

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION *Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee (MSPAC)*

August 11, 2011
MSU Diagnostic Center, Room 101
Lansing, Michigan

PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Hurley Coleman, Jr., Chair
Mary Brown, Vice-Chair
Commissioner John Madigan
Commissioner Frank Wheatlake

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Chris Graham
Robert Hoffmeyer
Mike McDonald
Kent Wood
Bill Rose

ABSENT

Jim Bradley
Tom Ferguson
Mike Foote
Mary Pitcher
Bill Rose
Todd Scott
Marne Smiley
Janet Mansfield, Ex-Officio Member
Duncan Wyeth, Ex-Officio Member

PUBLIC PRESENT

Joel Craig, Architecture Teacher, Pinckney High School, and Students Zach Lebeuk and Leslie Reifert

MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Chair Hurley Colema, Jr. called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m., with roll call and introductions around the room. Chair Coleman asked if any of the members had anything to add or adjust on the agenda. No additions or alterations to the agenda were offered.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Joel Craig, Architecture Teacher at Pinckney High School, introduced himself and his two students, **Zach Lebeuk and Leslie Reifert**. Craig explained that he has been an architecture teacher at Pinckney High School for 24 years and he encourages his students to work on

projects related to their community. He gave a brief overview about his students' most recent project. Students from the past school season worked on the Pinckney Depot, which is one of five remaining historical train depots in the State of Michigan. The depot has been publicly known as a place where youth like to gather and hang out; however, over the past couple of years, there has been concern with the appearance (graffiti) and unsafe conditions of the depot, including a few accidents that occurred at the depot. Mr. Craig then turned over the remainder of the presentation regarding the project itself to the students.

Zach and Leslie gave a brief presentation on what the students worked on and have accomplished with the Pinckney Depot. At one time, the depot was going to be destroyed due to vandalism, abuse and unsafe conditions. However, the state received a request to delay the destruction of the depot to allow the community more time to come up with a plan on how the historical structure could be restored, maintained and preserved. Pinckney High School's architectural class started their project in January/February of 2010, partnering with different entities and their community, including the DNR Parks and Recreation Division, the Village of Pinckney, Friends of the Lakeland Trail, and other organizations to conduct research while developing their project. Accomplishments to-date include a volunteer clean up day held in May 2011, where over 30 local volunteers helped clean up the site and removed hazardous materials, and the local hardware store donated paint to repaint the depot and cover up the graffiti. The community is also in the process of creating a non-profit historical society to run the depot, and developed a recreation feasibility study in hopes of obtaining a Recreation Passport grant to help fund renovations to the building. They created architectural plans to turn the depot into a historical, educational museum where they can display and present historical information about the depot and the town. They are working with a senior architectural firm to seek bids once a grant is secured. They feel this project and the depot, along with the adjacent Lakeland Trail, has already bonded the community together. It has offered youth the opportunity to get outdoors and get involved, while educating them on the history and importance of preserving this historical structure, and allows students a safe connection to their friend's houses via the trail system.

Chair Coleman commended the students and their teacher as leaders to improving the quality of life for their community and their youth. He looks forward to visuals and future updates to this committee regarding their efforts and their progress.

APPROVAL OF JUNE 9, 2011 MINUTES

Chair Coleman asked if the committee had any edits, changes or discussion regarding the June 9, 2011 Minutes. No comments/edits were offered. ***Kent Wood motioned to approve the Minutes; Bob Hoffmeyer seconded the motion; the motion unanimously carried and the June 9, 2011 Minutes were approved.***

MICHIGAN SEA GRANT PRESENTATION

Mary Bohling, Michigan Sea Grant Extension Educator for the Urban Southeast District, gave a brief overview about the Michigan Sea Grant program, which is one of thirty national programs sponsored by NOAA. They recently embarked on a joint project between Michigan State University, the University of Michigan, the DNR Fisheries Division, the Department of Community Health and Department of Environmental Quality to develop materials to educate the public and communicate Detroit River fish consumption advisories. With the economic decline, more and more people, families and communities are supplementing their diets with fish and fishing. Through studies/research conducted in 2007, fish consumption 'areas of

concern' were identified for the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River Basin, including the Detroit River. Students conducted surveys of shore fishermen and along river shorelines and found that many people were not aware of the fish consumption limits, the dangers or if they simply chose to ignore them. They then focused on getting fish consumption advisories to communities located near these areas of concern, identifying sites along a 32-mile stretch of the Detroit River where shore fishing is popular, and identified shore fishing areas in Monroe County, and western Lake Erie. They worked with local fishing groups to help educate the public, created temporary tattoos to draw kids in, cutting boards and cookbooks to entice people to learn how to safely filet and cook fish, and developed color-coded brochures to educate the public on safe fish, fish consumption limits, and dangers. Signage is posted all along the Detroit River, identifying fish, consumption limits, and how to filet fish to limit toxic consumption, etc. They distributed 40 signs in 23 different locations, touching 15 different communities. Milliken State Park and Harbor put up signs, and held fishing events for friends/families to educate them while they were fishing. They plan to get information out to faith-based communities, youth, and low income communities who are at a higher risk due to the economy and supplementing their diets with fishing.

