

Adirondack Rail Trail Stakeholders Meeting Agenda

Main Conference Room, DEC Region 5 Headquarters Ray Brook

10 am, Tuesday, November 8

I. Attendees

1. Craig Randall, Lake Placid (V)
2. Chuck Damp, North Elba (T)
3. Brad Hathaway, Lake Placid (V)
4. John Hopkinson, (Lake Placid/North Elba Historical Society)
5. Michelle Clement, (ROOST)
6. Tony Goodwin, (ATIS)
7. Ed Randig, Harrietstown (T)
8. Paul O'Leary, Tupper Lake (T)
9. Lee Keet, (ARTA)
10. Rich Shapiro, Saranac Lake (V)
11. Patricia Littlefield, Tupper Lake (T)
12. Peter Edwards, Tupper Lake (V)
13. Gary Beaudette, Tupper Lake Snowmobile Club
14. David Knapp, Franklin County Snowmobilers/NYSSA
15. Jim McCulley, Lake Placid Snowmobile Club
16. Ted Blazer, ORDA
17. Tony Carlino, ORDA
18. Kris Seymour, ORDA
19. Bob Stegemann, DEC (opening of meeting only)
20. Holly Kneeshaw, DEC
21. Steve Guglielmi, DEC

By phone

1. Fran Sheehan, DEC
2. Carolyn Dunderdale, OGS
3. Mark Johns, Bergmann Associates

II. Updates

1. Corridor Ownership
 - i. DEC has received written commitment with the following entities to resolve their ownership of small portions of the trail corridor so that the trail can be constructed between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake and used by the public
 1. Essex County
 2. Franklin County
 3. North Country Community College
 - ii. DEC has met with Lake Placid North Elba Historical Society, owners of Lake Placid Depot and the surrounding 7.5 acres, to discuss ways to ensure those lands are the northern terminus of the trail.

2. DOT-DEC MOU
 - i. DEC and DOT continue to meet and exchange information in the effort to complete an MOU which will provide for DEC's oversight and management of the section of the Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor between Lake Placid and Tupper Lake.
 3. Operation and Maintenance Umbrella MOU
 - i. DEC is having internal discussions to determine an acceptable and workable framework for the management of the recreational trail.
 - ii. DEC will provide the framework to the stakeholder group and begin discussions at a future meeting.
 - iii. Development of an MOU will begin then.
 4. Mapping
 - i. DEC has entered most of the points of interest/concern identified in the previous meeting into a GIS database but not all
 - ii. A completed map with all the points will be provided and discussed at a future meeting
 5. Project Report RFP
 - i. OGS states the scope, mapping, schedule, and payment are all under discussion and development
 - ii. Bergman Associates will formally move forward under contract with OGS in the next two weeks to develop
 1. Project Report
 2. Draft Recreational Trail Conceptual Design
 - iii. Nine (9) consultants have submitted qualifications to OGS seeking the contract for construction and design of the recreational trail
 1. Interviews of the consultant will occur in two weeks
 2. Vetting will take longer with expected award of the contract in early February
 6. Process Timeline
 - i. OGS has mostly completed developing a timeline of the planning, public participation, construction and completion of the recreational trail
 - ii. Needs some additional input from DEC
 - iii. Timeline will be provided and discussed at a future meeting after discussions and input from DEC
- III. State Land Master Plan Guidelines for Remsen-Lake Placid Travel Corridor
1. APA indicates that the 2016 UMP Amendment for the Travel Corridor addresses, includes and complies with the State Land Master Plan guidelines and criteria for lands classified as Travel Corridor

2. For this stakeholder planning effort, considerations mainly pertain to:
 - i. Signage
 - ii. Protecting/enhancing scenic vistas
 - iii. Creating/maintaining a park-like character, with emphasis on the special nature of the Adirondack Park: truly wild, Forest Preserve lands one step over the parcel boundaries
3. Travel Corridor classification provides much more flexibility than Wilderness or Wild Forest classifications particularly regarding
 - i. Signs
 1. Directional
 2. Interpretive
 - ii. Structures and improvements
4. **NOTE:** State lands within incorporated villages in the Adirondacks are not part of the New York State Forest Preserve. These lands are still State Lands within the Adirondack Park and subject to the Adirondack Park State Land Master Plan. ***(This was not stated during the meeting)***

