

MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES TRUST FUND

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Minutes of June 19, 2013

St. Anthony's Catholic Church Community Room

600 West Central Avenue, Mackinaw City

9:00 AM

The meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) Board of Trustees commenced at 9:05 AM.

The following Board members were present:

Brad Canale

Keith Charters

Keith Creagh

Sam Cummings

Bob Garner

Also in attendance were various staff members of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and other interested parties.

Chairperson Cummings took this opportunity to thank all parties involved in the bus tour of recreation sites, dinner and the "Dark Sky" boat tour that were held yesterday.

Acknowledgements of thanks went to Emmet County, Little Traverse Conservancy, Candy Corner, Village of Mackinaw City, Hayes Township, Jack Jones, A-Com, Mackinaw Shuttle, Pond Hill Farm, St. Anthony's Catholic Church, Audie's Restaurant, Mackinaw Area Historical Society, Sheffler's Mackinac Island Ferry, and City of Cheboygan.

I. ADOPTION OF MINUTES FOR MEETING OF APRIL 17, 2013.

Chairperson Cummings called for the adoption of the minutes for the April 17, 2013 MNRTF Board meeting.

MOVED BY MR. GARNER, SUPPORTED BY DIRECTOR CREAGH, TO APPROVE THE MINUTES FOR THE APRIL 17, 2013 MNRTF BOARD MEETING. PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

II. ADOPTION OF AGENDA FOR MEETING OF JUNE 19, 2013.

Chairperson Cummings called for the adoption of the agenda for the June 19, 2013 MNRTF Board meeting.

MOVED BY MR. CANALE, SUPPORTED BY MR. GARNER, TO ADOPT THE AGENDA FOR THE JUNE 19, 2013 MNRTF BOARD MEETING. PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

III. INTRODUCTIONS.

The Board members introduced themselves to the audience. Mr. Steve DeBrabander, Manager, Grants Management Section, Finance and Operations Division, DNR, introduced Grants Management staff present -- Mr. Jon Mayes, Unit Manager, MNRTF; Ms. Linda Harlow, Administrative Assistant to Grants Management and MNRTF Board; Ms. Janet Liesman, Financial Analyst; Ms. Jule Stafford, Grant Coordinator; Ms. Christie Bayus, Grant Coordinator; Ms. Shamika Askew-Storay, Grant Coordinator; and Ms. Tamara Jorkasky, Grant Coordinator. Also in attendance was Ms. Sharon Schafer, Chief, Finance and Operations Division, DNR.

IV. PUBLIC APPEARANCES.

Mr. Tom Bailey, Executive Director, Little Traverse Conservancy

Mr. Tom Bailey, Executive Director of Little Traverse Conservancy, provided the Board with a packet of information outlining what the Conservancy has done with MNRTF partners. The Conservancy has offered their services as a consultant to local units of government in the northern portion of Michigan to help them acquire land with the assistance of MNRTF program.

The MNRTF has provided over \$25 million in grants that Little Traverse Conservancy has been involved in. Almost \$10 million in funds raised or matching funds have been provided.

The Conservancy has been involved in 28 MNRTF projects (total projects completed by the Conservancy is 570). A total of 49,549 acres has been protected, with a total value of all projects (going back to the 1970's) of \$149 million.

Ms. Betsy Lieberman, Executive Director, Walloon Lake Trust and Conservancy – 13-083, Billiau Property Acquisition, Emmet County

Ms. Betsy Lieberman, Executive Director of the Walloon Lake Trust and Conservancy, made a presentation in support of the Billiau Property Acquisition application (13-083), submitted by Emmet County. This is for a 73-acre centennial farm in Resort Township which will be a county park. The wetlands and shoreline on the property are among the highest priorities for conservation within the Walloon Lake watershed.

She read a letter of support into the record.

Mr. Ross Maxwell, Director, Charlevoix County Parks

Mr. Ross Maxwell, Director of Charlevoix County Parks, thanked the Board for their support of MNRTF grants in Charlevoix County. He outlined improvements that have been accomplished to several parks in the county with the assistance of MNRTF funds, in particular, handicapped-accessible developments and Boyne City-Charlevoix non-motorized trail. This trail will eventually connect to the Camp Seagull property, which was approved for acquisition by the MNRTF to Hayes Township last year.

