

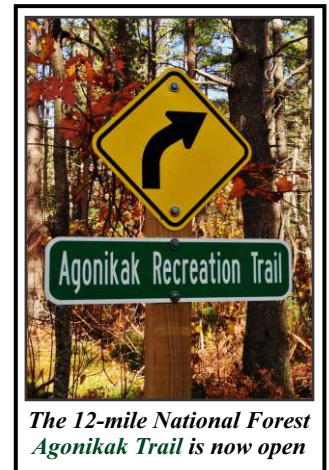
Wilderness Lakes Trails, Inc.

2014 Accomplishments

This year was a “Good News / Bad News” kind of year. The good news is we completed over 11 miles of the Agonikak (ah-gohn-ih-kak) Trail under budget (see Michigan Trail Progress). This trail is very challenging but a beautiful ride from Watersmeet to Land O' Lakes. The trail surface is compacted fine gravel that is suitable for all but the skinny tired road bikes. We were a little concerned as this surface material has not been used before and the trail is quite hilly. Our concern was about washouts, but it has held up extremely well. Last spring, together with the Fish and Game Club, we had our first workday on the Agonikak Trail. We had 18 volunteers who walked the trail and cleared the branches and fallen trees. We also blew all the leaves off the trail with equipment we purchased and share with the Town of Land O' Lakes.

On the bad news side, we were not awarded a grant for the Whitefish Lake Trail section. The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund awarded fewer grants than in the past and gave preference to towns that had not previously received grants. They encouraged us to reapply in 2015 as they are very supportive of our project. In addition, we were not able to get approval from the USFS to cross a wetland/flowage on the proposed Dream Lake Trail. Their proposed alternate route was not something we wanted to pursue. Therefore, we will continue to use a shared route on Thousand Island Lake Road.

We will continue to work with the LVD Tribe and Gogebic County to come up with plans for Thousand Island Lake and Rodis roads. We are discussing an off-road section combined with bike lanes. We appreciate the financial support you have given us and hope you can continue to provide the funds we need for grant matching. We would also love to have volunteers join our Board and/or participate in workdays.



The 12-mile National Forest Agonikak Trail is now open

2014 Michigan Trail Progress

Agonikak Trail - We had a slow start in completing the South Agonikak section due to the late thaw and extended road limits this spring, which limited heavy equipment access to the project. Construction started up again in mid-June and by the end of July the final trail surface was applied and the trail gates and signs were installed. By the end of August the highway signs, kiosk signs and bicycle racks were installed at the trail heads, a final inspection was done with the Forest Service and the closing documents were submitted. The 1.4 million dollar project will come in well under budget thanks to the many volunteers that did hands-on carpentry and field work throughout the project. To access the press release follow this link:

<http://www.wildernesslakestrails.org/PDF%20&%20Word%20Files/Agonikak%20Complete%208-1-2014.pdf>



The Michigan Department of Transportation allowed us to establish a south trail head at their Stateline Roadside Park as well as to place biking and hiking symbols on their signs.

An average of 2500 vehicles per day pass this point and last fall, after signs were placed, we began seeing regular use by bicyclists and walkers.



Albino Lake Trail - Another segment of the WLT system that the Lac Vieux Desert Tribe will be putting out for bids this year is the 1-1/2 mile Albino Lake Trail, which passes by two pristine National Forest lakes. The LVD tribe has been very supportive of the project since its inception and has proven to be a very generous and valuable partner.

Whitefish - Dream Lake Trail - In 2014 we applied for a grant for the first phase of this project and scored in the top 26% of applicants which wasn't high enough to be awarded a grant. We are intending to re-apply for a grant this year but due to complications with a wetland crossing in the Dream Lake section we are focusing only on the Whitefish Trail restoration. This will allow us to commit to a higher percentage of matching funds and increase our point score and chances of a grant award for next year.

2014 Michigan Trail Progress - contd.



Phase II will complete the link of the Lac Vieux Desert Bike and Hike Trail from the Resort and Casino to the WLT System

LVD Bike and Hike Trail - After considerable engineering work, the Lac Vieux Desert Tribe will be soliciting bids this spring for Phase II of its Bike and Hike Trail which connects the LVD Resort and Casino, tribal housing and the Watersmeet School to the main Wilderness Lakes Trail loop. This segment includes construction of a 40-foot bridge over the Ontonagon River and 100+ feet of boardwalk.

