

December 5, 2019 3:00 PM EST
Potawatomi Inn – Pokagon State Park
Wigwam Room
6 Lane 100A Lake James
Angola, IN 46703

Attendance

Board Members Present:

ATV Users- Tim Garrett
Bicyclists- Greg Midgley
Equestrians- Yvette Rollins
Environmental Groups- Dan Valleskey (Proxy)
Health/Higher Education- Pete Fritz
Hikers- Terry Fletcher
Mountain Bikers- Jeff Fetterer
Off-Road Motorcyclists- Rayce Guthrie
Pedestrians- Pat Martin
Trails Support Groups- Angie Quinn (Proxy)
Water Trail Users- Margaret Easton

DNR Staff:

Allen Hurst- Outdoor Recreation
Carman Jackson- Outdoor Recreation
Amy Marisavljevic- Outdoor Recreation
Cpt. Jet Quillen- Law Enforcement

Guests:

David Rollins
Gary Konecny – NW Indiana Paddling Association
Jay Jackson – ABATE
Julie Guthrie
Lewis Shuler – Cycle Conservation Club

Board Members Not Present:

Parks & Recreation Agencies- Travis Tranbarger
Four Wheel Drive Users- Ryan Sweany
Snowmobilers- Len Neisler
Users with Disabilities- David Meihls

Meeting Minutes

Welcome & Introductions

Chair Pat Martin welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:07 PM EST. He thanked everyone in attendance for coming and initiated introductions. All Trails Advisory Board (TAB) members, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, and guests introduced themselves. Kevin Hardie gave his proxy to Dan Valleskey to represent environmental groups. Angie Poole gave her proxy to Angie Quinn to represent trail support groups.

Approval of the Agenda

Martin called for approval of the agenda. Rayce Guthrie motioned to approve the agenda and Tim Garrett seconded. Motion passed.

Review and Approval of September 5, 2019 minutes

Yvette Rollins noted a small correction within the mountain biking section. Martin then asked for a motion to accept the minutes with corrections. Margaret Easton motioned, and Greg Midgley seconded. Motion passed.

DNR Report

ORV State Properties

Carman Jackson presented an end of the year update on the state motorized properties. At Redbird State Recreation Area (SRA), the paved road construction is complete. Water from Dugger had been installed, leading to the new planned entrance. These both setup the next phase of building the new gatehouse/office. She reported the planned paving of a section of county road leading into the new Redbird entrance by the County. Redbird SRA staff added 2.25 miles of single-track trail. Two new loops are planned that will tie into the newly created trail in 2020. Due to weather, they were not able to complete as much trail rehab during the property closure as they had hoped.

At Interlake SRA, Jackson reported that they re-opened and signed 45 miles of single-track. GPS data for these trails has been collected and a single-track map will be created. Interlake SRA crew has rehabilitated 13 miles of multi-use trail. Lastly, Jackson reported that Interlake SRA is currently working on a new training area suitable for beginner or youth riders.

OR Grants

Amy Marisavljevic reported a change in the usual RTP application deadline. Due to NLT and the staff workload, the RTP deadline for the upcoming year will be March 1. Another minor change is that the maximum grant request is now \$250,000, up from \$200,000.

She also reported the second round of the Next Level Trails closed November 1 with 61 applications submitted. This included 36 local and 25 regional applications. About 2/3 of the applications were re-applicants, many of whom participated in the feedback calls, and improved their applications. The second round will award \$30 million in grant funds with \$25 million for regional projects and \$5 million for local projects. She noted that the local pool would be very competitive. The NLT team is currently in the application review process. They will likely announce the awardees sometime in 2020. Although no deadlines have been set yet, she anticipates third round around mid-2020.

Other

Marisavljevic announced the 2021-2025 Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP), which includes the Indiana Trails Plan, is complete. She stated it should be published on their website within the next month and that the DNR will notify TAB members by e-mail once posted online. She then gave a short summary of the Indiana Trails Plan and its goals.

Marisavljevic reported that Indiana's state bicycle-friendly rating jumped to #24, from #38, at the end of November as announced by the League of American Bicyclist. This was the most notable jump in the ratings and truly marks a significant accomplishment for Indiana. She credited the work done by the interagency state bicycle and pedestrian workgroup, which includes the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT), State Department of Health, Office of Tourism, and the DNR, as well as the Indiana Bicycle Trails Task Force as contributing to this improved rating. INDOT should be releasing *Moving Towards an Active Indiana*, their state bicycle and pedestrian plan, soon.

