

Appendix B – Team Meeting Summary

Over the duration of the Lakefront and Beach Access Study, the Planning Team held a number of working group meetings. The following summaries describe the Team's discussions at those Planning Team Meetings:

- **Team Meeting #1 (Kick-Off meeting) located at the BCSRA Visitor Center on August 13, 2013** - The purpose of the Kick-Off Meeting was to introduce the Planning Team, tour the lakefront and beach area, determine the intent of the study, and brainstorm opportunities and strategies to improve the lakefront and beach access.
- **Team Meeting #2 located at the BCSRA Visitor Center on November 22, 2013** - the second Planning Team meeting followed the public input survey and the Public Input Workshop. The Planning Team reviewed input received to begin developing specific strategies. The Planning Team participated in exercises designed to evaluate public input recommendations compared to the shared goals of the study.
- **Team Meeting #3 located at the BCSRA Visitor Center on January 9, 2014** - Prior to the meeting, Planning Team members could review a list of draft action strategies that resulted from public input and outcomes from previous Planning Team meetings. At the meeting, the Planning Team offered feedback on the draft action strategies prior to the development of this report.
- **Team Teleconference Meeting #4 on March 3, 2014** - the Planning Team participated in a web conference to review and discuss the content of the Draft Lakeshore and Beach Access Study. Planning Team members suggested various revisions, clarifications, and updates to the action strategies that will assist with future planning and implementation of the strategies.

Bay City State Recreation Area (BCSRA)
Lakefront and Beach Access Study
Planning Team Kick-Off Meeting Summary

Location: BCSRA Visitor Center

Date: Tuesday, August 13, 2013

Time: 10 AM – 3 PM

- 1) Attendees: Debbie Jensen, Laura Ogar, Brian Rudolph, Greg Rankin, Annie Rummel, Mike Seward, John Terpstra, Dan Mullen, George Lauinger, Tom Hickner, Ray Fahlsing, David Birchler, Susie Roble
- 2) David Birchler gave a brief presentation to review the 2009 General Management Planning Process for BCSRA. The team discussed the difference between the Dedicated Boundary and Recommended Boundary shown on the Management Zone Map. Ray Fahlsing and George Lauinger are the only two team members that participated in the GMP process for BCSRA.
- 3) David Birchler reviewed the legal mandates and highlighted newly identified statutes that impact BCSRA
- 4) Discussion of the intent/purpose of the study
 - a) Laura Ogar read from an April 29, 2013 update letter from the DNR Director Keith Creagh, DNR Parks and Recreation Chief Ron Olson, and the DEQ Director Dan Wyant. Also it was noted that the General Management Plan zones protect 94% of available lands in the Rec Area as protected for natural resource protection and conservation and that only 6% of the Rec Area is to be developed for active recreational use – and this includes the campground and day use, spray park area and shoreline beachfront area
 - b) Annie Rummel asked if the DNR is willing to support conversion of coastal wetland into beach, restaurants, private entertainment...etc. She envisions the shoreline as a place for human interaction without compromising the existing natural resources
 - c) Brian Rudolph noted that several of Annie's conversion examples are likely not possible from a regulatory perspective, but there are alternatives (ex: pathways) that are possible and acceptable. Brian noted that varying water levels result in changes to the size and location of the beach area. Brian commented that he has been to the park several times to discuss possible development/recreation opportunities for the shoreline. He supports a pathway through the wetland area, but he cautioned about the importance of not eliminating coastal wetlands.
 - d) Annie is working with Michigan State University to develop a residential profile that will identify what residents in the area desire. She encouraged the DNR to support achieving the objectives and desires of the residents.
 - e) Tom Hickner commented that we need to be patient and see the process through. He noted that there are areas within Saginaw Bay where wetlands can be added if mitigation is necessary. He would like to see the historical documentation of the beach/wetland area and feels that managing the muck is critical.
 - f) Laura presented a historical description of the park's shoreline use as an active recreational beachfront area since the 1870's showing old newspaper articles, old photographs, amusement rides, menus from the dance pavilion café, etc.
 - g) Ray noted that the DNR has responded to the community needs with boardwalks, phragmites control, and a spray park, and stated that there is potential for beach access. He pointed out that muck is not easily managed and the economic impact of the shoreline may not be realized if the muck cannot be effectively managed. He commented that the focus of the project is to look at the entire shoreline area including the wetland/marsh area to increase tourism.
 - h) Greg Rankin commented that the beach can be improved but the quality of the water is a huge issue.