Mr. Chris Bunch, Executive Director, Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy

Mr. Chris Bunch, Executive Director of the Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy, thanked the Board for all the work that they do. He expressed his appreciation for the MNRTF acquisition grant provided last year for the Lake St. Clair Metropark (12-057) (grant received by Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority).

Mr. Bunch thanked all involved with the tours and dinner yesterday. He extended an invitation to hold the Board's October 2014 meeting in the Lake St. Clair area.

Ms. Emily Meyerson, Top of the Mitt Trails Council

Ms. Emily Meyerson from the Top of the Mitt Trails Council, made a presentation outlining trails that have been developed with the assistance of MNRTF funding – the Northeastern State Trail (from Alpena to Cheboygan) was opened last year.

Ms. Meyerson expressed her support for Phase I of the Northwestern State Trail Surfacing project – Alanson to Mackinaw City (12-138, DNR, Parks and Recreation Division).

Ms. Meyerson also outlined developments with the trailhead in the Alpena area. This was an application that was not recommended by the Board last year. The application has been resubmitted again this year (13-022). Mr. Garner thought there was a difficulty with this project because of a coalition of groups involved. Ms. Meyerson said there were letters of support from snowmobile clubs and others. Mr. DeBrabander added that in the past trailheads did not get the maximum trail points. With the Board's approval, scoring has been changed so that trailheads associated with an existing trail would get the maximum points and would score better.

Mr. Steve Bierkamp, Chair, Burt Lake Trail Committee

Mr. Steve Bierkamp, Chair of the Burt Lake Trail Committee, provided the Board with an update of the Burt Lake non-trail development project (TF10-047). A MNRTF grant was awarded to Burt Township in 2010 to begin the first three miles.

When the trail is completed, it will be an east-west connector trail between the North Central State Trail and the planned Northwest State Trail. The trail will be a 22-mile route around the north end of Burt Lake and an integral part of a 65-mile looped trail linking two northern Michigan rail trails.

In 2011, Cheboygan County was awarded a Michigan Department of Transportation grant for the trail to extend the trail an additional two miles (making it a five-mile trail).

The Burt Lake Trail Committee has and continues to work with township, village and county officials in the development of the trail. Plans are underway to extend the trail to the villages of Pellston and Topinabee.

A groundbreaking ceremony was held on May 13, 2013 to celebrate the start of construction of the Burt Lake Trail with completion scheduled for early August. A trail opening celebration and ribbon-cutting ceremony is scheduled for August 10, 2013.

Mr. Rich Bowman, The Nature Conservancy

Mr. Rich Bowman of The Nature Conservancy, advised the Board they will be getting invitations to the Eagle Harbor Township project (TF11-099, Coastal Wildlife Corridor Brockway acquisition). The property will be dedicated on August 12, 2013, with Governor Snyder in attendance.

Mr. Doug Luciani, President, Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce – Economic Impact of MNRTF Projects in Traverse City Area

Mr. Doug Luciani, President of the Traverse City Area Chamber of Commerce, made a PowerPoint presentation outlining the economic impact that MNRTF projects have made in the Traverse City area. Thirty percent of the jobs in northwest Michigan are in Grand Traverse County. He provided a video segment of the building removal for a new park that the MNRTF provided an acquisition grant a few years ago.

Mr. Luciani outlined testimonials of business owners in the area, describing how their customers have been drawn to the area. A famous Italian chef in New York stated that two of his favorite restaurants in the world are in Traverse City. In addition, air service has been expanded to include Cleveland, Newark, LaGuardia Airport, Atlanta, Denver, as well as the hubs to Chicago, Detroit and Minneapolis. The area has made the top ten list of most scenic rides in the country.

The area has been able to invest in wineries and microbreweries that are known throughout the country. Youth and amateur sports are another investment. Trails in the area, connecting with other state and regional trails, create an opportunity for world-class events coming to the area.

