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COORDINATOR'S REPORT

August / September 2010

ACTIVITIES:

Motz County Park Development Project

- A "punch list" of construction issues has been compiled. Building and Grounds Director Blaine Stevens is overseeing project closeout. The General Contractor Cross Lake Construction has removed its office trailer and equipment from the park.
- A major punch list item is poor drainage at the east end of the pavilion and around the pavilion water hydrant. To remedy the problem, Cross Lake Construction installed two drains to collect and remove surface water. Both drains connect to the storm sewer that transmits water collected from the beach house eave troughs to the ditch west of the pavilion. The storm sewer is located adjacent to the south side of the pavilion. The next rain will test the adequacy of this remedy.
- A number of punch list items deal with the beach house toilet rooms. It has been frustrating for all involved that faucets, flush valves, light sensors, soap dispensers, doors and door hardware to some degree have been problematic for the entire summer. My concern is that the numerous issues will remain unresolved through Labor Day and we'll not have the number of visitors in the park to fully test the function of "fixed" components. I've asked Blaine to winterize the beach house after Sunday, September 19.

Post Labor Day Operation

With the coming of the new school year, two of four Park Rangers will leave for university studies prior to Labor Day. I've been able to maintain a full schedule through Labor Day by re-balancing the work schedules of remaining employees. Following Labor Day, the park will remain open; however, the beach house will have reduced hours of operation with no operation whenever a Park Ranger is not present. A

seasonal sign will be placed near the entrance to make visitors aware of the fact that toilet facilities will have limited or no availability following Labor Day. A copy of the abbreviated operational schedule will be placed on the beach house bulletin board and posted on the County Internet site. Special events, such as the September 11 Pheasants Forever Youth Day, will have full operational support provided during scheduled event hours.

Boy Scout District Camporee

The Migisins District BSA Summer Camporee was held at the park Friday, August 13 until Sunday, August 15. The Camporee was attended by 57 Boy Scouts from Clinton County and 18 adult supervisors. A *Special Park Use License* was signed between the District and Clinton County, which enabled the Scouts to occupy a group camping area on the nights of August 13 and 14. The *License* included a waiver of liability and requirement for insurance coverage. On Monday, August 16, I spoke with Camporee Supervisor Chris Long and was told that the event came off without problem and everyone had an enjoyable experience.

Uniform Caps

Park Rangers have an additional uniform component thanks to the generosity of Chuck Nelson. Each Park Ranger has been provided with a blue flex band cap with green embroidered logo.

Park / Facility Design Award Competition

- da Vinci Award for Accessibility and Universal Design – This is one of four design competitions that the Motz County Park Development project will be nominated for. The nomination process required, in addition to a written application, the submittal of a 3-minute video. With a looming nomination deadline and no funds to produce the video, I was about to give up on the nomination. Chuck Nelson came with a solution to the time and resource limitations. Sensing an opportunity to create an instructional resource on Universal Design for MSU students enrolled in various park, recreation and tourism classes, Chuck obtained MSU funding to produce the film. A by-product of the film is the 3-minute nomination video.

Nomination materials were completed and submitted in time to meet the July 31, 2010 nomination deadline. The very professionally produced video will be shown at the August 23 joint meeting of the Commission and Agricultural Preservation Board. The 2010 da Vinci Award winners will be announced on Sept. 30, 2010, at a special awards event at the Henry Ford Museum in Dearborn, Michigan.

- Michigan Recreation and Park Association (MRPA) Facility Design Award – This is the second of four design competitions for the project. The nomination deadline is October 6. It is my intention to enter the beach house and swimming beach as separate facilities since both developments are innovative in the manner that they

serve visitor accessibility and safety and enhance the functionality of the built environment. Award recipients will be announced at the Association's Annual Conference held in early February.

MDOT Directional Signs

MDOT has completed installation of directional signs on US-27 (north- and south-bound lanes) and M-21 (east- and west-bound lanes). The familiar brown signs with white lettering, along with Road Commission "way signs" on DeWitt and French Roads, bring the road signing project to completion.

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Motz County Park Addition

On August 18, Chuck Nelson and I appeared before the Trust Fund Board to promote the grant application for the 260-acre addition to Motz County Park. The presentation, I believe, was well received by the members of the Trust Fund Board.

On August 19, Clinton County received its preliminary grant evaluation score, as determined by DNRE Grants Management staff review. The score is 330 points compared to 240 points at this time last year. The final 2009 score was eventually increased 270 points, which was still too low to successfully compete for a MNRTF grant award; 2009 projects generally had scores of 330 or greater.

The 2010 score of 330 will be increased by an additional 20 points with completion of the *Greening Mid-Michigan* (GMM) green infrastructure plan, which was started nearly two years ago. The good news is the plan is done! I attended a GMM Steering Committee meeting yesterday and obtained a copy of the GMM Vision Map. The map, along with two previously completed documents, brings the GMM project to completion. Necessary documentation is being sent to the County's DNRE Grants Management Coordinator to secure the additional 20 evaluation points.

In spite of not being funded in 2009, the 2010 application has a better chance of succeeding due to 1) a significant increase in available grant funding, 2) local government inability to meet project match requirement thus resulting in fewer applications submitted, 3) a revised application that has scored much, much better than the 2009 application and 4) a MNRTF "track" record that demonstrates Clinton County has been a good steward of past grant funds.

