

OFFICIAL NOTICE AND AGENDA

of a meeting of the County Board, Committee, Agency,
Corporation or Sub-Unit thereof,

COUNTY OF MARATHON
WAUSAU, WI 54403

**MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION'S
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN SUB-COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

August 26, 2021
5:30 P.M.

LARGE CONFERENCE ROOM
210 RIVER DRIVE, WAUSAU, WI

Marathon County Mission Statement: *Marathon County Government serves people by leading, coordinating, and providing county, regional, and statewide initiatives. It directly or in cooperation with other public and private partners provides services and creates opportunities that make Marathon County and the surrounding area a preferred place to live, work, visit, and do business. (Last updated: 12-20-05)*

Commission Purpose: *The Commission shall be concerned with studies and recommendations relating to activities including but not limited to land-use; natural resources; utilities; and transportation systems within the metropolitan planning area. (Commission Bylaws last updated: 12-18)*

The meeting site identified above will be open to the public. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and associated public health directives, Wausau MPO encourages Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee members and the public to attend this meeting remotely. To this end, instead of attendance in person, Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee members and the public may attend this meeting by telephone conference. If Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee members or members of the public cannot attend remotely, Wausau MPO requests that appropriate safety measures, including adequate social distancing, be utilized by all in-person attendees.

Persons wishing to attend the meeting by phone may call into the telephone conference **beginning five (5) minutes prior to the start time indicated above using the following number:**

Phone: 1-408-418-9388

Access Code: 1463 11 5814

If you are prompted to provide an "Attendee Identification Number," enter the "#" sign. No other number is required to participate in the telephone conference.

When you enter the telephone conference, PLEASE PUT YOUR PHONE ON MUTE!

AGENDA ITEMS:

1. CALL TO ORDER
2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

POLICY DISCUSSION AND POSSIBLE ACTION:

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE JULY 29, 2021 MEETING
4. PRESENTATION FROM *BILL BERTRAM, IRONBULL*: BIG POINTATOWSKI TRAIL
5. BICYCLE MAP CHANGES AND UPDATES
6. MASTER PLAN UPDATE AND PLAN EXECUTION
7. BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY APPLICATION UPDATE
8. COMMUNITY UPDATES AND AREAS OF CONCERN

9. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDA
10. NEXT MEETING DATE – SEPTEMBER 23, 2021
11. ADJOURN

Any person planning to attend this meeting who needs some type of special accommodation in order to participate should call the County Clerk's Office at 715-261-1500 or e-mail infomarathon@mail.co.marathon.wi.us one business day before the meeting.

SIGNED



PRESIDING OFFICER OR DESIGNEE

EMAILED TO: Daily Herald; City Pages; Marshfield News

NOTICE POSTED AT COURTHOUSE:

EMAILED TO: Mid-west Radio Group; TPP Printing

EMAILED BY: BI

By: _____

EMAILED DATE: 08/20/2021 _____

Date: _____

EMAILED TIME: 12:30pm _____

Time: _____ a.m/p.m.

MARATHON COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING COMMISSION
Bicycle and Pedestrian Sub-Committee
Minutes – July 29, 2021

Members: John Nowaczyk, Chair, John Beatty, Tom Mullaly, Mark Thuot, Lori Hellrood, Allen Weslowski
Staff: Andrew Lynch

1. CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by Chairperson NOWACZYK at 5:33pm

2. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES OF JUNE 24 MEETING

Motion/second by THUOT/BEATTY to approve the meeting minutes from the June 24, 2021 meeting.
Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent.

4. PRESENTATION AND PUBLIC INPUT: STEWART AVE

Weslowski presented the initial design for the Stewart Ave road reconstruction. The project will be constructed in 2024. This project utilizes \$2.7 million in STBG funding. Initial public comment period ends July 30.

Motion/Second by BEATTY/MULLALY to recommend the 10' multi-use paved trail on the north side and paved shoulders. Motion passed, no dissent. Staff will forward to the project consultants.

5. REVIEW MASTER PLAN PUBLIC INPUT

There were 13 online and 3 email comments. All comments were provided in the packet with staff response where appropriate. Committee considered changes to the recommendations.

Motion/second by THUOT/BEATTY to accept all staff recommendations and add to #23 "...to utilize temporary physical delineators to educate road users on bike lanes." Also add project suggested by Rib Mountain to add wide shoulders to Azelea between Foxglove Road and the River Trail. Motion passed no dissent.

