

NEGWEGON STATE PARK

PHASE 2 GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN LONG RANGE ACTION GOALS

Long range management guidance focused on the specific natural resources, cultural resources, recreation opportunities and education/interpretation opportunities of Negwegon State Park.

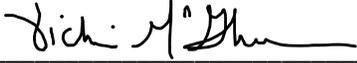


Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Parks and Recreation Division
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Negwegon State Park Phase 2 General Management Plan Approvals:

 _____ Chief, Planning & Infrastructure Section	<u>4-19-24</u> Date
 _____ Chief, Field Operations Section	<u>4.19.24</u> Date
 _____ Chief, Parks & Recreation Division	<u>5/7/2024</u> Date



Photographer on the Lake Huron shoreline

PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

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Eric Ostrander, Park Supervisor
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Reviewed and approved by:

Parks and Recreation Division Section Chiefs

Presented for information to:

MSPAC – STEWARDSHIP SUBCOMMITTEE
NRC – MICHIGAN STATE PARK ADVISORY COMMITTEE



Entrance Sign

Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction 6
 - 1.1. Planning Objectives 6
 - 1.2. Planning Process Overview..... 6
 - 1.3. Planning Team..... 7
 - 1.4. Stakeholder and Public Input Overview..... 7
- 2. Overview of Phase 1 General Management Plan 9
 - 2.1. Significance Statements..... 9
 - 2.2. Management Zones 10
 - 2.3. Changes Since Phase 1 General Management Plan..... 10
 - 2.4. Supporting Documentation Updates 14
- 3. 10–Year Action Goals 18
- 4. Implementation Strategy..... 21
 - 4.1. Implementation Toolbox 21
 - 4.2. Documentation of Changes 22
 - 4.3. Documentation of Accomplishments..... 22
 - 4.4. Five-year Review Process 22

Appendices

- Appendix A: Legal Mandates Update**
- Appendix B: Stakeholder and Public Input Summary**
- Appendix C: Capital Outlay Opinion of Probable Costs**
- Appendix D: Resource Maps**

1. Introduction

Negwegon State Park is located in the northern part of Michigan's lower peninsula on Lake Huron in Alcona and Alpena counties and is currently managed out of Harrisville State Park. The park was established in 1962 for the purposes of preserving and protecting the unique natural and cultural resources in the park and also providing opportunities for education and recreation. The park is 4,130 acres in size with over 10 miles of hiking trails, four hike-in/paddle-in backcountry campsites and over 8 miles of Lake Huron shoreline. Negwegon State Park is a dedicated Dark Sky Preserve and is popular with school groups, hikers, and visitors interested in the park's scenic beauty and natural and cultural resources. Specifically, the park's sensitive natural resources include a dune swale complex rare to Lake Huron, wetland and shoreline habitat for threatened and endangered species and bald eagle nests. Sensitive cultural resources attributed to indigenous peoples, remnants of an old stagecoach route, farmsteads and shipwrecks.

The General Management Plan (GMP) guides the future long-term management of Negwegon State Park and is based on the mission of the Parks and Recreation Division (PRD): "to acquire, protect and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water public recreation and education opportunities".

1.1. Planning Objectives

The objective of the GMP is to bring together PRD staff, representatives from other divisions of the Department of Natural Resource (DNR), stakeholders and the public into a planning process that directs management decisions and implementation strategies for the park.

The [Phase 1 GMP for Negwegon State Park](#), approved in 2008, established a 20-year management zone plan and defined the purpose and significance of the park. The supporting analysis included in the Phase 1 GMP provides important background information on the park such as park setting, area demographics, history, land ownership, legal mandates, and existing cultural, natural and recreation resources. A subsequent Phase 2 GMP was approved in 2010. This Phase 2 GMP updates and replaces the 2010 plan and builds upon the previous planning efforts by identifying 10-year action goals to accomplish in the park as a whole and in each of the management zones. These are implementation items for park staff and partners, addressing infrastructure, park management, and operations that impact resource protection and visitor experience at the park.

1.2. Planning Process Overview

The Negwegon State Park planning team met periodically over a 12-month period, beginning in spring of 2023. For this Phase 2 GMP, the first step was to review the Phase 1 GMP to ensure that no conditions have changed that would result in the need to amend the overall guiding document.

Input was sought from stakeholders and the public throughout the planning process to ensure the DNR is responsive to its partners and visitors. Stakeholders were invited to provide input early in the planning

process through a workshop designed to identify strengths, challenges, and opportunities at Negwegon State Park. The planning team used this information to guide the development of the draft Phase 2 GMP. The public was invited to review and comment on the draft plan through the project website or at a public meeting. The planning team reviewed all the comments received before recommending the final plan for adoption. Changes made to the plan as a result of public input included clarification of zoning descriptions, further explanation of action goals and the addition of supporting documentation.

1.3. Planning Team

This Phase 2 GMP was developed with valuable input and expertise of the planning team which included the individuals listed below.

NAME	TITLE	DIVISION
Eric Ostrander	Unit Supervisor	Parks and Recreation Division
Debbie Jensen	Management Plan Administrator	Parks and Recreation Division
Matt Lincoln	Lands Program Manager/Plan Administrator	Parks and Recreation Division
Ray Fahlsing	Stewardship Unit Manager	Parks and Recreation Division
Rich Hill	District Supervisor	Parks and Recreation Division
Ronda Osga	Regional Field Planner	Parks and Recreation Division
Paige Perry	North Central Trail Specialist	Parks and Recreation Division
Dale Parris	Forester	Forest Resources Division
Lori Green	Lease and Regulatory Unit Specialist	Parks and Recreation Division
Angela Kujawa	Wildlife Biologist	Wildlife Division
Peter Rose	Geologist	Minerals Management
Jesse Grzechowski	Conservation Officer	Law Enforcement Division
Wayne Lusardi	Archaeologist	Michigan History Center
Matt Klungle	Fisheries Biologist	Fisheries Division

1.4. Stakeholder and Public Input Overview

Stakeholder Meeting

A stakeholder meeting was held on June 13 at the Alcona Township Hall to guide the Phase 2 GMP for Negwegon State Park. Participants were invited to provide their input, identifying strengths, challenges and opportunities related to the park. A total of 8 participants represented government, business and tourism, and non-profit organizations from around the region. The meeting began with a short presentation of the Phase 1 GMP that was completed in 2008 and a review of the planning process for this phase 2 plan. A full report of the meeting is provided in Appendix B.

Strengths identified by stakeholder representatives in attendance included the location of the park, dark sky preserve status, backcountry campsites, trails, natural and cultural resources and education opportunities.

Challenges for the park identified by stakeholders in attendance included emerging recreation uses like e-bikes, trail maintenance, emergency access and invasive species.

Opportunities identified included improved trail and road maintenance, public engagement and programming, improved communication and marking the boundaries of the park.

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at the Alcona Township Hall on December 11, 2023, to review the draft Phase 2 General Management Plan and solicit comment on the 10-year action goals. The draft phase 2 plan was also posted on the DNR's website and comments were invited via e-mail and an online survey. A press release went out 3 weeks in advance of the meeting to 23,619 recipients of the GovDelivery system, including stakeholders associated with the park. Twenty-two people attended the public meeting and provided comments.

The majority of attendees concurred with the 10-year action goals presented. Action goals pertaining to natural resource protection, invasive species control, land acquisition, surveying and marking the park boundary and overall park maintenance were all highly favored.

Several comments were received requesting equestrian access within the park. The planning team reviewed the comments and concluded that equestrian use is not permitted due to the sensitive natural and cultural resources found at the park. A large part of the park is dune and swale, alternating beach ridges and wetland, not appropriate for horses or bikes. The park provides habitat for threatened and endangered species including Hine's emerald dragonfly, Pitcher's thistle, Lake Huron locust and Blanding's turtle which are sensitive to horse traffic. In addition, it was noted that several locations exist in the region that are open to equestrian use including DNR Forest Resources Division Land and Rockport State Park.

Other requests to open the park to mountain biking and to continue to allow metal detecting and snowmobiling were collected. For the reasons stated above, the planning team concluded that these uses are not appropriate at this park.

Tribal Outreach

The department's tribal liaison reached out to the twelve federally-recognized tribes in Michigan with a letter notifying them of the GMP process and timeline and inviting input. No comments were received.



Backpackers on the trail

2. Overview of Phase 1 General Management Plan

The Phase 1 GMP for Negwegon State Park was approved on September 18, 2008. The following information summarizes the significance statements and management zones for the park, which were defined in the Phase 1 GMP.

2.1. Significance Statements

Negwegon State Park was determined to be significant for the following reasons. These statements contain minor corrections made by the phase 2 planning team without changing the original meaning or intent.

- Negwegon State Park features high quality natural habitats. Its southern portion contains forests and gentle undulations of the wooded dune-swale complex that parallels the coastline. The north features lowland hardwoods and a variety of upland forest types. These forested coastal habitats provide for a diversity of flora and fauna within the park including state and federally listed threatened and endangered species.
- Negwegon State Park is a state designated Dark Sky Preserve offering viewing of the night sky with minimal light pollution.
- The park is located within the Lake Huron Flyway, providing vital habitat for waterfowl and resident and migratory bird species. State and Federal agencies use bird census data from the park and the surrounding area as a litmus test of the health of Lake Huron and the shoreline environment.
- The waters of Lake Huron just off the coast of Negwegon State Park are shallow and rocky, which provides an important fish spawning area for whitefish and other species, supporting recreational, commercial and tribal fishing.
- The park's sandy beaches are novel along the typically cobbled Lake Huron shoreline. Beach use is popular during the summer months.
- Negwegon State Park provides several opportunities for recreation including wildlife viewing, hiking, paddle sports, cross-country skiing, hunting and backcountry camping. Backcountry campsites provide a unique hike-in or paddle-in camping experience. Hunting at the park is open for all seasons including deer, small game and waterfowl.
- Within the park's boundaries are unique cultural resources attributed to indigenous peoples, farmsteads and an old stagecoach route that portions of the current trail system follow. Numerous shipwrecks are located off the coast of Negwegon State Park. These shipwrecks are part of the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and are interpreted by signage within the park.
- The park is a component of, or a stop along, the route of several regional tourism networks including the Sunrise Coast US 23 Pure Michigan Byway, Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Trail, the Lake Huron

Circle Tour, the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary and the Sunrise Coast Birding Trail. All together, these regional networks demonstrate the important role that Negwegon State Park plays in regional tourism.

2.2. Management Zones

The Phase 2 GMP planning team reviewed the zoning map developed in the phase 1 plan and determined no significant changes were necessary, although 391 acres purchased in 2018 was zoned Primitive to be consistent with adjacent zoning. A condensed review of the management zones, along with the zoning map, follows. A thorough description of each management zone can be found in the Phase 1 GMP.

- Primitive Zone reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources. Land is managed to only allow dispersed and low frequency use for very low impact recreational purposes. The majority of Negwegon land, 3,508 acres, or 85%, is designated Primitive Zone. The designated areas contain natural habitats, wetlands, and sensitive ecosystems.
- Backcountry Zone emphasizes resource quality over recreation but allows for modification of the landscape for low to moderate levels of recreation uses. Approximately 622 acres, or 15%, of Negwegon land is zoned Backcountry. The zone covers the northernmost portion of the park, existing hiking trails, backcountry campsites, and the old stagecoach route corridor which is planned to be developed into a hiking trail should the gap between the north and south park land be acquired.
- Cultural Landscape Overlay Zone addresses the overall setting in which is found not only historic structures, but non-structural evidence of the traditions, beliefs, practices, lifeways, arts, crafts and social institutions of any community. The Cultural Landscape Overlay Zone covers all Negwegon land. Cultural resources attributed to Indigenous peoples, farmstead remnants, a portion of the old stagecoach route, and shipwrecks along its coastal waters are reasons for this designation.

2.3. Changes Since Phase 1 General Management Plan

Infrastructure Improvements/Planning

The following projects have been completed since the original Phase 1 GMP was approved in 2008:

- Four backcountry campsites established (2010)
- Designated dark sky preserve (2016)
- 391-acre property acquisition to connect north and south sections of the park (2018)
- Boardwalk replacement (2017-2021)
- Four backcountry campsites listed in the online reservation system (2022)
- Friends of Negwegon projects including dark sky programming, invasive species control, promotion, and park clean-up days.

