

**Lake Vermilion Trail Steering Committee**  
**Meeting #4 Notes**  
**3/9/16 – US Forest Service LaCroix Ranger Station**

**Attendees**

Glenn Bergerson – *Beatty Township*  
Carol Booth – *Wakemup Village Resident, Cook*  
Greg Dostert – *Breitung Township*  
Tiffany Fondie – *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*  
Josh Gillson – *Lake Vermilion Resort Association*  
Russell Habermann – *Arrowhead Regional Development Commission*  
Cathi Hiveley – *Beatty Township*  
Andy Holak – *St. Louis County, Recreation Specialist*  
Tyler Lampella – *St. Louis County Planning*  
Holly Larson – *National Park Service*  
Steve Lotz – *Vermilion Lake Township*  
Bev Peterson – *Greenwood Township*  
Lee Peterson – *Greenwood Township*  
Sidra Starkovich – *Bois Forte Reservation*  
Elizabeth Storm – *City of Cook, Cook City Council*  
Sue Wolfe – *Owens Township*

1. General Updates/Comments from Committee Members
  - a. Carol Booth has contacted Ron Potter, who has worked extensively with trail development (specifically OHV Trails) in the past. She noted that he has interest in being involved in trail development efforts and has great insight into trail funding opportunities.
  
2. Regional Significance Designation
  - a. Regional Significance Application Update: Russell Habermann has drafted text for the Greater Minnesota Regional Parks and Trails Commission (GMRPTC) ([www.gmrptcommission.org](http://www.gmrptcommission.org)) regional designation application and will be working with Holly and a few select committee members to revise it before offering it to the entire group for review. He noted that the application is the first step in vying for state Parks and Trails Legacy funding; if granted a preliminary regional designation ranking, a master plan compliant with GMRPTC standards would have to be completed for the Lake Vermilion Trail to be integrated into the system and eligible for trail development funding.
  - b. Photos: 4-6 photos highlighting the trail are needed for the regional designation application. Russell has collected photos from Carol Booth, but invites others to send him more photos at [rhabermann@ardc.org](mailto:rhabermann@ardc.org).
    - i. Lee Peterson has photos of Greenwood he can share.

- ii. Josh Gillson can provide pictures of shelter projects and Lake Vermilion as a whole from the Lake Vermilion Resort Association. Tiffany Fondie will help compile and send these to Russell.
  - iii. Joel Abenth from Camp Vermilion may also have photos for use.
- c. Letters of Support Needed: Russell has drafted and sent out a draft letter of support for the regional designation application. No letters of support have been received yet.
  - i. Letters of support are being requested/put together by Breitung Township, Owens Township, Sportsmen's Club (meeting 3/9), Resort Association, City of Cook (meeting 3/24), Cook Lions, Bois Forte (meeting 4/6), St. Louis County, Vermilion Lake Township (meeting 4/4), Kugler Township, and City of Tower.
    - 1. Russell will ask Tom Rukavina about the County letter of support.
    - 2. Tiffany will work on the letter of support from the Resort Association.
    - 3. Greg Dostert will ask Linda Keith about the City of Tower letter.
    - 4. Julie Suihkonen will request a letter from Kugler Township.
    - 5. Russell will post the sample letter of support on the project page: [www.arrowheadplanning.org/lakevermiliontrailimplementation](http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/lakevermiliontrailimplementation).

### 3. Communication/Public Relations

- a. Logo Contest: Carol has been working with Shawna Kishel to further develop the trail logo contest, but she would like feedback from the committee on the following issues:
  - i. Ideas for additional partners? Schools.
  - ii. Application fee? No.
  - iii. Prize ideas? Bike, credit union prizes, etc.
    - 1. Sidra Starkovich mentioned that Bois Forte takes requests for donations; it could potentially provide wild rice, cash, golf passes, etc. as prizes. A request form is available online at <http://www.boisforte.com/pdf/DONATIONREQUESTSFORMS.pdf>.
  - iv. Advertising ideas? Websites, Hometown Focus, summer festivals.
  - v. Committee members willing to serve on Arts selection committee? Sidra and Elizabeth Storm have volunteered to be involved.
  - vi. Carol will send a draft of the application to everyone before it is finalized.
- b. Project Webpage: Russell said that the webpage is up-to-date and online at [www.arrowheadplanning.org/lakevermiliontrailimplementation](http://www.arrowheadplanning.org/lakevermiliontrailimplementation).
  - i. Steve Lotz noted that when you search for the trail, the original Lake Vermilion Trail Plan page comes up. He suggested linking to the implementation page. Russell said he will work on enhancing the visibility of the webpage.
- c. Brochure/Other Communication Tools: Carol noted the value of having a one-page or brochure that committee members could hand out about the project. It

would need to include a brief summary of the concept, and it would be useful at summer festivals and farmer's markets.

