

President's Message



The Gitchi-Gami State Trail (GGST) is considered by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to be one of the premier trails in the state, and it has received regional and even national recognition (USA Today listed it last year as one of the "10 Best Biking Trails Near Water" in the country). This is so, even though we have finished only about 30 miles of paved trail, in unconnected segments, out of the 89 miles planned to complete the GGST between Two Harbors and Grand Marais.

Finding funds for construction of additional trail sections is a major function of the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association (GGTA), and we are in a very competitive environment. Trails and parks in every corner of the state are looking for a share of state

funding from the Legislature. Many projects are in a holding pattern because of the failure of the state to fund them, and when there is some funding awarded, it is always substantially less than the total amounts requested. Recreational trail construction has significantly slowed in the last decade, due in part to gubernatorial vetoes of bonding bills in whole or in part, and changing legislative priorities.

In recent years, we've been awarded four Federal Transportation Alternative grants, two in the amount of \$150,000, and two in the amount of \$600,000. Federal grants cannot be accessed until matching funds are secured. The Minnesota Legislature presently is the only source for the million-dollar-plus grants that are really needed to make significant progress. The DNR supports our bonding requests, but its priorities compete with those of other agencies and interests in a time of fiscal conservatism.

Cook County B&B owner and trail activist Bob Nesheim and I recently spent two days at the Capitol urging legislators to support our request for a \$2million grant to fund a long-delayed project in Cook County. Michelle Pierson,

GGTA executive director, was able to join us for the second day. Experienced lobbyist Judy Erickson also works at the Capitol on behalf of North Shore clients, of which we are one. Your membership contributions help to pay for the invaluable services of these professionals in spreading our message. But the "lobbying" of GGTA members—yes, that means you—contacting your legislators to express your personal support of our efforts can be especially helpful.

If you are not a current member of the GGTA, please consider joining us. It is important to show broad statewide support when working with government officials, and dollars received from memberships go directly to our efforts to fund new trail sections. We are also exploring alternative funding sources for future trail construction. And please also consider joining our board. We are actively seeking new board members committed to our mission. In addition to actively working on trail issues, it is gratifying—and just plain fun—to be involved in such a great project, our beautiful Gitchi-Gami trail.

Bill Blank
President,
Gitchi-Gami Trail Association

**Join us for our annual meeting on Saturday May 20, 2017 with gear swap to follow.
Details inside!**

Trail Coordinator's Report

Maintenance:

Routine trail maintenance items include: mowing shoulders, hazard tree removal, blowing rocks off the trail, and replacing signs. Other planned projects include: trail patching at Split Rock River State Park, fence straightening along Highway 61 near Beaver Bay, and sealing cracks on the trail.

Construction / Engineering:

Construction is expected to begin this summer with the West Road Segment along with MnDOT's Beaver River Bridge reconfiguration. The bridge is of historical value and the reconfiguration design will provide a safe crossing for Trunk Highway 61 as well as the Gitchi-Gami for years to come.

We are working with area business owners in the town of Tofte as well as MnDOT, coordinating and planning a trail segment on the NE part of town. After owners within the right of way redesign their parking lots, the DNR plans to engineer a segment of trail extending to the Fisherman's Museum. This could be completed late this season.



Rebuilt trail section at Temperance River Sate Park - April 2017 photo

The Temperance River trail repair project is also scheduled to be completed this season. We think you'll enjoy the improvements to the trail, and the new trail will be better suited to stand up to hydrological happenings in the area.

The Cutface Creek Wayside Rest to Grand Marais trail corridor has been in-office planned and hiked. Portions of the trail alignment will be within the Trunk Highway 61 right of way. After additional funding is obtained, the segment will be next on our list for engineering and design.

Future Segment Funding:

Recently we were awarded \$600,000 in Transportation Alternatives (TA) funding for a 1.3 mile segment extending the Gitchi-Gami trail from Ski Hill Road in Cook County to the community of Lutsen. The segment will be planned for 2021 construction season, and MnDNR will begin seeking matching funds.

Mark Rudningen

Trail Development Specialist
DNR Parks and Trails

GGTA ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, May 20th, 2017

10:00am-11:00am

Two Harbors Federal Credit Union
801 11th St, Two Harbors, MN 55616

Spokengear's Yard Sale

Saturday, May 20th, 2017

9:00am-4:00pm

1130 11th Street, Two Harbors, MN

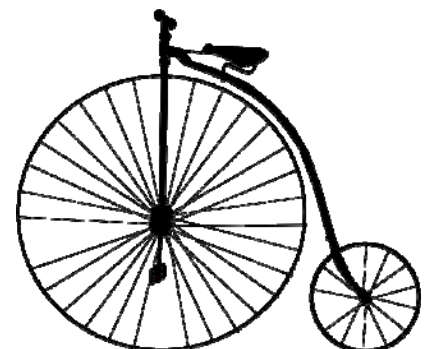
Come to Our Annual Meeting!

Are you a member, or prospective member of the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association? We sure hope so! And we hope you'll join us for the Annual Meeting of Members on Saturday, May 20, 2017. At this meeting we'll update folks about this summer's

construction projects on the trail, discuss our efforts to seek bonding funds to build MORE trail, show off our interactive map tour, and MORE! Free coffee and scones will be provided, compliments of our friends (and GGTA sponsors!) at Cedar Coffee Company in Two Harbors.