Project Boundary

A project boundary is a geographic area reflecting the future desired park boundary and may not follow the existing park boundary. The DNR has an interest in acquiring property within this boundary on a willing seller/willing buyer basis in order to better align the park with the DNR mission. The planning team reviewed and

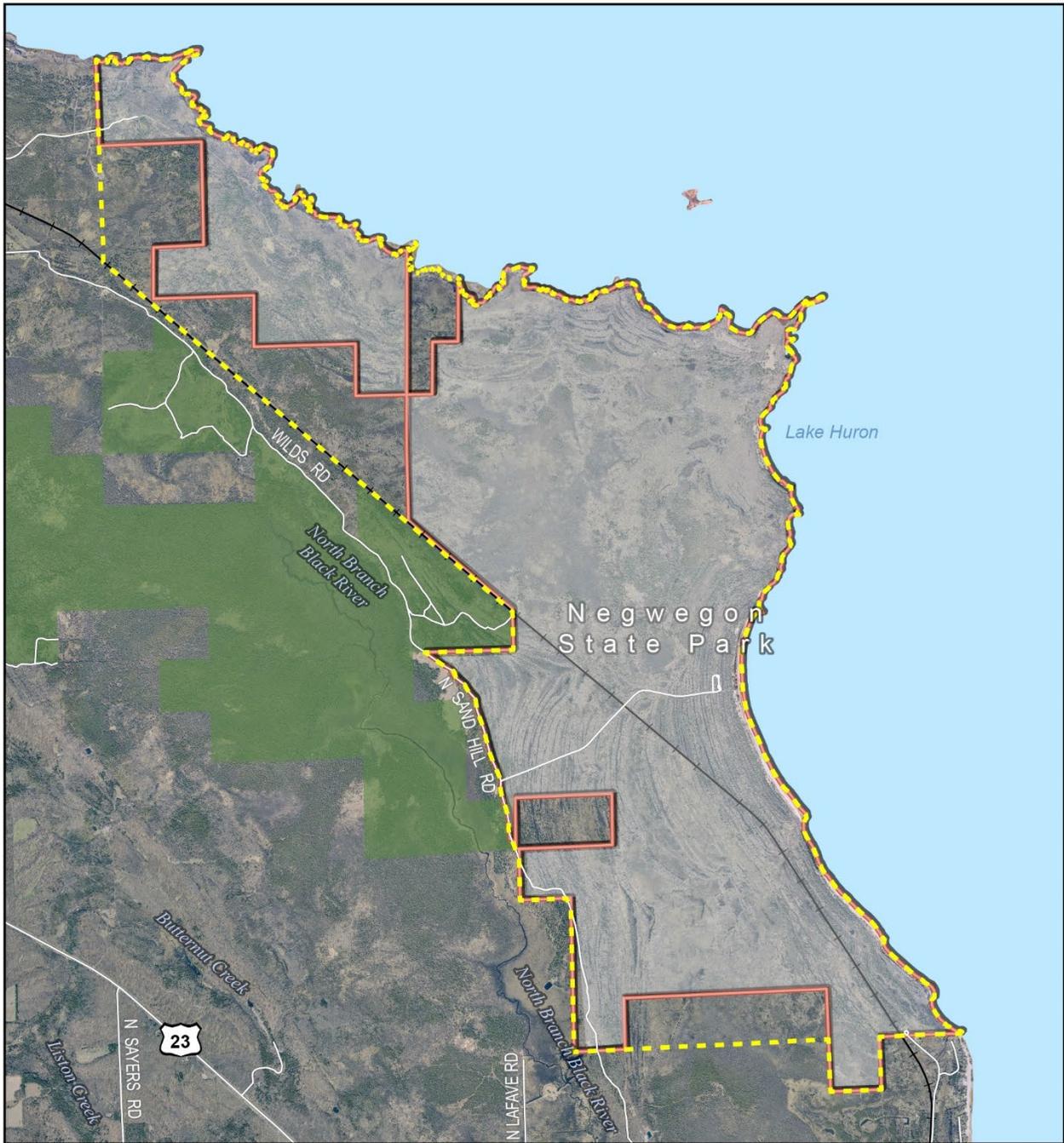
concluded with the 2020 project boundary, which was determined through a statewide effort with input from the public and approved by the Natural Resources Commission.



Lake Huron coastal ecosystem



A girl reads an interpretive sign at the park



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Negwegon State Park - Park Boundary

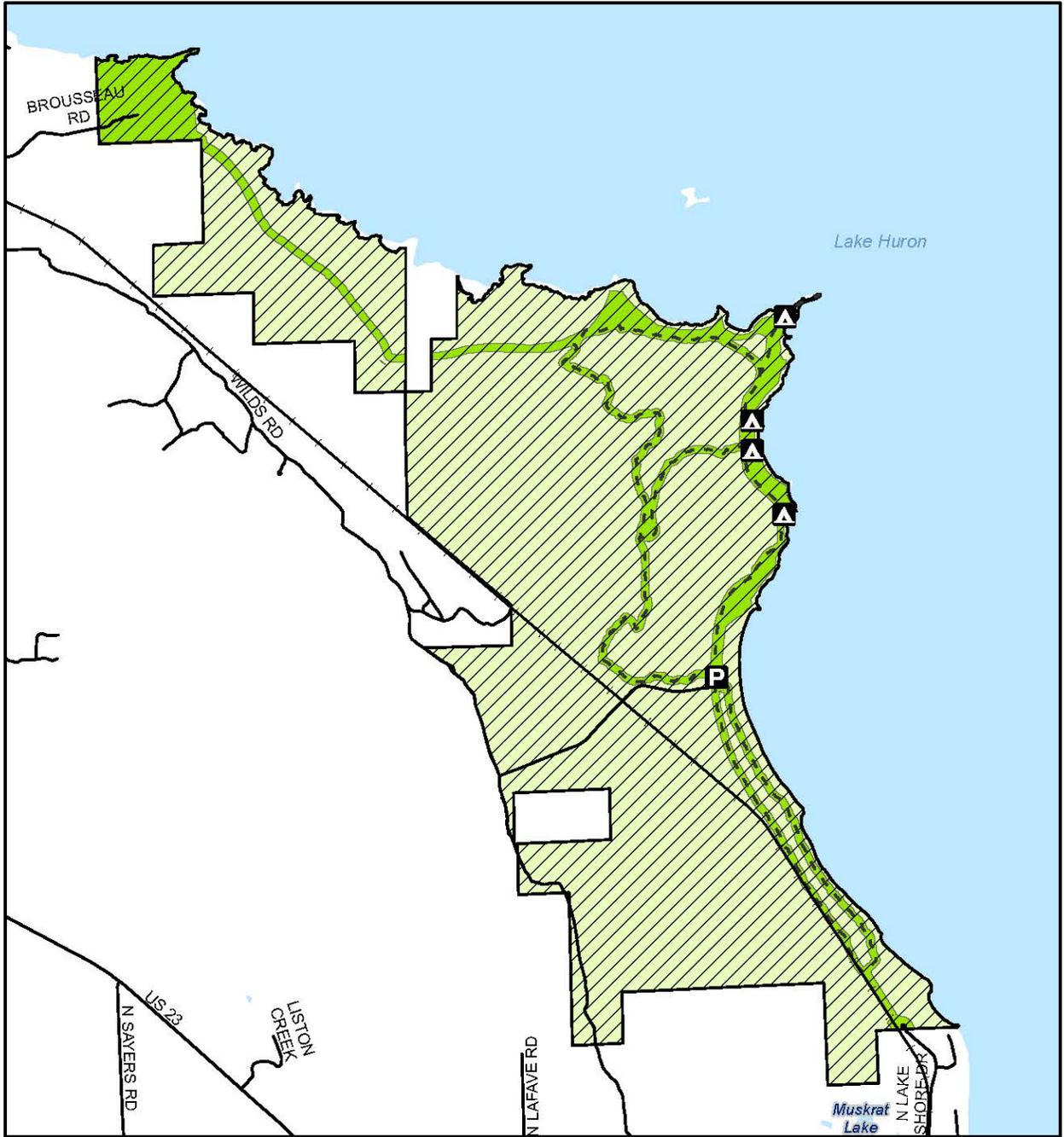


-  State Park Boundary
-  NRC 2020 Approved Project Boundary*
-  Road
-  Railroad
-  State Forest



Updated: 07/12/2023

*A project boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR on a willing buyer / willing seller basis, approved by the Natural Resources Commission in 2020



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Negwegon State Park- Management Zones

- Roads
- +— Railroad
- - - Hiking Trail

- Lakes and Rivers
- Parking Lot
- Backcountry Campsite

- Zone**
- Cultural Landscape Overlay
 - Backcountry Zone
 - Primitive Zone



2.4. Supporting Documentation Updates

A complete supporting analysis is included in the Phase 1 GMP. Below are updates or additional information to supplement information provided in 2008 and provide context to this park planning process.

Regional Context

Concurrent with the development of the Negwegon State Park Phase 1 General Management Plan in 2008, a regional assessment of Negwegon State Park, the Rockport property (now Rockport Recreation Area) and Thompson's Harbor State Park was undertaken. These planning efforts were guided by an advisory committee, known as NRTH, with representatives from many area government entities and organizations. The primary recommendation of this effort was that Rockport would be established as the central "hub" of the three sites, allowing Negwegon and Thompson's Harbor to remain in a relatively undisturbed, natural state. This regional planning approach was, in part, in response to the Northeast Michigan Integrated Assessment completed in 2007 which developed the following vision statement and policy question for the area:

Vision Statement: *"Visioning a Sustainable Future for Northeast Michigan: Connecting Great Lakes Coastal Access, Tourism, and Economic Development"*

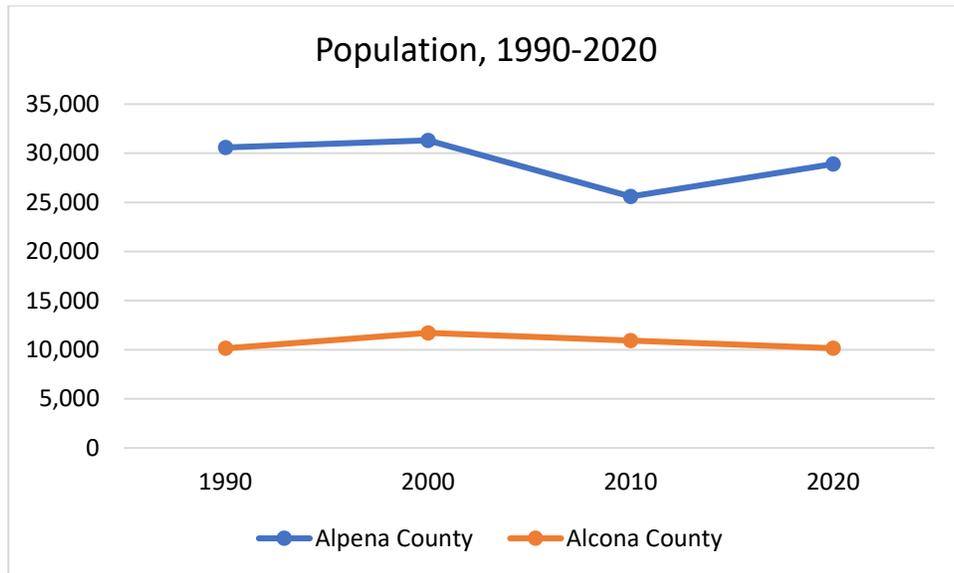
Policy Question: *"How can coastal access be designed, in a regional context, for sustainable tourism that stimulates economic development while maintaining the integrity of natural and cultural resources, and quality of life?"*

Negwegon State Park is in the center of the Sunrise Coast US-23 Pure Michigan Byway, providing scenic views along the Lake Huron shoreline and linking together numerous land and water recreation opportunities, cultural attractions and other points of interest. Negwegon State Park is listed as a birding trail hotspot on the Sunrise Coast Birding Trail which parallels US-23. The park is also a stop on the Great Lakes Maritime Heritage Trail, which follows the Lake Huron shoreline along the Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary. Highlighting the history of travel on the Great Lakes, the 4,300 square mile Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary protects a collection of nearly 100 shipwrecks. US-23 is also part of the 1,059-mile Lake Huron Circle Tour, encircling the lake through Michigan and Ontario, Canada.

In 2020, a plan was developed for the Sunrise Coast Trail, which is a planned non-motorized trail along the Lake Huron coast. The plan was developed with input from several stakeholders including the DNR. According to the plan, the trail alignment adjacent to the park follows the US-23 corridor, Sandhill Road or the railroad corridor. As the plan states, the DNR does not support using park property for the planned trail alignment to protect the park's high quality natural and cultural resources and the existing character of the park.

Demographics

Negwegon State Park lies in both Sanborn Township in Alpena County and Alcona Township in Alcona County. Since the Phase 1 GMP was written, the population of the area has generally fallen. However, Alpena County has shown a growth of approximately 13% between 2010 and 2020 showing a reversal of the downward trend (although still lower than in 2000).



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Both counties have an aging population, with 24.6% (Alpena County) and 35.5% (Alcona County) of persons over the age of 65 compared to 16.8% in the state of Michigan. There are also a significantly higher number of persons under the age of 65 with a disability: 15.2% in Alpena County and 16% in Alcona County compared to the state average of 8.7%. Median household income and per capita income is lower than the state average in both counties. The population is predominantly white but shows an increase in diversity since 2000.

Park Use Numbers

Day use vehicles were estimated to be 2,389 in 2022, equating to an estimated 8,692 visits using a standard multiplier. The park is busiest in the summer months but is also popular in the fall. Four backcountry camp sites were established in 2010. Use of the campsites has nearly doubled over the last four years and is continuing to rise since the sites were entered into the reservation system in 2022.

Backcountry camping reservations

- 2021 – 668 CAMIS nights/ 1,509 guests
- 2020 – 399 CAMIS nights/ 967 guests
- 2019 – 388 CAMIS nights/ 676 guests
- 2018 – 388 CAMIS nights/ 527 guests
- 2017 – 333 CAMIS nights/ 470 guests

Education and Interpretation

There are many opportunities for education and interpretation of the cultural and natural resources, including the dark sky viewing opportunities, at Negwegon State Park. Currently there are several interpretive signs relating to the history of the park, maritime history of the area and the specific natural resources of the park. On site programming is also carried out by the Friends of Negwegon State Park, the Northeast Michigan Great Lakes Stewardship Initiative, which implements place-based education programs through the local schools, and occasional programming conducted by the state park Explorer Guide based out of Harrisville State Park.

Cultural Resources

Within Negwegon State Park's boundaries are unique cultural resources related to indigenous peoples who hunted and fished the area for thousands of years before the arrival of Europeans. The remnants of a 19th century farmstead on the south end of the park and an old stagecoach route are also noteworthy cultural resources at the park. Numerous shipwrecks occurred off the coast of the park and are interpreted on several signs throughout the park. The schooner WILLIAM H. STEVENS and a smaller unidentified wreck are located just north of South Point near Bird Island. Similarly, the schooners ALVIN BUCKINGHAM and W. H. ROUNDS ran aground between Black River and Negwegon. Parts of these wrecks often wash ashore and can be seen along park beaches.

Geology and Mineral Resources

The Devonian Antrim Shale is a major source of natural gas production west of the park where the formation is thicker and deeper. Deeper formations within the area of the park can be petroleum reservoirs, and there has been, and continues to be, production from beneath the park.