In addition, physical activities to improve the health of individuals are critical to be in compliance with the Affordable Health Care Act.

An economic impact study was done on two youth sporting events in Traverse City last year—a May soccer tournament and a July lacrosse tournament—to determine the impact of the region. There were 17,400 people who came to these events. Attendees came from all over the country and Canada. The average income of attendees was \$125,000 per year. The typical Michigan visitor is about half this amount. As a result of these two tournaments (six days), there was about \$3.4 million in direct spending in the area.

Mr. Canale asked how the per capita income has increased. Mr. Luciani responded that this is a five-county region. The per capita income in Kalkaska County has stayed the same; Leelanau and Grand Traverse Counties have increased slightly; and Antrim and Benzie Counties are slightly down. School enrollment is down.

Mr. Tom Paquin and Mr. Ron Yesney, DNR – American Transmission Company’s Easement Request on Hermanaba Trail (Menominee and Delta Counties)

Mr. Tom Paquin, Western UP District Supervisor, Parks and Recreation Division; and Mr. Ron Yesney, Trails Specialist, Parks and Recreation Division, DNR; made a PowerPoint presentation on the American Transmission Company’s easement request on Hermanaba Trail, located in Menominee and Delta Counties.

Mr. Yesney stated that in the western Upper Peninsula, there is about 457 miles of rail-trail, the most of any district in the state. This is a result of the amount of rails that were used for mining in the past. Most of the rail-trails are multi-use -- motorized and non-motorized use for snowmobiles, off-road vehicles, hiking, and biking. Major dollars for these trails come from the Snowmobile, Off-Road Vehicle, Recreation Improvement Fund, Recreation Trail and Recreation Passport programs. The Recreation Passport program has been developed to help fund maintenance work on multi-use trails.

Many Upper Peninsula communities rely on recreation and tourism dollars associated with rail-trails. The DNR is working to stimulate more recreational and economic opportunities for these communities. Tourism, forestry and mining are the three most prominent economic drivers in the Upper Peninsula.

The corridor for the Escanaba to Hermansville Trail was built by the SOO Line in 1901. The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) acquired the rail from Canadian National in 2007 with the assistance of MNRTF dollars. It is managed by the DNR through a Memorandum of Understanding with MDOT, who owns the property. The property is railbanked under State law and will need to stay in its current configuration in case it needs to be reactivated for railroad use. The property was purchased with the goal of connecting communities and providing recreation opportunities.

Mr. Charters asked if the MNRTF provided the funding, why MDOT doesn’t just turn the title over to the DNR. Mr. Yesney responded this is because of the railbanking agreement and the way the State Railbanking Act was set up. MDOT has a Rail Freight Division and in order to be

railbanked, the property has to be held by this division. Mr. Garner asked if a check, using MNRTF funds, was cut to MDOT. Mr. Yesney responded no, the project and funding was awarded to DNR. MDOT needs to hold the ownership because of the railbanking agreement.

The Escanaba to Hermansville corridor is 25.5 miles in length and is mostly 100 feet wide. It connects with the Felch Grade off-road vehicle route and multi-use trail. The trail will be managed for recreational trail use with additional focus on preserving the corridor for future rail use. The surface material is largely aggregate.

Actions that the DNR has taken include:

- Partnered with Normenco Sportsman Club and SORVA Delta to remove trash from the rail-trail.
- Corridor has been inspected and recorded all of the driveways, trespasses and bridges.
- Compiled public input from a public input period and developed a management strategy.
- Elected to pursue two Director's Orders prohibiting specific activities on the rail-trail.
- All bridges have been inspected by an engineering firm.
- Applied for grant dollars to improve the surface and deck/rail bridges.
- Worked toward an agreement with the City of Escanaba to connect the east end of the corridor to the trailhead in Escanaba.

In April of 2013, the American Transmission Company (ATC) applied to the DNR for the use of the corridor for a high-powered 138 KV transmission line. The application would include 19.9 miles of the 25.5 corridor. A recreational trail would be constructed within the corridor at ATC's expense in exchange for an easement approving construction of the 138 KV transmission line. ATC plans to apply to the Public Service Commission of the Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs (LARA) in October for formal approval to construct the transmission line.

