

Lake Interstate State Game Area Master Plan

Michigan Department of Natural Resources



Wildlife Division
Sara Thompson
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Intended Purpose and General Management Direction

Lake Interstate State Game Area (SGA), (Figure 1) was gifted to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) from the Department of Transportation for the purpose of general wildlife management. The area remains utilized for general wildlife purposes as well as by anglers for year around fishing. The area is about 123 acres and is located just southwest of Lansing Michigan in Eaton County. The area includes a large borrow pit pond and the surrounding shoreline.

Due to the small size of the area, limited hunting opportunities exist but a small group of hunters use the area for hunting. The featured wildlife species of the area are cottontail rabbit and deer. Small game, waterfowl and archery deer hunting occurs on the area as well as year around fishing.

In 50-100 years this area should be operated by the county as a county park. The area is much better suited to other uses besides wildlife habitat management and hunting. Visitors enjoy the fishing pier and walking on the trail around the lake but hunting is a very minor use on the area. The DNR should work toward an agreement with Eaton County or similar organization for taking over the management/ ownership of this area.

Background

Due to the small size and limited quality of the area for wildlife habitat, the major factor used to determine management direction on the area was the use of the area for non-consumptive users and anglers. People in the Lansing area use the area to connect to the outdoors with their families and enjoy the local greenspace. Families utilize the fishing pier and shoreline to fish.

Wildlife Species

There are no known SGCN from the Wildlife Action Plan on the area. White-tailed deer and cottontail rabbit are the featured species of the area. Autumn olive is a common invasive species on the area and efforts continue to combat phragmites using early detection and response tactics. Invasive mute swans attempt to utilize the area for nesting and are removed, as needed. Waterfowl utilize the borrow pit pond as a staging area during migration and therefore are accessible by hunters. Climate change factors are not expected to significantly affect the wildlife species that utilize the area.

Existing Conditions

A survey of the natural communities or unique ecological features of the area has not been conducted to date, and no exceptional habitat quality areas are expected to be found. The area has not been inventoried using MiFi so a cover type map is not presently available.

Figure 2 shows the borrow pit pond and surrounding shoreline on the aerial photo. The borrow pit is deep in the center and has a narrow shallow area along the perimeter. Fisheries Division maintains the fishing pier that was installed with the assistance of the Boy Scouts. A walking path around the borrow pit has been established and maintained to provide access to the pond for wildlife viewing and fishing. The small grassland/brush areas adjacent to the pond provide limited habitat for deer and rabbit. The pond itself provides a roosting area for migrating waterfowl and year around habitat for fish and amphibians. The surrounding area is mostly large office complexes and other urban infrastructure.

Recreational Use

The primary recreational use of the area is fishing in the borrow pit pond and nature walking along the trail around the pond. A small group of hunters utilize the area for hunting but the area is small and wildlife populations are limited by habitat availability. There is a gravel parking lot and a small fishing pier for access on the area.

Impacts on the Local Economy

The area provides an island of greenspace in a primarily urban area. This is an attractive benefit to local residents and helps draw people to the area. People who work nearby utilize the area for breaks and walking.

Management Direction

The future desired condition of the area is to pursue transfer of this property to the county or other form of government to manage. While the property remains in state ownership, the goal will be to maintain the area in a safe condition for non-consumptive users as well as provide as much habitat for deer and rabbit as possible on the small acreage.

Goals, Objectives, and Management Actions

Goal 1 – Maintain existing habitat for deer and turkey.

Objective 1 – Control invasive species and remove unwanted brush on an annual basis.

Action 1 – Annually monitor upland area for invasive species and unwanted brush. Control using herbicide or manual removal as needed.

Goal 2 – Provide fishing access to the borrow pit pond for fishing along the shore line and from the fishing pier.

Objective 1 – Maintain the shoreline and the fishing pier in an operable and safe condition.

Action 1 – Work with Fisheries Division staff and local Boy Scout troops to make minor repairs to the fishing pier as needed to repair storm damage and normal wear and tear.

Action 2 – Annually monitor shoreline edge for holes or other safety concerns. Repair holes as needed.

Goal 3 – Provide opportunities for waterfowl hunters.

Objective 1 – Maintain attractiveness of the borrow pit pond to migrating waterfowl.

Action 1 – Remove invasive mute swans as they appear on the area.

Action 2 – Place brush (removed from the area) along the shoreline over the ice in the winter. This will provide shoreline structure for wood ducks and other wildlife to utilize.

