

Genesee-Finger Lakes Regional Blueway Analysis and Plan

Advisory Committee Kick-off Meeting Summary – 02.24.09

Date: February 24, 2009

Duration: 10:00 – 12:30

Location: Genesee Waterways Center ~ Rochester, NY

In Attendance:

Nicole Fulle, Genesee Waterways Center

Marty Howden, NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

Todd Lippa, NYS Canal Corporation

Wayne Hale, Orleans County Tourism and Planning

Charlie Helman, Genesee Chapter of the ADK Mountain. Club

Staff:

Brian Slack, Dave Zorn, Tom Kicior, Rebecca Rowe

Meeting Summary:

Brian began the meeting with a 45 minute overview presentation of the project. A Project Overview document was circulated. The project timeline and preliminary blueway inventory map were on display and referred to during the presentation/discussion. After the presentation, the floor was opened for questions.

Q-Wayne

-Should the group have representation from a user group and a service group? Examples: Kayak/Canoe rental store etc., guides, etc.

-A- “stakeholder” meetings will play a big part in accomplishing this.

-A- So far we have Randy French – who is a guide, who is not here today.

-A-We will also discuss later in the meeting who else we should invite to get involved in both the Advisory Committee as well as the workshops.

Q-Wayne

-Is paddling the main focus, and why? What about sport fishing?

-A-The grant is for the development of a “local Blueway trail”, focused on paddling.

Project needs to remain focused on the issue of recreational paddling as that is what falls under the definition in the LWRP program that awarded funding for this project.

Q-Wayne

-Will model regs be included? –Visual impacts, setbacks, limiting vegetation removal etc, docking, or perhaps would it be a next step? Orleans County developed a model local law like this and municipalities were able to adopt it.

-A- These issues can be discussed in the project, but probably not looked into in depth. Model ordinances will not be created

-A- This could be a recommendation for a next phase.

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Q-Wayne

-Can we emphasize the threat to access? Orleans has problems with informal access on private property.

A-Access is probably the most important issue of the project and will receive focus

A-Tort liability will be addressed

A-This project is not intended to be a guide for where you should launch and paddle.

A-Private property vs. public access – most if not all access points will be “public” ex: State routes/bridge overpass acting as informal access points.

Q-Is private land owner covered under the “general obligations” law?

A-Not sure, there are major issues/loopholes. Law generally says that the land owner is exempt from liability, but more research will need to be conducted. This will likely fall under the tort liability section of the final Blueway report/plan.

Q-Will there be consideration for white water routes?

A- We will endeavor to identify all stream corridors that are paddled – even if only for part of the season. Corridors will be ranked, however, through an objective methodology. The ability to paddle up stream and down stream, for example, will have a positive influence on the ranking of a stream corridor. Clearly if the stream is a challenge to paddle, it won’t be one that we want to encourage novices or first-time paddlers to travel down, so it might rank lower. It shouldn’t be excluded, however, from identification.

Q-How will ranking be done, who will we reach out to?

A- Staff can create a draft ranking system for the committee to review and revise in order to create a final ranking system. Some models have been referenced but the system will be largely original.

A-“Logical Lasting Launches” is a resource that we have in the office that can be used.

Q-Do we know what types of projects could be funded in the future as a result of this project and should there be some sort of piece to the project that discusses this?

A-Yes we should probably look to identify future funding streams, as well as future projects (either second stage or specific to small locations.) This would probably be a very general overview. The ranking system is intended to facilitate the identification/selection of implementation projects.

Q- Criteria? Are we coming up with it or are there statewide definitions?

A- There is no official criteria at the state level, but we will base it on existing definitions, and examples used by other Blueway systems (state/out of state). All steps of the project will be reviewed by the Department of State Division of Coastal Resources.

Q-Charlie – lots of waterways don’t have [overnight] accommodations

A-Different attributes considered in the ranking system could be weighted differently.

Ex. a great waterway with no accommodations should not be heavily penalized. On the other hand the water navigability/launch points would probably be weighted more

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heavily. Furthermore, we can establish a buffer area for overnight accommodations – accommodations <1 mile from the corridor, for example.

Q-accessibility – do launch points have to be ADA compliant?

A-No they don't but the committee might decide that ADA compliant launch sites should be given higher ranks.

At the conclusion of discussion, Brian moved into reviewing the current members of the Advisory Committee and to also discuss who we should try to get on the Advisory Committee. We should further try to identify organizations/individuals that we should reach out to during the stakeholder workshop phase of the project.

Members of the Advisory Committee who could not be in attendance today:

Laura Arney – citizen and Sierra Club representative

Jerry Koehler – Finger Lakes Ontario Watershed Paddlers (FLOW)

Rich Parker - NYS Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (Marty Howden was representing Rich in his absence)

Randy French – Pack Paddle Ski

Dan Hallowell – NYSDOT Region 4

Who have we missed? Both individuals and organizations. This can include both people to be on the Advisory Committee as well as those to be invited to the stakeholder meetings. Specific contact information will be supplied to G/FLRPC through email, etc.

- Buffalo Chapter of Adirondack Mountain club (get contact info from Charlie)
- “Yams and Cams” (Buffalo area) (get contact info from Charlie)
- Paddle Shops
 - Braddock’s Bay Paddle Sports
 - Bay Creek Paddling Center
 - NY Marathon Canoe Racing Association
 - Central NY paddling group
 - There is a little paddle shop in Penn Yan (get contact info from Charlie) Art Miller? – Has outfitter/instruction facilities on Keuka Outlet and Lower Gorge of the Genesee River (get contact info from Charlie) (Nicole might have contact info as well).
 - Bill Finley?
- DEC – Brian contacted Randy Nemecek. Haven’t heard back from (works with open space plan for the region, might have good info on access points) – (get contact info from Charlie about his DEC contact info (not Randy) eagleman@rochester.rr.com (bald eagle presentation)
- More Tourism Promotion Agencies (TPAs)? (Wayne has volunteered to contact) We could get a lot of input from them. (day use sites, accommodations, etc.)
- Someone from Soil and Water – (for access point info)

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Next Steps

There are two primary areas to focus on before we can have our stakeholder workshops:

1. Maps: Identification of the baseline blueway inventory – what are the paddling routes in the region. G/FLRPC has started this; the Advisory Committee should then review and add to it. We should also begin to start considering various attributes – access points, day use sites, overnight accommodations, etc. Brian anticipates that we will be able to focus on these items at a later point, so we should perhaps simply focus on the corridors for now.

2. Organization of the workshops. How many workshops? Where will they be located? How should we do outreach? All of the details will have to be addressed.

The next meeting will be scheduled through email correspondence (probably about a month (late March/early April). Brian will try to meet in person with those other members of the Advisory Committee who could not make it in order to inform them about the project. Brian will also send out the draft timeline.

Meeting adjourned at 12:15.

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