

Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting
Mesabi Trail Center
44 Station Road, Eveleth
Thursday, June 26, 2014
9:30 am – 2:30 pm

M I N U T E S

Members Present: Rick Anderson; Lynnea Atlas-Ingebretson; Kathy Bergen; Nancy Hanson; Brian Hubbard Chuck Kartak; Wayne Sames; Jenny Smith; Tom Stoa; Tony Yarusso; Jan Shaw Wolff
Liaisons: Erika Rivers; Arne Stefferud; Al Lieffort
Staff: Darin Newman, Laurie Young

1. Welcome

Recap visit to Lake Vermilion State Park

Approval of agenda

Approval of minutes

Several members of the committee visited Lake Vermilion State Park Wednesday evening. Comments about the visit included:

- Thankful that this opportunity is coming to fruition (preservation of park land for all MN citizens).
- Park can provide introductory experience to boundary waters.
- Accessible lakeshore trail would not occur without legacy dollars.
- Appreciated that archeological/cultural resource aspects are being taken into consideration and shared throughout planning and development process.

No changes were made to the agenda.

Minutes were approved.

2. Updates from the liaisons

DNR, Division of Parks and Trails, Erika Rivers

- DNR Parks and Trails is having a busy summer season especially with flooding. About a dozen facilities have been impacted by flooding and high water. The Blue Mounds dam broke, Fort Snelling was flooded and closed for a time. A lot of construction projects, some with legacy funding, are being delayed by weather.
- The new Tettegouche Visitor Center is open. This project was developed in partnership with MnDOT; The August Legacy Advisory Committee meeting will be held here.

Next Meeting-August 28, 2014

9:30 am – 2:30 pm

Tettegouche Visitor Center, located 58 miles northeast of Duluth. Entrance to the park is 4 1/2 miles northeast of Silver Bay on U.S. Highway 61.

Committee Actions Required

- ***Fill out the user-persona form (for yourself or an imaginary person) and return to us. Laurie will send out user-persona for people to fill out and return by Monday, August 18th.***
- ***Legacy Advisory Committee Members should attend Greater Minnesota district planning meetings to inform these planning groups about Legacy Advisory Committee activities.***

Staff and Liaison Actions Required

- ***Include an update on the Metropolitan Council's Policy Plan on the August agenda. Modify language/requirements for grant recipients to specify that they need to notify agency/PAT LAC when projects are 'open'.***
- ***Complete revisions to member description between meetings online.***
- ***Revise protocol for replacing new members. There are differences between the protocol for replacing appointed vs at-large members. This needs to be clarified in the process, list two separately.***

- The *Parks and Trails System Plan* will be posted on the DNR website for public review shortly.
- Stand up paddleboarding has been added to the “I Can” programs.
- Electronic pay stations will be installed in some parks as a pilot (Fort Snelling, Glendalough)
- Yurts are being installed in a few state parks (Afton, Cuyuna, Glendalough)
- Several parks are going to 100% reserveable camp sites as a pilot.
- Launched the brand new ParkFinder website to help people find the experience they are looking for. Check it out at <http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/parkfinder/index.html>
- Biennial budget planning has begun for FY 16-17.
- Liaisons have been meeting together with IT staff about development of an integrated state and regional park and trail web site.
- The bonding session delivered new money for Lake Vermilion State Park development, but not much for asset preservation. The need is estimated at \$32 million a year. The Division is working on a deferred maintenance plan to determine need and cost of delay.
- The Division is also in the initial stages of revising rules for state park and recreation areas, state trails and state forest recreation areas.

Metropolitan Council, Arne Stefferud

- First draft of the 2040 Policy Plan is being reviewed by the Parks and Open Space Commission. Public review of the plan will start in late August with a hearing in October.
- Grants are now will be administered on a web-based system later this year.
- Bonding dollars were significantly less than what was requested. The majority of dollars were earmarked.
- Parks and Trails Legacy Funds appropriated in 2013 for FY 2014 and FY 2015 were earmarked, mostly following the Metropolitan Council’s recommendations. One variation was additional money for the Mississippi River Whitewater Park.

Concern was expressed by the committee about the number of earmarks for bonding/legacy dollars. Earmarked projects do not go through the same evaluation/scrutiny that other projects do.

It was also suggested that the Legacy Advisory Committee should address the lack of funding for the local grants program. This results in pressure for regional PAT funding to be used for local projects. We should recommend alternative funding for local grants.

