

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**ATTENDEES**

**MTAC**

John Matonich  
Jenny Cook  
Steven Davis  
Joe Kuchnicki  
Jessi Adler  
Thomas Dunn  
Jason Rolling

**DNR**

Paul Yauk  
Nikki Van Bloem  
Annalisa Centofanti  
Jessica Holley  
Paige Perry  
Dakota Hewlett

**WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Meeting called to order by MTAC Chair, John Matonich, at 12:52 p.m.

**INTRODUCTIONS**

John Matonich started the meeting by saying topics and concerns from the trails workgroup subcommittee's filters through MTAC and has an effect with all trail programs. These are the groups that drive improvements.

**PROJECT INITIATIVES**

John Matonich asked the MTAC members if they'd like to share a project where the affects were shared by multi trail users. Mr. Matonich mentioned that letters sent to legislation on behalf of individuals, helping user groups to mitigate through issues and concerns. Mr. Matonich expressed that he is hopeful we will see very strong initiatives for the new trail plan.

Jenny Cook said trail etiquette is another great project that was accomplished working with all the advisory groups. The group recognized the need for additional signage and awareness.

**COUNCIL MEMBER INTRODUCTIONS**

**John Matonich** introduced himself as the Chairperson and said he enjoys all trails, including snowmobiling.

**Jason Rolling** said he represents non-motorized users and he enjoys snowmobiling, ATV/ORV trails, horse back riding, skiing, and biking.

**Steven Davis** represents non-motorized users and enjoys snowmobiling, ORV trails, and hiking.

**Joe Kuchnicki** represents snowmobile users and enjoys vintage snow sleds, biking, and maintaining trails.

**Jessi Adler** represents ORV users and enjoys multi use of the trails, such as ORV trails with her Jeep, hiking, and kayaking.

**Jenny Cook** represents the equine users and she enjoys horseback riding, ORV use, and an all-around outdoor enthusiast.

**Thomas Dunn** represents the ORV users and enjoys ORV trail riding.

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**BUSINESS ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION**

John Matonich made a motion to approve the September 11, 2019 meeting minutes. The motion was approved by all members.

John Matonich allowed an opportunity to take the agenda items out of order or add additional agenda items. No requests were made by council members.

John Matonich made a motion to approve the February 22, 2020 agenda as presented. The motion was approved by all council members.

**ACTION ITEMS**

**NEW COUNCIL APPOINTMENTS**

Nikki VanBloem offered an update for the pending new council appointments. Nikki VanBloem said Jim Kelts appointment for snow user representation is in process with the Governor's office. The Council is still searching for tourism representation.

Meeting locations need to be identified for the remaining 2020 MTAC meetings and will be determined soon. John Matonich asked to have locations in place by the next meeting date in May. Annalisa Centofanti said she is working on options and will present them to Mr. Matonich for his review.

**UPDATES**

**MTAC**

John Matonich read the [NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT \(EXCERPT\) Act 451 of 1994; Section 324.72110](#). Mr. Matonich emphasized the trails sub-committee advisory groups are created by the Council. These work groups advise MTAC. Mr. Matonich noted the importance of looping MTAC into all these groups. He requested upcoming agendas to be provided and meeting minutes distributed to all MTAC members after meetings have taken place.

**MTAC MEMBER UPDATES**

**Jenny Cook**

Jenny Cook started by saying trail safety is top priority. In instances when non equine trail users encounter horse riders to stop, speak, and stand back at least 10 feet. Ms. Cook is thankful for secured capital outlay funding dedicated for the horse trails. Ms. Cook expressed her value for the DNR. She pointed out a new website, [michiganhorsetrails.com](http://michiganhorsetrails.com). Friends groups are listed along with trail events listed on a calendar, by Amy Scharmen. Ms. Cook said there is a benefit in keeping open communication, advising and being advised. She stated that friends groups have donated over past 3 years \$1.4M. There is a lot of energy and passion happening with the equine users and groups. For instance, Ms. Cook said she heard Gale Whittaker, who rides in Black Lake, worked with the city park to allow horses back into the park.

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**Thomas Dunn**

Thomas Dunn expressed his thanks to the DNR department and user groups for their overall assistance and participation.

**Steve Davis**

Steven Davis appreciates all the feedback from the user groups. Mr. Davis is thankful for all the DNR staff keeping trails running in the UP, where there has been an abundance of snow.

**Jason Rolling**

Jason Rolling understands other opinions he heard from yesterday's workgroup meetings. He feels more connected with the other trail workgroups, listening to there issues and concerns.