- i. Holly Larson said she will send some examples of one-pages to Carol.
- ii. Holly mentioned another option is business cards with the project webpage URL, which could be passed out at parades.
- iii. Joel mentioned that Camp Vermilion has a printer that could be used for printing needs.
- iv. Josh said that other funding opportunities could also be explored.

#### 4. Management Structure/Political Support

- a. Mesabi Trail/Railroad Authority: Holly said she and Russell met with Bob Manzoline, who said that opportunity may exist for some form of partnership between the Lake Vermilion Trail and the Mesabi Trail. While the priority is completing the Mesabi Trail itself, a number of spurs connecting the trail to cities do not utilize former railroad beds for construction. Holly suggested proposing that the Mesabi Trail take over a portion (maybe five miles?) of the Lake Vermilion Trail as a spur of the Mesabi Trail, instead of asking the Railroad Authority to take over the entire Lake Vermilion Trail. The segment from Tower to the Y store is most likely to be accepted since it connects to the Mesabi Trail. It is likely that the Lake Vermilion committee would still need to work on trail planning and fundraising for that segment, but we could ask the Railroad Authority to handle construction and management. Holly also asked whether the committee would have an issue with this segment being named "Mesabi Trail" instead of part of the Lake Vermilion Trail.
  - i. The committee did not have a concern about the name, if having the Tower segment be a part of the Mesabi Trail would increase chance of development.
    1. The committee expressed concern for the Cook end of the trail to be constructed.
    2. The committee agreed with Holly's proposal.
  - ii. Greg said the citizen task force for the Mesabi Trail is gathering for their annual meeting at the Park Inn in Hibbing on April 12. Russell noted that representatives from the Lake Vermilion Trail are slated to present at this meeting.
  - iii. Holly noted that the Railroad Authority board is meeting June 1. If the citizen group responds positively to the idea of a partnership, this is also an opportunity for presentation about the Lake Vermilion Trail.
- b. County Potential Support: Holly noted that although St. Louis County may not be a practical option for owning and managing the trail, they can assist in trail development in other ways, such as through contributing tax-forfeit land, hosting environmental impact, and more.
  - i. Andy Holak, Recreation Specialist with St. Louis County, spoke about a \$3,000-\$5,000 recreation grant program opportunity through the County. Although it doesn't pay for personnel, construction, or planning, it could

help with the review and work connected to tax-forfeit land. This grant program has not had funding for several years, but the County Commissioners occasionally allocate funding for recreation projects directly. He also mentioned that original survey maps are available on the St. Louis County website; these maps could help in identifying old logging trails that could be used for trail development.

#### 5. Sub-Committee Work

- a. Tower End Trail Development: The group identified the public rights of way between Tower and the Y Store. Possible routes were discussed.

##### ACTION ITEMS:

- i. Tyler will check on the ownership of Pike Bay Dr. and the old 169 right of way.
  - ii. Steve will check on the width and location and easement or ownership of the power line corridor.
- b. Cook End Trail Development: The group identified the ridgeline and noted that the ridgeline segment presented in the 2013 Location study was mapped out by a resident with great knowledge of the area. In turn, it might be of value to use the location study as a point of reference going forward. Carol and Sue Wolfe will think about residents/land owners along this segment who would support the trail. Creating a trail loop near Wakemup Hill using Winnifred Road as one segment could be beneficial as well, as most of this land is owned by the County or State.

##### ACTION ITEMS:

- i. To further explore routing for the Cook end, Carol will set up a meeting with Jim Ganahl, Joel Abenth, Sue Wolfe, Elizabeth and Jerry Storm, and possibly a local state employee. She will also contact a Tom Yankowiak, a local resident who has knowledge of the local landscape.
- ii. Andy Holak will serve as the St. Louis County contact for recreation and tax-forfeit land.

**NEXT MEETING: WEDNESDAY, APRIL 13<sup>th</sup>, 10 am – 12 pm, at the Tower Civic Center**