On the topic of GGTA sponsors, we're so pleased to be holding our meeting in conjunction with Spokengear/Cedar Coffee Company's first annual bike/gear swap. The shops are holding their 'Yard Sale' on May 20th from 9am-4pm. Ahead of that date, donated/consignment outdoor adventure gear will be accepted at the store. Those contributing bikes, bike accessories, camping accessories, hiking equipment, kayaks, canoes, paddleboards, packs, you name it--- will have the opportunity to either donate items straight out, or sell their items on an 80%/20% breakdown. Proceeds collected on May 20th from the 20% consignment match, and from money netted from donated items, will be split between the GGTA and the new Lake County Mountain Bike group. We hope you'll join us at the Two Harbors Federal Credit union at 10:00am and then mosey, pedal, or walk on over to Spokengear to take in a festive atmosphere and find that new treasure you're seeking to augment your outdoor adventures!

Are you interested in volunteering at the Yard Sale event, contributing gear, or just have questions? Contact Michelle at news@ggta.org !



Celebrate 17!**17th Annual GGTA North Shore Bike Ride**

The 17th Annual Gitchi-Gami Trail Association North Shore Bike Ride will take place on **Saturday, August 19, 2017**, on the spectacular Gitchi-Gami State Trail and connecting roads.

Starting Point: Gooseberry Falls State Park.

Start Time: 9:00am to 10:30am

Parking: for the ride is in a lot inside Gooseberry Falls State Park. Vehicles will need an annual state park vehicle sticker or a daily vehicle pass (a daily pass will be provided by the GGTA as part of the registration fee).

Refreshments will be provided at rest stops and post-ride. Mechanical, emergency and sag support will be provided. All adult riders will receive t-shirts, and younger riders will receive water bottles. All riders must sign waivers and wear helmets.

8-mile family ride option: follows the Gitchi-Gami State Trail for 4 miles from Gooseberry to a new rest stop at Twin Points wayside, where there will be treats and special events for families. The ride returns on the GGST to Gooseberry.

28-mile ride option: is also entirely on the GGST, from Gooseberry through historic Split Rock Lighthouse State Park, continuing to the rest stop at the Beaver Bay Wayside, and returning on the trail. Because it is an "out-and-back" ride, bikers can turn around at any time to return to the starting point.

37-mile ride option: heads north on Co Rd 4 from the rest stop, follows Forest Rd 11/Penn Blvd into Silver Bay, then returns to Beaver Bay on the trail between Silver Bay and the newly paved West Road, down to the highway and across the Beaver River to the rest stop. The route returns to Gooseberry on the trail.

55-mile ride option: follows the GGST to Beaver Bay Wayside and adds a loop north on Lake Co Rd 4 and the Lax Lake Road to Hwy 1 and the Eckbeck rest stop, to Hwy 61, to Penn Blvd and Silver Bay, and back to Beaver Bay on Penn Blvd and Co Rd 4 (or, for a slightly shorter option, on the GGST and West Road), then back to Gooseberry on the trail.

Registration can be completed online (through secure PayPal payment) or by mail, using the form on this page.

Members of the GGTA receive a \$10 discount from these prices! at membership@ggta.org.

Questions? Contact us at annualride@ggta.org.

Registration and Waiver Form

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail _____

Registration by Aug 1: \$40 (\$30 for members)

Registration after Aug 1: \$45 (\$35 for members)

Riders 17 and under: : Free with paid adult

Circle shirt size: M L XL Second rider: M L XL

Options: ___ 8 miles ___ 28 miles ___ 37 miles ___ 55 miles

I agree by my entry into this event to accept its inherent risks, and absolve the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association (GGTA), its officers and employees, and all other sponsors, organizers, volunteers and associated entities, with their heirs and assigns, singly or collectively, of all blame or liability for any harm, inconvenience, injury, loss, or other misadventure suffered as a result of taking part in the GGTA North Shore Bike Ride.

Any qualified doctor or medical technician is hereby authorized to provide me medical treatment in response to an accident, injury, or illness during this event.

I give permission, without obligation or liability to me, for the use of my name, image or other record of my taking part in the GGTA North Shore Bike Ride for any promotional or publicity purposes.

I will obey traffic rules, heed officials' advice, and ride and conduct myself with due caution and respect, so as not to endanger anyone or disrupt the enjoyment of fellow cyclists, motorists or others. I agree to wear a properly fitted hard shell bicycle helmet at all times when riding a bicycle at this event.

My signature indicates that I have read this waiver and agree with its intent (**all riders must sign**):

Signature _____ Date _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Under 18? Sign above, and have adult sign below:

Signature _____ Date _____

Join us and ride . . .



on the road less traveled!



Gitche-Gami Trail Association

1130 11th Street

Two Harbors, MN 55616

Gitche-Gami Trail Association Board of Directors

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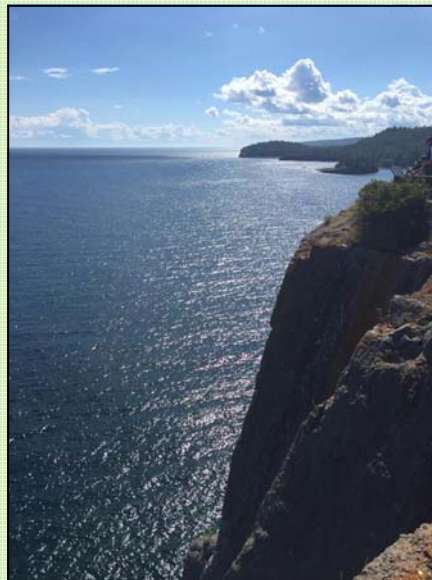


Photo by Molly King

*"One of the most scenic
areas I have ever been!
Beautiful trail and amazing
campsites along the way!"*
~ Kevin Williams



Photo by Michelle Pierson

*"Loved the Gooseberry to Beaver
Bay route, can't wait until more is
finished!" ~ Kevin Skroch*