

Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative
Meeting May 4, 2017
Peaine Township Hall, Beaver Island

Attendees: Brian Mastenbrook, Pat Lederle, Jennifer Kleitch, Erin Victory, Lee Boisvert, Doug Tilly, Denny Jason, Don Tritsch, Ross Maxwell, Lori Taylor-Blitz, Bobbi Welke, Alvin Lafaeviere, Jim Keiser, Seamus Norgaard, Bill Parsons, Kitty McNamara, Alan Proctor, Chris Pease, Pam Grassmick, Ed Salveter, Phil Wyckoff, Bill Kohls, Rich Gillespie, Bud Martin, Jeff Powers, Bill McDonough
Via teleconference: Shaun Howard, Wes Andrews, Matt Preisser

Review of agenda and notes from last meeting – Pat Lederle
Pat did introductions around the room asking that everyone sign in
Changes to the agenda:

- discuss public act 288 (ORV use on the roads),
- add a general question and answer discussion,
- trails discussion moved to the front of the agenda rather than at the end of the meeting.

Pat discussed the goals of the DNR, there are five. Three of them are protection of natural resources, providing recreation, and providing opportunities for resource based economics. There can be conflicts between these goals; it's hard to have them all within a group. All of them are understandable and worthy, and it is the job of the DNR to try to find the sweet spot among all of them and promote programs that provide these opportunities. It is crucial to the collaborative to work in the middle and make these opportunities a reality.

RECREATION TRAILS: Brian Mastenbrook discussed the inventory of the trails that took place last year by the DNR. There was a report handout provided at this meeting. He discussed that Jennifer Kleitch had requested input via email from the collaborative and it was not fruitful. Brian wants to know if the collaborative is going to put the effort in to finishing this project or if you are going to move on to other things. Pam Grassmick stated that some members are waiting for guidance from the DNR and distinguishing the trails into categories. Members are unsure where the island fits into PA288. Brian asked that maybe a few people could meet after this meeting to discuss trails. A lot of the trails go through private property and this complicates things a bit. Controlling invasive species should be built into the model also. There were very few people using the trails last summer while the DNR workers were doing their work. As the roads get better and better on the island the trails are getting used more. There is an interest with some about setting up an Island trails group and volunteer effort to get some things done. Even though there aren't a large number of people using the trails, those that do are passionate about them. **Bill Kohls mentioned a few people that are continuing to use and ask about the trails, he was asked by Pam to get these names to Jennifer.** Jennifer has been in touch with one that is particularly interested in doing work on the island. The collaborative needs work out what the purpose of the trails are, the footprint of the trails, what the use designations will be (walking, ORV, etc.), how the trails will be maintained, trails that cross private and public land, and invasive species issues along the trails. Are there other people interested? Snowmobilers? On the mainland trails are most successful when associations or user groups (snowmobile groups, bikers) are involved. Parks Division are the trails specialists for the DNR and Recreation Specialist, Emily Myerson, recommended coming up with a plan and prioritizing the work and trails.

Don Tritsch expressed support for improving the trails and hoped that the DNR would have proposals developed for dealing with areas that are impassable due to mud.

In conclusion a group will be established to build the framework and make some determinations. Getting something small done this summer is recommended and putting something in motion for later in the fall/winter when the islanders are not as busy. They determined that the low hanging fruit should be identified and worked on this summer/fall/winter. There was a lot of discussion on the state of some of the trails in particular. Getting a user association together to take on some of the projects will be sought. A trail guide should also be established. ORV use on public roads is also confusing and needs signage and designations.

Jennifer will contact the collaborative members and other interested parties and arrange a meeting.

Pam asked about the culvert on Johnny Martin's? Where are we? A: it's with the DEQ at the moment.

PUBLIC ACT 288: Brian Mastenbrook reviewed this and explained this is a new law that opens all state forest roads to ORV use if they are currently passable by two-wheel drive vehicles unless they are specifically posted closed. When Brian last spoke about PA 288 with the collaborative he stated that roads on BI would be closed because they were part of state wildlife research area property not forest roads, this was incorrect. The roads will be open unless there are management plan rules that close them. There is no backing right now to close the roads on BI. Clarification on what a forest road is was discussed. In the inventory process, the roads on BI have been categorized by DNR staff and public comment will be open for the month of June. Discussion on closed areas like the PRC and Jordan River took place. Brian discussed the policy and procedure the DNR is currently working with and how designations can be changed by public input. Closing roads can be done but in many cases it will be done after damage has occurred. Currently the majority of the ORV use on the island is done for hunting and utility purposes and done with conscientious users. Brian used the Wojan map when determining his recommendations as to which roads to close. Logging roads can be made at any time due to need; they can be opened and closed as needed.

