

1/27/2025 Draft

## **Chequamegon Chapter, NCTA 2025 Winter Meeting Agenda**

**When:** Saturday, February 8, 2025, 10:00 AM to Noon (9:30 – 10:00 socialize and snack)

**Where:** Town of Drummond Civic Center, 52540 Front Ave., Drummond, WI 54832

1. Approval of 2024 Fall Business and Planning Meeting Minutes
2. Chapter Reports:
  - Membership: Mary Stenberg
  - Treasurer: Ed Ronkowski
  - Volunteer Hours: Julia Waggoner
  - Western Trail Managers: Jim Fridsma & Derek Ogle - update on trail adopters
  - Eastern Trail Manager: Mike Trieschmann - update on tool storage
  - Communications Liaison: Marty Swank – update on Meet Up and Facebook
3. NCTA Regional Trail Coordinator report – Matt Davis
4. NCTA Board of Directors report -- Mel Baughman
5. Chequamegon Chapter Honor Award Presentation to Rhiannon Harmon
6. Tentative Plans for 2025 Activities
  - Proposed date for Fall Annual Business Meeting (Election) – Saturday, November 1, 2025, location TBD  
Need nominations for Vice President
  - NCT Promotion
    - March 7 – 10, NCTA multi-Chapter booth at Canoecopia in Madison (not participating)
    - June – September, NCTA Chequamegon Chapter booth at Ashland Farmer’s Market –Ellie Williams
    - September 27, NCT Day hike/picnic, possibly in collaboration with another chapter. (WI chapter presidents are considering several collaborative events)
    - Vehicle shuttles provided throughout the summer by Chapter volunteers. Updated list. Additional volunteers?
    - Other ideas?
  - Hikes
    - ✓ 1 weekday and 1 weekend per month
    - ✓ Combination of out-and-back hikes and through-hikes with shuttles
    - ✓ Some with other Chapters
    - ✓ Need a Hike Coordinator – Recruit hike leaders, provide training resources to hike leaders, complete Events Calendar Submission Form on NCTA Website for each hike. Send hike descriptions to Marty for posting on Facebook.
    - ✓ Invite Board members and trail adopters to lead hikes (rain-out dates?). Proposed hike dates:
      - June 7, Saturday – National Trails Day
      - June 18, Wednesday
      - July 12, Saturday
      - July 23, Wednesday
      - August 9, Saturday
      - August 20, Wednesday
      - September 10, Wednesday
      - September 27 -- National Public Lands Day, 3-Chapter event?
  - Workdays (Saturday, at least one per month, mid-month, more workdays may be added on short notice)
    - April – Trail adopters work on own section of NCT
    - May 10, Saturday-clear encroaching young trees in Rainbow Lake Wilderness

- May 17 & 18, Saturday & Sunday – rebuild Porcupine Creek Bridge
  - June 14, Saturday
  - July 19, Saturday
  - August 16, Saturday
  - September 13, Saturday
  - October 11, Saturday
- Improve safety on hikes and workdays
    - Written instructions for hike leaders and crew leaders – Mel, others?
    - Improved first aid kits for hikes and workdays – Mel, others
    - Driving directions from trailheads to hospitals with hospital addresses -- Mel
  - Emergency Location Signs at NCT road crossings and campsites to help emergency responders locate access points – WI Chapter Presidents
  - Update list of agency partners and contacts - Mel
  - Update Chapter temporary signs for fun event, trail maintenance, and volunteers at work with map that includes Vermont – Mel, Marty?

#### Trail Projects -- 1/27/2025 Draft

**Note: Projects are listed in geographic order from west to east**

**\*Indicates our biggest or most difficult projects**

#### **\*Canthook Area Reroute**

This is about a four-mile re-route that will replace about four miles of existing NCT. The new route will be considerably more scenic than the existing route. Two campsites along this route were proposed by the Chequamegon Chapter and tentatively approved, pending an archaeological search. The USFS still needs to complete the vegetation survey and archaeological search on the re-route. Katie LeMoine is doubtful that this project will be cleared for construction in 2025. In her opinion, at best there may be a short section on which construction could begin late in 2025.

