

General Management Plan Wilderness State Park

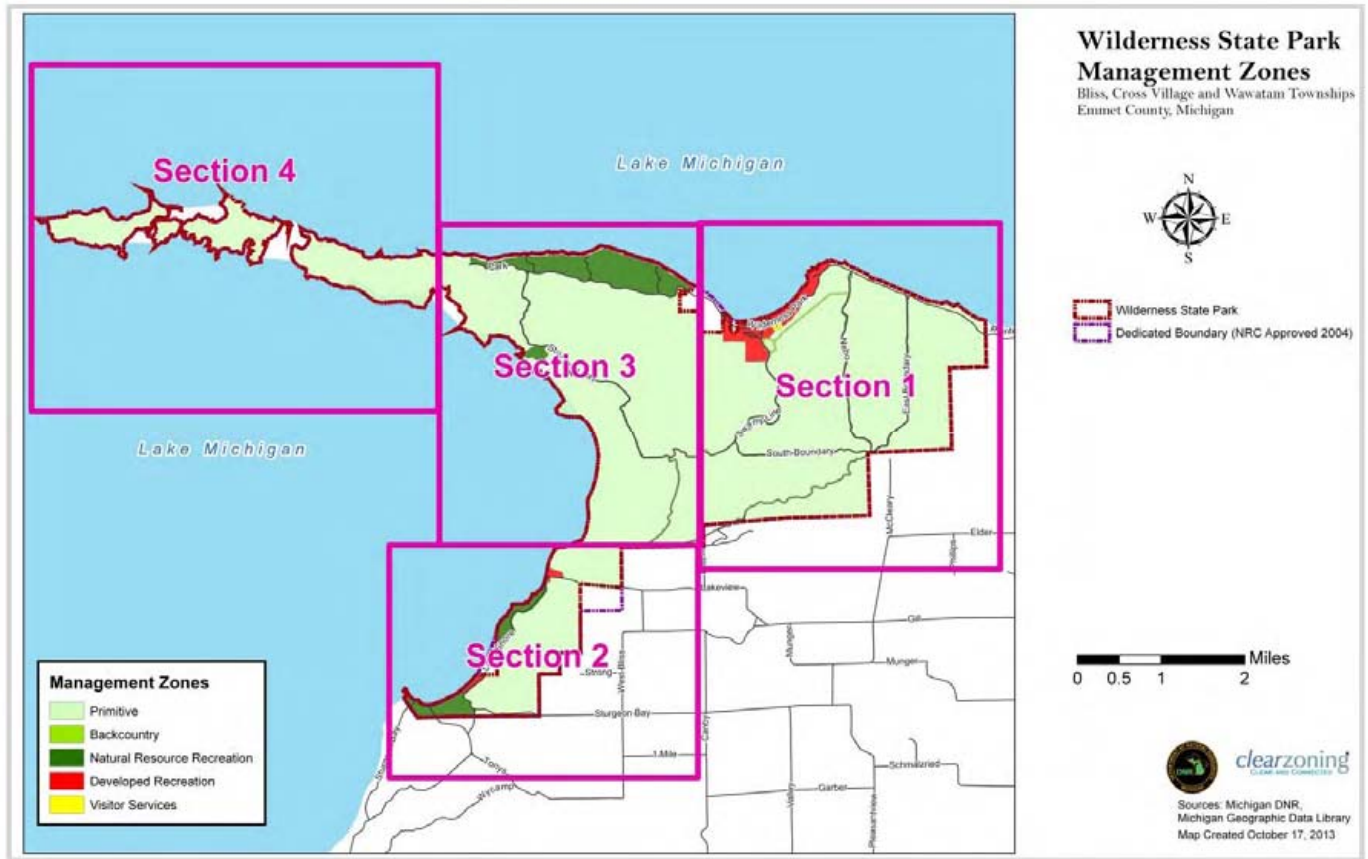


Approved May 21, 2014
Michigan DNR Parks and Recreation Division

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The project was directed by Deborah Jensen, Management Plan Administrator Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Parks & Recreation Division, with assistance from Clearzoning, Inc.

Financial assistance for this project was provided, in part, by the Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program, DEQ, through a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce.

The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this plan are those of the DNR and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DEQ and the NOAA.

Plan Approvals: *5-15-14*

[Signature]
Chief, Parks & Recreation Division

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Natural Resources Deputy

[Signature]
Director, Department of Natural Resources

5/21/14
Date

5/21/14
Date

5/21/14
Date

PLAN APPROVAL RECOMMENDATIONS:

PRD – SECTION CHIEFS:

2/3/14
Date

PRD – MANAGEMENT TEAM:

2/26/14
Date

DNR – RESOURCE MANAGEMENT BUREAU:

3/31/14 (via Email)
Date

NRC – MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

4/10/14
Date

Resolution

RESOLUTION NO. 04-2014-02

MICHIGAN STATE PARKS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MSPAC)

RESOLUTION TO RECOMMEND APPROVAL OF THE “WILDERNESS STATE PARK GENERAL MANAGEMENT PLAN”

ADOPTED: April 10, 2014

WHEREAS, the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks and Recreation Division has completed the General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park; and

WHEREAS, the planning process reflects sensitivity to natural resource values, historic and cultural resource values, recreation and education opportunities, is inclusive of all DNR programs and representative of eco-management; and

WHEREAS, the planning process was further inclusive of stakeholder, constituent, and public input; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan represents sound guidance for future planning phases that will be consistent with the mission of the DNR and the Parks and Recreation Division, and reflective of the purpose and significance of Wilderness State Park; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan is consistent with the recommendations of the Michigan State Parks and Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel report submitted to Governor Rick Snyder; and

WHEREAS, the General Management Plan has been reviewed and recommended for approval by the Parks and Recreation Division and the MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee recommends approval of the Wilderness State Park General Management Plan; and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee further recommends that the DNR Director approve the General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park; and

THEREFORE, BE IF FINALLY RESOLVED, that upon the DNR Director’s approval, the Parks and Recreation Division initiate the Phase 2 – Long Range Action Goals Plan for Wilderness State Park.

Submitted by: Chris Graham, Chair, MSPAC Stewardship Subcommittee

Motioned by:	Amy Trotter	Yeas:	11
Seconded by:	Mike Foote	Nays:	0
		Abstained:	0
		Absent:	5

This Resolution was adopted by the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee at their April 10, 2014 meeting as Resolution No. 04-2014-02.

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Executive Summary

Located 11 miles west of Mackinaw City on the northern tip of the Lower Peninsula in Emmet County, the 10,512-acre Wilderness State Park offers an abundance of year-round recreational opportunities within its boundaries. Visitors can observe and interact with nature, take advantage of 26 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, and truly have an “up north” experience.

The Lakeshore and the Pines are the park’s two modern campgrounds. Additional lodging is provided by 5 rustic cabins located along the Lake Michigan shoreline, 1 rustic cabin in the densely forested interior of the park and 3 rustic bunkhouses located within the Pines campground. There are approximately 23 miles of trails woven throughout the park that offer a variety of recreational opportunities for all types of users, including the North Country Trail, which provides a connection to the inter-state and national trail system. Furthermore, the park’s designated natural areas, critical and historical sand dunes, and rare and protected species including the piping plover, dwarf lake iris, Pitcher’s thistle, and calypso orchid, make it a valuable site for research and education purposes.



The shoreline of Sturgeon Bay

Financial assistance for this project was provided, in part, by the Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program, DEQ, through a grant from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), U.S. Department of Commerce. The statements, findings, conclusions, and recommendations in this plan are those of the Michigan DNR and do not necessarily reflect the views of the DEQ and the NOAA. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Parks & Recreation Division (PRD) oversaw the planning process. The Plan was developed with significant and valuable input from the Planning Team, stakeholders, and the public. Additionally, several existing recreation plans including the Michigan Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan and the Michigan State Parks Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report were used as guiding references.

The General Management Plan serves two primary purposes. It establishes a 20-year Management Zone Plan that provides specific guidance for development, stewardship, public use, education & interpretation and park operations and management at Wilderness State Park. The Plan also provides 10-Year Action Goals that address the desired future condition within each Management Zone. Overall, this Plan seeks to uphold the PRD’s Mission Statement: to acquire, preserve, and protect natural and cultural resources, and to provide access to land and water based recreation and education opportunities.

[Significance of Wilderness State Park](#)

The name “Wilderness” is very fitting for this park as it offers visitors the experience of feeling part of a true wilderness area. The park’s location, combined with its unique geological, ecological, recreational, cultural, and historical features, make it a popular destination for visitors from the state and region. Wilderness State Park was determined significant due to the following features and opportunities (refer to Chapter 3 for more detailed statements).

- **Shoreline:** Wilderness State Park's 26 miles of shoreline not only offer visitors picturesque views but also the opportunity to experience Lake Michigan through a variety of ways including by car, boat, walking on the beach, swimming and camping.
- **Camping:** Camping at Wilderness State Park is an in-demand and revenue-generating activity. A variety of year-round lodging opportunities are available, from lakeside to backcountry and modern to rustic, accommodating all types of users.
- **Trails:** Woven throughout Wilderness State Park is a 23-mile network of trails, including 11 miles designated as part of the North Country Trail. The trails in this vast 10,500-acre park offer visitors the chance to interact with unique natural resources and the environment of an undeveloped wilderness area.
- **Fishing and Hunting:** Wilderness State Park's location on northern Lake Michigan makes it a popular destination for angling enthusiasts and offers a variety of different fishing opportunities. Hunting is also a popular recreational activity due to the distinct Northern Michigan game found within the park including coyote, deer, bobcat, grouse and water fowl.
- **Natural Areas:** Wilderness State Park offers one of the state's most diverse arrays of dedicated natural areas and designated areas of environmental importance. These areas provide exceptional educational and historical value for park users, research groups, and nature enthusiasts.
- **Upper Peninsula-Type Ecosystem:** Wilderness State Park's ecosystem more closely resembles systems found in the Upper Peninsula than the Lower Peninsula including the boreal forest. These ecosystems provide habitat for animals traditional of the Great Lakes, including American black bear, beaver, bobcat, mink, muskrat, and otter.
- **Education:** Wilderness State Park's abundance of natural resources makes it a popular research and education oasis for universities, research groups, schools, youth groups and the like.
- **Rare and Protected Species:** A high concentration of rare and protected species such as the piping plover, Pitcher's thistle, dwarf lake iris and calypso orchid are dispersed across Wilderness State Park, providing significant educational value to park visitors and researchers.



Nebo Cabin offers a remote camping experience

Management Zones

A key goal in the development of this General Management Plan is to continue providing the opportunities and features that attract so many visitors to the park each year, while simultaneously protecting the park's resources. Taking this into account, the Planning Team, with stakeholder and public input, established appropriate Management Zones for the park. From a palette of nine standard zones, five were applied to Wilderness State Park. The Management Zone Map and a thorough review of each Management Zone are found in Chapter 4 of this Plan. A condensed view of the Management Zones is as follows:

- **Primitive Zone** comprises approximately 9,460 acres (90%) of the park and will reflect a desired condition that emphasizes the natural resources. Most of the dedicated Natural Areas at Wilderness State Park are found within this zone. The allowance of low impact recreational uses is consistent with attaining and maintaining a high quality natural resource condition.

- **Backcountry Zone** comprises less than 1% of the park and buffers those trails open to mountain bike use weaving through the Primitive Zone, allowing for a moderate level of non-motorized activity.
- **Natural Resource Recreation Zone** comprises 725 acres (6.9%) of the park and includes areas where rustic cabins, such as Sturgeon Cabin, are located. The Natural Resource Recreation Zone also buffers a portion of the trail system that allows for snowmobile use.
- **Developed Recreation Zone** comprises approximately 220 acres (2.1%) of the park and allows active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. Lakeshore Campground and Pines Campground are both located in this zone.
- **Visitor Service Zone** comprises less than 1% of the park and encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations. The zone includes the park headquarters, sewage treatment facility and all related land required to conduct the business of running the park.

10-Year Action Goals

The General Management Plan looks at each management zone and identifies 10-Year Action Goals that the Planning Team believes are necessary to guide management and development within the zones in order to achieve the desired user experience and natural resource protection. Action goals are categorized under General Action Goals if they pertain to the park as a whole or under the applicable management zone. Some of the Action Goals highlighted in Chapter 6 include the following:

General Action Goals

- Nominate appropriate wilderness/natural area(s) under Wilderness and Natural Areas Act
- Evaluate gaps and closed historical segments of the park's hiking trail network for possible connection/reopening
- Develop database from research project user permits to be shared with proposed new research projects

Primitive Zone Action Goals

- Evaluate opportunities for new backcountry camping opportunities including water trail sites
- Evaluate O'Neal Lake and the dam for future management and division responsibility

Backcountry Zone Action Goals

- Evaluate conditions of bridges on trails and repair/replace consistent with the zone

Natural Resource Recreation Zone Action Goals

- Create Development Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay area

Developed Recreation Zone Action Goals

- Repurpose the Dining Hall as outreach center
- Implement the Lakeshore Campground Redevelopment Plan

1. Core Values & Guiding Resources

Core values are the foundation upon which the park management plan is based. Core values are derived from the mission statements of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and Parks & Recreation Division (PRD), as well as the priorities of the Director to ensure that the state will acquire, preserve, and protect 1) natural resources and 2) cultural resources, and continue to provide 3) public recreation and 4) educational opportunities throughout the state park system.

1.1 Mission Statements

Guidance for the General Management Plan stems from the Mission Statements of the DNR and PRD and the Purpose and Significance Statements (discussed in Chapter 3) that have evolved through the planning process.

DNR Mission Statement

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations.

PRD Mission Statement

The Parks & Recreation Division's mission is to acquire, protect, and preserve the natural and cultural features of Michigan's unique resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities.

Five Goals of the DNR

1. Protect the natural and cultural resources
2. Ensure sustainable recreation use and enjoyment
3. Enable strong, natural resource-based economies
4. Improve and build strong relationships and partnerships
5. Foster effective business practices and good governance

“When you visit Michigan’s state parks and are surrounded with our forests, rivers, lakes and streams that have been here for thousands of years, it’s hard to imagine that changes ever occur here. As the world gets more hectic, we think Michigan residents will continue to turn to their state parks as a resource for rest and renewal.”

-Ron Olson (2013), DNR-PRD Chief



A kayaker enjoys the sunset over Lake Michigan



The calypso orchid has a home at the park

1.2 Additional Guiding Resources

The General Management Planning process is guided and shaped by several resources developed to provide recommendations for managing Michigan's park and recreation system. In particular, these resources have helped shape the 10-Year Action Goals established in this Plan.

Michigan Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan (SCORP) (2013-2017)

SCORP is a five-year strategic plan that shapes investment by the state and local communities in priority outdoor recreation infrastructure and programming. The Plan's overarching goal is to utilize Michigan's diverse and abundant natural assets to meet the fun, relaxation, and health needs of Michigan's residents and visitors, and the economic development needs of the state and local communities, by:

- Collaboration and cooperation
- Maintenance and continuous improvement of facilities
- Access to and connectivity between facilities
- Integration with economic development plans
- Effective marketing
- Protection and interpretation of natural resources



Michigan State Parks & Outdoor Recreation Blue Ribbon Panel Report (2012)

The Blue Ribbon Panel's report to Governor Snyder identifies a number of recommendations for system-wide changes to programs, management, infrastructure type, and investment strategies that set up the visionary framework for the next 30-50 years of park and outdoor recreation management in Michigan. Several of the recommendations included in the report include:

- Identify and protect important natural, cultural, historic, and prehistoric resources
- Diversify funding
- Prioritize development of statewide and regional systems of connected trail networks
- Connections between communities and their recreational assets to strengthen regional identities
- Integrate tourism and economic development marketing
- Prioritize investment in parks and recreation



Michigan Comprehensive Trail Plan (2013 - 2018)

The Trail Plan, developed by an 11-member committee appointed by Governor Snyder, includes eight priority recommendations with associated key actions that should be implemented to assist in achieving the vision of establishing a high quality, nationally-recognized, state-wide trail system. The eight recommendations are as follows:

- Trails are maintained to ensure a sustainable and quality trail system
- Expand trails and trail experiences and opportunities to ensure accessibility to trail systems, outdoor recreation opportunities and natural and cultural resources
- The Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council leads the effort to maintain and enhance Michigan's reputation as the trail state

- Link trails, trail users and adjoining towns to create memorable trail experiences and enhance economic prosperity
- Develop, enhance and celebrate partnerships and collaborations
- Implement a marketing plan including an electronic portal that allows citizens and visitors to be aware of all trails and related amenities
- Develop funding sources and mechanisms for trail maintenance, acquisition and development
- Ensure that the state's trail system compliments other plans and planning efforts

PRD Strategic Plan (2009-2019)

The PRD Strategic Plan, approved in 2009, was developed to establish one cohesive plan for the division that spells out long-range goals, objectives, actions, and specific tasks for Michigan's state park and recreation system. Specific guidelines that the PRD follows are:

- Take the best possible care of Michigan's natural and cultural resources
- Establish and maintain long-term funding
- Balance recreational use with protection of the resources
- Improve and expand education and interpretation
- Implement management practices to assess, sustain and update facilities
- Develop a workplace environment that promotes creation of fond, memorable experiences for our customers
- Strengthen safety and security
- Make the development of Partnerships a priority
- Incorporate 'Universal Access' into Michigan's state park and recreation system
- Provide facilities supporting emerging public recreation activities
- Promote PRD facilities and programs
- In all strategic goals, target and focus efforts to engage people in the out-of-doors

MiScorecard Performance Summary

The MiScorecard Performance Summary is a management tool for monitoring the progress of an initiative or opportunity. The over-arching goals of the MiScorecard Performance Summary correspond to the five goals of the DNR.

1.3 Summary of Legal Mandates

For all park General Management Plans, legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the General Management Plan and subsequent Action Plans. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. There are several “general and site specific” legal mandates applicable to Wilderness State Park listed in Appendix A: Supporting Analysis.

The legal mandates that most directly impact planning and management of Wilderness State Park focus on the following areas:

- Compliance with public health and safety regulations regarding campgrounds, wastewater systems, and discharge of pollutants to surface water and groundwater.
- Identification of the duties of the DNR in reinforcing its core values concerning preservation, protection and management.
- Requirement of a Recreation Passport for entry into the park.

The General Management Plan recognizes that future management of the land must be consistent with the restrictions of certain funding sources used to purchase the land. At Wilderness State Park over 1,000 acres was purchased using the State Game Fund for the purpose of game and fish protection.



Dwarf lake iris



Camping at Lakeshore Campground



The North Country Trail passes through the park



Interpretive programs are held in the Dining Hall

2. Plan Process Overview

2.1 Why Plan?

Park planning is not a new concept. The DNR has developed Master Plans in the past for many of Michigan's state parks. Most of these plans are now 20-40 years old and do not reflect today's realities or desires of recreational users. Furthermore, past plans put a strong emphasis on development and did not often include stewardship of natural and cultural features or opportunities for education and interpretation.

General Management Planning provides a new way of planning for a park. The GMP sets out a framework for protecting park resources while providing for meaningful visitor experiences. The long-range vision and management objectives for the park are derived from applicable legal directives, the purpose of the park, and the park's significant natural and cultural resources.

A GMP develops as a result of a series of planning steps. Each step builds upon the previous, and action decisions focus on (1) the mission of the Parks & Recreation Division (PRD), and (2) the specific Purpose and Significance of the park. There are three stages of planning, implemented in the following order:

1. **General Management Plan (GMP)** that presents a 20-Year Management Zone Plan used to guide park planning decisions and a 10-Year Action Goals Plan that establishes specific action strategies within each management zone.
2. **5-Year Action Plan** outlines specific actions to implement
3. **Annual Work Plan** addresses what will be done during a given year, and what progress was made throughout the previous year.

2.2 Planning Objectives

The objective of the General Management Plan is to bring together Parks & Recreation Division staff, stakeholders, and the public into a planning process that defines and clarifies the unique "Purpose and Significance" of Wilderness State Park. Collectively, those attributes will be reinforced in the planning and management decisions that impact the park through the implementation of the Management Zone Plan and Action Goals.

Extensive input was sought throughout the planning process. An online survey was developed that solicited input from park users. Stakeholders and the public were invited to workshops where they could provide verbal and written comments regarding the General Management Plan. The draft plan was also available for review on the park website, and the public was invited to email, call or mail questions or comments concerning this initiative. The Planning Team discussed and collected input and refined the plan as appropriate.



The Wilderness State Park Planning Team

2.3 Planning Team

The General Management Plan would not exist without the valuable input and expertise provided by all members of the “Planning Team.” Please refer to the Appendix for summaries of all Planning Team meetings.

Wilderness State Park Planning Team		
Division	Title	Name
PRD	Management Plan Administrator	Debbie Jensen
PRD	Planning Analyst	Matt Lincoln
PRD	Regional Planner	Keith Cheli
PRD	Unit Supervisor	Burr Mitchell
PRD	Unit Lead Worker	David Goheen
PRD	District Supervisor	Rich Hill Jr.
PRD	Ecologist	Glenn Palmgren
PRD	Cultural Resource Analyst	Lisa Gamero
FD (Fisheries)	Fisheries Biologist	Heather Hettinger
FRD (Forest Resources)	Gaylord Unit Manager	Joyce Angel
LED (Law)	District 3, Spv-1	Sgt. Greg Drogowski
OEO (Education)	Park Interpreter	Theresa Neal
WD (Wildlife)	Habitat Biologist	Mark Monroe
PRD	Lands Manager	Paul Yauk

Clearzoning Consultants

David Birchler, AICP, PCP, Chief Executive Officer
 Jill Bahm, AICP, Principal Associate
 Susie Roble, Associate Planner
 Sheila Starks, GIS Specialist

2.4 Summary of Public Input Survey

Understanding the important role of the public in developing this plan, the Planning Team utilized a variety of methods to gather feedback and input from park users, including:

- **Student Survey** - Students from the University of Michigan Biological Station surveyed Sturgeon Bay users to identify where they come from, how often they visit, and how they use the beach. The project was intended as a field-based, educational experience for the students. The complete study called *Sturgeon Bay Beach: A Study of Beach Use at Wilderness State Park* can be found in Appendix B: Summary of Public Input.
- **Public Input Survey** - The online public input survey was developed by the Planning Team to gather general information about park visitors (both day users and campers), how and where they use the park, as well as recommendations for improving features and amenities offered at the park. See Appendix B: Public Input Summary for more survey result information.

