



From the desk of the Executive Director

by Erlene Yentes

Hi Everyone!

Hope you enjoyed the summer and you're looking forward to a wonderful holiday season. Included in this issue are some highlights. This summer was great for Syracuse-Wawasee Trails. On July 17, 2021, we had our 10th annual Tour des Lakes Event. It was a record year for us with 454 registrations and 398 attendees. We even had one cyclist that had participated in all 10 years!

On July 29th, we had our first "Life Is Better On The Trail" event at Blue Barn Berry Farm & Event Center. We had 100 in attendance who received updates regarding our feasibility study. At that event, we announced new annual giving levels: Summit for \$5,000, Footprint for \$2,500, Blazer for \$1,000, Trailhead for \$500 and Grass Roots for \$100. This will be an annual event and hope you are able to join us next year on August 4th.

The trail office moved on September 25th and our new location is at 813 S. Huntington Street in Syracuse. Please feel free to stop in, say hi and gain insight on our trail plans.

Our feasibility study kicked off on March 29th and took six months to complete. We partnered with USI Consultant to conduct these studies. The report provides us with insight on where to go next and provides data that we can use for future trail sections. We received our report on October 18th. It is a huge report, and we are working on condensing the report making it easier to read and have future conversations. The report will be available on our website in the near future. Copies will also be available at the Trail Office, Syracuse Library and Community Center. The objectives of the feasibility study were to:

1. Evaluate options for expansion and connection of existing trail system

including future regional trail connections.

2. Expand connectivity to neighborhoods, schools, parks and businesses.
3. Provide safe routes for people to explore our most iconic natural resource — Lake Wawasee.
4. Look at future connections to other communities.



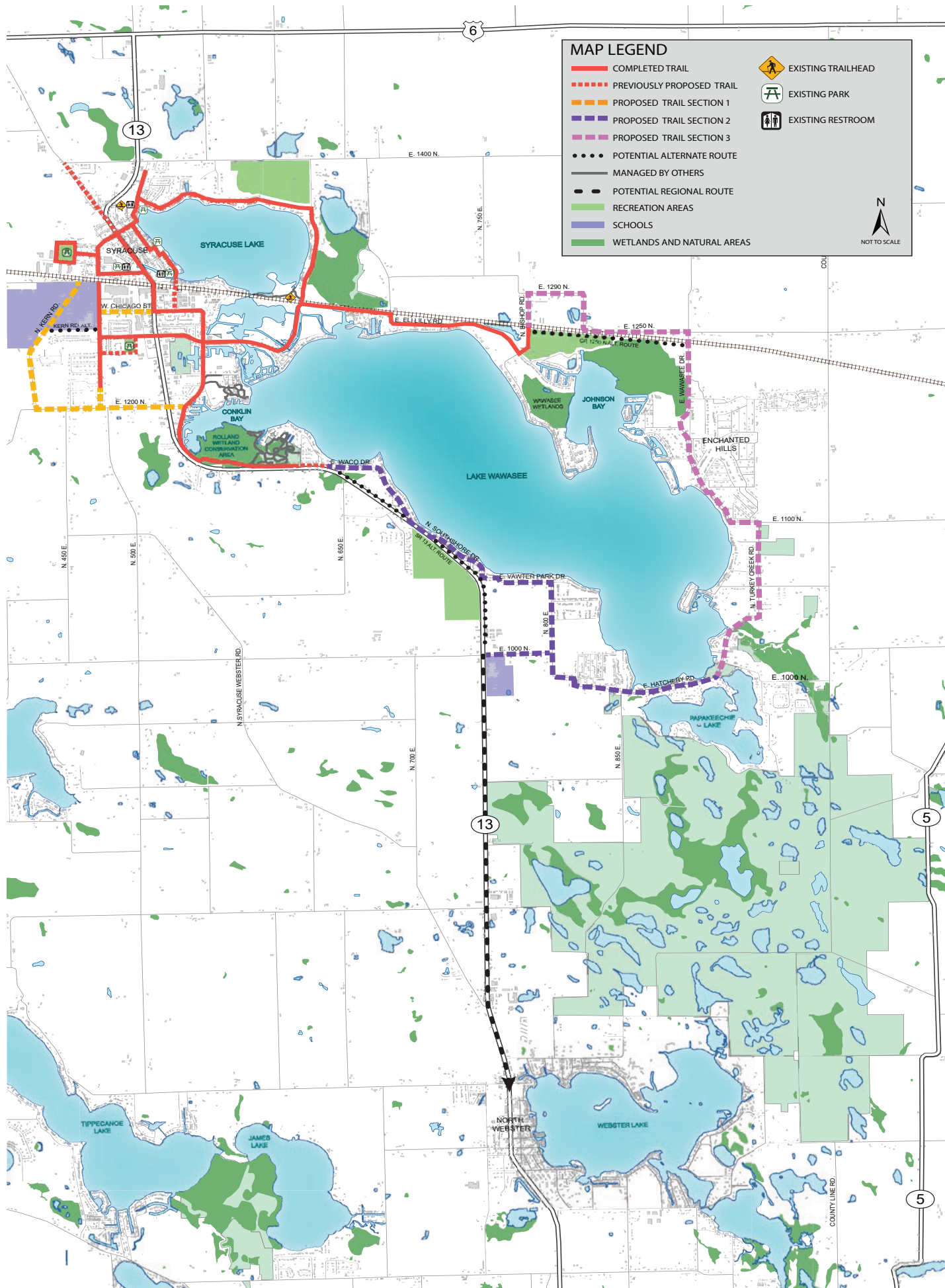
The map on the following page, shows the three proposed trail sections. The western section is in **yellow** and will provide connectivity to the new athletic fields on Kern Road. The central section that will extend where Conklin Bay ends and continue south to the middle school and around Lake Wawasee to the public boat launch is in **purple**. Lastly, the east side of the lake is in **pink**, and it will eventually connect to Eli Lilly Drive.

