

# Border Route Trail Association

Board of Directors Meeting / January 25 2023 / 7:00 PM / [Zoom](#)

## Attendees

(Board Members): Felicia Hokenstad, Larry Quinn, John Elliot, Chris Fothergill, Pam Tavernier, Ed Solstad, Gary Carlson, Brian Hanson, Deena Reisman

(Other Attendees): Derrick Passe, Michelle Olson, Andrea Breitung, Keith Welle, Kathy Howard, Sydney Nelson

## Action Items

- Felicia to schedule a meeting with Brian, Chris, and Gary to start planning for the spring trail clearing season
- Brian to send John a list of things that were in the missing kiosk
- Deena to send Brian 10 mapsets from the NCTA website
- Chris to reach out to the MN Rovers to get an idea of what the shared storage locker might cost for storing tools/equipment
- Anyone with a list of volunteer contacts from past trips please share with Felicia

## Meeting Agenda + Notes

### Q&A Discussion with Derrick Passee from the Kek - NCTA Chapter

- Felicia invited Derrick Passee from the Kekekabic Trail Chapter of the NCTA to discuss with us some of the change from an Affiliate to a NCTA Chapter.
- Derrick explained that the Kek was running out of people to handle the admin work, so they decided to transition to an NCTA chapter and focus more on recruiting volunteers to do trail clearing. The NCTA has paid staff that can do alot of that admin work.
- We discussed how the switch would affect our finances
  - You do lose some autonomy over the finances by becoming a chapter because expenses have to be approved through NCTA Headquarters.
  - The Kek typically charges volunteers \$60 per clearing trip to cover food. Most people absorb transportation costs. That \$60 is recorded as a "donation" to the Kek Chapter and the Friends of the Boundary Waters reimburses their volunteers \$12/day. There is still the opportunity to be reimbursed for clearing trip expenses.
  - Matt confirmed that after the Kek transitioned into a Chapter, they filed some forms with the Secretary of State and then wrote a check to the NCTA with their remaining funds - those funds were put into their Chapter account.
- Some advantages of the switch are:
  - You get looked after a bit more by the NCTA because it's in their benefit to have more volunteer chapters
  - It's easier to apply for and receive field grants

- The NCTA has an established membership and people can become members of the chapter to support work on the trail
  - All details about membership are controlled by the NCTA, including the price, but the chapter gets \$12 into their account when someone becomes a member
- Derrick can be reached by email with additional questions - [derrickpasse@gmail.com](mailto:derrickpasse@gmail.com)

### **Intro to Prospective Board Members**

- Kathryn Howard - [km\\_howard@msn.com](mailto:km_howard@msn.com)
  - Kathryn decided she'd prefer to become a trail clearing volunteer instead
- Andrea Breitung - [breituan@gmail.com](mailto:breituan@gmail.com)
  - Andrea lives in Maple Grove, has backpacking experience on the trail, has worked in marketing/communications, likes to give back to trails she recreates on, and is interested in the Web Administrator position. If we don't have additional questions or concerns for Andrea, we can vote her in at the next board meeting.
- Sydney Nelson - [sydneynelson@gmail.com](mailto:sydneynelson@gmail.com)
  - Sydney was raised in Duluth, but lives in DC. She has prior board experience and is interested in the Secretary position, but has a schedule conflict on Wednesdays. We weren't able to schedule our meetings on a different night of the week, so she won't be able to serve on the board.

### **VIP Sign Up - One of our 2023 goals is to have all volunteer signed up as VIPs**

**Details:** Because the National Park Service (NPS) is the federal administrator of the North Country National Scenic Trail, NCT volunteers may sign up under the NPS Volunteer-In-Parks (VIP) program. The VIP program for the NCT is co-managed by the NPS and the NCTA. **The VIP program provides important protection for volunteers. All VIPs are entitled to the same injury considerations that NPS employees receive (provided they are operating within their approved scope of duties and NPS policies).** Additionally, VIPs are recognized for their contributions and earn annual recognition items based on hours of service and are eligible to attend certain skills and leadership training.

**Individual Agreement Sign-Up Process - Step One:** Please select the title(s) below to view the position description (PD) and job hazard analyses (JHA) for the position(s) that best fits your interests, skills, and abilities. There are five volunteer positions to choose from:

- **Administrative.** Activities include attending or participating in meetings, preparing materials, and general administrative office tasks.
- **Sawyer.** Sawyers operate a chainsaw or crosscut saw to build, maintain, or otherwise clear the trail corridor. This requires certification.
- **Swamper.** Swampers assist sawyers, but do not operate saws. Activities include clearing brush, transporting equipment, site preparation, cleanup, and risk management.
- **Trail Construction and Maintenance.** Activities include design, layout, construction, and maintenance of the trail tread, its immediate environment, and related support facilities.

