

NEW YORK STATE TRAILS COUNCIL MEETING
Saratoga Spa State Park Administration Building — Gideon Putnam Room
19 Roosevelt Drive, Saratoga Springs, NY
October 14, 2017 10:30 A.M. - 3:00 P.M.

DRAFT MINUTES

Call to Order

Correction/Approval of Minutes of April 8, 2017 Meeting

Motion to approve minutes: Ivan Vamos Second: Quinn Wright
Motion passed unanimously.

Announcements

Jerry Smith and Eric Eagan, additional running delegates
Josh Wilson stepping down as Nordic Ski delegate
Craig Fury stepping down as Off-Road delegate

Council Attendance:

4-Wheel Drive –

All-Terrain Vehicles – Jeff Binga

Equestrian –Carol Schmelz, Mark Wehnau

Hiking – Quinn Wright

Nordic Skiing -

Off-Highway Motorcycles -

Off-road Bicycling – Michael Vitti

On-road Bicycling – Samantha Langton, Ivan
Vamos

Running – Jerry Smith

Snowmobiles – Dominic Jacangelo

Snowshoeing –

Universal Access – Denis Livsey

Water Trails – Tom Casey

FHWA -

National Park Service – Karl Beard

HRV Greenway – Elizabeth Campochiaro

Canal Corporation –

NYSDEC – McCrea Burnham

NYSOPRHP – Chris Morris

NYSDOT – Tom Benware

PTNY –

ECNHC – Brian Yates

Others in Attendance: Hank Osborn, NY-NJ Trail
Conference ; Howard Kemp; Paul Winkeller,
New York Bicycling Coalition

Presentation: I LOVE NY — Tourism and Marketing for Outdoor Recreation

Kelly Garofalo and Sara Emmert, Division of Tourism — I LOVE NY/Empire State Development
See websites, www.esd.ny.gov and www.iloveny.com.

Tourism had a \$105 billion economic impact on New York State in 2016. The state saw 237 million visitors. Leisure and hospitality is the fourth largest employer in the state. The state is divided into 11 vacation regions. The prime marketing targets are families within a five-hour drive radius; DINKs (double-income-no-kids) are secondary.

Kelly and Sara reviewed the state's advertising and marketing outreach and presence on the I LOVE NY website, social media and mobile app. They described various digital partnerships, international marketing, and public relations programs. They also discussed the tourism bureau's mobile pod, which features interactive quizzes, a trivia challenge and a virtual reality experience. The bureau has a presence on all social media platforms.

Kelly and Sara encouraged submission of photos and experiences for specific locations and activities for placement on social media. They also mentioned that there is \$4.5 million available statewide for creating new markets and programs to boost tourism, plus \$15 million in awards for investments in marketing and brick-and-mortar tourism projects.

An extensive Q+A session followed on how grants work and on addressing specific user-group concerns. Kelly and Sara stressed that economic impact is the primary concern of these programs, not hyperlocal spending.

Delegates received a useful handout, "Tips for Marketing Trail Events, Activities, & Businesses."

Selection for 2018 Meeting Dates: The delegates agreed on April 14 and October 20, 2018.

Chris Morris reminded those present that the International Trail Symposium comes to Syracuse April 28-May 1, 2019. Sara Emmert mentioned that groups can apply for funding to attend, on a reimbursement basis. Not-for-profits should have letters of support from relevant local municipalities.

Chris Morris directed the delegates' attention to a list on the back of the agenda of current and pending master plans. He also mentioned that the SCORP revision is underway; user groups with an interest in providing input can reach out to him and the OPRHP Planning Bureau.

Delegate Reports

Ivan Vamos inquired about studying accident rates and the possible link to increased activity in individual uses. Tom Benware said an analysis would be a good idea.

Dominic Jacangelo mentioned a court decision regarding the Adirondack Rail Trail, halting the project in its tracks. If your organization supports creation of the trail, express your concerns to david.winchell@dec.ny.gov. Carol Schmelz advocated for allowing horses on the trail. The Council will send a letter in support of the trail.

Lunch Break

Delegate Reports

Samantha Langton reported on a new trail at Jockey Hill and work on a new trail at Minnewaska. She also mentioned cleanup events and a bike swap event in New Paltz every May.

Quinn Wright mentioned a partnership with Steuben County to promote trails in the Finger Lakes region. We are trying to raise awareness of the various activities, not just hiking, possible on the trails. Sometime after the first of the year, PBS TV shows on the trail should be broadcast. He secured a grant to fund a study of trails and usage in Cattaraugus County. A survey of trail users said the number one concern is signage; people don't know how to find the trails.

Ivan Vamos mentioned the current edition of *Roads and Bridges*, which features an article on "room for all," a welcome change in focus. The Regional Planning Association supports a united network of pedestrian and bike paths.

Guest Paul Winkeller of the NY Bicycling Coalition discussed bike and pedestrian safety. He offered the delegates various pamphlets and window clings. He reported on a recent successful bicycling summit which drew a favorable response.

Mark Wehnau discussed riding his horse to Boreas Pond. The parking lot needs a lot of work; it is crowded and had no turnaround. He criticized the planned Empire State Trail which would exclude horses on a section of the trail near Schodack that horses have used for years.

Jeff Binga mentioned a goal of 100,000 acres statewide accessible to ATVs. He said the user group is pursuing safety initiatives. NYSORVA has updated its website with more content and safety features. He is asking local ORV clubs to have their members take an online safety course. He wants to promote the CP3 program for universal access to enable ATV riders with mobility issues to reach more areas.

Hank Osborn introduced himself and mentioned that the NY-NJ Trail Conference's mission statement no longer uses the word "hiking," as it now focuses on multi-use.