6. BICYCLE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY APPLICATION

LYNCH updated the group that the application was ongoing and there would be a better idea on completion at the next meeting.

7. COMMUNITY UPDATES AND FUTURE EVENTS

- a. **Village of Maine:** After years of correcting finances and infrastructure the Village is now in a position to begin working on quality of life and recreation improvements.

8. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

9. NEXT MEETING DATE – AUGUST 26, 2021

10. ADJOURN

Motion/second by HELLROOD/BEATTY to adjourn the meeting. Motion **carried** by voice vote, no dissent. Meeting Adjourned at 7:11 pm.

Submitted by:
David Mack
Program Manager/MPO Director
Marathon County
Conservation, Planning and Zoning/Wausau MPO



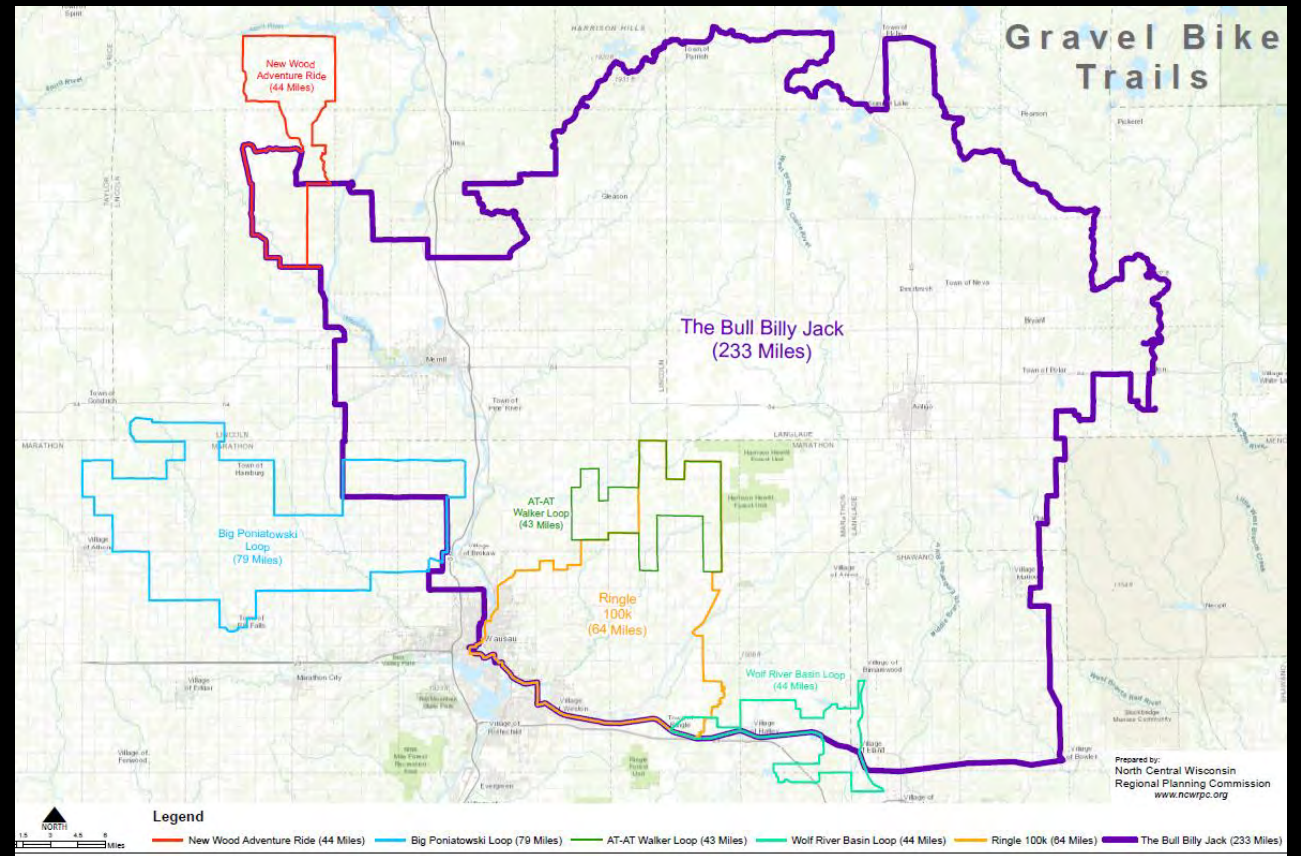
Marathon & Lincoln Counties Wisconsin

Premier Gravel Biking – Six Historical & Scenic Trails

Biking Paths - Wisconsin



The Midwest best gravel biking – Six historical trails that tell a story of America's Heartland



