

3.0 Management Zone Plan



With guidance of the Planning Team and input from our stakeholders and the public, the park's "Purpose and Significance" statements were formulated. This established an identity for Warren Dunes State Park as a place to be valued for its unique ecological features, Lake Michigan shoreline, recreational trails, camping and opportunity for natural resources education.

The Management Zone Plan, Figure 1, was developed in keeping with the park's unique Identity. Similar to the Purpose and Significance statements, the Management Zone Plan was also drafted with Planning Team, stakeholder and public support. The Management Zone Plan seeks to preserve and protect the resources, while creating low-intensity recreational uses, and educational and interpretation opportunities. To achieve this, the park was divided into the following zones:

- ❑ Primitive Zone, about 1,013 acres (70%), reflects a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources. Land is managed to only allow dispersed and low frequency use for low impact recreational purposes. Attaining and maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or uses are allowed
- ❑ Natural Resource Recreation Zone, 13 acres (1%) permits active recreation with moderate to high density of use conducted in a natural setting. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but higher levels of uses are allowed
- ❑ Scenic Zone, about 220 acres (15%), recognizes that there are aesthetic qualities to be preserved and protected in the park. Examples in Warren Dunes State Park include the lake views and views from the high points of the dunes.
- ❑ Developed Recreation Zone, 364 acres (25%), allows active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource

This is Phase I of the General Management Plan for Warren Dunes State Park. Phase I determines management zones for the park land. Management zones describe a variety of activities that **may be** appropriate within that zone. Identifying specific activities that **will occur** is a function of Phase 2 general management planning, and not a component of this phase.

significance. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced as possible. The campground areas will be in the DR zone.

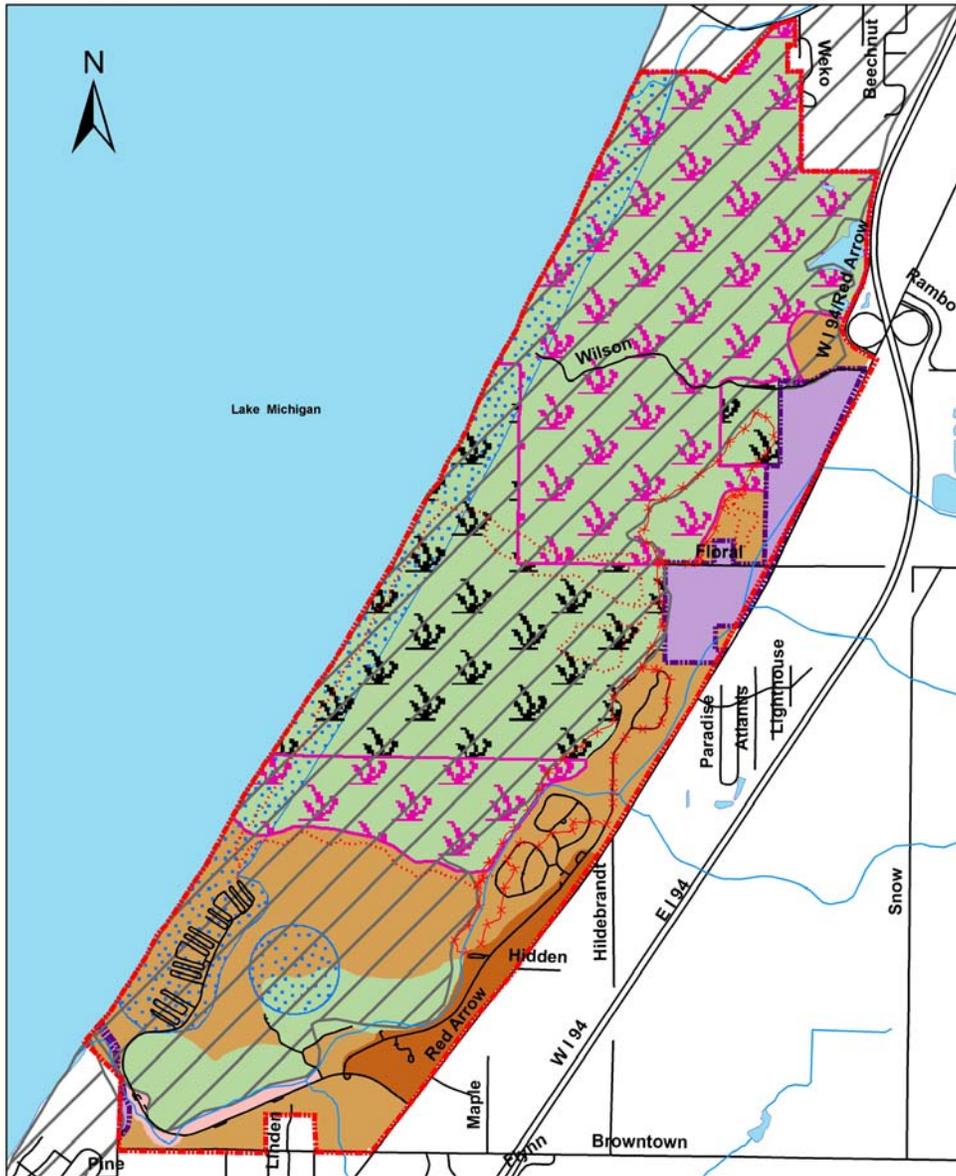
- ❑ Visitor Services Zone, 49 acres (3%), encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations. Typically it will include offices, contact stations, maintenance facilities and all related land base required to conduct the business of running a state park or recreation area. The current administrative offices for the park will be in the Visitor Services Zone.

