

Northern Lake Michigan Island Collaborative Meeting
Beaver Island Community Center
May 11, 2016 1:30 PM

Attendees: Pat Lederle, Jennifer Kleitch, Brian Mastenbrook, DonTritsch, Bill Kohls, Seamus Nogaard, Francis Pike, Matt Preisser, Randy Osborn, Doug Tilly, Randy Heiss, Bill Parsons, Shaun Howard, Lee Boisvert, Pam Grassmick, Alvin LaFreniere, Noah Jansen, Phil Wyckoff, Don Haney, Jim Flanagan, Ann Partridge, Bobbi Welke, Guy Fase, Bob Tidmore
via teleconference: Jared Pike

Introductions: Pat Lederle started the meeting with introductions of all attendees in the room and on the phone. He also gave a small introduction to what the meeting is for.

Pat discussed the decision making process for the Plan process, this process is the "will live with" process wherein everyone agrees that they will live with the decisions made by the collaborative and support those decisions. This is to prevent decisions being made outside of the group. To do this with an expanding and contracting group it is important to inform the group of this process periodically. There will be decisions that not everyone will want, but they will be ones that everyone will live with. It is a process to get the best balance of desires.

Pat commented on some of the things that have been done as they relate to the Plan and this collaborative effort:

- Working with the Townships on managed properties on state owned lands
- Water trail application through the Coastal Zone Management program
- Trail inventory/work
- Recreation site assessment with Parks and Recreation Division of the DNR
- Ongoing invasive species work
- Working on High & Garden Islands to get cabins removed and dump sites cleaned up
- Landscape level management planning
- Cultural issues are being considered now
- Recognition through Office of the Great Lakes and Conservation Resource Alliance

Approval of minutes: The minutes from the last meeting dated March 2, 2016; two members were left out, Alvin LaFreniere and Terry Bussy; The title needs to be NLMI Collaborative rather than Beaver Island Collaborative

Motion to approve minutes by Don, motion seconded by Bill, motion carried.

Review of Agenda, Additions/Deletions: No agenda changes were made

Review of Action Items and Sub-Committee Updates:

High Island Cabins: Pat had a discussion with one of the Technicians in Gaylord with experience getting rid of buildings in remote areas. Pat has money in the budget to assist with this process. The state regulations require specific processes for removing these as they have asbestos on them. Q: historic structures and cultural significant issues? A: Yes, there is one foundation from the house of David times that we are taking into account "the round house", the well should be preserved, there was a campground there and a hiking trail to Lookout which is one of the best views. Al has significant knowledge of this area and its history and cultural significance. Pat stated that we are taking all of these into consideration. Q: Can the water trail go into these areas? A: there has been some discussion on making the water trail go out to the outer islands, we would have to

change state land use rules to allow camping. Pam stated that there are several things to discuss when it comes to kayaks and safety for them. Possibly offering guided boat tours rather than expanding the water trail may be a better option. Q: High Island cabins - when getting ready to remove those would you be consulting the cultural sub-committee? A: Yes, this is a sensitive area and we are aware of that and need to take everything into consideration.

Invasive Sub-Committee: Pam stated that they have been active and busy, met with the Twp. Phragmites administrator. The Nature Conservancy & Michigan Dune Alliance grant application Request For Proposals was not successful, now looking at another grant & funding source. Will be developing this over the next month or so. Under the current funding source there is 1000 acres of invasive species removal, targeting areas of high risk species, and known invasive species areas. The sub-committee would like to hold a workshop to share goals. The grant would allow the purchase of supplies for invasive species work. On June 28th there is a meeting at community center. Ten years into invasive species removal and still have work to do. Q: aquatic invasives work? A: Signs for boaters, cleaning stations Q: when Pat is reviewing recreation sites keep the cleaning stations in mind; A: PRD will be here tomorrow, they will be able to assist in making recommendations. Q: High water levels and Phragmites? A: there should be nothing to treat this year, this is very good news. Comment: Phragmites work here has been a good example and something for use statewide. Comment: This is the 3rd year of a state funded grant program for invasives work. Comment: trail heads signage with boot brush cleaning stations would be good. Comment: there are 2 invasive species plans - State AIS aquatic invasives species plan --- and the terrestrial invasive species plan is out for public review...michigan.gov/invasivespecies is a good source for information on invasive species.

Cultural Resources Sub-Committee: Lee stated that they have had 2 meetings conducted with conference calls; working to complete the draft defining all cultural issues on all of the islands; PDF of 2008 historical map; Jennifer sent the state's archeological map which when overlaid with the state lands map shows gaps in knowledge; need to get the landscape planners to look at the historical features. We have a very small committee for landscape planning, it needs to be broader and needs to be more inclusive; Phil does not support making the sub-committee too large but does support making sure that those interests are represented. How do we get a representative from the cultural committee joining the landscape committee? It is up to the committee, all members here agreed, **will include Wes Andrews from LTBB in communications for the committee.** Pam will forward to Townships planning committees the meeting minutes for these collaborative meetings. Possible Campsite on Garden, the committee recommends that a DNR maintained campsite should be at North Cut bay, it is the best access and best view and less sensitive site from a cultural perspective.

