

**PA Trails Advisory Committee**  
**03.12.2020 Meeting Minutes**  
**Skype Meeting 10am – 12pm**

**Call to order at 10:05 am**

Betsy Aiken, (Chair) thanked the staff and the committee and guests for being flexible and turning the meeting into a teleconference in such a short time.

Tom Ford from DCNR also reiterated that message about everyone being flexible.

**Roll call was taken**

Committee members on the call: Aiken (Chair), Fager, Firme, Iannone (secretary), Kelemen, Kuhn, Laird, Maguire, Martin (vice-chair), Mason, M. Patterson, Perry, Ritting, Saunders, Steffey, Wills, Worozbyt. Absent: Confer, Kase, C. Patterson

DCNR Staff present: Tom Ford (Bur. Rec & Con), Tyler Semder (Bur. Rec & Con), Alex MacDonald (Bur. Rec & Con), Leslie Sarvis (Bur. Rec & Con), Michael Hoffman (Bur. of Forestry), Tom Hanes (Bur. of Forestry), Diane Kripas (Bur. Rec & Con), John Norbeck (DCNR Dep. Secretary for Parks & Forestry)

Others present: Cindy Barrick (PSSA), Liz Krug (PSSA), Janet Flynn (PennDOT), Chris Metka (PennDOT)

Motion/second to approve minutes from December 11, 2019 Skype meeting made by Kelemen/Wills; no discussion and unanimously passed.

Betsy welcomed new members: Penny Mason – 4-wheel drive rep; Miica Patterson – member at large; Joe Perry – ATV riders; David Saunders – member at large.

**The agenda was reshuffled.**

**E-Bike Update**

Frank Maguire gave an update on E-bikes and presented a letter that will be sent to Secretary Dunn along with the E-Bikes Statement that was approved by the committee in December. The letter expresses the desire for DCNR to use the 3 classifications for E-Bikes when developing future agency guidance. Frank said that committees on the House side are working on a bill for e-bikes to adopt the national model which uses the 3 classifications. The letter will come from Chair Betsy Aiken and will be sent to Sec. Dunn as soon as possible. Betsy thanked everyone on the subcommittee and Frank for all of their efforts.

Frank also mentioned that Bike to Work week is May 11<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. The Executive Bike Ride will take place on Monday, May 11, and there will be demonstration e-bikes at this event.

**Updates and Announcements**

The Trail of the Year event for the Ghost Town Trail will be June 11<sup>th</sup> from 10 am to noon. Committee members are urged to attend. It's being held at Vintondale, Cambria County. More details will be sent closer to the date.

Lydia Martin talked briefly about a trail town summit planned in York tentatively scheduled for August 2020. The York County Economic Alliance will coordinate the summit pending a mini-grant. Instead of planning a separate trails public forum in York, committee members are encouraged to attend the trail town summit. More information about the summit will be forthcoming.

**Trail Grant Application Review** – For the 2020 grant round (Round 26), Leslie gave an overview on the review process and informed the committee that each member will be reviewing and scoring 8-10 trail grant applications. Expect your applications to review in May.

Bill Ritting raised a question regarding the electronic review process and filling in the Word document. He had difficulties last year. They will have a test run ahead of time.

### **\*\*ATV policy**

John Norbeck presented on new changes to DCNR's ATV policy that has been in place since 2003. They are trying to balance ridership, environment, wildlife and public safety when considering riding trails open to ATVs; there has been an increase in ATV sales and ridership in recent years; DCNR has hired a new motorized recreation specialist to help manage motorized recreation on DCNR-owned lands; DCNR understands the economic value these trails have on the community; right now there is a 60-day comment period regarding the policy changes, and the deadline for comments is Friday, March, 27th; there was discussion about liability issues for private landowners leasing their land; there was discussion about the Recreational Use of Land and Water Act (RULWA), and there was discussion of the possible value of a brief presentation about RULWA either during a PTAC meeting or separately; John indicated that talking with your legislators about RULWA would be a good idea; The PA Land Trust Association (PALTA) is a good resource for RULWA and the recent 2018 amendments.

