

New Hampshire Statewide Trails Advisory Committee (STAC)
Meeting Minutes from December 9, 2008

In Attendance

Members:

- Tom DiMaggio (Chair) NH Mushers Assoc
- Chris Gamache NH Trails Bureau
- Greg Placy NH DOT/Dist 1
- Ken Domey NH Off Highway Vehicle Assoc
- Jack Waldron SPNHF
- Jack Chapman FOMBA
- Denis Laliberte EFTA
- Roger Lohr XC Skiers

Staff:

- Jennifer Codispoti NH Trails Bureau

Guests:

- Tom St. Martin

Open Meeting

7:05 PM, meeting called to order.

Introductions

Members and guests introduced themselves and their affiliations.

Review Minutes

Minutes from the October 14, 2008 meeting reviewed. Motion to accept by Ken Dome, seconded Roger Lohr. Unanimous vote and minutes approved.

OHRV Update

Snowmobile season officially starts December 15th. Grooming can begin at that time as well. Bartlett and Bear Notch area to possibly open this weekend (12/13). 911 Mapping a success and 1300 miles in Coos County have been completed. Upper Grafton and Carroll Counties to be mapped this winter. It is projected the whole state will be completed in 3-4 years.

Recreational Trails Program

No new updates from FWHA. The BOT will hold a RTP workshop on 12/22 and RTP applications are due 1/23/09. Jack W asked if the response timeframe can be moved up because some groups want to start work in July and do not have enough time to get everything done with the lengthy process. Chris G said it is a time consuming process but will make sure to have notifications of acceptance or denial out by the first week in April.

Heritage Trail Update

Lancaster Heritage Trail is looking reroute a section of trail to connect to Whitefield's section. They need to send in their proposal and Jenn C will bring it to STAC to discuss.

Old Business

Non-motorized trail funding: No one attended the sub-committee meeting held November 10, 2008 and now the whole committee needs to come up with recommendations. Chairman DiMaggio reminded members of the STAC that they are here to advise the Director of Parks, not hear what the Bureau of Trails is doing. Chris G started the discussion with a synopsis of HB441-FN and that the bill was ITL (Inexpedient to Legislate), but the Resources, Recreation and Development Committee still would like recommendations on how to proceed. Discussion ensued about the need for non motorized funding and a proposal to send to the RR&D committee. The adopt-a-trail program was brought up as a solution for the lack of funding and trail maintenance and members of the STAC said it is not going to go far enough. Greg P suggested whatever is decided it be called a "user" fee and not a "parking" fee, otherwise there may be issues with plowing and maintenance from NHDOT. For now, this program will be just for state Lands only, if the committee is looking for more than state land a GIA type program would be better. It was mentioned Minnesota only uses RTP funds and Colorado has a hiking pass.

It was asked how much money was needed to be raised and Chris G said he asked the RR&D Committee for \$250,000 for start up which would include employee salary, vehicle, tools, 3-4 construction

trailers, etc. Ideas for funding were discussed and the committee stated it should start out as a voluntary program, no charge in winter (IR only), a fundraising program, trail passes (monthly, yearly etc. including all public land), taxing recreation equipment such as ski's, boots, etc. Members said that would not necessarily be equitable, though.

Final Proposal Ideas:

- 1) Volunteer donation/fundraising
- 2) Tax on recreation goods
- 3) Using a portion of RTP
- 4) Iron Rangers on state land only

BOT will summarize proposals from the meeting and send out for comments. This will also be brought up for discussion and fine-tuning at the next STAC meeting in January. No new ideas will be presented at that time.

New Business

Chris G updated the Committee that there is a new Parks Director, Ted Austin that will start on December 19, 2008 if confirmed by Governor and Council. The Parks Strategic Plan should be available for viewing sometime in early 2009. The Division of Parks is also looking into putting in Iron Rangers in some parks throughout the State and it would be a good idea if STAC sent a letter to the Director advising him where the money should go, otherwise it will go directly into the Parks fund. Discussion about how Iron Rangers work and the pros and cons of them in the parks ensued. DES has a new format for the Trails Notification permit. DES is seeking comments and is hoping the format is easier to follow. The fee is still the same and now the projects need to be reviewed by Natural Heritage Bureau in DRED.

Next meeting

Set for January 13, 2008 7 PM, DRED conference room, 172 Pembroke Road, Concord.

Meeting adjourned at 8:37 PM.