



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Sunrise over Grand Traverse Bay at Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park

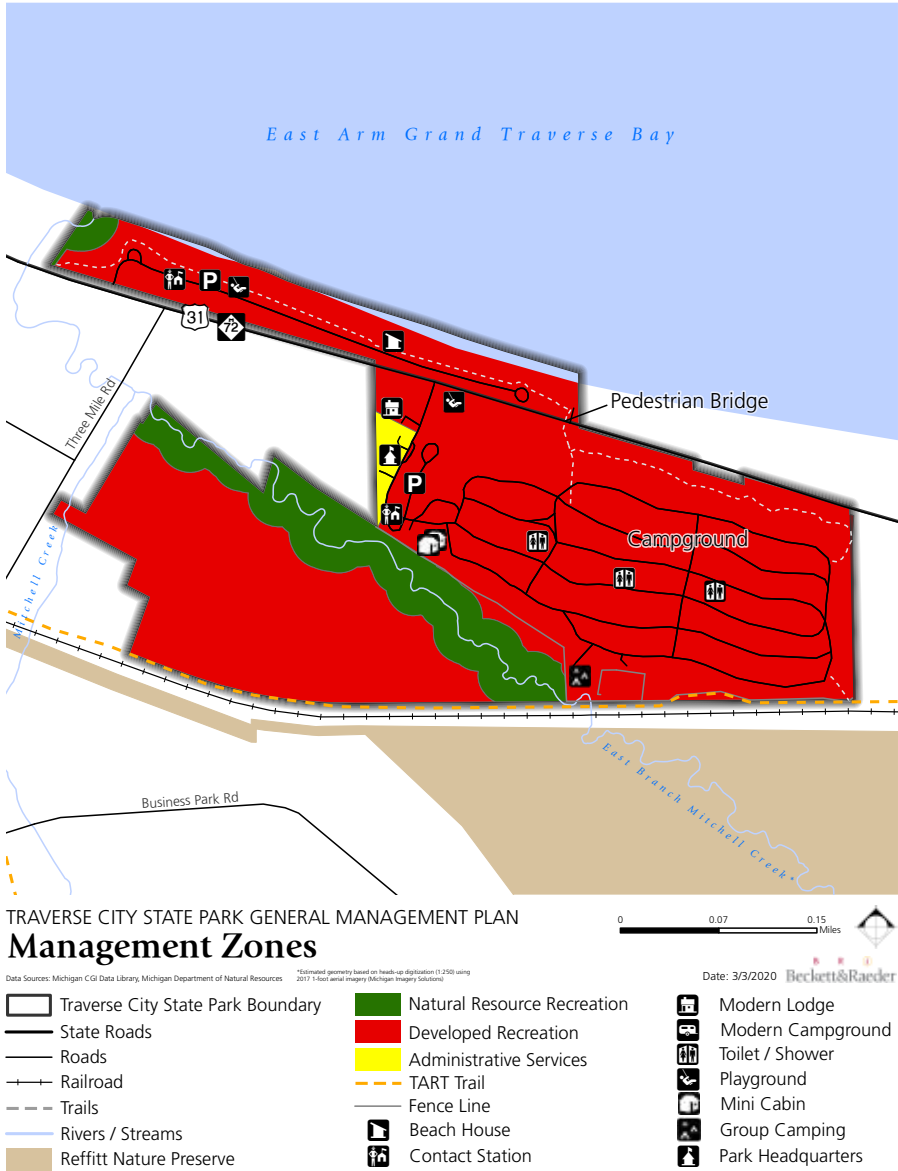
GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

APPROVED 9/24/2021

Prepared with the assistance of

B R 
Beckett & Raeder

www.bria2.com



This project was directed by Deborah Jensen, Management Plan Administrator, Department of Natural Resources, DNR Parks & Recreation Division with assistance from Beckett & Raeder, Inc.

PLAN APPROVALS:



 DNR Chief, Parks & Recreation Division

9/16/2021


 Date



 DNR Natural Resources Deputy

9/17/2021

 Date



 DNR Director, Department of Natural Resources

9/24/2021

 Date

PLAN APPROVALS

PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS

The following dates reference when the plans were presented for recommendation. In some instances, additional time was allotted for plan review following the presentation with subsequent approval received by email.

PRD- Section Chiefs	<u>6/29/2021</u> Date
DNR- Resource Management Bureau	<u>7/21/2021 (via email)</u> Date
MSPAC- Stewardship Subcommittee	<u>7/28/2021</u> Date
NRC- Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee	<u>8/11/2021</u> Date

RESOLUTION NO. 08-2021-04

MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

**RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE
“TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN”**

ADOPTED: August 11, 2021

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources’ (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division has completed the General Management Plan for Traverse City State Park; and

WHEREAS, the planning process reflects sensitivity to natural resource values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, and is inclusive of all DNR programs and representative of eco-management; and

WHEREAS, the planning process was further inclusive of stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning phases that will be consistent with the mission of the DNR and the Parks and Recreation Division, and reflective of the purpose and significance of Traverse City State Park; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel and the Parks and Recreation Division’s strategic plan; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division and the MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Traverse City State Park General Management Plan; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR Director approve the General Management Plan for Traverse City State Park;

Submitted by: MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee

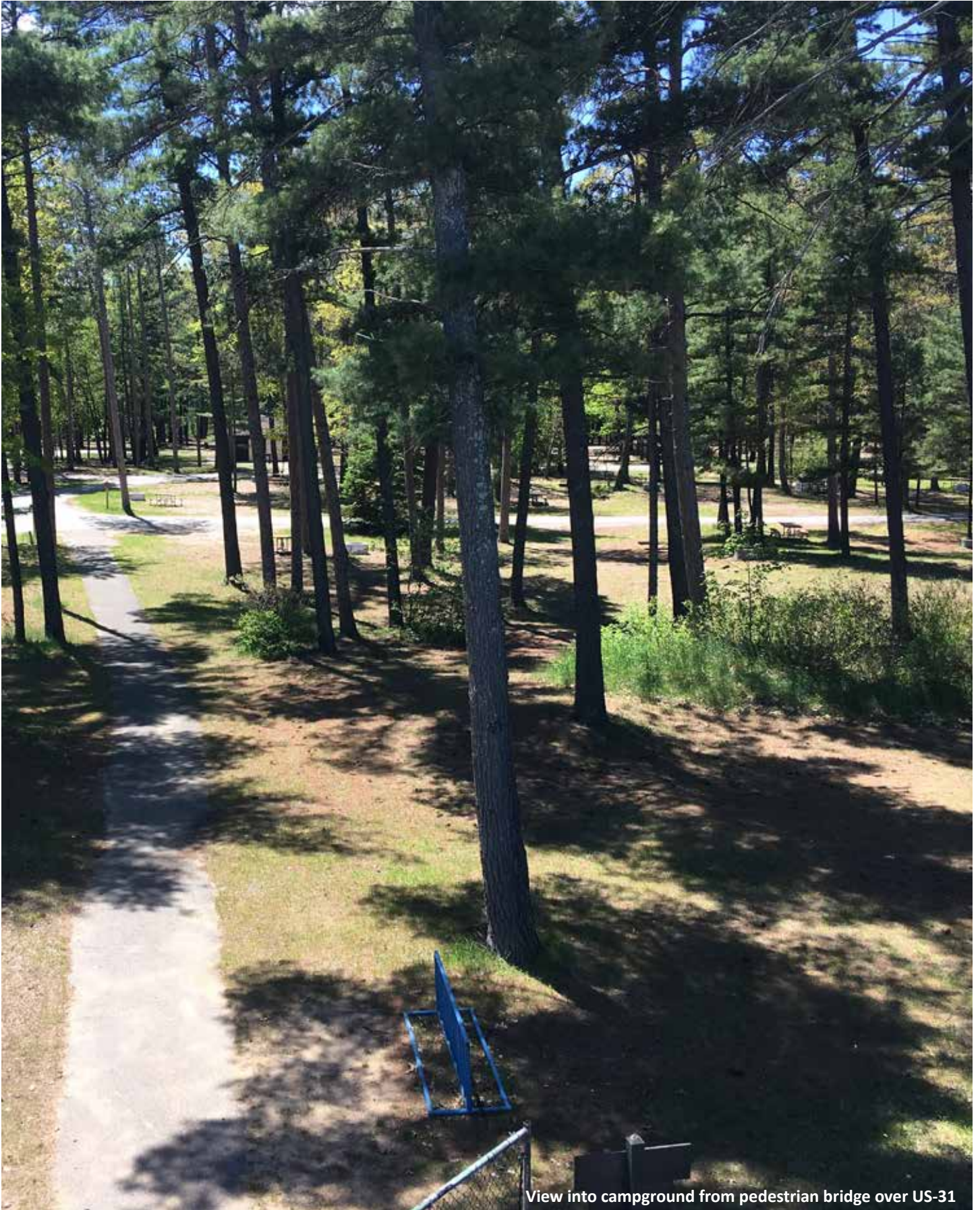
Motioned by: Mike Foote
Seconded by: Bob Hoffmeyer

Yeas: 7
Nays: 0
Abstained: 0
Absent: 3

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View into campground from pedestrian bridge over US-31



A modern campsite with bicycles, picnic table, and a hammock

General Management Plan Executive Summary

Keith J. Charters Traverse City (hereafter “Traverse City”) State Park is a 79-acre park located three miles from downtown Traverse City. The park was established in 1920 and its name was changed from Traverse City State Park to Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park in 2011 in honor of the former chair of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission. The park features a quarter-mile of Lake Michigan shoreline (along Grand Traverse Bay), a designated swimming area, seasonal kayak and paddleboard rentals, a modern campground and lodge, a playground, and 29 acres of undeveloped woodland and wetlands purchased in 2011. Mitchell Creek, a stream with a naturally reproducing trout population, runs through the park and outlets into Lake Michigan at the west end of the beach, which adjoins land owned by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians. The 87-acre Reffitt Nature Preserve to the south of the park, across the railroad tracks and the regional non-motorized Traverse Area Recreation Trail (TART), is owned by the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy and provides additional recreation opportunities as well as a buffer from nearby development.

The purpose of this general management plan (GMP) is to guide the future long-term management and development of Traverse City State Park. Overall, this plan seeks to uphold the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division’s (PRD) Mission: “to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan’s

unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.” The management plan brings together DNR staff, stakeholders, and the public into a process that defines the following for the state park:

- Purpose and significance that captures the unique identity of Traverse City State Park;
- Twenty-year management zone plan, reflecting the resource protection goals and level of development appropriate for different areas of the park;
- Ten-year action goals that address the desired future condition within the park as a whole and within each of the designated management zones.

The supporting analysis, included as Appendix A of this plan, provides important background information on Traverse City State Park that informs this planning initiative. It includes a comprehensive review of the park setting, area demographics, history, land ownership, legal mandates, and cultural, natural, and recreation resources. Furthermore, several existing planning documents, including the Michigan State Parks Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report, the Managed Public Land Strategy, and the Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, were used as guiding references (see Chapter One).

Significance of Traverse City State Park

This general management plan was developed in consideration of the property's significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state park system. Traverse City State Park was determined significant due to the aspects that are summarized below. The full statements of significance can be found in Chapter Three.

- An oasis amid the developed Traverse City region, the park offers visitors beach front views and a wooded campground.
- The park's campground is conveniently located near downtown Traverse City and adjacent to the TART trail, with access to local businesses, regional tourist attractions, and recreation activities.
- Water recreation along the park's quarter-mile beach draws in many day-visitors and campers. Visitors often enjoy swimming, paddling, and other water activities.
- Mitchell Creek provides a good year-round angling opportunity and is a popular fishing location for local anglers.



The TART Trail connects the park to nearby attractions



A fisherman displays his catch



Visitors enjoy a sunny day on the beach

Twenty-Year Management Zones

A key goal in the development of this general management plan is to continue to protect the park's natural and cultural resources, while providing recreation and education opportunities. Taking this into account, the planning team, with stakeholder and public input, established appropriate management zones for the park from a palette of nine standard zones. The management zone map and a thorough review of each management zone are found in Chapter Four of this plan. A condensed description of each of the applied management zones is as follows:

Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The natural resource recreation zone allows for active recreation with medium to high density of use conducted in natural settings. There is an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, moderate levels of use are allowed. The natural resource recreation zone makes up approximately 12% of the park and includes a 200-foot-wide buffer along the Mitchell Creek relic channel.

Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows for active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource emphasis. Although the newly acquired southern parcel is in this zone, the intent is to preserve the natural aesthetic and qualities of this land while considering modern improvements. In the developed recreation zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The developed recreation zone is approximately 87% of the park land and includes the modern campground, mini-cabins, group campground, lodge and pet walking area; the day-use beach area with parking, playground and restroom/ concession building; and undeveloped land south of Mitchell Creek.

Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations such as the park headquarters and related land required to conduct the business of running the state park. This zone is less than one acre, or approximately 1% of the park, and contains the park headquarters/maintenance area.



Campers relax in a modern campsite

Ten-Year Action Goals

Once the planning team established management zones to guide Traverse City State Park for the next 20 years, a series of action goals were identified. The planning team determined that these action items can be accomplished in the next ten years. The action goals are broken down into categories pertaining either to an area of management and operations, infrastructure/development projects that require capital outlay, small infrastructure and development projects, or partner projects. As future improvements are evaluated, renewable energy, resiliency, sustainability, EV charging and efficiency will be considered. Below is a summary of the action goals for the park. The full list of ten-year action goals can be found in Chapter Five.

Management and Operations

Goals for the management and operations of the park include continuing to explore land acquisitions within the project boundary, protecting the natural resources of the park by creating a plan for the stewardship of natural resources, and working to protect the Mitchell Creek watershed by using best development and management practices. Park management will also continually regenerate the maturing tree canopy in the campground, as this is an important feature of the park. DNR staff will identify opportunities for visitor interaction, interpretation, and education throughout the park, such as interpretive signage, a story trail, or other exhibits. In addition, the park management will work with the Bay Area Transit Authority to promote bus transportation between downtown Traverse City and the park.

Infrastructure and Development: Capital Outlay

Goals to complete larger projects involving capital improvement funds include:

- Working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study to assess opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation
- Improving the beach area's aesthetics, capacity, access, shoreline, playground, and recreation opportunities
- Studying options to improve the RV sanitary dump station capacity
- Developing a conceptual plan for the future of park land south of Mitchell Creek
- Implementing the recommendations of a traffic study to improve the campground circulation and beach access
- Replacing the campground sanitary and water lines
- Designing and constructing a new park headquarters
- Completing a Phase 1 archaeological reconnaissance survey on the land south of Mitchell Creek to determine if there are any sensitive cultural or prehistoric remains in the area before any development occurs

Partner Projects

Some action goals are planned to be completed with external partners. The DNR will work with MDOT to continue to look for opportunities to upgrade or replace the pedestrian bridge, considering accessibility and park operations. In addition, the DNR will work with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), local officials, and stakeholders to achieve enhanced use of the existing rail corridor for multi-use access and provide pedestrian access between the park and the conservancy land.



Mature trees line the campground roads



Sunrise on East Grand Traverse Bay

Chapter One:

Core Values & Guiding Resources

1.1 Mission Statements

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

DNR Mission Statement

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

DNR Evergreen Goals

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

PRD Mission Statement

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

1.2 Guiding References

The general management planning process is guided and shaped by several resources developed to provide recommendations for managing Michigan’s parks and recreation system. In particular, these resources have helped shape the ten-year action goals established in this plan.

Michigan State Parks & Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2012)

The Blue Ribbon Panel’s report to Governor Snyder identifies a number of recommendations for system-wide changes to programs, management, infrastructure type, and investment strategies that set up the visionary framework for the next 30-50 years of park and outdoor recreation management in Michigan. Recommendations in the report include:

- Identify and protect important natural, cultural, historic, and prehistoric resources

- Diversify funding
- Prioritize development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks
- Encourage connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen regional identities
- Integrate tourism and economic development marketing
- Prioritize investment in parks and recreation

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

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

- Foster stewardship and conservation
- Improve collaboration
- Raise awareness
- Improve recreational access
- Provide quality experiences
- Enhance health benefits
- Enhance prosperity

Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan (2013 - 2018)

The Trail Plan, developed by an 11-member committee appointed by Governor Snyder, includes eight priority recommendations with associated key actions that should be implemented to assist in achieving the vision of establishing a high quality, nationally-recognized, state-wide trail system. The eight recommendations are as follows:

- Trails are maintained to ensure a sustainable and quality trail system
- Expand trails, trail experiences, opportunities to ensure accessibility to trail systems, outdoor recreation opportunities, and natural and cultural resources
- The Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council leads the effort to maintain and enhance Michigan's reputation as the trail state
- Link trails, trail users and adjoining towns to create memorable trail experiences and enhance economic prosperity
- Develop, enhance and celebrate partnerships and collaborations
- Implement a marketing plan including an electronic portal that allows citizens and visitors to be aware of all trails and related amenities
- Develop funding sources and mechanisms for trail maintenance, acquisition and development
- Ensure that the state's trail system compliments other plans and planning efforts

Managed Public Land Strategy (2013)

The DNR-Managed Public Land Strategy provides a framework for the continued conservation, use, and management of public lands to provide an enhanced quality of life for Michigan residents, create jobs, and protect the essence of Michigan: its woods, waters, wildlife, and other natural and cultural assets. The Strategy identifies three broad goals with desired outcomes, metrics, and measurable objectives for each. These goals are to:

- Provide quality outdoor public recreation opportunities
- Foster regional economic prosperity
- Protect natural and cultural resources for future generations



Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan

PRD Strategic Plan (2017-2022)

The PRD Strategic Plan is the overarching document that guides the Parks & Recreation Division in carrying out its mission. This plan establishes long-range goals, objectives, and strategies for Michigan’s state parks and recreation system for the five-year period beginning in 2017. It identifies the most important issues facing the PRD and helps to define where resources should be focused for maximum benefit. The goals identified in the plan are:

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

1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates

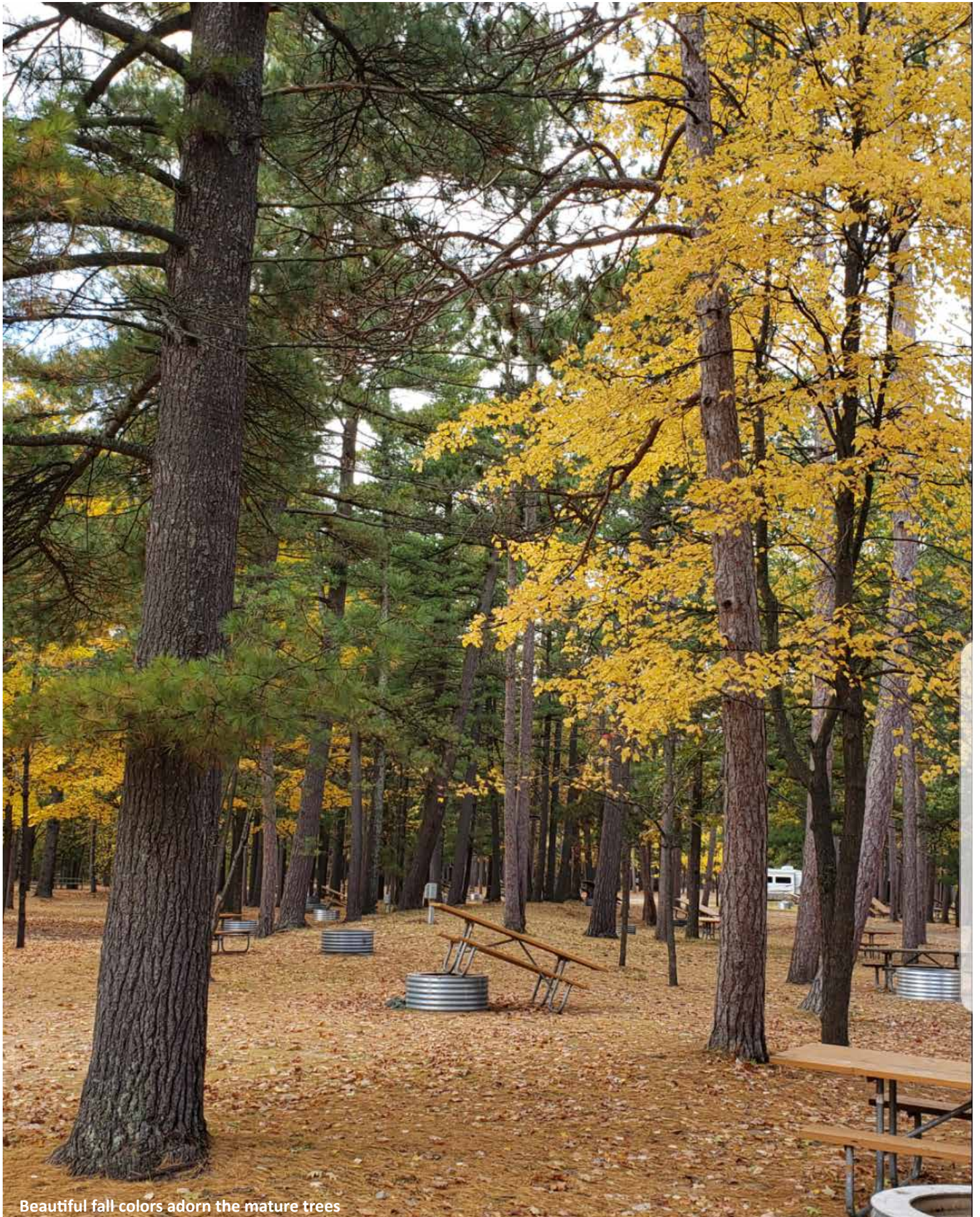
For all park general management plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the plan, park management, and park operations. For the DNR’s planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and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

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management at Traverse City State Park focus on the following areas:

- Preservation of natural and cultural resources
- Water resources, wetlands, Great Lakes submerged bottomlands, and inland streams protection
- Requirement for a Recreation Passport for entry into the park
- Public health code requirements for campgrounds, swimming areas, and swimmers’ itch
- A consent decree defining the legal right for tribal entities to fish in Mitchell Creek and the Great Lakes



Steps down to the beach on East Grand Traverse Bay



Beautiful fall colors adorn the mature trees



The modern lodge at Traverse City State Park

Chapter Two: Plan Process Overview

2.1 Planning Objectives

Development of Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park began in 1920 when the Grand Traverse Resort Association donated land to the State of Michigan to be used as a state park. The land included basic park structures and facilities, and soon many trees were planted and other park improvements were made. By 1974, the park saw over 200,000 visitors, and the park's first Master Plan was developed and approved by 1978. The campground now contains 347 campsites, a modern lodge available for rent, and two mini cabins. In 2011, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) purchased 29.11 acres and acquired another 0.75 acre to add to the park and the park's name was changed from Traverse City State Park to Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park in honor of the former chair of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission.

General management planning sets out a new framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for Traverse City State Park are derived from the missions of the DNR and the Parks & Recreation Division (PRD), applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

The objective of the GMP is to bring together Parks & Recreation Division staff, staff from other resource divisions, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique purpose and significance of Traverse City State Park. Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the 20-year management zone plan used to guide park planning decisions and ten-year action goals that establish specific action strategies for the park as a whole and within each of the management zones. Each GMP is reviewed every five years to ensure there have been no major changes that would warrant a revision to the approved plan.

2.2 Planning Process

The planning team met periodically over a two-year period to develop the general management plan, beginning in June 2019 and ending in May 2021. The planning schedule was longer than normal due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Throughout the process, the team sought the input of the public and stakeholders to guide the decisions made in the plan. A stakeholder workshop was held in October 2019 to gather insight from organizations tied to the park. In addition, an online public input survey was available for interested parties to comment on their current use of the park and their priorities for the future. Following the input sessions and survey, the team developed a list of action plan priorities and developed the draft plan.

2.3 Planning Team

This plan was developed with the direct assistance, input, and expertise provided by all members of the planning team.

PLANNING TEAM		
DIVISION	TITLE	NAME
PRD	Management Plan Administrator	Debbie Jensen
PRD	Lands Liaison	Matt Lincoln
PRD	GIS Analyst	Jessica Orlando
PRD	Unit Supervisor	Stephanie Rosinski
PRD	Cadillac District Supervisor	Kasey Mahony
PRD	Park Ranger	Mitchell Babcock
PRD	Regional Planner	Annamarie Bauer
PRD	Stewardship Unit Manager	Ray Fahlsing
PRD	N. Lower Trails Coordinator	Scott Slavin
PRD	Cultural Resources Analyst	Lisa Gamero
FD (Fisheries)	Fisheries Biologist	Heather Hettinger
FRD (Forestry)	TC Unit Manager	Dave Lemmien
WLD (Wildlife)	Wildlife Habitat Biologist	Steve Griffith
LED (Law)	District 4 Area Law Supervisor	Sgt. Dan Bigger
FOD (Finance & Operations)	Geologist	Peter Rose
LEO	Archaeologist	Stacy Tchorzynski

2.4 Summary of Input Opportunities

Public input is a critical part of the planning for Traverse City State Park. Below is a summary of the public and stakeholder input methods that were used to inform the development of the general management plan. Several different methods were used to ensure everyone had an opportunity for input. Full reports for each of the outreach methods are included in Appendix B of this plan.

Project Website

A public-facing website was maintained throughout the duration of the general management plan process. This website was updated with general information about the park and park maps, results of the public input survey, and the draft of the general management plan. The website contained a contact form so that the public could contact the planning team at any time with questions, concerns, and input.

Stakeholder Input Workshop

To gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited a group of nearly 50 stakeholders to participate in a facilitated input workshop held on October 30th, 2019. The stakeholders were initially given a brief overview of the park and the general management planning process. Next, the stakeholders were divided into small-table discussion groups to complete a series of exercises describing the park’s current status, opportunities for partnerships, the park’s potential benefit to the larger community, and the stakeholders’ vision for the park’s future. Each table then reported out to the larger group.



Stakeholders engaged in workshop exercises

Online Public Input Survey

One of the methods the planning team used to gather input from park users was an online survey. This online approach provides a convenient way for those who have access to the internet to provide feedback and accurately transfers all responses for analysis. However, it is not designed to be representative of Traverse City State Park users or uses, as respondents self-select and are not sampled on a random or systematic basis that would ensure a statistically accurate representation of users or uses. Nevertheless, the online survey does provide valuable information about what certain individuals or groups (those who are motivated to comment about the park, those likely to receive DNR communication about the survey, and those who have easy access to the internet) hope to see in the park's future management. This survey was advertised through a press release, sent to those who registered for camping in the last year, shared with park stakeholders, and was also shared on social media.

Six-hundred seventy-two (672) individuals responded to the survey. Of those, 645 (96%) have visited Traverse City State Park in the last five years. Those who had not recently visited the park were screened out from the remainder of the survey. The survey included questions on what activities the visitors participate in during their visit, their general satisfaction, their most recent visit, their thoughts on the day-use and overnight park amenities, park concessions, special events and programs, the future use of the DNR's newly acquired land, other thoughts about the park and their demographic information.

On-Site Survey

Another method designed to give representative user feedback to guide the management plan, but in less depth than the online public input survey, was an on-site use and user study undertaken in association with Michigan State University. The study included a survey of a representative sample of park visitors to provide an overall estimate of mean user hours per vehicle in day use parking areas, assess local spending, ascertain the opinion of park users about the future management options and approaches, and provide a profile of park visitors, both campers and day users. This on-site approach sampled users on systematically selected days and times across June – October of 2018. It used a windshield survey at the day use parking area and the same survey handed to a sample of up to 20 camping parties on sample days to ensure representation of the full range of park users. A full report can be found In Appendix D.

Public Input Meeting

The public was invited to share their thoughts about the Traverse City State Park Draft General Management Plan at a virtual public meeting that was hosted online by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on March 18th, 2021, from 6:00- 7:00 p.m. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in person, but due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the meeting was held virtually. The general public was notified about the meeting through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 24 attendees were recorded.

The meeting began with a brief introduction of planning team members, followed by a short overview of the general management plan process, Traverse City State Park, and the draft general management plan contents. The presentation was followed by a short question and answer period. At the end of the meeting, attendees were asked to visit the interactive public input survey link to review and comment on the statements of significance, management zone plan, and ten-year actions goals. There was also a section for additional feedback on the management plan and the input process. A full report of the input received can be found in Appendix B.

Following the public meeting, the planning team met to discuss the input received and to make any necessary plan changes. Some minor edits and additions to the action goals were made as a result of the public input.

Tribal Communication

The department's tribal coordinator reached out to the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe with a letter notifying them of the general management plan process and timeline and asking for any input.

2.5 Resilience Planning

According to “Planning for Community Resilience in Michigan: A Comprehensive Handbook” (www.resilientmichigan.org), “Resilience has become an umbrella term for the planning and design strategies needed to help communities meet the economic, social, environmental and climate challenges of the future. Community resilience is a measure of the sustained ability of a community to utilize available resources to respond to, withstand, and recover from adverse situations.” A resiliency plan involves assessing vulnerabilities, weighing the relative risks of various hazards, planning for plausible future scenarios, and tracking the progress toward resilience through measurable goals.

Although the local community has not gone through a resilience planning process, a “Framework for Our Future: A Regional Prosperity Plan” was written for the northwest lower Michigan region in 2014 that points to some of the same key issues. It recognizes the importance of the region’s natural resources and scenic beauty to its economic prosperity and suggests ways that communities can maintain, improve and protect the quality of surface and ground water resources, habitat, forestland, and green infrastructure assets. These include identifying sensitive features, implementing stormwater best practices, limiting development in or near sensitive landscapes, and working with community stakeholders and nonprofits to ensure the preservation of interconnected undeveloped lands.

Resilience planning is critical for communities and facilities, such as Traverse City State Park, that encounter risks due to rising lake levels, increased storm intensity and frequency, wildfire, extreme temperatures, flooding, erosion, and other hazards. The park has experienced the effects of some of these events, most recently record high lake levels that have caused flooding and erosion of the beachfront and playground. The general management plan recognizes the risks facing the park and sets out several ways to create a more resilient park (see Chapter Four and Chapter Five for more information):

- Creating a buffer of a lower-development zone around the Mitchell Creek relic channel to prevent development from encroaching on the stream;
- Planning to utilize best practices in development and maintenance of the park amenities and infrastructure to protect the Mitchell Creek watershed;
- Planning to re-design the beachfront area to create a more resilient waterfront.

Increasing resilience and mitigating hazards will continue to be an important goal for the park management staff. Though this plan addresses some of the issues present, a full hazard mitigation plan or resilience plan for the park would be a useful tool for the future.



High lake levels flood the playground in October 2019



paddling on the Grand Traverse Bay

Chapter Three:

Purpose and Significance

3.1 Purpose of Traverse City State Park

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, special designations and Department of Natural Resources (DNR) policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Traverse City State Park was included as part of the state park system.

The overarching purpose of Traverse City State Park is to be used as a public park *“for the purposes of public recreation or the preservation of natural beauty or historic association”* in accordance with Public Act (PA) 218 of 1919 that created the Michigan State Park Commission. PA 451 of 1994, the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (NREPA), states that the Department of Natural Resources 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”*.

Traverse City State Park was established by the State Park Commission in 1920 following several gifts of land to the state for use as a state park. It was renamed after long-time commissioner and former chair of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission, Keith J. Charters, in 2011.

3.2 Statements of Significance

Each general management plan (GMP) developed by the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) is built upon the foundation of the park’s significant features that make it distinct from other parks in the state’s system. Traverse City State Park was determined significant due to the following:

Oasis in an Urban Area

An oasis amid the developed Traverse City region, Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park offers visitors a natural setting and views of the Grand Traverse Bay in one of Michigan’s earliest state parks. The pace of life slows down when entering the campground, which has a towering tree canopy and is buffered from development by a nature preserve to the south.

Convenient Camping Location

The campground is located near downtown Traverse City, where campers can enjoy local businesses, regional tourist attractions, and recreation activities. The park provides affordable overnight lodging in a premier vacation destination that is convenient for many events such as sports tournaments, races, and festivals. The park’s location along the TART trail provides direct access to a regional system of bike trails and offers an opportunity for bike camping.

Water Recreation

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park lies within a region known for its water-centric recreation and provides public access to the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay. The park's beach is a main draw for campers and day-visitors to swim and enjoy the sun. The picturesque, sheltered bay offers a family-friendly swimming and paddling experience. Aside from Grand Traverse Bay, campers can take advantage of the many nearby public water access sites.

Mitchell Creek Fishery

Mitchell Creek, which runs through the park before outletting to the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay, provides a good year-round angling opportunity. Anglers can catch species such as trout, salmon and bass. The creek is also a popular fishing location for Grand Traverse Band tribal members, particularly for its spring spearing opportunities on ancestral fishing grounds. The DNR performs net assessments in Mitchell Creek to tag small mouth bass, which is part of an important bass population tracking project in northern Michigan.



Bicycling on the TART Trail adjacent to the park

3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance

Stakeholder and public input assisted the planning team with affirming the significant features and opportunities at Traverse City State Park. The feedback from the online survey confirmed that the experience of a natural environment, a convenient camping and lodging location, opportunities for water recreation and the Mitchell Creek fishery are key aspects of the park. Comments from survey respondents relating to those significant features are provided below.

"It's a nice break from all the commercial development along the shoreline. Great views of East Bay"

"It is a great park in a great location. Looking forward to going back! We loved the fact we could ride our bikes on the trail to get downtown."

"Perfect combination of beach and wooded camp sites with endless local opportunities for leisure, learning and fun for the whole family!"

"Traverse City State Park is always one of our favorites because we use it as a home base while visiting the area."

"We love the park and have been coming up multiple times a year for the last 20 years. We meet our best friends there from Illinois and camp together every year for the last 10 years. Lots of trees and amazing views and swimming from the beach."

"Convenient! Love the pedestrian bridge from the campground to the beach."

"Fishing in Grand Traverse Bay is excellent and the water is beautifully clear."

"Our grandson was fascinated with the ducklings that paraded back and forth along the waterfront, with their mother following close behind. We come every year with another grandson. Swimming with squirt gun fights are the highlight."

"We enjoy walking the trails with our dogs and simply enjoy our overall RV camping experience."

3.4 Community Connection

Traverse City State Park is closely linked to its surrounding community. As a small park located near the heart of the Traverse City area, visitors to the park tend to go out into the community and visit area attractions including restaurants, wineries, breweries, distilleries, casinos, area races and events, and regional recreation offerings. An on-site survey conducted by the DNR in 2018 found that park visitor spending in the local area of the park was substantial; it was the highest spending of thirteen parks studied between 2016 and 2018. The report states:

“Campers from a single vehicle reported spending an average of \$272 in the 24 hours prior to being surveyed with 94% spending something within 20 miles of the park. The greatest average amounts were for restaurant/bar meals and drinks, lodging fees and food and beverages from a store. Day visitor spending averaged \$154 per vehicle with 79% of them spending something in the local area in the past 24 hours. The greatest portion of day visitor spending was on lodging fees, restaurant/bar meals and drinks and food and beverages from a store.”

In addition to what's available in the surrounding community, the park offers some special events and programs of its own. One of the most popular is the park's annual Harvest Festival, held for campers the first weekend of October. A variety of activities are associated with the festival including a pancake breakfast, trick-or-treating, live music, costume judging and campsite decorating. This event brings campers together in a celebratory spirit and helps support state parks in the area.

As identified in the Statements of Significance, the park represents a convenient and affordable overnight lodging option in a premier resort destination. This makes it a popular lodging option for those participating in sporting tournaments, races, festivals, and the arts. Park visitors can access many of the amenities without using a car, as the park is located adjacent to the TART regional trail system and is within walking distance of some amenities/attractions. Furthermore, a free bus service is available that connects the park to downtown. Unlike some state parks where visitors may stay within the park borders during their entire visit, Traverse City State Park visitors can enjoy camping overnight, play at the waterfront, and then go out to explore all the community has to offer, including the larger Grand Traverse Bay and other abundant water recreation opportunities.