Acquisition and Disposal of Land

This game area should be considered for transfer to another conservation organization or the county for management. It would be better managed and utilized as a park. There is no opportunity for expansion due to the surrounding office building complexes. The area is minimally utilized for hunting. The ability of the area to be used by anglers into the future is important.

Review and Approval

This plan will be available for public review and comment on the DNR website between February 1, 2017 and February 28, 2017. Once the plan is approved it will be placed on the [DNR website](#), and will be reviewed again within 10 years of the approved date. Send comments to: Sara Thompson Thompsons23@michigan.gov

Approvals

(Mark Mills), Field Operations Manager

Date

(Mark Sargent), Regional Supervisor

Date

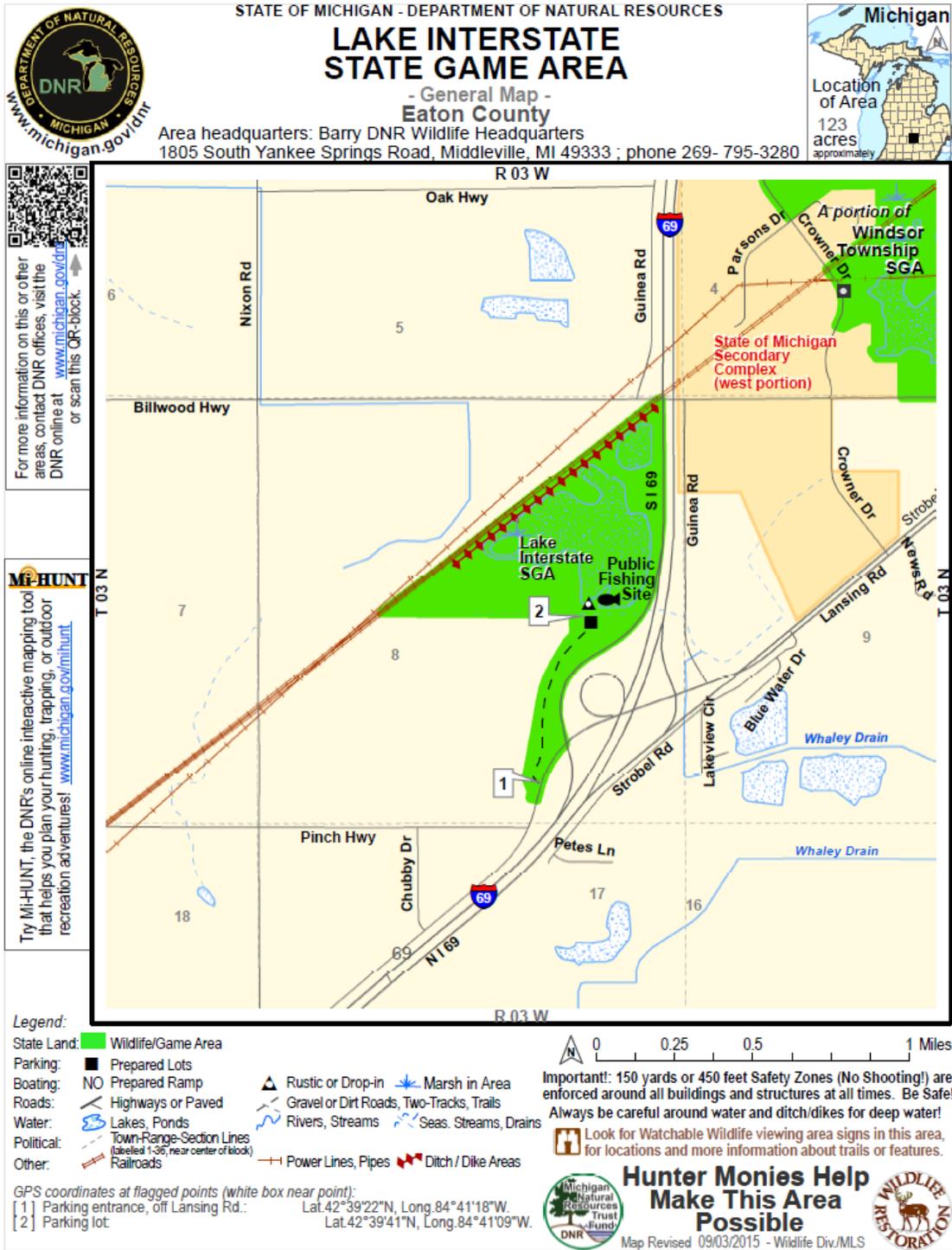


Figure 1. Lake Interstate State Game Area Map.



Figure 2. Lake Interstate State Game Area aerial photograph.