Betsy thanked John for his presentation.

### **\*\*PA Recreation Trails Grants – Leslie Sarvis, DCNR**

Leslie Sarvis presented on different trail grant opportunities, particularly about the PA Recreational Trail (PRT) grants program which provides federal funding for trail grants. Leslie discussed the PRT requirements, the distribution of PRT funds, eligible PRT applicants and project types, and the differences between the PRT and the ATV/Snowmobile grant programs.

Bill Ritting asked that a link to the Trails Strategic Plan be included with the instructions to the committee members for their individual trail application reviews.

Jim Laird asked about the current status of the Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP). The draft is being reviewed by the Governor's Office and must also be reviewed by the National Park Service. It should be final by summer 2020.

Gwen Wills asked if a separate meeting for a RULWA presentation by PALTA could be scheduled. Frank will talk to PALTA about this.

Betsy thanked everyone for participating in the meeting.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:59; motion/second made by Ritting/Martin and unanimously passed.

*\*\*Note that these presentations were emailed to the Committee and other attendees after the Skype meeting, along with a link to PALTA's guidance on RULWA.*

**Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Skype call (Due to Covid-19)**  
**June 4, 2020**  
**10:00am – 12:00pm**

*PTAC Members present:*

Betsy Aiken, Chair – Members at large	Lydia Martin, Vice Chair - Walking
John Confer – Members at large	Penny Mason – Four-Wheel Driving
Elizabeth Fager – Water Trails	Chris Patterson - Snowmobiling
Chris Firme - Hiking	Miica Patterson – Members at large
Donna Iannone, Secretary – Members at large	Joe Perry – ATV Riding
Carl Kelemen – Members at large	Bill Ritting III – Persons with Disabilities
Michael Kuhn – Mountain Biking	Ron Steffey – Members at large
Jim Laird – Off-Highway Motorcycling	Gwen Wills – Horseback Riding
Frank Maguire – Members at large	Owen Worozbyt - Bicycling

*PTAC Members not present:*

Tom Kase – Cross-Country Skiing  
David Saunders – Members at large

*Others in attendance:*

Jamie Lemon, FHWA  
Chris Metka, PennDOT  
Janet Flynn, PennDOT  
Liz Krug, PSSA  
Cindy Barrick, PSSA  
Carol Grayshaw, PALTA

*DCNR staff:*

Alex MacDonald	Nicole Faraguna
Tyler Semder	Lori Yeich
Diane Kripas	Erin Wiley Moyers
Leslie Sarvis	Paul Zeph
Tom Ford	Paula DeVore
Lauren Imgrund	Michael Hoffman

**Call to Order**

10:05 the meeting was called to order by Betsy Aiken. Betsy called for approval of March 12, 2020 meeting minutes. Carl Kelemen – motion, John Confer second. The minutes were unanimously approved with no changes.

**Welcome – Lauren Imgrund, DCNR Deputy Secretary for Conservation and Technical Services**

Lauren Imgrund thanked the committee members for their service and helping to advance trails in Pennsylvania. DCNR's goal is to ensure the outdoor community is available for all Pennsylvanians. Her comments included:

- Under the current climate we need to make sure everyone feels welcome when they are using the trails and enjoying the great outdoors.
- During the pandemic more people used the trails, highlighting the need to educate trail users on safety, stewardship and conservation.
- The state budget for DCNR will be level-funded through November. Continuation of our grant funds, such as Environmental Stewardship Fund and Keystone Fund, is critical.
- The Ghost Town Trail dedication as Trail of the Year is set for September 2<sup>nd</sup> in Vintondale, PA and September is also Trails Month.
- DCNR staff is working on the Trails Strategic Plan and action steps, the Statewide Outdoor Recreation Plan is out for comments. DCNR staff will talk more about the Trails Strategic Plan update.
- DCNR staff will give an update on the E-bikes Statement submitted to Secretary Dunn.