- i) Laura said that there are many entities working to improve the water quality conditions in the bay, including phosphorus reduction and improvements to wastewater treatment plants.
 - j) Annie Rummel commented that she directed soccer players, coaches, and spectators to beaches in Tawas and Caseville due to the superior beach access and the commerce amenities the customer was requesting. Information pertaining to the Bay City State Recreation Area was provided if it met the request of the customer.
 - k) Mike Seward commented that there is not one restaurant on the Bay and asked if it is possible to build one at BCSRA
- 5) The Planning Team toured the shoreline – it was noted that the groomed area of the beach was doubled to 1,200 feet in 2004. Ray mentioned that phragmites management began in 2005 and that between \$16,000-20,000 is spent each year to manage phragmites. In 2005, 80-90% of the wooded shoreline area was covered in phragmites. Currently, there is 10% coverage.
- 6) After lunch, the Planning Team participated in a group exercise, “What’s Working at BCSRA? What’s Not Working? Needed New Additions?” The results of this exercise are listed below.

What is Working

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sand path (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Moves on the Bay |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boardwalks & Docks (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Saginaw Bay (location) (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Observation towers | <input type="checkbox"/> Boaters Beach |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Waterfowl Festival (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive Center (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Picnic Facilities | <input type="checkbox"/> Youth outreach program (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tobico (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Spray Park (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Playscape (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Friends Group (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Music in Marsh (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Phragmites control (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Riverwalk / Rail Trail (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Park Staff (2) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Naturalist program (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Campground |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach volleyball (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Great Lakes Bay Regional Alliance (3 counties) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach maintenance | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing & fish hatchery |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach wellness event | |

What Needs Work

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> State Park “App” (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Universally accessible walkway connections (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Restaurant on top floor of Waterworks Building (3) | <input type="checkbox"/> Interpretive signs (based on plans) (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Natural Resource Damage Assessment | <input type="checkbox"/> Virtual Interpretive Tours (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Kiteboarding Access (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing plan (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beach Access (7) | <input type="checkbox"/> Development plan (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Capital Investment Plan Public & Private (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Tie park into events like Tall Ships Festival (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 104 miles of shoreline. | <input type="checkbox"/> Demand analysis / feasibility study (5) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Multi-generational attraction(s) | <input type="checkbox"/> Capitalize on Birch Run’s draw |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use the Bay to promote Bay Region (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Waterworks Building adaptive reuse |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Strategic Community Plan (1) | <input type="checkbox"/> Scenic overlook at south end (1) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trail Connections (land & water) (2) | <input type="checkbox"/> Ash tree removal / replacement (3) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mapping Regional Recreation Resources | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike rental network (1) |

- Birdwatching opportunities (3)
- Beach volleyball leagues
- Cross-marketing Movies on Bay
- Drainage of campground (1)
- Community outreach
- Limited opportunities to See Bay (2)
- Restroom buildings need TLC (1)
- Pet-friendly park (2)

New

- Pier (7)
- Restaurant (4)
- Canoe / kayak / recreation equipment rental (1)
- Amusement rides (2)
- Scuba diving courses and exploration / preserve (1)
- Interpretive plan (3)

- 7) Ray provided the results of the Integrated Assessment
- a) The Assessment includes a model for beach use, a model for muck management.
 - b) Annie asked if there is a way/method to re-use the muck?
- 8) Public Input Survey Exercise – What do we hope to learn from the survey? The results are listed below. Clearzoning, Inc. will develop a draft survey, for initial review by Laura Ogar and Debbie Jensen then send out to the team for input.

- What are public's priorities? (2)
- What would encourage you to visit BCSRA more often?
- Public opinion about : (1)
 - Beach Access
 - Quality of access
 - How can access be improved
- Would you welcome commercial development within BCSRA?
 - What would you want to see (recreation related)
- Opinion about what they would like to see that is not presently available.
- Opinion about what needs to be fixed or eliminated.
- Why do you visit BCSRA
- What keeps you away from BCSRA
- How do we capture day users?

- 9) Priority Exercise
- a) Each team member was given ten sticky dots to put on the recommendations that they feel should be prioritized. The results are provided above in the ().

- 10) Discussion of future Stakeholder-Public Input Workshop
- a) Schedule meeting on a Monday so that legislators can participate
 - b) Greg suggested having the meeting at the Bay City Yacht Club; Laura will assist with trying to find a location as well, possibly at Doubletrees Hotel.
 - c) Susie will email stakeholder list for the Planning Team to review and provide input; Susie will also send out a doodle poll for the potential dates for the Stakeholder-Public Input Workshop.