Other Considerations / Features of the Management Zone Plan

Regional Consideration.

The City of Bridgman is interested in a future bicycle path that connects Warren Dunes State Park with other local parks. This path may run along the border of the park. Future connections to the park are encouraged, with the access location to be determined by RD.

Warren Dunes State Park Management Zones



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|---|--|
|  Dedicated NRC Boundary |  Scenic Overlay |
|  Proposed Future Acquisition |  Primitive Zone |
|  Critical Dunes Area |  Natural Resource Recreation Zone |
|  Dedicated Natural Area |  Developed Recreation Zone |
|  Proposed Dedicated Natural Area |  Visitor Services Zone |
| |  Drains and Streams |

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library



3.1 Primitive Zone

Approximately 1.013 acres, 70%, of the land comprising Warren Dunes State Park is designated Primitive Zone, representing that portion of the park containing regulated Critical Dune Areas. Only foot traffic would be allowed in this zone to ensure that the natural features are not damaged or compromised by recreation.

A. Natural Resources. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Land would be managed to preserve and protect the second growth forest of the back dunes. Preserving this land is important because:

- ❑ The dunes in Warren Dunes State Park are a very important ecological resource that supports a diversity of flora, fauna and natural communities.
- ❑ A significant portion of the park is designated Natural Area and contains an extensive network of forested dunes and several large areas of open dune.

The management zone plan promotes the on-going maintenance and enhancement of these natural resources to ensure their success in the long-term. Native species and natural processes would take precedence over visitor accommodation. The designated Natural Area will be expanded to further encourage the protection of unique natural resources within the park.

