



**Discovery Routes Coordinating Council Meeting**

June 12, 2008

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

**Trail Partners Present:**

See attached sign-in sheet

**Also Present:**

Trish Moussa, Resource Technician Ministry of Natural Resources

Jennifer McCourt, Program Manager, Discovery Routes

Julia Hogan, Public Relations Coordinator, Discovery Routes

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Mark King welcomed participants to the meeting and introductions were made.

**2. Approval of the minutes of February 20, 2008**

*Resolution No. 01-06-12-08 - Rowlandson/Storms*

“That the minutes of February 20, 2008 be approved as written.”

**3. Regional Projects Overview**

**a. Trans Canada Trail Progress**

A report was presented on the progress of the Trans Canada Trail extension through the southwest corner of Callander. It is expected that this section of the trail should be completed by the end of June. The trail will be a fantastic addition to the trails network.

The contractor will also be working on improvements to the Commanda Heritage Trail section of the Trans Canada Trail once the Callander extension is finished. This section of trail is 3km in length and is located south of Commanda along the old Nipissing Road. This existing trail is washed out along a few sections but the original road base is still in place and it is not anticipated that much work will be required.

**b. Trail Map and Guide**

Discovery Routes' new regional trail map that is in the final stages. A proof of the map was presented and trail partners were asked to review it for accuracy. It is expected that the map will go to print by the end of June. Once the map is complete, Discovery Routes will be distributing copies to the region's information centres, municipalities, and businesses that sponsored the map.

Discovery Routes is also working in partnership with the Greater Nipissing Stewardship Council on the *'Trail Guide for Healthy Living'*. Discovery Routes

worked closely with the Council to gather trail information from groups across the region, and now the Stewardship Council will complete the layout and design. A trail map will be included with each guide that is printed.

**c. TD Friends of the Environment Foundation grant**

Discovery Routes has been approved for a grant in the amount of \$4,575 from the Friends of the Environment Foundation. This money will be used to purchase a tent, and create a promotional display for the trails throughout the region. Additionally, Discovery Routes will attend various festivals and events across the region to increase public awareness of the organization. This display and tent will be available for Trail Partners to borrow.

**4. Local Trail Partner Report**

**a. Voyageur Multi-Use Trails System**

VMUTS is working on a partnership to connect with West Nipissing's ATV trails. They are also actively working on a connection along the Highway 17 corridor towards Deep River. Both of these tie-ins are still in the preliminary stages. The VMUTS 2008 spring rally was successful. The group had over 300 bikes attend the rally, and VMUTS has noticed more and more riders coming up from the south. The local hospitality industry benefits considerably from these rallies. VMUTS estimates that 120 to 140 rooms accommodate the riders, with each spending roughly \$200 per day.

**b. Commanda Heritage Trail**

The goal of the Commanda Heritage Trail is to encourage environmental protection, while enjoying the natural beauty of this trail. The northern section of the Old Nipissing Road is designated as the Commanda Heritage Trail. The Commanda Heritage Centre, a part of the Near North Heritage Group, promotes heritage sites in the area and offers circle tours of things to see and do within short distances of the trail.

**c. City of North Bay**

The City of North Bay is currently working on a Trails and Active Transportation Strategy to be included as part of the City's Official Plan. Recently, the plan has been broadened to include sidewalks and bike routes. Existing routes have been identified, and priority projects have been recognized. The future plans stemmed from identifying potential links based on where people would want to go while using the trails - schools, restaurants, etc. This year, the City's focus will be on creating a paved multi-use pathway on the side of Gormanville Road, leading to the new hospital as well as the Education Centre. The City will also be working with the North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority on interpretive aspects of the Black Forest Trails. Kate Pace Way extensions on Marshall and Gibson roadways are also a priority for the City. The City of North Bay would like to take the trail off of Booth Road to the side of the road towards Birch's because of high volumes of traffic in the area.

**d. Trans Canada Trail**

The Trans Canada Trail Foundation is in the process of hiring a new Executive Director. The Foundation recently hired a new corporate fundraiser that will work out of Vancouver. She is currently looking for new sponsorship opportunities for the Foundation. The TCT has gone to the Federal Government to request that a portion of the funds they currently have be designated to supporting operating costs of trail organizations and groups who are building sections of the Trans Canada Trail. They have suggested that the Trans Canada Trail should offer to pay up to 50% of required operating costs for the duration of construction.

**e. Near North Trail Association**

The Near North Trail Association has ongoing issues with the TOP D trail that runs from Trout Creek north towards North Bay. A route has been identified through Ballantyne and Chisholm Township to connect to the existing abandoned rail line. The route uses predominantly Crown property and crosses three unopened road allowances within Chisholm Township. A Public Meeting will take place on June 23, 2008 in Chisholm Township to discuss this matter.

**f. Friends of La Vase Portages**

The Friends of La Vase have uncovered documentation from 1910 showing a road allowance from North Bay to Callander. The group may be able to use these documents to encourage the opening of these allowances through private property to re-connect the historic La Vase route.

**g. North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority**

The North Bay-Mattawa Conservation Authority is currently working on an infrastructure report for the Conservation Areas.

Asphalt repairs and re-painting on both the Kate Pace Way and the Kinsmen Trail will occur throughout the summer.

It has been reported that the trails in the area are very busy and will continue to be busy this summer. The Conservation Authority is considering putting counters on a few of the trails in order to gain an idea of usage.

**h. Friends of Laurier Woods**

The Friends of Laurier Woods hosted a number of guided hikes throughout May, and attendance was very good. Friends of Laurier Woods are currently working on a project in partnership with Home Depot that involves building a new trail extension, which includes a number of boardwalks, to extend to the Home Depot property. Friends of Laurier Woods are considering adding sponsored benches along the new trail as a fundraiser for the group. They are also working on new interpretive signage for the trail as well as a new brochure.

**i. Powassan Recreation Committee**

The Powassan Rec Committee is working on a trail that will link to Love Lake Space and Science Conservation Centre. The Committee is also working towards creating a water trail along the South River. There has been concern expressed about an

entrance at Highway 522, and therefore the Committee needs to reconsider an entrance farther down the river. The Committee will be hosting Hike for Live on the Pines trail on June 21, 2008.

**5. Crown Land Trails – Trish Moussa, Ministry of Natural Resources**

The process that trail builders must follow in order to build trails on Crown Land was presented. Once a group or organization has decided to build a new trail on Crown Land, they must obtain a Work Permit from the MNR. Once this application is complete, a Class Environmental Assessment is done. The rating that comes out of the Assessment determines the public consultation required. The complexity of the trail project that is being proposed often determines the length of time it takes to obtain the permit. The process can take anywhere from 30 days to a year, depending on the project.

A great deal of controversy has surrounded the use of trails for ATV rallies. The free-use policy under the *Public Lands Act* makes it legal for rallies to occur, however, many of these rallies are held in the early spring when the environment cannot sustain the excessive use. A new event agreement for groups that organize ATV rallies has been developed by the District Office for the MNR to address some of the problems. ATV rally organizers are being asked to sign this agreement stating that they have a minimum of \$2 million liability insurance, and that any damage done to the trails as a result of the rally will be corrected. A security deposit is obtained to encourage compliance.

**6. New Business**

There was no new business to discuss.

**7. Next Meeting – Annual General Meeting, October 2008**

The next meeting to take place will be Discovery Routes' Annual General Meeting in October of 2008. A final date has yet to be set.

**8. Adjournment**

*Resolution No. 02-06-12-08 – Storms/Tucker*

“That the meeting be adjourned.”