Two mini cabins available for rent

MANAGEMENT ZONE PROGRESSION			
MANAGEMENT ZONE	RESOURCE CONDITION	VISITOR EXPERIENCE	DEVELOPMENT LEVEL
ECOLOGICALLY SENSITIVE	Pristine	Restricted	None
PRIMITIVE			
BACKCOUNTRY			
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE			
HISTORY EDUCATION			
SCENIC			
NATURAL RESOURCE RECREATION			
DEVELOPED RECREATION			
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES			

Chapter Four: Management Zones

The 20-year management zone plan was developed in keeping with the park’s purpose and significance. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect and enhance the park’s natural and cultural resources while also supporting outdoor recreation and education opportunities to the greatest extent practicable. From a palette of nine management zones, the planning team studied the park and applied zones that best fit distinct areas of the park based on existing and desired future conditions. Management zones describe a variety of activities that may be appropriate within the zone and address the desired future condition for the following categories:

- Natural resources
- Historic/cultural resources
- Recreation opportunities
- Education/interpretation opportunities
- Visitor experience
- Management focus

The resource condition, visitor experience, and level of development vary in each of the nine standard zones, as indicated in the figure above. Traverse City State Park was apportioned into the following three zones:

- Natural resource recreation zone
- Developed recreation zone
- Administrative services zone

4.1 Project Boundary

Project boundaries are geographic lines that help define the state’s public lands acquisition and disposal strategy (land strategy). These boundaries contain a majority of state ownership, as well as privately owned lands that, should they ever become available for sale, would be a priority for the DNR to pursue acquiring. The DNR initiated a comprehensive statewide project boundary review in 2020. The GMP planning team provided recommendations on the proposed boundary for Traverse City State Park and supports the 2020 Project Boundary approved by the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the DNR. Considering the goal to improve the layout and circulation of the park, the project boundary was drawn to include parcels to the west near the park entrance and parcels between the park boundary and Three Mile Road. In addition, the DNR would be interested in acquiring the railroad corridor to the south, if it were to become abandoned. In total, the proposed project boundary would add 15 acres to the park.

The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians owns a 5-acre parcel of lakeshore property west of the state park land. In 2008, the state, working in conjunction with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, considered purchasing the property to add to Traverse City State Park. While this transaction was not completed, the state would be interested in working with the Tribal Council and the Conservancy to develop a comprehensive plan for lakeshore and Mitchell Creek access and protection.



TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

Proposed Project Boundary

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

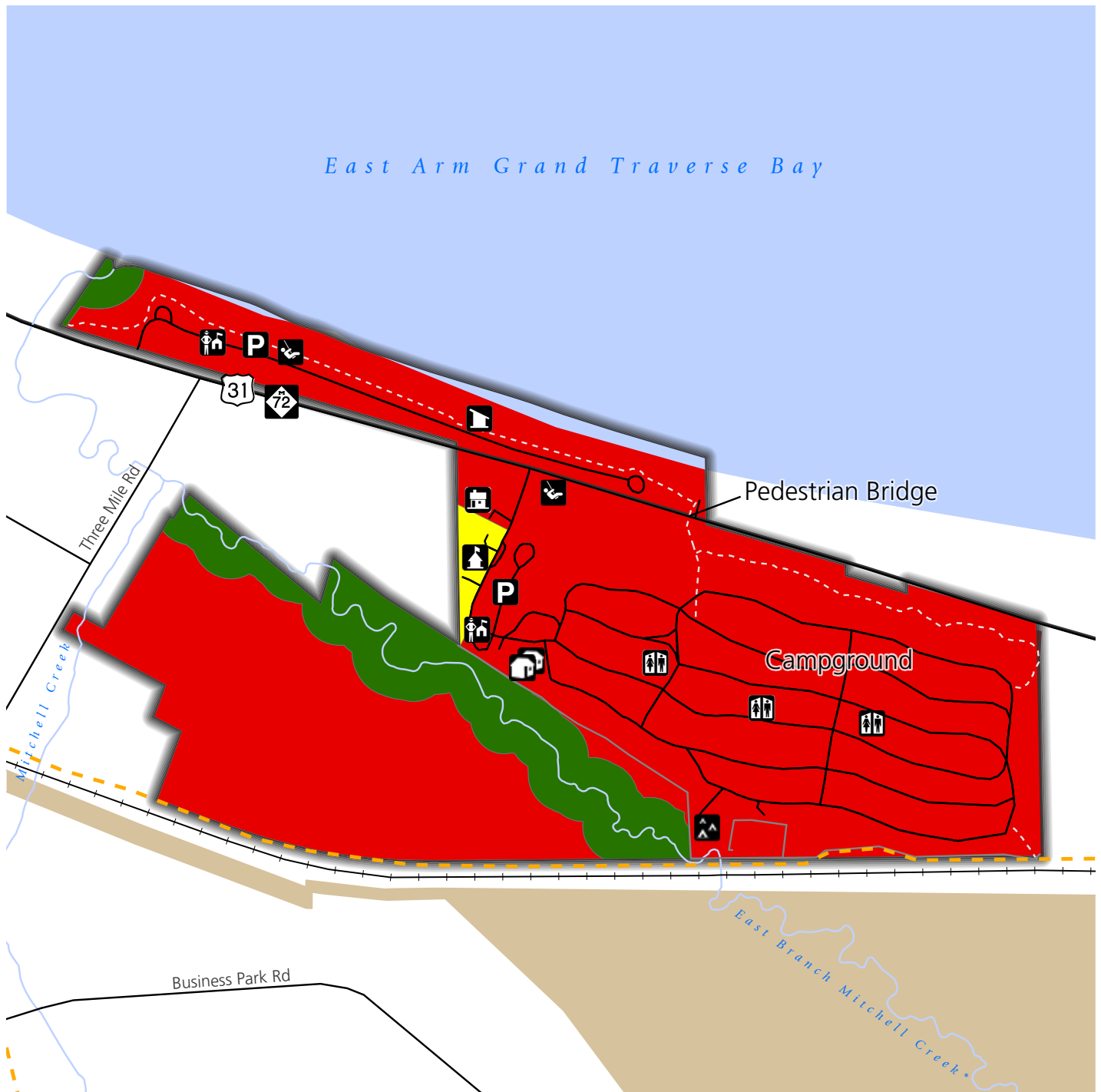
Date: 4/30/2021

- Traverse City State Park Boundary
- State Roads
- Roads
- Trails
- Rivers / Streams
- Lakes
- Reffitt Nature Preserve
- Tribal Land
- 2020 Approved Project Boundary

*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.

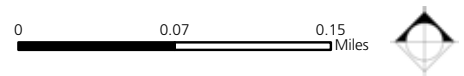
**The DNR would be interested in acquiring the railroad corridor if it were to become abandoned.





TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources *Estimated geometry based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solutions)



Date: 3/3/2020 **Beckett&Raeder**

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Traverse City State Park Boundary | Natural Resource Recreation | Modern Lodge |
| State Roads | Developed Recreation | Modern Campground |
| Roads | Administrative Services | Toilet / Shower |
| Railroad | TART Trail | Playground |
| Trails | Fence Line | Mini Cabin |
| Rivers / Streams | Beach House | Group Camping |
| Reffitt Nature Preserve | Contact Station | Park Headquarters |

4.2 Natural Resource Recreation Zone

The natural resource recreation zone supports active recreation conducted in a natural setting with medium- to high-density use. There is an emphasis on resource quality over recreation. The natural resource recreation zone makes up 9.5 acres (approximately 12% of the park) consisting of a 200' buffer (100' on either side) along the Mitchell Creek relic channel.

Natural Resources

In this zone, the natural resources may be managed or modified to support visitor activities with only moderate impacts, while being protected to the degree possible. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and function. Vegetation may also be managed to accommodate recreational infrastructure and use and to maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are no confirmed historic sites within this zone; however, there is potential for archaeological sites within the park, especially along Mitchell Creek where mills once stood, although little evidence may remain.

Recreation Opportunities

Moderate to high levels of recreation compatible with the natural character of the zone are permitted. Visitors may be engaged in outdoor activities in diverse, natural land and water settings. Activities that may be allowed in this zone

include hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, rustic camping, picnicking, nature observation, and fishing.

Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be provided at trailheads and on trails.

Visitor Experience

Visitors can expect frequent encounters with other visitors and moderate interaction with DNR staff. This zone requires a variable time commitment, as well as variable challenge and adventure. There is a moderate noise tolerance in this zone.

Management Focus

The management focus is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD mission, to protect public safety, and protect the natural resource of Mitchell Creek, while providing the desired level of access to the undeveloped parcel south of the creek.

Development

A moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is acceptable including vault toilets, paved and unpaved trails and small parking lots, benches, picnic tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening, including boardwalks and surfaced pedestrian paths, is allowed, as necessary to protect sensitive resources and provide access. A park access road across the creek may also be allowed, if deemed appropriate through careful planning. A moderate level of accessibility should be expected in this zone.



Mitchell Creek outlets to the East Grand Traverse Bay

4.3 Developed Recreation Zone

This zone allows active recreation with high-density use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The developed recreation zone is 68.7 acres (approximately 87% of the park land) and includes the modern campground, mini-cabins, group campground, lodge, pet walking area, the day-use beach area with parking, playground and restroom/concession building. It also includes the more recently purchased and undeveloped parcel on the south side of Mitchell Creek to provide flexibility in future development. However, this does not mean that the entire parcel will necessarily be developed. Some administrative functions, such as the RV sanitary dump station and service area, are located in the developed recreation zone. Wetlands within this area are protected under the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (PA 451 of 1994), and there is a desire to maintain a natural tree canopy where possible.

Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Vegetative management in this zone will facilitate development and recreational use and maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.

Historic/Cultural Resources

While there are no recorded historic sites within this zone, there is potential for discovery of archaeological sites within the park, although little evidence may remain. A mill was previously located along Mitchell Creek and may or may not have been within the boundaries of the park. Additionally, the old railroad grade that runs through the park was mentioned in the 1996 Office of State Archaeologist inventory as a potential additional historical site in the park.



Modern toilet/shower building in the campground

Recreation Opportunities

High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment may be found in this zone. Visitors may be engaged in recreation in diverse and modified land and water settings such as modern camping, bicycling, boating, paddling, fishing, nature observation, swimming, picnicking, metal detecting, and participating in educational programs.

Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be located at campgrounds, day-use facilities, trailheads, and on the walking paths. Active programming may also be provided such as the programs planned by the campground host or the park staff.

Visitor Experience

Visitors should expect a high frequency of encounters with other visitors and DNR staff. Activities in this zone may require a variable time commitment and variable levels of challenge, adventure, and exertion. This zone has a high noise tolerance.

Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is to maintain use of the zone appropriate to the PRD mission, protect the park's resources, maintain public safety, effectively manage visitors, and provide a high level of accessibility.

Development

A high level of development of facilities to support visitor activities is permitted in this zone such as restrooms, walkways, boat launches, fishing piers, parking, modern and semi-modern campground facilities, cabins, trails, playgrounds, benches, picnic tables, and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities, protect natural resources, and provide accessibility. Additional administrative functions would also be compatible with this zone if deemed appropriate when the park headquarters is replaced.



Picnic shelter and tables

4.4 Administrative Services Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations, such as the park headquarters/maintenance area, and related land required to conduct the business of running the state park. This zone is 0.8 acres, or approximately 1% of the park.

Natural Resources

Natural resources may be actively managed and modified to facilitate administrative support activities. Vegetative management, primarily consisting of tree removal for safety, is allowed.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are no known historic or cultural resources in this zone.

Recreation Opportunities

There are no recreational activities provided in this zone.

Education Opportunities

Person-to-person contact occurs at park headquarters for general information, both verbally and written (brochures, maps, etc.). Informational kiosks and other informational signage may be found in this zone.

Visitor Experience

The visitor experience in this zone is related to park business and information only. A high level of noise is tolerated in this zone.

Management Focus

The management focus in this zone is the business of running the park. This includes safety for employees, universal public access to the office, and providing appropriate facilities for staff, equipment, and materials.

Development

This zone supports a high level of development of facilities for support of park infrastructure and administrative activities such as office space, meeting rooms, an employee locker room, employee seating area, shop space, storage space, and other related spaces. A high level of accessibility is expected. Although currently focused on administration, this area would be compatible for developed recreation opportunities should the park headquarters and operations area be relocated in the future.



The park headquarters and workshop area near the entrance



A view of the undeveloped southern parcel



Accessible playground at the day-use area

Chapter Five: Ten-Year Action Goals

The planning team has developed 10-year action goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within Traverse City State Park to achieve the desired resource protection and user experience. Action goals are recommended that address the following categories: natural resources, cultural resources, recreation opportunities, education/interpretation opportunities, and development. These goals apply either to the whole park or to specific locations within the park, as appropriate, and according to the management zone. Refer to the zone descriptions in Chapter Four for appropriate activities in each zone.

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

The park management completed several projects during the 2020 season, including upgrades to the campground electrical system, water spigots, and restroom facilities. Since completion, every campsite has its own electrical pedestal. The entire west campground loop has 20/30/50 amp electric service as well as a few pedestals in the central loop and one pedestal in the east loop. All other sites remain 20/30 amp. Twenty-eight sites have a cement pad and all the water spigots located in the campground are upgraded. A new toilet/shower building which can also function as a storm shelter was built in the west loop with funding assistance from the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

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. Some goals are intended to continue throughout the plan timeframe and

are an “ongoing” priority. 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.

Stakeholder and public input helped to define the 10-year action goals for the park. Both stakeholders and the public expressed that while the park is conveniently located and an enjoyable place to camp and swim, improvements need to be made to the park circulation and infrastructure to enhance the experience of this popular park in a busy urban area. For example, the “collective priorities” from the stakeholder workshop were to realign the beach vehicular entrance, provide safer ingress and egress to the campground, increase the capacity of the sanitary pump-out station, improve the motorized and nonmotorized access to the beach, and give the park a refreshed and updated look while maintaining the park's natural features. Respondents to the public input survey echoed these sentiments, stating that the park was situated nicely on the TART Trail and the Grand Traverse Bay, but that their experience could be improved by, for example, adding additional sanitary dump stations, upgraded restrooms and electrical system, larger campsites, and better traffic control in and around the park. Additionally, when asked what their preference was for the development of the newly purchased land south of Mitchell Creek, 50% of respondents suggested

a higher level of development such as expanded modern camping and lodging opportunities/services.

5.1 Action Goals Summary

In the next ten years, park management and operations goals will focus on continuing to explore land acquisition of properties within the project boundary, protecting park resources by creating a plan for the stewardship of natural and cultural resources, and protecting the Mitchell Creek watershed by using best development practices. Park management will also continue to regenerate the maturing tree canopy in the campground as opportunities arise, as this is an important feature of the park. DNR staff will identify opportunities for visitor interaction, interpretation, and education throughout the park, such as interpretive signage, a story trail, or other exhibits. In addition, the park management will work with the Bay Area Transit Authority to promote bus transportation between downtown Traverse City and the park.

Goals to complete larger projects involving capital improvement funds include working with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study that would assess opportunities to improve campground ingress and egress, a possible additional access point to the park on Three Mile Road, circulation and access between the beach and the campground, and potentially aligning the



US-31 is a busy road that separates the day-use area (right) from the campground (left)

beach access road with Three Mile Road. Implementing the results of the traffic study would be additional capital outlay projects. In addition, upgrades are proposed to be made to the beach area to improve aesthetics, capacity, opportunities for recreation and play, access, shoreline naturalization in certain areas, and sustainability/resilience. Replacement of the campground sanitary and water lines are also planned. Like traffic circulation, studies will be required to achieve other goals. For instance, research will be needed to evaluate the opportunities for recreation and park access for the recently acquired southern parcel. In addition, a study of options to expand capacity at the existing sanitary dump station should be completed, including alternatives such as providing a limited number of full-hookup campsites. A Phase 1 archaeological reconnaissance survey will also be completed on the land south of Mitchell Creek to determine if there are any sensitive cultural or prehistoric remains in the area before any development occurs.

As the roads around the park are busy and congested, safe pedestrian and non-motorized access is paramount. When survey respondents were asked how they primarily access the beach from the campground, 83% reported using the existing pedestrian bridge to cross the road. However, the bridge is not universally accessible, as it has stairways on both ends. The DNR will work with MDOT, the pedestrian bridge owner, to continue to look for opportunities to upgrade or replace the bridge, considering accessibility and park operations.

The DNR will also work with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy, who owns the preserve south of the park, local officials, and stakeholders to achieve improved and higher-level use of the existing rail corridor for multi-use access and provide pedestrian access between the park and the conservancy land. The MDOT railroad corridor separates the park from the conservancy land, but also connects to Three Mile Road, and currently contains the TART Trail.

As future improvements are evaluated, renewable energy, resiliency, sustainability, EV charging and efficiency will be considered.



The existing sanitary dump station



Restroom building at the beach

KEITH J. CHARTERS TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK
TEN-YEAR ACTION GOALS

The following 10-year action goals are ranked in terms of priority based on health, safety, and welfare, as well as ease of implementation (cost, ability to implement with own staff, partnerships etc.). Priority Level 1 projects indicate those that should be addressed within the next 2 years. Priority Level 2 projects include those that should be addressed within 2-5 years. Priority Level 3 projects are desired, but can be tackled in the next 5-10 years, once funding has been identified. Some goals are intended to continue throughout the plan timeframe and are an “ongoing” priority. In the program input column, the bolded party is the program lead.

MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the project boundary. Develop a proactive relationship with township and local governments for increased awareness of potential property acquisition opportunities.	Ongoing	All	Park Supervisor Lands Liaison Local Governments Regional Planner
Utilize best practices in development and maintenance of park amenities and infrastructure to protect the Mitchell Creek watershed.	Ongoing	All	Park Supervisor Regional Planner Stewardship Ecologist Fisheries
Work with the Bay Area Transit Authority (BATA) to promote bus transportation between downtown Traverse City and the park.	Ongoing	All	Park Supervisor BATA
Regenerate the tree canopy in the campground as opportunities arise.	Ongoing	Developed Recreation	Park Supervisor Stewardship Forest Health Specialist Forest Resources
Identify opportunities for visitor interaction, interpretation, and education throughout the park, such as interpretive signage, a story trail, or other exhibits. Potential topics could include the Mitchell Creek watershed, nature conservation, the dynamic lake levels, and the history of the Traverse City area.	Ongoing	All	Park Supervisor Michigan History Center Marketing and Outreach Stewardship DNR Resource Divisions Local Partners
Complete a natural resource stewardship plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies.	2	All	Stewardship Ecologist Park Supervisor

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
<p>Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study to assess opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation, including but not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Campground ingress/egress -Additional access to the park from Three Mile Road -Circulation and access between the beach and campground -Aligning the beach access road with Three Mile Road -Regional trail connection 	1	All	<p>Regional Planner Park Supervisor MDOT</p>
<p>Work with MDOT to implement recommendations identified in the study above to address traffic issues on US-31/M-72 including potential realignment of the beach access road with Three Mile.</p>	1	Developed Recreation	<p>Regional Planner Park Supervisor MDOT</p>
<p>Perform a Phase 1 archaeological reconnaissance survey on the parcel south of Mitchell Creek.</p>	2	<p>Developed Recreation</p> <p>Natural Resource Recreation</p>	<p>Regional Planner Cultural Resources Analyst Park Supervisor</p>
<p>Create a conceptual development plan for the use and development of the southern park parcel, considering opportunities for camping, alternative lodging, recreation, trails, park access and the proposed headquarters location with an emphasis on the natural and cultural resources of the site.</p>	2	Developed Recreation	<p>Regional Planner Park Supervisor</p>
<p>Study options for expanded RV sanitary dump station capacity, including consideration for full hook-up campsites to alleviate congestion at dump station.</p>	2	Developed Recreation	<p>Regional Planner Park Supervisor</p>
<p>Design and construct a new park headquarters building.</p>	2	Developed Recreation	<p>Regional Planner Park Supervisor</p>

INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY, CONTINUED			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Design and implement beach improvements and beautification considering aesthetics, capacity, access, partial shoreline naturalization, opportunities for education, recreation, play, and future sustainability/resilience.	2	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Supervisor Local Partners
Implement recommendations of the traffic study, including potential improvements to campground ingress/egress and possible alternative access off 3 Mile Road.	2	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Supervisor
Replace the campground water and sanitary lines.	2	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Supervisor

PARTNER PROJECTS			
GOAL	PRIORITY	MANAGEMENT ZONE	PROGRAM INPUT FROM
Continue to look for opportunities to upgrade or replace the pedestrian bridge, considering accessibility and park operations.	Ongoing	Developed Recreation	Park Supervisor Regional Planner MDOT
Work with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), local officials, and stakeholders to achieve enhanced use of the existing rail corridor for coordinated multi-use access and provide pedestrian access between the park and the conservancy land.	1	Developed Recreation	Regional Planner Park Supervisor GTRLC MDOT TART Trails



High water levels impact the beach



A truck and camper at the modern campground

Chapter Six:

Implementation Strategy

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

A long-range plan such as this must maintain a degree of flexibility to be responsive to unforeseen changes in circumstances or opportunities. 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.

6.1 Implementation Toolbox

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

Coordination/ Communication

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

Funding

- Identify estimated cost for each capital improvement/ infrastructure project, with assistance from Regional Field Planner or other planning and infrastructure section staff as needed.
- Identify potential funding sources for each project/task. Liaise with PRD grants coordinator as appropriate.
- Align potential funding sources with the annual "call for projects" in July for capital outlay funding requests.
- Review action goals list and determine which projects can be requested to receive District Small Project funding through the District Supervisor.

Scheduling

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

6.2 Documentation of Changes

The Unit Supervisor 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 five-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 it. In reviewing the action goals for changes, documentation should be provided for goals that may become irrelevant or are no longer viable, as well as proposed new action goals, including justification.

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

6.3 Documentation of Accomplishments

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

6.4 Five-Year Review Process

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



The beach area entrance sign and contact station with East Grand Traverse Bay beyond

PARK PROFILE	
AREA	79 acres
COUNTY	Grand Traverse
TOWNSHIP	East Bay Township
LATITUDE	44.745560
LONGITUDE	-85.551180
ADDRESS	1132 US-31 N. Traverse City, MI 49686
PHONE	(231) 922-5270



Appendix A: Supporting Analysis

A.1 Park Overview

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park is a 79-acre urban park located along the Grand Traverse Bay, three miles from downtown Traverse City. The park, established in 1920, offers opportunities for modern camping, a fully equipped modern lodge (open year-round), two mini cabins, swimming, fishing, and access to the 10.5-mile multi-use TART Trail (Traverse Area Recreational and Transportation Trails, Inc), which is open to hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing. The park includes 29 acres of undeveloped woodland, purchased in 2011, which is currently not directly accessible from the remainder of the park.

Location & Community

Situated on the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay, Keith J. Charters Traverse City (hereafter referred to as “Traverse City”) State Park is two miles east of downtown Traverse City. The park is bisected by US-31 and bordered by the Grand Traverse Bay to the north and the TART Trail and Great Lakes Central Railroad to the south, with the Reffitt Nature Preserve south of the railroad. Just over 30 miles from Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Traverse City is a major tourist destination, attracting visitors through its many opportunities for outdoor recreation, agritourism, and explorations of

the arts and history. Traverse City is home to the annual National Cherry Festival each July and the surrounding area features many “U-Pick” farms and orchards for visitors to explore. In the summer, visitors enjoy film festivals, winery tours, shopping, and beach days, but the area has a variety of events and recreation activities to offer throughout the year. In the winter, there are opportunities to downhill and cross-country ski, snowboard, snowmobile, bike, snowshoe, and ice fish, as well as enjoy special events at the wineries and microbreweries throughout the region.

The non-motorized TART Trail connects park visitors to the heart of Traverse City and other trails in the area. Traverse City State Park is accessed from US-31, a corridor which follows the Lake Michigan shoreline in the Lower Peninsula from Holland to Mackinaw City. The Cherry Capital Airport is located just southwest of the park with commercial flights available from across the United States. The Bay Area Transportation Authority (BATA) offers seasonal transit between the park and downtown Traverse City. BATA also features a Bike-n-Ride program running from Traverse City to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore and up the Leelanau Peninsula to Northport.

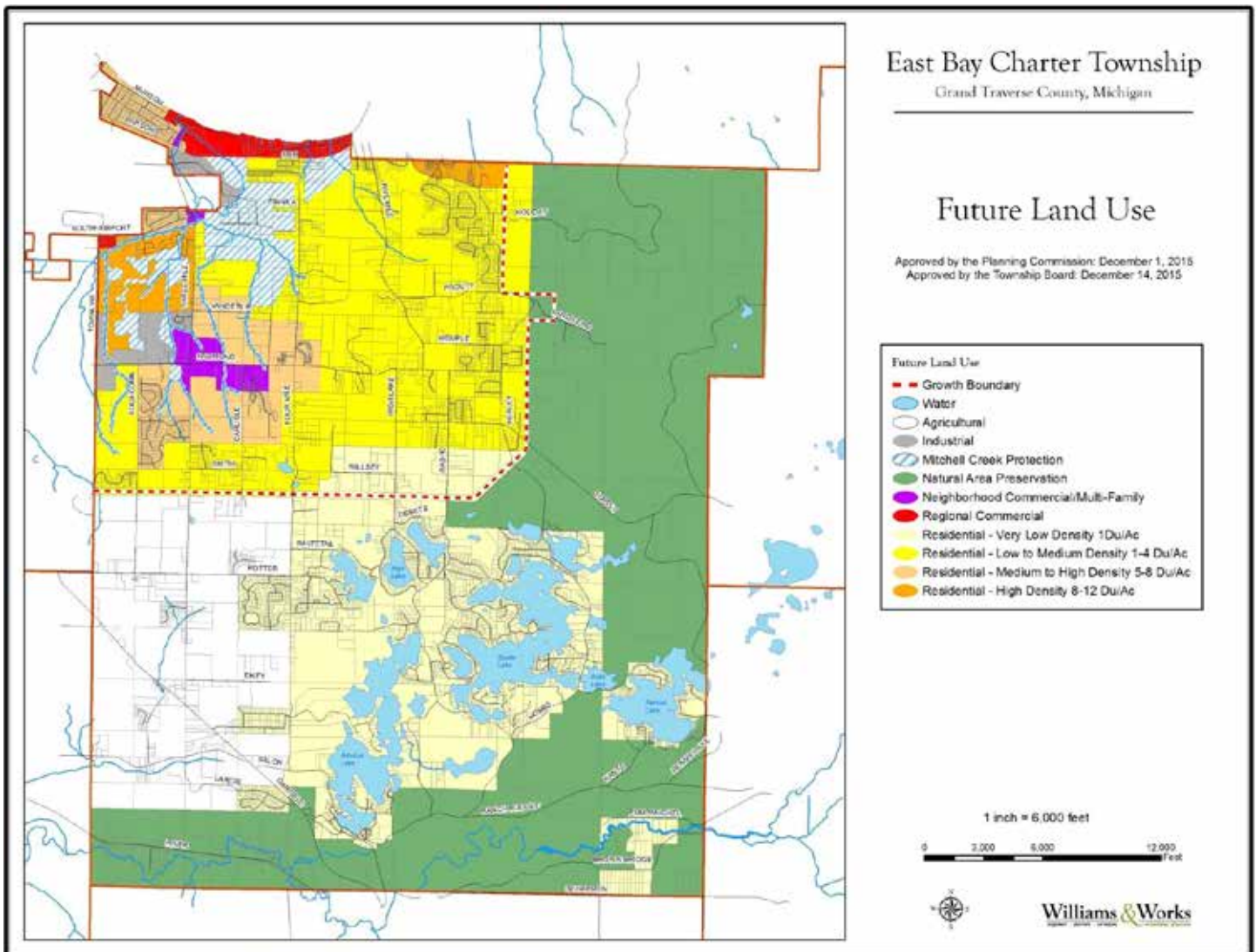
In their 2015 Master Plan, East Bay Charter Township indicated that Traverse City State Park is located in a Regional Commercial zone. This is intended to be a high growth area, with development focused on increasing commercial goods and services that effectively meet tourist markets and the needs of residents. In the plan, the township explained that commercial development is to be carried out with consideration to the natural features within the zone, especially due to its proximity to the Mitchell Creek Protection zone.

A.2 Demographics

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2010 population of Grand Traverse County was 86,986, which equates to approximately 187.3 persons per square mile, a slightly higher average than Michigan overall. The population has increased 12.02% since 2000, when the reported population was 77,654 individuals. Grand Traverse County has a lower rate of racial

diversity than Michigan overall, with a white population of 95.3% (compared to the state rate of 79.4%) and a much lower concentration of people with African American, Hispanic or Latino, or Asian backgrounds. However, the county does have a higher population of Native Americans (1.3%) than the state as a whole (0.7%). The Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa has administrative offices in Peshawbestown on the Leelanau Peninsula, and the Grand Traverse Band Government serves a six-county area including Grand Traverse County. The region appears to be more financially secure than the state as a whole, with a county poverty rate of 9.1% (Michigan, 14.2%) and a per capita income of approximately \$31,701 (Michigan, \$28,938).

The county is home to Interlochen State Park, Traverse City State Park, and a large portion of the Traverse City State Forest Management Unit. Agriculture and tourism are two of the most influential industries in the region. The 2013 Grand



Traverse County (GTC) Master Plan reports that the region receives approximately 1.4 million visitors annually, as well as approximately 10,000 seasonal residents. Traverse City is the county seat and the largest city in Grand Traverse County with a population of 14,674, according to the 2010 census. A study conducted by the Anderson Economic Group, reported that tourism contributed approximately 1.18 billion dollars in direct spending to Traverse City area businesses in 2012. The city is often referred to as the “Cherry Capital of the World”, and Grand Traverse County sees agriculture play an important cultural and economic role, not only through fruit production, but agritourism as well. Agricultural land accounts for approximately 15% of land use in the county, including 9,007 acres of orchards and vineyards, according to the GTC Master Plan. In recent years, agriculture has expanded from the production of cherries, plums, and apples to include crops such as hops.

Traverse City State Park is located within East Bay Township, which gets its name from its location along the East Arm of Grand Traverse Bay. Like Grand Traverse County as a whole, East Bay Township has a predominantly white population slightly older than the state average. There is also a higher concentration of Native Americans. Although the 2015 East Bay Township Master Plan indicates that the agricultural industry and land use has declined over time, it remains important to the community. The township is primarily residential with expanses of natural area preservation and protection areas.

GEOGRAPHY QUICKFACTS		
	GRAND TRAVERSE CO.	MICHIGAN
Population per square mile, 2010	187.3	174.8
Land area in square miles, 2010	464.33	56,538.90
POPULATION QUICKFACTS		
	GRAND TRAVERSE CO.	MICHIGAN
Population estimates, July 1, 2017	91,807	9,962,311
Population, Census, April 1, 2010	86,986	9,883,640
Persons under 5 years, percent	5.3%	5.8%
Persons under 18 years, percent	20.5%	21.8%
Persons 65 years and over, percent	19.2%	16.7%
Female persons, percent	51.0%	50.8%
White alone, percent	95.3%	79.4%
Black or African American alone, percent	0.7%	14.1%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone, percent	1.3%	0.7%
Hispanic or Latino, percent	2.9%	5.1%
Two or More Races, percent	1.9%	2.4%
Veterans, 2013-2017	6,776	581,527
Foreign born persons, percent, 2012-2016	2.5%	6.6%
Housing units, July 1, 2017	43,936	4,595,158
Owner-occupied housing unit rate, 2013-2017	76.6%	71.0%
Households, 2013-2017	36,519	3,888,646
Persons per household, 2013-2017	2.42	2.49
Language other than English spoken at home, % age 5 years+, 2013-2017	90.2%	86.5%
High school graduate or higher, % age 25 years+, 2013-2017	94.7%	90.2%
Bachelor's degree or higher, % age 25 years+, 2013-2017	34.2%	28.1%
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16 years+, 2013-2017	20.5	24.3
Median household income (in 2017 dollars), 2013-2017	\$58,229	\$52,668
Per capita income in past 12 months (in 2017 dollars), 2013-2017	\$31,701	\$28,938
Persons in poverty, percent	9.3%	14.2%

A.3 Regional Recreation Resources

Traverse City State Park is in a region that is known for its outdoor recreation and tourism, with a range of facilities within 50 miles of the park.

Federal Recreation Resources

- **Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore** is located approximately 32 miles west of Traverse City State Park. Visitors may climb sand dunes, swim in Lake Michigan and smaller inland lakes, or take a trip back in history and visit Glen Haven Village or the US Life-Saving Service Maritime Museum. There are two campgrounds (D.H.. Day Campground and Platte River Campground) on the mainland of Sleeping Bear Dunes, which offer both full hook-up and rustic sites. Visitors may also backcountry camp at select sites in the park and on the Manitou Islands. North and South Manitou Island are both part of the National Lakeshore and may be accessed by ferry service from Leland for backpacking, hiking, swimming and exploring the shipwrecks and ghost towns around the islands.
- **North Country National Scenic Trail (NCT)** is a national trail spanning over 4,600 miles, passing through seven states. Authorized by the U.S. Congress in 1980, the route from New York to North Dakota includes more than 1,500 miles in Michigan. The NCT passes within 10 miles of Traverse City State Park and connects to the VASA pathway just a few miles away.

State Recreation Resources

State Parks and Recreation Areas

- **Interlochen State Park** is located between Green Lake and Duck Lake, 15 miles southwest of Traverse City. This was the first state park, established in 1919, managed under the Michigan State Park Commission, The National Music Camp has operated on land adjacent to the park since 1928. Visitors may rent boats, fish, paddle, and swim here and the park also features picnic areas, 52 rustic and 392 modern campsites, three camper cabins, two tent rentals, and a playground. It also has a camp store on the premises.
- **Fisherman’s Island State Park** is nearly 39 miles northeast of Traverse City, at the mouth of the East Arm Grand Traverse Bay. This 2,678-acre park features 80 rustic campsites and hosts six miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The park is open to hiking, biking, and hunting.
- **Leelanau State Park** is located in the northern portion of the Leelanau Peninsula, approximately 40 miles northwest of Traverse City State Park. The 1,533-acre park features a rustic 51-site campground, three mini-cabins, a park pavilion, playground, and 8.5-miles of hiking trails and four miles of groomed, seasonal trails for winter recreation. The majority of the park is open to hunting. The park provides habitat that has supported the state and federally endangered piping plover in the past. The Grand Traverse Lighthouse is also located on the property and managed with a long-term lease by the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Association.

State Wildlife/Game Areas

- **Petobago State Game Area** is approximately 672 acres and located ten miles northeast of Traverse City State Park. Featured species in the area include white-tailed deer, ruffed grouse, and eastern cottontail rabbit. There are additional opportunities for hiking, cross-country skiing, fishing, and berry and mushroom picking.

State Forest

- **Traverse City Forest Management Unit** covers approximately 330,000 acres across Kalkaska, Grand Traverse, Benzie, Manistee and Leelanau counties. The State Forest hosts a wide variety of cover types including northern hardwoods, aspen and red pine. It is an actively managed forest typically harvesting 7,000 acres annually for habitat and timber management purposes. Dispersed recreation is available throughout the forest in the form of camping, hunting, fishing and mushroom picking, as well as concentrated recreation on numerous designated trail systems for motorized and non-motorized specific recreational opportunities. State forest roads are open to ORV/ATV use unless posted closed in accordance with Public Act 288. The forest has a history of white-tailed deer, black bear, ruffed grouse, woodcock and other game species to harvest.
- **State Forest Campgrounds** There are numerous rustic state forest campgrounds (SFCG) in the region that are managed by the DNR Parks and Recreation Division. The following SFCGs are managed out of Traverse City State Park.

