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GSC COORDINATOR'S REPORT

June 2009

ACTIVITIES:

Motz County Park Development

- Swimming Beach – Zito Construction of Grand Blanc completed construction of the swimming beach and pulled their equipment out of the park on Tuesday, May 26. The lake is now rapidly refilling with ground water and is already within three feet of its normal seasonal elevation. The beach is very attractive in its appearance.

An interesting new feature in the park is a new mound of earth located along DeWitt Road. The mound was created from the soil excavated during the establishment of the sun beach and lake bottom gradients. The mound appears to be about 12' in height and provides a good vantage point from which to view the park.

A reimbursement request has been prepared and mailed to the Michigan Municipal Risk Management Authority for \$15,000. The funds were granted from the Authority's Risk Avoidance Program (RAP) to help cover the cost of specific safety improvements to the swimming beach. With a safe and gradual underwater gradient of 6% out to deep water, a swimmer will not encounter sudden drop-offs within the 400' wide designated swimming beach. Above the shoreline, the gradient is 4% which is less than the minimum 5% running slope required by federal accessibility design guidelines for a manufactured swimming beach. Thanks to the Authority, the beach looks great and, more importantly, it is a safe and user friendly environment for park visitors.

It is difficult to say how much damage was done to the lake's fishery during de-watering. At its lowest level, the lake consisted of a few large pools, none of which were more than three feet in depth. It is likely that fish were pumped out during the de-watering process, but there was no apparent die off in the lake itself.



MOTZ COUNTY PARK SWIMMING BEACH PROJECT (Clinton County): This photo taken on May 13, 2009 shows the lake bottom in the future swimming beach area just after the water surface had been drawn down by a depth of 9'. Notice the numerous holes and other abrupt drop-offs present. Also visible are numerous large rocks. While some gravel is visible in the mound located in the center of the photo, most of the lake bottom contains clay soils. When walked upon by swimmers, the clay soils suspend in the water causing it to lose its clarity. The project eliminated these hazards by establishing a continuous 6% gradient out to deep water across the full 400' length of beachfront. After establishing the gradient, the clay bottom was covered with one foot of clean washed sand out to a distance of 120' below and 75' above the high water shoreline.



MOTZ COUNTY PARK SWIMMING BEACH PROJECT (Clinton County): View of the completed 400' wide swimming beach from the north side of the 15-acre park lake. The surface of the lake is still 3 to 4 feet down from its normal seasonal elevation.

- Picnic Tables and Grills – Table frames and grills were bid with those of two other counties – Gratiot and Isabella. Bids were received from four suppliers and opened on May 15. Low bidder, RJ Thomas (Pilot Rock), bid \$11,687.74 for a total of 54 eight-foot table frames, 2 large pavilion-size grills, 30 single table grills and one hot coal bin. The next lowest bid was \$13,122.50. All the tables are accessible for use by wheelchair visitors with a selection of side entry and end entry models. Lumber for table tops and seat planks, sealer and concrete for installation of the grills have yet to be purchased. \$25,000 had been budgeted for this project scope item. After purchase of lumber, sealer and concrete, I believe that this scope item will come in about \$10,000 under budget; funding that will be needed for other project scope items that are expected to be above budget.



End-entry accessible picnic table



Side-entry accessible picnic table



Single table BBQ grill



Figure 1 Hot coal collection bin

Eagle Scout candidate Ethan Malkin has been patiently waiting to begin his Eagle Scout project. He has the volunteer labor and tools needed to assemble the 54 picnic tables. Assembly will take place at the county's Maintenance Building located in the Townsend Road Campus. The assembled tables will be stored at the county Maintenance Building until construction at the park is complete.

I recently purchased an electric branding iron to mark the underside of all lumber used for table tops and seats. The mark will read "Property of Clinton County, MI". The manufacturer's distinctive frame design combined with the mark will serve to deter table theft.

MSU Intern Eric Dobbrastine

Eric started his internship on May 11. He will not be present for the June 5 Commission meeting since he will be off starting June 3 for a month of foreign travel. Eric will return on July 13 through August 17 for additional assignments. I find Eric to be an intelligent and likeable young person who isn't afraid of hard work. During the first three weeks of his internship experience, he has learned to plant trees and like it! Other assignments will await his return from vacation.