Active oil and gas leases exist within the park. The leases are classified as "non-development", indicating that no use of the land surface is allowed for purposes of accessing and developing the subsurface mineral rights. Any future mineral leasing involving Great Lakes bottomlands is not allowed.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Noteworthy species found at Negwegon State Park are the federal endangered Hine's emerald dragonfly and the federal threatened Pitcher's thistle. Northern goshawk and Lake Huron locust are both state listed as threatened. These designations reflect the updated 2023 state threatened and endangered species list. Bald eagles are protected under the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. Blanding's turtle, while only special concern in Michigan, is undergoing a Species Sustainability Assessment by the US Fish and Wildlife Service for potential federal listing. Blanding's turtle is protected by Fisheries Order 224.21.

Element Occurrence Natural Communities

- Great Lakes Marsh (573.4 acres)
- Wooded Dune and Swale Complex (1,783.5 acres)

Rare Plants

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Pitcher's thistle	<i>Cirsium pitcher</i>	State and Federally Threatened

Rare Animals

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Blanding's Turtle	<i>Accipiter gentilis</i>	State Threatened
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	State Special Concern
Hines emerald dragonfly	<i>Somatochlora hineana</i>	State and Federally Threatened
Lake Huron locust	<i>Trimerotropis huroniana</i>	State Threatened

Legal Mandates

Legal mandates that impact Negwegon State Park have been updated and are included in Appendix A of this plan for reference.



Wetlands along the trail

3. 10–Year Action Goals

The action goals proposed for Negwegon State Park have been developed by the planning team in response to stakeholder and public input and in context of the core values and guiding resources discussed in the Phase 1 GMP. The action goals for Negwegon State Park generally focus on the preservation of the park’s natural and cultural resources and improving the park’s trail system and interpretive education opportunities. These goals are supported by the recommendations of the major planning efforts guiding recreation in Michigan, including the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP).

The planning team has developed 10-year action goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within the designated management zones in order to achieve the desired user experience. Action goals are categorized under two types: Management and Operations or as Infrastructure and Development, which is further broken down to small projects and capital outlay projects. These categories align with the PRD Strategic Plan as well as the annual Capital Outlay funding process. Action goals are recommended to address the following criteria:

- Natural resources
- Cultural resources
- Recreation opportunities
- Education/interpretation opportunities
- Management focus
- Development

While these actions include some high level natural resource goals, a separate Natural resource Stewardship Plan was developed in 2012 and will be updated to identify conservation targets, goals and threats to those conservation targets for the park. The Stewardship Plan will also identify and define strategies to reach the goals for Negwegon State Park, including annual contracts, volunteer coordination and ranger assignments for invasive species control.

Management plans are based on known needs, funding realities and sound investment policies, but do not guarantee future 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.

As future improvements are evaluated, resiliency, sustainability, and efficiency will be considered. Specifically, at Negwegon State Park, opportunities may exist to incorporate sustainable trail management practices.

The following 10-year action goals are categorized 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. The “Program Input From” column identifies the project coordinators for each goal with a project lead identified in bold. 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.

Management and Operations

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Program Input From
Review all proposed earthwork activities for potential impact on cultural resources.	Ongoing	All	Unit Supervisor Regional Field Planner Stewardship
Update the existing natural resource Stewardship Plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies, including invasive species management.	3	All	Stewardship Unit Supervisor
Increase invasive species control with the use of contractors, partnerships with organizations such as Huron Pines and park staff accordance with the Stewardship Plan.	1	All	Stewardship Unit Supervisor
Improve communication and public awareness of natural resource stewardship efforts at the park.	1	All	Unit supervisor Stewardship
Close park to snowmobile use through a Land Use Order of the Director to protect natural and cultural resources.	1	All	Unit Supervisor Regulatory Unit
Survey and mark park boundary areas of concern within Alpena County and Alcona County.	1	All	Unit Supervisor Land Liaison Friends Group
Actively pursue land acquisition within dedicated project boundary through letters to landowners.	1	All	Land Liaison
Actively pursue land acquisition to connect north and south park land.	1	Backcountry	Land Liaison
Develop interpretive programming opportunities through the Explorer Guide from Harrisville State Park.	1	All	Unit Supervisor Explorer Guide
Improve park entrance road with more frequent grading and additional gravel placement	1	Primitive	Unit Supervisor
Work with Forest Resources Division for cooperative management of land between the railroad tracks and Sand Hill/Wilds Road for consistent user experience.	1	Primitive	Land Liaison District Supervisor Forest Resources
Increase routine patrols and routine maintenance at the park.	1	All	Unit Supervisor District Supervisor LED
Close park to metal detecting to protect cultural resources.	1	All	Unit Supervisor District Supervisor State Archaeologist

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Program Input From
Conduct site evaluation and clean-up of 391-acre property acquired in 2018.	2	Primitive	Unit Supervisor State Archaeologist Friends Group
Assess and prioritize drainage improvements along trails, considering long-term sustainability.	2	Backcountry	Unit Supervisor Regional Field Planner
Develop an interpretive plan to identify topics for interpretation, consolidation and updates of existing interpretive signage and digital media.	3	All	Unit Supervisor Explorer Guide MOD Michigan History Center Stewardship

Infrastructure and Development: Capital Outlay Projects

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Program Input From
Complete an Archaeological Survey/cultural resources inventory of the park and determine specific farmstead and rock wall recommendations for monitoring and protection.	2	All	Stewardship
If gap in ownership between the north and south park land is acquired, pursue the development of a hiking trail along the old stagecoach corridor and develop a trailhead at north end of park.	3	Backcountry	Regional Field Planner Unit Supervisor Trail Specialist

Infrastructure and Development: Small Projects

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Program Input From
Develop trailhead at south end of the park off N. Lakeshore Drive and designate a trail connection to the existing designated park trail system.	1	Backcountry	Unit Supervisor Regional Field Planner District Supervisor

Partnership Projects

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Program Input From
Continue to support natural and cultural resource stewardship partnerships.	Ongoing	All	Unit Supervisor Friends Group Huron Pines

4. Implementation Strategy

This chapter of the 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 PRD'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. The planning team recognizes that some goals may be accomplished in a short time frame, while others may carry over through multiple years. It will be 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 are in compliance with the approved Management Zones.

4.1. 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 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 will be refined and adjusted by the Regional Field Planner as designs and studies are completed.
- Identify potential funding sources for each project/task. Liaise with partners and 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 and opportunities.
- Incorporate project/task assignments into annual staff performance objectives.

4.2. 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 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.

4.3. 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.

4.4. 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 – LEGAL MANDATES UPDATE

For all park 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 & 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.

Legal Mandates were listed in the phase 1 plan. However, due to omissions and updates, a complete updated list of legal mandates impacting Negwegon State Park follows.

FEDERAL STATUTE

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT, 1973
This Act authorizes the determination and listing of species as endangered and threatened, and prohibits unauthorized taking, possession, sale and transport of endangered species
BALD AND GOLDEN EAGLE PROTECTION ACT, 1940 AND AMENDMENTS
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.
NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT, 1966 AS AMENDED
This is the primary federal law governing the preservation of cultural and historic resources in the United States. The law establishes a national preservation program and a system of procedural protections which encourage the identification and protection of cultural and historic resources 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.
AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, 1990 AS AMENDED
This is the primary federal law governing access for persons with disabilities. The law establishes design standards for outdoor recreation access and developments.

STATE STATUTE

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (NREPA) AND AMENDMENTS	
PA 451 of 1994, Part 5	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.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 31 Water Resources Protection	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.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 301 Inland Lakes and Streams	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.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 303 Wetlands Protection	Requires a permit from the state (EGLE) to undertake certain activities in regulated wetlands, such as, dredging, fill, construction or drainage.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 325 Great Lakes Submerged Bottomlands	A permit is required for all filling, dredging, and placement of permanent structures (i.e., docks, piers, pilings, etc.) below the "ordinary high water mark" and on all upland channels extending landward of the "ordinary high water mark" of the Great Lakes.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 351 Endangered Species Protection	The law governs those acts necessary for the conservation, protection, restoration and propagation of endangered and threatened species of fish, wildlife and plants in cooperation with the Federal Government.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 419 Hunting Area Control	Section 324.41901 establishes the powers of the Department to establish safety zones for hunting.
PA 451 of 1994, Part 741 State Park System	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.
PA 35 of 2010, Part 741 Recreation Passport	This act amended the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code to provide for a State Park and State-operated public boating access site "Recreation Passport" that a Michigan resident may obtain by paying an additional fee when registering a motor vehicle.

NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT (NREPA) AND AMENDMENTS	
PA 451 of 1994, Part 761 Aboriginal Records and Antiquities	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.

ORDERS

The following Orders apply to Negwegon State Park.

Land Use Orders of the Director

5.16a Entry, use and occupancy of certain state parks, recreation areas and scenic sites, prohibited conduct.

Order 5.16a (1) A person shall not do any of the following:

- (a) Enter any of the following state-owned lands with a motor vehicle unless a valid Michigan recreation passport has been purchased and affixed to the vehicle:

- (56) Negwegon SP, Alcona and Alpena counties.

5.24 Designated dark sky preserve, state park lands, allowable conduct.

Order 5.24 Notwithstanding the prohibition of access to day-use areas contained within administrative rule 299.927(a), access to the designated, signed, dark sky preserves identified in MCL 324.75102 for the purpose of star gazing shall be allowed 24 hours a day.

5.7 Certain environmentally sensitive and piping plover nesting areas, prohibited conduct, exceptions.

Order 5.7 (1) A person shall not do any of the following:

- (b) Enter, use, or occupy any of the following described state-owned lands, as posted, from April 15 through August 31 except with proper written permission:

- (viii) Negwegon SP - state-owned lands in sections 2, and 11-12, T28N R9E, Alcona county

Wildlife Conservation Orders

Wildlife is owned by all the people of the state of Michigan, and protection is administered and managed by the Michigan DNR. Hunting and trapping regulations including methods of take, bag limits, license quotas, and season dates are established by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and are described in the Wildlife Conservation Orders.

7.1 Hunting or trapping in state parks or game refuges; designating where permissible; permits; hunting or trapping in state recreation areas.

Sec. 7.1 (1) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter or by permit issued by the director, no person shall trap or hunt with firearms or dogs or in any other manner in any state park, state game refuge, or other lands under the control of and dedicated by the department as a game refuge or wildlife sanctuary.

(2) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, state recreation areas shall be open to hunting and trapping during established seasons.

7.21 Negwegon state park; hunting and trapping allowed.

Sec. 7.21 Hunting and trapping shall be allowed during the established seasons on all state-owned lands within the dedicated boundary of Negwegon state park.

State Land Rules

Parks and Recreation Areas – 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.

APPENDIX B – STAKEHOLDER AND PUBLIC INPUT SUMMARY

Over the duration of the Phase 2 General Management Plan development process, the planning team ensured a variety of opportunities for stakeholder and public input and feedback.

Stakeholder Meeting

A stakeholder meeting was held on June 13 at the Alcona Township Hall, 10:00 a.m. to guide the phase 2 general management plan for Negwegon State Park. Participants were invited to provide their input, identifying strengths, challenges and opportunities related to the park. A total of 8 participants represented government, schools, and non-profit organizations from around the region. The meeting began with a short presentation of the phase 1 general management plan that was completed in 2008 and a review of the planning process for this phase 2 plan. Input gathered at the meeting is listed below:

STRENGTHS

Location/Awareness

- Accessible from large population centers within 3-4 hrs.
- Use has increased
- Love for park
- Proximity to Huron Manistee National Forest
- Social media presence (Friends Group)

Recreation

- Dark Sky Preserve
- Backcountry campsites
- Disconnect from phone/light etc.
- User experience
- Gem due to lack of development
- Peaceful
- Trail system

Education

- Nature-based/place-based learning
- Opportunity for local schools for next generation natural resource appreciation and stewardship

Natural Resources

- Rare species – Pitcher’s thistle, birds, etc.
- Exceptional habitat – Blanding’s turtle
- Migrant birds – warblers
- Native swans
- Regional Great Lakes wetland system

Cultural Resources

- Homesteads
- Rock walls
- Shipwrecks

CHALLENGES

Facilities/Amenities

- Emergency access
- Natural area vs. accessibility
- Failing culverts on old stagecoach route
- Lack of easement connecting the properties

Management/Maintenance

- Hunting blinds and debris left on purchased land
- Trail maintenance/wet areas
- E-bike and mountain bike use
- Improper vehicle use (Southpoint beach, Hardwood Point)
- Park boundary identification on the ground
 - Conflicts with neighboring landowners difficult to enforce

Communication

- Planning updates

Threats

- Freshwater dune and swale complex is fragile
- Emerald ash borer impacts water levels and Blanding's turtle research
- Overuse detracting from park character

OPPORTUNITIES

Facilities/Amenities

- Active trail clearing
- Improve park road maintenance
- State park access road funding

Education

- Interpretation highlighting natural resources and the need for protection
- Public engagement/programming
- Shipwreck publicity/information
- Cultural education of past uses
- Interpretation through an app.
- Staff position?

Communication

- Annual stakeholder updates including educators

Management

- Maintain and identify the boundaries of the park
- Transfer of state forest land west of railroad tracks to parks
- Purchase inholdings
- Improve Recreation Passport compliance through enforcement

Natural Resources

- Protect vernal pools
- Protect sensitive vegetation

Additional Comments:

The Friends of Negwegon State Park (FONSP) has reviewed the previous 10-year GMP. We want to highlight some of the action items on that list that still need to be completed. We hope these items are remembered and moved to your new plan.

Priority	Target FY Completion Date	Action	Zone	Project Team Member	Responsible Project Position
1	2017	Land acquisition within the park boundary: - Define and mark current park boundaries utilizing GPS	General	Unit Supervisor	Unit Supervisor
2	2015	Land acquisition within the park boundary: - Send letter to land owners located within the dedicated boundary to inform them that we would be interested should they ever wish to sell.	General	Unit Supervisor, Land Manager	Unit Supervisor
3	2016	Reach out to landowner to develop a lease or other tool to allow extension of the "Stagecoach Trail" across the private land that divides the park should land acquisition not be feasible.	Backcountry	Unit Supervisor, Land Manager, Contracts Specialist, NLP Trails Coordinator	NLP Trails Coordinator
4	2020	Develop a cultural resources inventory of the park for interpretation, protection and preservation	General	Stewardship	Stewardship Cultural Specialist
5	2020	Develop a cultural resources inventory of the park for interpretation, protection and preservation	Stewardship	Stewardship Cultural Specialist	Stewardship Cultural Specialist

Thank you in advance for considering these items in the planning process.