#### **ATV Policy update – Nicole Faraguna, DCNR Director of the Office of Planning & Policy**

- The draft ATV Policy was released on Jan. 27<sup>th</sup> for public comments. The primary changes to the policy include rescinding the 2003 moratorium and permitting DCNR to explore opportunities for new trails/connectors on state forest lands; permits the Secretary to designate BOF roads as temporary, seasonal or permanent ATV trails; BOF will not consider a trail that requires access onto lands not owned or managed by the agency without an easement or legal agreement in place.
- The deadline for public comments was March 27<sup>th</sup>. DCNR received 867 comments, overall most people were in favor of the proposed changes. Issues of concern were safety, environmental and wildlife impact.
- Comments were received from an array of different groups; comments submitted via social media were reviewed, though they are not considered official public comment.
- An official Comment/Response document will be developed, hopefully available by late summer, and the policy should be finalized by fall.

Jim Laird asked if legislation needed to be changed and Nicole indicated no, legislative change wasn't necessary, just a revision to the policy.

#### **DCNR Updates:**

- The PTAC's E-Bikes Statement prepared by the PTAC/PPAC ad hoc committee was submitted to Secretary Dunn and she is supportive and positive of the statement. Frank Maguire commented that there were no updates from PPAC or PennDOT. A response letter will be coming soon from Secretary Dunn.
- Alex discussed the Trail Plan update. A survey is out to get feedback on the Recommendations and Action Steps; Alex encouraged everyone to take the survey. DCNR staff will be working on the narrative to the plan this summer and finalizing the plan.
- 2021 Statewide Greenways & Trails Summit in Erie – The planning committee will soon be looking for proposals for the conference. More info to come.
- There is a job opening in the BRC Trails Section of DCNR; it's a civil service job, based out of Harrisburg and it's a new position. The person will be working on the Recreational Trails program and working with the committee.

#### **Water Trails Presentation:**

Liz Fager gave a presentation on Water Trails in PA. Liz gave the definition of a water trail and talked about the PA Water Trails Partnership, including how to become a designated water trail in PA. The presentation included safety tips and similarities and differences between water trails and land trails.

*Note: The presentation was subsequently emailed to all meeting participants.*

## **Motorized Trails Presentation**

Jim Laird started the presentation stating that riding ATVs is a privilege and not a right and riders should self-regulate to keep ATV trails open. A power point presentation was presented to the group on motorized trail recreation by: Jim Laird (Off-Highway Motorcycling), Penny Mason (Four-Wheel Driving), Joe Perry (ATV Riding) and Chris Patterson (Snowmobiling).

Bill Ritting gave perspective from persons with disabilities and explained that he was happy to be able to ride an ATV but had difficulties shifting – some ATVs have be retrofitted for disabled riders.

Jim Laird talked about off-highway motorcycles and explained that all trails should be set up with the inherent and mandatory respect for the environment. Jim thanked DCNR for allowing the group to make this presentation and stressed the economic need for more ATV/motorized trails in PA.

*Note: The presentation was subsequently emailed to all meeting participants.*

Betsy called for any other questions or comments:

Bill Ritting said it's important that we get more trails in PA. During the Covid-19 pandemic he was out using the trails and found that it's important more people have access to trails.

Jim Laird talked about the importance of the RULWA Act (Recreational Use of Land and Water) getting it updated by the state legislature to further indemnify property owners.

Betsy called for any new business. None was presented.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 29<sup>th</sup> at the Eastern Trails Summit. However, it is unknown at this time if the summit will be held. Owen Worozbyt said the planning committee will be making a decision next week.