Community Forestry Grant Tree Planting Project

By the time Eric leaves for vacation, about half of the trees will have been planted. It's been quite a project. 153 conifers (51 white pine, 51 blue spruce and 51 Norway spruce) were purchased from a Lake City tree farm at a cost of \$18 apiece. 26 deciduous trees (combination of red and sugar maple, pin oak and flowering crabapple) were



MSU Intern Eric Dobbrastine completing the planting of a Norway spruce inside Motz County Park

purchased locally from Lloyd Mox. The trees are being stored next to the Searles Construction gravel pit weigh station. This location offers a source of pressurized water to care for the trees until they can be planted. Ron Keck of Holes and More was hired to auger 183 2-foot wide and 2-foot deep planting holes on the west, north and east side of the lake. Because the trees are being planted on a rather steep slope, it was necessary to find a way to create a dam on the down slope side of the planting hole to retain water needed to care for the trees. This was accomplished by overlapping two asphalt roofing shingles that are partially buried in the soil. The shingles were purchased at significant cost saving from Habitat for Humanity. They are a mixed bag of colors but the trees don't seem to mind. In about two years when tree feeder roots become well-established in the soil, the shingles will be removed.

Two Maintenance Department crew members, Chad and Mike, have volunteered to work overtime at Green Space Commission cost to plant trees on Saturday, June 6. I don't know if that will complete the planting project; we'll just have to wait and see.

Non-Motorized Facilities (NMF) Plan

Nothing has been heard yet from either the Capital Region Community Foundation or Tri-County Bicycle Association on the grant applications seeking financial assistance for the proposed *Clinton County Non-Motorized Facilities Plan*.

River Access Site Parking Improvements

I had an opportunity to visit the river access site located in Duplain Township and examine the new parking area recently developed by the Clinton County Road Commission. The Road Commission's work product is excellent! There is plenty of room to safely park four vehicles along French Road. Dan



Armentrout informed me that the Road Commission has used posts available for installation to

New parking area along road shoulder at river access site to Maple River located at the intersection of French and St. Clair roads.

prevent motor vehicles from entering the interior of the access site. I see this as a July assignment for Eric Dobbrastine.

Park Maintenance Garage

RESA Construction Trades Class Instructor Ross Pope and his students ran out of time before completing the renovation of the park maintenance garage. The only items left unfinished are the interior concrete cap over the existing floor, a new outside concrete apron in front of the sliding doors and new small slab outside of the service entry door. I am currently obtaining prices from area concrete contractors to complete the work. Two price quotes have already been received. The work should be awarded prior to the Friday, June 5 Commission meeting.

Federal Stimulus Funding – Summer Youth Program

I've received word from Michigan Works that the Commission will likely be provided with two individuals (18 through 24 years of age) on June 22. They will likely be less than full time workers since the individuals may be required to attend educational classes and/or counseling to enhance their future employability. I am prepared to be flexible. Trees probably don't care when they are watered as long as on a regular basis. Other tasks will be scheduled and completed whenever. Slow progress is better than no progress at all.

Mowing

In addition to mowing outside the fence along DeWitt Road and the west end of the park just inside the fence, the county Maintenance Department will also mow around the leased park maintenance building. I have found Blaine Stevens and his crew to be always willing to help out when I need something done at the park. I appreciate all that they do in support of the Green Space Commission.

Park Rules Ordinance

Jet Speed Printing of St. Johns is currently preparing to print the *Clinton County Park Rules Ordinance* in booklet (250 copies) and poster (50 copies) format. The booklets will be provided to the Sheriff's Department and State Police for office reference and use in all patrol vehicles. They will be available in the Commission office for distribution to the general public who request a copy. The poster format will be mounted on a wood backboard and placed at the park entrance in compliance with enabling legislation requirements.

Other Assignments/Activities in Progress

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

- Motz County Park Development Project – Phase II (still in planning stage)
- Motz County Park Development Project – Group Pavilion & Fishing Platform
- Motz County Park Development Project – Grant Management & Fiscal Reporting
- Motz County Park – Entrance Gate
- Motz County Park – Fencing Improvement (if funding is available)
- Searles Property Acquisition Grant Application (if necessary, respond to DNR request for additional information)
- Other Motz County Park improvements
 - Fish habitat improvements (January/February 2010)
 - Tree maintenance program (on-going through 2012)
- Parkland and Open Space Acquisition Plan (as time is available)
- Agricultural Preservation Board – Staff liaison (10% - 20% time allocation)
- Intergovernmental CIS Trail Committee – support/advisory role
- DeWitt Township/City/DARA Community Recreation Plan Committee – GSC rep.
- Clinton Conservation District – Upper Maple River Watershed Management Plan) – Advisory role
- Clinton County Non-Motorized Facilities Plan
- Fund Raising – All-Terrain Wheelchairs
- River Access Site Improvements – Vehicle Barriers and Sign
- Community Development – Supervisory Responsibility