Mike Vitti discussed proposed plans for long-distance bike trails from NYC to Greenwood Lake and Port Jervis to Kingston. He also mentioned bike-packing in Colorado on the Continental Divide Trail and a proposed trail the length of Long Island. He displayed two large folding saws suitable for trail work in place of chain saws. The largest is Silky brand's Katana Boy, retailing for about \$170; a smaller one is Silky's Big Boy.

Denis Livsey said he is anxious to see how access issues work out at Boreas Pond. McCrae Burnham says access is currently on a case-by-case basis, month-by-month until the state resolves the area's designation.

Carol Schmelz reported on protesting the omission of equestrian activity in the Outdoor Recreation Survey. She called the group in Colorado that produced the report, which in turn referred her to a group in Florida that gathered the information. A spokesman there explained that it was very difficult to get any information about equestrian activities.

Carol checked the American Horse Council website and discovered that the last economic impact study was in 2005. She wrote to the Council and asked them to find out what information the Outdoor

Recreation Industry needed and make sure it was included in the next economic impact study. The AHC conducted an economic impact study the summer of 2017. Results should be available in October. She will attend a meeting the State Horse Council Coalition in Lexington, Kentucky in November to discuss what actions the Coalition needs to take to ensure that equestrians are included in future studies.

Carol stressed that each of the Trails Council delegates is a community resource. She offered examples from her own experience:

1. The Director of Buildings and Grounds for Niagara County asked for help with an Eagle Scout trail project for a County Park. Colorblind people cannot see some colors. We changed our plan from many colors to just two colors on 4X4" squares with easy-to-read large black numbers. Another suggestion was to install the lowest numbers near the parking lots so if folks got lost and/or confused they could find their way back to their cars easily.
2. Town of Pendleton asked for and received input on their trail system. I sent pictures (examples of signage on other nearby trails) to the town councilman.
3. The Pendleton Parks and Rec Committee asked for and received assistance with ADA issues.
4. At the NYS Horse Council meeting at Knox Farm Park in September, I explained to an angry equestrian that if their group came up with matching funds for the RTP grants, they too might have a single use equestrian trail like the hikers. The problem always is with EQ's they don't have a dedicated source of funding like the snowmobilers.

Tom Casey mentioned that Suffolk County is working to increase canoe/kayak accesses and now allow private boats in Blydenburgh Park. The Ray Corwin Trail for hikers is now completely blazed from Rocky Point to Yaphank, a total of about 13 miles. Some signage is still necessary. The Greenbelt Trail Conference and CLIMB mountain bikers continue to improve trails on Bethpage State Park. Oak wilt is affecting oak trees islandwide, and a tick allergy that renders infected people allergic to mammal meat has affected a few hundred people locally. Tom also praised the L.I. Pine Barrens Commission's "A Day in the Life" program for involving hundreds of schoolkids in environmental research along Long Island's streams and rivers.

Mike Vitti mentioned that a local L.I. not-for-profit is seeking funds to do a study of ways to lessen the tick problem.

Agency Reports

Tom Hotaling mentioned 59 RTP proposals statewide in the current round. Awards will be announced in December. He is working with NYSDOT, striving to make the RTP more efficient and speedier.

Karl Beard mentioned the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Technical Assistance program. He is currently working on a rail-trail in Ulster County. He is also working with Dutchess County as it organizes a trails council. Other projects include the Troy-Rensselaer area and a Seneca Nation project in Cattaraugus County. On Long Island water trails groups want to have a summit in 2018. The National Scenic Trails Act will have a 50th Anniversary next year. He encouraged delegates to apply for National Recreation Trail status for their trails. New York State lags in such designations. NPS has two publications on water trail access. PBS did an hour-long segment on rail trails in New York State.

Brian Yates congratulated Paul Winkeller on the NYBC bike summit. He is currently working on a contract for publishing an Erie Canalway water trail guide book. One major focus will be trail connectivity.

Elizabeth Campochiaro said the Hudson River Valley Greenway Ramble was held in September. The Greenway will announce \$250,000 in grants next week.

Tom Benware said NYSDOT's pedestrian access safety plan is in full gear. The Empire State Trail initiative is an opportunity to continue that work. Samantha Langton raised the issue of access to trails off busy and dangerous roads. Tom said DOT tries to evaluate these problems for solutions, but it's difficult. McCrae Burnham suggested approaching local municipalities about possibly purchasing accesses.

McCrae Burnham said a DEC guide was shrunk to cover just the Adirondacks. DEC heard from groups statewide that they want inclusion, and DEC agrees. If you work on DEC land, do a writeup/photos and send to DEC.

Carol Schmelz mentioned that PTNY has expanded funding possibilities to DEC friends. Go to ptny.org.

Carol read a reply from NYSDOT to the Council's letter on road safety. (Text attached at end of minutes.) Paul Winkeller said one state legislator is a roadblock to passing a three-foot-clearance law for bike safety. He also discussed the debate on how to classify electric bikes and where they can be used. McCrae Burnham said mountain bikers don't want e-bikes on trails. Paul added that this is also a universal-access issue.

Old Business

New Business

Adjourn

Motion to Adjourn: Tom Casey Second: Tom Benware

Next Meeting: April 14, 2018, tentatively at Saratoga State Park

Text of NYSDOT letter to Carol Schmelz:

Dear Ms. Schmelz:

Thank you for contacting us regarding safe passing laws. Enhancing the safety of vulnerable road users is a matter of great importance to the Department. We appreciate your comments, and we understand the importance of safe passing distances for all vulnerable road users, as well as the need for motor vehicle driver education on safe passing. As such, we will continue to monitor S.1995/A.2845, and any other similar legislative proposals, throughout the legislative process. Thank you for your interest in transportation issues.

Very truly yours,
Janice A. McLachlan
Acting Assistant Commissioner and Chief Counsel