



Anderson
Bluffs &
River Trails

FOUNDATION



Tamarack Two-Track Extended

BY LEIGHTON NAFF

The Foundation is pleased to announce the addition of the newly completed extension of the Tamarack Two-Track Trail to the ABR trail system. The Tamarack Trail is part of an important 57-acre acquisition recently purchased along the Montreal River. It will provide an important link between the northern and southern trail systems. The Trail will offer skiers a scenic trail that parallels the Montreal River.

As soon as the property purchase was complete consideration for the best possible trail site began. Numerous visits to the property identified the new and gentle route which will run along a high piece of ground with wonderful scenic views. This summer construction of Tamarack Trail began and was completed ahead of schedule in August.

ABR skiers will be excited to experience this addition to our world-class trail system! Congratulations and thank you to all who were involved in the purchase and construction of the Tamarack Trail addition.

Upcoming Events
(check out websites and Facebook for details and updates):

- January 20, 2024 MECCA Trails Winterfest (virtual options all winter)
- February 3-25, 2024 Wolverine Winter Challenge



Transition Update

The Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation (ABR) started in 2019 to sustain ABR's legacy for generations to come. Four years later the nonprofit Foundation is amidst an operational restructuring to become effective April 1, 2025. Much of the transitional activity is focused on knowledge transfer from Angela and Eric. Let us update you on some of the transition activities.

The Foundation formed a recruiting committee to hire the key position of Operations Manager. This person will shadow Eric and Angela over the 2024-2025 ski season. Over 15 applicants have come forward from locations ranging from Alaska to Massachusetts. The interviews thus far have been impressive revealing the diversity of skills and relevant experiences. We are optimistic about the future.

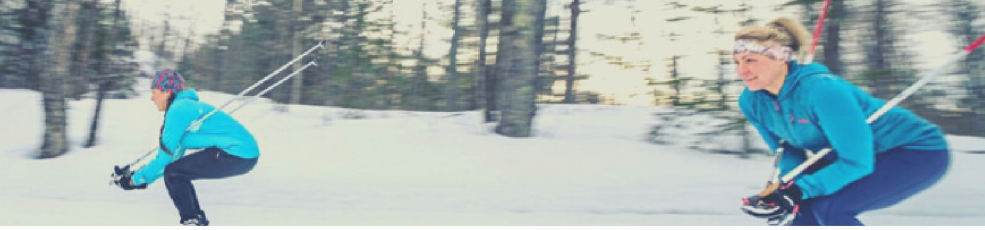
Here is a website link for further information. <https://andersonbluffsrivertrailsfoundation.org/>

The Board established Functional Leads to focus on knowledge transfer from Angela and Eric. Leads have been shadowing Angela's team to learn how to order merchandise, take inventory and conduct sales. A volunteer team helped Angela prepare the rustic cabins this year to understand the process. The Functional Lead for infrastructure has been busy with Eric this summer reviewing utility systems in the various buildings that will be donated in 2025. The team has also been reviewing the critical spare parts for the PistenBully, snowmobiles, grooming implements and buildings. Financial reserve accounts have been started to ensure spare parts are available to sustain the grooming magic. A capital project to raise funding for the next PistenBully was started to enable the Foundation to be ready to replace the donated PB in the future. Eric and Angela have always believed that mechanically sound grooming equipment is key to the success of the operation. Eric's team will continue maintaining the existing PB. Here is a website link for reference. <https://andersonbluffsrivertrailsfoundation.org/projects-new/>

The Functional Lead for land and trails has begun drafting a Trail & Land Use Strategy for release in 2024. Small group meetings have started with trail neighbors to ensure they are informed on the Foundations intent to renew leases and to address any concerns. The Board also formed an Executive Advisory Panel. They will be presented with new business opportunities and services, review strategies and high-level plans and generally provide the Foundation leadership recommendations. The talented panel is made up of diverse experiences in the Nordic skiing industry, business owners and entrepreneurs, top financial professionals, university staff and consultants as well as a doctor and lawyer.

A workshop was conducted this year to evaluate the Foundation's future risks. Eric was very helpful in sharing his experiences. The Board brainstormed other risks, probabilities and discussed potential consequences. This was a beneficial knowledge transfer in discussing mitigations and prevention measures. Detailed budgets for the future have been completed and reviewed by the Board. These plans address staffing, equipment, and infrastructure intended to maintain the existing level of meticulous grooming, customer service, and other ABR offerings Budget plans also address ways to grow and expand your experience here. We look forward to sharing our future visions with you!

