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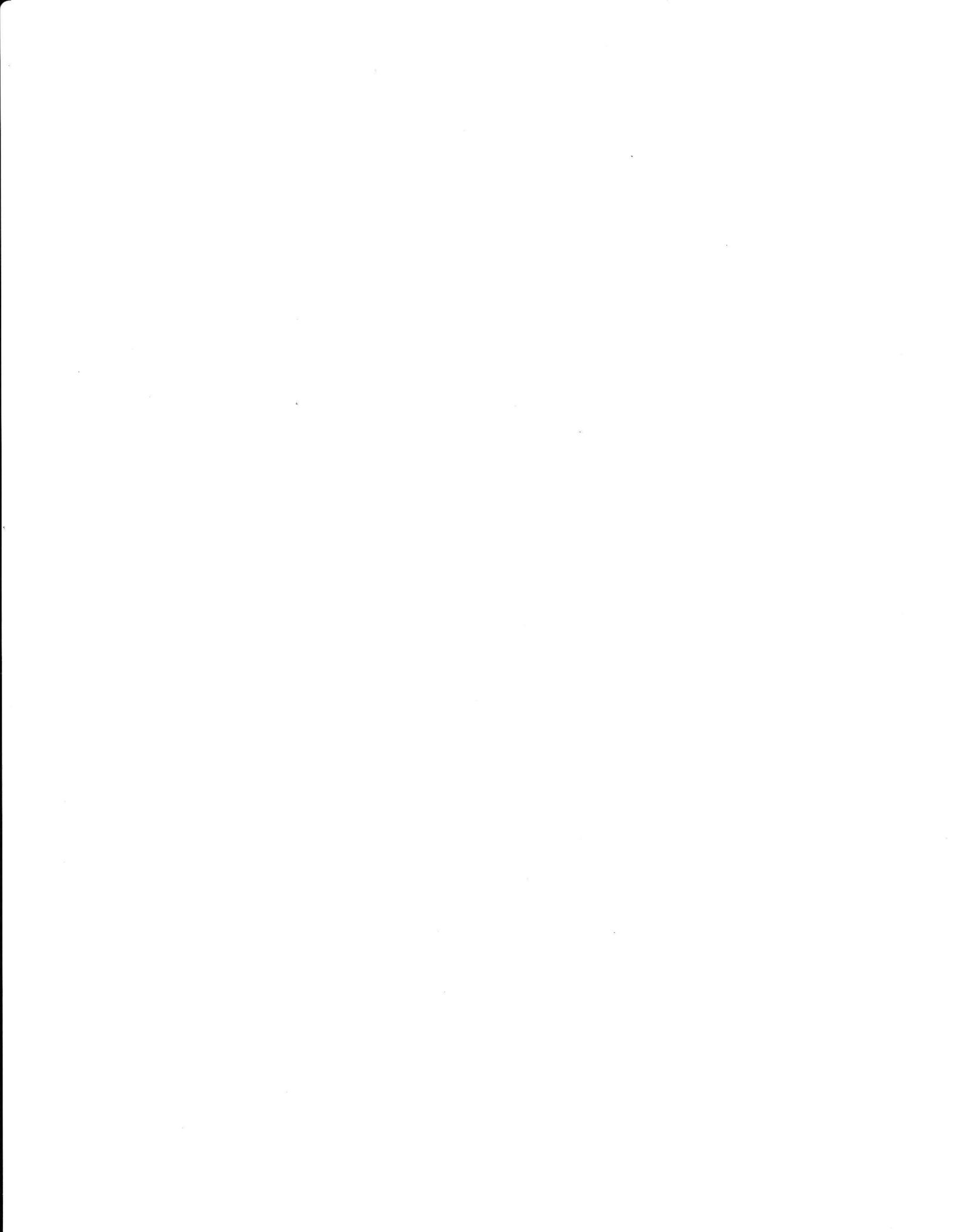
 St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trails Coalition

Bike & Hike the Valley

St. Croix Bike & Pedestrian Trails Coalition

2024 Annual Report for 2023

Dated May 8, 2024



St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition 2024 Annual Report for 2023

General Overview

In 2023 the Coalition Board and Committees met only occasionally virtually when circumstances dictated as the Pandemic wound down. In person meetings seem to allow more give and take during the meeting. To follow the various initiatives, see the various committee reports in this paper.