IV. Snowmobiling Needs and Concerns

1. Current or Planned Access and Connections
 - i. **CONSENSUS STATEMENT:** The corridor has been a snowmobile trail for decades, the type of activity is not changing though the amount of activity will increase.
 - ii. Main Access Points
 1. Provide parking for vehicles and snowmobile trailers
 2. Trail can be accessed nearby
 3. Five main access points along the trail
 - a. Lake Placid Snow Fields
 - b. Saranac Lake Former Train Depot
 - c. Charlie's Inn (Lake Clear Junction)
 - d. DEC Fish Creek/Rollins Pond Campground
 - e. Tupper Lake – Train Depot
 - iii. Snowmobile Trail Connectors
 1. C7B near Lake Colby
 2. C7 at Lake Clear Junction
 3. DEC is considering two possible connections
 - a. Fish Creek Campground (southern)
 - b. Rollins Pond Campground (northern)
 - c. At least one, possibly both, will be developed
2. Snowmobilers Concerns
 - i. Fish Creek Trail System Under-utilized
 1. Low use
 2. Poor condition of trails
 3. Lack of funding to maintain

4. **STATEMENT:** DEC will develop the trail system for year round use and access to the recreational trail through the:
 - a. Saranac Lakes Wild Forest UMP
 - b. Fish Creek/Rollins Pond Campgrounds UMP
- ii. Directional Signs to Businesses
 1. Not allowed on Wild Forest lands
 2. **APA STATEMENT:** Travel Corridor land classification allows for signage
- iii. Snow Plowed into Trail
 1. Businesses along the trail in communities plowing snow into the recreational trail, a particular problem in Saranac Lake
 2. **CONSENSUS:** Municipalities and others need to inform and educate businesses to stop this activity
- iv. Public Perception of Noise Problems
 1. Snowmobilers frustrated with concerns about noisy snowmobiles
 2. Recently manufactured snowmobiles are much quieter than much older snowmobiles
 - a. 4-stroke engines (vs old 2-stroke engines)
 - b. Much better muffler/exhaust systems
 3. After-market exhaust pipes
 - a. Most loud snowmobiles have after-market exhaust pipes installed
 - b. Illegal in New York State
 - c. New York State Snowmobile Association (NYSSA) and snowmobile clubs oppose use of after-market exhaust pipes
 - d. Manufacturers of after-market exhaust pipes have complained that sales dropped in New York State after NYSSA took this position
 - e. Few snowmobiles today have after-market exhaust pipes
 - f. Snowmobilers don't think noise is a big problem but recognize that there are still some snowmobilers using illegal exhaust pipes. This can be addressed through:
 - i. Education
 - ii. Enforcement
- v. Connecting snowmobiles with amenities
 1. Communities need to find legal means to connect snowmobilers to:
 - a. Gas
 - b. Food
 - c. Lodging

d. Supplies

2. DISCUSSION

- a. Municipalities can post streets open to snowmobile use
- b. Communities can identify snowmobile routes to provide access:
 - i. Visiting snowmobilers to amenities
 - ii. Resident snowmobilers to trail
- c. Communities must find balance between:
 - i. Connecting snowmobilers to local businesses
 - ii. Allowing residents to use street to access the recreational trail
 - iii. Creating a dangerous mix of snowmobiles, motor vehicles and pedestrians

vi. Enforcement Discussion

1. The travel corridor will be under the jurisdiction of all State Land Use regulation under the DEC/DOT MOU.
2. Agencies with enforcement jurisdiction and capabilities include:
 - a. DEC Forest Rangers on state lands
 - b. Environmental Conservation Officers for all fish, wildlife and pollution laws and regulations
 - c. Village Police Departments within their villages
 - d. State Police and County Sheriff Departments for criminal activity
3. Enforcement agencies can work checkpoints and other combined enforcement details to deal with specific issues as they already do.
4. Routine patrols by DEC enforcement staff may be possible but must be discussed.
5. Local snowmobile clubs may be willing to patrol the recreational trail or set up educational check points on the recreational trail or at access points.
6. **STATEMENT:** New York State Snowmobile Association and local Snowmobile Clubs support zero tolerance regarding enforcement of snowmobile laws and regulation.
7. **CONSENSUS/ACTION ITEM:** Future meeting will be held to:
 - a. Identification of possible enforcement needs.
 - b. Discussion of patrol and enforcement activities with the numerous enforcement agencies with enforcement jurisdiction and capabilities.