As with many successful & sustainable businesses, there comes paperwork. The Board has established governance documents for everything from Finances, Land Use, Philanthropy, and various policies to preparing the Rustic Cabins prior to ski season. Our goal is to ensure that your experience here satisfies or exceeds your expectations for generations to come. Lastly, the Foundation has had an outpouring of volunteers during this period. We are still looking for volunteers with skills in event planning, marketing, accounting, graphic design and others. Contact us at AndersonFoundation13@gmail.com if you would like to get behind the vision.



Vice President's Message

WILL ANDRESEN

I remember driving to the local sports shop in Eau Claire, Wisconsin to pick up my dad's specially ordered cross-country skis. And I remember the store's clerks gathering around to inspect those strange new things. And then hearing my dad's stories of skiing back and forth in a neighborhood park, of course all alone since nobody else owned those strange kinds of skis. A year later he lined those skis up to the starting line of the first American Birkebeiner, as my mom drove me and my brother to the start of the inaugural Korteloppet. Something sparked in me during those early days of the sport, as I got into high school and college racing, always starting with the season-opener at Wolverine Ski Trails in Ironwood, Michigan. A decade later, I jumped at the chance to move my family to Ironwood, assuming it was a true bastion of cross-country skiing. I couldn't have been more wrong. Like my dad 20 years ago, I found myself lonely setting my own tracks in a neighborhood cemetery. Then the father-son duo of Dave and Eric Anderson opened ABR. And Wolverine re-energized. Then everything changed. Skiers returned to Ironwood. And bought houses and started businesses. Young people returned home, and started families. No more lonely cemetery skiing for me. But more importantly, ABR helped to revitalize the region's economy. It's no coincidence that the only municipality showing population growth in the Western Upper Peninsula is Erwin Township, the proud home of ABR. ABR will always hold a special place for me. I skied with my dad on the last ski of his life on Cherry Dairy. And a year later I skied with my grand-daughter on the first ski of her life on the same trail. But she will never need to break her own trails, or ski alone. Thanks to the generous gift of Eric and Angela – and to your support – the impact and legacy of ABR will continue for generations to come.

The Gratitude Reciprocity Loop

AN IPAD KIOSK PROJECT

The Anderson Bluffs & River Trails Foundation is finding more and more supporters that are caught up in the Gratitude Reciprocity Loop, a Native American teaching that describes an abundant worldview. Eric and Angela's "gift of a lifetime's work" has inspired others, through gratitude for their gift, to selflessly give as well. The Foundation continually experiences reciprocated gratitude when others donate time, talent, and treasure to the advancement of our mission. The joy of selfless giving is inherent in each of us. It may be that each of us is endowed with an "altruism gene" that predisposes us to care for someone else.

Greg Masek and Julie Greenburg are a wonderful example of the Gratitude Reciprocity Loop. Eric's brother, Scott, and his wife Marlene met Julie and Greg in Texas. As their friendship grew, Scott and Marlene shared Eric and Angela's plan to give the Nordic ski business, ABR Ski Inc., to the non-profit Foundation. Over the last two years, Julie put her professional skills to work by volunteering and helping with philanthropy and marketing. This summer, Greg and Julie decided to travel with another couple to see ABR in person. After several meetings with Eric and Angela and other Board members to hear the transition plans, they quickly recognized the magnitude of Eric and Angela's gift that is being passed on to the community. In October, reciprocating their gratitude for Eric and Angela's gift, Julie and Greg were inspired to donate three new iPads to the Foundation. (left to right Julie Greenburg, Scott Anderson, Greg Masek)

This generous donation supports the new iPad kiosk project in the warming cabin so skiers can learn more and stay updated on the Foundation. The Foundation is sincerely thankful to Julie and Greg for their commitment to our long-term vision. The Foundation continues to appreciate the kindness of friends and supporters that are demonstrating the power of the Gratitude Reciprocity Loop!





Project CONNECT #8 Completed

HISTORIC TRAIL IN MANY WAYS

The Anderson Bluffs and River Trail Foundation (ABR) is pleased to announce the completion of the Historic Trail. This extension reaffirms our commitment to serve the community. ABR established Project Connect as a means to focus our community commitment as we move forward to make ABR the Midwest's premier Nordic ski destination.