The survey link was distributed to park visitors at the park headquarters, provided in a DNR press release, and made available on the Wilderness State Park website. Survey respondents were given approximately ten weeks to complete the survey. Approximately 250 respondents completed the survey. The Planning Team recognizes that the survey results may not be fully representative of all users of Wilderness State Park. The 15-question survey was divided into five sections:

Section	#'s	Type of Questions
About You	1 - 5	Questions about respondent's age, travel distance, frequency of visit, and type of use (day user vs. camper)
Day Users	6	Question directed toward day users regarding their favorite park features and frequency of visits
Campers	7-8	Questions directed toward campers regarding their favorite features of the park and length of stay
Experience of WSP	9-14	Respondents asked to identify areas of the park they most often frequent, if they ride a bike at the park, and if they prefer a designated area of the park to be managed as a "wild and natural" area. Respondents asked to rate park facilities and recreational opportunities. Respondents asked to prioritize park improvements and additions. Finally, respondents were asked to describe the park in 3 words.
Wrapping Up	15	Respondents asked to share additional comments/thoughts

About You

Survey respondents of all ages completed the survey, however approximately 44% of respondents were between 50-64 years old. While Wilderness State Park welcomes visitors from around the country, the majority of the respondents come from Michigan. Nearly 52% of respondents primarily visit the park during the summer season and approximately 23% of respondents visit year-round. Over half of the respondents visit the park 1-2 times per year, while 21% visit 3-5 times per year.

The Planning team wanted to gain a better understanding of the top rated features and the needed improvements specific to whether the respondent is a day user or a camper. Assuming that there are some differences between these two groups, the Planning Team decided to design the survey in a way that would identify these differences. Therefore, the last question for this section asked the respondent to classify themselves as camper, day user, or both. Approximately 54% of respondents were campers and 46% were day users.

Day Users

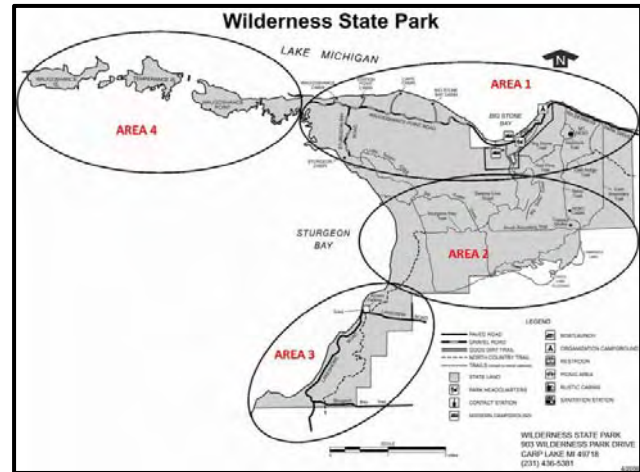
The top three favorite park features or recreational opportunities for day users are nature viewing/study, solitude of the beach, and Sturgeon Bay, which illustrates that day users enjoy the natural features and "wilderness" feeling that the park offers,

Campers

Campers top three favorite park features and opportunities include the campground, solitude of the beach, and the Lake Michigan shoreline. These results indicate that campers at Wilderness State Park highly value the opportunity to camp in close proximity to the lake/shoreline. Furthermore, an equal percentage of respondents (approximately 41% each) answered that they camp overnight 1-2 nights and 3-6 nights, while 17% stay more than 7 nights.

Experience of Wilderness

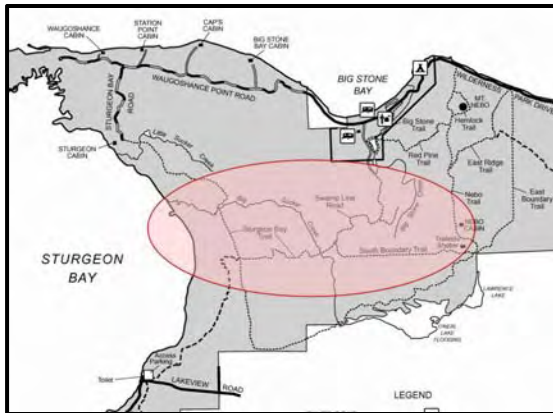
Viewing the map to the right, respondents were asked to identify which area of the park they typically spend most time. 70% of respondents spend most of their time in Area 1 (North shore/Campground) and 25% spend most of their time in Area 3 (Sturgeon Bay). Respondents spend the least amount of time in Area 4 (Waugoshance Point/Islands) and Area 2 (Interior/O’Neal Lake), which is not surprising as these areas are more difficult to access due to the natural features present.



Approximately 36% of respondents ride a bike on park roads, 14% on mountain bike trails, and 50% do not ride a bike in the park.

Respondents were asked to give their opinion regarding whether they would like to see the highlighted backcountry area in the below map managed as a “wild and natural” area that would allow foot-traffic only. Approximately 30% of respondents support the idea, 26% want the area left as is, 23% need more information, 13% have no opinion, and 8% chose to provide a comment.

Overall, respondents are very satisfied with their experience with most facilities and recreational opportunities at Wilderness State Park. They are most happy with the northern and Sturgeon Bay shorelines, nature viewing/study, swimming, and hiking/trail running. Respondents would like to see the addition of a designated pet-friendly beach and additional campsites.



Finally, respondents were asked to choose three words to describe Wilderness State Park. Their responses are provided in the Wordle graphic below. The larger the word, the more times it was chosen to describe the park.



3. Purpose & Significance

There are over 100 parks in Michigan’s park system and each park has its own unique and defining characteristics. This chapter describes what makes Wilderness State Park a significant asset to the state’s park system.

3.1 Park Purpose

Park purpose statements are based on park legislation, legislative history, special designations and DNR policies. These statements reaffirm the reasons for which Wilderness State Park was identified as part of the state park system.

- To be used as a public park, pursuant to the intentions of the State Legislature when it created the park and authorized its purchase, beginning in 1944.
- To preserve and protect Wilderness State Park’s unique natural resources for current and future generations.
- To provide diverse recreational opportunities to nearby populations.
- To provide educational and interpretive opportunities for the public that reflect the DNR mission and the unique qualities of Wilderness State Park.

3.2 Statements of Significance

Shoreline

Wilderness State Park’s 26 miles of shoreline offer visitors the opportunity to experience Lake Michigan through a variety of ways including by car, boat, walking on the beach, swimming and camping. Given the park’s large size, the character of the shoreline differs considerably – whereas sandy dunes characterize the southern shoreline, the northern shoreline is shaped by cobble stones and dense woods. Thus, whether enjoying the sunrise or sunset, or star gazing late at night, the park’s shoreline offers some of the most picturesque views in the state.



Lake Michigan shoreline near Lakeshore Campground

Camping

Camping at Wilderness State Park is an in-demand and revenue-generating activity that attracts visitors from across the state and region. The park offers a variety of year-round lodging opportunities, including 250 modern camp sites, 6 rustic cabins, and 2 backcountry camp sites, accommodating all types of users. Several of the campground buildings and cabins hold important historic and educational value. The bunkhouse and dining hall area still reflects the architectural signature of its builders, the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) and the Works Progress Administration (WPA). Likewise, the three CCC-built cabins, remotely nestled in the woods, retain the historical aesthetics of the era in which they were constructed.

Trails

Woven throughout Wilderness State Park is a 23-mile network of trails, including 11 miles designated as part of the North Country Trail. This trail provides regional, inter-state, and national trail connections.

The park provides approximately 12 trails, several of which were built by the CCC and WPA during the 1930's. The trails range in difficulty and length and serve hikers, mountain bikers, cross-country skiers, and snowmobilers. Most significantly, the trails in this vast 10,500-acre park offer visitors the chance to experience unique natural resources, and the environment of an undeveloped wilderness area.

Fishing and Hunting

Wilderness State Park's prime location on northern Lake Michigan makes it a popular destination for angling enthusiasts, particularly those seeking to fish for smallmouth bass. Anglers here often employ a variety of fishing methods such as fly fishing and bait fishing for carp and bass, trolling for trout and salmon, and bow fishing for carp. This location is unique in the variety it offers; anglers can enjoy the experience of the Great Lakes sport troll fishery and target lake trout and Chinook salmon in the deeper waters off the park, as well as small boat/shore fishing for smallmouth bass and common carp in and around the islands' shallower waters in the northwestern portion of the park.

Hunting is also a popular recreational activity due to the distinct northern Michigan game found within the park. Coyote, deer, bobcat, black bear, grouse and water fowl help to make the hunting experience at Wilderness State Park memorable.

Natural Areas

Wilderness State Park offers one of the state's most diverse arrays of natural areas. There are four Natural Areas dedicated by the Natural Resources Commission and two Natural Area Registry sites (cooperative agreements with The Nature Conservancy) within the park. Furthermore, the northwestern portion of the park is a designated Environmental Area, while the southern portion is designated as Critical Dunes by the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality, providing additional legal protection to the plants, animals, and natural landscapes in these areas. The Natural Areas within Wilderness State Park provide exceptional educational and historical value for park users, research groups, and nature enthusiasts. In particular, the designation of these areas illustrates the foresight by past nature enthusiasts, researchers, and DNR staff to protect the unique, rare and diverse natural resources of the park for current visitors and generations to come.

Upper Peninsula-Type Ecosystem

While every park has its own distinct ecosystems, Wilderness State Park's boreal (spruce-fir) forests are particularly unique in that they more closely resemble systems found in the Upper Peninsula than the Lower Peninsula. In addition to the boreal forest, the park also contains a large mosaic of exemplary wooded dune and swale, Great Lakes barrens (pine savanna), red pine-white pine (dry-mesic) forest, open dune, and a variety of wetlands such as northern and coastal fens. These ecosystems contain populations of many animals and plants that are part of the traditional image of the northern Great Lakes, including black bear, beaver, bobcat, mink, muskrat, and otter.

Education

Wilderness State Park's abundance of natural resources makes it a popular research and education oasis for universities, research groups, schools, youth groups and the like. Universities and research groups from near and far access the park year-round to study and interpret different areas within their scope of interest. There is great potential to expand upon educational and interpretive outreach at the park through coordination with research and educational institutions and other organizations.

Rare and Protected Species

A high concentration of rare and protected species, such as the piping plover, dwarf lake iris, Pitcher’s thistle, and calypso orchid, have a home at Wilderness State Park. These species are dispersed across the park and its various Natural Areas. They provide significant educational value to park visitors and researchers, particularly the calypso orchid, which is typically found in undisturbed northern and montane forests and near the shores of the Great Lakes. Park management makes every effort to protect these species and educate park visitors on their importance.



A kiosk provides information about the piping plover

3.3 Public Affirmation of Significance Statements

Stakeholder and public input played a critical role in assisting the Planning Team with identifying significant features and opportunities at Wilderness State Park. The feedback they provided via the online survey, the on-site workshops, email and phone, affirmed that the park offers something for every type of user. Comments from survey respondents regarding the significance of the park are provided below.

“We love the campgrounds, and the surrounding beach, and wooded areas.”

“The charm of this park is its ‘wild’ feeling.”

“This park is a gem to have in our state parks system. It could seriously rival some of the national parks if enough resources were allocated.”

“I recognize how ecologically unique the dune/swale complex is at Sturgeon Bay and hope this area remains protected.”

“I have been going to Wilderness State Park for 40 years. I love the camping, fishing, cabins and undeveloped property. Also, everyone that stays there is friendly.”

“My family and I have been visiting the park and staying in the cabins for 25 + years. I value the park very much and have stayed in all the cabins...”

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4. Management Zones

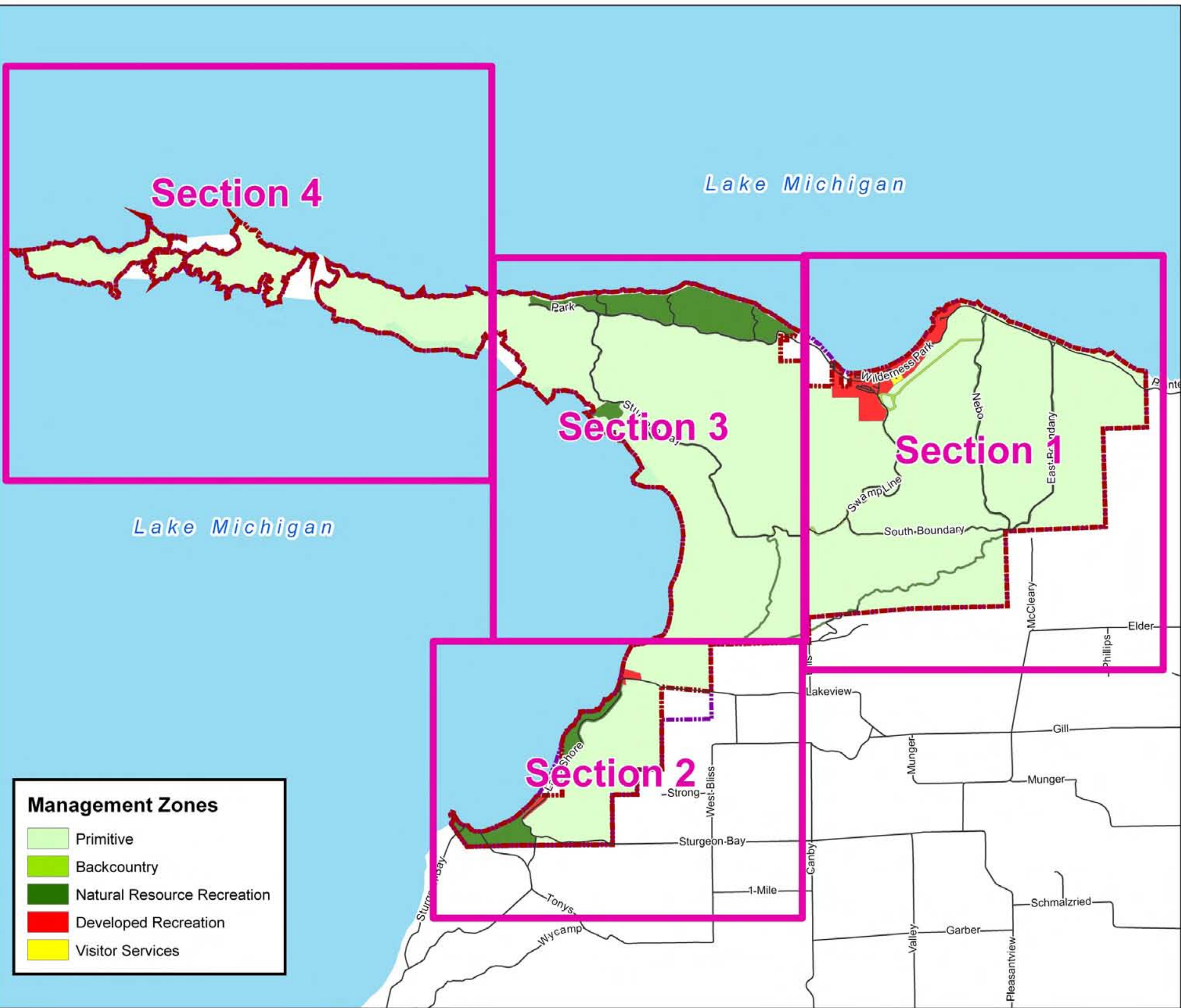
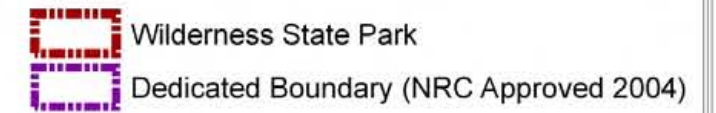
The 20-Year Management Zone Plan was developed in keeping with the park’s significance, identity, and purpose. The primary goal in the development of the management zones is to protect the park’s resources while also preserving the opportunities and features that attract so many visitors to the park each year. From a palette of nine management zones, the Planning Team studied the park and applied zones that best fit, given the significant features of the park. Management zones describe a variety of activities that **may be** appropriate within the zone. The resource condition, visitor experience, and development level varies in each zone, as indicated in the figure below. The 10,512-acre Wilderness State Park was divided into the following five zones: 1) Primitive Zone; 2) Backcountry Zone; 3) Natural Resource Recreation Zone; 4) Developed Recreation Zone; 5) Visitor Services Zone.

Management Zone	Resource Condition	Visitor Experience	Development Level
Ecologically Sensitive Enhance and protect the native community and natural resource process over and above any other uses that might be contemplated	Pristine Native species and natural processes maintained, restored and protected	Restricted None, unless classified as a “Seasonal Zone”	None No development, except as needed for resource protection
Primitive Attain and maintain a high quality natural resource condition			
Backcountry Maintain natural character while allowing for increased visitor use			
Cultural Landscape The zone addresses evidence and interpretation of historic and cultural resources			
Scenic Protect and preserve aesthetic qualities			
Natural Resource Recreation Protect natural resources while allowing medium to high density active recreation			
Developed Recreation Encourage active recreation with high density of use in areas not designated for natural resource significance			
Visitor Services Develop areas for program administration and operation			

The 2004 dedicated boundary approved by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) includes private inholdings along the northern shoreline, the Bliss Township Park property on Sturgeon Bay and a 66 acre parcel south of Lakeview Road on the south-east boundary of the park. A boundary review undertaken in 2012 (but not yet approved) would remove the inholdings. The planning team supports this change as the inholdings include established residencies which are unlikely to come into public ownership. The proposed boundary includes land which should remain in public ownership or be considered for future public purposes should it come available. A boundary plan is important as it provides a guide to Department staff and private land owners that there is a state interest to acquire this land for future public benefit on a willing-seller basis.

Wilderness State Park Management Zones

Bliss, Cross Village and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



Management Zones

- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Natural Resource Recreation
- Developed Recreation
- Visitor Services













Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created October 17, 2013

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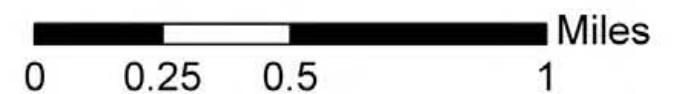
Wilderness State Park Management Zones Section 1

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



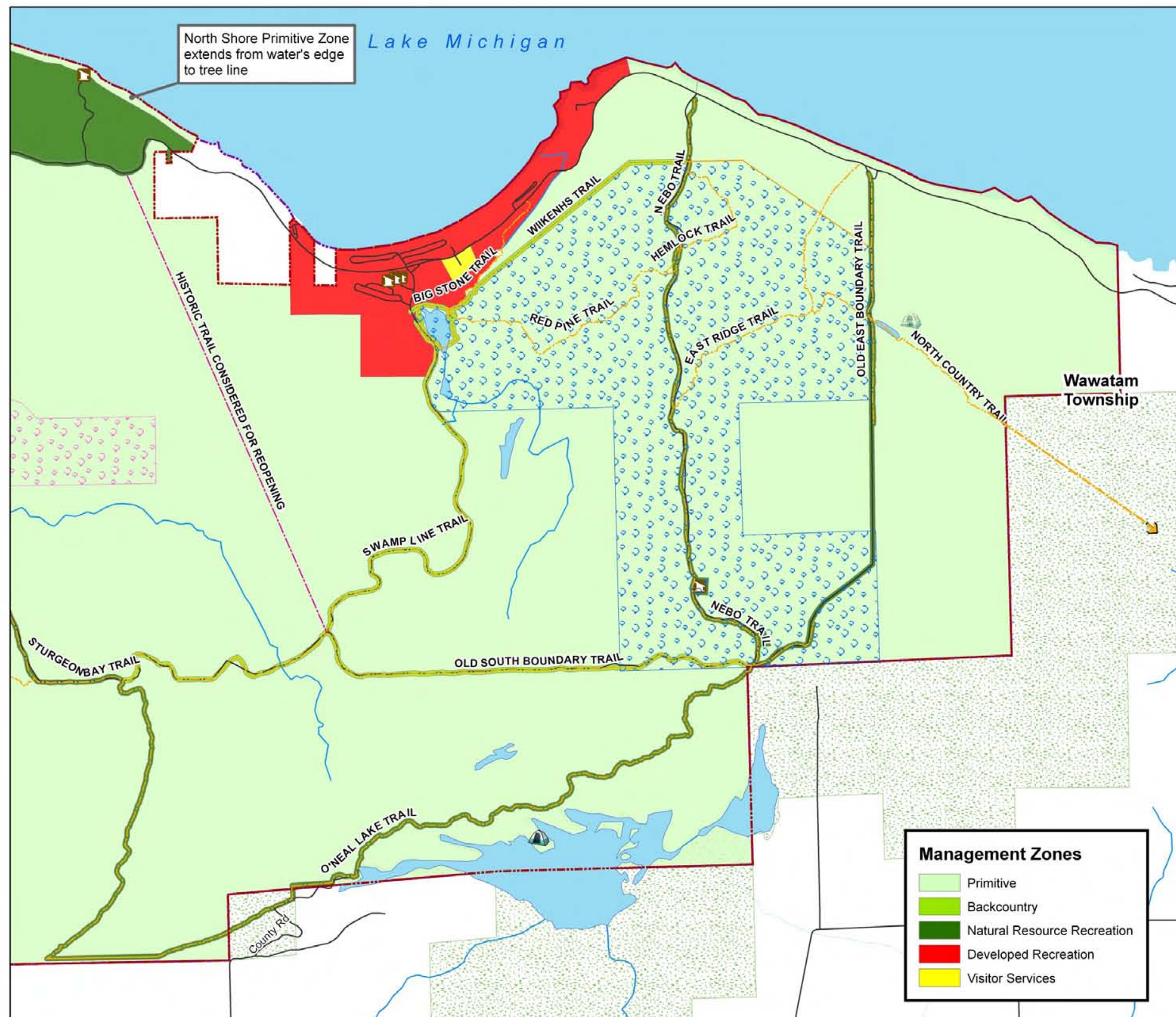
-  Wilderness State Park
-  Dedicated Boundary (NRC Approved 2004)
-  Mackinaw State Forest
-  Natural Area Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
-  Nature Study Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
-  Trails*
-  Historic Trail Site
-  Rustic Cabin
-  Backcountry Camp Site
-  Trail Continues

* All trail buffers are 50 feet wide.