Betsy called for a motion to adjourn at 12:04. Joe Perry- motion, Gwen Wills – second

**Pennsylvania Trails Advisory Committee Meeting**  
**Zoom Meeting**  
**December 16, 2020**  
**1:30pm – 3:00pm**  
**Meeting Minutes**

*PTAC Members present:*

John Confer – Members at Large  
Elizabeth Fager – Water Trail Users  
Chris Firme- Hiking  
Donna Iannone – Members at Large  
Michael Kuhn – Mountain Biking  
Jim Laird – Off-Hwy Motorcycling  
Frank Maguire – Members at Large  
Lydia Martin – Walking  
Penny Mason – Four-Wheel Driving

Chris Patterson – Snowmobiling  
Miica Patterson – Members at Large  
Joe Perry – ATV Riding  
Bill Ritting - Persons with Disabilities  
David Saunders – Members at Large  
Ron Steffey – Members at Large  
Gwen Wills – Horseback Riding  
Owen Worozbyt - Bicycling

*PTAC Members not present:*

Betsy Aiken – Members at Large  
Tom Kase – Cross-Country Skiing  
Carl Kelemen – Members at Large

*Others in Attendance:*

Cindy Barrick, PSSA  
Roy Gothie, PennDOT  
Janet Flynn, PennDOT  
Carol Grayshaw, WeConservePA

*DCNR staff:*

Leslie Sarvis	Olivia Braun	Tyler Semder
Alex MacDonald	Nicole Faraguna	Matthew Crosbie
Diane Kripas	Jean Lynch	Paul Zeph
Tom Ford	Paula Devore	Tom Hanes
Lauren Imgrund	Meredith Hill	Jake Newton
Troy Withers		

**Call to Order**

Lydia Martin, Vice Chair, presided over the meeting

1:30 PM Lydia called the meeting to order and a motion was made by Joe Perry and seconded by Owen Worozbyt to approve the June 4<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes with no changes. Motion was passed unanimously.

Leslie Sarvis, DCNR, took roll call of the members.

Welcome – Lauren Imgrund, Deputy Secretary of DCNR and Tom Ford, BRC Bureau Director

1:35pm – Lauren thanked everyone for their service on the committee. She commented on the following:

- Appreciative of everyone's involvement with trails and outdoor recreation, especially this year with the extenuating circumstances due to COVID-19
- How much an impact outdoor recreation, trails and parks have made for people during the pandemic and that more people are getting outside.
- She commented from a friend that they would take overcrowding over apathy, an example of the importance of outdoor recreation for everyone.

Tom spoke about what a challenging year 2020 has been and thanked everyone for being flexible. His comments included:

- It was record year for trail use throughout the state. Increased usage has had the positive effect with increased awareness and appreciation for trails, but it can also put stress on our outdoor resources and on the people who maintain them. He expressed appreciation for the hard work to maintain and protect trails, as well as to educate new trail users on proper trail usage and etiquette.
- State funds like Keystone and federal funds like Recreational Trails are secure this year thanks to stakeholders and their organizations expressing their support and promoting trails. He hoped we could leverage the new users, so they continue using trails after COVID.
- DCNR welcomes Olivia Braun in her new role working with trails and the committee.
- Our staff appreciate the committee for their help and input with the Trails Strategic Plan.

Final DCNR ATV Policy – Nicole Faraguna, DCNR

1:45pm - Nicole presented a slide show on the final DCNR ATV Policy. Nicole's comments included the following:

- A draft policy was released in January 2020 for public comment.
- A public comment period was open through March 2020. DCNR received 857 comments, and the majority were supportive of additional ATV riding opportunities on DCNR-managed lands. All comments that were received from the public and stakeholder group were considered. The policy changes include:
  - Rescinds the 2003 moratorium
  - DCNR can consider new trails on state forest lands
  - Continues to prohibit ATV trails in State Parks
  - Supports land acquisition for motorized recreation
  - DCNR Secretary may designate portions of BOF road system as temporary, seasonal and/or permanent ATV trails.
- The final policy was released in November 2020 and became effective immediately
- DCNR Bureau of Forestry (BOF) is finalizing an ATV management plan to ensure the policy is implemented effectively.
- COVID-related budget restraints may slow the implementation of the new policy.
- DCNR BOF is also working on a pilot project in Northcentral PA exploring long-distance ATV trail opportunities.

