ICORE

Iron County Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts

Annual Meeting Notes

Tuesday, October 20, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

Mercer Community Center

2648W Margaret Street, Mercer, Wisconsin

In attendance: ICORE Board Members Karen Hagemann (President), Ian Shackleford (Vice President), Brenda Nelson (Secretary), Mark Fedora (Treasurer), Diane O'Krongly, and Gail Ondesky. Absent were Bill Wagener and Karen Teliszczak. Other ICORE members listed in attached sign-in sheet.

Prior to the official start of our annual meeting, Karen presented a review of the requested bylaws change that had previously been sent out to membership. To address the growth of the organization and the resulting increased work load:

Article III – Board of Directors
Section 2. "The Board of Directors shall be elected by the membership and shall consist of no fewer than three (3) non-officer members and the officers pursuant to Article IV, section 1, and no more than eight members," to be changed to "…no more than eleven members."

John Bitner motioned to make the proposed change to the bylaws and Gail Ondersky seconded it. Motion passed.

1. Call to order

   Karen Hagemann called the meeting to order at 5:06PM.

2. Approval of minutes of the 2025 Annual Meeting

   Karen Hagemann motioned to approve the notes and Mike Sholdice seconded. Some edits were made. Motion passed.

3. Treasurer's report

   Mark Fedora reviewed current financials as of September 30th, 2026. Total ICORE funds are $471,997. This is split between our general fund at $15,668, Hurley Bike Trail fund at $167,794 and Mercer Bike Trail at $184,903 (Associated Bank) and $103,632 (Edward Jones account). These numbers will be updated as we are transitioning quick books between Mark Fedora and Karen Teliszczak which has caused a few glitches. Mark explained that the Treasurer transition is due to the increased complexity of ICORE accounting and taxes due to our two very active bike trail

projects. We thank Mark for his service as Treasurer of ICORE. A motion to accept the financial report was made by Diane O'Krongly and Paul Hagemann seconded it. Motion passed.

4. Membership update

   Gail Ondresky provided an update on the membership. Membership is a difficult draw for ICORE because we are an interest group. 571 on our Meetup site. 171 on roster, 74 are current. Gail will be contacted to renew as part of our membership drive. ICORE funding allows us to promote all the area outdoor events in Iron County and has allowed us to initiate several very large projects.

5. Election of board members:
   a. Board members up for re-election: Diane O'Krongly, Mark Fedora, ~~Ian Shackleford,~~ Bill Wagener. Karen Haegmann asked to step down as President.
6. Nominations:
   a. President – Karen Hagemann nominated Ian Shackleford; Mark Fedora seconded it
   b. Vice-President - Karen Hagemann nominated Mark Fedora; Brenda Nelson seconded it
   c. Treasurer – Karen Hagemann nominated Karen Teliszczak; Joel Enking seconded it
   d. At-large members – Karen Hagemann nominated Jay Sween (former Iron County Executive) and Aline Fetter; Heda Patzke seconded it. Ian Shackleford nominated Diane O'Krongly; Karen Hagemann seconded it. Diane O'Krongly nominated Bill Wagner and Brenda Nelson seconded it. Diane O'Krongly nominated John Bitner and Gail Ondresky seconded it

      All motions passed.
7. 2025/2026 Activity Reports:
   a. Hurley Nonmotorized Trail

      ICORE continues to work with the City of Hurley to build a three-mile paved trail between Hurley and Montreal and connecting to the Iron Belle Trail in Michigan. In 2026 we emphasized fundraising for the City of Hurley to purchase 37.2 acres of Soo Line railroad grade from CN (Canadian National) for $175,000. The year began with discouraging news that a tentative $82,655 grant from the Wisconsin DNR had to be withdrawn because the land purchase does not include mineral rights. We decided to attempt to raise the remaining $105,000 without the

grant. Thanks to 56 different donations ranging from $20 to $25,000 we raised the funds by August 28, and expect the City of Hurley and CN to complete the sale by the end of the year.

