

Minutes

Bicycle Nova Scotia – Mountain Bike Trails

Tuesday February 11, 2014 Meeting

Present: Lawrence Plug, Darrell Cooling, Lola Doucet, Shawn Skelhorn, Jim Kvammen, Duane Moase, John Kleronomos, Keith Croucher

1. Approval of Agenda
 - Lawrence Plug moved that the agenda be approved subject to the addition of a discussion of the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area. Seconded by Darrell Cooling. Motion carried.
1. Regrets: Tom Kavanaugh, Ryan Lindh
2. 2013 Update (Attached): Lawrence Plug
 - Lawrence Plug discussed the attached 2013 summary. Further discussion arose concerning the Nova Scotia Trails Federation annual general meeting. Specifically, the need for involvement in trail building in Colchester County as requested by Garnet McLaughlin. Duane Moase indicated a willingness to help pending further details. Lawrence Plug will contact Garnet for more details and discuss with Duane. Lawrence will also contact Jeff Simms who recently opened a new bicycle shop in Truro.
1. 2014: Keith Croucher
 - A general discussion of 2014 was held including the need to reach out to the areas of the province outside the HRM.
 - A discussion regarding the Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Area. Lawrence Plug had met with Peter Bush of Nova Scotia Environment and Beth McGee board member of Five Bridge Lakes Wilderness Coalition. They are looking to get approval for mountain bikes to use the ATV routes in the wilderness area. BNS would be excited to sign a user agreement and carry insurance for these specific trails. Users would probably be required to have a BNS membership, owing to governing details of the NS Wilderness Act. A general BNS membership is available for a reasonable fee, and a supporting membership even more cheaply so this shouldn't be an obstacle. NS Env/Peter Bush is looking into timing and permission for an exploratory ride through the potential routes.
1. Committee Elections:
 - a) Associate Vice president
 - Lawrence Plug was nominated by Lola Doucet. Seconded by Duane Moase. Motion Carried.
 - b) Secretary
 - Secretary position is still vacant
 - c) Treasurer
 - Treasurer position is still vacant
 - d) Regional Representatives from :
 - i. Fundy
 - Fundy Area Rep is vacant
 - ii. South Shore
 - South Shore Area Rep is vacant
 - iii. Highlands
 - Highlands Area Rep is vacant
 - iv. Cape Breton
 - Cape Breton Area Rep is Vacant
 - v. HRM
 - Jim Kvammen was nominated by Shawn Skelhorn. Seconded by Lawrence Plug. Motion carried.

- vi. Annapolis Valley
 - Lola Doucet nominated Ryan Lindh in absentia. Seconded by Darrell Cooling. Motion carried
- 1. Brochure:
 - Lola Doucet presented materials for consideration for a trail etiquette brochure. There was discussion around the content, design, distribution, and production. A budget was set at \$500. Lola will email the group with content and ask for input.
- 1. Sector Budget
 - Lawrence Plug suggested we purchase a half-dozen copies of the IMBA trail manual books.
 - Brochure budget of \$500
 - Shawn Skelhorn raised the idea of t-shirts and riding jerseys. A discussion followed regarding design, materials, and cost. Further discussion is needed so this will be added to the agenda for the next meeting.
- 1. Other Business Arising
- 2. Date for Next Meeting: TBA Location TBA.
- 3. Motion to Adjourn
 - Jim Kvammen moved that the meeting be adjourned. Seconded by Shawn Skelhorn. Motion Carried.

Annual Report 2013
BNS-ORA (Off-Road Advocacy)
Bicycle Nova Scotia

12 January 2014

Committee Membership

VP Trails Lawrence Plug

Members Keith Croucher, Daryl Cooling, Troy Turple , Shawn Skulhorn, Sherry Huybers, Matt Rockwell, Tom Kavanaugh (ex-officio)

Sector Meetings in 2013:

We held two Sector Meetings in spring 2013.

Representation:

- Nova Scotia Trails Federation (we are now an active board member of NSTF)
- McIntosh Run Watershed Association
- Nine-mile river trail association
- Meeting with Halifax Mainland MLA

Changes to Leadership

The current VP for the sector, Lawrence Plug, is resigning as of the January 2014 AGM, at which time a vote for a replacement will be held. A current member of the sector, Keith Croucher, has offered to serve. Keith is endorsed by the current VP!