It is crucial for the public to have input on the determination on these roads. **Jennifer will send out a reminder with a link to the collaborative once the public review period opens.** The trails group should discuss how to limit use by ORVs on trails to try to prevent improper use. LED will be here this afternoon to hear some comments/concerns on enforcement.

WATER TRAIL: Pam Grassmick stated that the grant from the Office of Great Lakes is still in play, On May 16 Harry is coming to the island and will want to meet with the group. Harry and Pat had a discussion on what sites were going to be stops on the water trail. Pat inquired about additional funding through PRD and was told that associations involved with the water trail should be applying for these funds once there is a plan in place. As an island community there needs to be sustainability for the trail. There was a discussion on money offered and the timeline for funding. In order to designate camping sites it has to be done through a director's order and has to go through the commission for their process of approvals.

LANDSCAPE PLANNING SUBCOMMITTEE: Bill Parsons presented an update of their processes so far. Bill discussed the purpose and goals for the subcommittee. They have met several times since February and have worked on a model/map to connect the natural communities. Bill also discussed the purpose and goals of the subcommittee (see attached). There are three different management areas with definitions. The definitions were handed out to the NLMIC (see attached).

Alan Proctor continued the discussion with a presentation of maps showing a model of potential areas for conservation corridors and the datasets used to create them. Printed handouts of the resulting model maps were given to the collaborative members (see attached). The subcommittee

determined that of the layers available for mapping, five were determined to be most useful/important – Parcel Acreage, Forest Stand Information (SOM Lands), Hydrology, MNFI Natural Community, Proposed Management Areas (SOM Lands). Alan discussed the process and the data used for creating the model and maps. Brian Mastenbrook was very pleased with the product produced and the process. Another map with potential areas having cultural resources was created and presented by Alan. Wes Andrews stated that the areas marked in red represent knowledge of existing archaeological sites or historic sites, but do not represent tribal areas. **Motion: Pam & Bill Kohls would like to see a letter sent to the LTBB thanking them for the products and time they have given to the collaborative/townships. Unanimous passed.**

Jennifer Kleitch continued with discussion on the model that was created and how it is being utilized. She has defined the three areas, sent it out for review, and included this feedback to create a draft map. She distributed this map to the collaborative. Special conservation area 3,713 acres, Selective management 3,440 acres, habitat & restoration 5,361 acres. Even though an area is defined, not all of the acreage is manageable. Before doing any management in an area there are processes and approvals to get through first. Identifying specific acreage to manage is one of those. MNFI is doing inventory work that will be used for the forest stand layer that was used for the model. MNFI is doing forest inventory (MiFI) for the DNR in state game areas and will be coming out to BI to do some here. They are also doing natural heritage inventories at the same time. ½ of the state land will be done this year and ½ next year. Would it be conducive to do this in a manner that will benefit doing certain areas first? **Brian requested that the collaborative identify areas that should be inventoried first and get to Brian/Jennifer.** It was requested that the map be changed to reflect that the entire coastal shoreline be identified as a special area, even though this is not state land and the map was created for only state lands. **Jennifer will send the map to the full collaborative (See attached).** Brian stated that the economic return of the forested land should also be reflected in the map as selective harvest. There was a lot of discussion on the potential of different species of forest. The information presented shows that the committee has done a lot of work and are heading in the right direction. After lunch it will be discussed further.

Phil Wyckoff requested that the MNFI inventory, scheduled for this summer, prioritize areas that could be utilized for habitat improvement and forest products.

Break

Pat reconvened the meeting and discussed the path for the rest of the meeting with changes to allow the LED officers to go next.

LANDSCAPE PLANNING NEXT STEPS: Seamus Norgaard discussed some changes to the mapping that he would like to see done. Pat asked the collaborative how they want to proceed. To follow a definite process for making changes, not funneling everything in at the last minute, something that would allow for input that would not bog down the process. To move forward the subcommittee has to adopt a process so that the work done can be reviewed and brought back to the collaborative and a decision made on any proposed changes. Once something is proposed to be done, what are the steps that need to be taken to complete the work for the DNR? Brian reviewed the process with the group and that it is a starting point and small management plans would be written for those areas to get the end result that is being sought. It would then become a statement of work. The compartment review process looks at a smaller scale and not at the landscape level, however with the forest certification process it may need to be done in a compartment review. It was suggested that the language used in defining the special area designators be done so that they do not fall under the forest certification process. The subcommittee will gather more information from

everyone and will bring back recommendations to the collaborative and then a work plan would be constructed. Jennifer would like a timeline as well so that the subcommittee is held to a timeline for this process. The plan (Management Plan for State-owned Lands on Northern Lake Michigan Islands - https://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/island_management_plan_wld_529105_7.pdf) has been developed, this plan was developed to be implemented. The tribe wants to see landscape level planning as part of the plan, even as an appendix to the plan. There was discussion on where a landscape level plan would reside; could there be an implementation document? Seamus would like a process for adding to the plan in the event that positions and DNR personnel change.