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 25, 2013



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Management Zones

- Primitive
- Backcountry
- Natural Resource Recreation
- Developed Recreation
- Visitor Services

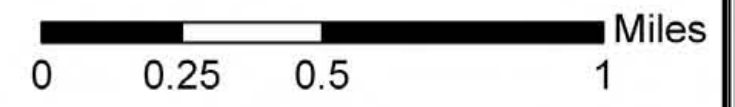
Wilderness State Park Management Zones

Section 2
Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



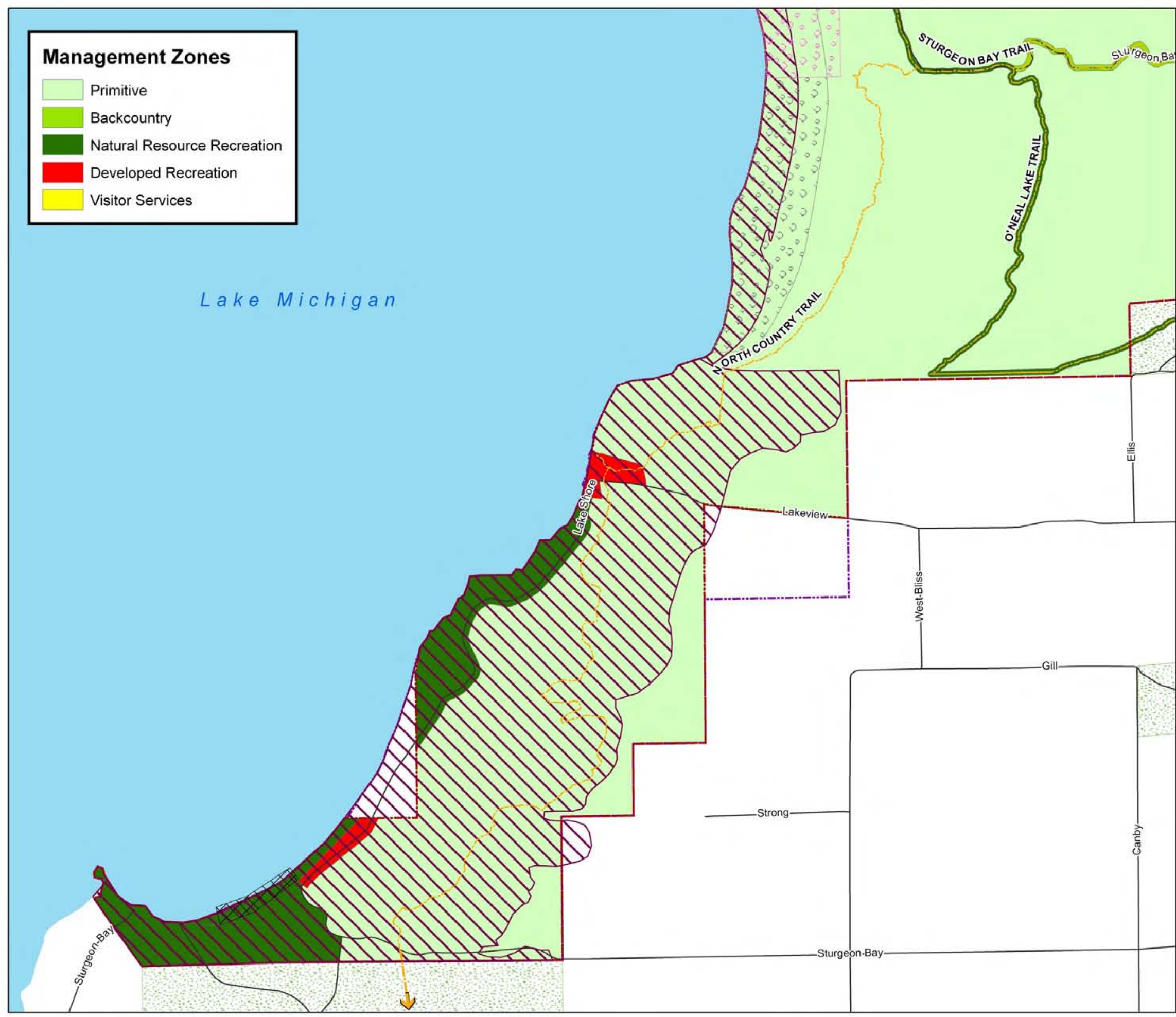
- Wilderness State Park
- Dedicated Boundary (NRC Approved 2004)
- Mackinaw State Forest
- Natural Area Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
- TNC Natural Areas Registry
- High Risk Erosion Area
- Critical Dunes
- Rustic Cabin
- Trails*
- Trail Continues

*All trail buffer zones are 50 feet wide.



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 25, 2013



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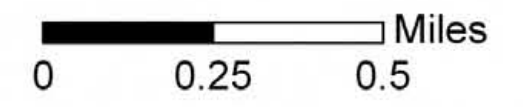
Wilderness State Park Management Zones Section 3

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



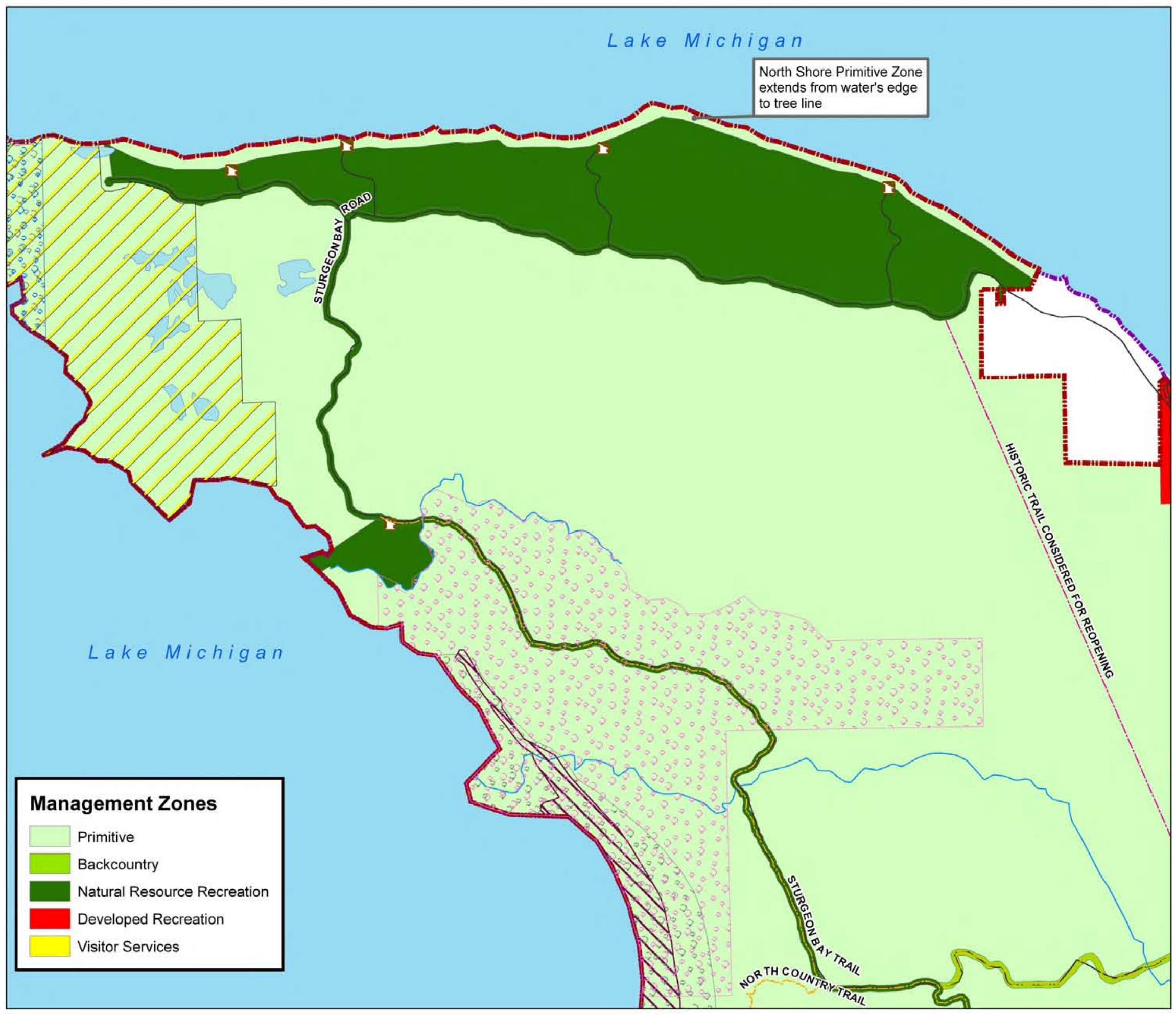
- Wilderness State Park
- Dedicated Boundary (NRC Approved 2004)
- Natural Area Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
- Nature Study Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
- TNC Natural Areas Registry
- Critical Dunes
- Coastal Environmental Area
- Rustic Cabin
- Trails*
- Historic Trail Site

* All trail buffers are 50 feet wide.



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 25, 2013



- Management Zones**
- Primitive
 - Backcountry
 - Natural Resource Recreation
 - Developed Recreation
 - Visitor Services

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Wilderness State Park Management Zones

Section 4

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



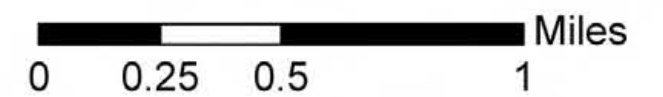
-  Wilderness State Park
-  Dedicated Boundary (NRC Approved 2004)
-  Natural Area Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
-  Nature Study Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
-  Coastal Environmental Area

Lake Michigan

Lake Michigan

Management Zones

-  Primitive
-  Backcountry
-  Natural Resource Recreation
-  Developed Recreation
-  Visitor Services



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 25, 2013

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4.1 Primitive Zone

Approximately 90% (9,460 acres) of Wilderness State Park is designated Primitive Zone. This zone preserves and protects the unique exemplary natural communities found in this park, including piping plover nesting areas and habitat along the shoreline. The zone includes the four dedicated Natural Areas, two Natural Area Registry sites, the designated Environmental Area, as well as the Critical Dunes area. Only foot traffic would be allowed in this zone to ensure that the natural features are not damaged or compromised by recreation.



A view of Waugoshance Point

Natural Resources

This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management allowed only where necessary to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Protection of native species (including the piping plover) and natural processes would take precedence over visitor accommodation.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are several historic resources within this zone which have not been identified to protect them from unauthorized collecting of artifacts.

Recreation Opportunities

With the focus of this zone being preservation, protection and enhancement of the natural communities present within the zone, recreational opportunities are limited to low-intensity, self-reliant (no bicycle or equestrian) uses. Low-intensity activities that typically occur in this zone are hiking, hunting/trapping, and nature observation. The North Country Trail passes through this zone. Higher-level use trails that cross through the Primitive Zone are buffered with a 50-foot wide Backcountry or Natural Resource Recreation Zone designation in recognition that they permit more intensive activity, while limiting the area where it is permitted.

Education Opportunities

The significance of the natural habitat in this zone presents a tremendous educational opportunity. Information can be relayed through the use of kiosks and interpretive signage at trailheads and low frequency interpretive signage along trails and at other appropriate locations, along with new media for self-guided tours and the like. Signage within the zone will be mindful of the primitive zone designation.

Visitor Experience

Visitor experience will reflect a high degree of natural feel, a sense of solitude, and a lack of man-made improvements. Overall, there will be relatively low interaction with other visitors.

Management Focus

Management will focus on maintaining the low-impact character of the zone, with emphasis on natural resource quality. Routine maintenance would be provided and care will be taken to eliminate any detrimental impacts such as incursion of invasive species.

Development

The focus is to maintain as little evidence of human activity as possible. Trail improvements will be considered where natural resources are not compromised.

4.2 Backcountry Zone

Less than 1% of land within Wilderness State Park is designated Backcountry Zone. Much of the park's trail system has a 50-foot wide Backcountry Zone buffer to allow for moderate levels of non-motorized active recreation uses including mountain biking, hiking, nature observation, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing. The zone emphasizes resource quality, but allows for modification of the landscape to accommodate recreational use.

Natural Resources

This zone will reflect natural processes, with vegetative management only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Within the Backcountry Zone, natural resources may be modified slightly to support visitor use, but the tolerance for natural resource impacts is low.

Historic/Cultural Resources

There are no known historic or cultural resources within the Backcountry Zone.

Recreational Opportunities

Moderate levels of recreation are allowed in the Backcountry Zone, provided the activities are compatible with the natural character. Non-motorized outdoor activities could be permitted, including hiking, backpacking, canoeing, kayaking, mountain biking, nature observation, hunting/trapping, cross-country skiing, and snowshoeing.

Education Opportunities

The ecological significance of the resources in the park presents a tremendous educational opportunity. Information can be relayed through the use of kiosks at trailheads and interpretive signage along trails and other appropriate locations. The Michigan State Park Explorer Program (also known as the Outdoor Explorer Program) offers campers and day visitors the opportunity to learn about a wide range of topics including forests, insects, and pond studies.

Visitor Experience

A moderate level of visitor encounters can be accommodated in the Backcountry Zone. Visitors will engage in self-reliant, non-motorized outdoor activities that may require a fairly high time commitment. Low noise tolerance and low interaction with others can be expected.

Management Focus

Management will focus on maintaining the low-impact character of the zone, with emphasis on natural resource quality. Routine maintenance, including maintenance for trails or access routes, will be provided. Care will be taken to eliminate any detrimental impacts such as incursion of invasive species.

Development

A low level of development is allowed to support visitor access to activities offered in the zone. Development would be unobtrusive and blend in with the natural environment.



A variety of winter recreational activities are permitted along the Backcountry trails

4.3 Natural Resource Recreation Zone

Approximately 6.9% (725 acres) of Wilderness State Park is zoned Natural Resource Recreation Zone. This zone provides for active recreation with medium to high density of use conducted in natural areas. The north shore cabins, Sturgeon Cabin, and areas along the coast of Sturgeon Bay are designated Natural Resource Recreation. Additionally, trails within the park that permit snowmobiling, such as segments of the Sturgeon Bay Trail and O’Neal Lake Trail, have a 50-foot wide Natural Resource Recreation buffer, 25 feet either side of center line. While the zone designation emphasizes resource protection, landscape modification is permitted to allow for moderate interaction and recreation, as well as more intensively used trail corridors.



Big Stone Bay Cabin located along the North Shore

Natural Resources

This zone reflects natural processes, with vegetative management only allowed to restore and maintain natural ecological structure and processes (such as removing of invasive species), to address hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. Vegetation may also be managed to enhance the views of the zone.

Historic / Cultural Resources

Cultural resources would be preserved, rehabilitated or removed. Historic structures could be adaptively used for operational uses or educational purposes.

Recreational Opportunities

Moderate to high levels of recreation compatible with natural character of the zone.

Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage may be used at key viewing points, trailheads, or observation area(s). There may be opportunities for off-site interpretation as well.

Visitor Experience

Visitors engaged in outdoor activities in diverse land and water natural settings for recreation and education. Snowmobiling permitted on designated routes. Variable time commitment, challenge and adventure. Moderate noise tolerance and interaction with DNR staff. Moderate visitor encounters accommodated.

Management Focus

Management focuses on maintaining the use of the zone appropriate to the PRD’s mission. Public safety, protection of resources, and universal access are management priorities.

Development

A moderate level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include walkways and parking, trails, benches, cabins, and picnic tables. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities and protect natural resources.

Trail Re-Routes

If a problem arises on a section of a trail buffered Backcountry Zone or Natural Resource Recreation Zone, park management will make every effort to resolve the issue within the 50-foot buffer area. If a re-route is unavoidable, it will be laid out in consultation with the Stewardship Unit and a buffer (no wider than 50 feet) will be applied to the re-route.

4.4 Developed Recreation Zone

Approximately 2.1% (220 acres) of Wilderness State Park is designated Developed Recreation. This zone allows active recreation with high density of use conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance. The Developed Recreation Zone includes Lakeshore and Pines campgrounds as well as parking areas along the coast of Sturgeon Bay. Any development along the coast of Sturgeon Bay will be mindful of the surrounding sensitive areas and natural resources.



Camping is a popular activity in this zone

Natural Resources

Vegetative management in this zone will address hazard trees, invasive species, and pests and disease, and will also be allowed for purposes of facilitating development and recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape. Natural resources are actively managed and modified to support visitor activities. Protected species of plants are known to occur in this zone, which will be protected in the context of development activities.

Historic/Cultural Resources

Resources in this zone could be preserved, interpreted, adapted or rehabilitated. Non-utilized or non-stabilized structures could be removed.

Recreational Opportunities

High levels of recreation in a highly structured environment are found in this zone. Visitors engage in recreation activities in diverse and modified land and water settings: hiking, modern camping, bicycling, boating, kiteboarding, fishing, nature observation, day-use beach, and other day-use activities.

Education Opportunities

Interpretive signage and information could be provided at the campground, registration building, trailheads, and/or along trails and overlooks.

Visitor Experience

A high level of visitor encounters can be accommodated. Activities for visitors to engage in could offer a variable time commitment, challenge and adventure. Visitor encounters at designated points along the shoreline, along the trails, and in the campgrounds. Moderate noise tolerance and moderate to high interaction with others can be expected.

Management Focus

Management focuses on maintaining the use of the zone appropriate to the PRD's mission and to promote and support a diversity of facilities and activities. Public safety, protection of resources, and universal access are management priorities.

Development

A high level of development of facilities for support of visitor activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include restrooms, concrete/asphalt/gravel walkways and parking, trails, bike racks, benches, picnic tables, campsites, cabins and shelters for recreation and educational opportunities. Site hardening is allowed as necessary to facilitate activities, protect natural resources, and provide universal access.

4.5 Visitor Services Zone

Less than 1% of Wilderness State Park is designated Visitor Services Zone. The zone encompasses the developed areas required for program administration and operations. It includes offices, contact stations, maintenance facilities and all related land required to conduct the business of running a state park. The Visitor Services zone in Wilderness State Park includes the welcome center and the sewage treatment facility.

Natural Resources

Natural resources are actively managed and modified to support administrative and support activities. Vegetative management is allowed (primarily tree removal for safety).

Historic/Cultural Resources

Resources in this zone could be preserved, adapted or rehabilitated to support administrative and support activities.

Recreational Opportunities

There are no recreational activities provided in the Visitor Services zone.

Education Opportunities

Person to person contact at park headquarters for general information; informational kiosk may be available.

Visitor Experience

Business and information only. High noise tolerance and moderate to high interaction with others can be expected.

Management Focus

Management focuses on the business of running the park, appropriate facilities for staff, employee safety. Universal access will be provided to the offices.

Development

A high level of development of facilities for support of administrative and management activities is permitted in this zone. Examples of development include office space, meeting rooms, employee locker room, eating area, shop space, and storage space.



Park headquarters at Wilderness State Park

5. 10-Year Action Goals Plan

The Planning Team has developed 10-Year Action Goals that it believes are necessary to guide management and development within the five designated management zones in order to achieve the desired user experience. For each management zone in the plan, action goals are recommended that address the following categories:

- Natural Resources
- Historic/Cultural Resources
- Recreation Opportunities
- Education/Interpretation Opportunities
- Management Focus
- Development

Management Plans do not guarantee future PRD funding to achieve them. PRD will seek internal funding, alternative funding sources, partnerships and other potential mechanisms for implementing the desired future conditions defined in this plan.