The USFS has indicated interest in hiring a contractor to build this new trail, but I am not aware of any specific proposals written to secure such funding. If this avenue is pursued, we may need to wait a couple of years for funding to become available. Otherwise the Chequamegon Chapter and Wisconsin Roving Trail Crew could tackle this over a couple of years.

#### **Trees down in Rainbow Lake Wilderness** – reported by Julia Waggoner 10/14/2024

There are three big ones that should probably be taken out. The first tree we encountered (hiking south to north), was a 10" maple down across the trail only about 75' or so south of the reroute near Bufo Lake that we did a couple years ago. The second tree was about ¼ mile or so north of Rainbow Lake. The third tree was at the far south end of Tower Lake. **Katie LeMoine agreed to have the USFS clear these big trees in the Wilderness.**

#### **Clear Encroaching Brush in Rainbow Lake Wilderness** – comments by Mel

Clear encroaching young trees (8' tall) on NCT in the Rainbow Lake Wilderness just south of Bufo Lake. This section flooded a few years ago. Also clear encroaching brush near Rainbow Lake. We need to cut off tree stems, then dig up roots to create a clearing width of around 5'. This may need clearing every couple of years. I suggest doing this work in late April to early May before trees fully leaf out.

#### **\* Drummond Connector Trail**

Two boardwalks need to be built over gullies on this old railroad grade. Mel send Katie LeMoine a proposal for two boardwalks (not bridges), including site photos, construction plans, and materials list. USFS can provide building materials.

### **Dummond Woods Trailhead** – comments by Mel

We still need to improve the steps and perhaps install an arrow sign in the parking lot pointing to the trail steps as the trail access point. Mel send Katie LeMoine a proposal to replace existing steps and add about 3' uphill. Include plans and list of building materials.

### **\*Campsites near Lake Owen and Nelson Lake**

We may be able to build backpacker campsites this summer on or near Lake Owen and Nelson Lake, but Katie LeMoine needs to check on the status of the archaeological survey.

### **\*Re-build 2-log Bridge Over Porcupine Creek**

USFS delivered two used stringers made from laminated wood to the bridge site. Stringers are 4.5" x 11" x 28' -- long enough to span the creek. Mel sent a proposed bridge design to Katie LeMoine, utilizing the two stringers, deck boards, and curbs. Katie asked the Chapter to demolish the old bridge and build the new bridge with supplemental help from the USFS.

### **County Road D to Long Mile Lookout** – comments by Tom Matthiae

We may want to install a boardwalk over a wet area, if it is wet most of the time. Tom and Mel will evaluate this area in the spring. Send Katie LeMoine a proposal with boardwalk design, building materials list, and lat/lon coordinates. She is reluctant to build structures on seasonally wet areas.

### **Wisco Road (FR 378) to Long Mile Lookout** – Steve

Bade's section reported by Kevin Schram

Consider installing a double-plank puncheon about 16' long. There is an area with an exposed culvert and rotten corduroy logs that would probably benefit from a puncheon. I would guess it is about 16 feet long, but I was alone and I didn't have a tape measure, I have attached a photo and the GPS coordinates should be in the meta data. This project would dove-tail nicely with the one on Dean's section. Mel evaluate this site and send Katie LeMoine a proposal with puncheon design, list of building materials, and lat/lon coordinates. If we can provide this information this winter, she can haul building materials to the site via snowmobile. Otherwise we may be able to use the PowerWagon next summer.



### **Wisco Road to Old Grade Road – Wet Areas** – Section maintained by Mary Jo Gingras and Dean Johnson, reported by Mark Belknap.

