

# **Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020**

MINUTES PROVIDE A RECORD OF MINNESOTA'S PARKS AND TRAILS LEGACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THESE MINUTES HAVE BEEN APPROVED AND WERE REVIEWED ON Feb. 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021



# Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

Thursday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2020

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Minnesota Department of Natural Resources Host  
WebEx

## Updates and Announcements

**Next Meeting:** February 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021 10:00 AM-2:00 PM

**Meeting Host:** Department of Natural Resources

**Meeting Location:** WebEx

## Action Items

- Staff will post the approved October 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting minutes onto the PTLAC Website
- Agency Liaisons should review the Statewide Trails Workgroup's purpose statement & identify the next steps necessary for this statement to be published before the PTLAC meeting on Feb 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021

## Minutes

**Members:** Andrea Christoffer, Cecily Harris, Heather Stirratt, Jim Shoberg, Jon Oyanagi, Les Ollila, Louise Segreto (absent), Margot Imdieke-Cross, Matthew Lindaman, May Yang, Pat Stieg, Pete Royer, Poppy Potter, Randy Sorensen, Sumbal Mahmud, Tim Mitchell.

**Liaisons:** Emmett Mullin, Erika Rivers, Laura Preus, Renee Mattson, Tom Ryan (absent)

**Staff:** Gratia Joice, Margaret Krueger & Lars Erdahl

## Introductions and Welcome

May Yang opened the meeting and led introductions. A special thanks to everyone that was able to attend today's virtual meeting. Congratulations to Lars Erdahl on his new role as the Legacy Program Consultant. Lars Erdahl has a wealth of experience in natural resources & education at the MN Zoo & the Metropolitan Parks and Open Space Commission. A huge welcome to Lars in this new staff role at DNR Parks and Trails!

**Today's meeting agenda was approved with no conflicts of interest identified between members & staff.**

**The October 22<sup>nd</sup> PTLAC Meeting Minutes were approved by group consensus.**

## Statewide Trails Workgroup Project Presentation: Pete Royer

Pete Royer began by introducing the goals & vision for the Statewide Trails Workgroup.

## Border to Border Trails: Why?

- Bold, unified goals for all three implementing agencies
- Increase system wide awareness, interests & dialogue
- History of trails:
  - Transcontinental Railroad
  - Appalachian Trail

- Michigan Belle
- Multi-agency, Public/private Partnerships in Examples: Rural Electrification, Moon Landing, 1776 Declaration of Independence

#### Mission Statement:

“The Minnesota Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee proposes to create a border to border recreational trail connecting the State’s natural resources, historic, cultural and scenic attributes. We wish to establish a trail that connects north to south and east to west across the state of Minnesota, utilizing existing trails and corridors and connecting communities.”

- Connect state and regional parks via recreational trails
- Create economic boosts to state and local businesses
- Encourage multi-public agency partnerships
- Encourage public-private partnerships for trail maintenance, rest areas, etc.
- Create trail signage and wayfinding to help users navigate (maps located at trailheads, trail intersections)
- Allow for bike packing and backpacking usage
- Connect up to adjoining state and regional recreational trails
- Connect up to transcontinental trail

#### Trail Usage:

- Users as defined by trail owner
- Pedal bicycle
- Pedal assist bicycle, (electrical)
- Inline skate/ski
- Hiker/walker

#### Trail Surface:

- Trail will be paved
- Non-paved segments will be noted (crushed limestone, etc)
- Trail can be on state and county roads where needed

#### Names:

- Minnesota Traverse
- North Star Trail (MN DOT uses this name)
- Legacy Trail
- Naming Contest?

#### Timeline & Goals:

- Identify most viable routes, [date]
- Define Budget allowance per biennium
- Analyze best method to close segment gaps (trail, roadway, etc) [date?]
- To be complete 2034

#### Agency Presentations:

Each Implementing Agency took a few minutes to briefly describe their current system of trail plans.

#### *GMRPTC Trail System Overview: Renee Mattson*

- This map outlines potential routes for this project, a number of which are currently in development
- This map has potential routes for a trail going both north/south or east/west
- Not all of these are biking trails but many are: Gitchi Gami, Willard Munger, Sunrise Prairie Trail
- The hope is that this map can provide a starting point, and the next step would be to identify nearby assets/areas of interest based on this map

#### *DNR Trail System Overview: Laura Preus*

- Laura continued the discussion by presenting the State Trails Primary & Secondary Corridors
- There are currently about 1,500 miles of developed trails and 2,900 miles of trail that have been legislatively authorized for future development
- This map specifically identifies the areas that are primary & secondary priorities for the trails that have been authorized for development
- This map provides a realistic way for developing the State Trails System to the fullest extent possible.