Deer can be seen at the park year-round



Park Manager, Burr Mitchell, leads the Planning Team on a park tour



The 4th of July Bike Festival is a popular event



O'Neal Lake provides habitat to both land and water species

General Action Goals

Many of the 10-Year Action Goals for Wilderness State Park are general in nature and apply within all of the management zones. These often deal with park-wide issues, such as invasive species control, universal access, developing Stewardship, Wildlife and Emergency plans, or marketing the park's many recreational opportunities to a wider audience of potential users. Many of the overall maintenance and operational issues of operating a state park also result in the need for actions across all zone boundaries, such as law enforcement.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Natural Resources			
1. Create a Stewardship Plan	3-5 Years	Regional Planner District Supervisor Stewardship Park Manager	Stewardship Ecologist
2. Implement Stewardship Plan for the park	On-going	Stewardship Park Manager	Park Manager Stewardship
3. Implement the specific provisions of the Biodiversity Stewardship Plan (BSP)	On Hold	Stewardship Volunteers Park Manager	Stewardship Restoration Specialist
4. Update Natural Features Inventory	On-going	Stewardship Volunteers	Stewardship
5. Preserve the quality of the known exemplary natural communities	On-going	Stewardship Wildlife Park Manager	Stewardship
6. Clarify boundaries of designated Natural Areas	1 Year	Stewardship Regional Planner Park Manager	Stewardship
7. Nominate appropriate wilderness/natural area(s) under Wilderness and Natural Areas Act (recommend recinding existing Natural Resource Commission dedications)	3 Years	Stewardship Park Manager DNR Legal	Stewardship
8. Implement invasive species control, with a strong emphasis on early detection and rapid response. Monitor roads, trails, and any new development sites for possible invasive species introductions.	On-going	Park Manager Stewardship Fisheries	Park Manager
Historic/Cultural Resources			
1. Complete the cultural resources survey of the park for interpretation, protection and preservation	5 Years	Stewardship SHPO	Cultural Resource Analyst
2. Develop and conduct monitoring program for archaeological resources	On-going	Park Manager Stewardship SHPO	Cultural Resource Analyst Office of State Archaeologist
3. Maintain historic characteristics of historic structures consistent with Secretary of Interior Guidelines	On-going	Stewardship SHPO Regional Planner Park Manager	Cultural Resource Analyst Park Manager
4. Protect archaeological/cultural resources identified by the inventory	On-going	Stewardship SHPO Regional Planner Park Manager	Cultural Resource Analyst Park Manager
5. Review all proposed earthwork activities for potential impact on historic/cultural resources	On-going	Regional Planner Stewardship SHPO	Cultural Resource Analyst Office of State Archaeologist

General Action Goals			
Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Recreation Opportunities			
1. Identify opportunities to improve trail connectivity between the park and local community to support the mutual goals of PRD and the local partners	2 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner Local Recreation Partners	Regional Planner
2. Park Manager will continue to utilize marketing resources (ex: local paper) to build relationships within surrounding community	2 Years	Park Manager Local Recreation Partners	Park Manager
3. Evaluate gaps and closed historical segments of the park's hiking trail network for possible connection/reopening	5 Years	Regional Planner Park Manager	Park Manager
4. Work with partners to support safe water trail opportunities	3 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner Local Recreation Partners Unit Supervisor Stewardship	Park Manager
5. Evaluate and identify ecotourism opportunities	On-going	Park Manager Marketing & Outreach Recreation Programmer	Park Manager
6. Evaluate existing trails for appropriate use	On-going	Regional Planner Park Manager	Park Manager
7. Evaluate trails and rate level of difficulty	2 Years	Park Manager	Park Manager
Education/Interpretation Opportunities			
1. Develop specific interpretation and education opportunities	On-going	Park Manager Stewardship Marketing & Outreach	Park Manager Marketing & Outreach
2. Develop database from research project user permits to be shared with proposed new research projects	2 Years	Park Manager Stewardship Marketing & Outreach	Park Manager
3. Utilize variety of traditional and new media, including audio and visual technologies, podcasts, and other emerging technologies for interpretation	On-going	Park Manager Marketing & Outreach	Park Manager Marketing & Outreach

General Action Goals

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Management Focus			
1. Explore feasibility of land acquisition within the new proposed boundary	On-going	Park Manager Lands Manager Stewardship	Lands Manager
2. Update Wildfire Plan and Emergency Plan	Completed with Annual Update	Park Manager Stewardship	Park Manager
3. Continue to explore and develop on-going revenue generating opportunities that are sustainable	On-going	Park Manager Marketing & Outreach	Park Manager
4. Advocate for appropriate funding for maintenance of historic structures	On-going	Stewardship Regional Planner Park Manager District Supervisor	Park Manager
5. Implement high-speed internet access at headquarters and throughout both campgrounds	2 Years	Park Manager DTMB District Supervisor	Park Manager
6. Advocate for appropriate funding for stewardship needs	On-going	Stewardship Regional Planner Park Manager District Supervisor	Stewardship
7. Evaluate park boundary with adjacent land administrators	On-going	Lands Manager Regional Planner Park Manager Local Administrators	Lands Manager
8. Continue to promote and enhance partnerships with friends groups, stakeholders, universities, research groups and the like	On-going	Park Manager Volunteers Friends of WSP Stewardship Universities/Researchers	Park Manager
9. Continue to incorporate Dark Skies designation into all aspects of park planning, management and development	On-going	Regional Planner Marketing & Outreach Park Manager	Park Manager
10. Define park boundaries with appropriate markers	5 Years	Lands Manager Park Manager	Park Manager
11. Conduct assessment to improve parking and access at Sturgeon Bay	2 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Park Manager
Development			
1. Implement recommendations of parking assessment to improve parking/access within Sturgeon Bay	5-10 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Park Manager
2. Evaluate opportunities to improve barrier-free access throughout the park	On-going Annually	Park Manager	Park Manager
3. Implement recommendations for trail connectivity in cooperation with local partners	5-10 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner Local Recreation Partners	Park Manager

Primitive Zone

The Primitive Zone emphasizes the natural resources. It is managed to allow only dispersed, low frequency and low impact recreational use in the zone. Maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or users are allowed. For this reason, native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation. Furthermore, the administrative regulations and standards associated with the Critical Dunes, Coastal Environmental Area, and designated Natural Areas should be recognized. The following 10-Year Action Goals propose only very low levels of development, in order to protect sensitive resources.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Natural Resources			
1. Inspect for piping plover nesting sites on the beach to ensure resource protection	On-going (Seasonal)	Park Manager Stewardship Volunteers US Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife	Park Manager US Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife
Recreation Opportunities			
1. Evaluate opportunities for new backcountry camping sites including water trail sites	2-4 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner Stewardship	Park Manager
Education/Interpretation Opportunities			
1. Identify opportunities (including technological) for interpretation of the plovers and their habitat	On-Going (Seasonal)	Park Manager Stewardship Volunteers	Park Manager
Management Focus			
1. Evaluate O'Neal Lake and the dam for future management and division responsibility	2 Years	Fisheries Wildlife District Supervisor Park Manager	Wildlife
2. Monitor and protect piping plover and their nesting sites through a variety of methods (i.e. exclosures)	On-going (Seasonal)	Park Manager Stewardship Volunteers US Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife	Park Manager US Fish & Wildlife Service Wildlife
3. Continue to implement all administrative regulations for Critical Dunes and environmental areas	On-Going	Park Manager Stewardship Emmet County DEQ	Park Manager

Backcountry Zone

The character of the Backcountry zone is intended to be natural, with minimal evidence of human impact. Several of the trails at Wilderness State Park are buffered as Backcountry Zone in recognition of the fact that these trails are used more intensively than what is permitted in the Primitive Zone. Nonetheless, Backcountry Zone trails need to be managed to ensure the natural resources are protected and the natural feel is maintained. Tolerance for natural resource impacts is low in the Backcountry zone and is reflected in the 10-year Action Goals for this zone.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Development			
1. Evaluate conditions of bridges on trails and repair/replace consistent with the zone	3-5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Park Manager

Natural Resource Recreation Zone

Active recreation, at medium to high density of use, conducted in a natural setting is the hallmark of the Natural Resource Recreation zone. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, higher levels of use are allowed. Vegetation may be managed to facilitate recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape, as well as to address such things as hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. The 10-year Action Goals are intended to promote moderate to high levels of diverse recreation opportunities compatible with natural character of the zone. At Wilderness State Park, a Natural Resource Recreation buffer is applied to designated trails allowing higher level use (ex: snowmobiling) as well as to areas of the park where rustic cabins are located.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Natural Resources			
1. Continue to follow regulations of the High Risk Erosion Area	On-going	Park Manager Wildlife Stewardship Emmet County/DEQ	Park Manager
Management Focus			
1. Create Development Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay area	3-5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Regional Planner
Development			
1. Evaluate opportunity for additional rustic cabins and backcountry sites including water trail sites	3-5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Park Manager
2. Evaluate condition of bridges on trails and repair/replace consistent with the zone	3-5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Park Manager

Developed Recreation Zone

Active recreation with high density of use, conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance, is characteristic of the Developed Recreation Zone. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced where possible. Wilderness State Park's primary day-use and camping areas and swimming beaches are located in this zone. The 10-Year Action Goals direct management decisions and development projects designed to promote and support these diverse visitor activities.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
Recreation Opportunities			
1. Explore possibilities for creating a safe Great Lakes boating access area within the park	5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner District Supervisor	Regional Planner
Historic/Cultural Resources			
1. Work with partners to restore Wellhouse consistent with Secretary of Interior Guidelines and repurpose for recreation use	5 Years	Stewardship Park Manager	Park Manager
Education/Interpretation Opportunities			
1. Explore opportunity to create year-round interpretive program	1-2 Years	Marketing & Outreach Park Manager	Marketing & Outreach
Management Focus			
1. Create Development Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay area	3-5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner	Regional Planner
Development			
1. Implement Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay	5-10 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner District Supervisor	Park Manager
2. Implement Lake Shore Campground Redevelopment Plan	5 Years	Park Manager Regional Planner District Supervisor	Park Manager
3. Repurpose the Dining Hall as outreach center	10 Years	Marketing & Outreach Park Manager Stewardship	Park Manager
4. Restore Pines Campground latrines, and west lakeshore kiosk	5 Years	Park Manager	Park Manager

Visitor Service Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for operations. It includes maintenance facilities with the associated land required to conduct the business of running Wilderness State Park.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Program Input From	Responsible Program Position
1. Upgrade maintenance areas on an as needed basis	On-going	Park Manager	Park Manager
2. Implement high-speed internet access at park headquarters	2 Years	Park Manager DTMB District Supervisor	Park Manager

Appendix A – Supporting Analysis

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A.1 PARK SETTING

Park Profile

Area: 10,512 acres
County: Emmet County
Township: Bliss Township, Cross Village,
Wawatam
Latitude: 45°44'03"N
Longitude: 84°54'10"W

Address: 903 Wilderness Park Drive
Carp Lake, MI 49718
Phone #: (231) 436-5381

Location & Community

Located 11 miles west of Mackinaw City on the northern tip of the Lower Peninsula in Emmet County, Wilderness State Park offers year-round recreation within its immense boundaries. Visitors can observe and interact with nature, take advantage of 26 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline, and truly have an “up north” experience.



The Lakeshore and the Pines are the park’s two modern campgrounds. Additional lodging is provided by 5 rustic cabins located along the Lake Michigan shoreline, 1 rustic cabin in the densely forested interior of the park and 3 rustic bunkhouses located within the Pines campground. There are approximately 23 miles of trails woven throughout the park that offer a variety of recreational opportunities for all types of users, including the North Country Trail, which provides a connection to the inter-state and national trail system. Furthermore, the park’s designated natural areas, critical and historical sand dunes, and rare and protected species including the piping plover, dwarf lake iris and calypso orchid, make it a valuable site for research and education purposes.

Despite its popular coastal towns, Emmet County remains predominantly rural. The County experienced a modest 4% growth over the past decade. Emmet County was originally settled by fishermen and largely developed as a resort community. Increased production of the lumber industry fueled growth and development, especially along the shores of Lake Michigan. These lakeshore developments eventually led to an increased interest in the resort industry in the region. The county now offers a unique variety of coastal towns that attract visitors from across the state.

Wilderness State Park Location Map

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



- mcd_Emmet_alt
- Wilderness State Park
- Dedicated Boundary Approved by the NRC
- Lakes and Ponds
- Rivers and Stream
- Intermittent Streams and Drains
- Roads

Miles
0 0.5 1 2



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CLEAR AND CONNECTED

Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 12, 2013



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A.2 DEMOGRAPHICS

With its prime location along Great Lakes waterways, Emmet County was discovered early by European settlers and subsequently became a point of control for the Upper Great Lakes Territory. Prior to this discovery, the area was occupied by various native tribes including the Ottawa, who first recorded contact with European settlers in 1615. Settlement in the area began in 1715 with the construction of Fort Michilimackinac. Despite French and British control over the area over the next century, Indian populations continued to thrive. Emmet County was formed in 1840 and originally called Tonedegana County. It was renamed Emmet in 1843. Its first county government was formed in 1853.

2010 U.S. Census Data for Emmet County

People QuickFacts	Emmet County	Michigan
Population, 2000	31,437	
Population, 2010	32,694	9,883,640
Persons under 5 years	5.0%	5.9%
Persons under 18 years	22.6%	23.2%
Persons 65 years and over	16.6%	14.1%
White persons	92.9%	80.2%
Black persons	0.7%	14.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	3.7%	0.7%
Asian persons	0.6%	2.5%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander persons, percent	Z	Z
Persons reporting two or more races	2.2%	2.1%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino Origin	1.4%	4.5%
White persons not Hispanic	91.9%	76.4%
Language other than English spoken at home	3.5%	9.0%
High school graduate or higher, percent of persons age 25+	92.7%	88.4%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons age 25+,	29.6%	25.3%
Veterans	2,828	711,613
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+	25.4	23.9
Total housing units	21,304	4,525,480
Housing units in multi-unit structures, percent	19.2%	18.1%
Occupied Housing Units	13,601	3,825,182
Seasonal Housing	27.5%	
Average Household Size	2.38	2.53
Median household income	\$52,762	\$48,669
Persons below poverty level, percent	10.6%	15.7%

Geography QuickFacts	Emmet County	Michigan
Land area in square miles	467.49	56,538.90
Persons per square mile	69.9	174.8
FIPS Code	047	26
Metropolitan or Micropolitan Statistical Area	None	

Source: 2010 US Census and American Fact Finder

A.3 HISTORY OF WILDERNESS STATE PARK

Although many historians believe that there has never been an Indian settlement on the land of Wilderness State Park, the land was extensively used by tribes including the Ottawa for hunting, fishing, gathering, overnight encampments, and at times a place of war. Historical evidence shows the presence of a nearby Ottawa Indian Village of Waganakisi, also known as L'Arbre Croche by white explorers. Waganakisi was located between what is now Cross Village and Harbor Springs. Ottawa traditions describe a war waged against the Mascoutens, the tribe originally occupying the area of L'Arbre Croche, resulting in Ottawa possession of the land.

From 1634 and 1761, the French utilized the land now known as Wilderness State Park for trapping along the fur trade route. The French lost control of the area during the French and Indian War, culminating in the takeover of Fort Michilimackinac, which was relinquished to the British.

The 1800's: Settlers Arrive

White settlers began coming to the area during the 1840's. Enterprises of varying degrees were developed including coopers shops, mercantile stores, commercial fishing, real estate, schools, and postal services. In 1855, Father John Bernard Weikamp came to Cross Village and established a charitable and religious society of St. Francis. The institution prospered.

During the 1870's, the lumbering industry was developed in the area, dominating for the next 35-40 years. Several lumber companies logged the lands within the boundaries of what is now Wilderness State Park. Lumbering of the park ended in 1917. Between severe local fires and lumbering operations, the lands of Wilderness State Park were nearly completely deforested. Subsequently, the denuded lands became useless to the landowners.

Throughout the late 1800's, a few hardy settlers were scattered within the park area: The Laways at Big Stone Bay, Brewer's Cabin on the westward site of the Straits; O'Neal's camp on Big Sucker Creek; Parmerter's Cabin along Bliss Trail, and; Hunt's Camp and Nelson's camp to the east. These private holdings slowly transferred to the State through purchase and land exchange. In 1896, some of the land of Wilderness State Park was purchased or acquired through tax reversion by the state then placed under the administration of the Game Division of the Department of Conservation as a game refuge. Approximately 1,488 acres of land were reverted to the state for the nonpayment of taxes.

Early 1900's: Establishment of Wilderness State Park

In 1909, another 813 acres were reverted for tax nonpayment. A house and outbuildings were constructed in 1921 to house resident manager, Frank Lloyd. In 1922, the land became officially known as the "Emmet State Game Refuge" and Irish Saben was placed in charge as resident manager. The land was set aside as a breeding ground for game birds and other animals. In 1927, the game reserve was placed under the administration of the Parks Division and officially became known as Wilderness State Park.

Six years later, in 1933, Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) established a camp on the hill where the present outdoor center stands. Approximately 16 structures were erected. Additionally, the CCC was responsible for the construction of over eight miles of trails, installation of a public campground and the creation of the four acre pond, Goose Pond. The CCC camp was active until June, 1936. In 1937, Cap's Cabin, a trail cabin, was destroyed in a fire shortly after being constructed.

From 1937 thru 1946, the Works Progress Administration (WPA) began working within the park. Despite original plans for the development of many buildings, the WPA completed several park projects: constructed 3 log dormitories at the outdoor center; developed the 15 acres of land previously cleared by the CCC into a campground, and; constructed a stone and log toilet building.

During WWII (1941-1945), the old CCC camp was taken over by the U.S. Navy, and the western portion of the park is deemed off limits to civilians. As a base of operations, the Point was used for target practice and experimentation with radio controlled aircraft. Evidence of these military usages can still be seen throughout the park including bullet holes in the Waugoshance Point Lighthouse. In 1947, the Conservation Commission established a game refuge within Wilderness State Park. Hunting and trapping became prohibited within its boundaries. In 1949, the CCC camp became a minimum security work camp. During the next several years, Department of Corrections inmates worked on projects throughout the park. Construction of the manager's residence began in 1950. The house is presently used as the headquarters building. A saw mill was also erected in 1950, later to be decommissioned in 1957. Also, the Mt. Nebo Lookout Tower was deemed unsafe and dismantled.

1950's – Present Day: Ongoing Land Acquisition and Park Enhancements

On April 19, 1951 four areas were dedicated by the Conservation Commission (now the Natural Resources Commission) as natural areas: Crane Island Natural Area Preserve, Sturgeon Bay-Sucker Creeks Natural Area Preserve, Waugoshance Point Nature Study Preserve, Big Stone-Cecil Bay Nature Study Preserve. A building was erected one mile west of the manager's residence by Big Stone Creek which served to house the manager and family, park headquarters, garage, and shop space.

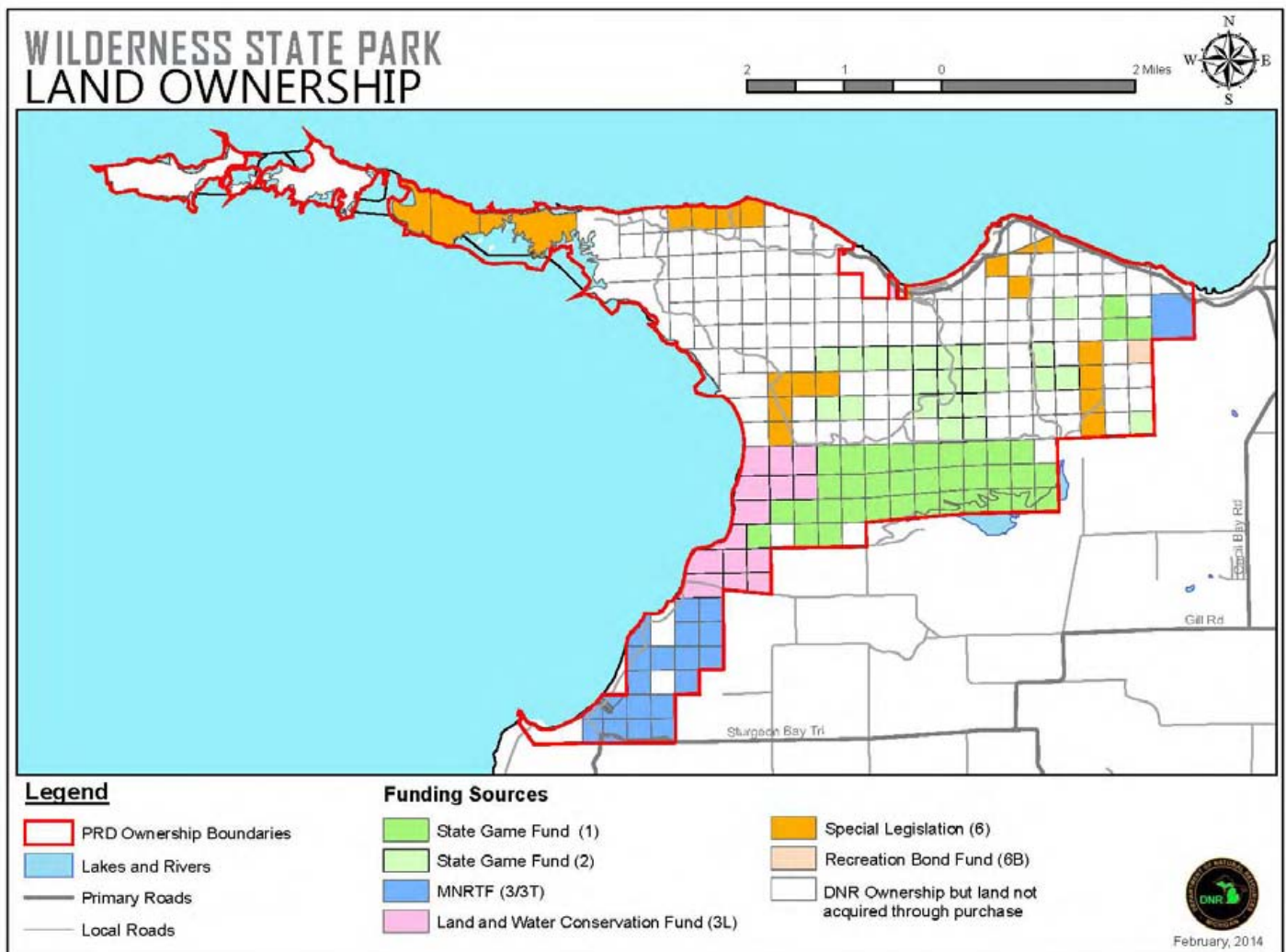
During the 1950's and 1960's many park enhancements were made including the following: 1) the West Lakeshore Campground and toilet building was constructed; 2) the new corrections camp, known as Camp Pellston, was opened, while the former corrections camp on the hill was reopened to the public; 3) construction of the log Dining Hall was completed; 4) a third campground, known as the East Lakeshore Campground, was developed; 5) improvements were made to hiking trails, and; 6) foot bridges, the dam at Big Stone Pond, and a sanitation station were constructed. During the late 1960's, the first permanent Park Interpreter came to the park. A building was moved from the picnic area to a location near the outdoor center and remodeled to include educational materials. In 1972, construction of the amphitheater was completed and hosts interpretive programs.