Standing Committees

The Coalition has four standing committees; the Communications Committee, the Hwy 64 Trails Corridor Committee, the Friends of Lake Mallalieu Trestle Park Committee and the Lake Mallalieu Trestle Park Committee in conjunction with the National Park Service. See the details for those committees' initiatives in Appendix B, C, D and E respectively.

Financial Report

As 2023 began, funds carried over from 2022 were \$19,681.02-. The total revenues collected for the year were \$3017.39. The Coalition held one fund raiser in 2023 at Oliphant Brewing. Yearly expenditures amounted to \$9,060.66. The year ended with \$13,159.14 in the bank with approximately half of that designated for the Lake Mallalieu Basin project. See Appendix A for details.

Looking to the Future

Making strong connections that create a county wide network of trails reaching into neighboring counties in both Minnesota and Wisconsin will continue to be the overreaching focus of the Coalition's activities in 2025. Working cooperatively with governmental entities and trails organizations will be a highlight of the years' activities.

Board of Directors

Terms Expiring in 2026

Mark Gherty
Open Seat
Open Seat

Terms Expiring in 2025

Pam Kaiser
Kyle Lindstrom, Vice Chairperson
Paul McGinnis

Terms Expiring in 2024

Susan Heuser, Secretary/Information Director
Mark Vanasse, Chairperson and Treasurer
Open Seat

Alternates

Term ending in 2024 – Open Seat
Term ending in 2025 – Open Seat

Appendix A

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trails Coalition, Inc.

Financial Report

January 2023 - December 2023

Income	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total To Date	Budget 2023
Grants - General														2,000.00
Grants - Lake Mallalieu Basin														5,000.00
Total Grants:														7,000.00
Donations - General		82.23			277.23									359.46
Donations - Lake Mallalieu Basin														4,000.00
Donations - Tourism Events		1,000.00												1,000.00
Total Donations:		1,082.23			277.23									1,359.46
Total Membership Dues:	41.85	181.08			60.00									282.93
Fund Raiser - General														500.00
Fund Raiser - Lake Mallalieu Basin														500.00
Fund Raiser - Oliphant					1,150.00									1,150.00
Fund Raiser - Raffle @ Oliphant					225.00									225.00
Total Fund Raisers/Raffles:					1,375.00									1,375.00
Total Income:	41.85	1,263.31			1,712.23								3,017.39	15,900.00

Expenses	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total To Date	Budget 2023
Office Supplies									13.89	63.85			77.74	1,000.00
Insurance					400.00								400.00	500.00
Professional Fees														250.00
Gov't Filings Fees			25.00		25.50		79.50						130.00	125.00
Web Page/Media	30.16	129.03								66.51	46.34		272.04	300.00
Bank Charges														20.00
Doner Box Charges	2.14	6.32			2.59								11.05	20.00
Expenses General	15.81	112.97	150.00	150.00					155.00				583.78	1,000.00
Tourism Events		121.27			417.66	67.21				109.95			716.09	1,000.00
Total From Donations - General:	48.11	369.59	175.00	150.00	428.09		79.50		168.89	240.31	46.34		1,705.83	4,215.00
Grants - General														1,000.00
Grants - Lake Mallalieu Basin						3,031.02	329.28				68.96		3,429.26	2,000.00
Total From Grants:						3,031.02	329.28				68.96		3,429.26	3,000.00
Donations - General														1,000.00
Donations - Lake Mallalieu Basin														1,000.00
Donations - Lift and Loop														
Donations - Andre Johnson Memorial										1,570.00	1,854.53			
Total From Donations - Projects:										1,570.00	1,854.53		3,424.53	2,000.00
Total From Membership Dues:														600.00
Fund Raiser - General														250.00
Fund Raiser - Lake Mallalieu Basin														3,000.00
Fund Raiser - Oliphant					469.06									469.06
Fund Raiser - Raffle @ Oliphant					31.98									31.98
Total From Fund Raisers/Raffles:					501.04									501.04
Total Expenses:	48.11	369.59	175.00	150.00	929.13	3,031.02	408.78		168.89	1,810.31	1,969.83		9,060.66	13,215.00

Funds Available

General	6,256.49	6,271.48	6,096.48	5,946.48	5,855.62	5,855.62	5,776.12	5,776.12	5,607.23	5,476.87	5,430.53	5,430.53	
Andre Johnson Memorial	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	3,424.53	1,854.53			
Lake Mallalieu Basin	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	6,968.98	6,639.70	6,639.70	6,639.70	6,639.70	6,570.74	6,570.74	
Tourism Events		878.73	878.73	878.73	461.07	393.86	393.86	393.86	393.86	283.91	283.91	283.91	
Oliphant Fundraing					680.94	680.94	680.94	680.94	680.94	680.94	680.94	680.94	
Oliphant Raffle					193.02	193.02	193.02	193.02	193.02	193.02	193.02	193.02	
Total Funds Available:	19,681.02	20,574.74	20,399.74	20,249.74	20,615.18	17,516.95	17,108.17	17,108.17	16,939.28	15,128.97	13,159.14	13,159.14	

