



Email: scbptc@gmail.com

Web Site: www.stcroixtrails.com

 St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trails Coalition

St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trail Coalition

2015 Annual Report for 2014

Dated April 8, 2015

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition 2014 Annual Report

2014 was a formative year for the St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trails Coalition. The Coalition began with informal discussions around a kitchen table among friends interested in trails and their safety in St. Croix County. In May 2013, the group got more formally organized and began holding regular meetings. These meetings were the start of an effort to connect bike/pedestrian trails throughout St. Croix County to the new *Loop Trail*, slated for construction during the summer of 2017, being built as a part of the St. Croix River Crossing project.

Communications Committee

A Communications Committee had been formed in late 2013 to develop some of the basics required for the organization to facilitate information sharing in the county and that work continued into 2014. This group discussed, solicited samples and reviewed both logo and tag line options to present to the membership for approval. The committee initiated creation of a web site and a *Facebook* page to add to the opportunities for sharing information that had previously been limited to email communication. A Vision Statement and Goals & Objectives document were fine-tuned and referred to the Coalition membership for approval. For ease in presentations to various organizations and at events, a generic *Power Point* presentation containing relevant trail information was created so that a formal presentation at a specific gathering could be generated quickly.

Formal Organization

September 2014 saw the adoption of a set of By-Laws and Standard Policies that formalized the operation of the Coalition and appointed 8 initial Board of Director members. A ninth member was added to the board in December 2014.

Board of Directors

Terms Expiring in 2015

Susan Heuiser, Secretary/Information Director

André Johnson

Mark Vanasse, Treasurer

Terms Expiring in 2016

Richard Baillargeon

Marian Webber

Timothy Witzmann, Vice Chairperson

Terms Expiring in 2017

Mark Gherty

Andrew Lamers

David Mandel, Chairperson

In addition, discussions were begun with attorneys about achieving official corporate status in the state of Wisconsin and filing for nonprofit status for the Coalition.

Speaker Presentations

As part of its efforts to share information with communities and persons interested in trail issues, the Coalition began having presentations by experts about trail related issues. In October, David Burch, from Waukesha County's Department of Park and

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition 2014 Annual Report

Land Use, discussed his considerable experience planning regional trail systems. Robert Hagstrom, from the Gateway-Brown's Creek Trail Organization, detailed the evolution of a successful trail organization in November.

Loop Trail Connection Resolutions

The Coalition and eight communities passed a resolution that requested WisDOT to look into a connection from the southern end of the *Loop Trail* to Highway 35 headed south toward Willow River State Park, the Village of North Hudson and the City of Hudson. All 9 resolutions were submitted to WisDOT officials as *Loop Trail* design specifics, scheduled for completion in 2015, get under way. In addition, the St. Croix County Board passed a similar, more detailed resolution regarding the same concerns.

Special Projects

July saw members of the Coalition assisting River Valley Trails, a long standing bicycle organization in St. Croix County, in an informational trail ride regarding the River Crossing's *Loop Trail*. The trail ride was a part of the City of Hudson's RiverFest celebration.

St. Croix County invited a representative and alternate from the Coalition to serve on the committee that studied economic impact possibilities related to the St. Croix River Crossing.

Participation in funding raising efforts for an Art Bench Project, an ongoing effort of the Phipps Center for the Arts all along the St. Croix River in both Minnesota and Wisconsin, was approved in December. The bench design will be created by students at Houlton Elementary School with the help of an artist and placed on the *Loop Trail* when it is completed in 2017.

Financial Report

The Coalition did not have a financial account of any kind during 2014 and therefore neither received money nor spent money as an organization during 2014.

Looking to the Future

With approval of the St. Croix County TAP planning grant application in August, the Coalition's efforts to gather and disseminate trail information became an even stronger focus and that impetus will continue into 2015 as the planning process actually gets underway at the county. Making strong connections that create an interconnected, county wide network of trails reaching into neighboring counties in both Minnesota and Wisconsin will continue to be the focus of the Coalition's activities.