2013 Updates

BNS-ORA recognizes that the majority of it's focus has been on HRM area. Partly this is because it has so little singletrack compared to population (at least, singletrack that is approved by landmanagers and owners). Another factor is the Halifax-centric board membership. We'd like to change that. To help, or to see if BNS-ORA can help your trail project, please contact us at ora@bicycle.ns.ca.

Spider Lake Trails (Waverley/Fall River)

Background: Spider Lake area has an informal system of singletrack trails used by mountain bikers. Most of the trails are within the Lake Major watershed, which is protected and managed as a source of water for HRM. Halifax Regional Water Commission (HRWC) is the primary landowner/manager in the area but trails also cross into private land. Neither HRWC nor landowners have granted permission for the trails. According to HRWC, recent increased levels of trail use, construction of trail structures, liability concerns (especially owing to recent rescue operations for lost trail users), and general concern for watershed integrity are motivation to potentially close the informal trails. Alternatively, trails might potentially be brought into a formal management plan which addresses HRWC concerns.

Update: Discussions with HRWC to develop a trail management agreement are underway. This would likely entail loss of some trail in areas deemed sensitive and/or critical to HRM water supply by HRWC.

McIntosh Run Trail System (Spryfield/Herring Cove)

Background: BNS is a supporting organization (with Hike Nova Scotia) for the proposed singletrack trail

system for non-motorized users in the Herring Cove backlands on the Halifax Mainland. The McIntosh Run Watershed Association (MRWA) is the primary organization moving the plan forward. The proposed trail system would incorporate some existing informal trails principally used and maintained by mountain bikers. New trail also would be built under a phased development plan that totals approximately 28km of singletrack in an area very near the population heart of HRM. BNS has contributed to this project through formal statements of support, communication and awareness-raising among BNS members, and by direct participation by BNS-ORA members Kroucher and Plug in MRWA. In late 2012, a Concept Plan was submitted for approval to HRM and DNR, the two landholders in the area of the proposed trail system.

Update: MRWA and DNR are negotiating over a draft letter of agreement that would authorize MRWA to build and manage the trail system. In 2012, both HRM and DNR had consented to 'consider' the trail system plan.

HRM has designated funds toward a detailed construction plan and the beginning of construction. This is a positive development, a couple of road blocks remain: a) it has been determined by HRM staff that HRM Council must vote to approve the trails, and this has not yet been done; b) HRM is reorganizing their procurement process with respect to trails in HRM, so that the HRM procurement office instead of trail associations performs the procurement of services such as trail design and building. Understandably, MRWA is concerned that the original intent of the trail system as bike+ped single-track, including technical singletrack, is maintained.

To help: Contact and/or join the McIntosh Run Watershed Association (web: mcintoshrun.ca); communicate to your MLA and City Councillor your support for the McIntosh Run singletrack trail system plan. Eventually, assuming DNR and HRM agree to the plan, hands will be needed to assist with trail work and maintenance.

Uniacke Estates (Mt Uniacke)

Background: In 2011, the NSMTBTA (BNS-ORA predecessor organization) entered into an agreement with Uniacke Estate Museum Park to help maintain and upgrade, where necessary, the existing trails on the Estate property. Estate trails had fallen into disrepair owing to insufficient staff and resources to maintain them. In exchange for trail work, the Estate formally opened trails to mountain biking. Several dozen mountain bikers and hikers attended trail work days. New bridges and boardwalks were built and portions of the Wetlands trail were armoured using local rock to prevent further erosion. East Hants County recreation department gave a grant of \$1000 to cover material costs. Estate management changed in 2012/13, putting BNS-MBT management and MTB access in limbo.

Update: In spring 2013 BNS-MBT withdrew from managing/upgrading Uniacke Estate trails.

Long Lake Provincial Park (Wrandees)

The singletrack trails built here by mountainbikers (and used by many others too) before the Park was declared are not part of the Park Management Plan which was formed some 10years ago. In fact, there is no allowance for bikes on singletrack in the Plan. If/when the management plan is put in place, the trails may be at risk. It's important to initiate discussions with DNR, possibly through the Halifax Mainland MLA, to reverse the Park Plan in this one respect.