Parks and Recreation Division have reviewed the easement request and are awaiting final design specifications from ATC.

Discussion ensued about the positive aspects for both ATC and the DNR with the approval of this easement.

At this point, this proposal is for the Board's information only and no action needs to be taken at this time.

Mr. Don Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Board; Mr. Joe Sancimino, Chair, Parks and Recreation Board, Arenac County; and Mr. Scott Bell – 13-099, Point AuGres Blue Water Trail Development

Mr. Don Hamilton, Parks and Recreation Board, Arenac County, thanked the Board for their past support of MNRTF funding for Arenac County.

Mr. Joe Sancimino, Chair of the Parks and Recreation Board, Arenac County, made a PowerPoint presentation in support of the Point AuGres Blue Water Trail Development project (13-099). The MNRTF was responsible for the funding of the AuGres County Park ten years ago. The property has been well-maintained and has provided recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.

Mr. Scott Bell outlined the proposed project. The Arenac County Parks and Recreation Commission was established in 1978, and currently own three county parks: Oasis Lake Park, Point AuGres Park and Youngman Park. The proposed development project would be in the Point AuGres Park.

In 2012, an Arenac Economic Development Commission study found that there was very little public access to the Saginaw Bay and recommended the Blue Water Trail. There is 47 miles of coastal shoreline in this area with limited access. To the north there is the Huron Shores Coastal Water Trail and to the south is the Tip of the Thumb Water Trail. The county received a Coastal Zone Management grant to assist with the development plan and Saginaw Bay Water Trail promotion.

The Point AuGres Park is used as the primary launch landing site for the Blue Water Trail.

The park was a privately-owned campground until 1997. It was purchased by Arenac County, with the assistance of the MNRTF, in 2002. In 2004, extensive improvements were made, again with the assistance of the MNRTF, including the boardwalk, cabins and restroom.

The park is 6.9 acres, with 1300 feet of waterfront on Saginaw Bay. There are five rustic cabins, 19 rustic campsites, three pavilions, playground, docks, office and environmental center, boardwalk, volleyball courts and horseshoe pits.

The proposed project submitted for possible MNRTF funding includes: improve dock and construct EZ Launch, information kiosk, signage and storage racks, modernize campsites (install water and electric), provide electricity and water to cabins and pavilions, and shower building.

Mr. Bell stated that there is much support for this project from various local units of governments, school district and other organizations.

Mr. Keith Frank, Park Manager, City of East Tawas – 13-020, East Tawas City Park – Genii's/Verlac Acquisition

Mr. Keith Frank, Park Manager for the City of East Tawas, made a PowerPoint presentation in support of the East Tawas City Park/Genii's/Verlac Acquisition project (13-020).

East Tawas City Park is located on Tawas Bay in downtown East Tawas, with the campground adjacent to the East Tawas Harbor of Refuge and the downtown business district. The campground is open all year. It has 174 campsites. The Genii's/Verlac Acquisition would enable the park to expand.

The acquisition will be to acquire two parcels bordering the park's day-use area and public beach, adding 201 feet of Lake Huron shoreline. The total acquisition of the two parcels is .93 acres, with an assessed value of \$565,000. Additions to the park by this acquisition would be expansion of current day-use and parking (20 additional spaces). In addition, the city is working with the AuSable Valley Audubon to provide a "bird hide" and additional waterfowl viewing enhancement. The project will enhance the economic opportunities for the area residents and visitors.

This project is in compliance with the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) to expand recreational facilities and to increase the quality of life for residents and visitors. It also is in alignment with the US-23 Heritage Route Management Plan and addresses the need for expanded recreational facilities along the southern portion of the Heritage Route system.

Waterfront property was the highest priority identified at the city's public input meeting held September 6, 2012 regarding the city's recreation. With acquisition of these parcels, the city-owned water frontage open for public access on Tawas Bay would be 2,042 feet.

Mr. Frank proceeded to outline proposed uses of the two parcels via photographs.

