

State Trail Administrators Meeting October 20-21, 2004 -- Austin, Texas

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MEETING NOTES

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Andy Goldbloom TX

Welcoming statement...

- Don't have many real AASHTO standard trails.
- Hope that conference will help jumpstart more bikeway and community trail development.
- Be sure to walk the Town Lake and see Barton Springs in Zilker Park.

Scott Carbonneau (SD) - 80% of his job is snowmobile trails, but performs a lot of other trails work too. Had first snowfall last week.

Tim Mitchell (MN) - Recreational Trails Coordinator for Minnesota

Other State funded programs including State bike system and snowmobile program. Chasing budget. No dedicated funding for nonmotorized programs which is going to other parks budgets. Cultivating new relationships with North Country Trail and other user groups. They have not been so great in the past.

Lee Ann Barnhardt (ND) - Also does Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF); extending Maah Daah Hey mountain bike trail.

Susan Moerschel (DE) - With program for 25 years. Lots of programs for outdoor recreation in the State including LWCF. Building stronger ties with user groups, especially equestrians. They are getting more organized. Completed SCORP last year; the number one activity demand is trails. Giving a lot of fodder for promoting trails funding. Lt. Governor is big on physical fitness and promoting outdoor recreation.

David Bartoo (DE) - Spends most of his time in the field but helps with grants. Able to focus on sustainability of their trails. Use IMBA design techniques to improve usability of their trails.

Kathy Dimpsey (FHWA PA) - Hi.

Vanyla Tierney (PA) - New secretary for department has priority of more ATV riding sites. Uses RTP funds to purchase 6,000 acre site. Will help RTP program as they have had trouble getting motorized applications. Lots of interesting things going on with program.

Susan Henry (OK) - LWCF. Did new trails booklet. Got \$20,000. Has newsletter, is updating trails plan, has set up new website: travelOK.com/trails. Can now get grant applications from website. Motorized trails project: 1720 acre land acquisition. Has gotten a lot of help from FHWA office.

Richard Andrews (OK) - Bike ped coordinator from Oklahoma. Wants to learn from trails folks and work closer between agencies.

Shannon Dumolt (FHWA OK) - Environmental engineer for FHWA: trails, scenic byways, enhancements. Job is made easy by good people working for State trails program. Had a major motorized land acquisition project that took a couple of years. Public outcry against it; not prepared for that. Goal is to get bike/ped and trails programs doing more coordination.

Terri Gimbel (CO) - New trails and health guidebook. Easy access trails to encourage use. Started Statewide mapping project to end up with electronic online maps. Planning 9th annual State trails conference in Broomfield, Colorado. Long distance trail along Colorado Front Range Trail through population centers along I-25 corridor. Will hire a consultant to help develop the project and ultimately raise funds for management.

Steve Bowman (IA) - With Department of Transportation. Trying to expand OHV parks, getting into water trail development.

Tom Metsa (CO) - Grant application was challenged. Went from broader criteria to very specifically numerical criteria.

Tommy Boxx (MS) - He does everything related to trails including grant administration. Hoping to do a trails inventory. Partner with department of tourism and getting University of Southern Mississippi to do the actual work. Many towns want to build walking tracks with lights and call them trails.

Larry Miller (NJ) - Trying to do initiatives to link urban with rural areas. East Coast Greenway--hoping will be first State to complete their section.

John Schmill (CA) - His division does grants and works on trails. Separate trails office and separate OHV division. Was formerly OHV coordinator; great to be back with trails.

Jessica Terrell and Erika Jaques (MO) - Never enough funding, eagerly awaiting reauthorization. Awarded grants including several new ones to USFS, which is a change. Didn't meet motorized this year. Not enough areas applied. Had first State trails conference this year; went even better than expected.

Doyle Neimeyer and Dale Schweiger (KS) - State Park manager. Director of State Parks administers the RTP funding. Just finished State trails plan. Received input from focus groups. Rail trails have been tough project and take many years. One win, "spirit trail," in spite of tough opposition from landowners. Went to a lot of public meetings. State Parks and a lot of county parks are putting in new trails, especially equestrian trails and three new campgrounds.

Jim Radabaugh (MI) - Program manager for four programs--State forests and camping, trails, and OHVs. Funding for snowmobile and OHVs. RTP is just one of the funding sources. Recreation Improvement Fund is another State funding program. Opened crossing of I-75 with new trail on USFS land in cooperation with Highway Dept. 75% of staff retired in two years. MI Snowmobile Association did study on damage to asphalt trails. Did experimental paving study; still going on, and hope to find better paving mixes.

