

**Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Notes**  
**Tuesday October 12<sup>th</sup> @ 3 – 4:45 pm**

**Participants:**

- Committee members present: Fahrenkrog, Finn, Kitchell
- Committee members absent: Bratsch, Lang, Van Bergen, Van Stappen
- Partners: Rothe
- Subcommittee Members: Fentress, Jeannette, Wegerson

Review Agenda

Discussion on expanding geographic scope of BAT and revising organizational options

1. Expanding to Cornucopia/Town of Bell: Cornucopia Trails Club & Pratt's Peak: as BAT Comm. has accomplished several priorities in 2021, the discussion acknowledged the mutual benefits of expanding to include the Town of Bell. Their participation would bring in Pratt's Peak, which has been identified as a priority area in the work plan; plus, this will bring Siskiwit, Lost Creek, and other trails around Cornucopia into the collaboration.
  - a. **Decision/Action:** Kitchell will prepare a letter to the Town of Bell to invite them to join the Committee and to sign the MOU (to be updated in January). The Town may use their discretion to appoint their representative. Rothe will give a heads up to Town of Bell Chair.
2. Consider expanding the scope of BAT geography due to expanding trail linkages. Consider reaching out to other Towns (Bayview, Washburn) & U.S.F.S.
  - a. **Decision/Action:** The Committee concluded that outreach/invitation to other Towns or USFS should be deferred until there is a project/action that would prompt coordination.
3. Re-engaging trail user liaisons and trails groups:
  - a. **Action:** In advance of the next meeting, Kitchell will develop a plan on how and when to re-engage these partners, at least for purposes of information sharing (Bayfield Nordic, CAMBA and NCCA and others).
  - b. **Action:** invite a partner to attend the November meeting for information sharing.
4. Solidifying subcommittee function, structure, and composition, toward the goals of expanding capacity and creating a sustainable organization.
  - a. Communications (Jeannette, Fentress, Johnson): web, Facebook, signage, proactive outreach
  - b. Projects and Volunteers (Ipsen, Wegerson): Project planning and volunteer coordination.
  - c. There was discussion about possibly establishing "membership" in order to develop and maintain a membership list, communication procedures, and possibly voluntary dues that could be used to support BAT Comm. basic operations and select projects.
  - d. Think about other subcommittees? Fundraising and Finances?
  - e. **Action (Kitchell & Subcommittees):** task these subcommittees with developing a charter and expanding participants to address function, structure, membership composition, and chair.
5. **Decision making protocol:** decisions would remain under the purview of the core BAT Committee members with welcome input from trail liaison reps and subcommittee members.
  - a. **Action:** clarify this when MOU is updated.
6. **Documentation:**
  - a. **Action:** Kitchell & Jeannette revise diagram to show 1) Core Membership (land owners/managers); 2) Trail User Liaisons; 3) Subcommittees; 4) Fiscal sponsor
  - b. **Action:** Discuss and confirm these proposals and actions at future BAT Comm. meetings toward the goal of updating MOU in Jan. 2022 as stated in MOU.

Volunteers & Project Calendar Status & Outlook

1. Hatchery connection – walk the route; initiate coordination with DNR/State (Kitchell & Parent): late October. (Note: invite Peter Rothe from CTC to see how to go about trail route planning)
2. Brownstone Steps – September 27 – Oct. 1 with Will Krift (Kitchell, Lang): complete
3. East Rim Gravel & Boardwalk: Completed on Oct. 15 (Kitchell & Finn)
4. Gil Larsen Waterfall Stone Steps: November (City – Kitchell)
5. Martin Rd.: gravel (Phil Peterson)
6. Pratt’s Peak Trails (Cornucopia Trails Club): hope to start some trail work this fall, depending upon County approval.

**Action:** Review and initiate revising plan at December meeting.

#### Communications Reports (Jeannette & Kitchell)

##### 1. Tony’s update:

**Facebook:** Sept 1 – October 1:

- **596 followers** 71.8% Female; 28.2% Male (77 new in Sept)
- **Post Reach:** 1,110 people
- **Post engagements:** 250

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##### **Bayfield Area Trails Website:** Sept 1 – October 1:

**723** unique users have visited since Sept 1.

**13.8%** are return visitors

**901** total sessions (1.25 sessions per user)

**1,747** page views

On average, people are spending **1.5 minutes** per visit and visiting **2 pages**.