#### *Metropolitan Council Trail System Overview: Emmett Mullin*

- Emmett Mullin continued the discussion by describing Metropolitan Council's current system within its 10 Implementing Regional Agencies
- There are multiple potential routes that can go through the metro region, including routes that align with the Minnesota River & the Mississippi River
- The Metro Regional routes will also help to provide many invested stakeholders & interest groups, and will be a key component of this project

#### *Questions & Next Steps:*

- Is there focus on trail systems in the surrounding areas outside of MN? (Canada, WI, ND, SD, IA)
- What are the next steps?
  - Three Implementing Agencies need to approve the purpose statement & begin to push it forward within their agency.
  - Buy-in from all the agencies and outside partnering networks
  - Agency Liaisons should review this purpose statement & identify the next steps necessary for this to be published
- MN DOT has also worked on developing various bike routes across the nation, however many of these routes in MN don't have signage
- The Legacy Liaisons & PTLAC members should also be prepared to undergo leadership transitions for the sake of this project, as a number of members on this workgroup will be terming out at the end of this year
- Identifying a general alignment for a prioritized route will be a major step
- What is the expectation for the project timeline, funding, and trail priorities?
  - Will this displace potential trails up for development or will this be funded separately?
- The work that has been done is highly impressive, and tells its own story in a unique way

### Subcommittee Breakout Sessions:

The following subcommittees broke into smaller groups, and discussed the current work plan for each subcommittee for 2020. The following is a summary of these breakout sessions:

#### Benchmarks Subcommittee:

- This subcommittee has been working on finalizing a document to pull together some shared measurements that will work for all three agencies
- The Benchmarks Subcommittee has been meeting regularly to finalize this document, and they are very close to completing this.
- Benchmarks will be meeting again before the end of 2020 to continue to work on this
- After this document has been finalized, who will be the broader audience for this project?
- What are some qualitative elements to attach to the elements of Legacy Reporting?

#### Statewide Trails Workgroup:

- This group has finalized their purpose statement, and submitted this final statement to Agency Liaisons for their approval
- The next step for the Statewide Trails Workgroup is to interface with the Communications Subcommittee and identify the next steps for publishing this purpose statement
- This workgroup is hoping to publish the final purpose statement in the spring of 2021

#### Inclusion Subcommittee:

- This subcommittee is currently in the process of surveying different DEI strategies that are currently being done in MN parks & trails
- These surveys will be designed & developed in partnership with various minority councils
- “Nothing *about* me *without* me” is a central theme of this work, which ensures that minority groups across MN will be engaged with this project
- The overall goal of this is to increase participation for all of these marginalized groups in MN and engage these communities in future inclusion activities

#### Governance Subcommittee:

- This subcommittee is currently in the process of examining various governing documents, statutes, and charters that the PTLAC follows
- The group would also like to examine the application process & identify potential barriers for marginalized communities during this application process
- The Governance Subcommittee would like to meet with DNR staff to become more familiar with the application process for new members

#### Communications Subcommittee:

- This subcommittee did not get a chance to meet today due to multiple members being committed to other high priority subcommittee breakout sessions today
- This subcommittee would like to explore hosting cross-over meetings with various subcommittees, specifically Benchmarks & Statewide Trails
- The purpose of this subcommittee is to interface with the other subcommittees and provide communications support for PTLAC on an ongoing basis

## 2021 Alternate Chair & Chair Elections

A very special thanks to May Yang for her service as PTLAC Chair in 2020, and for Pete Royer's service as PTLAC Alternate Chair. Their leadership, time, and commitment to advancing the goals of the PTLAC during 2020 has been highly valued, especially amidst the many new challenges this year due to COVID-19. Thank you!

Both the alternate chair & chair positions on the PTLAC are up for re-election for 2021. Jon Oyanagi has expressed interest in the position of PTLAC Chair. Cecily Harris has expressed interest in the position of PTLAC Alternate Chair. The Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee will vote by group consensus on these two positions today.

**Both candidates have been elected by group consensus.**

Congratulations to Jon & Cecily!

## Final Updates:

### 2021 Meeting Schedule

- Next Meeting Dates:
  - Feb. 25<sup>th</sup> 10:00 AM-2:00 PM (online meeting)
- The 2021 PTLAC Meeting Schedule has been sent out, and is on the PTLAC website

### Outdoor Recreation Task Force:

- The Outdoor Recreation Task Force will be finalizing their recommendations in the coming months, and would like to solicit public feedback on this information
- The Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Members are well positioned to offer specific insights & advice on the work of this taskforce in a very meaningful way
- Gratia Joice will continue to update the PTLAC members on when the period for public comments will begin

### New Membership Application Updates:

- The Legacy Liaisons & staff are currently in the midst of appointing 5 new members to the PTLAC, and 3 returning members
- There are currently 69 applicants that have expressed interest in serving on the PTLAC
- The Legacy Liaisons are invested in continuing to diversify the experiences, insights, and identities of the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee membership make-up

*Open Discussion: What would PTLAC members like Liaisons to focus on during the new membership application selection process?*

- Seeking members with trail recreation/motorized trail experience is important
- Finding applicants that have direct experience working on issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Prioritizing applicants that have natural resource management backgrounds, specifically landscape architecture experience
- Finding applicants that have direct experience in the healthcare field is also an area of interest for the PTLAC

#### Farewell to Departing PTLAC Members: Pete Royer, Pat Stieg, and Tim Mitchell

The Legacy Liaisons and PTLAC members spent the next several minutes reflecting on the excellent service from our departing members: Pat Stieg, Pete Royer, and Tim Mitchell. A special thanks to these members for their leadership, time, and passions while serving on the PTLAC for the last 6 years. Members that have continued interest in participating with the work of PTLAC Subcommittees are welcome to stay connected & engaged. Congratulations & farewell!

**The meeting was adjourned.**