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ELITE TRIATHLETE'S DEATH INVIGORATES TRAIL EXPANSION

Objective to complete the B2B Regional Trail System in 5 years

Chelsea, MI, May 11, 2017: Karen McKeachie, a United States Triathlon Hall of Fame inductee and internationally recognized athlete, was killed on August 26, 2016 while cycling on a road near her home. Out of this tragedy, there is increased community commitment to accelerate the construction of the Border-to-Border Regional Trail System (B2B) in order to provide safe recreational pathways in Washtenaw County Michigan.

Immediately following Karen's death, her family chose to honor her Legacy through a \$1,100,000 gift to the Huron Waterloo Pathways Initiative (HWPI), a local nonprofit group dedicated to supporting the B2B expansion. In the words of Lew Kidder, Karen's husband, "Karen was a remarkable athlete who encouraged countless people to be active and reach their physical potential. Karen's parents and I would like to honor her by providing safe recreational opportunities for everyone. It's time to build the trail."

In order to accelerate construction, the McKeachie Family and HWPI are thrilled to announce the Karen's Trail Campaign, a public effort to raise at least \$1,000,000 for trail construction. During this 2017 campaign, the public is invited and encouraged to help build Karen's Trail through their support of a series of community events and fundraising efforts.

Completion of the entire B2B by 2021 is possible through an extraordinary public-private partnership between HWPI, local and state governments, and community organizations. HWPI is striving to raise \$15 million in private funding, to be combined with \$20 million in public funding. HWPI is actively seeking the financial support of individuals, local businesses, foundations and corporations in this fundraising effort. The combined private and public funding will be used to complete construction of the B2B and ensure that families, athletes, and community members of all abilities can enjoy the trail soon.

The B2B was originally conceived in the 1990's by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission as a 35-mile non-motorized trail that would follow the Huron River from its entry into Washtenaw County just south of Pinckney to its exit into Wayne County near Ypsilanti. The expanded B2B vision is a 55-mile paved trail that, when combined with the adjoining Lakelands State Trail, will be 70 miles long and will include a unique 44 mile loop trail connecting Dexter, Chelsea, Stockbridge, and Pinckney and two state recreational areas. The Huron Waterloo Loop is certain to be a major regional attraction for the approximately 4 million people who live within one hour of the B2B. Additionally, the B2B will be a marquee part of the Iron Belle Trail, Michigan's 2,000-mile network of trails.

For more information about HWPI and the Karen's Trail Campaign, trail maps and how to get involved, please visit huron-waterloo-pathways.org or contact the HWPI Board Chair, Jeff Hardcastle at chair@huron-waterloo-pathways.org. To donate to the Karen's Trail Campaign, please visit bit.ly/karenstrailcampaign.

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