There is a short wet area toward the western end of the segment that several of us worked on a bit on a workday a few years ago. We piled pieces of downed aspen in a jumbled pile to close off the wet area and rerouted the trail around it. With that change we still ran into a shorter wet area. A very primitive corduroy section was put in place as a temporizing measure, but we didn't go back to do a permanent fix. That length of corduroy has since been replaced by two rows of cookies that are mossed over (some of them rock a bit as well), and they would be quite treacherous when wet. It seems to us that they should be replaced by a safer structure such as a 2-plank puncheon. The contour, tread, and width of the trail are such that materials could be brought in with our new DR Powerwagon. The only barrier is the bridge over the creek near to the trail head, but we think that we could use a ramp to get up and down the stairs.

There are also several other areas further east where there are short (~4-foot) lengths of 2 x 6s that are just laid down on the trail. They are unstable and also are mostly hidden by the leaves this time of year. Re-assess and measure these areas next spring or when soil is wet. (If possible, do not install structures in seasonally wet areas.)

Mel evaluate these sites and send Katie LeMoine photos, a proposed design, list of building materials, and lat/lon coordinates. If we can provide this information this winter, she can haul building materials to the site via snowmobile. Otherwise we may be able to use the PowerWagon next summer.

**From Snake Trail Road (FR 383) about 1.5 miles west toward Overlook** – comments by Mel. Reported by Mark Belknap

Re-align trail over seasonal stream that has eroded dirt, exposing a trailbed of loose, baseball-sized rocks. Use rocks on-site as trail edging to define the trail as it crosses this drainage. New route is no more than about 6' from existing tread and is already in use by hikers. Little tread work is needed.

**East of Brunswailer River**—reported by Mike Trieschmann.

Mike reported that just east of the Brunswailer River, there is a section of trail with several washed-out culverts. These crossings are moderately hazardous and could be improved with boardwalks. Mike says Power Company staff drive ATVs over this section. If we build a boardwalk, it should be wide enough for ATVs (4' ?), otherwise those vehicles will tear up the trail when it's wet. Mel and Mike evaluate the site in spring.

**Hanson Rd (FR 188) to Quarry Rd (FR 604)** – comments by Kevin Schram

This section of the trail has about four wet/muddy stretches that should be evaluated for bog walks and/or short reroutes. Some of them are on the ski trail and some are off the ski trail.

On 1/17/2025 Mel, Katie LeMoine, and Natalie Osowski inspected the ski trail starting from Quarry road and continuing west for about ¼ mile. We passed over one flat area where Katie said there may be wet soil, but we could not evaluate it due to snow cover. The second area was in a small valley and we recommended 40' of plank puncheon, 24" wide, positioned on the edge of the ski trail, allowing at least 6' of clear space for the snow groomer to pass. Mel prepared construction plans. Katie will deliver materials this winter.

Mel and Katie should inspect this whole section next spring to consider how to improve other wet areas.

**CFSP / Trebelhorn Field Area** – comments by Kevin Schram

There is an exposed culvert and a hazardous hole that needs to be filled in the power line corridor. Mike Trieschmann knows where it is. Mel and Mike inspect this in spring.

**\*Copper Falls State Park (CFSP)** – comments by Mel

Our Chapter may need to assist Park staff next summer to install two boardwalks on the newly re-built hike and bike section of trail which is also the NCT. Mel has already prepared construction plans and Mike T will order lumber with grant funds from Friends of Copper Falls State Park.

**CFSP** –comments by Mel

We may need to help Park Staff and Friends of Copper Falls State Park cut up felled trees along the newly re-built 1-mile Hike & Bike section of the NCT. These trees were bulldozed to widen the trail, but now are an eyesore and wood can be processed for firewood.

**CFSP** –comments by Mel

In the spring or summer evaluate new routes for NCT from Old Grade Road to Mellen in light of possible grant funding, land acquisition and Highway 169 re-surfacing. – Mel, Mike, Park staff

**CFSP**—comments by Mel

Scout for a re-route to eventually replace the spur trail to the sandstone ledges backpacking campsite. This may be needed in the future if flooding destroys recently constructed bridges, boardwalk or tread on the side-hill section of trail. Work with Heritage Chapter on this. No rush. – Mel, Mike, Bethany Thomas, James Enigl