

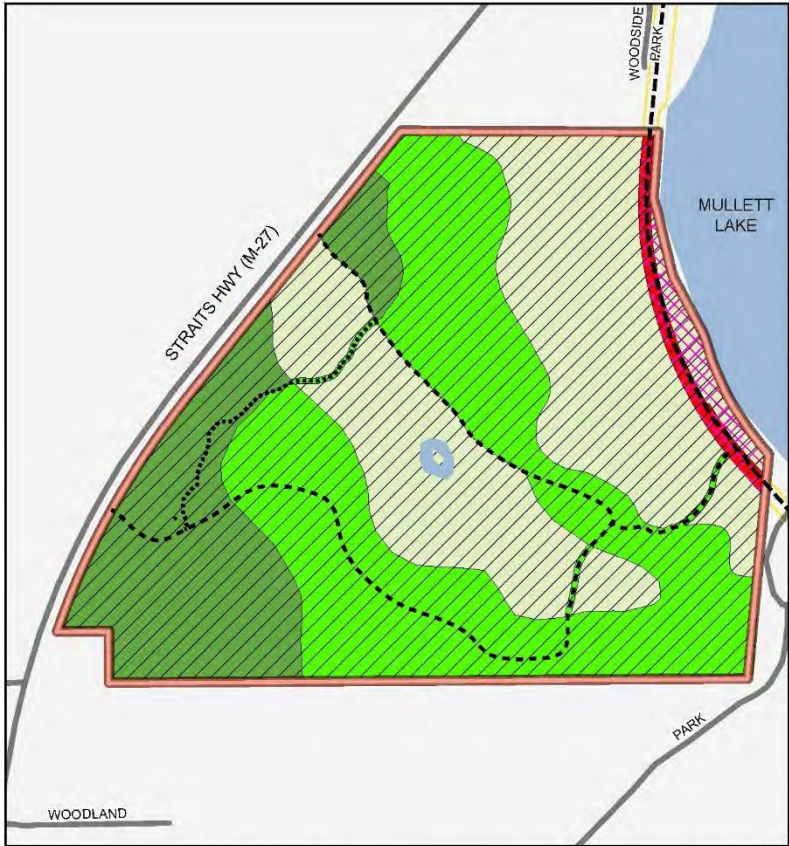
# Gete Mino Mshkiigan Draft General Management Plan



Michigan Department of  
Natural Resources, Parks and  
Recreation Division  
July 2022

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# Plan Approvals



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
**Gete Mino Mshkiigan - Draft Management Zones**

|                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Boundary                | Developed Recreation        |
| Road                    | Natural Resource Recreation |
| Designated Rail Trail   | Backcountry                 |
| Proposed Foot Trail     | Primitive                   |
| Undesignated Foot Trail | Cultural Landscape Overlay  |
| Ponds, Lakes and Rivers | Scenic Overlay              |

Updated: 06/23/2022

This plan was prepared by Debbie Jensen, Park Management Plan Administrator,  
 Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Division

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 Chief, Planning & Infrastructure Section

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 Date

**GETE MINO MSHKIIGAN  
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN  
PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS:**

PRD – SECTION CHIEFS:

Date:

DNR – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BUREAU:

Date:

MSPAC – STEWARDSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE:

Date:

NRC – MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

Date:

# Resolution

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# Executive Summary

The 147-acre undeveloped Gete Mino Mshkiigan property (formerly referred to as Mullett Lake South or the Jeanie Johnson tract) was purchased by the state in 2013 from the Little Traverse Conservancy, with funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund State Trailways Initiative. The property is in Mullett Township, Cheboygan County, south of the community of Topinabee at the “Tip of the Mitt” in Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. It is accessed off N. Straits Highway (M-27), which is the main route between the towns of Indian River and Cheboygan. The property name, pronounced “Geh teh mi no mush key gun”, was suggested by the current and former Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians. The name roughly translates from Anishinaabemowin to English as Ancient Good Wetlands, capturing the land’s history, beauty, abundance, and centrality within the larger wetland chain that is the Inland Waterway.

Gete Mino Mshkiigan includes 1,500 feet of frontage on the southwest shore of Mullett Lake, the fifth largest inland lake in the state and part of the Inland Waterway, a 38-mile navigable route from Lake Huron at the mouth of the Cheboygan River to Crooked Lake at Conway. The property features undulating terrain dominated by mixed coniferous-deciduous forest, with approximately 35% of the land identified as emergent wetlands. The North Central State Trail runs through the property near the lakeshore. A residential structure and associated buildings have been removed, but a two-track trail system remains evident across the site. The land is managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) out of the Cheboygan Field Office. The property is closed to ORV use in accordance with state land use rules.



*Shore of Mullett Lake*

The purpose of this General Management Plan (GMP) is to guide the future long-term management of Gete Mino Mshkiigan. Overall, the GMP seeks to uphold the Parks and Recreation Division’s Mission Statement: *“to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan’s unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.”*

The plan defines the following for the park:

- **Purpose and significance** that captures the unique identity of Gete Mino Mshkiigan.
- **20-year Management Zone Plan** reflecting the resource protection goals and level of development appropriate for each area of the property.
- **10-year Action Goals** that address the desired future condition within the property as a whole, and each of the designated management zones.

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) of the DNR oversaw the planning process. The plan was developed with significant and valuable input from the planning team, which included representatives from all DNR resource divisions and the Mullett Township supervisor. The planning team in turn solicited input from stakeholders and the public. Furthermore, several existing planning documents were used as guiding references (See Chapter 1 for additional information on guiding references).

The Supporting Analysis, included as Appendix A of this document, provides significant background information to inform this planning initiative. It includes a comprehensive review of the property setting, area demographics, history, land ownership, legal mandates, and cultural, natural and recreation resources.

## Significance of Gete Mino Mshkiigan

Each GMP developed by PRD is built upon the property's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's system. Following is a summary of the features that were determined significant for Gete Mino Mshkiigan. The full statements of significance can be found in Chapter 3.

### Location/Access

- On the 17,000-acre Mullett lake
- Accessible from the North Central State Trail (NCST), road and water

### Mullett Lake/Waterways

- Situated approximately midway along the 38-mile Inland Waterway
- 1,500 feet of undeveloped shoreline
- Opportunities for public access, stewardship and recreation

### History

- The Inland Waterway has long been used as transportation corridor
- Native Americans have lived along the waterway for millennia, and the landscape remains important to contemporary Anishinabek lifeways, traditions, beliefs, and heritage
- Former Michigan Central Railroad

### Linear Trail

- 75-mile NCST runs through the property
- Open to all non-motorized uses year-round and snowmobile use in the winter months
- Access to an extensive regional trail network

### Natural Resources

- Quality forest cover types
- Habitat for a variety of plant and animal species
- Opportunities for natural resource- and wildlife-based recreation and education opportunities



- Ancient beach ridge from historic shoreline of Mullett Lake

## Management Zones

A key goal in the development of this General Management Plan is to continue to protect the property's natural and cultural resources, while providing access to recreation and education opportunities. The planning team, with stakeholder and public input, established appropriate management zones for the property. From a palette of nine standard zones, four zones and two overlay zones were applied to Gete Mino Mshkiigan. The Management Zone Map and a thorough review of each management zone are found in Chapter 4 of this plan. A condensed description of each management zone is as follows:

### **Primitive Zone**

This zone is approximately 55 acres (38% of the property) covering the wooded wetlands and most of the lakeshore. This area is dominated by rich conifer swamp. No development is proposed in this zone, which only permits foot traffic.

### **Backcountry**

The backcountry zone applies to 60.2 acres (39%) and includes the upland wooded areas, reflecting high-quality mesic northern forest. Corridors of backcountry zone buffer existing or proposed trail routes through the primitive zone. This zone allows for a slightly higher level of development than the primitive zone, but still maintains an emphasis on resource protection.

### **Natural Resource Recreation Zone**

The Natural Resource Recreation Zone applies to upland areas adjacent Straits Highway, covering approximately 30 acres (20%). In this zone, more active recreation may take place, including parking areas and rustic supporting amenities, such as vault toilets, information kiosk etc.

### **Developed Recreation Zone**

This zone is applied to the 100-foot North Central State Trail property, covering about 2.7 acres. Active recreation with a high density of use is typical of the Developed Recreation Zone.

### **Cultural Landscape Overlay**

The entire property falls within this zone designation in recognition of the cultural sites that have been identified and the likelihood of other sites yet to be discovered.

### **Scenic Overlay**

This designation protects the scenic qualities of the lakeshore area (5.7 acres), protecting the views of Mullet Lake from the trail.

## 10-Year Action Goals

Once the planning team established management zones to guide Gete Mino Mshkiigan for the next twenty years, a series of action goals were identified that the planning team believes are necessary to achieve the desired user experience and level of resource protection. Action goals are considered for each of six key considerations: natural resources, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, education and interpretation opportunities, management, and development.

The action goals are broken down into categories pertaining either to park management and operations, large infrastructure and development projects requiring capital outlay, and small infrastructure and development projects. Below is a summary of the 10-year action goals developed for the property. The full list can be found in Chapter 5 of this plan and a guide to implementation in Chapter 6.

### **Management and Operations**

The property will be formally designated as Gete Mino Mshkiigan, and land use rules clarified or promulgated to close the property to snowmobile use and metal detecting. The property will remain open to hunting through a Wildlife Conservation Order, if needed. An inventory of forest cover types is also proposed, which will help to inform a Stewardship Plan for the property, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies. Emergency, safety and wildfire plans will also be developed, as well as planning for management of the lakeshore. The DNR will work closely with adjacent neighborhood associations to ensure cooperative management and communication.

### **Infrastructure and Development (Capital Outlay)**

Key to having a better understanding of the property is completing a phase 1 archaeological survey. This will ensure that any cultural resources that may be present are protected. Following this survey, a loop hiking trail system will be designated through the property, which may include boardwalk construction as needed to cross wetlands.

### **Infrastructure and Development (Small Projects)**

Small projects to be implemented using park or district funds include surveying and delineating the park boundary on southeast end of the lakeshore and signing the land boundary for no motorized vehicle use. Taking the results of the cultural survey into account, a parking lot and entrance sign, with associated amenities, will be installed off State Highway. Developing interpretation materials of the cultural and natural resources of the property is a longer-term goal for the property.

# 1. Core Values & Guiding References

Throughout the planning process, the core values of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) were the foundation of the planning team’s decisions. These include the mission statement of the DNR, the five goals of the DNR, and the DNR Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) mission statement. These values set the protection of natural and cultural resources and the provision of recreational and educational opportunities at the forefront of the plan.

## 1.1 Mission Statements and Goals

### **DNR Mission Statement**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state’s natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

### **DNR Evergreen Goals**

- **Protect** natural and cultural resources
- **Ensure** sustainable recreation use and enjoyment
- **Enable** strong natural resource-based economies
- **Foster** effective business practices and good governance
- **Improve** and build strong relationships and partnerships, internally and externally

### **PRD Mission Statement**

The Parks and Recreation Division’s mission is to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan’s unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.

## 1.2 Guiding References

The general management planning process is guided and shaped by several resources developed to provide recommendations for managing Michigan’s parks and recreation system. The following resources helped shape the 10-Year Action Goals established in this plan.

### **Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) (2018-2022)**

SCORP is a five-year strategic plan that shapes investment by the state and local communities in priority outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming. The Plan’s overarching goal is to “Protect and manage Michigan’s diverse and abundant natural and cultural assets to provide relevant, quality experiences that meet the fun, relaxation, and health needs of Michigan’s residents and visitors, and support economic prosperity” by meeting the following objectives:

- Foster stewardship and conservation

- Improve collaboration
- Raise awareness
- Improve recreational access
- Provide quality experiences
- Enhance health benefits
- Enhance prosperity

### **Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trail Plan (2022 - 2032)**

The 2022-2032 Michigan DNR Trails Plan guides the direction of more than 13,400 miles of Michigan’s diverse trail opportunities and lays out key goals to ensure these assets are sustained and remain relevant into the future. To further elevate Michigan’s national reputation as the Trails State, the DNR will pursue the following goals over the next ten years:

- Sustainable maintenance and development: Manage Michigan’s state-designated trails system to sustainably maintain and improve existing conditions while supporting the DNR’s long-term natural and cultural resource management goals.
- Funding: Develop and refine funding structures to ensure state-designated trails provide quality recreation and transportation experiences.
- Planning and collaboration: Model trail planning best practices to maintain and improve strong relationships and partnerships with the public, stakeholders and other governmental agencies.
- Marketing, promotion and education: Promote Michigan’s diverse trail opportunities to residents and visitors, accurately depicting experiences found throughout the state.

### **DNR Public Land Strategy – The Power of Public Lands (2021-2027)**

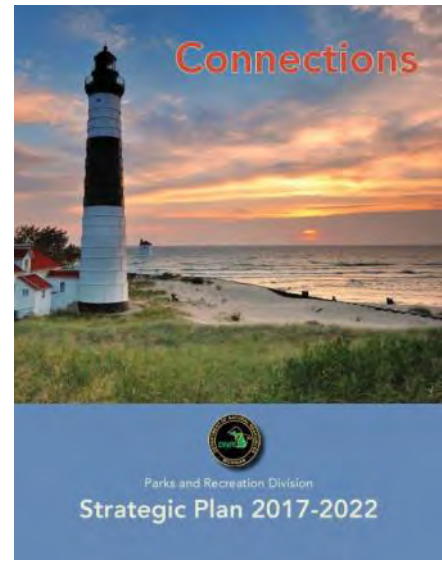
The public land strategy provides a framework for the conservation and management of DNR-managed public land to ensure the best use of the state’s natural and cultural resources for the benefit of Michigan residents and visitors. The strategy sets priorities and guides actions for the best use of the 4.6 million acres of state forests, parks, trails, game and wildlife areas, and other public lands the Michigan DNR is entrusted to manage on behalf of the people. The plan identifies three broad goals with strategies and measurable objectives for each goal. These goals are to:

- Protect natural and cultural resources
- Provide access to outdoor public recreation opportunities
- Perform responsible natural resource management

## PRD Strategic Plan 2017-2022: Connections

The PRD Strategic Plan is the overarching document that guides the Parks and Recreation Division in carrying out its mission. This plan establishes long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for Michigan’s state parks and recreation system for the 5-year period beginning in 2017. The goals identified in the plan are:

- Be exemplary stewards of Michigan’s natural and cultural resources.
- Provide users with quality outdoor recreation experiences in balance with resource protection.
- Continue to advance Michigan as the “Trail State.”
- Provide a relevant gateway to connect people to nature and Michigan’s cultural heritage, and foster understanding and support for PRD’s mission among future generations.
- Improve and maintain strong public, stakeholder and department communication, relationships and partnerships.
- Engage in strategies to increase community and state economic prosperity.
- Sustainably support PRD programs, operations and facilities.
- Foster and adopt effective and safe business practices.



## 1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates

For all park general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the plan, park management and park operations. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. There are several general and site-specific legal mandates applicable to Lime Island State Recreation Area listed in Appendix A: Supporting Analysis.

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management at Gete Mino Mshkiigan focus on the following areas:

- Identification of the duties of the DNR in reinforcing its core values concerning preservation, protection and management.
- Preservation of cultural resources
- Protection of wetlands

## 2. Plan Process Overview

Gete Mino Mshkiigan was acquired by the DNR in 2013 with assistance from the Little Traverse Conservancy and using funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Although the property has been open to the public since that time, no formalized recreation opportunities currently exist on the property.

### 2.1 Planning Objectives

General management planning sets out a framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for the park are derived from applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

The objective of the General Management Plan (GMP) is to bring together PRD staff, staff from other DNR divisions, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique purpose and significance of Gete Mino Mshkiigan. Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the property. Through this process, the team creates the 20-year management zone plan to guide park planning decisions as well as 10-year action goals to establish specific action strategies for the property. The Implementation Strategy provides guidance for implementing the action goals, tracking progress, and maintaining the plan so that it remains relevant in the long-term and aligns with statewide planning documents, initiatives, and funding processes. Each GMP is reviewed every five years to ensure there have been no major changes that would warrant a revision to the approved plan.

### 2.2 Planning Process

The planning process for the General Management Plan for Gete Mino Mshkiigan began in April 2020. The project was paused due to the COVID-19 pandemic with the planning team resuming meetings in October 2021 and over the following 12-month period to develop the GMP.

The DNR sought extensive stakeholder and public input throughout the planning process to ensure the plan was in line with the needs and desires of users of the property and the local community.

#### **Project Website**

A public-facing website was maintained throughout the duration of the project. This website was updated with general information about the property and property maps, results of the stakeholder input meeting, and the draft of the GMP. The website included contact information so that the public could contact the planning team at any time with questions, concerns, and input.

### **Stakeholder Input Meeting**

A stakeholder input meeting was held on February 2, 2022, using an online format. Over 60 representatives of area businesses, state and local governments, non-profit organizations, neighborhood associations, and recreation groups were invited to the meeting. Representatives of the DNR provided stakeholders with a brief overview of the property and the GMP planning process. After a short question and answer period, stakeholders were asked to participate in a series of brainstorming questions to help inform the plan.

### **Tribal Communication**

The department's tribal coordinator reached out to the following tribal governments with a letter notifying them of the GMP process and timeline and inviting them to meet with the DNR to discuss the property or the planning process.

- Bay Mills Indian Community
- Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
- Hannahville Indian Community
- Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Lac Vieux Desert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
- Gun Lake Tribe of Pottawatomi Indians
- Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Members of the core planning team met with current and former Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians in April 2022 to discuss the property, planning process and protection of cultural resources.