##### **Top 5 pages:** “/” is the Home page

Page	Pageviews
/	599
/trail-map-information.html	453
/trail-alerts.html	91
/blog/many-hands-make-light-work	86
/team-mission-vision.html	35

##### **Search:** Top search queries that led people to us:

bayfield area trails
big ravine - west rim trail
big ravine trail
bayfield hiking trails
bayfield waterfront trail
bayfield trails
brownstone trail bayfield wi
bayfield wi trails
hiking in bayfield wi
hiking trails bayfield wi

2. Comm. Plan & Core Messages: ongoing
3. Discussion about revising and posting the “More to Explore” map sign at other trailheads including Jerry Jolly, Salmo, Frog Bay, and Brownstone.
  - a. **Action:** revise and bring back to committee. Determine appropriate size: 24” x 24”?
  - b. **Action:** wait to finalize until geographic scope is revised (e.g. Town of Bell, etc.)
  - c. **Action:** include these signs in respective 2022 budgets for the County, Town, Tribe...

Round Robin Reports from Committee members and partners (20 min.)

1. Ashwabay (AOEF) (Finn)
  - a. The recreation use agreement has been signed with the County.
  - b. Haunted Trail event on 10/30
  - c. Lots of trail work in preparation for nordic and alpine ski season: cleaning up rocks, stumps, etc. on nordic trails.
  - d. Chalet improvements.
  - e. Lots of new equipment: 3 new Ginzus, new snowmobile, 2 new trucks with tracks for trail grooming, Bombadier being shared with Book Across the Bay, and new snow guns for snow making.
  - f. Planning to establish a nordic grooming group: training volunteers
  - g. Working on ski patrol capacity as some members are moving toward full retirement.
2. City (Kitchell): See project list above. Kitchell reported on issues associated with outflow onto Big Ravine slope from the school’s roof downspouts. The City is working with the school buildings and grounds supervisor to remedy this.
3. County (Bratsch): Jason Bodine has decided to stand down on participating until after matters with Ashwabay get more settled. The following was submitted via email:
  - a. County is installing 3 concrete vault privies at Lost Creek, Siskiwit, and the CAMBA trailhead on Whiting. Getting contracts signs and plans set now, and they will get installed next year. American Rescue Plan funds are being used for this.
  - b. There is an RFP out right now for work at Lost Creek falls. Getting a couple more boardwalks installed to shore up some spots on the trail.
  - c. Working on making sure that all of our recreation properties have either addresses or U.S. National Grid signs, or both in some cases.
  - d. As part of the meeting about U.S. National grid signs, both the Sheriff’s office and dispatch said it’s really helpful for them to know about recreational events around the county in case a call comes in. The County Forestry and Recreation office knows about events on county forest land, but if BAT Comm. members are having events elsewhere it’s a good idea to make sure dispatch and the sheriff’s office know about it.
  - e. Working on stuff for the rec use agreement with Ashwabay and with the Northern Pines Dog Sled Race in Iron River. After those are finished, the Cornucopia trails club request is next on agenda.
  - f. Other than that, even though it’s been unseasonably, starting to think about snowfall and what needs to happen before then with yurts and snowmobile trails.
  - g. The proposed timber sale is postponed until spring: Committee members recognized the high level of public interest and request for more public information and input.
  - h. The County plans to develop a special management plan for the Ashwabay block. The goal of this plan is to provide more detail and clarity on planned future management activities scheduled within that block. Using the standards/protocols/direction already provided in the comp plan as sideboards. This will include coordination via reps. From CAMBA, AOEF, and BAT Comm.
4. Landmark (Lang): Big Ravine wetlands: in discussions with Ed Rabideaux, landowner, about signing a purchase agreement for \$45,000. This is about 18% over the fair market value appraisal of \$38,000. Although there are some concerns about setting precedent to pay more than 10%, the consensus with Landmark and community members is that this is a unique opportunity to secure this important

property in the long run. Development of this property would put the wetlands and watershed at risk. This higher price is reasonable, when considering the volatility of the current market.

5. NPS (Van Stappen)
6. Red Cliff (VanBergen):
7. Town (Fahrenkrog): Beyond the trails projects listed above and the Big Ravine wetlands (Landmark), nothing new from the Town regarding Trails. A 2022 budget request for \$6000 for trails is currently under consideration in the Town's budget plan. From the Chamber perspective: Applefest was very successful and the growers were all very happy. 40 – 50,000 visitors to the area, with an impact of \$8-10 Million. The new approach to having several music venues distributed around the City worked very well; they plan to do this again in the future.
  - a. Possible Trails nexus with Applefest: 1) featured trail(s) for hiking from the City to orchards; 2) more kids' activities, such as guided hikes.
8. Cornucopia Trails Club: (Rothe): waiting for use agreement with the County.

Private Land Trail Crossings Status of Finn easement on East Rim (Finn): still pending. Do a blog post, when signed.

Fiscal sponsorship: Finn & Kitchell will explore this with RFR at their October meeting. This arrangement would enable receiving and administering donations, membership dues, and grants for projects that cross multiple jurisdictions.

**Adjourn: NEXT MEETING: November 9<sup>th</sup> @ 3 p.m.**