

**Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council Meeting
Northern Michigan University, Marquette
Saturday, May 3, 2008**

Large Group Discussion

1. **To establish good communication, what factors are most important?**
 - Open transparency from both parties
 - Financial and management direction should be from local area to Lansing
 - Communications; for example, use other groups to get the word out on meetings, etc.
 - Time constraints; for example, the NRC meeting 3-5 minute time slot is not enough time. Too many items on the NRC agenda and not enough time for public input. Extend the time period.
 - Have specific subject meetings
 - Integrity of communication - facts on both sides (public and the DNR)
 - Need early communication
 - Honesty – both sides
 - Establish clear goals and objectives
 - How will the DNR increase communication with limited budgets
 - Need feedback from the DNR – response to comments
 - There should be more advance notice, for example the NRC agenda, a proposal is submitted one month for information only and the next month it's on the agenda for the Director's action. (There was a suggestion of a 6 month notice)
 - Increase civility in communication on both sides (spoken/unspoken)
 - There should be a coordinator to manage communication; for example, in charge of notices, advertisements, etc. Should be well publicized
 - Increase communication with the right people
 - Decision makers need to be knowledgeable and involved in actual decisions (external/internal)
 - Ability to share information with stakeholders effectively and ability to provide feedback; for example, web site; listserv; customer service line; library; direct mail; blog
 - Hope this is not an illusion of inclusion – ongoing feedback in a timely manner
 - Local DNR should communicate with locals and be able to make decisions for the local area
 - Meeting locations – if its about the UP have the meeting in the UP

2. **What elements are necessary to create a citizen's advisory council that meets the needs of all parties involved?**
 - There should be an executive committee with sub-committees and focus groups. There should be someone selected from the executive committee to be on every sub-committee and focus group.
 - There should be broad representation including land owners; corporate representatives; regional representatives; and then look around to see who is missing. Also, change representation as needed.
 - Dynamic process
 - Must be responsive to comments/input
 - Requires open mindedness
 - No hidden agendas

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- Follow through with actions
- Information gained through process needs to make it to the decision makers
- The DNR involved with the CAC should be at the local level
- Forward thinking - proactive. The CAC should not only deal with issues but should anticipate to prevent issues; for example, lack of habitat area
- There are different issues in different regions of the state (move from local area to Lansing)
- Each group needs to pick their representative
- Meetings should be centrally located for the WUP
- The CAC meetings should be an open forum and should be open to the public
- Use the NRC as an element to enhance communication
- Positive reinforcement
- Those involved in decisions need clear understanding of the issues that decisions are being made on

3. What challenges need to be overcome?

- Understand the different viewpoints that come to the table (everyone needs to listen)
- Reverse decision making from top down to bottom up
- If recommendations are not adopted explain why in a timely matter
- Trust
- Overcome individual positions to look at overall needs and goals
- Have an open mind
- Understanding available resources to do this
- Attendance is important
- Maintaining the momentum
- The DNR seems to be more interested in the money makers; for example, ORV, snowmobiles, etc. Need to include silent sports, enact a conservation license to support the silent sports
- To what extent will there be a voice
- How will comments be weighed? Is more consideration given to suggestions made in person vs. written?
- Meetings, etc. should not be on a 9 to 5 time frame
- Revisit previous idea - what didn't work in the past, might work now
- Emphasize routine DNR feedback to recommendations
- Balance social, economic, and recreational issues
- Process needs follow through
- Keep issues germane to the UP
- How to tie local, regional, and statewide issues
- How will it be structured? For example, leadership, etc.
- Time for meetings – traveling
- Recognize that you don't live in a bubble – when you manage state land...look across to see who your neighbor is

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- Establish moderator at the CAC meetings – “keep the peace/pace”
- Needs transparency to all, public forum, web site
- Focus on everyone’s strengths, don’t focus on weaknesses - embrace the positive
- The CAC should define topics to discuss
- Expectations need to be defined/managed
- There was an advisory group in the 60’s that disbanded after 3 years because its recommendations never resulted in action or a response from Lansing