
GITCHI-GAMI TRAIL ASSOCIATION

March 9, 2017, 10:00am

Gooseberry Falls State Park – Visitor Center Conf. Room



Welcome/Introductions

- ❑ Meeting called to order at 10:05am
- ❑ Introductions – In attendance: Lisa Austin (MnDOT), Dan Cruikshank, Greg Fangel, Rod Garver, Nathan Koski (ARDC GIS intern), Charlie Moore (ARDC), Tom Peterson, Chad Pierson, Michelle Pierson, Mark Rudningen, Ginny Storlie
- ❑ Motion to Approve meeting minutes from January 12, 2017 by Dan Cruikshank, Chad Pierson. Unanimous, carries.
- ❑ Agendas and meeting summaries posted here: www.ardc.org/ggta

Committee Business

1. **President's/ Vice President's Report**

- March 15th – Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota Advocacy Day
 - Bill Blank, President, will attend the Parks & Trails Council Day on the Hill. Bob Nesheim will connect with Bill to discuss some funding strategies.
- March 16th – BikeMN Advocacy Day on the Hill
 - Bill Blank and Michelle Pierson will attend this event to promote bike infrastructure
 - Judy Erickson will connect with us this day
- 2017 Annual Ride discussion
 - Board supportive of decision to add another ride length
 - Mark Rudningen will include a tent/canopy rest station at Twin Points in the special use permit for the ride day. That should be the only necessary step we'll need to make to add this rest station to our ride.
 - We will want to have the ride information updated on our website prior to sending out the spring newsletter.
 - Rod Garver has agreed to be Co-Ride Director this year with Bill Blank
 - Dan Cruikshank mentioned the Heck Epic ride is scheduled for our ride weekend again. We were happy that Dan could lend bike shop assistance in 2016, and with new ownership of the Outdoor North in Grand Marais, we may need to look at our options for bike mechanical support on ride day. It was noted that Mayor Arrowsmith-Decoux is the new owner of the shop. **Would anyone want to reach out and check with him/his family about continued bike mechanic support in exchange for a business membership?**
 - We had ride rates at \$40/(30 for members) before August 1, and \$45 (35 for members) after August 1st as our ride rates last year. **Do we want to discuss changing these rates?** Are they too high? Would we encourage more ridership with a lower fee? In years past we charged \$5/child with a paid adult and children received water bottles. Would making 'kids free with paying adult' encourage families?

2. Executive Director's Report

- Update on Transportation Alternatives Application
 - Ski Hill Road to Lutsen Town Center project
 - The Transportation Alternatives task force met in early February, and the GGST project was one of two selected for funding! The projects were approved by the Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) a work group committee of the Area Transportation Partnership (ATP). The projects must be approved by the full ATP at their early April meeting. The grant requested amount was \$600,000 with a project total on this segment of trail looking at \$1.4M.
 - It was noted that the Transportation Alternatives task force appreciated that the DNR does not tend to apply for this grant every year.
 - Will need to begin preparing items to work to include this project in the state 2018 bonding bill
 - Public support was very beneficial to this application. Special thanks to Scott Harrison for acquiring 8 letters of support. The GGTA also provided a letter.
- Presented to MnRovers Club: The Gitchi-Gami State Trail- A Great Trail on Our Great Lake on March 7th
 - Michelle presented at the weekly series at Macalester on Tuesday to a full house! There were about 70 folks in attendance. Chad Pierson ran tech support. The presentation covered who/what the GGTA is and does, showcased our website, discussed upcoming trail construction and repair projects, showcased our annual ride and our interactive map tour. Also highlighted new USBR41 route.
 - Some questions came about at the MnRovers Presentation:
 - Do MN State Parks accommodate those who bike/hike into the park even if all camping sites are reserved? - No one at this meeting felt definitive on this matter. Michelle checked with front desk staff in Gooseberry who said there is no official policy to accommodate those who bike/hike in. Michelle will contact state park managers to ask about this question especially in light of the new USBR41 route – we may have a few more bikers who do not anticipate their camping needs correctly/encounter problems, etc.
 - Can anyone think of another place that Rovers could stay near Gooseberry that would give them a park-like environment?
 - a) The property across from Gooseberry? Tom Peterson stopped after the meeting and read the sign. The website listed on the sign is no longer active. Michelle will try calling the phone number.
- Continued communications with MnDOT regarding USBR41
 - Maps to roll out soon
 - Nice website at: <http://www.dot.state.mn.us/bike/usbr41/>
- Worked with Sandy Schutte to update online membership page of website
- Added button links to website to showcase our business sponsors
- Will work on a business sponsorship push at the end of March/beginning of April
- Annual Meeting set for May 20th in coordination with Spokengear's YARD SALE (a gear and bike swap). Dan Cruikshank, GGTA board member and co-owner of Spokengear gave us an update. Donations will be accepted at the shop. Folks can choose to sell their bike on consignment, with 25% of their sale going to two nonprofits (GGTA & Lake County Mountain Bike Trails club). Folks can also decide to outright donate their

items, and all proceeds will be split between the nonprofits. As a beneficiary of this event, we will need to find some volunteers to work the event. Be thinking of folks you can invite, and we'll include this in the newsletter and social media posts.

