where should BAT put their energy to accomplish the vision and mission?
    - 1. Evaluate and maintain enhance, existing trails
    - 2. Identify new trail connections and opportunities.
  - v. Feedback from BAT Comm:
    - 1. Make sure the featured presentation is a good speaker; and consider what the audience would be interested in.
    - 2. County & Landmark indicated that they would not have much to display at a table or any projects for which they would be seeking public input.
    - 3. It may be useful to include a brief round robin where each BAT Comm member introduces themselves and reports on their current activities of public interest.
    - 4. Include information about opportunity to donate.
- 6. Economic Impact Study Update:
  - a. Coastal Management is starting to move on funding: aim to start the project in June.
  - b. Met via zoom with Survey Research Center, Shaheer Burney to start planning.
  - c. Kate & Peter will revise the implementation plan with new dates and timeline.
  - d. An essential step will be recruiting and hiring the project coordinator. We have good lead time to do this.
- 7. Communications Subcommittee (CsC) & Website Report:
  - a. Annual Report released & posted on website
  - b. Several website updates implemented by Tony J.
  - c. CsC is working on its annual work plan to include
    - i. Expanding email roster and volunteers; emphasize engaging younger folks

- ii. Expanding CsC membership: photography, graphics, social media
  - iii. More education/stewardship in addition to continuing communication via website, Facebook, & email outreach
8. Rapid Round Robin Reports
- a. **Town of Bayfield:** (Kitchell)
    - i. Closed Pileated Woodpecker Trail (PWT) for mud season: outreach via email, Facebook, and website.
    - ii. County and DNR are working on reconciling land records regarding land ownership along the Angler Access Trail and new PWT bridge. Recent concerns from adjacent landowner have been resolved.
    - iii. PWT map produced by Brigid Reina-Williams at the County. Will be installed at intersections and at trailheads.
  - b. **City (Clark):**
    - i. Closed & posted Pine Bluff & Hemlock Heights.
    - ii. The City Parks & Rec. Committee is reviewing and updating the Outdoor Rec. Plan, which includes the trails and management of the City-owned property in the Big Ravine. Clark is contemplating a recommendation to invite the DNR regional ecologist to evaluate the Big Ravine for possible state natural area designation. Some possible benefits could include helping citizens and elected officials to recognize the unique and valuable natural features of the Big Ravine; elevating the importance of resource conservation vis a vis land uses, including trails; increased competitiveness for grant funding.
  - c. **Landmark (Lang):**
    - i. Waiting to hear about 2 large grants for the Brownstone: TAP in April; FEMA in June.
    - ii. The Conservation Committee is supportive of the idea of holding additional Brownstone Trail easements if landowners are willing to grant them. This has not yet been considered by the Board. A stewardship fund may be appropriate for these easements (and possibly other trails).
  - d. **Ashwabab** (Schalla): no report due to having to leave the meeting early.
  - e. **County** (Mattson): no report due to having to leave the meeting early.
  - f. **Town of Bell/Cornucopia Trails Club:** (Rothe):
    - i. Volunteers recently helped the County with pruning trees in the Siskiwit orchards. Fred & Julie Erickson of Erickson Orchards in Bayfield trained several volunteers and assisted with the pruning at Siskiwit. There is a lot of volunteer interest and lots more work to do. Jason Bodine indicated that the County will follow up on next steps.
    - ii. CTC will hold a meeting soon to start discussions about engaging more with BAT and the County.
  - g. **APIS/NPS:** (Steve Ballou): no report – not present
  - h. **Red Cliff Treaty Natural Resources Division (TNRD)**(Huinker – not present):  
Information provided in advance of the meeting.
    - i. There is a new TNRD administrator named Dylan Jennings: several BAT Comm and TsC members know Mr. Jennings and speak very highly of his

resume, experience, dynamic energy, and collaborative skills. He worked with GLFWC and was nominated to serve on the state Natural Resources Board. We look forward to working with him!

- ii. Moving slowly forward on the trails feasibility study.
- iii. Applied to the National Park Service Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program for technical assistance on an assessment and plan for renovating the Frog Bay Trails.
- iv. Frog Bay Trails project: BAT volunteers, led by Ted May, will be working with Ashley this spring on some basic trail maintenance.

**9. NEXT MEETING: March 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024 @ 2:30 – 4:30 p.m.**

Kitchell gone in April – make decision on April meeting at March meeting

10. Future Agenda Topics:

- MOU Review Follow-up
- Trails Forum
- Project calendar & budget
- Long-term planning proposal
- Reaching trail users at trailheads – for volunteering, fundraising, and participating
- Trail mapping
- Trail management standards: blazing, closures, etc.