

Thunder Bay Trails News

Volume 6, Issue 1

Newsletter of The Thunder Bay Trails Association

May 2002

Mission statement: The mission of the Thunder Bay Trails Association is to promote and protect non-motorized trail systems in Alpena county and adjoining areas and reflect their recreational significance for the enjoyment, education and adventure to area citizens.

TBTA Events

- May 11, Saturday—9:00 a.m.—Chippewa Hills Pathway—Spring Work Bee, trail clean-up
- May 18, Saturday—12:00 p.m.—Sounds of Spring Walk—Norway Ridge Pathway
- June 22, Sunday—1:00 p.m.—Mandjidiwin Days Mtn. Bike Race—Chippewa Hills Pathway



TBTA on the Web:



www.ossineke.com/tbta

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SOUNDS OF SPRING WALK

John Bellows, a Biology instructor with Alpena Community College, will be leading a walk at the Norway Ridge Pathway on Saturday, May 18, 2002 at 12:00 p.m. John will point out some of the interesting rituals that Mother Nature displays during the spring in the forest. Please plan to join us for a gentle walk. Spring trail conditions at the Norway Ridge Pathway can usually be wet; therefore, please plan your dress accordingly.



SPRING WORK BEE SET FOR CHIPPEWA HILLS

Plan on attending the spring work project at Chippewa Hills Pathway on Saturday, May 11. We will gather at the main parking lot at 9:00 a.m. All the signs will be repaired, painted, and if needed they will be removed and repaired at Randy Fairbanks workshop on Bartz Rd. We will be using vehicles to access the trail for all the loops in order to expedite the repair process. So a trail ride will be available in the repair trucks for those assisting. Refreshments will be provided and a picnic lunch at Randy's will follow.

TBTA MOUNTAIN BIKE TEAM MEMBERS NEEDED

A mountain bike squad will be fielded this year and sponsored by TBTA. A total of six members, male or female, will be solicited to represent TBTA in at least three northern Michigan mountain bike races, and in particular the TBTA race at Chippewa Hills. TBTA will provide the jerseys and cover the cost of race registration for the team members. If interested you must be a member in good standing with TBTA and contact Randy Fairbanks at (989)727-3702.

NEW TRAIL IMPROVEMENT ROADBLOCKS

With new mandates issued from the MDNR in Lansing to all volunteer groups, the TBTA has been caught in the middle of the politics of resource management. The decking project planned for Norway Ridge Pathway this spring has been put on hold. The TBTA is waiting for a reply from MDNR officials on our application to construct a floating deck at Norway Ridge Pathway. Membership and grant monies were solicited and obtained this past fall for the floating deck project and the materials have been purchased and stored. Randy Fairbanks expressed TBTA's concerns to the Natural Resources Commission in April in hopes of resolving the additional paperwork and mandates handed down to our volunteer group. A letter was sent out to all members alerting them to the current dilemma TBTA is facing on current and future projects. We will keep you informed of news relating to the MDNR policy changes.

PLEA TO THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

A Letter from our Vice-President–

On April 11th I traveled down to Grandville. The Natural Resources Commission held their monthly meeting. A portion of the meeting is reserved for members of the public to bring forth MDNR issues and voice their concerns.

Randy Fairbanks, representing TBTA was on the agenda. TBTA brought forth three issues of concern.

1. Current MDNR policy of no new un-funded recreational projects on state forestland.
2. MDNR Gift and Acceptance Agreement for Design and/or Construction of a Facility.
3. Failure of the MDNR to work with non-profit volunteer groups in their efforts to expand, enhance, and improve Michigan's non-motorized trails systems.

The process is very structured. The presenter is allowed five minutes to present the issues. Members of the commission then have the opportunity to ask questions.

The presentation did not draw any support from the commission. Statements were made that there is no funding available in the Forestry Division for trails expansion. Users of non-motorized trails systems will have to start paying their own way. I stated that we were not asking for funding but rather authorization to put some mountain bike specific single track at the Chippewa Hills Pathway.

Commissioner Paul Eisele stated that mountain bikes do not belong on non-motorized pathways because they have wheels. He further stated that mountain bikes are destructive to the pathways.

Commissioner Jim Campbell stated that it is the responsibility of groups like TBTA to contact their state representatives and senators in order to initiate legislation that would require trail user fees for non-motorized activities.

I did not come away from the meeting with the thought that anything positive was accomplished. At the least, some educating has to be done in the area of mountain biking as an accepted non-motorized form of recreation and the value of volunteer non-profit groups.

