

## Northern Lake Michigan Islands Collaborative Meeting – Draft Minutes

March 2, 2016

**Attendees:** Jennifer Kleitch, Rex Ainslie, Alan Proctor, Jim Keiser, Bill Kohls, Brad Frederick, Shaun Howard, Kaldis Grants, Brian Mastenbrook, Bill Parsons, Dave Ewert, Pam Grassmick, Wesley Andrews, Emely Meyerson, Lee Boisvert, Seamus Norgaard, Archie Kiogima, Tom Bailey, Kevin Haynes, Noah Jansen, Tom Callison, Al Colby, Keith Kintigh, Alvin LaFreniere, Terry Bussy.

**Via Teleconference:** Don Tritsch, Phil Wyckoff, Bill McDonough, Matt Priesser, Jim Flanagan, John Paskus, Jared Pike

On February 9, 2016 some members of the Collaborative began looking at maps of the islands and designating some landscape level interests. The circles made on the maps were intended to be a starting place to get interests articulated. Some members of the collaborative thought the resulting maps were a decision to protect all lands indicated by the circles on the map. This caused some mistrust among those who were in attendance on February 9 and those that did not attend.

This sparked a discussion regarding communication within the collaborative. In order to facilitate communications to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), it was suggested to have a single point of contact - Jennifer Kleitch. There was some discussion about the time commitment required and it was stated that time would be made for this. The collaborative is trying to build a system that works better and to trying to have broader conversations. Having one point of contact could improve transparency of what is going on and would be for the good of the collaborative.

Bill Parsons stated that the E-mail list for the collaborative is ~150 names, is there a way we can include those interested without overwhelming others? It was suggested that we could ask people for affirmation that they want to be on the list and/or to have an online forum to store information. It would be good to have a website where folks can go to get updates, minutes, etc. Bill Kohls will look to see if there is an effective solution in Peaine Township.

Bill Kohls asked: if you want to be part of the collaborative, what is your obligation? We need to hold each other accountable and people that join have to hold themselves accountable. Members need to participate fully.

Additions to the Agenda: John Paskus will be available after lunch to talk about landscape planning

What are things are the collaborative already doing?

- Working on water trails proposal grant application with Coastal Zone Management Program (CZM)
- Trail system work in summer in coordination with townships
- Landscape level planning effort

Approval of minutes from last meeting:

One comment: Mosquitoes are the worst problem on Garden, not black flies and stable flies.

Minutes approved.

Action Items from last meeting:

Finalization of the Management Plan for State-owned Lands on Northern Lake Michigan Islands: maps are close to being finished, and this was the last thing to accomplish prior to the plan being finalized.

Letter of approval created recommending townships sign on to the Charlevoix, Antrim, Kalkaska, Emmet Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CAKE CISMA) Memorandum of Understanding; Rex Ainslie has signed; waiting for township signatures.

Bill Wagner Campground lease – Keith Kintigh could not find any deed language at Charlevoix county office for Bill Wagner campground. Therefore, we are starting fresh with discussions on property leasing and management.

We will continue work with recreation sites and trails. Conservation Resource Alliance (CRA) has interest in partnership with trail improvements on the island especially as they pertain to water crossings. We need to know what information CRA needs when we do the inventory of the trails.

Was the culvert that was placed on state land without a Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) permit done so in a regulated wetland? Maybe. Jennifer will work with Scott Rasmussen to determine and if necessary do an after the fact DEQ permit application. If the culvert is not sized appropriately, it may need to be pulled out or redone. There could be other structural and permit issues as well.

#### Reports from subcommittees

**Cultural Resources:** Wes Andrews would like to know what is going on. We talked in general terms in the Plan with no specifics. Eric Hemenway is coming out to investigate cultural resources in relation to water trail stops.

