

September 5th, 2019 3:00 PM EST  
Historic Wysor Street Depot  
700 E. Wysor Street  
Muncie, IN 47305

## Attendance

### Board Members Present:

ATV Users- Tim Garrett  
Bicyclists- Greg Midgley  
Environmental Groups- Kevin Hardie  
Equestrians- Yvette Rollins  
Four Wheel Drive Users- Ryan Sweany  
Health/Higher Education- Pete Fritz  
Hikers- Terry Fletcher  
Mountain Bikers- Jeff Fetterer  
Off-Road Motorcyclists- Rayce Guthrie  
Snowmobilers- Len Neisler  
Trails Support Groups- Angie Pool  
Water Trail Users- Margaret Easton

### Board Members Not Present:

Parks & Recreation Agencies- Travis Tranbarger  
Pedestrians- Pat Martin  
Users with Disabilities- David Meihls

### DNR Staff:

Allen Hurst- Outdoor Recreation  
Amy Marisavljevic- Outdoor Recreation  
Evan Kalember- Outdoor Recreation

### Guests:

Brandon Burgoa - INDOT  
David Rollins  
Dorothy Neisler  
Jay Jackson- ABATE

## Meeting Minutes

### Welcome & Introductions

Vice Chair Terry Fletcher, who served as acting Chair in Pat Martin's absence, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 3:06 PM EST. He thanked everyone in attendance for coming, Angie Pool for hosting, and Kevin Hardie for organizing the canoe trip. He then initiated introductions. All Trails Advisory Board (TAB) members, Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff, and guests introduced themselves.

### Approval of the Agenda

Fletcher called for approval of the agenda. Ryan Sweany motioned to approve the agenda and Tim Garrett seconded. Motion passed.

### Review and Approval of March 7, 2019 minutes

Amy Marisavljevic announced she incorporated Jay Jackson's and Greg Midgley's changes into the minutes. Fletcher called for a motion to approve the minutes with noted edits. Len Neisler moved to approve the minutes, Yvette Rollins seconded, motion passed.

## **DNR Report**

### **Next Level Trails (NLT) Update**

Marisavljevic reported that the second round of NLT was announced, and will be accepting applications from October 1 to November 1. The cut off time is 5pm EST for round two applications. She noted three minor changes from the previous grant round, which were: 1. One application, per applicant, per round, 2. Requiring a parcel map for projects with land acquisition to assist staff with understanding the project, 3. For Locally Significant projects, they added a 'Connection to Nature' category to further break up projects because of the competitiveness of the Local pool. Round two is a \$30 million round, with \$25 million for Regionally Significant projects, and \$5 million for Locally Significant projects. The third round is expected mid-2020.

### **State Trails Plan Update**

Marisavljevic stated that Greg Beilfuss is working on a draft for the State Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). She explains the SCORP is required for Land and Water Conservation Funding (LWCF), similar to the Trail Advisory Board for Recreational Trail Program funding. A new Indiana Trails Plan will be included in the SCORP as its own chapter. The plan is an update, since it only has a moderate amount of public input and not the full public engagement done every ten years, to provide a progress report on new laws, trends, and what progress has been made since the previous SCORP. Noticing that previous Indiana Trails Plans are not fully inclusive of all trail types, Marisavljevic notes she and her staff are going to work on being inclusive of all trail types and recreations.

### **Trail Network Gathering**

Marisavljevic announced that in conjunction with IPRA and the Greenways Foundation, the DNR will be presenting on a few key topics at the Trails Networked Gathering.

### **Redbird State Recreation Area (SRA)**

Lastly, Marisavljevic announced that Redbird SRA has reopened as the paved road project was complete. The gatehouse construction should start next year, assuming everything goes as planned. The gatehouse construction should not close the property. She notes record regular, or non-special event, attendance the weekend Redbird SRA reopened.

## **Old Business**

## **New Business**

### **Cardinal Greenway Presentation**

Pool gave a presentation on the Cardinal Greenway, which extends 62 miles in five counties, has been in existence for 25 years, and was recently designated in the Rail-Trail Hall of Fame. Cardinal Greenways has a 19 member board, with four full-time staff, and two temporary staff. Approximately 300 – 400 volunteers help year round. The Rail-to-Trails Conservatory (RTC) has designated the Cardinal Greenway as a 'Gateway Trail' for the newly unveiled Great American Rail Trail (GART) in Indiana. Pool was recognized as Indiana's Outstanding Trail Leader at the International Trails Symposium

in May for her work with Cardinal Greenway. Many of the guests at today's meeting got to visit the new bridge and under construction Kitselman Trailhead on Muncie's east side. The project will provide another key connection between the Cardinal Greenway and White River Trail. Cardinal Greenways is looking to fill the gap between Gaston and Gas City using Next Level Trail funding, but is having trouble finding donations to use as match. They hope to apply in round three.

