

Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

June 27th, 2019

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 July 25th, 2019



Parks and Trails Legacy Advisory Committee Meeting

June 27th, 2019

Rock County Law Enforcement Center
1000 North Blue Mound Avenue.

Updates and Announcements:

Next Meeting: July 25th, 2019

Meeting Host: GMRPTC

Meeting Location: 8257 MN-89, Bemidji, MN 56601

Committee Actions Required:

- Katherine Bloom O'Connell will revise the social media policy to include clear definitions for deleting/hiding materials on social media
- Katherine Bloom O'Connell will revise the social media policy to define the process for addressing potential political affiliations in any posted materials
- Legacy Liaisons will continue to discuss the pop-up kits at the next Liaisons meeting on July 18th
- The discussion on a statewide hiking/biking trail will be continued at the upcoming meetings, and requires further planning/collaboration between all PTLAC members & liaisons

MINUTES

Members:

Bob Bierscheid, Cecily Harris, Les Ollila, Louise Segreto, Matthew Lindaman, May Yang, Nancy Hanson, Pete Royer, Pat Stieg, Wayne Sames, Margot Imdieke-Cross, Tim Mitchell, Kathy Bergen, Katherine Bloom O'Connell, Randy Sorensen, and Chris Crutchfield (absent), Poppy Potter (absent).

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

Guests: Met Council: Colin Kelly; MN DNR Leadership Team Members: Chuck Carpenter, Lance Crandall, Gary Hoeft, Rachel Hopper, Scott Kelling, Paul Kurvers, Phil Leversedge, Elizabeth Murray, Melody Webb, GMRPTC Commission Bryan Pike

Staff: Stefanie Stearns, Margaret Krueger

Welcome & Introductions:

Bob Bierscheid welcomed the group, and lead the introductions. Bob Bierscheid thanked the Rock County Law Enforcement Center for hosting today's meeting. The DNR Leadership Team has joined our meeting to discuss one of the main pillars in the 25-year Legacy Plan: "Connecting People to the Outdoors".

The April 25th 2019 meeting minutes have been approved.

Discussing Legacy Pillars: “Connecting to the Outdoors” with DNR Leadership Team

Elizabeth Murray, the Assistant Regional Manager for the southern region of Minnesota opened the discussion. Elizabeth Murray began by describing the various parks and trails systems of Southern Minnesota, and she also welcomed all attendees and thanked everyone for coming to Luverne, MN. Erika Rivers opened the discussion by describing the organization of the DNR Leadership Team (DLT). The goal of today’s discussion is to include the themes of connecting people to the outdoors in terms of diversity, equity, and inclusion, based on the previous April 25th PTLAC Meeting.

Northeast Region: Scott Kelling, Northeast Regional Manager, PAT

Scott Kelling continued the discussion by describing the efforts to connect people to the outdoors in the northeast region. Many staff in the northeast region have made significant efforts to connect people to the outdoors, especially in partnership with various tribal bands in the Northeast region. These include:

- Tribal Connections with the Fond du Lac band of Ojibwe, Boise Forte Band of Ojibwe, and a partnership with the Grand Portage Band of Ojibwe
- “We Are Water” exhibit at the Duluth Aquarium
- Wellness Fair at Grand Portage State Park
- Visitor’s Center remodeling at St. Croix State Park
- Youth Outdoors in Duluth
 - The Duluth community piloted this program to provide youth in the Duluth Area with opportunities to experience the outdoors through our parks systems
 - Based on the value that all children have a right to connect with the outdoors
 - Takes place in Jay Cooke, Tettegouche, and others state parks along the North Shore
 - Recreational funding has now been released (was not available before 2008 Legacy Amendment)

Visitor’s Services and Outreach: Rachel Hopper, Visitors Services & Public Outreach Manager, PAT

Rachel Hopper continued the discussion by describing what the Legacy Amendment has allowed the DNR Parks and Trails Systems to achieve in the Visitors Services and Outreach section of the Parks and Trails Division. These programs would not be possible without Legacy Funding. These achievements and programs include:

- I Can! Programs
 - Approximately 80% of I Can Camp! participants identify as people of color
- Parks and Trails Interpretive and Naturalist Programs
- Urban Outreach Program
 - Seeks to reach marginalized communities through direct outreach

