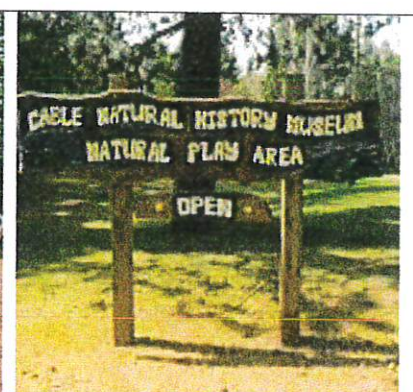


Town of Cable Recreation Plan 2025 - 2030

An Element of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan



Adopted by the Cable Town Board:

CABLE RECREATION PLAN - 2025 UPDATE
Plan Commission: February 4, 2025
Town Board: February 19, 2025

INTRODUCTION

The Town of Cable and its surrounding communities are home to an incredible amount of natural resources, making the community attractive for outdoor recreation by Town residents, community members, and state, national and international visitors. The Town has complemented its natural resources with man-made physical improvements to diversify and expand the availability of year-round, recreational opportunities to residents and visitors alike. As such, the Town of Cable also offers a number of indoor recreation opportunities for year-round activities.

To better understand and utilize its available recreational attributes, the Town completed an Outdoor Recreation Plan in 2018. Prior to this date, the Town used a plan developed by the Bayfield County Board's Tourism Department. Because of the critical role the Town's recreation resources and opportunities contributed to tourism in Bayfield County and the State of Wisconsin, the County plan's focus was primarily on promoting tourist-related activities. The 2018 Outdoor Recreation Plan complemented the County's plan by providing necessary attention to the specific recreation needs of, and benefits to, Town residents.

The 2025 Recreation Plan update is a directive of the Town of Cable 2023 Comprehensive Plan revision (adopted by the Cable Town Board on October 18, 2023). The Town's comprehensive plan recognizes that Cable is the gateway to the area's unparalleled natural resources and recreation opportunities for residents and tourists. Recreation connects tourism to Cable's local economy and provides jobs to many area residents. More important, these recreation opportunities are available year-round, a factor that is often not available to many tourist-related communities.

Beyond the economic impacts, recreation is a way for residents to maintain healthy lifestyles and provide key social connections that are critical to the emotional and mental health of all. Recreation involves not only outdoor physical exertion, but can be low-impact activities in both indoor and outdoor settings. Also, recreation activities do not just target youth or athletes, but attract all community groups, including those with physical challenges.

A review of current Town recreational amenities is a starting point before identifying future objectives for the next five years. The following review also recognizes the improvements that have been completed since 2018.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Improvement and expansion of recreation amenities in Cable and surrounding areas have been incredible since adoption of the 2018 Outdoor Recreation Plan. Some efforts were direct actions by the Town of Cable, either through direct funding or through private partnerships that have raised critical funding to accomplish these improvements.

Public Improvements/Actions

- Establishment of the Cable Campground, a 10-unit, tent campground at the Town Recreation Park.
- Installation of modern playground equipment at the Cable Recreation Park through private fundraising by the Cable & Area Lions Club.
- Construction of Cable Bike Park mountain bike trails and obstacles and a concrete-paved pump track at the Cable Recreation Park funded through private donations.
- Addition of pickleball striping and nets to Town tennis courts.
- National Park Service approval of a Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA) pedestrian and bicycle connector trail through the Namekagon River corridor from the old railroad grade to Parker Road.
- Lake monitoring for invasive species through a WNDR grant and volunteer assistance from the Town lake associations.



Private Improvements/Actions

- Reconstruction of the Cable Natural History Museum Wayside Wanderings Facility on Randysek Road to expand outdoor education and recreation.
- Expanded trails at the former Telemark Resort by the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation (ABSF) through private fundraising and corporate sponsorships:
 - Addition of 16 miles of new mountain bike trails that radiate in progressive loops from beginner to moderate to advanced skill levels; these trails also connect to the wider CAMBA trail network
 - Snowmaking installation for 5 km of cross-country ski trails with plans to add 7 km.
 - Restoration of the original Telemark ski trails for 15 km of trails relying on natural snow
 - Construction of a 5 km paved multi-purpose trail to facilitate off-season training, such as roller skiing.
 - Construction of the Kawabaming Observation Tower at the top of Mt. Telemark



- Improvements to the Cable Rod & Gun Club funded in part through a Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) grant:
 - Gateway Kiosk with safety and education information
 - Improved sight lines for trap and skeet ranges
 - Expanded rifle ranges
 - Berm improvements including improved signage along the boundaries
 - Addition of an archery range
- Trailhead and road signage for ATV/UTV Trails and expanded access to County Highway M.