### **Public Meeting**

A final public meeting was held on [DATE] to present the draft plan for public comment. The draft plan was also made available for review on the department's website, and the public was invited to email, phone in or mail questions or comments concerning this initiative. [*Describe meeting and outcomes*].

Full reports for each of the outreach methods described above are included in Appendix B of this plan.

## 2.3 Planning Team

The Gete Mino Mshkiigan GMP was developed with the valuable input and expertise provided by all members of the planning team.

| Division                | Title                             | Name              |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|
| Parks and Recreation    | Management Plan Administrator     | Debbie Jensen     |
| Parks and Recreation    | Planning Analyst/Lands Specialist | Matt Lincoln      |
| Parks and Recreation    | Cheboygan F.O. Manager            | Dave Stempky      |
| Parks and Recreation    | Cheboygan F.O. Supervisor         | Patrick Rogers    |
| Parks and Recreation    | District Supervisor               | Rich Hill         |
| Parks and Recreation    | Regional Field Planner            | Keith Cheli       |
| Parks and Recreation    | Regional Field Planner            | Ronda Osga        |
| Parks and Recreation    | Stewardship Ecologist             | Greg Norwood      |
| Parks and Recreation    | Cultural Resource Analyst         | Lisa Gamero       |
| Parks and Recreation    | N.L. Trail Coordinator            | Greg Kinser       |
| Parks and Recreation    | Trail Specialist                  | Paige Perry       |
| Michigan History Center | DNR Archaeologist                 | Stacy Tchorzynski |
| Finance and Operations  | Geologist                         | Peter Rose        |
| Law Enforcement         | Conservation Officer              | Tim Rosochacki    |
| Forest Resources        | Forester                          | Shannon Harig     |
| Fisheries               | Fisheries Biologist               | Tim Cwalinski     |
| Wildlife                | Wildlife Biologist                | Jennifer Kleitch  |
| Mullett Township        | Supervisor                        | Laz Surabian      |

## 2.4 Planning for Climate Change

The following anticipated climate change impacts drawn from ecosystem-based vulnerabilities led by the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science have been identified that could impact recreation and the natural environment at Gete Mino Mshkiigan. *Source: Fourth National Climate Assessment (2018). [www.adaptationworkbook.org/explore-impacts](http://www.adaptationworkbook.org/explore-impacts).*

- Northern Michigan temperatures will increase between 4°F and 10°F by the end of the century, with more warming during winter.
- Northern Michigan's winter snowpack will be reduced by 30-80% by the end of the century.
- Northern Michigan will have 30-50 fewer days of frozen ground during the winter by the end of the century.
- Northern Michigan's growing season will increase by 30 to 70 days by the end of the century.
- Intense precipitation events will continue to become more frequent in northern Michigan.
- Climate conditions will increase fire risks in northern Michigan by the end of the century.



- Many invasive species, insect pests, and pathogens in northern Michigan forests will increase or become more damaging by the end of the century.
- Surface water temperatures are expected to rise due to warming air temperatures.

Some of the potential impacts of climate change to park use and management include:

- Less snow could result in a shortened season for winter trail use such as cross-country skiing and snowmobiling on the NCST.
- Flooding due to increased precipitation.
- More insect pests impacting visitors and vegetation.
- Increased frequency and intensity of storms which could increase shoreline erosion and impact water quality.
- Higher temperatures affecting visitor comfort and safety and heightening the desire to be close to and access to the water.

A variety of adaptation strategies, approaches and tactics will be considered to address these impacts in both short- and long-term park management and development decisions. These include:

- Resistance: Improving defenses against change and disturbance to retain a relatively unchanged condition.
- Resilience: Accommodating some degree of change to allow a return to prior condition following disturbance.
- Transition: Intentionally facilitating change to align a system to new conditions.

At Gete Mino Mshkiigan, managing and restoring the existing vegetation cover, wetlands and natural shoreline, including invasive species management, and making wise decisions for sustainable recreation use will maintain the resiliency of this property and reduce vulnerabilities to climate change impacts. The property lies on the shore of Mullett Lake, and many organizations are working together to protect the water quality and long-term sustainability including the Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and the Mullett Lake Preservation Society.



Mature woodland with relic lakeshore ridge in the background

# 3. Purpose and Significance

There are over 100 state parks, recreation areas and scenic sites in Michigan's state park system and each site has its own unique and defining characteristics. This chapter describes what makes Gete Mino Mshkiigan a significant asset to the state's park system.

## 3.1 Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Gete Mino Mshkiigan was identified as part of the state's recreation system.

The DNR purchased the property under authority of Act 451, Public Acts 1994, as amended due to the following site attributes<sup>1</sup>:

- Over 1,500 feet of frontage on Mullett Lake
- Opportunity for public access to Mullett Lake from the North Central State Trail that crosses the property
- Undulating terrain and mature forest with mature, specimen-quality pine and hemlock
- Palustrine wetlands and small fresh-water pond
- Good two-track trail system
- Indication of past use of the site as a cold-season camp

The purpose of the state park and recreation system is to:

- Preserve and protect the state's historic/cultural resources
- Preserve and protect the state's natural resources
- Provide access to land- and water-based recreation and education opportunities

## 3.2 Statements of Significance

Park significance statements capture the essence of the park's importance and the features that make it distinct from other parks in the state's recreation system. Understanding the park's significance helps managers make decisions that preserve those resources and values necessary to accomplish the park's purpose. Gete Mino Mshkiigan was determined significant due to the following:

### **Location/Access**

Gete Mino Mshkiigan is situated near the community of Topinabee on the 17,000-acre Mullett Lake, one of the largest inland lakes in the state. It is easily accessible from the multi-use North Central State Trail

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<sup>1</sup> August 10, 2012, Memo to DNR Director and NRC recommending approval of acquisition

that runs along the lakeshore through the property, by car from Straits Highway less than a mile off I-75, or from the water.

### **Mullett Lake/Inland Waterway**

Mullett Lake is part of the 38-mile Inland Waterway, a unique northern Michigan resource. Situated roughly midway along the Inland Waterway, Gete Mino Mshkiigan provides 1,500 feet of undeveloped lakeshore frontage, one of only a few such areas of public land on a lakeshore that is dominated by private residential development. This provides potential for resource stewardship as well as recreation opportunities.

### **History**

The property is centrally located along the Inland Waterway, a significant wetland chain abundant with natural resources and long used as an inland transportation corridor across the tip of the Lower Peninsula. Native Americans have lived along the waterway for millennia, and the landscape remains important to contemporary Anishinabek lifeways, traditions, beliefs, and heritage. The former Michigan Central Railroad ran along the west shore of Mullett Lake and was integral to the development of the region. After the railroad was abandoned in 1990, trail enthusiasts lobbied the state to acquire the former railroad corridor and incorporate it as part of Michigan’s linear trail system.

### **Linear Trail**

The 75-mile-long North Central State Trail (NCST) runs through the property and connects the well-established tourist towns of Gaylord and Mackinaw City, via the city of Cheboygan. The crushed limestone trail is open to all non-motorized uses year-round and snowmobile use in the winter months. The NCST is integral to the extensive northern Lower Peninsula trail network. It is also part of the bicycle route of the Iron Belle Trail, a 791-mile route from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula.



*Planning team walking the NCST through the property*

### **Natural Resources**

Gete Mino Mshkiigan provides an important contribution to protecting the full range of biodiversity of the area. It supports good quality forest cover, including mesic and dry-mesic northern forest, and rich conifer swamp. The forests exhibit higher levels of hemlock and oak regeneration than is typically found in similar areas, which suggests the long-term viability of these species. Other interesting features include an ancient beach ridge from a historic shoreline of Mullett Lake and a four-acre emergent marsh in the center of the property. The property provides opportunities for a variety natural resource- and wildlife-based recreation and education opportunities.

### 3.3 Relationship to the Community

Cheboygan County, known as “Michigan’s Shoreline County”, contains miles of shoreline along the Great Lakes and the Inland Waterway, including Mullett Lake where this property is located. The county features many tourist destinations and recreational assets. Gete Mino Mshkiigan is located in between the communities of Topinabee and Indian River, in an area that has been welcoming visitors interested in outdoor pursuits since the late 1800s. At present, the site is undeveloped and therefore not well known outside of the local residents who use it for hiking, nature observation and hunting. With limited public access to Mullett Lake, the lakeshore area of the park is popular, offering a very different type of experience to the more developed beach area in nearby Topinabee.

The property is bordered by neighborhood associations on both sides, with residents having a strong sense of ownership and a desire to keep the natural aspects of the property protected.



*Undeveloped lakeshore at the property*

# 4. Management Zones

The 20-year Management Zone Plan was developed in keeping with the park’s legal mandates and purpose and significance. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect and enhance Gete Mino Mshkiigan’s natural and cultural resources while also supporting outdoor recreation and education opportunities. From a palette of nine management zones, the planning team studied the park and applied zones that best fit each area of the park based on current and desired future conditions. Management zones describe a variety of activities that **may be** appropriate within the zone and address the desired future condition for the following categories:

- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Recreation Opportunities
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities
- Visitor Experience
- Management Focus

The resource condition, visitor experience, and development level vary in each zone, as indicated in the figure below.

| Management Zone                                     | Natural Resource Impacts | Visitor Use            | Development Level |
|---|--------------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Ecologically Sensitive                              | None                     | Restricted             | None              |
| Primitive   | Very low                 | Low (dispersed)        | Very low          |
| Backcountry   | Low                      | Low to moderate        | Low               |
| Cultural Landscape                                  | Low to moderate          | Moderate               | Moderate          |
| Natural Resource Recreation                         | Moderate                 | Moderate to high       | Moderate          |
| Scenic  | Moderate                 | Moderate to high       | Moderate          |
| History Education                                   | Moderate to high         | High                   | Moderate to high  |
| Developed Recreation                                | High                     | High                   | High              |
| Administrative Services (Formerly Visitor Services) | High                     | High (primarily staff) | High              |

Gete Mino Mshkiigan was divided into the following four zones with two overlays:

- Primitive Zone
- Backcountry Zone
- Natural Resource Recreation Zone
- Developed Recreation Zone
- Cultural Landscape Overlay
- Seasonal Ecologically Sensitive Overlay

## 4.1 Project Boundary

Project boundaries are geographic lines that help define the state’s public lands acquisition and disposal strategy (land strategy). These boundaries contain state-owned land, as well as privately owned lands that, should they ever become available for sale, would be a priority for the DNR to pursue acquiring. The DNR undertook a comprehensive statewide project boundary review in 2020. That review recommended no changes in the boundary at Gete Mino Mshkiigan. The GMP planning team recommends that the boundary be reviewed following development of the property and several years of use to see if conditions have changed that may warrant a change in the proposed project boundary.

## 4.2 Management Zones

A Management Zone Map and detailed description of each management zone follows. Zoning has also been applied to the North Central State Trail which runs through the property. All acreages given are approximate. The following are standard management zone descriptions for zones applied to Gete Mino Mshkiigan. Examples of recreation activities and development that **may be** allowed in each zone are general and may not necessarily be appropriate or allowed at this location.



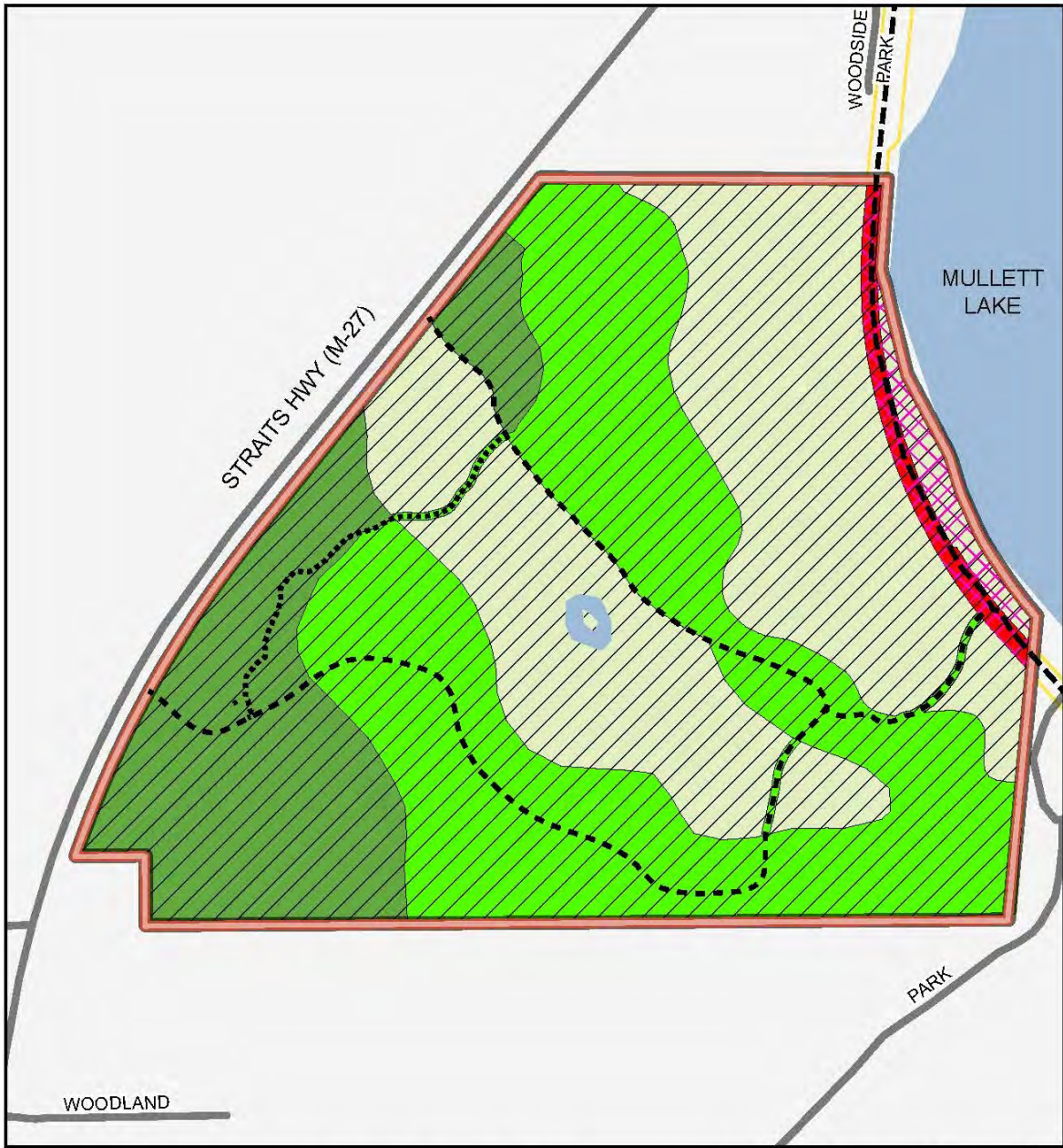
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

## Gete Mino Mshkiigan - Park Boundary

-  Road
-  Regional Trail
-  Boundary



Updated: 08/17/2022



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



## Gete Mino Mshkiigan - Draft Management Zones

- |                         |                             |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Boundary                | Developed Recreation        |
| Road                    | Natural Resource Recreation |
| Designated Rail Trail   | Backcountry                 |
| Proposed Foot Trail     | Primitive                   |
| Undesignated Foot Trail | Cultural Landscape Overlay  |
| Ponds, Lakes and Rivers | Scenic Overlay              |



Updated: 06/23/2022



## Primitive Zone

The Primitive Zone covers approximately 55 acres (38%) of the property, including the wetland areas and most of the lakeshore area between the trail right-of-way and Mullett Lake. The primary purpose of the Primitive Zone is the protection of natural resources and natural processes. The zone is managed for low-impact recreational experiences in a primitive, natural landscape. Only dispersed, self-reliant, and low-frequency use is intended. Attaining and maintaining a high-quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed. No development is proposed in the wetland areas (a backcountry corridor is provided for trail access) and only minimal improvements to protect the resources in the lakeshore area.

### **Natural Resources:**

- Native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation.
- Native Michigan natural communities/ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored and protected.
- Human-caused habitat fragmentation is eliminated.
- Non-native species are controlled or eliminated.
- Natural hydrology is maintained or restored.
- Vegetative management is only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removal of invasive species), and to manage pests and disease.
- Prescribed fire is allowed to mimic natural disturbance or control invasive species.

### **Cultural Resources:**

- Archaeological resources are preserved.
- Ethnographic resources are protected.
- Extant historic structures may be preserved, but more often are removed or allowed to molder in place.

### **Recreation Opportunities:**

- Recreation is dispersed.
- Self-reliant, non-mechanized (no bicycle, horse, or motorized use) outdoor activities (e.g., hiking, backpacking, primitive camping, cross-country skiing, hunting/trapping/fishing, nature observation).
- Trail density is low. Trail routes are point to point and not sinuous in design. Trails are single track and natural surface (except as needed to protect the resource), although existing two-tracks may be allowed to remain.

### **Education Opportunities:**

- Primarily off-site.
- Interpretive signage is allowed at trail heads and at overlooks.

**Visitor Experience:**

- Low visitor-to-visitor encounters.
- Visitors are engaged in high solitude, off-trail or trailed, self-reliant outdoor activities.
- High time commitment.
- High challenge and adventure.
- Discovery area with minimal on-site interpretation.
- Low noise tolerance.
- Low interaction with DNR staff.

**Management Focus:**

- Maintain low-impact character of the zone, with emphasis on natural resource quality.

**Development:**

- Very low level for visitor accommodation (e.g., foot trails).
- Site hardening only allowed to protect sensitive resources (e.g., boardwalk).
- Little evidence of human activity.

