

Rails to public trails conversion plan wheels towards state Senate approval

By TIM RICHARDS
STAFF WRITER

Cities and towns would have to be involved in planning rails-to-trails projects under bills moving through the state Senate.

"Nothing prevents the state from creating linear parks. But this sets specific criteria," said an aide to Sen. Robert Geake, R-Northville, sponsor of a key bill.

"Local units would have to be involved in plans for land use, law enforcement and facilities.

"There is liability protection for landowners from suits by hikers or bicyclists who cross their property."

"No general fund money would be used. The state would access federal trail money. Easements can be sold to utilities for fiber optics lines."

As railroads and the state have abandoned tracks in Michigan, hikers, bicyclists, equestrians and even snowmobilers have sought to convert them to trails.

One parallels Paint Creek in northeastern Oakland County. Another runs from Livingston County to Jackson. A third goes from Kalamazoo to Grand Haven.

Adjacent property owners in Green Oak Township of Livingston County have stymied trailway plans by acquiring former railroad strips before the state could do so.

At the same time it advanced Geake's bill, the Senate moved a companion measure to make it easier for the state Department of Transportation to transfer unused rail lines into the trail system.

Sponsor James Barcia, D-Bay City, cited his experiences in Bay County where adjacent property owners bought property and extended their lots before trailways could

be established.

Geake's aide cited a Penn State University study showing trailways enhance the value of adjacent private property.

Senate passage is due this week.

Geake's bill declares that a system of trailways will provide public enjoyment, promote fitness, protect open space and preserve the land for future possible public use.

It lets the state Natural Resources Commission designate state trailways "only if potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners, or residents of adjacent property are minimized" by:

- Promulgation and enforcement of rules.
- Maintenance of crossings for farmers.



"Bring your precious fur to Jacobson's and we will store it in our temperature-controlled vault until fall. Also take advantage of our other services which include repairing, cleaning, combing, brushing and glazing, all meticulously performed by our experienced professional furriers."

Jacobson's

We welcome Jacobson's Charge, MasterCard and VISA.
Hours: 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday and Friday. Until 6 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Saturday.

Don't Miss It!



He's reading PERSONAL SCENE; you should too. Don't miss this great new directory. It's a real 90s kind of thing. It involves electronic answering for complete privacy, it has five interesting classifications and it's easy to use. Check it out right now. If it's Thursday, you'll find PERSONAL SCENE in our Classified section, if it's Monday, check out our Street Scene section. Who knows? There may be someone there for you!

SAVE UP TO \$240 LAST WEEK

FREE* DELIVERY & INSTALLATION
THRU MAY 2002

Large selection of top quality wooden gymnasts - smaller models start at \$299

The Doll Hospital & Toy Soldier Shop
3947 W. 12 Mile • Berkley • 543-3115 • M-Th 10-5:30, Fri 10-6, Sat 10-5

SPECIAL SPRING SALE!

Ducane

All Gas Grills on Sale

- Weber
- Charmglow
- Broilmaster
- Ducane
- Pro Chef

Natural or LP Gas Grills

We Carry Replacement Parts & Accessories

MICHIGAN FIREPLACE & BAR-B-QUE
2808 Long Lake (at Reginald) Troy • 689-2286

PRICE SLASHED!

Save time and money with **BOLENS' One Step™** Mulching Mower

From the makers of the Original Mulching Mower!

- Recycles clippings and leaves into free lawn fertilizer.
- Eliminates raking, bagging forever.
- Solves disposal problems.
- Complete line-up to choose from.
- Ask about NO-MONEY-DOWN Financing!

3 Year WARRANTY

Bolens

"WE SERVICE WHAT WE SELL" SINCE 1948!

MANUS POWER MOWERS

3116 N. WOODWARD, 2 Blocks South of 13 Mile
549-2440
Mon.-Fri. 9-5, Sat. 9-4, Sun. 10-2

HARDEN
Crafted Like No Other Furniture In The World.

American Made By America's Oldest Furniture Maker.

From Traditional To Transitional

22 hand-finishing steps, 16 hand carving procedures, triple joinery, solid woods and 148 years of American know-how combine to make a distinctive difference in your living room, dining room or bedroom decor. Beds shown are available by special order only. Now, for a limited time, enjoy special savings on Harden furniture. Visit our showroom soon.

SALE Save 35%
Sale ends Monday, June 1.

This special factory authorized offer cannot be used in conjunction with Stewart Glenn Open House Sale now in process. No further discounts will apply to this special sale.

Stewart Glenn
of Bloomfield Hills

2600 N. Woodward Ave.
Just South of Square Lake Rd.
Fine Furniture Since 1917.

332-8348
Open Mon., Thurs., Fri. 'til 9 p.m.
Tues., Wed., Sat. 'til 5:30 p.m.