

Sunrise Trail Coalition

Meeting Minutes 5/27/09, 4:30 p.m. – 6:00 p.m.

The Maine Grind, Ellsworth

Present: Bob Bachorik, Candy Bachorik, Tony Barrett, Sue Ellen Bordwell, Bill Ceckler, Polly Ceckler, Stephanie Clement, Charlie Corliss, Shirley Cotton, Jim Fisher, Sally Jacobs, Jay Johnson, Sandy Johnson, Eleody Libby, Patrick Munhall, Adam Paul, Kevin Ramsdell, Jack Schmelzer (?), Thomas Stevenson, Bob Uravin, Dave Wood

1. Introductions

Bill asked everyone to introduce themselves. He said there are two additions to the agenda – a discussion of the trail surface and project management.

2. Treasurer's Report

Eleody said that she met with Dave Wood who will be taking over the Treasurer's position. They went over tracking memberships, IRS filings, reports, etc. The coalition thanked Eleody for her service and presented her with a golden spike and certificate. Eleody said that in order for her name and Sally's name to be removed from the checking account and to have Bill Ceckler and Dave Wood added, an approved motion must be presented to the bank.

MOTION: To remove Sally Jacobs and Eleody Libby as approved signatories to the Sunrise Trail Coalition bank account and to add Dave Wood and Bill Ceckler as signatories.
MADE BY: Sally Jacobs
SECOND: Polly Ceckler
VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

3. Approve Minutes of the Last Meeting

MOTION: To approve the minutes of the April Sunrise Trail Coalition meeting.
MADE BY: Polly Ceckler
SECOND: Sally Jacobs
VOTE: Unanimous in favor.

4. MDOC/MDOT Update

Charlie reported that the Hancock parking area is complete. Charlie reported that the dispute with Mr. Henderson over ownership of the tracks is still pending in court. Tony asked whether Mr. Henderson owns two sections of the trail. Charlie replied that he owns sections in both Hancock and Washington Counties, which have separate courts. Presently, he has not made any filings in Washington County, and Charlie is seeking an opinion from the Maine Department of Transportation (MDOT) attorneys whether they will be allowed to traverse Mr. Henderson's properties even if a temporary injunction against rail removal is granted. Charlie reported that rail removal has been delayed until the first or second week of June. The contractors will start in Harrington where work ceased last year.

Charlie said that he has completed a report of what needs to be done to open the Down East Sunrise Trail from Whitneyville to Machias. One culvert had an issue, and some ditch work is needed. Charlie said that the list of projects on the Whitneyville section is supposed to be

completed this week with the exception of a snowmobile project that will be done in winter. He added that a guard rail will be put up in Machias to prevent people from parking on the trail. Charlie said that two sections of the surface will need to be re-done because they did not pass inspection. Charlie has been working to identify changes that are needed in the culverts.

Sally asked about the big rocks on the surface of the trail. Charlie said that the trail surface has been accepted, and the bigger rocks will be kicked away from the trail as ATV's use it. Dave asked if these bigger rocks would interfere with cyclists, and Charlie responded that it is uncertain. Charlie added that the trail specifications were based on the Jay to Farmington trail standards, and the ATVs will throw aside the larger rocks. Bill said that he thought that the trail surface was supposed to be 3/4" or less rocks, but it seems to be bigger than that.

Charlie said that the Machias to Whitneyville section will be open for Trails Day and he hopes to have the trail complete to Hancock by the fall.

Stephanie asked whether Charlie had been coordinating with Bangor Hydro on the electricity reliability project. She had heard that Bangor Hydro would be putting in new power lines and poles and would be using the trail for access. Charlie and Sally have been coordinating with Bangor Hydro and reported that sections of the trail may have to be closed while they are out there. Sally said that any damage they do to the trail will have to be repaired. Jim added that power lines will be on single poles that are tall. He added that it is not clear how many lines will be on each pole. Sally said that the power lines will be on the other side of the trail from Schoodic Mountain, so hopefully the negative impact on the scenery will be minimized. Charlie said that Bangor Hydro will be going to permitting in December.