Thousand Island Lake Road Bike Lanes - A major reconstruction of Thousand Island Lake Road (County Highway 535) is underway and Gogebic County is incorporating plans to add paved bicycle lanes from US 2 to the Wisconsin Border wherever feasible. This is a multi-year project and we will coordinate closely with the Road Commission as plans and opportunities for funding develop.

Governor's Showcase Trail - As of January 29, 2015 the Michigan DNR has published a draft showing the 774-mile bike route from Ironwood to Belle Isle (near Detroit) to be named the Iron Belle Trail. Along with Watersmeet Township, we worked with Dickinson County to lobby for designating the US 2 corridor for the bike route through the Upper Peninsula. This route was recently affirmed and will intersect with the Wilderness Lakes Trail System. A draft map can be downloaded at this link:

https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/Showcase-Trail-Route_469159_7.pdf

2014 Wisconsin Trail Progress

2014 was a quiet year for any activity regarding further development of the Wisconsin portion of Wilderness Lakes Trails. Other than some ongoing maintenance on the new trail between Forest Lake Road and Deer Farm Road there was no further activity since the focus of WLT was on the completion of the Agonikak trail in Michigan. In 2015, we have plans to further develop a trail maintenance system, repair and replace signage as needed, and research options for a possible trail addition to create a smaller loop ride off of the existing west end of the Wisconsin portion of the main 40 mile WLT trail system. Additionally we will add mileage markers along the trail system and will complete installation of donor plaques on the trail head Kiosks.

2014 Financial Results

Income for 2014 was \$25,556, of which \$17,284 was received in donations and the balance represents fund-raising events revenue. Expenses were \$6,622, primarily fund-raising event and trail expenses. WLT's cash and investment balance of slightly more than \$126,000 will be available for future grant matching requirements.

The "Ride with Leinie" weekend in August attracted over 150 bikers and generated over \$4,700 in support of future trail development. Thanks to Dick Leinenkugel, Mark and Kris Gostisha and all the participants and volunteers for their enthusiastic support of this family fun event. Mark your calendar for August 8, 2015 and join us on the trails or just stop in for a brat and a beer.



The Ride with Leinie event continues to be popular with riders of all ages

As explained above, our focus in 2015 will be geared more towards planning than building. As we finalize our plans, our financial requirements will become more clear and we will pursue the necessary fund-raising. **Thank you to the following individuals who generously donated to Wilderness Lakes Trails in 2014. Your continuing support and commitment to this project and the Land O' Lakes and Watersmeet area is greatly appreciated.**

Steve Bablitch and Elaine Kelch
Ray Brown
Will and Jody Buergey
John and Jean Frana
Scott and Karen Ghinazzi

Peter and Kathy Kelly
Tom and Kathy Krautkramer
Bud and Mary Kuppenheimer
Rob and Kathy Lauer
In Memory of Jaybird Magdanz – Camp Fishville

Mark Nehring Family
Jeff and Cheryl Pytlarz
Rohlen Family
Rob and Sandy Seymour
John and Judy Sick

Thank You!

Wilderness Lakes Trails would like to thank the donors to our Milestone Program listed below. These significant donations along with the hundreds of smaller ones have made the construction of our trails possible. Currently we are making plaques to recognize these donors. They will be displayed on the trail head kiosks. If you would like to make a donation please contact us at 715-547-3770 or visit our website: www.wildernesslakestrails.org

Platinum

5 Generations on Anderson Lake
Forest Lake Country Store
Wilson Industrial
In Memory of Danis Wilson
Binder & Lee Families
Tom Church
Margaret Baack & Michael McAdams
Conserve School
John & Leslie Pearson
Lac Vieux Desert Tribe
TriCounty Bicycle Association
In Memory of Jaybird Magdanz- Camp Fishville

Gold

Bob & Sara Beedie
Camp Pohlmann
The Sethness Family
Tim & Jill Schmidt
Land O' Lakes Chamber
Bikes Belong Coalition

Silver

Clarke Family
In Memory of Granny & Grandpa Peterson
Ely Memorial Church
Headwaters State Bank