STATE FOREST CAMPGROUNDS			
STATE FOREST CAMPGROUNDS	DISTANCE FROM TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK	NUMBER OF SITES	FEATURES*
Arbutus Lake	8 mi. S	30	Fishing, BAS
Forks	12 mi. SE	8	Fishing, BAS
Schecks Place	12 mi. SE	30	Fishing, BAS
Schecks Place Trail Camp	12 mi. SE	-	Equine groups
Guernsey Lake	17 mi. SE	36	Fishing, BAS, hiking
Rapid River Trail Camp	22 mi. E	-	Equine groups
CCC Bridge	35 mi. SE	32	Fishing, BAS

*BAS = Boating access site

- **State Wildlife Management Areas** are managed primarily for wildlife habitat, wildlife watching and hunting. Some also feature primitive camping, hiking trails, fishing and boating access sites.
 - Lake DuBonnet Flooding (18 miles southwest)
 - Headquarters Lake Flooding (25 miles southeast)
 - Grass Lake Flooding (26 miles southwest)

Regional Trails

- **Iron Belle Trail** is the longest designated state trail in the nation, stretching from Belle Isle in Detroit to Ironwood in the Upper Peninsula, with separate routes for biking and hiking. The hiking trail follows the route of the North Country National Scenic Trail through Grand Traverse County and will be 1,221 miles long once complete.
- **Great Lakes Circle Tour** (Great Lakes Commission) is a 6,500-mile road tour around the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River and runs through eight states and two Canadian provinces. The Lake Michigan Circle Route is approximately 1,100 miles long and runs through Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan. A portion of the tour follows M-22 down the Leelanau Peninsula and into Traverse City, at which point it crosses onto US-31.
- **TART Trail** (Traverse Area Recreation and Transportation Trails, Inc.) is a 10.5-mile urban trail open to hiking, biking, and cross-country skiing. The TART runs through parks and downtown Traverse City and links to other trails including the Boardman Lake Trail, Three Mile Trail, and the Leelanau Trail. The TART Trail can be accessed directly from Traverse City State Park.
- **Leelanau Trail** (TART) is 17 miles long and connects Traverse City to Suttons Bay on the Leelanau Peninsula. This trail is open to biking, hiking, and cross-country skiing. The Leelanau Trail crosses the DeYoung Natural Area for nearly a mile. Two “food forests” along this trail are part of the Grand Traverse Edible Trails, an effort to increase access to local sustainable food.
- **Michigan Shore-to-Shore Trail**, also known as the Michigan Riding and Hiking Trail, is a 220-mile non-motorized trail, which spans from Lake Michigan in Empire (near Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore) in the west to Lake Huron in Oscoda (in the Huron-Manistee National Forest) in the east. It features a northern spur up toward Cheboygan and a southern spur toward Cadillac. Most areas of this trail are limited to hiking and horseback-riding, but some do intersect with trails that allow snowmobiles. The Michigan Trail Riders Association works with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the US Forest Service to maintain and coordinate trail rides and rest sites along the trail.
- **Sleeping Bear Birding Trail** (SBBT) spans an exceptional migratory flyway and thousands of public acres along the Lake Michigan coastline. The trail is anchored by Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, an Important Bird Area (IBA) with 71,000 acres of public land and 35 miles of beaches. The SBBT covers all 123 miles of Michigan Highway M-22, which connects Manistee to Traverse City and circles the Leelanau Peninsula. The diverse habitat, significant public access, and many miles of shoreline make the trail a birder’s paradise. Leelanau State Park is noted as a migrant trap, with nearby Leelanau Conservancy land also listed as important birding locations.
- **Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail** Currently the trail is 22 miles, end to end, including a 3-mile route on the road through Glen Arbor. The Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail was developed as a partnership between the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee (LSHR), the Michigan Department of Transportation, Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, and TART Trails.

Non-Motorized Pathways

- **Betsie River Pathway** is a 10-mile non-motorized, multi-use trail located 37 miles southwest of Traverse City State Park. Trail users may hike, bike, or ski along the Betsie River and through meadow and wooded areas.
- **VASA Pathway**: Located on state forest land, the VASA Pathway features a series of loops (3K, 5K, 10K, 25K) that offer users a variety of challenges from easy to difficult. Cross-country skiers, runners, hikers, mountain bikers, walkers, and naturalists enjoy the VASA Pathway. The VASA Pathway is maintained and groomed by TART Trails under and agreement with the DNR.
- **VASA Single Track**: VASA Single Track Loop is a 11.2-mile loop trail located near Traverse City that features a great forest setting. The trail is rated as moderate and is primarily used for nature trips and mountain biking. The trail is open for mountain biking year-round, and a portion of the trail is groomed in the winter.
- **Sand Lakes Quiet Area** consists of five small lakes surrounded by rolling hills of oak and pine. This 2,800-acre tract is quiet, thanks to a ban on motorized activity. Sand Lakes Quiet Area hosts 7.2 miles of trail that is suitable for all skill levels. The trail is primarily used for cross-country skiing and hiking.
- **Muncie Lake Pathway** is an 8.4-mile loop trail that features a lake and is rated as moderate. The trail offers non-motorized opportunities and is accessible year-round. It is groomed in the winter for cross-country skiing.

Motorized Trails

- **Grand Traverse Motorcycle Trail** is a 63-mile motorcycle trail that is maintained at a width of 24” on the ground and 40” at handlebar height, as only 2-wheeled motorcycles are permitted. The Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail (MCCCT) connector trails and roads link different trail systems together in the Lower Peninsula.
- **Leetsville ORV Trail** is a 23-mile ORV trail with a 50 inch or less width located 3 miles east of Kalkaska.
- **Snowmobile Trail #3**, (also known as the Maple City and Platte River snowmobile trails) travels approximately 40 miles from Maple City (Leelanau County), then through state forest land in Benzie County, and links to the Betsie Valley Trail and other trails leading south into Manistee County. The trail is maintained by the DNR Parks and Recreation Division with assistance from the Benzie-Manistee Snowmobile Club.

Municipal Recreation Land

Grand Traverse County features many municipally-managed recreation opportunities, offering fishing, boating, hiking, biking, picnic areas and more. The major parks and natural areas in close proximity to Traverse City State Park are listed below.

- **Lighthouse Park & Old Mission Point Park** (Peninsula Township) are adjacent parks located at the tip of Old Mission Peninsula, a 20-mile drive from Traverse City. The 646-acre Old Mission Point Park has been leased from the Michigan DNR by Peninsula Township since 1949. Lighthouse Park hosts the historic Old Mission Lighthouse and the Hessler Log Cabin. There are opportunities for swimming, biking, hiking and cross-country skiing. Old Mission Point Park features more trails and parking areas.
- **Power Island/Bassett Island** (Grand Traverse County) are two connected islands located in the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay off the Old Mission Peninsula. Power Island features around 200 acres of land connected to Bassett Island via an isthmus. There is a dock for boats, over five miles of hiking trails and opportunities for primitive camping (10 campsites), fishing, and swimming.
- **South Long Lake Forest Natural Area** (Long Lake Township) is just over 12 miles southwest of Traverse City State Park. The 229-acre natural area is primarily forested,

with both uplands and wetlands. It offers approximately 1.5 miles of trail and is open to hiking, snowshoeing and skiing, as well as bow-hunting.

- **Cedar Run Creek Natural Area** (Long Lake Township) is 13.8 miles west of Traverse City SP, located along the Cedar Creek and Cedar Lake. The 316-acre park is open to hiking, snowshoeing, and skiing. There are also opportunities for bird watching, fishing, and hunting.
- **Hickory Hills Ski Area** (Traverse City) features eight downhill runs of varying difficulty on 125 acres of land. The ski area is located just over six miles west of Traverse City State Park. Downhill skiing and snowboarding and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing are options both during the day and in the evening.
- **Historic Barns Park** (Traverse City/Garfield Township) is the result of a partnership between municipalities and non-profit entities to offer community gardens, agricultural and environmental education and a botanical garden.
- **Clinch Park** (Traverse City) features a sand beach stretching over 1500 feet along West Grand Traverse Bay in downtown Traverse City. Clinch Park has picnic tables, bike racks, TART Trail access, lifeguards (mid-June -- August), a snack bar and restrooms. It is adjacent to the Clinch Park Marina, east of Union Street on Grandview Parkway.

Grand Traverse Region Lighthouses

The following are some of the lighthouses in the greater Grand Traverse region.

GRAND TRAVERSE REGION LIGHTHOUSES		
NAME	LOCATION	NOTES
Point Betsie Lighthouse	South of Sleeping Bear Dunes, North of Frankfort	Original 1858 lighthouse, keepers residence, fog signal building, and Boathouse Museum are open to the public
Grand Traverse Lighthouse	Leelanau State Park	Constructed to guide vessels through the Manitou passage in 1858. Features a restored keeper’s dwelling, a tower providing spectacular views of Lake Michigan, a fog signal building, interpretive displays and a giftshop, all open to the public seasonally.
Mission Point Lighthouse	North end of the Old Mission Peninsula	Guided mariners through West Grand Traverse Bay from 1870 until it was decommissioned in 1933. Now offers visitors a peek into what life was like around the turn of the century for lighthouse keepers and for others who lived and worked in the area at the time.
South Manitou Island Lighthouse	South Manitou Island harbor	Established in 1839 to mark the location of the only natural harbor between northern Michigan and Chicago. Its 100-foot tower dates from 1871. Decommissioned in 1958, the lighthouse is now part of the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.
North Manitou Shoal Light	In Lake Michigan between North Manitou Island and the Leelanau Peninsula	"The Crib" was established in 1935 to mark a dangerous shoal and is still in operation today as an automated navigational light. Not open for tours but can be viewed up close from the ferry from Leland to the Manitou Islands or from the top of Pyramid Point in Leelanau County. The North Manitou Light Keepers purchased the light in 2016 from the Coast Guard after the structure had been empty for 36 years following automation in 1980. Efforts to restore the lighthouse are in progress.
South Fox Island Lighthouse	South Fox Island	The State of Michigan owns one third of the island, which includes the lighthouse complex under the jurisdiction of the DNR. With seven buildings and two light towers, the station is one of the biggest light stations in the USA.

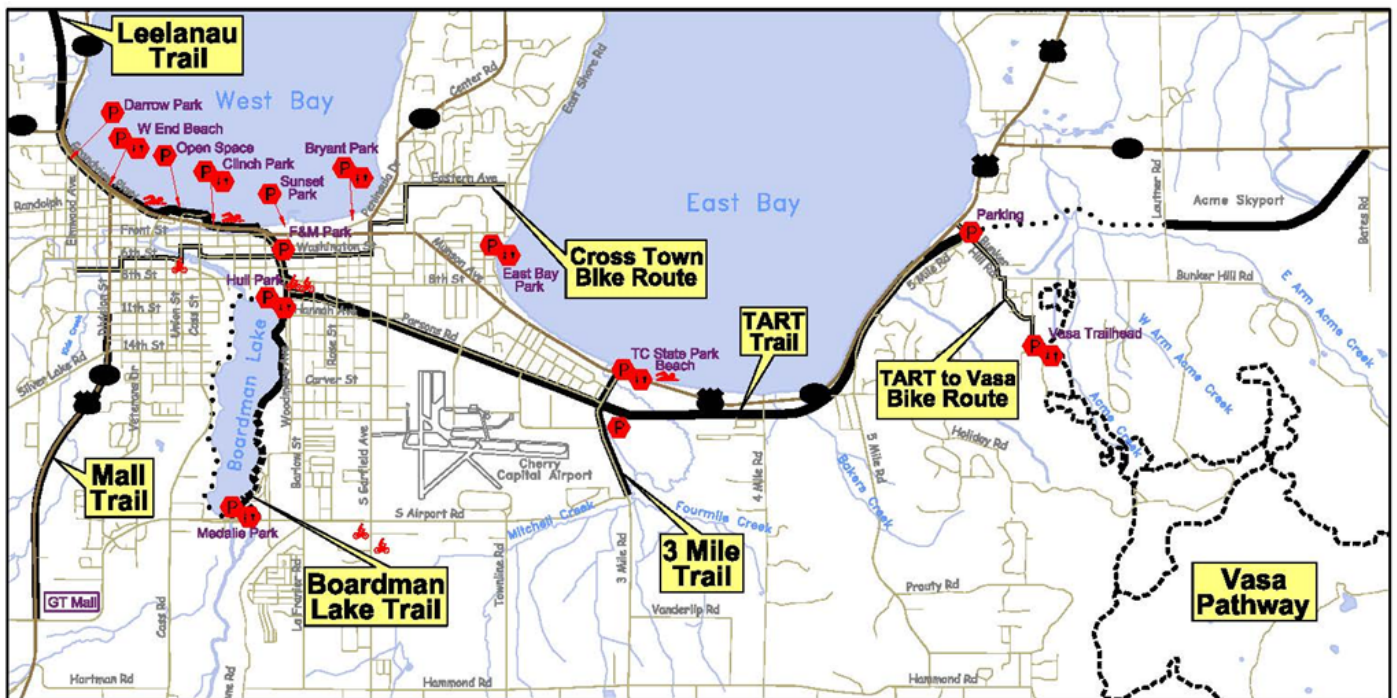
Water Recreation

The following public harbors are in the Traverse City area.

- **Duncan L. Clinch Marina** (Traverse City) is located on the West Arm of Grand Traverse Bay and features both transient and seasonal boat slips on the bay, as well as seasonal slips on the Boardman River. The Harbor and Marina is four miles west of Traverse City State Park.
- **Greilickville Marina** (Elmwood Township) is located approximately six miles west of Traverse City State Park. The marina features 150 seasonal and 21 transient slips, as well as 17 moorings inside and 11 moorings outside the harbor. The marina is ADA accessible and also includes a laundry facility, picnic area and pavilion grill area
- **E.C. Grace Memorial Harbor** (Elk Rapids) is 14 miles north of Traverse City State Park and features 50 transient, 161 seasonal, and two commercial boat slips available.

The following Boating Access Sites (BAS) are managed by Traverse City State Park.

BOATING ACCESS SITES			
BAS	WATER BODY	TYPE	PARKING SPACES
Spider Lake	Spider Lake	Hard surfaced	25
Arbutus Lake #4	Arbutus Lake	Hard surfaced	22
Lake Skegemog	Lake Skegemog	Hard surfaced	30
Scheck's Place SFCG	Boardman River	Carry-down	40
Forks SFCG	Boardman River	Carry-down	5
Smithville	Manistee River	Hard surfaced, limited depth	20
Sand Banks	Manistee River	Carry-down	15
West Sharon	Manistee River	Gravel, limited depth	12
Three Mile Bend	Manistee River	Carry-down	5
CCC Bridge SFCG	Manistee River	Carry-down	20
Burnt Cabin	Manistee River	Carry-down	12
East Lake	East Lake	Hard surfaced, limited depth	20
Guernsey Lake SFCG	Guernsey Lake	Gravel	6



Urban Trail System



Paved Trail	Parking
Proposed Trail	Restroom
Vasa Pathway	Bike Shop
Bike Route	Swimming

2008

North
Scale in miles
0 .25 .50 .75 1

TART Trail: The 10.5 mile long TART Trail is a paved urban transportation corridor traversing from M-72 & Bates Rd in Acme Township to M-22/M-72 intersection in Traverse City.

Boardman Lake Trail: The heavily wooded, 2-mile trail is paved on the north mile while the south mile is crushed limestone. The vision for this trail is a pathway that encircles Boardman Lake.

Mall Trail: The nearly 2-mile long Mall Trail parallels US-31, connecting downtown Traverse City residents with many commercial businesses and restaurants.

Three Mile Trail: The 2-mile long trail goes along Three Mile Rd from the State Park beach on US 31 to South Airport Rd. Future plans include extending the trail to Hammond Rd.

TART Trails, Inc
www.traversetrails.org
(231) 941-4300

Natural Areas and Nature Preserves

There are numerous natural areas and nature preserves in the Traverse City area, primarily managed by non-profit agencies. The following is a brief list of the regional natural areas and preserves, it is not comprehensive but includes several sites close to Traverse City State Park or which have unique regional recreation opportunities.

- **George and Ada Reffitt Nature Preserve** (Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC)) is located directly southeast of Traverse City SP, across the TART Trail. The Reffitt Nature Preserve hosts 106 acres with 1.7 miles of hiking trails and opportunities for bird watching.
- **Hickory Meadows** (Joint Recreation Authority) covers 116 acres and is located approximately 5 miles west of Traverse City State Park. There are 2.5 miles of trails open to hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.
- **DeYoung Natural Area** (Leelanau Conservancy) is a 191-acre natural area just over eight miles northwest of Traverse City State Park. A historic farmstead is located on the site, which is bisected by the TART Trail. There are opportunities for hiking, fishing, guided tours, and hunting (by permit only).
- **Deepwater Point Natural Area** (GTRLC) is located on the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay. Visitors may hike and snowshoe, kayak, or swim in the 17-acre park.
- **Pelizzari Natural Area** (Peninsula Township/GTRLC) offers 3.2 miles of trails open to hiking, snowshoeing, and cross-country skiing on Old Mission Peninsula.
- **Grand Traverse Commons Natural Area** (Garfield Township) is a 140-acre park in Garfield Township, about 5.5 miles from Traverse City State Park.
- **Miller Creek Nature Reserve** (Garfield Township) is an 88-acre reserve with a mixture of prairie and wooded areas. The reserve is approximately six miles southwest of Traverse City State Park. The area may also be open to hunting, with prior approval from Garfield Township.
- **Boardman Valley Nature Preserve** (Garfield Township) is 5-miles southwest of Traverse City State Park. The 90-acre preserve has additional opportunities for canoeing/kayaking, fishing, and hunting (with township approval).

Historic Places

- **Grand Traverse Bay Preserve** is an underwater preserve that covers 295 square miles of Lake Michigan bottomlands and surface waters (both the East and West Arms of Grand Traverse Bay) and protects several known shipwreck sites and many other potential shipwreck sites, docks, wharves, and piers from the region's early development.
- **Grand Traverse Commons** in Traverse City is the site of the former Traverse City State Hospital and has been adaptively re-used as a mixed-use development with residential, retail, and restaurants. The site is open for historic tours.

Private Recreational Facilities

Many local businesses contribute to the recreation industry in the Traverse City area. These include private marinas, hotels, campgrounds, resorts, fishing charters, a sailing club, watersport and bike rentals, guides and outfitters. In addition, there are many cultural destinations, as well as gaming establishments. The area also has several championship golf courses including those designed by Arnold Palmer and Jack Nicklaus. Some of the additional recreational opportunities are described below.

Vineyards

There are over 20 vineyards and wineries in the Leelanau-Grand Traverse area, producing a variety of local wines, ciders, spirits, and microbrews. Visitors may drive, bike, or take a shuttle or bus tour to explore wineries and distilleries, attend tastings, and take behind-the-scenes tours. The Leelanau Peninsula Wine Trail consists of three loops: Sleeping Bear, Grand Traverse Bay, and the Northern Loop. The Grand Traverse Bay loop includes eight vineyards and farms and is predominantly along the southern portion of the Leelanau Peninsula. There are also several vineyards along Old Mission Peninsula, many of which are located along Route M-37, which visitors may follow to drive or bike up the peninsula.

Camping and RV

There are many private resorts and campgrounds in the Traverse City area for tent and RV camping. Amenities vary at these facilities but may include modern bathrooms and showers, beach areas, docks, equipment rentals for water recreation and biking, as well as common areas and camp stores.

Other Attractions

The Cherry Bowl drive-in theater is a historic drive-in theater in Honor, Michigan, on US Highway 31. It opened on July 4, 1953 and was one of seven remaining drive-in theaters in Michigan in 2003. Crystal Mountain, located 33 miles from the park in Thompsonville, is a four-season resort featuring golf, skiing, dining, a spa, and other facilities. Mt. Holiday Ski & Recreational Area offers skiing, snowboarding, tubing just two miles east of Traverse City State Park. Additionally, there is one mile of trail dedicated for hiking and biking and an 800-foot zipline. Located south of Traverse City, Interlochen Center for the Arts offers arts education programs for students in grades 3-12 and adults of all ages. It also hosts hundreds of concerts and events. Local gaming establishments, such as the Turtle Creek Casino and the Leelanau Sands Casino and Showroom, are also popular attractions.

A.4 History of Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park

When missionaries and surveyors visited the Grand Traverse region in 1838, it was occupied by Odawa and Ojibwe people. Remnants of eight Indian villages, six burial grounds and 55 mounds have been found in Grand Traverse County, mostly near Traverse City where Native American settlement was concentrated. The route of US-31 through the state park follows the route of a historic trail from Houghton Lake known as the “Trail to Grand Traverse”.¹ In the 1836 Treaty of Washington, Odawa and Ojibwe bands ceded most of the northern Lower Peninsula to the United States. They retained hunting and fishing rights, which they still retain today. Dispossession continued with the Treaty of Detroit in 1855, which provided for tribal lands to be broken into individual allotments.

In 1838, a missionary known as Reverend Peter Dougherty came to the region, establishing a settlement on Old Mission Peninsula. There were few settlers until 1847, when Captain Boardman purchased land from the government at the mouth of what is now known as the Boardman River. Captain Boardman and his son, Horace, set up and operated a water-powered saw mill. The mill and associated property were sold to the Hannah Lay and Co. in 1851. The Hannah-Lay company prospered greatly from the lumber industry, buying more land, building a second, more powerful mill, and damming the river to facilitate the movement of lumber. Over three and a half decades, the company reportedly cut approximately one billion feet of white and red pine, and later hardwood lumber. This lumber boom was partly responsible for the development of Traverse City, which was incorporated as the Village of Traverse City in 1881. The Mitchell-Mahan Mill, which

operated during this period, may have been located within the present-day site of Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park.² It consisted of a mill pond, water mill and steam mill. The Voice-Nelson Sawmill, established in 1853 by William Voice and Captain Peter Nelson (who later became keeper at Grand Traverse Lighthouse), was reportedly at the end of a large pier in the Traverse Bay in the location of the present-day state park beach. The exact dates of operation are unknown.

By 1900, the timber industry subsided (as the timber in the area had been logged off) and the area began transitioning into a resort town. In 1920, the Grand Traverse Resort Association improved 16 acres of land along US-31 to accommodate an ever-increasing number of visitors wishing to recreate in the area. As the site grew in popularity, the association donated the land to the State of Michigan for use as a state park. In 1921, another parcel was donated by the Association to be developed as a fish hatchery, although plans never came to fruition.

Structures/facilities present on the park site during the early 1920s included a caretaker’s cottage, bathhouses, toilets, fireplaces, and picnic tables. Trees were sparse in the park initially, so more than 350 trees, primarily maple and elm, were planted in the park in 1927-1928³. Planting continued through 1930. Renovations and improvements

¹Traverse City State Park, Richard Briley, compiled by WPA, Michigan Writers Program, 1949.

²Traverse City Record Eagle, October 14, 1970, Organization Efforts Assure Fish Hatchery and Fine State Park.

³Fourth Biennial Report of the Department of Conservation (1927-1928) Funding Sources.



Historic photograph of the Voice-Nelson sawmill at the end of a large wooden pier

were implemented through the late 1920s including repairing existing and developing new roads, the construction of and renovation of toilet buildings, and the installation of a playground, stoves, tables and benches, and more. In the 1930s and '40s, a combination of Works Progress Administration (WPA) and state funds were used for park improvements such as the paving of a 75-car parking lot, a shower and laundry building, the development of campground facilities, and installation of water and electrical lines. Members of the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed the first campground facilities. In 1940, the park received approximately 30,000 visitors and 2,000 campers. The park was expanded in 1959/1960, following a state land exchange. In 1966, the construction of a pedestrian overpass across US-31 was completed, allowing more convenient beach access. By 1974, the park saw 209,000 visitors and 26,000 campers. The first Master Plan was developed in 1966 and approved in 1978, with further revisions made in 1983.

The campground now features 347 campsites. A modern lodge, that was built as a park manger's residence in 1967, is available for rent. Two mini cabins were constructed in the campground in the early 1990s.

In 2011, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) purchased 29.11 acres and acquired another 0.75 acre as a gift from The Arnold Bohn Revocable Trust. These parcels are located southwest of the park campground. On July 21, 2011, the name of the park was changed from Traverse City State Park to Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park, in honor of the former Chair of the Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC). Keith Charters served on the NRC from 1994 until his retirement in 2010. He also served on the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board.



The pedestrian bridge, owned by the Michigan Department of Transportation

A.5 Land Ownership

Funding Sources

The lands that comprise Traverse City State Park were acquired by the state through a variety of funding sources. Often, conditions attached to the original funding source, or other details of the property transaction, encumber the future use or disposition of the land. The funding source map at the end of Appendix A identifies the sources used in acquiring land within Traverse City State Park. The following outlines in more detail each funding source associated with the park.

Michigan Land Trust Fund

The "Kammer Recreational Land Trust Fund Act of 1976" (Public Act (PA) 204 of 1976) created the Michigan Land Trust Fund (MLTF) program to provide a source of funding for the acquisition of lands for resource protection and public outdoor recreation. Funding was derived from royalties on the sale of leased state-owned minerals. This fund has now been replaced by the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. In 1981, three parcels, totaling approximately 6.41 acres, were purchased, in part, using the Michigan Land Trust Fund (MLTF). The parcels are situated in the northwestern day-use area of the park and were purchased using 50% MLTF funds and 50% Special Legislation funds.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) was created by a state constitutional amendment in 1984, which required that oil, gas, and other mineral lease and royalty payments be placed into the Trust Fund, with proceeds used to both acquire and develop public recreation lands. To implement the constitutional amendment, the Legislature passed the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Act of 1985 (PA 101 of 1985). Two adjacent parcels were purchased in 2011 using MNRTF dollars, totaling 29.11 acres.

Special Legislation

Acquisitions for park purposes through this source are tied to specific funding established by the Legislature under PA 27 and PA 50 of 1944. Special legislation funds were used, in part, to purchase several parcels of land, totaling 42.32 acres. Michigan Land Trust Fund dollars also contributed to some of these purchases. These parcels consist of the Traverse City State campground and the day-use areas along the Grand Traverse Bay in the northern portion of the park.

Gift

The Grand Traverse Resort Association sold 16 acres of land for \$1.00 to the State of Michigan in 1920, with the intention that the land would be established as a state park.

In 2012, the Arnold Bohn Revocable Trust donated approximately 0.75 acre of land along Mitchell Creek.

Easements

The following easements grant access or construction rights on Traverse City State Park property. The documentation was obtained through the Michigan Land Ownership Tracking System and may not be complete.

Granted Easements

- East Bay Township: Granted easement in 1983 to construct and maintain a water main.
- Grand Traverse County:
 - Granted easement in 1985 to construct, operate and maintain a water main.
 - Granted easements in 1974 to construct, operate and maintain a sanitary sewer.
- Michigan Bell Telephone Company: Granted an easement in 1977 to bury and maintain a telephone line and related fixtures

- Michigan Transportation Commission:
 - Granted an easement in 1977 for placing traffic signs and replacing a guard rail.
 - Granted an easement in 1994 for non-motorized pathway purposes.
- Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT): Granted highway right-of-way easement in 2006
- Consumers Power Company: Granted an easement in 1959 to construct and maintain an electric distribution line.

Operating Agreements

- Paddle Traverse City LLC: Concession agreement to provide Kayaks, Stand-up paddle boards, bicycles, and beach furniture from Memorial Day to Labor Day. (Expires November 30, 2027).
- MI SAUNA LLC: Operating agreement to operate a portable sauna at a designated location in the day use parking area from Tuesday after Labor Day through the Thursday before Memorial Day. (Expires March 2026).

State and Federal Grants

The following MNRTF, Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) grants were received for both acquisition and development at Traverse City State Park. Depending on the date of the grant (for development), this may impact how the land is used.

STATE AND FEDERAL GRANTS				
GRANT NUMBER	YEAR	TITLE	AMOUNT	DESCRIPTION
DEVELOPMENT GRANTS				
26-01060 D4	1978	Traverse City State Park Beach	\$45,255.00	Beach house w/ site work and utilities, LWCF
26-01623	2004	Traverse City State Park Campground Upgrades	\$423,600.00	Replace existing restroom building with one 150 site capacity toilet shower building utilizing PRB's standardized plans.
26-00082	1965	Traverse City State Park Overpass	\$10,872.25	Construct a pedestrian crosswalk over US-31 to link the campground w/ the day-use beach on Grand Traverse Bay.
P4195.31	2016	Toilet Shower Building / Storm Shelter	FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program amount \$371,604 (total project cost \$1,053,950)	Replace existing toilet shower building with new toilet shower building that will also function as a storm shelter.
ACQUISITION GRANTS				
TF269	1979	Traverse City State Park	\$800,000.00	Acquisition of three acres with 900 feet of frontage on East Grand Traverse Bay. (beach access)
TF361	1980	Traverse City State Park	\$400,000.00	Acquisition of 2.71 acres with 363 feet of frontage on Grand Traverse Bay. (beach access)
TF08-129	2008	Mitchell Creek Land Acquisition	\$1,000,000.00	Acquired 28.79 acres of land adjacent to Traverse City State Park , including access to Mitchell Creek

A.6 Legal Mandates

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.

Specific to Traverse City State Park, the following legal mandates have been identified.

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 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.
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.

PUBLIC HEALTH CODE	
PA 368 OF 1978, PART 125, CAMPGROUNDS, SWIMMING AREAS AND SWIMMERS' ITCH	Established to protect and promote the public health by establishing health code requirements and regulations that all public (including DNR) and private campgrounds must meet. Includes permitting, licensing, inspections and rules regarding sanitation, safety standards and public health. Also covers testing and evaluating quality of water at bathing beaches, safety and rescue equipment.

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.

CONSENT DECREES

Federal treaties exist between the United States government and native tribes residing in Michigan. Although the entire State of Michigan is covered by treaties, only two treaty areas are currently subject to fishing by tribal entities. The Treaty of Washington, signed in 1836, covers the eastern Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower Peninsula of Michigan. The

Treaty of La Pointe, signed in 1842, covers the western Upper Peninsula and areas of northern Wisconsin.

Two consent decrees have developed from these treaties. The 2000 Great Lakes Consent Decree is a legal document that defines the extent of tribal rights and describes how the state and the tribes will cooperatively allocate and manage the fisheries resources in the 1836 Treaty-ceded waters of the Great Lakes. The 2006 Inland Consent Decree is a legal document that defines the extent of tribal rights and describes how the state and the tribes will cooperatively manage natural resources and inland treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather on land ceded to the United States in 1836.

A.7 Landscape Context and Natural Resources

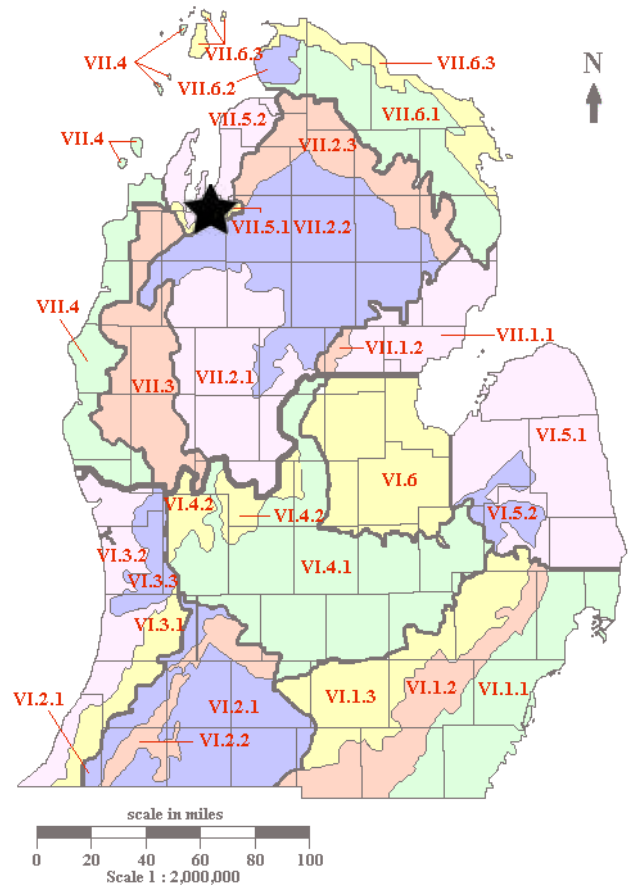
Regional Landscape Ecosystem

A regional landscape ecosystem classification has been developed for Michigan, which distinguishes major landscapes based on macroclimate, physiography, soil and vegetation. The following information was obtained from the Regional Ecosystems of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin prepared by Dennis Albert in 1995.

Traverse City State Park is located in the southern portion of ecoregion sub-subsection VII.5.2 Leelanau and Grand Traverse Peninsula – Traverse City. The Traverse City sub-subsection is made up of multiple peninsular sections, separated by Grand Traverse Bay and other large inland lakes. Elevation in the region ranges from 580 feet to 1,095 feet and land features are influenced by the Great Lakes and the retreat of glaciers with narrow drumlin fields and low sand dunes.

Climate

Lake Michigan moderates the climate of this subsection. The region is known for having a climate ideal for farming, with a growing season ranging from 110 (inland) to 150 days (along Lake Michigan), relatively mild thunderstorms and an early, but cool, spring. There is an average annual rainfall of 30 to 34 inches. Proximity to Lake Michigan causes heavy lake-effect snow, with an average of 100 to 140 inches of snowfall annually.



Source: Albert, Dennis A. 1995. Regional landscape ecosystems of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin: a Working Map and Classification.



Mitchell Creek as it passes by the west side of the park adjacent to Three Mile Road

Water Resources

Traverse City State Park features over 2,000 feet of frontage on Grand Traverse Bay, while Mitchell Creek flows through the southwest of the park (with approximately 2,500 linear feet of frontage) before emptying into the bay at the west end of the state park beach. The Grand Traverse Bay watershed covers 976 square miles over the West and East arms of the Grand Traverse Bay and includes nine subwatersheds, including Mitchell Creek. Mitchell Creek is a naturally reproducing trout (with brown, brook, and rainbow trout all present) and salmon (coho and Chinook) stream and features groundwater pools and developing wetlands in some locations including a small section within Traverse City State Park.

The Lake Michigan water level fluctuates seasonally and annually. The lake level reached a record low of 576.02 feet in January 2013 and its record high was measured at 582.35 feet in 1986. Lake Michigan was within one inch of a new record high in June 2019 and is expected to continue to rise. Great Lakes levels have been above their monthly average levels since September 2014. Lake Michigan’s annual average lake level was 580.24 in 2018, compared to a mean annual elevation of 578.84. The December 2018 elevation was

four feet higher than the December low in 2012 of 576.15 feet. This has a big impact on the beach area of the park. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has established a 100-year flood (a flood which has a 1% chance of occurring any given year) elevation of 584 feet on the Great Lakes.

