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Bike & Hike the Valley

St. Croix Bike and Pedestrian Trails Coalition Project History

The Coalition began with informal discussions around a kitchen table among friends interested in trails and their safety in St. Croix County. In May 2013, the Coalition formally organized and began holding regular meetings. The goal was to start an effort to connect bike/pedestrian trails throughout St. Croix County to the new Loop Trail slated for construction between the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge and the new St. Croix River Crossing Bridge.

The Coalition's Mission Statement contains four main foundations which guide the activities of the organization. The list below contains projects the Coalition has participated in, often in collaboration with other organizations, to support one of those basic tenets.

Creates a County Wide Connected Network of Trails that Connects to the Loop Trail

- Representation on a County committee studying the economic impact of the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge
- Organized 9 municipalities and the County to pass a resolution to improve the link from the Loop Trail south toward Hudson and North Hudson
- Participated in the approval process for the St. Croix County Bike & Pedestrian Trail Plan
 - Coalition representative sat on a County committee that selected the contractor to create the Bike & Ped Plan
 - Coalition representatives sat on a County committee that developed the Bike & Ped Plan
 - Coalition representatives presented information about the Bike & Ped Plan to various community organizations
 - Members spoke numerous times at the County's Community Development Committee and at the County Board meetings
- Created Highway 64 Trail Corridor Committee to connect the Loop Trail from Houlton to Somerset to New Richmond
- Worked with a trail engineer to define trail possibilities along the *Landing Hill* section of STH 64 between Houlton and Somerset
- Provided information that lead to an agreement between three municipalities creating the first effort for a common trail between the three communities
- Coalition Representatives sat on a committee in cooperation with the New Richmond Pathway organization to create a *Beyond the Loop Trail Map* to showcase on road trails connecting to the Loop Trail in Wisconsin

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Creates Safe Commuting and Recreational Opportunities

- Held a series of informational meetings about trail impact on communities and regional areas
 - Regional trail planning experts – Brown’s Creek and Mississippi River Corridor
 - Trail organization evolution expert
 - WisDNR grant coordinators defining Stewardship options
 - How to create a *bicycle friendly* community
 - How placemaking creates a consistent plan for a region
- Started a bike rack initiative in partnership with WITC to place locally manufactured bicycle racks in local communities
- Facilitating the purchase of an abandoned railroad bridge between the City of Hudson and Village of North Hudson owned by Union Pacific Railroad

Encourages Healthy Lifestyles

- Representation on the Healthier Together committee a joint effort between various hospitals in St. Croix & Pierce Counties and their Public Health Departments.
 - Facilitated Core 4+ program in Pierce and St. Croix County elementary schools
 - Facilitated both *Walk to School* (in the fall) and *Bike to School* (in the spring) at local elementary schools.
 - Supplied Pierce and St. Croix County libraries with the *Library Backpack Program* materials providing tools to check out for families to investigate nature.
- Coalition Representatives sat on the committee that developed the *Art Bench Project* near Houlton Elementary School at the Loop Trail Main Trailhead – a project of the Phipps Center for the Arts

Promotes Tourism & Commerce in the greater St. Croix County Area

- Participated in a September 2019 St. Croix Valley Tourism Conference highlighting the St. Croix River Crossing Bridge project
- Lead the Wisconsin portion of the celebration of the opening of the Historic Stillwater Lift Bridge, the Lift and Loop celebration. This event has been postponed because of the pandemic
- Established an Economic Summit event in cooperation with St. Croix County and St. Croix County Economic Development Cooperation to highlight the benefits trails bring to an area. This event has been postponed because of the pandemic

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