- Partnership Development Consultant position has been opened to build better connections with the DNR's partners
- Parks RX program that provides medical professionals with the means to "prescribe" the outdoors to patients.
 - Outreach packets used to reach out to medical professionals
 - Health and Nature initiative meeting covering the background of Parks RX and informational sharing

Northwest Region: Melody Webb, Northwest Assistant Regional Manager, PAT

Melody began the discussion by describing the challenges in the Northwest Region with connecting people to the outdoors. Current projects include:

- Increased efforts to make parks systems accessible
- Sugar Shack: Maplewood State Park hosts a maple syrup-ing event in partnership with local tribes
- "New American" groups include immigrant individuals, and programming has been designed to be more inclusive of the diversity in Northwest Minnesota
- Naturalist and Interpretive programs in Lake Bemidji State Park have been expanded to include the regional Bemidji Area
 - This includes a tribal advisory group for Big Bog State Recreation Area, and the surrounding Lake Bemidji Area
- Transportation proves to be a challenge to connecting people to the outdoors
 - Solutions include: hosting programs in primed locations, and providing on-site accommodations to employees

Southern Region: Elizabeth Murray, Southern Assistant Regional Manager, PAT

Elizabeth began the discussion by describing the challenges and opportunities with connecting people to the outdoors in the southern region. These include:

- Repairs to Cannon Falls trails systems
- Increasing accessibility, which includes paving many trails in the region
- Regional naturalists in Minneopa State Park conducted ceremonies when releasing bison in partnership with local tribal bands
- Interpretive signage has changed to include local tribal languages
- Volunteer program: Bison Ambassadors Program
- Recreational Activities: archery, snow-shoeing, canoeing etc.
- Transportation services: working on developing a transportation program to bring families out to State Parks that would otherwise not have access to transportation
- Oral histories include stories of elder community members
- Control of invasive species by using grazing livestock connects people to the outdoors by educating the public on prairie restoration efforts in Southern Minnesota

- “New American” populations now have greater accessibility to various interpretive programs
 - Blue Mounds State Park: Latinx immersion/outreach program
- Partnership with the Luverne Community has allowed for interpretive kits and programs to be more accessible to local community members

Discussion Conclusion: Erika Rivers, Director, PAT

- The leadership of the DLT has made great strides towards connecting people to the outdoors
- These accomplishments would not be possible without the phenomenal public servants on the team today
- Much of these statewide projects would also not be possible without Legacy Funding

Communications Subcommittee Updates

Social Media Policy: Katherine Bloom O’Connell

Katherine Bloom O’Connell opened this section of the meeting by describing the goal of the Social Media Policy. This policy is to be implemented in the event of any potential issues with the new Instagram account. Katherine opened the floor to discuss potential revisions to this policy. These revisions/suggestions include:

- Define the parameters for deleting public comments on any potential posts
 - Must define who would begin the process of deleting/monitoring comments
 - Must define which comments would be identified as inappropriate or derogatory
 - Katherine will include clear definitions for deleting materials on social media
- Define the process for addressing potential political affiliations in any posted materials
 - Could include opinion disclaimer
 - Must define who will lead the decision making process in a timely manor
 - Potentially could be the Agency Liaisons, or PTLAC Chair

State Fair Exhibit: Stefanie Stearns and Laura Preus

Stefanie Stearns began by describing the updates to the State Fair Exhibit for 2019. Laura Preus described in detail the goal and themes of the interactive games at the exhibit. These updates include:

- Smaller banners describing the 4 pillars
- Multiple stepping stones along the “river”
- Games:
 - Will be much more visible

- Educational/ Interactive games will be a way to receive feedback from members of the public
- Theme: Connecting People to the Outdoors
- Voting activity to get feedback on how people connect to the outdoors with various recreational activities
- Near the exit door will be the PTLAC website featured on a laptop
 - Dell will be donating equipment for this
- Photo Center
- Question: should benches be included in the exhibit?
 - Provides accommodation for families with kids that need seating space to enjoy the Legacy Exhibit

Stefanie continued the discussion by describing the updates necessary for the Greater MN Outdoors Website.