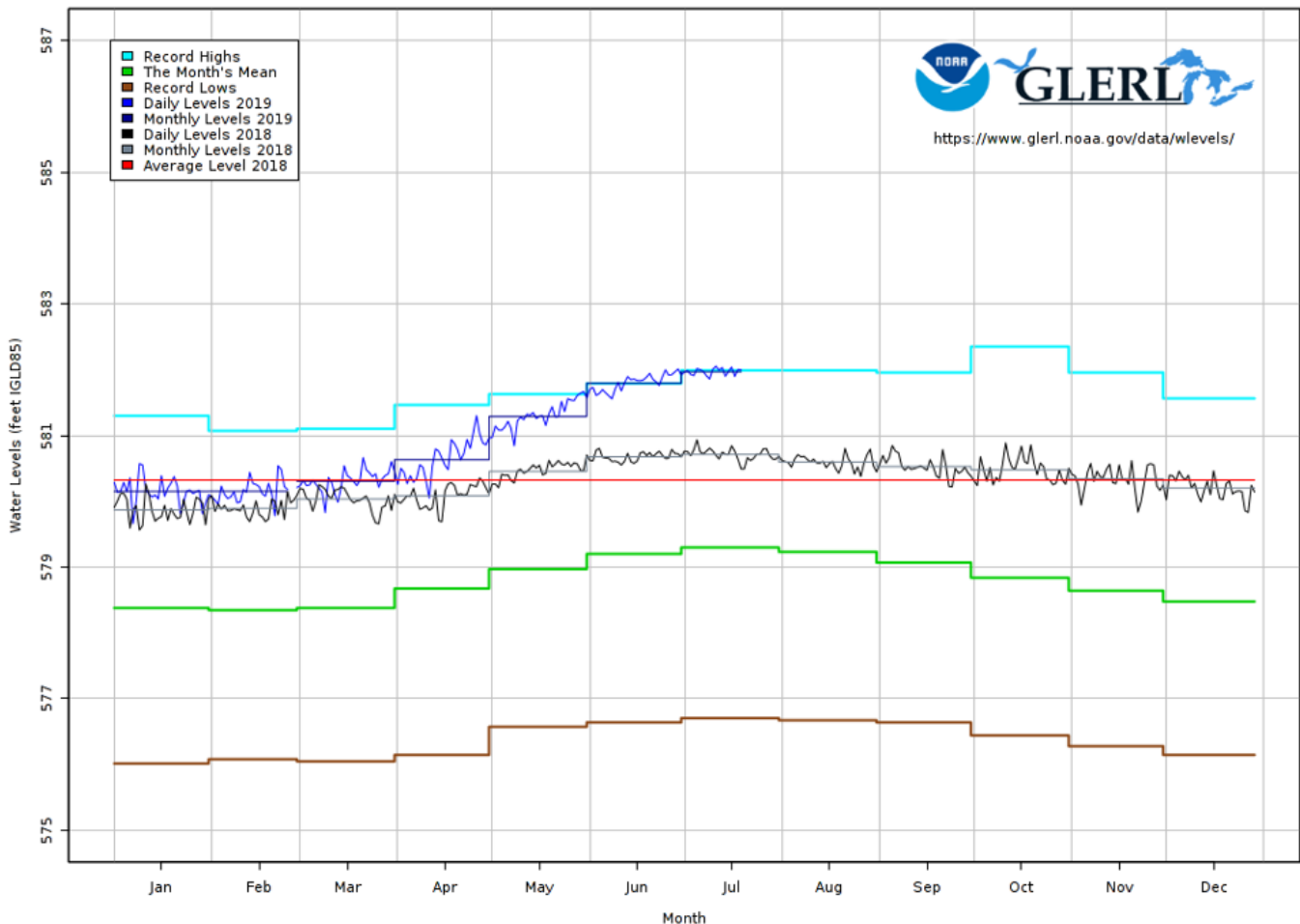
Topography

The park land is essentially flat, with an elevation of between 590 and 600 feet. The 880-foot beach that existed when the park was established in 1920 originally featured small-scale sand dunes, which were removed and used to fill in around the buildings used as bath houses.

Soils

Soil in the Leelanau and Grand Traverse Peninsula subsection shows evidence of glacial activity and predominantly consists of sandy soil on end moraines and gravelly sandy loam derived from till on drumlins. Traverse City State Park predominantly features sand, although there is a strip of loam and muck along Mitchell Creek.

Lake Michigan-Huron Water Levels from Harbor Beach, MI - 9075014 2018 - 2019
As of End of Day 07/20/2019 (Refresh your browser to ensure plot is up to date)



Geology and Mineral Resources

During the last glacial period, as ice sheets advanced and retreated across Michigan, glaciers carved out the valleys of the Grand Traverse Bay, which subsequently filled with melt water as the ice retreated permanently.

The surface geology of the Traverse City area consists of lacustrine gravel, sand, and clay from the succession of proglacial lakes that preceded Lake Michigan. Dune sand tops the lacustrine sediments in some areas. The glacial sediments are typically greater than 200 feet thick across most of the area. Michigan's glacial sand and gravel deposits are frequently quarried for construction aggregate. There is minimal potential for sand and gravel development inside the park, and there are better sources of aggregate in the area around Traverse City. Bedrock underlying the glacial sediments in the park consists primarily of Late Devonian to early Mississippian marine shales. Some of these shales have been mined in the past in places where glacial drift is thin or absent.

While there has been some oil and gas leasing activity in the area surrounding Traverse City, there has not been any production in this area. Traverse City is several miles from the northern extent of the Niagaran reef hydrocarbon play. There has been minor production of natural gas from the Antrim Shale several miles to the east and west of Traverse City, and there is likely some potential for Antrim Shale gas beneath the state park. However, it is unlikely for there to be any oil and gas exploration or development around Traverse City in the near future.

Early 1800s Vegetation

The 1800s land cover mapping, derived from original notes of the State of Michigan General Land Office survey conducted in the early to mid-1800s, indicates that the land that now comprises Traverse City State Park was predominantly wetland including the land surrounding Mitchell Creek and its tributaries. Mixed coniferous and deciduous forest (red pine, white pine and oak) was recorded in the southwest of the property.

Current Vegetation

In the 1930s, a large number of trees were reported to have been planted in the area that now contains the campground. These included hundreds of maple, elm and pine. The campground is now dominated by uneven-aged, planted mixed pines (primarily red and white pine, with some jack pine), sugar maple and other mixed deciduous trees. The undeveloped land south of the creek is a combination of dry mesic forest, dominated by oak and pine, and northern shrub thicket with tag alder, willow and dogwood along Mitchell Creek.

Rare Flora and Fauna

No threatened or endangered species have been documented in Traverse City State Park. However, the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), a state species of special concern, has been documented in Grand Traverse County in the past and could be present in the park. Bald eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), also a state species of special concern, have been reported to nest nearby and feed in the east bay.

Wildlife

Traverse City State Park provides camping opportunities in an otherwise urban setting. Being close to downtown Traverse and having Grand Traverse Bay beach property makes this park a popular destination. However, the otherwise beneficial location limits the variety of wildlife that park patrons may expect to see.

Beach goers will no doubt expect to hear and see herring and ring-billed gulls, and plentiful waterfowl like mallards, common mergansers, and Canada geese. They may also be treated on occasion to see a bald eagle, native trumpeter swans, common tern, and killdeer.

Around the campsites and other park infrastructure, wildlife observations include song birds, the occasional raccoon, red squirrel, and wandering skunk or possum. Much of the campground is sheltered by mature pines and scattered deciduous trees. Avian species that campers may encounter, other than the ubiquitous American crow, might include Cooper's hawk, northern flicker, red-breasted nuthatch, hermit thrush, or cedar waxwing.

Fisheries

Traverse City State Park is part of the Central Lake Michigan Management Unit, managed by Fisheries Division out of the Traverse City Customer Service Center. The park provides access to shore fishing along the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay including the mouth of Mitchell Creek. Nearby boating access sites provide boat anglers the ability to pursue lake trout, steelhead, smallmouth bass, yellow perch, and cisco in the spring and summer months, as well as Chinook and coho salmon in the fall months. Mitchell Creek is a popular, naturally reproducing trout stream that hosts resident brook and brown trout, as well as migratory runs of suckers, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, steelhead, and brown trout.

A.8 Recreational Resources

Activities

Camping

The campground is open for tent, trailer, and RV camping, as well as lodge, and mini-cabin rentals, with only the modern lodge open year-round. The campground features 20/30-amp electrical service on all sites with additional 50-amp service to the west loop and some sites in the central loop.

Fishing and Boating

Powerboating, sail boating, and paddling are popular activities in the Grand Traverse Bay. Fishing charters are available in the bay and there are opportunities for salmon, trout, smallmouth bass, and panfish fishing. There are also opportunities to go out into the bay on a Tall Ship or Catamaran. Kayak and stand-up paddle board rentals are available at the park concession. There are no designated boating access sites within the park, although paddle watercraft can be launched from the day-use area.

Metal Detecting

The entire park is open to metal detecting. However, any items found must be reviewed by park staff and may be retained for further investigation. Metal detecting is recognized as a legitimate recreation activity when it is conducted in ways that do not damage the natural and cultural resources in Michigan State Parks nor violate applicable state statutes.

Swimming

The park has a beach and designated swim area, with a nearby picnic area, parking, playground, and bathhouse.



A small child enjoys cherries at the campsite picnic table



A fisherman and his catch on the Grand Traverse Bay

TART

The TART Trail is a paved 10.5-mile path, which runs east-west adjacent to the southern park boundary. The trail is open to running/walking, biking, and cross-country skiing. An extension runs from the state park beach south along Three Mile Road. The TART Trail can be accessed from the park between campsites 46 and 47. This paved trail runs all the way to Suttons Bay.

Facilities

Picnic Area

The day-use area consists of a strip of land bordered by a beach to the north and US-31 to the south. A swim area, picnic tables, playground, and grills are available to day-use visitors. The parking lot can accommodate 150 vehicles. No beach fires are allowed.

Concessions

A paddle board, kayak and bike rental is located in the day-use area.

Modern Lodge

The modern lodge can sleep up to 11 people. It features three bedrooms, two bathrooms, a full kitchen, a living room with a pull-out couch, and washer and dryer units. It also has a deck and a fire ring in the back.

Mini-Cabins

There are two mini-cabins (East Bay and West Bay) within the park on the "West Loop". Each are capable of sleeping up to four people and offer 20-amp electrical service, a wall heater, and are equipped with a mini fridge and microwave. There is also a picnic table, waist high cook grill and fire ring outside the cabin.

Youth Group Camp

A youth group use area is available within the park, south of the main campground area, near the TART Trail. It can accommodate a maximum of 50 people. There is electricity available on the site.

Playground

There is a swing set in the northwest section of the campground, and a playground in the day-use area.

Pet Walk

There is an area to walk pets in the northeast section of the park (on the east side of the pedestrian overpass).

Beach House

The beach house features toilets and changing rooms and is ADA accessible.

Modern Restrooms

There are three modern restrooms within the campground, one located in each West, Central, and East Loops. The west loop bathroom is also a designated tornado shelter for 300 people.

Sanitation Station

A sanitation station is located at the west end of the campground.

A.9 Historic and Cultural Resources

There are no known significant historic structures located in the park. There is potential for archaeological sites, although due to the level of development and shifting lakeshore/creek, little evidence may remain. Possible sites include the mill that was located at the mouth of Mitchell Creek (according to an 1883 atlas of Grand Traverse County) and possible structural remains associated with logging or the old railroad grade that runs through the campground. A wooden pier extended into the bay from the present-day beach during the logging era, although no evidence of remains have been documented. Native American sites associated with the Early Woodland era have been found in the vicinity of the park.

A.10 Programming and Events

Traverse City State Park hosts an annual Harvest Festival for campers the first weekend in October with a variety of activities including a pancake breakfast, trick-or-treating, costume judging and campsite decorating.

Traverse City State Park accepts applications for campground hosts. The hosts stay for a month and help the park out with jobs and activities such as: keeping the brochure shelter stocked with area information, hosting coffee hour and craft hour, helping with the dump station line, returning pop cans, picking up litter and interacting with campers.



Costumed children participating in the Halloween festivities

A.11 Park Use Statistics

Traverse City State Park offers a day-use beach and options for overnight visitors year-round. The modern campground features 347 sites open to tents, truck campers, and trailers or RVs up to 50 feet long. The park also includes a modern lodge capable of sleeping up to 11 people, and two mini-cabins in the West Bay Loop. In the 2017 fiscal year, 32,956 reservations were made for an estimated 100,976 campers. A total of 154,066 day-use visitors were reported in 2017. Summer months are the most popular for overnight reservations, with July seeing nearly 10,000 reservations. Campers are recorded using the reservation system, while day-use visitors are estimated based on a count of the number of vehicles multiplied by the mean number of people in each vehicle.

VISITATION DATA				
	2015	2016	2017	2018
CAMPERS	88,093	94,501	100,976	98,401
DAY-USE VISITORS	160,449	137,525	154,066	116,462

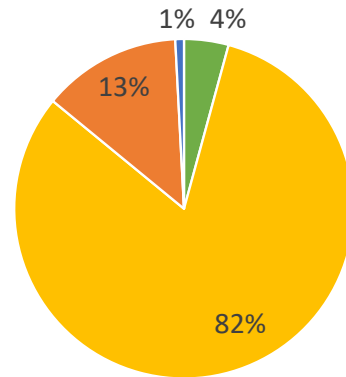
TOP TEN U.S. CITIES FOR CAMPING RESERVATIONS (2017)

CITY & STATE	NUMBER OF NIGHTS
Grand Rapids, MI	1364
Traverse City, MI	774
Midland, MI	520
Bay City, MI	439
Kalamazoo, MI	403
Saginaw, MI	389
Holland, MI	368
Rockford, MI	349
Hudsonville, MI	332
Ann Arbor, MI	322

Note: Canadian visitors accounted for an additional 872 nights

Day-Use Visitation by Season (2018)

- Spring (Mar-May)
- Summer (June-Aug)
- Fall (Sept-Nov)
- Winter (Dec-Feb)








A man smiles by his camping grill



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



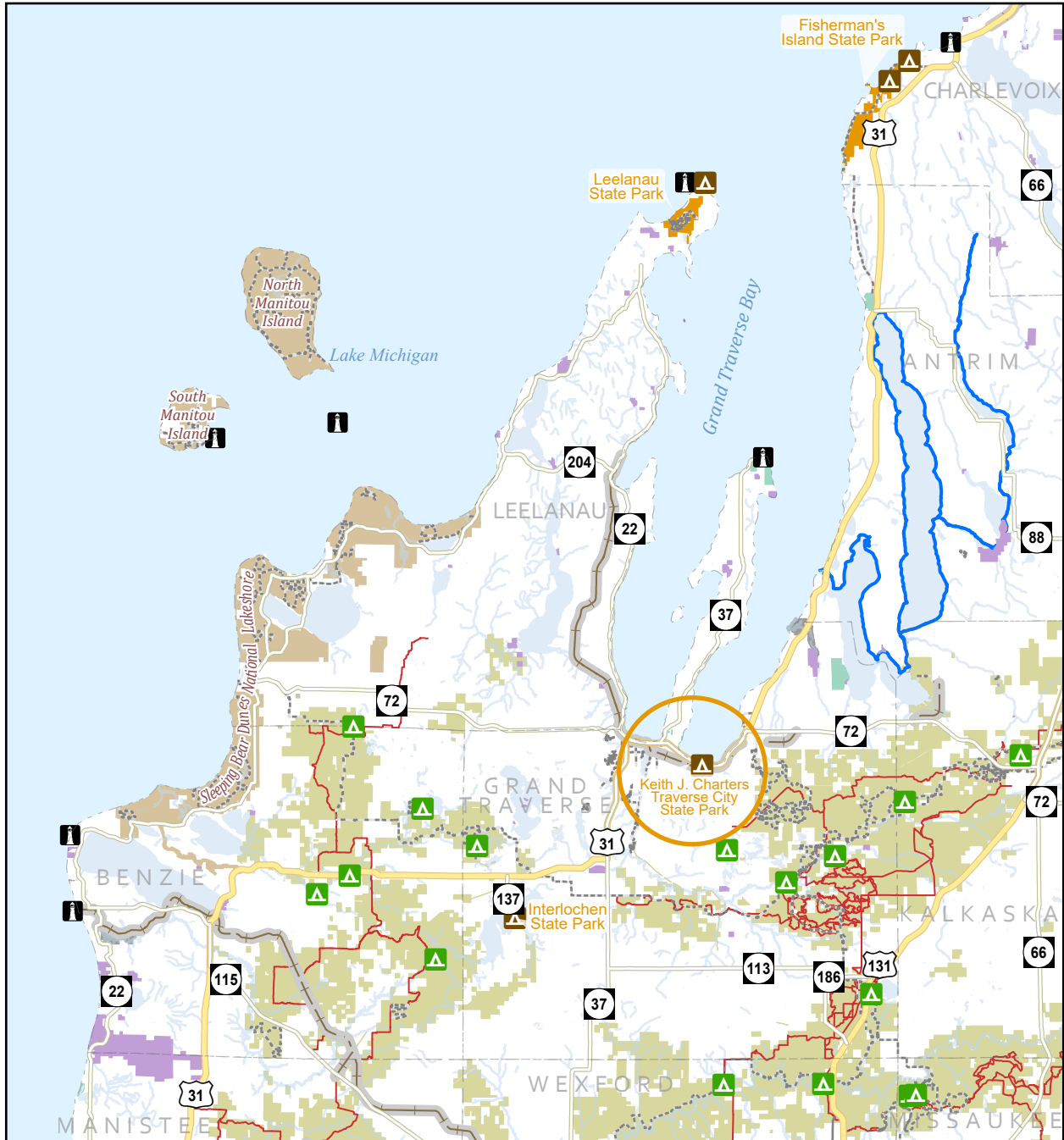
Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Park Boundary

-  State Park Boundary
-  NRC 2020 Approved Project Boundary*
-  Road
-  Railroad
-  Regional Non-motorized Trail



Updated: 01/07/2021

*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



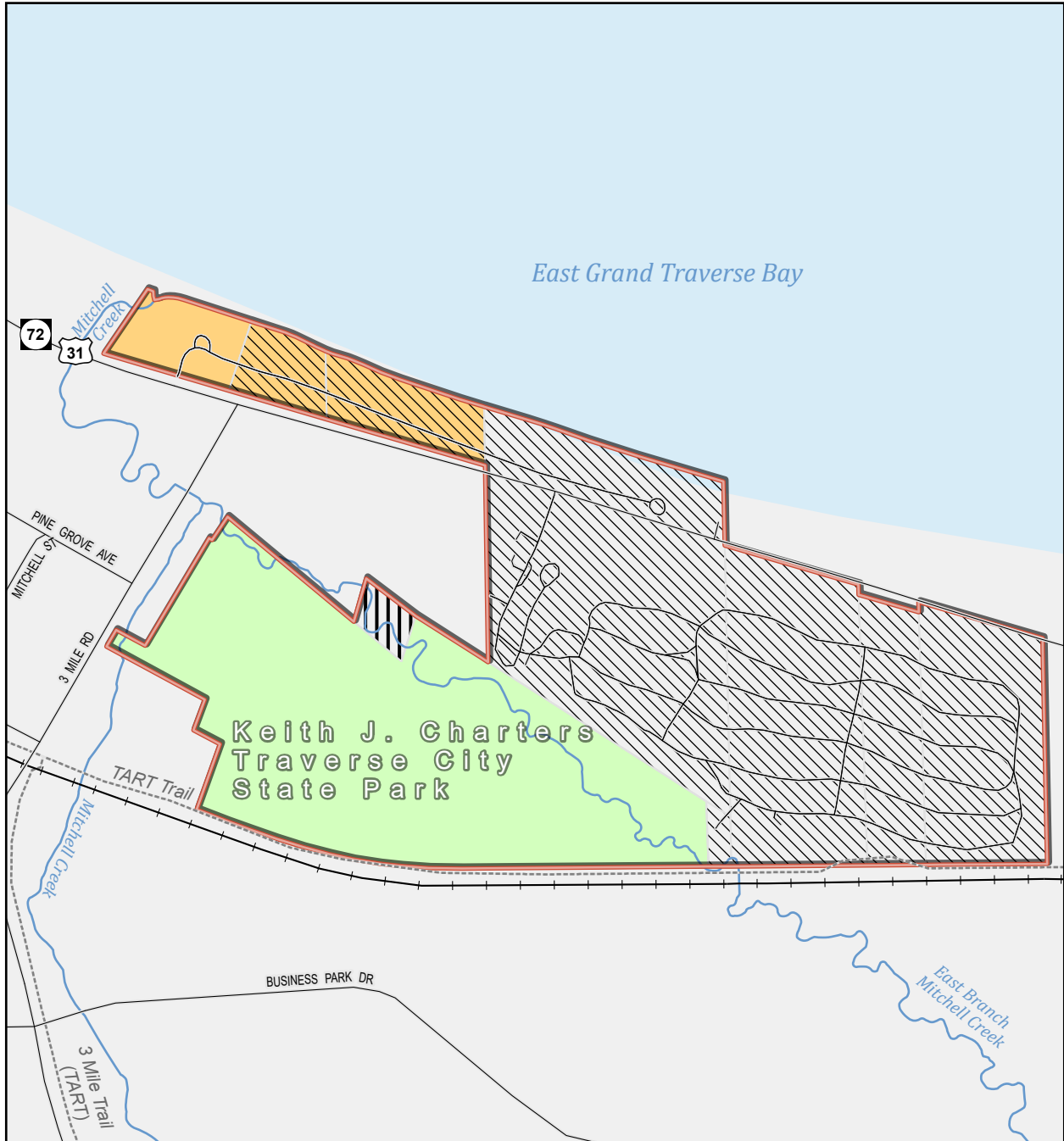
Regional Recreation Resources



Updated: 09/16/2019

- County Boundary
- State Park
- State Forest
- State Game/Wildlife Management Area
- Federal Lands
- Municipal/County Park
- Nature Reserve
- State Park Campground
- State Forest Campground
- Lighthouse
- Non-motorized Trail
- Motorized Trail
- Designated Water Trail
- Railtrail





MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



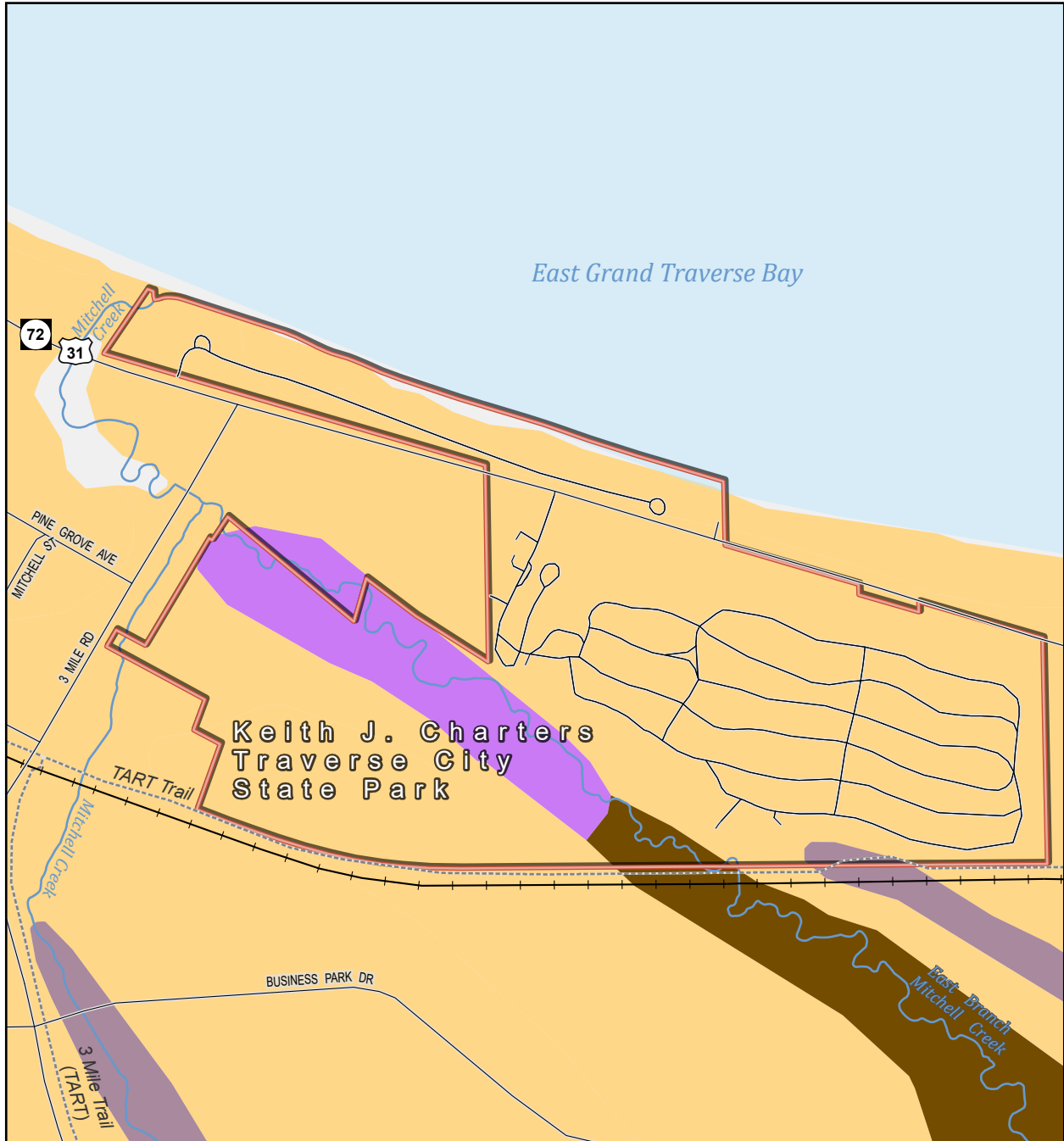
Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Funding Sources

- State Park Boundary
- Road
- Railroad
- River/Stream*
- Regional Non-motorized Trail
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
- Michigan Land Trust Fund
- Special Legislation
- Gift



Updated: 09/17/2019

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Soils

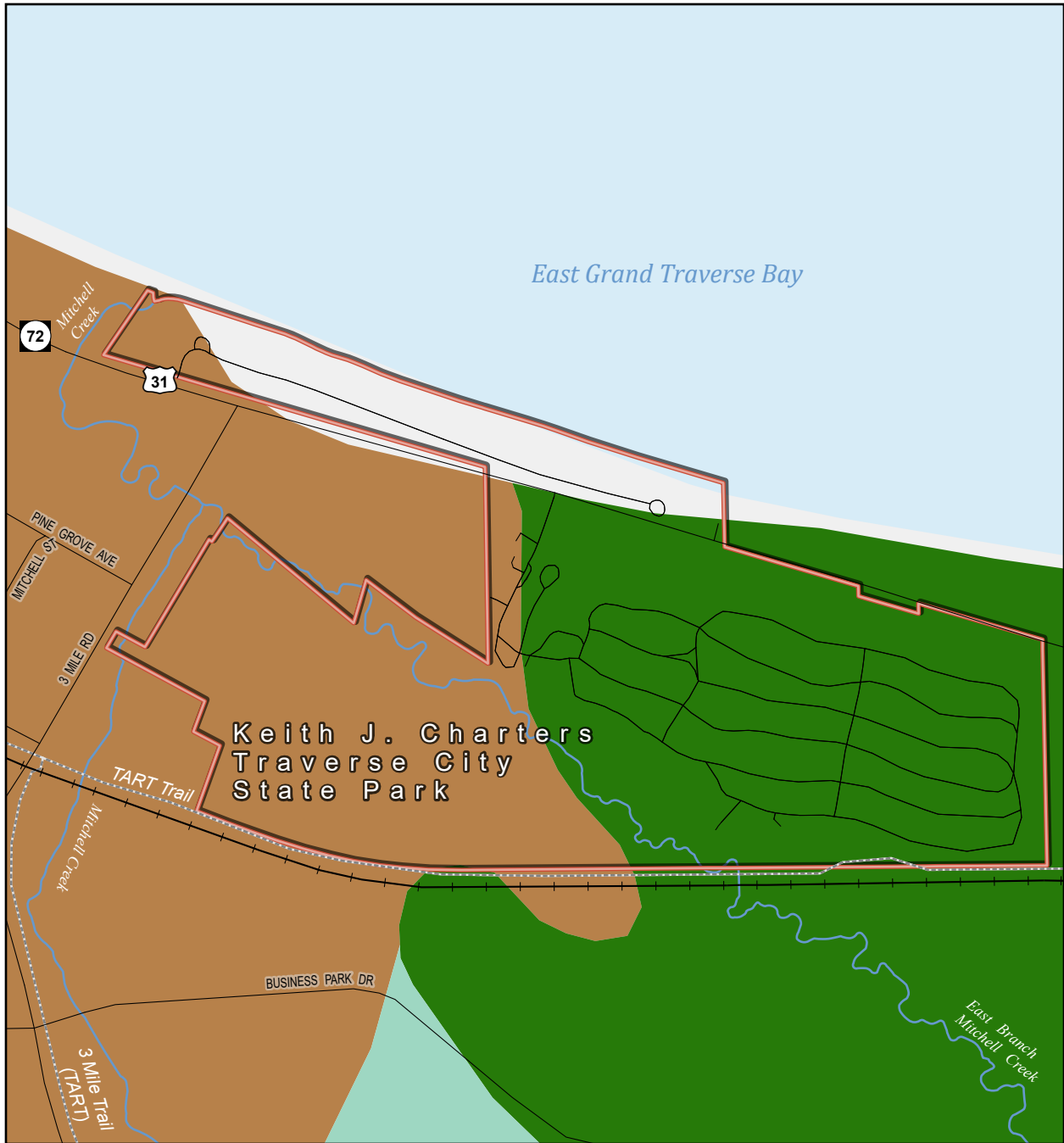
- | | |
|------------------------------|------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Soils** |
| Road | Sand |
| Railroad | Mucky loamy sand |
| River/Stream* | Loam |
| Regional Non-motorized Trail | Muck |



Updated: 09/18/2019

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)

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



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Land Cover, 1800s

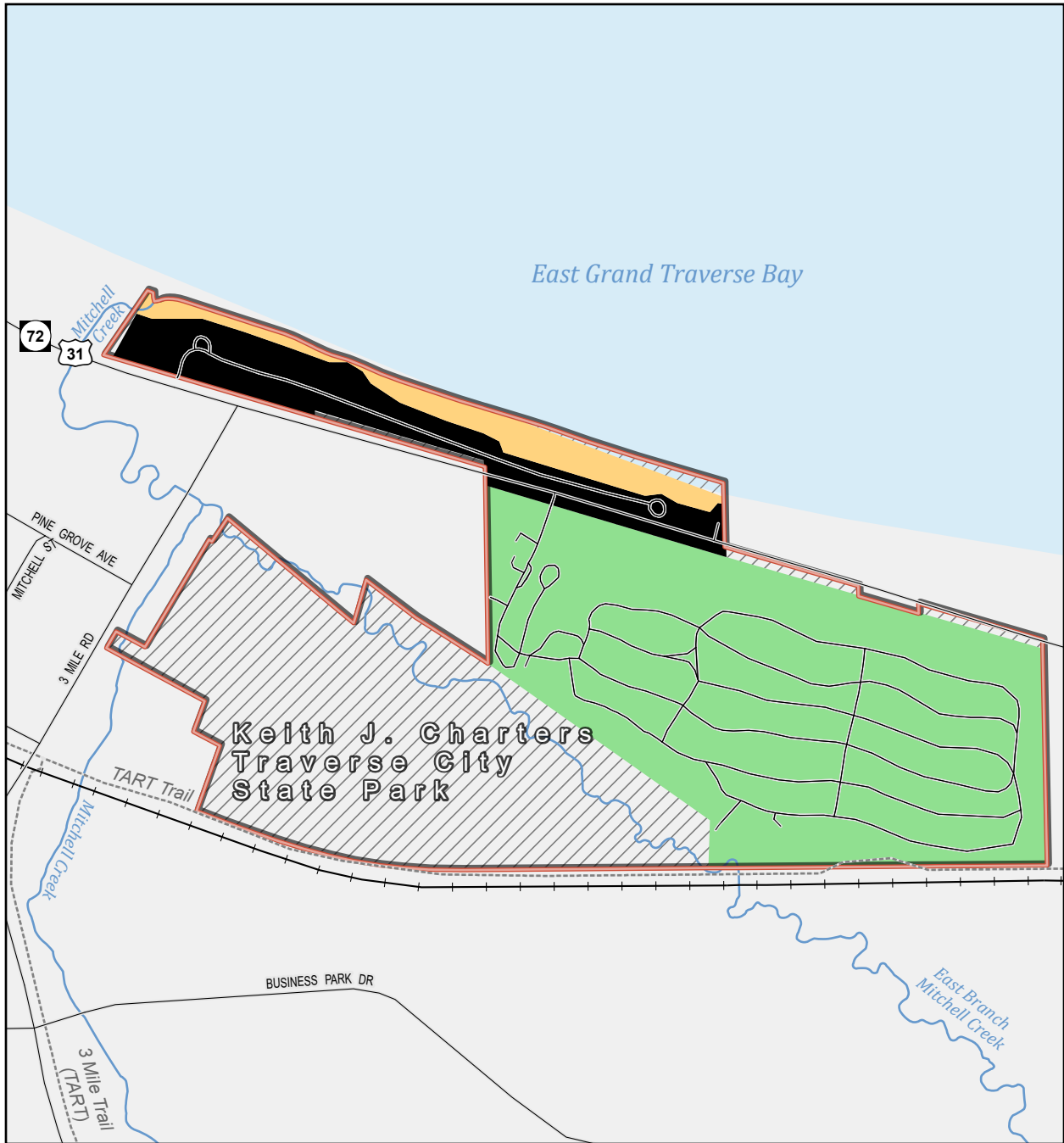
- | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Land Cover** |
| Road | Cedar Swamp |
| Railroad | Emergent Marsh |
| River/Stream* | Red Pine/White Pine |
| Regional Non-motorized Trail | |



Updated: 03/16/2020

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)

**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



Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Forest Stands and Land Cover

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Regional Non-motorized Trail | Non-Forest Covertype |
| Road | Forest Stands and Land Cover** | Roads/Parking Lot |
| Railroad | Forest Covertype | Sand/Soil |
| River/Stream* | Planted Pines | No Stand Data |



Updated: 09/18/2019

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)

**Forest Stand Covertypes as determined by DNR forest stand examiners during the DNR's forest inventory process



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Wetlands

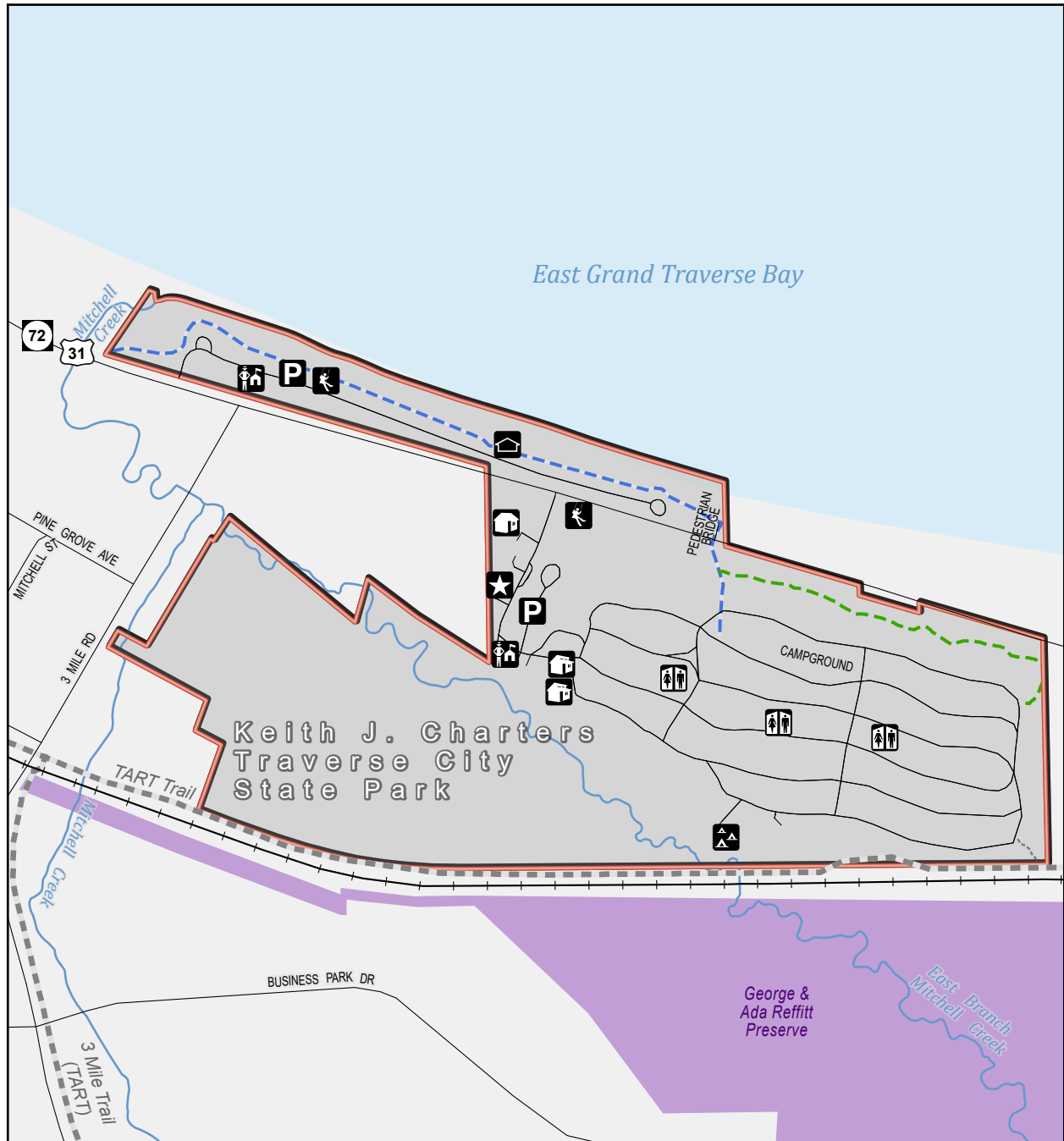
- State Park Boundary
- Road
- Railroad
- River/Stream*
- Regional Non-motorized Trail
- Wetlands**
- Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland



