



Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Notes
Tuesday September 17th @ 2:30 – 4:00 pm (via Zoom)

Participants:

- Committee members present: Ballou, Bunch, Huinker, Kitchell, Lang, Mattson, Rothe, Westcott
- Committee members absent: Clark, Finn
- Trails Subcommittee present: Ipsen
- Communications Subcommittee present:
- Others present:

WELCOME MIKE BUNCH! Representative for the Town of Bayview

Focus Topics

1. Economic Impact Study Report: Hilary Jewell, Project Coordinator
 - Hilary is on board as coordinator
 - Volunteers are signed up – need to recruit more
 - Conducted volunteer training on Sept. 9th; another scheduled for Sept. 18th @ 6 pm
 - Piloted surveys Sat. 9/14 & Sun. 9/15 at Lost Creek & Gil Larsen trailheads
 - Complete summary of training, logistics and scheduling attached at the end of this document
2. Long-term strategic plan – now named the Bayfield Peninsula Trails Plan (BPTP)*: Kate
 - Working with Holly Larson & Chris Morgan from the NPS RTCA program, we have conducted 2 rounds of face-to-face stakeholder meetings with 16 groups (list at bottom of agenda). We plan follow up meetings with the entities listed below.
 - i. Peter Rothe suggested including foragers in the stakeholder outreach list.
 - Next steps: 1) compile input and prepare map of ideas generated; 2) initiate field data collection on select trails; 3) initiate feasibility analysis; 4) convene sub-group of the BPTP Committee to start discussions about sustainable organization; 5) develop and implement a communications strategy.
 - Working on a detailed trail assessment tool with RTCA & Trails Subcommittee to conduct detailed analysis of trails.
 - Will circulate for review & comment soon
 - Will ask more experienced volunteers to conduct the assessments. Coordinate with the County on Siskiwit, Lost Creek & JJJ

Rapid Round Robin Reports

1. **Ashwabay** (Finn/Schalla/Olson): Doing volunteer work days Oct. 14th & 16th @ 9am
2. **County** (Mattson):
 - a. Reopened the Jerry Jolly Overlook Loop with the help of BAT volunteers
 - b. Planning to work with CTC on installing USNG signs at Lost Creek & on snowmobile trails

- c. Planning to fill another rec. position – will serve as assistant administrator for recreation under Jason Bodine
- 3. **Town of Bell/Cornucopia Trails Club:** (Rothe) Several people from the TOB and CTC are volunteering on the trail user surveys. It's a low yield apple year in the Siskiwit orchards.
- 4. **Red Cliff Treaty Natural Resources Division (TNRD)**(Huinker): The Red Cliff to Bayfield trail feasibility study is underway. The contractor will be visiting 1st week of October to do data collection and field work. They are working on plans for community feedback meetings and/or surveys.
- 5. **Town of Bayfield:** (Kitchell)
 - a. Pileated Woodpecker Trail (PWT): thanks to great support from Bayfield County, the upper portion between Ashwabay & the Jolly Long Link has been mulched by a Fecon mulcher and it looks awesome. John Mesko at the County also rehabbed the old skid road, addressing drainage issues. Doug Olson from AWB hauled rock into a dip where there is an intermittent stream across the trail. There is a volunteer project scheduled for Friday Oct. 4th to put on the finishing touches; Ted May is the project leader.
 - b. 15 yds. of gravel were spread on Striped Skunk & Martin on the Big Ravine's west side and 15 yds. of gravel on the Big Ravine's East Rim Trail on Sept. 20 & 21.
- 6. **City** (Clark/Carrier): Carrier & Kitchell have discussed submitting a proposal to Wis. Coastal Management Program (WCMP) for a redesign and renovation of the lower Gil Larsen Trail.
- 7. **Landmark** (Lang):
 - a. Landmark & Bayfield County have jointly purchased a power wheelbarrow that is on tracks.
 - b. Still working on raising funds for the Brownstone (BST) restoration. Not successful with FEMA or Wisconsin DOT grants, but plan to reapply next year.
 - c. Mowed all along the Brownstone edges & Maki meadow. Planning to move the deteriorated bench in the meadow and replace it with a quality Leopold bench.
 - d. Discussed the idea of an interpretive sign about railroad history somewhere along the Brownstone Trail. Erika will inquire with Neil Howk & the Ap. Islands Historic Preservation Conservancy about funding, since they funded the sign at Salmo about the train wreck. Mike Bunch wrote a report about the orphan trail that came to Bayfield; he suggested that this could be an interesting part of the story in a sign.
 - e. ACTION: Kitchell will initiate scheduling a meeting for the project being planned for Oct. 18 & 19 on the BST near Wild Rice Retreat. It will entail excavating drainage, placing culverts, and spreading gravel. John Ipsen is serving as project lead for the field work.
- 8. **APIS/NPS:** (Steve Ballou/Lucas Westcott): Steve is going on furlough until Jan.
 - a. The accessibility project at Meyers Beach is now fully funded and shovel ready thanks to fundraising by the Friends of the AI & GLRI funds. Plans are to construct by the end of 2025.
 - b. Sand Island is becoming more and more accessible as the boardwalk across the island is moving toward completion.
- 9. **Town of Bayview** (Mike Bunch)

- a. Mike introduced himself. He is an avid hiker and loves all of the area's trails, including Houghton Falls Preserve trails.
- b. Mike highlighted the diversity of trails and terrain at the Preserve. Discussion ensued about being cautious about expanding and publicizing more trails due to the risk of possibly "loving the area to death."
- c. Volunteer project is being planned for November sometime. It will entail spreading 10 yds . of gravel near the start of the trail. Gravel will be funded by the Town.
- d. A more comprehensive plan for Houghton Falls Preserve is being proposed for funding by Wisconsin Coastal Management Program. Erika is taking the lead on this proposal.