The question was raised about what is controversial or significantly different with 2040 Policy Plan?

- One issue is how the issue of equity should be addressed. How should funding be tied or related to this issue? The plan may specify that a certain percentage of funding be used for connecting people to the outdoors. People need to agree on what ‘connecting people to the outdoors’ means.
- The plan also addresses the addition of new units to the regional system. The addition of 110 new miles of regional trails in Hennepin and Carver counties are being added.
- The plan will also define what level of oversight is required for conversion of lands from regional park or trail purposes to other uses. This will fill a gap in the protection of park land.

- The plan is recognizing the overlap between transportation and parks by acknowledging the transportation functions of some regional trails in the 2040 Parks Policy Plan and the 2040 Transportation Policy Plan.

Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission, Al Lieffort

- The first round of district planning meetings has been completed. The second round of meetings will be completed by July 22. Ultimately, the outcome from the work of the committees is to define a system plan for Greater Minnesota regional parks and trails. Generally the state system and local system (developed mostly by cities) are being used to help define the regional system. The group is focused on regional parks and trails specifically for legacy funding.
- District planning committees have been appointed. Groups range in size from 4 to 15 members. People are interested in defining the level of overlap with the state system.
- The Commission hired a planner from Bemidji to act as staff for the project.
- The plan will include a dynamic database that can be amended, added to, and subtracted from. This will be conducted alongside, but separate from, an integrated mapping effort. It is anticipated that a semi-public website with this information will be available by the end of the summer.
- One issue is that the district planning groups lack diversity.
- It will be important that the process and plan is communicated effectively to the public

3. Definition of Connect People to the Outdoors

It is desirable to develop a common understanding so that projects can be categorized consistently, then analyses of how Park and Trail Legacy Funds have been used can be conducted. It is also desirable so that it can be determined if the recommendations in the *Parks and Trails Legacy Plan* are being achieved.

As per the action item from the last meeting, the liaisons discussed the definition of “connect people to the outdoors.” Liaisons shared how they have been thinking about this definition in the past and in the present relative to categorizing projects within this pillar.

Liaisons agreed on the following definition: ‘Connecting people to the outdoors are projects that are non-capital items that attract new users and retain existing users.’

This consensus was reached by the liaisons during the development of the five-year accomplishment brochure. *Celebrating 5 years of Legacy Parks and Trails Success* .

The question of whether or not Legacy Regional Grants in Greater Minnesota can be used for “connect people to the outdoors” projects such as programs and promotions was raised. Was there legislation allowing this?

Answer. There has been no legislation that allows Legacy regional parks and trail grants to be used for programming, promotion and other “connect” projects. Funding for those types of projects are not eligible in the upcoming grant cycle. In the future, Greater Minnesota can advocate and make a change for this use of Legacy funds for grants to Greater Minnesota.

The question was raised as to whether or not development projects that address upgrading facilities to meet ADA standards should be included under “connect people to the outdoors.”

Answer. “Connect” is being interpreted as attracting and retaining people. It is mandated by law to provide for accessibility; spending for physical access should not be categorized as connecting people to the outdoors. This work (ADA compliance) should not fall onto the back of Legacy Funds. These types of projects need to be funded by traditional sources as well. Even if accessible infrastructure is developed people may not use it – legacy dollars should be used for communication after development of facilities occurs.

Question: Can these dollars be used for market or social research? This research is needed for effective promotion and to be used for planning of new facilities. Should these activities also be categorized as connecting people to the outdoors?

Answer. Those activities are part of good marketing and promotion. They are also included with the strategies in the legacy plan for connecting people to the outdoors.

Note: The legacy appropriation needs to be accounted for according to the pillars even if it is not allocated through the 3 liaisons. Examples include the dollars appropriated to the University of Minnesota.

There was consensus by the Legacy Advisory Committee on the definition or scope of “connect people to the outdoors” as follows: ‘Connecting people to the outdoors are projects that are non-capital items that attract new users and retain existing users.’

4. Update on the Integrated State and Regional Park and Trail Database and Website

Liaisons have been discussing how to create the integrated mapping website mandated in the last Legacy appropriation. There is also an appropriation for the University of Minnesota, Center for Changing Landscapes to update the inventory and framework for parks and trails of state and regional significance. This inventory should feed into the integrated mapping effort. The University of Minnesota Center for Changing Landscapes began this inventory in 2009.

