

NEW YORK STATE TRAILS COUNCIL MEETING
Meeting Held In-Person and Virtually via WebEx
October 14, 2023 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Council Attendance:

4-Wheel Drive –

All-Terrain Vehicles –

Equestrian – Carol Schmelz, Wendy Wakula

Hiking – Stephanie Campbell

Nordic Skiing –

Off-Highway Motorcycles –

Off-road Bicycling – Michael Vitti, Doug Eli

On-road Bicycling – Ivan Vamos, Harvey Botzman

Running –

Snowmobiles – Bill Cook

Snowshoeing –

Universal Access – Jason Thurston

Water Trails –

ECNHC – Mona Caron

FHWA –

National Park Service –

HRV Greenway – Beth Campochiaro

NYS Canal Corporation –

NYSDEC – Jill Trunko

NYSOPRHP – Tom Hotaling, Chris Morris

NYS DOT –

PTNY – Dylan Carey

Guests: Jonathan Duda, Parks and Trails NY, Connie Schmitz, NYS Horse Council

Call to Order & Introductions:

Meeting was called to order at 10:06 AM. Delegates and attendees introduced themselves to the group.

Correction/Approval of Minutes from April 15, 2023:

Harvey asked for corrections and a motion to approve the minutes. Motion carried with none opposed- Minutes approved from 04/05/2023.

Announcements:

- Chris Morris noted vacancies in multiple user groups and encouraged delegates to solicit for interested folks. Chris noted possible Nordic Skiing representative from Adirondacks- will invite to join.

Selection of 2024 Meeting Dates

- Group selected **Saturday, April 13** and Saturday, **October 12, 2024**.
- April meeting will be in-person with virtual option, October meeting will be planned as full virtual.

2024 Chair and Vice Chair Elections

- Harvey requested folks participate in nomination committee. Stephanie Campbell, and Wendy Wakula volunteered to participate.
- Harvey asked for any self-nominees; none at this time.
- Committee should bring nominees to group no later than 45 days prior to April 13th meeting.
- Delegates will vote for Chair and Vice-Chair at April meeting.

Presentations on Grant Opportunities:

Jonathan Duda, Parks and Trails NY

- Parks and Trails NY's Partnership Grant:

- Small non-profit in Albany dedicated to advocating and supporting Parks and Multi-Use Trails
- Many volunteer groups and “friends” groups associated with Parks and DEC lands with lots of opportunity for projects.
- EPF Funded through OPRHP.
- Began in 2015 w \$500k, increased in 2020 to \$1M, now \$2M in 2022.
- 4 types of grant opportunities: Capacity grants, Stewardship and Access, Prof. Development, Step-Up grants.
- Awards range from \$20k-\$300k. Match amounts vary from \$500 to 20% project amount.
- Visit [Ptny.org/grants](https://ptny.org/grants) for more information

Beth Campochiaro, Hudson River Valley Greenway

- Hudson River Valley Greenway Funding Opportunities
 - Grants available to municipalities and non-profit groups within the Greenway’s 14-county designated area.
 - Trail grants available for construction, design, rehab, maintenance, and more.
 - Grants range from \$25-\$250k. Match is 50%.
 - Community and National Heritage Area grants also available.
 - Applications accepted on a rolling basis.
 - Visit hudsongreenway.ny.gov/grants-funding for more information.

Both presentations garnered a number of questions and discussion from the group.

Delegate Report Highlights and Q&A:

Delegates submitted written reports electronically prior to the meeting. (attached)

- Mike Vitti elaborated on the issues his group is facing engaging with NYS Parks in the Long Island Regions.
 - Chris and Thomas offered any assistance to help communication with our staff.
- Mike also noted the progress on the Long Island Greenway. Expect new 13mi segment by 2025.
- Thomas questioned Carol S. issue with equestrians at Harriett Hollister Spencer SP.
 - Chris shared knowledge of the situation and noted that he will ask Region to follow up w a status.
- Wendy W. noted multi-use trails excluding horses on DEC Region 7 lands.
 - Jill T noted Unit Management Plan process to identify appropriate trail user groups in areas. She asked that groups try to work directly with regional land managers when concerns are identified. Regional contact info is listed on DEC Webpage: <https://www.dec.ny.gov/outdoor/82098.html>
- Carol noted her work with Bond Lake Park, in Niagara Co and trail improvements there.
- Jill T noted that she has forwarded Carol’s concerns to Adirondack land managers. Mike Nowak is best contact in Otter Creek area.
- Chris M mentioned upcoming Greenway Trails Dev. Guide document. He also noted there is a new Dir. Of Snowmobiling, William Shattuck, who will participate with TC going forward.
- Chris brought up topic of E-bikes as a few folks has emailed on it- group discussed.
 - Carol noted concerns with young riders. Opportunity for safety publication?
 - Harvey noted the recently printed NYBC safe riding guide with a section on e-bikes. Harvey offered printed copies to folks if they send their address.

- Harvey and others noted that rider etiquette and education is key. Opportunity for education campaign?
- Bill C inquired about RTP Education funding to address intoxicated snowmobile operation. Tom asked Bill to coordinate with NYSSA and State Parks Snowmobile unit on next steps.
- Chris offered the idea of a field-based meeting to view accessible trail or other trail example for the group rather than a presentation. Central NY perhaps? DEC Five Rivers trail?
- Thomas noted revisiting the topic of engagement with the greater trails community or greater presence for the Council on social media, etc. at the upcoming meeting.

Mike Vitti made a motion to adjourn, second from Ivan V. Meeting concluded at 12:25pm.

Next meeting: April 13, 2024 **In-person @ DEC's Five Rivers location and virtual via WebEx.**