Water Trail: Pam received \$10,000 grant through the County.; Coastal Zone Management grant is moving along, should have a response by July or August; all of this funding is for looking at the access sites to determine what is necessary such as outhouses and structures, are there T&E issues, other considerations, etc.; This is a great opportunity for education and outreach for those people that use the water trail. They are looking at signs and brochures and a website/aps for the trail. There are locations determined for this and they are working with the tribal coordinators to make sure that they are not interfering culturally sensitive areas. Designating campsites specifically for kayakers; using these sites for deer hunters in the fall is also something to consider.

Landscape Planning Sub-Committee: Discussion of landscape planning process March 2 meeting there were motions made; subcommittee met and determined 2-3 areas that were agreed upon to apply for the Wildlife Habitat Grant. One is on the east side and was previously proposed

for treatment, another to the north through Al's property that was also previously proposed for treatment, and a third that was easy access for hunters. The plan is to look at the sites tomorrow, GPS the sites and submit for the grant mid-July. The third site did not previously have a treatment proposed and will be a longer process; the area to be cut would need to be marked, Jennifer brought flagging with her to do that and it could be painted later. Forest Resources Division staff could not attend at this time due to the fire danger currently. A prescription with specs would need to be written indicating all of the protections and omissions and inclusions. Procedures and policies are already in place for doing these prescriptions and these will be used to keep consistency throughout the process. Q: were any of the sites surveyed for invasives? A: Some were and some were not, the 2012 information was looked at. Q: BMPs and removal of invasives? A: specs can be written into the prescriptions to make sure that those are followed. DNR, Department of Environmental Quality and Department of Agriculture and Rural Development have some decontamination guidelines and these will be incorporated into the forest certification work instructions. It will be necessary to follow these when the work is done. This process will be hand cutting in the winter and contamination risk will likely be minimal. Comment: need a recording process for success and monitoring of the active management to make sure that things that we intend to have happen do happen and habitat is serving the purpose of affecting the wildlife species accordingly. What is the monitoring process? What kind of data do we want to gather? Adaptive management was what was determined when the planning process was started. Comments continued on monitoring and what is expected in monitoring and results that could come of the habitat management. This type of project may be something for a grad student at CMU to tackle. There were comments on diseased trees and how to prevent the spread of these diseases to the island. Plantings on private property were also discussed by Al. **The sub-committee needs to get together again, especially following tomorrow's tour, and discuss all of the issues at hand.**

Wildlife club has invited the landscape committee to discuss mapping and get input to move this process along. This will add to what has already been started.

Where are we? Where do we go from here (CAP plan? Other)?: Pat brought the Conservation Action Plan (CAP) process and estimates of costs to do this process. Q: Do you envision this to compliment what you talked about earlier? A: the two could be related or unrelated, in a perfect world the CAP plan would be informed by the survey data. Not being familiar with the software program it might be something that could be inputted ourselves and may already have the answers to the majority of the questions. That seems like a recommendation that should be pursued. Matt stated that CAP is desktop program and making use of the information collected in the field. This group wants implementation action plans and it seems like this could be done without spending the money on CAP. How to proceed? Purchase or free program? Unsure... does this require more funding in the future? The group does not seem to be willing to purchase this software. How do we then get the information we need in a timelier manner? Establish a timeline? Again, we must continue to make decisions and continue to move forward. Brian stated that a request can be made to Michigan Natural Features Inventory and would be prioritized along with the rest of Wildlife Division requests. The group has already made the decision to move forward with these cuts. **Getting MNFI to join the sub-committee may be a viable option.** June 28th they will already be here, if funding could be found then they may be able to do that. Mapping out the natural communities is needed this year to continue working this year. LTBB may be able to get the funding; the DNR does not have the funding this fiscal year for this. The sub-committee will try to get MNFI representation into the group.

ACTION: The Landscape Level Sub-committee will discuss bringing MNFI and Wes Andrews to the Wildlife habitat cuts

