

**Sunrise Trail Coalition Meeting  
January 9, 2008  
Down East RC&D office, Cherryfield**

Present: Bill Ceckler, Gary Edwards, Andrea Ednie, John Brace, Kathleen Shannon, Eleody Libby, Charlie Corliss, Jim Fisher, Maggie Warren, Dave Wood, Tora Johnson, Polly Ceckler, Stephanie Clement, David Whitney, and Tim Tunney

Meeting called to order at 1:10 PM by Bill Ceckler. Sally Jacobs is sick today. The November Minutes were approved with suggested corrections, which Maggie will make.

### **Introductions**

#### **Treasurer's Report**

Eleody distributed the 2006 report. We discussed whether Sunrise Trail is required to file the Form 990. Our revenues were below \$25K, suggesting that we might not have to file. Jim said we should probably file a 990 even if we don't meet the conditions so we will be on the web site GuideStar. We may be penalized at this point if our income and charitable contributions are over the allowable amount. Our records need to be in good order to fill out this form. Gary will do some research and report back. The deadline to file the 990 for 2007 is April 15<sup>th</sup>. (NB: We did not need to file last year, but we must file this year.)

January 2008 financial report disbursed. Jim will check to see if we can get a nonprofit version of QuickBooks to make Eleody's job easier. Dave Wood moved that the Treasurer's report be approved. Maggie Warren seconded the motion, and all approved.

#### **Charlie Corliss's Report**

On 12/22, Parks and Lands met with Plymouth Engineering; he expects that the bid package will be put out in the next week or two. The bid package will be put on a DVD and sent to companies nationwide. A pre-bid-package submission meeting will be held in mid-February, probably in Machias. By mid-March, this process will be completed; bids will be open soon thereafter, then awarded to vendor. Anyone interested in this process can ask contact Charlie with questions. Charlie hopes that construction will start in early May. It is estimated that it will take 8 month to remove rails. There will be questions about sources of gravel. Bottom line: Allow 18 months—end of 2009—for the project to be totally completed. Work will begin in the Machias area (from Whitneyville to E. Machias)—the epicenter of the trail. The contractor can decide where to go from there. No helicopter photo survey done yet. This was supposed to help bidders, but they can go on Google for the type of information it would have provided.

Calais Snowmobile Club: Charlie talked to them about the trail in the Calais area. He will work on that more with them. He will talk to Jeremy about it first, since Jeremy has already started working on the trails project in Calais.

Deed survey on hold because of snow.

Washington Junction. Crobb Box will give us an easement. The Board thanked Bill for working so hard on this. Jasper Carter who lives at Washington Junction will give us an easement. Sawyers sound enthusiastic about giving us some easements also. Charlie reports positive activity going on in Washington County.

There was discussion as to who will groom the trail after it is built. Charlie says we will try to get a municipal grant from Ellsworth or Machias to do it, probably matching 75-25. Some donation can be in-kind. Snowmobile clubs can't handle it. Dave Rodrigues had asked Charlie to find out what the snowmobile clubs have for equipment. An ideal travel surface for snowmobiles, x-country skiers, etc., would be 10 to 12 feet wide.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Mapping Committee**

Tora gave Charlie maps to look over. There has been no meeting of that committee yet. Tora needs feedback. The maps are formatted for Arc Reader, public domain software available online at [www.esri.com](http://www.esri.com). Charlie needs to renew his GIS software license, which will come in handy for different projects. Tora can train anyone how to use a GPS easily. UMM has several GPS units that they can use for trail mapping projects. Tora's group does service projects. In May they will be looking for a project.

### **Geocaching Update**

[www.Downeastexplorer.org](http://www.Downeastexplorer.org), a downeast Maine geo-tourism clearing house, has been created by Jim Fisher. He is working with trail and byway groups to create small interpretive panels that will be located along the DEST, Schoodic and Blackwoods Byways. Students may be able to help ground-truth the locations, find sites and develop content for the panels and for the website. Sites are in Hancock and Washington counties. A scenic byway grant is paying for these signs.

### **Boxcar**

Kathleen reported no news. No stenciling because of the weather.

### **Spring Business Conference**

Draft schedule and Save the Date posters were distributed. Speakers are nearly set; follow-up to prospective speakers is being done now. Eleody will mail agreement to University of Maine at Machias re meeting rooms, lunch menu, and snacks, etc. Jeremy has been working with a number of land trusts and representatives of some of these land trusts want to attend the conference. Jim will put the registration form on our website.

David Whitney cautioned that at the Business Conference, we explain what *railbanking* means: The railroad *can* come back. Potential entrepreneurs should be aware of this. We need to look at that situation and to where the trail may be moved in the future should that be the case. Rights-of-way for power lines cannot be signed over to another entity; individual landowners who have leased ROWs to utility company must do that.

MaineDOT is calling the building of the Down East Sunrise Trail “a renovation of an existing rail corridor.”

Bill and Polly volunteered to go to Ellsworth and see where they can post Save the Date! posters in store windows, on bulletin boards, etc.

Bill reported that the **Surface Transportation and Recreation Center (STAR) meeting** went well today. MaineDOT will contract with HCPC to manage this project. Jim prepared a Proposal for the Feasibility Analysis and distributed it at the STAR meeting. A GANTT chart shows the completion date as December 2008. DEST, excursion rail, Ellsworth chamber office, the City of Ellsworth and others will be involved. The project team will ask for input from businesses, etc., as to what they want included.

Downeast Heritage Rail will acquire two, maybe three, passenger cars by mid-summer 2008. Their planned route will be from Washington Junction to Ellsworth Falls—6 miles.

- Tora said she would provide maps for the conference as needed.
- UMM needs a week’s notice as to headcount. On-site will have to be estimated
- Sally will write the letter to send to sponsors.

#### **NEW BUSINESS**

**Work Plan for 2008.** Bill is not prepared to discuss this today. Will table until next meeting when Sally will be present.

#### **Sunrise Trail Coalition Meeting Schedules (2008)**

2/27, 3/26, 4/2 (conference), and 4/23 at 1 PM at Charlie’s office. **Regular meetings will be held at 1:00 PM until further notice at the Down East RC&D office, 87 Milbridge Rd., Cherryfield.**

**How we will organize the Management Committee.** Appoint subcommittee to work with Charlie and David Rodrigues? Issues such as grooming, signage, accessibility to trail, limiting access to trails, etc. Bill suggested we table this item for the next meeting.

#### **Talking Points for Interviews**

Stephanie will start a sheet of, and Jim will post it to the website. This will help us all be ready when journalists call us for information about the Trail.

#### **Announcements**

Towns are beginning to look at ways to connect to the Trail. Cherryfield has received a grant to connect to the trail. They will hire a consultant to create a pedestrian plan to make town more interesting to visitors. Additional funds from MaineDOT are available for integrating rail trail as an asset to towns. Some call it village revitalization.

Bud Newell’s replacement is Mick Rogers.

The meeting was adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted, Maggie Warren, Secretary