

# GITCHI-GAMI TRAIL RIDER

A publication of the Gitchi-Gami Trail Association

Summer 2023



PHOTO: ADAM MALMANGER

## President's Message

### REFLECTIONS ON GRATITUDE

**T**he snow, cold, and length of this past winter are now mercifully but memories. By now many of us have our bikes out of storage, we've felt the wind and sun on our faces, and we find ourselves looking ahead to a great cycling season. As I work on getting my bike ready for the trail, I am also filled with thanks for the work of many who came together to advocate for the maintenance and future construction of the trail I love best.

The Minnesota State Legislature recently wrapped up a very productive session, including historic funding for many projects that support our state trails and parks. We are thrilled to let you know that the \$4 million in dedicated funds for the Gitchi-Gami State Trail that we requested were included in the final Capital Investment bill (HF670; also referred to as the Bonding Bill) that passed on May 22, 2023.

Building a paved bike trail through volcanic rock and over a multitude of rivers takes time, planning, interagency cooperation and partnership, and, of course, funding. The funds awarded to the Gitchi-Gami State Trail this session include \$1.5 million for the current and future phases of trail extending from the Ski Hill Road into the town center in Lutsen; \$1.5 million for the construction in Tofte, closing the current gap in the trail; \$500,000 to support upcoming trail construction between Two Harbors and Flood

Bay; and \$500,000 for design and engineering of a seven-mile segment between Silver Bay and Tettegouche State Park.

These are significant projects, and we offer our profound thanks to Senator Grant Hauschild and Representative Roger Skraba for carrying bills supporting these projects' inclusion in the bonding bill. We also owe thanks to the Cook and Lake County Chambers of Commerce, and to a network of local units of government and area businesses, nonprofits, and residents, for showcasing their support of these projects.

Please plan to join us for the 23rd Annual North Shore Bike Ride on the GGST on August 19th. We would love to see you there, either as a rider or a helper—or both (see request for volunteers on the back page of this newsletter).

In the meantime, I hope your summer is full of sunshine, family, fun and gratitude!

Keep pedaling!

*Bruce Martinson*  
GGTA President



## Trail Coordinator's Report

**D**espite the later-than-normal start to spring on the North Shore and the opening of the bicycling season, we are once again eager to welcome trail users of all types back to the Gitchi-Gami State Trail.

This year will again prove to be a busy one for the trail. We hope you will notice our continued maintenance work, which this summer will include crack sealing, brushing, and signage replacement.

We're also excited about trail construction already underway from the Ski Hill Road Trailhead (recently acquired by the DNR) to the Lutsen town center. New construction this year will add 1.3 miles of trail in this corridor, which we anticipate will be ready and opened by late October or early November. In addition, funding secured from the Federal Highway Administration Transportation Alternatives program will extend this trail segment another quarter-mile, connecting the trail to the frontage road in the Lutsen downtown area in 2027.

In addition to the Lutsen construction project now underway, DNR staff are concurrently working on next year's construction of the Two Harbors segment, which will represent a huge milestone—the formal "start" of the Gitchi-Gami State Trail.

Projects such as these are not easily accomplished and do not occur without the support of engaged community members and trail users. I once again thank you for all of your continued support of the trail!

Happy trails!

*Oliver Liu*

Trail Development Specialist  
DNR Parks and Trails



Oliver Liu repairs winter damage to the trail in Tofte this spring.

## Executive Director's Report

**K**ids, trail stewardship, and bike rides... oh my! Our gears are grinding as we prepare for many great events over coming weeks and months.

The GGTA was recently awarded grant funding from our friends at the Parks & Trails Council of Minnesota to work on habitat restoration. This grant allowed us to work with 6th grade students from Cook County Public Schools to review bike safety and trail user etiquette, to learn about habitat on the trail corridor, to evaluate trail conditions, and to plant native seeds along the trail between Grand Marais and the Cut Face Creek State Wayside.



Students learned to plant native seeds.

This trail segment was finished in the fall of 2021, when many areas in our region faced dry conditions. Because of the drought, together with greater than average snow

depth, increased snow melt, and wet conditions in 2022, many of the seeds planted in the corridor did not take root.

We purchased native plant mix seeds, and the students biked from school, raked, and planted the seeds. We hope the students will continue to use the trail with their families to watch how their seeding efforts pay off. Sowing native plants, and sowing trail stewards—what a wonderful start to springtime!