Fletcher asked if the bike share program was subsidized and Pool replied that they are not and are free, but they are looking at charging a nominal fee to assist with maintenance in the future. Easton asked about the Greenway connecting to the Blueway. Pool responded that she would like to, and that the Kitselman Bridge would be a good spot for that. Hardie noted that access sites could be simple and not have to be an extensive parking area with a full 360 degree turning areas for trucks, Easton agree. Pool noted that they would also like to extend their horse trail, but need volunteer groups with the knowledge. Lastly, Pool announced that the Cardinal Greenways is hosting the Walk Indiana event on September 7. There is also Bike-tober fest on October 5 to highlight the southern section of the trail in Wayne County.

### **River Council Request**

Easton has been in contact with a motivated individual who would like to create an Indiana River Council, noting that Illinois and Michigan have a council they could look at as models. She asked that this be added to Decembers TAB agenda and if she could bring the interested party to the December meeting as a guest. Marisavljevic agreed that this person could come and suggested focusing on river recreation such as water trails at the moment. Marisavljevic also noted the DNR could help facilitate by providing a list of stakeholder they knew and getting a conference rooms for a potential meeting. Hardie suggested the Trail Advisory Board could be a leader in this discussion. Marisavljevic said that now might be a great time as more individuals, groups, and municipalities are interested in water trails due to an increase in popularity of paddling.

### **Emergency Service Inclusion**

In response to an incident on the White River, which eight people lost their lives, Hardie suggested that an emergency responder representative be on the TAB. The group went on to talk about trail safety issues, especially as it pertained to water trails, off-road vehicles (ORVs), and snowmobiles. Marisavljevic stated that perhaps law enforcement, such as Conservation Officers, would be the right place to start since they have broad knowledge of these. She suggested the first step is to invite someone to the December meeting rather than move to add the position to the board right away. Easton suggested they might have a spot as a permanent guest or advisory position if not a board member. Marisavljevic also added that if the TAB likes this presentation, they could opt for a yearly presentation on safety.

## **Other Business**

### **Statewide Active Transportation Plan**

Brandon Burgoa said that by the end of September INDOT will be finishing their first Statewide Active Transportation Plan. They mostly focus on transportation, but are also touching on recreational needs. INDOT is also looking at the mobility corridors for suitability to be redesigned or amended for alternative transportation, but this is unlikely. There will be a section to suggest transportation planning depending on the road. The report also hosts a trail cost calculator to estimate the cost of a trail construction with different lengths and materials.

## User Group Reports

### ATVs

Garrett happily announced that Redbird has reopened! He notes counties near Redbird are becoming more ORV friendly, and some parks are also allowing ORV's. To use an ORV on the road you only need to be registered. Insurance, among other rules, varies from county to county. The Night Ride at Redbird will be on Oct. 19-20. Garrett notes that even if you've been during the day, the trails at night are completely different. Poole asked about the Hall-O-Wheelin tie in, to which Marisavljevic notes this year the DNR is hosting the Night Ride and hay ride with no volunteer hosted haunted trail this year.

### Bicyclists—

Midgley reported that he biked nine trails and 140 miles from Plainfield to the Wysor Depot, on a combination of trail and county roads. This allowed him to see a lot of the trail progress completed this year. He announced that two days prior to the meeting, Kokomo finished paving their Industrial Heritage Connection to the Nickel Plate. The Midland Trace going from Westfield to Noblesville is finished, which can now get from the Monon to Morse Reservoir. Plainfield finished paving their half-mile extension of the Vandalia trail to the edge of town. Indianapolis and Plainfield have added bike share stations, but they are not in operation yet. In Westfield, the trail bridge over State Route 32 on the Monon is in place, and they are finishing the approaches. The Converse Trail connecting to the Cardinal Greenway is now through the center of its town. Midgley met with Mike Kuepper in Peru, who is working hard on the connection from the Nickel Plate to the Converse. Marisavljevic added that this connection would tie together the two longest rail-trails in Indiana.