**John Matonich**

John Matonich pointed out the lack of continuity between MTAC and the trail workgroups. Mr. Matonich believes at least one member from each workgroup should serve on MTAC and will like to explore that option. Collectively, MTAC is one strong voice. Mr. Matonich hears the need to develop good funding sources and wants to work on creating a funding workgroup. Mr. Matonich requested that each of the workgroup chairs forward 2 names to Annalisa Centofanti. Mr. Matonich asked what terms of a funding workgroup would look like that will represent all trail user groups. It was suggested that Andrea LaFontaine (NAW) has a background that can drive and advise this type of request.

**DNR TRAIL UPDATES**

Written statements from trail specialists are supplied in packets.

**Jessica Holley**

Jessica Holley presented a quick overview of the new system tool being rolled out in Spring/Summer 2020 for ORV Grants. This program is called Motorized Automated Grants Given (MAGG). John Matonich said this sounds like a great program and looks forward to the roll-out.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

John Matonich made a motion to adjourn the MTAC meeting, which was approved by all council members. The meeting was adjourned at 1:36 p.m.

# MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)

## Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020

1:00 pm – 2:00 pm

### Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)

Updates for Trails Advisory Groups meeting, Feb 21-22, 2020

#### North Central LP (Paige Perry)

##### MULTI-PROGRAM PROJECTS

- Alpena to Hillman Phase 1 to Herron with 2 bridges- newest update involves a new rule for wetlands mitigation. Currently working with EGLE and MDOT to determine status.
- Little Black River Bridge on the NCST temporary 8'wide bridge in place to avoid winter reroute onto ~2 miles of city streets. Design is engineered and bids came in significantly over cost estimates. Still seeking funding to construct new.
- Gaylord South Trail outcry over the control structures installed to separate trail from RR seems to have subdued. Gaylord Area Snowmobile Club, Otsego County, City of Gaylord Chamber, Lake State Railway and DNR (specifically club contact Scott Thompson) have done a great job coordinating a consistent message to the public in terms of transparent information on the resurfacing project and the snowmobile public.
- Rogers City Spur Proposal
  - 'Bypass' Trail proposal was approved contingent on MDOT and PIRC permissions. MDOT permissions received. PIRC denied. Many thanks to Dave Campo of PIST and Matt Treinen DNR Contact! There is good momentum now to continue to pursue a hybrid multi-use proposal using some Carmeuse (that would trade for DNR owned corridor) and some MDOT.
  - Swan River Bridge on Rogers City Spur is slated for engineering in 20. Construct in 21-22.
- MDOT initiated meeting to discuss realignment of NWST along US 31 due to upcoming road project

##### NAW

- Event Permits: Great Lks Relay, Fundraiser in the Jordan Valley
- Trail Proposals: 3 for NCT keep stalling... Still trying to keep moving (will get finalized before spring!)
- Pathway 'you-are-here' maps: Working to finalize new template for next batch of pathway signs
- Norway Ridge EGLE Permit for multi-site maintenance is nearing final approval (many thanks to Local DNR Contact Blake Gingrich at PH Hoeft SP)
- Project Bridges on
  - NCT/IBT- Carp River Bridge - engineering cost estimates and structural options are being reviewed currently with NCTA, consultant
  - HCP - Black River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (1:3) for brand new build (this bridge was removed 3 years ago due to structural instability)
  - HCP - Pigeon River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (2:3) for evaluation, likely removal of existing and rebuild (this bridge was repaired 7 years ago and is twisting again due to poor design)
  - Pickerel Lake Pathway - Pickerel River Bridge - Engineering services are requested (3:3) for design only (hoping that staff and volunteers can remove current footbridge and replace in kind)

##### ETS

- Trail Proposals: Inspiration Point EQ Pathway and Horse Camp proposal near Cheboygan pending

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**SAW**

- JVTC Pinney Bridge Rd: Letter sent to JKVTC to explain Right of Way questions brought up at last SAW meeting
- Event Permits: Vintage Snowmobile out of Indian River FOE and Petoskey Snowmobile Club
- Incident Reports: Derailment of train in Otsego Co, Single snowmobile impact to posts, Snowmobile stuck in RR Switch

**ORVAW**

- Event Permits: Six Days of Michigan, Rites of Spring -working with Elissa Buck to establish ROS into a multi-year event permitting pilot
- Grading Contracts for next summer – working to secure agreements/ contracts to work in 2 additional maintenance grades on dual use Routes that have been historically graded only once in late fall

