

Stone Valley Cooperative Recreation Area (SVCRA)

Project Description

The Stone Valley partners request that proposed work on land within the SVCRA boundaries be reported to them for discussion and suggestions before pursuing acceptance from the relevant property owner(s).

1. Submission Date: January 23, 2014
2. Name of project: Stone Valley (SV) Whitewater Area Access Improvements
3. Description of location: north and south end of SV trails along river
photos/maps attached—draft final design dated June 28, 2013
property owner(s)—Most improvements are on property owned by Brookfield Renewable Energy and the Town of Colton; however proposed directional signs also will be on state, county and town routes
4. Contact Person(Name): Fred Hanss (grant coordinator)

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5. Person completing this form (if different from above): Ruth McWilliams for Town of Colton, Mary Jane Watson for RRBC partners
6. Short Description of proposed project: (as outlined in grant documents)

COMPONENT 2: STONE VALLEY WHITEWATER AREA ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

The project partners will design and construct a number of trail side facilities to meet the needs of recreational paddlers and whitewater enthusiasts utilizing the Stone Valley whitewater area on the Raquette River in the hamlet of Colton. Proposed improvements include:

- Construction of an ADA-compliant parking and scenic overlook on the North end of Riverside Drive;
- Development of ADA-compliant restroom facilities and changing rooms [*note...location for paddler facility now proposed to be part of a recently purchased building at 90 Main Street yet to be demolished, designed and constructed by the Town of Colton rather than in the Colton Volunteer Fire Station on Riverside Drive*];

- Installation of directional signage on State Highway 56 directing travelers to the Stone Valley parking area and trail heads and informational signage and kiosks at trail heads directing paddlers changing and restroom facilities and viewing locations.
7. Estimated starting date: grant awarded in 2011 / first planning meeting held in September 2012
8. Estimated completion date: December 2015
9. Materials to be used (wood, metal, stone, etc.): overlook—wood (pressure treated pine) and related construction materials; restroom/changing area— proposed to be off-site but nearby in a new multi-purpose community building to be designed and constructed; kiosks & signage—wood (pressure treated pine) and metal; parking area—crushed stone and blacktop
10. Description of signage to be installed (per SVCRA sign guidelines, see Management Agreement Appendix 11):
- Planned signage includes the following:
- ✓ Main entrance sign / kiosk at trailhead on southeast end of trail system (off parking area)
 - ✓ Three additional trailhead kiosks (modeled after prototype kiosk at Main Street & SH56) - southwest, northeast, northwest ends of trail system
 - ✓ Interpretive signs (modeled after Potsdam done within last 5 years)—ten *[note...will include maps, historic locations, geological features, land use rules (including information on St. Lawrence County pilot ATV trail on northeast end), safety and emergency messages, Leave No Trace guidance, information about invasive species plus QR codes and partner logos]*
 - ✓ Directional signs on main access roads *[note...these are off-site along state highways, county routes, town roads]*
11. Equipment required to complete (especially machines, power tools): Project team will coordinate with Brookfield Renewable Energy staff who will be doing on-site work
12. Estimated cost of project: Total = \$163,029 (signage = \$81,037; overlook = \$32,600; paddler facility (off-site) = \$49,392) plus in-kind from Brookfield, Town of Colton, Adirondack Mountain Club / Laurentian Chapter

Source of funding or supplies: New York State Department of State Local Waterfront Revitalization Program (LWRP) grant (awarded in 2011)

13. Organization of the work (coordination, reporting structure, safety/risk management):

Coordination:

- ✓ For grant—Fred Hanss (with assistance from Mary Jane Watson)
- ✓ For Brookfield—Matthew Johnson
- ✓ For Town of Colton—Dennis Bulger and Ruth McWilliams

Reporting structure: Whitewater Parks Project Advisory Committee

Safety/risk management: SVCRA partners

14. Sustainability, or expected life use of project: 20 years

Estimated annual maintenance requirements and associated cost: Project team will discuss with Brookfield staff and other partners

Monitoring and maintenance responsibility: Brookfield Renewable Energy (with help from ADK / Laurentian Chapter and possibly other management partners and user groups) plus Town of Colton (Code Enforcement, etc.), NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and other state agencies as needed

Equipment and supplies needed to maintain: To be determined by Brookfield staff and others

15. Anticipated Impacts of Project on Management Goals of Agreement (check all that apply)

- XXX Healthy and abundant natural resources for timber, hydropower, and recreation
- XXX Public has access for allowed activities
- XXX High scenic values of forested landscape and river flow
- XXX Harmony among users and owners
- XXX Biological diversity, with emphasis on native species
- XXX Interpretation and protection of geologic and historic features

Elaborate on each impact checked above:

