

# **Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting**

## **February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

MINUTES PROVIDE A RECORD OF MINNESOTA'S PARKS AND TRAILS LEGACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETINGS. THESE MINUTES HAVE NOT BEEN APPROVED AND WILL BE REVIEWED ON APRIL 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020.



## Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

February 27th, 2020

9:30 AM-2:30 PM

Northern Star Basecamp 6202 Bloomington Rd.,  
St. Paul, MN 55102

### Updates and Announcements:

**Next Meeting:** April 23<sup>rd</sup> 2020 9:30 AM-2:30 PM

**Meeting Host:** GMRPTC

**Meeting Location:** Grand Rapids, MN

### Action Items:

- DNR staff will post the approved meeting minutes on the PTLAC Website
- DNR Staff will include a discussion on the Funding Workgroup for the April 23<sup>rd</sup> PTLAC Agenda

## Minutes

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

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

**Guests:** Darcie Vandergrift, Gunnar Carlson, & Ed Quinn

**Staff:** Gratia Joice & Margaret Krueger

### Introductions & Welcome

- May Yang led the introductions and welcomed the new committee members to the team.
- May also thanked the Fort Snelling Base Camp Staff for hosting today's meeting.

**The December 5<sup>th</sup> Meeting Minutes have been approved.**

### Funding Workgroup Updates: Laura Preus

- The first two meetings of 2020 have taken place for the Funding Workgroup members
- Past meeting focus: informational sharing for the workgroup members
- Bob Bierscheid shared the historical context of the previous funding decisions for the workgroup members.
- The next series of meetings will focus on arriving at a specific recommendation for the funding split between the Implementing Agencies before June 15<sup>th</sup>, 2020.
- It is important that the Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Members continue to stay up-to-date on the recommendations from this Funding Workgroup. More consultation & discussion will take place at the next PTLAC Meeting on April 23<sup>rd</sup>.

- More information on the results of these meetings is on the Funding Workgroup's website: <https://mediationcentermn.org/27824-2/>

### Implementing Agencies' System Snapshot Presentations

The representatives of the Implementing Agencies gave a brief overview of each uniquely structured parks and trails system. This is in an effort to provide background knowledge necessary for new Committee Members. These presentations were also utilized at the most recent Funding Workgroup meeting.

#### Metropolitan Council: Emmett Mullin

Emmett gave a quick overview of the Metropolitan Council's system.

- The Metropolitan Council oversees the 10 implementing agencies, which are responsible for the management of the regional parks in the 7-county metro area.
- The 10 Implementing Agencies include:
  - Anoka County
  - City of Bloomington
  - Carver County
  - Dakota County
  - Minneapolis Park and Recreation Board
  - Ramsey County
  - City of Saint Paul
  - Scott County
  - Three Rivers Park District
  - Washington County

#### Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission: Renee Mattson

Renee Mattson led a quick discussion on the Greater Minnesota Parks and Trails system.

- 13 total representatives that are dedicated to making funding decisions.
- The Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission uses a competitive grant process to allocate the funds on the county level.
- 62 regionally significant parks and trails in Greater Minnesota's system
- The GMRPTC relies on its evaluation team to review the competitive grant process, which is composed of 5 outside members
- These members work to designate regionally significant parks and trails against the competitive grant process.
- The next application cycle will open on April 1<sup>st</sup>, and closes on July 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Legacy Funding has changed & supplemented the way projects are implemented through Greater Minnesota's system.

#### Minnesota Department of Natural Resources: Erika Rivers

Erika Rivers led a very brief presentation on Minnesota's Outdoor Recreation System. These priorities are carried out through a variety of different programs, including I Can! Programs, the Urban Outreach Program, and many various partnership developments.

- Overall, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources works through the Division of Parks and Trails.
- The DNR receives 40% of the Parks and Trails Legacy Fund.
- The DNR focuses on the four main pillars in the following order:
  - Taking Care of What We Have
  - Acquire Land, Create Opportunities
  - Connect People to the Outdoors
  - Coordinate Among Partners

### Youth in the Parks: Darcie Vandergrift & Gunnar Carlson

Darcie and Gunnar began their presentation by describing the goals and objectives with the research overseen by the Metropolitan Council. This research is a collective effort for the staff at the Met Council, and is led by Darcie Vandergrift.

Darcie began by posing a few different questions to the group:

- How do you consider youth needs in your work with Parks and Trails?

### Why this Research Matters:

- Public Health
  - Time in nature lowers various health risks
  - “nature connectedness” requires about 120 hours per week in nature
  - Can be a protective measure against mental health issues in youth
- Equity
  - Youth population is only continuing to grow in diversity
  - Youth experience unique barriers
  - Equity connects to public health concerns
- Park System Sustainability
  - Youth Nature connectedness yields more citizen support for parks and trails systems

### Collaborative Research Process:

- Increasing Youth Access to Parks and Trails:
- Three step process:
  - Recruiting participants
  - Designing experience/generating data
  - Data analysis

### Data: Barriers to Access

#### Park Condition Barriers:

- Safety
- Opportunity
- Racism
- Awareness
- Time Constraints

- Economic Constraints

#### Data Findings:

1. Parks generate feelings of well-being
2. Staff and programming are important
3. Desired amenities & activities
4. All users bring prior experiences

#### Recommendations:

1. Value prior experiences
  - No user is inexperienced
2. Invest in Cultural Inclusivity
  - Do youth see themselves in the parks?
  - Continue to find stories that connect all of us as Minnesotans
3. Strategic Partnerships
  - Partnerships with youth serving organizations

#### Conservation Work & Restoration Evaluations across Parks and Trails: Ed Quinn

Ed Quinn led a detailed presentation on the conservation evaluation efforts conducted by the DNR with Legacy Funding.