Cultural Resources Subcommittee: Lee B, Pam G, Wes Andrews, Kitty McNamara

Landscape level planning should be done holistically, looking at all cultural values, which can include natural resources

We will collaborate with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) to investigate and possibly develop designation of cultural resources. We all need to explore consequences of this designation. Trails should also be permitted through DNR SHPO process.

**Invasive Species:** The Nature Conservancy (TNC) has \$20,000 available for work on the island for invasive species work. Tom Clemens is new coordinator for CAKE CISMA. There will be a meeting on March 3, 2016 at Walloon Lake. Dune alliance with Beaver Island Association (BIA) applied for grant for 2017-18 for invasive species control on wetland sites on Garden and Hog islands.

**Water Trail:** Second grant applied for through Charlevoix County for LIAA study (\$52,000).

Break

**Landscape Level Planning:** Jennifer presented Landscape Level Planning information that can be used in the process.

- Map 1 – Michigan Natural Features Inventory (MNFI) Element occurrences (rare species and natural communities):  
This map does not show density of plants, it is incomplete survey and occurrences may reflect

older observations. Common communities are different than on mainland. Little Traverse Conservancy (LTC) protects the species and communities that are common today and that may become rare in the future. Questions about specific meaning of polygons were answered.

- Map 2 - Invasive species 2012 by TNC:  
Again, this does not reflect a complete survey though the shoreline and some public land trails, were surveyed. Map represents 26 species present on the island.
- Map 3 – Potential for archeological features – incomplete survey and general areas where there may be concerns.
- Map 4 – Beaver Island State Land Forest Cover Types – DNR data
- Map 5 – Beaver Island prescribed and completed treatments – DNR data
- Map 6 – Fund acquisition source for Beaver, High, Garden, South Fox, North Fox.

Question: What are implications of different funding sources from when the land was acquired? Some restrictions apply to what can be done on land acquired with different funding sources, (Tax Reverted, State Game, Pittman-Robertson Funds, Swamp Tax) but we have opportunities to manage these all equally for wildlife.

Some other questions arose: When was the Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) rate set and how much is it? (Charlevoix county and statewide) and is there any Commercial Forest Act (CFA) land enrolled on Beaver Island? Action item for DNR to investigate and respond – The answer is no CFA Land on Beaver Island.

Bill Parsons asked where subcommittee minutes should be held? They will be posted to the website once it is created until then they will be emailed to the collaborative.

MNFI asked to come up and help with maps, they were contracted to look at Garden and High islands in 2015. A New report is available – addendum to work from 2011. Geographic Information System (GIS) data for Little Traverse Bay Band (LTBB) shared, Seamus brought core wild area maps. Jim Gillingham helped to put trails and other areas on a map.

Bill Parsons explained of how the initial maps came about. These were put together as examples of how the data can be used. LTBB built trails layer from Gillingham data. Eric Ellis has asked to see where existing aspen is and where it can be created in the future.

Don Tritsch – Wildlife Club did not put circles on map – they were waiting for DNR to identify areas that could be managed for wildlife.

Seamus Norgaard - Unmanaged areas are important for genetics and to protect them from invasive species.

Lunch Break

#### Discussion of Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process

**John Paskus:** CAP handout, TNC and MNFI have developed plan for entire Lake Michigan basin which was completed in 2012. The goal of the plan was to put local actions within larger context. Seven conservation targets were identified; islands were one of the conservation targets. Beaver Island has been highlighted in many reports as being a special place. In addition, the islands and coastal wetlands are in generally good “ecological health”

Questions: What kind of facilitation/leadership is necessary to complete a CAP plan?

What would be the advantages to planning process of using CAP – this process has evolved since mid-nineties. It is an internationally accepted process that accepts multi – value and resource use. Software is available to help use it.

How can we get MNFI here to do a CAP plan? It costs money, but how much? John would have to get back to us. A key factor is how involved people want to be in the process and how robust you want it to be. These projects can take several years. They may cost \$40,000 and up.

Can this plan take human infrastructure and economics into account? Yes, it can incorporate human well-being into process.