STRATEGIC ACTION PLAN

INITIATIVE 1.1 THE WAUSAU BRAND

Re-brand the Wausau region as an outdoor recreation mecca

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

1.1.1. Launch an Outdoor Recreation Task Force that brings together innovators in the region's outdoor recreation industry to discuss opportunities for new events, destinations, and other business opportunities that leverage the region's large menu of outdoor amenities.

1.1.2. Support Granite Peak Ski Area in its expansion projects. Encourage the growth of the resort and expansion of its facilities. Partner with the Ski Area to explore development of surrounding properties with supportive uses (lodging, housing, retail/restaurants) that draw a higher volume of visitors into the region and encourage them to stay longer. Explore opportunities to develop a full-service resort hotel in conjunction with Granite Peak.

1.1.3. Invest in the enhancement and development of extreme sports, outdoor recreation, and related attractions throughout Marathon County. This includes curling, whitewater rafting, hiking and biking trails, and other amenities that attract outdoor sports enthusiasts.

1.1.4. Build awareness of the Wausau region as a destination for the business side of extreme sports and outdoor recreation.

1.1.5. Take ownership of the Wausau region's online and social media presence and play an influential role in traditional media channels. Actively manage and update the City of Wausau and Marathon County websites and other online content, such as Wikipedia, to ensure they include accurate and positive information. These sites are often the first (and sometimes only) source of information people use to learn about a community before a potential visit.





INITIATIVE 1.2 TARGETED TALENT RECRUITMENT

Launch a new talent attraction initiative to support employers in their talent recruitment efforts.

STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

1.2.1. Develop a comprehensive new talent attraction website to market the Wausau region as a desirable destination not only for traditional manufacturing employment, but also for creative workers, entrepreneurs, and professionals. Use the new website as the central information hub for a broader talent attraction campaign. Develop an omni-channel talent recruitment campaign aimed at filling the hiring needs of Marathon County's major employers. Design the campaign with a comprehensive suite of services including media planning, public relations, social media strategy, content creation, creative development, digital management and production, branding, and a job-posting microsite.

1.2.2. Embrace the local Hmong population and explore linkages to St. Paul, MN (an important population center for the Hmong nationally). Work with the Hmong Wisconsin Chamber of Commerce to promote the Wausau region as a leading destination for Hmong business owners and professionals. Market Wisconsin and Marathon County as a Hmong-friendly location to Hmong talent located in other parts of the US and globally.

1.2.3. Promote the Wausau region as a hub for extreme sports and outdoor recreation enthusiasts. The year-round recreational options of the region represent a unique value proposition. The Outdoor Recreation roundtable held in December 2018 revealed specific opportunities that advance this goal. The roundtable identified three specific opportunities that warrant further examination:

- Events (IRONBULL and Xtreme sports generally), mountain bike racing and cross-country riding, downhill ski competitions, whitewater kayaking, cross-country skiing expansion
- Conferences associated with the events that advance outdoor recreation
- Recruitment of niche industries associated with sports and recreation technology

RIB MOUNTAIN STATE PARK AND THE SURROUNDING REGION

A property and regional analysis providing background information
for the revision of the Rib Mountain State Park master plan



CONTENTS:

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The existing master plan and the modification process	2
The role of this document	4
Information about the property	5
Introduction	5
Recreation opportunities and facilities	7
Natural resources	11
Cultural resources	14
Challenges in managing the property	15

