

**SLEEPY HOLLOW STATE PARK
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The following is a summary of input received at a series of four Community Engagement Public Meetings on 4/12 afternoon, 4/14 afternoon, 4/14 evening and 4/20 evening, at Victor Township Hall, Laingsburg, MI. Dr. Chuck Nelson asked participants to identify Strengths, Weaknesses and Opportunities regarding Sleepy Hollow State Park. This input will be used to inform the planning team as the General Management Plan is developed.

STRENGTHS

Nature

- Woods/grasslands/openings/varied habitats
- Lake Ovid
- Natural beauty/aesthetics
- Diverse topography
- Park setting one easy to appreciate nature
- Quiet
- Large area of public land/2,500 acres

Facilities

- Campground
 - Privacy/vegetative screening between sites
 - Paved pads/roads
 - Accessible restrooms/showers
 - Playground
- Cabins
- Disc golf course
- Beach
- New boat ramp/parking area/entrance
- Handicapper deer blind
- Pavilions
- Road bicycling opportunities
- Trails
 - Equestrian
 - Multi-use
 - Hike/Bike

Location

- Near mid-MI population
- Still rural/small town feel

Activities

- Equestrian
- Hiking
- Bicycling (road and mountain)
- Hunting (especially deer hunting)
- Fishing
- Canoe/kayak/paddlesports
- Appreciate nature (e.g. bird watch, photography, relax, etc.)

Personnel

- DNR park managers and seasonal staff
- Explorer guide
- Park volunteers including Friends of SHSP, activity oriented groups (e.g. trail related), other volunteers

Management Actions

- Clean
- Sense of safety
- No wake lake
- Easy to reach beach
- Easy to launch watercraft
- Open year-round
- Long camping season for campground
- Effective integration of varying user groups/interests with minimal conflict
- Fostering park/user/volunteer partnerships
- Effectively developed facilities and did not impact natural sense of park
- Does not seem crowded

Programming

- Campground programs
 - Halloween, Crane Days, Christmas in July, etc.
- Explorer Guide programming
 - Owl walk, interpretive programs, Rec. 101, etc.
- Programs/events put on by partners/volunteers/park
 - Horse and equestrian rides, runs, disc golf tournaments, fishing tournaments, build snowshoes, etc.

WEAKNESSES

Nature

- Eurasian watermilfoil and other invasive plants
- Declining fishery for panfish

Facilities

- Campground
 - Lack tent camping opportunities with grass pad and separation from RVs
 - Electrical system inadequate for larger RVs
 - Pedestal placement too far from many campsites
 - Lack of ADA campsites (only 2 are rated accessible of 181)

- No equestrian campground
- No shade in group/organization camp
- No easy trail access to beach from campground
- Can't see lake from campground
- Can't moor or launch boat near campground

- Playground hidden in campground and difficult for day visitors to reach/park
- No indoor/climate controlled meeting or interpretive space

Beach

- No enclosed shallow area for young children
- NW shore location means lots of vegetation washed up by prevailing winds

Disc golf course

- Can't meet demand during tournaments
- Too much poison ivy in wooded holes
- Disgusting portajohns during off-season when beach restrooms closed

Trails

- Too many wet areas on equestrian, multi-use and hike/bike trails
- Some erosion problems where trails are too steep (fall line trails)
- Lack of trail mileage for equestrian, multi-use and hike/bike trails
- Concern about safety with two way bike trails and tight/blind turns
- Lack connection to Fred Meijer CIS trail from SHSP

- Abandoned parking lots near beach unsightly, out-of-place, inefficient

Day use areas

- Lack of electricity in some pavilions
- Lack fire rings and picnic tables away from pavilions in others
- Lack of shade in some day use areas
- Difficult to access largest island as bridge is a mile hike one way

Management Actions

- Lack of wildlife habitat management/enhancement
- Too much mowing/vegetation cutting between campsites
- Signage related to trails, orientation, interpretation, invasive species
 - Faded
 - In disrepair/missing
 - Confusing
- Lack of overall marketing plan for park, partners, neighboring communities
- Lack of recycling/too many trash bins

Conflicts

- Trespass on neighboring property to E of park N of Price Rd. often hunting related
- Shooting lanes for hunting being cut along trails create concern for trail users
- Lack of knowledge among trail users about hunting seasons esp. youth deer
- Neighbor concerns about slow drainage in park through shared Montague Drain
- Boundary signs noting park property too far apart to be clearly visible
- Deer stands left up all year in trees
- Purple insect traps scare some horses near equestrian trails

OPPORTUNITIES

Nature

Develop/implement invasive species control plan, especially in lake, to improve fishery, boating and swimming as well as overall habitat

Facilities

Campground

- Develop new tent sites with grass pads, separation from RV sites
- Develop some larger RV sites to accommodate bigger rigs
- Develop some full service campsites
- Provide wifi in the campground
- Upgrade electrical system with higher amperage, better placed pedestals
- Develop an accessible trail from campground to beach
- Upgrade/renovate bathrooms
- Make more campsites ADA accessible
- Provide a firewood vending machine

Develop an equestrian campground

Develop some walk-in, boat-in tent campsites

Trails

- Properly site all trails out of wet areas for longer use each year
- Develop new trail mileage for equestrian, multi-use and hike/bike
- Develop ADA trail East Pavilion/Org. Camp to Beach to Campground
 - Explore using material removed from abandoned lots in surfacing
 - Consider uses for former parking lots such as prairie habitat, overflow camping, etc.
- Develop accurate new trail maps with GPS data for all trails
- Develop with partners a connection from SHSP to Fred Meijer CIS trail

Develop indoor/climate controlled meeting and interpretive space

Develop/implement a sign plan for orientation, interpretive, distance and regulatory signs

Develop a second disc golf course

Develop a splash pad near the beach

Provide electrical service in all pavilions

Programming

Strengthen/provide more Explorer Guide and general interpretive programming

With partners develop a weekend event where all park partner/volunteer groups can encourage the public to participate in their chosen activities

- Bike
- Hike
- Run
- Bird nesting boxes
- Equestrian
- Fish
- Hunt,
- Disc golf

Management

Limit use of heavy vehicles in soft, wet ground for trail management