**Backcountry Zone**

The Backcountry Zone is applied to the balance of the upland wooded area that is not designated as Natural Resource Recreation, comprising 60.2 acres (39%). The character of this zone is natural, with minimal evidence of human impact through recreational use. While the Primitive Zone is highly restrictive for recreational use and human impact, this zone allows for slightly increased use and modifications of the landscape (e.g., trail development) to accommodate that use.

**Natural Resources:**

- Natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use, but tolerance for natural resource impacts for visitor accommodations is low.
- Native Michigan natural communities/ ecosystem components and processes are maintained, restored and protected.
- Human-caused habitat fragmentation is minimized.
- Non-native species are controlled or eliminated.
- Natural hydrology is maintained or restored.
- Vegetative management is only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removal of invasive species), and to manage pests and disease.
- Prescribed fire is allowed to mimic natural disturbance or control invasive species.

**Cultural Resources:**

- Archaeological resources are preserved.
- Ethnographic resources protected.
- Extant historic resources are preserved, rehabilitated, removed, or allowed to molder in place.

**Recreation Opportunities:**

- Moderate levels of recreation compatible with the natural character of the zone.
- Visitors engaged in non-motorized outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings (e.g., hiking, backpacking, backcountry camping, bicycling, horseback riding, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting/trapping, nature observation, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing).
- Trails are more point to point than sinuous in design. Trail purpose is viewing and access more than challenge.

**Education Opportunities:**

- Interpretive signage at trail heads, on the trail, and at overlooks is allowed.
- Moderate off-site interpretation.

**Visitor Experience:**

- Moderate visitor-to-visitor encounters.
- Visitors engaged in non-motorized outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings.
- High time commitment.
- Moderate challenge and adventure.
- Discovery area with minimal on-site interpretation.
- Low noise tolerance.
- Low interaction with DNR staff.

**Management Focus:**

- Maintain low-impact character of the zone, with emphasis on natural resource quality.

**Development:**

- Low level of development to support visitor access to outdoor activities (e.g., trails, trailhead parking, marked routes, designated backcountry campsites, vault toilets, water pumps) and educational opportunities.
- Development shall be unobtrusive and blend with natural environment.
- Site hardening (e.g., boardwalks, fencing, pedestrian paths) may be necessary to protect sensitive resources.

**Natural Resource Recreation Zone**

The Natural Resource Recreation Zone applies to areas of wooded upland adjacent to Straits Highway, totaling about 30 acres (20%). The Natural Resource Recreation zone supports active recreation conducted in a natural setting with medium to high-density use. There is an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but moderate to high levels of use may be accommodated. Proposed development in this zone includes trailhead parking and support amenities such as vault toilets and trailhead kiosk,

**Natural Resources:**

- Natural resources support visitor activities with only moderate impacts.
- Natural resources are managed or modified to support visitor activities but protected to the degree possible and appear natural.
- Human-caused habitat fragmentation is minimized.
- Non-native species are controlled or eliminated.
- Natural hydrology is maintained or restored.
- This zone will reflect native Michigan natural communities/ecosystems and natural processes, with vegetative management to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Vegetation may also be managed to facilitate recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape.

**Historic/Cultural Resources:**

- Archaeological resources are preserved.
- Ethnographic resources are protected.
- Extant historic resources may be preserved, restored, allowed to molder in place, or adaptively used for operational or educational purposes.

**Recreation Opportunities:**

- Moderate to high levels of recreation compatible with the natural character of the zone.
- Visitors engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings (e.g. hiking, backpacking, backcountry and rustic camping, bicycling, horseback riding, boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting/trapping, nature observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and snowmobiling).
- Except in areas with Exemplary Natural Communities, trails may be sinuous to provide for recreational challenge. Multi-use linear trails may be permitted in this zone.

**Education Opportunities:**

- Interpretive signage may be provided at trail heads, on the trail, at overlooks and in campgrounds.

**Visitor Experience:**

- Moderate to high visitor-to-visitor encounters accommodated.
- Visitors engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings for recreation and education.
- Variable time commitment.
- Variable challenge and adventure.
- Moderate noise tolerance.
- Moderate interaction with DNR staff.
- Moderate accessibility.

**Management Focus:**

- Maintain use of zone in accordance with PRD's mission.
- Public safety.
- Protection of resources.

**Development:**

- Moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities (e.g., vault toilets, concrete/asphalt/gravel walkways and parking, trails, benches, picnic tables, rustic campsites, rustic cabins and shelters) for recreation and educational opportunities.
- Site hardening (e.g., boardwalks, fencing, surfaced pedestrian paths) as necessary to protect sensitive resources and provide accessibility.

**Developed Recreation Zone**

This zone covers the North Central State Trail property, which totals approximately 2.7 acres. The Developed Recreation Zone supports active recreation with high-density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The trail is currently open to all non-motorized uses year-round and snowmobiles in the winter.

**Natural Resources:**

- Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to support visitor activities.
- Water quality is maintained or restored.
- Vegetative management will address hazard trees, invasive species, and pests and disease, and will also be allowed to facilitate development, recreational use, and to maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape. Native vegetation is still emphasized. PRD's tree planting standards should be followed in this zone.

**Cultural Resources:**

- Archaeological resources are preserved.
- Ethnographic resources are protected.
- Extant historic resources may be preserved, restored, or adaptively used to support visitor activities, operational or educational purposes.

**Recreation Opportunities:**

- High levels of recreation activity in a highly structured environment.
- Visitors engaged in activities in diverse natural and modified land and water settings (e.g. hiking, modern and semi-modern camping, bicycling, horseback riding, boating, canoeing, kayaking, fishing, hunting/trapping, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, day-use beach, swimming, picnicking, disc golf, and other day-use activities where people congregate).
- Except in areas with Exemplary Natural Communities, trails may be sinuous to provide for recreational challenge. Multi-use linear trails are allowed in this zone.

**Education Opportunities:**

- Interpretive signage may be provided at campgrounds, day-use facilities, boating facilities, registration buildings, trail heads, on the trail, and at overlooks.
- Active programming at campgrounds and other areas where people congregate.

**Visitor Experience:**

- High visitor-to-visitor encounters accommodated.
- Visitors engaged in activities in diverse land and water settings for recreation and education.
- Variable time commitment.
- Variable challenge and adventure.
- Variable level of exertion.
- High noise tolerance.
- High interaction with DNR staff.
- High accessibility.

**Management Focus:**

- Maintain use of zone in accordance with PRD's mission.
- Management of people.
- Public safety.
- Protection of resources.
- Public accessibility.

**Development:**

- High level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities (e.g., modern restrooms, walkways and parking, trails, benches, picnic tables, picnic shelters, modern and semi-modern campgrounds, modern cabins, and shelters) for recreation and educational opportunities.
- Site hardening (e.g., boardwalks, fencing, surfaced pedestrian paths) as necessary to protect sensitive resources and provide accessibility.
- Strive for universal access in all new developments.

## Scenic Overlay

The Scenic Zone recognizes that there are aesthetic qualities to be preserved and protected in our state park and recreation areas. Examples of this zone include scenic views, such as the overlook escarpment at the Lake of the Clouds in Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, or linear components such as a scenic road or a scenic river. At Gete Mino Mshkiigan a scenic overlay has been applied to the lakeshore area to protect the views of Mullett Lake from the NCST. This covers approximately 5.7 acres.

### **Natural Resources:**

- Prescriptive description of the underlying zone will apply.
- Natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use and viewing, but tolerance for natural resource impacts is low.

### **Historic/Cultural Resources:**

- Prescriptive description of the underlying zone and the Cultural Landscape Overlay will apply.

### **Recreation Opportunities:**

- Levels of recreation compatible with the underlying zone and the purpose of viewing.

### **Education Opportunities:**

- Interpretive signage at key viewing points, trail heads, overlooks, and parking areas.
- Moderate off-site interpretation.

### **Visitor Experience:**

- High visitor-to-visitor encounters accommodated.
- Visitors engaged in transit or sightseeing activities by foot, car, bicycle, watercraft, or other conveyance.
- Moderate time commitment.
- Moderate noise tolerance.
- Variable interaction with DNR staff.
- High level of accessibility at vantage points.

### **Management Focus:**

- Maintain the quality of the views on which the zone is based.
- Public safety.
- Ensure all activities or developments in this zone are compatible with the overriding purpose of view quality.

### **Development:**

- Level of development consistent with underlying zone and to support visitor access, transit, interpretive activities, and sightseeing.
- Development blends with the natural and cultural environment.

## Cultural Landscape Overlay

The Cultural Landscape Overlay recognizes the presence of, and potential for, cultural resources, and encompasses this entire property and the NCST. It is considered an “overlay” of all other zones in the park. The known cultural resources represent Native American heritage and additional resources may be present that have yet to be identified.

### **Natural Resources:**

- Prescriptive description of the underlying zone will apply.

### **Historic/Cultural Resources:**

- Resources may include archaeological sites, buildings, structures, objects and landscape characteristics and features.
- Cultural resources are preserved or rehabilitated for stewardship, visitor understanding and/or for compatible adaptive use by DNR or partners.

### **Recreation Opportunities:**

- Recreation opportunities as allowed by the underlying zone designation.
- Visitors engaged in sightseeing, recreational, and educational activities in a cultural setting, compatible with and sensitive to the setting.

### **Education Opportunities:**

- Interpretive signage may be used in accordance with the underlying zone
- Moderate off-site interpretation.

### **Visitor Experience:**

- Visitor experience varies in accordance with the underlying zone

### **Management Focus:**

- Maintain cultural character of the zone, and if a sub-set of a resource zone, maintain emphasis on natural resource quality.
- Keep development consistent with the zone.

### **Development:**

- Non-historic development and activities that do not conflict with the cultural landscape are tolerated.
- Level of development consistent with the underlying zone



## 5. Ten Year Action Goals

The planning team, with stakeholder and public input, has developed 10-Year Action Goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within the recreation area in order to achieve the desired user experience. Action goals are recommended that address the following categories:

- Natural Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Recreation Opportunities
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities
- Management Focus
- Development

These goals apply either to Gete Mino Mshkiigan as a whole (all management zones) or to specific locations within the property, as appropriate and according to the management zones. Refer to the zone descriptions in Chapter 4 for appropriate activities in each zone.

Gete Mino Mshkiigan is known to have important cultural resources and significance to Native Americans through its past use. Although some studies have taken place, there has been no formal investigation of the entire property. For this reason, a Phase 1 archaeological study for the entire property will be undertaken to better document resources that may be present. In addition, forest cover types will be mapped using the department's Forest Inventory system.

A low level of development is proposed for the property to complement more developed state and township recreation opportunities in the area and in line with the cultural and natural resources of the site. Proposed action goals focus on better identifying and delineating the property and clarifying land use rules to minimize disturbance to the property and neighboring private lands. Recreational use of the property will be enhanced with a parking lot off Straits Highway and appropriate supporting amenities, and a foot trail system that will connect to the North Central State Trail. Education and interpretation of the natural and cultural features will also be explored through signage and/or other means.

Management plans are based on known needs, funding realities, and sound investment policies, but do not guarantee future Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) funding to achieve the actions identified. PRD will seek internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan. On an annual basis, PRD districts determine priorities for project planning and project capital outlay. Each district's top projects are then evaluated at a state-wide level for available funds.

The action goals below are organized by management and operation decisions and capital outlay projects, which are further divided into major and small projects to correspond with PRD funding programs. The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships, etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years once funding has been identified. In the program input column, the bolded party is the program lead. Opinion of probable costs have been developed for each capital outlay action goal identified (see Appendix C) and these projects will be included in the statewide master project list.

## Ten Year Action Goals: Management and Operations

| Action Goals  | Priority | Management Zone | Program Input From  |
|---|----------|-----------------|---|
| Review all proposed earthwork activities for impact on cultural resources.  | Ongoing  | All             | <b>Unit Manager</b><br>Regional Planner<br>Stewardship<br>DNR Archaeologist     |
| Work with adjacent homeowners' associations and other stakeholders for cooperative management, including annual meetings as needed                              | Ongoing  | All             | <b>Unit Manager</b><br>District Supervisor<br>LED<br>Homeowners<br>Associations |
| Formalize the property name and appropriate management and enact Land Use Order of the Director (LUOD) for requirement of Recreation Passport                   | Ongoing  | All             | <b>District Supervisor</b><br>Policy Analyst                                    |
| Complete site emergency, safety and wildfire plans  | 1        | All             | <b>Unit Manager</b><br>Stewardship  |
| Indicate that the property is closed to metal detecting on the department website and close the property (except for the NCST) to snowmobile use through a LUOD | 1        | All             | <b>Policy Analyst</b><br>Stewardship<br>Unit Manager                            |
| Maintain the property open to hunting through a Wildlife Conservation Order, if needed  | 1        | All             | <b>Policy Analyst</b><br>Unit Manager<br>Wildlife<br>LED                        |
| Complete Forest Inventory (MiFI) mapping of the property  | 1        | All             | <b>Stewardship Ecologist</b>  |
| Complete a natural resource Stewardship Plan for the property, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies.         | 2        | All             | <b>Stewardship Ecologist</b><br>Unit Manager<br>Wildlife                        |
| Complete a lakeshore management plan  | 1        | Primitive       | <b>Regional Planner</b><br>Unit Manager<br>Local Partners                       |

LED – Law Enforcement Division

### Ten Year Action Goals: Infrastructure and Development - Capital Outlay

| Action Goals  | Priority | Management Zone                               | Program Input From  |
|---|----------|---|---|
| Complete a phase 1 archaeological study of the entire property  | 1        | All   | <b>DNR Archaeologist</b><br>Regional Planner<br>Stewardship<br>Unit Manager<br>LTBBOI |
| Design and construct a loop hiking trail system using existing trails as a base, including a sustainable trail connection to the NCST | 2        | Natural Resource<br>Recreation<br>Backcountry | <b>Regional Planner</b><br>Unit Manager<br>Trails Specialist                          |

### Ten Year Action Goals: Infrastructure and Development - Small Projects

| Action Goals   | Priority | Management Zone                | Program Input From   |
|--|----------|--------------------------------|--|
| Install park entrance sign, parking lot, vault toilet and associated amenities off State Highway | 1        | Natural Resource<br>Recreation | <b>Unit Manager</b><br>Regional Planner<br>District Supervisor   |
| Survey and delineate park boundary on southeast end of the lakeshore                             | 1        | All                            | <b>Unit Manager</b>  |
| Mark state land boundary and sign for no motorized vehicles                                      | 1        | All                            | <b>Unit Manager</b>  |
| Develop natural and cultural interpretation materials  | 3        | All                            | <b>DNR Archaeologist</b><br>Unit Manager<br>MOD<br>Stewardship<br>Michigan History<br>Center<br>LTBBOI |

NCST – North Central State Trail

MOD – Marketing and Outreach Division

LTBBOI – Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians

# 6. Implementation Strategy

This chapter of the general management plan (GMP) provides guidance for implementation of the action goals and maintaining the plan so it remains relevant in the long term. These guidelines will also help the park align the action goals with park, district and statewide annual funding processes and annual tasks outlined in the Parks and Recreation Division's Strategic Plan or other planning documents. Although the implementation of the GMP will require commitment from staff at every level, it will be the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager to oversee plan implementation.

A long-range plan such as this must maintain a degree of flexibility in order to be responsive to changing circumstances or opportunities that cannot be foreseen. It is recognized that some goals may be accomplished in a short time frame, while others may carry over through multiple years. It is important to track progress so that the plan remains a relevant park management tool. The GMP will be reviewed every five years to ensure it remains viable.

All proposed changes in the park should be reviewed to ensure they follow the approved Management Zones.

## 6.1 Implementation Toolbox

The following is a list of items to consider when reviewing and prioritizing the implementation of action goals identified in the GMP.

### **Coordination/ Communication**

- Meet regularly with the Regional Field Planner and District Supervisor to coordinate and prioritize large capital projects for capital outlay requests.
- Maintain an open dialogue with local partners and stakeholders to coordinate community-related projects as identified in the action goals.
- Follow-up regularly on progress for action goals that are not the primary responsibility of the Unit Supervisor/Manager with the responsible program position.

### **Funding**

- Estimated costs for capital outlay projects are included in the Opinion of Probable costs section. These costs should be refined and adjusted by the Regional Field Planner as design and studies are completed.
- Identify potential funding sources for each project/task. Liaise with PRD grants coordinator as appropriate.
- Align potential funding sources with the annual capital outlay funding requests.
- Request District Small Project funding through the District Supervisor for small projects identified in the 10-year Action Goals.

## Scheduling

- Further prioritize projects based on need, funding, staffing, and other constraints/ opportunities.
- Incorporate project/task assignments into annual staff performance objectives.

## 6.2 Documentation of Changes

The Unit Supervisor/Manager should keep a record of any major changes to the park since approval of the GMP and note potential updates that may be required in the future. Documenting these changes will assist in the 5-year plan review or when the GMP is updated. Changes may include:

- New user requests or conflicts
- Emerging recreation, funding, or partnership opportunities
- Changes in land management
- Land transactions or changes to the approved Project Boundary
- Major infrastructure projects or removal of structures

Changes may be documented by marking up the park's copy of the GMP or maintaining a log that is kept with the GMP. In reviewing the action goals for changes, document goals that may become irrelevant or are no longer viable, as well as proposed new action goals, including justification.

The management zoning map should also be reviewed regularly. Any proposed changes to the map related to land acquisition or disposal, errors in the original zoning, or land management changes should be documented. Note that the park zoning is intended to be a long-term document: changes will only be considered with adequate justification and are subject to a formal review and approval process.

