

Massachusetts Recreational Trails Advisory Committee
MINUTES
March 9, 2011

Location: Damon Road DCR Offices, Northampton

Time: 4pm to 6pm

Members Present:

Bill Boles: New England Mountain Bike Association

Benton Phelps: New England ATV Association

Becky Barnes: DCR Trails Coordinator

Becky Kalagher: Bay State Riders

Dean Zuppio: Snowmobiles Association of Massachusetts

Amanda Lewis: Recreational Trails Program Coordinator

RTP Update, Meeting Schedule, Etc.

- The 2011 RTP grant cycle recommendations for funding and for potential funding are currently undergoing the environmental review process as well as the approval process through the DCR Commissioner and up to the Governor. This will take several months to complete.
- Public Law 112-5, Section 201, has extended the Federal Surface Transportation Program through September 30, 2011. This means that we will have a full year of Recreational Trails Program (RTP) funds apportioned to Massachusetts, similar to FY 2009 and 2010 levels, for the next grant round.
- The STIP has been signed and approved, with the RTP funding level at \$626,400. However, it does appear that MassDOT may be applying for an amendment to the STIP to program the additional funds that are set to lapse, which could potentially bring the total amount of funds available this year to \$1,506,400.

New MARTAB Membership

- Dick O'Brien has volunteered to remain on the board until a replacement can be found. He has left TTOR and is on the board as a representative of land management organizations, so a replacement for that particular group will need to be found. His initial recommendations for replacements were all employees of TTOR, however, the organization has decided not to appoint any employees to the board due to lack of staff time to allocate to it. MARTAB will need to select a few other land management organizations to inquire about membership. Wildland Trust, Mass Audubon, and Berkshire Natural Resource Council will all be contacted to submit nominations for the board, if they choose to do so.

Follow-up: Amanda will contact land management agencies to request nominations for MARTAB.

RTP Education Grant Projects Review and Selection

- MARTAB review of RTP grant applications for 2011 education grant awards – EXECUTIVE SESSION. Notes for this portion of the meeting will be available when grant contracts are awarded, in accordance with Massachusetts Open Meeting Law (M.G.L. c. 30A, §§18-25).

MARTAB Votes

- MARTAB voted on the nomination of Dick Williamson to replace Craig Della Penna as a representative of Rail Trails and shared-use paths in Massachusetts. Dean made a motion to appoint Dick Williamson as the rail trail and shared-use path representative on MARTAB. Ben seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to appoint Dick.
- MARTAB voted on passing a resolution to support trail improvements at DCR and other state properties in accordance with the DCR Trail Guidelines and Best Practices Manual, whether or not an RMP is in place at that time. The board voted previously on this via teleconference in January, however, it was determined that according to Open Meeting Law, a valid vote must take place in a face-to-face meeting. Dean made a motion to pass the resolution. Bill seconded the motion. The board voted unanimously to pass the resolution.

Follow-up: Bill Boles will finalize the resolution and send it out to the DCR Commissioner. Amanda will contact Dick to inform him of his appointment and he will now begin to participate in MARTAB meetings and communication.

Conference Planning

- Discussion about another spring trails conference sponsored by MARTAB and funded by RTP:
- Members of the Spring, 2011 Conference Planning Committee:
Dick O'Brien
Dean Zuppio
Bill Boles
Becky Barnes
Amanda Lewis

Amanda will set up a time for the Conference Planning Committee to discuss plans and dates via teleconference.

- Brainstorming for future conferences:
 - Dealing with conservation commissions

- GPS'ing trails and submitting data to central trails warehouse – is this something that the regional planning commissions would appreciate?
- 3 workshops in different Mass regions that cover working with cultural/historic resources, NHESP, and Conservation Commissions, similar to recent internal DCR workshops – 3 different Saturdays
- Board agreed that another trails training workshop, similar to those held already, should be focus of spring workshop
- 3 or so workshops across regions to educate trails community on preserving and conserving natural resources while trail building in spring-fall. Include summary of volunteer policy with DCR.

Miscellaneous

- **Change the trails deadline to October 1st again. November 1st was too close to holidays and difficult to get reviews started until after the new year.**
- MARTAB Website: using education funds, MARTAB will set up a website which will post helpful trail information as well as announcements and other appropriate content pertaining to trails in Massachusetts. Becky Kalagher has reserved the domain of “martab.org” for two years.

Follow-up: Next step for the website is for Amanda and other MARTAB members to identify a website manager who will create, maintain and update the website.