

**Bayfield Area Trails Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Tuesday September 14<sup>th</sup> @ 3 – 4:45 pm**

**Participants:**

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

**Round Robin Reports from Committee members and partners:**

1. Ashwabay (AOEF) (Finn)
  - a. Trails:
    - i. Preparing trails for winter: cleaning up rough sections, stumps, rocks.
    - ii. There may be a few more nordic trail additions, including changes at the main trailhead to better distribute skiers at the start and maintain better skiing conditions there.
  - b. Timber sale and forest management concerns: The County has a proposed timber sale listed for consideration at the October meeting of the Forestry and Parks Committee (F&P). AOEF Board is very concerned:
    - i. Trees have been marked, including clear cut areas.
    - ii. They feel that the County did not adequately inform or engage AOEF.
    - iii. The County Forester presented a special use agreement template at the F&P Committee meeting that AOEF had not yet seen.
    - iv. AOEF BOD sent a letter to the County requesting a moratorium on the timber sale until an MOU can be agreed to. No meeting has occurred as of the BAT Comm. date.
    - v. They believe the timber harvest would have totally unacceptable impacts to the trails, recreational experience and AOEF programs. There should be a cost/benefit analysis of recreation vs. timber uses and dollar value.
    - vi. They believe that this process should be slowed down, giving recognition to this special resource.
    - vii. A key concern is that it is difficult to get good clear information, including for the general public.
    - viii. When the AOEF report devolved to personal attacks, Kitchell stopped the discussion, remarking that the Committee will not allow this type of conduct. The meeting then moved on to the next agenda item.
2. City (Kitchell)
  - a. Big Ravine:
    - i. School trail complete: school hosting a ribbon cutting celebration 9/17
    - ii. Striped Skunk boardwalk completed on west side with help from Northland College students. Thanks also to John Ipsen & Kris Wegerson.
  - b. Waterfront Walk – deferred to spring 2022
  - c. Larson land donation on East Rim – still in progress
3. County (Bratsch)
  - a. MOU has been signed by the County Administrator
  - b. Lost Creek Trail: adding some boardwalk
  - c. County C: improving Perch Lake access
  - d. Siskiwit: starting to plan more trails on the west side.
  - e. Working with Kellie Peterson on grant funds for trails.
4. Landmark (Lang)
  - a. Big Ravine Headwaters Acquisition report:

- i. Appraisal has been received; in discussion with landowner. Landmark can offer up to 110% of the appraised value. The goal is to establish a signed purchase agreement with the landowner, Mr. Ed Rabideaux.
    - ii. Kitchell & Lang will continue to apply for grants in conjunction with the Town of Bayfield to support purchase. Purchase would take at least a year, due to the delay in receiving grant funding.
  - b. Brownstone Trail report:
    - i. Doing lots of community outreach and education: doing a series of videos; individual outreach to community members to gauge appetite for large fundraising.
    - ii. Based upon appraisal, they are in dialog with Maki brothers about purchasing the land by the “slump.”
    - iii. Landmark is putting together a full package and cost estimate for land acquisition, slump repair, and endowment.
    - iv. Town of Bayfield has expressed willingness to be the long-term owner of the Maki property if it is purchased and put in public ownership.
    - v. Northland College (Tom Fitz) is leading a baseline inventory of the trail and shoreline. This includes assessing shoreline stability/vulnerability, resource inventory, landowner survey. This will inform future management and landowner coordination.
- 5. NPS (Van Stappen)
  - a. The park maintenance crew has been working on the Mainland trail for two weeks now. A lot of hauling of bridge materials and 3x12s to cover up wet areas and building steps. They will be starting on the first 40-foot bridge this week.
- 6. Red Cliff (VanBergen): not present
- 7. Town (Fahrenkrog)
  - a. Gracie’s Trail open and map posted on website and at North Ravine and Gil Larsen trailheads.
  - b. Joint Town Plan Commission and Board meeting on Monday 9/13: lots of very positive feedback about the Big Ravine and other trails. It’s great to hear this from community and from Town officials.
  - c. A budget request for 2022 will be submitted to the Town Board for consideration at the 9/20/21 meeting.
  - d. Still lots of interest in the Brownstone Trail.
  - e. The Plan Commission is considering rezoning, including locations for campgrounds.
  - f. Festival of the Arts occurred 9/11-9/12.
  - g. Applefest is going ahead the weekend of 10/1 – 10/3. There are some COVID-related adjustments: no carnival, limited indoor activities, more emphasis on outdoor activities, spacing out the music venues, and the parade will go on.
- 8. Cornucopia Trails Club: (Rothe)
  - a. Working on a [proposal for work on County land on Pratt’s Peak](#). This includes about 5.8 miles of trail, much of which is on logging roads and existing trails.
  - b. Some logging has occurred on Pratt’s Peak. The top of the peak is an area of concern as it has remarkable recreational and natural values.

