

MINUTES

NATURAL RESOURCE COMMISSION

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

October 12, 2017

**Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary
500 West Fletcher Street
Alpena, MI 49707**

PRESENT FOR THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Commissioner Chris Tracy, Co-Chair

PRESENT FOR THE MSPAC

Commissioner Christine Crumbaugh, Co-Chair

Tom Bailey

Jim Bradley

Ann Conklin

Bob Hoffmeyer

Mike McDonald

Chuck Hoover

Chris Graham

Jefferson Gray

ABSENT

Mike Foote

Julie Clark

Jim Hendricks

Mary Pitcher

Commissioner Louise Klarr, Chair

OTHERS PRESENT

Ron Olson

Vicki McGhee

Jason Fleming

Paul Yauk

DNR Management and Staff

MICHIGAN STATES PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

OPENING COMMENTS

The meeting was called to order at 8:05 a.m. by **Commissioner Tracy**. Commissioner Tracy welcomed everyone to today's meeting.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Minutes were approved for the August 10, 2017 meeting. It was noted that the agenda indicated the June minutes for approval in error. August 10, 2017 minutes approved unanimously.

June meeting minutes, motion to approve made by Commissioner Conklin, Seconded by Commissioner Crumbaugh.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments presented.

PRESENTATION

PRD Green initiatives Team Update:

Tim Machowicz, Sleepy Hollow State Park, provided an update on the status of the Green Initiatives Team and a draft report was provided to the committee members. **Commissioner Bailly** commended the team on the work they have done to synthesize the report down to 6 pages, and made a recommendation of adding information highlighting "Dark Sky" parks and the efforts being undertaken to reduce the use of lighting.

Commissioner Conklin suggested that whenever there is the opportunity to document the cost of savings; advantage should be taken to include that savings.

Commissioner McDonald commended the group as well on the job done on the report. McDonald questioned whether there were things that could be done by staff to educate visitors on things they can do to be greener and better practices for recycling. Tim suggested using the interpreter program and explorer guide program to provide those educational opportunities.

Commissioner Conlin further suggested that where the mParks can assist in some of these efforts identified in the report to please let her know.

INFORMATIONAL ONLY

Vicki McGhee, Planning and Infrastructure Chief, provided an update on the general management plan for Sleeper SP and Port Crescent SP to the Commissioners and the specific action items were reviewed in additional detail.

Commissioner McDonald recommended that anyone has an opportunity to attend the Stewardship Subcommittee meeting and suggested that **Renee Parker** send out the dates and times of the subcommittee meetings again. **Commissioner Chris Graham** emphasized the importance of membership in the stewardship.

GENERAL UPDATES

Invasive Species (v) (w)

A Resolution prepared by **Commissioner Chris Graham**, Chair Stewardship Subcommittee, was passed out to committee members present for review. The resolution requests the DNR Director to institute a task force to explore the invasive species issue.

Jason Fleming, Resource Planning and Protection Chief, provided an overview of the efforts being undertaken by Stewardship staff to treat the Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA) issue. The resolution goes to the heart of the issue that HWA effects the whole state and isn't just a parks issue. **Fleming** also informed the Commissioners that additional surveys are being sent out to assess the issue.

Commissioner Bailey was impressed with the well written resolution and believes that as it is submitted by the subcommittee it comes with a motion and support, so they can move directly into discussion and action.

Commissioner Chris Graham added that while this resolution is specific to HWA, the larger issue is the effect invasive species are having on the forests of Michigan; and education on this issue and elevation to the highest level government is necessary.

Commissioner McDonald further advised that Ray Fahlsing provided information to the subcommittee on ways you can work with your local units of government.

Natural Resources Committee Commissioner Richardson stated that he would advise the group at the NRC's next subcommittee meeting, so this issue could be discussed then.

All were in favor of the resolution – the Motion passed unanimously.

Detroit Grand Prix (v)

Ron Olson, PRD Chief, provided an update on the Detroit Grand Prix event and an overview of the historical relationship. When the lease was relatively new, a survey was completed to determine preferences and issues the community may or may not have related to Belle Isle.

At the time, 65% of the respondents said they supported large events such as the Grand Prix. Due to the clean-up efforts done on Belle Isle, comments have been heard that the Grand Prix is no longer needed as a funding source. As the contract with the Grand Prix is set to expire in a year, a listening session was held recently to better understand the issues the public has related to Belle Isle and specifically the Grand Prix. One item that came up was doing an environmental impact study. Another item of concern was the length of time for the set up and take down of the event, as well as the costs of the event.

In addition to the general fee paid by the Grand Prix, the Grand Prix provides opportunities for additional fundraising efforts that result in additional revenue that is directly reinvested in Belle Isle. **Chief Olson** did inform the Committee and attendees that the DNR is doing its due diligence.

Commissioner Bailey commented that it appears the concerns raised are not necessarily environmental but more social.

Commissioner Gray commented that some of the concerns recently raised about Grand Prix are likely being made due to the success of the DNR's revitalization efforts.

Commissioner Tracy communicated a reminder that all comments are welcome on this issue, so long as they are done in a professional manner.

Ed Golder communicated the good work being done by Parks and Recreation on listening to the concerns of the public.

Firewood (v)

Ron Olson, PRD Chief, provided an update on the action steps being taken on firewood in parks. The key being education and there are no changes being implemented this year.

Petoskey Stone (v)

Ron Olson, PRD Chief, shared that a gentleman illegally took a Petoskey stone from state land. It was decided that it would be a better use to place the Petoskey stone in a venue where it could be viewed and appreciated by the public. The venue was first decided to be at the Outdoor Adventure Center; however, comments being received indicate this may not be the best location.

Aquatic Invasive Species (v)

Ron Olson, PRD Chief, further shared that a group has been very active in communicating on the issue of aquatic invasive species and has suggested that the DNR not develop any new boat launches without better treatment options and boat washing stations. The DNR has reached out to the President of this group and a dialog has been undertaken to partner together on this issue and develop educational materials.

Commissioner McDonald provided further comments on this issue and discussed that Ingham County Parks has placed a boat wash station at Lake Lansing Park and that while boat washing stations don't harm it is difficult quantifying the success, so education is key.

Trails Update (v) (w)

Paul Yauk, Trails Section Chief, provided an update on the inventory efforts being undertaken by staff to meet the requirements of the PA 288. The Northern Lower Peninsula inventory is complete and recommendations were provided to the public on the DNR website. Over 1,000 comments were received during the public comment period. All comments were reviewed and in some instances action were taken. There is now a second public comment period being held. The next phase will be the Upper Peninsula inventory, which is approximately 40% complete. The final phase will be the Southern Lower Peninsula which does not contain forest land but does have state park and wildlife lands. **Commissioner Bailey** asked for clarification on the final comments deadlines.

Mike Levin Trail Naming and Donation

Paul Yauk, Trails Section Chief provided information to the Commissioners on the dedication of the Lakelands trail to Mike Levine. Yauk further highlighted Levine's 5 million dollar donation to the trail and his overall dedication to Michigan trails.

E-Bike Bills

Paul Yauk, Trails Section Chief, provided an update on the status of the e-bike bills.

Commissioner Bailey informed the Committee of a current emerging issue that may need to be looked at in the future and that is wake boats.

Commissioner Bailey reminded the group that as a whole we need to be more creative in funding for recreation, especially since general fund dollars are no longer appropriated for Park and Recreation uses.

OTHER

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at 9:38 a.m.