Our Annual Meeting of Members on June 3rd was followed by a "slow roll" on the new GGST spur trail in Split Rock Lighthouse State Park. If you are heading up the shore this summer, we hope you'll plan a nice hike, roll, or ride on this new one-mile spur that leads to the Trail Center area of the park.

Those of you who have participated in our annual supported ride in the past know that I am BIG fan of talking with trail users. I hope we'll get a chance to chat trailside on August 19th, during our 23rd Annual North Shore Bike Ride. We hope you will join us, and, when you do, please say hello to me, board members, and volunteers at the registration table and rest stops.

Wishing you a great trail season! Let's roll!

*Michelle Pierson*

GGTA Executive Director

## 23<sup>rd</sup> Annual GGTA North Shore Bike Ride

The 23rd Annual Gitchi-Gami Trail Association North Shore Bike Ride will take place on **Saturday, August 19, 2023**, on the Gitchi-Gami State Trail and connecting roads.

**Starting Point:** Gooseberry Falls State Park

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

**Details:** Parking for the ride is in a lot inside the park. Vehicles need an annual state park sticker or a daily pass (a daily pass is provided as part of the registration fee). Refreshments will be provided at rest stops and post-ride. Mechanical, emergency, and sag support will be provided. Adult riders will receive t-shirts, and young riders will receive water bottles. All riders must sign waivers and wear helmets.

**8-mile family ride option** follows the GGST for 4 miles from Gooseberry to a rest stop at Twin Points wayside, where there will be treats and special activities for families. The ride returns on the GGST to Gooseberry.

**28-mile ride option** follows 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.

**34-mile ride option** is all on the GGST, following the trail to the rest stop at Beaver Bay Wayside, crossing the Beaver River bridge, turning uphill along the West Road, and continuing to Silver Bay. At the trail terminus on Outer Drive, bikers turn around and retrace the route back to Beaver Bay, to refuel and return to Gooseberry. This is also an "out-and-back" ride with a return-when-you-wish opportunity.

**50+-mile ride option** follows the GGST to the Silver Bay terminus, then west on the main road (Outer Drive to Penn Blvd on Co Rd 5), to the intersection with Lax Lake Rd (Co Rd 4). The route follows Lax Lake Rd north and east to the intersection with Hwy 1. From there, we are looking at new options to provide a 50+ mile ride that will eliminate riding on Hwy 61. New maps will be available at ride day registration.

**Registration** can be completed online (through secure PayPal payment) on our website at [www.ggta.org/ride.php](http://www.ggta.org/ride.php), or by mail using the form on this page. Cost of the ride is \$40 by August 1, \$45 after that date. GGTA members save \$10, so their cost is \$30 before August 1 and \$35 thereafter.

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We couldn't do what we do without these supportive businesses. Check out the website to learn the benefits of GGTA business sponsorship and learn how you can join this list, or just call or email us for more info.

### 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: S M L XL Second rider: S M L XL

Options: \_\_\_ 8 miles \_\_\_ 28 miles \_\_\_ 34 miles \_\_\_ 50+ 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 \_\_\_\_\_

**Send completed Registration and Waiver form and check for ride registration (including membership fee, if any) in the enclosed envelope.**





## Business Sponsor Spotlight

Is your family planning to “hang out” on the North Shore this summer? If so, be sure to check out the North Shore Adventure Park located at Hwy 61 and Outer Drive in Silver Bay. The park promotes opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy the outdoors in our region. It features climbing, zip lines, picnic areas, axe throwing, and more. North Shore Adventure Park has supported the work of the GGTA since it got off the ground (quite literally). In addition to being a business sponsor of our work, the



business is offering everyone who registers for the GGTA Annual Ride a coupon that can be used to offset the cost of attractions at the park. Those registered will be provided by email before the ride with information about accessing the coupon. Learn more about the park at its website: [northshoreadventurepark.com](http://northshoreadventurepark.com).

### Gitchi-Gami Trail Association

1130 Eleventh Street, Two Harbors 55616

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GITCHI-GAMI  
STATE TRAIL

### Gitchi-Gami Trail Association

1130 Eleventh Street  
 Two Harbors, MN 55616

## Help wanted!

The GGTA is seeking volunteers to help with our 23rd Annual North Shore Bike Ride on August 19th. Can you lend a hand? Volunteers can help putting up signs, setting up the registration area and rest stops, working at the registration table, handing out t-shirts and treats, and other tasks. Volunteers can also participate in the ride. Let Michelle know if you can help out for a bit on or before the day of the ride. Email her at [info@ggta.org](mailto:info@ggta.org) or call her at 218-529-7535! Thanks!