“Pop-Up Kits” For Legacy Outreach and Education: Bob Bierscheid

Bob began the discussion by explaining the goals of the Legacy funded Pop-up Kits.

- Goal: To develop affordable access to local events, and to provide pop-up opportunities at various public events that would otherwise not have educational opportunities about Minnesota’s parks and trails system and the Legacy Amendment.
- Display board:
 - 3 panel design, portable, lightweight
 - Cost 150\$
 - Includes a whiteboard kit
- Includes an evaluation system
- Those using these kits must be able to effectively answer questions about legacy funding

Feedback from PTLAC:

- Must ensure that the 3 agencies can efficiently decide when and where to use these kits at specific venues
- Multiple legacy funds are in collaboration
- 3 agencies must have funding to staff these pop-up events
 - Doesn’t necessarily need to have staff supporting the display boards (displays can stand on their own with proper monitoring by local staff)
- Displays should include a “hook” to engage more people
- Displays must also include accessible information for people of all abilities
- Proposal: “Legacy Ambassador” program used to train staff on legacy related issues
- Content can be manipulated and vary across different sites

- Must ensure quality control and continuous branding is maintained for all kits
- Legacy Liaisons will continue to discuss the pop-up kits at the next Liaisons meeting

Agency Updates

DNR Updates: Laura Preus

Laura Preus began by describing the latest updates from the DNR.

- School's Out Camp Out: highly successful event centered around getting young kids outdoors now that the school year has ended
- Currently working to prepare for bonding requests for all DNR systems
- MN Great Outdoors Website is expected to receive an award in recognition of the work for this project
- State Trail Visitor Survey: currently cycling through different types of systems to gain better visitor survey data
 - Helps the DNR understand more about the PAT systems
 - Utilizing trail counting systems
 - Potential use of Streetlight Data for these surveys

MET Council Updates: Colin Kelly

Colin Kelly began by describing the most current programs at the MET Council.

- Play Features: Research on the Twin Cities Regional Parks Systems to gain a better understanding of visitor usage of regional parks in the metro region
- Nature Connector Bus: Parks Ambassador at MET Council has worked to increase signage on local busses in the Metro
 - This includes: Minnehaha Regional Park, Theodore Wirth Regional Park, Lake Como Regional Park, and Lake Phalen Regional Park
- Equity Grant Program Pilot:
 - Fund Distribution Plan
 - About \$300 K available for the first year of this program

GMRPTC Updates: Renee Mattson

Renee Mattson began by describing the various updates in planning for the GMRPTC.

- Updating Strategic Plan
- Developing more criteria around the Master Plan based on feedback from the Evaluation Team
- Funding Application period is now opened

2019 Legislative Update

GMRPTC: Renee Mattson

- Multiple Commissioner Seats are going to be filled shortly

- Renee attended the ceremonial bill signing on June 18th which had a presence from all four legacy funds

DNR: Laura Preus

- Having regular contact and collaboration efforts between the 3 agencies has helped move things forward in the legislative process
- Working group will continue to move forward, and the DNR will continue to collaborate with the other agencies on this
- Current Legacy Bill has been approved
- The legislative proposal to increase the free entry days to state parks has been met with a compromise, and the DNR will be increasing a select number of free entry days

Statewide Bike and Hiking Trail: Pete Royer

- Potential name: "MN Traverse"
- Goal: create a bike/hiking trail across Minnesota from North/South Dakota to Wisconsin
- Increase access to our Parks and Trails systems by creating accessible trails on a statewide level
- Biking and camping together have become more popular in our trails systems
- Need to include data in relation to accessibility: including distances, slopes, terrain, and current conditions of trails
- This discussion will be continued at the upcoming meetings, and requires further planning/collaboration

Final Updates

SCORP: Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreational Plan

- Draft of the new SCORP plan has been developed, and will be submitted by July 10th

Next Meeting Details:

- Next meeting will be held on July 25th, in Bemidji, MN

DNR Staffing Updates:

- The DNR Legacy Program Consultant Position cannot currently be filled, but continues to be a priority

Bob Bierscheid adjourned the meeting.