Upcoming meetings:
(1) Landscape Management Work Group Public Information Meeting, Wednesday, May 19, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. at the Lilac Inn in Brandon
(2) Vermont Trail Collaborative, Tuesday, October 19, 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Central Vermont Chamber of Commerce in Berlin. The room is reserved for the day in case working groups want to meet earlier. Note date change from October 21.

Stewardship and Communication Work Group -- Brian Cotterill is taking the lead facilitating the initiative to develop a trails stewardship education plan for the state. The work group and Brian met April 14 before the Trail Collaborative meeting. Work group meeting notes will be posted on the website at www.uvm.edu/tourismresearch/stewardship soon. In sum, Brian outlined his role, got to know the work group members, what each brings to the group and what motivates their participation. Action items include: getting complete representation of different recreation groups on the work group, drafting a survey, and developing lists of trails organizations and trail management resources. A "Trail Summit" model was piloted at the Vermont Trails and Greenways Council annual meeting. It is a participatory activity geared to generate a substantial amount of stakeholder input in a short amount of time. The Trail Summit will be used with other organizations to collect information. The Trail Summit focuses on 4 questions: (1) what are key trail resources at stake?, (2) what are key trail stewardship messages applicable to all user groups?, (3) what are key sustainability indicators and monitoring efforts needed to gauge success?, and (4) what branding/communication strategies are needed to deliver messages? Brian and the work group will take the Trail Summit activity to other groups and use the information collected as a catalyst for the work group to design recommendations for a universal Vermont trail ethics message and brand. Brian will begin using the google group more actively for internal discussions and sharing of documents. Contact Brian at bdcotterill@gmail.com if you have questions or want to be added to the google group.

Next steps: Brian will set up a meeting for the work group. He also will develop a schedule of focus groups and Trail Summits. The Trail Summits will align with organization annual meetings and other gatherings already planned and can be scheduled as independent events. Contact Brian if you would like to schedule a Trail Summit and/ or learn more.

Landscape Management Work Group -- The Landscape Management Work Group held a public information session on April 28 in Warren. Meeting notes will be posted at http://www.uvm.edu/tourismresearch/landscape. The meeting had diverse representation of user groups/interests and geographic distribution. The small number of participants allowed for a facilitated round table discussion touching on the different issues/points. In sum, trail connectivity is a concern. Participants felt that there used to be more trails on private lands and greater access to those trails. Participants are working on the Mad River Path, which will connect towns through the valley. They are looking into tax incentives to encourage private land owners to open lands. Discussion about the ecological impacts centered on the need to educate the public on building and maintaining sustainable trails, dog impacts on vegetation and wildlife, invasive species, trail erosion, and viewshed impacts. Participants mentioned concerns that maple sugar tubing has been tampered with, perhaps because tubing hangs low over some trails. There is a lack of public information on equestrian and mountain biking opportunities in the area. Discussion of trail conflicts focused on hunting, dog conflicts on Mad River Path, mixed uses between skiers/snowmobiles, and ancient roads. Participants emphasized the need to develop a
statewide code of ethics.

Next steps: The third public information meeting is May 19 in Brandon at the Lilac Inn, 6:30-8:30 p.m.

Science Panel -- The science panel has a conference call on Tuesday, May 11 at 12:00 p.m.. The group will hear an update on the VAST study (the plan is posted at http://www.uvm.edu/tourismresearch/science under the section on snowmobile use) from Bryant Watson of VAST. The group will also discuss the annotated bibliographies science panel members are working on, including Jim Harding's students' annotated bibliographies. Kim Hoffman of UVM has completed a report titled, A LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS OF THE GREEN MOUNTAIN NATIONAL FOREST’S DORSET MOUNTAIN AREA. Opportunities exist to work with other UVM students to complete similar studies. Contact william.valliere@uvm.edu if you have additional links and documents to post on the webpage.

Next steps: The next conference call will be Tuesday, May 11 at 12:00 p.m. The phone number is 1-888-296-6500 and passcode is 603878.

Steering Committee: The steering committee has monthly conference calls and everyone is welcome to join the call. Please let me know in advance if you'd like to join so I can send you the call-in info and make sure we have enough open phone lines. The next call will be Tuesday, June 1 at 1:00 p.m.