

**SUSTAINABLE ATV TRAIL STAKEHOLDERS GROUP
NORTHERN HIGHLAND-AMERICAN LEGION STATE FOREST
WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**

MEETING MINUTES



Date: Monday, Oct. 9, 2006
Times: 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM
Location: Reuland's Catering,
Hwy. 51 N., Arbor Vitae, WI

ATTENDANCE

All Stakeholder Representatives, Team Leader, D. Leith; Meeting Facilitator, B. Klase; GIS Specialist, N. Janicki; Core Planning Team members: B. Schepper, B. Dall; State Forest Superintendent, S. Petersen; Al Eschenbauch

INTRODUCTIONS

- Denny Leith, Team Leader
 - Introductions and welcome, opened the meeting.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Bill Klase, Meeting Facilitator, UWEX
 - Reviewed meeting protocols
- Group Subcommittee reported findings of their field trip study of Iron Co. trail proposal. The trip was useful to answer or eliminate questions and to view on-the-ground features. The group agreed that some progress is being made. This route is still in the preliminary research stage.

The general impression of the subcommittee is the trail may be feasible but some obstacles exist.

- See notes of stakeholders' criteria discussion titled, "Iron Co. Study Proposal" (attached.)
- Discussed Recreational Use Classifications as they apply to campgrounds and use areas in the state forest.
- Discussed emphasis of the master plan directive to establish a connecting trail versus a stand-alone trail.
- Discussed other potential trail locations –
 - Work with snowmobile clubs north and east of Sayner to connect to UP Michigan?
 - Lake Tomahawk area as a possible "southern" route?
- The group discussed how the Stakeholders should proceed:
 - Options & questions:
 - Should a subcommittee explore other routes and opportunities, given the size of the NHAL?
 - Would a straight-line route service more trail users than a looping trail?
 - Concern that ATV trails have been proposed by user-groups for a long time, meanwhile other uses have increased on the forest.
 - Consideration of "user impact" of various sports is a big part of the issue. There is only one state forest here of this quality.

- Can a linear trail be developed through the forest without being overly intrusive or impactful of other uses and the environment?
- A challenge for Stakeholders is to find a balance of use to be fair to all users.
- The Vilas Co. referendum was for county lands, but we need to consider sentiments of local townships and Vilas Co. residents.
- There is pending legislation to allow road access in the future for ATVs as is allowed for snowmobiles.
- Stakeholders want to hold further discussion of the viability of the Iron Co. proposal.

CONSENSUS / ACTIONS

- D. Leith and several stakeholders will inquire of town of Manitowish board re. utility corridor and right-of-way along Circle Lily Rd.
- K. Anderson will check with Vilas Co. to clarify property lines.

CALENDAR –

- **Wed. Nov. 1, regular meeting, 10 AM – 2 PM, at Reuland’s Catering**
- **Thurs., November 30, regular meeting, 10 AM – 2 PM, at Reuland’s Catering**

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT –

- A brief time period is allowed at end of meetings if needed for Public and Media Q & A.

ADJOURN

NOTE –

IF UNABLE TO ATTEND A MEETING PLEASE CONTACT TEAM LEADER, DENNIS LEITH

Agenda or Team Related Questions?

Contact: Dennis Leith – 715-358-9226, Dennis.Leith@dnr.state.wi.us

Meeting Information or Special Dietary Needs?

Contact: Bob Dall – 715/365-8993, Robert.Dall@dnr.state.wi.us

IRON COUNTY STUDY PROPOSAL

Link or connected to a regional network of ATV trails

Made every effort to use existing corridors or town roads that are already designated as ATV routes.

Trail links to an established trail that heads NW into Iron Co.

Within existing upland travel corridors

Chose old rail bed, utility corridor, or woods roads wherever possible.

A portion of trail follows Plunkett Rd.

Some short segments would have to be cut to avoid road /right-of-way and scenic corridor on approach east of the wayside crossing.

Minimize impacts on water resources

Used existing road beds or circumvented wetlands as much as possible.

Boardwalk or culvert would be needed in number of locations – two sites along utility corridor east of snowmobile repair shop, one lowland portion of the rail corridor, one crossing of a creek /drainage west of the repair shop, possibly along a portion of Circle Lily Rd.

Avoided a part of the rail bed that is known to be extremely wet in years with normal precipitation.

Chose a short crossing of the Manitowish River, in line with an existing corridor, at an established public access – a boat landing and wayside – within earshot of Hwy. 51.

Chose the shortest, most direct crossing with high banks at Circle Lily Creek near Hwy. 51.

Minimize impacts on sensitive resources or management zones

At the river crossing, the trail would follow a dead end road, already a designated ATV route, and head away from the river to move southward away from the river and scenic corridor.

The trail proposal avoids traveling inside of, or parallel to, the river's scenic corridor.

Consider user conflicts

Three-season ATV seasonal use would not interfere with winter snowmobile travel.

No other trails (e.g. ski, hike, bike) exist in this route location.

Chose to cross and then steer away from Manitowish River due to its use by paddlers.

Looped trail north to avoid close proximity to Sandy Beach campground.

Looped trail to travel more to west to avoid Discovery Center activity.

Wayside has history of established users – canoe/kayak launch, local walkers and travelers.

Link to communities and related facilities

One part of trail links to Iron Co. ATV trails near Chuck' Bar.

? Provide users good access to a trail head or parking.

Support and cooperation from local clubs and government bodies
Focused our attention on locations within townships or counties that would be receptive or are believed to have an interest in having ATV trails.

Avoids or circumvents private ownerships where possible.

Management and administration

The proposed trail is almost entirely on or within state forest property

FUTURE DISCUSSION POINTS

Accessible to available or suitable parking

? Chuck's Bar location.

Noise abatement

Tried to remain in forested areas and as far as possible from private residences.

Directed travel away from (by crossing) rather than parallel to the river corridor west of the wayside.

Visual impact

Avoided river scenic corridor.

Stayed in the woods as much as possible.

Unknown but useful information to research

? Percent of trail that follows existing corridors or road beds?

? Percent of trail that enters counties or towns that are less receptive to ATVs.

? Percent of trail that crosses wetlands and waterways.

? Percent of trail that follows town roads.

? Percent of trail that is not on or inside state forest.