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GSC COORDINATOR'S REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2008

ACTIVITIES:

2008-09 Community Forestry Grant Program –

On August 26, the BOC authorized the submittal of a tree planting grant application to the 2008-09 Community Forestry Grant Program. The application has been mailed to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The Department will notify successful applicants as soon as possible, with official notification within 2-3 months of the August 31 application closing date.

The project, if selected for funding, will enable the planting of approximately 150 3' tall conifers (white pine and Norway spruce) and 40 12' tall deciduous trees (Amur maple, bur and pin oak, and hawthorn species) at Motz County Park. The trees would be planted in areas of the park not slated for construction activity. The addition of 190 trees to the existing 31 trees planted last spring would begin to make a significant and positive impact on the appearance and environmental function of the park.

Tree Care Activities –

I've been watering the 31 conifers planted last spring every 7 to 10 days. Due to my August vacation and a mechanical issue with the truck, an interval of 17 days without watering occurred. When I was able to water again, I discovered the trees, except for one, to be in good health. One of the two large Norway spruce obtained from Sleepy Hollow State Park was found to have lost 95% of its needles. Its twin on the other side of the entrance drive appears to be very healthy.

The tree had been experiencing a gradual loss of needles beginning within a few weeks following its planting; however, I was surprised to have found it nearly defoliated within a two week period of time. The extended lack of watering may have contributed to its

demise, but I don't believe this to have been the main cause of the problem. The tree will be cut and removed from the park.

At each watering, I pull the weeds growing within each tree's root zone. Outside of the root zone, I applied Roundup to kill weeds and grass to make it easier to mow around. This helps to maintain a clean, well-kept appearance and reduces competition for moisture and nutrients available in the soil.

In November, January and March, I will apply a product called Deer-Off to protect the soft needled white pine and Norway spruce from damaged caused by browsing deer and other animals. Next spring, an application of nitrogen fertilizer will be made to stimulate plant growth and root development.

Mowing of the Park –

Prior to leaving on vacation, I ask local resident Dennis Morrison to mow the interior of the park once more. Mr. Morrison has completed the mowing, baling and removal of the vegetation. The park has a clean and groomed appearance for the Labor Day holiday period. This will be the last mowing of the field area between the entrance drive/parking lot and the lake until next May. The Maintenance Department will continue to mow along DeWitt Road, the west end of the park and the shoulders of the entrance drive/parking lots until the growing season ends.

Clinton County Park Rules Ordinance –

The county's legal counsel has reviewed the proposed ordinance. A few modifications were recommended and made, but nothing major that would change the intent of any specific rule. The proposed ordinance is scheduled for BOC Personnel and Finance Committee review on September 18. If approved by the Committee, the BOC will consider final adoption action at its September 30 business meeting. If adopted, the ordinance will take effect once the following conditions are met:

1. Nine days have elapsed following adoption by the BOC,
2. The ordinance is published once a week for 2 consecutive weeks in a newspaper of general circulation in the county, and
3. The ordinance is posted at the entrance to any present or future park property where the ordinance will be applied and enforced.

Motz County Park Development Project –

On August 26, the BOC approved a contract with C2AE of Lansing to engineer the development of the park's swimming beach. C2AE will survey the site, prepare plans, specifications, bid documents and construction cost estimates, obtain necessary local and state permits, coordinate bidding of the work, and oversee construction activities.

The approval of plans, specifications and bid documents created by C2AE will need to be approved by DNR Grants Management prior to advertising for construction bids. That will not occur until the DNR offers a formal Project Agreement to the county. By getting the engineering work done now, the county will be well positioned to move the project forward in a timely manner.

On August 4, I met with RESA Construction Trades class Instructor Ross Pope to discuss student involvement with the park project. Mr. Pope indicated that construction of the group pavilions and fishing/observation platforms are items that could be successfully undertaken by the students. A C2AE project cost estimate provided to the county in July indicated that the project budget was adequate to construct only one pavilion and one fishing/observation platform rather than the two each originally proposed. It is hoped that by eliminating the cost of construction labor resulting from RESA student involvement, the original quantity of both items can be realized.

Universal Access Committee Meeting –

Duplicate meetings have been scheduled for Monday, September 15. This was done to accommodate the personal schedules of the original attendees. The GSC September meeting packet will include a copy of the UA Committee agenda and a media release submitted to the Clinton County News. The media release purposes to inform the public on what is being done by the Commission to create outdoor recreation facilities that serve all residents with or without disabilities in a user-friendly manner and to invite participation on the UA Committee. The agenda and media release have been placed on the county web site.

Other Assignments/Activities in Progress –

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

- Motz County Park Development Project (Phased construction thru 2009)
- Searles Property Acquisition Grant Application (#2) – Pending BOC approval
- Motz County Park improvements
 - Fish habitat improvements (winter project)
 - Tree planting grant project & maintenance program
- Parkland and Open Space Acquisition Plan (joint APB / GSC project)
- Agricultural Preservation Board – Staff liaison
- Intergovernmental CIS Trail Committee – support/advisory role
- DeWitt Township/City/DARA Community Recreation Plan Committee – GSC rep.
- Clinton Conservation District – 319 Grant (Maple River) – Advisory role
- Duplain Township River Access Site – Sign & vehicle parking improvements
- Trail Summit & Non-Motorized Transportation Plan