

Aldo Leopold's Legacy Lives On Through State Trail System

The ribbon cutting ceremony follows Gov. Jim Doyle's signing into law Senate Bill 161, naming the Wisconsin's 42 trails covering 1,728 miles statewide, the Aldo Leopold Legacy Trail system. The bill was sponsored by Sen. Mark Miller of Monona during the 2006-2008 session and signed by the governor in November 2007.

DNR Bureau of Parks and Recreation staff are erecting the new brown and white Aldo Leopold Legacy Trail System signs – identical to the one used at the ceremony – at each end of each trail. The renaming of the trail system was supported by the Aldo Leopold Center in Monona and the Aldo Leopold Foundation in Baraboo. Both organizations are partners with the DNR on the project.

Joining Matt Frank, the DNR Secretary at the ceremonial ribbon-cutting of the Aldo Leopold Legacy Trail System was Aldo Leopold's granddaughter – Trish Stevenson, Tourism Secretary Kelli Trumble, Dane County Executive Kathleen Falk, Aldo Leopold Nature Center Board Director Rick Phelps and members of conservation, recreation and tourism organizations.

Speaking for her mother, Nina Leopold Bradley, who could not attend the ceremony, Trish Stevenson said, "The world has changed in many ways since Aldo Leopold died in 1948 – perhaps the most significant are the barriers we have erected between ourselves and nature. Wisconsin's splendid trail system, being named for Aldo Leopold, will surely be useful in penetrating those barriers. As our citizens walk and bike these trails, they may gradually discover a new connection with the natural world – a slow sensitizing of people to land."

Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble echoed Nina Leopold Bradley's message, saying the new trail signs will remind travelers about the state's long history of stewardship and the remarkable people who inspired it. "With the renaming of the trail system, we celebrate Aldo Leopold as one of Wisconsin's original visionaries and honor his vision of seeing the natural world as a community to which we belong," Tourism Secretary Kelli A. Trumble said. "Our precious natural resources inspire and define the state's tourism experience, and connect people in remarkable ways."

To learn where you can find the closest Aldo Leopold Legacy Trail, state park or more about Aldo Leopold, visit: www.dnr.wisconsin.gov, www.travelwisconsin.com and www.aldoleopold.org.