Existing Facilities

The Town of Cable has an extensive inventory of recreation facilities that meet the recreation needs of a wide range of Cable residents and visitors - from young to old, performance athlete to recreational participant, and winter or summer enthusiast.

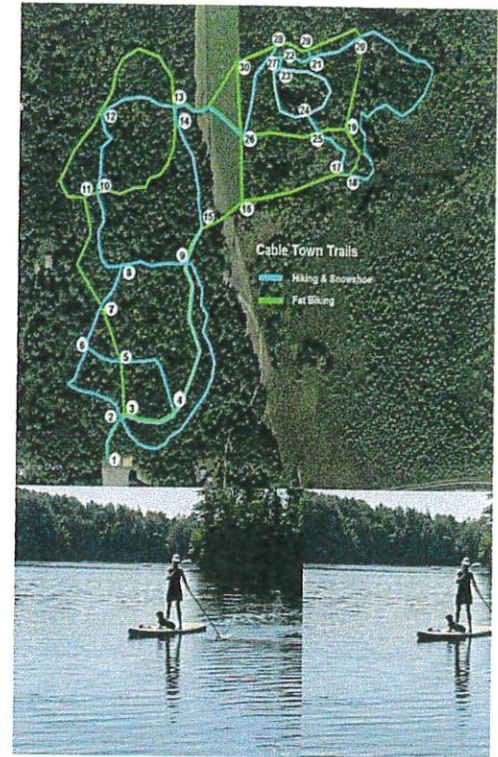
Public Facilities

- Cable Recreation Park & Depot
 - Approximately 30 acres of public land and park that hosts multiple town functions and is maintained in partnership with the Cable & Area Lions Club. Amenities include:
 - o Former train depot building with restrooms and kitchen facilities
 - o Outdoor picnic shelter
 - o Modern playground equipment that was recently added to the park in partnership with the Cable & Area Lions Club
 - o Baseball Fields
 - o Skateboard Park
 - o Tennis/Pickleball Courts
 - o Bike Park with mountain bike trails and obstacles, and a concrete pump track
- Cable Community Centre provides indoor space for low intensity physical and social recreation, a public gathering space, as well as an outdoor playground.
- Cable Town Trails are located on 20-acres of Town land (combined with private property) north of the Cable



Community Center and offer year-round recreation, including hiking, snowshoeing, and biking.

- Public beach and boat launch at Perry Lake with additional public boat access at Cable and Takodah Lakes.
- Former railroad grade that provides a multi-use trail from County M to Parker Road and connects to the CAMBA trail system.



County/Federal Facilities

- Bayfield County Forest - 5,475 acres of forested land with an extensive network of gravel roads and off-road trails suitable for ATV/UTV use, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, hiking, and single-track mountain biking.
- The Namekagon River flowing through Cable is part of the Saint Croix National Scenic Riverway (administered by the Wisconsin DNR and the National Park Service).

Private Facilities

American Birkebeiner - Mount Telemark Village and Birkebeiner Race Start venue

In 2021, the American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation added the former Telemark Resort property (approximately 1,000 acres) to its property holdings and expanded its Start Venue for its annual cross-country ski races, trail run, and fat tire bike race. The old, obsolete hotel was demolished and work began on developing comprehensive recreational use of the property. The work expands winter use (including snow making capabilities) as well as year-round activities and events.

The ABSF recently completed Mt. Telemark Hub, a multi-purpose building that acts as headquarters for trail use (including 24-hour restroom and shower facilities) and provides vendor space for coffee, ski and bike shops and meeting space that is available for public use. In addition to the Birkie Race Course, the ABSF has added a 5 km loop with snow making capabilities with plans for expansion 7 km. The former Telemark Ski Trails were also reclaimed and restored for recreational use.





A paved trail for roller ski use in non-snow months was installed to expand skier training opportunities. This paved trail is also available for cycling and walking and includes signage developed in partnership with the Cable Natural History Museum that highlights connections between skiing, fitness, and ecology, while helping people learn about the natural features surrounding the trail.