Dwayne Stutzman (NC) - Administers several funding programs. Main project is Mountains to Sea long distance trails.

Bud Newell (ME) - Went four months without State coordinator. Getting ready for second round of RTP grants. One job is to promote RTP funding, received over 200 applications this year.

Scott Chapman (WA) - Ten million a year goes into trails from different grant programs.

Wendy Coplen (SC) - Trying to keep from piecemealing grants, but has been difficult without funding being clear. Didn't get any OHV applications this year. Member suggested compromise to waiver of motorized funds and to rollover part.

Bob Walker (MT) - Working on two rail trail conversions, about 65 miles. Working with BCHA to print

safety training manual. They are required to be trained before working on USFS trails. Working with dog mushers on sign standards for trails. Working with safety issues on mixed use trails.

Leslie Lewis (CT) - Small State waiver for motorized projects in the State. Trying to come up with some way of compromising their needs without compromising relatively small open space areas. Multiuse trails; can't get them on the ground fast enough. Lots of applications for State trails funding. Health issues helped garner interest in funding multiuse trail guide which will be going out to primary care physicians. Going to do a study on how to improve health with better promotion of trails.

Brigit Brown (WI) - Thousands of miles of snowmobile and ATV trails. Responsible for meeting RTP requirements and working with grant applicants.

John Knudson (UT) - Creating more snow ATV trails. Replaced entire fleet of snow grooming cats. Holding second annual trails conference in November with tobacco settlement money. Partnership with Utah Walks to promote health and trails. Staff of one with additional motorized program.

Steve Weston (AR) - Trouble spending motorized money. Hard to get them organized and to help coordinate projects. Using tobacco money on "Trails for Life", building small 1/4 mile loop trails in communities. Also does bike/ped program and scenic byways and is also a staff of one.

Steve Morris (IN) - State Trails Plan. Had separate grant administration.

Brad Eckert and Cheryl Surface (NV) - Operation registration. User groups pushing OHV registration bill in State legislature. SCORP was completed, now working on first ever State trails plan.

Rebecca Brown (VT) - First time at a STAM conference. Works on RTP and State funded trails and the OHV program. Has also worked in Kentucky. Trying to provide more motorized opportunities.

Bill Robinson (WV) - ATV projects including Hatfield-McCoy (<http://www.trailsheaven.com>). New section is good for beginners and intermediates, opened up another county. Getting close to State border with long-distance trail. New rail trail.



ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

The first topic of discussion was in regards to the Eligibility of Motocross tracks. Wendy Coplen from SC also had similar questions regarding the eligibility of BMX tracks, walking tracks, and/or running tracks.

FHWA offered the following thoughts.

- The facility must be available to the public.
- Is it on private property?
- Is it within a reasonable cost?
- States are allowed to make this decision.
 - Douwes: Federal guidelines are meant to be more permissive, but States can be more restrictive.

CONFERENCE CALL ATTENDEES

Sherry Smecker (VT)
Alexandra Weiss (FL)
Chris Woods (FHWA NY)
Vicky Slade (NY)
Annie McVey (AZ)
Chris Gamache (NH)

For a more detailed response to this issue please read the [Q and A regarding the eligibility of Motorcross tracks](#).



TOP

ALLOWABLE AND INDIRECT COSTS

Rebecca Brown (VT) - I work with youth groups a lot. I see a lot of indirect costs such as transportation, clothes, awards, and food. What's eligible under RTP?

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - Please see the [RTP Guidance on Allowable Costs](#). Also follow the link to the OMB Circular A-87. State DOTs have other issues to deal with, such as the need to have indirect costs approved. Shannon Dumolt stands up and shows her circulars to the attendees.

Wendy Coplen (SC) - South Carolina chose not to allow indirect costs.

Shannon Dumolt (FHWA OK) - Agreement among various agencies could allow indirect costs. Trouble is that people go to their elected officials and want to use administrative takedown? State uses administrative percentage. You can if you want...

Alex Weiss (FL-phone) - Trail organizations are charging a fee for administering grants. They are putting time in as an in-kind donation for matching.

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - Preapproval for original grant application is not allowed.

John Schmill (CA) - Are we confusing grant administrative costs or are these project management related? These are costs specifically related to that project.

Andy Goldbloom (TX) - How about care and feeding of volunteers?

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - How many of you collect per diem on State travel?

Tommy Boxx (MS) - Convict labor. Do [we?, you?] allow the feeding of them?

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - We don't pay for entertainment; has to be "necessary and reasonable" for dissemination of technical information, etc.

