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Citizen Representatives



CLINTON COUNTY PARKS AND GREEN SPACE COMMISSION

100 E. State Street, Suite 2100
St. Johns, Michigan 48879
Phone (989) 224-5128
Fax (989) 224-5102
Email: parks@clinton-county.org



Staff
Jerry Jaloszynski, Green Space
Commission Coordinator

Gayla Phillips, Secretary,
Administration

COORDINATOR'S REPORT

December 2013

It's a Done Deal!

It's been 10 years since Leon Searles indicated that Searles Construction Company properties on DeWitt Road north of M-21 would be available for purchase by Clinton County for public parkland. Since 2003, county officials developed a working relationship with Mr. Searles, created necessary planning documents, patiently waited for commercial sand/gravel mining activities to be concluded, sought and obtained multiple state recreation grants and completed all requirements that come with the acceptance of such grants. The Parks and Green Space Commission and County Board of Commissioners experienced changes in membership over the 10-year period; however, support for acquisition remained an important goal.

On Wednesday, November 13, 2013 Clinton County assumed ownership of the 271.75-acre Searles Construction Company sand/gravel quarry property. The purchase significantly enhances outdoor recreation opportunities available to Clinton County residents and visitors. Exceptional property features include:

- Total land acreage: 314.18 (2007 purchase - Francis Motz County Park – 42.43 acres; 2013 purchase – Un-named parkland – 271.75 acres)



Leon Searles signs property closing documents.



County Board Vice-Chair Dave Pohl signs property closing document as County Clerk Diane Zuker prepares to sign next.

- Number of lakes / combined surface area: 3 lakes / 117 acres
 - 90-acre (un-named) Maximum depth: 45 feet. Overall average depth: 15 feet. Fish species: Rainbow trout, walleye and yellow perch
 - 15-Acre (un-named) Maximum depth: 14 feet. Overall average depth: 8 feet. Fish species: Large-mouth bass, perch, bluegill and channel catfish
 - 12-Acre (un-named) Maximum depth: 18 feet. Overall average depth: 8 feet. Fish species: Large-mouth bass
- All lakes are groundwater fed with limited surface water recharge. Water quality is exceptional due to lack of bacteriological and chemical contaminants and lack of invasive plants and animals capable of damaging a healthy aquatic environment.
- Agricultural field: An existing 87-acre agricultural field will be developed into a prairie grassland ecosystem in 2015. The development will be accomplished in partnership with the Clinton Conservation District, Pheasants Forever, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and US Fish and Wildlife Service. When completed, the restoration project will enhance the park's biodiversity and provide critical habitat needed by grassland-dependent insects, birds and other animals.
 - Trails: In 2014, Park Rangers will maintain approximately 4 miles of walking trails. The trails will follow along the shoreline of the three lakes providing wonderful views of the park, wildlife and surrounding farm fields.

Long after the men and women who labored to bring this park acquisition project to successful completion have passed on, the property and its recreational opportunities will continue to enrich the lives of Clinton County residents for untold future generations. It's a shared legacy we all can be proud of!

The property will remain temporarily closed to the public until February 12, 2014 to provide time for Searles Construction Company to relocate its quarry operations to another site. After February 12, visitors are cautioned to use good judgment in the outdoor activities they pursue on the site since the property will contain little recreational development.

Fish Stocking Completed

With purchase of the 271.75-acre property, the 90-acre lake was stocked with rainbow trout, walleye and yellow perch. Both the 90- and 12-acre lake received stockings of fathead minnows to establish a forage base for the new game fish and the 12-acre lake's existing population of largemouth bass.

Walleye will need a couple of years to grow to legal harvest size. Currently perch of any size may be kept; however, undersize perch do not make for good table fare.



2,007 Yellow perch of 4 to 5 inch length were part of the November stocking of the 90-acre lake.

Rainbow trout were stocked as a 'feature fish' to provide angling opportunity while the walleye and perch grow to harvestable size. 530 Trout were released and most are already legal in size to catch and keep.

Fishing in park waters is regulated by the Michigan Natural Resources Commission. Michigan Fishing Rules strictly apply.

Greening Mid-Michigan Video

The video is the next step in a green infrastructure planning process initiated in 2008. Clinton County was a financial contributor to the early planning process.

The video project got underway in 2012 with the following objectives:

- Define 'greening' or green infrastructure
- Explain why a healthy environment is important to the health and well-being of county communities and residents
- Provide examples of successful green infrastructure enhancement projects
- Encourage individual residents to take personal actions in their daily lives to protect and improve the Region's green infrastructure assets

Today, the video is nearly finished with only minor editing required. A draft of the video is available for viewing at <https://vimeo.com/79349035>. When completed the video will be an environmental educational tool available to a host of government and education agencies and non-profit organizations in the Tri-County Region. It will also be a promotional tool available to local Chambers of Commerce and county economic development agencies to be used to retain employers and attract new employers. The video will be made available to station WKAR for public television broadcasting.

Ingham County Parks recently submitted the *Greening Mid-Michigan* video project for Michigan Recreation and Park Association's 2014 Green Gift Program recognition. Application materials recognize the efforts of all project partners, including Clinton County Parks and Green Space and Eaton County Parks. If selected in December as the



2,700 walleye 5 to 8 inches in length are introduced into the 90-acre lake. It will take a couple of years for today's fish to reach a legal harvest size of 15".



Pictured is the first of several buckets of fathead minnows released to both lakes. Total minnows stocked were 150,000. Fathead minnows are prolific breeders and are an important food source for trout, walleye, largemouth bass and yellow perch.

Program's 2014 recipient, Ingham County Parks will receive a \$2,500 financial contribution to the project, an amount which would be turned over to Tri-County Regional Planning Commission to cover video project costs.

2013 – A PRODUCTIVE YEAR

Commission 2013 accomplishments were the result of many people working together to provide Clinton County residents with cost-effective and valued public service. I thank the County Board of Commissioners, Parks & Green Space Commissioners, County Administration, other county personnel and county residents and organizations for supporting the Mission of the Parks and Green Space Commission.

A partial list of 2013 Commission accomplishments:

- ☑ RESA Construction Trades Class installed grab bar on wheelchair transfer platform
 - ☑ Installed three benches along the Motz County Park lake walking trail (Eagle Scout project)
 - ☑ Commission received citizen donation of boat & trailer – Establishes new lifesaving capability on swimming beach
 - ☑ Hosted 2013 Dr. Bill Earl Youth Fishing Program
 - ☑ Secured MSU Intern Andy Morse as Motz County Park Manager
 - ☑ Repaired damage to beach walk caused by spring rains – Completed erosion control project to protect against future damage to walk and the sun beach
 - ☑ Hosted week-long Cub Scout Day Camp Program
 - ☑ Held successful Clinton County Non-Motorized Plan Workshop for county elected and appointed officials
 - ☑ Created Clinton County Trails Advisory Council
 - ☑ Hosted 2013 Playmakers Classic Triathlon
 - ☑ Completed application of fertilizer benefiting 250 Motz County Park trees
 - ☑ RESA Construction Trades Class installed fiberglass insulation above the beach house pipe chase ceiling
 - ☑ Cleaned building adjacent to park maintenance building for park storage purposes – RESA Construction Trades Class to repair/remodel the storage building in December
 - ☑ Secured second park maintenance pickup truck
 - ☑ Secured two grants from Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority for improvements to county camera surveillance systems in Courthouse and County Jail
 - ☑ Concluded acquisition of Searles Construction Company property
 - ☑ Stocked fish in two lakes found within the 272-acre acquisition property
 - ☑ Partnered in creation of *Greening Mid-Michigan* video
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