Midgley says his route back will be 110 miles, with half of that on trail. He noted the growth of trails and seeing pieces coming together is great. Avon just finished a mile connection on the Ronald Regan Trail. Jay Jackson asked if there was a map he used to plan this all out. Midgley answered the DNR Indiana Trail Finder is the most comprehensive planning tool and the best starting point. Midgley talked about his trip and planning the route. He notes it was easy in sections around Kokomo and Sheridan, but US Bike Route 35 was not taking advantage of newly constructed trails. An email was sent notifying them of this. Rollins asked about equestrians on paved trails, and about the use of soft shoes on paved trails. Midgley responded that horses on paved trails is difficult because of manure, the skittish nature of horses, and the possible chipping of the asphalt.

### **Environmental Groups**

Hardie reported that the rivers are changing because of climate change and areas are missing out on the economic benefits of rivers due to largely varying water levels. Muncie is removing three low-head dams. Indianapolis is exploring the option alongside Hamilton County as part of their White River Plan. The governance right will be the driving factor, as well as cultural and arts Institutions that are recognizing the importance of blueways and greenways. The Hoosier Environmental Council is hosting a Bike for the Mounds fundraiser on September 14. The annual White River Festival will be in down Indianapolis September 14-29. The event is fundraiser and awareness tool for the White River. It will again feature a dragon boat race and river cleanups.

### **Equestrians**

Rollins announced that the Back Country Horsemen of America have taken an official stance against e-bikes on multi-use trails due to safety concerns about their interactions with horses. She notes that when horses can hear their surroundings they are prepared, but the e-bikes are quiet and the horses aren't aware of their presence which can be dangerous to riders. Hundreds of miles of trail for e-bikes have opened out West. The e-bikes being very far out, 50+ miles out West, could lead to even more injuries out in the wilderness. Rollins is also worried about getting off the trail safely when the e-bikes can approach much faster than a traditional bicycle. Fetterer brought up the idea that people on e-bikes may not be the fittest, or experienced, that can also lead to issues. Fetterer clarified the function of e-bikes' electrical assistance stopping at 28mph for Class 3, and 20mph for Class 1 & 2.

At the time of the meeting there was a horse loose in the Charles C. Deam Wilderness in Hoosier National Forest (HNF) after it and the rider were attacked by bees. The horse was still fully tacked, and Rollins asked if TAB members could share the information with their groups that recreate near HNF. There is a charity ride in October at Deam Lake and all proceeds go to equine assistance programs. The Midwest Trail Ride near Norman, Indiana is the weekend of September 14 with about two-thousand riders. There is an issue with equipment training and the US Forest Service, where equestrian volunteers is being asked to get certified for ORVs and other equipment. This was not previously required. There was an open round table meeting to talk about the HNF Plan in Bloomington. The plan includes construction of a cable fence at the Blackwell Horse Camp. Rollins researched it and saw no other national forests with cable as fencing, and they are bypassing the public comment period by changing the category to maintenance.

### **Four Wheel Drive Users**

Sweany reported good attendance at the Four Wheel Drive Association event held at Interlake SRA in early August. The 38<sup>th</sup> Four Wheel Drive Jamboree will be at the State Fairgrounds on September 20-22. October 26 is the Haspin Acres 'Toys for Tots' event. 2020 will be the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary for the Indiana Four Wheel Drive Association. The annual event will be in Madison, IN.

### **Health/Higher Education**

Pete Fritz reports that a state government multi-agency work group is exploring different ways to promote active transportation around walking and biking in Indiana. The group is working from a MOU with funding to do shared programming. One of the tasks the group is working on is identifying the technical assistance needs of communities so they may offer some free assistance on how to make walking and biking safer in communities in the future. A survey will be designed and deployed in fall.

A bike-ped crash analysis report will be conducted, to build upon a previous report to identify hotspots around the Indiana by looking through crash data and police reports. He notes that Brown County is a hotspot, most likely because of increased recreational rider numbers. Fritz notes the goal is not to raise a flag, but understand where and why this crashes are happening and to deploy a positive response. The group is looking to provide workshops around Active Living next year, but planning where and when this year. Funds will be used to hire an intern to assist with DNR's Next Level Trails program. He encouraged if anyone knew a student or recent grad who would be interested to please let Marisavljevic or Fritz know.

### **Hikers**

Fletcher state the Hoosier Hikers Council (HHC) is working on Cagles Mill on every third Saturday. The Knobstone Mini is a fundraiser for HHC in September. The Tecumseh Trail Marathon is in October. A 50K distance was added last year. At Chain O'Lakes State Park, the Esko Glacier 40 Mile is another fundraiser for the park.