Mr. Lyn Johnson, Controller, Emmet County; and Ms. Sandy Planisek – 13-055, Cecil Bay Park Boardwalk and Kayak Launch; and 13-083, Billiau Property Acquisition

Mr. Lyn Johnson, Controller for Emmet County, and Ms. Sandy Planisek, provided a PowerPoint presentation in support of the Cecil Bay Park Boardwalk and Kayak Launch (13-055) and the Billiau Property Acquisition (13-083) projects.

Mr. Johnson outlined the Billiau Property Acquisition. This consists of 73 acres, with 1700 feet on Walloon Lake. The property is a centennial farm, being owned by the same family since 1913, and currently another part is being farmed by a family member. There are some out buildings on the property. The property is located in Resort Township.

The county would like to extend their “Dark Sky” program, arboretums, cross-country skiing, preserving the shoreline activities with the acquisition of this property.

Chairperson Cummings asked what condition the buildings were in. Mr. Johnson responded that the barn was built in 1915, and the house is in excellent shape. The family is still living in it. Some pole barns are on the property and they will be removed.

Ms. Planisek continued with the presentation. She stated that the City of Mackinaw City was chosen this year by Family Fun magazine as the number one family destination in America. Part of the reason for this is the MNRTF providing the funding to enable the city to provide recreation opportunities for residents and visitors.

Ms. Planisek outlined the Cecil Bay Park Boardwalk and Kayak Launch project. The park project was initially funded with the assistance of the MNRTF in 1987 and 1989 (900 acres). The park is located halfway between the City of Mackinaw City and Wilderness State Park.

The development project would include an accessible boardwalk to the beach, restroom/changing rooms, fishing/picnic/viewing platforms and a kayak/canoe launch. The county has also received a Coastal Zone Management grant from the Department of Environmental Quality to do a waterways trail. There is a partnership between the Top of the Mitt Trails Council, Emmet County, Cheboygan County, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments and Mackinaw City for this trail project.

Director Creagh asked if the water trail was integrated with the Office of Great Lakes as to their strategy. Ms. Planisek responded that the Northeast Michigan Council of Governments has taken the lead on that grant. Director Creagh stated that there is a land strategy called for in the Governor’s Environment and Energy message on water strategy. Mr. John Allen from the Office of the Great Lakes is leading the water strategy. Part of that strategy is water trails and the connectivity between land and water. As the water trail is developed, it might potentially be a good thing to showcase. He asked that DNR staff be updated on progress.

Mr. Jason Jones, Director of Parks and Recreation, Grand Traverse County – 13-059, Maple Bay Park and Natural Area Improvements

Mr. Jason Jones, Director of Parks and Recreation for Grand Traverse County, made a PowerPoint presentation in support of the Maple Bay Park and Natural Area Improvements (13-059) project.

The Maple Bay Park and Natural Area encompasses 400 acres. There is 2500+ feet of frontage on East Grand Traverse Bay. In 2001, the county received a \$6.8 million MNRTF grant for the park, which was the largest grant in the MNRTF’s history. Surrounding areas include properties owned by the land conservancy and state.

Development for the beach area of the park would include accessible vault toilet, picnic pavilion, well pump, accessible grill, accessible concrete sidewalk, asphalt parking (18 spaces), kiosk, amenities and fencing. On the Bates Road portion, development would include driveway, bioretention area, picnic pavilion, well pump, accessible concrete sidewalk, fencing, accessible grill, amenities, asphalt parking (13 spaces), accessible vault toilet, gravel driveway, and pathway. The Bates Road portion is the more “passive” area of the park.

Mr. Charters asked about the east side of the road and where the earned farmland money goes. Mr. Jones responded that this money stays with the farmer for a limited income. The farm house is owned by the regional land conservancy. Mr. Charters wondered if the farmer gets to farm the land for nothing. Mr. Jones responded yes.

Mr. Charters asked about making the public aware of the park (signage and marketing). There has been \$6.8 million of MNRTF funding awarded to this park. If the public is not aware of the park’s existence and location, it becomes merely a park for local residents. He wants to make it more accessible to visitors and citizens of Michigan. Mr. Jones responded they are working together with their partners to better promote their parks to the public outside of Grand Traverse County. Mr. Charters asked if there was a sign identifying this park. Mr. Jones responded that there is a sign off of US-31 identifying Maple Bay Park and Natural Area. Mr. Charters added that it is important to promote all MNRTF projects as they belong to the citizens of the State of Michigan.