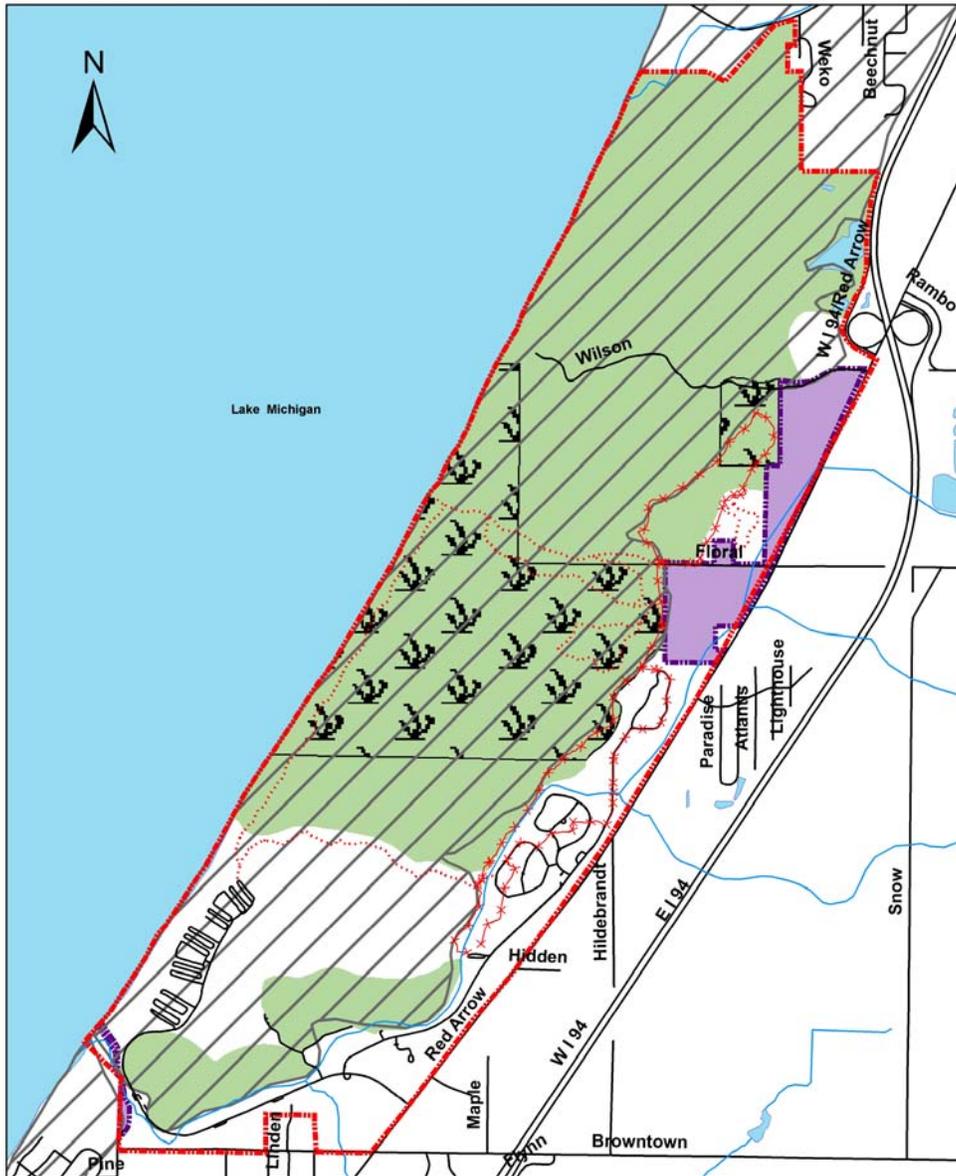
B. Historic / Cultural Resources. Resources in this zone would be preserved, removed or allowed to waste away.

C. Recreational Opportunities. With the focus of this zone being preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural communities present within the zone, recreational opportunities are limited to low-intensity uses. Any uses must be dispersed, low intensity, off-trail or trail, self-reliant, outdoor activities. Activities that could occur in this zone are hiking, back-packing, hunting/trapping/fishing, primitive camping, cross-country skiing, nature observation.

D. Education Opportunities. The ecological significance of the resources in the park presents a tremendous educational opportunity. Information can be relayed through the use of kiosks at trailheads and interpretive signage along trails and other appropriate locations.

E. Visitor Experience. Visitor experience would reflect a high degree of natural feel: a significant sense of solitude, and a lack of man-made improvements. There would be low interaction with others.

Warren Dunes State Park Primitive Zones



-  Dedicated NRC Boundary
-  Proposed Future Acquisition
-  Critical Dunes Area
-  Dedicated Natural Area
-  Primitive Zone
-  Drains and Streams