Bay City State Recreation Area (BCSRA)
Lakefront and Beach Access Study
Planning Team Meeting 2 Summary

Location: BCSRA Visitor Center

Date: November 22, 2013

1. Attendees: Debbie Jensen, Bill Boik, Laura Ogar, Ron Bloomfield, Tom Hickner, Mike Seward, John Terpstra, Dan Mullen, George Lauinger, Valerie Blaschka, Ray Fahlsing, Jill Bahm, Susie Roble
2. Jill Bahm gave a brief overview of the Public Input Workshop. Discussion took place over the context of the beach and shoreline within the park.
3. The Planning Team went through several exercises:
 - a. **Review of Priority Sticker results from Public Input Workshop:** the Planning Team examined 37 suggestions from the Public Input Workshop. Duplicate items were removed, as were items that did not present a specific strategy (e.g., ““Bay” is our namesake”). Several items did not relate as specifically to the lakeshore, but were appropriate for consideration in Phase 2 of the park’s General Management Plan (e.g., “campground drainage fix”).

Possible Strategies for Lakeshore & Beach Access Study

1. Improve developed groomed beach by expanding the developed groomed beach and providing Universal Access to the developed groomed beach
2. Provide Universal Access to the lakeshore
3. Build pier out into water
4. Build pier out into water and add restaurants
5. Improve public access to lakeshore by land and water
6. Expand bike trail connections
7. Dredge & reopen Tobico River
8. Build a permanent dike to create swimming basin and harbor
9. Add a boat launch for small non-motorized watercraft
10. Add restrooms close to beach
11. Expand splash park
12. Build outdoor amphitheater
13. Build floating docks
14. Add concessions for renting kayaks & small personal non-motorized watercraft as well as other recreational amenities
15. Build elevated walkway for viewing shoreline wetland
16. Improve education and interpretation of emerging wetland
17. Add amenities that encourage BCSRA as stop on regional water trail
18. Enhance birding

Possible Strategies for Future Phase 2 GMP

1. Expand rail trail to connect BCSRA to Pinconning
 2. Improve and market Tobico Lagoon
 3. Expand cross-country skiing
 4. Improve campground drainage & access
 5. Expand Waterfowl Festival
 6. Add disc golf
 7. Purchase driving range
- b. **Shared Goals assessment:** the Planning Team reviewed each of the 18 possible strategies noted in the first exercise and confirmed that these strategies would meet most, if not all, of the shared goals of the study. At this point, the “pier with restaurants” suggestion was removed due to the legal mandates for the park that would preclude such use. In addition the “dredging and reopening of the Tobico River” and the “permanent dike” suggestions were also removed due to these items not meeting several of the shared goals.
- c. **Cost/Benefit assessment:** The Planning Team considered the costs/benefits of the remaining suggestions in a matrix exercise. This exercise was intended to help the Planning Team consider which suggestions may have high or low costs and/or high or low benefits. This evaluation will help with the priority of the strategies; strategies with low benefits and high costs may not be a high priority compared to a strategy with high benefits and low costs.
- d. **Next Steps:** The final exercise was “next steps.” The Planning Team reviewed the remaining strategies and identified implementation steps needed to achieve those strategies.
4. Discussion of next Planning Team meeting
- a. The Planning Team asked the consultants to refine the strategies and suggest priorities as the starting point for the next Planning Team meeting.
 - b. Susie will also send out a doodle poll for the potential dates for the next meeting.

Bay City State Recreation Area (BCSRA)
Lakefront and Beach Access Study
Planning Team Meeting 3 Summary