Mr. DeBrabander added that in the scoring criteria used to evaluate projects there is a category for “Marketing and Outreach”. We request applicants provide information on how they are going to market their park system in general and their project. Staff is now in the process of a project inspection of the encumbered parks under all of the grant programs administered by Grants Management Section. One of the things required is an actual photograph of their park entry sign.

Ms. Sheila Aldrich, City Manager, City of Manistique – 13-111, Manistique River Waterfront North Lot Acquisition; 13-112, Manistique River Waterfront Lot US-2 Acquisition; and 13-113, Manistique River Waterfront Elk Street Acquisition

Ms. Sheila Aldrich, City Manager for the City of Manistique, made a presentation in support of the Manistique River Waterfront North Lot Acquisition (13-111), Manistique River Waterfront Lot US-2 Acquisition (13-112), and Manistique River Waterfront Elk Street Acquisition (13-113) projects. She provided a color-coded map that outlined the proposed acquisition projects.

The city currently has a boardwalk on Lake Michigan. The city, along with some other partners (local units and other organizations), have been working on a plan to extend the boardwalk (path) from Lake Michigan to the Manistique River, then east on Pine Street in the city and then to Central Park (MNRTF provided funding for this park). It would then continue east and then south to US-2. This would be a three-plus-mile path. The three acquisition applications submitted would be to acquire property to make the waterfront more accessible (1.16 acres

Manistique River waterfront north lot, 13-111; and 7.64 acres, US-2 lot, 13-112) and 2.73-acre (four lots) to Manistique River parcel for public parking to access the path extension, 13-113.

Ms. Aldrich stated that the City of Manistique just received a designation of “Community for a Lifetime” from the State of Michigan. The city also received an award from Johnson and Johnson.

Director Creagh stated that a dam is in the process of being put built (1700 feet along the bank that would be improved). He wondered if the boardwalk tied into this dam. Ms. Aldrich stated that the portion owned by the Manistique Paper is still in the permitting process. Director Creagh would like to find out if the 1700 feet of the river would be advantageous to the city’s project. He would like the city to let Mr. DeBrabander know the result of this.

Mr. Karl G. Zueger, Assistant City Manager/Parks and Recreation Director, City of Marquette; and Ms. Michelle Butler, Property Owner – 13-032, Clark Lambros Beach Park Acquisition

Mr. Karl Zueger, Assistant City Manager/Parks and Recreation Director for the City of Marquette, made a PowerPoint presentation in support of the Clark Lambros Beach Park Acquisition (13-032) project.

Ms. Butler, who is the property owner of the proposed acquisition, outlined aspects of the project. The family has absorbed all the costs, including the donated land process, to help meet the requirements of the grant request. It is hoped that this project will create a high quality park in the City of Marquette. Another goal is to establish an endowment fund to insure that the park is maintained in perpetuity.

Mr. Zueger continued the presentation. This is a nine-acre parcel that has 1500 feet of Lake Superior beach. It also includes 300 feet of Dead River frontage for fishing and wildlife viewing. The property would provide the following:

- Protected from dangerous rip-tides.
- Opportunity to protect fragile ecology.
- Gathering point for city trail system.
- Expand Moosewood Outdoor Laboratory.
- Safe Lake Superior paddle sport access.
- Storm protected scenic overlooks.
- 300 feet of riparian habitat.
- Migratory Warbler and waterfowl viewing.
- Fishing access.
- Wetland habitat protection.

Mr. Zueger outlined various other features of the property via photographs on PowerPoint.

Chairperson Cummings asked Ms. Butler about the cost of the acquisition. Ms. Butler responded that her family will donate back the purchase price of the property for endowment and infrastructure improvements. Chairperson Cummings thanked Ms. Butler and her family for their dedication and generosity in making the park a reality.