0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library



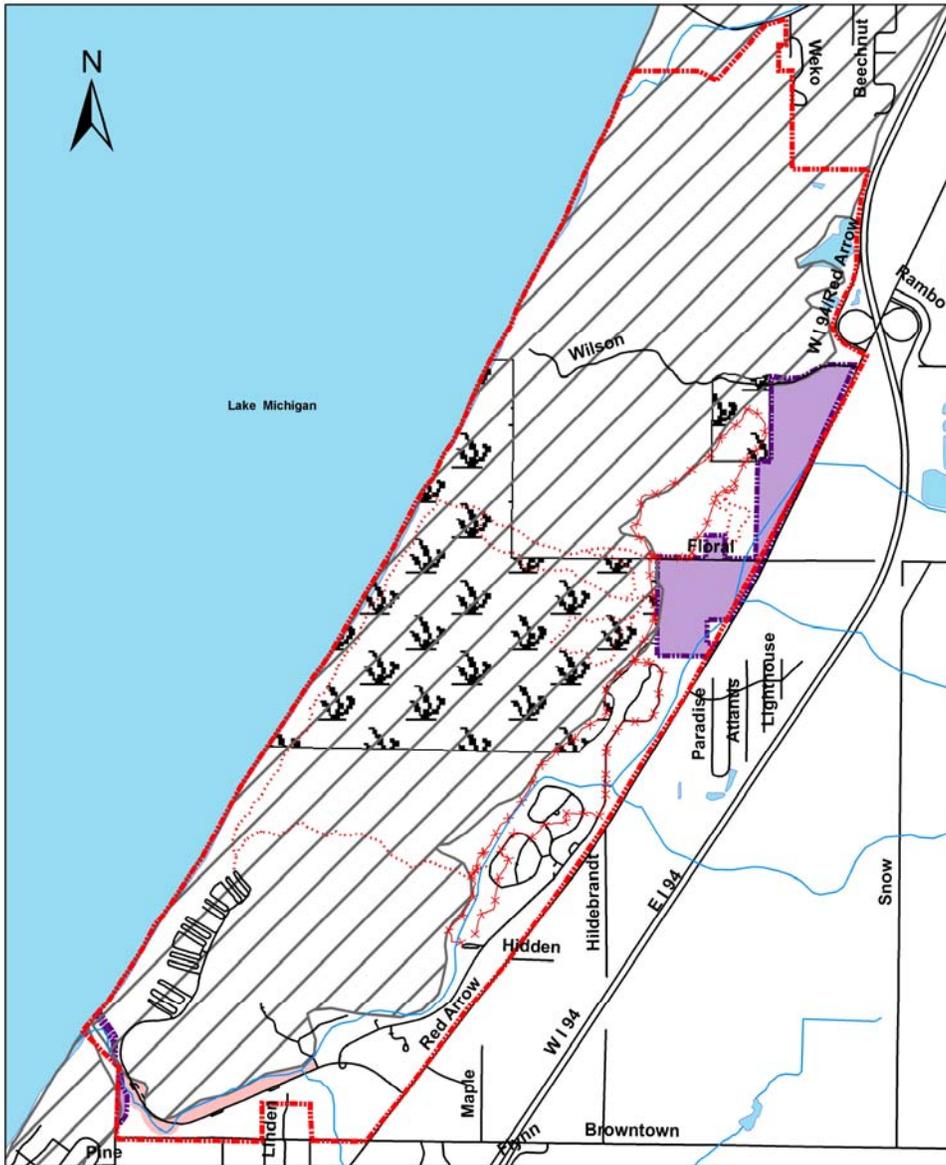
- F. Management Focus. Management would focus on maintaining the low-impact character of the zone, with emphasis on natural resource quality. The Natural Area will be expanded. Routine maintenance would be provided. Care would be taken to eliminate any detrimental impacts such as erosion, sedimentation or incursion of invasive species. Vegetation will be protected from human predation (i.e., illegal picking and harvesting). Other management strategies would be based on recommendations in a future Stewardship Plan.
- G. Development. The focus is to maintain as little evidence of human activity as possible. Only trail improvements, which can include boardwalks and/or overlooks.

3.2 Natural Resource Recreation Zone

A small sliver, 13 acres (1%), of Warren Dunes State Park is Natural Resource Recreation (NRR). This zone encompasses the existing Painterville Creek, a county drain, where there is currently a high level of visitor activity. This activity should be monitored to maintain the quality of the natural resources and to limit the impact of visitors on adjacent privately owned property.

- A. Natural Resources. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Vegetation may also be managed for soil stabilization, to facilitate recreational use, and to maintain an aesthetically appealing landscape.
- B. Historic / Cultural Resources. Resources in this zone could be preserved, rehabilitated, removed or allowed to waste away. Historic structures could be adaptively used for operational uses or educational purposes.
- C. Recreational Opportunities. Moderate to high levels of recreation will be permitted in this zone only. This will accommodate visitors engaged in diverse land and water activities including wading, sunbathing and picnicking. Fishing is allowed in designated areas.
- D. Education Opportunities. Information can be relayed through the use of kiosks or interpretive signage at trailheads, along trails or overlooks. Keeping public use on public (not private) property is one opportunity to target.
- E. Visitor Experience. Moderate to high visitor encounters are accommodated in the Natural Resource Recreation Zone. Activities for visitors to engage in could offer a variable time commitment, challenge and adventure. Moderate noise tolerance and moderate interaction with others can be expected.

