

# MINUTES

## NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION

*Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee*

April 14, 2018

9:00 – 11:00 a.m.

MSU Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

4125 Beaumont Road

Lansing, MI 48910

### **PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION**

**Commissioner Louise Klarr, Chair**

Commissioner Chris Tracy

### **PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC**

Ann Conklin

Bob Hoffmeyer

Mike McDonald

Chuck Hoover

Chris Graham

Jim Bradley

Tom Bailey

Julie Clark

Mike Foote

Ron Olson

### **ABSENT**

Jefferson Gray

Mary Pitcher

Jim Hendricks

### **OTHERS PRESENT**

Jacklin Blodgett

Vicki McGhee

Jason Fleming

DNR Management and Staff

## MICHIGAN STATES PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

## **OPENING COMMENTS**

The meeting was called to order at 9:01 a.m. by **Commissioner Klarr**. Commissioner Klarr welcomed everyone to today's meeting. Committee member introductions were made around the panel.

## **APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Minutes were approved for the January 11, 2018 meeting. Commissioner Klarr motioned for approval of the minutes with Committee member **Chris Tracy** and **Mary Pitcher** seconding that motion. Motion to accept minutes passed unanimously.

## **INTRODUCTION OF NEW PRD ASSISTANT CHIEF, JACKLIN BLODGETT**

**Commissioner Klarr** introduced Jacklin Blodgett as the new Parks and Recreation Assistant Chief and congratulated Jackie on her new position.

### **Amendment to Agenda:**

DNR Director Keith Creagh and Chief Budget Officer Eric Eklund asked for the agenda to be amended to discuss future revenue for state parks and the impact proposed legislation would have on the Michigan State Parks Endowment Fund and funding for parks in the future.

Director Creagh and Eric Eklund presented an overview of Senate Bill 763 (SB763) and Senate Joint Resolution O (SJRO), which proposes amendments to the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF) and the Michigan State Parks Endowment Fund (MSPEF). Both SBJ O and SB 763 would amend the way revenue from oil, gas and mineral royalties is allocated. This amendment would provide funding for local public recreation projects and protect future oil and gas revenue after the \$800 MSPEF corpus is reached. Director Creagh encouraged the group to take a broader approach than just state parks when reviewing these; stating this broad approach is in alignment with the Blue-Ribbon report. The recreation passport "Opt Out" would be pursued to attempt to "makeup" for lost revenue to the Parks and Recreation.

Eric Eklund further presented the specific impact of SB763 and SJR O by illustrating various assumptions made and presenting various scenarios of the financial impact of keeping the MNRTF unchanged and the SB763 and SJR O proposal.

The director also reported that at the MNRTF board meeting Wednesday, \$10 million more was made available for the West Michigan Sargent Sand Company project, and more money was made available for Iron Belle Trail connectors.

Numerous committee members had comments and questions upon completion of the Directors comments. Members expressed concern that the Recreation Passport “opt out” doesn’t have enough support. Further suggesting that local community and interest groups could help support the “opt out”. Members suggested that regional meetings in various townships be held to assist with further the next steps and providing accurate information.

Committee member Tom Baily shared that he was around when the Trust Fund Board was developed. Tom spoke about working together as a body that offers advice to the Natural Resource Commission (NRC), and that recommendations made may or may not be taken. No one will get 100% of what they want, expressing the need to work together and compromise, thus setting a good example.

Legislative next steps are; the proposal will go to the Senate to be approved (2/3 majority), then to the House for approval (2/3 majority) and then onto the August ballot.

## **PUBLIC COMMENT**

No public comment

## **AWARD**

### **Miss Dig Safety Award:**

**Chief Ron Olson, Parks and Recreation**, shared that at a ceremony held on March 16, 2018 the Grayling Construction crew was awarded The Miss Dig 811 Safe Digging Advocate Award. The Grayling Construction crew includes; Josh Pellow, Eric Rohn, Reese Janisse and Dave Foster. This group works across DNR divisions and the state. They are also called upon by the governor in special emergency situations.

## **ACTION ITEM**

### **Holly Recreation Area General Management Plan**

**Deb Jensen, DNR Parks Management Plan Administrator**, presented a summary of the Holly Recreation General Management Plan. The plan has the support of the MSPAC Stewardship subcommittee who reviewed the plan with minor revisions suggested. The summary of the planning process incorporated public input with sensitivity to natural resources, historic and cultural resources, recreational and educational opportunities and includes all DNR programs.

The Stewardship subcommittee has previously reviewed the plan with minor modifications and supports the plan presented.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF:**            **Commissioner Louise Klarr** asked for a motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 04-2018-02. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Mike McDonald**. Resolution No. 04-2018-02 was approved unanimously.