- **Trail Support.** Activities include leading hikes, scouting, attending outreach events, blazing, trash cleanup, and landowner communication.

**Individual Agreement Sign-Up Process - Step Two:** Once you have determined which positions you're interested in, please print and complete the Volunteer Service Agreement. (\*Google Chrome or Firefox are the recommended browsers to use while opening this document.) Important: Be sure to check the appropriate boxes in Box 26 of the agreement to identify what PDs and JHAs you read for each position you would like to serve. As long as you continue to report your volunteer hours on a regular basis (at least once a year at a minimum), you must only update your volunteer agreement when there is a change in personal information or if you wish to make any changes to the volunteer positions you wish to perform.

[Completed Form Example](#)

[Volunteer Service Agreement](#)

**Unfortunately, only hand-signed ink signatures will be accepted at this time. Regardless of how many positions you would like to sign up for, only one Volunteer Service Agreement is needed.**

**Mailing Address:** Nic Loiseau, 318 E. Main St. Suite K, Lowell, MI 49331

### Submitting Volunteer Hours

**Details:** Reporting your hours allows the NCTA to recognize and report to the National Park Service the value of your hard work. When you report hours, you also earn eligibility for National Park Service awards, such as water bottles, personalized clothing, and America the Beautiful parks passes.

**Report Hours with this Link:**

<https://northcountrytrail.org/volunteer/report-volunteer-hours/>

**Volunteer Awards:** The awards ceremony is held each year during the annual NCTA Celebration. Those who receive these awards have given exceptional service, often many years' worth, to the North Country Trail and the North Country Trail Association. There are diverse award categories to represent the myriad of efforts put forth for the Trail.

### Spring Trail Clearing

- Contact List for Trail Crew Leaders
  - Anybody with volunteer contact information should share that with Felicia so that she can add it to our new member email list.
- Perspective Dates for Spring Trail Clearing - let's start looking at dates that will work
  - There will be a separate meeting scheduled to discuss this topic more in depth
  - John, Larry, Felicia (and her husband) will be heading up to Hestons from May 11-14 to do some trail clearing between Magnetic Rock and Bridal Veil Falls. They'll also spend some time from Magnetic Rock to the access road because a family that lives in that area donated a large sum to the BRTA. They'll spend some time stopping at some of the other resorts near the Gunflint Section.

## **First Aid + CPR Training with Wilderness Focus**

**Date:** Saturday, March 11, 2023

**Location:** TBD

**Details:** Andrea Luhman, a Red Cross Instructor, was working with the Kek Chapter to organize a 1-day "wilderness emphasis" Basic First Aid & CPR course on Saturday 3/11 somewhere in the Twin Cities. This course would be similar to what Paul Kautz did a few years ago - cover the basic requirements for the Basic First Aid & CPR certification but also cover info that volunteers are likely to encounter out in the woods where calling 911 isn't the best option. Matt opened up the training to the SHT and BRTA. Val Bader said that NCTA can pay the instructor directly for ~20 VIP sawyers/swampers (first priority) and then VIPs.

### **Sign Up Link:**

[https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Vj-ogkGWD5Xv5h3Xs\\_Et\\_JT7RbqtEeNbGVyC3ldpT8s/edit?usp=sharing](https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1Vj-ogkGWD5Xv5h3Xs_Et_JT7RbqtEeNbGVyC3ldpT8s/edit?usp=sharing)

### **Instructor Information:**

Andrea Luhman, Red Cross Instructor

Minnesota Wilderness First Aid

(Cell) 651-491-2402

email: [andrea\\_luhman@mac.com](mailto:andrea_luhman@mac.com)

website: [www.mnwildernessfirstaid.com](http://www.mnwildernessfirstaid.com)

## **BWCAW Trails Kickoff**

**Date:** Saturday, March 25, 2023

**Time:** 12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Location:** Camp Sacajawea Retreat Center, 5121 McAndrews Rd, Apple Valley, MN 55124