A Master Plan for Wilderness State Park was finalized and accepted on August 9, 1974. Shortly after, the outdoor center counselors' quarters, the last remaining building of the original CCC camp was removed and a 440 acre parcel of land, known as the Starr tract, was purchased for \$400,000. The land bordered the southwest corner of the park and contained extensive prized Lake Michigan shoreline. In 1976 the state purchased Whispering Waters, a resort within the LaWay Settlement. The remainder of the LaWay Settlement is the only remaining private property within the park boundaries. In 1983, Cap's Cabin was rebuilt near the original CCC cabin which burned down in 1937. Remnants of the original fireplace still exist. In 1989, Big Stone Bay Cabin was built.

A.4 LAND OWNERSHIP

The lands that comprise Wilderness State Park have been acquired by the State of Michigan through a variety of funding sources. Often, conditions attached to the original funding source or other details of the property transaction encumber the future use or disposition of the land.

The funding source map below identifies the varieties of sources used in acquiring land within Wilderness State Park. In areas where small, fragmented parcels were aggregated, multiple funding sources may have been utilized. The following outlines in more detail each funding source as associated with Wilderness State Park.



Special Legislation

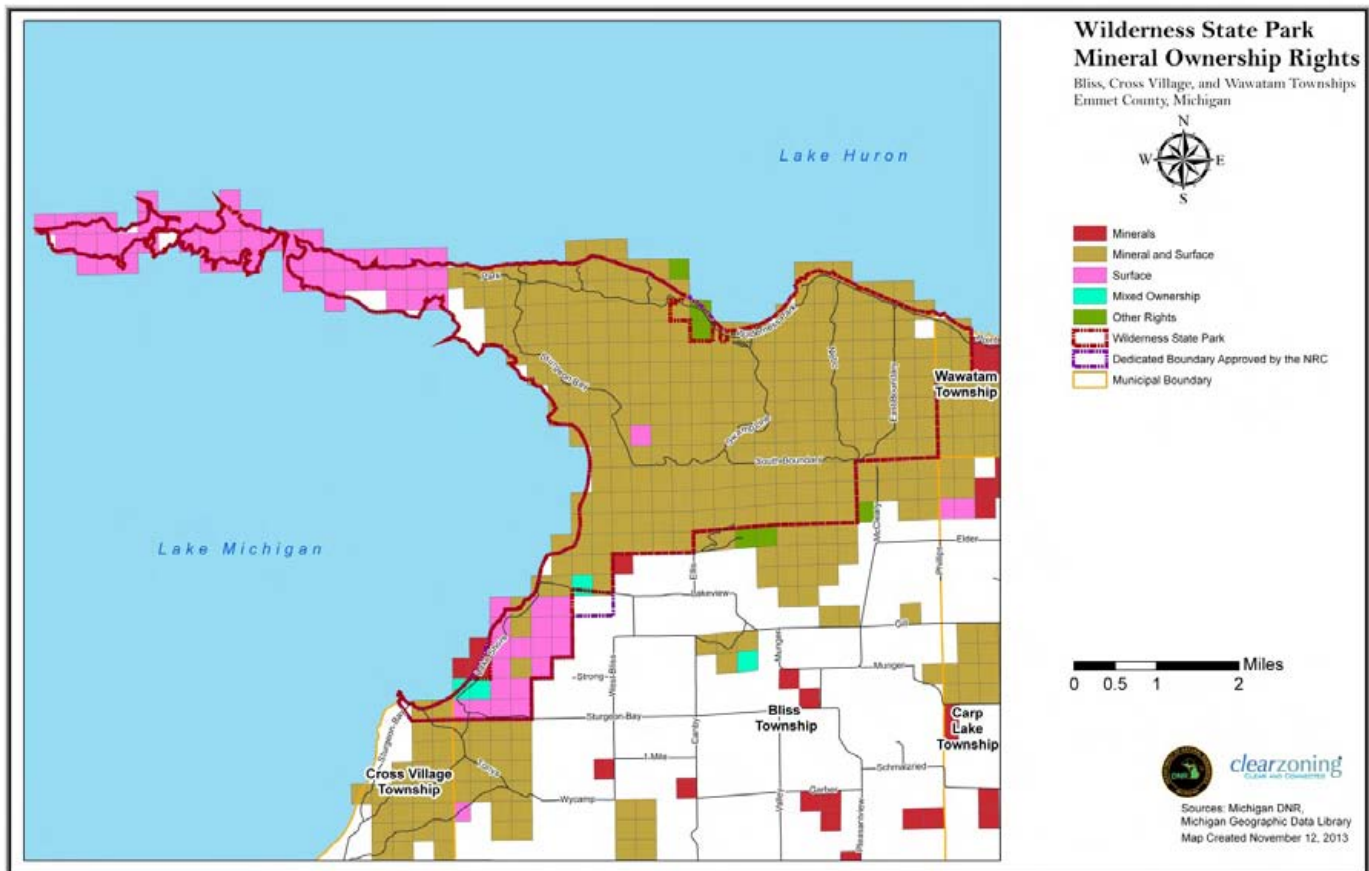
- 638.25 acres acquired under Act 27, P.A. 1944, and Act 50, P.A. 1944.

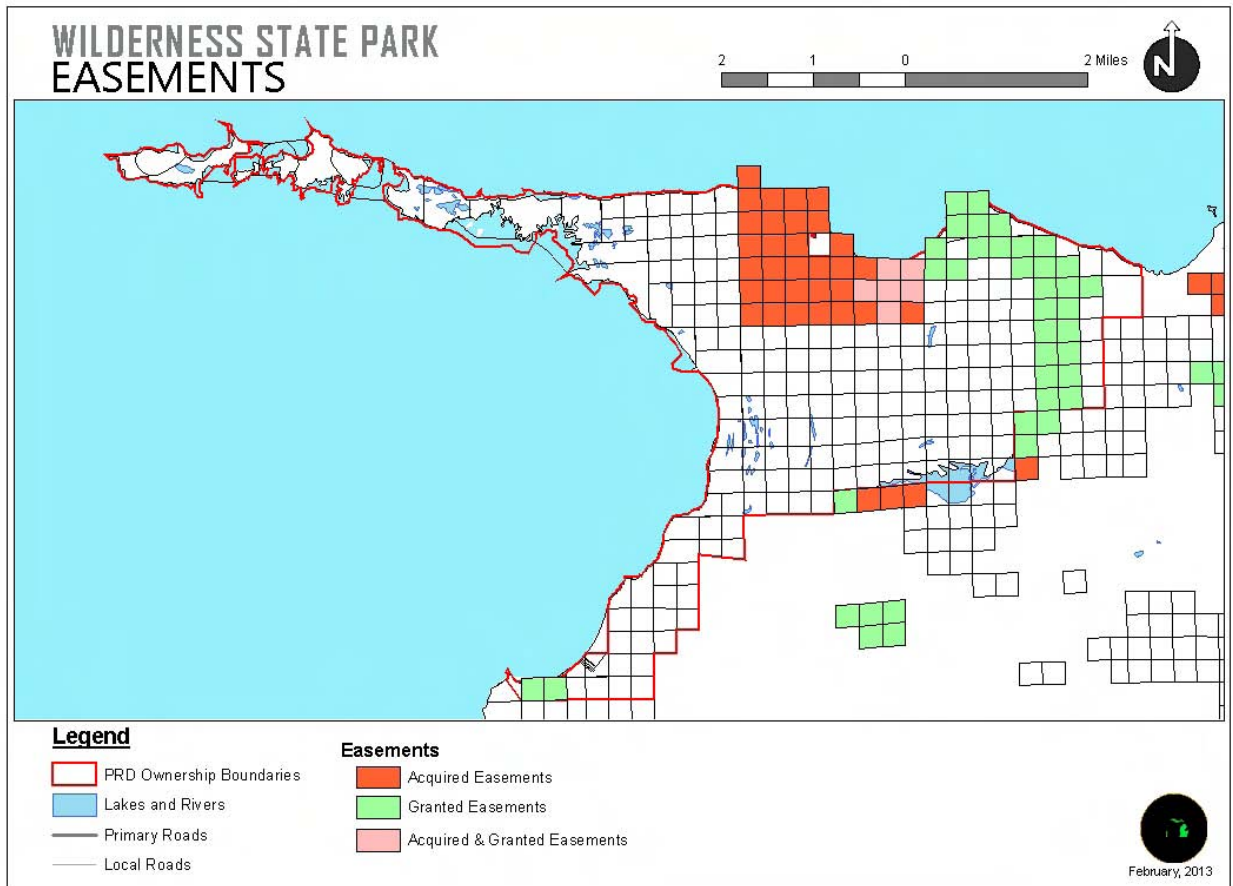
State Game Fund

- This fund is used for purchase, lease and management of lands for: Propagating and rearing game, fur-bearing animals, birds or fish; Establishing and maintaining game refuges, wildlife sanctuaries, and public shooting and fishing grounds. (324.43553 sec. 4c)
- 920 acres acquired under State Game Fund prior to Act 325, P.A. 1 mineral revenue deposited into Game & Fish Protection Trust Fund, no federal dollars involved.
- 120 acres acquired under Act 17, P.A. 1921. Land Purchased with \$1.50 deer hunting license fee. Mineral revenue deposited into Game & Fish Protection Trust Fund.

Recreation Bond Fund

- Typically to meet program needs, but requires investigation on a case-by-case basis. (Legislation may direct use of a specific funding source, property may come with deed restrictions or 'gift' may specify use.)
- 40 acres acquired under Old Recreation Bond Fund: Act 257, P.A. State Park and Recreation Areas (Source: Land Information System (LIS))





Easements

Wilderness State Park is impacted by both acquired and granted easements, as outlined in the following:

- **Acquired Easements**
 - Wilderness State Park acquired 1195.35 acres in easements of unknown types.
- **Great Lakes Energy Cooperative**
 - A non-profit rural electric cooperative created in 1996 by the merging of two existing cooperatives. Headquartered in Boyne City, provides power to more than 125,000 members. This cooperative was granted 163.14 acres within Wilderness State Park for the establishment of underground electric lines.
- **Top O'Michigan Electric Company**
 - Headquartered in Boyne City, this company began in 1937. In January 1999, this electric cooperative voted to merge with Great Lakes Energy Cooperative, forming the third-largest electric utility in Michigan. 1151.69 acres were granted to Top O'Michigan Electric Company for power lines.
- **Additional Granted Easements**
 - An additional 91.57 acres were granted for easements of unknown use and grantees.

A.5 LEGAL MANDATES

For all park General Management Plans, all legal mandates are identified that serve to further guide the development of the General Management Plan and subsequent Action Plans. For our planning purposes, the term “Legal Mandates” refers to not only state law, but also the administrative tools of “Policy” and “Directive” of the Natural Resource Commission, the Department, and the Parks & Recreation Division. Examples include Wildlife Conservation Orders, Orders of the Director, and all other laws, commission orders, and rules or directives that apply to the park. Specific to Wilderness State Park, several legal mandates have been identified, which are listed below.

Department of Natural Resources State Land Use Rules

- Issued by authority conferred on the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) by Section 504 of 1994 PA 451 MCL 324.504.
- Covers rules on state land relating to camping, motorized vehicle use, control of animals, trail use etc.

DNR Policies and Procedures – Series 26 - State-Owned Lands

- General principles established by the Department that guide the administration of authorities delegated to the Department by the Legislature and the Governor.
- 26.04-04 - Use Of State-Owned Lands Administered By The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (ISSUED: 02/01/2006). The NRC will manage state-owned lands in a manner that protects and enhances the public trust while providing for the use and enjoyment of those lands as outlined in the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act.

Land Use Orders of the Director

There are two land use orders relating specifically to Wilderness Point State Park

- A person shall not enter, use, or occupy certain environmentally sensitive and piping plover nesting areas, as posted, from April 15 through August 31 except with proper written permission.
- A person shall not possess a dog or allow a dog to enter into or upon state-owned lands, from April 15 through August 31 at Waugoshance Point or Sturgeon Bay.

PA 368 OF 1978, ARTICLE 12 - ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH, PART 125 – CAMPGROUNDS – Part 125 of the Public Health Code

- Established to protect and promote the public health by establishing health code requirements and regulations that all public (including DNR) and private campgrounds must meet.
- Campground wastewater system must meet the construction permit, design, and operation requirements under Michigan’s Public Health Code.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 22 – CAMPGROUND WASTEWATER SYSTEMS

- These rules apply to all campground wastewater systems and regulates discharges to groundwater; administered by the Water Division, Groundwater Discharge Unit.

PA 451 of 1994, PART 31 – WATER RESOURCES PROTECTION

- Administered by the DEQ and part of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, this legislation defines specific rules for the regulation of permitted activities in a floodplain in Michigan.

PA 451 of 1994, PART 303 - WETLANDS PROTECTION (formerly Act No. 203, P.A. 1979 Wetland Protection Act)

- Administered by the DEQ and part of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, this legislation provides clarification and guidance on interpreting Part 303 by defining specific rules for the regulation of wetlands in Michigan.
- The law requires that persons planning to conduct certain activities in regulated wetlands apply for and receive a permit from the state before beginning the activity.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 353 - SHORELANDS PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

- Administered by DEQ.
- Designates “Environmental Areas” and “High Risk Erosion Areas” and requirements related to their use.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 323 - SAND DUNES PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT

- Administered by DEQ.
- Designates “Critical Dunes” and requirements related to their use.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 419 - HUNTING AREA CONTROL

- Administered by the DNR, this part of PA 451 establishes the powers of the Department to establish safety zones for hunting.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 504 - STATE LAND USE RULES / LAND USE ORDERS OF THE DIRECTOR

- Administered by DNR Law Division.
- States that the department shall promulgate rules for the protection of the lands and property under its control against wrongful use or occupancy.

PA 451 OF 1994, PART 741 - STATE PARK SYSTEM - NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

- Notable in this law is Section 324.74102, which identifies the duties of the DNR and reinforces those core values concerning preservation, protection and management cited above.

PA 35 of 2010, Part 741 (“Recreation Passport”)

- This act amended the Michigan Motor Vehicle Code to provide for a State Park and State-operated public boating access site “Recreation Passport” that a Michigan resident may obtain by paying an additional fee when registering a motor vehicle.
- The Recreation Passport is required for entry into all PRD administered facilities and takes the place of the Motor Vehicle Permit (MVP).

PA 45 OF 2010 - NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

- Amends the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (PA 451 of 1994) to require the DNR to establish a plan for a statewide trail network that includes Michigan trailways, pack and saddle trailways, and other recreational use trailways, and to permit pack and saddle animals on designated trailways managed by the DNR.

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDERS

- Established by the Natural Resources Commission (NRC).
- Describes hunting and trapping regulations including methods of take, bag limits, license quotas, and season dates are established by the NRC and are described in the Wildlife Conservation Orders.

DEDICATION OF NATURAL AREAS BY THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION

- On April 19, 1951, the Conservation Commission (now the Natural Resources Commission) dedicated two Natural Area Preserves and two Nature Study Preserves at Wilderness State Park.

A.6 RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER RECREATION RESOURCES

State Owned Recreation Land

- Mackinaw State Forest – Gaylord Mgmt Unit - over 326,000 acres of state forest lands in Cheboygan (southwest of Black River), Antrim, Charlevoix, Emmet, and Ostego Counties. State Forest land borders a large portion of Wilderness State Park boundary, including to the west, the southern banks of O’Neal Lake and to the southeast of the park. Three campgrounds are within the State Forest lands and are managed by Burt Lake State Park. Numerous miles of ORV trails, snowmobile trails, rail trails, and the National North Country Hiking Trail traverse State Forest lands within the Unit.
- Northwestern State Trail – 35 mile former railroad corridor connects from Mackinaw City to the Little Traverse Wheelway in the south and also from Mackinaw City trailhead to approximately 130 miles of Rail Trail to the south and east, (the North Central and North East State Trails). This is a multi-use trail open to horses in the summer and snowmobiles in the winter. The trail is currently unimproved with the exception of a 7 mile paved section from Petoskey to Alanson.
- Petoskey State Park – located on the north end of Little Traverse Bay between Petoskey and Harbor Springs, Petoskey State Park offers 303 scenic areas and a sandy beach on the bay. The park has two separate modern campgrounds: Tannery Creek offers 100 campsites, and Dunes offers 80 campsites.

County Owned Recreation Land

- The Headlands – The Headlands, located just a couple miles west of Mackinaw City and north of Wilderness State Park, contains 550 acres, more than 2 miles Lake Michigan shoreline and many rare and endangered wildlife species. The park offers trails for hiking, bicycling, cross-country skiing, and nature viewing. While the park is open 24 hours, camping is not permitted. As an alternative, visitors can rent the park’s Guest House, which can accommodate up to 22 people. In 2011, Emmet County was awarded Dark Sky Park designation for the Headlands park, making it the sixth park in the United States with this designation. The Dark Sky Park designation recognizes the excellent night sky viewing and associated activities provided by the park.

Municipal Owned Recreation Land

- Bliss Township
 - Bliss Township Park
- Cross Village Township
 - Shurtleff Preserve
 - Port of Cross Village Park
- McKinley Township
 - McKinley Township Park

Little Traverse Land Conservancy Owned Land

The Little Traverse Land Conservancy is a regional land trust funded entirely by individuals and dedicated to preserving land in Chippewa, Mackinac, Emmet, Cheboygan and Charlevoix Counties. Notable preserves in the vicinity of Wilderness State Park include

- Fischer Preserve – 39.02 acres located in Cross Village Township.
Enje Nkweshdat Wat Preserve – 35 acres located in Cross Village Township. This preserve was donated by Sarah McPharlin and is located along the M-119 Scenic Corridor.
- Ryan Preserve – 49.5 acres located in Cross Village Township. This preserve was a gift from Marion Ryan and is located along both sides of the M-119 Scenic Corridor.
- Shurtleff Preserve – 0.26 acres located in Cross Village Township. This preserve is located in the heart of Cross Village Township along M-119.
- Goodheart Farms – 595 acres of land, including 3 parking areas and 7.5 miles of marked trails, including equestrian and mountain bike.
- Elmer Johnston Preserve – 220 acres, with 2 miles of trails, including equestrian, and views of Lake Michigan.
- Stony Point/Smith/Veling – these three preserves combine for 196 acres in Carp Lake Township on Paradise Lake.

Privately Owned Recreation Land

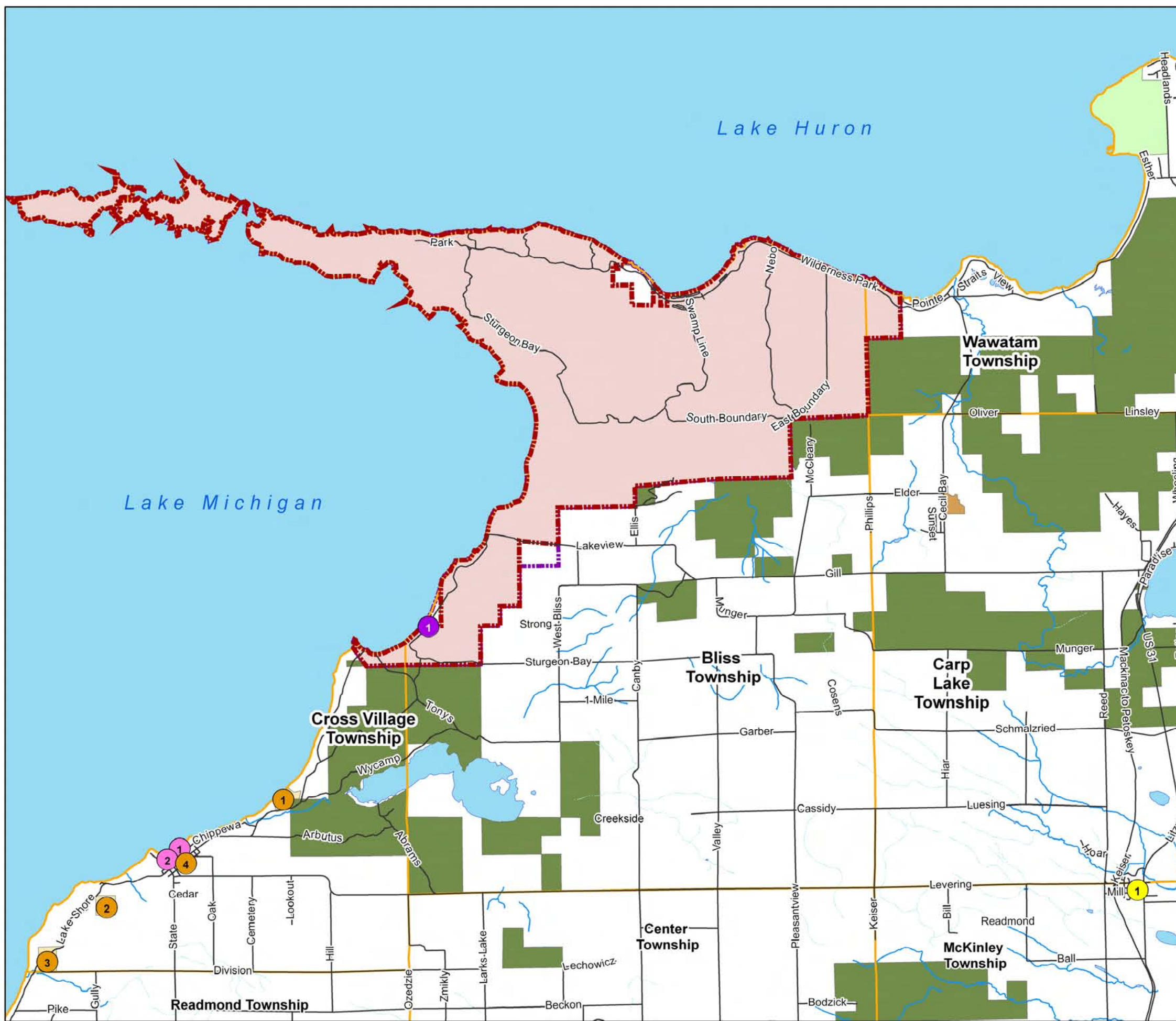
- Wilderness Golf Course – As Mackinaw's oldest course, Wilderness Golf Course offers equal amounts of challenge and enjoyment. Located in Carp Lake, Wilderness Golf Course is a par 35, Links Style Course with newly renovated and irrigated greens & tees.