Warren Dunes State Park Natural Resource Recreation Zones



-  Dedicated NRC Boundary
-  Proposed Future Acquisition
-  Critical Dunes Area
-  Dedicated Natural Area
-  Natural Resource Recreation Zone
-  Drains and Streams



Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library

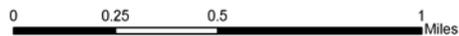
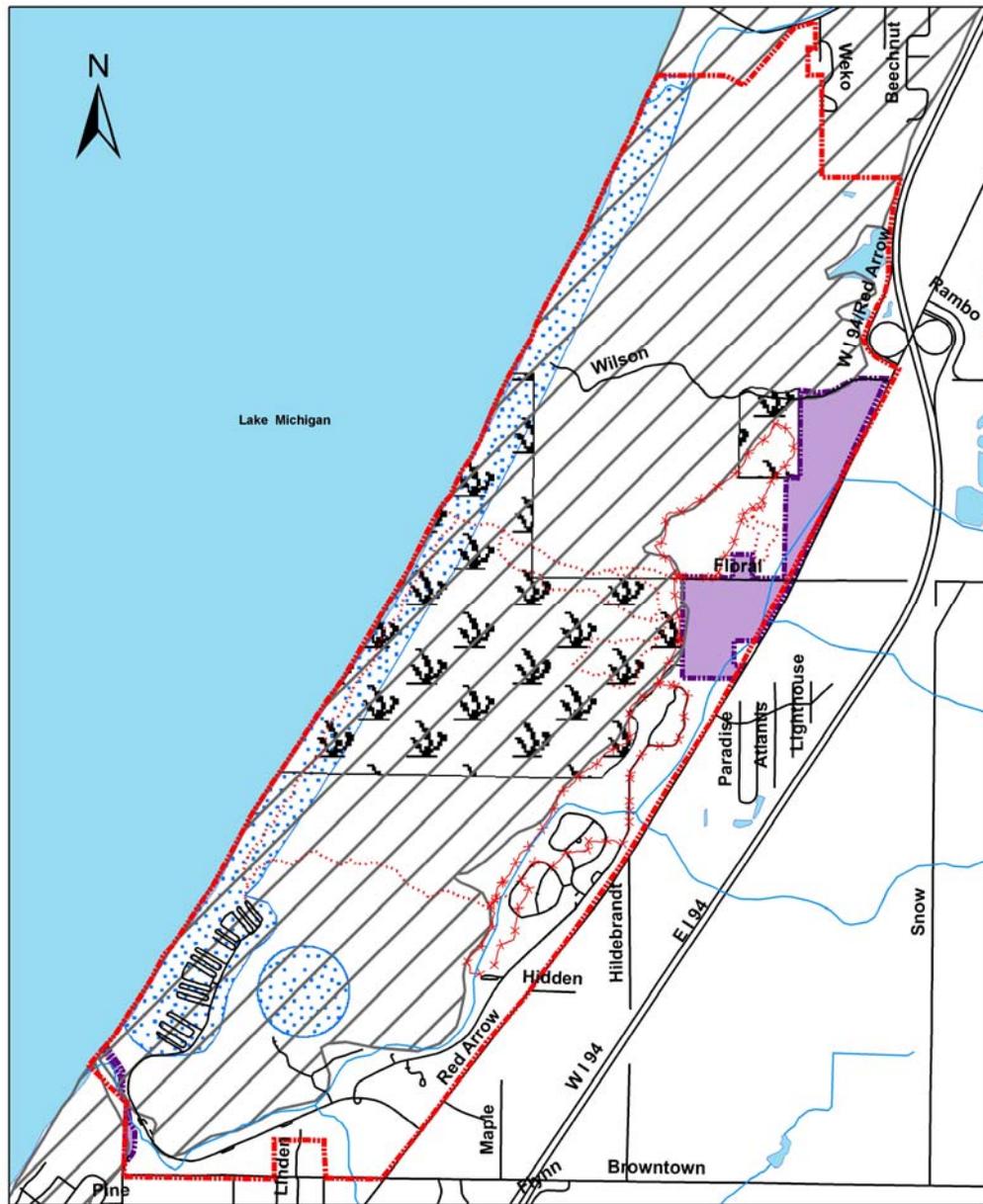
- F. Management Focus. Management focuses on maintaining the use of the zone appropriate to the RD's mission. Public safety, protection of resources, and universal access are management priorities. Management will seek opportunities to address issues of park user impacts on private interests along Painterville Creek.
- G. Development. A moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include walkways and parking, trails, benches, and picnic tables. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities and protect natural resources. Soil stabilization, particularly addressing Painterville Creek, is expected.