## 6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments

As action goals are completed, the Unit Supervisor/Manager should mark them as such in the park's copy of the GMP, including the completion date. This will also help to maintain a log of accomplishments for district and division-wide reporting purposes, including PRD's strategic plan.

## 6.4 Five-Year Review Process

General management plans are reviewed every five years from the date of approval of either the phase 2 plan or the complete GMP. The planning team for the 5-year review is made up of the Park Management Plan Administrator, Unit Supervisor/Manager, Regional Field Planner and District Supervisor, with other team members included as may be necessary. A 5-Year Review Form will be used to record all changes to the plan within the past 5 years. Upon reviewing the GMP and the documented changes, the planning team will determine whether the changes warrant a complete update of the plan.

If there are no major changes required in either the zoning or the action goals, the planning team will complete the 5-Year Review Form and attach it as a supplement to the existing GMP. If zoning changes

are needed, the GMP will be revised or updated following the established planning process led by the Park Management Plan Administrator. If changes to the action goals only are required, the phase 2 GMP planning process will be implemented.

**APPENDIX A**  
**Supporting Analysis**

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## 1. GETE MINO MSHKIIGAN OVERVIEW

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|              |  |
|--------------|--|
| AREA (acres) | 147  |
| COUNTY       | Cheboygan  |
| TOWNSHIP     | Mullett  |
| LATITUDE     | 45°27'52.9"N   |
| LONGITUDE    | 84°36'27.4"W   |
| ADDRESS      | 266 N. Straits Highway<br>(C/O Cheboygan Field<br>Office, 120 A St<br>Cheboygan) |
| PHONE #      | 231-627-9011   |



### Property Description

The 147-acre undeveloped Gete Mino Mshkiigan property was purchased by the state in 2013 from the Little Traverse Conservancy with funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (State Trailways Initiative). At the time, it was referred to as the “Jennie Johnson Tract” after a former long-time property owner. The land is located between the communities of Indian River and Topinabee, and between Straits Highway (M-27) and the southwest shore of Mullett Lake, in Cheboygan County. The property includes 1,500 feet of lake frontage. The undulating terrain is dominated by mixed coniferous/deciduous forest, with approximately 35% of the land identified as emergent wetlands. The North Central State Trail runs through the property near the lakeshore. A residential structure and associated buildings have been removed, but a two-track trail system remains evident across the site. The land is currently open to hunting and trapping and is managed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) out of the Cheboygan Field Office. The property is closed to ORV use in accordance with state land use rules.

### Location & Community

Gete Mino Mshkiigan is in Mullett Township in Cheboygan County, at the “Tip of the Mitt” in Michigan’s Lower Peninsula. It is accessed off N. Straits Highway (M-27), which is the main route between the towns of Indian River and Cheboygan. Interstate 75 is just a couple of miles to the west. The site may also be accessed via the North Central State Trail (NCST), which is a 75-mile rail-trail from Waters, south of Gaylord, to Mackinaw City, via Cheboygan. The NCST is open year-round to all non-motorized uses and to



snowmobiles from December 1 to March 31. Access to the property is also possible by boat from Mullett Lake and the Inland Waterway, although no public dock or launch is currently available. The Inland Waterway is a navigable route that links approximately 40 miles of lakes (including Mullett Lake) and rivers across northern Michigan, connecting to Lake Huron.

Mullett Township is split into east and west by Mullett Lake, the fourth largest inland lake in Michigan. The township has a population of just 1,300, which grows significantly in the summer months due to visiting tourists. This resort area is popular for year-round outdoor recreation opportunities such as hiking, trail riding, fishing, boating, hunting, and wildlife viewing. Cheboygan County has the distinction of having more water surface (77.3 square miles) than any other county in the State of Michigan and boasts 344 inland lakes and 420 miles of streams. The closest community to Gete Mino Mshkiigan is Topinabee, an unincorporated village and the location of Mullett Township Hall. The larger community of Indian River, with a population of just under 2,000, according to the 2010 census, is located approximately five miles to the south and provides restaurants, shopping, and amenities.



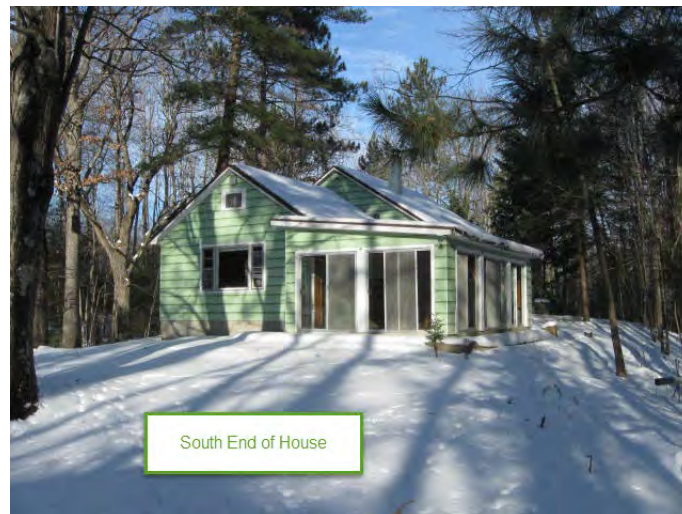
*Shore of Mullett Lake from the property*

## 2. EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS AND SURROUNDING LANDUSE

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### Existing Site Conditions

Gete Mino Mshkiigan is currently undeveloped. It features undulating terrain dominated by mature forest with a variety of mixed conifer tree species, including pine and hemlock, and associated northern hardwoods. Approximately 35% of the property is identified as palustrine wetlands, primarily covered with emergent vegetation, with a 0.60-acre manmade pond. A cottage once stood on the property, and although removed when the DNR took ownership 6 years ago, it can still be evidenced by a cleared area alongside a two-track and the remaining electric service. The property can be accessed by a gated entrance off N. Straits Highway (M-27) with limited off-road parking immediately adjacent to the road, via the North Central State Trail, or by watercraft on Mullett Lake (although there is no dock or landing on site). The North Central State Trail occupies the former Michigan Central Railroad right-of way and was officially dedicated in 2008.

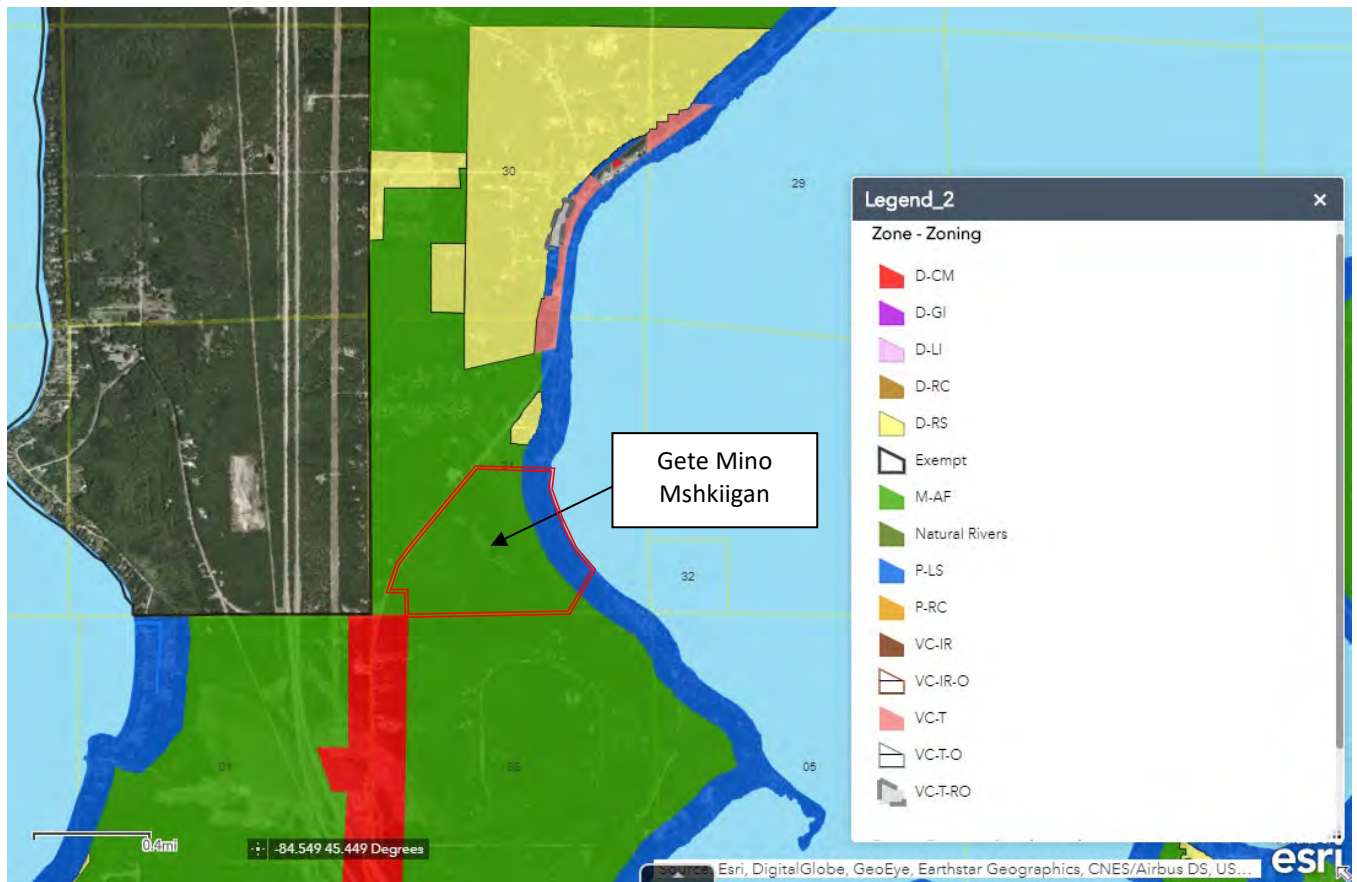


*Cottage that once stood on the property*

### Zoning and Surrounding Land Use

N. Straits Highway (M-27) forms the northwest boundary of the property, with the North Central State Trail and Mullett Lake to the east. Land to the north and south of the site is dominated by low-density residential development. The Indian Woods Trail Association (neighborhood association) is located to the south and the Woodside Park neighborhood to the north (mix of year-round and second homes). Both neighborhoods have shared access to the Mullett Lake shoreline with boat docks and private beach area. While not immediately adjacent to Gete Mino Mshkiigan, two relevant property owners in close proximity, along M-27, include Indian River RV Resort and Camp and Country Cabins of Topinabee.

According to the Cheboygan County zoning map (see figure below), most of the property is classified as Agriculture and Forestry Management District (M-AF). The M-AF district is for the preservation and encouragement of farming, forestry operations, and other such rural-type activities. Low-density single-family and two-family dwellings are allowed. Property within 500 feet of the ordinary high-water mark of Mullett Lake is zoned Lake and Stream Protection District (P-LS). The purpose of this district is to avoid excessive structural encroachment on the water and waterways, promote high water quality by encouraging natural vegetation strips along waterways, protect wildlife habitat, and promote the general welfare of the county. The M-27 corridor south of the property is zoned Commercial Development District (D-CM). Land to the north, in the Topinabee community, is zoned Residential Development District and Village Center to provide for concentration of residential, social, local commercial, and public uses in a small community setting.



*Excerpt of Cheboygan County Zoning Map*

### 3. DEMOGRAPHICS

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The U.S. Census Bureau reports the 2010 population of Cheboygan County at 26,152, with an estimated population of 25,413 in 2018, showing a slight decline that is in line with statewide general trends. However, the county's population has more than doubled in size over the past 70 years and Mullett Township shows ongoing growth. The mean age in Cheboygan County is 47.1, and the average household size is 2.31. The census shows that the percentage of people in Cheboygan County over the age of 65 is 23.9%, which is higher than the statewide figure of 15%. There is also a smaller percentage of young people under the age of 18 in Cheboygan County, making up 18.4% of the population compared to 22.7% percent in Michigan as a whole. The population between age 60 and 64 is estimated to have risen by 30.9% since 2000, while the population between 25 and 34 has decreased by 22.6%.<sup>1</sup>

Cheboygan County is predominantly rural, averaging 36.6 persons per square mile, while the state average is 174.8. Seasonal homes make up approximately 30% percent of all houses in Cheboygan County, which has a large impact on the community.

The median household income in the county is reported at \$38,166, about \$10,000 lower than the State of Michigan average. The top five industries in the City of Cheboygan are retail trade (21%), construction (20%), manufacturing (12%), accommodations and food services (10%), and wholesale trade (6%).

The population of Cheboygan County is predominantly white (93.1%). However, the percentage of American Indian and Alaska Native alone is 3.1%, which is significantly higher than the state average of 0.70%.

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<sup>1</sup> Cheboygan County Master Plan, January 14, 2014

| <b>GEOGRAPHY QUICKFACTS</b>   |                      |                 |
|---|----------------------|-----------------|
|   | <b>CHEBOYGAN CTY</b> | <b>MICHIGAN</b> |
| Population per square mile, 2010                                      | 36.6                 | 174.8           |
| Land area in square miles, 2010                                       | 715.26               | 56,538.9        |
| <b>POPULATION QUICKFACTS</b>  |                      |                 |
|   | <b>CHEBOYGAN CTY</b> | <b>Michigan</b> |
| Population estimates, 2018  | 25,413               | 9,995,915       |
| Population, Census, April 1, 2010                                     | 26,152               | 9,883,640       |
| Persons under 5 years, percent  | 4.0%                 | 5.7%            |
| Persons under 18 years, percent                                       | 16.4%                | 21.7%           |
| Persons 65 years and over, percent                                    | 27.3%                | 17.2%           |
| Female persons, percent   | 50.1%                | 50.8%           |
| White alone, percent  | 93.1%                | 79.3%           |
| Black or African American alone, percent                              | 0.7%                 | 14.1%           |
| American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent                      | 3.0%                 | 0.7%            |
| Asian alone, percent  | 0.4%                 | 3.4%            |
| Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone, percent             | 0.1%                 | <0.1%           |
| Two or more Races, percent  | 2.8%                 | 2.5%            |
| Hispanic or Latino, percent   | 1.5%                 | 5.2%            |
| White alone, not Hispanic or Latino, percent                          | 92.0%                | 74.9%           |
| Veterans, 2013 – 2017   | 2,414                | 581,521         |
| Housing units, July 1, 2018   | 18,614               | 4,614,380       |
| Owner-occupied housing units, 2013-2017                               | 81.7%                | 71.0%           |
| Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2013-2017               | \$116,900            | \$136,400       |
| Households with a computer, percent, 2013-2017                        | 81.1%                | 86.5%           |
| Households with a broadband internet subscription, percent, 2013-2017 | 68.4%                | 76.3%           |
| High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2013-2017 | 90.6%                | 90.2%           |
| Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+, 2013-2017    | 68.4%                | 76.3%           |
| Persons with a disability, under age 65, 2013-2017                    | 14.3%                | 10.4%           |
| Persons without health insurance, under age 65, percent               | 8.3%                 | 6.1%            |
| Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2013-2017        | 26.8                 | 24.3            |
| Median household income, 2013-2017                                    | \$42,876             | \$52,668        |
| Per capita income last 12 months (in 2017 dollars), 2013-2017         | \$24,956             | \$28,938        |
| Persons in poverty, percent   | 14.3%                | 14.2%           |

*2010 U.S. Census Data retrieved from census.gov/quickfacts. Accessed July 2019.*

## 4. REGIONAL RECREATION RESOURCES

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Cheboygan County is recognized as a northern Michigan outdoor recreation destination. Below is a description of the primary recreation resources in the county. In addition to those listed below, the Straits of Mackinac area, just over 30 miles away, offers additional recreational resources drawing visitors to the region including Mackinac Island and other Mackinac Historic State Park sites.

### State Parks

- **Aloha State Park** is located on the northeast shore of Mullett Lake, approximately 12 miles from Gete Mino Mshkiigan by road. The park provides a boat launch, 285 modern campsites, swimming beaches, and fishing opportunities. The North Eastern State Trail, a 71-mile rail trail connecting Alpena and Cheboygan, runs through the park.
- **Burt Lake State Park** is on the south shore of Burt Lake, approximately 5 miles south of the property. The park features 2,000 feet of sandy beach, a pet-friendly beach area, a 306-site modern campground, a boat launch, picnic facilities, and a one-mile foot trail.
- **Cheboygan State Park** is a 1,250-acre park located east of the City of Cheboygan, 20 miles north of Gete Mino Mshkiigan, on the shore of Lake Huron. It features a modern campground, lakeshore rustic cabins available year-round, a fully furnished modern lodge, swimming beach, and nearly seven miles of hike/bike trails. A carry-in boat launch provides access to Duncan Bay with excellent fishing opportunities.

### State Forest

State forest land in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan totals approximately 2 million acres of public land. State forest land in Cheboygan and surrounding counties is managed by the Gaylord, Atlanta and Pigeon River Country State Forest management units and covers 377,261 acres. The land supports recreational activities such as hunting, fishing, gathering, and wildlife viewing and can be accessed by many trails and forest roads. Specific recreation areas within the management units are described below:

- **Black Mountain State Forest Recreation Area:** Located in Cheboygan and Presque Isle Counties, Black Mountain State Forest Recreation Area provides access to hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, horseback riding, off-road vehicle riding and snowmobiling in a state forest setting. The recreation area includes multiple forest campgrounds and various types of trails including:
  - 30 miles of non-motorized pathways open to hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, and equestrian use. A local volunteer group grooms the trails for both skate and classic skiing while weather permits.
  - 80 miles of groomed snowmobile trails.

