
GITCHI-GAMI TRAIL ASSOCIATION

September 13, 2018, 10:00am – Meeting Summary
Minnesota DNR Parks & Trails Offices – Conference Room
1568 County Hwy 2, Two Harbors, MN 55616



*meeting notes and documents will be posted at: www.ardc.org/ggta

WELCOME

1. Welcome & Introductions – Meeting called to order at 10:10am and introductions followed. In attendance: Tom Peterson (President), Chad Pierson (Treasurer), Dan Cruikshank, Bob Nesheim, Terry Hukriede (Two Harbors Trees and Trails Commission), Chris Swanson (Mayor, Two Harbors), Mark Rudningen (Trail Coordinator, MnDNR), Kevin Johnson (MnDNR), Kent Skaar (MnDNR), Bryan Anderson (MnDOT), Charlie Moore (ARDC), and Michelle Pierson (GGTA Executive Director)

COMMITTEE BUSINESS

1. President's Report
 - Call to approve agenda & 7-12-2018 Meeting Summary was made by Dan Cruikshank/2nd by Tom Peterson, carries.
2. ARDC Update
 - **Paved Trail Economic Impact Study** Overview – Charlie Moore

Moore reviewed project goals and processes which included both systematic counting equipment employed on 4 trail systems that connect with state trails in the Coastal Zone and trail user intercept surveys. The trails in the study include the Willard Munger, the St. Louis River Trail, Duluth's Lakewalk/Cross City Trail and the Gitchee-Gami. Each trail system utilized a summer long control site automatic infrared counter, and rotational counters that were placed at varying locations along each trail system to capture 2 week counts. The second aspect, the trail user survey, were distributed at a variety of locations along each trail system by a field technician. Technicians gave advance notice using trailside signage to trailusers that a survey opportunity was ahead. At the survey locations, technicians asked trail users if they'd like to participate in a survey and had water and snacks to offer to trail users while they stopped. Over 400 surveys were completed along the trail. Many trail users, and especially cyclists, preferred not to stop, and technicians also had small business cards with an online link to the survey if passersby did not want to stop, but wanted to take the survey. Posters were placed on trail kiosks where available, and at many trail side businesses with business owner permission. Data collection and analysis has begun and an online interactive story map has been developed which will house and showcase the information gleaned in this study. The survey will remain open through September. Final analysis will take place in October. Stay tuned for a draft study review coming your way in the coming weeks. And if you haven't take the survey but have used the trail, please take the survey here:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/JNW6XP6>

A facebook post was published to the GGTA Facebook page inviting our trail users to take the survey if they have biked the trail this summer. To increase reach, we invited folks to share the post and comment, in exchange for being entered into a drawing for a sticker and a GGST waterbottle. A drawing for these prizes will be held at the end of September. Find the post here if you'd like to share from your personal page to help spread the word:

<https://www.facebook.com/GitchiGamiTrailAssociation/photos/a.687060654676437/1753508881364937/?type=3&theater>

- **Cook County Transportation Plan**
This project has just kicked off with a stakeholder meeting on September 7th. Next steps will be to develop a Steering Committee. If anyone is interested in the meeting notes or in serving on the steering committee, let Michelle know. Updates from this project will be posted here: <https://ardc.org/cookcountytransportationplan/>
- **MnDOT District 1 Bicycle Plan** - held 4th TAC meeting on September 20th, Com. Ginny Storlie attended, an opportunity came out of that meeting to look to employ MnDOT funds to predesign/pre-engineer a GGST segment. Find the project page for this plan here: <https://districtonebicycleplan.com/>
 - **Discussion:** Bryan Anderson (MnDOT, District 1) attended our meeting and gave some background about an opportunity to do a quick-turn around predesign/preengineering study on a future segment of GGST. District and State DNR staff members in attendance, along with the board, investigated options. Kent Skaar (DNR), mentioned that investigating a location for a Hwy 61 crossing between Lutsen Town Center and the Cascade Beach Road in Cook County could be beneficial for future planning. The Hwy 61 corridor in this segment has very narrow shoulders, so investigating good options for siting and planning the trail in this corridor, along with options for safe crossings of 61, would prove beneficial. Anderson noted that the contractor would be then interested in meeting with the GGTA board, potentially in conjunction with the board's November meeting.