Ongoing Activities Reports

1. Trail Subcommittee: John
 - a. Standard work days reports – upcoming projects: Upper Big Ravine, PWT, Brownstone, and Houghton Falls.
 - b. AAT update: August reports have been sent to the land managers and BAT Comm. members. Next reports due October 15th.
2. Communications Subcommittee (CsC) Report:
 - c. Data from Tony Jeannette* indicates that the website, FB and Instagram are effective and have good following.

PROPOSED NEXT MEETING: October 15th @ 2:30 – 4:30

Future Agenda Topics:

- Assume BPTP will be on agenda for several months
- Volunteer Plan
- Reaching trail users at trailheads – for volunteering, fundraising, and participating
- Trail management standards

Completed Stakeholder Meetings:

1. Bayfield County staff (Abeles-Alison, Bodine, Ammon, Mattson, Motiff, K. Pedersen)
2. US Forest Service (Gus Smith & Jen Bratsch)
3. Biking community (a bunch of people)
4. Nordic & snowshoe community (a bunch of people)
5. Landmark (Erika)
6. Mt. Ashwabay (Doug Olson & Chuck Finn)
7. Apostle Islands National Lakeshore staff (Jo Holt & Garyck Hoenig; plus Neil Howk)
8. Red Cliff staff (Ashley Huinker, Melis Arik, Mark Duffy, Doug Jennings)
9. Town of Bayfield Plan Commission (Chuck Finn, Jim Steffenson, Carol Fahrenkrog)
10. Town of Bell board members & interested parties
11. Town of Bayview Board Chair & BAT Comm. rep. (Don Jenicek, Mike Bunch)
12. Cornucopia Trails Club
13. City of Bayfield (Matt Carrier, Fred Clark, plus Susan Hedman)
14. City of Washburn (Tony Janisch, Jen Maziasz, Arianna Austin)

15. Bayfield Chamber (Carol Fahrenkrog)
16. BPTP Planning Committee (a whole bunch of people)

Additional Stakeholder Meetings (some via zoom):

1. Washburn Chamber reps.
2. Motorized users – ATV & snowmobile
3. County highways – Jake Benson (replaced Bob Anderson)
4. Equestrian reps.
5. Outdoor-oriented businesses
6. Bayfield Rec. Center
7. Bayfield Heritage Association & Apostle Islands Historic Preservation Council

Trail User Survey – Detailed Report

- We have 27 volunteers who have expressed interest specifically in helping with the Trail User Survey.
- We have had two trainings with 8 volunteers attending and another training through video and phone calls.
- We plan to offer a third training in the coming weeks.
- Between the three, we'll cut a training video that folks can do on their own time. We're really striving to offer as much flexibility to our volunteers as possible here.
- Our pilot weekend September 14 and 15 was a success, with 5 volunteers filling 10 hours of survey shifts at two trailheads - Lost Creek Falls and Big Ravine - Gil Larsen. From volunteer reports it sounds like at least 20 surveys were completed. For reference, although there's some nuance, the goal is 385 surveys completed over the next year, which would be 32 surveys a month. So at least 20 the first weekend, and that's with one volunteer report not in yet, that makes me feel good that we're going to hit that 385.
- Surveys during an individual 2-hour shift ranged from 1 to 9. The reports from the field were that most folks were very agreeable and that many said the trails were the reason they were here. All good news.
- A few more shifts were covered last weekend with more happening this week. The October schedule should be out soon, hopefully tomorrow.
- I believe you all have the survey itself. After the pilot weekend we do have a few more proposed tweaks that I am working on with Shaheer from UWRF, our survey guru.
- We will continue to build out and smooth out logistics as we go but we are using Signup.com for our scheduling platform. Volunteers are able to look at the schedule and select their own shifts. One of my next steps will be to schedule October and open that up for signups.
- Jotform is the application we are using to conduct the surveys on mobile devices at the trailheads. It has an offline mode that allows surveys conducted outside of service to be uploaded later. This seems to be working well so far.
- Thanks to our partners, we have Volunteer Kits - a sandwich board and small bag with things like name tags - located at the Town of Bayfield Shed and the Cornucopia Community Center. It sounds like we'll be staging a third at Mt Ashwabay, and we have tentative plans

to add another kit or two in the spring for the busier summer. The name tags and signs are to identify the volunteers and hopefully make folks more comfortable to participate in the survey. Hats will soon be added as a small thank you to the volunteers and to further identify them.

- Now that we are in motion with surveys being conducted, I'll be doing another round of outreach and recruitment. October is the last "warm season" month, with more survey shifts to be done
- than the coming colder months. We aim to get enough volunteers to fill all of the 24 October shifts, so it seems like at a minimum we need to double our number of trained volunteers to 12.
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