- 60 miles of ORV trails and 15 miles of ORV routes.
- 65-acre Black Mountain ORV scramble area open for 50” or smaller ATVs or motorcycles.
- **Pigeon River Country State Forest** is a special management unit located in southern Cheboygan County and northern Otsego County. Now home to one of the largest free-roaming elk herds east of the Mississippi, Pigeon River Country offers abundant opportunities to explore the outdoors. At 12 miles wide and 20 miles long, it is the largest block of contiguous undeveloped land in Michigan’s Lower Peninsula.
- **State forest campgrounds:** the following state forest campgrounds in the vicinity are administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division.

| STATE FOREST CAMPGROUNDS |              |  |                |
|--------------------------|--------------|--|----------------|
| SITE NAME                | NO. OF SITES | DESCRIPTION  | MANAGING UNIT  |
| Black Lake               | 52           | 11 miles N. of Onaway, on the N. shores of Black Lake. 17 designated for ORV use | Cheboygan SP   |
| Black Lake Trail Camp    | 5            | Dedicated for equestrian use   | Cheboygan SP   |
| Maple Bay                | 35           | W. side of Burt Lake with boat access site and sand beach                        | Burt Lake SP   |
| Haakwood                 | 18           | On the Sturgeon River 2 miles N. of Wolverine                                    | Burt Lake SP   |
| Pine Grove               | 6            | 12 miles E. of Wolverine   | Otsego Lake SP |
| Stoney Creek Trail Camp  | 10           | 12 miles east of Indian River. Dedicated for equestrian use                      | Aloha SP       |
| Twin Lakes               | 11           | On Twin Lake close to Black Mountain Recreation Area                             | Cheboygan SP   |
| Weber Lake               | 18           | On Weber Lake, NW of Wolverine, with access to Lost Tamarack Pathway             | Burt Lake SP   |
| Ocqueoc Falls            | 13           | 12 miles west of Rogers City on the Ocqueoc River                                | Hoefl SP       |

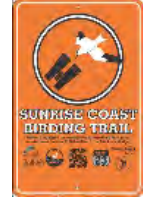
- **State forest pathways:** the following state forest pathways in the vicinity are also administered by the Parks and Recreation Division.

| STATE FOREST PATHWAYS  |       |   |               |
|------------------------|-------|---|---------------|
| NAME                   | MILES | DESCRIPTION                                   | MANAGING UNIT |
| Wildwood Hills Pathway | 9.3   | 6 miles SW of Indian River                    | Burt Lake SP  |
| Lost Tamarack Pathway  | 4.75  | Located at Weber Lake state forest campground | Burt Lake SP  |

## State Wildlife Management Areas

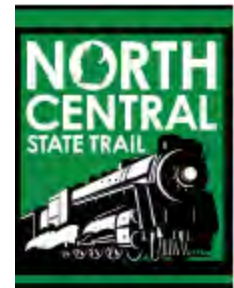
Co-managed by the DNR Wildlife and Forest Resources divisions, the following State Wildlife Management Areas are located in Cheboygan County.

- **Dingman Marsh Flooding State Wildlife Management Area** encompasses over 4,000 acres located in northern Cheboygan County between Mackinac City and Cheboygan. Dingman Marsh is a stop along the Sunrise Coast Birding Trail and primarily managed for waterfowl production and stopover sites. Many common and rare bird species can be observed using the flooding at various times of year.
- **Stoney Creek Flooding State Wildlife Management Area** is located off M-33 south of Cheboygan and east of Mullett Lake in Cheboygan County. The Shore-to-Shore Trail traverses the area and is used by horseback riders and hikers. The flooding itself features a mix of open water and marsh providing habitat for waterfowl like mallard and trumpeter swan and aquatic mammals like beaver.
- **Lee Grande Ranch Grouse Enhancement Management Site** was purchased by the state in 2007 and established as a Grouse Enhancement Management Site (GEMS) in 2014. The area is located just north of Stoney Creek Flooding along M-33 south of Cheboygan and east of Mullett Lake. This property, formerly a bison ranch, consists primarily of open land, aspen, and mixed forest managed for various age classes with a focus on providing quality ruffed grouse and woodcock habitats. A group of elk frequents the area throughout the year.

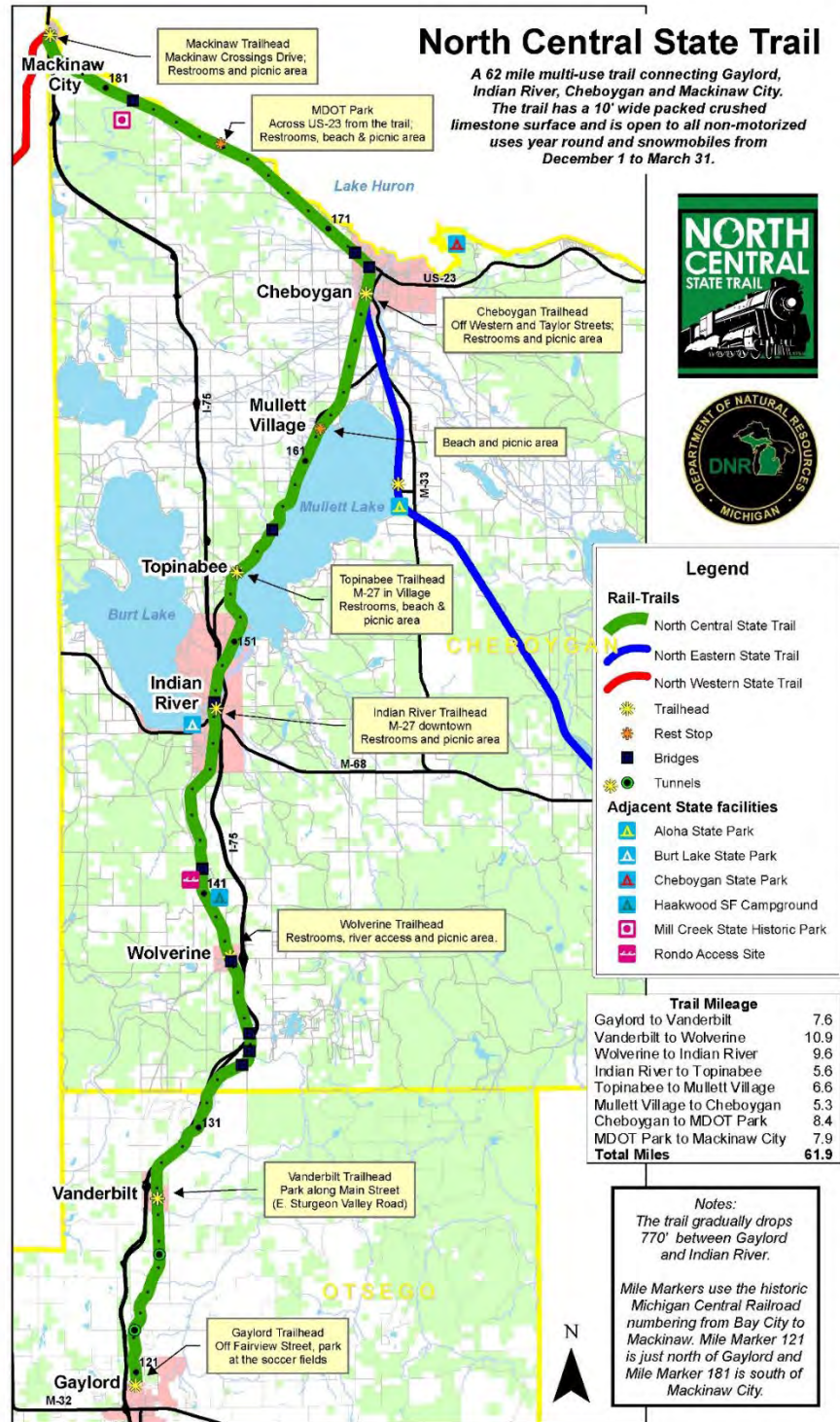


## State Trails

- **North Central State Trail (NCST)**. This 75-mile-long rail trail runs from the south Otsego County line to Mackinaw City, through Gaylord, Vanderbilt, Wolverine and the City of Cheboygan. It is part of the bicycle route of the Iron Belle Trail, a 791-mile route from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the western Upper Peninsula. It is open to hiking, biking, and equestrian use year-round, and snowmobiles from December 1 through March 31.
- **North Eastern State Trail (NEST)**. The NEST is a Michigan DNR multi-use rail trail that runs 71 miles from Alpena to Cheboygan, where it joins the North Central State Trail. The trail has a 10-foot-wide packed, crushed limestone surface and is open to all non-motorized users year-round and snowmobiles from December 1 through March 31. Part of the trail is also designated as the Midland to Mackinaw Trail.
- **Cheboygan County Snowmobile Trails**. The NCST and NEST, both open to snowmobile use in winter, link up in Cheboygan and connect to Trail 99, which heads southeast out of Cheboygan, primarily through state forest land. To the south, the NCST links to a snowmobile trail network south of Burt Lake and west of Wolverine. There are over 100 miles of trails in the region that are groomed for snowmobiles by volunteers under an arrangement through the Snowmobile Trail Improvement Fund.







- Tomahawk Trail System.** This interconnected state designated ORV trail system has trail designed for motorcycles, 50" ATVs, as well as side-by-sides and full size ORVs. The 100+ mile ORV trail system extends into neighboring Emmet and Charlevoix counties and is managed by the DNR as dictated by the ORV Trail Improvement Fund in partnership with volunteer ORV organizations.

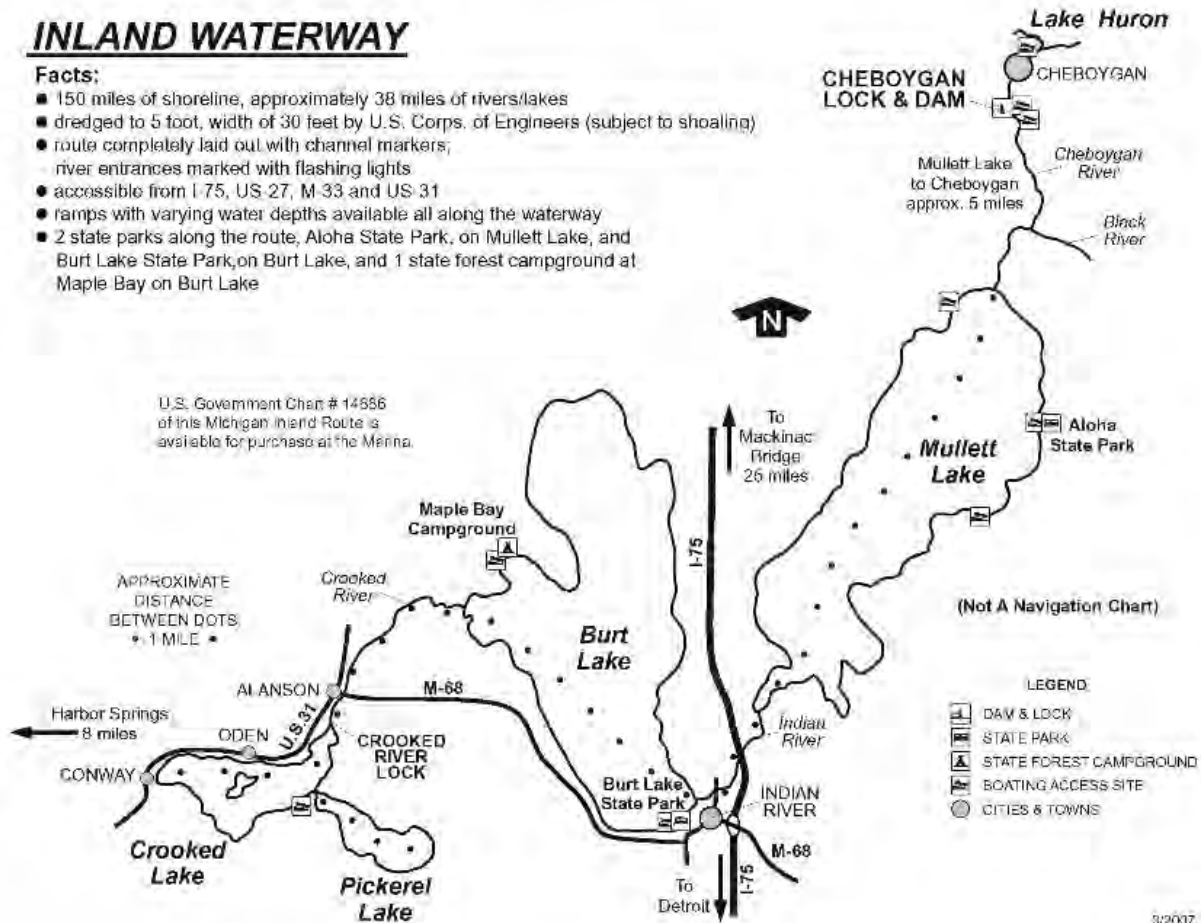
## Water Recreation

The **Inland Waterway** is a unique northern Michigan resource, consisting of a 38-mile navigable route connecting three rivers and three lakes. Starting at Lake Huron in Cheboygan, the route travels up the Cheboygan River to the 12-mile-long Mullett Lake, then up the Indian River into Burt Lake, and Crooked River to Crooked Lake. The route passes through many communities providing docks, accommodation, and dining opportunities for travelers.

### **INLAND WATERWAY**

**Facts:**

- 150 miles of shoreline, approximately 38 miles of rivers/lakes
- dredged to 5 foot, width of 30 feet by U.S. Corps. of Engineers (subject to shoaling)
- route completely laid out with channel markers,
  - river entrances marked with flashing lights
- accessible from I-75, US-27, M-33 and US-31
- ramps with varying water depths available all along the waterway
- 2 state parks along the route, Aloha State Park, on Mullett Lake, and Burt Lake State Park, on Burt Lake, and 1 state forest campground at Maple Bay on Burt Lake



## Boating Access Sites

The following public boating access sites are located in the area, with direct or indirect access to Mullett Lake.

| BOATING ACCESS SITES |                 |  |                            |
|----------------------|-----------------|--|----------------------------|
| SITE NAME            | WATER BODY      | DESCRIPTION  | MANAGER                    |
| Aloha State Park     | Mullett Lake    | Hard-surfaced ramp with limited water depth, 35 parking spaces, skid pier and restroom | DNR Aloha State Park       |
| Burt Lake State Park | Burt Lake       | Hard-surface ramp, 58 parking spaces, skid pier and restroom                           | DNR Burt Lake State Park   |
| Forks                | Cheboygan River | Hard surfaced ramp, 73 parking spaces, 2 skid piers and restroom                       | DNR Cheboygan Field Office |
| Jewell Road          | Mullett Lake    | Hard surfaced ramp, 50 parking spaces, 2 skid piers and restroom                       | DNR Cheboygan Field Office |
| Maple Bay SFCG       | Burt Lake       | Hard surfaced ramp with limited water depth, 7 parking spaces                          | DNR Burt Lake State Park   |
| Mullett Lake Village | Mullett Lake    | Hard surfaced ramp, 18 parking spaces, skid pier and restroom                          | DNR Cheboygan Field Office |
| Tuscarora Township   | Indian River    | Hard surfaced ramp with skid pier and 26 parking spaces                                | Tuscarora Twp.             |

There are also county and township access points to the Inland Waterway, which includes Mullett Lake, such as road ends and township recreational areas.

**The Sturgeon River** between Wolverine and Burt Lake is the fastest river in the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan and provides a wilderness white water (Class I/II) experience. The Sturgeon River flows directly into Burt Lake, which is also part of the Inland Waterway, near Burt Lake State Park.

## Municipal-Owned Recreational Land

While state recreational resources are abundant in Cheboygan County, county, city and township recreational land is limited. Cheboygan County owns the County Fairgrounds, which has attached soccer fields and youth football field. Cheboygan County also owns the County Marina in the city of Cheboygan.

Township parks are generally small neighborhood parks, several of which provide rest stops along the North Central State Trail, as well as other connecting trails. Following are some of the township parks in the vicinity.

- **Topinabee Beach Park**, in Mullett Township, on Mullett Lake, serves as a trailhead with restrooms, pavilion, playground and swimming beach available to the public. Food as well as fuel is available directly across the street from this park in the Village of Topinabee.
- **Boy Scout Park**, in Mullett Township, is 80-acres located on the east side of Mullett Lake and features a pavilion, rustic style restrooms, dock, swim area, and other outdoor recreation amenities.
- **Cooperation Park**, in Tuscarora Township, two miles south of downtown Indian River, covers 51.78 acres and provides a variety of outdoor community recreation such as baseball, softball, basketball, etc.
- **DeVoe Beach and Veterans Pier** is located in the heart of Tuscarora Township, just a short walk from downtown Indian River. The park has a large sandy beach with volleyball net, picnic area with tables and grills, restrooms, fishing pier on Burt Lake, and hosts several annual community events.

## Nature Preserves

The Little Traverse Conservancy manages many nature preserves open to the public in Cheboygan County. These include:

- **Giauque Nature Preserve** – a 1-acre parcel just north of the Gete Mino Mshkiigan property.
- **Fergus Nature Preserve** – 16 acres, south of the property bordering M-27.
- **Hildner-Bearce/Waubun Nature Preserve** – 27 acres combined. A short trail is found on this property dominated by oak, maple and beech and upland bluff habitat close to Burt Lake.
- **Sturgeon Bay Nature Preserve** – 40-acre property to protect the water quality of Burt Lake.
- **Needle Point** - 40.5 acres in Aloha Township on the east shores of Mullett Lake.
- **Wendy O’Neil Memorial Nature Preserve** - 204 acres in Inverness Township. Includes 2,600 feet of frontage on Mud Lake Bog to the north.
- **Boyd B. Banwell Nature Preserve** - 400 acres east of Indian River. The land is characterized by oak/pine forests and steep bluffs above the Pigeon River with over 5 miles of trail (including the adjacent Andreae Preserve) and is open to hunting.
- **Vivian VanCampen Nature Preserve Management Unit** - 30 acres, adjacent to the Banwell Preserve, with 1,150 feet Pigeon River frontage.