2. Publicity and Communications Officer's Report

- Spring Newsletter- Greg Fangel has taken over this aspect of the Publicity and Communication Officer's position. He has assigned stories to the President, Trail Coordinator, and Executive Director. He will also include ride registration form. Greg intends to have the newsletter put together by April 20th. Greg will work with Michelle to get final copies ready to send to ProPrint in Duluth.
- Committed to print ads – MnTrails, PedalMN/ExploreMN, Have Fun Biking

3. Treasurer's Report

- Report of the Treasury – Chad Pierson presented the statement of the treasury. There was a motion to accept the statement as written by Greg Fangel/Dan Cruikshank. All approved. Carries.
- It was requested that the GGTA request a formal statement to accompany invoices from Judy Erickson containing legislative updates/lobbying status.

4. Trail Coordinator's Report

- Transportation Alternatives Grant – Mark reiterated the level of support by the community as working in our favor.
- West Road Project-
 - Pre-contract with a local contractor to remove trees in the construction limits will go out soon. Trees need to be removed before June 1st.
 - The project will not be any wider than the road and right of way. No temporary easements required. This project will consist of paving a portion of the trail, with a curb and then 10' width trail.
 - MnDNR is coordinating the beginning of this project with MnDOT as MnDOT prepares the reconstruction/reconfiguration of the Beaver River Bridge.
- Grand Marais to Cutface -
 - This project is still \$1.5M short
 - Included in 2016 bonding bill should that be funded this May
 - MnDNR applied for \$150,000 FRTP grant
- Tofte-
 - NE portion to the Fishing Museum will see some construction and reconfiguration this summer
- Caribou Falls Wayside-
 - Construction this summer, provision for the trail will be included, no actual paving of trail included in this summer's plans. Will DNR consider installing a bike rack or interpretation to showcase that this will be a trailhead for the trail?
- Repair Projects-
 - Large project to mitigate natural springs and shallow out grade in Temperance River State Park is expected to be completed by the end of June
 - Some in-house projects anticipated – Mark sent around some photos of collapsing culverts, the first in Gooseberry.
 - Crack sealing/patching will also take place
- Miscellaneous-
 - New State Park Manager at Cascade River State Park

5. **ARDC Update** – Charlie Moore, ARDC GIS, and Nate Koski, ARDC's GIS intern from UMD attended the meeting and presented the following:
- MLSCP Grant—Economic Impact of Paved Trails in the Coastal Zone – ARDC was awarded a grant to evaluate the economic impact of paved trails in the Coastal Zone. These will include the GGST, Duluth's Lakewalk, the Munger Trail in the Coastal Zone, and the St. Louis River Trail near Carlton. It will be a project that combines count data with surveys to capture trail user habits. Official notice of funding should come through this summer with this project beginning July 2017 and wrapping up after the 2018 summer cycling season.
 - Two Harbors Trails Plan – The City of Two Harbors is updating its Comprehensive Trails Plan. ARDC has assisted with mapping, surveys, and meeting facilitation. Building GGST in Two Harbors near the visitor center comes out as one of the top two priorities in surveying the public at this time. Dan Cruikshank reported his views of the meetings. It seems there is great public support for the GGST in Two Harbors.
 - Winter Trail Counts on the GGST in Split Rock – Charlie Moore presented a handout showing trail usage on the MnDNR's pilot winter biking trail loop in Split Rock Lighthouse State Park.

6. Other Business-

- Lisa Austin, MnDOT District 1, attended the meeting on behalf of Bryan Anderson. Lisa presented exciting news about a grant MnDOT was awarded to be used in District 1 in a highway right of way to benefit pedestrians and cyclists. It was determined that MnDOT would use the funds to hire a consultant to pre-engineer a segment of trail. While the SW side of Tofte was a consideration, it was decided based upon the recent Trails Planning process and public sentiment that looking at the Two Harbors area of trail would provide an opportunity to gain some figures that could assist with future Transportation Alternatives solicitations and bonding considerations. The consultant will look at the intersection of Scenic 61/Expressway at a route through the City of Two Harbors and look at a trailhead and first segment of GGST to span from the Visitor's Center/Campground out to Flood Bay State Wayside. This process will be getting underway shortly and will have a public input component. Look for more information about ways you can participate in the near future.
- Dan Cruikshank also updated the group about two cycling initiatives:
 - The Lake County Mountain Bike Trail system has received a coastal grant to conduct engineering and fill out an Environmental Assessment Worksheet (EAW) for the Split Rock Ridge portion of the planned MTB system in Lake County.
 - Silver Creek Township has 80 acres near the Two Harbors fairgrounds and meetings are being held to consider potential hiking, mtb biking, dog walking, and equestrian trails.
- Greg Fangel noted that the Cook County Historical Society is beginning a new History Week project and will look for ways to incorporate the trail.

7. Next Meeting –Annual Meeting on May 20th, 2017. Meeting time yet to be determined.