We especially thank:

- Anonymous #2 for the $20,000 match for the Connect the Rivers match campaign.
- Anonymous #5 for a $25,000 donation.
- Leann & Paul Jahnson for a $10,000 donation.
- Rails to Trails Conservancy for a $10,000 grant.
- $5,000 donations from Gloria Fauerbach, the Ironwood Tourism Council, and Catherine & Kurt Garvens.

All donors are listed on our project web page. All donations $1,000 and more are receiving plaques at the Hurley Trailhead; on a railroad tie we installed this spring. $500 donations will be listed together on a plaque at the end of each year.

We have another $15,000 match campaign in progress, from Anonymous #6, trying to raise $30,000 to get us started on trail construction. $7,211 raised so far. We have a pending grant application with Tamarack Health for $5,000, to be split between both trails. We're working on a $23,500 grant application with the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program to pay for engineering design of Phase 1, from US 51 to 9th Avenue. We will continue fundraising and grant applications in the coming years. We hope to brush as much of Phases 1 and 2 as we can in 2027, opening Phases 1 and 2 (1.6 miles) to hiking and mountain biking.

b. Mercer Bike Trail Expansion

Brenda Nelson shared a PowerPoint presentation of the Mercer Bike Trail expansion. She shared the project's new logo/branding and the new name for 26-mile loop we are creating is the "Loon Loop". Brenda went through a case for the project's importance reviewing the local opportunity for this trail expansion as well as the impact on the community. The project map was also shared and the 3 phases of the trail were explained. The $1.9M DOT TAP grant that was applied for last year was not awarded. We believe that the size of our project along with our 20% private funding need gap was the reason we did not get the grant. The ream is fully prepared to apply again with the funding gap closed during the next grant cycle. We have addressed much of

that gap in the past year since our application. The project has $290,000 raised versus our goal of $380,000.

Bike Fest 2026 was a huge success with 276 registered rider which was a 20% improvement over 2025. This event raised over $40,000. Plans are underway for Bike Fest 2027 which will be on July 31st, 2027. Plans are also underway for a Q4 2026 formal fundraising campaign and tie in to Giving Tuesday. A matching Hurley Trail Railroad tie will be placed in Carow Park at our trailhead to display plaques recognizing large donations to the trail. This brings an umbrella approach to trail fundraising for ICORE.

c. Mark Fedora brought up his idea to work on an ICORE strategic long-term plan. He wants to pull this plan together in the next few months. Mark is looking for volunteers to work on this.
d. Bethany Thomas from North Country Trail announced the acquisition of the new 300 acres near Saxon County Park, on the shore of Lake Superior and the west side of the Montreal River. The parcel will be called the Lake Superior property and is owned by the U.S. Park Service.
e. Mike Shouldice from MECCA announced that Winterfest will be held on January 16th as well as virtually. Winterfest will be marketing jointly along with Ironwood's SISU to entice skiers to stay the entire week between these events. The candlelight snowshoe is scheduled for January 30th.

8. Set the next annual meeting date.

   The date was tentatively picked for Oct 19th, 2027.