There will be two outward interfaces for the same data. One is for planning and evaluation of parks and trails for agencies, legislators, communities, etc. The other interface will be for public users to find outdoor recreation opportunities.

Comments regarding this project included:

- This will be a great project but will have tremendous costs.

- It will be used if it is truly integrated. People care about the end experience; they do not care who provides it or where it comes from.
- We must make sure that destinations related to the park or trail facilities are included on the map (bathrooms, bike shops, food, lodging, etc.). These destinations should be related to the activity they are engaged in.
- That is why it is critical to have a partnership with Explore Minnesota Tourism. They have this data already and it is reliably updated.

Action: Fill out the user-persona form (for yourself or an imaginary person) and return to us. Laurie will send out user-persona for people to fill out and return by Monday, August 18th.

6. Update on Citizing Contract

A draft agreement has been developed. The last step is obtaining signatures. The agreement is for one year and \$2,500. A plan for managing the site needs to be developed by the Communications Subcommittee.

Website References

Lynnea provided the following websites in reference to the information she presented on these topics reference.

- [Policy Links, Minnesota's Tomorrow : Equity is the Superior Growth Model](http://beta.policylink.org/sites/default/files/MNT_032514.pdf)
http://beta.policylink.org/sites/default/files/MNT_032514.pdf
- www.mncompass.org

7. Lunch

8. Subcommittee Meetings

Subcommittees met for an hour

9. Subcommittee Reports

Communications Subcommittee

- The subcommittee reviewed previously identified information to be included on the LAC website. There are some additions to the website that should be made:
 - Add bios for: Anita, Jenny, Tony, Dwight
 - Add subcommittee membership in each member's bio
 - Identify chairmanship and alternate-chair under name
 - Identify "appointed by____", or "at-large" under each member's name
 - Add agendas and meeting locations **prior** to meetings
 - Check to see if Tony has access to [PAT LAC website](#) to make changes/revisions.
- We would like to be able to 'announce' when legacy funded projects are completed. This is easier for larger projects but it is difficult to sort through multiple agencies and media sources to

find smaller projects. These notifications should be sent to PAT LAC (communications subcommittee email list or alternative method). The committee can then post these 'announcements' on Facebook/twitter/PAT LAC website. (Possible partnership with existing communication networks at liaison's agencies?)

Action: Modify language/requirements for grant recipients to specify that they need to notify agency/PAT LAC when projects are 'open'.

Governance Subcommittee

A draft Legacy Advisory Committee Member Job Description has been written. Please review the draft and submit comments to Lynnea and Laurie. There are no new or additional requirements for members. The new information is geared towards helping assist people who may be considering applying to be members.

Comments:

- Need to renumber member responsibilities – number two has been added to requirements instead.
- Get revisions/errors from Kathy.
- Add list of benefits to aid in recruitment of new members.
- Add pictures of locations, talk about networking, elaborate on the purpose of the legacy plan.

The committee wanted clarification of responsibility 3 regarding engaging with two groups. There are three goals of this responsibility:

- Reach out to implementing agencies and Departments/Divisions to inform them about the legacy plan.
- Inform stakeholder groups about legacy plan and PAT LAC who benefit from legacy dollars.
- Reach out to stakeholder groups who can advocate on behalf of PAT LAC/Legacy Fund.

Members should consider reaching out to stakeholder groups that may be great partners for PAT LAC.

Minnesota Parks and Recreation Association would be a great partner; I will look into contacting them.

Action: Legacy Advisory Committee Members should attend Greater Minnesota district planning meetings to inform these planning groups about Legacy Advisory Committee activities.

Action: Revise protocol for replacing new members. There are differences between the protocol for replacing appointed vs at-large members. This needs to be clarified in the process, list the two separately.

Youth Subcommittee

Discussed connecting people to the outdoors and including youth assessments of legacy projects. Still have the same proposal for assessments.

Benchmark Subcommittee

We are recommending that liaisons evaluate four five-year priorities for their accomplished projects this year.

Funding Subcommittee

- Information about historic funding sources/levels will be presented at the next meeting.
- We would like to study some projects to see if they address the goals/objectives of the plan.
This would be a way to provide a comment/assessment of some earmarked projects.

9. Next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday, August 28th at the new Tettegouche Visitor Center in Tettegouche State Park.

Action: Laurie will coordinate a carpool from St. Paul.

ADJOURN