**Proposed Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant Application – Land and Water Conservation Fund**

**Matt Lincoln, DNR Grant Coordinator**, gave an overview of the MNRTF grant application process; as well as the small projects, development grant projects and acquisition projects included. A list of projects was included in the committee members packets.

Committee members suggested a link be provided on the website showing how these grants have been utilized over the past 5 years. Especially noting the various locations around the state that have been assisted with these grants.

**RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF:**            **Commissioner Louise Klarr** asked for motion of support for approval of Resolution No: 04-2018-03. The motion was seconded by **Committee Member Mary Pitcher**. Resolution No. 04-2018-03 was approved unanimously.

**Ionia GMP**

No action to be taken plan was presented for review of Phase 2, **Matt Lincoln** shared information on the various resources there, this plan is vetted through Stewardship subcommittee.

**PRESENTATION**

**Iron Belle Trail (IBT) Update – PA288**

**Paul Yauk, DNR Chief State Trail Coordinator**, gave an update regarding the Trail State Program. Reporting that Michigan should be proud of the 12,500 miles of trails in Michigan, stating we are #1 in the nation for rail trails. Paul spoke about the health and economic benefits of trails, how they connect people and places and current trail trends. Paul also noted that the Iron Belle Trail is 2,200 miles long and is the longest state designated trail in the nation. **Kristen Bennett, DNR Iron Belle Trail Coordinator**, spoke more at length about the IBT stating this is not a state-owned trail but a community developed, state facilitated trail. Kristen shared that there is over 1,221 miles of IBT for hiking, and 798 miles for biking. The goal is to have the trail 80% complete by December 2018. This will create a seamless trail from Belle Isle to Ironwood and traverses over 48 counties. A fundraising committee is currently working on a fundraising campaign to assist with the completion.

**Paul Yauk** spoke Public Act 288 signed by Governor Snyder in September 2016, which covers the opening of forest roads to ORVs in the Lower Peninsula. This provides consistency for the Upper and Lower Peninsula.

PA 288 only applies to state land not federal or other public lands and opens over 7,600 miles of forest roads to ORV use. Paul noted that numerous meetings will be held to educate staff as well as the public, around the state.

## **GENERAL UPDATES**

### **Grand Haven State Park Enhancements (v)**

**Chief Ron Olson, Parks and Recreation** updated the group on a recent meeting regarding Grand Haven State Park (GHSP). The meeting with various stakeholders and city officials was to discuss the overall importance of the park and how we could work collaboratively on several projects.

**Chief Olson** spoke about the dune grass problem that we've dealt with the last few years. Upscaled equipment will help us deal with this problem moving forward. PRD is working with law enforcement, due to the large crowds for holidays and the coast guard festival. Problems from last year have resulted in this year 5-day law enforcement presence for less problems we hope. Alcohol seems to be the source of many of the problems last year. Lots of interest there for expanding parking there for viewing. We will be enhancing staffing and the parking area for this park. Great partnership with community, shows how we are working together.

### **Firewood Update (v)**

**Chief Ron Olson, Parks and Recreation** spoke to clarify that there is no restriction on bringing firewood into any state park. We are encouraging local purchase or purchase at parks. We intend to do a robust public education campaign. Bids are out for firewood providers for our parks with specific requirements. Trying to keep price point about the same and increase the value of the wood. We are not prohibiting firewood to be brought in. There is still a no transport rule for taking firewood across the bridge. Further update to be given at the June 2018 meeting.

### **Centennial Update (v)**

Next meeting

### **Back Country Camping Changes (w) – Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park**

**Chief Ron Olson, Parks and Recreation** referred the committee to the update in their packet regarding back country camping changes. Michigan has seen an uptick in back country camping. Chief Olson also noted that Highland Cooper Mining Company has completed their exploratory drilling in the park, we have no further information on what the company intends to do next.

### **Financial Update**

**Jacklin Blodgett, PRD Assistant Chief**, gave a brief update on the FY18 supplemental, which included an additional \$4 million. The additional funding allows for us to bring our rangers back sooner. The supplemental funding will be used on salaries, park equipment, telecom and green initiative projects. Funding supplemental must be used by September 30, 2018.

### **Major Projects Update (v)**

**Vicki McGhee, PRD Planning Section Chief**, provided an update on current major projects. Indicating that the best time to get projects out for bids is winter. Vicki shared information on three major renovation projects; Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park, F.J. McLain State Park and the White Pine Trail. These major renovations will cover multiple years. Vicki further shared that there are over 200 projects in some state of design or construction.

**Chief Ron Olson** requested that staff pull together a list of those projects that can be shared on the committee members document library if they wish to review further.

Reminder that a May 16 2018 MSPAC workshop is scheduled as a conference call.

Members of the Finance committee determined that a conference call next week would be arranged to determine the outcome of the resolution they have been discussing.

### **OTHER**

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 11:35 a.m.