



Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

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Sunrise Coastal Trail Planning
Kickoff Meeting Notes
May 8, 2019

Attendees: Joseph Gentry, Thunder Bay Trails Association; Jim Conboy, Top of Michigan Trails Council; Kevin Schaedig, MDOT Alpena TSC; Mary Beth Stutzman and Jess Moarasky Alpena Area CVB; Nathan Skibbe, Alpena Township; Jim Klarich, Alpena Chamber; Marlena MacNeill, Alcona Township; Eric Ostrander, MDNR Harrisville & Negwegon State Park; Tom Keerl, City of Harrisville; Sue Keller, Friends of Negwegon; Larry Clark and Gary Parteka, South Bay; Andrew Kenyon, USFS; Steve Schnell, NEMCOG; Emily Meyerson, NEMCOG/Trail Consultant.

The meeting convened at 1:30pm. Emily Meyerson facilitated the meeting with assistance from Steve Schnell. Everyone introduced themselves. Emily provided an introduction to this project. She then provided a brief presentation on general trail planning and how trails can benefit communities.

Maps were introduced which indicated the extent of the planning area and the communities along the general route corridor. The maps highlighted state-owned land, public parks, and recreational assets that were known. The attendees were asked to share any thoughts they had about the route, what they knew about traffic in the corridor, local highlights, connections that would be important to make to the trail, and any existing trails or routes in the area. The attendees were asked who is missing from this first meeting, what users of the trail need to be included and how to name the trail.

Trail Route Thoughts

The following were comments from the attendees:

- There is a need to connect to the existing Alpena bicycle routes and cycling infrastructure.
- In Harrisville, there is a subdivision along to the north of the city center that is a destination and important connection.
- The railroad grade along Piper Road should be reviewed for possible trail route location.
- The railroad grade east to Squaw Bay could be part of this route. There was a question about whether the wetlands in that area could be an issue, though.
- Negwegon State Park has a Plan that should be referenced. They are supported by the Friends of Negwegon, which participated in the planning effort. The Plan includes reference to trails. Note: the 2010 Plan includes as a long range action goal a statement that the trails "may allow for equestrian and bicycle use, where appropriate".
- Crossing US23 at the Harrisville State Park entrance, safety is a concern with the heavy traffic on US23.
- The only school on the route is in Ossineke.

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- There is the large Lost Lake Woods Development should be added to the map.
- The main destination sites are on the map, include Harrisville State Park, City of Harrisville, Sturgeon Point Lighthouse, Black River Recreation Area, Negwegon State Park, Ossineke park facilities, campground and shops, Squaw Bay and the 45th Parallel.
- There are maritime interpretive signs at the NOAA Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. More can be added along the proposed route.
- Logging history should be highlighted for users of the proposed trail.
- Connections to water trails should be included in the plan.
- There is a trail through Harrisville State Park which was developed to be part of this entire trail network and leads to local roads on either end.
- There is a small trail connector between Ossineke school and Paul Bunyon statue.
- There is good riding and sight lines on Lakeshore Drive between Harrisville and Black River.
- City of Harrisville Historic Trail is just a marked road route through town.
- On the north end of Harrisville there is a subdivision that needs connections to town.
- MDOT plans shoulder improvements north of Harrisville in the near future.
- Golf Course on Cedar Lake Road.
- Wet area along railroad corridor north of Harrisville.
- Ossineke needs a trail through town to connect their community including the State Forest Campground, DNR Boat Launch and Sanborn Twp. Park.
- Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve (owned by Huron Pines Conservancy) should be added to the map.
- Scott Road Overlook

Others to invite

We asked for ideas on who else should be part of this process. Some of the following were invited but were unable to attend.

- Alcona Health Care Center (KiAnn Kruttlin)
- Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
- Northeast Michigan Community Foundation
- Huron Pines
- Sheriff, State Police
- Alcona Parks and Recreation (Dan Gauthier)
- Cobblestone Cycle Shop
- Iosco Exploration Trail
- Follow up with county boards
- Mid-Michigan Hospital
- Alpena News
- Alcona Review
- Iosco newspaper

Names for the trail

- Reference Lake Huron in some way
- Keep it simple
- Some like “Sunrise Coastal Trail”

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Next Steps

Emily stated that there will be a press release soon that will let people know that this effort is underway and inviting more to participate. The next meeting may be in the same location since the township hall was agreeable to those in attendance since it's in the middle of the project area. We will be adding details to the map from today's meeting and inviting the additional people and organizations mentioned.