



Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Notes
Tuesday May 14th @ 2:30 – 4:30 pm (via Zoom)

Participants:

- Committee members present: Kitchell, Lang, Mattson, Rothe
- Committee members absent: Ballou, Finn, Huinker
- Trails Subcommittee present: Ipsen, Johnson, Wegerson
- Communications Subcommittee present: n/a
- Others present: NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program: Holly Larson & Chris Morgan

Focus Topics

1. Long-term strategic plan – renamed “Master Plan” (Kate)
 - a. 2 grant apps. submitted: 1) NPS RTCA program (successful); 2) DSACF for facilitator/coordinator (likely to succeed).
 - i. **DESIRED OUTCOME:** a 5-year master plan, with maps, that defines our goals, trails priorities, resources needed to implement the plan, and a roadmap for implementation.
 - b. Launch at Celebration – tables, suggestion form, online survey linked via QR code & follow up after celebration
 - c. RTCA introduction – Holly Larson
 - i. Technical assistance program, not grant funding. They will bring 3 team members with expertise in planning, GIS/mapping, public outreach, etc. They also have access to university partnerships to augment capabilities.
 - ii. The project is currently approved for a year, until May 2025. If we are making progress but need more time, the project can be extended.
 - iii. They will issue a letter of agreement that outlines their role and commitments to the project. It will be general and broad to allow flexibility as the project evolves.
 - iv. Holly sent relevant information to Kate. It includes an example plan, trail assessment and monitoring protocol, and example organizational structure. This info. can be viewed on the [Google drive here.](#)
 - d. **DECISION:** The Committee agreed to designate a Planning Subcommittee to guide the project, potentially including Susan Hedman, Cindy Anderson, and others beyond the BAT Comm to expand our planning capability.
 - i. **ACTION:** Kitchell will reach out to BAT Comm, subcommittee members, and others for interest in participating in the Planning Subcommittee. Some others may emerge at the June 1st event.
 - e. **NEXT STEPS:**
 - i. Holly Larson will try to attend the Trails Celebration on June 1st. She will bring examples of Master Trails plans.
 - ii. Kitchell & Larson will coordinate to schedule a F2F working session in June with the NPS team and the BAT Comm Planning Subcommittee to come to agreement on the outcomes, products, approach, milestones, and roles.

2. World Trails Weekend Celebration (see Trails Celebration Short Version doc)
 - a. Pileated Woodpecker Trail update: dedication postponed due to land ownership dispute & no public access
 - b. Last minute logistics (Kris): the ad hoc subcommittee has set up and take down all covered. YAY TEAM!
 - c. Review program & make decisions (Kate)
 - i. The last segment of the program will focus on launching the 5-year Master Plan, seeking input from participants via the feedback form that will be available via hard copy or online.
 - i. The Committee discussed the feedback form, including the questions being asked of the participants. **ACTION:** Kitchell sent out the [feedback form](#) to Committee members with a request for review and comment by the end of the week.
 - ii. Confirmed table assignments, focus areas & BAT Comm. member roles. **ACTION:** Kitchell will follow up with members who were not present to confirm assignments: 1) NPS – APIS & Friends of the Apostle Islands; 2) Ashwabay; 3) City of Bayfield; 4) Red Cliff
3. Socioeconomic Study: Kate & Peter
 - a. Funding availability still uncertain. Lang suggested that we may be able to get a letter from WCMP to proceed with the project, assuming the funding is forthcoming soon.
 - b. Concerned about capacity to do this in addition to strategic plan
 - c. Lang suggested that it could be possible to get extensions beyond June 30, 2025
 - d. Success will hinge on 1) coordinator to assist with getting off the ground; and 2) volunteers. These will be scoped out via the Trails Celebration and initial outreach filling the coordinator positions.
 - e. Recommend deciding go/no go at June meeting after we scope out volunteer base and potential coordinator applicants.