## Private Recreation Resources

The region supports many recreation-based businesses including campgrounds, resorts, cabin and cottage rentals, marinas, boat rentals, and guiding services. Indian River RV Resort is adjacent to Gete Mino Mshkiigan on the north side of M-27, providing over 100 campsites including full hook-up, water and

electric, tent sites, nine log cabin rentals, and amenities such as an in-ground pool, pavilion, playground and store. Country Cabins of Topinabee is also nearby, offering one-room cabins, a recreation room, picnic facilities and bicycles to rent. There are many other opportunities for accommodation along the Inland Waterway and in the region.

Mullett Lake Marina, located on the northwest side of Mullett Lake, provides transient and seasonal boat slips, winter storage, boat repairs, refueling, boat sales and rentals. Indian River Marina, between Mullett and Burt lakes, provides similar services. There are also several golf courses in the vicinity including Mullett Lake Country Club, Cheboygan Golf and Country Club, and Indian River Golf Club.

## 5. HISTORY OF THE REGION AND THE PROPERTY

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### Regional History

Native Americans have lived along the Inland Waterway for millennia. In addition to abundant natural resources that supported daily life, the waterway provided inland passage between Lakes Huron and Michigan, avoiding maritime hazards associated with the Straits and Waugoshance Point on Lake Michigan. The waterway landscape remains important to the lifeways, traditions, beliefs, and heritage of contemporary Anishinaabek (Odawa/Ottawa, Ojibwe/Chippewa, and Bodwéwadmí/Potawatomi) living locally and regionally today.

The Inland Waterway was important in the early development of Cheboygan County. The name Cheboygan is derived from the Anishinaabemowin word Cha-boia-gan, meaning the “place of entrance, a portage or harbor”, probably referring to the mouth of the Cheboygan River, which provided a sheltered harbor from the winds of Lake Huron. The mouth of the Cheboygan River was an important area for trade among the local Odawa and Ojibwe tribes, and later, Europeans. Contact between fur traders and the native population at the mouth of the river is documented as far back as the 1770s.

Mullett Lake is named after John Mullett, who, together with William A. Burt (neighboring Burt Lake’s namesake), completed a federal survey of the area from 1840 to 1843. The lumbering era began in Cheboygan County in the mid-1800s, as the supply of white pine was rafted down the rivers. Lumber mills sprang up all over the county, causing Cheboygan to grow rapidly. During the lumber boom peak, the Michigan Central Railroad laid track to Cheboygan and then to Mackinaw City in 1881. Roads were opened to surrounding communities as new settlements were established in the county’s interior. Many settlements developed during this time, with stations for the various railroads, including Topinabee (built in 1882), Mullett Lake and Indian River. The Topinabee train station is still in its original location and has been restored, now housing the Topinabee Library.

The following historical marker can be found at Burt Lake State Park:

*“The glaciers of the last Ice Age retreated to the north some 25,000 years ago, leaving behind the lakes that rank as Michigan’s most notable and geographical feature. Among the state’s largest inland lakes is Burt Lake, named after William A. Burt, who, together with John Mullett, made a federal survey of the area from 1840 to 1843. By following the Cheboygan River, Mullett Lake, and Indian River to Burt Lake, then up Crooked River to Crooked Lake, Indians and fur traders had only a short portage to Little Traverse Bay. Thus they avoided the trip through the Straits. Completion of a lock on the Cheboygan in 1869 opened this inland waterway to the Cheboygan Slack Water Navigation Company, whose vessels carried passengers and freight until railroads put it out of business. Day-long excursions over these waters became popular with tourists.”*

The Inland Water Route Historical Society Museum is located in downtown Alanson, off U.S. 131, and includes many historical displays about the history of this unique Michigan asset.

After five decades of prosperity, the forests were logged off and mills and businesses closed as Cheboygan County's economy was impacted by the decline of the lumbering industry. However, at about the same time, the region began to become a popular recreation and resort area. Horace Pike was one of the early settlers who built a hotel in the area, hoping to attract visitors to the pristine waters of Mullett Lake and enjoy the many springs in the area. He named the community Topinabee after the famous Indian Potawatomi Chief Topinabee (He Who Sits Quietly), who was famous as a great leader and warrior. Vacationers traveled by train to Topinabee to stay at the hotels. The station also received freight and had a large boat dock where freight was taken from the trains and loaded on to boats that traveled the Inland Waterway.<sup>2</sup>

At one time, eight steam passenger trains per day (four in each direction) went through Topinabee, as well as freight trains. With the advent of modern automobiles, and the construction of I-75 through the Cheboygan County area, the region continued to grow, but the passenger trains dwindled to just one per day. All passenger service ended in 1963. Freight trains continued to use the line until 1990, when the mainline from Gaylord to Mackinaw City was abandoned. This line is now the North Central State Trail (NCST) and is owned by the State of Michigan.



*Topinabee Station, c. 1952*

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<sup>2</sup> [A Summary of the History of the Railroad in Topinabee, Michigan](http://topinabeerailroad.blogspot.com/), By Paul Chapoton,  
<http://topinabeerailroad.blogspot.com/>

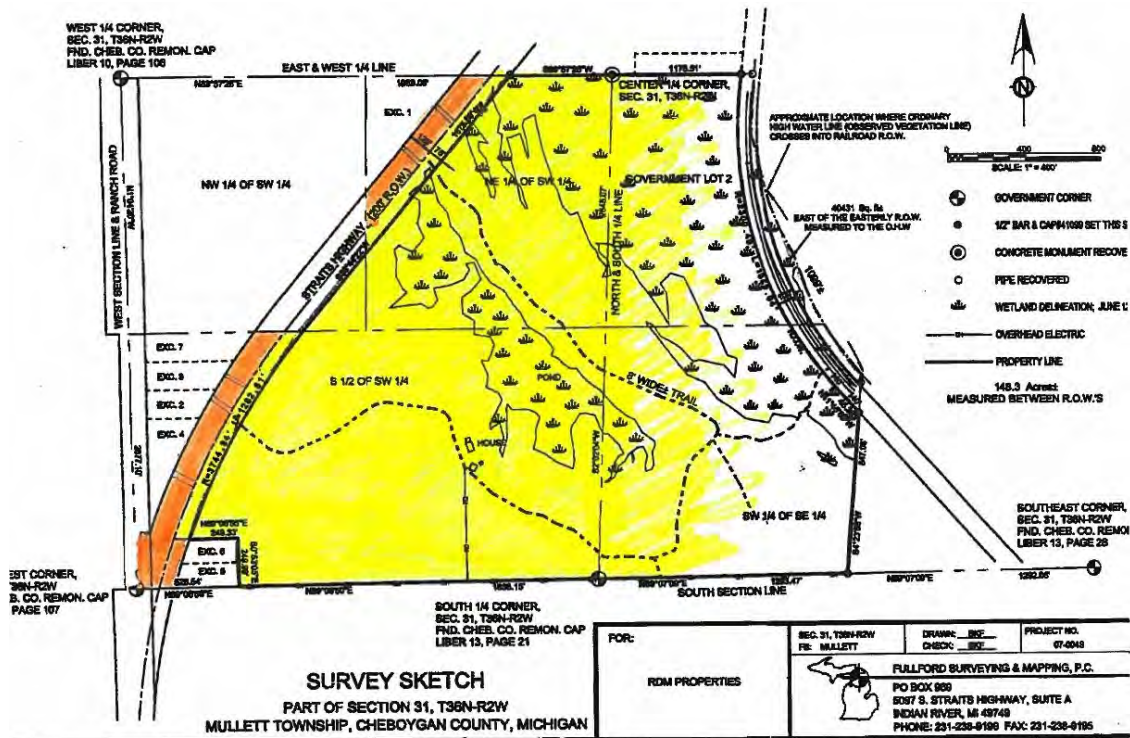
## Site History

By mid-1990, trail enthusiasts were already eyeing the former railroad corridor from Gaylord to Mackinaw City. The trail was acquired in six separate transactions between 1998 and 2000, and then developed with a nearly \$2 million federal trail enhancement grant administered by the Michigan Department of Transportation, the DNR and more than 40 local government units and organizations. By the fall of 2007, the 10-foot wide North Central had been resurfaced with crushed limestone and the following year it was officially dedicated.

Much of the land that now makes up Gete Mino Mshkiigan was deeded to the state in 1904 for non-payment of taxes, most likely after the land was logged and then abandoned. It was then sold to private landowners between 1911 and 1937. Jean Johnson owned the land for many years before the estate was sold first to Marty S. Miller and then to the Little Traverse Conservancy in 2008.

The property between the trail corridor and the lakeshore and the trail corridor and highway M-27 was purchased by the State of Michigan in March 2013 from the Little Traverse Conservancy, which purchased the land with the initial intent of transferring to the Forest Resources Division. However, it was determined to be better suited to be managed by the Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) due to the location of the North Central State Trail through the property (administered by PRD) and the proximity of other recreational land on both Mullett and Burt lakes.

A cottage and outbuildings located on the land was removed by the DNR after purchase. Some of the two-tracks are still evident on the site, as is the overhead power supply.





## 6. LAND OWNERSHIP

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### Funding Sources

Conditions attached to the original funding source or other details of the property transaction may encumber the future use or disposition of the land. The state acquired the lands encompassing Gete Mino Mshkiigan from the Little Traverse Conservancy through funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF).

The MNRTF was created by a state constitutional amendment in 1984, which required that oil, gas, and other mineral lease and royalty payments be placed into the Trust Fund, with proceeds used to both acquire and develop public recreation lands. To implement the constitutional amendment, the Legislature passed the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Act of 1985 (P.A. 101 of 1985, Act 101). Funds for acquisition of this property were made available through the MNRTF State Trailways Corridor Initiative. Property acquired through the Trust Fund must be used for public recreation purposes in perpetuity.

### Easements

An Attorney General's review of the property, September 2012, lists the following encumbrances:

- Consumers Power utility easement granted September 27, 1951, by Jean F. Johnson (Liber 146, page 21-22)
- Easements for access, use, replace and repair were reserved as disclosed in a Deed from Douglass Campbell, Trustee of the Michigan Railroad Company, to the Detroit Mackinac Railway Company, March 29, 1976 (Liber 386, page 599)
- Consumers Energy Company easement granted by the Detroit Mackinac Railroad Company for utilities on, above and underneath the railroad's right-of-way, August 3, 2004 (Liber 955, page 297).

The documentation was obtained through the Michigan Land Ownership Tracking System and may not be complete.

### Surface and Mineral Rights

The state does not own all the mineral rights within the boundaries of the property. The U.S. Government reserved all "uranium, thorium or other material determined to be peculiarly essential to the production of fissionable materials" on Government Lot 2. The Michigan Central Railroad retained mineral rights on two parcels. Where the state does not own the mineral rights, it is required to provide the current mineral rights owner reasonable access to the surface for the purpose of mineral exploration and development if the owner of the mineral estate elects to develop their interest in the property.

## Deed Restrictions

The warranty deed for the property was subject to the following restrictions: “No marinas are allowed on the property and only one seasonal dock can be located on the property.”

## 7. LEGAL MANDATES

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For all general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the general management plan and subsequent action plans. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers not only to federal and state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks and Recreation Division. Examples include Orders of the Director, Park and Recreation Areas State Land Rules and all other laws, commission orders, and rules or directives that apply to the park.

Specific to Gete Mino Mshkiigan the following legal mandates have been identified.

### Federal Statute

|   |
|---|
| <b>BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT, 1940 AND AMENDMENTS</b>  |
| This Act prohibits anyone, without a permit issued by the Secretary of the Interior, from "taking" bald eagles, including their parts, nests, or eggs. The Act defines "take" as "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, collect, molest or disturb." "Disturb" includes actions that may result in injury to the eagle, a decrease in its productivity or nest abandonment.  |
| <b>NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966 AS AMENDED</b>  |
| This is the primary federal law governing the preservation of historic properties in the United States. The law establishes a national preservation program and a system of procedural protections which encourage the identification and protection of historic properties of national, state, tribal and local significance. Projects that receive federal support in any form may be subject to compliance with Section 106 of the NHPA to ensure that impacts on historic properties are considered and that any adverse effects are avoided, minimized or mitigated. |
| <b>AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 1990, AS AMENDED</b>  |
| The ADA is a civil rights law that prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all areas of public life, including jobs, schools, transportation, and all public and private places that are open to the general public. The purpose of the law is to make sure that people with disabilities have the same rights and opportunities as everyone else. ADA Standards for Accessible Design are enforceable standards under Titles II and III for new construction, alterations, program accessibility, and barrier removal.                         |

State Statute

| <b>NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (NREPA) &amp; AMENDMENTS</b> |   |
|--|---|
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 5</b>  | Gives the DNR authority to make rules to support its mission. This includes State Land Rules, Land Use Orders, Wildlife Conservation Orders, Fisheries Orders and Watercraft Control.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 31<br/>Water Resources Protection</b>                      | Provides authority to EGLE to require a permit for any occupation, construction, filling, or grade change within the 100-year floodplain of a river, stream, drain, or inland lake.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 301<br/>Inland Lakes and Streams</b>                       | Requires a permit from the state (EGLE) to undertake certain activities relating to inland lakes and streams, such as dredging, fill, marinas, structures, alteration of flow, etc.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 303<br/>Wetlands Protection</b>                            | Requires a permit from the state (EGLE) to undertake certain activities in regulated wetlands, such as, dredging, fill, construction or drainage.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 419<br/>Hunting Area Control</b>                           | Section 324.41901 establishes the powers of the Department to establish safety zones for hunting.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 741<br/>State Park System</b>                              | The department shall create, maintain, operate, promote, and make available for public use and enjoyment a system of state parks to preserve and protect Michigan's significant natural resources and areas of natural beauty or historic significance, to provide open space for public recreation, and to provide an opportunity to understand Michigan's natural resources and the need to protect and manage those resources. |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 761<br/>Aboriginal Records and Antiquities</b>             | The state reserves the exclusive right and privilege to all aboriginal records and other antiquities including those found on the bottomlands of the Great Lakes.   |
| <b>PA 451 of 1994, Part 821<br/>Snowmobiles</b>                                    | This section establishes fees, regulations, management and provision of a recreational snowmobile trail program.  |

## State Land Rules

State Land Rules are issued by authority conferred on the Michigan DNR by Section 504 of 1994 PA 451 MCL 324.504. The rules cover entry, use and occupation of state lands and unlawful acts.

### Land Use Orders of the Director

#### **5.18 Designation, management and administration of rail trail corridors**

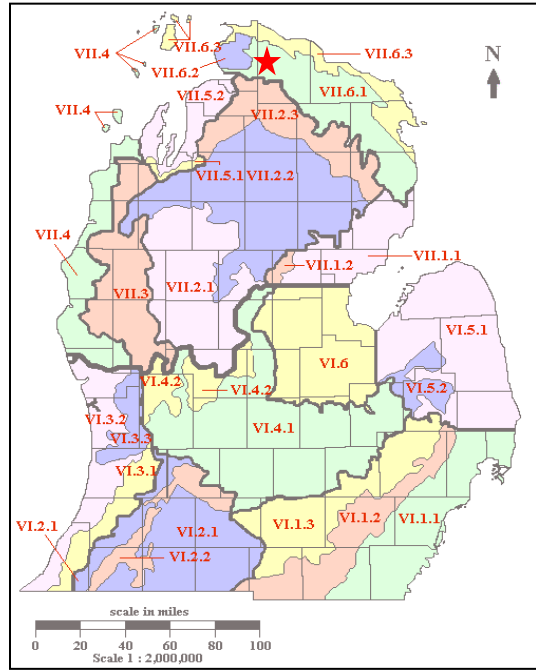
Order 5.18 Designation, management and administration of rail trail corridors identified below including the associated trailheads and parking areas shall be undertaken consistent with mcl 324.74101(g). this designation, management and administration shall require that a motor vehicle accessing the related trailheads and developed parking areas, where such access is allowed, possess a valid Michigan recreation passport for entry. On the lands of these rail trail corridors that are adjacent to the state forest land and outside 10 – 30 foot wide actively utilized and managed for recreation rail trail corridor the historic management practice of co-management will continue. These rail trail corridors and related trailheads and developed parking areas consist of the following:

- (29) North Central State Trail
  - a. Gaylord to Cheboygan Trail

## 8. LANDSCAPE CONTEXT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

A regional landscape ecosystem classification has been developed for Michigan, which distinguishes major landscapes based on macroclimate, physiography, soil and vegetation. Gete Mino Mshkiigan is located within the Onaway sub-subsection of the Presque Isle subsection in the Northern Lacustrine-Influenced Lower Michigan ecoregion (VII.6.1).

The Onaway sub-subsection is broadly characterized by drumlin fields on coarse-textured ground moraine vegetated by northern hardwood forest and conifer swamp.



*Regional Ecosystems of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin, Dennis A. Albert, 1995.*

### Climate

The average growing season ranges from approximately 100 days inland in the south to 130 days in the north along Lake Huron. Extreme minimum temperatures inland can reach -46°F. Average annual rainfall is 30 to 32 inches. Annual snowfall is 140 inches in the west near Lake Michigan and 70 inches on the eastern edge of the sub-subsection.