Updated: 09/18/2019

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)

**The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) dataset (2012)



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



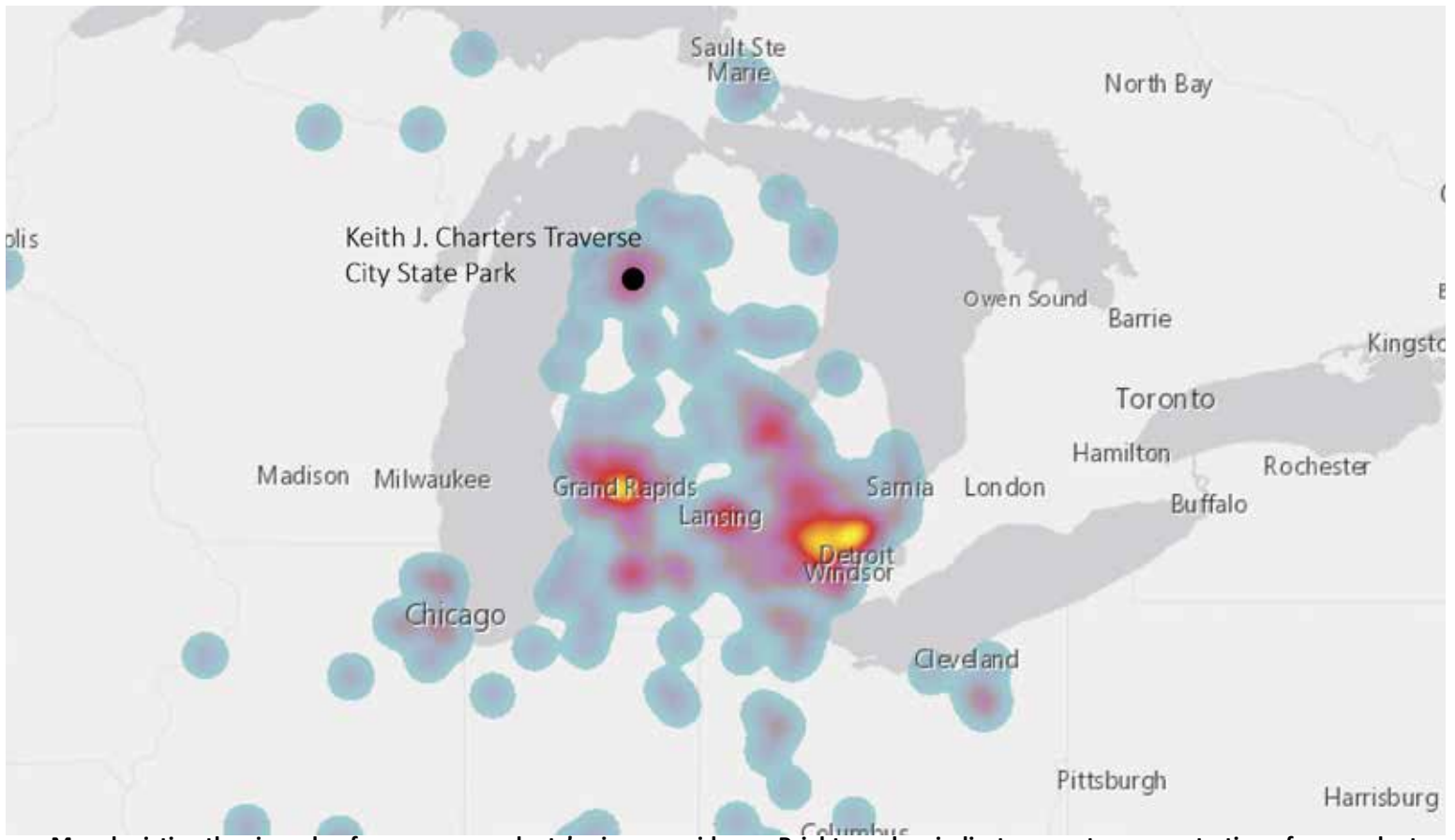
Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Park Amenities

- | | | |
|--|------------------------------|---------------------|
| State Park Boundary | Pet Walk | Beach House |
| Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy | TART Trail Connector | Toilet/Shower |
| Road | Regional Non-motorized Trail | Modern Lodge Rental |
| Railroad | Youth Group Camp | Mini Cabin |
| River/Stream* | Park Headquarters | Playground |
| Beach Trail | Contact Station | Parking |

Updated: 03/13/2020

*East Branch Mitchell Creek & Mitchell Creek estimated based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot resolution aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solution)





Map depicting the zip code of survey respondents' primary residence. Brighter colors indicate a greater concentration of respondents. A small number of respondents were located outside of the map area.

Appendix

B: Public and Stakeholder Input

B.1 Project Website

A project website was available for public viewing throughout the duration of the planning process and was updated with maps, survey results, and the draft plan. Members of the public could contact the planning team through the website contact form.

B.2 Summary of Public Input Survey

One of the methods the planning team used to gather input from park users was an online survey. This online approach provides a convenient way for those who have access to the internet to provide feedback. However, it is not designed to be statistically representative of Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park users or uses, as respondents self-select. The on-line survey provides valuable information (those who are motivated to comment about the park, those likely to receive DNR communication about the survey, and those who have easy access to the internet) hope to see in the park's future management. This survey was advertised through a

press release, shared with park stakeholders, sent to those who camped at the park within the last year, and was shared on social media. Due to the survey advertisement to the camping reservation system email list, campers may be disproportionately represented in the responses as compared to day users.

Responses were collected from October 10 through November 10, 2019. During the collection period, 672 individuals responded to the survey. Of those respondents, 645 (96%) have visited the park in the last five years. The largest segment of respondents was between 50 and 64 years old (41%) and most respondents were located in southern Michigan, Chicago, Cleveland, several cities in Indiana and Ohio, and the Upper Peninsula. A very small number of respondents were located outside of this regional area and are not shown on this map.

The survey was broken down into several categories to gather targeted input:

CATEGORY	INPUT RECEIVED
General Satisfaction	Questions pertaining to activities users participate in at the park, general impressions, travel logistics and visit planning
Your Most Recent Visit	Specific questions about the most recent visit and satisfaction with the park
Overnight Accommodations	Use of and satisfaction with overnight accommodations
Park Concessions	Use of and satisfaction with park concessions
Fishing	Questions about where visitors fish and their target species
Special Events and Programs	What activities users participate in and their opinions of them
New Land	Questions about the future use of the DNR's newly acquired land.
Other Input	Any other thoughts about the park or the planning process
Tell Us About Yourself	Demographic data

Your Visit

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park has a convenient location that encourages repeat visitation, but not necessarily frequent use. **Ninety-six percent of respondents have visited the park in the last five years. Those who did not visit the park within the last five years** gave reasons such as living a long distance from the park, time constraints, overcrowding in the park, preference to other local park locations, and others. Survey respondents were **most likely to visit in the summer season**, followed by the fall season; only 1.8% of the respondents indicated that they visit the park in all four seasons. **Visitors gather information for their trip from multiple sources** such as the DNR website, previous experience, friends and family, and tourist or information centers. They **travel to the park mainly by personal vehicle**, but a few visitors travel with bicycles or on foot.

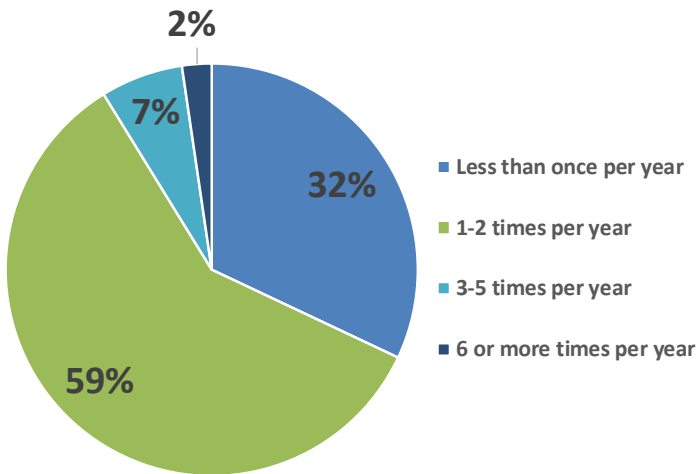
Respondents were **asked what three words they would use to describe the park** to someone who had never visited. The top ten most common words were convenient, great location, beach, clean, busy, crowded, beautiful, nice, family friendly, and fun. The word cloud below shows the words that were mentioned five or more times, with the increasing size of the word indicating a more frequent response.

Visitors participate in a range of activities at Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park. The **most common activities respondents reported participating in are camping (90%), visiting the beach (81%), walking/running (76%), and biking (62%)**. The next most common activities were swimming (53%), accessing the TART Trail (46%), and picnicking (24%).

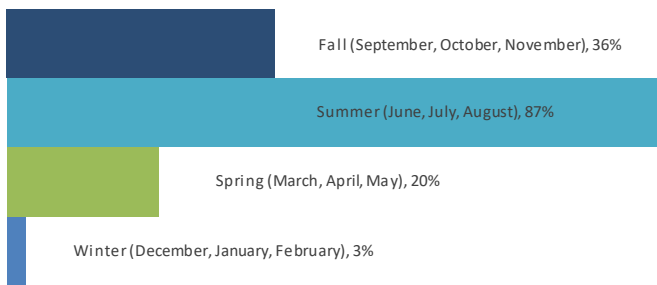


Words most frequently used to describe the park. Words that were used five or more times are included. Larger word size indicates a more frequent response.

How often do you visit the park?



In what seasons do you typically visit the park? (Select all that apply)

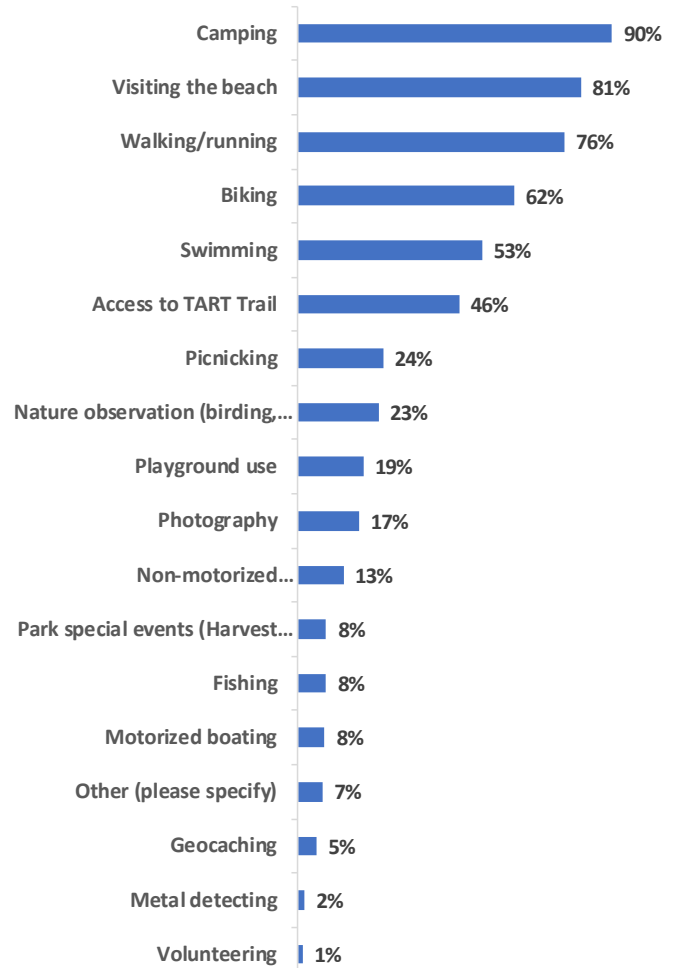


Responders were also asked to **rate the importance of the following in their decision to visit Traverse City State Park:** access to Grand Traverse Bay/Beach, close to downtown Traverse City, TART Trail access, regional attractions, camping, event lodging, and visiting family or friends. The rating was on a scale of one (very unimportant) to nine (very important). Sixty-one percent of respondents said that camping was very important; its overall weighted average rating was the highest of the options at 7.62. Access to Grand Traverse Bay/Beach (6.85) and regional attractions (6.62) had the next highest weighted averages. Access to Grand Traverse Bay was still very important to 39% of respondents, but more responses fell between neutral and very important. Visiting family and event lodging had the lowest weighted average ratings, due to a majority of responses as either neutral or very unimportant.

Most Recent Visit

The next portion of the survey focused on the respondent's most recent visit. On the visitors last visit, their **party size** was most frequently a couple (36%), followed by a family (35%). The **ages of those in the party** were most frequently between

Please check ALL the activities in which you participate while at Traverse City State Park.

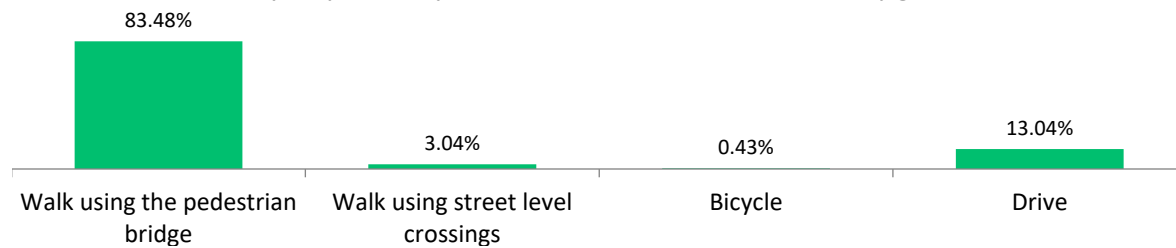


the ages of 50-64 (50%). The next most frequent age groups were 30-39 (28%), 65 or older (28%), and 40-49 (24%).

Respondents were asked to rate their **satisfaction with the park's beach facilities** on a scale of one (highly dissatisfied) to nine (highly satisfied), with 5 being neutral. The item with the highest weighted average of 7.25 was pedestrian access, with 36% of respondents highly satisfied, and another 37% of respondents between neutral and highly satisfied. The next highest rated facilities were the beach (7.15 weighted average) as responses tended to be higher than neutral, followed by parking (6.52 weighted average) which had a stronger neutral response with less rating it above neutral. The lowest rated items were the playground (5.86), followed by the restrooms at the beach (5.89) and picnic area (6.09) as most respondents rated those items as neutral.

When asked what was **liked most about their experience at the beach area**, many responses mentioned cleanliness, the campgrounds and sandy beach area, activities such as walking and swimming, and the beautiful park views and scenery. Five randomly selected comments follow:

How do you primarily access the beach from the campground?



What did you like most about your experience at the beach area?

- The views and the convenience
- Clean beach, near water
- Clean, not over run
- Scenery
- Plenty of room to spread out. Didn't feel like we were on top of other families.

When asked **what changes could be made to the beach area** in order to improve their experience, 63% of respondents stated that no changes were needed. The other respondents made comments that cited smoother traffic flow and pedestrian access, improvements in the cleanliness of the beach, parking areas, and bathrooms, better lighting for crosswalks and bathrooms, and many others. Five randomly selected responses follow:

Are there any changes that you would like to see made at the beach area in order to improve your experience?

- To let pets on the beach
- More benches
- A place for snacks and drinks would be nice.
- Update the bathroom
- Cleaned more often

When asked **if there were activities they or someone in their party wished to participate in but were not able to due to personal mobility challenges** or lack of accessibility accommodations, the majority of respondents (97%) said no, they had no difficulty. Three percent of respondents did report a challenge, such as difficulty climbing the stairs to the beach and accessible water access. Three randomly selected comments follow:

During your last visit, were there any activities you or someone in your party wished to participate in but were not able to due to personal mobility challenges or lack of accessibility accommodations?

- Should have dog access at the beach. There are a lot of older couples that travel with their pets.
- It would be nice to walk across street without climbing

the bridge for those with physical challenges. The light is a long way to walk to.

- Too cumbersome to cross the path to get to the beach with any beach gear and small children.

Overnight Accommodations

Eighty-three percent of respondents **have used the overnight accommodations at the park**. Most stayed on the campground (97%), while a few used the Mini Cabin (3%). Less than one percent of respondents used the modern lodge (0.63%), the pop-up camper rental (0.42%), or the youth group campsite (0.00%). Respondents most frequently stay for two to three nights. When asked **how the respondents primarily access the beach from the campground**, a large majority stated they used the pedestrian bridge (83%). Only thirteen percent drove to the beach, and three percent walked using street level crossings. **Most respondents (70%) did not bring a pet on their last visit.**

Respondents were also asked to **rate their satisfaction with the overnight accommodations** they used on a scale of 1 (highly dissatisfied) to 9 (highly satisfied) with 5 being neutral. Most respondents were satisfied with the campground, with 84% rating it 6 or above. The modern lodge only had two ratings, both of which were satisfied. The pop-up camper rental also only had two ratings, with one neutral and one highly satisfied. Most of the few respondents who used the mini cabins were highly satisfied.

When asked what they **liked most about their accommodations**, respondents frequently mentioned the convenient location of the park with easy access to Traverse City and TART Trail. They also mentioned the beach, the large size of the camping areas, and wooded scenery. Five randomly selected comments follow:

What did you like most about your accommodations?

- The site was level for easy set up. Was close to restroom.
- Access to the TART Trail.
- Spacious sites
- Quiet
- Decent size sites

When asked **what could be done to improve the accommodations in the future**, around 30% of respondents indicated that nothing should be done. However, 70% of respondents who commented indicated a desire for full hookup campsites, more dump stations for RV's, upgraded restrooms and electrical systems, larger campsites with better traffic control in and around the park, or better cleanliness. Five randomly selected comments follow:

What could be done to improve your satisfaction with the accommodations in the future?

- Water hookups at sites
- More dump stations available for this park!! This is a very high traffic park and trying to dump is an absolute nightmare. You wait too long (sometimes hours!) and its not an easy access trying to get in and out with a camper.
- Its just a little crowded and close to your neighbor
- I would like more attention paid to grading campsites more level, or at least creating a level "pad" for parking an RV or trailer.
- RV sites too close together

Those that did not use the overnight accommodations at the park were asked where they stayed. The most common answer was at their own principal home (55%). A few responders stayed at another state park (15%), while others stayed at a hotel/motel/rental property/B&B (13%) or another's home/second home (11%).

Park Concessions

The planning team wanted to hear **which concessions (firewood, ice, and rentals) the visitors utilize and their level of satisfaction with them.** On a scale of one (highly dissatisfied) to nine (highly satisfied) with five being neutral, most respondents were neutral or satisfied with the firewood, with 62% rating it a five or above, and 31% had not used the firewood. A large portion of respondents had not used the ice or rentals, but those that did were generally satisfied with the ice and fairly neutral about the rentals. When asked what, if any, changes could be made to improve the concessions, 80% of comments said that nothing needed to be done. Some suggested improvements included increasing firewood and ice availability, quality and price and having an on-site camp store with concessions. Five randomly selected comments follow:

What changes, if any, would you make to improve the concession services at the park?

- Please provide maps of pedestrian and bike access to the surrounding natural resources
- Firewood is always either wet or they are sold out, so I buy elsewhere every year

- Better firewood choices
- Improvement of firewood. Wood often wet and doesn't burn well
- Beach chair rental would be nice

Fishing

Five percent of survey respondents use the park for fishing access. They most frequently fish from the shoreline (43%) or from a motorized boat (43%), rather than a non-motorized boat (13%). The preferred fishing location was Lake Michigan (77%) followed by Mitchell Creek (13%) and other local water bodies (10%). The most frequently **targeted species** was smallmouth bass (53%). Comments left by respondents noted an enjoyment of fishing at the park while others suggested fishing piers, boat launches and better lighting.

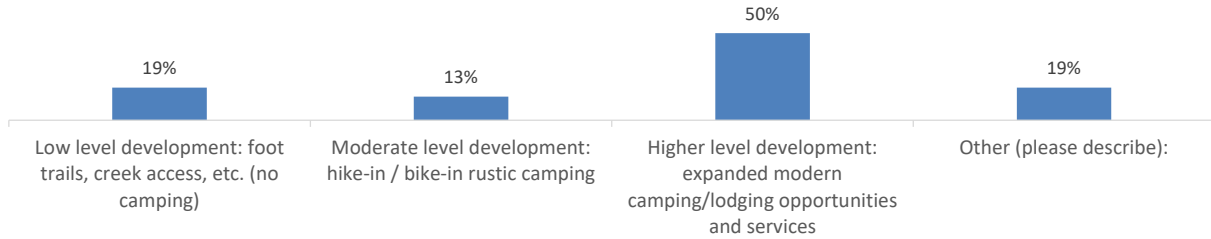
Special Events or Programs

Most survey respondents (91%) have not participated in a **special event or program at the park.** Those that did most frequently participated in the Harvest Festival, Halloween events, coffee/hot chocolate events, arts and crafts, and children's activities. Participants were on average very satisfied with the special events or programs. On a scale of one (highly dissatisfied) to nine (highly satisfied), the various activities were scored positively, with 49% of respondents highly satisfied, and only one rating below neutral. Comments left were generally very positive, with only a couple negative comments regarding not having an itinerary available for the harvest fest and the Learn to SUP program being overcrowded. Five randomly selected comments follow:

Please enter any comments you may have on the special events or programs in which you participated at the park.

- Keep up the great work, seen lots of people
- Good time (Fall Festival)
- We have been coming to harvest fest for 10 years gets better every year
- Far too many people at the same time. It would be better to have sign up times to keep the groups smaller. (Learn to SUP program)
- The park staff does a great job! (Stand Up Paddle Boarding)

What is your preference for the future use of this land?



New Land

The DNR has recently purchased 29 additional acres between Mitchell Creek and the TART Trail. The respondents were asked **to give their thoughts on the future use of this land.** Most respondents preferred higher level development (50%), such as expanding the modern camping/lodging opportunities and services rather than low (19%) or moderate level development (13%).

Nineteen percent of respondents suggested a wide variety of uses, such as larger, expanded campsites, more RV dump stations, another park entrance off of Three Mile Road, low level development with foottrails and rustic campsites. Five randomly selected comments follow:

The DNR has recently purchased 29 additional acres between Mitchell Creek and the TART Trail (highlighted in yellow above). What is your preference for the future use of this land?

- Half modern camping (full services-sewer and water at site) and low development (trails)
- Expand RV camping sites with more privacy, the "quiet" campground with noise restrictions, premium sites at a higher cost, large rig accommodations, patios
- Basic-rustic camping with motorized access!

- Expanded modern camping along with some hiking trails.
- Maybe a few more modern campsites and a few rustic camp sites, lots of people like rustic camping. Then put in some activities like volleyball, horseshoe maybe a pickleball court...etc...

Other Thoughts

Finally, respondents could share **any other comments** they had about the park, and optionally submit a photograph of their experience. Two hundred and twenty-one comments were submitted, and five randomly selected comments follow:

Please share any other thoughts you may have on the park.

- It is a wonderful park in a great location. Access across the highway always a challenge since no one uses the overhead walkway. That's the only issue.
- New bathrooms, repave the roads.
- Full hookups would be great
- Just keep in mind that tent camper and motor home campers have different wants and needs.
- I love the park, they could do better at enforcing quiet hours.



A sample of photos submitted by survey respondents

B.3 Summary of Stakeholder Input Workshop

To gather targeted input from governmental, non-profit, and business/tourism entities, the planning team invited nearly 50 stakeholders, both individuals and community groups, to participate in a facilitated input workshop held on October 30, 2019, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. at the East Bay Township Hall in Traverse City, Michigan. Representatives of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) provided the stakeholders with a brief overview of Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park, including its natural features, cultural resources, and recreational offerings. The stakeholders were also presented the general management plan process, timeline, and an explanation of the plan elements that their input would inform: the statements of significance, the twenty-year management zone map, and action goals intended to be accomplished over the next ten years.

The stakeholders were divided into small discussion groups around a numbered table (either 1, 2, or 3). They worked together to complete a series of exercises discussing the park’s current status, opportunities for partnerships, the park’s potential benefit to the larger community, and the stakeholders’ vision for the park’s future. Each table then reported out to the larger group. The results of the table exercises are outlined in the following summary.

STAKEHOLDER INPUT WORKSHOP ATTENDEES	
NAME	REPRESENTING
Barbara Nelson Jameson	National Park Service
Michael Sipkoski	Adams chapter
Tyler Bevier	Bay Area Transit Authority
Jim Carruthers	City of TC
John Walter	Retired KJC Traverse City State Park
Derek Melville	City of Traverse City- Parks and Recreation
Chris Oosse	Grand Traverse County Sheriff's Office
Keith J Charters	Self
Carolyn Charters	Self
Krista Phillips	MDOT- Traverse City Office
Leslie Couturier	East Bay Township
Stephen Lagerquist	Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy

PLANNING TEAM ATTENDEES	
NAME	REPRESENTING
Debbie Jensen	DNR-PRD
Lisa Gamero	DNR-PRD
Stephanie Rosinski	DNR-PRD
Kasey Mahony	DNR-PRD
Mitch Babcock	DNR-PRD
Annamarie Bauer	DNR-PRD
Jessica Orlando	DNR-PRD
Christy Summers	Planning Consultant
Caitlin Jackson	Planning Consultant



Stakeholders listen to a presentation on the general management plan



Michigan
Department of
Natural Resources



You're invited!

What

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park
General Management Plan
Stakeholder Input Workshop

When

Wednesday, October 30th
10:00 am - 12:00 pm

Please RSVP to:

Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen
JensenD1@michigan.gov

Where

East Bay Charter Township
1965 N Three Mile Rd, Traverse City, MI 49696

About the plan

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division is in the process of developing a general management plan for Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park. The general management plan will define a long-range planning and management strategy that protects the resources of the site while addressing recreation needs and opportunities. Public and stakeholder input is a critical component of the planning process.

About the workshop

The planning team cordially invites you to attend a stakeholder input workshop! This session will include a brief presentation from the DNR on the planning process and progress followed by individual and group exercises to gather input to inform the plan. We request that your organization send a maximum of two representatives so we may accommodate everyone. We hope to see you there!

Input survey

In addition, we are collecting input from park users via an online survey, which closes on November 10. You may share this link with any who may be interested.

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/TCSP-GMP>

Project website

<http://mdnrmanagementplans.org/traverse-city-state-park>

For more information, please contact:

Plan Administrator Debbie Jensen at 517-284-6105 or
Email JensenD1@michigan.gov

Icebreaker Question

When the stakeholders introduced themselves, they were asked to describe what matters most to them about Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park. Their recorded responses follow in the table below.

WHAT MATTERS MOST TO ME ABOUT KEITH J. CHARTERS TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK IS...
STATEMENT
Provides "urban camping opportunity in Traverse City for a nature/recreation experience for many visitors
1) Overall reputation 2) Cleanliness 3) Safety 4) Staff Friendliness
Traffic on US 31N Highway, safety and security, law enforcement response
Accessibility and availability
That it is kept available for public use
Safe, convenient access for all park and road users
Natural environmental and water quality issues as we grow the recreational resource at the park
Maintaining and improving Mitchell Creek watershed and habitat; Improving how it fits to GTRLC property and TART so more in community use it
The continuation of sharing the TC experience with visitors to our area; with opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian safety, universal access to and around the park
Improved bus stops near the footbridge for transit access
Improved aesthetics of the beach area
Beautification of beach site
Realignment of entrance to 3 Mile
Utilize south parcel to access 3 Mile as egress/ingress
Offering access to our GTRLC property to the south of the state park
Continuation and potential enlargement of park sites and activities in additional land portion
Improvement in outdated bathroom and other facilities including walkways and beach
Movement of traffic light on 3 Mile road directly to beach-improvement on egress and access, perhaps an alternate exit off 3 Mile road

Exercise 1: Say one word or phrase that describes the state park right now.

Commonly mentioned words or phrases that stakeholders used to describe the park related to its convenient location and access to many nearby amenities – the beach, trails, downtown local businesses, multiple modes of transport, and recreation offerings. However, traffic congestion and traffic problems were also frequently mentioned. The stakeholders mentioned that the park is a great local recreation resource that is popular for locals and vacationers.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Traffic congestion/traffic problems-egress	2,3
Trees- canopy	2,3
Family/family recreation	1,3
Gateway	1
Historical bridge	1
Memories	1
Opportunities for enhancement	1
Refreshing	1
Safety concerns (traffic & pedestrian)	1
Surprise	1
Vacations	1
Year-round	1
Access to local businesses	2
Access to multiple modes of transport	2
Affordable	2
Close to downtown	2
Full capacity	2
Great beach for locals- kids & adults	2
Great natural resource in our built natural environment	2
Great outdoor recreation area	2
Oasis	2
Watershed protection	2
Accessible- access in	3
Beach access	3
Convenient	3
Dated	3
Trail access	3

Exercise 2: Say one word or phrase that you want to describe the state park in the future.

When stakeholders thought about how they would like to describe the park in the future, more than one table thought of a pristine, clean, safe place that continues to protect the environment. Some stakeholders imagined an expanded, accessible park with upgraded amenities, better ingress and egress, and updated restrooms and facilities. Ideas also included that the park should do more to protect fish habitat, improve water quality, sustain the tree canopy, be more natural/less hardscaped, and be better connected to other protected lands.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Pristine, clean	1,3
Safe	1,3
Protecting the environment	1,2
Expanded	1,2
Affordable (economic accessibility)	1
Placemaking	1
Beautification of beach	1
Underground utility poles	1
Updated restrooms/facilities	1
Remain the same	2
Expanded	2
Sustain the tree canopy	2
Maintain and enhance water quality	2
Safe and convenient access	2
To be the crown jewel of all state parks	2
Protecting fish habitat	2
Expand and protect beach- GT Band	2
Less hardscapes, more natural	2
Further connected to other protected lands	2
More community outreach- visitor center?	2
Better ingress/egress	3
Pump out station needs	3
Amenities- upgraded	3
Accessible (ADA, RV's, etc.)	3
Trails	3
Educational (events, socials, projects)	3

Exercise 3: How can the state park benefit the wider community now or in the future?

The stakeholders were tasked with focusing on the ways in which the park could benefit the larger community, whether from a standpoint of economic development, recreation, or education, for example. Multiple stakeholder groups mentioned expanded outdoor education opportunities (especially environmental education) as a service the park could provide. Groups also mentioned the financial benefit the park provides as it brings visitors to the area. The stakeholders also felt that improving the access to the state park and connectivity with a new entrance would provide a community benefit.

ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
Expanded outdoor education (outreach environmental)	2,3
Financial benefit to community/ economic value to area	1,3
Improve state park access/ connectivity with new entrance	2,3
Multi-recreational access	1
ADA Kayak launch	1
Continue to improve trail & transit access	1
3-mile entrance at light (new)	1
Year-round access & promotion	1
Encourage compatible development (American Automobile Association building)	1
Mitchell Creek restoration work plan (old DNR plan)	1
Beautification volunteers	1
Natural preservation of existing assets	2
Stormwater runoff protections (ex. Parking area & Mitchell creek)	2
Manage tree canopy	2
Universal access	2
Better pedestrian access & safety	2
Beach & park combined access	2
Native historical use & recognition	2
Environmental (canopy in urban area)	3
Events at beach	3
Involve community in park programs	3
Recruit/retain staff- nearby businesses	3

Exercise 4: What are some collaboration and partnership opportunities that the state park presents for local communities and stakeholders?

Many stakeholders suggested that the park could partner with TART Trails to provide non-motorized access to local businesses, provide wayfinding signage and market the park. Other tables suggested partnerships with the Bay Area Transportation Authority for transportation between the park and downtown, a partnership with MDOT and the road commission to improve the park access and pedestrian crossings, and the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians for potential park land acquisitions.

GROUP OR STAKEHOLDER NAME	COLLABORATION OR PARTNERSHIP IDEA	MENTIONED AT TABLE #
TART Trails	Wayfinding Connections Non-motorized access to local businesses Marking/signage	1,2,3
BATA	Promotion of Bayline Transport to park & downtown	1,2
MDOT/Road Commission	Main entrance realignment Pedestrian crossings/planning Transportation Planning	1,2
GT Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians	Sell/develop property for compatible use, historical & educational land purchase/gift	1,2
Volunteers	Beautification, garden	1
Trout Unlimited/Watershed Center	Mitchell Creek	1
East Bay Township/GTSO	Neighboring zoning/ safety park	1
Hotel Owners	Corridor improvement Corridor Improvement Authority (CIA) district	1
Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy	Access to the natural area to the south with universally accessible trail opportunity	2
Outdoor Recreation Company	Offer recreational equipment use/rentals	2
Watershed Center	Water quality	2
City of Traverse City	Grant collaboration Parks & recreation	2
Firewood Contractors	Safe use of fire wood	2
Local Townships	Fire & emergency services	2
Conservation District	Invasives & restoration	2
Grand Traverse County	Grant collaborations	2
YMCA	Camps, programs, swim lessons, fishing	3
Big Brother/Big Sister	Camps, programs, swim lessons, fishing	3
Youth Work- Child & Family Services	Service projects at parks, tree planting, trail work	3
SEEDS	Service projects at parks, tree planting, trail work	3
Schools	Programs	3
Media Outlets	Advertising, promote programs	3
Northern Michigan College	Programming, service projects	3
Law Enforcement	Contacts with rangers & easy access communication	3

Exercise 5: What improvements or changes would you like to see at the state park? What things would stay the same?

In this exercise, stakeholders first brainstormed ideas for improvements or changes to the park as well as features they thought should stay the same. Then, each attendee could vote on their top three items from the list generated at their table. The items that received the most votes included aligning the beach entrance road with 3-Mile Road, maintaining the natural features, refreshing and updating the look of the park, improving motorized and pedestrian access to the beach and park, and improving the vehicular ingress/egress.

Final Exercise: Collective Priorities

The final exercise of the meeting was to compile the results of exercise 5, combining the top-voted items from each table into a list. The attendees then had the opportunity to prioritize items that were mentioned at any table, creating a list of collective priorities. The collective priorities list below shows that the top voted items were to realign the beach vehicular entrance, to provide safer campground ingress and egress, and to protect the natural features of the park. This input will be considered by the planning team when creating a 10-year action plan.



