

Next Generation “Strengthening Our Niche” Work-Group Meeting Notes of January 11, 2010

Present

Will Andresen, Tom Bergman, Annette Burchell, Bob Burchell, Sam Davey, John Garske, Leeann Garske, Morgan Grasso, Melanie Fullman, Linda Jindrich, Rob Katona, Kelly Klein, Brad Kusz, Gemma Lamb, Jim Rouse, Sue Rouse, Denise Stephens, Charlie Supercynski, Richard Swanson, Ron Yesney

Trail Mapping Sub-Committee Report

Work-group leader Annette Burchell welcomed the two Michigan DNR representatives to the meeting and explained that the purpose of the meeting will be to introduce them to the proposed trail route and receive their feedback and suggestions.

Will Andresen provided background on the over-all “Next Generation Initiative” and the rationale for the creation of the four work-groups. Will also explained that the trail route in Iron County is being included in the county’s economic development strategy, the county parks and recreation plan, the City of Hurley comprehensive plan and the Hurley School District’s Safe Routes to School Plan – and that for this to be a successful project, both counties need to work together.

John Garske presented the proposed trail project on the Michigan side, which is proposed to follow the Canadian National/Wisconsin Central line (the Northerly line through Ironwood and the Southerly line through Bessemer) from Ironwood to Ramsay and then along old US-2 to Wakefield.

Ron Yesney from the Michigan DNR said that he appreciated the community-based support for this effort and explained that this local support was critical for moving this project forward. He said that there were funds available for acquisition and development of the proposed trail, but that the project would have to be pushed locally (in other words, this would be a local project, not a state project). He emphasized the community will have to work hard, be persistent, get the attention of appropriate state officials (both elected and staff), integrate the proposed trail into local plans and gain support from local organizations and the public.

Ron indicated that the title work for this segment of the trail has been “pulled together” but not “analyzed” – and indicated that He explained that grants are awarded based on a points system, with additional points for economically distressed communities and for cultural features. He recommended that the grant application focus on the following three items: 1) economic development; 2)

cultural features and how they relate to the trail; and 3) how well-organized and supported the effort is.

Ron also recommended the following two steps: 1) meet with local motorized groups to obtain agreements; and 2) obtain resolutions of support from local governments and organizations.

Course of Action

Two courses of action were agreed upon. First, John Garske and Melanie Fullman will meet with representatives of the Gogebic Range Trail Authority to present and discuss the proposed project (before requesting resolutions of support); and 2) more closely examine the ownership of the proposed route between Ironwood and Ramsay.

Next Meeting Date

Monday, February 1st, 12:00 Noon, Board Room of the Iron County Courthouse