Planning Team Attendees:

Matt Lincoln (Park Planner/Land Liaison), Debbie Jensen (Management Plan Administrator), Ronda Osga (Regional Field Planner), Eric Ostrander (Unit Supervisor), Lori Green (Commercial Use Specialist), Ray Fahlsing (Stewardship Unit Manager), Rich Hill (District Supervisor), Peter Rose (Geologist), Wayne Lusardi (Archaeologist), Jesse Grzechowski (Conservation Officer)

Stakeholder Meeting Attendees

Name	Stakeholder Affiliation
Dan O’Conner	Alcona Schools
Logan Hewley	Huron Pines
Sue Keller	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Rob Pallavito	State Representative Michele Hoyenga
Dave Riegle	Rich Schlegel (Inholding Landowner)
Matt McAmmond	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Kenneth Gauthier	Sanborn Township
Doug Baum	Northeast Michigan Council of Governments

Tribal Outreach

The department’s tribal liaison reached out to the twelve federally-recognized tribes in Michigan with the following letter notifying them of the GMP process and timeline and inviting input. No comments were received.

Dear Tribal Leaders:

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is in the process of developing general management plans for the following state parks:

- William C. Sterling State Park in Monroe County
- Duck Lake State Park in Muskegon County
- Indian Lake State Park in Schoolcraft County
- Palms Book State Park in Schoolcraft County
- Negwegon State Park (phase 2 plan update) in Alpena and Alcona Counties

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 GMPs for these sites.

The planning process includes several opportunities for input, including a stakeholder meeting and online survey. In addition, the draft plans will be available for review and comment prior to adoption.

For additional information on our management plan process, please visit our website at

www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

We would like to give the Tribes the opportunity to meet with us to discuss the management plan process and any thoughts you may have in relation to any of these properties.

Please contact Ms. Debbie Jensen, PRD Management Plan Administrator, at Jensend1@michigan.gov if you would like any additional information or would like to arrange a meeting.

Sincerely,

Trevor J. VanDyke

*Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office & Tribal Liaison
Executive Division, Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Constitution Hall, 525 West Allegan Street
P.O. Box 30028
(517) 284-6243
vandyket1@michigan.gov*

Public Meeting

A public meeting was held at Alcona Township Hall on December 11, 2023 at 6:00pm to review the draft Phase 2 General Management Plan and comment on the draft 10-year action goals. The phase 2 plan was also posted on the DNR's website and comments were invited via e-mail and an online survey. A press release was issued 3 weeks in advance of the meeting to 23,619 recipients via the government-delivery system, including 38 stakeholders associated with the park. A total of 22 participants attended the meeting.

The press release for the meeting, analytics gathered at the meeting, a list of attendees, comments received, as well as survey results are provided in the following pages.

DNR seeks public input on Negwegon State Park planning



Those interested in long-term planning for Negwegon State Park are invited to a public meeting 6-7:30 p.m. Monday, Dec. 11, at the Alcona Township Hall, 5576 U.S. 23 in Black River.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources-hosted meeting provides an opportunity for people to learn about the new draft Phase 2 general management plan, proposed improvements and planning process, followed by feedback and questions with DNR staff.

The DNR uses general management plans to define long-range planning and management

strategies that protect the resources of state parks, while addressing recreation and education needs and opportunities. The updated plan will replace the park's Phase 2 general management plan completed in 2010.

Negwegon State Park is located on the shores of Lake Huron between Alpena and Harrisville in Alpena and Alcona counties. This 4,130-acre park is popular for hiking, hike-in/paddle-in campsites, and hunting and trapping. It features more than 8 miles of sandy shoreline and is home to a state-designated dark sky preserve.



Survey, project website

A copy of the draft plan and a [public input survey](#) – open through Dec. 22 – are available for those who can't attend the meeting. Find links at [Michigan.gov/Negwegon](#).

Comments/questions about the park, plan and meeting also can be shared via email with DNR Parks and Recreation Division land specialist Matt Lincoln at LincolnM@Michigan.gov.

Additional information on the DNR's general management planning process is available at [Michigan.gov/ParkManagementPlans](#).

Note to editors: Accompanying photos are available below for download.

- [Wooded trail at Negwegon](#): (photo courtesy Michigan Department of Natural Resources, by [Michigan state parks photo ambassador Samantha Hageman](#))
- [Negwegon lakeshore](#) (photo courtesy Michigan Department of Natural Resources)

The meeting began with a presentation of the primary components of the phase 1 GMP approved in 2008 and the action plan proposed in this phase 2 GMP. The presentation was followed by a brief question and answer period. Attendees were then invited to review the proposed actions, provide further comment, and prioritize the actions using colored dots.

Public Meeting Attendees

<u>Name</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Susie Gauthier	Alpena Horseman’s Club
Sue Keller	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Kelly Sexton	
Carol Luna	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Steve Weichel	Landowner
Mary LaBarge	Equestrian
John Feys	Hunter, Hiker
Denise Schiebout	Equestrian, Hiker
Logan Hawley	Huron Pines
Donna Cochrane	
Chuck Matlock	Black River Waterways Committee
Doris Feys	League of Womens Voters of NE Michigan
Betty S. Debrose	
Darlene Alexander	Equestrian
Larry H. Hanner	Landowner
John and Kelly Sweet	K’Lorne Acre Resident
Bob and Pam Staker	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Dave and Barry Reigle	Friends of Negwegon State Park
Elin Whitehall	Equestrian

Planning Team Attendees

Rich Hill, District Supervisor
 Eric Ostrander, Unit Manager
 Debbie Jensen, Management Plan Administrator
 Matt Lincoln, Land Specialist

Questions and Answers

Where are the cultural resources? Answer: Cultural resource locations are not shared with the public and are exempt from Freedom of Information Act inquiries. All earth disturbance proposals are vetted through our stewardship staff.

Any logging proposed? Answer: Park is not managed for timber. Limited timber harvest may be used to address forest health sanitation or ecological restoration, but is not anticipated here.

Why is the north end of the park shown as Backcountry Zone? Answer: To allow for future trail access but not narrowed down as to where this will occur. Zoning allows for flexibility.

What are stewardship rangers? Answer: There is a new program at the park which will assign park rangers to stewardship duties during winter months.

Why is focus on boundary marking just in Alpena County? Answer: Alpena County is currently the priority, however we recognize that Alcona County portion of the park also needs surveying.

Should project boundary be moved to include proposed FRD land? Answer: Internal issue so not necessary as FRD has their own project boundary that includes this land.

Increased e-bike use...please explain current policy. Answer: Current policy only allows for a powered mobility device at pedestrian speed on designated hiking trails for persons with mobility impairments.

Horses used to be allowed. Why can't we ride in the park anymore? Answer: After the NRTM planning meetings to look at the region, Rockport SP was determined to be the park for equestrians. Negwegon was planned at that time to be more of a preserve for natural resources. We will look into this further.

Sandhill Road is dangerous for 4 wheelers, especially with increased traffic and deteriorating conditions. Talk to landowners in Alcona County. E-bikes, mountain bikes...why not?

Written Comments

The fact that the park is difficult to get to is a great asset. No horses on the beach. Clean up the crap. Could add campsites at north end.

We have an environmental jewel that needs to be carefully preserved. Forests absorb tons of carbon and puts oxygen back so it cleans air. I would recommended rethinking entry. Make it an extension of Black River for camping access and extension of stagecoach road.

I would like to see horse trails out at Negwegon State Park. Also at Silver Lake, they open up the shoreline to 125 horses a day for the month of November. I would like to see this shoreline open for a certain part of the year for horses.

The park has accommodated horses in the past. Equestrian use is natural and ecologically compatible with this natural setting. Consideration of this request is greatly appreciated.

Appreciate the planning to improve usage in the park. Meeting was informative. We previously were always allowed to ride the loop around the park. It started in Black River by the church up to the main parking lot of the park and then looped back. Beautiful place to ride. Nice wide sandy trails. Beautiful birch trees, orange and red leaves, and access to blue water. We would normally only ride early spring or late fall as black flies carry you away at other times. Please give us our access back.

I would like equestrian access. Previous Phase 2 said a possible access to the Brousseau Road or to the south end parking area. Right to Ride Bill 2010...I would love to work together toward my goal.

As denoted with the plan; Alcona County is a designated disenfranchised community. Why would infrastructure reinforcements for park boundaries be limited to Alpena County?

Would like to see an equestrian rail in Negwegon. There are many ways to make a sustainable trail for horses. Thank you.

Meeting Exercise Results

Each meeting attendee was given 5 green dots to prioritize the action goals they considered to be the most important. Red dots were provided to identify actions that attendees did not agree with. The table below records the number of people prioritizing action goals in green, those opposed to an action goal in red and comments collected that were associated with the action goals.

Ten Year Action Goals - Management and Operations

Action Goal	Priority	Management Zone	Priority Stickers/Comments
Review all proposed earthwork activities for potential impact on cultural resources.	Ongoing	All	
Update the existing Stewardship Plan for the park.	1	All	1
Use stewardship rangers to control invasive species control in accordance with the Stewardship Plan.	1	All	5 1 “This goal frustrates me the way it is written. I think control of invasive species is a #1 priority for this park, but I think it needs more professional focus and control than what “stewardship rangers” will likely be able to provide.” “Clarify intent is to <u>augment</u> existing efforts.”
Close park to snowmobile use through a Land Use Order of the Director	1	All	4
Survey and mark park boundary areas of concern within Alpena County.	1	All	7 3 “Post the entire park boundary.”
Actively pursue land acquisition within dedicated project boundary through letters to landowners.	1	All	3
Actively pursue land acquisition of old stagecoach route.	1	Backcountry	4
Develop interpretive programming opportunities through the Explorer Guide from Harrisville State Park.	1	All	

Action Goal	Priority	Management Zone	Priority Stickers/Comments
Improve entrance road with more frequent grading and additional gravel placement	1	Primitive	2
Explore potential transfer of Forest Resources Division administered land between the railroad tracks and Sand Hill/Wilds Road to Parks and Recreation Division.	1	Primitive	7
Increase routine patrols and routine maintenance at the park.	1	All	5
Close park to metal detecting.	1	All	
Conduct site evaluation and clean-up of recently acquired property.	2	Primitive	1
Assess and prioritize drainage improvements along trails.	2	Backcountry	3 1
Develop an interpretive plan to identify topics for interpretation, consolidation and updates of existing interpretive signage and digital media.	3	All	1

Ten Year Action Goals - Capital Outlay

Action Goal	Priority	Management Zone	Priority Stickers/Comments
Complete an Archaeological Survey/cultural resources inventory of the park and determine specific farmstead and rock wall recommendations for monitoring and protection.	2	All	1
If stagecoach corridor is acquired, pursue the development of the trail including trailheads.	3	Backcountry	1

Ten Year Action Goals – Small Projects

Action Goal	Priority	Management Zone	Priority Stickers/Comments
Develop trailhead at south end of the park and designate existing trail.	1	Backcountry	5 "Make south entry extension to Black River [along <u>west</u> side of railroad tracks]"

Ten Year Action Goals – Partnership Projects

Action Goals	Priority	Management Zone	Priority Stickers/Comments
Continue to support natural and cultural resource stewardship partnerships.	Ongoing	All	1

The following are ten-year action goals some meeting attendees wanted to see added to the list.

- "Would like equestrian use on trails." 5
- "Need equestrian trails. Equine therapy is magical for everyone!" 5
- "Equestrian use trails please. Look up R2R" 5
- "Horses are good for the environment. Manure is top soil & nutritional for the grounds." 3
- "Would like equestrian use w park" 5
- "Equestrian trails" 5

Project Website

A webpage was maintained through the duration of the planning process and was updated with maps, meeting information and the draft plan. Contact information was provided for members of the public to submit comments or ask questions.

E-mailed/Mailed Comments

I saw the public notice but was unable to attend the Negwegon State Park Management Plan meeting on Monday and had a few questions before I do the survey.

There are a bunch of things unclear from reading this as it refers to things I find no reference to, so sorry in advance for all the questions:

1. What is the "old stagecoach route" and where is it defined in the plan. I didn't see it anywhere.
 - *This corridor is shown on the zoning map as a light green corridor (Backcountry Zone) that doesn't have a trail shown in it. It runs from the SE to NW corner of the park, paralleling the shore.*

2. The plan says "If stagecoach corridor is acquired, pursue the development of the trail including trailheads." What is "the trail and trailheads". *Official designation of the trail, development includes clearing and surfacing the trail (likely just dirt for hiking). Trailheads would be at the NW and SE corners of the park where the trail exits the park at the roads.*
3. The plan says "Develop trailhead at south end of the park and designate existing trail." What trail and what trailhead? *This is a connector trail that would run from the road end at the SE corner of the park to the trail loop currently shown on the zoning map. It is currently not designated but the zoning map shows a Backcountry Zone corridor that would accommodate it.*
4. It says the backcountry zone allows for biking, is that on dirt trails only or can it be on a developed trail of some sort? I guess I would like what type of development is allowed in backcountry zone. *Dirt only. Currently, bikes are not allowed at the park, but the zoning could accommodate them in the future if management decides to change that position.*
5. The plan appears to plan for the railroad property, does the DNR manage that 100' right of way? I was just concerned because it seems the maps should show private property there but maybe things have changed. *The DNR does not own the railroad corridor nor does it have plans to acquire it in the future.*
6. There is no mention of a regional trail be proposed in the area that the DNR participated as part of the process. Even if your management plan disagrees with it, seems like it should have been noted somewhere that it was discussed. *The planning team was not aware of any current plans for a regional trail which is why it was not included. Thank you for providing the plan below. We will certainly take this into account in the management plan for the park when our team meets again.*

Plan can be found at: <https://www.discovernortheastmichigan.org/docview.asp?did=686>

I hope this message finds you well. On behalf of the Friends of Negwegon State Park (FONSP), I would like to extend our gratitude for the opportunity provided by the DNR to participate in the recent meeting concerning the General Management Plan (GMP) for Negwegon State Park.