Chair Coleman thanked Ms. Bohling for her presentation and in educating the public. He asked if the DNR plans to take this any further by extending advisories to all high risk areas around the state. **Jim Dexter, Acting DNR Fisheries Chief**, responded that this is not a normal function of the Fisheries Division; however, it was a perfect opportunity to partner with Michigan Sea Grant in getting the word out. They are in support of working on all fourteen areas of concern in the state; however, it takes a lot of money. He recommends targeting heavily used boat launches, working with Michigan state parks and recreation areas, and working with the licensing division to identify locations where a majority of fishing licenses are purchased and distribute publications to those communities and retailers. There is a lot that can be done, and working with the DNR Parks and Recreation Division would be a good start.

PARK IMPROVEMENT, PARK ENDOWMENT AND WATERWAYS FUNDS

Sharon Schafer, Jason Crandall, and Erik Eklund, DNR Finance and Operations, gave an overview of the Park Improvement Fund, the Park Endowment Fund, Recreation Passport Funds, and the Waterways Fund, including their revenue sources, balances, allowable uses, expenditures, the corpuses, and how they are appropriated.

Discussions ensued regarding the corpuses, and their anticipated growth based on oil and gas sales and revenues, and the success of the Recreation Passport.

Chair Coleman asked that an overview and discussion about all four funds and updates regarding the corpuses be brought back to this Committee in early 2012, and that fund balances become a standard agenda item at all future meetings.

RESOLUTIONS IN SUPPORT OF PHASE I GMPS

Mike McDonald, on behalf of Chris Graham, Chair of the MSPAC's Operations and Stewardship Subcommittee, reported that the subcommittee met, via a visual, Go-To meeting conference call, regarding the Phase I General Management Plans for Sleeper State Park and Port Crescent State Park, which were provided to all members for their review prior to today's meeting. He reported that the entire subcommittee thoroughly reviewed both plans and unanimously support both plans. Chair Coleman asked that each member read both Resolutions in Support of each General Management Plan and then asked for a motion to

approve the Resolutions. **Mike McDonald motioned to approve both Resolutions in Support of both General Management Plans; Bob Hoffmeyer seconded the motion; no objections were offered and both Resolutions in Support of the Phase I General Management Plans for Sleeper and Port Crescent State Parks unanimously carried.**

RECREATION PASSPORT UPDATES

Harold Herta, DNR Parks and Recreation, gave an overview/update on the Recreation Passport participation rate, to-date, explaining that the participation rate for the month of June was 23.2%. He also mentioned that the last three recorded months, April, May and June, consistently averaged 23% participation rate, and if this rate holds for the month of July, in addition to local Recreation Passports sold at state park entrances, then the overall participation rate will hit roughly around 24%. The top five counties for percentage of participation through June include Ottawa, Mason, Crawford, Cheboygan and Roscommon. The top five counties overall through June include Oakland, Wayne, Kent, Macomb and Ottawa.

Herta also gave updates on the relationship between the Secretary of State and the DNR, including discussions about options for expanding recognition of Recreation Passport participants beyond the small "P" indicator on their license plate tabs; adapting software to allow Recreation Passport sales right at car dealerships; exploring options of allowing non-annual renewed plates to purchase the Recreation Passport at Secretary of State branch offices; and incorporating the airing of a 30-second Recreation Passport promotional video at 88 Secretary of State branch offices.

Maia Stephens, DNR Parks and Recreation, gave a brief update on Recreation Passport marketing efforts, a list of Recreation 101 Events scheduled through the fall, and the addition of other Rec 101 programs.

NRPA 2012 NATIONAL GOLD MEDAL AWARD

Ron Olson mentioned that the DNR Parks and Recreation Division was chosen as one of five finalists for the 2012 National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA) Gold Medal in Excellence Award. Part of the application process was to create a video to present to the Awards Committee. Jolene Priest, DNR Marketing and Outreach, showed the video that qualified Michigan as one of the finalists. The winner of the 2012 NRPA Gold Medal in Excellence Award will be announced at the NRPA's Annual Conference in November, 2011.

Chair Coleman commended the DNR Parks and Recreation Division by stating that just being one of five finalists out of fifty states is, in itself, already a huge accomplishment.

CLOSING COMMENTS

Chair Coleman asked if there were any closing comments; none were offered. Chair Coleman requested a motion to adjourn. **Mary Brown motioned to adjourn the meeting; Bob Hoffmeyer seconded the motion; and the meeting adjourned at 12:13 p.m.**