Non-Motorized Trails in Emmet County

- North Country Trail – The North Country trail with 4,600 miles is the longest national scenic trail. It was created in 1980 by Congress. The route starting in New York and ending in North Dakota passes through seven (7) states. Forty-six miles of the trail pass through Emmet County. This trail is open for both hiking and bicycling.
- Little Traverse Wheelway - The Wheelway is 26 miles long running from Charlevoix to Harbor Springs. It is somewhat parallel to M-119 and US 31, a non-motorized paved trail, mostly separated from the roadway offering spectacular views of Little Traverse Bay and Lake Michigan. The trail is managed and maintained by multiple government entities and organizations.
- USBR 35 Bicycle Route –This is a route for experienced long distance touring bicyclists. It is not a trail per se, but is a mapped route meant to be a recommendation as the best way to ride a bicycle long distance along the coast. Approval of USBR 35 designates it as a nationally recognized route, designated by the same organization that numbered the US interstate highway system. Michigan's U.S. Bicycle Route 35 will attract bicycle tourists from near and far, providing economic, social, and health benefits to the communities that the route intersects. The route, approximately 500 miles in length, runs from New Buffalo, on the border with Indiana, to Sault Ste. Marie, Canada.

Wilderness State Park Recreational Opportunities

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



- Wilderness State Park
- Dedicated Boundary Approved by the NRC
- Municipal Boundary
- State Owned Recreation Land - Mackinaw State Forest - Gaylord Mgmt Unit
- County Owned Recreation Land - Emmet County The Headlands
- Locally Owned Recreation Land
- Bliss Township
 - Bliss Township Park
- Cross Village Township
 - Shurtleff Preserve
 - Port of Cross Village Park
- McKinley Township
 - McKinley Township Park
- Non-Governmental Organization Recreation Land
 - Fischer Preserve
 - McPharlin Preserve
 - Ryan Preserve
 - Sturtleff Preserve
- Private Recreation Land - Wilderness Golf Course



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created November 12, 2013

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Public Swimming Opportunities in Emmet County

The table below identifies various public swimming opportunities in Emmet County:

Township/City Location	Body of Water	Beach Name	Location
Bear Creek	Lake Michigan	Petoskey State Park	M-119
	Walloon Lake	Jones Landing	West Gruler Rd.
Bliss	Lake Michigan	Sturgeon Bay (MDNR)	N. Lakeshore Dr.
	Lake Michigan	Wilderness State Park	Wilderness Park Dr.
Carp Lake	Paradise Lake		End of Blake Dr.
Center	Lark's Lake	Lark's Lake Pioneer Park	Latocha Rd.
Cross Village	Lake Michigan	The Port of Cross	Waterfront Dr.
	Wycamp Lake	Wycamp Lake (MDNR)	Wycamp Rd.
Harbor Springs	Lake Michigan	Zoll Street Park	End of Zoll St.
	Lake Michigan	City Beach	W. Bay St.
Little Traverse	Crooked Lake	Little Traverse Beach	US 31
Littlefield	Pickerel Lake	Camp Petosega	
	Crooked Lake	Walter Dow Roadside Park	Oden Rd.
Petoskey	Lake Michigan	Magnus City Park	W. Lake St.
Readmond	Lake Michigan	Park Preserve	N. Lamkin Dr.
	Lake Michigan	Middle Village Park (Readmond/Friendship Twn.)	S. Lamkin Dr.
Resort	Walloon Lake	Resort Pike Park	Resort Pike Rd.
	Walloon Lake	Morford Park	Lake Grove Rd.
Springvale	Crooked Lake	Channel Road Park	Channel Rd.
	Pickerel Lake	Township Park Road Park	Township Park Rd.
	Crooked Lake	Channel Road Park (MDNR)	Channel Rd.
Wawatam	Lake Michigan	Cecil Bay (Emmet County)	Pointe Dr.
	Lake Michigan	Headlands (Emmet County)	E. Wilderness Park Dr.
	Lake Michigan	Beach 1 (managed by Village of Mackinaw City)	Corner of Esther Land and E. Wilderness Park Dr.
	Lake Michigan	Beach 2 (managed by the Village of Mackinaw City)	Approximately 1 mile west of Beach1 on E. Wilderness Park Dr.

Source: Emmet County 2012 Recreation Plan

Private and Semi-Private Recreational Opportunities in Emmet County

Emmet County has several private and semi-private recreational opportunities as listed in the table below:

Facility	Location by Township or Reference	Approximate Use-Acreage
Alanson Marinas	Village of Alanson	1.5
El Rancho Campground/ Resort	Village of Alanson	40.0
Crooked River RV Park	Village of Alanson	1.7
American Adventure	Bear Creek	42.2
Bear River Canoe Livery	Bear Creek	5.0
Petoskey Snowmobile Club	Bear Creek	2.1
Pirates Cove Adventure Golf	Bear Creek	3.3
KOA- Campground	Bear Creek	26.4
Bliss Polo Club	Bliss	81.0
Marina (Jordan)	Carp Lake	0.3
Irish Boatworks	City of Harbor Springs	5.7
Walstrom Marina	City of Harbor Springs	3.1
Crooked Lake Yacht Club	Littlefield	0.5
Ryde Marina	Littlefield	0.5
Windjammer Marine	Littlefield	2.5
Crooked Lake Outboard Club	Little Traverse	1.3
Bay Tennis & Fitness	Little Traverse	2.7
Morgan Trout Ponds	Maple River	20.0
Boyne Highlands Ski Resort	Pleasantview	1,780.0
Nubs Nob Ski Resort	Pleasantview	200.0
Sogonosh Riding Stable	Readmond	80.0
Bay Harbor Equestrian Club	Resort	35.5
Bay Harbor Yacht Club	Resort	9.8
KOA- Campground	Wawatam	45
Trout Ponds	Wawatam	0.5
Thunder Falls Water Park	Wawatam	7.2
Birchwood Farm and Country Club	West Traverse	540.0 (part)
Five Mile Creek Community Center	West Traverse	2.0

Source: Emmet County 2012 Recreation Plan

Golf Courses Located in Emmet County

Identifying Name	Approx. Acreage	Township Location
Bay Harbor	280	Resort
Birchwood Farms	390	West Traverse
Boyne Highlands	620	Pleasantview
Chestnut Valley	100	Pleasantview
Crooked Tree	160	Resort
Harbor Point	100	West Traverse
Hidden River	220	Maple River
Little Traverse Bay	200	Little Traverse
Mackinaw Club	180	Carp Lake
Petoskey-Bay View (P)	120	Bear Creek
True North (P)	212	Friendship
Maple Ridge	160	Maple River
Wequetonsing (P)	150	Little Traverse
Wilderness	90	Carp Lake
TOTALS	3,305	

Source: Emmet County 2012 Recreation Plan

A.7 NATURAL SYSTEMS AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Climate

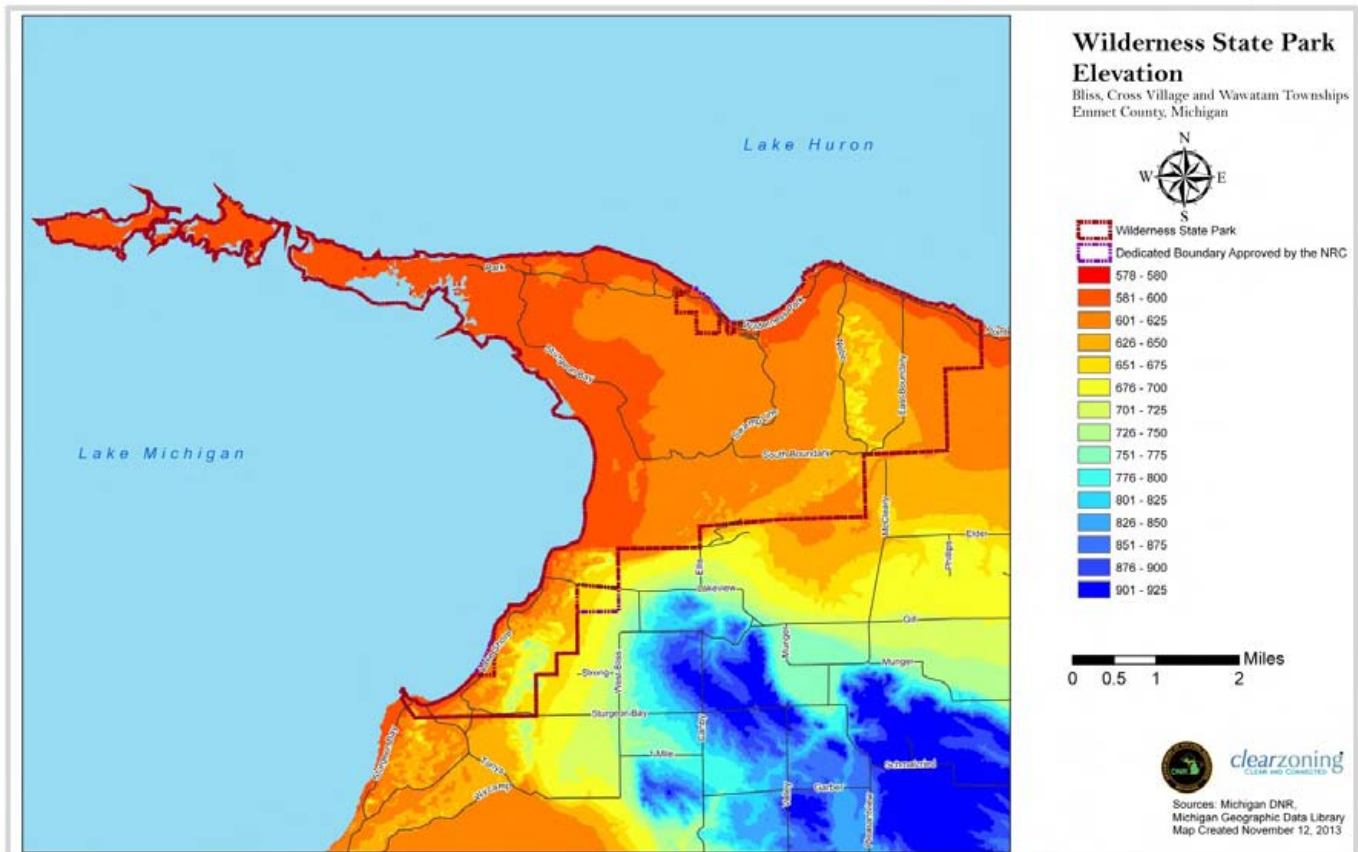
Growing season in this eco-region ranges from 130 days (near the inland edge) to 140 days (along the lake shores). Extreme minimum temperatures vary between $-28\frac{1}{2}$ and $36\frac{1}{2}$ depending on the location. Annual precipitation ranges roughly between 28 and 36 inches, though these numbers are often dramatically affected by lake effect changes. Snowfall averages at 80 inches annually throughout the entire VII.6.3 sub-subsection.

Geology

Sub-subsection VII.6.3 is composed of sandy lake plains, 2-10 miles wide, along the shore of Lake Huron with some exposure to Lake Michigan at Wilderness. While sand covers most of the topography, limestone bedrock is near the surface throughout the area. The topography of the area is a series of beach ridges and adjacent wet depressions. These are well developed in Sturgeon Bay. The shoreline is lined with sand dunes, low foredunes, sand spits and beach ridges. Reaching further inland the ridges and depressions give way to extensive flat, featureless areas of sand lake plain, with some low sandy rises interspersed. Large dunes are present near Sturgeon Bay

Topography and Elevation

The majority of Wilderness State Park is fairly flat. The most drastic elevation changes on the site are located in the southern most portion of the park, where sand dunes create steep slopes along the shores of Lake Michigan.



Soils

Most dominant soils throughout the Wilderness State Park area are Carbondale Muck (Ca), Blue Lake loamy sands (BIB), Tawas Muck (Ta), Thomas mucky loam, Roscommon mucky sand (Rc), and East Lake loamy sand (EaB).

Natural Areas and Environmentally-Sensitive Areas

Due to its location and unique wildlife and natural resources, Wilderness State Park has been impacted by several administrative dedications over the years, all of which focus on the ongoing protection and management of the park's various natural features. A summary of these various dedications is provided below.

- There are four Natural Resource Commission (NRC)-dedicated Natural Areas at Wilderness State Park, two of which are dedicated as "Natural Area Preserves" and two of which are dedicated as "Nature Study Preserves." All four of the Natural Areas were dedicated on April 19, 1951. Natural Area Preserves restrict use to only foot trails, while Natural Study Preserves include areas that are valuable from a research perspective.
- There are two Natural Areas Registry sites, which are voluntary agreements between The Nature Conservancy (TNC) and the DNR requiring the DNR to notify TNC if management practices at these sites are changed.
- There following three environmentally-sensitive areas in the park were designated by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ): 1) Coastal Environmental Area; 2) High Risk Erosion Area; 3) Critical Dunes. In the northern portion of the park, affecting Waugashance Point and the islands, there is the Coastal Environmental Area. A permit is required to dredge, fill, grade, alter soil, or alter vegetation utilized by fish or wildlife within an Environmental Area.

A small portion of the shoreline along Sturgeon Bay is designated as High Risk Erosion Area. A permit is required to construct any permanent structure on a parcel that contains a High Risk Erosion Area, and permits will only be granted if required setbacks are met to make sure the structure will not erode away into the lake. Links to the law and the associated administrative rules for Environmental Areas and High Risk Erosion Areas can be found on DEQ's website (http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_3677_3700---,00.html - see the "Laws & Rules" box on this page).

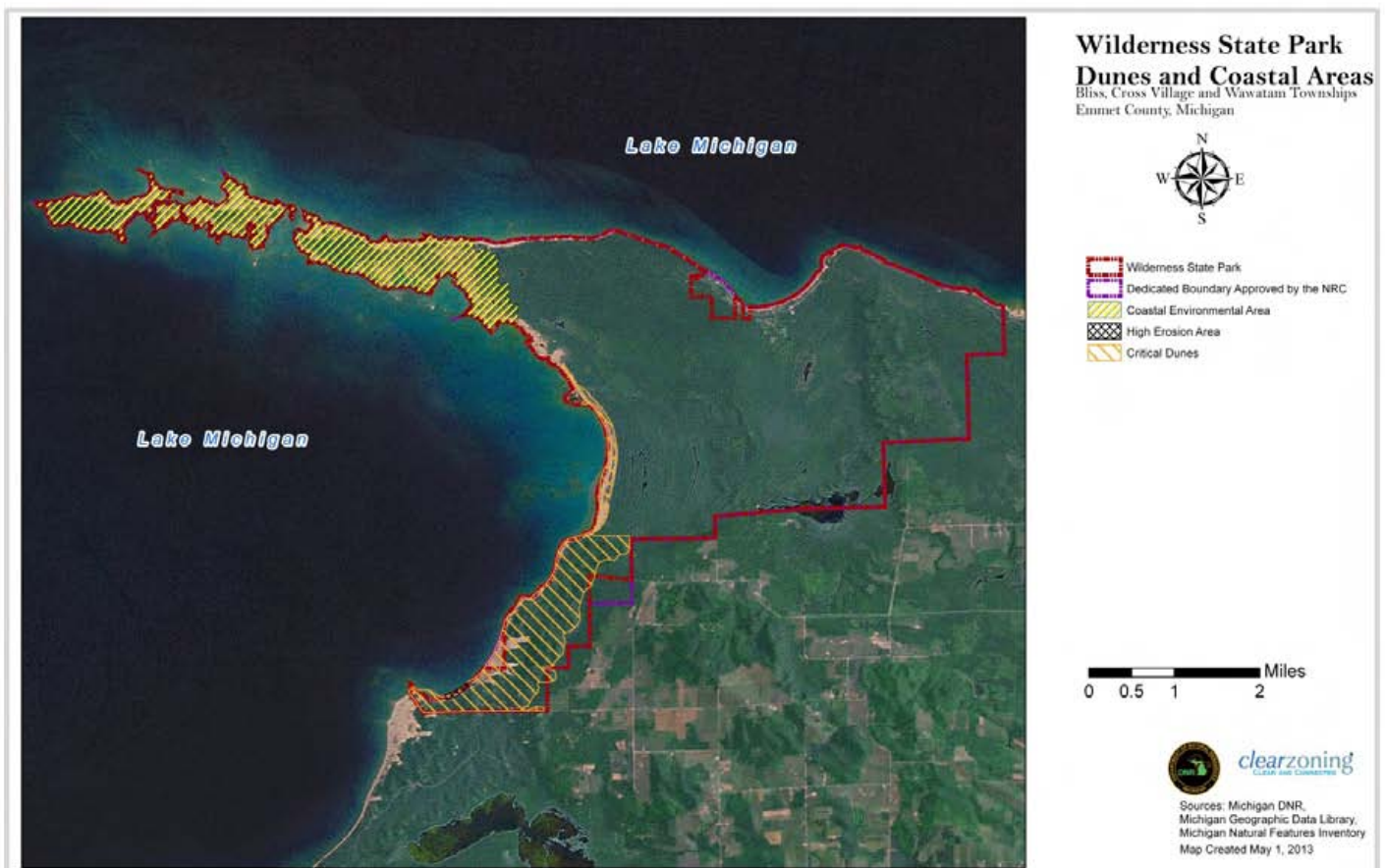
Also located in the Sturgeon Bay area of the park are Critical Dunes. The legal definition of Critical Dunes is contained in Act 451 of 1994, Part 353 (Sand Dunes Protection and Management). The law states that a permit is required to construct anything or alter the soil or vegetation, although there is a list of special exceptions. The law was recently changed (in late 2012) and DEQ is in the process of revising the administrative rules related to critical dunes to reflect the new law. Links to the law and associated administrative rules for these can be found on this DEQ website: www.michigan.gov/criticaldunes.

- Historical dunes are characterized as very old dune and swale natural communities. Over the past 10-20 years, researchers have recently been ageing the dunes and publishing findings about the geology of the Great Lakes shoreline. The historical dunes at Wilderness State Park are wooded dune and swale natural communities similar to those that occur at Negwegon State Park, Sleeper State Park, and a few other sites.

- Proposed Areas - There is one proposed "natural area" and one proposed "wilderness area" under the Wilderness and Natural Areas statute, Act 451 of 1994, Part 351. The proposal was presented to the NRC but did not move forward to dedication. Therefore the two areas remain in a proposed status.

Any proposed Natural Areas are first called "nominated." It remains as "nominated" until it goes through an internal approval process. Once approved internally, the area becomes "proposed." The 90-day timeline begins once an area is designated as proposed and it moves through legislation.

In addition to the dedicated and proposed natural areas, a large portion of the park's shoreline encompasses piping plover habitat. This habitat is formally designated as "Critical Habitat" by the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The park management makes every effort to protect piping plover nesting areas.



Wilderness State Park Natural Areas

Bliss, Cross Village and Wawatam Townships
Emmet County, Michigan



-  Wilderness State Park
-  Dedicated Boundary Approved by the NRC
-  Natural Area Preserve (NRC Dedicated)
-  Nature Study Preserve (NRD Dedicated)
-  TNC Natural Areas Registry



Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library,
Michigan Natural Features Inventory
Map Created November 25, 2013



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Flora

Rare Plants at Wilderness State Park			
Scientific Name	Common Name	State Status	Federal Status
<i>Bromus pumpellianus</i>	Pumpelly's bromegrass	Threatened	
<i>Calypso bulbosa</i>	Calypso or fairy-slipper	Threatened	
<i>Carex concinna</i>	Beauty sedge	Special Concern	
<i>Cirsium pitcheri</i>	Pitcher's thistle	Threatened	Threatened
<i>Cypripedium arietinum</i>	Ram's head lady's-slipper	Special Concern	
<i>Iris lacustris</i>	Dwarf lake iris	Threatened	Threatened
<i>Pinguicula vulgaris</i>	Butterwort	Special Concern	
<i>Potamogeton hillii</i>	Hill's pondweed	Threatened	
<i>Pterospora andromedea</i>	Pine-drops	Threatened	
<i>Solidago houghtonii</i>	Houghton's goldenrod	Threatened	Threatened
<i>Tanacetum huronense</i>	Lake Huron tansy	Threatened	

Rare Animals at Wilderness State Park			
Scientific Name	Common Name	State Status	Federal Status
<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Piping Plover	Endangered	Endangered
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	Special Concern	
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	Special Concern	
<i>Sterna hirundo</i>	Common tern	Threatened	
<i>Trimerotropis huroniana</i>	Lake Huron locust	Threatened	

(http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/data/cnty_dat.cfm?county=Emmet)
 (Michigan Natural Features Inventory, 2003)

Piping Plover

Over the years park management has worked to increase the numbers of piping plovers in the area. Historically the piping plover population in Michigan was several hundred breeding pairs. In 1986 that number had declined to 17 breeding pairs, leading it to be listed as federally endangered. Since then, populations have fluctuated between 12 and 55 breeding pairs statewide. In 2002, 16 of the 52 active nests were located at Wilderness State Park.



A piping plover

Hungerford's Crawling Water Beetle

While not known specifically from the park, Emmet County is home to one of the most endangered species in the world, the Hungerford's Crawling Water Beetle (*Brychius hungerfordi*). The beetle is commonly found in fast flowing streams with sand and gravel substrates. Development considerations for this species should focus on the prevention of disturbances to streams and stream watersheds.

Natural Community Types

A *natural community*, as defined by the Michigan Natural Features Inventory, is an assemblage of interacting plants, animals, and other organisms that repeatedly occurs across the landscape under similar environmental conditions. The following natural communities are known to occur at Wilderness State Park:

- Boreal forest
- Coastal fen
- Dry-mesic northern forest
- Emergent marsh
- Great Lakes marsh
- Interdunal wetland
- Intermittent wetland
- Limestone cobble shore
- Mesic northern forest
- Muskeg
- Northern fen
- Northern shrub thicket
- Open dunes
- Poor fen
- Rich conifer swamp
- Wooded dune and swale

Descriptions of these natural communities can be found at:

<http://mnfi.anr.msu.edu/communities/index.cfm>

A.8 HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Below is a list of historical structures at Wilderness State Park.

