

## **Northern Regional Trail Advisory Committee**

Meeting Summary of April 30th, 2026 (Draft)

WI Department of Natural Resources – Spooner Northern Region HQ

810 W Maple St. Spooner, WI

### Members Present:

Dana Heller, Barron County; Pete Schneider, Barron County; Lindley Mattson, Bayfield County; Chuck Anderson, Burnett County; Susan Tollander, Burnett County; Sue Smedegard, Burnett County; Clint Meyer, Douglas County; Dennis Bachman, Chippewa County; Paul Krumenauer, Chippewa County; Doug Johnson, Polk County; Tony Nowak, Polk County; Don Mrotek, Sawyer County

### Others Present

Dalton Bygd, Barron County Trails Coordinator; Clem Larson, NWRPC; Pat Anderson, WI DNR; Dan Thole, ORV Council

### Approve Agenda

Motion by Johnson to approve agenda, seconded by Mrotek - Approved

### Committee Introductions & Recognition of Guests

Members and Guests were introduced.

### April 24th, 2025, Meeting Summary

Motion by Heller to approve the summary from April 24th, 2025; seconded by Krumenauer - Approved

### Financial (Larson)

Larson gave a quarterly update on the NoRTAC budget. \$5,154.42 in budget, as of March 31<sup>st</sup> 2026. 2026 membership has currently been paid by 5 of the 9 member counties.

### ORV Council Update (Thole)

Funding meeting occurred in August (handout provided). Council had \$249k in carryover from previous year. \$9 million in funding. \$3 million spent on maintenance. \$15k in storm damage requests. Cost increases in projects have been becoming more common. Council is looking at possibility of capping (% of original) on projects with cost increases. Fully engineered projects may have a better chance of getting funded. Council fully funded all bridge projects (\$1.2 million), 70% of trail rehabs (\$694k), fully funded all acquisition projects (\$312k) and intensive use projects (\$66k). ATV registrations have levelled off, UTV registrations increasing moderately. February meeting discussed Cheese Country Trail (Darlington to Monroe) 43 of 68 bridges need maintenance, several were closed at time of inspection, 42 replacements needed. Discussed possible registration fee increase. If UTV cost was doubled it would provide an additional \$3 million. Heller stated that if there is going to be an increase it should be on both ATV & UTV, better optics. Thole also distributed bridge funding too developed by council. Council to develop similar tools for all project types. Trail rehab is next. 2 openings on ORV council next year. Council will be looking at trail surfaces next year. Possibly funding gravel at lower percentage than natural surface trails. Meyer stated that Counties in region have certified forests that need to meet standards. Trails will go away if standards are not met.

### SRC/AWSC update (Smedegard)

SRC- has been using bridge tool, finds it helpful. Cost overruns for snow have to reapply if overrun reaches a certain % of project costs. SRC has issues with heavy equipment being used on bridges that aren't rated for it. Will not pay for damage caused by groomers, etc. Bridges added to SNARS. Meeting by Zoom next week, to discuss 3 overruns. AWSC- No longer Secretary after 15 years, new secretary & new Vice President. International Snow Congress meets in June.

## Issue Briefs

None

### County Updates Relating to Trail Development/Maintenance and Other Projects or Points of Interest

Barron (Bygd) – 4 projects kicked off. Cattail 400 loads of new gravel, lots of washouts. Trails open tomorrow. (Schneider) new pavilion made from a grain bin went up with another scheduled near cedar lake this summer. (Heller) New section open from Wild Rivers to Stump Lake. No need to cross 53 now.

Burnett (Tollander) – North Fork bridge replacement project in Crex Meadows. Lowest bid \$92k over budget. Worked with DNR to reduce costs and now only \$20k over budget. Saved 40k by aligning project work with scheduled water draw-down. Savings also gained by utilizing DNR equipment. Applied for 1 bridge, as it was an access point to County Forest. Trail rehabs with washouts on private land. Paving some approaches in the Town of Swiss.

Chippewa (Krumenauer) – Trails open tomorrow. Some washouts, will be getting gravel.

Douglas (Meyer) – Nost trails are open. Plugged culvert on Wild Rivers due to beavers. Bridge replacement on Wild Rivers, working with DNR. Trail 7 culvert replacement this summer. HWY 105/Pokegama River project this summer, Year-round ATV trail ultimately. Trail 541 is going to have a large dam removed deck is the crossing. Also applied for some new miles and maintenance.

Polk (Nowak) – Culvert replacement on County forest land, bids soon. Application for culvert on Sawmill County Trail. Primary issue on Cattail is gravel gets pushed off the side of trail creating gullies. Meyer stated that Douglas County policy is if groomers push material off of the trail they fix it.

Sawyer (Mrotek) – County highways are open with the exception of a few within tribal land. Ad-hoc committee formed with Tribal Council. Attended meeting tribe looking at starting a club. Trails opened at noon last Friday. With the exception Flambeau State Forest and Chequamegon National Forest.

Bayfield (Mattson) – Trails possibly opening next Wednesday. Half of the clubs are okay with it the other half thinks they should already be open. Reroute in Drummond w/ forest Service finalized. Forester looked at trails data in GIS, total was withing 4 miles of GTS. Will be doing GPS on trails this summer. Trestle project having issues with engineer. On site visit in May. Project to begin this time next year.

DNR (Anderson) – replacement has been offered job.has received all maintenance grants. RTP has 22 motorized apps for \$1.6 million, \$641k available. Non- motorized has 66 apps asking for \$4.5 million. July timeframe for those. If you are trying to get ahold of a bridge inspection report, let Pat know.

## Next Meeting Date

The next NoRTAC meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 30th, 2026.

## Adjourn