Mr. Rob Manigold, Township Supervisor, Peninsula Township – 13-086, Bowers Harbor Park Expansion

Mr. Rob Manigold, Township Supervisor for Peninsula Township, made a PowerPoint presentation in support of the Bowers Harbor Park Expansion (13-086) project.

Mr. Manigold stated that the township has received MNRTF funding in the past. Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy has been very helpful to the township in obtaining grants. In addition, in 1995 the township was awarded \$1 million for a MNRTF acquisition grant for development rights easements on farmland to provide significant scenic views of Lake Michigan and Grand Traverse Bay. At the current time, there are 6,000 acres under conservation easements.

The acquisition project for Bowers Harbor Park would be to acquire an additional 60 acres for recreational activities. The township would like to provide a walking path, dog park, baseball fields, pavilions, playground, gravel parking, and bioretention area.

In addition, the Traverse City Track Club Bayshore Marathon holds its half marathon annually, and the event finishes at Bowers Harbor Park. Last year there were 500 participants. This event provided over \$2 million to the local economy. Also, the Traverse City Triathlon held their event at Bowers Harbor Park. A Spanish soccer league and Cherry Roubaix bike race are also held in the park. Participation at these events keeps increasing.

V. OLD BUSINESS.

2013 MNRTF Application Review – Thumb Drives/Notebooks

Chairperson Cummings stated that all Board members have received either a thumb drive or notebook of all 2013 MNRTF application information.

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

Update on MNRTF Staff Activities

Mr. DeBrabander outlined the following MNRTF staff activities that have taken place since the last Board meeting:

- Grant Coordinators are in the process of conducting site inspections of 2013 applications received. There were 142 applications received under the MNRTF program; the total for all three grant programs was 251 applications.
- The new database for Grants Management is still underway. We are still on schedule for 2014 to be a paperless program – applicants will complete applications on line and send all documents electronically. Staff will be providing information regarding the new process at its workshops in January and February, 2014.
- Staff has been involved in 14 workshops and 11 have been completed. The three that are remaining are MI Place Making workshops that are being conducted throughout the state with four other state departments – Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Michigan State Housing Development Authority, Department of Environmental Quality and Michigan Department of Transportation.
- Staff has completed an update of the MNRTF Board Policies and Procedures booklet and the updated version is on the Grants website.
- Grants Management Section has approximately 7,000 sites that must be site-inspected or self-certified by the grantee to make sure they remain in public outdoor recreation use. One of the requirements is that the recreation site has a grant program recognition sign, as well as a park entrance sign. Staff is in the process of getting caught up in the backlog of inspections. Staff is 15 counties into the goal of getting caught up, with the goal of sending out three counties per month. Grantees are sent post-completion self-inspection forms to complete and send back. Also, we are requiring this self-inspection form to be completed for each grant a community has received when they prepare a new five-year recreation plan. Grant Coordinators also do post-completion inspections when they are out doing their site inspections for new applications.

Mr. Charters asked what kind of response staff was receiving from the grantees. Mr. DeBrabander responded that the initial response was about 50 percent. If the grantee did not respond to the initial letter, a reminder letter is sent out. If still no response, a third and final, strongly worded letter is sent out stating that failure to comply with the self-inspection request will negatively affect their score for future grants or may make them ineligible. That tends to get more of a response. In addition, staff is discovering in about 50 percent of responses received there are issues with the site—the majority being with signage. There is a link to order recognition signs for both the MNRTF and Land and Water Conservation Fund programs on the Grants website. Per the report sent by the sign manufacturer, there has been a significant increase in sign orders.

TF12-122, Grant Township Park/Copper Harbor Playground Renovation, Grant Township – PROJECT WITHDRAWAL

MOVED BY MR. GARNER, SUPPORTED BY MR. CHARTERS, TO ACCEPT THE WITHDRAWAL OF TF12-122, GRANT TOWNSHIP PARK/COPPER HARBOR PLAYGROUND RENOVATION, GRANT TOWNSHIP. PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.