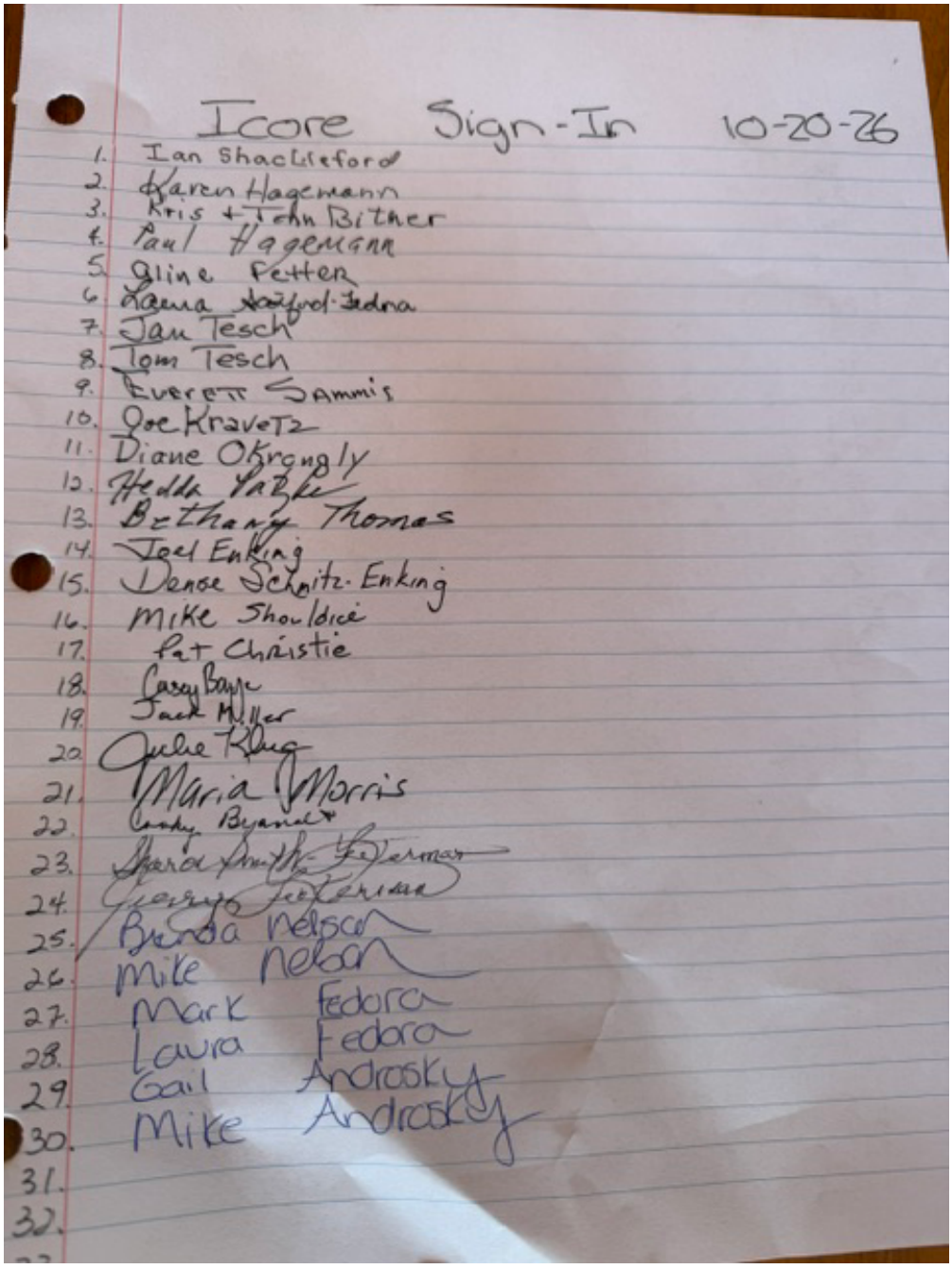
9. Adjourn

   Paul Hagemann motioned to adjourn at 6:15 PM and Ian Shackleford seconded it. Motion passed

   The annual meeting was followed by a potluck and presentation by John Heusinkveld, Conservation Outreach Specialist from the Northwoods Land Trust.

ICORE

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Icore Sign-In 10-20-26

1. Ian Shackleford
2. Karen Hagemann
3. Kris + John Bitner
4. Paul Hagemann
5. Aline Petter
6. Laura Hafford-Fedora
7. Jan Tesch
8. Tom Tesch
9. Everett Sammis
10. Joe Kravetz
11. Diane Okrongly
12. Hedda Parke
13. Bethany Thomas
14. Joel Enking
15. Denae Schultz-Enking
16. Mike Shouldice
17. Pat Christie
18. Casey Baye
19. Jack Miller
20. Julie Klug
21. Maria Morris
22. Cindy Bynum
23. Sharon Smith-Peterman
24. George Peterman
25. Brenda Nelson
26. Mike Nelson
27. Mark Fedora
28. Laura Fedora
29. Gail Androsky
30. Mike Androsky
31.
32.