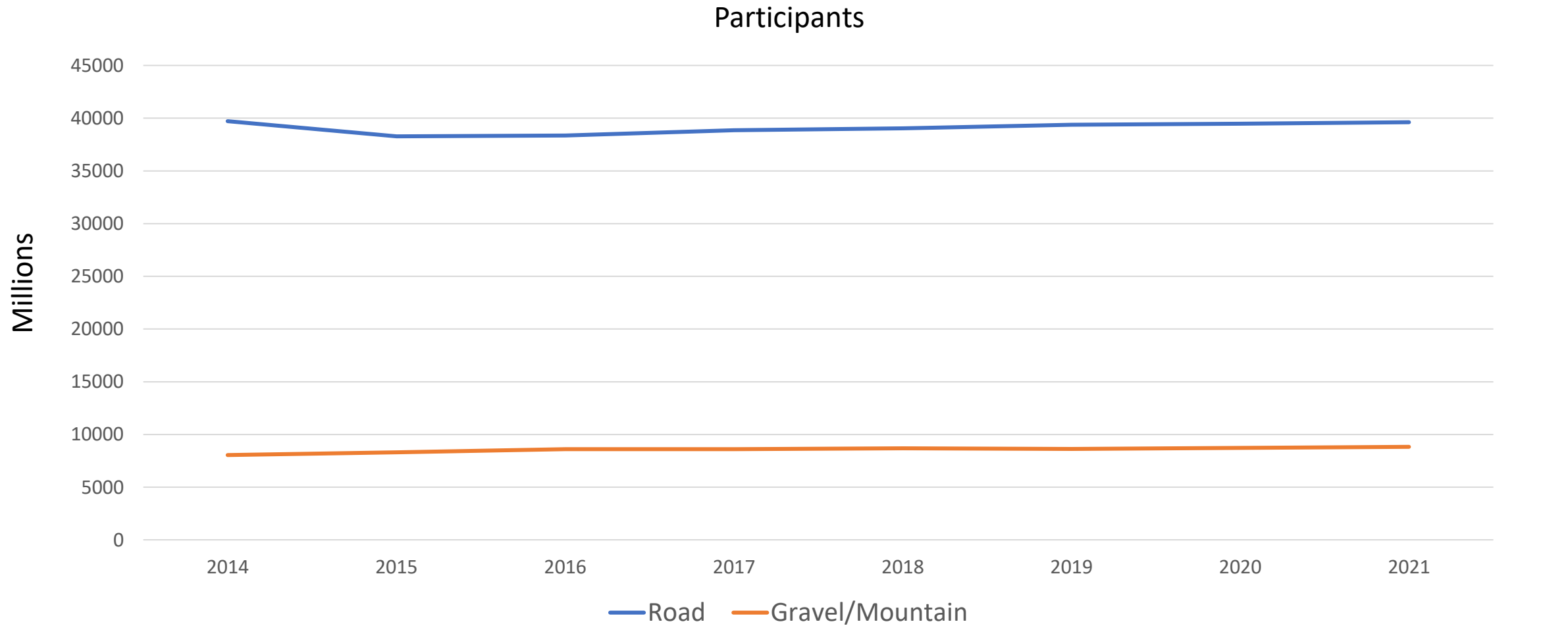
Rib Mountain Master Plan

- Gravel roads build on the proposed changes to the Master Plan of enhanced biking and connectivity of Nine-Mile Forest to Rib Mountain
- Potential expansion of Rib Mountain impacts visitation as a year around destination, increase could be as great as 148,000 in winter and 122,000 in summer. 3rd most popular state park in '20, 640K people came to Rib in '20, up from 418K in '19, 53% increase
- Premier outdoor recreation destination
- Potential IMBA Mountain Biking Ride Center
- One of twelve communities the Department of Tourism is focusing on in 2021
- Outdoor races attract athletic enthusiasts like a magnet

Why Do?

- The gravel trails would complement the Mountain-Bay Bike trail making Marathon County a destination for off-road gravel riding
- In addition to the focus on health, the trail system would tell the history of our county and a way of life
- Complements and builds upon CWOCC and the growing mountain biking community and infrastructure we have in Central Wisconsin
- Complements Chamber's Master Plan for outdoor recreation
- Gravel riding is one of the fastest growing segments of off-road biking
- Connectivity of trails would open our county and parks to tourism
- Brokaw Hills to the north add a distinct element to biking that few trails in the state could offer
- 4th busiest intersection in the state 29/39 exchange with over 4 million vehicles a year passing through Wausau and Marathon County
- Wausau is easy to get to and just a 4-hour drive from Chicago and 3-hour drive from Milwaukee
- Ties into Granite Peak with the ability to co-market the trail

Biking Data



Regression Analysis calculated 2020 & 2021 datapoints in that data is not available for 2020 yet

Shortly after stay-at-home advisories were announced in the U.S., the cycling industry gained momentum from new cyclists. Number 1 category in outdoor recreation sales!