3. Concerns about Snowmobiling
 - i. **DISCUSSION** - Conflicts with cross-country skiers
 1. Suggestions Discussed
 - a. Side by side trail with divider between snowmobiles and skiers
 - b. Jack Rabbit Ski Trail is for skiing not recreational trail
 - c. Increase width of trail where possible
 2. **DEC STATEMENTS:**
 - a. The UMP designates this as a multi-use trail
 - b. Trail will have snowmobilers and skiers using it
 - c. Width will be consistent throughout to avoid safety problems at choke points.
 - d. Efforts will be made to educate users:
 - i. Skiers – move to the side and allow snowmobiles to pass
 - ii. Snowmobilers – slow down and move away from skiers while passing
 3. **CONSENSUS:** Skiers and snowmobilers coexist with very little conflict on many trails in the area there is no reason they cannot do the same on the recreational trail.
 4. Education and Promotion
 - i. Maps (accurate and current) and information about using the trail will be provided through:
 1. Brochures
 2. Kiosks
 3. Signs
 4. Web pages
 5. Apps (interactive)
 - ii. Include information on amenities
 5. **CONSENSUS:** DEC, municipalities, and organizations will promote the use of snowmobiles in a manner that provides an excellent experience for snowmobilers while minimizing the negative impacts on residents along and the near the recreational trail and other users of the trail.

- V. **DISCUSSION:** General Location and Features of Amenities
 1. Locations of some have been identified by stakeholders during mapping exercise at previous meeting
 2. Bathrooms
 - i. Various possible options within and along the corridor
 1. Full bathrooms in villages
 - a. Depots
 - b. Businesses
 - c. Other

- 2. Composting toilets at some secondary access points
 - 3. Pit privies on nearby forest preserve lands
 - ii. Minimize distances between bathrooms
- 3. Benches
 - i. With backs
 - ii. Backless benches
- 4. Picnic Tables
 - i. Concrete tables
- 5. Lighting
 - i. Possibly within the villages
 - ii. Parking areas and crossings
 - iii. May need to be a future addition
 - iv. Should be “Dark Sky” compliant (Tupper Lake)
- 6. Trash Cans
 - i. Pack It In, Pack It Out
 - ii. Locate with picnic tables and bathrooms
 - iii. Must be emptied regularly
 - iv. Patrol to pick up litter
 - v. Groups may adopt sections of the trail to maintain
- 7. **CONSENSUS:** Overall Standard for Amenities
 - i. Aesthetically pleasing
 - ii. Consistent appearance with distinguishable differences between communities
 - iii. Clean
 - iv. Vandal proof
 - v. Bike racks nearby
 - vi. Co-locate facilities as much as possible

VI. Priority of Topics for Future Meetings

- 1. Topics Regarding Design and Construction
 - i. Road Crossings
 - ii. Needs and concerns of bicyclists
 - iii. Needs and concerns of skiers and pedestrians
 - iv. Causeways, bridges and culverts
 - v. Kiosks and signs
 - vi. Minimizing impacts on residential areas
- 2. Topics Regarding Management of the Trail
 - i. Minimizing impacts on residential areas
 - ii. Rules, regulation and enforcement
 - iii. Operation and Maintenance Plan and Agreement
 - iv. Public Participation
- 3. Topics being addressed outside of this process
 - i. Historic Preservation
 - ii. Train Depots

VII. Miscellaneous

1. What will be the contact for problems along the trail?
 - i. Enforcement issues
 1. DEC Dispatch 518-897-1300 or
 2. 911
 - ii. Problems or concerns with the trail
 1. This will be determined in the future as we develop the Operation and Maintenance Plan and Agreement
2. Other Priority Concerns
 - i. DOTs plans for tracks at Tupper Lake Depot
 - ii. Winterizing Depots particularly the Saranac Lake Depot
 - iii. Speed limits on roads at trail crossings

VIII. Next meeting – After Thanksgiving