

Testimony of Holly & Tom Tomlanovich  
Eagle River, Vilas County  
Special Committee on State Trails Policy Meeting  
Thursday, October 5, 2006

We both would like to thank Senator Breske for heading up this Special Legislative Council. It is critical that the Wisconsin Legislature develop a Statewide Trails Policy that includes all forms of trails use, incorporates all funding sources, uses a multi purpose trail format when possible and at the same time provides for the administration of this policy to be flexible enough to allow for local level government implementation. These are the folks that generally have the best understanding of their area and its idiosyncrasies.

Tom and I are among those who work in the trenches of the trails program. We are the hands on stewards of these trails. A task we take seriously. We each have over 12 years invested in the trails of Eagle River and Vilas County. Currently, Tom is the Vilas County Snowmobile Alliance Rep to the AWSC(Association of Wisconsin Snowmobile Clubs) and Trail Boss for the Sno-Eagles Snowmobile Club. I am the Secretary /Treasurer for the Vilas County Alliance of ATV Clubs. In addition I do 4-5 daily trail condition web site updates before, during and at the end of the snowmobile season plus the daily Snowmobile Trail Hotline phone updates for the Eagle River area. Together we are members of the Sno-Eagles Snowmobile Club, Sno-Eagles Grooming/Trails Board, the LandOver ATV Club and Vilas County Alliance of ATV Clubs Board. In short, we understand trails and the issues that arise when many are competing for the same space.

As you are all aware, Vilas County has a treasure trove of trails of all types, both non-motorized and motorized. These trails attract thousands of vacationers and visitors to our County each year. Each year the demand for more miles of trails increases. Along with this has come user group conflicts, when groups are many times competing for the same trail space. For that reason and because Tourism is the life blood of our County, the Vilas County Forestry, Recreation & Land Committee and County Forest Administrator, under the direction of the Vilas County Board developed a Trail Planning and Permitting process.

Mr. Dale Mayo, Vilas County Trails Coordinator will speak as well today and he can provide you with the details of the policy, so we will not go into the details ourselves. What we will speak to is that this policy provides for a nearly seamless method for trail planning, acceptance and oversight. The policy has eliminated nearly all conflicts that have arisen in the past between different users groups. We both would urge the Committee to consider implementing the Vilas County Policy into the State Trails Policy planning.

In closing, thank you all for allowing us to speak to you today.