Erin Victory explained that the "Plan" is a Management Plan, the highest level, there can be small subunit plans that are operational plans and meet the goals of the Management Plan but at a lower level.

Pat brought the meeting back to the landscape planning process and moving it forward. What is the timeline for getting this back to the collaborative? Bill Kohls is ready to move forward with what they have come up with and leaving it in the hands of the subcommittee without further input.

Proposal to thank the subcommittee for the work they have done and leave it with them to come up with any additional changes. Bring the "final" product to the collaborative at the next meeting in August. No opposition to this proposal.

LED UPDATE/ROUNDTABLE: Conservation Officer (CO) Chad Baldwin, Sgt. Mike Feagan answering questions on Law Enforcement.

Pam – on State land how would you like reports of illegal use of ORVs? A: The enforcement level is going to change on the Island; 800-292-7800 is the RAP dispatch number to call in a complaint. If you want it to stop you have to call, this is 24-7 answered phone number. The complaint can be anonymous if you prefer. Last summer there was a small presence of enforcement on the Island and this year it will be more.

Fisheries enforcement? A: Yes, we do enforce fishing, game, and recreational laws, the same as any other law enforcement officer. Boat registrations, fishing violations, drunk driving, etc.

Boat? A: Yes, if there is something that we need to be here ASAP the Lt. has allowed for flights and we are also working with local law enforcement officers for other transportation as needed. Otherwise they will get here as soon as possible.

Visibility will go a long way out here, with ORV use especially. Education is also going to be a huge hurdle; most people do not know what they can and cannot do here. A: Not everyone will get a ticket, there will be a lot of warnings and information given to help educate.

Using the radio and other media outlets available on the island would also help get new information out. A: The first 1-2 years of a new law are educational times, word will get around. We can come out and introduce ourselves as well.

Having a report to show what was done on the island would be helpful. A: There is a biweekly report online for every district, we are district 3 (http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-42199_50569---,00.html).

What was your take on the amount of ORVs and the amount of violations compared to the mainland? A: Sunset was the most common time for ORV use, the issues were the same as on the

mainland, not wearing helmets, double riders, etc. Education on the laws is the most beneficial. There was not a lot of use, but most of it was non-locals.

Not many ORVs are coming on the ferry, they are being used during the hunting seasons, and not many are the high speed performance ones. Even the locals do not see much use. A: There may not be a lot compared to the mainland, but it is more sensitive areas here that are of concern for illegal use. July 1st bass opener is the primary time for complaints on Garden Island & Hog. Signage would help and under PA 288 there will be more signs and maps for the legal areas.

What are the age restrictions on ORVs? A: 16+ you are good to go on your own, there are other times when younger kids can ride but on state land 16+ without a parent. COs address these directly with the parents when violations are apparent.

Increase presence why? A: because we have more officers in the county now. The process is a bit of a task because it's not easy to get here. Now CO Baldwin is going to be putting more of an effort to be here. If you don't call us when you see something you don't have the right to complain about it to us later. Call the RAP number and if calling a CO direct make sure to leave a message if you do not get an answer. CO Baldwin gave out his card with contact information.

The COs will be sending ORV pamphlets to Bill Kohls who will in turn make sure that they get to the proper locations to get distributed.

High Island grouse hunting permit using helicopter, where exactly were they and are they doing this again? A: They landed where the airstrip used to be, not on the lakeshore. It was for one year and they have not asked for a renewal.

UPDATE ON LINE 5: Matt Preisser Michigan Office of the Great Lakes (participating via teleconference). Matt is not directly participating in this issue but was pleased to share some general updates/reminders. If the audience has specific questions, he volunteered to help get the answers. There was an advisory board set up a few years ago by the Governor. They are having a risk analysis done, looking at liability for Enbridge to make sure they would have financial viability. A second study is an alternatives analysis, which will compare alternatives to the existing pipeline (e.g., rail, truck). Both studies are being conducted by outside, third-party contractors and are to be released in DRAFT in June. There is a process laid out on out to give public input on these two studies. Matt recognized there has been some concern from the public about Enbridge funding both studies; he assured the group that the money is being held in escrow by the Department of the Attorney General and will not influence the content of the reports. The other important upcoming date is the pipeline advisory board is meeting at the Petoskey Middle School on June 12. No questions were posed by the audience. For more information, see the Michigan Petroleum Safety Advisory Board website: <https://mipetroleumpipelines.com/>

- To read the public outreach strategy related to the release of the two draft contractor studies (risk analysis and alternatives analysis), click on Resources & Reports

To learn about the upcoming Board meeting on June 12 in Petoskey, click below.

