



Discovery Routes Coordinating Council Meeting

February 20, 2008

North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority's Natural Classroom
15 Janey Avenue, North Bay

Trail Partners Present:

See attached sign-in sheet

Also Present:

Jennifer McCourt, Program Manager, Discovery Routes

Julia Hogan, Marketing Assistant, Discovery Routes

1. Introductions

Mark King introduced Discovery Routes and began the meeting.

2. Regional Projects Overview

a. Trans Canada Trail Progress (slide show)

Discovery Routes presented a slideshow of the construction of the Trans Canada Trail through the Municipality of Callander. Discovery Routes plans to approach the Municipality of Callander and suggest that they be responsible for maintaining the new TCT the same way they are maintaining the Cranberry Trail. There is a potential to include those living in Callander in the grand opening celebration of the TCT by having the community decide on an official name for the route.

b. Trail Map and Guide

Discovery Routes is working with the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council on a "Trail Guide for Healthy Living" which will include information and maps for the official trails in the Near North region. Along with the guide, Discovery Routes is creating a new trail map that will fulfill the region's need for up-to-date trail information. This map will accompany the guide, but will also be available independently at no cost. Advertising space is being sold on the map to recover the printing costs and as a fundraiser. A business card size ad (2" x 3.75") is being sold at \$400, with special rates available for larger ads.

c. Youth Program

Discovery Routes has applied for funding to develop an educational program for youth on the local trails to encourage physical activity. The Near North District School Board has expressed an interest in the program. Rainbow Routes has a similar program, "Learning Through Trails" which will be used as a model when developing the curriculum-based lessons. Discovery Routes will work with the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority, the Communities in Action Fund, and Take Heart on this program.

d. Membership

Discovery Routes has launched a new membership campaign along with the first edition of the digital newsletter, *Trail Tales*. Discovery Routes' membership fees are as follows: Individual Memberships are \$12 for 12 months, Family Memberships are \$24 for 12 months, Trail Partner Memberships and Business Memberships are both \$120 for 12 months. Benefits of becoming a member of Discovery Routes includes notice of trail events and trail openings across the region, keeping up-to-date with a digital newsletter – 'Trail Tales', being able to vote at the Annual General Meetings, cooperative marketing opportunities, special event assistance, and helping improve the quality of community life.

e. Almaguin Highlands Trails and Tours

Discovery Routes is working with the Almaguin Highlands Economic Development Committee to develop business opportunities in the Almaguin Highlands. The project will involve an inventory of the trails and trail amenities in the Almaguin Highlands. The trail information will be provided in a format that will be easy for businesses and municipalities to access and distribute to visitors in the region. The municipalities in the Almaguin Highlands are interested in moving this project forward, though details still need to be finalized. If this project proves to be successful, there will be an opportunity for Discovery Routes to propose the same project to other areas that may be interested in having an easily accessible trails inventory on hand.

3. Local Trail Partner Report

a. Magnetawan and Area Business Association

The Magnetawan and Area Business Association is having concerns the Dam Trail. The trail that has been used for many years is accessed via a lock system owned and maintained by the Ministry of Natural Resources. The MNR has stated that the closure is due to liability issues. MABA has approached the MNR on numerous occasions asking to re-gain access to no avail. The closure has halted Magnetawan's plans to have the Trans Canada Trail re-routed over the island since the gate prevents the trail from linking together.

The mention of the MNR began a discussion amongst the group regarding how difficult it can be to accomplish trail development due to the lengthy processes that trail groups have to endure when dealing with various government agencies. It was suggested that Discovery Routes could represent other trail groups with the MNR and other agencies. Most trail groups do not have the time or resources to manage the administrative requirements when applying for permits.

b. Voyer Trail

The Voyer Trail Committee is a committee is a committee focused on establishing the Voyer Trail, which will run between Corbeil and North Bay. The group is having issues with landowners in the area and that it is taking time getting the required approvals to continue with the project. The Voyer Trail Committee along with Discovery Routes will be approaching municipal members to discuss the project and find solutions for the problems that the Voyer Trail Committee is currently facing.

c. Sudbury-Nipissing Rails to Trails Committee

The Sudbury-Nipissing Rails to Trails Committee is working on the Trans Canada Trail link from Capreol to North Bay. The Business Plan should be finished soon.