Ongoing Activities Reports

4. Trails Subcommittee Report & Input from BAT Comm (10 min.): Wegerson, Ipsen, Johnson
 - a. AAT report: reports were due May 15th: 23 of 45 segments reported so far. **ACTION:** Full report will be given at June meeting. Kitchell will alert land managers of immediate issues (Lost Creek Falls overhanging tree)
 - b. Volunteer Release Forms: look for a way to merge County & BAT forms and process. NOTE: the County form is patterned after the BAT form.
 - c. Highlight field projects: Big Ravine Headwaters boardwalk to viewing platform completed by crew led by Feyen, Ipsen, & Wegerson. GREAT WORK TEAM!
5. Communications Subcommittee (CsC) Report (5 min.):
 - a. Focused on outreach for Celebration
 - b. CsC is working on its annual work plan to include
 - c. Pileated Woodpecker Trailhead Signage: 2 signs will be installed in time for event; Salmo sign will also be installed.

6. Rapid Round Robin Reports, if any (15 min.)

a. **Town of Bayfield:** (Kitchell)

- i. East Rim Trail: 1) 1 incident of motorcycle this spring, 1 incident last fall. Town Board supports installing trail cam if needed. **ACTION:** Kitchell will install posts to make entrance at M-O trailhead more difficult for bikes/motorcycles. Clark will continue to assess if something is needed at the Lynde entrance to the trail. 2) Gravel and/or boardwalk work will be done in the fall. Will convene a field recon. in advance of the project.

b. **City (Clark):**

Big Ravine Update:

- All Big Ravine trails now open
- Wet areas becoming marginally impassable on north segments of East Rim Trail on Town property need to be assessed this summer.
- Hazard tree removed on Gil Larsen by Robert Kelly Tree Care (pro bono). Possibly one fallen tree remaining on mid-section of East Rim Trail?
- Walking tour of Big Ravine with WDNR Ecologist Ryan Magana on May 29th.

Bayfield Parks and Rec Update

- New Mayor Ted Dougherty, possibly new committee assignments and committee chairs.
- Public Works Director position is vacant and City Clerk position recently vacated and being refilled means some low priority projects are being postponed and few new projects are being taken on until positions are filled.
- We'll need another check in with Matt and Mayor Dougherty on Sweeny Loop Trail development this summer.

Very glad to see the long-term planning initiated.

c. **Landmark (Lang):**

- i. Charly Kearns position now vacant: working on PD. Summer intern starts 5/20.
- ii. Need to continue to keep Forget-me-Nots under control in lower Big Ravine. We will work on recruiting help on 5/21 to work with intern on this.
- iii. Continuing to work on easements between the end of the Brownstone & the Salmo Trail.

d. **Ashwabay (Finn/Schalla/Olson):** n/a Work on AWB trails included in project calendar for late summer/fall.

e. **County (Mattson):** Siskiwit: wildflower demonstration garden; meadow was recently burned; fencing and signage this summer.

f. **Town of Bell/Cornucopia Trails Club:** (Rothe):

- i. Successful clean-up project at Siskiwit: removed lots of old metal, glass, fencing, etc.
- ii. Cornucopia Pathfinders: hiking group has formed that is coordinated via a text group. Recently hiked Lost Creek #3 and Kettles area.

g. **APIS/NPS:** (Steve Ballou): n/a

- h. **Red Cliff Treaty Natural Resources Division (TNRD)**(Huinker):
- i. The contract with SEH for the trails feasibility study is very close to final. Hopefully, they will make it to the June 1st event.
 - ii. The NPS RTCA will be working on a trail assessment and plan for Frog Bay.

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday June 11th @ 2:30 – 4:30

7. Future Agenda Topics:
- AAT Report
 - Economic Impact Study Decision
 - Mater planning
 - Project calendar
 - Establishing a volunteer recruiting and coordination subcommittee in the TsC to engage a broader & more diverse volunteer base
 - Reaching trail users at trailheads – for volunteering, fundraising, and participating
 - Trail management standards