**Details:** We are invited to attend and participate in an event planned by the Boundary Waters Advisory Committee (BWAC) called the BWCAW Trail Alliance Kickoff. In past events, each BWCAW trail organization (BRTA, Kek, NCTA, and BWAC) have had the opportunity to present on their respective focus and plans for the upcoming year. Rod Markin, BWAC President, would like to add an opportunity for round table discussion on mutual issues across trail organizations, such as crew leader training, land manager relations, volunteer recruitment methods, etc. They've lined up a keynote speaker at the event - BJ Kohlstedt, former Emergency Management Director for Lake County. And they will be serving PIZZA. More info to come, but Felicia has RSVP'd for the BRTA. Would love to see others attend as well. Brian mentioned at past events that there has been room to set up a table to leave brochures and an interest sign up sheet. We've also donated trail guides, mapsets, and shirts for door prizes in the past.

## **Chainsaw & Crosscut Training**

**Date:** Saturday, April 22, 2023 (Chainsaw training) and Sunday, April 23, 2023 (Crosscut saw training) - these are two separate trainings and volunteers are not required to attend both days.

**Location:** Rum River Central Regional Park, 17955 Roanoke St NW, Ramsey, MN 55303

**Description:** Chainsaw and crosscut saw training in the Twin Cities area has been set! The training is currently open to NPS VIPs with SHTA, BRTA, and two NCTA chapters (ARW and KEK). Because seats are limited, depending on the number of individuals who sign up, I may reach out and ask you to prioritize those who are attending from your group.

**Prerequisites to attend training:**

1. Completion of the NPS VIP volunteer sign-up process. Information about the sign-up process can be found on NCTA's website: <https://northcountrytrail.org/volunteer/volunteer-resource-center/nps-vip-form/>. If you have any questions about the process, please reach out and I'm happy to walk you through it.
2. Completion of [Trail Safe!](#), an online self-paced safety training. At the bottom of the website, instructions are provided on how to receive credit by emailing [daniel\\_watson@nps.gov](mailto:daniel_watson@nps.gov).
3. Up-to-date first aid and CPR training. There must be an in-person component to the training, whether it's 100% in-person or blended (part online, part in-person.) [American Heart Association](#) and [American Red Cross](#) are the most recognized organizations for first aid and CPR training. When completed or if you are already certified, please email me a copy of your certificate.

**Sign Up Link:** <https://forms.office.com/g/EpayKVJsBf>

Deadline to Sign Up is February 6 - after that, remaining seats will open to other NPS VIPS on a first come, first served basis.

**Contact:**

Nicole Loiseau, Volunteer Program Manager

North Country National Scenic Trail, National Park Service

616-302-9842

**Midwest Mountaineering Spring Expo**

Save the Date: Friday, April 28, 2023 - Sunday, April 30, 2023

**Vote to Approve December Minutes-** voted on + approved

**Roundtable Reports**

- President - Felicia Hokenstad
  - [Board Member Contact Information Spreadsheet](#)
  - [Volunteer Contact Information Spreadsheet](#)
- Vice President - Brian Hanson

- Brian has the wilderness tools stored in his garage temporarily
- Treasurer - Deena Reisman
  - Deena sent a thank you card to the donor from TX who has a cabin near the BRT - they sent us a large donation last month
- Mechanized (Non Wilderness) Trail Director - Gary Carlson filling in
  - Gary is going through the tool trailer to get a better understanding of the repairs that are needed. He says we need to take the carpet out to see what the situation is with wood rot.
- Wilderness Trail Director - Chris Fothergill
  - Would like us to spend some time addressing the tool storage dilemma - the MN Rovers are looking for a new storage locker for tools and it's possible we could share a space with them and pitch in on the cost.
  - Google document about who sharpens our saws, lodge information, etc. What each board member is responsible for. Share the board member handbook out to the entire board.
- Equipment Coordinator - John Elliot
  - We have about 156 trail guides in stock, they've been selling okay on the website.
  - Follow up with the Forest Service to see if we can get our kiosk items back
    - John needs the list of things that were in the kiosk. The USFS found the NCT sign and a plaque and the plan going forward is to put stuff on the backside of that kiosk.
- Marketing Director - Pam Tavernier
- Directors at Large - Ed Solstad
  - Discussion on the potential reroute from Clearwater to Daniels

**Vote to Approve Treasurer's Report** - voted on + approved

### **Determine Future Meeting Date**

- Wednesday, February 22, 2023 at 7PM via Zoom - details can be found on our website - <https://www.borderroutetrail.org/events/february-board-meeting>