Charlie had hats and t-shirts made for the Down East Sunrise Trail.

5. Rally Set-up

Bill said that the Maine Grind will be able to accommodate 70 people downstairs, and if more space is needed, the rally could be moved upstairs. Polly and Sandy agreed to staff a membership table for the Sunrise Trail Coalition at the rally. At the event, Bill will welcome guests and invite them to become members and trail volunteers. Charlie will then give his slide show.

A discussion ensued about volunteerism on the trail. Stephanie recommended that the Maine Department of Conservation set the volunteer projects that are needed and provide initial training. Tom (?) offered the assistance of the Adventure Motorcyclists of Maine and described the organization. It has about 60 members in the state. He explained that adventure motorcyclists are allowed to use gravel roads and multi-use trails, but not ATV trails. Tom (?) said that motorcyclists want to be good stewards and acknowledged that sometimes a few people ruin the experience for everyone.

Charlie said that he doesn't expect much maintenance work the first few years. If there is a major maintenance project needed, the Maine Department of Conservation will contract out the work. Brushing should be taken care of since the trail is within a broad rail corridor. Charlie said that replacing signage could be an issue and that volunteers could be useful in conducting trail surveys. Sally added that volunteers could help with trash pick-up.

Bob said that when a bridge needed to be replaced on the Jay/Farmington trail, the Maine Department of Conservation coordinated the effort, but involved others. Bill wondered whether skiers could learn to groom the trail to relieve some of the pressure on the snowmobile club groomers. Sally also recommended setting up a host program on the trail. Jim also recommended planning events and races to build local support for the trail.

6. National Trails Day

Sally recommended that everyone meet in Machias at 9:30 a.m. to set up banners at the boxcar in Machias. At 10 a.m., Commissioner Pat McGowan, Betsy Fitzgerald and others will speak. Invitations were sent to all the state politicians. The parade permit has been secured to allow ATVs, and Charlie added that this year, the ATVs will have a police escort back to their trailers. At 10:30 a.m., everyone will parade to the Whitney Tool Shed where there will be a barbecue and concert. At 12:30 p.m., there will be an optional ride to Whitneyville and back. Bill is working on getting tents and tables. Dave brought the maps and brochures for the event.

Charlie said he would check the definitions of motorized and non-motorized uses on the trails. (NOTE: After the meeting, Stephanie received from Pat Munhall the legal definition of ATV and other information resources). The coalition invited the motorcyclists to attend National Trails Day in Machias to help combat the concerns that some people have regarding motorcycle use on the trail.

7. Next Meeting

Sally said that Dan Stewart from the Maine Department of Transportation is not able to come to the Sunrise Trail Coalition meetings. He has requested monthly meetings in Augusta on the third Wednesday of the month. The goal of these meetings is to coordinate management, maintenance, construction, and outreach among MDOT, MDOC, and the Sunrise Trail Coalition. Sally, Bill, and Charlie will attend these meetings.

The next meeting of the Sunrise Trail Coalition was set for June 24th at 1:00 p.m. at the Down East RC&D offices in Cherryfield. **(PLEASE NOTE: this meeting has been rescheduled to Wednesday, July 1st at 1 p.m. at Helen's Restaurant in Machias.**

8. Kiosks

Kathleen Shannon was going to contact Scott Ramsey regarding the use of the East Coast Greenway kiosk plans, but this can also be covered during the monthly meetings with MDOT and MDOC. Jim asked if a kiosk could be placed at the boxcar in Machias, and Charlie thinks it may be, but it probably would not be visible from the road.

9. Trail Surface

Tony said he had had the opportunity to tour sections of the trail. He was impressed with the teams working on the trail, and that the culverts and ditches were robust. He said that the sections of the trail where the existing surface was left were compact, but uneven. Charlie said that a final trail surface will be added on top. After the meeting adjourned, Tony showed slides of the different trail surfaces he had encountered.

**Respectfully submitted,
Stephanie M. Clement
Secretary**