3. Executive Director's Report

- **Annual Ride wrap up** – August 18, 2018 was a great day for a great ride!
 - 156 riders, 10 children
 - Multiple 3-generations families participated
 - Initial feedback noted we should increase/enhance 34 mile turnaround signage
 - Many favorable comments about our food selection and happy volunteers
 - We ran out of bread at Beaver Bay, ran out of grapes at Gooseberry, and had really little left over. "Traditional" chip trays were enjoyed more, don't fall for the less expensive variety mixes with the barbecue chips. Ran out of Gatorade at Beaver Bay.
 - Costs were lower this year (purchase less food, cheaper tshirt, didn't purchase ride brochures), meaning it was a fundraising ride!
- **Grand Marais to Cut Face Creek Letter** supporting MnDNR's trail alignment
 - Cook County News Herald published a GGTA Letter to the Editor on September 7th. There has been a response
 - GGTA sent additional letters to DNR, Judy Erickson, Rep. Ecklund and Sen. Bakk
 - More info about status of this project during the trail coordinator's report
- **Give MN preparations**
 - Give to the Max Day – November 15th
 - 10th anniversary, may be ways to leverage the contributions we receive through contests (giving away prizes every 10 minutes)
 - Pierson updated our profile on the new platform so we may promote the GiveMN page for year end giving/memberships

- Find our profile here: <https://www.givemn.org/organization/Gitchi-Gami-Trail-Association>

- **Bike Your Park Day** – September 29, 2018 10:00am
 - Registered a casual, support-yourself ride beginning at the trailhead in Gooseberry down by the lake. Folks who register at the link below can be entered into a drawing for a bike and Amtrak tickets.
<http://bit.ly/BikeYourParkDayGitchiGami>

- **Lutsen Design project** –MLSCP application was selected for funding
 - 3 components to a design plan including:
 - Town beautification
 - Wayside Design- Hwy 61/Ski Hill Rd
 - Trail design for the 1.55 mile trail extension from Ski Hill Rd to the central part of town in Lutsen
 - 3 grants awarded (Town of Lutsen, NSSD Council, GGTA), but some of the facilitation will be streamlined. Town of Lutsen committed to providing the matching dollars for all three components at their Annual Meeting. A continuation of that meeting will include a resolution to provide the match.
 - GGTA will enter into a grant agreement with the MLSCP if the Town of Lutsen does pass a resolution to commit funds. A motion to enter into an Agreement with the Coastal Program and sign a resolution of authorization if the Town provides the matching dollars was made by Chad Pierson/Dan Cruikshank. Motion carries unanimously.

- **Trail Funding sources** –
 - A conversation to discuss current sources of trail funding included:
 - Transportation Alternative Program (TA) Grant
 - LOI's open October 1st, may see some changes to the worksheet template
 - 100,000- 600,000 dollars - 80% Federal grant/ 20% local match
 - Due by October 31st
 - This year's solicitation is for construction in 2023
 - There is great support with the recent Two Harbors Trails Plan being adopted in the City, and by City leadership, to think about the Two Harbors to Flood Bay corridor
 - Bryan Anderson, MnDOT noted that with reconstruction of Hwy 61 in Two Harbors being programmed for 2024 there is some benefit to thinking about developing an application for the TA solicitation in fall of 2019, as those projects will have funds set for 2024.
 - IRRRB – trail grants 50/50% match, project must begin within 6 months of grant award. Initial conversation included looking at project eligibility. Pierson was asked to look into seeing if the program would provide staffing dollars. It does not. She also inquired about a state trail receiving funds and was told that signage and fencing are eligible projects. Please review the grant description attached and we will add this to our next meeting agenda.
 - LCCMR- Lutsen project is included in the current LCCMR package. There is not a GGST project included in the 2020 request.
 - Others?-