ABR recently completed Project Connect #8 which extends Deer Trail east to the historic site of JK Jackson Farm and then to the site of Erwin's Historic Museum. The trail continues east through a short, wooded loop passing through Eric's great-great Grandfather Korkiamaki's property. The wooded trail contains a memorial bench dedicated to Dave Anderson, co-founder of ABR, who passed away in 2022. The Anderson family connection to this trail is extremely important to Eric and the entire family and will remain a source of family pride for years to come.

The trail extension was made possible by a collaboration with the Erwin Township Historic Society. Their dedication and assistance are greatly appreciated. ABR, Inc. generously made in-kind contributions.



CABIN STORIES

A perspective on Rock Fence Cabin from the ABR Season Pass Holder Coleen Sullins. Her claim to fame at ABR is being the season pass holder from furthest away -North Carolina!

"I am not sure the year it happened, but I had been hearing about the pleasures of cross-country skiing at ABR for years from my brother Scott (Hervey) and Ruth (Hampton). The stories about how great the snow was, how much fun the trails were, the joys of cabin life, the people stories were all a draw for me. One year, I asked why I hadn't been invited to join in the fun and was told that the invitation had been extended the previous year, the mistake was mine in not recognizing the invitation. Thus began my annual pilgrimage to Ironwood and ABR from North Carolina. Now not only do I have an annual pass, I can't imagine the beginning of a year without an opportunity to travel to ABR's winter wonderland to play that dance with snow and gravity in the woods that is cross-country skiing. For me, the adventure starts with the meal planning and preparing. We have chosen to stay in the Rock Fence Cabin, with no electricity. But lest anyone think we are roughing it, our meals have included things such as hearty stews, rice pudding, homemade tortillas, stuffed porkchops, cranberry salad, chutney, and cornbread. With the outdoors as an available freezer (coolers in the cars acting as our freezer, coolers at the cabin as our refrigerator), we have many options and exploring and planning the meals is a fun way to prepare for the trip. We eat well and enjoy the slow rhythm of the days. After a good breakfast, when a slow leisurely start to the day has involved watching the Pisten Bully groom the trails out past the cabin and the other earlier skiers that have zipped past, we head out to ski. We all return to the cabin for a warm lunch and tall tales of adventures (porcupines, ruffed grouse, rabbits, moose tracks, and more). Afternoons may involve relaxing, a second round of skiing or snowshoeing. What a great way to spend the day. There is something so rewarding about a day out in the woods, competing with yourself to the rhythm of your skis, the challenge of the climbs, the joy of the descents, the gliding strides and at the end of the day, the tiredness of a day well spent. Add in the pleasure of the company around the table and a sauna rounding out the day, and it is hard to find a better way to spend time. People at home (Raleigh, NC) ask me what draws me to the cold and snow. I will say that there is nothing like the silence of a beautiful, snowy day out on the trails in the woods. Whether it is a blue bird sky or a cloudy day with snow drifting down, the trails are amazing and the beauty is sublime. The exhilaration, challenge and fun of cross country skiing at ABR makes for a memorable time well spent with good friends and family.

Peek in a Rustic Cabin

TAMARACK CABIN

Ski on down the River Trail and it will lead you to this cozy cabin. Nestled in the woods near snowshoe and ski trails Tamarack is a great choice for a ABR cabin stay. Brian Murphy, Foundation volunteer on the Philanthropy Committee, has a special love for this cabin. In his words - Tamarack is a cozy retreat in the middle of a winter paradise. It's not for everyone, for sure, but for us it's perfect. It takes an effort to get there. We bring our food and gear on sleds from the parking lot. After a day of skiing, we snowshoe to the sauna at the trailhead. We then warm up some chili or soup and settle in for a night of games and reading. A long winter's nap follows. In the morning, coffee and oatmeal are prepared to sustain us for the day. Rinse and repeat. It's magical. Karen and I love the Tamarack cabin so much we wanted to know the meaning of the word Tamarack. We knew it was a tree, but we learned from the Adirondack Almanac that "word tamarack is the Algonquian name for the species and means 'wood used for snowshoes.'" We found this to be providential as Karen and I met while taking a snowshoeing course in suburban Chicago. We decided right then and there to name our new home in Southwest Michigan, Tamarack. We think of ABR every day!