The Indiana DNR attended the Trails Gathering in October, as well as many staff also participated in the Greenways Foundation's (GF) Trail Town Workshops in November.

Lastly, Marisavljevic announced that the Walk Bike Places conference will be August 4-7, 2020 in Indianapolis and the Mid-America Trails and Greenways (MATG) conference will be August 30-September 2, 2020 in Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Old Business

Water Trail Stakeholders

Easton, Dan Valleskey, and Gary Konecny stated that several paddling organization stakeholders are exploring the idea of an Indiana river council after being inspired by seeing this in other states. The desire is to have a statewide umbrella group made up of water trail supporters from different regions. Easton noted the groups purpose would be for networking, information exchange, to create a comprehensive website on river information, and to have a unified voice to bring to legislators, should the need arise. Konecny added that a council allows experienced clubs to share information on grants and other resources to other clubs with less experience. They particularly see a demand for this type of organization now as paddling continues to grow in popularity. Easton wished to work with the DNR where possible and would appreciate any support from the State.

Marisavljevic inquired if recreation would be the primary purpose of the river council. Easton and Valleskey agreed that recreation is the top priority. However, they would welcome environmental groups as well. Marisavljevic then asked what they envision the group as something that is a non-profit or an actual state designated board, which would require legislation. Easton replied the discussion amongst the supporters has not reached that point yet and they will want their input before deciding.

Valleskey added the idea of a state group is not new. Marisavljevic briefly noted the previous 'River Rally' attempt, which was unsuccessful attempt at unifying water support groups. She added that the DNR would be willing to help when possible, such as passing along a list of water trail contacts.

Trail Safety & Emergency Trends- DNR Law Enforcement

Marisavljevic reminded the TAB of their request for safety information after their last meeting where recent drownings and ORV accidents were discussed. She then introduced Captain Jet Quillen, of Indiana DNR Law Enforcement (LE), who could better answer their questions on statistics, safety, legalities, and outreach opportunities.

Quillen reported that the Indiana DNR only has 107 officers statewide. These officers have a full spectrum of responsibilities, including investigating ORV/Snowmobile accidents and drownings. He then reported ORV accident information and numbers (see table below.) He noted that DNR LE is required to investigate an ORV accident if there is serious bodily injury or \$750 or more worth of damage.

Year	ORV/Snowmobile Accidents	Alcohol Related	Injuries	Fatalities
2018	182	14	202	11
2017	231	21	-	18
2016	231	19	-	21

He discussed the procedures and difficulties during investigations, especially when alcohol is believed to be a contributing factor. Due to this, he noted that the reported alcohol related accidents to be lower than what may actually be the case. Quillen reported

a large amount of accidents are on roadways rather than trails or elsewhere, but it is currently hard to pinpoint an exact number. Many collisions also occur with other vehicles, fences, signs, trees, and ditches. He noted detailed reporting would improve with the ARIES software, a statewide crash reporting system used by all levels of LE. ARIES currently does not have an ORV component, but Quillen hopes that the new version of the reporting software in 2020 will.

Quillen noted LE efforts in their ORV safety messaging. This includes participating in public safety appearances throughout the year, social media as much as possible, and their Safety Sam program aimed toward young riders. Jay Jackson noted there has been an improvement asking for a call to action in news releases where a fatality occurred with a lack of safety equipment (helmet, life jacket, etc.) Quillen says they do try to put safety comments in release when appropriate. He stated LE is always open to improving these safety messages in the new releases as well as better outreach methods if there are suggestions.

Carman Jackson brought up the topic of an increasing number of counties allowing ORV use along with lack of consistency and understanding that sometimes comes with it. Quillen noted a problem can be lack of knowledge of the law, especially by local entities and parents. Quillen inquired about ORV dealerships discussing laws with buyers. Guthrie answered that manufactures require ATV dealers to discuss them, and even have a checklist to follow.