The FONSP appreciates the DNR's dedication to preserving and enhancing the park's natural beauty and heritage. We were pleased to contribute to the discussion and are now eager to formally highlight our top priorities detailed in the GMP draft. We believe these tasks are crucial for the ongoing stewardship and enhancement of the park:

k. Increase routine patrols and routine maintenance at the park.

j. Explore potential transfer of Forest Resources Division administered land between the railroad tracks and Sand Hill/Wilds Road to Parks and Recreation Division.

g. Actively pursue land acquisition of old stagecoach route

FONSP emphasizes the need for a public right of way to enable uninterrupted passage between the two halves of the park, which are currently separated by private land. Establishing this connection is crucial for providing continuous access and improving the overall park experience for visitors.

q. If stagecoach corridor is acquired, pursue the development of the trail including trailheads.

f. Actively pursue land acquisition within dedicated project boundary through letters to landowners.

Additionally, we would like to express our strong support for the survey and boundary marking initiatives in the Alpena County portion of the park. We feel it is equally imperative to prioritize similar efforts in Alcona County to ensure a cohesive approach to the park's management.

Lastly, the FONSP highly values the collaboration with organizations like Huron Pines in tackling issues such as invasive species management. Their expertise and commitment have proven instrumental, and we hope the DNR continues this beneficial partnership.

We eagerly anticipate the publication of the finalized GMP and remain committed to working alongside the DNR to realize the plan's vision, ensuring Negwegon State Park remains a cherished natural haven for future generations.

Thank you for considering our feedback. We look forward to our continued partnership in stewarding this remarkable natural resource.

Web Survey Results and Comments

Fifty-nine individuals completed the post meeting online survey that was designed to help prioritize and provide feedback on the proposed action goals and public input opportunity. Of those respondents, approximately 12 responded “yes” to the question “Did you, or do you plan to, attend the public meeting at Alcona Township Hall?” Approximately 43 responded “no” and 4 individuals chose not to answer. In the survey, participants were asked to prioritize their top five action goals from the ten-year action goals list (see table on following page). The top priorities, in order of preference were:

- Improve entrance road with more frequent grading and additional gravel.
- If stagecoach corridor is acquired, pursue the development of the trail including trailheads.
- Develop trailhead at south end of the park and designate existing trail.
- Actively pursue land acquisition of old stagecoach route.
- Close park to snowmobile use through a Land use Order of the Director.

When asked if any actions should be added to the list, a variety of responses were submitted. Common themes included:

- Adding and developing equestrian usage throughout the park.
- Prioritizing natural resources and keep the park as unspoiled as possible, increase public education, stewardship, and working to understand and minimize environmental impacts.
- Adding additional campsites.
- Increased access.

When asked if any of the actions should be removed from the list, the primary response regarded closing the park to certain activities, primarily snowmobiling and metal detecting. Many people believed that snowmobiling is a strong part of the local culture and restricting use in the park would damper winter-time usage.

Should any goals be added to the list?

- I believe goals to focus on should be to improve trails, which would include better signage and maintenance, access. Entrance to park needs improvements, patrols. No ORV or Snowmobiles allowed.
- On current boundary signs add arrows showing which way the park property is located. It is confusing in some areas. Possibly put QR codes on posts that link to a site showing your exact location in the park or interesting information about the area you are in. If the cell service is spotty in the park possibly lease land (less than an acre) to a cell tower company.
- Include and encourage Equestrian usage. There is limited equestrian public land usage in the area. By developing trailheads and access points for equestrian use, this would open up a wider diversity of community usage. Even if it was only “Day use” the land could be enjoyed and appreciated by so many more people.
- I think you should consider joining with Huron Pines and the Lake Huron Forever Pledge. Protect the watershed area from Negwegon to Lake Huron.
- A goal of surveying the Alcona County portion of the park should be added. Perhaps goals “f” and “g” address an easement or a purchase of land along the right-of-way so that the two halves of the park are truly connected and the public can move from section of Negwegon to the other. Some solution is needed to allow the park to be traversed as one contiguous park.
- The potential environmental impact of increased traffic and foot traffic to this area should be minimized. Locals enjoy this area as untouched as it is as of today. Please consider this in your future planning.
- More species monitoring.
- Bring back and clear equestrian trails, allow shoreline riding even if only a designated month. Silver Lake can be used as an example of how this is done.
- Possible vehicle access off N. Lakeshore dr.
- Prioritize the natural beauty, no plastic used in the park.
- Possibly additional campsites, since the document shows an increase in usage in 2021 (although 2022, 2023 were not listed, so maybe 2021 was an outlier).
- Please keep biking and snowmobiling out of the area. I appreciate the quiet nature.
- Keep it rustic, pavement free. And quiet!
- Keeping it as unspoiled as possible
- Open trails to biking, so more people visit the park Create more backcountry sites. More opportunities to camp.
- Prioritize natural resource protection, including education to the public on these unique features of Negwegon State Park. Maintain low development to conserve the unique outdoor experience Negwegon offers: peaceful, remote, dark sky preserve, a true experience to connect with nature!
- Increasing stewardship via NPR
- Don’t add more campsites! One of the gems about this place is that it only has 4 sites. Keeps it remote in the lower

Should any goals be removed from the list?

- The “Close park to metal detecting” goal should be removed from the list. There is already an adequate policy that allows metal detecting along the beach and parking lot area and restricts metal detecting in culturally and historical areas of the park. One could argue that

metal detectorists might encounter shipwreck debris along the beach, but iron nails and other bits are not of interest to metal detectorists. The fact that metal detectorists pick up debris along the beach as they detect out ways and negative aspects of having this hobby practiced at Negwegon.

- Additional grading should be minimal. Trails should remain rough.
- The goal of closing this park to snowmobiling should be removed. This goal limits winter-time usage to clientele who should be embraced in a more positive manner. To be clear I do not snowmobile and I feel this goal if implemented, is setting a standard of eliminating snowmobiling on all state of Michigan governed properties. This seems a bit sneaky to me.
- Stopping snowmobile use, snowmobiling is a strong part of the culture in NE Michigan and has minimal impact on the park.
- Should not be banning any activities currently in use.
- Four respondents said no goals should be removed from the list

Satisfaction with public input opportunities

When asked to rate the level of satisfaction with the options provided to review and comment on the draft plan, 57 respondents gave an average rating of 3.7 out of 5.

The following are statements explaining the reason for the rating in the previous question.

- It was not explained why mountain bikes and horses are not allowed on the trails. What is the reasoning for this?
- Some of these agendas appear expensive and unnecessary. They appear to be the plan of a very few. This park needs very little and there's not a thing we can do to improve what nature has provided. It has access and basic facilities. Leave it as it is.
- I'm just concerned that with more traffic to the area that the beautiful aspects of the park will be taken over and destroy one of the nicest parts of Alcona County.
- Attached to survey would be easier
- I use Negwegon for swimming and snowshoeing. I feel all that is needed is upkeep/updating of what is already there.
- Over 4000 ac and only 4 camping sites.... It's like MI DNR doesn't really want anyone at Negwegon. More effort should be placed on the archaeological research and allowing public access and education on those areas to obtain additional support
- Over emphasis on cultural concerns
- I did not understand what some of them were completely and or pros and cons of choosing them
- Would like to see more primitive camp sites added to existing count of sites
- Eight respondents were thankful for the opportunity.

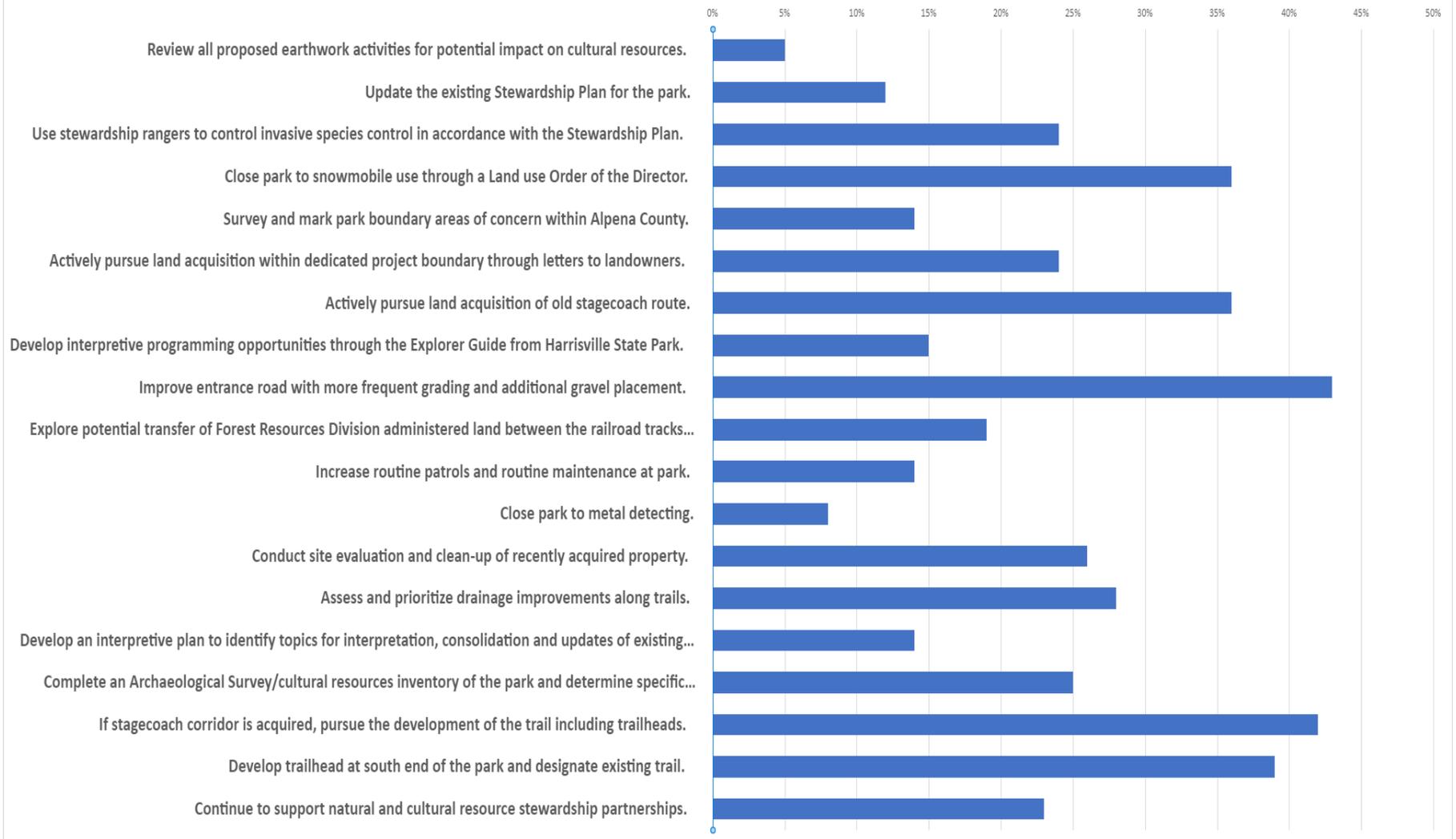
Additional Comments

- Visitors should be made aware that any rescue operations in case of emergency are about 45 minutes away by land if not more. By water it is hard to say, having assistance coming from Alpena or Harrisville since Black River is unreliable to launch from.
- It's difficult in this area to stay involved with what's happening. If you don't invest in the newspapers, can't get reliable internet, or can't get to the library, you never know what's

going on in the area. There really needs to be a better way to communicate with the community.

- Keep up the good work and ideas for improving the park! Thanks for all you do
- If I had not had to suggest an addition or subtraction to the draft, then the plan and options would have received 5 stars. The draft is a good start and it is good that the public have this opportunity to participate in the plan for the park.
- More explanation is needed for some of the options.
- We love Negwegon for camping and hiking.

Prioritize your top five draft action goals. Select the corresponding checkboxes for up to five of the following action goals:



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). From these sources, the annual capital outlay budget for state parks varies from year to year and has averaged approximately \$14 million per year over the past few years.

One-time appropriations from the state General Fund may also be ear marked for specific needs but are not guaranteed. In 2022, the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) was approved by the Michigan legislature which directed \$250 million towards state park infrastructure, trails and a new state park in Flint. Although this funding is welcomed, the amount of need is still estimated to be in the hundreds of millions due to the amount of aging infrastructure in the state park system.