Pavilion Reservations

The park pavilion has been reserved on 18 occasions this year. This does not include the Grand Opening event or the August 23 joint APB/P&GSC meeting. Several were eligible for fee waiver due to their public service purpose. Total revenue received for 2010 is \$660. Based on past experience with other county park systems, I predict that within a couple of years the pavilion will be fully booked in advance for weekend reservations by early May.

Opinion Survey / Vehicle Traffic Count

In response to Commissioner inquiries made at the July 9 Commission meeting concerning the number of visitors to the park, 1) a vehicle count was conducted by the Road Commission in July and 2) a random visitor survey initiated on July 27 will continue to gather information through Labor Day.

The Road Commission placed a vehicle traffic counter on the park entrance drive from 4:00 pm on July 15 until 9:00 am on July 29. The counter has provided the Commission with useful data. For the 13 fully days the counter was in use, it recorded 4,972 "hits". Dividing this figure by 2 (to adjust for the same vehicle being recorded twice - coming into and out of the park), the number of vehicles recorded was 2,486. It is estimated that 5% of the vehicles were employee, contractor and county maintenance owned. With a 5% adjustment, the actual number of vehicles belonging to visitors is estimated at 2,362 or an average of 182 vehicles per day. The busiest time of day is 3:00 pm with most visitation occurring between 11:00 am and 8:00 pm.

The visitor opinion survey is given to the first person to enter the park at the following prescribed times: 10:00 am, 2:00, 3:30, 6:00 and 8:00 pm. Additionally, the survey card is given to the person responsible for reserving the pavilion. The survey card asks about the reason(s) for your visit, hours spent in the park, number of persons who came with you, whether anyone in your party has a physical impairment that limits participation in work or recreation, how you would rate your experience (1 to 7 scale), the reason for the given rating, one desired park improvement and your ZIP Code. Responders are asked to place the survey card in a collection box located under the beach house bulletin board. Gayla Phillips is entering the responses on an Excel spreadsheet as they are received. About 78 of 100 survey cards passed out so far have been filled out and returned. With the exception of one "finding" given below, survey results will be reported at the Commission's September meeting.

The 78 cards returned so far indicate an average vehicle party size of 4 occupants. This is a larger number than customary found in surveys conducted at other state and county parks; however, it agrees with what I have been seeing in terms of family use with lots of children on the waterfront. If you use a 4 person per vehicle occupancy rate multiplied by 182 vehicles (the average per date rate determined by Road Commission vehicle counter data), from July 16 thru 28 the park has an average daily visitation of around 728 persons. About 9,500 people would have visited the park during the 13-day period.

Clinton County Non-Motorized Facilities Plan – Proposed Route Map

On Wednesday, August 18 at 7:00 12 county residents attended a review of a proposed county-wide non-motorized route map created by MSU Interns Anna Popp and Ryan Soucy. Notice of the review session had been placed in county newspapers, Internet

media sites and directly emailed to about 100 individuals. Following a PowerPoint presentation by Anna and Ryan that briefly outlined route selection considerations, participants were given an opportunity to review the map and offer recommendations for change. While I would like to have had more residents in attendance, the input received from the 12 participants is very useful. Anna is currently incorporating the information/recommendations obtained on August 18 input into the proposed route map. Anna will have completed her internship assignment on August 25. Ryan Source completed his internship assignment on August 18. Both MSU students did an outstanding job of moving the *Clinton County Non-Motorized Facility Plan* along.

Complaints/Rumors About the Swimming Beach

I occasionally receive a call inquiring about the quality of the lake water. The caller tells me that he/she had been told that the water is contaminated, or that "swimmer's itch" is present. Just in case you hear similar inquiries, I am confident that the water is fine. Swimmer's itch is not possible since snails are not present in the lake and snails are required in the life cycle of the fluke that causes the "swimmer's itch" rash. As for the hygienic quality of the water, a water sample is periodically taken to the DNRE laboratory in Lansing for testing. The test looks for the presence of fecal coliform and e-Coli bacteria and uses a rating scale of 10 to 10,000 counts per mg/L. A rating of 300 counts per 100 milliliters is considered unsafe for human contact. The most recent park beach water test, taken on August 2, had a fecal coliform and an e-Coli rating of less than 10 counts, which is below the lab's minimum scale. With some of Michigan's public beaches periodically contaminated by surface water bacteria and unsafe for use, it is wise for the public to be cautious. I am pleased that Motz County Park is only fed by ground water, making the swimming beach a very high quality facility.

Other Assignments/Activities in Progress

Listed for general information purposes. Items will be removed once completed.

- Motz County Park Development (MNRTF Grant)
 - Project reporting & financial control
- Other Motz County Park improvements
 - Fish habitat improvements (January/February 2010)
 - Tree maintenance program (on-going through 2012)
- Parkland and Open Space Acquisition Guidelines
- Greening of Mid-Michigan project – Steering Committee
- Agricultural Preservation Board – staff liaison (10% time allocation)
- Upper Maple River Watershed Management Plan – Steering Committee
- Design, construct and install Maple River access site sign
- Community Development Department – General Management
- Clinton County "Authorized Organization Representative" for federal grants
- Assist w/ creation of Clinton County Trail Advisory Council
- Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block program grant management