
RPA 1 Transportation Enhancement Committee MINUTES: January 24, 2012

Present: Rod Marlatt, Robin Bostrom, Elaine Govern, Dean Hilgerson, Harold Chapman, Lora Friest, Rick Edwards, Darla Kelchen, Karla Organist

1. Agreement on “Backbone”: After some discussion, the committee came to an agreement on what they are considering the “Backbone” of the Northeast Iowa Trail System. The goal of the committee is to seek a federal earmark or appropriation to complete this phase in the region (as well as a few miles into MN). It is hoped that by completing this main trail section, communities across Northeast Iowa can then apply for funds to connect. For the main trail: From MN’s Shooting Star State Trail and IA’s Wapsie-Great Western Line from Riceville to Cresco to the Prairie Farmer Rec. Trail – Also from MN’s Root River Trail south to Cresco and the Prairie Farmer Trail. One spur from Calmar to Decorah. And then following the Prairie Farmer Trail south to the Turkey River Recreation Corridor (Great River Road to Clermont, Elgin and Elkader). Then from Elkader to Guttenberg and the MRT and Cassville Ferry.
2. Needs remaining: Each county will work to identify what it would take to complete these sections. Specifically, the number of miles, number of special features (culverts, bridges, etc.), engineering, possible land acquisition (no need to identify where this might be), etc. Please be specific as to how you came up with your costs (i.e. dollars/mile, dollars/culvert, etc.). These numbers are to be brought to the next Enhancement Committee meeting.
3. Strategize communication effort:
 - a. What: Northeast Iowa Regional Trail Enhancement (or some other catchy, descriptive name yet to be agreed upon)
 - b. Who: Directed to IA and MN Federal Legislators and aides.
 - c. How: A forum at Calmar or Elkader (location still up in the air)
 - d. Invite: State government legislators and the governor, local government, conservation boards, economic and community developers, college administrators, region trail groups and residents...
 - e. Presentation: Map (not too specific); costs and economic benefits; aerial photos(?); video of home value increases as a result of trails, other things in ppt. form that support our request.
 - f. Yet to be decided: When this would occur, who would preside over presentation, can we do this as the “Enhancement Committee” (will need to bring to the Policy Board).

4. Updates on TE applications: Due at UERPC on Feb. 10th, Karla will send to conservation directors. Conservation directors will arrange scoring at county level. Committee will meet on Feb. 24th to determine their recommendations for the Tech Committee and the Policy Board.
5. NEXT MEETING: FEBRUARY 24TH, NOON IN POSTVILLE.

PIZZA WILL BE PROVIDED – TWO ITEMS WILL BE DISCUSSED:

- ENHANCEMENT APPLICATIONS
- THE “BACKBONE” COSTS AND NEXT STEPS