**Northeastern LP (Amy Swainston)**

**NAW**

- Greg Kinser attended last Grayling Trail Committee Group (interest in Pure Mi Trail designation for water trail, crack repair of existing non-motorized trail); as well as meeting with Road Commission and Township supervisors for local community fundraising for Iron Belle trail progress within the County
- Assisted City of Clare by providing a letter of commitment from RTP funds for the MDNR match of \$300,000 to complete a 2.5-mile gap in the Pere Marquette trail which is a match to a TAP grant
- NEMCOG – Sunrise Committee is wrapping up preliminary plans for extending a bicycle / pedestrian path from Alpena to Oscoda.
- Continuous work by NEMCOG in wrapping up preliminary plans for Roscommon, Ogemaw. Continued detailed preliminary plans and designs for Iosco, Crawford.
- Recently Trails have been getting some snow resulting in improved groomed ski trails and reducing the hard packed – icy conditions. (Ogemaw, Tisdale, Mason Tract)

**SAW**

- Trail inspection of the Thumb area trails was done in early Feb. and substantial signage was done to all the trails to be open for the February snow systems. Efforts are continuing to update the maps to align with current land rights and Trail proposal information.
- Kalkaska county snowmobile – groomer incident/accident; speed was noted as the contributing factor in the initial report.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)

**ETS:**

- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where Shore to Shore trail encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species near Grayling.

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**ORV:**

- A wheeled motorized activity form (PR0358) was created to facilitate notification of the activity by the organizer to the Department and to allow for staff review of the activity to determine whether the event permit criteria has been met. This form establishes a consistent mechanism for organizers to provide basic activity information for evaluation. Staff were provided the form in Feb. and will be posted on the DNR Website soon.
- Concern expressed by clubs seeking request for reimbursements (RFR) to reduce backlog of requests and follow thru with reimbursement requests. This may be resolved with MAGG but there is a need to define and standardize ways to keep sponsors in the loop of who's has / has not approved the RFR. I.E.: If it has been received by Trail Specialist; if it has been checked; approved for payment to Lansing. Locally I have responded to RFR confirming receipt and included the club when approved – processed on to Lansing.
- (Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails. Many of which were inventoried as forest road, county seasonal road or are part of the designated ORV route system)
- Proposed EMR CCAA adjustments to FRD for areas where ORV trails encroached into the protection habitat to lessen the reporting / impacts the threatened species. (Leota, Old State House)
- ORV Jonesville Bride – have consultant hired to look at bridge and evaluate current condition and improvements for connectivity.

**MTAC:**

Continue to have numerous inquiries at Customer Service Center / Law Enforcement contacts related to wheeled vehicle use on groomed snowmobile trails that are dual designated.

**Northwestern LP (Scott Slavin)**

Current priority project list funded or partially funded for 2020

**Non-Motorized Projects:**

1. East Branch of the Hersey River culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Ashton MI East Branch Hersey River
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out.
  - c. Cost: 1.1 million
  - d. Funding: "funded" Project was part of the 11-mile paving project from Reed City to Leroy. The remaining funding for the paving project will be used for culvert replacement.
  
2. Rogers Farm Pond culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Stanwood
  - b. Status: Engineering and design complete, project is bid out
  - c. Cost: \$382000

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

- d. Funding: “funded” using a trust fund grant and part of a 3 million MEDC grant.
  
- 3. Cold Creek culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, South of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: “funded” using MEDC grant for 3 million.
  
- 4. Byers Creek culvert replacement
  - a. Location White Pine Trail, south of Big Rapids
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is underway
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: “funded” using MEDC grant for 3 million.
  
- 5. Tustin culvert replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Tustin
  - b. Status: Engineering and design underway
  - c. Cost: \$ 500,000
  - d. Funding: “funded” funding has been provided form the snowmobile supplemental fund.
  
- 6. Reed City Covered Bridge replacement
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Reed City
  - b. Status: Bridge inspection report and conceptual design is complete.
  - c. Cost: 1.2 million
  - d. Funding: “not funded” Bridge inspection/conceptual design was funded. Additional funding for replacement has been pursued with TAP grant and NRTF grant, both unsuccessful.
  