### Geology and Mineral Resources

The origin of Mullett Lake, as well as some of the other lakes of the Inland Waterway that stretches from Crooked Lake to Lake Huron in Cheboygan, was at least partially controlled by the pre-glacial bedrock topography. These inland lakes, including Burt and Mullett lakes, occupy an area of low bedrock topography, with some of the deepest parts of the lakes overlying distinct bedrock valleys. During the last Ice Age, the continental ice sheets that moved across northern Michigan would tend to be thicker in these lowlands and resulted in the accumulation of a greater volume of glacial sediment compared to more upland areas. The glacial sediments are in the range of 200 to 400 feet thick in the area of the property compared to less than 10 feet thick in some areas just seven miles south. After ice retreated from this area for the last time, around 11,500 years ago, Burt and Mullett lakes and what are now lakes Michigan and Huron, were likely all connected as one, large proglacial Great Lake (Lake Algonquin). As the land

surface began to rebound following retreat of the thick and heavy ice sheet, the shallower portions of the Waterway emerged as dry land and the deeper areas became a chain of separate inland lake basins.

Gete Mino Mshkiigan sits on the western shore of Mullett Lake today. At the end of the last glacial period, lake levels would have fluctuated considerably, and the site would have been inundated multiple times. The surficial sediments of the property consist of glacial moraine and lake deposits, which are a mix of gravel, sand, and clay that have been partially sorted and stratified by moving water. Michigan’s glacial sand and gravel deposits are frequently quarried for construction aggregate. Numerous active sand and gravel mining operations exist in this region.

Bedrock underlying the glacial sediments on the site consists of the Devonian-age Traverse Formation. The Traverse Limestone, the most prominent unit of the Traverse Formation, is mined for aggregate and cement products in other parts of the state, where it is near the surface, and is known for its prevalence of marine invertebrate fossils.

There has been no oil and gas development in the area of the property, and there is no known potential for economic oil and gas production beneath the property at this time.

## Topography

The Gete Mino Mshkiigan property slopes gently from a minimum elevation at the lakeshore to a high of 673 feet at the southwest property corner adjacent to M-27.

## Soils

Soil types on the property consist of Tawas peat and muck near the lakeshore, characterized as poorly drained depressions of the lake plains. Mucky soils are also present around the small pond, supporting very poorly drained marshland. The remainder of the property is covered by somewhat poorly drained Au Gres sands and excessively drained Rubicon sands of slopes varying from 0-30%.



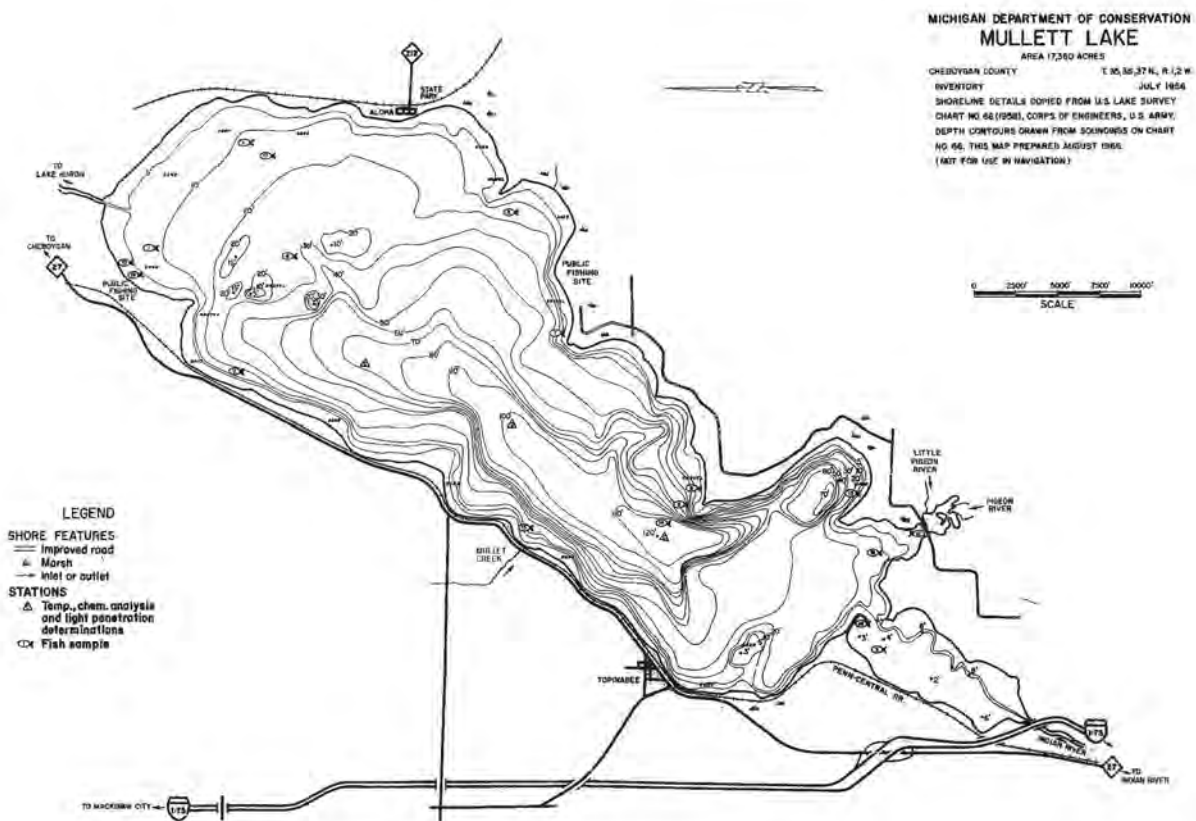
*Small pond and surrounding wetland near the center of the property*

## Water Resources

Gete Mino Mshkiigan is located on the shores of Mullett Lake within the Cheboygan River Watershed, with 1,500 feet of lake frontage. Drainage from the Cheboygan River Watershed flows into the Cheboygan River, through the city of Cheboygan and into Lake Huron. Mullett Lake is the fourth largest inland lake in Michigan, covering approximately 17,000 acres and measuring 10 miles in length (north to south) and about 4 miles wide at the widest point. It is 120 feet at its deepest. Major inflows to the lake are the Indian River (which connects with nearby Burt Lake), Pigeon River, Little Pigeon River, and Mullett Creek. The Cheboygan River flows out of the northeast end of the lake. The lake level is controlled by the Cheboygan Dam, targeting a summer elevation of 593.1 feet and a winter elevation of 592.15 feet.

The property also features palustrine (emergent) wetlands and a 0.60-acre man-made pond near the center of the site.

The site is in an area of “minimal flood hazard” according to National Flood Hazard mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.





## Early 1800's Vegetation

The General Land Office survey of the area occurred in 1840, followed by a dependent resurvey in 1855. The surveys included notes on vegetation and land cover. The uplands of the Gete Mino Mshkiigan property (western third) were described as part of a large “pine and oak openings” between Mullet and Burt Lakes. To the northeast, in what is today Long Point and Miami Beach, the 1855 survey noted approximately 600 acres of burned land. There were numerous mapped villages, agricultural fields, and trails in the area reflective of the long history of Indigenous peoples who also managed the land with fire.

These notes suggest the property's uplands had a more open condition than today consisting of overstory white oak, red oak, red pine, jack pine, and white pine. The oak was also prevalent in the subcanopy as multi-stemmed shrubs of stump-sprouts due to the frequent fires. The understories of these open forests would have had a high diversity of shrubs of many berry and nut producing species such as serviceberry, bearberry, American hazelnut, beaked hazelnut, huckleberry, wild plum, choke cherry, dewberry, and blueberry. Other shrubs likely included serviceberry, striped maple, witch-hazel, and dogwoods, much like it does today.

The middle third of Gete Mino Mshkiigan can be presumed to have been similar to the vegetation seen today where there is a former ancient shoreline of Mullett Lake consisting of a main ridge and ravine-like landforms. Hemlock and sugar maple likely predominated as it does today. Further east towards the shore exhibited rich conifer swamp. Surveyors in 1855 noted that the shoreline was often periodically inundated and contained heavy fallen timber. The land was sold for private ownership in 1856 after which intensive logging marked a dramatic shift in the vegetation in the area.

## Current Vegetation

The easternmost third of the property is still primarily rich conifer swamp exhibiting a land use history consistent with most in the region. One can readily identify the stumps of large cedars that were cut over a century ago during periods when the ground was frozen. Cedar regeneration appears uneven with balsam fir and white spruce filling in more of that space today. Common trees and shrubs include tamarack, tag alder, winterberry, and willows. The middle third of the property is mesic northern forest and was clearcut at least once (tree cores have not been taken at the time of this writing). This area is a diverse forest with all ages of eastern hemlock represented – an important feature to protect since hemlock is often heavily browsed by white-tailed deer. Other dominants include sugar maple, balsam fir, ironwood, striped maple, beech, and yellow birch. The much drier westernmost third of the property is a very diverse dry and dry-mesic northern forest. Species composition appears relatively even with red pine, white pine, large-tooth aspen, red oak, white oak, red maple, with white cedar and hemlock represented in the more mesic sites. This area was logged in the 1850s or 1860s and again very approximately in 1940 based on the sizes of the trees.

## Rare Flora and Fauna

No known surveys have been carried out to determine if rare plant and animal species are present on the site. The following have been recorded in the vicinity of the property and could be present:

| Common Name               | Scientific Name                 | Protection Status                    |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Ram's head lady's slipper | <i>Cypripedium arietinum</i>    | Special Concern                      |
| Michigan monkey flower    | <i>Mimulus michiganensis</i>    | State Endangered, Federal Endangered |
| Common loon               | <i>Gavia immer</i>              | State Threatened                     |
| Bald eagle                | <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> | Special Concern                      |
| Red shouldered hawk       | <i>Buteo lineatus</i>           | State Threatened                     |

Ram's head lady's slipper is referenced as being present in the general area in vague historic records. It may be found in pine forests and in conifer-dominated swamps. Michigan monkey flower has historically been recorded along the banks of Mullett Creek and the west shores of Burt Lake. It is found in cold calcareous springs, seeps, and streams through northern white-cedar. Mullett Lake has been identified as loon habitat, and bald eagle and red shouldered hawk have been seen in the area, although are not known to nest on the property.

## Wildlife

The property is made up of a variety of forest and wetland ranging from conifer swamp in the east near Mullett Lake, to a pond and wetland area in the center of the property, to upland forest in the west along Straits Highway. This mixture of cover types provides habitat for a range of wildlife species. Wildlife likely to occupy the property at various times of year include mammals like white-tailed deer, bear, beaver, bobcat, snowshoe hare, cottontail rabbit, and various squirrel species among others. Bird species likely to be found on the property range from wetland species such as wood duck, red-winged blackbird, and common yellowthroat, to upland species like wild turkey, ovenbird, and black-throated green warbler. Amphibians and reptiles also have good potential to use the available habitats on the property. Species like painted and Blanding's turtles, eastern hognose snake, northern water snake, spring peepers, leopard frogs, and various salamander species may be found here.

## Fisheries

Mullett Lake has a history of fisheries management activities dating back to 1887. This large lake today is well known for its sport fishing, with good opportunities to catch yellow perch, rock bass, walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, rainbow trout, cisco, white bass, and muskellunge. Lake sturgeon is a

threatened species in Michigan, is native to the lake, and has been regularly stocked in Mullett Lake since 2003. Numbers today of this species are lower than historical numbers. Other past fish stocking efforts, including walleye and lake trout, have been halted due to lack of attention among anglers (lake trout) or increased natural reproduction (walleye). Species such as lake sturgeon and cisco hold special status in Michigan due to their unique life history needs and sensitivity to habitat perturbation. Both of these species are found in Mullett Lake, but likely in lower numbers today than historically.

Known invasive species to the Mullett Lake environment are many, including sea lamprey, round goby, alewife, zebra mussels, quagga mussels, rusty crayfish, spiny water flea, and Eurasian water milfoil. The mussel species are thought to have a profound impact on the lake through their ability to reduce the amount of food (plankton) in the water column through filter feeding ([Mullett Lake Status of the Fisheries Resource Report 2018-255](#), Tim Cwalinski, 2017). Most of the lake shoreline today is developed, with the exception of the Gete Mino Mshkiigan property which has a natural shoreline.

## 9. CULTURAL RESOURCES

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This property is sensitive for the presence of cultural resources. One previously reported archaeological site is located within the property and is considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. This site will be preserved and protected. Additional cultural resources may be present that have yet to be identified. A property-wide cultural resources survey is recommended to identify any additional sites requiring special stewardship. Proposed projects within the property will avoid impacts to significant cultural resources.

## 10. RECREATIONAL RESOURCES

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Gete Mino Mshkiigan is currently lightly used for recreation, other than the North Central State Trail (NCST) which passes through the property. The trail is open to all kinds of non-motorized uses year-round and to snowmobiles from December 1 through April 1. A 2014 Use Assessment of the NCST undertaken between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend, estimated an average of 169 uses per day during the study period. Of all observed uses, 63% were bicycling and 37% were walking or running. Winter use, especially by snowmobiles, is known to be high along the NCST. There are also several two tracks that provide hiking opportunities on the property, although they are currently unmarked.



*North Central State Trail through the property*

There is a small beach area between the NCST and Mullett Lake, which provides a rest stop for both land and water trail users and a popular location for visitors and local residents to access the lake for swimming. This is a rustic site with no amenities provided.

Mullett Lake is popular for kayaking, canoeing, wake boarding, fishing, and swimming, however access from the property is not convenient. Mullett Lake is one of the largest inland lakes in Michigan and often has rough water or even white caps caused by the wind.

The property is open to all hunting and trapping in accordance with state regulations.

ORV use is not allowed.

## 11. RESOURCE MAPS

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- Regional Overview
- Regional recreation Resources
- Ownership Rights
- Funding Sources
- Topography
- Soils
- Land Cover 1800s
- Forest Stands and Land Cover
- Wetlands

*Note: These maps were created prior to the property being named and reflect the informal name given to the property when it was purchased.*

## APPENDIX B


### Stakeholder, Tribal and Public Input

#### B.1 Project Website

A project website was available for public viewing throughout the duration of the planning process and was updated with maps, stakeholder meeting presentation and summary, and the draft plan. Contact information was provided for members of the public to submit comments or ask questions. Note that at the outset of the project the site was referred to as the “Mullett Lake South” property prior to adopting the name of Gete Mino Mshkiigan, as suggested by the current and former Tribal Historic Preservation Officers of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians.

#### B.2 Stakeholder Input Meeting Summary

The planning team invited over 60 stakeholders, both individuals and community groups, representing governmental, recreational, non-profit, neighborhood, and business/tourism interests, to participate in a facilitated input workshop held online via Microsoft Teams on February 2, 2022. Representatives of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided the stakeholders with a brief overview of the Mullett Lake South property and an outline of the general management plan process, timeline, and an explanation of the plan elements that their input would inform.



**MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES**  
CARING FOR MICHIGAN'S OUTDOOR PLACES AND STORIES SINCE 1921

**DNR seeking stakeholder input at Feb. 2 virtual meeting for "Mullett Lake South" property**

You're invited to attend a stakeholder input meeting regarding the "Mullett Lake South" property 10 a.m. to noon Wednesday, Feb. 2. The goal is to gather valuable insights from your organization and other key stakeholders on a new [general management plan](#) for the property.

The virtual meeting will include a brief presentation on the planning process and progress, followed by a series of brainstorming exercises. A maximum of two representatives from your organization or department is requested, so all attendees can actively participate. Advance registration is required.

The 147-acre property includes 1,500 linear feet of water frontage on the southwest shore of Mullett Lake. The property was purchased in 2013 and is largely undeveloped except for the North Central State Trail that runs parallel to the lakeshore.

The final plan will help set the course for future management planning, protect natural and cultural resources within the property, and address recreation and education needs and opportunities.

[Register by Jan. 31 ▶](#)

*The property is not signed, but open to the public and may be accessed from S. Straits Highway, approximately 1 mile south of Topinabee or from the North*

#### Stakeholder Input Meeting Invitation

Input from the stakeholders to help inform the management plan was solicited through a series of brainstorming questions, the results of which are presented below.