Stakeholders discuss the future of the park together

IMPROVEMENTS OR CHANGES		
ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #	TOTAL VOTES
Realignment of beach entrance (align with traffic signal)	1, 2	6
Refreshed & updated look	1	4
Improve motorized/pedestrian access to beach & park	2	4
Ingress/Egress- more safe / 3-Mile Property as egress/ ingress	1, 3	4
Additional pump out station	3	3
Connected to nearby protected lands (ex. Reffitt/Mitchell Creek)	2	2
Less impervious surfaces & stormwater improvements	2	2
Accessibility of footbridge	1	1
MDOT hawk signal needed (mid-block crossing)	1	1
Improved appearance of US-31 fence	1	0
Improved look of bridge	1	0
Beach grooming	1	0
Improve universal access	2	0
More staff	3	0
More funding	3	0
Reforestation efforts	3	0
BATA bus access/coordination	3	0

STAY THE SAME		
ITEMS	MENTIONED AT TABLE #	TOTAL VOTES
Natural features	2	5
Affordability	1,2,3	3
Ambiance	3	2
Friendly customer service staff	1	1
Preserve forest where possible	3	1
Footbridge overhead	1	0
Woody vegetation	1	0
Camping & beach access	2	0
Keep Stephanie	3	0

COLLECTIVE PRIORITIES	
ITEMS	VOTES
Realign beach vehicular entrance	12
Safer park ingress/egress (campground)	8
Natural features	7
Additional pump-out station	5
Improve motorized/pedestrian Access to beach	4
Refreshed/updated look	3

B.4 Tribal Communication



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER
DIRECTOR

October 14, 2019

To: Mr. Donald Seal, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
Chief Ronald F. Ekdahl, Tribal Chief, Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe
Mr. Doug Craven, Natural Resources Director, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Chair Regina Gasco Bentley, Tribal Chair, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Mr. Frank Beaver, Natural Resources Director, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
Ogema Larry Romanelli, Little River Band of Ottawa Indians
Chairman Thurlow McClellan, Tribal Chairman, Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa & Chippewa Indians

The Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is in the process of developing new General Management Plans (GMPs) for Leelanau State Park in Leelanau County and Keith J. Charters Traverse City (Traverse City) State Park in Grand Traverse County. The DNR uses 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 plans will include designated management zones for each park and define 10-year action goals that provide specific guidance for development, stewardship of cultural and natural resources, recreation opportunities, education and interpretation opportunities and park management.

The 1,500-acre Leelanau State Park, located at the tip of the Leelanau Peninsula, is home to 2.25 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, a rustic campground, three mini cabins, 8.5 miles of hiking trails with scenic overlooks, winter recreation trails, land open to hunting, a new accessible playground, a picnic area and the Grand Traverse Lighthouse Museum. The majority of the park's southern portion includes critical dunes with associated high-quality exemplary natural communities, habitat for the federally and state-threatened piping plover and a Natural Area Registry Site through an agreement with The Nature Conservancy.

Traverse City State Park is a 79-acre park located just three miles from downtown Traverse City. The park, which was established in 1920, features one-quarter mile of Lake Michigan shoreline along Grand Traverse Bay, a modern campground and lodge, a designated swimming area, seasonal kayak and paddleboard rentals, a playground and 29 acres of undeveloped woodland that was purchased in 2011. Mitchell Creek, a natural reproducing trout stream, runs through the park and empties into Lake Michigan at the west end of the beach, which adjoins land owned by the Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians.

Leelanau and Traverse City State Park General Management Plans

Page 2

October 14, 2019

The planning process includes several opportunities for input to help guide the plan. Stakeholder focus group meetings are scheduled as follows:

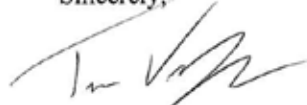
- Leelanau State Park, Tuesday October 29, from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. at Leelanau Township Firehall, 100 8th Street, Northport, Michigan
- Traverse City State Park, Wednesday October 30, from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m., at East Bay Township Hall, 1965 North 3 Mile Road, Traverse City, Michigan.

In addition, online surveys are available for each park to solicit input from park visitors, and public meetings will be scheduled once the draft plans are developed to provide an opportunity for review and comment prior to adoption. Links to the online surveys are available for Leelanau State Park at Michigan.gov/Leelanau and Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park at Michigan.gov/TraverseCity.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with the Tribes independently to discuss the management plan process and any thoughts you may have in relation to the Leelanau or Traverse City State Parks. In addition, you are welcome to send representatives to the stakeholder focus group meeting, or the public meeting, which will be advertised in spring/summer next year. Please contact either Ms. Debbie Jensen, PRD Management Plan Administrator, at 517-284-6105, or myself to arrange a meeting.

For additional information on our management plan process, please visit our website at www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

Sincerely,



Trevor VanDyke
Tribal Coordinator
517-284-6237

cc. Ms. Debbie Jensen, DNR
Ms. Kasey Mahoney, DNR
Ms. Stephanie Rosinski, DNR

B.5 Public Input Survey Data

Public Input Survey

The purpose of this survey is to gather input from **Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park** visitors. Your answers will help the Michigan Department of Natural Resources develop a **General Management Plan** that will guide the future of the park.

This survey should take about **10 minutes** to complete. Your answers will not be shared with any other parties and are confidential unless you provide your email address at the end of the survey.

At the end of the survey, you will be directed to the **project website** that provides additional information on the General Management Plan process and further opportunities for public review and comment.

To proceed with the survey, click the "Next" button.

General Satisfaction

* 1. Have you visited the state park in the last five years?

- Yes
- No (Please explain what keeps you from visiting more often)

2. How often do you visit the park?

- Less than once per year
- 1-2 times per year
- 3-5 times per year
- 6 or more times per year

3. In what seasons do you typically visit the park? (Select all that apply)

- Winter (December, January, February)
- Spring (March, April, May)
- Summer (June, July, August)
- Fall (September, October, November)

4. How do you travel to the park? (Select all that apply)

- Motorized vehicle (Car/Truck/RV/Motorcycle)
- Bicycle
- On Foot
- Other (please explain)

5. From which of the following sources did you get information to plan your trip to the park? (Select all that apply)

- DNR website
- Other websites
- Social media
- Tourist or information center
- Previous experience
- Friends / family
- Printed publication (magazine, book, brochure)
- Other (please specify)

6. What three words would you use to describe Traverse City State Park to someone who has never visited the park?

First Word

Second Word

Third Word

7. Please check ALL the activities in which you participate while at Traverse City State Park. (Select all that apply)

- Walking/running
- Biking
- Fishing
- Metal detecting
- Geocaching
- Nature observation (birding, etc.)
- Other (please specify)
- Visiting the beach
- Swimming
- Motorized boating
- Non-motorized boating/paddling
- Camping
- Picnicking
- Playground use
- Photography
- Park special events (Harvest Festival, camp host activities, etc.)
- Volunteering
- Access to TART Trail

8. Rate the importance of the following in your decision to visit Traverse City State Park (1 = very unimportant, 5 = neutral, 9 = very important)

	1 = Very unimportant	2	3	4	5 = Neutral	6	7	8	9 = Very important
Access to Grand Traverse Bay / Beach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Close to downtown Traverse City	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
TART Trail access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Regional attractions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Camping	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Event lodging	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting Family and Friends	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Your Most Recent Visit

The following questions relate to your most recent visit.

9. On your last visit, which statement best describes your party?

- Individual
- Couple
- Family
- Friends
- Family and friends
- Organized group or club
- Other (please specify)

10. On your last visit, what age ranges were in your party, including you? (Check all that apply)

- Under 5 years old
- 5-12 years old
- 13-17 years old
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-64
- 65 or older

11. Beach Area: For only the facilities you visited from the list below, please rate your level of satisfaction (1 = Highly dissatisfied, 5 = Neutral, 9 = Highly satisfied):

	1 = Highly dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 = Neutral	6	7	8	9 = Highly satisfied	N/A
Vehicular access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pedestrian access	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Parking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Picnic area	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Beach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Playground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Restrooms (at beach)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

12. What did you like most about your experience at the beach area?

13. Are there any changes that you would like to see made at the beach area in order to improve your experience?

- No
- Yes (please describe)

14. During your last visit, were there any activities you or someone in your party wished to participate in but were not able to due to personal mobility challenges or lack of accessibility accommodations?

- No
- Yes (please describe)

Overnight Accommodations

* 15. Have you ever used any of the overnight accommodations (campground, modern lodge, mini cabin, pop-up camper rental, youth group campsite) at the park?

- Yes
 No

16. Where did you stay the last time you used the overnight accommodations at the park? (Select all that apply)

- Campground
 Mini Cabin
 Modern lodge
 Pop-up camper rental
 Youth group campsite

17. During your last visit, how many nights did you stay?

- 1 night
 2-3 nights
 4-6 nights
 7 or more nights

18. How do you primarily access the beach from the campground?

- Walk using the pedestrian bridge
 Walk using street level crossings
 Bicycle
 Drive

19. Did you bring your pet(s)?

- Yes
 No

20. Please rate your level of satisfaction with your overnight accommodations. (1 = Highly dissatisfied, 5 = Neutral, 9 = Highly satisfied)

	1 = Highly dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 = Neutral	6	7	8	9 = Highly satisfied
Campground	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Mini Cabin	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Modern lodge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pop-up camper rental	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Youth group campsite	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

21. What did you like most about your accommodations?

22. What could be done to improve your satisfaction with the accommodations in the future?

- Nothing
- Please describe the changes you would like made:

Non-camper Accommodations

23. On your most recent visit, where did you stay when you visited the park?

- Own principal home
- Own second home
- Another's home/second home
- Another state park
- Dispersed camping on state or federal forest land
- Another public campground (federal, county, township, etc.)
- Private campground
- Hotel/motel/rental property/B&B
- Other (please specify)

24. Park concession services: For only those services you have used, please rate your level of satisfaction (1 = Highly dissatisfied, 5 = Neutral, 9 = Highly satisfied):

	1 = Highly dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 = Neutral	6	7	8	9 = Highly satisfied	N/A
Firewood	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ice	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rentals (paddleboard, bike, kayak)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

25. What changes, if any, would you make to improve the concession services at the park?

- None
- Please describe the desired changes:

Fishing Access

* 26. Do you use the park for fishing access?

- Yes
- No

27. How do you typically access the water for fishing?

- Shoreline
- Motorized boat
- Non-motorized boat

28. What is your preferred fishing location when visiting the park?

- Mitchell Creek
- Lake Michigan
- Other local water bodies (please specify):

29. What is your target species of fish? (Check all that apply)

- Lake trout
- Brown trout
- Whitefish/cisco
- Perch
- Smallmouth bass
- Salmon
- Bluegill
- No particular species

30. Please enter any comments you may have about fishing at/near the park.

Special Events and Programs

* 31. Have you participated in a special event or program (activities, program, class or other event) at the park?

- No
- Yes (please list the events or programs)

32. Please rate your level of satisfaction with the programs or activities in which you participated. (1 = Highly dissatisfied, 5 = Neutral, 9 = Highly satisfied)

	1 = Highly dissatisfied	2	3	4	5 = Neutral	6	7	8	9 = Highly satisfied
No	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
[Insert text from Other]	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

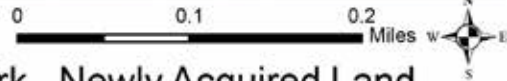
33. Please enter any comments you may have on the special events or programs in which you participated at the park.

New Land

Park Boundary Map with Recently Purchased Land Highlighted in Yellow



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park - Newly Acquired Land

- State Park Boundary
- Newly Acquired Land
- Road
- Railroad
- Regional Non-motorized Trail



Updated: 10/07/2019

34. The DNR has recently purchased 29 additional acres between Mitchell Creek and the TART Trail (highlighted in yellow above). What is your preference for the future use of this land?

- Low level development: foot trails, creek access, etc. (no camping)
- Moderate level development: hike-in / bike-in rustic camping
- Higher level development: expanded modern camping/lodging opportunities and services
- Other (please describe):

Other Thoughts

35. Please share any other thoughts you may have on the park.

36. (Optional) Share a photo of your experience at Traverse City State Park! By uploading a photo, you grant permission to the DNR to use the photo.

Choose File

No file chosen

37. What is the ZIP code of your primary residence?

ZIP:

38. What is your age?

- Under 18
- 18-29
- 30-39
- 40-49
- 50-64
- 65 or older
- I prefer not to answer.

39. If you would like to be informed about future meetings for the Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park General Management Plan, please leave your contact info below:

Name

Email

Thank you for participating in the Traverse City State Park General Management Plan survey! Your input is appreciated.

Q.1 HAVE YOU VISITED THE PARK IN THE LAST FIVE YEARS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	95.98%	645
NO (PLEASE SPECIFY WHAT KEEPS YOU FROM VISITING THE PARK)	4.02%	27
ANSWERED	672	
SKIPPED	0	

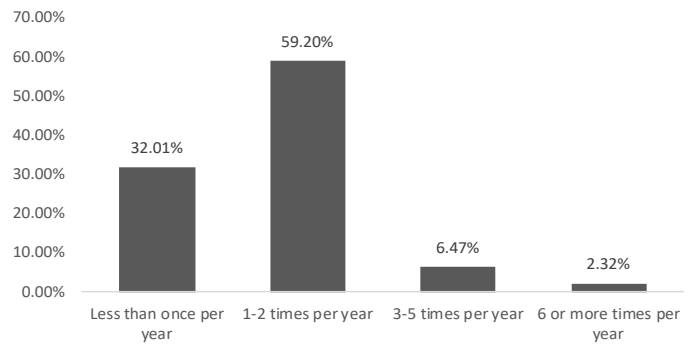
No (Please specify what keeps you from visiting the park):

- I live about 6 miles away and own vacation ownership at Pinestead Reef for use of beach and amenities. We occasionally have friends and family stay at the State Park.
- Haven't had the time. I prefer more remote, wild parks. Great beach though.
- I live here
- I love here, never think of this side of town, o honestly forget about it
- I live 3 mi. From the park.
- We try to stay at as many state parks as possible with the goal of camping at all of them
- need room for large rigs and prefer full hook up sites.
- Visit other parks
- difficult to book a campsite
- This past summer
- never stayed in this state park
- The park is always booked
- Prefer off season, smaller crowds. Beginning to travel more though
- Wanted to visit just never had the opportunity
- V
- Traverse City State Park
- Some washrooms need updating
- Better locations near by to visit
- very hard to get in or out . needs traffic light . main road has heavy traffic
- Too crowded
- Have been visiting other state parks.
- I used the playground, but as far as the actual campground it feels like it is targeted more for tourists, which isn't necessarily a bad thing.
- I live here and also was gone for six years.
- Live out of state, don't get to see all of Michigan when we are up there.
- Plenty of other less busy parks to visit.
- I live here
- I am a resident in the area

Q.2 HOW OFTEN DO YOU VISIT THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
LESS THAN ONCE PER YEAR	32.01%	193
1-2 TIMES PER YEAR	59.20%	357
3-5 TIMES PER YEAR	6.47%	39
6 OR MORE TIMES PER YEAR	2.32%	14
ANSWERED	603	
SKIPPED	69	

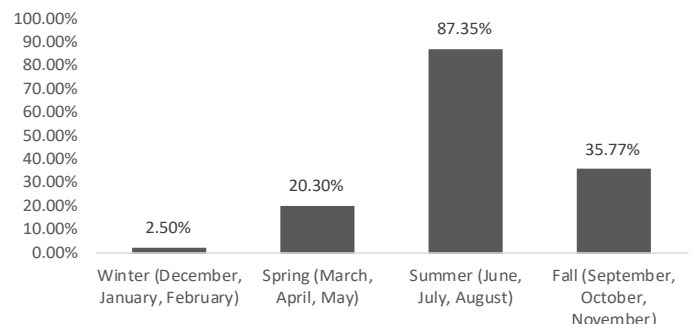
How often do you visit the park?



Q.3 IN WHAT SEASONS DO YOU TYPICALLY VISIT THE PARK? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
WINTER (DECEMBER, JANUARY, FEBRUARY)	2.50%	15
SPRING (MARCH, APRIL, MAY)	20.30%	122
SUMMER (JUNE, JULY, AUGUST)	87.35%	525
FALL (SEPTEMBER, OCTOBER, NOVEMBER)	35.77%	215
ANSWERED	601	
SKIPPED	71	

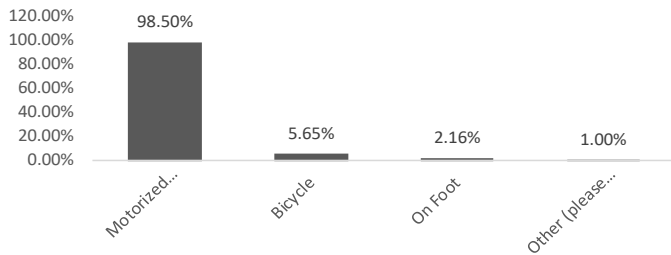
In what seasons do you typically visit the park?
(Select all that apply)



**Q.4 HOW DO YOU TRAVEL TO THE PARK?
(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
MOTORIZED VEHICLE (CAR/TRUCK/RV/MOTORCYCLE)	98.50%	593
BICYCLE	5.65%	34
ON FOOT	2.16%	13
OTHER (PLEASE EXPLAIN)	1.00%	6
ANSWERED	602	
SKIPPED	70	

How do you travel to the park?
(Select all that apply)



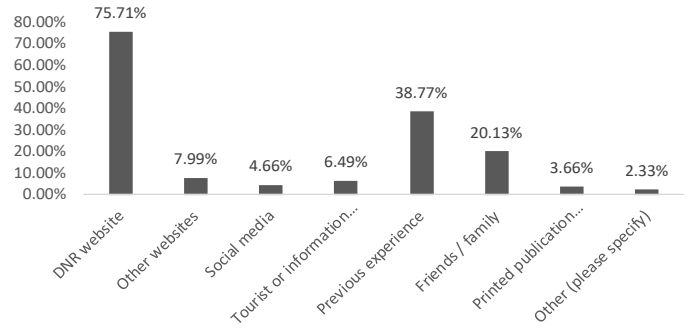
Other:

1. BATA
2. We drove there and then pitched a tent.
3. Boat
4. Small plane/commercial air
5. On
6. Motor home with a car towed behind

**Q.5 FROM WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING SOURCES DID YOU GET INFORMATION TO PLAN YOUR TRIP TO THE PARK?
(SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)**

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
DNR WEBSITE	75.71%	455
OTHER WEBSITES	7.99%	48
SOCIAL MEDIA	4.66%	28
TOURIST OR INFORMATION CENTER	6.49%	39
PREVIOUS EXPERIENCE	38.77%	233
FRIENDS / FAMILY	20.13%	121
PRINTED PUBLICATION (MAGAZINE, BOOK, BROCHURE)	3.66%	22
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	2.33%	14
ANSWERED	601	
SKIPPED	71	

From which of the following sources did you get information to plan your trip to the park?
(Select all that apply)



Other (please specify):

1. NO PLANNING
2. Pass it on a daily basis.
3. I am local, so know about the park
4. RV Park App
5. We live in TC
6. Cherry Fest Headquarters
7. Drive by the park
8. none
9. Park campsite pictures
10. Bayshore Marathon webpage
11. local resident
12. I live near this area. The State Park is a resource for beaches.
13. TART trail
14. None

Q.6 WHAT THREE WORDS WOULD YOU USE TO DESCRIBE TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK TO SOMEONE WHO HAS NEVER VISITED THE PARK?

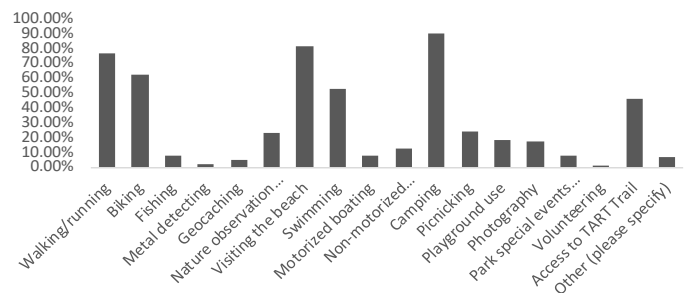


Words most frequently used to describe the park. Words that were used three or more times are included. Larger word size indicates a more frequent response.

Q.7 PLEASE CHECK ALL THE ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU PARTICIPATE WHILE AT TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK. (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
WALKING/RUNNING	76.47%	455
BIKING	62.02%	369
FISHING	7.90%	47
METAL DETECTING	1.68%	10
GEOCACHING	5.21%	31
NATURE OBSERVATION (BIRDING, ETC.)	23.03%	137
VISITING THE BEACH	81.18%	483
SWIMMING	52.77%	314
MOTORIZED BOATING	7.56%	45
NON-MOTORIZED BOATING/PADDLING	12.94%	77
CAMPING	90.25%	537
PICNICKING	24.37%	145
PLAYGROUND USE	18.66%	111
PHOTOGRAPHY	17.48%	104
PARK SPECIAL EVENTS (HARVEST FESTIVAL, CAMP HOST ACTIVITIES, ETC.)	8.07%	48
VOLUNTEERING	1.18%	7
ACCESS TO TART TRAIL	46.22%	275
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	6.89%	41
ANSWERED		595
SKIPPED		77

Please check ALL the activities in which you participate while at Traverse City State Park. (Select all that apply)



Other (please specify):

1. Wine tasting
2. Shopping
3. Mrpa group
4. visiting Traverse City
5. Exploring Traverse City
6. access to Traverse City events
7. go to wineries
8. Wine tasting and hiking
9. Close to Cherry Fest
10. Sightseeing and shopping
11. Shopping
12. Kayaking on West Traverse Bay
13. Accommodations while traveling
14. shopping
15. Fellowship

16. Wine tasting
17. Dog Trail
18. Grandkids soccer tournament nearby
19. Kayaking
20. Bike to downtown area
21. Easy access to downtown TC
22. Traverse City attractions
23. Camp fires, base camp for local activities, relaxations!
24. Cherry festival
25. Used as a base camp to bike around Traverse City
26. Local area exploring
27. Proximity to Sleeping Bear Dunes and Traverse City and Cherry Festival
28. Easy beach access
29. Explore Traverse City and surrounding area
30. wine tasting
31. Michael Moore Film Festival
32. Sports Tournament
33. Location
34. Bayshore Marathon
35. Ale Trail
36. Kayak fishing tournaments
37. rock hunting
38. Tourism of the Traverse City area
39. Visit Traverse City- play, museum, restaurants, ran 5-mile race
40. Visit friends
41. Wine Tours

Q.8 RATE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR DECISION TO VISIT TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK (1 = VERY UNIMPORTANT, 5 = NEUTRAL, 9 = VERY IMPORTANT)

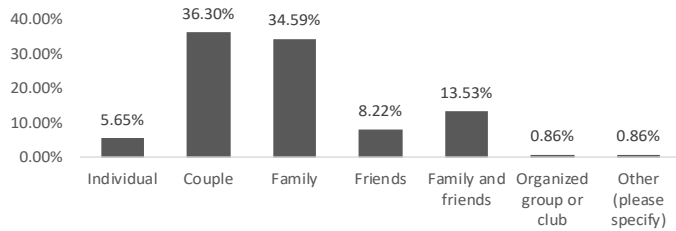
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
ACCESS TO GRAND TRAVERSE BAY / BEACH	8.81%	1.69%	2.37%	1.36%	11.86%	6.78%	16.10%	11.53%	39.49%	590	6.85
CLOSE TO DOWNTOWN TRAVERSE CITY	7.26%	2.20%	3.55%	1.86%	16.72%	9.97%	14.70%	12.50%	31.25%	592	6.57
TART TRAIL ACCESS	10.98%	3.77%	3.09%	2.92%	19.55%	7.55%	10.98%	10.98%	30.19%	583	6.19
REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS	4.13%	2.24%	3.79%	2.41%	17.73%	9.12%	19.62%	16.52%	24.44%	581	6.62
CAMPING	8.64%	0.85%	0.51%	1.02%	6.10%	1.19%	7.29%	12.54%	61.86%	590	7.62
EVENT LODGING	27.42%	5.10%	5.10%	4.22%	40.77%	2.99%	4.04%	2.81%	7.56%	569	4.1
VISITING FAMILY AND FRIENDS	25.77%	5.84%	4.47%	3.44%	27.84%	5.50%	7.90%	6.01%	13.23%	582	4.59
ANSWERED	568										
SKIPPED	104										

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INPUT

Q.9 ON YOUR LAST VISIT, WHICH STATEMENT BEST DESCRIBES YOUR PARTY?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
INDIVIDUAL	5.65%	33
COUPLE	36.30%	212
FAMILY	34.59%	202
FRIENDS	8.22%	48
FAMILY AND FRIENDS	13.53%	79
ORGANIZED GROUP OR CLUB	0.86%	5
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	0.86%	5
ANSWERED	584	
SKIPPED	88	

On your last visit, which statement best describes your party?



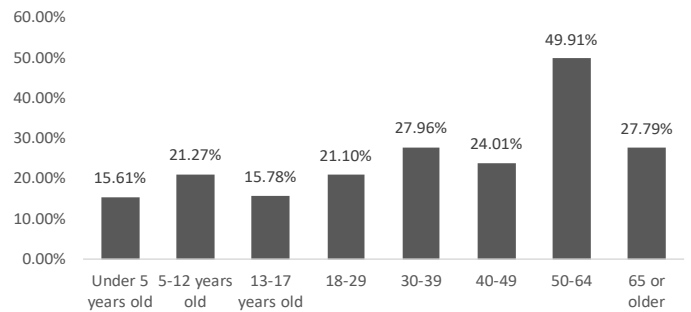
Other (please specify):

- Two couples
- C
- Multiple family sites
- Family and extended family
- Couple & dog

Q.10 ON YOUR LAST VISIT, WHAT AGE RANGES WERE IN YOUR PARTY, INCLUDING YOU? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
UNDER 5 YEARS OLD	15.61%	91
5-12 YEARS OLD	21.27%	124
13-17 YEARS OLD	15.78%	92
18-29	21.10%	123
30-39	27.96%	163
40-49	24.01%	140
50-64	49.91%	291
65 OR OLDER	27.79%	162
ANSWERED	583	
SKIPPED	89	

On your last visit, what age ranges were in your party, including you? (Check all that apply)



Q.11 BEACH AREA: FOR ONLY THE FACILITIES YOU VISITED FROM THE LIST BELOW, PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION (1 = HIGHLY DISSATISFIED, 5 = NEUTRAL, 9 = HIGHLY SATISFIED):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
VEHICULAR ACCESS	1.63%	2.36%	2.54%	4.72%	19.24%	6.17%	9.98%	11.07%	21.05%	21.23%	551	6.5
PEDESTRIAN ACCESS	2.15%	2.15%	1.80%	2.51%	10.95%	5.57%	12.39%	19.39%	35.91%	7.18%	557	7.25
PARKING	1.45%	1.63%	3.44%	2.71%	20.61%	5.79%	12.12%	10.85%	19.35%	22.06%	553	6.52
PICNIC AREA	0.75%	0.56%	2.26%	1.69%	31.95%	3.95%	7.52%	6.20%	11.65%	33.46%	532	6.09
BEACH	2.87%	1.79%	1.25%	2.87%	9.68%	6.45%	14.87%	18.64%	31.72%	9.86%	558	7.15
PLAYGROUND	1.88%	1.50%	1.32%	1.32%	27.82%	4.14%	6.58%	6.20%	8.08%	41.17%	532	5.86
RESTROOMS (AT BEACH)	2.23%	1.86%	4.83%	4.83%	19.89%	5.76%	8.74%	7.25%	11.34%	33.27%	538	5.89
ANSWERED	568											
SKIPPED	104											

Q.12 WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR EXPERIENCE AT THE BEACH AREA?

ANSWERED	404
SKIPPED	268

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Responses:

- 3. geocaching
- 6. Close parking to be beach
- 7. view of the water
- 53. the view
- 70. The water! It's clean and so inviting. We spend all day, every day swimming while we are there.
- 79. beach sand clean
- 89. View
- 96. It's a large area so it doesn't feel cramped.
- 131. The water is not usually rough.
- 146. Proximity and access to the park
- 172. The view of the bay
- 179. The clear water
- 183. Access
- 196. Playground and bay
- 215. The view
- 218. Clean clear water
- 221. Sandy beach
- 249. The cleanliness of the beach
- 266. clean area
- 279. Access Easy
- 291. good, not the weather for it
- 297. The views
- 298. Nothing. Very dirty with lots of weeds, trash.
- 304. Sandy
- 328. View from crosswalk
- 335. The beauty of the lake
- 340. Location
- 348. Nice access amongst all the motels.
- 366. dipping our feet in the water
- 388. beach access

Q.13 ARE THERE ANY CHANGES THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE MADE AT THE BEACH AREA IN ORDER TO IMPROVE YOUR EXPERIENCE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NO	63.16%	324
YES (PLEASE DESCRIBE)	36.84%	189
ANSWERED	513	
SKIPPED	159	

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Yes (please describe):

- 1. keep johns open more
- 2. Better access to enter and exit the parking lot. Traffic is very heavy on US-31 and getting out is especially difficult if you are turning left (northward)
- 4. restroom, litter
- 12. Pet friendly area
- 17. Ramp to the pedestrian bridge so it's easier to push a stroller
- 24. Not much can be done, but the traffic noise detracts from the experience.
- 28. traffic light at campground entrance/exit
- 35. accessibility from the main road
- 38. Parking is terrible and very narrow parking space
- 41. sand should be groomed during the season regularly. Traffic is loud.
- 51. A barrier wall to reduce excessive road noise
- 55. Rake the beach and actually take care of it like you used to!
- 74. Keep it clean. Add trash cans for people to use
- 75. More playground equipment
- 79. More sand for flooded areas.
- 96. Reinstate benches for observing sunsets and resting after walking.
- 107. The beach needs sand brought in so there is not a lake with cattails in the middle of it. The sand needs to be grated and skimmed to keep it clean. Years ago the tractor cleaned the beach every other day at least.
- 116. Better pedestrian access from campground. The bridge is difficult to cross with children and all their stuff.
- 127. Food truck
- 128. Remodel the pedestrian bridge
- 137. Not much room to walk long distance
- 153. easier access

- 157. cleaner, picnic tables...
- 160. Cleaned more often
- 167. Available to watch the sunrise!
- 172. Gate from the campground to the walkway over the road opened earlier.
- 173. Easier or additional access to the beach. Crossing the road can be dangerous at times.
- 178. Bird control
- 184. It did not seem very clean. Lots of debris was in the water and trash in the sand.
- 188. Shaded areas.

- 14. To cumbersome to cross path to get to beach with any beach gear and small children.
- 15. Walking across the cross-walk bridge to the beach
- 16. Getting to the water
- 17. Child in wheelchair
- 18. ADA kayak launch

Q.14 DURING YOUR LAST VISIT, WERE THERE ANY ACTIVITIES YOU OR SOMEONE IN YOUR PARTY WISHED TO PARTICIPATE IN BUT WERE NOT ABLE TO DUE TO PERSONAL MOBILITY CHALLENGES OR LACK OF ACCESSIBILITY ACCOMMODATIONS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NO	96.80%	544
YES (PLEASE DESCRIBE)	3.20%	18
ANSWERED	562	
SKIPPED	110	

Q.15 HAVE YOU EVER USED ANY OF THE OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS (CAMPGROUND, MODERN LODGE, MINI CABIN, POP-UP CAMPER RENTAL, YOUTH GROUP CAMPSITE) AT THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	82.85%	483
NO	17.15%	100
OTHER (PLEASE SPECIFY)	0.00%	0
ANSWERED	583	
SKIPPED	89	

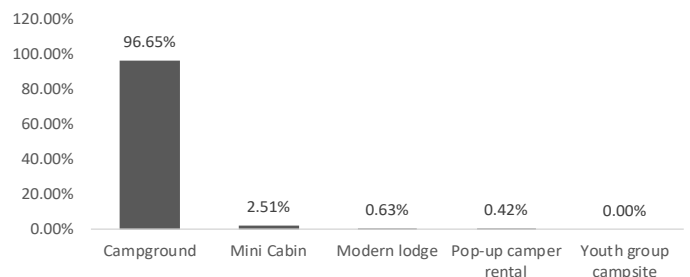
Q.16 WHERE DID YOU STAY THE LAST TIME YOU USED THE OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS AT THE PARK? (SELECT ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
CAMPGROUND	96.65%	462
MINI CABIN	2.51%	12
MODERN LODGE	0.63%	3
POP-UP CAMPER RENTAL	0.42%	2
YOUTH GROUP CAMPSITE	0.00%	0
ANSWERED	478	
SKIPPED	194	

Yes (please describe):

- 1. Handicap access
- 2. Easier access on walking bridge. Possibly change to a ramp over stairs for strollers, walkers, etc.
- 3. I would have liked earlier access to the beach from the campground walkway to watch the sunrise without having to cross the road where there was high traffic
- 4. Should have dog access at the beach. There are a lot of older couples that travel with their pets
- 5. No grills in the park
- 6. No public boating that visitors could take. We are not taking a boat cross the country.
- 7. Would love to bring motorcycle however the road is too busy and dangerous to pull in and out of.
- 8. Campground did not have room for kids to play ball or play anything without going into road. We couldn't have a campfire as trailers to close together
- 9. Stairs to beach from campground can be difficult
- 10. It would be nice to walk across street without climbing the bridge for those with physical challenges. The light is a long way to walk to.
- 11. should have a ramp
- 12. Fishing
- 13. Stairs up over road we're a challenge for us older folks

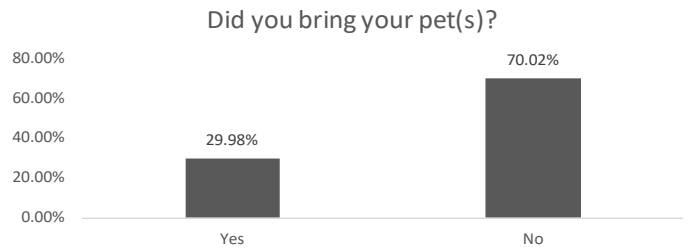
Where did you stay the last time you used the overnight accommodations at the park? (Select all that apply)



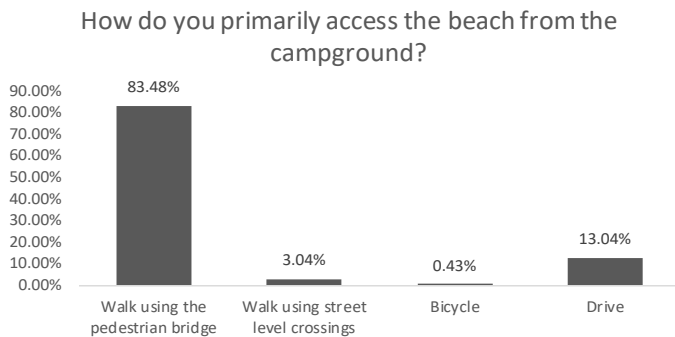
Q.17 DURING YOUR LAST VISIT, HOW MANY NIGHTS DID YOU STAY?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
1 NIGHT	7.10%	34
2-3 NIGHTS	52.82%	253
4-6 NIGHTS	27.97%	134
7 OR MORE NIGHTS	12.11%	58
ANSWERED	479	
SKIPPED	193	



Q.19 DID YOU BRING YOUR PET(S)?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	29.98%	143
NO	70.02%	334
ANSWERED	477	
SKIPPED	195	



Q.18 HOW DO YOU PRIMARILY ACCESS THE BEACH FROM THE CAMPGROUND?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
WALK USING THE PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE	83.48%	384
WALK USING STREET LEVEL CROSSINGS	3.04%	14
BICYCLE	0.43%	2
DRIVE	13.04%	60
ANSWERED	460	
SKIPPED	212	



Q.20 PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH YOUR OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS. (1 = HIGHLY DISSATISFIED, 5 = NEUTRAL, 9 = HIGHLY SATISFIED)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
CAMPGROUND	1.08%	2.38%	3.03%	3.90%	4.98%	12.77%	24.46%	20.35%	27.06%	462	7.1
MINI CABIN	0.00%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%	8.33%	0.00%	25.00%	0.00%	58.33%	12	7.67
MODERN LODGE	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	33.33%	33.33%	33.33%	3	8
POP-UP CAMPER RENTAL	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	50.00%	2	7
YOUTH GROUP CAMPSITE	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0	0
ANSWERED	478										
SKIPPED	194										

Q.21 WHAT DID YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT YOUR ACCOMMODATIONS?