- 7. 29-mile paving project Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - a. Location: White Pine Trail, Big Rapids to Sand Lake
  - b. Status: Culvert replacement is underway, RFP’s need to be submitted for engineering and design.
  - c. Cost: Estimated cost 8-9 million

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

- d. Funding: “not fully funded” 3 million has been acquired by a MEDC grant and is being utilized to repair several culverts that need to be repaired prior to paving. The remaining balance of MEDC grant will be used for engineering and design.
8. Lewis Bridge Abutment project
- a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Elberta
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete, Natural Rivers Permit is out for review
  - c. Cost: \$79,000
  - d. Funding: “funded” RTP funding and friends group matching grant has been utilized to fund the project.
9. Re-Surfacing project Crystal Lake Segment
- a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Beulah
  - b. Status: Engineering and design is complete
  - c. Cost: \$300,000
  - d. Funding: “partially funded” Friends group received a NRTF grant for \$150k, RTP grant for \$150,000 has been submitted.
10. Betsie Valley Trail Master Planning design
- a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Frankfort to Copemish
  - b. Status: Conceptual design being completed by Johnson and Hill
  - c. Cost: \$40,000
  - d. Funding: “funded” Friends of the BVT funded this project.
11. Sign Project Pere Marquette Trail
- a. Location: Baldwin to Clare
  - b. Status: A project request needs to be submitted
  - c. Cost: \$100,000
  - d. Funding: “funded” RTP funding has been allocated to this project.
12. Cadillac Pathway single track development
- a. Location: Cadillac Pathway, Cadillac
  - b. Status: Mapping underway for 12 miles of new single track
  - c. Cost: Unknown

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

- d. Funding: NMMBA and DNR seeking grants

**Snowmobile Program**

13. Bear Creek Swamp re-route

- a. Location: Free Soil, Lake and Mason Counties
- b. Status: EPA permit for construction is out for review
- c. Cost: \$130,000
- d. Funding: “funded” Funding was provided from the snowmobile program.

14. Fife Lake re-route/Easement acquisition

- a. Location: Fife Lake, Trail 5
- b. Status: Re-route construction is completed; easement acquisition has been requested.
- c. Cost: Unknown
- d. Funding: “unfunded” Request for use of snowmobile easement fund has been requested.

15. Manistee River Bridge decking project

- a. Location: Betsie Valley Trail, Mesick
- b. Status: Inspection and scoping report has been completed, decking project is on hold
- c. Cost: 1 million
- d. Funding: “unfunded” Inspection and scoping report was funded with RTP dollars. Engineering/design need to be funded along with construction this is estimated to be 1 million.

16. Kaleva to Chief snowmobile easement purchase

- a. Location: Chief
- b. Status: Property acquisition is underway and scheduled for presentation to the NRC for approval.
- c. Cost: \$80,000 for property and \$100,000 for land clearing and capping of the surface.
- d. Funding: “funded” Snowmobile acquisition fund has been utilized to fund this project.

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**Off Road Vehicle Program**

17. Missaukee Junction ORV trail reroutes
  - a. Location: Cadillac
  - b. Status: Project was complete in 2019 but a portion of trail was obliterated by a timber harvest
  - c. Cost: Unknown
  - d. Funding: FRD will utilize timber sale management fund to complete the reroute on the obliterated trail.
  
18. Missaukee County 2 unnamed creek bridge replacements
  - a. Location: Missaukee County, Miss-kal trail
  - b. Status: Engineering and designing is underway
  - c. Cost: \$500,000
  - d. Funding: "funded" funded with 2019 supplemental.
  
19. Sharman RD Trail Head construction
  - a. Location: Grand Traverse County, Grand Traverse Motorcycle Trail
  - b. Status: Trail proposal is still under review
  - c. Cost: \$20,000
  - d. Funding: "funded pending proposal" The site is a natural gas pumping station that has been de-commissioned. The gas company will be helping to grade, gravel and improve the access road.

**MICHIGAN TRAILS ADVISORY COUNCIL (MTAC)**  
**Meeting Minutes / February 22, 2020**  
**1:00 pm – 2:00 pm**  
**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center (RAM)**

**FROM: PAUL GABERDIEL**

**FEBRUARY 2020**

Workgroup updates,

**MTAC-** Haywire Grade has been awarded the 2020 Pure Michigan Trail award. The Haywire is also celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a rail trail this year. Events celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary will be snowmobile, Equestrian, Bicycling and ORV. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ETS-** Haywire Grade 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary event will on June 6, 2020.

**NAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary biking event will be on August 22, 2020. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**ORVAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary ORV event will be on October 3, 2020.

Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail. We have had 3 major storms in the East UP. Because of the heavy damage seen on the snowmobile trails, trail maintainers my want to plan for additional trail maintenance work this spring.

**SAW-** Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary Snowmobile event will be February 29, 2020.

Haywire Grade has been named as a Pure Michigan Trail.

Ride Right campaign placemats have been distributed to 7 food locations for last weekend, working on distribution to 4 more for this weekend.

Haywire 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary events participation registration can be done online at [www.visitmanistique.com](http://www.visitmanistique.com)