The proposed routes provide more than 12 miles of future trail development which doubles our current trail system! The report breaks down each of the color sections into smaller section to provide flexibility in evaluation. Each section can be implemented individually or combined depending on funding. The report also includes the future of local and regional connectivity. Connectivity to other trails is a win-win for everyone. The Kosciusko County Comprehensive Plan indicates people want trails and greenways. Did

See Desk | Continued on page 3



Our New Office Sign



Desk | Continued from page 1

you know that feasibility studies have taken place in the Towns of Milford, North Webster and Etna Green and the City of Warsaw! Milford is already working on their 1.12 mile of trail. I have been in communication with North Webster regarding their 4-mile section in town and their goal of getting a trail to Wawasee Middle School.

The committee's next steps are to use the report for further conversation and future trail development. We are developing a matrix that will provide vital information regarding right of way, easements, utility pole relocation, environmental impacts to wetlands, water drainage, agencies to coordinate with, safety at crossings and alternative routes.

We need your help and input as we navigate future trail projects. Please take a few moments and fill out the enclosed survey. Your input is vital as we prioritize the next 12 miles of trails and continue our vision of a connected community. Surveys can be dropped off at the Syracuse Library, Community Center or the Trails Office. If you prefer,

surveys can be mailed to: 813 S. Huntington Street, Syracuse, IN 46567. All surveys with a name will go into a drawing for a \$50 gift card to Channel Marker! Please mark your calendar for our community engagement meeting on January 19, 2022 from 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm at the Syracuse Community Center. This will be an in person and virtual meeting discussing the report and future plans for Syracuse-Wawasee Trails.

In conclusion, it's an exciting time for trails in our area with North Webster and Milford planning for future trail construction. Both Dan Thystrup and Trisha Gall are working diligently developing their trail programs which will only benefit our communities. I look forward to collaborating with them as our projects move forward. As we navigate trail expansion and grant opportunities, we welcome feedback and suggestions from our donors, users and community. Communication, financial support, collaboration and education are vital links to a connected trail community. We rely on public support from people like you for trail maintenance, operations and to build new

trails. Please consider making a tax-deductible donation using the donation form included in this newsletter or visit syracusewawaseetrails.com; click the "Donate Today" button to use a credit card. On behalf of myself and the Trails Committee, we deeply appreciate your continued supported and wish you Happy Holidays!



happy
HOLIDAYS!



In order to make a donation

Please send checks with the donation slip provided below. If you would prefer to use your credit card, you can go to the trail's website: syracusewawaseetrails.com and click on the Donate Today button.

Trail Contribution Form

Please show your support with your tax-deductible contribution.

We need your help to build and to maintain our 12-plus miles of trail. Contributions are appreciated.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Make checks payable to "Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation, Trail Committee". Your gifts are tax deductible and we will furnish a receipt.

Send checks with this form to: Syracuse-Wawasee Trail,
Syracuse Community Center
1013 N. Long Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567

☐ Check here if your company matches funds.

☐ Check here to receive information about planned giving.

☐ Check here if you would like to volunteer.