Quillen next reported on the statistics for recent drownings in Indiana. Although some of these are paddling related, others are related to swimming, wading, and boating. Quillen continued with drowning statistics for paddlers. There were five fatalities of paddlers in 2018, and seven in 2017. He noted that recent media stories have spun a spike in drownings, but this is contrary to the actual numbers.

Year	2019	2018	2017	2016
Drownings	45	53	51	54

Easton asked how many victims were wearing a life jacket. Quillen responded that likely none of them. He added that in his career, he has never recovered a drowning victim that was wearing a life jacket. When asked about outreach and enforcement, Quillen noted that LE always asks for proof of personal floatation devices (PFD) on boating stops. Quillen noted that the majority of times LE ask for life jackets, the high majority do have and present them. However, he added that Indiana law requires PFD's simply be present, and are not required to be worn. Easton asked if LE deals with liveries, Quillen replied in the affirmative. He noted a livery license requires the business to provide PFD's in order to operate.

DNR LE also promote the 'Wear it Indiana' outreach campaign. Easton asked if they would be willing to do more. Quillen said LE is open to suggestions. He also reminded the TAB that while safety promotion is important and LE will continue to do community outreach, that their main priority is law enforcement and they continue to be stretched thinner over the years with new responsibilities.

There was a brief discussion comparing the numbers of boats and ORV's. This segued into Quillen discussing their boater education. DNR LE officers teach the boater education classes, but see low numbers of people showing up. Jay Jackson compared that the ORV manufactures offering incentivized safety classes, which no one takes advantage of. Fritz asked if boated education would ever be required when registering a boat. Quillen answered it would likely take legislation to mandate that, and it would be hard to tell if such a thing could be enacted. Easton asked if water education could be mandated for water-based violations. Quillen noted those classes are court-ordered, and would likely require legislation to enact.

Garrett asked how their current number of officers compared if DNR LE was fully staffed. Quillen answered it would be 214 fully staffed, but noted this has not happened for a while and there is often difficulty in finding quality applicants. Carman Jackson thanked Officer Quillen for coming and DNR LE for all their work.

New Business

E-Bike Discussion

Marisavljevic explained Indiana's current e-bike law as well described the three different e-bike classes, including where each class of e-bikes are allowed. In particular, she noted Class 1 and 2 are allowed on all paved, multi-use trails, unless explicitly prohibited by the trail manager. Non-motorized natural surface trails are closed to any class of e-bike unless the trail managers specifically allow them. Lastly, Marisavljevic noted the National Park e-bike policy was enacted by the Department of Interior, therefore it does not apply to National Forests or Army Corps properties.

Fetterer inquired if any natural surface trail managers allow e-bikes in the State. Marisavljevic answered that she believed Griffin Bike Park, managed by Vigo County Parks, may allow them, but that was the only property she was aware of. Fetterer commented on the ability to enforce the current laws prohibiting e-bikes from getting on the mountain biking trails. He also noted that the law is not well known at the properties, and that gate attendants often give out incorrect information. Fetterer inquired if the DNR would adopt a policy for the properties to clarify e-bikes. Marisavljevic responded that perhaps education of the current law would be a better first step.

Jay Jackson asked Fetterer what are the concerns of e-bikes on mountain bike trails. Fetterer noted a few including that e-bike users increased speed could account for an inability to ride in control, trail yielding especially on hills, and the possibility of e-bike users running out of power and lacking the ability to cycle back. Rollins commented that a lack of sound combined with the speed of e-bikes is a cause of concern for multi-use trails, especially with horses. Lastly, Fetterer noted a feared potential land managers using e-bikes as a means to restrict access to trails. Fetterer also recognized that many benefits of e-bikes, including for those that physical limitations. He noted regardless of a policy, it would be nice to have a consistent public message.

Nominations & Appointments

Marisavljevic announced that the Indiana DNR will accept nominations in December for five positions on the TAB whose terms expire next year. This includes environmental groups, hikers, mountain bikers, trail support groups, and users with disabilities.

Nominations must include name, position, and contact info. Self-nominations are acceptable as well as those from an organization or individual. All nominees will receive a questionnaire to fill out in January. From the nominations and questionnaires, Indiana DNR Director Cam Clark will make the appointments. Marisavljevic stated appointments would be made in February, in time for the March 5 meeting.