- Proposed signage at the four trailheads and along the trails in the SVCRA should improve visitor knowledge about and appreciation for the natural resources, scenic values and biological diversity found in the area. The greater under-

- standing hopefully will promote a deeper desire to care for the area by following the Leave No Trace principles supported by the SVCRA partners.
- Also planned interpretive signs about the geology and history of the area should create learning opportunities for students at all levels or in any stage of life who visit Stone Valley for more than recreational reasons.
 - The planned improvements should create greater harmony among users and owners in several ways. The proposed overlook should help reduce concerns about (and improve safety for) people with disabilities using steep and uneven sections of the trail to see waterfalls and whitewater kayakers. Signage should make it clearer to all about allowable uses of the trails and area for outdoor activities. And the restroom/changing facility should create a more hospitable situation for homeowners, paddlers, spectators and all who live near, do business near, or recreate in the area.

16. Management Objectives of Agreement addressed by Project (check those that apply):

- XXX Enhance public information about SVCRA
- XXX Maintain / improve access to SVCRA and related spaces
- XXX Minimize/reduce and mitigate human impact
- XXX Increase public awareness of land use ethics and rules
- XXX Enhance public safety
- XXX Deal with invasive plants
- ___ Gather and report user statistics [*note...to be done by Brookfield with management part
ners and possibly others*]
- XXX Promote tourism

Elaborate on each objective checked above:

- The proposed improvements directly relate to all management objectives except gathering and reporting user statistics; however there may be ways the planned changes also could improve knowledge about users (e.g., people visiting the bathroom/changing facility, etc.).
- The combination of planned signs (trailhead, interpretive, safety, directional), in particular, should enhance public information about the area, how to access and how to use it.
- Also the signs should create greater knowledge about and hopefully greater respect for natural resources, including undesired invasives and what to do or not to do about them.

- Altogether the improvements also should promote more informed use of the area by visitors as well as residents, many of whom know very little about Stone Valley at this time.

17. Anticipated Impacts of project during and after construction on Socioeconomic Characteristics of the Area (check all that apply)

- XXX Provision of emergency services
- XXX Persons with disabilities, minorities, or elderly
- ___ Local tax base
- XXX Adjacent land use (outside SVCRA)

Elaborate on each category checked above:

- Planned signage will include safety messages for hikers, paddlers and other users which complement information available on whitewater release days for kayakers and spectators. This also complements other planned emergency services including swift water training and rescue procedures.
- The ADA-compliant parking area and scenic overlook near the main trailhead on the east side of the river at the end of Riverside Drive in the hamlet of Colton should promote outdoor enjoyment by people with disabilities.
- Signage and the nearby bathroom/changing facility should create greater harmony with nearby homeowners and businesses. And the improved parking areas at and near the main trailhead coupled with signs should alleviate many parking issues.

18. Anticipated Impacts of project during and after construction on Natural Resources of the Area (check all that apply)

- XXX Soil
- XXX Vegetation, trees
- XXX Streams, rivers
- ___ Groundwater aquifers
- XXX Runoff or runoff patterns
- XXX Wetlands
- XXX Fish and wildlife
- XXX Significant habitat areas
- XXX Rare, threatened or endangered species

Elaborate on each category checked above:

- Proposed signage at the four trailheads and along the trails in the SVCRA should improve visitor knowledge about and appreciation for the range of natural resources in the area. Use will need to be monitored to help ensure the area or

specific parts of the area are not over used and the natural resources loved too much. Signs will include the Leave No Trace principles promoted by the SVCRA partners.

- The nearby bathroom facility should promote a more hospitable situation with users of the area having options other than the woods to relieve themselves.
- Improved signage about parking and improved parking areas should help protect soils, vegetation and other natural resources; however the situation will have to be monitored for noncompliance and over use.

19. Anticipated Impacts of project during and after construction on Cultural or Historical Characteristics of the Area

XXX Cultural or historical features

Elaborate on impacts:

- Planned interpretive signs about local history and important sites (e.g., tannery ruins) along the trails should create a greater appreciation for the significance of the area over time; however use will have to be monitored for changes to historic sites and/or the development of social paths off the main trails.

20. Anticipated Impacts of project during and after construction on Pollution Potential of the Area (check all that apply)

XXX Potential for hazardous wastes

___ Effects from solid waste

XXX Noise impact

___ Air quality

XXX Traffic patterns and safety

Elaborate on each category checked:

- The combination of planned improvements (e.g., signage, parking, bathroom) should help minimize hazardous waste situations plus improve traffic patterns and safety.
- The river has a lot of noise associated with it already due to the waterfalls and rapids; however the noise impact of users on nearby homeowners needs to be monitored over time.

Submission of this form to the Stone Valley partners is for coordination only and does not constitute an approval process. Applicants still must acquire written permission of the property owner(s).