Cable Rod & Gun Club

A fixture in Cable since 1985, the club provides clay trap, skeet, sporting clays, and pistol and rifle ranges that are open to the public. The organization also makes its facilities available for law enforcement training and conducts youth training. In 2020, the club finalized acquisition of 15 acres of land on McNaught Road that it had previously leased from the Cable Union Airport. In 2022, a WDNR grant funded improvements that included installation of a Gateway Kiosk with club information and operation rules, addition of improved signage along property boundaries, relocation of structures for additional range distances, and addition of an archery range.



Recreation Groups & Organizations

The wide variety of recreation activities in Cable and the surrounding community are provided through a number of private organizations. These groups are supported in large part by private volunteers and fundraising. These wide ranging activities are supported by and coordinated with the Town of Cable through its Special Event Coordinator and by the Cable Area Chamber of Commerce.

Cable Area Chamber of Commerce.

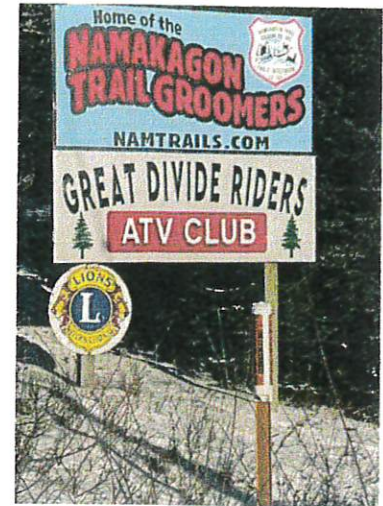
A five-town organization that promotes area tourism. The organization promotes year-round recreation amenities from its office in Cable, its website, its exterior electronic sign board, and by member promotion. The Chamber also provides assistance to visitors for lodging, dining, and shopping suggestions.



Private Trail Organizations.

Most area recreation amenities are primarily developed and maintained by private groups whose members share an interest in that activity. These groups construct and maintain usable trails, update trail conditions, and promote public events for participation by members and visitors.

- Great Divide Riders.
Identifies trails suitable for ATV and UTV use and provides road markings.
- Namakagon Trail Groomers.
Grooms over 110 miles of snowmobile trails in the Cable and Namakagon area. The group provides trail maps, condition updates, and trail signage.



- Chequamegon Area Mountain Bike Association (CAMBA).
Builds and maintains over 130 miles of off-road trails in Bayfield and Sawyer Counties, including the Cable Cluster. Trail information is provided at the Town Municipal Parking Lot and at various road and trail intersections.

CAMBA also has identified over 200 miles of gravel and paved biking routes and grooms 70 miles for winter fat tire biking.

- Cable Rod & Gun Club.
Operates and maintains a gun range, an archery range, and service building at its 15-acre site on McNaught Road. The organization provides educational services to its members, as well as training facilities for law enforcement groups.



- North End Ski Club
Maintains 50 km of groomed ski trails from its trailhead on Randysek Road through a cooperation agreement with Bayfield County Forestry Department. Trails are also provided for hiking and snowshoeing. The group conducts three public events: the North End Classic Ski Race, a Snowshoe Race, and a Trail Run.



- Cable Natural History Museum

The museum not only provides a physical space in Cable to promote and educate residents and visitors about the area's natural history, but also promotes outdoor recreation and education activities in a variety of ways.

- Year-round nature tours and wildlife excursions for people of all age groups.
- Equipment rentals: snowshoes, birding backpacks and cameras.
- Wayside Wanderings: a play and educational facility on Randysek Road between 2nd Street and Philippi Road.

The 8.5-acre site provides a screened pavilion for educational and recreational activities from spring through fall and a hiking trail suitable for use by all ages and athletic abilities

- Mammal Trail - a one-mile, leisurely trail at the North End Ski Club/CAMBA Ojibwa Trailhead. The route is decorated with 25 metal animal silhouettes.



RECREATIONAL EVENTS

Cable and the surrounding community host numerous recreation events sponsored by local organizations to promote their specific activity. These events range in size from over 3,000 skiers from all over the world for the American Birkiebeiner ski race to 30 to 40 local residents and visitors who participate in the North End Snowshoe Race. These events provide an incredible financial boost to the Cable community as well as providing recreation outlets for residents and visitors.