ANSWERED	397
SKIPPED	275

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Yes (please describe):

- 2. near the restroom
- 8. Trees buffering sites
- 10. Shady spots, friendly campers.
- 30. We were parked in the back of the campground away from the horrific road noise.
- 47. Flat
- 57. The access to the tart trail
- 75. Level campsite
- 95. Ease of access
- 107. Close proximity to beach town and trail
- 117. Good campsite
- 120. Clean
- 156. The grounds are beautiful
- 162. TART trail bike path
- 176. Good site
- 180. Proximity and affordability
- 205. large sites
- 211. Dry
- 213. security
- 222. We get a site right by the pedestrian bridge. These sites are large and convenient for the beach.
- 251. The location of the actual campground
- 283. Quiet

- 296. Farthest section away from the road. Trees separate sites.
- 305. The size of most of the camping sites
- 310. trees
- 346. Lot location
- 354. large campsite
- 375. Location, large sites, atmosphere, proximity to new bathroom.
- 381. proximity to city
- 385. nice size lots
- 397. Convenient location

Q.22 WHAT COULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE YOUR SATISFACTION WITH THE ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE FUTURE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NOTHING	30.26%	141
PLEASE DESCRIBE THE CHANGES YOU WOULD LIKE MADE:	69.74%	325
ANSWERED	466	
SKIPPED	206	

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Yes (please describe):

- 3. I truly after bringing children up there for ever would like to see some kind of basketball court,so many teens there who would continually use it,I have said this before and just number one on my list-basketball court just do it
- 11. larger campsites
- 17. More clearly marked site perimeters. The site width was easy to understand, but site depth was less defined.
- 39. Space! And quite. Doesn't feel like camping

- 48. Cut half the damn trees down. Seriously. This park is an obstacle course when towing and backing in a camper with narrow one way roads and giant pines trees 18 inches from the road. Clipped my awning on one and when I got out to look at damage you could see about 8 other old scars on tree where people had previously hit the same tree. You also have almost no sunlight in most of the sites due to the canopy of trees.
- 59. More showers in facilities.
- 65. Grate on firepit for cooking Clean the restrooms more frequently. They were dirty!
- 75. New bathrooms and start re planting programs and starting a donation program to help
- 81. Cleanliness and maintenance to the bathhouses, overcrowding within park.
- 83. Keep the campground similar to how it is. Upgrade older buildings as funding allows
- 86. There was poison ivy everywhere in the campsites nearest to the road, when you travel with 4 small kids it makes it a campground you won't choose again.
- 95. Updated restrooms
- 119. Lots need to be leveled out.
- 148. More affordable wood available for purchase.
- 151. Option for water and sewage hookup
- 156. Reinstate the Pet Free camping area. The overwhelming number of dogs are a major detraction.
- 172. Cleaner newer bathrooms, vastly improved playground, allow open containers of alcohol, full hook up sites.
- 195. Better pedestrian bridge, some kind of traffic management. Making a left turn into the park is nearly impossible.
- 202. my site was small and too close to others. don't make such close/small sites.
- 206. Turning left out of the campground is horrible because of the traffic. We often sit more than 5 minutes to do it, take the chance of a crash, or turn right. More pull thru sites to accommodate people with bigger boats.
- 239. 50amp service, water. Clear out a few trees
- 243. Campground looks dated and uninviting. Needs new

landscaping and signs to give the campground some life back

- 244. I would probably stay on the other side of the park so I don't hear the highway traffic as much
- 284. Nicer, cleaner bathrooms
- 294. Our site was way too awkward. Almost impossible to get our small trailer onto the site
- 299. Bathrooms in dire need of updating. Some trees on campground sites need to be removed for easier access backing into site.
- 308. Adding water/sewer to hookups
- 314. better bathrooms and showers
- 317. The bathroom buildings, removing some trees to get campers into sites more easily and remove some of the squirrels. They are everywhere and got into my friends camper by chewing through the screen and destroyed the inside.
- 318. Nicer bathrooms

Q.23 ON YOUR MOST RECENT VISIT, WHERE DID YOU STAY WHEN YOU VISITED THE PARK?		
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
OWN PRINCIPAL HOME	55.32%	26
OWN SECOND HOME	2.13%	1
ANOTHER'S HOME/ SECOND HOME	10.64%	5
ANOTHER STATE PARK	14.89%	7
DISPERSED CAMPING ON STATE OR FEDERAL FOREST LAND	0.00%	0
ANOTHER PUBLIC CAMPGROUND (FEDERAL, COUNTY, TOWNSHIP, ETC.)	2.13%	1
PRIVATE CAMPGROUND	2.13%	1
HOTEL/MOTEL/RENTAL PROPERTY/B&B	12.77%	6
ANSWERED	47	
SKIPPED	597	

Q.24 PARK CONCESSION SERVICES: FOR ONLY THOSE SERVICES YOU HAVE USED, PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION (1 = HIGHLY DISSATISFIED, 5 = NEUTRAL, 9 = HIGHLY SATISFIED):

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	N/A	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
FIREWOOD	1.32%	1.51%	1.88%	1.69%	15.82%	4.33%	10.55%	11.68%	19.77%	31.45%	531	6.81
ICE	0.79%	0.20%	0.39%	0.99%	14.40%	2.37%	6.51%	9.86%	19.33%	45.17%	507	7.13
RENTALS (PADDLEBOARD, BIKE, KAYAK)	0.61%	0.20%	0.41%	0.20%	20.28%	1.01%	1.01%	1.42%	2.23%	72.62%	493	5.44
ANSWERED	533											
SKIPPED	139											

Q.25 WHAT CHANGES, IF ANY, WOULD YOU MAKE TO IMPROVE THE CONCESSION SERVICES AT THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NONE	80.21%	389
PLEASE DESCRIBE THE DESIRED CHANGES:	19.79%	96
ANSWERED	485	
SKIPPED	187	

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Please describe the desired changes:

- 3. it would be nice to have some activities in the park
- 10. A small store for campers would be nice. Just the basics is all that is needed
- 12. separate area for tents only
- 14. Vegan options!
- 15. A simple supply store. We forgot some things. Back country North was close and set us up
- 23. Bigger bundles of firewood for cheaper price
- 25. Concession at beach
- 27. Always seem to be sold out of wood over the July 4th timeframe, have a reserve stock somewhere for high demand times or more frequent restocking by whomever you get it from.
- 30. Dryer fire wood
- 33. I could not see any rentals in late July when we were there at your campsite. We rented from West Traverse Bay site.
- 35. Often run out of firewood and ice. Better supply during busy times
- 43. Small general store for frequently used, but forgotten items.
- 45. Camp store
- 48. better staffing
- 49. Having firewood to purchase. Ran out over the week of the 4th July this year.
- 50. there are basically none
- 53. Although we did not rent at the concession stand, it would have been nice to have a map of the TART trail that we could have taken to have with us. There were parts of the trail, especially where it was around Boardman Lake, that were a little confusing. Although there are signs with arrows- having a map would have been good. The concession stand would have been a good place to note underwater portions of the trail as well.
- 56. More accessible fire wood. Not sure where we could have

gotten ice from. Didn't know about bike rentals.

- 59. Add a camp store with on site food service.
- 64. Coffee machine :) pay for your own firewood (limited set out maybe?)
- 67. Food truck at beach
- 73. wood prices are a bit out of hand at all the parks, that almost make people want to bring there own wood,,, need to do better on that.
- 74. More camping sites. I would also like to see more Camper cabins or Popup campers.
- 82. A camp store would be nice.
- 83. Clean it up & staff
- 86. Some sort of snack concession might be nice
- 88. I always find the firewood situation at state parks to be lack luster for the most part when they sell the small bundles of wood. However, the firewood situation in this park was no worse than usual.
- 93. I didn't know they existed. I only visited the beach.
- 94. Beach chair rental would be nice
- 95. Ability to purchase firewood outside of office hours

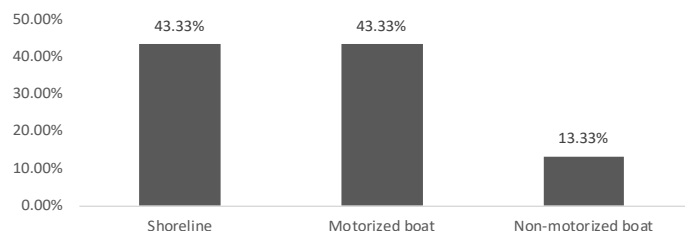
Q.26 DO YOU USE THE PARK FOR FISHING ACCESS?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
YES	5.22%	30
NO	94.78%	545
ANSWERED	575	
SKIPPED	97	

Q.27 HOW DO YOU TYPICALLY ACCESS THE WATER FOR FISHING?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
SHORELINE	43.33%	13
MOTORIZED BOAT	43.33%	13
NON-MOTORIZED BOAT	13.33%	4
ANSWERED	30	
SKIPPED	642	

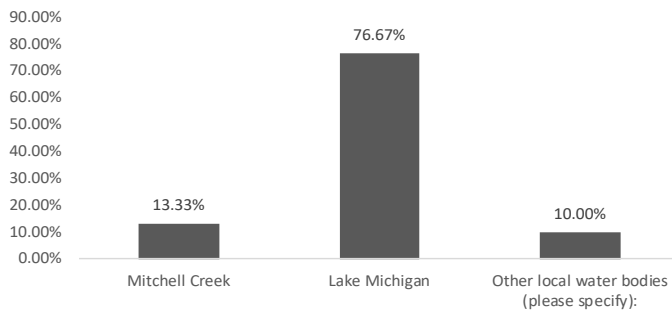
How do you typically access the water for fishing?



Q.28 WHAT IS YOUR PREFERRED FISHING LOCATION WHEN VISITING THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
MITCHELL CREEK	13.33%	4
LAKE MICHIGAN	76.67%	23
OTHER LOCAL WATER BODIES (PLEASE SPECIFY):	10.00%	3
ANSWERED	30	
SKIPPED	642	

What is your preferred fishing location when visiting the park?



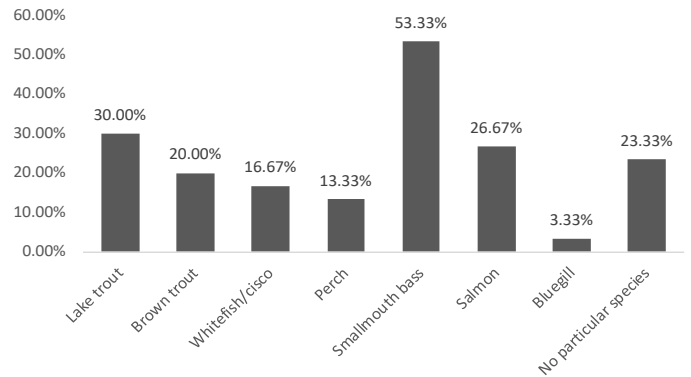
Other local water bodies (Please Specify):

1. Boardman River
2. Grand Traverse Bay
3. Leelanau

Q.29 WHAT IS YOUR TARGET SPECIES OF FISH? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
LAKE TROUT	30.00%	9
BROWN TROUT	20.00%	6
WHITEFISH/CISCO	16.67%	5
PERCH	13.33%	4
SMALLMOUTH BASS	53.33%	16
SALMON	26.67%	8
BLUEGILL	3.33%	1
NO PARTICULAR SPECIES	23.33%	7
ANSWERED	30	
SKIPPED	642	

What is your target species of fish?
(Check all that apply)



Q.30 PLEASE ENTER ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE ABOUT FISHING AT/NEAR THE PARK.

ANSWERED	10
SKIPPED	662

Responses:

1. fishermans wonderland the whole area
2. a small fishing pier would be nice at the mouth of Mitchell creek, also a boat launch is needed
3. Some form of pier with access to deeper water at Creek mouth is badly needed
4. The park needs a boat launch.
5. Not real convenient to launch the boat. Need to drive onto old mission peninsula to get to a DNR boat launch.
6. Need a better ramp and area for trucks to get in and out of launching a boat. You can barely turn a truck around in the public launch that is on the corner of 37 & main rd into Traverse City, plus its all sand could be ashphalted or concrete
7. Not a top priority.
8. Fishing in Grand Traverse Bay is excellent and the water is beautifully clear.
9. Primarily fish shoreline areas of East Bay.
10. The center road boat launch needs a WORKING light. potholes need to be filled, more parking, and ticket vehicles without boat trailers that take up parking spaces.

Q.31 HAVE YOU PARTICIPATED IN A SPECIAL EVENT OR PROGRAM (ACTIVITIES, PROGRAM, CLASS OR OTHER EVENT) AT THE PARK?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
NO	91.11%	523
YES (PLEASE LIST THE EVENTS OR PROGRAMS)	8.89%	51
ANSWERED	574	
SKIPPED	98	

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Yes (please list the events or programs):

- 2. Camp host programs for kids.
- 3. bridge walk
- 7. Crafts at the campground host
- 9. Kid-related programs and I couldn't be more specific
- 10. Halloween
- 11. Harvest Festival
- 14. 4th of July bike parade
- 17. Kids craft and coffee with hosts

- 18. Daughter did crafts daily...Loved it
- 21. Campfire story time
- 24. Halloween
- 25. Harvest festival
- 27. Halloween
- 29. Host sponsored scavenger hunts and arts and crafts.
- 31. Family reunion
- 33. Morning get together.
- 34. Harvest event
- 36. Kids activities
- 38. Learn to SUP
- 39. Children's activities
- 40. Stand up paddle boarding
- 42. Hot cocoa
- 43. Coffee/hot chocolate host event.
- 45. Kids do Labor Day bridge walk and camp host activities
- 46. Harvest Festival
- 47. Harvest festival
- 48. Grandkids use activities park host provides! luv this nice addition!
- 49. Children's activities, Christmas in the Park
- 50. Harvest festival.
- 51. Harvest festival

Q.32 PLEASE RATE YOUR LEVEL OF SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAMS OR ACTIVITIES IN WHICH YOU PARTICIPATED. (1 = HIGHLY DISSATISFIED, 5 = NEUTRAL, 9 = HIGHLY SATISFIED)

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
[INSERT TEXT FROM OTHER]	0.00%	0.00%	1.96%	0.00%	1.96%	3.92%	19.61%	23.53%	49.02%	51	8.06
ANSWERED	51										
SKIPPED	621										

Q.33 PLEASE ENTER ANY COMMENTS YOU MAY HAVE ON THE SPECIAL EVENTS OR PROGRAMS IN WHICH YOU PARTICIPATED AT THE PARK.

ANSWERED	16
SKIPPED	656

Responses:

1. Keep up the great work seen lots of people
2. none
3. good time
4. camp ground hosts are always really nice/helpful
5. It was very cute.
6. I love the traverse city state park my family has many memories in this park please please make wise choices on the improvements
7. We have been coming to harvest fest for 10 years gets better every year
8. None that I can think of.
9. Love the kids activities that are offered. So sweet for the host to do!
10. Okay
11. Nice, fun
12. Far too many people at the same time. It would be better to have sign up times to keep the groups smaller.
13. The park staff does a great job!
14. To have an actual itinerary available
15. Kids and grma luv the park host! very nice and helpful
16. I love harvest festival and bummed that it was cancelled this year

Q.34 THE DNR HAS RECENTLY PURCHASED 29 ADDITIONAL ACRES BETWEEN MITCHELL CREEK AND THE TART TRAIL (HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW ABOVE). WHAT IS YOUR PREFERENCE FOR THE FUTURE USE OF THIS LAND?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	RESPONSE COUNT
LOW LEVEL DEVELOPMENT: FOOT TRAILS, CREEK ACCESS, ETC. (NO CAMPING)	18.52%	105
MODERATE LEVEL DEVELOPMENT: HIKE-IN / BIKE-IN RUSTIC CAMPING	13.40%	76
HIGHER LEVEL DEVELOPMENT: EXPANDED MODERN CAMPING/LODGING OPPORTUNITIES AND SERVICES	49.56%	281
OTHER (PLEASE DESCRIBE):	18.52%	105
ANSWERED	567	
SKIPPED	105	

(30 randomly selected responses follow. Full results available upon request)

Other (please describe):

3. not sure
10. Some modern camping, some trails and creek access.
11. Something special like that needs to be guarded with care but likewise rustic camping can be part of that.
15. half modern camping (full services-sewer and water at site) and low development (trails)
18. please don't develop this land! It should be left natural. Mitchell Creek is facing a variety of development-related challenges and this should be kept forested and vegetated with very strategically located low level development additions such as elevated board walks.
21. Full hookup modern campground
25. Tent camping only keeping the north side all trailer and new tent low impact to the area
29. Mountain bike trail.
30. Maybe a mix of modern camping and also some additional amenities for kids, like basketball hoops or volleyball courts. Maybe expand rental of kayaks, paddle boards and such.
37. Perhaps a new entrance to the park. It's nearly impossible to make a left turn out of the park and sometimes even a right turn.
38. Full hook-up rv camping and trails.

- 39. That is a wonderful addition to the park. It is really hard to determine how to use it... I am thinking that since there are other places nearby for hiking that this would be wonderful to use for full service hook-up.
- 41. Add full hook up rv sites
- 44. Drive in camping without and with electricity.
- 49. Open campsites for larger vehicles
- 54. More camping with amenities such as water and sewer at the sites, also sizes more like 45 x 55
- 57. Higher level (full hook up) camping sites and full park access from the 3 mile road on the west side. Would be easier and safer to get in and out of the park rather than using 31.
- 65. I feel the strength of this campsite is it's proximity to town and the regional attractions as well as it's location on the trail. I wouldn't be opposed to additional campsites, provided that the sites maintain that balance of rustic camping in the middle of the more urbanized area. Additional trails are always great.
- 69. Move tent camping there as it is farther from the highway. RV camping can go right next to the road since they are less sensitive to noise.
- 71. Would like family camping area for larger groups, hard to get multiple spots together,
- 72. It would be nice to not have the traffic noise
- 75. Have entrance off 3 mile. Building out is good, would be nice to have more space or private lots.
- 76. Scheduled rustic camper/tent sites
- 84. I think a combination of foot trails and expansion of modern camp sights would be fantastic
- 92. No preference.
- 97. More campsites and at least two additional dump stations!
- 98. Maybe a few more modern campsites and a few rustic camp sites, lots of people like rustic camping. Then put in some activities like volleyball, horseshoe maybe a pickleball court...etc...
- 99. NEED LARGER LOT SIZES
- 101. That is sensitive land and should remain environmentally safe. It is part of the water shed.
- 103. We no longer have our trailer so camping cabins, tents, yurts, teepees would be great!

Q.35 PLEASE SHARE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS YOU MAY HAVE ON THE PARK.

ANSWERED	221
SKIPPED	451

Responses:

- 9. It would be great if the TC State Park promoted or sponsored BATA's free Bayline route as a transportation option to/from downtown Traverse City.
- 16. FULL HOOKUP SITES should be put in at the campground!
- 23. Need additional parking at campground for overflow
- 43. This is a beautiful campground that is not well maintained. Litter in campsites is normal, restrooms are often unclean and most important, cutting trees that are hazardous to expensive RVs, trailers, etc. is never done which is obvious by the dozens of scars on trees that are difficult to negotiate around when trying to park in the campsites. Many of these trees could be removed and the forest affect would not even be noticeable.
- 54. I love TC
- 62. New bathrooms, repave the roads.
- 66. I wouldn't make the park bigger. It already seems overloaded, so adding more modern facilities seems more than can be handled.
- 72. New updated playground equipment in the campground.
- 79. Reasonable rates and great location near downtown Traverse City and TART trails.
- 83. Beautiful area!
- 87. We love the park. We have camped there for many years. (About 40) It's like our second home. Can't wait to get to go again!
- 90. The water electric connectors are not always on the correct side of the rv. Drivers side on most rv's
- 116. It is a real treat to camp here.
- 119. On the new land building a driveway off of 3 Mile Road, is a great need. Trying to Leave the current driveway on M72 is very dangerous and nearly impossible with a camper trailer.
- 123. The sites could be more level.
- 137. A larger dump station would be helpful to relieve traffic congestion during check out times.
- 138. Better electric set up. Boxes are to fare away. Didn't know and was not informed that we would need so long a cord. Bad set up
- 142. Traffic exiting the park big problem at times.
- 145. Add water station for check in and expand dump station.
- 165. More spacious sites
- 188. Picture that I've shared below is our RV with the TART only 100 feet from our campsite.
- 190. Dump stations, revamp! Better restrooms!!

- 191. Expanded camping sites would be nice because the park fills up quickly. A back entrance off the main road is needed to access the park.
- 193. It is always packed...but quiet at night. Could use more handicap pull through or accessible spots
- 200. Its a great location, with so much to do, it would be so great to have a section with full hookups !
- 202. The location is great! proximity to Traverse City is nearly ideal. But current campground is very dated and needs to be modernized and made ready for today's campers (size and electrical capacity)
- 205. Great to see your seeking input on improvements!
- 214. Already did
- 218. ADA crossing from campground to beach.
- 221. Traverse City State Park is always one of our favorites because we use it as a home base while visiting the area. Was real disappointed when found out wasn't open this fall so really looking forward to the improvements for our next visit.

Q.36 (OPTIONAL) SHARE A PHOTO OF YOUR EXPERIENCE AT TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK! BY UPLOADING A PHOTO, YOU GRANT PERMISSION TO THE DNR TO USE THE PHOTO.

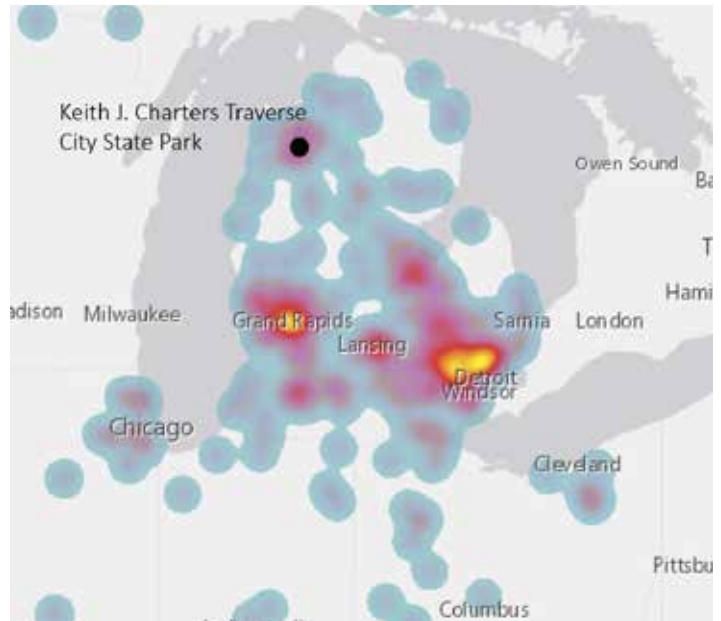
ANSWERED	42
SKIPPED	630

Q.37 WHAT IS THE ZIP CODE OF YOUR PRIMARY RESIDENCE?

ANSWERED	572
SKIPPED	100

Q.38 WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
UNDER 18	0.69%	4
18-29	6.56%	38
30-39	14.51%	84
40-49	15.20%	88
50-64	41.11%	238
65 OR OLDER	21.24%	123
I PREFER NOT TO ANSWER.	0.69%	4
ANSWERED	579	
SKIPPED	93	



A map depicting the zip code of survey respondents' primary residence. Brighter colors indicate a greater concentration of respondents. A small number of respondents were located outside the map extent.

B.6 Summary of Draft Plan Public Input

The public was invited to share their thoughts about the Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park Draft General Management Plan at a virtual public meeting that was hosted online by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) on March 18th, 2021, from 6:00- 7:00 p.m. The meeting was originally scheduled to be held in person, but due to the coronavirus pandemic, the meeting was held virtually. The general public was notified about the meeting through a press release, internet postings, and email notifications. A total of 24 attendees were recorded.

The meeting began with a brief introduction of planning team members, followed by a short overview of the general management plan process, Traverse City State Park, and the draft general management plan contents. The presentation was followed by a short question and answer period. Topics discussed included the proposed beach area improvements, the management plan process, and campground improvements. The answers to the questions can be viewed on the following pages.

At the end of the meeting, attendees were asked to visit the interactive public input survey link to review and comment on the statements of significance, management zone plan, and ten-year actions goals. There was also a section for additional feedback on the management plan and the input process. The survey link was posted to the project website, along with a recording of the meeting and the report of the questions and answers from the meeting. The survey link was open through March 30, 2021. Comments could also be submitted during that time via email.

Participants were asked to prioritize their top five action goals from the ten-year action goals list. Some of the top priority goals were:

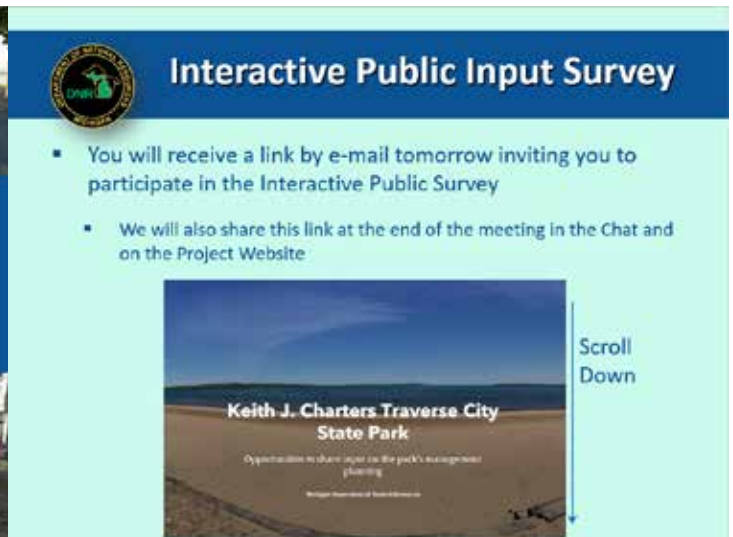
- Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study to assess opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation, including but not limited to:-Campground ingress/egress-Additional access to the park from Three Mile Road-Circulation and access between the beach and campground-Aligning the beach access road with Three Mile Road-Regional trail connection (14 votes)
- Create a conceptual development plan for the use and development of the southern park parcel, considering opportunities for camping, alternative lodging, recreation, trails, park access and the proposed headquarters location with an emphasis on the natural and cultural resources of the site (11 votes)
- Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the project boundary. Develop a proactive relationship with township and local governments for increased awareness of potential property acquisition opportunities (10 votes)
- Study options for expanded RV sanitary dump station capacity, including consideration for full hook-up campsites to alleviate congestion at dump station (10 votes)

Many other themes were discussed within the survey comments and emails, such as creating better pedestrian connections, improving the beach and campground, and more.

The following report is a listing of all comments received through the interactive public input survey as well as the email comments received. These items, along with other input from the public, will be considered as the planning team finalizes the general management plan.



Screenshots from the virtual public meeting presentation



Virtual Public Input Meeting Questions and Answers

The following questions were asked by members of the public during the Traverse City State Park online public review webinar. The answers below were either given during the presentation or were answered by the planning team after the meeting concluded.

1. What do you envision for a refreshing of the beach area?
 - a. We want to look at the functionality of the area – for a few examples: how does the parking work, how would the realignment of the park entrance impact the beach parking, looking at the seawall condition and how that relates to the lake levels, and looking at the beach house and restroom building. We would take an overall assessment of how things function, how they look, and try to weave in sustainability measures and greener infrastructure. We will be looking for public input on that process as well.
2. How did Mobi-Mats work out?
 - a. We have had Mobi-Mats in the past, and we still have the Mobi-Mat; however, with the high water levels, we haven't had a place to put the Mobi-Mat out where it would function properly. When the water levels drop, we will put the Mobi-Mat back out.
3. Will you be contacting local stakeholders directly such as the local jurisdictions (city, tribe)?
 - a. A long list of stakeholders was developed early in the planning process including local municipalities, non-profits, and user groups. They were invited to the stakeholder input meeting and invited to participate in the online survey. As part of our management planning, we do also reach out to tribal governments. A letter was sent to them advising them of the planning process and inviting them to contact us and meet with us as they so desired. We did not receive a request for a meeting from them. The plan is in review right now, and stakeholders received the plan review press release directly. If anyone wants to contact us specifically with other questions or to make sure we are in alignment with other plans, they are always welcome to do so.
4. How often are general management plans completed, and where can we find what the recommendations were put forward then, to see effectiveness?
 - a. The general management plan is a long-range plan; zoning is intended to be for the next 20 years; action plans are for 10 years. There is an internal review every five years. With 103 state parks, it is a big effort to go through all of them, so currently we are catching up with the five-year reviews. All the completed plans are available on the DNR website, and as we complete the five-year reviews as an addendum, and in that update, you can see what has been completed and what action goals may have become obsolete.
5. Are there any future plans for renovation or replacement of mini cabins?
 - a. There is a possibility that we will receive funds for remodeling of the mini cabins. Stay tuned, and hopefully we will see improvements soon.
6. Do you have or plan to have an accessible cabin at the campground, like at Interlochen State Park?
 - a. Both of our cabins are accessible. Interlochen cabins are considered camper cabins (two rooms), where ours are considered mini cabins (one room), but they are accessible.
7. What is the management plan cost?
 - a. The cost of producing the plan is about \$35,000. It is a twelve-month process with a lot of public input, so that is what it costs to complete each plan. We also have in the plan an opinion of probable costs for all the plan items that we have identified. For Traverse City State Park, the total cost of projects planned right now is \$2,070,000.
8. Will there be opportunities to educate the public on various conservation topics related to the area? An example would be letting people know how to recreate without spreading invasive plants, as well as aquatic and tree pest.
 - a. This is something we have not discussed much with this management plan (we often do). We are always looking for education opportunities, and when you have a captive audience with the number of campers we have here, there is a good opportunity for education. We are looking to implement some more environmentally friendly initiatives into the beach area as a demonstration and education piece. This is something we can bear in mind.
9. Is there Wi-Fi available at the State Park for campers?
 - a. We do not have Wi-Fi available at the park.

STATEMENTS OF SIGNIFICANCE COMMENTS

OASIS IN AN URBAN AREA

An oasis amid the developed Traverse City region, Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park offers visitors a natural setting and views of the Grand Traverse Bay in one of Michigan’s earliest state parks. The pace of life slows down when entering the campground, which has a towering tree canopy and is buffered from development by a nature preserve to the south.

1. Given its urban location, having safe and convenient walking and biking connections between the beach, restaurants, and other destinations is very important.

CONVENIENT CAMPING LOCATION

The campground is located near downtown Traverse City, where campers can enjoy local businesses, regional tourist attractions, and recreation activities. The park provides affordable overnight lodging in a premier vacation destination that is convenient for many events such as sports tournaments, races, and festivals. The park’s location along the TART trail provides direct access to a regional system of bike trails and offers an opportunity for bike camping.

No comments.

WATER RECREATION

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park provides public access to the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay in a region that is known for its water-centric recreation. The park’s beach is a main draw for campers and day-visitors to swim and enjoy the sun. The picturesque, sheltered bay offers a family-friendly swimming and paddling experience. Aside from Grand Traverse Bay, campers can take advantage of the many nearby public water access sites.

1. Need more landscaping and trees to buffer parking and improve beach experience.

MITCHELL CREEK FISHERY

Mitchell Creek, which runs through the park before outletting to the East Arm of the Grand Traverse Bay, provides a good year-round angling opportunity. Anglers can catch species such as trout, salmon and bass. The creek is also a popular fishing location for Grand Traverse Band tribal members, particularly for its spring spearing opportunities on ancestral fishing grounds. The DNR performs net assessments in Mitchell Creek to tag small mouth bass, which is part of an important bass population tracking project in northern Michigan.

1. Can the adjacent property owned by the tribe be used to compliment activities at the park? This is a significant amount of underutilized beach frontage.

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

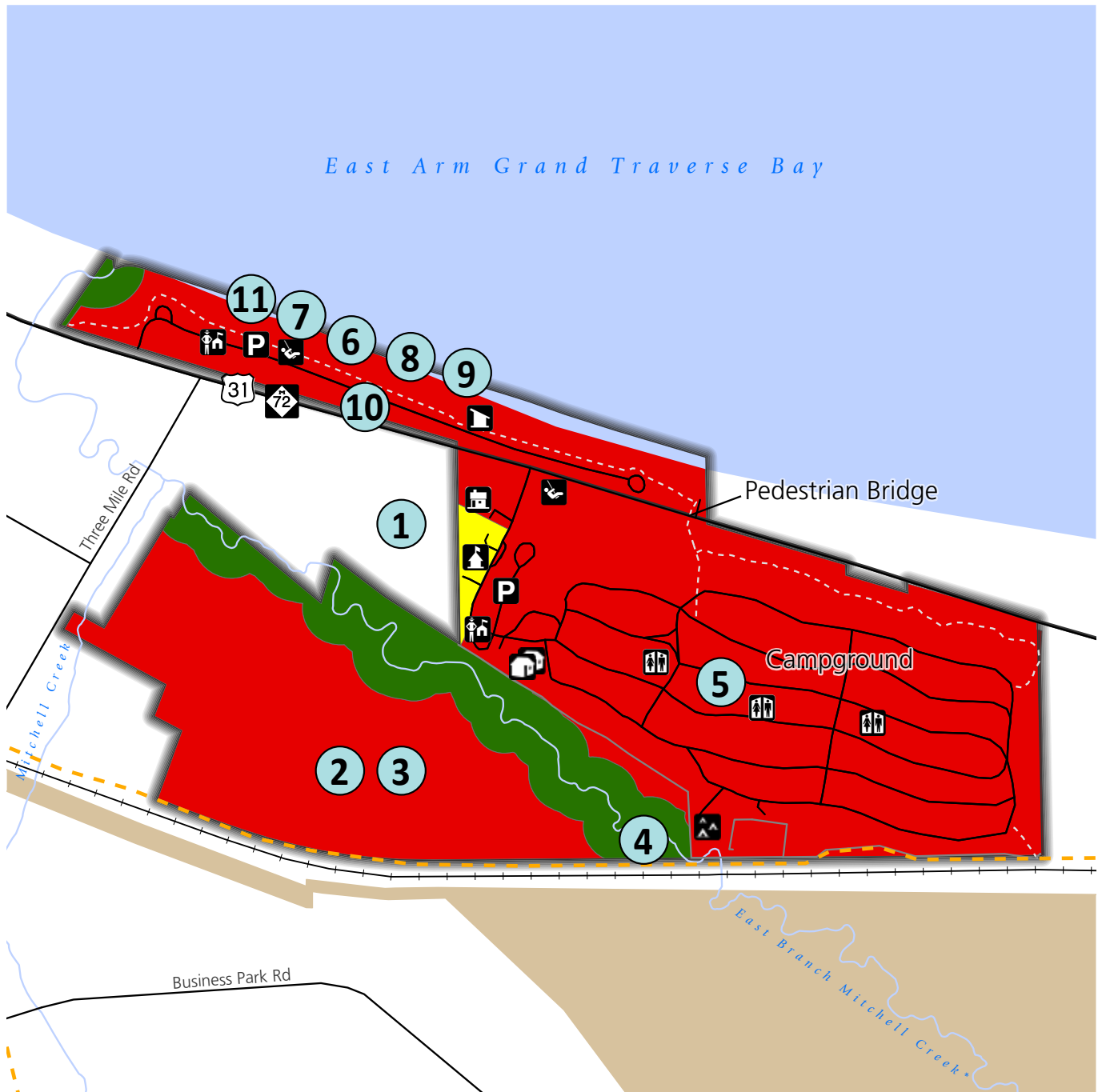
Should any significance statements be added? Suggest a significance statement(s) that should be added to the above, if any.