Michigan Natural Features Inventory and Forest Inventory: Getting an understanding of what resources there are and what natural features there are; what would it take to do the entire 12,000 acres of State-owned land on Beaver Island? \$100,000 to \$125,000. Q: how does this differ from Mi-Hunt? A: Mi-Hunt only includes cover type, not a good inventory of the detail; Q: Compartment review? A: When was the last time inventory was done, 2 years ago to identify cutting for Ruffed Grouse Society and a Wildlife Habitat Grant; Q: why can't we take that compartment inventory information? A: some of it is too old, there are 10 compartments and only one per year. The new data would give you more detail and be more valuable for a deeper assessment. MNFI would be a better detail and is used in the game areas in the southern part of the state. There is another benefit with MNFI doing it – the time of year when the surveys are done. They are done in the winter with the DNR, MNFI would get more detail as it would not just be in the winter. Invasives and protected species and areas of cultural significance could be missed in the winter. Q: DNR is in control of state lands, does the revenue coming from the state land stay here - does it come back to the island? A: it depends on how the land was purchased originally, if the land was purchased with game money then it will go back into Wildlife Division, unfortunately the location of where money is spent is a high-level decision; nothing can be specifically earmarked for the islands in the budgeting process. Money is prioritized in the work plan process statewide, not at a local level. Q: where is MNFI? DNR? A: No, they get funding from the DNR, but they are MSU Extension affiliated. They build on information already in existence. We are looking for other work for MNFI to continue doing on state lands and this may be an opportunity to bring them here and give them other work to do on state lands. Pam stated that this will be a good thing to do on all of the islands especially with invasive species. Q: Why? A: reviewing some of the T & E species and felt that it would be a good project to look at the islands. Scott Hicks Program leader for US FWS East Lansing Field Office. Brian has put in a request for MNFI evaluation on Beaver Island when MNFI requests were being sought. Q: Timing on the planning process and how does that relate to MNFI evaluation? A: More data is always better, but decisions cannot be held up due to a process not yet in place.

Trails work this summer: Jennifer discussed the 2 seasonal workers that will be hired for the summer to work on the trails to GPS them and look at/characterize problem areas. This would include mud holes, stream crossings, etc. and inventory them to get permits to fix these problems. These permits would be through DEQ and are necessary to do that sort of repair work on the trails. This permit would be an all-inclusive permit if an inventory is completed the permit would be good for 5 years to complete the work needed. June 9th is the estimated start date for the seasonal workers. Matt requested to get them to the June 28th meeting with MNFI. This effort will give us the knowledge base needed. They will be doing minimal maintenance to make trails walkable. Many other sorts of repairs envisioned (culverts, bridges, etc.) cannot be conducted without a permit and a permit can be applied for when the inventory is completed. Jennifer will be the lead worker and will be relying on assistance from collaborative members for guidance with the workers. Future trails work: If there is an organized group and an agreement in place and a volunteer agreement in place then volunteers can go out and do work such as sign placement and trail clearing. Pam would like to look into easements and work on trails on non-state owned lands. Look into the Beaver Island trails committee meeting that was on the calendar.

Maine Islands/Beaver Island Activities: Beaver Island Association is working with Maine - 15 islands off Maine's coast - and working on priority focus areas. Broadband, Healthcare/EMS, and quality K-12 Education are the top priorities. Housing is a consideration that also needs to be looked at. Marketing assistance through this group would be a great asset. Surveys would be a key item in finding out what people are looking for and understand what draws people to the islands. Information sharing with the Maine Islands Institute has proven to be helpful. Five community members of Beaver Island went to Maine and were able to meet with the coalition to discuss issues

both areas share. There is value in bringing the 17 unbridged Great Lakes island communities together to discuss issues on all of the islands. Every island is likely dealing with the same types of issues but are dealing with them in a vacuum and sharing ideas and solutions would be beneficial to everyone. Funding is a key issue needing to be looked at.

Discussion of Goals 4&5: Presentation by Don Tritsch: Goal 4 deals with recreation and goal 5 is Other Natural Resource Based Activities. Economically Beaver Island is in a recession. Don's presentation was on increasing the revenue on the island. These opportunities included hunting and wildlife viewing which would need an increase in wildlife habitat. Don discussed ways he felt would increase this habitat. He also discussed fishing and the ability to increase revenue here. Boating was discussed as well and the difficulty that boaters face with a lack of launches and parking at the harbor. Q: is this focused on state lands or island wide? A: this would have to be funded through grants a lot would have to be on state lands and put together tutorials for private property owners on what they could do on their own lands. There is a DNR landowner guide for habitat improvements and it is a good resource for property owners. That guide can be found here: http://www.michigandnr.com/publications/pdfs/huntingwildlifehabitat/landowners_guide/Introduction/TOC.htm Property owners working collectively to get some of the habitat work done would be more cost efficient than each property owner doing it independently. There are some values on the island that would have long term economic viability that should be tapped into. Some of the items are already being addressed by some of the sub-committees; those that are not may need to be looked at to see if they could be. Some of this may be something that the island coalition would also be able to assist in marketing. Fishing may be a gap with this planning process.

Open Discussion/Next Steps: Pam: where are we with the website? A: transitioning to the new vendor and moving forward with this.

There are 68 people on the collaborative; **the complete list will be included with the minutes.**

June 2nd a forester coming to the island to discuss contracts on private property.

June 24th at the library a folks will be discussing nature's solutions to nature.

Matt: DNR is handling this big complex messy thing well. Kudos!

Pat: Tangible things are getting done and coming up with good results.

Next meeting: suggestions will come to Pat and a date will be set in August.

Meeting ended at 4:45PM.