2013 MNRTF Applications – Invitations to Make Presentations at August Board Meeting in Lansing (Southern Lower Peninsula)

Mr. Jon Mayes, MNRTF Unit Manager, Grants Management, DNR, mentioned that the Board has received a letter in their Board package outlining the list of applicants to be invited to make a presentation at the August meeting. If Board members have any additions to the list, let him know.

MNRTF Board's October 2014 Meeting – Invitation to Hold Meeting in Lake St. Clair Area (on behalf of Chris Bunch, Executive Director, Six Rivers Regional Land Conservancy)

This topic was previously discussed by Mr. Bunch under “Public Appearances.”

VII. STATUS REPORTS.

DNR Real Estate Report – State Acquisitions

Mr. DeBrabander stated that the Board has received a copy of the DNR Real Estate Report in their Board package. There has been one state project – Coopersville and Marne Railroad Corridor in Ottawa County – that has been completed.

MNRTF Financial Report

The report was not discussed, however, Chairperson Cummings pointed out that the “Payments in-Lieu of Taxes (PILT)” line item has been moved from the “Operating Expenditures” line to a separate line item.

MNRTF Land Consolidation and Line Item Department Projects

Mr. DeBrabander stated that the Board has received these reports in their Board package. Staff has been making contact with local units of government, and Mr. Mayes with DNR divisions, to check on the status of open projects in the attempt to close out projects.

VIII. OTHER MATTERS AS ARE PROPERLY BROUGHT BEFORE THE BOARD.

Chairperson Cummings stated that the MNRTF Investment Policy action by the Board will be moved to the August 21, 2013 meeting. The Board has received a proposed investment policy and the subcommittee will meet one more time before the August meeting. There could be a financial impact on this year's grant disbursement amount relative to the adoption of this policy.

Director Creagh outlined the 2013 summit held on January 11th. There were various stakeholders who attended. This brought together the MNRTF, Natural Resources Commissioners, Blue Ribbon Committee individuals, snowmobile, trails, The Nature Conservancy, Little Traverse Conservancy and others to come up with a vision and priorities. A work project was put together and provided to the Subcommittee on Parks of the Natural Resources Commission.

As part of the Governor's Energy and Environment message, there is a land strategy that has been put together consisting of members from Michigan United Conservation Clubs, The Nature Conservancy, Little Traverse Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Northern Initiative, Southeast Council of Governments, Alliance for Economic Success, The Right Place, Northeast Michigan Council of Governments, Chevron, Michigan Environmental Council, Plumb Creek, Oakland County Parks and Recreation, Michigan Recreation and Park Association, Michigan Snowmobile Association and Michigan State University. These members looked at a comprehensive land strategy.

There was a perspective that there were 4.6 million acres which the State of Michigan owns where there was not enough information as to purpose, location and ultimate use of land. There were six public hearings, as well as other meetings held. Director Creagh met with officials from the ten counties in Michigan where the most land is owned. From these hearings/meetings the DNR was commended for their good work, but also received some criticism in some areas. The strategy is moving along and it is hoped to be finalized and presented to the Governor within the next two weeks.

Director Creagh also mentioned that at the present time the Legislature is debating the restructuring package for licenses. DNR had 227 licenses and it was simplified to 40. DNR has received all the user groups' support. The problem the Legislature had yesterday was land – that the DNR should not spend any Game and Fish Fund money on land.

Director Creagh urged the audience to support natural resources in a broader context by making sure their local legislators understand the importance of the process. Mr. Garner also agreed that it was important to contact legislators on the land issue.

Chairperson Cummings advised the audience that Mr. Garner is being inducted into the Michigan Conservation Hall of Fame this weekend.

IX. ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The next meeting of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board is scheduled for 9:00 AM, Wednesday, August 21, 2013, Lansing Community College West Campus, 5708 Cornerstone, Lansing, Michigan.

X. ADJOURNMENT.

**MOVED BY MR. GARNER, SUPPORTED BY MR. CHARTERS, TO
ADJOURN THE MEETING. PASSED WITHOUT DISSENTING VOTE.**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:57 AM.

Sam Cummings, Chairperson
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Board of Trustees

Steven J. DeBrabander, Manager
Grants Management

DATE