Bronze

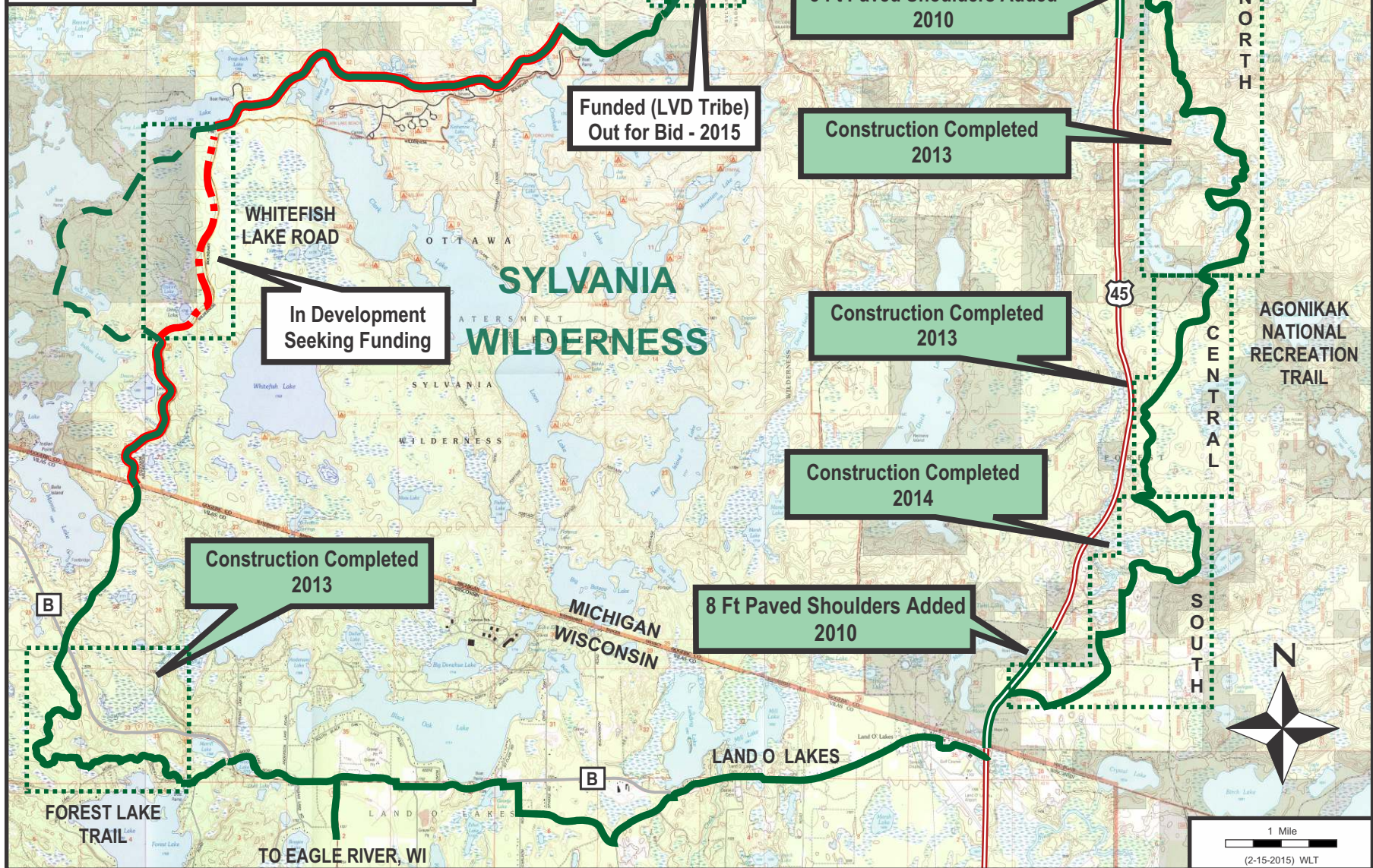
The Family of Mark Flood
The Clayton Family
The Elder Family
Chris & Cindy Hook & Family
Gordon & Linda Johnson
Mary Ellen Alt
Tony & Piper Manatt- Happy Trails
The Pioli Family
The Schlifske Family
Sunrise Lodge
Jim Surpless, Scott Barnum & Peter Kelly Families
Jeff & Cheryl Pytlarz
Carolyn & Kully Rohlen
We Energies

WILDERNESS LAKES TRAILS

Trail Development Status

(FEB 15, 2015)

-  Completed Segment
 -  In Development
 -  Planned Segment
 -  Planned Bike Lanes
 -  Temporary Bike Route
- EA = Environmental Assessment



1 Mile
(2-15-2015) WLT