User Group Reports

ATVs

Garrett reported positive feedback from the ORV community regarding the 2019 Redbird SRA road construction. He noted unfortunately bad weather affected the annual Fall Night Ride in October, which usually is the biggest event at the property. Staff and volunteers will be looking how to overcome that next year, should weather ever be an issue again.

Bicyclists

Midgley cycled 93 miles of trails around Fort Wayne's bicycle network prior to the meeting. Quinn noted that Fort Wayne celebrated 120 miles of open trail last week. Midgley reported that the Pufferbelly Trail has 11 more miles planned. He plans to explore more of northeast Indiana's bike trails in the next few days.

Environmental Groups- No report.

Equestrians

Rollins informed the TAB of Clark Collins, founder of the Blue Ribbon Coalition and national recreation advocate, passing. She then reported that Indiana Trail Riders Association (ITRA) completed its yearend cleanup of Brown County State Park (BSCP). The group had received a \$10,000 grant from the Greenways Foundation (GF) for a gravel hauler. The hauler been very helpful in hardening many horse trails and improving their longevity.

Rollins announced a coalition of eight different groups, including Hoosier Backcountry Horsemen, came together to improve Trail 18 in Hoosier National Forest (HNF). The group successfully completed 104 feet of geotech draining.

Rollins reported on behalf of the side-by-side community that a Cancer Ride was held in Odon in September. This year the annual ride honored a local woman who had recently passed away and fundraised about \$34,000 to assist the family's medical expenses. Lastly, Rollins thanked Valleskey for introducing her to canoeing. She noted how wonderful the TAB is for introducing each member to the other's preferred recreation and bringing attention to the work their respective user groups are pursuing.

Four Wheel Drive Users – No report.

Health/Higher Education

Fritz stated that the Indiana State Department of Health (ISDH) manages a grant program that funds bicycle and pedestrian master plans for communities. There is currently \$40,000 available for this 50/50 match grant with the maximum request of \$20,000.

Applications are due December 19 and ISDH hope to fund three plans this round. They funded 15 master plans total so far. ISDH also manages a grant program for ‘tactical urbanization demonstration projects.’ These are temporary projects to increase safety for walking and biking. Last year, ISDH funded four projects. The grant provides \$10,000 in funds and requires no match. Applications are due Feb 20.

Fritz then reported on the state’s multi-agency workgroup, which involves ISDH, DNR, INDOT, and the Indiana Office of Tourism Development. The workgroup helped hire an intern to assist the DNR with NLT administration using funds from INDOT. Fritz, Marisavljevic, and Brandon Burgoa from INDOT, gave a presentation on their multi-agency workgroup up at the Indiana planning conference in October in Fort Wayne.

Hikers

Fletcher shared a letter from Bonnie Wilcoxson, from the Hoosier Hiking Council (HHC), thanking builders of trails that many enjoy. He then reported that HHC continues to work on the new trails at Cagles Mill Lake. HHC is also starting to work with The Nature Conservancy (TNC) on their trails. The first planned trail is Greens Bluff in Owen County. Fletcher then reported on three major trail races benefiting non-profits this past fall. HHC had their Knobstone Mini, Indiana Trail Running Association hosted the Tecumseh Trail Marathon in Yellowwood State Forest, and the Indiana Trail 100 at Chain O’Lakes had record turnout.

Mountain Biker

Fetterer reported that this year’s Brown County Epic was Hoosier Mountain Bike Association’s (HMBA) largest fundraiser. The event had almost 700 riders and raised \$45,000. HMBA held a grand opening of the Weed Patch Trail at BCSP, which was the first trail funded by their NLT grant to open. Over the winter, HMBA will be working on better signage of their mountain biking trail at BCSP. Lastly, Fetterer announced both the O’Bannon Adventure Ride at O’Bannon Woods State Park and Hassmer Fest at Versailles State Park had record numbers, and that each of those mountain bike events are growing yearly.

Off-Road Motorcyclists

Guthrie reported that he attended the AIM Expo in Columbus, Ohio. UTV sales eclipsing off-road motorcycles in 2018 into 2019 was the hot topic. Guthrie noted the ORV County map, which shows counties that allow ORV’s on county roads, might soon include Owen County since they recently passed an ordinance. Carman Jackson noted that once the DNR has the county ordinance, that they could update the map. Guthrie also attended the Vigo County side-by-side ride, which had 44 UTV’s ride 74 miles.

