**Trails and Conservation Committee Ideas**

Here are the ideas that I have for the structure and function of the Trails and Conservation Committee based on my own ideas and discussions with Jim Birdsall.

**Purpose**: The purpose of the committee is to serve as a way for D&L Trails and Conservation staff to interact and benefit from the committee. I believe that this is an important committee that greatly benefits our staff and improves our programs and projects.

**Goals**:

1. For the D&L Trails and Conservation staff to share information about programs, plans, and work with the Trail and Conservation Committee so the committee members have a better understanding of the work and products that the staff implement.
2. For the Trails and Conservation Committee members to help shape the big picture goals and direction for the department. They will do this by sharing their expertise, time, and knowledge with the D&L Trails and Conservation staff to create better projects and programs.
3. To serve as a link between the full board and the D&L Trails and Conservation staff. This committee will bring any resolution or issues that need the full board’s attention.

**Organization**

The committee fits into our larger reorganization strategy and my goal of bringing an adaptive management strategy to the department. In general, with an adaptive management strategy our department is looking to follow a set process that allows us to continually improve. Broadly defined the adaptive management strategy is cycle that consists of:

* Set goals
* Plan
* Implement and monitor
* Learn and adjust

I view the committee as being a key part of the process especially in the set goals and learn and adjust phases. With this framework in mind I recommend that the Trail and Conservation Committee would work as:

* Three meetings a year.
* A workshop format for the meetings.
* Larger issues can be worked on in separate tasks by a subset of committee members.
* The general make-up of the committee remains as a mix of board members, advisors, and community members of approximately the same size.

**Three meetings a year**

We would have three committee meetings a year. We could stick with the schedule of piggybacking on the full board meetings with our meeting happening earlier in the day. The general schedule would provide a focus on:

January – Set Goals – Work with the D&L staff to set major goals and priorities for that calendar year.

July – Implement – Take a deeper dive into one or two projects that we are implementing.

Nov. – Learn and adjust – We would review the accomplishments and key performance indicators for the year to assess if we are meeting our goals.

**A workshop format for meetings**

To maximize our effectiveness, I would like to use a participatory decision-making workshop style. This is slightly different from a standard meeting. Instead of a standard meeting with general topics and open discussions we will structure the meeting around three general objectives:

* Telling – What are the key items that staff want to update the committee on. Not meant to be a review of everything (We have our board reports and other venues also).
* Participatory activity: For a set topic define outcomes and follow a process to reach them.
* Action items – Approvals needed for the staff to move forward, resolutions or motions for the board, or other items.

**Specific Issues**

The restrictions on time with this committee make it not possible to delve into all topics fully at each meeting. This will require that some topics or items will necessitate extra attention outside of the meeting. This can happen two ways:

* On-going topic specific meetings. For example, our trail projects are too detailed and require constant attention so cannot be adequately covered in the committee meeting. For this reason, there is a separate monthly meeting that the Trail & Stewardship Manager and interested parties attend that goes into greater depth.
* Set issues for a set duration of time. If there is a topic that comes up in the committee that needs further attention we could delegate this to a staff member and select committee members to research and report back on to the full committee.

**General Committee Make-up**

Having a committee that has a diverse make-up of backgrounds, professions, geographic regions and interests will produce the best outcomes. Our current make up (below) is 5 staff, 7 board members, and 5 at large members. I think that general size is good, but we should encourage full involvement and replace committee members who are not interested in participating. This committee structure could be used for three years. At the end of that period the responsibilities and organization could be revaluated

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| Name | Status |
| Elissa Garofalo | D&L Staff |
| Claire Sadler | D&L Staff |
| Brian Greene | D&L Staff |
| Lauren Golden | D&L Staff |
| Patrick Hunt | D&L Staff |
| Jim Birdsall | Board |

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| --- | --- |
| Name | Status |
| Sean Robbins | Board |
| Darrell Crook | Board |
| Andy Hamilton | Board |
| Dan Ulman | Board |
| Bob Skulsky | Board |
| Dan Ullman | Board |
| Jerry McAward | At-large |
| Scott Slingerland | At-large |
| Christine Dettore | At-large |
| Jessica Coulon | At-large |
| Devin Buzzard | At-large |