No comments.

ACTION GOAL PRIORITIES	
ACTION GOAL	VOTES
a. Continue to explore land acquisition of properties within the project boundary. Develop a proactive relationship with township and local governments for increased awareness of potential property acquisition opportunities	10
b. Utilize best practices in development and maintenance of park amenities and infrastructure to protect the Mitchell Creek watershed	7
c. Work with the Bay Area Transit Authority (BATA) to promote bus transportation between downtown Traverse City and the park	6
d. Regenerate the tree canopy in the campground as opportunities arise	7
e. Complete a natural resource stewardship plan for the park, identifying targets for conservation and related natural resource management strategies	2
f. Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study to assess opportunities to improve vehicular and pedestrian access and circulation, including but not limited to:- Campground ingress/egress-Additional access to the park from Three Mile Road-Circulation and access between the beach and campground-Aligning the beach access road with Three Mile Road-Regional trail connection	14
g. Work with MDOT to implement recommendations identified in the study above to address traffic issues on US-31/M-72 including potential realignment of the beach access road with Three Mile	9
h. Perform a Phase 1 archaeological reconnaissance survey on the parcel south of Mitchell Creek	0
i. Create a conceptual development plan for the use and development of the southern park parcel, considering opportunities for camping, alternative lodging, recreation, trails, park access and the proposed headquarters location with an emphasis on the natural and cultural resources of the site	11
j. Study options for expanded RV sanitary dump station capacity, including consideration for full hook-up campsites to alleviate congestion at dump station	10
k. Design and construct a new park headquarters building	3
l. Design and implement beach improvements and beautification considering aesthetics, capacity, access, partial shoreline naturalization, opportunities for education, and future sustainability/resilience	9
m. Implement recommendations of the traffic study, including potential improvements to campground ingress/egress and possible alternative access off 3 Mile Road	6
n. Continue to look for opportunities to upgrade or replace the pedestrian bridge, considering accessibility and park operations	9
o. Work with the Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy (GTRLC), local officials, and stakeholders to achieve enhanced use of the existing rail corridor for coordinated multi-use access and provide pedestrian access between the park and the conservancy land	2

ACTION GOALS COMMENTS
GOALS TO ADD
Should any goals be added to the list? Suggest any action goal(s) you think should be added to the above, if any.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Adding more camp sites. With electric for large campers. 1st goal open it up & lower the rates \$35 is way too high compared to other state parks. Wider sites, more trees for privacy, plow the snow at beach & have more sites available during winter. 2 main shower buildings isn't enough even with the new one that hasn't even been used yet. Clean the beaches better. Acquire lot just west of entrance and make it a large parking lot. Close the road on the beach side completely!. Utilize new/upgraded Bridge or tunnel like Clinch Park has.

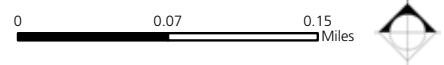
ACTION GOALS COMMENTS
GOALS TO REMOVE
Should any goals be removed from the list? Record action goal(s) above you disagree with, if any, and explain.
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> The Southern parcel should focus on creating trails and developing more opportunities to enhance the outdoor experience (canopy walks, elevated board walks by the creek, connecting trails to the preserve, etc). The new headquarters building.



TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN
Management Zones

Data Sources: Michigan CGI Data Library, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

*Estimated geometry based on heads-up digitization (1:250) using 2017 1-foot aerial imagery (Michigan Imagery Solutions)



Date: 3/3/2020 **Beckett&Raeder**

- | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Traverse City State Park Boundary | Natural Resource Recreation | Modern Lodge |
| State Roads | Developed Recreation | Modern Campground |
| Roads | Administrative Services | Toilet / Shower |
| Railroad | TART Trail | Playground |
| Trails | Fence Line | Mini Cabin |
| Rivers / Streams | Beach House | Group Camping |
| Refitt Nature Preserve | Contact Station | Park Headquarters |

DRAFT MANAGEMENT ZONE COMMENTS		
COMMENT NUMBER	MANAGEMENT ZONE	COMMENT
1	None	If and when you acquire this property you should turn this into a field and put a playground primarily for campers interest. Keep as many remaining trees as possible.
2	Developed Recreation	What does the management plan call out for this area except an archeological survey?
3	Developed Recreation	Develop well-maintained trails south of the creek. Create a trail that least disturbs the natural development of the forest. Develop a canopy walk for a visitors to experience a closer look and greater appreciation of the well developed tree canopy.
4	Natural Resource Recreation	Create a elevated boardwalk near the Tart trail and along the creek that leads to a gazebo for visitors to bird watch, observed the flowing creek and capture memorable photos of their trip.
5	Developed Recreation	Need bigger spaces. No more parallel parking along road.
6	Developed Recreation	Is there an area established for boat access from the bay?
7	Developed Recreation	The playground is fantastic and should be developed more. Another bathroom should be placed closer to it and a awning canopy that looks modern and allows some like penetration.
8	Developed Recreation	Replace any metal railings with wood for a more natural feel.
9	Developed Recreation	Focus more items that supports sport recreationally actives include kayak/paddle board racks & bike racks
10	Developed Recreation	Plant native bushes or shrubs along M31 as a noise reducing barrier and to capture litter from being blown into town from beach goers or visa versa.
11	Developed Recreation	Take down the seawall and replace with a more natural landscape (dune grass or rocks, but NOT CONCRET SLABS or rubble)

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

ADDITIONAL MANAGEMENT PLAN COMMENTS

Please provide any additional comments you may have on the Traverse City State Park general management plan.

1. Sounds like a good plan. Over the years, I have been to a number of Michigan State Parks. I have also been to a number of other states and their parks. I am happy and proud to say that the Michigan State Parks are some of the best if not the best. The Park administration should be proud of their efforts.
2. I'd like to see handicap accessibility (ramps) to walk across the walk to the beach from the campground. I have 2 handicap children and we visit the park a couple times per year.
3. Make a parking lot for boats on trailers, kayak trailers, etc. . . Camped late last summer, camp with tents, couldn't park my 22ft four winns on camp site, had to change camp site. Yes a better entrance and exit would be best. As for the Skywalk, rebuild with elevator as they have in the city of Cheboygan over the river. Have more larger camp sites that can accommodate a little bigger crowd. The new bathhouse is awesome but the hot water is cold! Had to use older bathhouse for a shower. Thank you.
4. In order for better beach access you have to actually have a beach! High water from the bay has virtually eliminated the majority of the beach and now new sand dispersal is needed. Is that possible?
5. I would like to see the pedestrian bridge turned into an iconic symbol for the area welcoming visitors and taking pride in the area while also helping visitors to better enter the park as well. The signage could also be a funding source with a sponsor. I would like to see ev camping charging areas installed and better entry to the park at the light or a roundabout at three mile. Also the beach could have a better entrance by the playground area with possibly a wood pier for viewing and fishing on that side not effecting the view but making it even better. Any more help I can please call me anytime 2313137307 David Kenny
6. I've been coming to the park for a decade now, and while I love the TART trail, I wish there was a running trail or boardwalk on the beach connecting to downtown. I'd love to run along the shoreline or closer to the water.

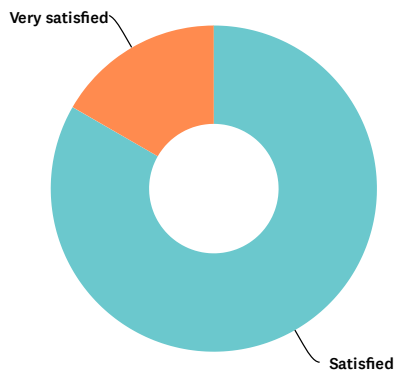
PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE FORMAT FEEDBACK

What worked well and how can we improve future virtual public open houses like this one?

1. Excellent way to reach many people.
2. Better program.
3. I appreciated getting to read the draft plan beforehand and then learning about each proposed change. You all seem like very nice and dedicated humans.

OPEN HOUSE FORMAT EXPERIENCE

Rate your experience with this virtual public open house format



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	0.00%	0
Satisfied	83.33%	5
Very satisfied	16.67%	1
TOTAL		6

Public Comments Received via Email

Online Comment 1 Received 3/18/2021

What improvements are planned for the beach side of the park? With TC being a premier location in the state, the beach and its grounds should reflect that. The bathrooms are from the 70s and in dire need of replacement with the grass parched and unkempt most of the season. The entrance sign has been gone for 3 years! Where's the "welcome" in that? Thank you.

Appendix C:

Opinion of Probable Costs

C.1 State Park Funding

The primary funding sources for state park improvement and development projects are Recreation Passport sales (motor vehicle registration fee), the Park Endowment Fund (generated from royalties from oil, gas and mineral extraction on public land) and the Park Improvement Fund (from camping and other state park user fees). One-time appropriations from the state General Fund may also be ear marked for specific needs but are not guaranteed. The annual capital outlay budget for state parks varies significantly from year to year, as illustrated by the table below. The necessary restrictions put in place to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 in 2020 negatively impacted economic activity in Michigan and state revenue collections. In anticipation of these impacts, limits have been imposed on discretionary state funding. Both long- and short-term spending is therefore uncertain.

The state park system is 100 years old and much of the infrastructure is aging. Identified infrastructure needs across the state park system (excluding Belle Isle Park, trail infrastructure, and state waterways infrastructure) is currently estimated to be over \$258 million.

FISCAL YEAR	TOTAL ANNUAL CAPITAL OUTLAY PROJECT BUDGET**	IDENTIFIED INFRASTRUCTURE NEEDS
FY21	\$ 14,945,000	\$ 258,482,050
FY20	\$ 15,435,000	\$ 278,159,950
FY19	\$ 18,925,000	\$ 273,498,836
FY18	\$ 14,520,000	\$ 264,089,912
FY17	\$ 10,400,000	\$ 285,513,487
FY16	\$ 8,661,000	\$ 312,594,557

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

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

C.2 Estimated Cost of Proposed Developments

The following table provides an estimate of probable cost for each capital outlay development project proposed at Traverse City State Park over the next ten years. Management and operations actions and small projects, which are funded out of district or park funds, are not included in this list but may have additional financial implications. The costs are preliminary, based on information available at the time, and will be adjusted as studies, 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 2020 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.

OPINION OF PROBABLE COSTS

KEITH J. CHARTERS TRAVERSE CITY STATE PARK INFRASTRUCTURE & DEVELOPMENT: CAPITAL OUTLAY		
ACTION GOALS	PRIORITY	OPINION OF PROBABLE COST
Work with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) to complete a traffic study to assess opportunities to improve vehicular & pedestrian access and circulation, including but not limited to: -Campground ingress/egress -Additional access to the park from Three Mile Road -Circulation & access between beach and campground -Aligning the beach access road with Three Mile Road -Regional trail connection	1	\$40,000 (Traffic study)
Work with MDOT to implement recommendations identified in the study above to address traffic issues on US-31/M-72 including potential realignment of the beach access road with Three Mile	1	To be determined (TBD) by traffic study and MDOT implementation
Perform a Phase 1 archaeological reconnaissance survey on the parcel south of Mitchell Creek	2	\$20,000
Create a conceptual development plan for the use and development of the southern park parcel, considering opportunities for camping, alternative lodging, recreation, trails, park access and the proposed headquarters location with an emphasis on the natural and cultural resources of the site	2	\$50,000 (Design)
Study options for expanded RV sanitary dump station capacity, including consideration for full hook-up campsites to alleviate congestion at dump station	2	\$30,000 (Study)
Design and construct a new park headquarters building	2	Design \$70,000 Construct \$1.8m
Design and implement beach improvements and beautification considering aesthetics, capacity, access, partial shoreline naturalization, opportunities for education, and future sustainability/resilience	2	Design \$75,000 Construction – TBD by design
Implement recommendations of the traffic study, including potential improvements to campground ingress/egress and possible alternative access off 3 Mile Road	2	To be determined by study
Replace the campground water and sanitary lines.	2	\$1,200,000
TOTAL*		\$3,285,000
*EXCLUDES COSTS YET TO BE IDENTIFIED BY STUDIES TO DETERMINE BEST WAY TO PROCEED AND COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH PROJECTS THAT ARE ALREADY FUNDED. THE FULL COST OF ALL THE PROJECTS LISTED COULD TOTAL AN ADDITIONAL SEVERAL MILLION DOLLARS.		

Appendix D:

On-Site Survey Report

Keith J. Charters Traverse City State Park 2018 On-Site Use and User Study Report

By Charles M. Nelson and Kali Maisano Department of Community Sustainability Michigan State University

East Lansing, MI 48824 February 21, 2019

Introduction

As part of the management planning process for Keith J. Charters Traverse City (hereafter Traverse City) State Park (SP), an on-site study was conducted of a representative sample of park visitors to provide an overall estimate of mean user hours per vehicle in day use parking areas, assess local spending, ascertain the opinion of park users about the future management options and approaches and provide a profile of park visitors, both campers and day users. This on-site approach sampled users on systematically selected days and times across June – October of 2018. It used a windshield survey at the day use parking area and the same survey handed to a sample of up to 20 camping parties on sample days to ensure representation of the full range of park users.

Methods

The on-site study methodology and questionnaire were developed by the senior author in cooperation with the DNR Park Planner Debbie Jensen of the DNR Park and Recreation Division (PRD) staff. The questionnaire is found in Appendix B and is very similar to an instrument that was used in 2016 in the pilot project of integrating visitor surveys into the state park management planning process at Sleepy Hollow State Park, in 2017 at seven other Michigan State Parks and Recreation Areas (Indian Lake, Palms Book, Pontiac Lake, Proud Lake, Rifle River, Saugatuck Dunes and Warren Dunes) and in 2018 at four other Michigan State Parks (Algonac, Duck Lake, Fort Wilkins and Holland) . A sampling calendar of 27 sample days was developed that proportionally allocated sampling days across June- October based on seasonal estimates of park use for summer and fall provided by the DNR (Appendices C and D). The survey commenced in the field at Traverse City SP on June 26, 2018.

On a sample day, the survey administrator (a Michigan State Park employee) would begin sampling at one of the day use parking areas at the beginning of the designated sample period (9AM, Noon, 3PM or 6PM) per the sampling schedule. The survey administrator would count all vehicles present upon entering the lot. Once the count is made, a questionnaire with location, questionnaire number and time of day is distributed to each vehicle front windshield or directly handed to the driver if he/she is at the vehicle. If it is raining, surveys are enclosed in a clear plastic bag and placed on the windshield. While most vehicles receive a questionnaire, occasionally one leaves before a survey can be administered, hence the number of surveys distributed is slightly lower than the vehicle count. Also, if there are more than 50 vehicles in a lot, it is the intention that all are counted, but only the first 50 counted receive a questionnaire to limit confusion and keep to a time schedule to complete all other vehicle counts and survey distribution. At Traverse City on 8 of the 27 sample days, the vehicle count exceeded 50.

This method does not capture input from those arriving by bicycle, on foot, or public transportation, only those arriving by vehicle. However, those arriving by vehicle directly support the Michigan State Park system through the purchase of the Recreation Passport or, in the case of non-residents, through the purchase of the non-resident motor vehicle permit. Those arriving by bicycle or on foot, if they have not purchased the Passport or a non-resident motor vehicle permit, are not providing such direct financial support.

For campers, surveys were distributed in the campground which has 480 sites. On a sample day, a survey administrator would randomly choose a campsite number between 1 and 480 and proceeded to sample the next 20 campsites where campers were present by handing them with a questionnaire. If there were less than 20 sites with campers present, then the number of occupied sites with camper present received a questionnaire. If there were more than 20 present, only 20 were distributed.

Respondents returned the questionnaire by U. S. mail using the postage paid, business reply feature of the postcard. Cards were directly delivered to Dr. Nelson at MSU.

Results

Results are presented in three ways. The first is observations/vehicle counts done by the survey administrator. These provide an assessment of use levels for each facility/parking area. The second is survey responses to questions 1-10, which focus on the respondent's experience the day they were sampled. Since these questions ask about the specific day's experience, there is no possibility of oversampling frequent users as each use is a use, whether done by a person who visits the park one time or 100 times in a year. However, Questions 11-16 are weighted to account for frequency of use bias as they ask about suggested improvements, things not to change and demographic information that defines the distinct park user. A frequent user, such as one who visits the park 100 times a year has 100 times greater chance of receiving a survey than one who visits the park once a year. To be able to use a one person, one vote rule where each person has an equal say in suggesting potential changes or the lack of them, the data is weighted to eliminate the frequency of use bias in sampling. For distinct users the data is weighted by the reciprocal of the number of uses the previous year (Q 16). If a person used the park once in the previous year, their weight is 1/1. If they used it 100 times, their weight is 1/100.

All results tables are provided in Appendix A and are numbered as they are in the text of this report.

Observations

There were 21 scheduled sample days in Summer and 6 in Fall. All were sampled for both day users and campers on all sample days. Table 1 shows that a total of 1,369 vehicles were counted in day use parking areas over the 27 completed sample days (1,339 vehicles in the summer and 30 in the fall) with a total of 737 questionnaires distributed (707 questionnaires in summer and 30 in fall) in day use lots. Campers were sampled on 21 summer and 6 fall days with a total of 475 surveys distributed (405 in summer and 68 in fall).

Survey Results: Uses

One hundred thirty-seven completed questionnaires were returned by camper respondents and 84 by day use respondents as of the November 4, 2018 cutoff (one month after the last sampling day) for a total of 221 respondents. The response rate for day visitors was 11%, for campers 29% and for the combined group 18%.

Activities and Party Characteristics

The average amount of time a day visitor vehicle was parked where it was sampled for day visitors was 3.1 hours and the mean day visitor party averaged 2.5 people per vehicle. Few day visitors were grouped with others in other vehicles as the mean day visitor group had 3.3. For camper respondents, mean people per vehicle also averaged 2.5 people per camper vehicle.

A total of 11 percent of day use respondents and 10 percent of camper respondents reported on the day they were sampled that one or more people in their vehicle had a physical impairment that seriously limited him/her from participation in work or recreation. These persons would be classified as disabled under the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Park visitors participated in a wide range of activities. Table 2 shows that the five most common activities for campers in order of participation were camping, hiking/walking, bicycling on a paved road, swimming and sunbathing. For day visitors the five most common activities were swimming, sunbathing, picnicking, hiking/walking and photography.

When campers were asked the one most important park activity to them, they were in descending order camping, bicycling, swimming, hiking and nature observation (Table 3). When day visitors were asked this question, their five most common responses in descending order were swimming, sunbathing, camping, bicycling and hiking.

One unique question asked at this park focused on use of the Traverse Area Regional Trails (TART) system. When asked if they had used the TART system during their visit to the park, 51% of the campers and 23% of the day users responded affirmatively.

Local Spending

Park visitor spending in the local area of Traverse City SP was substantial (Table 4). Campers from a single vehicle reported spending an average of \$272 in the 24 hours prior to being surveyed with 94% spending something within 20 miles of the park. The greatest average amounts were for restaurant/bar meals and drinks, lodging fees and food and beverages from a store. Day visitor spending averaged \$154 per vehicle with 79% of them spending something in the local area in the past 24 hours. The greatest portion of day visitor spending was on lodging fees, restaurant/bar meals and drinks and food and beverages from a store.

Satisfaction

When asked to rate their satisfaction with their Traverse City SP experience the day they were sampled, day visitors were generally satisfied with a mean rating of 7.9, while the average rating for campers was lower at 7.6 on a scale of 1 – 9 where 1 is highly dissatisfied, 5 is neutral and 9 is highly satisfied (Table 5). Almost half of day visitors and a little over a third of camper respondents gave their experience the highest satisfaction rating (9). Six percent of campers and two percent of the day visitor respondents rated their experience as dissatisfying, with eight percent of campers and five percent of day visitors rating it as neutral.

When asked an open ended question about the one most important reason for their experience rating, campers were most likely to mention it was a generally wonderful experience, that they liked the campground and the natural aspects of the park (Table 6). For day visitors, the most common positive comments related to the day use area being well maintained, liking the beach/swim area and having a generally wonderful overall experience. The most common concerns voiced by campers were poor facilities, poor maintenance and patrol and conflicts with other visitors. For day users, concerns were most likely to be related to poor management of the beach/swim area and conflicts with others.

Distinct Users Opinions

To understand the opinions of distinct users, one open ended question asked visitors to identify the one most important change they would like at Traverse City SP. This information is weighted as previously discussed to insure frequent users who are more likely to be sampled are not over represented in the results. If a respondent provided more than one desired change, only the first change was recorded in data entry. Campers most commonly suggested that facilities be better maintained, that more facilities be added to support the campground, with special focus on increasing the number of toilet/shower opportunities/facilities, campground utilities be updated to accommodate higher amperage units and that maintenance of the campground as a whole be improved (Table 7). For day visitors, the three most frequent suggestions were improve facility maintenance, no improvements needed and better maintain the beach area including litter pickup, bathroom maintenance and parking management.

When asked what one most important thing should not be changed at Traverse City SP (Table 8), campers were most likely to suggest the campground stay the same. They also were likely to support keeping the campground facilities the same as well as the natural aspects of the campground. For day visitors the most common suggestion of what not to change was that they didn't want any changes or to keep the beach/lakefront as it is.

Demographics

Distinct respondent campers had a mean age of 55, with ages ranging from 16-83. Fifty-nine percent of distinct camper respondents were female and 41% male. For distinct day visitors, the mean age was 46, with ages ranging from 23-77. Seventy-three percent of distinct day visitor respondents were female and 27% male.

The vast majority of distinct campers and day visitors were Michigan residents (Table 9). Ohio and Illinois were the most common non-resident origins of campers. For distinct campers, the five most common camper zip codes were 49024 (Portage), 48118 (Chelsea), 48910 (Lansing), 48884 (Sheridan) and 49424 (Holland). The most common day visitor origins following Michigan were also Ohio and Illinois. For distinct day visitors, the five most common zip codes were 49685 (Traverse City), 49525 (Grand Rapids), 48823 (East Lansing), 49496 (Traverse City) and 48509 (Burton).

Summary

Traverse City is a long established northern Lower Michigan state park with a very large campground located just across a major state highway from Grand Traverse Bay with a substantial beach front and a single day use area designed to park 115 cars. In addition, the TART trail system is between highway M72 and the beach, providing easy access for trail users to the beach without a car. The day use area is very heavily used for swimming and sunbathing and does not provide the range of day use activities found at most waterfronts in state parks such as a boating access site, fishing area, etc.

The overall satisfaction rating for campers and day visitors at Traverse City SP was positive, but also reflects some important concerns that, if addressed, could significantly improve those satisfaction ratings. One is that the very large campground (480 sites) was full most of the summer and lacked a full maintenance staff due to challenges in hiring and retaining short term

workers. With the heavy level of visitation throughout the summer, there was little opportunity to catch up on maintenance of the campground, especially key facilities such as toilet/shower buildings. This is reflected in concerns about maintenance and facilities. Second, the separation of the campground from the beach/waterfront by a very busy major state highway provides challenges with noise, visitor safety and the ability to easily go between one’s campsite and the waterfront. This is unlike almost every other state park in Michigan, even if in some other parks the distance is greater to the beach, the hazards are not. At the day use area, the lot regularly fills to overflowing, resulting in visitors being turned away, conflicts over parking sites, etc. The link of the beach to the TART trail provides a way to accommodate more park visitors, but, unless those people have purchased a Recreation Passport for their vehicles, they are benefiting from those who do purchase the passport.

Nevertheless, the popularity of Traverse City, the Grand Traverse Bay and the opportunity to stay in town at a relatively low cost in a shaded setting are very attractive to visitors. Those visitors also have many opportunities to support local businesses with spending, which they do. Spending related to park experiences is substantial and is much higher than most other state parks studied. Traverse City and the surrounding area have a tremendous array of choices for restaurant and bar meals and drinks. This is reflected in three-quarters of the campers and two-thirds of the day visitors patronizing one or more restaurants the 24 hours prior to being surveyed. Also, almost 60% of campers purchased other items such as souvenirs, clothing, etc., again attesting to the diverse and interesting array of local retail opportunities. Because many day visitors are a considerable distance from home, they are often staying at a motel/hotel, thus encouraging local lodging spending. In summary, the local spending near Traverse City SP encompasses many sectors of the local economy providing significant economic benefits to the community.

Like visitors to many Michigan State Park and Recreation Areas, there is interest among both campers and day visitors in updating and adding more facilities such as better toilet/shower buildings and improving campground utilities. Unlike most other areas however, there is also a concerted push to improve maintenance of the existing land base and facilities. This is both a staffing and a level of use issue. With the likely continued heavy use of both the campground and the day use area, it will be imperative to fully staff the park in coming years for the summer season. Another issue that is unique to this park is the ability to get campers across the highway to the beach. This is truly a challenge to many who camp and options should be explored to more safely and easily get campers across the highway to the beach.

Acknowledgments

The authors would like to thank Michigan DNR Park and Recreation Division permanent and seasonal field staff for their distribution of the survey instrument, record keeping of the number of surveys distributed and counting vehicles during sampling. We also greatly appreciate the cooperation throughout the project with Division Planning staff.

Appendix A. Tables of Results

Table 1. Vehicle counts and surveys distributed on-site 2017 at Traverse City SP day use areas and campgrounds.

Parking Lot/Area	Summer Count	Summer Surveys Dist.	Fall Count	Fall Surveys Dist.	Total Count	Total Surveys Dist.
Traverse City State Park Day Use Area	1,339	707	30	30	1,369	737
Campers Sampled in Campgrounds	NA	407	NA	68	NA	475

APPENDIX D

Table 2. Percent of Traverse City SP respondents participating in selected recreational activities during sample day in 2018.

Activity	Campers	Day Visitors	All
Camp	94%	10%	62%
Swim	53	76	62
Hike/walk	74	24	59
Sunbathe	42	69	52
Bicycle on a paved road	58	10	39
Picnic	29	31	30
Photography	27	20	24
Nature observation	11	19	14
Paddle canoe/kayak	8	4	6
Bicycle on an unpaved trail	9	2	6
Fish from a boat	7	1	5
Fish from shore	4	2	3
Pick berries/mushrooms	4	1	3
Metal detect	2	1	2
Explorer program	0	0	0
All others	14	19	16

Table 3. Percent of Traverse City SP respondents citing one most important recreational activity during sample day in 2018. (a)

Activity	Campers	Day Visitors	All
Camp	84%	4%	54%
Swim	3	50	21
Bicycle	6	3	5
Sunbathe	0	15	5
Hike	1	3	2
Nature observation	1	3	2
Metal detect	0	2	<1
Photography	0	0	0
Pick berries/mushrooms	0	0	0
Picnic	0	0	0
Fish	0	0	0
All others	4	12	7
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding

Table 4. Expenditures of on-site respondents during past 24 hours within 20 miles of Traverse City SP in 2018 (a).

Item	Campers Mean \$(% Spent something)	Day Visitors Mean \$(% Spent something)	All Mean \$(% Spent Something)
Restaurant & bar meals & drinks	\$74 (74%)	\$44 (67%)	\$62 (71%)
Lodging fees	69 (69%)	49 (25)	61 (52)
Grocery and convenience store food & drink	49 (79)	23 (48)	39 (67)
Vehicle related	34 (58)	19 (50)	29 (55)
Sporting goods	9 (16)	5 (5)	7 (12)
All other items including souvenirs	37 (59)	14 (16)	28 (43)
Total	\$272 (94%)	\$154 (79%)	\$226 (88%)

(a) Totals may not exactly add up due to rounding.

Table 5. Rating of satisfaction with Traverse City SP use experience by respondents on the day sampled in 2018.

Rating Scale	Campers	Day Visitors	All
1 (very dissatisfied)	2%	0%	<1%
2	0	0	0
3	<1	1	<1
4	4	1	3
5 (neutral)	8	5	7
6	5	6	6
7	13	17	14
8	33	23	29
9 (very satisfied)	35	47	39
Total	100%	100%	100%
Mean Rating (a)	7.6	7.9	7.7

(a) Rating scale: 1=highly dissatisfied; 5=neutral; 9=highly satisfied.

APPENDIX D

Table 6. Response to open-ended questions about one most important reason for satisfaction rating with Traverse City SP use by on-site respondents on the day sampled in 2018. (a)

Reason	Campers	Day Visitors	All
Generally like, wonderful, amazing	24%	16%	21%
Clean, well maintained/patrolled	7	26	15
Nature, wildlife, quiet	9	12	10
Like lake/beach/swim area	4	14	8
Like campground	12	0	8
Poor facilities	6	1	4
Poor maintenance/patrol	5	1	4
Conflict with others	5	3	4
Poor mgt. beach/swim area	0	8	3
Positive, friendly staff	3	0	2
Don't like campground	2	0	2
Like facilities	2	1	2
Convenient, close to home	2	3	2
Overcrowded	4	0	2
Road noise/road nearness	4	0	2
Good trails	2	0	2
Like easy access to surface waters and trails	<1	1	1
Positive interaction with others	1	1	1
Other positives with one response or hard to classify	2	1	2
Other negatives with one response or hard to classify	1	4	2
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Table 7. Response to open ended question about one most important improvement at Traverse City SP by distinct on-site user survey respondents in 2018 (a).

Improvement	Campers	Day Visitors	All
Improve facility maintenance	34%	22%	31%
Nothing to improve/change	6	21	10
Update and increase facilities (e.g. showers)	12	<1	9
Better campground management/maintenance	9	1	7
Improve campground utilities	9	0	6
Better beach maintenance	0	18	5
Improved beach access	7	1	5
Change park rules	5	5	5
Improve campground store/concessions	4	4	4
Increase patrol	<1	7	2
More parking	0	8	2
Better road maintenance	2	0	1
Improve trail maintenance/system	1	0	1
Better playground	<1	4	1
More rental watercraft available	0	2	<1
Other suggestions made by one respondent or difficult to classify	10	5	9
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Table 8. Response to open ended question about one most important thing not to change at Traverse City SP for distinct on-site user survey respondents in 2018. (a)

Don't change	Campers	Day Visitors	All
Don't know/Keep as is	12%	31%	17%
Facilities	14	18	15
Campground	20	0	14
Nature/wildness/quiet/wildlife	16	<1	12
Beach/lake	<1	24	7
Trails	7	5	6
Staff/personnel	9	0	6
Location	6	2	5
Rules/regulations	4	5	5
Cost/price/value/passport	4	3	3
Level of maintenance	0	6	2
Easy access to lake/river/activities	2	5	3
Watercraft rental	2	0	1
Other hard to classify or less than 1% of responses	3	0	2
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Table 9. Origins of distinct park visitors to Traverse City SP by state for on-site user survey respondents in 2018 (a)

State	% Campers Originating	% Day Visitors Originating	% All Originating
Michigan	74%	78%	75%
Ohio	3	9	7
Illinois	6	4	5
Indiana	3	3	3
Florida	3	0	2
Wisconsin	6	0	1
Minnesota	1	0	1
Georgia	1	0	1
Delaware	0	3	1
Texas	1	0	1
Iowa	0	3	1
Colorado	1	0	1
Arizona	<1	0	<1
Total	100%	100%	100%

(a) Total may not add to 100% due to rounding.

Appendix B. On-site questionnaire

Keith G. Charters Traverse City State Park Use Assessment _____ Date

Dear Driver:

MSU and the Michigan DNR are cooperating to measure recreation use of Traverse City State Park as part of updating the park management plan. Please take the 4 minutes needed to complete this form and mail it to us postage paid or put it in one of the drop boxes marked "Park Surveys". You will be anonymous and your name will not be connected with study results. You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate by completing and returning this survey.

1. Please check ALL of the activities in which one or more of the people from your vehicle participated while you were in the park today.

<input type="checkbox"/> Hiking/Walking/Running	<input type="checkbox"/> Photography	<input type="checkbox"/> Paddling watercraft
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling paved road/trail	<input type="checkbox"/> Camping	<input type="checkbox"/> Sunbathing
<input type="checkbox"/> Bicycling unpaved trail	<input type="checkbox"/> Picnicking	<input type="checkbox"/> Swimming
<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing from boat	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal detecting	<input type="checkbox"/> Attend interp prog.
<input type="checkbox"/> Fishing wade/shore/dock		
<input type="checkbox"/> Pick berries/mushrooms		
<input type="checkbox"/> Nature observation (birding, etc.)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other(_____)	

2. Which ONE activity was the MAIN reason to visit the park today? _____

3. How many HOURS was your vehicle in the park today? _____ # HOURS

4. Including you, how many PEOPLE came here in this vehicle? _____ # PEOPLE

5. Including other vehicles, how many people are in your group? _____ # PEOPLE

6. Does anyone in your vehicle have an impairment that seriously limits his/her participation in work or recreation? ___ Yes ___ No

7. Did you or others in your vehicle ride a bicycle outside Traverse City SP during this visit to Traverse City SP (e.g. TART trails, city streets, etc.) ___ Yes ___ No

8. During the past 24 hours, how much did you and those in your vehicle spend within 20 miles of Traverse City State Park on the following items.

Vehicle related (gas, oil, trip related repair, etc.)	\$ _____
Restaurant & bar meals & drinks	\$ _____
Grocery or convenience store food, drink or ice	\$ _____
Sporting goods (fishing supplies, camping gear, etc.)	\$ _____
Lodging fees (camping, motel, cabin rental, etc.)	\$ _____
All other items (boat rental, firewood, souvenirs, ice, etc.)	\$ _____

9. Please rate on a scale of 1-9 (w/ 1 highly dissatisfied; 5 neutral; and 9 highly satisfied), how satisfied you were with today's Traverse City SP experience. #_____ Rating

10. What is the ONE most important reason for your rating? _____

11. What ONE change would you recommend to improve Traverse City SP? _____

12. What ONE thing would you recommend not change at Traverse City SP? _____

13. What is your principal home zip code? _____

14. Your age? _____ years 15. Please circle your gender. M or F

16. How many days did you visit Traverse City SP in 2017 (last year)? _____ #days

Thanks for your help in improving the management of Traverse City SP.
Dr. Chuck Nelson, Project Director _____ Time
MSU Dept. Community Sustainability, 480 Wilson Rd., _____ Site
East Lansing, MI 48824 Phone (517) 432-0272 nelsonc@msu.edu _____ Ques #

Appendix C. Traverse City Sampling Schedule 2018

- 27 sample days prescribed, 27 accomplished in day use and campground.
- Based on Summer and Fall use levels per 2017 DNR park use data
- For our study purposes
 - Summer sampling June-August
 - Fall sampling September - November
- Sample days are scheduled with 2/3 on weekdays and 1/3 on weekends similar to calendar.
- Traverse City SP sampling will begin at one of the following times each sample day: 9 AM, Noon, 3PM and 6PM.

Appendix D. Traverse City State Park Planned On-Site Sampling Calendar

Day	Date	Start Time	Personnel
Thu	6/28	9AM	
Sat	6/30	3PM	
Tue	7/3	6PM	
Mon	7/9	Noon	
Fri	7/13	6PM	
Sun	7/15	3PM	
Mon	7/16	Noon	
Sun	7/22	9AM	
Wed	7/25	3PM	
Sat	7/28	Noon	
Thu	8/2	6PM	
Sun	8/5	Noon	
Tue	8/7	9AM	
Fri	8/10	Noon	
Sat	8/11	6PM	
Mon	8/13	3PM	
Thu	8/16	9AM	
Sun	8/19	6PM	
Wed	8/22	9AM	
Thu	8/23	3PM	
Sat	8/25	Noon	
Wed	8/29	9AM	
Sat	9/1	Noon	
Tue	9/11	3PM	
Fri	9/14	6PM	
Sun	9/23	3PM	
Thu	10/4	Noon	