Structure	DMB#
Pump House ODC	80320
Kitchen & Dining ODC	80321
Dormitory #18 ODC	80323
Dormitory #16 ODC	80324
Dormitory #17 ODC	80325
Trailside Shelter 7	80330
Station Point Cabin 9	80333
Sturgeon Bay Cabin 10	80335
Nebo Trail Cabin 8	80336
Log Latrine #1 (from pines campground)	No tag
Log Latrine #2	No tag

Trailside Cabins

- Three original trailside cabins remain largely intact, the Sturgeon Bay, Nebo, and Station Point Cabins. Each of these cabins was built using whole log lumber and had wood shingled gable roofs. All three cabins were constructed on a fieldstone foundation with a fieldstone chimney and fireplace. Although these three cabins maintain much of their historical integrity, many repairs have been made over the years. Asphalt roofs replaced wood shingles, wood floors cover the original cement, many windows have been replaced by larger windows, and the fireplaces have been replaced by woodstoves.

Tool Burial

- In 1937, upon the discontinuance of the CCC camp, a pit was dug and all of the hand tools were buried.

Foundation of the Mt. Nebo Lookout Tower

- Built in 1933-1934, the Mt. Nebo Lookout Tower was erected on a hill in the eastern portion of the park. The structure was made of timber and stood until 1950 when it was deemed unsafe and dismantled. Pieces of the foundation of this structure still remain.

U.S. Navy Remnants

- Remnants of military activity can be found throughout the park.
- Bullet holes can be found in the Waugoshance Point Lighthouse.

Straits of Mackinac Area Lighthouses

- There are several lighthouses in the region. Although none of the lighthouses are part of Wilderness State Park, Shepler's Ferry Service offers summer lighthouse tour cruises. Lighthouses in the area include Waugoshance, White Shoal, Gray's Reef, Skillagalee, and St. Helena Island Lighthouses.

A.9 EDUCATION AND INTERPRETATION

Michigan State Park Explorer Program

- Summer program offered at 41 Michigan State Parks to campers and day visitors. The program arms participants with field gear (animal skins, bug boxes and hands-on materials) and a guide for informal hikes and other programs. These activities cater to each parks' unique physical and cultural resources, targeting both children and adults.

Interpretive Trail Systems

- Pondsider, Red Pine, and Hemlock trails offer interpretive signage and brochures that encourage learning about native flora and fauna found in the park. The North Country Trail also has user guide brochures at designated trail heads.

A.10 RECREATION RESOURCES

Camping

- 250-site modern campground with electrical service and modern restrooms. The campground is divided into two main areas, Lakeshore with 150 sites along the Lake Michigan shoreline; and the Pines with 100 campsites on higher land inland of the Lakeshore.
- 6 Rustic Cabins spread out along the park shoreline and woods. The Station Point, Nebo, Sturgeon Bay, Big Stone Bay, Caps, and Waugoshance cabins are considered “rustic”, with no electricity, running water or flush toilets. Woodstoves and wood is provided for heating. All but the Nebo Cabin are on the beach.
- 3 rustic bunkhouses in the Pines area that do include electricity.
- Group Use Area east of the Lakeshore campground with rustic sites and vault toilet. Available by reservation only.

Trails

Wilderness State Park contains 14 trails, giving visitors access to nearly 23 miles of stimulating outdoor activities and the largest trail system in Emmet County. The trails provide guests with an opportunity to engage in activities such as cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, hiking, mountain biking, and wildlife viewing. Cabins are inaccessible by car during the winter months, making cross-country skiing and snowmobiling the main means of reaching these accommodations. Trails within the park and their designated activities can be found below.

- Big Stone Trail is a 0.75 mile trail located just south of Wilderness Park Drive and near many of the park’s amenities. It provides a hiking opportunity for those who don’t want to stray too far from the camp grounds.
- East Ridge is a 1 mile long hiking trail that runs from Wilderness Park Road to Nebo Trail. It is located in the northeast portion of the park just west of the Old East Boundary Trail.
- Hemlock Trail is 0.75 mile dirt, hiking trail located along the Nebo Trail. The trail brochure educates hikers about the trees, animals, and insects that can be found along the way.
- Nebo Trail is a 2 mile trail with cross-country skiing, hiking and mountain biking opportunities. It begins along Wilderness Park Drive in the northeast portion of the park and carries users to a trail intersection just south of the trailside shelter.
- North Country Trail includes 10 miles of trail within the park and provides users with an opportunity to cross-country ski and hike. This is part of a national trail that winds from North Dakota to New York. It enters the park from the northeast and after merging through several of the parks trails exits through the southwest portion of the park.
- Old East Boundary is a 2 mile trail that provides visitors with an opportunity to hike, cross-country ski, mountain bike and snowmobile. It is located in the northeast portion of the park, not far from the park entrance.
- O’Neal Lake Trail is a 4.9 mile trail that offers hiking and snowmobiling in a remote area of the park on the north side of O’Neal Lake.
- Point Road Trail is 3.5 miles long and provides park visitors with an opportunity to cross-country ski, hike, mountain bike, or snowmobile.
- Pondsides Trail is a short 0.25 miles hiking trail close to the campgrounds, with many fascinating natural features along its route. A brochure educates trail participants about many of these features, such as stands of Sugar Maples, Balsam Firs, White Pine, White Cedar, and White Ash trees as well as where to look for beaver dams and Great Blue Herons.

- Red Pine Trail is a 1.25 mile hiking trail that connects the Nebo and Big Stone Trails. It shares a trail brochure with the Hemlock Trail and can lead to a short, educational trail adventure for the day.
- Old South Boundary Trail provides park visitors with the opportunity to hike, cross-country ski or mountain bike. It is 1.5 miles long and takes visitors from the southern portion of Old East Boundary Trail to the intersection of the Swamp Line Trail and Sturgeon Bay Trail. The North Country Trail portion of Sturgeon Bay Trail is closed to snowmobile use.
- Sturgeon Bay Trail is 2.25 miles in length and provides users with a chance to cross-country ski, hike, mountain bike or snowmobile. It begins in the northwestern portion of the park along Wilderness Park Drive and extends down to the center of the park where the South Boundary and Swamp Line Trails converge.
- Swamp Line Trail is 2 miles long, beginning a short distance south of the park campgrounds and extending down to the southern portion of Sturgeon Bay Trail. Its uses include cross-country skiing, mountain biking, and hiking.
- Wiikenhs Trail is 1.3 miles long and connects Big Stone Trail and Nebo Trail in the northern region of the park.

Watchable Wildlife

- The Great Lakes population of piping plover, a federally listed endangered species of bird, is almost exclusively found in Michigan during the nesting season. The 26 miles of shoreline at Wilderness State Park provide critical habitat for the survival of the species. Nearly all of the shoreline of the park has been conserved as habitat for the piping plover and other species that inhabit this area. See the 'Fauna' section of this report for more information.
- Some bird species that may be found within the park include: alder flycatcher, Baltimore oriole, barred owl, eastern bluebird, Caspian tern, short-billed dowitcher, great egret, northern goshawk, herring gull, killdeer, magnolia warbler, common nighthawk, olive-sided flycatcher, pileated woodpecker, red-tailed hawk, scarlet tanager, tree swallow, white-breasted nuthatch, and northern flicker. During spring migration, many neotropical migrants may be observed which include many wood warblers.
- Common wildflower species found within the park include: aster, bunchberry, columbine, forget-me-not, goatsbeard, Indian paintbrush, iris, lady's slipper orchid, star flower, violets (blue), and wintergreen.

Hunting

- The park allows hunting between September 15 and March 31, except in designated hunting safety zones and in accordance with all current rules and regulations.
- Excellent deer and snowshoe hare hunting exist within the park, as well as grouse, goose and squirrel. Hunters are welcome for early goose season after Labor Day, as well as turkey hunting during the appropriate season with a license. Bear hunting is also possible so long as the appropriate license is acquired. Some bobcats also exist within the park. Wilderness is open for trapping and hosts abundant populations of beaver and coyote. The park also supports mink, muskrat and otter populations.

Playground

- Playground equipment can be found at each of the park's campgrounds sites. Equipment found may include swings and slides.

Shoreline Beaches

- Wilderness State Park includes 26 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline.

Fishing

- The park is famous for smallmouth bass fishing around the many islands in Lake Michigan as well as off the shore of Waugoshance Point. The waters surrounding the park are also known for their perch fishing opportunities.

Picnic

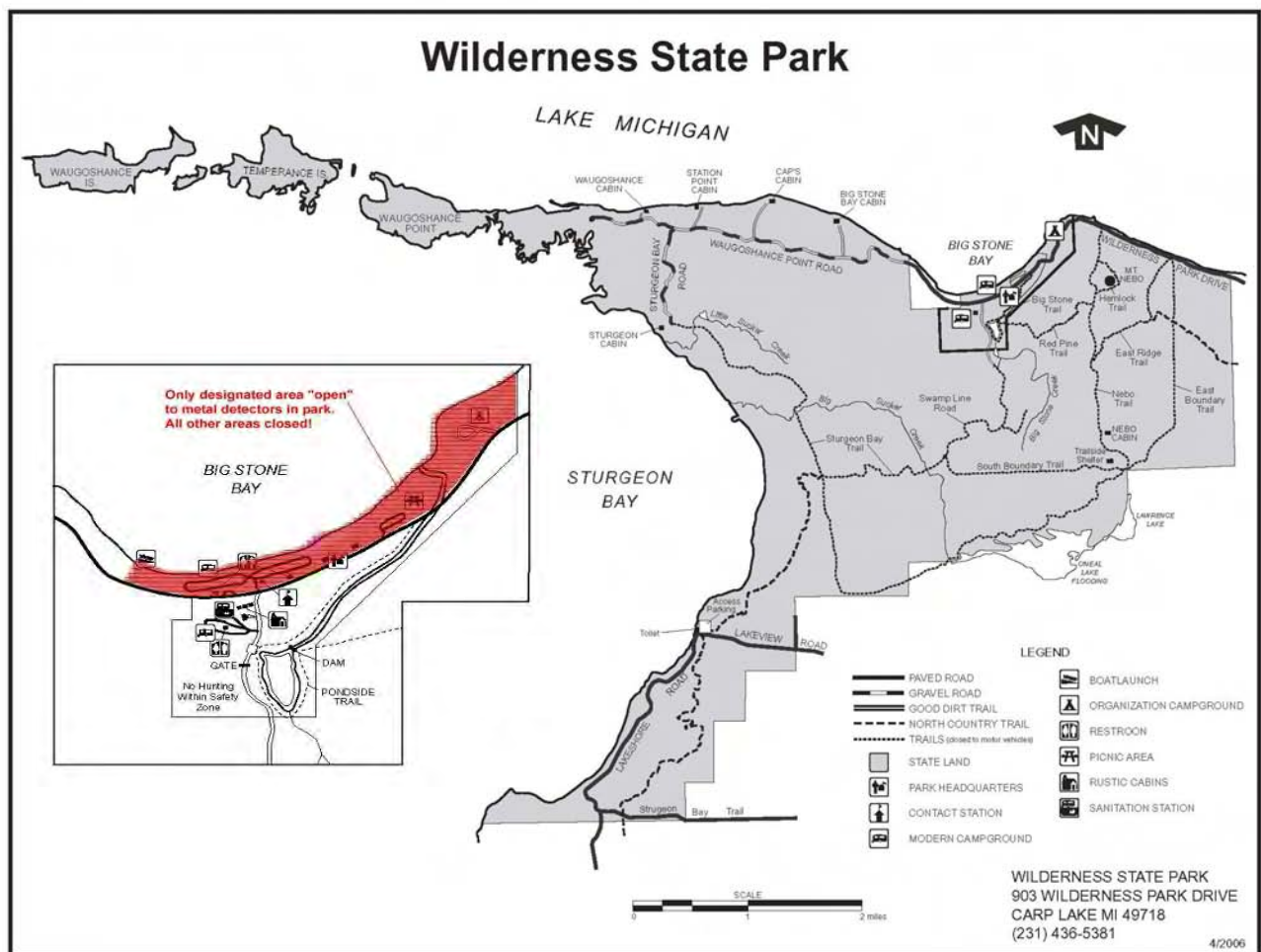
- Fire pits and grills are available at picnic sites

Boat Launch

- Access to Lake Michigan is available at the boat launch on Big Stone Bay. Larger craft may be difficult to launch here due to low water conditions

Metal Detecting

- So long as no damage to cultural and natural resources occur, and no state statutes are violated, metal detecting is considered a legitimate recreation activity. Designated metal detecting areas are available within this park; any items found must be reviewed by park staff.



(Source: DNR Online Map Archive)

A.11 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Issues and opportunities associated with Wilderness State Park:

- Lakeshore Campground re-development project
- Multi use trails (hiking, mountain biking, cross country skiing, snowmobiling) – user conflicts
- O’Neal Lake: Wildlife Division administered dam, access road, north side breach, Tribal research projects
- Forest Resources Division lands to the south and east of the park which poses dual land administration duties
- Historic sites along Sturgeon Bay
- Historic structures
- “Dark sky preserve” designation
- Bliss Township in holding on Sturgeon Bay shoreline
- Sturgeon Bay boat access site,
- Potential harbor of refuge
- Health concerns with heavy seasonal use of Sturgeon Bay shoreline
- Threatened and endangered species
- Dog access to beach/water
- Access to beach from Pines Campground
- Great Lakes water levels
- Forest management vs. Dedicated Natural Areas

A.12 PARK USE STATISTICS AND ECONOMIC IMPACTS

Park Use

Wilderness State Park had 244,865 recreation visitors during 2012, 151,816 (62%) of which were day users and 93,049 (38%) of which were campers.

A characterization of park use is described as follows (based on MDNR-Park Attendance Statistics):

- **Summer Use Season** – This is defined as the three-month period of June through August, when schools are not in session. This is the busiest season for the park, as 64% of all day-use and 75% of all camping takes place during these months.
- **Fall Use Season** – The fall season is defined by the months of September through November. An estimated 20% of all day-use and 24% of camping takes places within this season.
- **Winter Use Season** – December through March marks a significant decline in park use, with between 1,700 and 2,500 visitors recorded per month. The modern campgrounds are closed through the winter, however, cabin use is still significant.
- **Spring Use Season** – April through May shows gradual increase in park use with day-use at approximately 5%.

Economic Impacts

Michigan State University (Dr. Dan Stynes) developed an economic analysis model known as “MGM2”. This model is an update of the MGM model developed by Dr. Ken Hornback for the National Park System in 1995. The purpose of the updated MGM2 model is to estimate the impact of park visitor spending on the local economy. These economic impacts are reflected in terms of sales, income, employment, and value added.

This analysis tool relies on three primary factors in the common equation:

Economic Impact of Tourism Spending = Number of Tourists (x) Average Spending per Visitor (x) Multiplier (to estimate extended effects of direct spending).

For our purposes of conducting a very basic review of impacts, we have utilized the “MGM2-Short Form” version of the program, which simplifies the extent of analysis required for input, and utilizes more generalized multipliers for spending outputs. For the non-economist, this provides an excellent tool for establishing a baseline assessment of the economic impacts of our parks.

Following are the relative economic impacts of Wilderness State Park to the economy of Emmet County.

Direct Economic Effects to the Community

- Direct spending attributable to Wilderness SP visitors totaled \$4.29 million of which \$1 million came from day-use, and \$3.29 million from Camping.
- Jobs totaled 135, with 31 related to day-use activity and 104 to camping. (Note...jobs are not full-time equivalent. They include part-time and seasonal positions.)
- Personal Income total is \$1.64 million with \$336,000 associated with day-use of the park and \$1,122,000 associated with camping.
- Value added (total income plus business taxes) totaled \$2.2 million. Day-use accounted for \$508,000 and camping accounted for \$1,694,000.

Total Economic Effects to the Community

(NOTE...this reflects 'Direct Effects' plus the 'Secondary Effects' of visitor spending on the local economy. Secondary Effects (sometimes called 'Multiplier Effects') capture economic activity that results from the re-circulation of money spent by the park visitors in the community.

- Total spending = \$5.67 million
- Jobs = 157
- Personal Income = \$1.9 million
- Value added = \$3 million

Appendix B – Public Input Summary

Over the duration of the General Management Planning process, the Planning Team ensured a variety of opportunities for public input and feedback. These avenues included:

Overview of Public Input Opportunities

- **Public Input Survey** – an online survey developed to gather general information about park visitors (both day users and campers) and their use of the park as well as recommendations for improving features and amenities offered at the park. The survey was made available for a 10-week period.
- **Student Survey** - students from the University of Michigan Biological Station surveyed Sturgeon Bay users to identify where they come from, how often they visit, and how they use the beach. The project was intended as a field-based, educational experience for the students. The complete study called *Sturgeon Bay Beach: A Study of Beach Use at Wilderness State Park* is located at the end of this appendix.
- **Wilderness State Park Website** – the public could post comments on the website, which also included additional resources about the General Management Planning process. The link for the website is: <http://www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park/>
- **Stakeholder Input Open House (September 25th, 2013)** – located at the Dining Hall at Wilderness State Park, stakeholders had the opportunity to learn about the General Management Planning process and provide input regarding the Statements of Significance and the Draft 10-Year Action Goals. Approximately 50 stakeholders were invited to the open house; 7 stakeholders attended.
- **Public Input Meeting (December 12th, 2013)** – located at Mackinaw City High School from 6-8 p.m., members of the public were invited to learn about the General Management Planning process and comment on the Statements of Significance and the Draft 10-Year Action Goals.

DNR Stakeholder Open House

Wilderness State Park



We Want Your Input!!

You are invited to complete a 10 minute online survey, which can be found at:

[http://
www.surveymonkey.com/
s/WildernessStatePark](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/WildernessStatePark)

Your input will inform the Planning Team as they develop appropriate zones and action goals for the park!

You are encouraged to visit the project website at:

[http://
www.clearzoning.com/
clearzoning-clients/
wilderness-state-park/](http://www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park/)

For more information, or to RSVP, please contact Susie Roble at susie@clearzoning.com or 248.423.1776 x 15

DNR Stakeholder Open House

Review and discussion of Draft General Management Plan

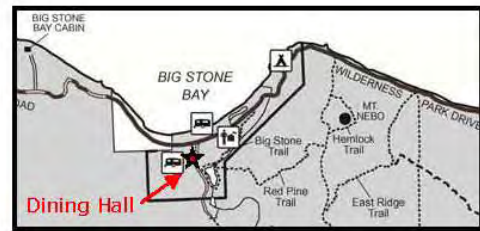
The Parks & Recreation Division of the DNR is in the process of developing a Management Plan for Wilderness State Park. The Management Plan includes a 20-year management outlook for natural and cultural resources and educational opportunities at the park. In addition, the plan includes a set of 10-year action goals that will guide specific management decisions and enhance the visitor experience, while protecting the natural, cultural and historic resources for the enjoyment of future generations.

You and/or your group have been identified as a stakeholder, with active interests in Wilderness State Park. Using an open house format, the DNR will share its initial thoughts on the Draft General Management Plan and welcomes your input.

You may drop in at any time during the scheduled open house. We request that each stakeholder group limit itself to not more than 3 representatives, so that we may accommodate everyone based on meeting space and time constraints.

**Wednesday, September 25th, 2013
1:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.**

The Dining Hall at Wilderness State Park
903 Wilderness Park Dr
Carp Lake, MI 49718



**Stakeholder Input Open House
Wilderness State Park
September 25th, 2013
1:00 PM – 4:00 PM
Wilderness State Park**

1. **Planning Team Introductions at 1:00 p.m.**
2. **Brief Presentation of Management Planning Process and Status at 1:05 p.m.**
 - a. Significance Statements
 - b. Development of Management Zone Maps
 - c. Action Goal Development – Draft 10-year strategies to address the desired future condition of each zone
 - d. Wilderness State Park Planning Team Draft Action Goals organized by:
 - General Action Goals
 - Primitive Zone
 - Backcountry Zone
 - Natural Resource Recreation Zone
 - Developed Recreation Zone
 - Visitor Service Zone
 - e. Priority Exercise explained
 - f. Action Goals input sheets described
 - g. Questions and Answers
3. **Open House at 1:30 p.m.**
 - a. You are invited to visit each of the stations and talk to Planning Team members
 - b. Sticky notes are available to comment on Management Zone Map
 - c. Color dots are available for you to identify your priority actions (please limit yourself to 10 dots)
 - d. “Additional Input” sheets are available for you to contribute additional suggested actions goals
4. **Reconvene at 2:30 p.m.**
 - a. Group conversation to share ideas with Planning Team and other stakeholders
5. **Adjournment at 4:00 p.m.**

Please remember to complete the Wilderness State Park Public Input Survey (link provided below). The survey will close on Friday, September 27th.

For More Information:

Survey: www.surveymonkey.com/s/WildernessStatePark

Project Website: www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park/

DNR Management Planning Website: www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

Email: Susie@clearzoning.com or jill@clearzoning.com

Phone: 248.423.1776

clearzoning



Stakeholder Input Workshop September 25th, 2013 1-4 PM		
Name	Affiliation	Email Address
Keith Cheli	MDNR PRD	Chelik@michigan.gov
Gene Reck	Supervisor @ Cross Village	Gene@threepinesstudio.com
Debbie Jensen	MDNR	Jensend1@michigan.gov
Vince Cavalieri	USFWS	Vincent_cavalieri@fws.gov
Jack Dingledine	USFWS	Jack_dingledine@fws.gov
Burr Mitchell	MDNR – PRD	MitchellB3@michigan.gov
Dennis Fay	North Country Trail	Dennisfay@centurylink.net
Glenn Palmgren	DNR – PRD	Palmgeng@michigan.gov
Nancy Solar	Emmet County	Nsolar@emmetcounty.org
Cydney Steeb	Emmet Conservation District	Cydney.steeb@macd.org
Douglas Fouty	Trails End Bay Property	Foutyshores@sbcglobal.net

Comments from Stakeholders and Response from Planning Team

- A. Look into repaving the county road that provides access to Wilderness Park Drive
 - i. Debbie commented that there are funding opportunities for road improvements for roads that provide access to a state park. The funding comes from a three-way split among the DNR, County, and MDOT. Funding priorities are for those roads with trail elements. Burr commented that he has talked to the County about this issue in the past, and he will have a follow-up conversation with the County.