#### DNR Parks and Trails: More than just Campgrounds

- Outstanding Natural Resources
- Outstanding Cultural Resources

#### Parks and Trails Legacy Fund: Legacy Plan Strategies for Natural Resources:

1. Preserve natural areas & water resources
2. Restore natural communities that have been degraded
3. Reconstruct natural communities lost due to impacts of past agricultural and development activities

#### Reconstructing Natural Communities

1. Pre-Legacy: average 700 acres per year
2. With legacy: average 829 acres per year
3. 19% increase in average annual restoration acreage
4. Total acres restored since Legacy Amendment: 9,124 acres

#### Managing Invasive Plant Species:

1. Pre Legacy: 5,703 Acres per year
2. With legacy: average 13,475 acres per year
3. 136% increase in average annual acreage of invasive plant management

#### Prescribed Burning:

1. Pre Legacy: 5,068 acres per year
2. With Legacy: 6,379 acres per year
3. 26% increase in prescribed burns since Legacy Amendment

## Special Legacy Resource Management

- Bison Reintroduction at Minneopa State Park
- Biological Surveys
- Rare Species Management

## Evaluation of Natural Community Restoration Projects:

### *Results:*

1. Six projects exceeded stated goals
2. Eight projects achieved stated goals
3. One project minimally achieved stated goals

## Minimizing Resource Impacts of Parks and Trails Legacy Funded Development:

1. Review proposed projects
2. Document potential impacts
3. Communicate a recommendation
4. Work with proposers to meet needs

### *Resource Assessment:*

#### *How are we doing?*

- Priority # 3: Impacts to cultural resources are avoided or reduced to no adverse effects
- Priority # 5: Impacts to native plant communities or rare species are avoided
- Priority # 2: Protecting rare species & their habitats

## Open Discussion: Laying out the Foundations for a Successful 2020 & 2021 Subcommittee Work Plan

### Perspectives on the Role of PTLAC Members:

May Yang opened the floor to discuss the historical roles of Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Members. This will help new Committee Members understand the role of the Advisory Committee, and define a work plan for the coming years.

- Provides insights on the allocation of Legacy Funds
- Construction of grant criteria, and bonding requests for all three Implementing Agencies.
- The Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee serves as a sounding board to guide the work of the Implementing Agencies
- Climate change, and diversity, equity, & inclusion, should continue to be at the forefront of these funding decisions.

### Shaping the Scope of PTLAC Work: Special Skills & Interests of Members

The following is a summary list of the skills and interests of Committee Members. This list will shape the work plan of the PTLAC for 2020 & 2021. Further discussion & work planning will take place at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> PTLAC Meeting.

#### **1. Communications & Outreach:**

- How can we collect information & feedback from the public? How can we bring public voice to the LAC meetings?
  - Building a case to continue work of PTLAC and Legacy Program staff
  - Legacy outreach program
  - Start navigating towards 2024?
  - Planning for future vote in 2034
  - Support Research
  - Coordinate with other Legacy Funds
- 2. System-based Projects:**
- Bicycling
  - Statewide Trail Project
  - Measure, report, & share impact of Legacy spending on natural resources & environmental systems between implementing agencies
  - Trails & waterways
  - Motorized recreation
  - Increasing physical accessibility of park systems
  - Planning for outdoor recreation & natural resources in a dynamic, changing environment
  - Legacy Reporting: GMRPTC Model of Legacy Reports for other Implementing Agencies
  - Identify synergies between conservation, recreation, and education
- 3. Diversity, Equity & Inclusion:**
- Connecting Seniors to outdoor opportunities
  - Engaging youth
  - Shifting demographics in MN
  - Inclusion & civic engagement
  - Broaden partnerships
  - Underserved populations

## Final Updates

### Selecting Alternate Chair (May Yang)

- May Yang made the announcement that the Alternate Chair will be selected at the April 23<sup>rd</sup> PTLAC Meeting
- Anyone interested in this role should reach out to their appropriate Legacy Liaison & DNR Staff: Gratia Joice
  - Ad Hoc members may reach out to Gratia Joice to express interest
- See [‘Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee- Charter’](#) 1.1-1.3

#### Pop-up Kit Updates (Margaret Krueger)

- The contract with the designing company has been fully executed, and the work to fabricate portable outreach exhibits is underway.
- There will be two total review sessions
- Representatives from the PTLAC & Implementing Agencies will give feedback on the products.
- The exhibits will be completed no later than May, 2020.

**The meeting was adjourned.**