Questions:

- Where in the NC region will the pilot area be located and will it provide more trails or more distance? Several counties: Tioga, Potter, Clinton, Lycoming, etc. Uncertain

whether it will be more trails or more distance. BOF will continue to look at existing BOF roadways to evaluate safety and consider using snowmobile trails seasonally.

- If BOF will use snowmobile trails, will DCNR be partnering with any snowmobile clubs or PSSA? The pilot is still in the early planning stages but do anticipate partnering when the time comes.
- Is DCNR considering limiting ATV use to a different season than snowmobiles? That is under consideration.

### 2021 Trail of the Year Top Three Nominations - Olivia Braun, DCNR

2:00pm - Olivia presented the three top finalists for 2021 Trail of the Year. Her comments included the following:

- Expressed how much she's glad to be part of the DCNR team and working with the PTAC
- Top three Trail of the Year Nominees are:
  - D & H Rail-Trail (Delaware and Hudson Rail-Trail) multi-use trail
  - Susquehannock Trail, hiking trail
  - Westmorland Heritage Trail, multi-use trail
- Olivia presented a summary of each trail. Members were asked to vote by 12/17 at 4:00pm via Microsoft Forms.
- She thanked the trails subcommittee for reviewing the eight applications submitted for trail of the year. Members of the subcommittee are Gwen Wills, Miica Patterson, Chris Firme and Donna Iannone.

### Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice on trails discussion – Lydia Martin, Miica Patterson and David Saunders, PTAC Committee Members

2:15pm - Lydia (Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay) started the discussion with a slide presentation and her role with the Alliance for the Bay. How can we build excitement for trails and parks for everyone? Her comments included the following:

- Take opportunities to help make diverse voices heard and prioritize DEIJ in plans and budgets.
- Challenges include overcoming language barriers and increasing education and leadership opportunities
- Suggested being open to others joining outdoor adventures and inviting them to attend PTAC meetings.
- For additional information and resources, reference the slide show provided.

Miica Patterson (Schuylkill River Greenway Association) continued the discussion with the following discussion points:

- Schuylkill River Greenways is working to make trails more diverse.
- They have created a DEIJ statement for the board.
- Per goals in their strategic plan and mission, they will form a team to focus on DEIJ and outreach to the community.
- They are working on a vision, as well as internal and external training and trail programming.
- Suggested finding opportunities for DEIJ training
- Discussed that while there are many public spaces, how do we help people feel more comfortable using them?



- Encouraged diversity in photos and messaging
- She will be sending a Leslie a report from Montgomery County about best practices for building DEIJ for trails and outdoor recreation.

David Saunders (Pa Department of Health, Office of Health Equity) shared his own experiences using trails and outdoors space. His comments included the following:

- That he felt more comfortable in California than he does in Pennsylvania using outdoor spaces.
- He has been warned to be careful where he goes being a man of color.
- He believes we should get our youth active in the outdoors.
- Everyone should be comfortable using outdoor spaces.
- Being outside is beneficial for everyone especially now.
- The importance of making these spaces accessible to people with disabilities and ensuring we are sensitive to others that are using the trails or outdoor recreation in general.

Questions:

Bill Ritting asked for clarification on DEIJ and inquired if the terms also included peoples with disabilities? Yes, this is an inclusive term and additional resources would be shared after the meeting for those interested.

Jean Lynch discussed the ongoing work of DCNR's DEI Committee. The DEI Committee is focusing on DCNR's workforce diversity as well as communications and outreach to the public. They would like for DEIJ communication and ideas to flow between PTAC and the DEI Committee.

#### Announce 2021 officers, farewell to outgoing members – Leslie Sarvis, DCNR

2:50pm - Leslie introduced the 2021 committee officers:

- Lydia Martin, Chair
- Ron Steffey, Vice Chair
- Donna Iannone, Secretary

Leslie thanked all of the outgoing members for serving and appreciated all of their contributions to the committee and moving trails forward. Outgoing members:

- Betsy Aiken (Chair), two terms
- John Confer, two terms
- Carl Kelemen, two terms
- Chris Patterson, one term
- Bill Ritting, two terms

Meeting adjourned at 3:00pm.