Green Mountain Trails Collaborative  
Stewardship and Communication Work Group  
Meeting Notes  
April 14, 2010

Date: 4-14-10  Time: 10:30-12:00  Location: VASA Headquarters

Facilitator/ Note Taker: Brian D. Cotterill

Committee Members in Attendance:
Danny Hale  VASA, VTGC  
Doug Weber  VORA  
Ed O'Leary  FPR  
Jessica Ricketson  FPR  
Mark Maghini  FWS, Silvia O'Conte  
Sherry Winnie  FPR  
Tom Butland  Green Mountain Plonkers  
Tony Clark  Moosalamoo Association  
Walt Opuszynski  NFCT, VTGC

Agenda:
- Welcome/ introductions
- Draft Operating Norms
- Overview of Project
  o Outcomes
  o Process
  o Timeline
  o Questions and Feedback
- Committee Representation – Who Is Missing?

Welcome and Introductions
- Brian welcomed members and noted that the work group is “re-forming” with a combination of original members, some members on longer participating, and new members in the work group.
- Members introduced themselves, their organization and user group. Members commented on why participating in this work group was important to them. Reasons included:
  o Desire to ID a set of universal trail use ethics for Vermont
  o Trail user education
  o Trail stewardship education
  o Desire for uniform signage and less signage in general in the woods
  o Standardization of trail signage and messaging
  o Need for good trail use standards for land managers
Draft Operating Norms

- Members offered norms for how they would like to operate.

Group Norms:
- Be receptive to new ideas and give all ideas a “fair shake”.
- All members be heard and treated with respect.
- Establish clear roles and ask if you desire a specific role.
- Be clear on objectives for meetings and phone conferences.
- Tie tasks with time frames and outcomes.
- Stay on task and keep focus during meetings.
- Agree to disagree.
- Have fun!

Overview of Project

- Brian offered an overview of his role and the deliverables he is expected to produce via his contract with the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council.
  - Inviting 2-3 underrepresented groups to the table.
  - Facilitation of work group meetings.
  - Representing the work group at Trails Collaborative meetings.

- In addition, Brian outlined the bulk of the project, which involves obtaining and synthesizing data from a wide variety of trail user stakeholders. Brian proposed the following outcomes, process and timeline.
  - Outcomes: Design and implement processes to identify and produce data related to:
    - Trail resources at stake.
    - Key education & stewardship messages.
    - Initiative branding & message delivery strategies.
    - Sustainability indicators & monitoring strategies.
    - Develop and propose signage graphics.
  - Process: Brian proposed facilitating regional focus groups to cultivate input and discussion on the subjects listed above.
  - Timeline: With the help of the work group Brian will develop recommendations based on findings and draft final report by October 10, 2010.

- A number of questions, feedback and suggestions were generated including:
  Success Indicators
  - Identify the work group’s definition of success (what does success look like?)
  - Align this groups outreach with events that are already occurring to be efficient with time and build interest/ momentum within
organizations (example, annual meetings, other Trails Collaborative public outreach meetings if appropriate, etc)

- Create tools that stakeholders or work group members can use on their own to generate the data we need. Make participating easy.
- Identify ideal number of people/users we would like to reach.

Data gathering
- Include ways to reach the “average Joe” trail user.
- Use survey as a flexible mechanism for data collection.
- Use trails orgs as one-stop shopping place to generate input.
- Use regional leaders as a resource for perspective, Trail Chiefs for example.
- Lean on organizations that will use the outcomes of this project most.
- Use regional planning offices as hubs for communication.

General Questions
- Need to find out what work has already been done on this topic.
  - Existing trail use rules for various user groups.
  - Existing trail management resources.
  - Web resources and information hubs for trails.
- Identify organizations responsible for signage on Vermont trails

Committee Representation
- Need to round out the work group to be representative of all stakeholders.
  - Local Motion has been added to represent bicycle and pedestrian users.
  - Looking for at least two more stakeholder representatives to add (towns, regional planner and conservation commissions were suggested)

Action items:
1. (Brian). . . Lead effort to invite additional members to committee to ensure full trail user group representation.
2. (Jessica). . . Lead effort to draft a survey the group can use to capture data from various segments of stakeholders.
3. (Walter). . . Generate a list of trails organizations via VT Trails and Greenways list.
4. (Sherry). . . Generate a list of existing web based trail management resources.
5. (All). . . Register as a member of the work group by going to http://groups.google.com/group/trails-collaborative-education-group
6. (Brian). . . Get administrative permission for Google Group changed into his name so he can post info and documents for public viewing.
7. (Brian). . . Set next meeting and generate schedule for moving forward.