



MN Rovers Trail Committee meeting, April 29 2004, Ed Solstad's lair

In Attendance: Mary Gute, Ed Solstad, John Elliott, Tom Harris, Torsten Muller

MN Trails Council (MNTC) Update (from April 23)

Mary gave a brief update of the issues discussed at the last MN Trails Council meeting the previous Sunday, in particular the pending re-route of the NCST. Environmental Assessment upcoming, with public comment period from May 24 to June 25 and legislation introduced to congress by October.

Discussed the need to mobilize the Rovers' membership to write letters to National Park Service and contact their respective representatives in the Minnesota delegation. It was also suggested to get the resorts along the North Shore and the Gunflint Trail involved and solicit their support. Possibility of sample letter or list with discussion points was mentioned. Mary agreed to rouse the Rover membership to write in with support.

Donation from J. Wellman / Clearwater Trail Clearing Trips

Rovers received a donation from James Wellman for use on the Clearwater trail clearing trips in the spring. The committee agreed to send photos and a trip report to James after the trail clearing trips are completed. The trip leaders are encouraged to have participants write trip reports for the web-site and for quotes in future brochures.

This year, Rovers have to pay for the boat shuttle and use of bunk house at Clearwater Lodge. Tom negotiated a 40% discount with the owners, which will come to \$459 for three trips with nine participants each (27 trip participants), less for fewer people. The Forest Service typically paid for this expense, but now covers only 50% of the cost due to budget constraints. Mary will contact Judy Ness of the FS in Grand Marais after the trips to settle the financial issues.

Future Trail Clearing Trips

During the MNTC meeting, the Itasca-Morraine chapter inquired about getting their trips listed in the MWTA brochure, so the Rovers will have a possibility to list our mechanized trips as well -- In particular since the Kek Club wasn't able to fill all their listed trips this year. For next year's trips, Mary agreed to try and have the leaders recruited, and the schedule ready by Thanksgiving to allow potential trip coordinators ample time to plan.

Gayle Coyer from the SHTA offered to publicize Rovers' trail clearing trips in the "Ridgeline", so Tom will approach the Rovers board to seek to exempt service trips from the membership requirement. This will also be useful should we get an AHS trip together in the future. The listing in the SHTA newsletter also requires more planning-ahead than currently practiced.

To facilitate recruitment for Rovers trail clearing trips, Rudi Hargesheimer from Midwest Mountaineering offered to provide gift certificates or water bottles as a "signing bonus". During

the discussion with Rudi at the Midwest Outdoor Adventure Expo, Tom and Torsten found out that production cost for custom-printed Nalgene bottles is \$5.85 for a quantity of 144 bottles. The committee agreed to have Torsten approach Rudi and inquire about a cost-share for an order of 144 custom printed bottles, showing the Midwest Mountaineering and the Border Route Trail logos. The bottles could be given away to trip participants and sold to the Rovers membership as a fund-raising opportunity. The use of the bottles by Rovers is expected to increase exposure of the BRT to general public when Rover members use their bottles outside of Rover events.

The possibility of a joint backpacking trip with the SHTA, on both the SHT and BRT, was discussed as a means to get more recognition of the trail to SHT users. Plan subject to time of the committee members.

Future Projects for the Border Route Trail

- Obtain 501(c)(3) tax exempt status, now that the Incorporation is filed. John Elliott agreed to take care of the paperwork.
- Erect kiosks at the trail ends and the connector trails. The kiosks will have to conform to the NCST standards, but the committee agreed to have kiosks that allow swift additions of material, such as warnings about trail closings. In total, there would be at least eight kiosks, with additional kiosks possible for road crossings along the way. Torsten will look into the requirements for the kiosks and obtain a copy of the NCTA trail standard.
- Signing of trail sections outside the BWCA with new BRT logo. It was agreed to use laminated paper print-outs in the interim, until more permanent markers, such as the style the SHT uses, are printed. The need for additional signs reading "To 360 overlook" or "Spur Trail" was agreed on. Mary will have two dozen trail logos printed and laminated.
- The BRT lacks hiker-only camp sites. Tom reported that building camp sites at least 200 yards away from lakes and streams simplifies the review process and insures that the camp sites are not used by canoeists. Tom will hike the trail to scout for possible locations this summer. Possible locations are desired near Bridalveil Falls and along the Cross River (outside BWCA)
- Publication of a brochure was discussed. The brochure could include a list of suggested hikes, info about resorts that offer shuttles. To prepare for a brochure, we will ask trip coordinators this spring to request their participants, especially first-timers, to help survey for remarkable features and contribute short reports for the web-site. Creation of brochure was postponed due to time constraints of the committee members.
- The need for more and newer photos from the trail was expressed. Tom in planning to lead a "get acquainted" trip in the summer with the condition that participants either take pictures or write about the trail. This would spread the burden of writing a brochure on more shoulders. Torsten suggested to give a slide presentation about the BRT at next spring's Midwest Outdoor Adventure Expo to further increase recognition of the trail
- The re-route of the trail around the clearing east of McFarland Lake was mentioned as a project which will have to happen but has to wait because of a lack of man-power to do the scouting, lobbying and building. In the interim, cairns will be used to guide hikers across the clearcut.

The next trail committee meeting was set for Thursday, June 3rd 2004 at 7:30pm at Ed Solstad's house.