+63%

Dollar sales of bicycles increased 63% in June 2020
versus the same time last year.

\$697M

Bicycle sales reached \$697M in June 2020.

Data Points

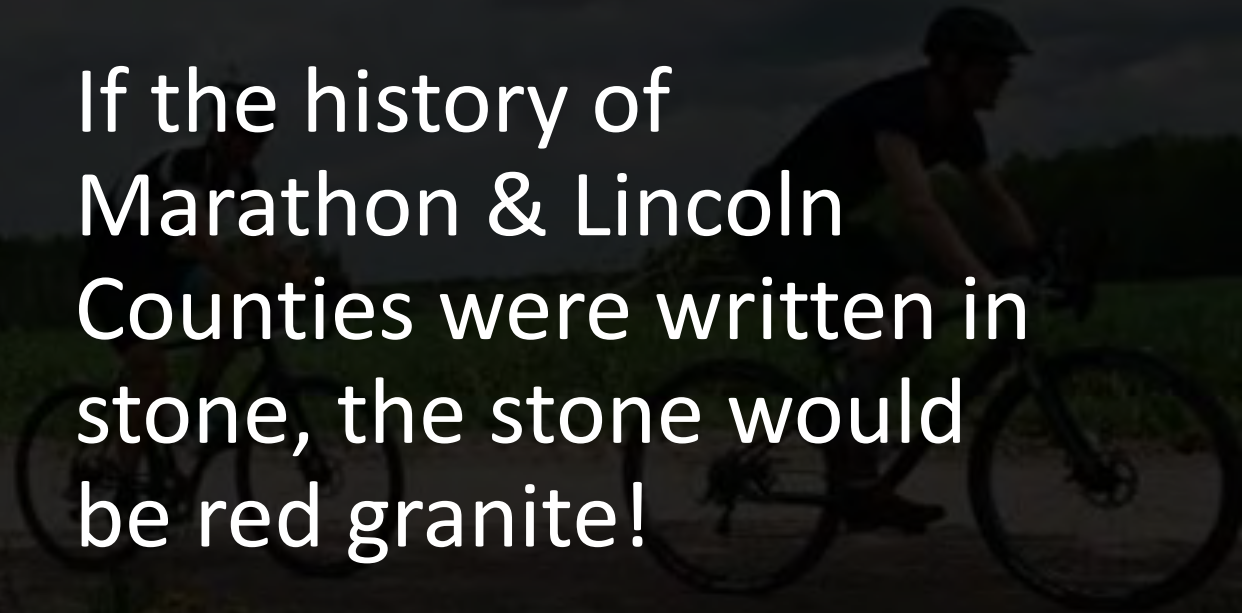
- Gravel riding—or all-road, or mixed terrain —is basically drop-bar cycling for anyone who doesn't discriminate between pavement and dirt. And it is growing fast. In 2017, while the number of bikes shipped in the United States fell by 4 percent from the previous year, including losses for traditional mountain and road models, shipments of gravel bikes continued to grow, adding \$26.9 million of new business—more than any other category.
- A convergence of factors has fueled gravel's growing popularity. For one, interest in road riding is waning.
- The Four Cs of gravel riding - Courses, Community, Camaraderie and Challenge
- Need convenient overnight and weekend parking in the downtown with possibility of tent camping for bikers in Marathon park
- Add tent camping to county parks where gravel trails cross
- Need to determine if the paths join at a point or are stand alone
- Once established reach out to Portage County for connectivity