Randy Fairbanks–Vice President Thunder Bay Trails Association

NORDIC TRAIL GROOMING TEAM RECOGNIZED

Randy Fairbanks and Ron Anderson waited out Mother Nature and when the snow did finally come to Northeast Michigan, they were packing and setting tracks at Norway Ridge, Alpena's BiPath, and Chippewa Hills. Those members who did get out skiing will agree the trails were some of the finest set tracks that are available for Nordic skiing in the region. At the April meeting, the two member Nordic-grooming team was recognized with a gas card and dinner for two as a token of our appreciation. Your comments to them on how you found the trail system is always appreciated. Thank you Randy and Ron!!

KAYAK GROUP BEING FORMED WITHIN TBTA

In light of the possibility of waterways trails being considered in the new Thunder Bay Underwater Preserve and the Misery Bay/Houghmaster property acquisition, interest in kayaking the shoreline has increased. TBTA members interested in participating in a weekly or monthly kayak cruising should email TBTA or call Vince Call. Summer is around the corner. Other destinations may include Negwegon, Thompson Harbor, Bear Pt., Partridge Pt., and Bell Bay.

TBTA PARTNERS WITH THE NATURE CONSERVANCY

TBTA has partnered with the Michigan Nature Conservancy in hopes of assisting with the Lake Huron/Misery Bay shoreline acquisition (currently owned by the Houghmaster family). The Nature Conservancy and Alpena Township have been working together to secure MDNR funds to acquire the shoreline property for recreational purposes. A waterway trail and shoreline trail system will be considered in the planning process once the land is acquired. This is where the TBTA comes in! Our organizational input as to use and layout of non-motorized trails and canoe and kayak use will be considered. Those members interested in this project should plan on attending future planning meetings with the Nature Conservancy, MDNR, and the Alpena Township. If interested please contact TBTA.

SKI SEASON? WHAT SKI SEASON?

As you may be aware or not aware this was the mildest winter on record! We had the least amount of snowfall on record for December and January. If you did not give up on Mother Nature by February and March, we were able to put together some super Nordic trails due to the increased snowfall. Our membership has suffered due to the cancellation of the Candle-Light ski and the dismal ski season. If you have not renewed your 2002 TBTA membership, please do so. We truly need your partnership. We have observed a 40% drop in memberships so far this year. Remember the membership dues assist in the ongoing trail projects, facilitate events, and assist with our lobbying efforts for north-eastern Michigan non-motorized trails. Cross country ski trail grooming is only a small part of what TBTA is all about.

TBTA 2002 Membership Application

Please take the time to fill out the form completely. This information will help to better assist our individual members needs and assist with planning and grant writing for trail maintenance and improvement.

Please send form to:
 TBTA
 2700 Beebe Blvd.
 Ossineke, MI 49766

PLEASE PRINT!

Name: _____ **Names of Household Members:** _____

Street Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip Code:** _____

Home Phone Number: _____ **Work Phone Number:** (Optional) _____

Occupation: _____ **E-mail Address:** (Optional) _____

What activities do you participate in?

PLEASE CHECK ALL THAT APPLY!

- | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Hiking | <input type="checkbox"/> X-C Skiing | <input type="checkbox"/> Mtn. Biking | <input type="checkbox"/> Horseback Riding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Running | <input type="checkbox"/> Nature Viewing | <input type="checkbox"/> Family Trail Walks | |

2002 Membership Dues:

- Student \$5.00 Individual \$15.00


Please check one category!

- Household \$20.00

Additional Donation: \$ _____
 Groomer Donation: \$ _____

Thunder Bay Trails Association is a 501 (C)3 non-profit organization. Donations and membership dues are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law.

for more information, please contact Vince Call (989)356-9216

Please Recycle 

Thunder Bay Trails Association

2700 Beebe Blvd.
Ossineke, MI 49766



2002 TBTA Contributing Members and Donors

James Anderson
Dave Baird
Richard Barber
Louis and Cindy Barch
Denise Bazzett
Don and Barbara Beem
Marcia Billings
David Blumenthal
Jeff and Amy Blumenthal
Tom Brandt
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Jerry Trevillian, Sr.
Tom and Judy Woizeschke
Dan and Janine Zielaskowski

*** If your name is missing or you would like to donate to the TBTA, please contact Vince Call at the number listed below or go to the TBTA web site to get a membership form.*

***Thanks so much
to all that donated
and paid dues!!***