While the ABSF and Cable Rod & Gun Club generally use their own property for events, other events are hosted by Cable organizations and use Town of Cable roads or facilities. All events must obtain a Town of Cable Permit with coordination and Town support facilitated by the Town's Special Event Coordinator. Such coordination is essential to informing Cable residents of access restrictions to certain roads or increased traffic by event participants. Some of the major events include:

Chequamegon Mountain Bike Festival. Established in 1983 by local residents, the event began as a point-to-point race from Hayward to Cable. The 16-mile Short & Fat race was added later. Held in mid-September, both events finish at the Birkie Start Venue and attract over 2,000 professional and amateur cyclists from all over the country. Lifetime Fitness acquired the event in 2011, maintains a Cable office, and employs a number of local residents.

Rumble on the Lake. Centered at Lakewoods Resort on Lake Namakagon, this annual motorcycle ride uses some Town of Cable roads and benefits many local businesses. Sponsored by Ammo's Evergreen Tavern, the event is held Memorial Day weekend as a fundraiser for youth programs and scholarships and other area charities.

Hungry Bear Gravel. Presented by CAMBA, the gravel race is held in early May, offering 30 to 100 mile rides starting and finishing in Cable. Fundraising beneficiaries include the Cable volunteer Fire Department, local scholarships, and other charitable groups.

Fun in the Forest. This annual ATV/UTV ride is held the third week of October from the Lakewoods Resort. The event provides riders with a scenic ride through Bayfield, Ashland, and Sawyer Counties while raising funds for local groups, such as Cable Area Resources in Emergencies (CARE), the local Lions Clubs, Brick Food Ministries, and Toys for Tots.

North End Ski Club events. The club sponsors its signature North End Classic Ski Race in February, a trail run in September, and a snowshoe race in January. All events are held on club trails from its trailhead on Randysek Road.

CARE Run. Each July 4th, CARE sponsors a 10K run or 5K run/walk as a primary fundraiser. The event begins and ends at the former Cable school site on Kavanaugh Road and is a key event at Cable's July 4th festivities.

Chequamegon 100. A 100-mile mountain bike ride in late July/early August to benefit CAMBA.

Cable Rod & Gun Club. An annual Ice Fishing Contest is held in early February at Lake Namakagon.

American Birkebeiner events. In addition to its signature cross-country ski race in February, the ABSF sponsors year-round events in sports compatible with its mission of supporting healthy and active lifestyles among people of all ages and abilities.

- Birkie Trail Run - this September event offers a trail pole trek to runs of 5 km, half marathon, and marathon distances on the Birkie Trail.
- Fat Tire Birkie - this event takes place the first weekend of March.
- Telemark Ascend enduro mountain bike race - with its inaugural event in 2024, participants race downhill on the new Trek mountain bike trails.
- Epic Bike Fest - An early June event featuring both mountain and gravel bike races.

The Birkiebeiner property is also used by other organizations, such as the Wisconsin State Nordic Ski League for its high school championship races, regional high school cross-country running or skiing events, and the National Interscholastic Cycling Association for middle and high school mountain bike races.

In addition to the above major events, residents and visitors can participate in regular activities such as fitness classes at the Cable Community Centre Fitness Classes (including Tai Chi, Creative Movement (including a seated option) and Eccentric Fitness)). Non-physical recreation, such as puzzle solving or knitting groups, can be found at the Forest Lodge Library.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL

The 2023 Revised Town of Cable Comprehensive Plan identified a specific goal for the Town's current and future recreation needs:

High-quality outdoor recreation areas, facilities, and activities in the Town of Cable meet current and future needs/desires of Town citizens and visitors.

To ensure this updated Recreation Plan met community needs, the Plan Commission conducted a Listening Session on August 27, 2024 to collect input and suggestions. Several tables were set around the Cable Community Centre where people could provide suggestions. Participants were then given the opportunity to explore all tables in the room and to place colored dots on various suggestions that they viewed as priorities for the Town's recreation needs. A summary of the Listening Session and prioritized suggestions is attached as Exhibit A.

Updated Recreation Objectives & Goals

Based on the August 2024 Community Listening Session, suggestions by participants and Plan Commission members, the following objectives and potential actions were developed to guide future recreation improvements for the period of 2025 to 2030.

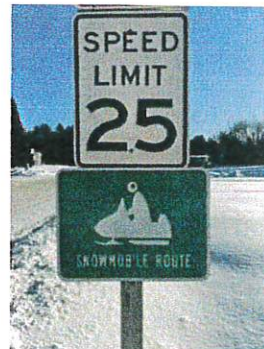
Objective: Promote a balance of recreational opportunities to meet the needs of various recreational users on trails, pedestrian walkways, and public roads and lands.

Action: Continue trail signage efforts to identify trails and appropriate user groups.

