

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

Thursday, April 11, 2019

8:30 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

4125 Beaumont Road, Lansing

PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Commissioner Louise Klarr, Chair

Commissioner Chris Tracy

Commissioner David Nyberg

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Mike McDonald

Tom Bailey

Chuck Hoover

Julie Clark

Chris Graham

Mary Pitcher

Bob Hoffmeyer

Ann Conklin

Jacklin Blodgett – DNR-PRD Representative

ABSENT

Jim Bradley

Mike Foote

Jefferson Gray

OTHERS PRESENT

PRD Staff:

Deb Jensen

Paul Yauk

Barbara Graves

Michael Morrison

Michelle Coss

MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

OPENING COMMENTS

The meeting was called to order at 8:34 a.m. by **Commissioner Klarr**. Commissioner Klarr welcomed everyone and committee member introductions were made around the panel.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the February 14, 2019 meeting minutes with **Commissioner Tracy** and **Committee member Julie Clark** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the March 25, 2019 meeting minutes with **Commissioner Tracy** and **Committee member Julie Clark** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment

ACTION

North Higgins Lake State Park GMP, Resolution No. 04-2019-02 and South Higgins Lake State Park GMP, Resolution No. 04-2019-03

Deb Jensen, DNR Parks Management Plan Administrator, presented general management plans for North Higgins Lake State Park and South Higgins Lake State Park. North Higgins includes the historic Higgins Lake Nursery and Civilian Conservation Corps Museum. Both parks offer swimming, boating, hiking, camping, and biking. Plans for the two parks include continued efforts to address aquatic invasive species, developing playgrounds through private funding, redeveloping a shooting range, replacing toilet and shower buildings, improving the nursery and CCC Museum, and constructing modern cabins.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Klarr asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 04-2019-02. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Tom Bailey**. Resolution No. 04-2019-02 was approved unanimously.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Klarr asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 04-2019-03. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Tom Bailey**. Resolution No. 04-2019-03 was approved unanimously.

Jacklin Blodget, Assistant Chief, PRD briefed the committee on a proposed land use order amendment. The amendment would prohibit the use of sky lanterns to prevent fire hazard; grant the department the ability to restrict usage on designated mountain bike trails when conditions may cause damage; close the DTE Mountain Bike Trail and Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park to snowmobiles; regulate use of electric bikes and unmanned aircraft on state land.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Tracy asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 04-2019-04. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Pitcher**. Resolution No. 04-2019-04 was approved unanimously.

INFORMATION ONLY

Deb Jensen presented for the committee's information Phase 2 of management plans for Saugatuck Dunes State Park and Warren Dunes State Park. Both parks have Lake Michigan frontage, critical dunes and natural areas. Saugatuck Dunes is a day-use-only park. Warren Dunes is a big camping destination. Both have seen significant increase in visitor numbers, doubling in the last five years.

PRESENTATION

Lawrence Falardeau and Dick Russell from Friends of Highland Recreation Area introduced themselves and thanked the committee for letting them present today. Mr. Falardeau gave a brief presentation on the history of the Highland Recreation Area. Committee member Ann Conklin said Larry's passion has been instrumental in the development of a lot of things in Southeast Michigan and he has been a leader professionally and as a volunteer, and that we are very lucky to have him.

GENERAL UPDATES

MSPAC Finance Committee Update

Committee member Conklin reported that they had full participation at the last Finance Committee meeting, and she would like to extend an invitation to others who want to get involved. The next meeting is May 13 at 2 p.m. at Constitution Hall in Lansing. She said everyone did a fantastic job of providing a lot of background information about the history of the funding for the state parks, where we are at now, and where we are in the future. The committee came up with a framework of the things that need to be addressed.

State Trails Plan and Program Update

Paul Yauk, State Trail Coordinator, PRD updated the committee on the state trails program. The Houghton County storm cleanup will continue in 2019. The department has named the first state-designated water trails. The Pure Michigan Trails & Trail Towns announcement will be this spring. The Ralph C. Wilson Jr. Foundation launched a \$100 million investment of parks and trails in Southeast Michigan; representing a major commitment to trails and recreation in Detroit for years to come. \$1 million in Iron Belle Mini-grants will be awarded this Spring 2019. Staff are in the process of updating all of the equestrian trail maps and equestrian trail information on the website. The DNR will be receiving two awards from the North Country Trail Association. The Trails Section is working on updating the 5 Year Trail Plan. Trails staff will be presenting at the International Trails Symposium this year in New York.

There will be events throughout the state on National Trails Day, June 1. June 5 – 8 is the 51st International Snowmobile Congress in Grand Rapids. June 8 – 9 is free ORV weekend, and September 12 – 19 MTGA is hosting the first Great Lake-to-Lake Route #1 Ride.

Chief Updates

Assistant Chief Jacklin Blodgett, PRD provided an update on a proposed new ORV area in Oakland County. The Oakland County Board approved the plan and the proposed terms, but work remains to be done to finalize the arrangement between the DNR and the county. Milliken State Harbor has opened early for the month of April for fishermen to rent slips. State parks are opening, with a few delays due to snow. Seasonal ranger staff are returning and season staff hiring is underway – using social media to get the word out on employment opportunities. Chief Ron Olson is in Ft. Custer at the Law Enforcement Ranger Academy graduation were 26 students are graduating today. There is a vacancy on the MSPAC, so please share contacts of anyone who may want to serve; they are in the process of posting the position and will be requesting applications.

The next meeting to be held on June 13, 2019 at the Detroit Zoological Society in Royal Oak.

Meeting adjourned at 10:32 a.m.