<https://mipetroleumpipelines.com/event/june-12-2017>

HEMLOCK WOOLLY ADELGID (HWA): Sue Tangora was not able to make it to the meeting to give information on HWA so Pat gave an update based on information Sue provided to him. Pat showed a map of surveillance conducted in the SW coastline of the state. Pat wasn't sure if the movement north was increased surveillance or movement of HWA. There is a bunch of info on HWA available on the web. The best time to look for this is right after a storm when the branches fall out of a

hemlock and end up on the ground. It will look like it has snow on it in a way. They are looking at how HWA gets from place to place and are suspecting birds are involved in the movement. This does not bode well for islands with birds moving back and forth to the mainland. Roger Mech was out here a few years ago and if needed could be back. There was an instance of HWA in Harbor Springs and they were able to eradicate it there and do not detect it any longer there. The island surveyed 70 sites and none were found. They are going to survey it again.

INVASIVE SPECIES: Pam Grassmick/Shawn Howard were asked update the group on Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CAKE CISMA)? They are in the closing stages of getting funding from sources. Focusing on early detection, this is the last year of the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative grant funding. The new round of MIS grant funding was just released, coastal regions are receptors for HWA and this is something they are watching. HWA taskforce is in west Michigan. The primary need is survey to see the extent of the problem.

Tom Clement will not be the invasive species coordinator; they are looking to hire his replacement.

Asian Longhorn Beetle: where is it? Northern site is in IN. Not in Michigan yet.

CULTURAL SITE SUBCOMMITTEE: Lee Boisvert gave an update and thanked the islanders for the work they have put in to keeping the island cultural resources. The committee meets 1-2 times a month and have created a map that Wes Andrews discussed earlier, Cultural Resources, The map does not include Irish and Mormon resource sites. This map is just the beginning. Working on educating private property owners that they own anything that is found on their property and that they do not have to surrender it to someone that is researching on their property.

Bobbi Welke introduced Lori Taylor-Blitz as the new Historical Society Director. Lori stated that artifacts have been found with a professor that was doing research and are being inventoried. They are creating a policy to encourage visiting archeologists to return the artifacts back to the island when research is completed. A document was created of what artifacts have been found and what the uses were, **July 16-22 (18th Wes)**. There is a collection of artifacts from Beaver Island at Northern Michigan University (NMU); one professor is cooperating in sharing and showing the items he has collected as well as the reports from the students. There are some schools of concern that are not willing to return items. Working on this policy is important. SHPO issues permits and the State is a resource for addressing concerns about items not being returned. At Cables Creek there was a researcher that applied for a permit. On state land there needs to be a permit. **It was requested that if something is taking place on the island on state land under a permit that it was reported to the Historical Society.** A Professor from NMU digging behind the print shop found two jaw bones from elk.

Wes Andrews stated that one of the strongest successes is the collaboration of the subcommittee with the Beaver Island Historical Society and have merged into one entity. They are in complete support of the subcommittee and have worked well to educate others. They are a good example of the collaborative at work. Very pleased with the way things have gone over the past two years.

Fox Islands – Lee is getting with Leelanau Co Historical Society to get information on these two islands.

Q & A ROUNDTABLE:

State land transfers, is there an official process, public comment timeframe, giving away access/trails in those transfers? A: Yes, people apply and there is a process, it's quite lengthy.

Appraisals are done and an exchange committee is involved. It is posted for information for 30 days for public input. Local units of government are required to be involved/informed. The last big exchange on BI was with CMU for 40 acres swap. If legislation passes it would require the DNR to do another rendering of its portfolio of parcels of land to reevaluate the ownership and its value. The DNR and others have discussed identifying acquisition possibilities.

There was some discussion on the need to do something that brings some excitement and money to the island. Don Tritsch expressed concern about the economic health of Beaver Island, and suggested that improving the local economy be given priority when making decisions on state land use.

He quoted statistics from the 2017 Draft Beaver Island Master Plan

- The population on Beaver Island is aging - the median age of Peaine Township residents is 58, St James is 55. At the state level the median age is 39.
- There were 83 building/remodeling permits issued in 2000, and 15 in 2016.

From the 2017 State of the Beaver Island School Address

- There were 104 students (K-12) enrolled the school in 1999/00,
- 42 students projected for the 2017/18 school year

33 students are projected for 2022/23 school year.

Are the outer islands special conservation areas? The outer islands may be of interest to loggers. Jennifer stated that the effort so far on landscape planning has been Beaver Island only.

Discussion continued on bird habitat and using this as a venue for revenue/hunting.

Parks and Recreation Division's new strategic plan has information that Pam would like Brian and Jennifer to look at to see if there is something they can help with.

Next meeting - 3rd week of August - 17th 10-3 Bring Your Own Lunch, On Beaver Island

Adjourned