Rebecca Brown (VT) - Roving crews that stay out in the backcountry for weeks at a time have to buy their [supplies] in advance.

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - Value is going to be locally specific, i.e. volunteer labor value.

Andy Goldbloom (TX) - Used Davis Bacon rate for unskilled labor.

Wendy Coplen (SC) - You can go up to \$10 an hour without justifying skills. For volunteers; can they charge their mileage? How about their time in the trails?

John Schmill (CA) - Has seen a wide variety of prevailing wages. Can just go with minimum wage?

Tommy Boxx (MS) - Used State Employment Commission which has detailed rates for various jobs.

Susan Moerschel (DE) - Office of volunteerism for Parks and Recreation department uses their rate of \$13 an hour.

PHONE - How about convicts that have no value? We are looking a volunteer hours not as a match but as part of their criteria scoring.



TOP

INSURANCE

Alexandra Weiss (FL) - Insurance issue (Bob is handing out packets). For insurance, National Association of OHV managers put together, with assistance from NOHVCC, a national working group collaborative partnership with the insurance industry, agencies, and user groups to address the issue. Similar to the snowmobile issue. Trying to develop best management practices the requirements can be adopted as practices, not requirements. If you have a big grant to a small community.

Brigit Brown (WI) - Is the group working with National OHV Insurance Committee? They use it for club insurance in WI.

Bob Walker (MT - Chair of National Association of OHV Program Managers) - No other State

does. Some insurance companies are willing to look at the issue but only if there is a Statewide interest, i.e. minimum enrollment requirements.

Will not insure clubs that don't belong to a State association. Clubs have pulled out of grant projects. Others have drained their accounts to have only token assets and "just roll the dice."

Does NH still provide the \$15 policy for OHV use?

Chris Gamache (NH) - We just had a superior court decision that OHV clubs are considered "occupant liable properties"; they are not liable as long as there is no fee involved.

Leslie Lewis (CT) - Equestrians have waiver of liability for equestrian professionals. Is there any similarity for OHV programs?

Alexandra Weiss (FL) - Trail attorneys didn't like it in Florida.

John Knudson (UT) - Are we looking at allowing insurance as a project cost?

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - The question has been asked. "Some trails have been unable to build a project because of insurance." Some States have wondered if they could pay for insurance. States are NOT allowed to pay clubs for insurance.

Bob Walker (MT) - Trying to find insurance for clubs and riding areas, not a RTP question specifically.

Alexandra Weiss (FL) - It does affect States directly when trail managers are trying to prove to legislature that OHV (and equestrian) facilities can be built as an "assumable risk" and that it can allay the fears of risk managers. They are afraid that these activities are too high a risk. Best practices research shows ways to design and manage these areas.

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - This is going to be a State by State issue, not something FHWA can delve into. Ongoing insurance is NOT eligible, but paying for insurance to get started (the first year) is eligible.



TOP

REAUTHORIZATION

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - Thirty second version: SAFETEA proposal has not changed from last year, still at \$60 million a year. Several modest changes proposed. Senate and House passed their versions last spring. Senate version was similar

to the Administration's proposal with some changes (some \$60 million per year). House proposal started with \$53 million and would go up each year; more money total. Did not include streamlining proposals. Other changes, going thru §112 highway requirements, Davis Bacon, maintaining highways and bridges requirements, Statewide and Metropolitan planning, etc. RTP is already exempt from Section 4(F). Is NOT exempt from NEPA. Student conservation groups: proposal was to send 10% for youth corps, etc. House included only as encouraging. Don't expect the requirement to be included the final version.

We are now under an 8 month extension through the end of May 2005. Technically, funding should be available now, but still don't know what the apportionments are. Provided number to finance office but still don't have Federal appropriations act. Yes, you will have money in FY 2005. Question is how much and when will you be allowed to use it.

Shannon Dumolt (FHWA OK)

Senator Inhofe is in charge of reauthorization. If we don't have anything before new Congress takes over expect them to start all over again with new congress in January.

Susan Moerschel (DE) - Heard that the conference committee will be meeting this year.

Christopher Douwes (FHWA HQ) - Rumor is that reauthorization will be put off, however if Democrats make big win, current Congress will try to pass something. Both House and Senate versions would allow environmental and assessment costs incurred before application made.

Notes from end of day two.