3.3 Scenic Zone

The Scenic Zone, approximately 220 acres (15%), is established for scenic viewscapes. Those identified during the plan process are noted on the plan: the park's entire Lake Michigan shoreline and the peak of Mt. Randall.

- A. Natural Resources. This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Vegetation may also be managed to enhance the viewscapes of the zone.
- B. Historic / Cultural Resources. Cultural resources would be preserved, rehabilitated or removed. Historic structures could be adaptively used for operational uses or educational purposes.
- C. Recreational Opportunities. Moderate levels of recreation would be allowed, compatible with the surrounding Primitive or Developed Recreation zone. Non-motorized activity only would be allowed in the trail and observation point; motorized activity would be allowed as appropriate to provide access to the viewshed, or in the case of a scenic road designation.
- D. Education Opportunities. Interpretive signage may be used at key viewing points, trailheads, overlooks or the parking area. There may be opportunities for off-site interpretation as well.
- E. Visitor Experience. High encounters are expected in Scenic Zones. Visitors would be engaged in sightseeing activities by hiking. A moderate time commitment, off-site interpretation and noise tolerance would be expected.
- F. Management Focus. Management focuses on maintaining the quality of the viewscape. Public safety, and ensuring that other activities and/or development within the Scenic Zone are compatible with the overriding purpose of the view quality are other management concerns.

Warren Dunes State Park Scenic Overlay Zones



Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library



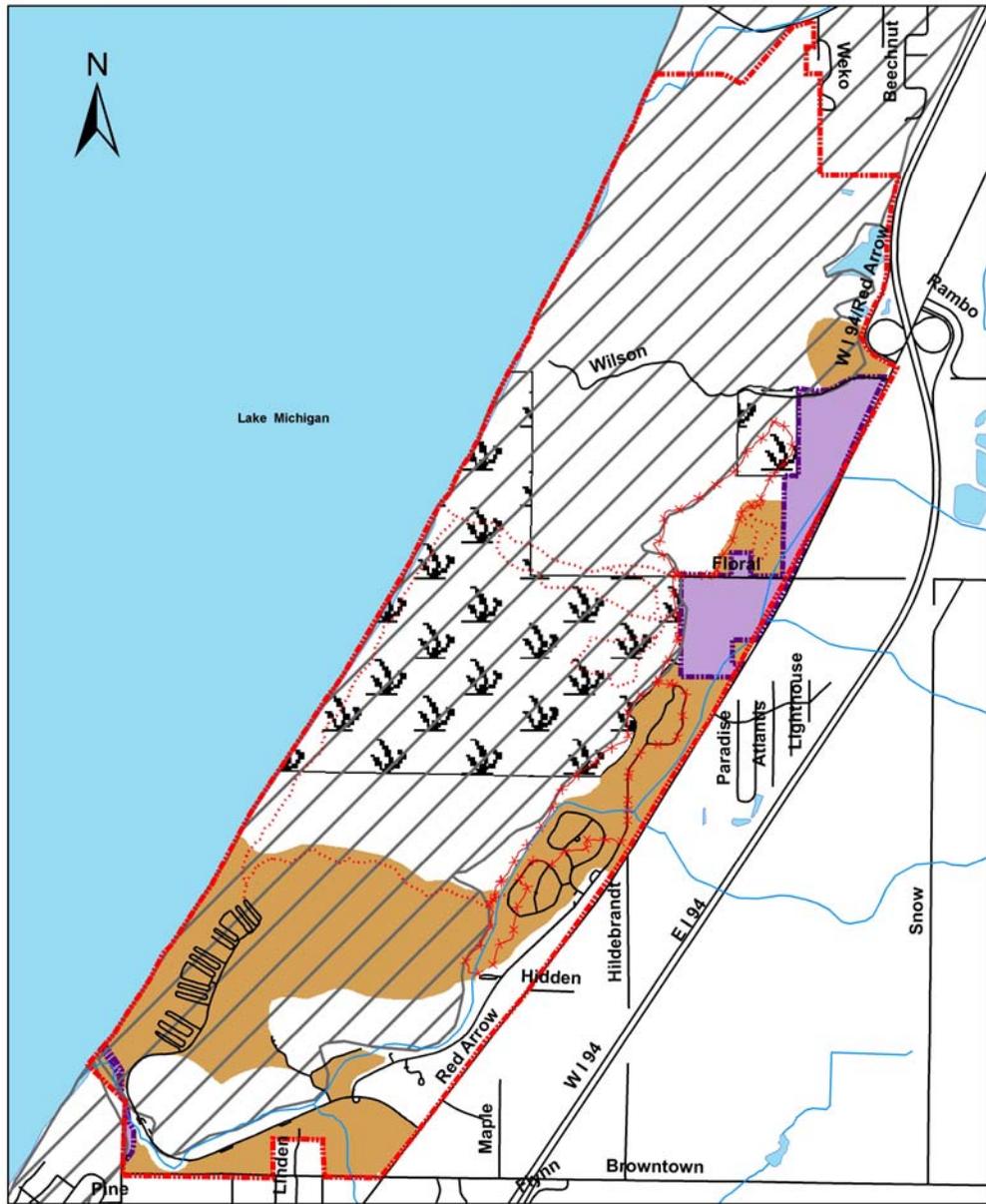
- G. Development. A moderate level of development is expected to support visitor access, interpretive activities and sightseeing. Roads, restrooms, trails, parking, picnic areas and kiosks are some of the development options that would be allowed in a Scenic Zone, where appropriate.

