

KEWEENAW TRAILS ALLIANCE
Tuesday, October 14, 2008
7:30 PM – SDC Blueline Room

MINUTES

PRESENT/REPRESENTING

Mike Abbott, Michigan Tech
Jeff Parker
Lori Hauswirth, Chain Drive
Mike Young
Evan MacDonald, Keweenaw Land Trust
Sam Raymond, Copper Harbor Trails Club
Aaron Rogers, Copper Harbor Trails Club
Bill Marlor, Chain Drive
Jay Green, Keweenaw Nordic Ski Club
Charles Eshbach, Michigan Nature Association
Marc Norton, Swedetown Bike Trails/Deer Chase

INTRODUCTIONS

Lori Hauswirth opened the meeting. No introductions were needed.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS MINUTES

Minutes were reviewed from the previous meeting.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Bill Marlor reported on the Houghton-Chassell Rail Trail barricades. Judge once again ordered the barriers to be removed and the landowners are to remove them. DNR has the right to manage the trail. It was discussed that there may be a role for the KTA in partnering to address situation along this trail and helping to identify alternate route for motorized activities.

Lori reported that WUPPDR was working with the DNR on a project to examine rail trail ownership in the Keweenaw. More info will be forwarded when available. Evan was wondering whether there would be a non-motorized trail in front of the Quincy Smelter. Jay Green was concerned about ATV conflict on a non-motorized trail from the Bridge to Lake Linden.

Jeff Parker reported that the new ski trail was complete with an additional 7.5 Km of 20 Ft wide trail added to the system. Skywalks from the City of Houghton were salvaged for use as a bridge on the trails. The bike trails are in the process of being restored. The new Nara Chalet remodeling is almost done and will not be staffed. City is hoping to light sledding hill and beginner trails at the Nara System. Michigan Tech and the City will be working together on grooming.

Jeff also reported that the 2.5 Km reroute was underway at Swedetwon to work around a landowner who no longer wants trail on their land.

Jay Green reported that the Maasto Hiihto/Churning Rapids Trails are ready for the season. They are working on cutting a new trail that connects the DPW trailhead to Churning. They are hoping to finish before winter. The new trail is replacing existing trail.

Marc Norton reported that he has begun work on the Farmers Well Trail. Marc has plans for a dirtjump area and pump track and is working with Paul Lehto to identify the best area. The Uffda Extension is done and they'd like to build some alternate lines at the trails to provide more technical options. Lori asked about signage and Marc reported that he would be working on signage and maps this winter. Five areas have been identified for maps and the Neufeld kids would be helping to paint trail signs.

Sam reported that Steve Rowe has build about 6 km of wooded striding trails and 2-3 of trails along the perimeter of the golf course at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge. This winter 7-9 Km of trail will be available as Phase I of the winter trails expansion at the Keweenaw Mountain Lodge. The County has committed topurchasing asled, a Ginsu and a roller compactor for the trails. The Mountain Lodge will not be open this winter but the trails will with Steve, Aaron and Sam sharing grooming duties. A fundraiser for the trails and land acquisiiton project is being planned for December 13th featuring chef Malcolm Hudson preparing a dinner base on the featured movie: Babette's Feast. It will be a \$100/plate dinner. An trail open house will be from 12-4pm the same day. Jay Green asked about fees for the trails and Sam reported there will not be a fee for the trails this season but a donation pipe will be available. The trails in Copper Harbor will also have a new drag for the 2008-2009 season.

Aaron reported on summer trail progress in Copper Harbor. The Copper Harbor Trails Club is now a registered non-profit with 150 members. They have completed a 1,000 boardwalk and a Garden Brook Trail Connection. Signs based on the Keweenaw County rustic signage was installed on the Mountain Lodge Trails. They have also made a lot of progress on the new Brockway Trail that will eventually connect to Hunter's Point. This winter they will be working on finishing signage and preparing a central kiosk next to the visitor's center. Jeff Parker asked about maps and Aaron said fold out maps were being developed and would be made available at a few locations.

Evan MacDonald asked whether the KTA should have a member of the Copper Country Trail Scenic Byway Committee and suggested that the goals/tourism efforts seem to be a fit. Lori said she would talk to Meg Pachmeyer at WUPPDR to discuss.

Evan, Charlie and Sam reported on the August 17th emergency at Bare Bluff where a MTU student's father needed assistance. It was a hot day, difficult area to access and response was hampered because of a blocked roadway. Unfortunatley one of the first responderes suffered a massive heart attack during the rescue. Following this event the first responders meat with the County Board complaining about "Trail People" and that all trails should be at least 6 feet wide for ATV access. Don Keith from the Board argued that it was not apporopriate. Guided by input from Steve Rowe and Mr. Premo from Mercy, the outcome of the meeting was the identified need for a trained search and rescue team with proper equipment. Charlie also suggested that signage could be better at all sites with a uniform system of "ratings" and all visitors should be informed that immediate medical rescue is not available. Discussion ensued regarding the rating system and it was felt that it could be difficult to manage but should be looked into. Sheriff Lahti has applied for a grant for more equipment. Mike Abbott suggested that a Wilderness First Responder Course with evacuation training should be organized and he has looked into this in coordination with Michigan Tech.

Charlie reported that they would be having a trail work day on Friday and Saturday with the goal of a sustainable reroute for 200-300 feet of trail at Bare Bluff. He also reported that the MNA people were toured on the IMBA reroute at Garden Brook and had a positive response after walking original trail

ACTION ITEM UPDATES – ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

No update. Mike Young and Lori will be meeting to review other organizations. Still looking for one or two people to help out with this committee.

ACTION ITEM UPDATES – COMMUNICATIONS

Mike has talked to Dean Woodbeck about website and other ideas.

ACTION ITEM UPDATES – CONTACT DATABASE

Sam has started on this and hopes to get more done over the winter.

ACTION ITEM UPDATES – TRAIL EXPERTS AND RESOURCE DATABASE

Jeff talked to Dean about setting up a wiki where people can update information themselves.

ACTION ITEM UPDATES – LOGO

Jeff presented some logo ideas and the group did some preliminary voting.

OTHER

It was discussed that the KTA should review rating systems at other trails. We will look for a volunteer to do this.

NEXT MEETING DATE

Scheduled for November 11, 2008 (Postponed until December 9, 2008)