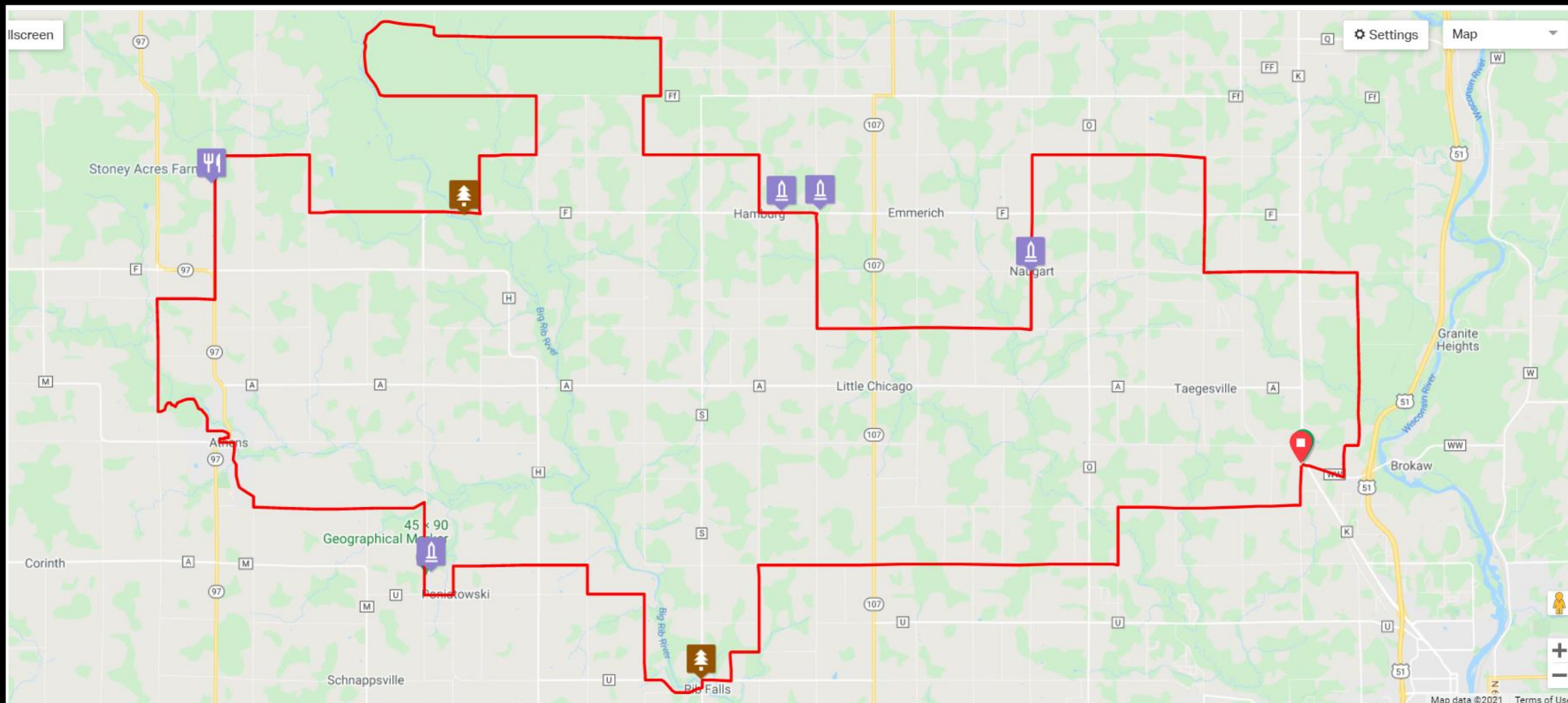


Red Granite Bike Trails



If the history of
Marathon & Lincoln
Counties were written in
stone, the stone would
be red granite!





Big Poniatowski Trail

Major Starts & Stops

- Village of Athens – Trail Signage, Bike Repair & Air Station
- Amco Park County Park – Trail Signage & Air Station
- Town of Berlin – Trail Signage & Air Station
- Village of Maine – Trail Signage & Bike Repair & Air Station
- Rib Falls County Park – Trail Signage & Air Station