Action: Create a centralized trail system map (or maps) to identify different systems for winter or summer/spring/fall users with links to trail condition postings. Locations could include Town parking lot/restrooms, Forest Lodge Library, or other sites.

Action: Work with user groups and emergency response providers to install GPS trail markings to assist with emergency response.

Action: Develop a non-motorized trail corridor through Namakagon/Cable to bypass County Highway M.



Objective: Support existing and create new economically viable and environmentally sustainable events and activities that encourage community engagement and well-being.

Action: Continue the Town Special Event Coordinator position to emphasize safety at recreation events, coordinate Town resources, and support business needs.

Action: Publicize volunteer opportunities Town-wide as well as individual event volunteer recruitment.

Action: Post all events on Town calendar or web postings to alert Town residents of any potential conflicts, road closures, etc.

Action: Engage local recreation groups/organizations that promote activities and provide information to Town residents to increase opportunities - such groups/organizations include Namakagon Pickleballers, ATV groomers, swim groups, bike and ski groups, and snowmobile clubs.

Action: Partner with Cable Natural History Museum and the Birkie Foundation and other user groups on adaptive efforts to target those with mobility, visual, and hearing challenges.

A man wearing a red shirt and a blue cap is riding a bicycle. A young child is sitting in a small wooden cart attached to the front of the bicycle. A dog is sitting in the cart. The scene is outdoors on a paved street with trees and other people in the background.

[illegible]

Action: Partner with groups (such as Cable Rod & Gun Club and Fishing Without Boundaries) to encourage fishing in Cable for those with disabilities.

Action: Resurface the existing tennis/pickleball courts at the Cable Recreation Park.

Action: Work with CAMBA or Chequamegon Mountain Bike Festival to create a local bike challenge or other event at the Bike Park.

Action: Partner with Cable & Area Lions Club to host local recreation or entertainment events at Cable Recreation Park or at the former Cable School Site.

Action: Identify grants and other funding resources to improve the former Cable School site as green space with amenities to provide a venue for music, art activities, recreation, and other uses as suggested by Town and area residents, businesses, and visitors.



Objective: Promote use of Town of Cable's water amenities at its lake and river landings.

Action: Partner with area users to promote low-impact water use, such as paddleboarding, kayaking, and canoes.

Action: Continue participation in lake monitoring to prevent spread of invasive species.

Action: Improve water access by maintaining or improving boat launches, beaches, and docks; provide changing shelters or public restrooms

Action: Identify community residents to become "friends" of a landing to assist in maintenance and use opportunities.

Action: Create a centralized water use map to identify boat launches and swimming beaches and post along with trail maps.

Action: Create a River Event that would be coordinated with WDNR and National Park Service.

Objective: Expand indoor recreation opportunities for year-round activities.

Action: Encourage use of the Cable Community Centre for physical fitness classes, such as yoga or strength training.

Action: Provide non-physical activities, such as community board game nights, knitting, or crochet groups.

Action: Work with American Birkebeiner Ski Foundation on an indoor recreation center or use of current facilities for indoor activities (classes at Mt. Telemark Hub or pickleball at Great Hall).

Action: Support private efforts to develop an indoor fitness center that includes a pool, exercise equipment and multi-purpose courts.

IMPLEMENTATION

Financial resources are needed to implement some actions, such as resurfacing of the tennis/pickleball courts, modifying the skate park, or improving the former Cable School site. However, Town resources are strained by numerous demands. Other improvements might be accomplished through grants or fundraising from public or private sources.

A key component to implementing changes is making contact with various groups, preparing plans and budgets, and applying for grant funding. However, the Town lacks staff that could devote time to address the above recreation-related suggestions.

One way to implement many actions, especially those with little or no cost, is to appoint a new committee by the Town Board to prioritize the suggested recreation-related actions. This committee would be responsible to act on a particular suggestion, make contact with interested parties, obtain needed approvals, and seek funding and grants as necessary. Such a committee could be modeled after the community's Social Connections Committee and could consist of one or two members of the Town Board or Plan Commission and other interested Town residents. The committee could meet periodically and provide regular progress updates to the Plan Commission and Town Board. The committee would also oversee implementing approved actions.

Suggested actions of the committee could include:

Action: Regular engagement of major local recreation groups and organizations to evaluate the various groups' needs and identify if any Town resources are needed. The meetings would help minimize disruptions to Town operations and prevent possible trail conflicts.

