



Dedicated to the Trails & Parks of Rock County Wisconsin - www.rocktrailcoalition.org

Newsletter OVER 20 YEARS OF ROCK TRAIL ADVOCACY February 2015



Please join us for our next meeting!

OUTDOORS NEW ZEALAND: MAORIS, HIKES AND HOBBITS

**In December 2014,
eight Janesville residents traveled
to New Zealand for summer,
for hiking and for some
new adventures.**



**February 19th
6:00pm
Rock County
Job Center**

**1900 Center
Avenue
Janesville**

Thank You to Jeff Worple and Randy Scott for snow plowing the Peace Trail while the RTC machine was out of commission.

Governor's Budget Decimates Walking and Biking Programs

(From our friends at the Wisconsin Bike Federation)

The governor's budget (Senate Bill 21) would:

- Repeal Wisconsin's successful Complete Streets law. The law requires that bicyclists and pedestrians *be taken into account* whenever a road is built or reconstructed with state or federal funds. There are all manner of ways to get an exception if the project would be too expensive or if use by bikes and pedestrians is projected to be too light. The law works well in practice. Yet, the governor chose to eliminate it altogether. This would mean many fewer safe places to bike.
- Cut the Transportation Alternatives Program by \$2 million. The governor would eliminate all state support for this program, leaving only federal dollars. TAP is used for a variety of pro-biking initiatives, including bike plans and facilities.
- Essentially eliminate the Stewardship Fund. The Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund (named for iconic Republican Governor Warren Knowles and Democratic Governor and Senator Gaylord Nelson) works to purchase and protect land for future generations. Funds for state trail purchases are included in the program. The governor would stop all purchases for over a decade. - **See more at:**
<http://wisconsinbikefed.org/2015/02/04/governors-budget-hits-biking/#sthash.3C57MV29.dpuf>



Upcoming Events:

Wednesday, February 11, 5:30pm Public Hearing on the I-90/I-39 Interchange in Beloit –at Beloit Public Library Community Room, located at 605 Eclipse Boulevard, Beloit. This is an opportunity to lobby for a bike lane on the overpass!

Saturday, February 21, 5:30pm Candlelight Ski, Snowshoe and Hike –at Beckman Mill County Park, 11450 County Highway H, Beloit

Thursday, April 16, 7pm Wheel Fever authors Jesse Gant and Nick Hoffman discuss the history of cycling in Wisconsin. Beloit College, Pearsons Hall, 700 College Street, Beloit.

Some Sunday this Spring – Mocha Moments will be open to support RTC on a Sunday TBD

May date TBD – **Hike, picnic and general membership meeting** – Big Hill Park – more details in next newsletter.

June 24 – 28 Ice Age Trail Mobile Skills Crew work project Storrs Lake, Milton. Volunteer opportunity - all skill levels – join us for a few hours or a few days.



Whose Streets?

Many motorists believe cyclists do not belong on the streets. There should be no bike lanes, and no accommodations for bikes or pedestrians. They think gas taxes pay for the streets and since pedestrians and cyclists do not consume gas they are freeloaders on the streets.

Many cyclists believe the gas tax myth as well. So who pays for roads and streets?

Well, that depends which roads and which streets.

At the federal level the transportation department is funded about 60% by gas taxes and related fees.

At the state level, it was said, about 56% comes from state revenue and 87% of that is from gas taxes and fees. That works out to 48% state revenue from gas taxes and fees – less than half. (WisDOT 2013 Act 20 Biennial Budget). That was 2013.

In Governor Walker's State Budget for 2015 -2016, he calls for \$1 Billion in borrowing to pay for transportation. The 48% number was optimistic in 2013. It is more like 30% today.

At the local street level almost no funds come from gas taxes and fees. The Gazette reported (10/10/14) "The city's street funding comes from the **current tax levy and borrowing**, totaling about \$2 million per year, Allen said." (emphasis added).

So who funds streets? We all do. Most of us drive and we are paying gas taxes and registration fees anyway. Those gas taxes and fees are ending up at the state and federal level. And they are paying for major federal and state highway projects like I-90 reconstruction, Some trickles down to the local level through grants. State grant funds mandate *consideration* of bikes and pedestrians. [Editor's note: Governor Walker's Budget proposal eliminates the *consideration* of bikes and pedestrians in road projects].

Most of the money for local streets is paid by all of us whether we ride or drive or walk or all of the above. 

But even if we never drove a car and instead walked, biked or took the bus, we are paying for the streets just like everyone else.