The Syracuse-Wawasee Trail system is a network of walking/biking trails that connects the Town of Syracuse, Syracuse Lake, and part of Lake Wawasee. The trail system is administered by a Trail Committee of the Syracuse-Wawasee Park Foundation, a non-profit organization. Our vision is to have a connected trail community. The new trail section adds 1.37 miles to the existing 11-miles of trails continuing the vision of a connected trail throughout or vibrant community. We rely on public support to build and maintain our 12-plus miles of trails.

Feasibility Study Survey

Syracuse-Wawasee Trails has finished our feasibility study that will increase our trail size by more than 12 miles which will double our current trail system. As our committee reviews the report and develops our strategic plan, we would like input from our community, businesses, and trails users.

The study will be available on our website in the near future.

Please take a few minutes to take our survey to help us gain community feedback to improve our trail systems and develop a plan for future trail sections.

1. How often, on average do you use Syracuse-Wawasee Trails? (please circle one at least one)

Daily

First Time

A few times a year

Between 3 -5 times a week

Once a month

A couple times a month

Don't use trails – Why

2. What is your primary activity on Syracuse-Wawasee Trails? (check all that apply)

Walking

Biking

Jogging/Running

Other Activity (Please Specify)

3. Please identify your age group (circle one)

16 to 25

26 to 35

36 to 45

46 to 54

55 to 65

Over 65

4. What do you like about Syracuse-Wawasee Trails? (Circle all that apply)

Close to home

Connectivity to our community

Nature

Boardwalks

Exercise

Other (Please Specify):

5. What do you dislike about Syracuse-Wawasee Trails? (Circle all that apply)

Easier access

More Trailheads

Some areas are too narrow

Maintenance

Other (Please Specify):

6. Please rank your future top five trail sections with 1 being most important and 5 being least important

Middle School Route

- ☐ Waco
 - ☐ Southshore
 - ☐ Vawter Park
 - ☐ Middle School
 - ☐ Hatchery Road
- } *Purple Section On The Map*

East Side of Lake Wawasee

- ☐ Turkey Creek
 - ☐ Enchanted Hills
 - ☐ Johnson Bay
- } *Pink Section On The Map*

New Athletic Field

- ☐ Kern Road
 - ☐ Extending Syracuse-Webster Road
 - ☐ Chicago Street
(between SR 13 and Syracuse-Webster Road)
- } *Yellow Section On The Map*

7. With the above question in mind, please explain your reasoning for your top 3 sections?

1st Choice:

2nd Choice:

3rd Choice:

8. Would you consider being a volunteer for our trail?

Yes No

9. Will you attend our public meeting on January 19 2021 from 6 – 7:30 pm at the Syracuse Community Center?

Yes No

10. What criteria is important to you?

Accessibility

Cost

Safety

Liability

Other _____

Any other suggestions?

Name: _____

Phone # _____ Email: _____

We appreciate your time and feedback!

Surveys can be dropped off at the Syracuse Library, Community Center or at the Trails Office.

All surveys with a name will go into a drawing for a \$50 gift card to Channel Marker!

Please contact Erlene Yentes at 574-675-6433 or at ed@syracusewawaseetrails.com

with any additional information or concerns.

Upcoming Events for 2022

1/19/2022 — Community Engagement Meeting from
6:00 pm to 7:30 pm — Syracuse Community Center

4/22/2022 — Earth Day

5/20/2022 — National Bike to Work Day

7/16/2022 — Tour des Lakes
(For more information about this event —
go to www.tourdeslakes.com)



8/4/2022 — Life is Better on the Trail Fundraiser at
Blue Barn Berry Farm & Event Center

Stay tuned for more information regarding Earth Day, National Bike to Work Day, Tails and Trails as well as morning walks at the library. Events will be updated on our Website — www.syracusewawaseetrails.com/events. Thank you for your understanding and continued support of Syracuse-Wawasee Trails!

Committee Members

Kay Young, Chairman

Dr. Tom Edington, Treasurer

Steve Coyle

Sherman Goldenberg

Chad Jonsson

Tony Pawlicki

Jared Pritchard

Angie Racolta

LuAnn Wojtczak

Jerry Wright

Erlene Yentes

The volunteer trail committee is always open to individuals who have an interest in helping with trail development and maintenance. If you would like to join our committee, please reach out to Erlene Yentes at (574) 675-6433.



Syracuse-Wawasee Trail
Syracuse Parks and Recreation
Syracuse Community Center
1013 N. Long Drive
Syracuse, IN 46567

Nonprofit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Millford, IN
Permit No. 2