With 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 Negwegon State Park 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 2023 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

Action Goal	Priority	Opinion of Probable Cost
Complete an Archaeological Survey/cultural resources inventory of the park and determine specific farmstead and rock wall recommendations for monitoring and protection.	2	\$ 100,000
If gap in ownership between the north and south park land is acquired, pursue the development of a hiking trail along the old stagecoach corridor and develop a trailhead at north end of park.	3	To be Determined once corridor is acquired
	Total	\$ 100,000

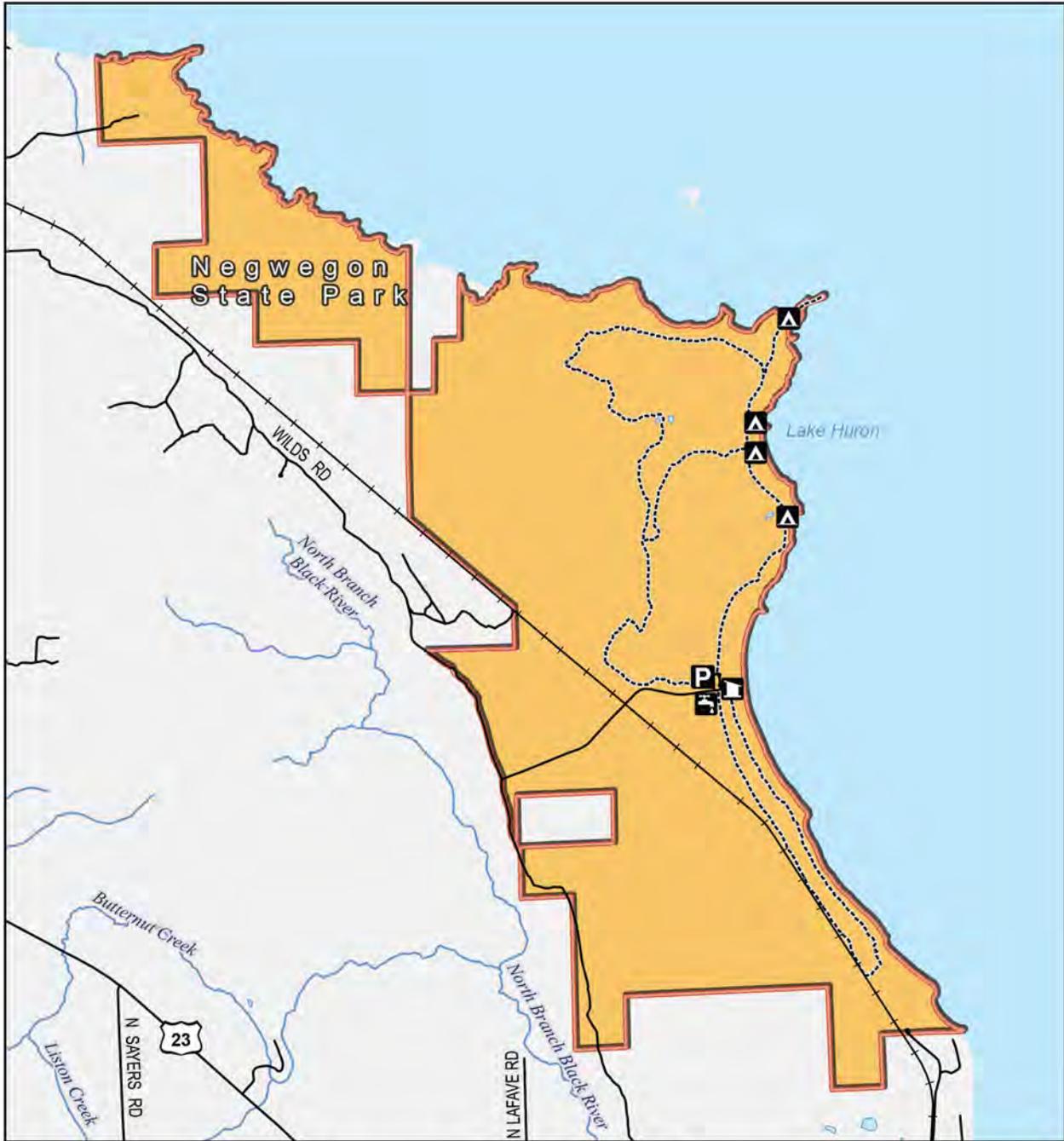
**Does not guarantee funding.*

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

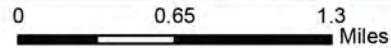
APPENDIX D

Resource Maps

1. Park Amenities
2. Park Boundary
3. Management Zones
4. Funding Sources
5. Land Cover
6. Land Cover, 1800s
7. Exemplary Natural Communities
8. Soils
9. Topography
10. Wetlands



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

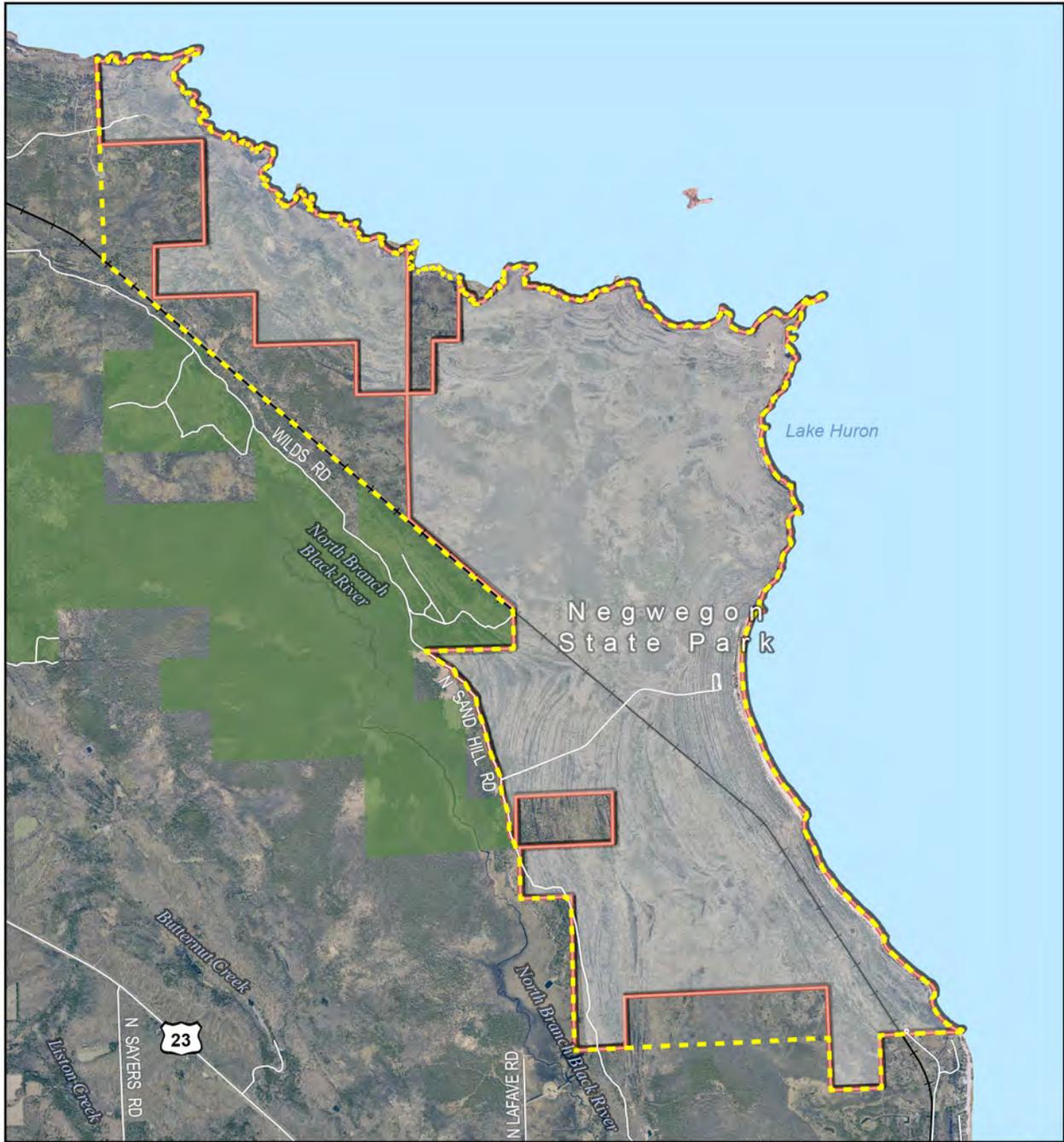


Negwegon State Park - Park Amenities

- | | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|--------------|
| State Park Boundary | River/Stream | Water Source |
| Road | Lake/Pond | Vault Toilet |
| Railroad | Open to Hunting | Parking Lot |
| Hiking Trail | Backcountry Campsite | |

Updated: 07/12/2023





MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

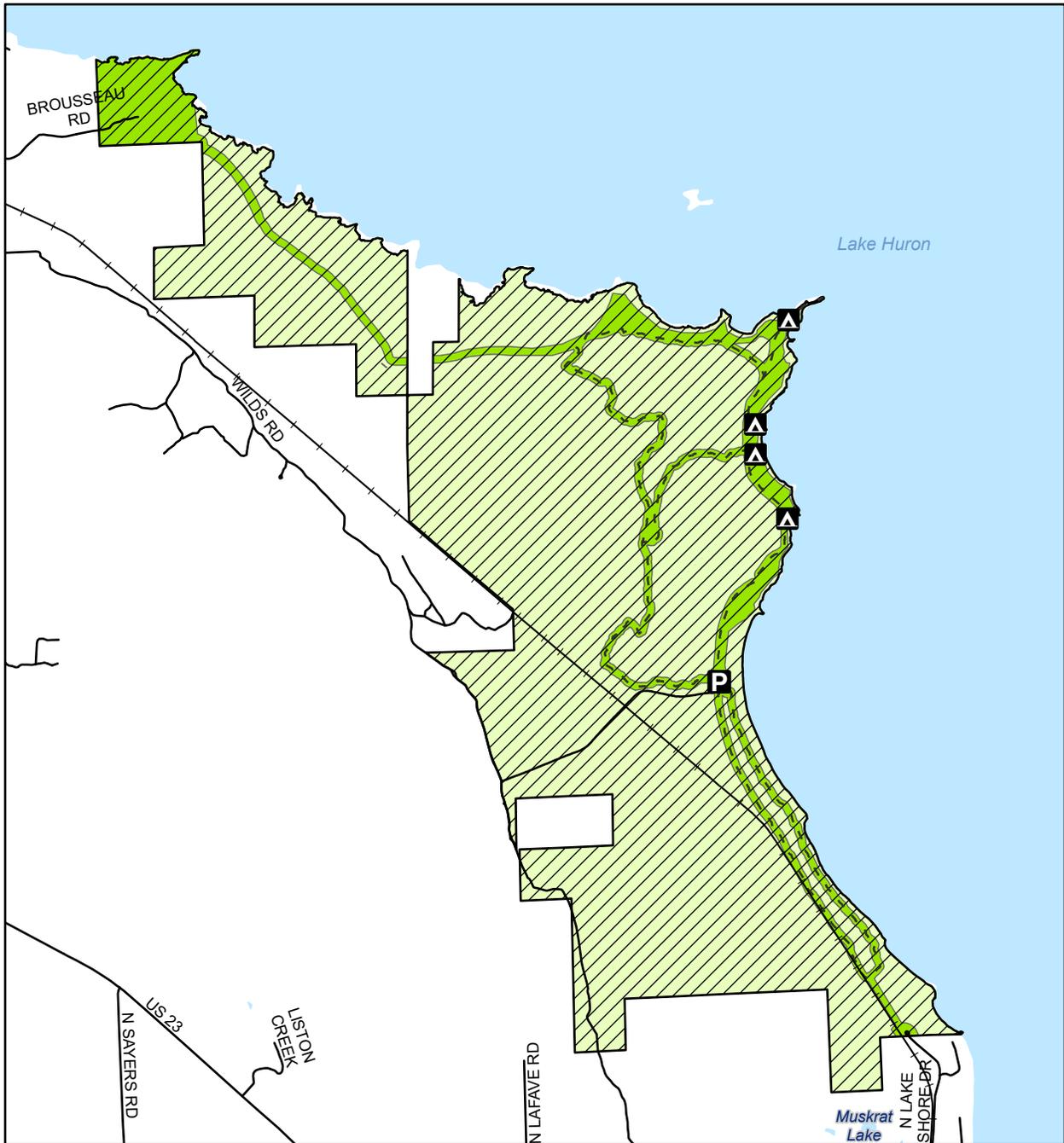
Negwegon State Park - Park Boundary

-  State Park Boundary
-  NRC 2020 Approved Project Boundary*
-  Road
-  Railroad
-  State Forest



Updated: 07/12/2023

*A project boundary is a geographic area in which the DNR is seeking to acquire property that supports the mission of the DNR on a willing buyer / willing seller basis, approved by the Natural Resources Commission in 2020



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Negwegon State Park- Management Zones

- Roads
- +— Railroad
- - - Hiking Trail

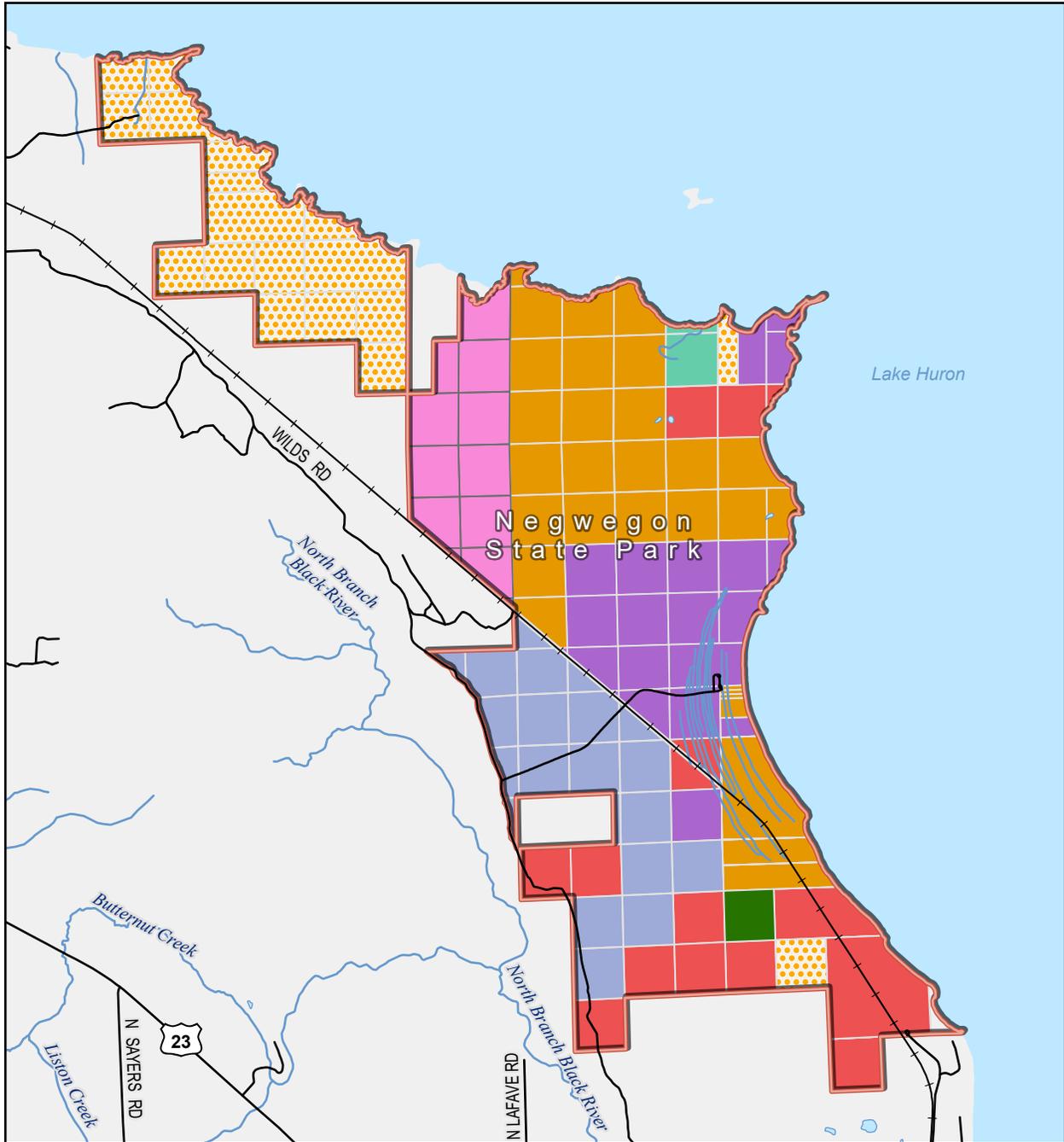
- Lakes and Rivers
- P** Parking Lot
- ▲** Backcountry Campsite

