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## **CLINTON COUNTY PARKS AND GREEN SPACE COMMISSION**

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## **COORDINATOR'S REPORT**

**February 2014**

### **Tobacco-Free Areas Resolution**

At the request of the Parks and Green Space Commission, the County Board adopted a Tobacco-Free Area resolution on Tuesday, January 28, 2014. The Commission may now move forward with designating approximately 4% of the land area inside Francis Motz County Park as Tobacco-Free. Signs provided without cost by Mid-Michigan District Health Department will be installed this spring. Materials informing park visitors about the resolution, including a map showing where tobacco use is and is not permitted will be displayed on the park bulletin boards. The resolution strikes a fair balance between the rights of tobacco users to smoke and chew and members of the public who don't wish to be exposed to second-hand smoke or spit. The resolution will result in a significant reduction in ground litter caused by discarding of cigarette butts, especially in the sand of the sun beach.

### **Demolition of Farmstead Buildings**

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant recipients are required to remove all non-recreational structures on acquired property within 90-days of property closing. Use of structures for park maintenance and operational support are an exception to the policy. The former Searles Construction Company property contains a house and two barns that are in very poor condition and have no recreational or support purpose. Leon Searles has offered to demolish all three structures at no cost to the county. Clinton County is responsible for providing roll-off dumpsters to receive and hold the debris until it is disposed of in the Granger landfill. In the process of obtaining a demolition permit from Clinton County Building Department, an asbestos and lead paint inspection was completed on all three structures. A limited amount of asbestos was discovered in construction materials used to build the house. On January 23 and 24, the firm of Asbestos Abatement Incorporated of Lansing collected and removed the asbestos. As soon as certification of proper disposal of the asbestos is received, demolition will be

coordinated with Leon Searles. Weather permitting; the work should be completed by mid-February.

### **Fish Stocking in Motz County Park Lake**

The 15-acre lake is stocked with fish every three years. Stocked in 2008 and 2011, it's time to do it again in 2014. The Capital Improvement Budget contains \$3,300 for this year's project. After discussing my personal observations of fishing activity, size and species of fish being caught with EasyPro Pond Products (formerly known as Stoney Creek Fishery) Fishery Biologist Dave LaBomascus, Dave recommended stocking 2,000 yellow perch and 40,000 fathead minnows this year.

A completed *Public Water Stocking Permit Application* was e-mailed to DNR Fishery Biologist Scott Hanshue for the project. In the same e-mail, I requested the three lakes found inside Motz County Park and the new park property be stocked with fish from DNR-operated hatcheries. With a combined surface area of 117 acres, the three lakes provide significant fishing opportunity for mid-Michigan residents. DNR Fisheries Biologists have been dealing with the Viral Hemorrhagic Septicemia (VHS) virus for the past several years and this has affected hatchery operations. As state hatcheries return to full production, it's hoped that the three lakes can be added to the DNR's stocking program.

It's been so cold that few people are willing to venture onto the Motz County Park lake to ice fish. Still, there are a couple of hardy individuals who are regulars. They are likely attracted by the lake's 10" – 12" yellow perch and 26" channel catfish. As the weather warms, I expect fishing activity to increase.

### **Dr. Bill Earl Youth Fishing Program**

The Program Committee decided to hold all three 2014 spring fishing events at Ingham County's Hawk Island County Park. There were several reasons why Motz County Park was dropped as a 2014 site. Foremost reason cited was a 41% "no show" rate for registered participants. The organizations that cooperate to provide this excellent introduction to fishing for youth put a lot of time, funding and volunteer effort into each program venue. I can understand their dismay when participants don't show up, especially when other youth were turned away after registration reached its maximum enrollment number.

On the positive side, the Program Committee will be hosting three "advanced" fishing programs in June for past participants of spring programs. Motz County Park will host an advanced program on Tuesday, June 10 from 5:30 until 8:30 pm. Registration is expected to be 12 – 20 youth. The youth will be taught more specialized fishing techniques, and how to clean and cook their catch.

----- Nothing Follows -----