Trail Summit Meeting
Green Mountain Club
July 14, 2010
GMC Community Room, Waterbury

Facilitator: Brian D. Cotterill
Note Taker: Brian D. Cotterill
Time: 6:30 – 8:00

Members in Attendance: (Total # 24 counted.)
   Marge Fish
   Ben Rose
   Doug Reeves
   Chad Van Ormer
   Carol Langley
   Hawk Merheny
   Henry Smith
   Jim Sullivan
   Maureen Robertson
   Dick Andrews
   Richard Windish
   Michal Chcinich
   Charlene Bohl

The following are the outcomes of the Green Mountain Club’s Trail Summit meeting. (** Indicates frequency and that the item was mentioned in a session more than once.)

**Trail Resources at Stake (What is at risk or vulnerable?)**
1. Ground surface – sustainable tread way. *
   a. Not torn up by OHV or horses.
2. Trail users that are active supporters now get turned off turned away.
3. Water resources. *
4. Quiet – low use backcountry experience. ****
5. Encroaching development. *
6. Historic buildings (ex. Copper lodge needs to be removed).
7. Hikers displaced by the inconsiderate.
8. Historic character of trails.
9. Sometimes, the trail itself (ex. closures).
10. Impacts from renewable energy projects (ex. industrial wind towers in view shed).
11. Sensitive flora and fauna. *
12. Introducing invasive plants. *
13. Ability for user groups to work together and come to consensus.
15. Relationships with adjacent landowners.
16. Free, first come – first serve “open” experience for pedestrians (supply and demand).
17. Wildlife.
Education and Stewardship Messages (Key elements of Vermont’s universal trail ethic?)

1. Respect.
   a. For environment.
   b. For designated uses.
   c. For other users.
   d. For historic context.
   e. For non-human visitors/ habitat.
2. No building trails without permission.
3. Stay on designated trails allowed for your use.
4. Know your audience and customize the message in how you deliver it.
   a. Message sent is message received.
5. Idea “Trails to Every Classroom”.
6. Transcend and resonate with all user groups and communities.
8. Appropriate uses for appropriate places.
9. Focus on a positive message.
   a. Not a bunch of “NO’s”.

Branding and Delivery (How to deliver the message?)

1. Persuade rather than mandate.
   a. Be careful not to confuse by distinguishing this from LNT.
2. Maybe valuable brands already exist.
   a. GMNF, FPR, GMC, VAST, CTA, VMBA, VASA
3. Message should be clear, constant and consistent.
4. Be aware that getting the message out will take time (perhaps a measurement caution here).
5. Confiscate trespassing machinery.
6. Have trails fit their environment.
   a. Scale, contour, surface.
7. Appeal to individuals that want to experience a historic and unique VT landscape.
   a. Use something like “A historic landscape saved for future generations.”
8. Comprehensive reference material by the type of use.
   a. Rating and difficulty reference system.
9. Trail user workshops for maintenance and appreciation.
10. Internet and social media.
11. Multiple-use trails are Cooperative-use trails.
12. Expand messages to trail users such as hunters and anglers.
13. VT brand of Trails Day.
14. Get message to educators.
   a. Workshops.
   b. Project Learning Tree.
   c. Forest for Every Classroom.
Sustainability Indicators and Monitoring (What are the methods for measuring success?)

1. Condition of trails. *
   a. Doable indicator like inventory conditions every 5 years. *
2. User feedback. *
   a. Clubs, trail logs etc.
3. Number of people using trails.
4. Measure user level of satisfaction.
5. Number of user groups working together and partnering. *
6. Level of information sharing amongst different user groups.
7. Measure if people embracing or opposing what is put into place? *
8. Number of illegal use/access incidents. **
9. Question, who will measure and report? *
10. Vandalism decreases and fewer incidents. *
11. Capacity of trail managing organizations to address needs.
12. Wide variety of use across generations.

These results along with other Trail Summit data will be used by the Stewardship and Communication workgroup to draft a Universal Trail Ethic message and brand for Vermont by early October 2010.

For more information on the Vermont Trail Collaborative:
https://www.uvm.edu/~snrvtdc/?Page=vttrailcollaborative.html

For more information on the Stewardship and Communication Workgroup:
http://groups.google.com/group/trails-collaborative-education-group

To give feedback and ideas to the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council Board Chair contact Danny Hale: director@vtvasa.org

To contact the Stewardship and Communication workgroup facilitator Brian D. Cotterill email: bdcotterill@gmail.com