- Zone**
- Cultural Landscape Overlay
 - Backcountry Zone
 - Primitive Zone



Updated: 07/05/2023





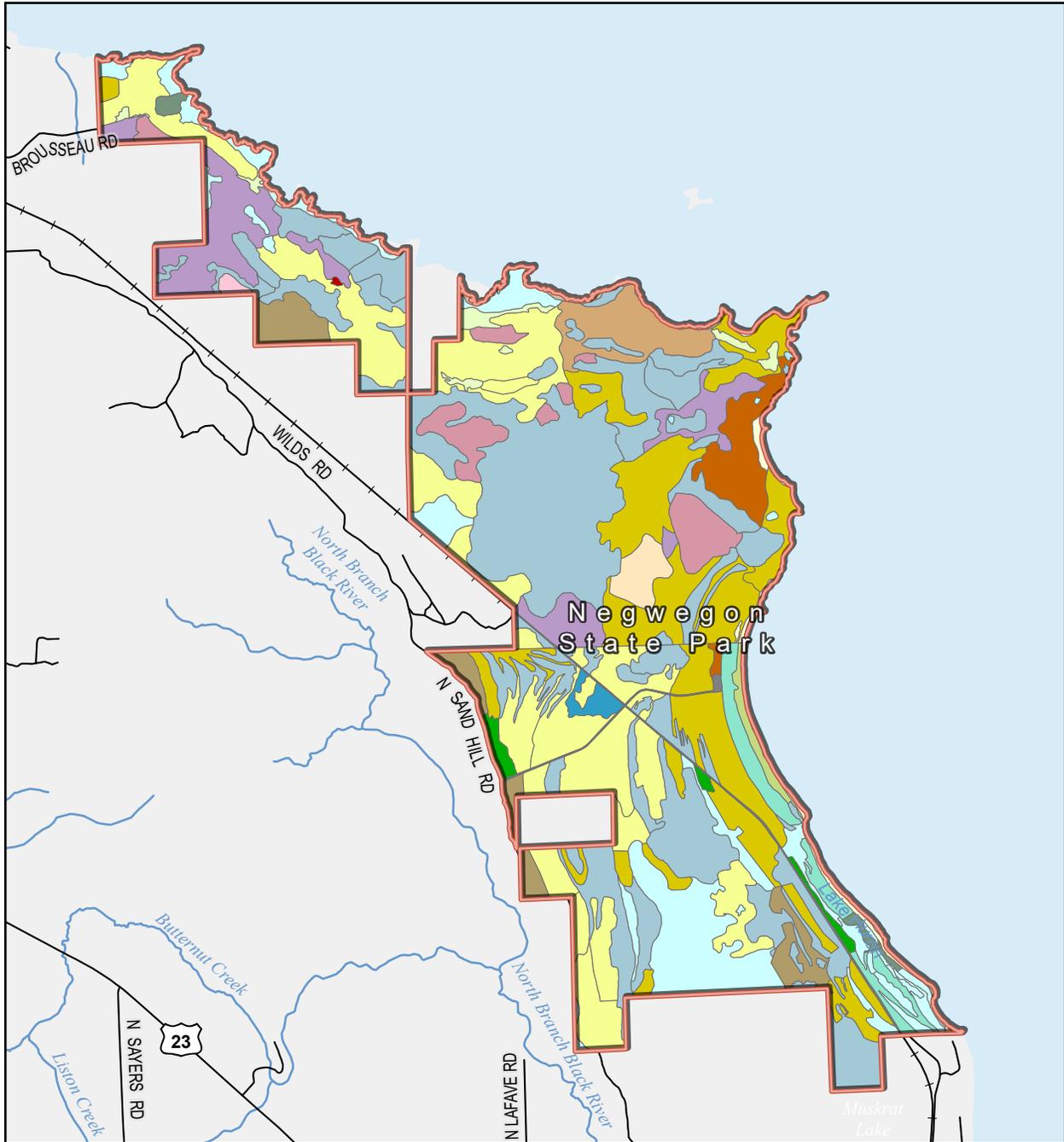
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Negwegon State Park - Funding Sources

- | | | |
|---------------------|--|----------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Funding Source | Recreation Bond Fund |
| Road | Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund | Special Legislation |
| Railroad | Michigan Land Trust Fund | State Game Fund |
| River/Stream | NCWC National Coastal Wetland Conservation | Tax Reverted Land |
| Lake/Pond | | Land Exchange |





MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

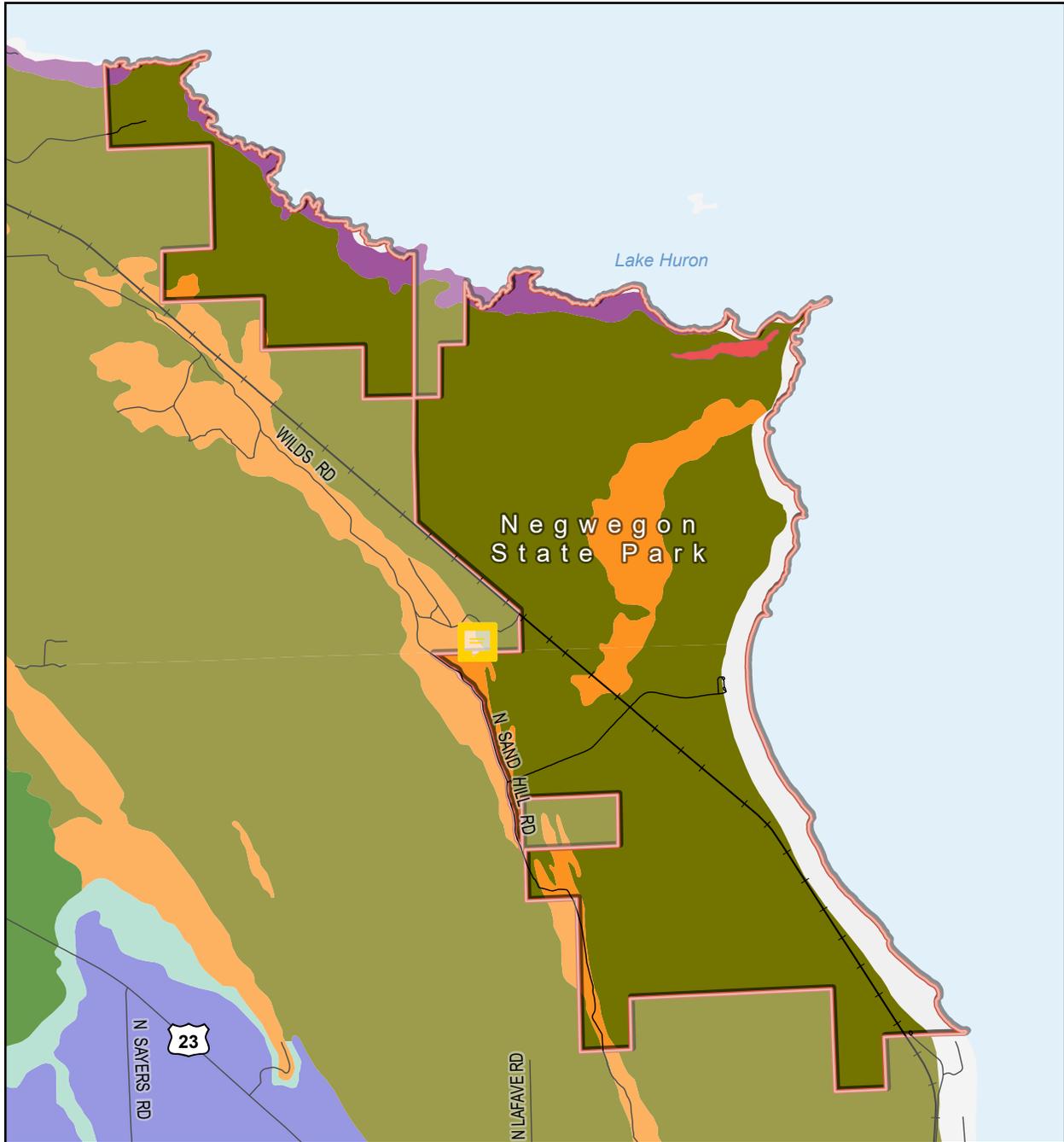


Negwegon State Park - Land Cover

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Aspen | Lowland Deciduous Forest | Water |
| Road | Other Upland Deciduous | Lowland Coniferous Forest | Lowland Shrub |
| Railroad | Mixed Upland Deciduous | Lowland Mixed Forest | Emergent Wetland |
| River/Stream | Natural Pines | Non-Forest Coverture* | Mixed Non-forested Wetland |
| Forest Coverture* | Other Upland Conifers | Road/Parking Lot | Sand, Soil |
| Northern Hardwood | Mixed Upland Conifers | Herbaceous Openland | Exposed Rock |
| Oak Types | Upland Mixed Forest | Upland Shrub | No Stand Data |



Updated: 07/12/2023
 *Michigan Forest Inventory, Michigan DNR



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



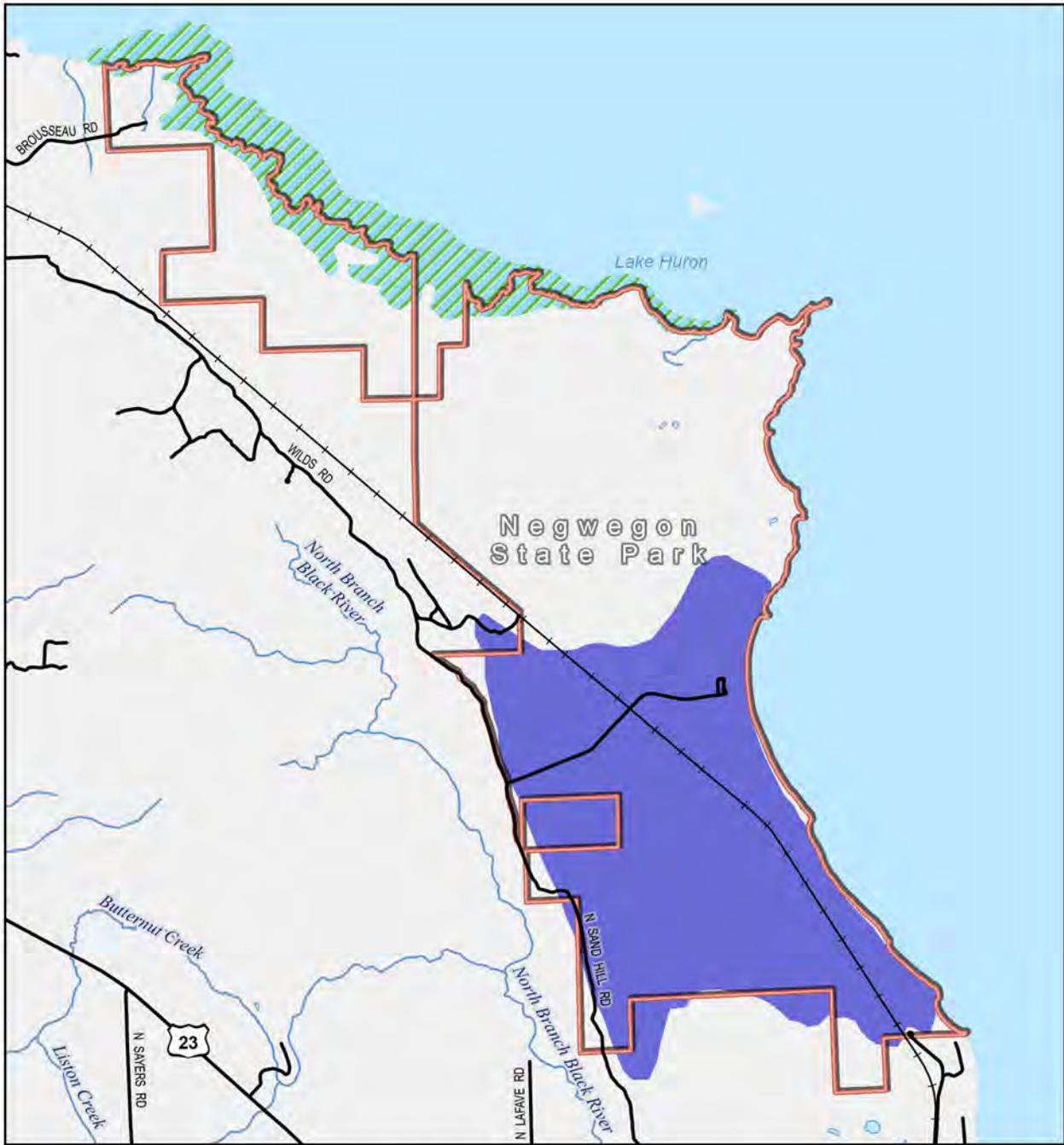
Negwegon State Park - Land Cover, 1800s

- | | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Land Cover* | Great Lakes Marsh |
| Railroad | Alder/Willow Swamp | Hemlock/W Pine |
| Road | Beech/Hemlock | Cedar Swamp |
| Lake/Pond | Low Conifer Swamp | W Pine/Beech/R Maple |