As of November, Guthrie reported that ABATE held 23 dirt bike classes in 2019, the most they have done in a year so far. He noted the Grad National Cross Country held in Crawfordsville was a very muddy, causing attendance to be down about 1,000 riders this year. Guthrie also attended the National Off-High Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) in Reno, as did Carman Jackson and Lewis Schuler, and came back with some good ideas.

Lastly, Guthrie discussed the growing concern of e-bikes vs. motorcycles. He argued that if it is electric, it is motorized, and therefore they are a motorcycle to a degree. He

referenced a flyer of an e-bike that has speeds far beyond class 3 and that the pedals are optional. He said that version of e-bike was similar to 450-motocross machine with its horsepower to weigh ratio.

Parks & Recreation Agencies – No report.

Pedestrians

Martin reported that the bikeshare program in Bloomington folded due to the presence of e-scooters. He noted that the e-scooters were causing extensive havoc. As such, the city council worked on e-scooter ordinance, which now serves as a model for others municipalities. Lastly, Martin said only two of the bike shops in Bloomington sell e-bikes, as they are slow to gain popularity in the city.

Snowmobiles – No report.

Trails Support Groups

Quinn reported that in October the GF held their Trails Gathering, which included 75 attendees. The GF also held six trail town workshops across the state, which saw 202 total attendees. She noted that feedback from the trail town workshops was supportive and perhaps worthwhile to have a statewide trail town program. GF are beginning the process of looking into it.

Quinn brought up the GF license plates program sold 1,500 specialized plates this year, up from 1,200 last year. The rise allowed GF to increase how much funds they can award in their grant program. The amount was previously \$5,000, and is now at \$10,000. GF gave four grants last month, two for NLT projects, one for maintenance equipment, and one for trail counters.

Quinn announced that the GF luncheon will be on April 16, 2020 and will feature Governor Holcomb as the keynote speaker. Lastly, Fort Wayne Trails just applied to the National Park Service for National Recreation Trail status for the Pufferbelly Trail.

Users with Disabilities – No report.

Water Trail Users

Easton stated that a low-head dam on the Elkhart River in Elkhart is beginning the process of a partial removal. Elkhart is also adding an access site downstream from the old dam as a greenspace initiative. (2:06:08) Additionally, a trail and trout fishery will be developed on the north branch Elkhart River by 2021. She reported a recent paddling fundraiser raised \$17,000 in one day by simply utilizing water trails.

Lastly, Easton reported that Elkhart County Waterways Alliance had a 2.5-mile river cleanup on the Elkhart River. 53 volunteers put in 246 hours of work and hauled out over 2,000 pounds of trash. She emphasized the amount of trash, over a 2.5-mile stretch, since it had only been 16 months since the last cleanup.

Konecny, a board member of Northwest Indiana Paddling Association (NWIPA), stated the club has held several cleanups and logjam removals on the East Calumet River over

the year to make the river accessible. He then reported multiple river cleanups around the state. They include: The Hoosier Canoe Club cleaned up a 10.1-mile stretch of the Big Raccoon River, Friends of the Big Blue River cleaned up on 8 miles of the Big Blue River, P4C Paddlers for Conservation cleaned up a part of the Tippecanoe River, and the Friends of the Iroquois River and Jasper County Soil and Water District cleaned up part of the Iroquois River. Valleskey added that Fall Creek through Fort Harrison is open.

Announcements

August 30-September 2, 2020- MATAG Conference, Grand Rapids, MI

2020 Meeting Dates

Marisavljevic noted the TAB meeting in June 2020 would be on the first Thursday of the month, as opposed to the last Thursday. Martin offered to host the March TAB meeting in Bloomington. He suggested a tour of Switchyard Park, the \$29 million mega-park that walks and talks.

Garrett discussed a new conference building / hotel coming to Sullivan. That, along with the Redbird SRA gatehouse construction, would make a good TAB destination when both are completed.

March 5, 2020 – Bloomington

June 4, 2020

September 3, 2020

December 3, 2020

Adjournment

Martin asked for a motion to adjourn. Easton made a motion and Fetterer seconded. Motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 5:45 PM.