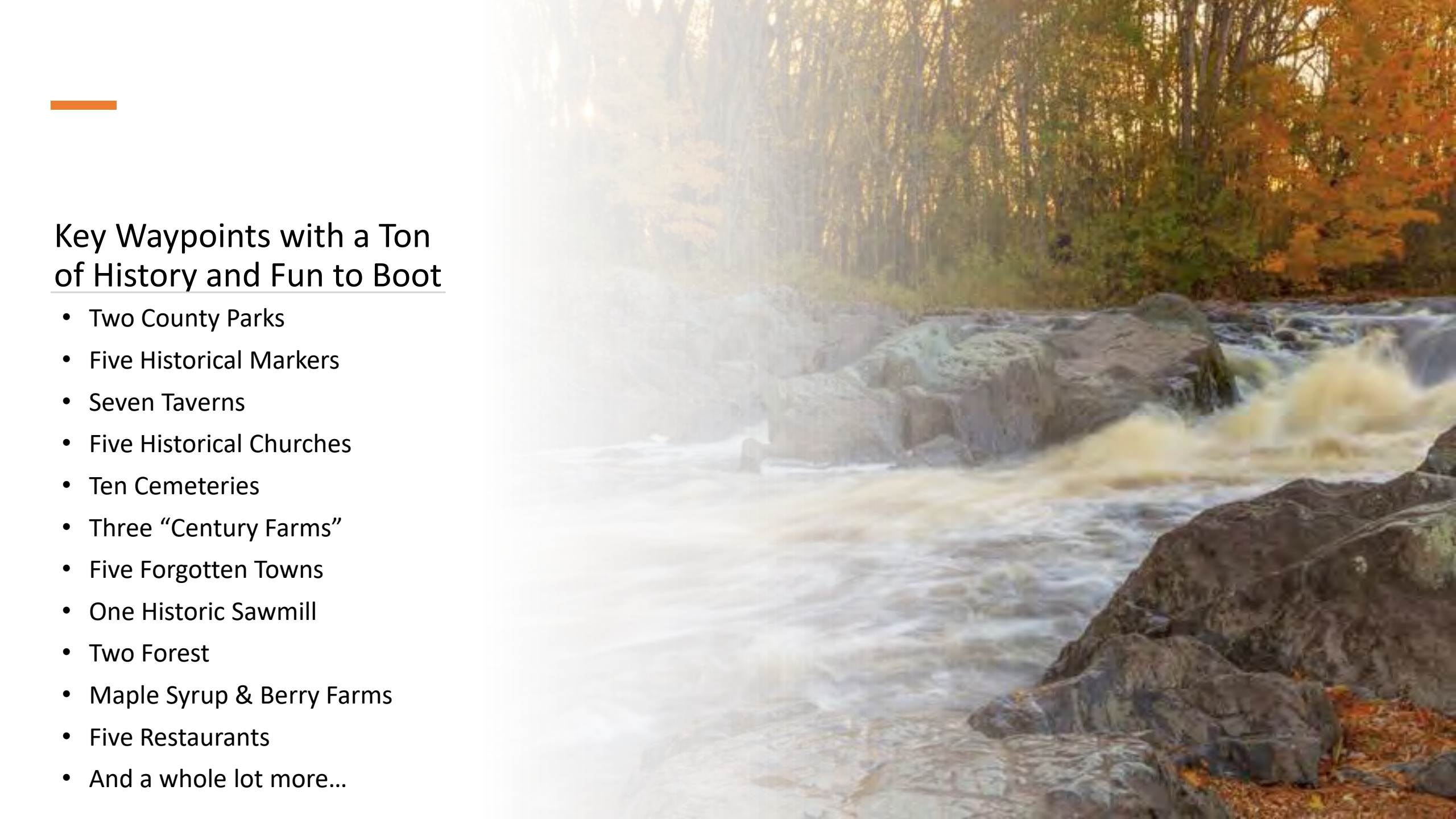

Athens

WI

Lion's Shelter

- Parking
- Amenities
- Signage
- Restrooms
- Bike Racks
- Bike Repair & Air Station





Key Waypoints with a Ton of History and Fun to Boot

- Two County Parks
- Five Historical Markers
- Seven Taverns
- Five Historical Churches
- Ten Cemeteries
- Three “Century Farms”
- Five Forgotten Towns
- One Historic Sawmill
- Two Forest
- Maple Syrup & Berry Farms
- Five Restaurants
- And a whole lot more...

Amenities

- Signage with trail map @ Merrill, Rib Falls County Park, Athens Gazebo, Berlin Town Hall & Amco County Park along with history
- Bike Repair & Air Station @ Merrill & Athens
- Air stations at Rib Falls County Park, Amco County Park, and Berlin Town Hall
- Four position bike racks @ Merrill, Rib Falls County Park, Geographic Marker, Athens Gazebo, and Amco County Park
- Would make available bike racks to other businesses to keep consistency



Draft August 2021



0 0.5 1 2 Miles

Bike Facilities

- Paved Path
- Bike Lane
- Paved Shoulder
- Bike Routes
- Mountain Bay Trail



Mountain Biking



Bicycle Repair Facility



Fix Stations



Parks

