

**Vermont Trails & Greenways Council**  
**Minutes of March 24, 2005**  
**Marsh –Billings National Historic Park**

**Attendees:** Mike Stafford – Morrisville Trails; John Peters - ?; John Brodhead – Craftsbury Nordic Center; Virginia Lancaster – VT Horse Council; Amy Bell –VTrans; Rebecca Brown – ANR; Bonnie Waninger – NWRPC; Sherry Smecker – ANR; Ben Rose – Green Mtn. Club; Ed O’Leary – ANR; Beth Ann Finlay – Northern VT Resource & Development Council; Diane Konrady – VT Dept. of Tourism & Marketing; Lenore Budd – Catamount Trail; Tim Tierney – Kingdom Trails; Luke O’Brien – Kingdom Corp.; Paul Moffat – Westmore Trails; Bryant Watson – VAST; Dick Mackay – Northern Rail Trail; Jen Lamphere – Northern Forest Canoe Trail; Lucy Gibson – Smart Mobility; Todd Sheinfeld – VT ATV Sportsman Assoc.; Jennifer Waite – NPS.

1. **Approval of Minutes of 1/20/05** – On a motion by Lenore Budd, seconded by Ben Rose the minutes were unanimously approved.
2. **Treasurer’s Report** – Ben Rose reported the current balance is \$967.87. On a motion by Jennifer Waite, seconded by Luke O’Brien the treasurer’s report was unanimously approved.
3. **Officer & Board Nominations** – Paul Moffat presented the following slate of officers to be voted upon at the 5/19/05 Annual Meeting:

**Officers**

Kevin Russell, Chair	Beth Ann Finlay, Vice-Chair
Ben Rose, Treasurer	Mike Stafford, Secretary
Becca Brown/Tiffany Shaw, Recording Secretary	

**Directors**

Luke O’Brien, Local Trails	Amy Bell, Regional Trails
Tim Tierney, Regional Trails	Lenore Budd, Statewide Trails
Alexis Nowalk, Statewide Trails	John Brodhead, Commercial

**4. Government Affairs Committee Report:**

- a. **Ancient Roads:** Kevin and Mike have participated in the legislative hearings. The formal Council policy position has come in handy. After a lengthy discussion of the issue it was noted that the Council should advocate for being part of any summer study committee effort.
- b. **Fish & Wildlife Access Areas:** Deferred due to the absence of Gray Stevens.
- c. **Act 250 Jurisdictional Ruling:** Bryant Watson updated the Council on the recent Environmental Board ruling in which the Statewide Snowmobile Trail System was determined to be “public in purpose” and thus outside Act 250 jurisdiction. Bryant anticipates that VNRC will appeal the decision.
- d. **Act 250 Trails Exemption:** The Council has not taken a formal position on this issue. It was noted it will be important to avoid polarization between motorized and non-motorized trail uses. The outcome may be more clarity and direction but it may result in greater burden being placed on trail groups. All agreed there was a need for clarity and perhaps a summer study committee would be the best approach. No formal action was taken.

5. **Membership Committee Report:**

Kevin Russell provided a report. The committee is pursuing opportunities to mail membership information to towns via VLCT. \$837 needed to do a larger membership mailing – we'll revisit this discussion at May meeting. Kevin asked for suggestions for fundraising. Suggestions included: getting VRPA mailing list; Council needs to better demonstrate value to ANR to obtain funding to support Council efforts; formalize role of Council via statute ex. Governors Snowmobile Council members get mileage reimbursement; meet with RPC's as a part of work plans with VTrans. Kevin and Ben Rose will be visiting with ANR in the near future.

6. **Public Affairs Committee:**

- a. Website: Tiffany Shaw (Becca's replacement) will take over responsibility for the website: vtfpr.org
- b. Newsletter: Jennifer Waite reported that there will be a spring newsletter. Get member news (75-100 words) to Jennifer by 4/1. A mid April release date is planned.
- c. Governor's Conference Trails Track 2005: Paul Moffatt reported that the committee has the following recommendations for topics:
  - 1. Trail Building: Mount Independence Part 2 (Peter Jensen)
  - 2. Ancient and Class IV Roads and Trails: What Every Town Should Know
  - 3. Project Management (Mike Stafford)
  - 4. Burlington-Montreal Bikeway (Chapin Spencer)
  - 5. Trail Maintenance 101 (GMC?)

Diane Konrady will work with Mike to develop a more catchy title for the Project Management session. Todd noted that he would like to see a future session that included emerging forms of recreation such as ATV's.

7. **Operations Committee Report:**

- a. **VT Trails System:** Issue has taken a back seat, will need to revisit at May mtg. ANR Commissioner Wood wants Council to develop criteria for inclusion in the State Trails System application. Until criteria are developed and the process is mutually agreed upon no new applications will be considered. Sherry Smecker distributed a draft application – please submit comments to Sherry ASAP. It was moved by Luke and seconded by Ben that “the Operations Committee re-forward the draft to the Council and get comments back prior to the next meeting”. Vote unanimous?
- b. **Trails & Greenways Manual Update:** Beth Ann Finlay provided an overview of the project and introduced the consultant Lucy Gibson from Smart Mobility. Lucy stressed the need for continued input from Council members. Council members can expect to receive requests for input from Lucy in the near future.
- c. **Grants:** Sherry reported that approximately \$360,000 in competitive grants and \$3,000 in mini grants are available for the 2005 Recreation Trails Grants Program (RTP). The ranking committee has met, a funding recommendation has forwarded to Commissioner Wood. She hopes to make a formal announcement by April 1<sup>st</sup> in time for the newsletter. Sherry reported that 19 of 36 applications were recommended for funding. She also announced the **2006** Tentative Program Timeline: Applications

available in September; Workshop via Interactive TV in November; Application Deadline – 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday in January.

**Land and Water Conservation Fund:** Sherry reported that the LWCF funding is threatened at the national level – she'll pass along more info. via email.

**8. Other Items:**

**a. Reorganization of ANR (S. 56)** – Todd Sheinfeld brought it to everyone's attention that this bill calls for the appointment of a twelve member committee to oversee the reorganization of ANR. He highlighted the importance of the trails community participating in those discussions

**b. Topics for May Meeting Agenda:**

- Membership Committee – raising funds for larger membership solicitation.
- Design Guide for Trails
- Trails and Greenways Manual – need 40 minutes on May Agenda
- VT Trail System
- Reevaluate Committee membership and structure - is the committee structure working? need to expand committee membership?, Mike to provide committee description at Annual Mtg.

Meeting adjourned at 12:25 P.M.