Location: BCSRA Visitor Center

Date: January 9, 2014

1. Attendees: Debbie Jensen, Bill Boik, Laura Ogar, Ron Bloomfield, Tom Hickner, Mike Seward, John Terpstra, Dan Mullen (via conference call), George Lauinger, Valerie Blaschka, Ray Fahlsing, Greg Rankin, James Blaschka, Terry Watson, Cyndi Gaul, Brian Rudolph, Rex Ainslie, Annette Rummel, Veronica Horn, David Birchler
2. The Planning Team discussed the boardwalk. Laura indicated the boardwalk is estimated to cost \$70,000, which is based on Pinconning and used for grant application submitted to CZM.
3. Dave Birchler distributed Draft Action Strategies for Bay City State Recreation Area to the meeting attendees to get their feedback. Debbie Jensen reported that PRD Director, Ron Olson, has suggested that detailed implementation of the action strategies need to be outlined by a smaller group.
 - a. Expand Developed Groomed Beach
 - i. Laura Ogar would like projects that have previously been approved/agreed to (ex: 1,000 ft. groomed beach expansion) to be separate from this study.
 - ii. Brian Rudolph asked that any reference to groomed beach area include that it extends from the fore dune to standing water line.
 - b. Develop an Access & Connectivity Plan
 - i. Laura Ogar wants “shoreline” added to the title of the action strategy and would like to combine concessions study into access plan.
 - ii. Mike Seward commented that he appreciates the DNR’s offer to lease land for the pier.
 - iii. Greg Rankin expressed concern with “over-committing” in the event that Federal rules for protecting nearby eagles nests would preclude development.
 - iv. The Bay Area Chamber has beach access, pier and waterfront restaurants as their #1 priority. The local community strategic community development plan also addressed swimming beaches.
 - v. Debbie Jensen wants the goal to reference both land and water trails
 - vi. Laura Ogar would like this section to be more detailed regarding what trails to connect, the best locations for concessions...etc.
 - vii. Terry Watson expressed concern about the impact if nearby nesting eagles were to move their nest to the beach. Even though eagles have recently been de-listed, they are still protected under Federal Law. Rex Ainslie noted the Planning Team should promote ability for visitors to see eagles in their natural environment.
 - viii. Laura commented that local residents consider the entire beach as the area that they want “groomed.” Brian Rudolph noted that this requires traversing a large coastal wetland, which requires preservation at 10:1 ratio. Laura suggested

possibility of developing a mitigation “bank,” but Brian responded that Michigan lacks legislation for mitigation banks.

- ix. Laura Ogar suggested referring to the coastal wetland by a different name as people call it the former beach.
 - x. John Terpstra would like to seize the teaching opportunity to help people understand the value of the coastal wetland. Rex Ainslie agreed and suggested that people refer to the wetland as “weeds” because the DNR has not adequately communicated their value.
 - xi. Laura Ogar suggested hiring a consultant to explore other amenities, access, connectivity enhancements.
 - xii. Format Idea – each bullet needs to stand alone in the document and have its own page.
- c. Enhance concession offerings
 - i. Laura Ogar expressed concern about the concessions being required to provide market assessment. Dave Birchler clarified that the intent is for the partnership (between DNR and Bay County) to conduct the market assessment to identify concessions in demand and likely to be successful.
 - d. Explore opportunities to increase birding activities
 - i. Ray Fahlsing noted that this extends beyond the shoreline into the entire Recreation Area. The park is home to many rare birds.
 - ii. Valerie Blaschka commented that she has weekly hikes and that the park is part of the Saginaw Basin Birding Trail.
 - e. Education and Interpretation of coastal wetland and other natural resources at the park
 - i. The team discussed the need to enhance the capacity of these resources.
 - f. Enhance performance space for festivals
 - i. This strategy is satisfactory to the Planning Team.
 - g. Implementation of Access Improvements
 - i. Laura would like the plan to include a statement of commitment from the partners.
4. Clearzoning, Inc. will complete the draft plan in the next 4 weeks. There will be a team teleconference in 6 weeks for the team to review the document.

Bay City State Recreation Area (BCSRA)
Lakefront and Beach Access Study
Planning Team Meeting 4 Summary
Go-To-Meeting
Date: March 3, 2014

1. Attendees – Laura Ogar, George Lauinger, Annie Rummel, Charlie Bauer, Brian Rudolph, John Terpstra, Kriss Bennet, Bill Boik, Ray Fahlsing, Rex Anslie, Dan Mullen, Tom Hickner, Dave Birchler, Susie Roble, Jill Bahm
2. John Terpstra confirmed that the preliminary plans for the boardwalk are complete and the permit will be submitted in the next day.
3. Laura suggested that Action Strategy #1 include a statement regarding muck clean up on beach and maintenance responsibilities
4. Charlie Bauer commented that the DEQ will be studying the feasibility of removing the muck
5. Laura would like the report to include the history of public use of the beach and what is driving this study.
6. Greg Rankin noted that more people will come if beach is more desirable.
7. Dan Mullen noted that the current beach and the new 1,000 foot groomed beach and a potential lease at the southeast end will likely increase public access and visits
Mike
8. The Planning Team approved Action Strategies #2-#7
9. Team agreed to return comments by Friday, March 14th