**Say one word or phrase that describes the property or this general location right now.**

- Wet
- Unique
- Scenic
- Problematic
- Peaceful
- Loud in summer
- Rare
- Unregulated
- Natural beauty
- Habitat
- One mile from parking, beachfront and bathrooms in Topinabee
- Significant
- Natural
- Convenient access
- Beautiful shoreline
- Noisy in summertime (people at the waterfront/boaters)
- Wetlands & Wildlife
- Peaceful
- Great location for a trail to run through (NCST)
- Natural shoreline protects rest of property from the boaters
- Popular

**Say one word or phrase that you want to describe the property in the future.**

- Quiet
- Sustainable
- Unobtrusive to property owners
- Environmental education for the future
- Ecologically diverse
- Properly regulated and enforced
- Trail amenity
- Fishing pier for kids
- Pleasant stop on the trail
- Healthy water resources
- Public lake access
- Preserve access by non-motorized boats
- Needed loop trail
- Unchanged
- Accessible in its natural state (as natural as possible)
- Educational (i.e. signage)
- Kept in its natural state
- Tranquil/quiet
- Wetlands protected/preserved
- Monitored
- Visible boundaries



**How can the property benefit the wider community? Could be from the standpoint of recreation, preservation, economic development.**

- Shoreline stewardship and education
- Enhance the trail experience
- Education signs along the trail relating to habitat and geology
- Local ecotourism attraction
- Public health amenity – passive recreation, hike, bike, snowshoe, skiing
- Thoughtful development to assist in appropriate use
- Consider fencing boundaries adjacent to private land
- Quiet recreation (a loop trail for example)
- Educational opportunity to learn about nature and wildlife (topography, flora/fauna) in a non-disturbing way
- Providing access for the community to natural resources (an area to park to be able to walk the trails)
- Small parking lot at existing driveway spot
- Low-impact recreation connections from the trail to other trails
- Regulate party boat crowd access to ensure natural resources and “quiet” atmosphere is protected
- Create an intentional connection between water/ NCST and rest of property

**What natural or cultural aspects should be prioritized at the property?**

- Wetland preservation
- Complete a biological inventory
- Preserve diversity
- Maintain natural and pristine lake frontage – one of few public properties on the lakeshore
- Trail preservation (not impacted)
- Old sawmill buildings? (Indian Woods trail old logging encampment)
- Historical education
- Identify, preserve and protect areas of cultural significance
- Natural shoreline benefits – education and partner with other DNR programs
- Education/interpretation signs of ancient lakeshore ridgeline, natural resources
- Education opportunities/interpretive signage regarding Native American impacts on the property
- Large trees preserved/protected
- Consider not allowing metal detection at the park based on other park precedents

**What recreational activities should be prioritized at the property?**

- Walking
- Minimal and quiet
- Non-motorized (on the property)
- Cycling (on the trail)
- Trail should be priority and new uses should not infringe
- Opportunity for light camp activities e.g. bike camping accessible from the trail
- More use could damage lakeshore (high use of lake by boats)
- Designated area for lakeshore use

- Recreational use should not infringe on private properties
- Tranquility maintained
- Maintain tree cover/ natural environment
- Limited trail development with signage (like LTC property) – low impact, well maintained
- Prioritize dedicated times or locations for non-motorized boating use. (Opposite of mouth of Cheboygan River)
- Shoreline use by boater’s problematic
- Foot traffic (snowshoeing/cross country skiing, hiking trails)
- Education/interpretive signs
- Frisbee golf
- Picnic access close to water
- Kayak/canoe access
- Ice fishing access
- Help alleviate congestion along Straits Highway at Woodruff Road
- Preserved biking activities on the NCST
- Potential for restricting kinds of hunting? (restricting to bow/small game seasons only) – may be unsafe due to other recreation activities proposed.
- Safe access from (i.e., off road parking) and across S. Straits Hwy.

**What are some collaboration and partnership opportunities that the property presents for local stakeholders and communities?**

- Indian River RV resort willing to assist
- Watershed council partner on educational opportunities and maintaining wetlands
- Collaboration between DNR, stakeholders and Law enforcement
- Cheboygan County updating rec. plan
- TOMTC
- Neighborhood Association potentially help with stewardship/ monitoring?
- Explore possibility of new regulations with Twp. (balance private and public)
- UMICH Douglas Lake Biological Station study of flora/fauna history/human history of area
- Local school districts – education opportunities
- Lake associations – help keep lines of communication open and to be stewards of site
- Little Traverse Band of Odawa Indians, Burt Lake Band can help us with interpretive/educational opportunities. May also help us with naming the site
- Inland Waterway water trail organization

**Stakeholder Workshop Attendees:**

| Name                       | Representing  |
|----------------------------|---|
| Brent Bolin                | Top of Michigan Trails Council                                |
| Cam Cavitt                 | Cheboygan County Drain Commissioner                           |
| Cole Williams              | Representative Allor’s office                                 |
| Darcy Ashman               | Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society                        |
| Dave Lurie                 | Grandview Beach Association                                   |
| Denise Lange               | Neighboring Property Owner                                    |
| Frank Kirst                | DNR Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee |
| Laz Surabian               | Mullett Township Supervisor                                   |
| Herm Boatin                | Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society                        |
| Jennifer Merk              | Cheboygan County Planning & Zoning                            |
| Jessica Lovay              | Northern Lakes Economic Alliance                              |
| Jim Conboy                 | Top of Michigan Trails Council                                |
| Jim Metcalf                | Indian Woods Trail Association                                |
| Kacey Cook                 | Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council                             |
| Kathie Lafferty            | Indian Woods Trail Association                                |
| Ken Hoehn                  | Woodside Park Owners Association                              |
| Kieran Fleming             | Little Traverse Conservancy                                   |
| Kyle Keller                | Cheboygan County Sanitarian                                   |
| Lauren Dey                 | Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council                             |
| Margie Reh                 | Top of Michigan Trails Council                                |
| Michael Turisk             | Cheboygan County Planning & Zoning                            |
| Representative Susan Allor | Michigan House of Representatives, District 106               |
| Terrell Deppe              | Indian River RV Resort  |

**Planning Team Attendees:** Debbie Jensen (Park Management Plan Administrator), Matt Lincoln (Land Liaison/ Grants Specialist), Keith Cheli (Regional Field Planner), Rich Hill (District Supervisor), Dave Stempky (Cheboygan Field Office Manager), Greg Norwood (Stewardship Ecologist), Lisa Gamero (Cultural Resource Analyst), Greg Kinser (NLP Trail Coordinator), Paige Perry (Trails Specialist), Stacy Tchorzynski (Archaeologist), Peter Rose (Geologist), Tim Rosochaki (Conservation Officer)

The following input was received following the stakeholder workshop via email:

### **Email Comment #1**

Dear Deborah:

In regards to the plans for the “Mullett South” development, three of the neighboring property owner associations are joining to provide a unified response to the plan as presented. Thank you for the opportunity to more fully address our viewpoints. Our associations – Indian Wood Trails Association, Woodside Park Owners Association and Grandview Beach Association - are directly impacted by the plans of the DNR to develop this property.

During the conference call, we chose not to dwell on some of the concerns, but rather respect the assignment given to us by the call coordinator. Based on what was heard, we are pleased that it seems the DNR sees that this 147 acres wedged between Indian Wood Trails Association and Woodside Park Owners Association will maintain and offer park visitors access to the wetlands and natural treed beauty of Northern Michigan, while at the same time being careful to **preserve and protect the lakefront area**.

We have just a few major concerns which we would be remiss in not noting during the DNR planning process as we are sure, as stewards of the environment, the DNR will be even more concerned about.

- 1) The RV Park (Indian River Campground and Resort) located close to the park could market the “Johnson” property as available nearby lake access for their campers. According to the words of the owner of the campground during this call, he serves “100,000 campers” per year. Common sense dictates that some or many of these campers could walk or bike across M-27 (with a 55 mph speed limit) and down to the beach. This type of activity is not only a **serious pedestrian hazard** but no doubt will **harm the ecology of the beach** creating additional problems for the Indian Wood Trails and Woodside Park residents who already have a big problem with boaters using their beach, docks and facilities. In our view this will require **active management** by the DNR, especially during peak summer, fall camping season.
- 2) Boaters – many days during the summer, boaters anchor close to shore or pull their pontoons onto the beach. Last July 4<sup>th</sup> there were 220 boats in this one small area – all close to shore. What is to prevent boaters, especially those from the RV Resort with their newfound “lake access” resulting from this project, from unlimited and unattended mooring of boats off the shore of this property, unmonitored beaching of boats, and potential damage to the delicate shoreline? While this may not be your problem directly, with park beach access, there will be more boaters and beachgoers, and more damage done to the integrity of the shoreline environment. Your plan must affirmatively control further growth of boaters in this area because it does affect the natural habitat. We know the natural shoreline integrity is a concern of Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council and the Mullett Area Preservation Society. **What is the DNR plan to keep from seriously compromising the last publicly owned pristine lakefront on Mullett Lake? How will the “Mullett South” development avoid this small area becoming another uncontrolled free-for-all boat gathering spot similar to the mouth of the Cheboygan River at Mullett Lake or worse, the Torch Lake sandbar?**
- 3) Akin to #1 and #2, what is your plan to keep visitors by foot, bike and boat from using the facilities of Indian Woods Trails? It is already a serious problem with incidents every summer, and there could be thousands more visitors a year. **Boaters and beachgoers use the docks, bathrooms and beach areas of Indian Wood Trails and Woodside Park Association.**

4) Woodside Park Road and its cul-de-sac would without doubt become a vehicle access and parking area for the new park development. Currently, at all times of the year, and especially on a summer weekend, the cul-de-sac at the end of the road is regularly clogged with hiker and bicyclist's motor vehicles, who use it as a staging area. **Can Woodside Park Road have signage to prohibit on street parking as part of this development?**

5) **What is the DNR park management plan** for ensuring that the park is used appropriately including hours of operation, camping, beachfront issues, and so on.

6) Grandview Beach has walking trails through 20 acres of its wooded property. These trails occasionally are used improperly by 4-wheelers and go karts. **What is the DNR plan – other than signage – to prevent motorized vehicles, including snowmobilers, on the trails?**

7) As close neighbors to this land, please be assured that the property in question has been utilized, including as recently as this season, for hunting of all types. Reference to the State of Michigan's "MI-Hunt" interactive map web site does not show this location as a viable and approved hunting location. The comparatively small size of the property has significantly reduced huntable areas given required safety zones. New uses for the property would directly conflict with the current use of the property by hunters. **Since it is already extensively being used for hunting, what mechanisms would be put in place to ensure hunting can coexist with the new planned uses for the property,** its close proximity to homes, buildings, and the North Central trail, and, most importantly, enforce restrictions on a continuing and practical basis?

We ask you to send this to any of your colleagues who are involved in writing or implementing the plan for this property. During November, when you indicated on the call that DNR staff walked the property, many of these concerns were obviously not present, but they are during the busy summer months. At the very least, come to see the activity IN PERSON over the summer, and especially holiday weekends, or ask us to send you a video.

When the Public Hearing is held this summer, you will hear these concerns loud and clear from those residents on Indian Wood Trails, Woodside Park Association and Grandview Beach, many of whom are year round residents. We are confident that the DNR, as **stewards of the environment and natural resources** of our great state, will find ways to address and mitigate the concerns expressed in this email.

Thank you once again.

Sue Fisher, President, Indian Wood Trails Association  
Ken Hoehn, President Woodside Park Owners Association  
Dave Lurie – President, Grandview Beach Association

Cc:

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Mullett Township Board                                    | Patrick Rogers                             |
| Darcy Ashman – Giauque Beach Association                  | Jacklin Blodgett                           |
| Tuscarora Township Board of Trustees                      | Brandy Brown                               |
| Little Traverse Conservancy                               | David Stempky                              |
| Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council                         | Samuel Cummings                            |
| Mullett Lake Area Preservation Society Board              | Steven Hamp                                |
| Michael Turisk, Cheboygan County Planning Director        | William Rustem                             |
| Sheriff Dale V. Clarmont, Cheboygan County Representative | Scott Swanson, Editor Straitsland Resorter |
| Sue Allor   | Kortney Hahn, Cheboygan Tribune            |
| Senator Wayne Schmidt                                     | UpNorthLive (4and7 News)                   |
| Daniel Eichinger  | 9 & 10 News                                |
| Nate Stearns  |  |

## Email Comment #2

This was a productive conversation, and I think participants felt heard, and comforted by the fact that the DNR is not attempting to build a heavy use park.

Our guests will be very pleased to have access to the land, trails and water. As stated in my comment in the chat window, my only potential concern is for the safety of our guests as they make use of the park on foot or by car. We have been making changes to the ingress and egress of our property to reduce the number of accidents, and I'm willing to make further adjustments if necessary to facilitate your project.

To help you better plan, you should know that we host about 100,000 guests each summer (several hundred people on any given day), and a large number of them will likely make use of the park.

If there is anything we can do to help minimize any negative impact of our guests on the property and its neighbors, please let me know. We are willing to partner with you in any way, from development through daily operations, to make this project successful and well appreciated by the community.

—

Terrell Deppe

## B.3 Tribal Communication

An Email was sent to Tribal representatives from the Tribes listed below, informing them of the project and inviting them to meet and provide any thoughts on the property or planning process.

- Bay Mills Indian Community
- Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians
- Hannahville Indian Community
- Keweenaw Bay Indian Community
- Lac Vieux Dessert Band of Lake Superior Chippewa Indians
- Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
- Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
- Gun Lake Tribe of Pottawatomi Indians
- Nottawaseppi Huron Band of Potawatomi
- Pokagon Band of Potawatomi
- Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
- Sault Tribe of Chippewa Indians

Representatives from the planning team met with the current and former Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians to discuss the property and explain the planning process. Topics of conversation included the need for a cultural resources survey of the property and consideration of impacts to cultural resources through ground disturbing measures. Ideas for a suitable property name were solicited.

Dear Tribal Leaders, Natural Resources Directors, and Environmental Directors:

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is in the process of developing general management plans for two properties on Mullett Lake in Cheboygan County – Aloha State Park and an undeveloped parcel on the southwest side of the lake referred to as the Mullett Lake South property.

Aloha State Park features waterfront campsites, boating access and beaches on Mullett Lake at the central point of the Inland Waterway. The North Eastern State Trail, which runs from Alpena to Mackinaw City, borders the park. In addition, the park includes a 64-acre undeveloped parcel to the south that features meadows and woodland.

The 147-acre Mullett Lake South property, located approximately 1 mile south of Topinabee in Mullet Township (T36N, R02W, S31), was purchased by the DNR in 2013. The property features diverse cover types including mixed deciduous and coniferous mature northern forest, wetlands and 1,500 feet of frontage on Mullett Lake. The 75-mile-long North Central State Trail runs along the lakeshore through the property. This property contains significant Indigenous cultural resources that require protection and appropriate stewardship. We encourage your Tribal Historic Preservation Officer or Tribal Cultural Representative, to participate in park planning.

The DNR uses general management plans (GMPs) to define a long-range planning and management strategy that will protect the natural, cultural and historic resources of the site, while considering education and recreation opportunities. A planning team, representing various specialties within the DNR, has been established and is meeting regularly to develop the GMP for these sites.

The planning process includes several opportunities for input. The first of these is an online stakeholder focus group to discuss the Mullett Lake South property scheduled for February 2, from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. A similar meeting for Aloha State Park will be scheduled in the early spring, together with an online survey. In addition, the draft plans will be available for review and comment prior to adoption in the summer or fall of 2022.

For additional information on our management plan process, please visit our website at [www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans](http://www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans)

We would like to give the Tribes the opportunity to meet with us independently of the larger group to discuss the management plan process and any thoughts you may have in relation to either of these properties. In addition, you are welcome to send representatives to the stakeholder focus group on February 2 by registering [here](#).

Please contact Ms. Debbie Jensen, PRD Management Plan Administrator, at [Jensend1@michigan.gov](mailto:Jensend1@michigan.gov), or myself if you have any questions or would like to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

**Trevor J. VanDyke, J.D.**

*Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office, Tribal Liaison  
Executive Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources  
Constitutional Hall, 525 West Allegan Street  
P.O. Box 30028  
Phone: 517.284.6243  
Fax: 517.335.4242  
[vandyket1@michigan.gov](mailto:vandyket1@michigan.gov)*

## **B.4 Public Input**

*To be completed*



## APPENDIX C

### Capital Outlay Projects Opinion of Probable Cost

#### State Park Funding

The primary funding sources for state park improvement and development projects are Recreation Passport sales (motor vehicle registration fee), the Park Endowment Fund (generated from royalties from oil, gas and mineral extraction on public land) and the Park Improvement Fund (from camping and other state park user fees). One-time appropriations from the state General Fund may also be ear marked for specific needs but are not guaranteed. The annual capital outlay budget for state parks varies significantly from year to year, as illustrated by the table below. The state park system is 100 years old and much of the infrastructure is aging. Identified infrastructure needs across the state park system (excluding Belle Isle Park, trail infrastructure, and state waterways infrastructure) is currently estimated to be over \$258 million.

| Fiscal Year | Total Annual Capital Outlay Project Budget** | Identified Infrastructure Needs |
|-------------|--|---------------------------------|
| FY21        | \$ 14,945,000                                | \$ 258,482,050                  |
| FY20        | \$ 15,845,000                                | \$ 278,159,950                  |
| FY19        | \$ 18,925,000                                | \$ 273,498,836                  |
| FY18        | \$ 14,520,000                                | \$ 264,089,912                  |
| FY17        | \$ 10,400,000                                | \$ 285,513,487                  |

*\*\*Capital Outlay funds dedicated to funding state park projects; excluding funds for Belle Isle Park, major emergency repairs, District Major Maintenance Projects, etc.*

With such a large gap between financial need and budget, all projects are carefully analyzed to look at innovative solutions to increase efficiencies or downsize assets.

#### Estimated Cost of Proposed Developments

The following table provides an estimate of probable cost for each capital outlay development project proposed at Gete Mino Mshkiigan over the next ten years. Management and operations actions, small projects, which are funded out of district or park funds, and those lead by partners, are not included in this list but may have additional financial implications. The costs are based on information available at the time and will be refined as conceptual and detailed designs are completed. Where noted, the costs may only include studies or project planning, which will provide direction for development costs if determined appropriate. The costs are based on 2022 prices and should be adjusted according to the consumer price index and the market at the time of implementation.

The following action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well identified need and ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2

projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years once funding has been identified.

PRD will seek future internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan. Costs listed below do not guarantee funding. On an annual basis, PRD districts determine priorities for project planning and project capital outlay. Each district's top projects are then evaluated at a state-wide level for available funds.

**Infrastructure and Development: Capital Outlay**

| <b>Action Goals</b>   | <b>Priority</b> | <b>Opinion of Probable Cost</b> |
|---|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| Complete a phase 1 archaeological study of the entire property.   | 1               | \$45,000                        |
| Design and construct a loop hiking trail system using existing trails as a base, including a sustainable trail connection to the NCST | 2               | \$125,000                       |
| <b>**TOTAL OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS (10 YEARS)</b>   |                 | <b>\$170,000</b>                |

*\*Does not guarantee funding.*

*\*\*Excludes costs yet to be identified by studies to determine best way to proceed and costs associated with projects that are already funded.*