- Biggest thing about reauthorization is not the RTP, not health; but money.
- House version went from \$375 billion to \$275 billion.
- Increase in funding would require some kind of revenue enhancement.
- House is now at \$299 billion.
- Senate is at \$301 billion.
- The difference is psychological difference of being over \$300 billion.
- Donor State issue: only Federal Highway Trust Fund expected to be returned to States that contribute.
- House has no changes proposed for TE.
- Senate version:
 - historic preservation is a separate category.
 - include historic battlefields.
 - Iowa proposal from Senator Harkins would give priority to health related facilities.
 - concerns about eligibility.
 - concerns about designating facilities as "recreational".

Q&A

Q: Do you have to obligate funds by May?

A: No, but it's a good idea in case RTP is not reauthorized.

Q: Is the RTP safe?

A: Probably, regardless of how the elections go. Amount of money is up in the air; significant Federal budget considerations exist.

Q: What about administrative funding request to consider increase from 7%?

A: Consensus among States at last meeting is that would be nice, but public might not accept it.



ACCESSIBILITY

Janet Zeller

USDA Forest Service - National Accessibility Program Manager

Q: What's a facility?

A: A building, not a trail. Section 504 is trails.

"We're not going to turn every trail into a hallway just because we're still waiting for federal guidelines." -- Janet Zeller, USDA Forest Service National Accessibility Program Manager

Q: When does this USFS Guideline apply in the case of long distance trails?

A: If section previously constructed is NOT accessible, you don't have to make the new section accessible. But if you are constructing a NEW trailhead out to an existing trail, you do need to look at applying accessibility guidelines.

Presentation.



NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (NEPA) STREAMLINING

Shannon Conner Dumolt

Environmental Engineer, OK Division, FHWA

[NEPA Presentation available in HTML format.](#)



DISCUSSION GROUPS

The following notes have been developed for the discussion groups. Please follow the relevant links.

Notes from Working Groups:

- [RTP Clearinghouse](#)
- [Conflicts on Multiple Use Trails](#)
- [Training](#)
- [Technology and Development](#)
- [Information Gathering Standards](#)
- [Insurance](#)



TRAINING

National Trails Training Partnership Stuart Macdonald

The National Trails Training Partnership (NTTP) is a nationwide partnership committed to making training for trails and greenways skills more available.

Current key efforts of the National Trails Training Partnership include:

- Maintaining the online calendar of training opportunities at www.NTTP.net.
- Managing the online clearinghouse of training contacts and information.
 - includes the extensive resources and archives of www.AmericanTrails.org.
- Identifying and working with college and university training providers.
- Providing an online home for studies, research papers, theses, training manuals, design guidelines, and other trail-related publications.
- Promoting resources and state-of-the art examples on planning, improving, and managing accessible trails for persons with disabilities.
- Promoting cooperation and information sharing on trail training at conferences, interagency meetings, and through communications with our many contacts in the trails community.

If we can get more information from States and training providers we will develop a web page for each State with featured training providers, volunteer training organizations, and other resources.

Other goals of NTTP include:

- Making existing training available to non-profit groups and partnerships with public agencies.
- Documenting teaching sessions and outstanding expertise in formats that will make the information more widely available.
- Creating new skills workshops on most-requested topics with the help of experts.
- Bringing trail skills to youth employment groups, volunteers, and underserved populations.



Recreational Trails Program

Administration proposal would specify the requirements for State Trails Committees. [Current guidance regarding State Recreational Trail Advisory Committees](#) may be found in the RTP Guidance.

Permissible uses will be rewritten. They are basically the same but would clarify as eligible the following:

- Assessment of trail conditions for accessibility and maintenance.
- State-paid trail crews; youth and service corps specifically allowed.
- Use of trail crews provision was somewhat controversial; may or may not be included.
- Safety and environmental protection already eligible; for clarification would add supporting non-law-enforcement trail monitoring.
- A RTP funded project may allow funds for environmental planning as part of developing the application. Match allowed preapproval toward nonfederal share less than 18 months prior to approval.
- Waiver of highway requirements that don't make sense for trails program.



NEXT MEETING

The issue regarding where the next meeting will take place and which issues need to be covered were discussed and voted upon. In 2005 the State Trails Administrators Meeting will be held in Newark, DE on September 20, 21, and 22. Information and updates will be posted on the [STAM](#)

[2005 website.](#)



MEETINGS for 2006

National Trails Symposium in Quad Cities.

What IMBA wanted was to have their own conference and take State Trail Administrators out to look at trails and show us how to work with them.

Work on possibilities of what training is most valuable and bring it to Delaware to discuss.

Adjourned at 5 p.m.

To provide Feedback, Suggestions, or Comments for this page contact Christopher B. Douwes at christopher.douwes@fhwa.dot.gov.

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