### **Mountain Biker**

Fetterer reported that Brown County State Park (BCSP) is opening up the new Weed Patch Trail next month. The Hoosier Mountain Biking Association (HMBA) is working on creating a world class signage system on trails and make some of them directional because of an uptick in traffic on trails.

In response to a Facebook comment asking about HMBA spending, the organization held a meeting inviting all to attend to look at their books and ask any questions. Marisavljevic commented on their tracking of trail development and maintenance costs, over \$3.5 million, and its usefulness for trail managers. As fall is mountain biking season there are many upcoming events. The Brown County Epic Mountain Bike Festival is Oct. 11–13 at BCSP. Hassmer Fest is September 27–29 at Versailles State Park. The Gravel Grovel is November 30 in HNF. Yvette Rollins asked to know the Brown County Epic route as early as possible to forward that information to the equestrian community.

Fetterer noted that E-Bikes are becoming an issue on mountain bike trails, usually by users that are new to the sport. The law says that e-bikes are not allowed on mountain bike trails unless specified as allowed. National Parks allow e-bikes anywhere bikes are allowed, but State Properties, outside of the motorized facilities, and USDA National Forests does not. Fetterer said he seen hunters using E-Bikes to get out to their hunting spots.

### **Off-Road Motorcyclists**

Guthrie reported a motorcross race on August 24-25 in Crawfordsville, on the same weekend as Motorcycles on Meridian. There were 82 riders at the Lawrence County Recreational Park (LCRP) the previous weekend, following three weekends of being closed for other events. The most noticeable special event at LCRP was The Gathering of the Juggalos. The American International Motorcycle (AIM) Expo will be in Columbus, OH on September 19-20. A dual sport event called the Buffalo 500 on September 28-29 for road and off-road in Bartholomew and Brown counties. Guthrie reports there will be a National Off-Highway Vehicle Conservation Council (NOHVCC) meeting in Reno October 16-19. There will be trail maintenance training at NOHVCC. GNCC race in Crawfordsville October 26-27. First campout and recreation Halloween event also on October 26-27.

**Parks & Recreation Agencies** – No report.

**Pedestrians** – No report.

**Snowmobiles** Neisler attended the International Snowmobile Congress in June, 2019 in Grand Rapids, MI. Attendees are snowmobile volunteers, enthusiasts, and administrators from all over the world. Neisler was asked by American Council of Snowmobile Associations to create an endowment for members to donate to, in order to perpetuate the legacy of snowmobiling the US. It was launched this year and is managed by an organization out of Lansing, MI. Donations to the endowment don't get taxed and do not count as income, essentially a pass through. He announced this year's Indiana Snowmobile Association's ride-in will be at Tree Tops, MI Feb 6 – 10, 2020.

### **Trails Support Groups**

Pool is helping Epley with a southern Indiana trail presentation on October 11. Pool will also be on the Maintenance Panel during the Trail Network Gathering on October 17. The educational and networking event, hosted by the Indiana Parks and Recreation Association and the Greenways Foundation, is for trail managers and advocates Pool confirmed the Greenways Foundation luncheon will be April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2020, in which Governor Holcomb will be speaking.

At the end of October through November 2019, there will a series of workshops about Trail Towns with a national trail town consultant. The workshops will be held in various locations throughout the state and will talk about the connections between trails, tourism, and economic development. The Greenways Foundation is working on its legislative agenda and will host a webinar on it. Marisavljevic commented that the trail town concepts are applicable to all recreational trail facilities, not just bike/ped trails.

**Users with Disabilities** – No report.

### **Water Trail Users**

Easton attended the Indiana Paddler Rendezvous in Lafayette on Wildcat Creek. Wildcat Guardians Organization maintains 25% of the 84 mile creek. Easton noted the main concerns for the Wildcat Guardians were a need for signage on bridges and increased education.

Easton attended a fundraiser called Paddle for Parkview hosted by Parkview Hospital. Easton reported that healthcare is beginning to look to the rivers for funding and for therapy. Alongside partners, the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association opened an additional 1.5 mile on the Little Calumet River with over six-hundred hours of work. The river has ADA ramps at both ends now.

### **Announcements**

September 28 - National Public Lands Day

September 31 – October 3 (Four Days) – National K9 Competition, Lawrence Recreation Park

October 26-27 – Redbird Night Ride

### **2019 Meeting Dates**

December 5, 2019 – Pokagon State Park.

March 5, 2020 – Offered to be hosted in Bloomington.

### **Adjournment**

Fletcher asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Hardie so moved and Fetterer seconded. The motion passed and the meeting adjourned at 5:02.