THANK YOU! 2015 Renewing Members

Are you on this list? If not, renew, or join, today.

Use the handy form included below or join online at <http://rocktrailcoalition.org/membership/>

Backe	Pat	Helgeson	Les & Diane	Rasmusson	Bill & Lois
Baker	Bob	Hendricks	Sandy	Rutter	Tim
Bennett	Al & Nancy Hansen	Hornsey	Ron & Joyce	Sather	Mike
Bjoin		James	Dennis	Schlegel	Bob & Janet
Limestone	Kathy Bjoin	Jeannette	Ed	Sedlacek	Gary
Brandeen	Carolyn	Johnson	Jeffrey & Susan	Stabb	Mark
Buelow	Mary E	Kautz	Tom & Rosie	Stankus	Jerry & Barb
Cameron	Kelli	Khan	Mike & Elaine	Steinmetz	Steve
Cantrell	Brad	Kline		Thomas	Anne
Carroll	Margie & Moe	Tollefson	Jim & Deb	Thorp	Douglas & Susie
Cress	David & Susan	Krause	Tim	Turner	Dick
Cripe	Jim & Karel	Kromrey	Tena	Tiffany	Wayne
Douglas	Jim & Pat	Lewis	Chuck		Susan Swanson & Steve
Drew	Skip & Wendy Hein	Madere	Ed & Sue Ellen	Vavrus	
Dutcher	Roger	Malmanger	Dennis	Velo Club	James Rooney
Feuillerat	Randy	Marr	Clara & Russ	Walz	William
Fisher	Debbie & Randy	McCluskey	Mark	Weber	Stuart
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Goldstein	Chuck	Nolta	Larry & Marlene	Woodrich	Karen
Guisleman	Mike	Pearson	Ken & Nancy	Zimborski	Larry
Gunterberg	Wanda	Pickos	Scott & Deborah	Zweck	Margaret
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Haviza	Richard & Sheri	Rankin	Bill & Denise	Mueller	Gene

Renew for this year: please use the convenient membership form below to renew today!

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Mail to: Rock Trail Coalition, P.O. Box 8101 Janesville, WI 53547-8101

Dues for 2015:

_____ Basic Individual \$15

_____ Family \$25/no t-shirt or _____ Family \$30 w/t-shirt

_____ Trail Builder \$50 _____ Trail Blazer \$75

_____ Golden Trekker \$100 _____ Sustainer \$250

_____ Lifetime \$500

_____ Organization or Business \$60

Many of our routine communications for meetings, work parties and events are sent by email. Do we have your email address? Send it to VP Carolyn at volunteerRTC@charter.net

For additional information on involvement, you can also contact President Dean Paynter at 608-289-5672.

Beloit/Janesville Trail Update

Big Hill Park

We recently hiked the proposed trail route from the Goose Creek bridge up to Girl Scout center. Beloit engineering has done a remarkable job of laying out a route that keeps the grade at 5% or less, no small feat in this steep terrain. The final route will depend on surveying.

The asphalt trail will accommodate narrow tired road bikes down to the playground at the bottom of the park. As of the date of our hike, an asphalt connection all the way to the Goose Creek bridge was not in the plan, but Beloit cyclists are lobbying for this short addition.

Construction may happen as soon as this Autumn. The City of Beloit is commended for moving forward with their grant application and construction in such a timely fashion. **Good Job!**

Afton to Beloit

Rock Trail Coalition and Rock County are waiting for easements to be processed by the property donors. Once Rock County receives signed easements Rock Trail Coalition will begin clearing a rough hiking and mountain bike trail from Afton to Big Hill Park. In 2014 Rock Trail Coalition invested \$3,500 in the trail from Walters Road to the Big Hill Park bridge. We anticipate spending double that amount this spring.

Rock County will be the owner of the Peace Trail from Afton to Big Hill. In May the county will apply for a grant for the final surfacing of the trail. Stay tuned for further developments.



"I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in." - John Muir, 1913

*in Linnie Marsh Wolfe, ed.,
John of the Mountains: The Unpublished Journals of John Muir, 1938*

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Sign up at: volunteerRTC@charter.net

PLEASE SUPPORT OUR FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS
OF THE ROCK TRAIL COALITION OVER THE PAST YEAR!

**Afton Pub, Bass Creek Café, Afton Family Market, Bjoin Limestone,
Michael's Cycles, Mocha Moment, Skip's Friendly Village**

Janesville, WI 53547-8101

P.O. Box 8101

Rock Trail Coalition