

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

Thursday, November 7, 2019

9:00 a.m. – 10:30 a.m.

Lansing Community College, West Campus, 5708 Cornerstone Drive, Lansing

PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Commissioner Louise Klarr, Chair

Commissioner Chris Tracy

Commissioner David Nyberg

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Mike Foote

Chuck Hoover

Bob Hoffmeyer

Mike McDonald

Ron Olson – DNR-PRD Representative

ABSENT

Mary Pitcher

Julie Clark

Chris Graham

Ann Conklin

Jefferson Gray

Jim Bradley

OTHERS PRESENT

Jason Fleming, PRD

Barbara Graves, PRD

MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

OPENING COMMENTS

The meeting was called to order at 9:12 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 June 13, 2019 meeting minutes with **Committee member David Nyberg** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the August 8, 2019 meeting minutes with **Committee member Chris Tracy** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the 2020 Tentative Meeting Dates with **Committee member Chris Tracy** seconding that motion. Motion to accept the tentative dates passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment.

ACTION

Resolution No. 08-2019-05 to support the Maybury State Park General Management Plan

Deb Jensen, DNR Parks Management Plan Administrator, gave an update on the General Management Plan for Maybury State Park that she previously covered in detail at the August 8, 2019 meeting. The committee approved a resolution supporting the Plan.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Chris Tracy asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 08-2019-05. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Chuck Hoover**. Resolution No. 08-2019-05 was approved unanimously.

The committee approved a resolution supporting the establishment of hunting and trapping at Watkins Lake State Park and County Preserve in Washtenaw County, approved by the NRC in September. The area open for hunting at Watkins Lake comprises about 400 acres of the park's total 1,122 acres. Hunting and trapping were part of the approved management plan for the park, which is jointly managed by the DNR and the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Chris Tracy asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 08-2019-06. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Mike McDonald**. Resolution No. 08-2019-06 was approved unanimously.

The committee also approved a resolution supporting the Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 10 to open 350 acres at Yankee Springs State Recreation Area to hunting during the established open hunting seasons.

RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF: Commissioner Chris Tracy asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No 11-2019-08. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Chuck Hoover**. Resolution No. 11-2019-08 was approved unanimously.

Rifle River Phase 2 General Management Plan

Deb Jensen, DNR Parks Management Plan Administrator, presented the Rifle River Phase 2 General Management Plan; one of the recreation areas administered in partnership with the Wildlife Division.

Research Study Results: Assessing Trends in Michigan State Park Use and Users

Dr. Chuck Nelson from Michigan State University presented the research study *Assessing Trends in Michigan State Park Use and Users* (presentation attached). The three-year analysis was based on surveys of visitors and campers at 14 state parks throughout the state. About 2,700 people responded. It was concluded from the study that visitors were favorable of our parks and have ideas for their improvement, and it also showed that parks provide a substantial economic benefit to local communities. Commissioner Klarr thanked Dr. Nelson for the great presentation.

GENERAL UPDATES

Chief Updates

Chief Ron Olson said Recreation Passport sales and lodging reservations remain strong. Because of the success with generated revenue they were able to request \$8 million be put towards infrastructure. The Parks and Recreation Division hired 10 additional staff in the Western Upper Peninsula, with most being former Department of Corrections employees who were laid off from the Ojibway Correctional Facility when it closed. With assistance from the Road Commission and the Michigan Department of Transportation, County Road 107's shoreline has been armored. Staff did a wonderful job. The last 300 ft. of shoreline at McLain

State Park was armored. One of the big challenges is high water problems. The Army Corps of Engineers are predicting levels to be 6 inches higher than last year. Many of the parks have lost beaches due to shoreline erosion. Funding from the Federal Emergency Management Agency has helped with seven projects at state parks. Toilet and shower buildings were built to FEMA specifications to serve as storm shelters if they are needed.

Chief Olson honored staff who were instrumental in designing and executing the successful celebration of the Michigan State Parks Centennial: Maia Turek, Stephanie Yancer, Lyla Luoto and Michelle Coss of the Parks and Recreation Division; Ami Van Antwerp, Tyler Czarnopis and Julie Ellsworth Byelich of the Marketing and Outreach Division; and Sarah Lapshan from the Public Information Office. Their efforts included Look Back, Give Forward, Pure Sounds of Michigan, Paint the Parks, a unique partnership with New Holland Brewery, Trails to Table, Happy Little Trees, and the Happy Little 5K Virtual Run which had 1.1 million website views, the most hits on a DNR web page. Over 21,000 people have signed up for the event. Jason Fleming said all these things are meant to go beyond 1 year and that they are accomplishing these great things with a very dedicated staff.

MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee Update

Committee member Mike McDonald said at the last meeting, a report was presented by staff on the data collected from DNR boat access sites. Jason Fleming said they had a group of MUCC workers collect samples at over 120 sites statewide to see what was out there in terms of invasives. This was not a scientific study, but an observation. All this information will be provided to members at a future meeting.

OTHER

Chief Olson said he just received an update on committee member Ann Conklin, who recently had surgery and is now recuperating at home, with some challenges ahead. If you know her, give her a call or text.

The next tentative MSPAC meeting date is February 13, 2020.

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 10:32 a.m.