Action: Coordinate efforts to develop, install, and maintain signage to orient residents and visitors to Town recreation amenities.

Action: Monitor annual use of various activities to determine impacts of climate change and possible ways to adapt activity for adverse weather conditions.

Action: Identify new or changing recreation activities and suggest ways to accommodate new activities.

Action: Identify federal, state or county grants and private partners to fund capital-intensive, long-term facilities.

Town of Cable Outdoor Recreation Plan

Public meeting, August 27, 2024

Comment/Suggestion (65 total)	# dots
Cable school site for public to gather (Town square, green space for music, etc.)	16
Twice annual meeting between key people in the main user groups to discuss issues and cooperation, such as ski/bike/ATV/snowmobile/Forestry/DNR?	8
Gun range - move AR and rapid fire etc. to remote area, focus on trap/skeet at main location, better dialogue with CRGC	8
Expand adaptive recreation opportunities	5
Improve indoor recreation activities (senior center) - dancing, games, puzzles, etc	5
Accessibility expansion (wheelchairs, strollers, etc.)	5
Fitness Center: indoor pool, equipment, trainers, indoor winter options, multi-purpose court, daycare for "all" regardless of age	5
Trail corridor through Namakagon/Cable (non-motorized) to bypass County Highway M	5
Create beginner mountain bike trails	4
Connect trail systems around Town and update maps (CNHM Wayside Wanderings)	3
Develop on-road/off-road bike access to Mt. Telemark (including McNaught Road)	2
Improve signage	2
Courts (pickleball/tennis) need resurfacing	2
Create indoor pickleball - Great Hall?	2
Outdoor hockey rink at Mt. Telemark (Broomball!)	2
Opportunities for user groups to connect - Town, Timber Co., all stakeholders	2
Swimming beaches identified	2
Spring River Run or River events (work with DNR)	2
Roadways - biking/walking lane demarcated and distances, safe corridors	2
Accessible activities - not just hyper-athlete focused, including for "non-athletes"	2
Cultural activities: art, music, classes, concert venue in area needed	2
Dog park and pet care	2

Enhance public landings for shore fishing, swimming, paddleboarding, etc.	1
Signage for Cable places - Library	1
Motorized access to Cable non Road	1
Develop an all-sport map, showing trail crossings	1
Color-code trail signs for each recreation use	1
Activities for local/senior residents (vs. visitors)	1
Social clubs	1
Available "coin" shower and bike wash	1
Courts: pickleball, tennis, basketball - maintain surfaces	1
Location markers - ER response infrastructure and accessing	1
More centralized volunteer pool, publicize, inclusive of all needs (next generation recruitment, incentivize volunteers)	1
Garden club and Town beautification	1
Community potlucks with activities like hiking	1
How to meet lodging needs for large events (Paralympics, etc. that used Telemark Lodge)	1
Assess multi-use trail usage and document	
Consider on-road bike routes	
Develop partnerships and proposal for better ATV access from Sawyer County (Identify specific areas to work together)	
Wash station - research possibilities	
Enhance/promote interpretive natural/cultural history	
Indoor bikes - basketball	
To access recreation opportunities and as part of the recreation network, the Town MUST invest in and keep roads maintained - add shoulders	
A covered pavilion in the center of Town would be useful to host yoga, Tai Chi, and other fitness activities ("covered" is important for weather protection)	
Hungry Bear finish in Cable - Destination ending	
Boat landing maps	
Science on Tap @ Base Camp - talks with museums	
Residents, visitors, non-Cable residents (feel separation) - was this for all? (Question was asked)	

User groups work cooperatively more	
Emergency (GPS) information on signs at trail crossings	
Maps available at Chamber of Commerce (they already are!)	
Expand non-snow recreation activities	
Update and improve Community Centre playground with a fenced dog area next to it	
Community activities calendar	
Wash stations for watercraft to eliminate invasive species (DNR funds)	
Uniform signage to find businesses, trails, attractions, wayfinding	
RV park	
Housing for workforce and volunteers	
Activities -> central scheduling so less overlap and spread out more evenly	
Youth activities	
Updated trail map within 10 mile radius of Cable (for all users) - 3 types: (1) hike/bike (road bike routes)/ski, (2) ATV, (3) snowmobile	
Clear and concise expectations communicated and posted for ATV and bike courteous use	
Communicate "rules of road" and safety expectations for road bikers	
Connector trails for ATV/snowmobiles, bikes from Town outward	