### **Communications Reports (Jeannette & Kitchell)**

- 1. Tony’s update: over 500 followers on Facebook. Continued interest in the website.
- 2. Comm. Plan & Core Messages: RESPECT campaign is being incorporated into the Facebook posts.
- 3. Kitchell plans to provide an update report to email list of interested people: report on recent projects and upcoming events (link to blog posts).
  - a. These updates should be done on a quarterly basis.

4. Discussion about revising and posting the “More to Explore” map sign at other trailheads including Jerry Jolly, Salmo, Frog Bay, and Brownstone.
  - a. Committee members support this concept, with some adjustments:
    - i. It may need to be revised to incorporate the broader geography and trails, including Cornucopia and the Town of Bell. Include Pike’s Creek wetlands properties.
    - ii. Include the “RESPECT” messages into a sidebar of the map/sign.
    - iii. **Action:** revise and bring back to committee. Determine appropriate size: 24” x 24”?
    - iv. **Action:** include these signs in respective 2022 budgets for the County, Town, Tribe...

#### **Volunteers & Project Calendar Status & Outlook (review calendar)**

1. Hatchery connection – walk the route; initiate coordination with DNR/State (Kitchell & Parent): late October.
2. Brownstone Steps – September 27 – Oct. 1 with Will Krift (Kitchell, Lang)
3. East Rim Gravel & Boardwalk: Oct. 14 & 15 (Kitchell & Finn)
4. Gil Larsen Waterfall Stone Steps: November (City – Kitchell)
5. Martin Rd. drainage work? (Finn & Peterson)
6. Pratt’s Peak Trails (Cornucopia Trails Club): hope to start some trail work this fall, depending upon County approval.

#### **Private Land Trail Crossings**

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

**Fiscal sponsorship:** action pending: Finn & Kitchell will explore this with RFR when time is right: perhaps at the October RFR Board meeting?

**Trails Forum and Celebration:** The Committee agreed to late winter/early spring due to Delta variant

#### **Initiate discussion about possibly expanding geographic scope of BAT and revising organizational options**

- 1 Reference attached MOU and diagram: 1) core membership (land owners/managers); 2) Trail User Liaisons; 3) Subcommittees
  - a. **Action:** Kitchell & Jeannette revise diagram
- 2 **Proposal:** Consider expanding the scope of BAT geography due to expanding trail linkages. Consider reaching out to:
  - a. Expand to Cornucopia/Town of Bell: Cornucopia Trails Club & Pratt’s Peak
    - i. **Action** (Rothe): Inquire with Town of Bell about becoming a BAT Comm. member/signatory of MOU.
  - b. Expand to Town of Bayview and Washburn: trail connection between AWB and Valhalla.
  - c. Note: a Town/Committee member may designate whatever representative they choose (e.g. plan comm. member or local citizen)
  - d. Extend invitation to U.S. Forest Service (Jen Messias?)
  - e. Note: We asked Town of Russell (Raspberry River trails) & they said no thanks last year
  - f. **Action** (Kitchell): draft outreach letter to Towns and U.S.F.S. for Committee consideration.
- 3 **Proposal:** Re-engage trail user liaisons and trails groups:
  - a. This is where the CTC could fit.
  - b. **Action** (Kitchell & others?): 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)?
- 4 **Proposal:** Solidify subcommittee function, structure, and composition, toward the goals of expanding capacity and solidifying a sustainable organization.
  - a. Communications: web, Facebook, signage, proactive outreach

- b. Volunteers: recommend expanding to include “membership” in order to develop and maintain a membership list and communication procedures. Ultimately, membership could include voluntary dues that could be used to support BAT Comm. basic operations and select projects.
  - c. Think about other subcommittees? Project planning and coordination (includes financing)?
  - d. **Action (Kitchell & Subcommittees)**: task these subcommittees with developing a charter and participants to address function, structure, membership composition, and leadership (e.g. chair).
- 5 **Proposal:** 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.
- 6 **Action:** Discuss and confirm these proposals and actions at next BAT Comm. meeting toward the goal of updating MOU in Jan. 2022 as stated in MOU.

**Adjourn: NEXT MEETING: October 12<sup>th</sup> @ 3 p.m.**

**Future Agendas:**

- Follow up on possibly expanding geographic scope of BAT and revising organizational options