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Appendix B – Communication Committee White Paper Report

The Communications Committee met jointly with the Board of Directors in 2023 as it continues to work on outreach options for the Coalition's missions. The Communication Committee's guiding theme is *to continue getting accurate information to interested parties via various methods to be discussed with the Board of Directors as time requires and continue working cooperatively with groups interested in trails and trail promotion in the area.*

Marketing Plans

Marketing plans continued to be developed, a working *Power Point* was created and members of the Coalition did presentations at both the Healthier Together St. Croix and Pierce Counties organization and the River Falls Rotary Club. More outreach of this kind is anticipated.

Hudson Expo

In May, the Coalition participated in the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau's Spring Expo for the second year in a row. The booth provided an opportunity to talk to visitors about trails and trail issues in the area. Those involved considered it a worthwhile event to participate in and will likely be involved in 2024.

Tourism Summit

A Tourism Seminar was held during National Tourism Week on May 11, 2023. The keynote speaker was Mary Monroe Brown from the *Wisconsin Office of Outdoor Recreation* who discussed the significance of tourism moneys that come into the state of Wisconsin from people coming to recreate. She also provided specific information about moneys coming into the region. Then St. Croix County and several local trails groups completed the morning long event.

That large meeting was followed on October 12, 2023, with a discussion by Drew Nussbaum from *Travel Wisconsin* about the true value of tourism in the three county area of St. Croix, Polk and Pierce Counties in Western Wisconsin.

The Coalition was joined by St. Croix County, the Hudson Area Chamber of Commerce & Tourism Bureau and St. Croix County Economic Development Corporation in this effort.

Further Outreach Tools used by the Coalition include a *Facebook* page with fewer followers than in previous years as *Tik Tok* and other social media platforms took customers away from *Facebook*, an email account with 300+ persons receiving messages from the Coalition and a website that provides a wealth of information about trails in the area and information about how to start and manage trail initiatives. The website also includes two entire pages of trail maps users can access as they plan visits to western Wisconsin and its many trail related amenities.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

Going forward, the Committee's activities will be to continue to provide accurate information about connecting trails throughout the county, to more actively pursue opportunities to share trails information with various organizations and to work cooperatively with other organizations that support trail networks in the area.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mark Gherty,
Susan Heuiser
Janet Lindstrom

Mark Vanasse
Tim Witzmann, Chairperson

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Appendix C – Highway 64 Trail Corridor Committee White Paper Report

The Highway 64 Corridor Trail Committee was created by the St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trail Coalition in mid-2016 to research and provide a variety of information to the Coalition regarding collaboration between and among the Highway 64 corridor communities. Organizations identified as part of the Hwy 64 corridor were the Towns of Richmond, St. Joseph, Somerset and Star Prairie, the Village of Somerset, New Richmond's Pathway Committee and the City of New Richmond. Each of the organizations has passed the Committee Charter at their Town/Village/City/Committee boards/councils/meetings and a representative from six of the seven organizations has been appointed.

The Hwy 64 Corridor Committee did not meet during 2023. Committee membership fluctuates with elections in some of the designated communities.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This Committee remains of vital interest to the Coalition as trail development occurs along the corridor from the Loop Trail in the Town of St. Joseph through Somerset toward New Richmond. The Village of Somerset received a TAP grant to add trails to the areas around the highway and trail construction by WisDOT in 2023.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Laine Belter	Kyle Lindstrom
Susan Heuser, Chairperson	Jim Peirson
Josh Hecht,	Tim Witzmann
Jim Remington	

Mark Vanasse serves as minute taker but is not a member of the Committee.

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Appendix D – Friends of Mallalieu Trestle Park White Paper Report

This Committee, Friends of Mallalieu Trestle Park, did not meet during 2023 because circumstances aren't ready for a Friends Group to support the Trestle Park yet.

To be noted for future meetings, Sharon Keiser has moved out of the area.

CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

This Committee will likely remain inactive until real possibilities exist that some kind of public outdoor recreation facilities will develop on the site. However, the Trails Coalition will continue to seek suggestions and advice from the Committee members.

MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

Mark Gherty, Chairperson
Susan Heuser
Don Jordan
Sharon Keiser

Paul McGinnis
Kerry Reis
Dag Selander
Dan Timmerman

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Appendix E – RTCA Lake Mallalieu Trestle Park Committee White Paper

In March of 2022, after several years of working on issues related to the railroad trestle located in the Lake Mallalieu Basin and its surrounding properties, the Trails Coalition applied to the National Park Services' *River Trails and Conservation Assistance* (RTCA) Program for help with the project. In June of 2022, the Trails Coalition received word that assistance had been granted for working with the multiple stake holders in the area to find a way to utilize these properties as a public facility that connects the City of Hudson & the Village of North Hudson, facilitates a nonmotorized connection between the I-94 and St. Croix River Crossing bridges and develops the property into a recreational facility that both residents and tourists can enjoy. In March of 2023, the Coalition applied for a second year of assistance from the RTCA and it was granted.

The Committee met monthly throughout 2023 except for December. As the year began, the group participated in a design charette exercise with RTCA staff. Possibilities for amenities in the space were considered and the RTCA staff would generate a concept plan based on input from this January and further meetings for the group to review as the year ensued.

In February, Bruce Lenzen, the private individual who purchased the two railroad trestle parcels in the area, met with the group a week after his closing on the property with the Union Pacific Railroad. He had no definite plans/concepts to share at that meeting but was hoping to get those items in process during 2023. As the year continued to its end, the Committee heard nothing definitive from Lenzen.

The spring of 2023 also brought a study, commissioned by the Trails Coalition, regarding trails in the area and their connections. Warren White, an experienced trails engineer, presented his report to the Trails Coalition in June and it was subsequently reviewed by this committee. A new proposal in the document was an at grade crossing possibility from Bridge Street into what is currently the City of Hudson's impound lot. The report divided the Lake Mallalieu project into sections, including the railroad trestle parcels, and had cost estimates for each section. It can serve as a tool for determining various items as development of the property is considered.

The County created maps showing zoning, flood plains and slope issues to inform the discussion regarding the design proposals from the RTCA.

Members of the Committee visited various committees at the City and Village to share concepts for the area as they were being considered. The reception was generally positive at both municipalities. The County preferred not to review the proposals until more definite details were available.

As the Committee considered how to get relevant information about the project out to the various local units of government as well as the general public, a FACT SHEET was developed by the group that is a one page (front and back), succinct description of all the areas the Committee has considered.

In November, a meeting of the decision makers was convened by the City of Hudson's Mayor O'Connor. The group considered what was presented by the Committee and then asked for more information before they could consider a proposal. Specifically, the items requested were about costs of the proposed concept and long term maintenance

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Appendix E – RTCA Lake Mallalieu Trestle Park Committee White Paper

tasks, management & costs of the proposed concept. Funding sources were also a request from the decision makers. The Committee began consideration of information provided by the RTCA to get these documents prepared.

Throughout the course of the year, many changes in key personnel in the stakeholders' organizations were noted. Amy Noonan did not run for re-election in the Village, Bill Rubin at St Croix EDC retired in the fall; Jason Kjeseth was named the new St. Croix County Community Development Director in August; Gina Alberti was named the Village Administrator/Clerk and the City Manager in Hudson resigned for a second time. Each of these changes affected the way the Committee deals with the stakeholders in a significant way.

The Committee has formed a collegial working relationship with open and frank discussions about the issues concerning these properties. This is the first time in many years of considerations about these gems in the rough properties that an actively working conversation has been possible.

Next steps in the process to begin in 2024 are, most importantly, to get an agreement between the stakeholders about how the properties will be owned and how a park will be designed, constructed & maintained on the properties. Assistance from this Committee and/or the Trails Coalition can be further considered once that agreement is in place.

LOOKING FORWARD

Because of the complex nature of the property and the stakeholders' working relationship issues, it is likely the work of this Committee will not be completed in the even two year period allowed by the RTCA second request for assistance filed this year. The Coalition will likely need to file for an extension of the services in 2023 to continue involvement of the National Park Service staff.

Members of the Committee

Sarah Bruch, City of Hudson
Brett Budrow, St. Croix County
Pat Casanova, City of Hudson
Mark Gherty, Coalition
Susan Heuiser, Coalition

Holly Larson, National Park Service
Paul McGinnis, Coalition
Kirk Nelson, Village of North Hudson
Amy Noonan, Village of North Hudson
Scott Wagner, St. Croix EDC