### Rex Ainslie Presentation

We have collected a large amount of information and interests have been articulated since we began the Planning process. We are working with both ends of the spectrum with this project. We want to be clear as to what the values and interests are of the people.

What are our opportunities? There are many options to help economics on the island. For example:

- Beech salvage and yet saving trees that are resistant to BBD
- Sugar bush – what are the opportunities/desires for this?
- Beaver island honey, maple syrup
- Shingle Mill – what is available? – Drummond island example

We look at timber management as tool for wildlife management. We want a mosaic; we are in forest certification and any forest management needs to be sustainable. We may have complimentary ideas though without discussing them we won't find common ground.

The Triangle: Take into account Economics, Protection, and Recreation to take actions that make a difference. We need to take into account all values in order to be successful.

Jared Pike – Map with core wild areas and orange spots: are those near term action items?

Phil Wykoff – Can some areas to be released to be cut for next DNR grant (Wildlife Habitat Grant) cycle in June?

Discussion:

- We would prefer to look at what opportunities are for habitat management. Everyone agrees that this is a good idea.
- Is this a non-commercial endeavor? Commercial is preferred, but aspen is not profitable.
- Start with short term actions that have very little risk and then move on.
- How can we get to the point where treatments are proposed by June 1. What are our sidebars?
- What are the goals? We cannot reach a good conclusion until we have goals.
- How do we protect ash and cedar? Write the specs to do so.

- Have these been surveyed for Threatened & Endangered species? No – there is a rare species review before a harvest but not a survey. It would need a paid survey to ensure that logging would not impact it.
- If we go outside of the broader landscape planning process to harvest for the Grant, what does that mean?
- Can we find areas everyone agrees on? Hannigan road? Can we put down acres on grant and then identify the acres later?
- Put a group together that want active management to get their ideas on what they want: 20–40 acres per year is what the Wildlife club would do.
- Are there other ways to get treatments that benefit deer?

Bill Kohls – if the collaborative agrees to allow cutting prior to a landscape plan approval, it should not set a precedent. Consider authorizing a treatment of 20-40 acres – subcommittee would identify where. This is a one-time deal and any future treatment would have to come through the ordinary course through the collaborative.

Bill Parsons – If it is agreed that an area to cut for this year’s grant cycle can be cut it should also be agreed that we will adopt a Core Wild Area concept. Those on the phone (Phil, Don, and Jared) agreed.

**Motion** for the Wildlife Club to put in a proposal for the Wildlife Habitat Grant this cycle for clearcutting 20-40 acres on state land.

Discussion: Subcommittee will make recommendations to wildlife club in time for them to make proposal.

Who is on subcommittee? Maintain original subcommittee (Jennifer Kleitch, Don Tritsch, Seamus Norgaard, Galen Bartels, Bill Parsons)

This is also a commitment to look at Core Wild Areas as a paradigm for management.

**Motion restated:** for the Wildlife Club to put in a proposal for the Wildlife Habitat Grant this cycle for clearcutting 20-40 acres of aspen on state land with a commitment to pursuing Core Wild Areas.

**Motion made and seconded passed unanimously.**

**Motion** for the collaborative to explore obtaining services of someone to pay for CAP, get scope of work drafted and potential cost

Discussion: We need to narrow the focus that we are getting the help for. Explore using the approach of drawing lines on a map.

**Motion seconded and passed unanimously.**

Discussion: who will initiate a CAP and also how much would it cost to do a floristic inventory on Beaver Island? Pat Lederle will initiate and find out.

Don Tritsch and Jim Flanagan – economy and economic sustainability on the Island are very important.

**Motion** for proposed areas for management to be looked at sometime this summer (field trip led by landscape planning subcommittee).

**Motion seconded and passed unanimously** – Assigned to the landscape planning subcommittee.

Next meeting to be scheduled for Late April or early May on Beaver Island.

Meeting Adjourned.