Once the document is released, Discovery Routes will receive a copy to see whether there are any areas in which the organization can be of assistance.

d. Forgotten Trails

Four of the Forgotten Trails, the Moose Mountain Trail, One-a-Day Trail, Tower Trail, and Loxton Beaver trail are only 'somewhat' recognized by Westwind Forest and the MNR. The Forgotten Trails' biggest efforts are to keep the trails open, bring visitors to the trails, and being able to direct users properly to avoid anyone getting lost. To help with these issues, Forgotten Trails has teamed up with PARC – Promotion of Arts, Recreation, and Culture in South River. Forgotten Trails is working on a signage project that will help users navigate themselves along the routes. The question of liability insurance remains. They are currently gathering the required information to be considered under Discovery Routes' liability coverage. The Annual General Meeting will be held in the spring. In order to get more people involved, members of the group are thinking of organizing an activity that participants can enjoy rather than a typical AGM.

e. South Shore-Restoule Snowmobile Club

The South Shore-Restoule Snowmobile Club is interested in partnering with the Voyer Trail Committee to help get their trail built. The Snowmobile Club firmly believes in partnerships and they would welcome any other organizations or groups interested in working with the Club. It was suggested that Discovery Routes could arrange a meeting between the Snowmobile groups and ATV groups in order for them to work out differences and develop partnerships that both parties can benefit from in the future.

f. City of North Bay

The City of North Bay is currently working on an Active Transportation initiative. This initiative will eventually link the City's trails, sidewalks, and greenways together to provide means of navigating through the City without the use of motorized transportation. This year, the City is focusing on a bike path on Gormanville Road that will connect to the Education Centre as well as the new hospital. The City will also be working with the MTO on a new overpass on Chippewa Street. The City of North Bay is also interested in linking the Kate Pace Way with the Voyer Trail in the future.

g. North Bay Nordic Ski Club

The North Bay Nordic Ski Club is opening a new snowshoe trail that will be insured under Discovery Routes. A grand opening celebration for the trail will take place February 23, 2008 at 1:00 pm at the North Bay Nordic Ski Club, 630 North Shore Road.

h. Voyageur Multi-Use Trails System

VMUTS trails consist of over 200 km of marked trails, mainly for ATV or equestrian use. Currently, accommodation rates due to ATV use is on par with snowmobiling. Seasonal passes for the ATV trails are sold through ATV Ontario, and day passes are also available. Last year, over 1,500 day passes were sold. Within the next year, VMUTS expects to have over 500 km of trails mapped out, stretching across Tilden Lake, down to Sturgeon Falls.

VMUTS is working in partnership with horseback riders and are attempting to create trails for equestrian use. Although they cannot strictly enforce trail usage due to the trails being on crown land, they are encouraging users to stay on certain trails.

i. Blue Sky Riders

A representative for the Blue Sky Riders informed the group that on May 4, 2008, there would be a trail ride for new and experienced users on over 100 km of trails in the region. It was mentioned that although the trails Discovery Routes promotes are not always difficult enough for motorcycle enthusiasts, they do lead to more difficult trails in the area.

j. North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority

Updates on some of the Conservation Authority's projects are available on their website.

4. Review of Discovery Routes Trails Organization Sustainability and Long-term Outlook

Having our MPP attend the membership launch is important because it helps show the public that Discovery Routes has a large cross-section of organizations from across the region.

Discovery Routes will focus on the Voyer Trail as a next project.

Discovery Routes will also be supporting the City of North Bay's Active Transportation initiative in order to promote the region's trails and help the community get active.

5. New Business

The Near North Trail Association has approached Discovery Routes for assistance with the routing of the TOP D trail. The D trail is a major north-south snowmobile connection that is currently stuck at Powassan. A route has been identified along crown land through Ballantyne and Chisholm Township, however the club cannot proceed without support of the Township of Chisholm for the crossing of two road allowances. An environmental study has been completed and the trail does not come close to any residences. Discovery Routes will investigate the issues and determine if assistance is appropriate.

6. Next Meeting – Wednesday, June 11, 2008

The next meeting of the Coordinating Council will be held on June 11, 2008.

7. Adjournment

Resolution No. 01-02-20-08 - Storms/Sheppard

"That the meeting be adjourned."