3.4 Developed Recreation Zone

Approximately 364 acres, 25%, of Warren Dunes State Park is Developed Recreation (DR). Land in this zone is mainly comprised of Lake Michigan day-use beach, Mt. Randall dune access and campgrounds. Camping opportunities include tent and RV camping along with a group camping area.

- A. Natural Resources. Vegetative management in this zone will address hazard trees, invasive species, and pests and disease, and will also be allowed for purposes of facilitating development and recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape. Natural resources are actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Water quality is maintained or restored.
- B. Historic / Cultural Resources. Resources in this zone could be preserved, adapted or rehabilitated. Non-utilized or stabilized structures are removed.
- C. Recreational Opportunities. High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment are found in this zone. Visitors engage in recreation activities in diverse and modified land and water settings: hiking, modern and semi-modern camping, bicycling, boating, canoeing, kayaking, nature observation, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, day-use beach, picnicking, and other day-use activities. Fishing is permitted in designated areas.
- D. Education Opportunities. Interpretive signage and information could be provided at a day-use facility, campground, registration building, trail head, along trails and overlooks.
- E. Visitor Experience. A high level of visitor encounters can be accommodated. Activities for visitors to engage in could offer a variable time commitment, challenge and adventure. Moderate noise tolerance and moderate to high interaction with others can be expected.
- F. Management Focus. Management focuses on maintaining the use of the zone appropriate to the RD's mission. Public safety, protection of resources, and universal access are management priorities. A recommendation of this plan is to modify the Natural Area designation (which currently takes in the semi-modern campground) by moving the east border of the Natural Area to west of Painterville Creek.

Warren Dunes State Park Developed Recreation Zones



-  Dedicated NRC Boundary
-  Proposed Future Acquisition
-  Critical Dunes Area
-  Dedicated Natural Area
-  Developed Recreation Zone
-  Drains and Streams



Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library

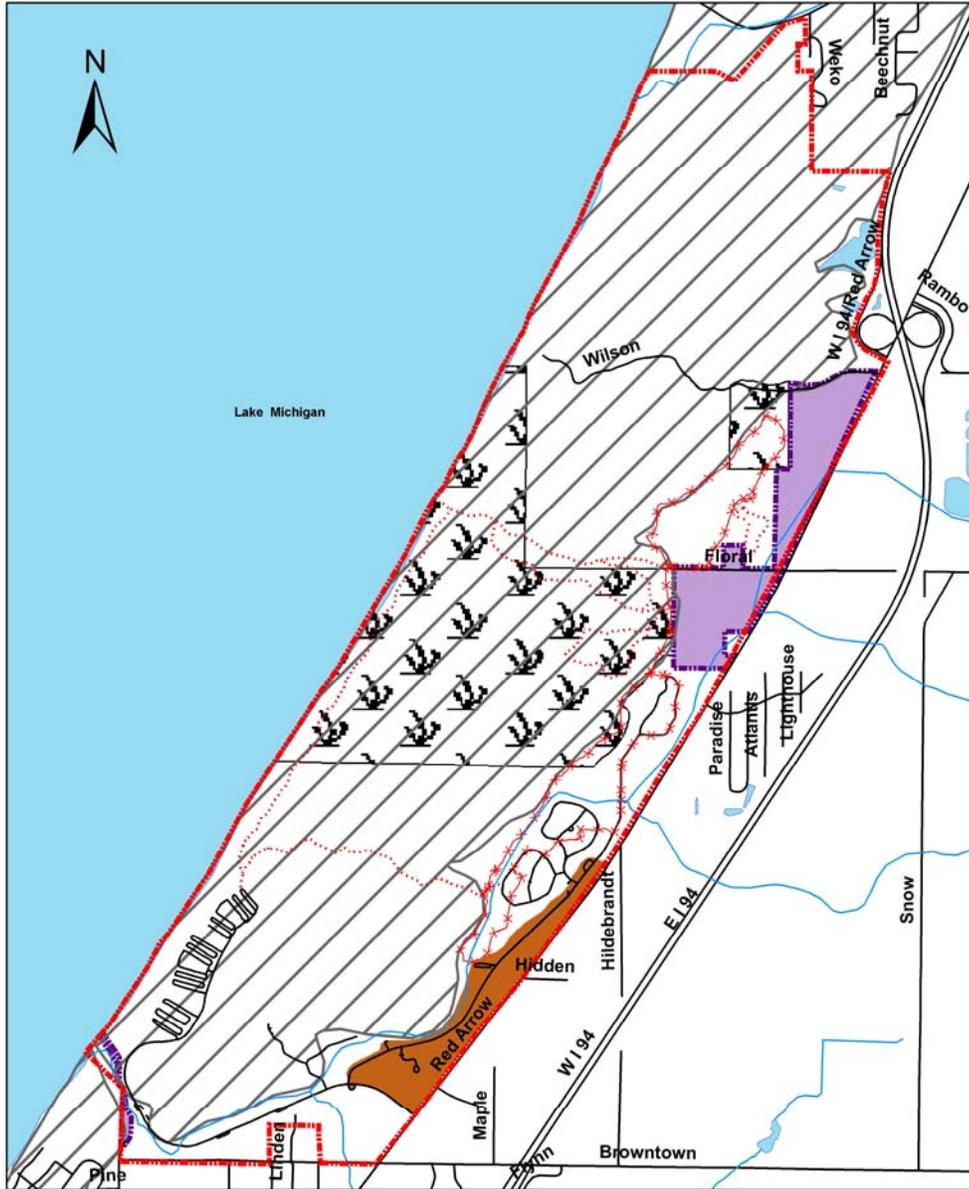
- G. Development. A high level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include restrooms, concrete/asphalt/gravel walkways and parking, trails, benches, picnic tables, rustic campsites, cabins and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities and protect natural resources

3.5 Visitor Services Zone

This zone is 49 acres (4%), and encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations. Typically it will include offices, contact stations, maintenance facilities and all related land base required to conduct the business of running a state park. The VS zone in Warren Dunes State Park includes the existing park office and maintenance facilities.

- A. Natural Resources. Natural resources are actively managed and modified to support administrative and support activities. Vegetative management (primarily tree removal for safety) is allowed.
- B. Historic / Cultural Resources. Resources in this zone could be preserved, adapted or rehabilitated to support administrative and support activities.
- C. Recreational Opportunities. None.
- D. Education Opportunities. Person to person contact at park headquarters for general information; informational kiosk may be available.
- E. Visitor Experience. Business and information only. High noise tolerance and moderate to high interaction with others can be expected.
- F. Management Focus. Management focuses on the business of running the park, appropriate facilities for staff, employee safety. Universal access will be provided to the offices.
- G. Development. A high level of development of facilities for support of administrative activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include office space, meeting rooms, employee locker room, eating area, shop space, and storage space. It will be highly accessible.

Warren Dunes State Park Visitor Services Zones



-  Dedicated NRC Boundary
-  Proposed Future Acquisition
-  Critical Dunes Area
-  Dedicated Natural Area
-  Visitor Services Zone
-  Drains and Streams



Sources: MDNR, Michigan Geographic Data Library