

**North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department
Recreational Trail Program Advisory Committee Annual Meeting Minutes
April 12, 2012**

Committee Members Present:

Non-motorized hiking: Curt Glasoe – Maah Daah Hey Trail Association
Non-motorized paddling: Kathy Stremick
Non-motorized at large: Alicia Hoffarth – North Country Trail Association
Non-motorized at large: Lisa Kudelka
Non-motorized at large: Tyler Jacobson – North Dakota Recreation and Park Association
Motorized snowmobile: Keri Wanner – Snowmobile North Dakota
Motorized off-highway vehicle: Mike Burke – North Dakota Dirt Riders
Motorized at large: Dave Vad

Ex-Officio Members Present:

Ben Kubtschta – NDDOT
Sandy Zimmer - FHWA

Others Present:

Arik Spencer – Recreation Division Manager, North Dakota Parks and Recreation Department (NDPRD)
Jessica Riepl – Grants Manager, NDPRD
Mark Zimmerman – Director, NDPRD
Ben Ehreth – Director, Bismarck Mandan MPO
Susan Wefald – Author

Committee Members Absent:

Non-motorized horseback: Curt Vanek
Non-motorized mountain biking: Mark Liebig – Central Dakota Cyclists

The meeting was called to order at 1:30 p.m. by Jessica Riepl, who introduced herself, Arik Spencer, and Mark Zimmerman. All others present then introduced themselves.

Arik Spencer introduced guest speaker Susan Wefald, the former Public service Commissioner who wrote a book entitled “Spectacular North Dakota Hikes, Bring the Dog” that gives suggestions and areas to hike in North Dakota. First location Susan discussed was Harmon Lake, which was funded by the RTP funds a while back, she enjoyed it however she was unhappy with the lack of signage. Even the best trails can be ruined if it was longer than a hiker expected and was not prepared for. She suggested advising applicants when funding a project to make sure and budget for maps and signage to list such things as bathrooms, water, and the length of the trail. She also covered other spectacular hikes around North Dakota.

Jessica Riepl then introduced guest speaker Ben Ehreth, director of the Bismarck Mandan Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), explaining that after the RTP Advisory Committee scores & ranks the projects, MPOs throughout the state are consulted to ensure the projects are in line with MPO planning. Ben reviewed their general history and purpose of MPOs and outlined how trails and alternative transportation is part of that planning effort.

Jessica Riepl reviewed grant projects funded in 2011 to update the committee on progress since the last meeting. Projects reviewed included the North Country Trail, Tetrault Woods State Forest Boardwalk, Little Missouri State Park trail re-route, University of ND Bike Path, Bismarck Park District's Tom O'Leary trail rehab, City of Devils Lake trail and the Pembina Gorge State Recreation Area motorized trail.

After reviewing previous projects, Jessica Riepl opened discussion of the current grant cycle with a funding update. She went on to explain that when the grant cycle was opened there was only 6 months of funding authorized. Since then, an addition 3 month extension was authorized bringing the available grant funds for projects to approximately \$800,000 in funding available which include under runs from past projects. Given the number of applicants, should a full year of funding be approved, there are enough projects successfully ranked by the committee to utilize all grant funds appropriated for FY 2012.

General discussion then began on the 2012 applications. There were 11 eligible applications this year, including 3 motorized and 8 non-motorized. Riepl handed out a spreadsheet of how these projects will meet the 30/30/40 motorized/non-motorized/diverse use requirements. She also handed out a spreadsheet of the final ranking of the projects. The committee then discussed this ranking, and each individual project. Based upon the scoring, NDRPD would begin the project review process and perform some pre-award visits to address some project specific questions.

2012 Project Ranking

Project Name	Sponsor	Score	Average	Grant Amount	Total Cost
Pembina Gorge Trails	NDRPD	74	7.4	\$ 80,000	\$ 100,000
Turtle Mts OHV Trail	NDRPD	67	6.7	\$ 95,040	\$ 118,800
Grafton Leistikow Park Trail	Grafton Park District	62	6.2	\$ 56,332	\$ 70,414
Minot Bison Plant Trail	Minot Park District	60	6	\$ 120,000	\$ 150,000
Maah Daah Hey 2012	USDA- Forest Service	56	5.6	\$ 150,000	\$ 200,846
NCT Development	North Country Trail Assn.	55	5.5	\$ 57,175	\$ 71,468
SND Easements 2012	Snowmobile ND	54	5.4	\$ 80,000	\$ 100,000
Bismarck Shared Use Path	Bismarck Park District	34	3.4	\$ 150,000	\$ 269,875
Fargo Shared Use Path	City of Fargo	30	3	\$ 150,000	\$ 350,000
Milnor Multi-Use Path	City of Milnor	30	3	\$ 42,800	\$ 53,500
SND Equipment 2012	Snowmobile ND	28	2.8	\$ 150,000	\$ 187,500

*Please note that while this list is the final committee ranking, projects must pass the environmental and cultural review before they are approved. Not all of these projects will necessarily be funded.

Next Spencer addressed the future of RTP stating that since last year progress has been made in passing a Federal Highway Bill which includes the RTP program; however there is still much uncertainty and that hopefully a bill will be passed by June 30th when the current extension expires.

Spencer also invited the committee members to first ever North Dakota Trails Conference, which will be held August 28 – 29 at Fort Abraham Lincoln State Park.

Meeting was adjourned at 3:30 p.m.