Updated: 07/12/2023

*Mapping derived from original notes of the State of Michigan General Land Office Survey conducted in the early to mid-1800s



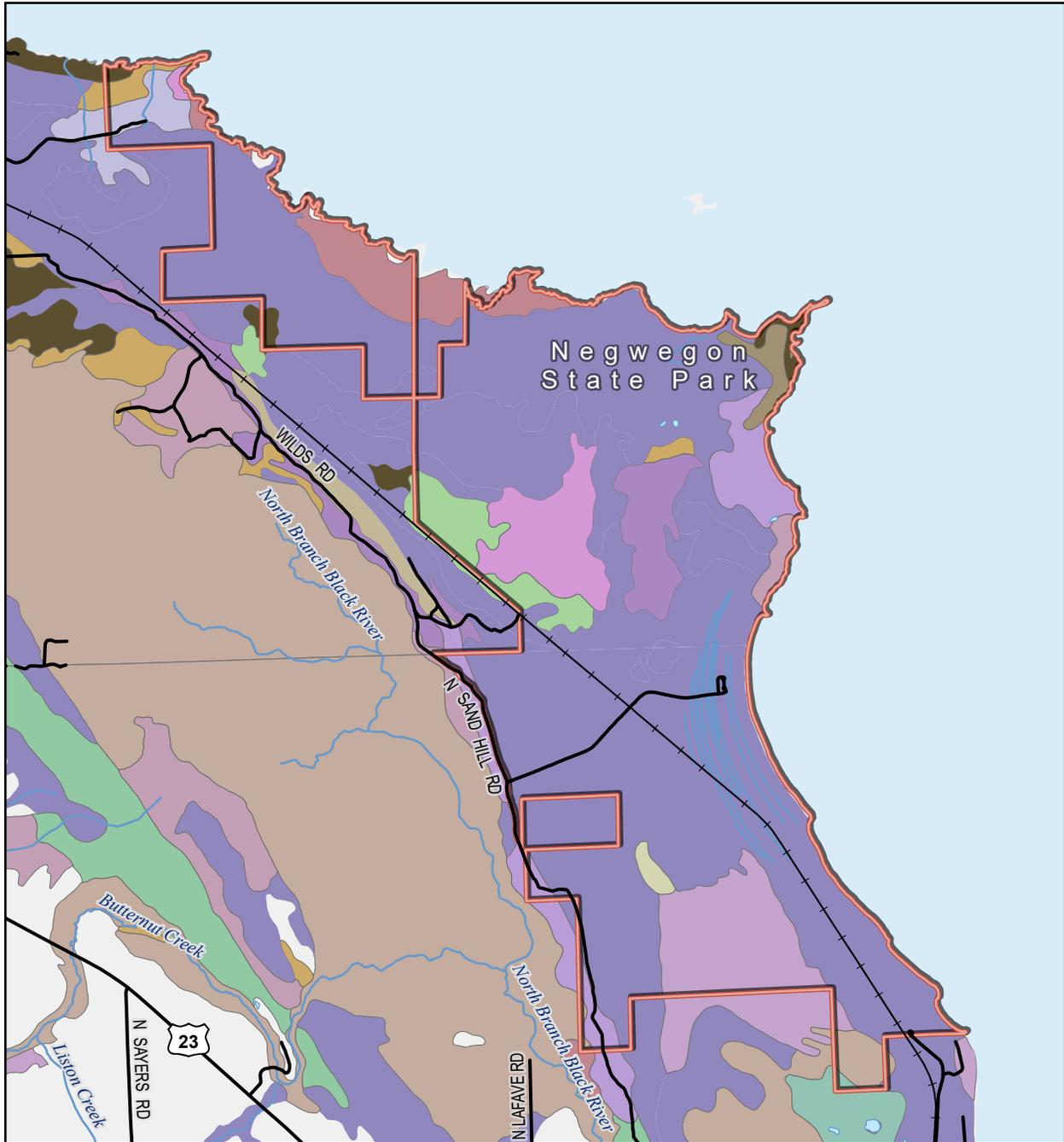
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Negwegon State Park - Exemplary Natural Communities

- | | |
|----------------|---------------------------------|
| — Road | —+— Railroad |
| — River/Stream | ▨ Great Lakes Marsh |
| ▭ Lake/Pond | ▭ Wooded Dune and Swale Complex |





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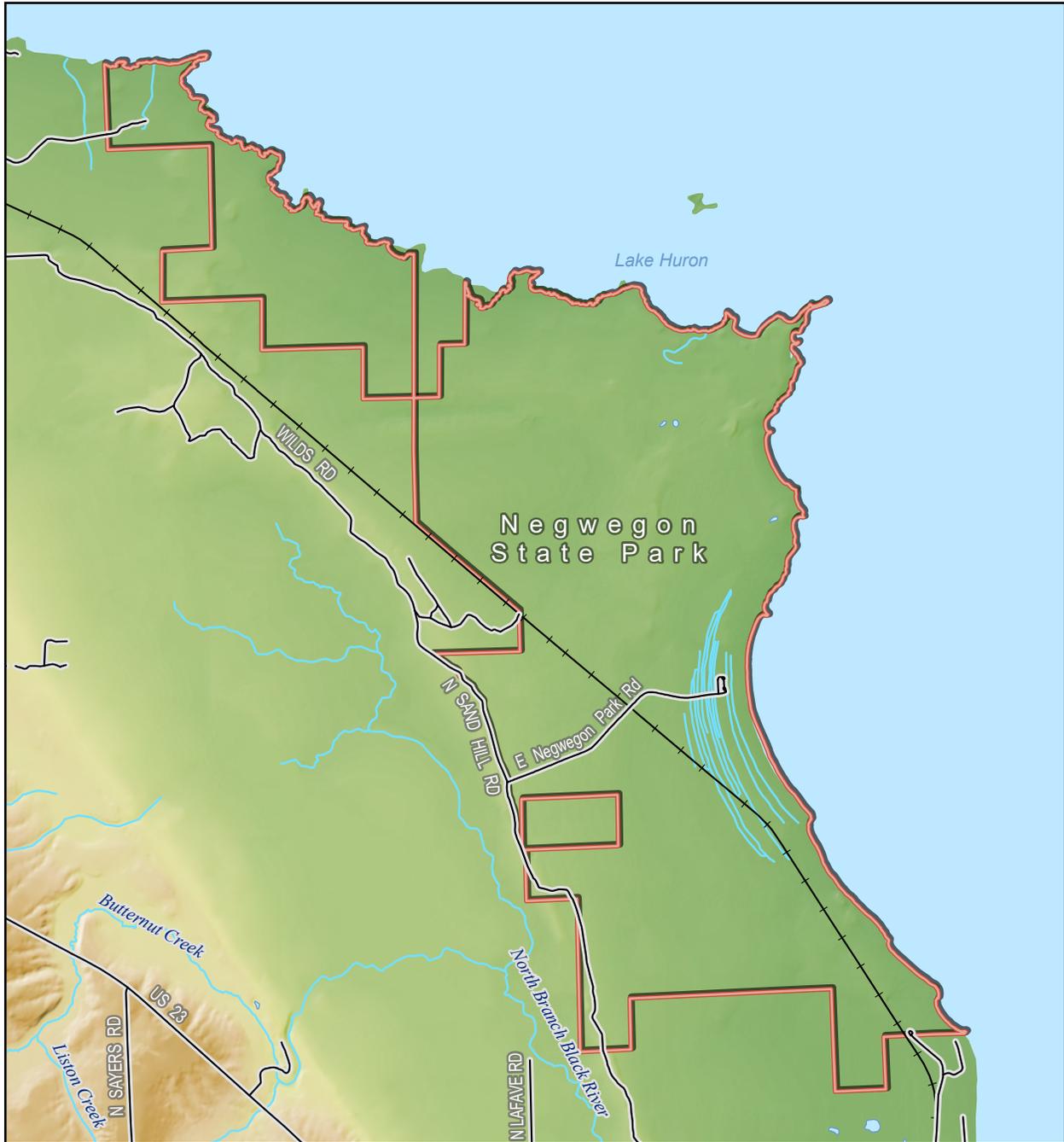
Negwegon State Park - Soils

- | | | |
|--------------------------|----------------|----------------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Cathro muck | Battlefield sand |
| Road | Croswell sand | Lupton muck |
| Railroad | Deford muck | Alpena gravelly sandy loam |
| River/Stream | Histosols | Tonkey silt loam |
| Lake/Pond | Rubicon sand | Markey muck |
| Soil Composition* | Tawas muck | Dorval muck |
| Angelica loam | East Lake sand | |
| Au Gres sand | Eastport sand | |

Updated: 07/12/2023

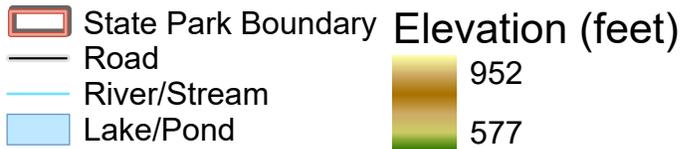
*Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Map Sheets, Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) Database, 2000





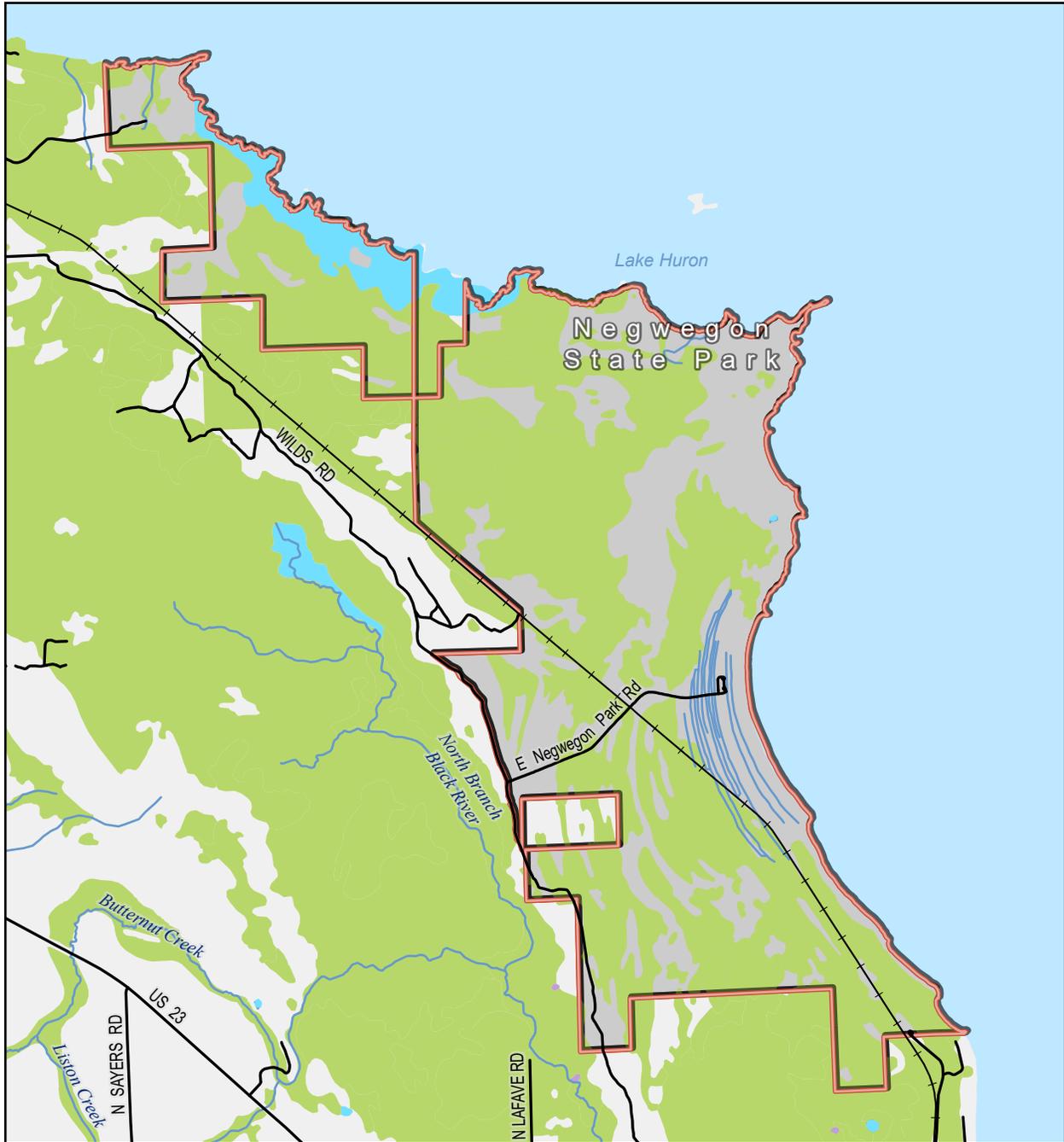
MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Negwegon State Park - Topography



Updated: 07/11/2023

*Elevation calculated from USGS National Map 3D Elevation Program (3DEP). May 16, 2023.



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Negwegon State Park - Wetlands

- | | | | |
|---|---------------------|---|-----------------------------------|
|  | State Park Boundary |  | Wetlands* |
|  | Road |  | Freshwater Emergent Wetland |
|  | Railroad |  | Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland |
|  | River/Stream | | Freshwater Pond |
|  | Lake/Pond | | |



Updated: 07/11/2023
 *The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) dataset (2012)