- B. Consider a designated pet-friendly beach/area
 - i. Burr commented that putting a designated pet-friendly beach/area in Sturgeon Bay would be in direct conflict with the Director's Order, which prohibits dogs in Sturgeon Bay in order to protect the piping plovers
 - ii. Burr thinks that Big Stone Bay may be a better location and the pet-friendly beach could be incorporated into campground redevelopment plan
 - iii. The team decided to add a Developed Recreation/development goal to evaluate location for and designate a pet-friendly beach area on the north shore.

- C. The US Fish and Wildlife reps were concerned about Developed Recreation zoning along Sturgeon Bay and the potential impact on piping plover nesting.
 - i. Burr expressed his concern that we would be restricting ourselves from any future development if we change from Developed Recreation Zone.
 - ii. Dave Birchler made the point that just because it's zoned as Developed Recreation Zone, does not mean we have to develop to that level.
 - iii. Glen suggested we put Natural Resource Recreation buffer from beach up to the fore dune
 - iv. Dave Goheen agreed and noted that we cannot develop anything along the shoreline anyway
 - v. Debbie suggested adding a note in the General Management Plan to reinforce that any development would be mindful of the surrounding sensitive areas and natural features. Debbie also suggested using High Risk Erosion line as our guide for the Natural Resource Recreation zone along the shore

- D. The team commented that the Cross Township Supervisor was very enthusiastic about the importance of Sturgeon Bay to local residents

DNR Public Input Open House

Wilderness State Park



We Want Your Input!!

Your input will inform the Planning Team as they develop appropriate zones and action goals for the park!

You are encouraged to visit the project website at:

[http://
www.clearzoning.com/
clearzoning-clients/
wilderness-state-park/](http://www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park/)

For more information, or to RSVP, please contact Susie Roble at susie@clearzoning.com or 248.423.1776 x 15

DNR Public Input Open House

Review and discussion of Draft General Management Plan

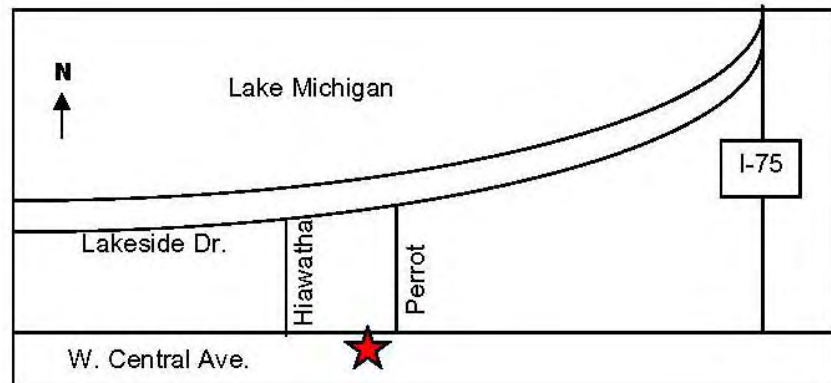
The Parks & Recreation Division of the DNR is in the process of developing a Management Plan for Wilderness State Park. The Management Plan includes a 20-year management outlook for natural and cultural resources and educational opportunities at the park. In addition, the plan includes a set of 10-year action goals that will guide specific management decisions and enhance the visitor experience, while protecting the natural, cultural and historic resources for the enjoyment of future generations.

Using an open house format, the DNR will share its initial thoughts on the Draft General Management Plan and welcomes your input. **You may drop in at any time during the scheduled open house.**

Thursday, December 12th, 2013

6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Mackinaw City High School (Multipurpose Room)
609 W. Central Avenue
Mackinaw City, MI 49701



Public Open House Scheduled on December 12th to obtain input on a new General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park

Contact: Debbie Jensen 517-335-4832 or Ed Golder, 517-335-3014

Agency: Natural Resources

November 25, 2013

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) announced that they will be holding an open house designed for the public to provide input on a new General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park, in Emmet County. The open house will be held on Thursday, December 12th, 2013 from 6 to 8 p.m. in the multi-purpose room at Mackinaw City High School, located at 609 W. Central Avenue, Mackinaw City, MI 40701. The meeting will provide an opportunity for the public to review and comment on specific long-range planning recommendations for this park.

The General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park defines a long-range planning and management strategy that will assist the Parks and Recreation Division in meeting its responsibilities to protect and preserve the site's natural, cultural and historical resources, and to provide access to land and water based public recreation and educational opportunities. This 10,500 acre State Park offers a variety of year-round recreational opportunities with 26 miles of northern Lake Michigan shoreline, modern and backcountry camping, rustic cabins, 23 miles of trails, and excellent opportunities for nature observation. The draft plan is available for review online at <http://www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park>

Additional information on the DNR's General Management Plan process is available at www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

For more information about this open house, the proposed plan, or persons needing accommodations to attend this open house, contact Debbie Jensen, DNR Park Management Plan Administrator, at 517-335-4832 (TTY/TDD711 Michigan Relay Center for the hearing impaired) at least five business days before the open house.

The Recreation Passport is an easy, affordable way for residents to enjoy and support outdoor recreation opportunities in Michigan. By checking "YES" for the \$11 Recreation Passport (\$5 for motorcycles) when renewing a license plate through the Secretary of State (by mail, kiosk, online at www.expresssos.com or at branch offices), Michigan motorists get access to state parks, recreation areas, state forest campgrounds, nonmotorized state trailhead parking and state boat launches. In addition, Recreation Passport holders can enjoy real savings at businesses and retailers that participate in the Passport Perks discount program. The Recreation Passport is valid until the next license plate renewal date. Nonresidents can purchase the Recreation Passport (\$30.50 annual; \$8.40 daily) at any state park or recreation area or through the Michigan e-Store at www.michigan.gov/estore.

Learn more about this creative way of sustaining Michigan's outdoor recreation and natural resources at www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport. For information on Passport Perks shopping discounts or how businesses and retailers can enroll in the program, visit www.michigan.gov/passportperks.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to www.michigan.gov/dnr

**Public Input Open House
Wilderness State Park
December 12, 2013
6:00 PM – 8:00 PM
Mackinaw Public Schools**

1. **Planning Team Introductions at 6:00 p.m.**
2. **Brief Presentation of Management Planning Process and Status at 6:05 p.m.**
 - e. Significance Statements
 - f. Development of Management Zone Maps
 - g. Action Goal Development – Draft 10-year strategies to address the desired future condition of each zone
 - h. Wilderness State Park Planning Team Draft Action Goals organized by:
 - General Action Goals
 - Primitive Zone
 - Backcountry Zone
 - Natural Resource Recreation Zone
 - Developed Recreation Zone
 - Visitor Service Zone
 - h. Priority Exercise explained
 - i. Action Goals input sheets described
 - j. Questions and Answers
3. **Open House at 6:30 p.m.**
 - e. You are invited to visit each of the stations and talk to Planning Team members
 - f. Sticky notes are available to comment on Management Zone Map
 - g. Color dots are available for you to identify your priority actions (please limit yourself to 10 dots)
 - h. “Additional Input” sheets are available for you to contribute additional suggested actions goals
4. **Adjournment at 8:00 p.m.**

For More Information:

Project Website: www.clearzoning.com/clearzoning-clients/wilderness-state-park/

DNR Management Planning Website: www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans

Email: Susie@clearzoning.com or jill@clearzoning.com

Phone: 248.423.1776



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Attendees List	
Name	Organization
Debbie Jensen	DNR
MaryAnn Moore	Mackinaw City
Susie Safford	Mackinaw City
Tim & Mary Arthur	Linden
Nancy Salar	Emmet County
Bo Gleron	Citizen
Dick Moehl	Emmet County
Mike Moehl	Dexter MI
Glenn Palmgren	DNR
Jolene Michaels	Carp Lake
Dawn Edwards	Mackinaw City Chamber of Commerce
Roy Cole	Wawtam Twp Trustee
Bob Desy	Wawtam Twp Trustee
Dave & Deb Zagurny	
Wendy Conway	Wilderness Park

General Action Goals

Many of the 10-Year Action Goals for Wilderness State Park are general in nature and apply within all of the management zones. These often deal with park-wide issues, such as invasive species control, universal access, developing Stewardship, Wildlife and Emergency plans, or marketing the park's many recreational opportunities to a wider audience of potential users. Many of the overall maintenance and operational issues of operating a state park also result in the need for actions across all zone boundaries, such as law enforcement.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Natural Resources		
1. Create a Stewardship Plan	3-5 Years	
2. Implement Stewardship Plan for the park	On-going	1
3. Implement the specific provisions of the Biodiversity Stewardship Plan (BSP)	On Hold	3
4. Update Natural Features Inventory	On-going	2
5. Preserve the quality of the known exemplary natural communities	On-going	5
6. Clarify boundaries of designated Natural Areas	1 Year	1
7. Nominate appropriate wilderness/natural area(s) under Wilderness and Natural Areas Act (recommend recinding existing Natural Resource Commission dedications)	3 Years	
8. Implement invasive species control	On-going	5
Historic/Cultural Resources		
1. Complete the cultural resources survey of the park for interpretation, protection and preservation	5 Years	1
2. Develop and conduct monitoring program for archaeological resources	On-going	
3. Upgrade all historic structures to a historically-appropriate and functionable level	On-going	4
4. Protect archaeological/cultural resources identified by the inventory	On-going	1
5. Review all proposed earthwork activities for potential impact on historic/cultural resources	On-going	
Recreation Opportunities		
1. Identify opportunities to improve trail connectivity between the park and local community to support the mutual goals of PRD and the local partners	2 Years	6
2. Park Manager will continue to utilize marketing resources (ex: local paper) to build relationships within surrounding community	2 Years	4
3. Evaluate gaps and closed historical segments of the park's hiking trail network for possible connection/reopening	5 Years	1

General Action Goals		
Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Recreation Opportunities (cont.)		
4. Work with partners to identify/develop water trail opportunities	3 Years	3
5. Evaluate and identify ecotourism opportunities	On-going	1
Education/Interpretation Opportunities		
1. Develop specific interpretation and education opportunities	On-going	
2. Develop database from research project user permits to be shared with proposed new research projects	2 Years	
3. Utilize variety of traditional and new media, including audio and visual technologies, podcasts, and other emerging technologies for interpretation	On-going	
Management Focus		
1. Explore feasibility of land acquisition within the new proposed boundary	On-going	
2. Update Wildfire Plan and Emergency Plan	Completed with Annual Update	
3. Continue to explore and develop on-going revenue generating opportunities that are sustainable	On-going	
4. Advocate for appropriate funding for maintenance of historic structures	On-going	3
5. Implement high-speed internet access at headquarters and throughout both campgrounds	2 Years	1
6. Advocate for appropriate funding for stewardship needs	On-going	1
7. Evaluate park boundary with adjacent land administrators	On-going	
8. Continue to promote and enhance partnerships with friends groups, stakeholders, universities, research groups and the like	On-going	2
9. Continue to incorporate Dark Skies designation into all aspects of park planning, management and development	On-going	3
10. Define park boundaries with appropriate markers	5 Years	
11. Conduct assessment to improve parking and access at Sturgeon Bay	2 Years	12 (10 of the 12 stickers were from one individual)
Development		
1. Implement recommendations of parking assessment to improve parking/access within Sturgeon Bay	5-10 Years	
2. Evaluate opportunities to improve barrier-free access throughout the park	On-going Annually	2
<p>Comments: From Chamber of Commerce - we need to be able to market trail loops, 1.5 mile - 3 mile areas, more parking for walkers. Simple benefits sheets for what park offers to people.</p>		

Primitive Zone

The Primitive Zone emphasizes the natural resources. It is managed to allow only dispersed, low frequency and low impact recreational use in the zone. Maintaining a high quality natural resource condition dictates the extent to which recreational improvements or users are allowed. For this reason, native species and natural processes take precedence over visitor accommodation. Furthermore, the administrative regulations and standards associated with the Critical Dunes, Coastal Environmental Area, and designated Natural Areas should be recognized. The following 10-Year Action Goals propose only very low levels of development, in order to protect sensitive resources.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Natural Resources		
1. Inspect for piping plover nesting sites on the beach to ensure resource protection	On-going (Seasonal)	2
Recreation Opportunities		
1. Evaluate opportunities for new backcountry camping sites including water trail sites	2-4 Years	2
Education/Interpreation Opportunities		
1. Identify opportunities (including technological) for interpretation of the plovers and their habitat	On-Going (Seasonal)	1
Management Focus		
1. Evaluate O'Neal Lake and the dam for future management and division responsibility	2 Years	
2. Monitor and protect piping plover and their nesting sites through a variety of methods (i.e. enclosures)	On-going (Seasonal)	2
3. Continue to implement all administrative regulations for Critical Dunes and environmental areas	On-Going	1

Backcountry Zone

The character of the Backcountry zone is intended to be natural, with minimal evidence of human impact. Several of the trails at Wilderness State Park are are buffered as Backcountry Zone in recognition of the fact that these trails are used more intensively than what is permitted in the Primitive Zone. Nonetheless, Backcountry Zone trails need to be managed to ensure the natural resources are protected and the natural feel is maintained. Tolerance for natural resource impacts is low in the Backcountry zone and is reflected in the 10-year Action Goals for this zone.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Development		
1. Evaluate conditions of bridges on trails and repair/replace consistent with the zone	3-5 Years	1

Natural Resource Recreation Zone

Active recreation, at medium to high density of use, conducted in a natural setting is the hallmark of the Natural Resource Recreation zone. There is still an emphasis on resource quality over recreation, but in this zone, higher levels of use are allowed. Vegetation may be managed to facilitate recreational use and maintaining an aesthetically appealing landscape, as well as to address such things as hazard trees, and to manage pests and disease. The 10-year Action Goals are intended to promote moderate to high levels of diverse recreation opportunities compatible with natural character of the zone. At Wilderness State Park, a Natural Resource Recreation buffer is applied to designated trails allowing higher level use (ex: snowmobiling) as well as to areas of the park where rustic cabins are located.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Natural Resources		
1. Continue to follow regulations of the High Risk Erosion Area	On-going	
Management Focus		
1. Create Development Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay area	3-5 Years	
Development		
1. Evaluate opportunity for additional rustic cabins and backcountry sites including water trail sites	3-5 Years	
2. Evaluate condition of bridges on trails and repair/replace consistent with the zone	3-5 Years	

Developed Recreation Zone

Active recreation with high density of use, conducted in areas not designated for natural resource significance, is characteristic of the Developed Recreation Zone. In this zone, recreation dominates with natural resource attributes enhanced where possible. Wilderness State Park's primary day-use and camping areas and swimming beaches are located in this zone. The 10-Year Action Goals direct management decisions and development projects designed to promote and support these diverse visitor activities.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
Recreation Opportunities		
1. Explore possibilities for creating a safe Great Lakes boating access area within the park	5 Years	1
Historic/Cultural Resources		
1. Restore historic structures to operational level	5 Years	3
Education/Interpretation Opportunities		
1. Explore opportunity to create year-round interpretive program	1-2 Years	
Management Focus		
1. Create Development Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay area	3-5 Years	1
Development		
1. Implement Master Plan for Sturgeon Bay	5-10 Years	
2. Implement Lake Shore Campground Redevelopment Plan	5 Years	1
3. Repurpose the Dining Hall as outreach center	10 Years	
4. Restore Pines Campground latrines, and west lakeshore kiosk	5 Years	

Visitor Service Zone

This zone encompasses the developed areas required for operations. It includes maintenance facilities with the associated land required to conduct the business of running Wilderness State Park.

Action Goals	Target Completion Date	Priority Stickers
1. Upgrade maintenance areas on an as needed basis	On-going	
2. Implement high-speed internet access at park headquarters	2 Years	2



[close print view](#)

DNR seeks public input on a new General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park

Contact: Debbie Jensen, 517-335-4832 or [Ed Golder](#), 517-335-3014
Agency: Natural Resources

July 22, 2013

The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) invites the public to take part in an online survey to provide valuable input on a new General Management Plan for Wilderness State Park in Emmet County.

Wilderness State Park is administered by the DNR Parks and Recreation Division. The park offers visitors a variety of year-round recreational activities within its 10,000-plus acres, including 26 miles of beautiful Lake Michigan shoreline, numerous trails, six rustic cabins and three rustic bunkhouses.

The DNR Parks and Recreation Division uses General Management Plans to define long-range planning and management strategies. This General Management Plan will assist the Parks and Recreation Division in meeting its responsibilities to protect and preserve the site's natural and cultural resources, and address access to land- and water-based public recreation and educational opportunities.

This is the first of several opportunities for citizens to be part of the planning process, which will include availability of draft documents online for review and comment, and a public open house to be announced in the fall.

The survey can be found online at www.surveymonkey.com/s/WildernessStatePark and will be available until Sept. 6, 2013.

For more information about this survey or the proposed plan, contact Debbie Jensen, DNR park management plan administrator, at 517-335-4832 (TTY/TDD711 Michigan Relay Center for the hearing impaired). Additional information on the DNR's General Management Plan process is available at www.michigan.gov/parkmanagementplans.

For more information about Wilderness State Park, visit www.michigan.gov/wilderness.






The Recreation Passport is an easy, affordable way for residents to enjoy and support outdoor recreation opportunities in Michigan. By checking "YES" for the \$11 Recreation Passport (\$5 for motorcycles) when renewing a license plate through the Secretary of State (by mail, kiosk, online at www.expresssos.com or at branch offices), Michigan motorists get access to state parks, recreation areas, state forest campgrounds, nonmotorized state trailhead parking and state boat launches. In addition, Recreation Passport holders can enjoy real savings at businesses and retailers that participate in the Passport Perks discount program. The Recreation Passport is valid until the next license plate renewal date. Nonresidents can purchase the Recreation Passport (\$30.50 annual, \$8.40 daily) at any state park or recreation area or through the Michigan e-Store at www.michigan.gov/estore.

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Question 2: See Next Page for Zip Code Map

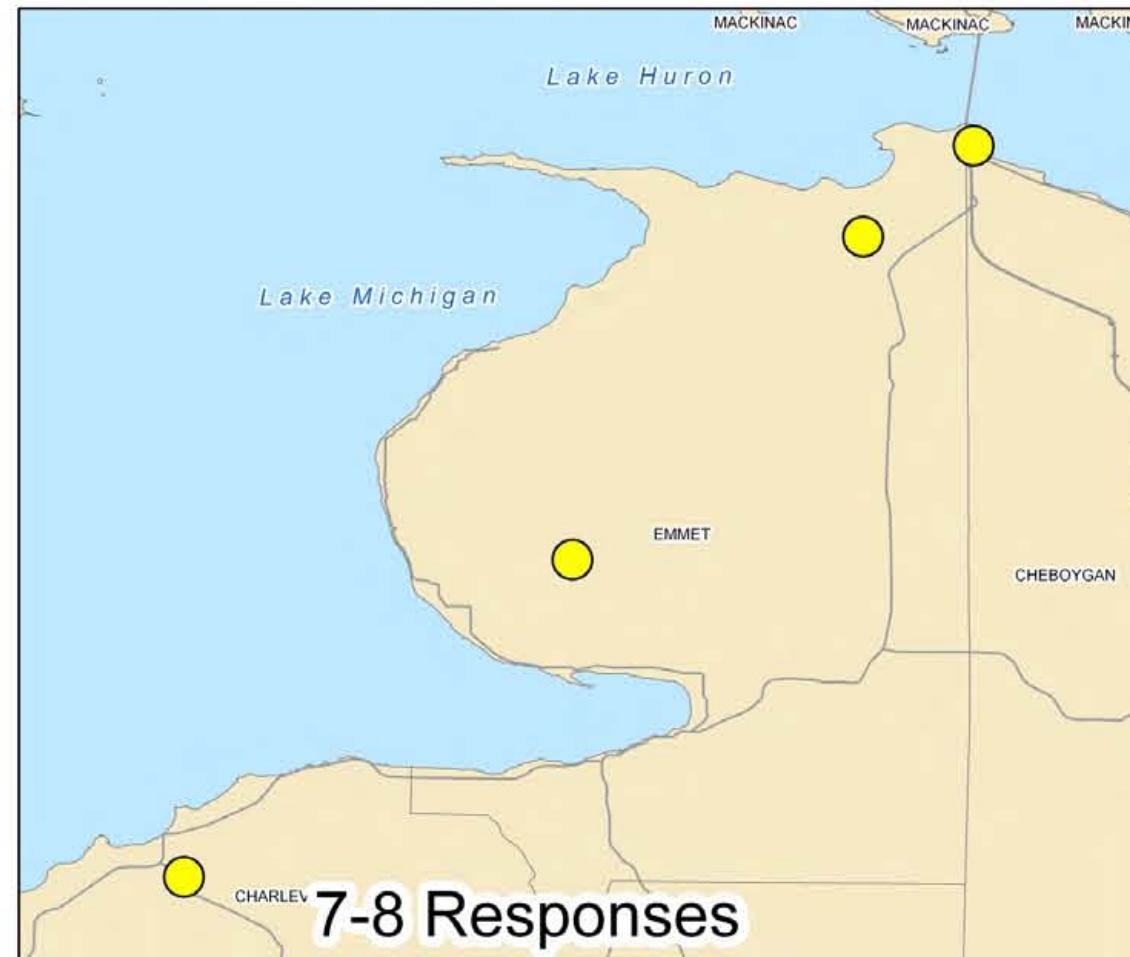
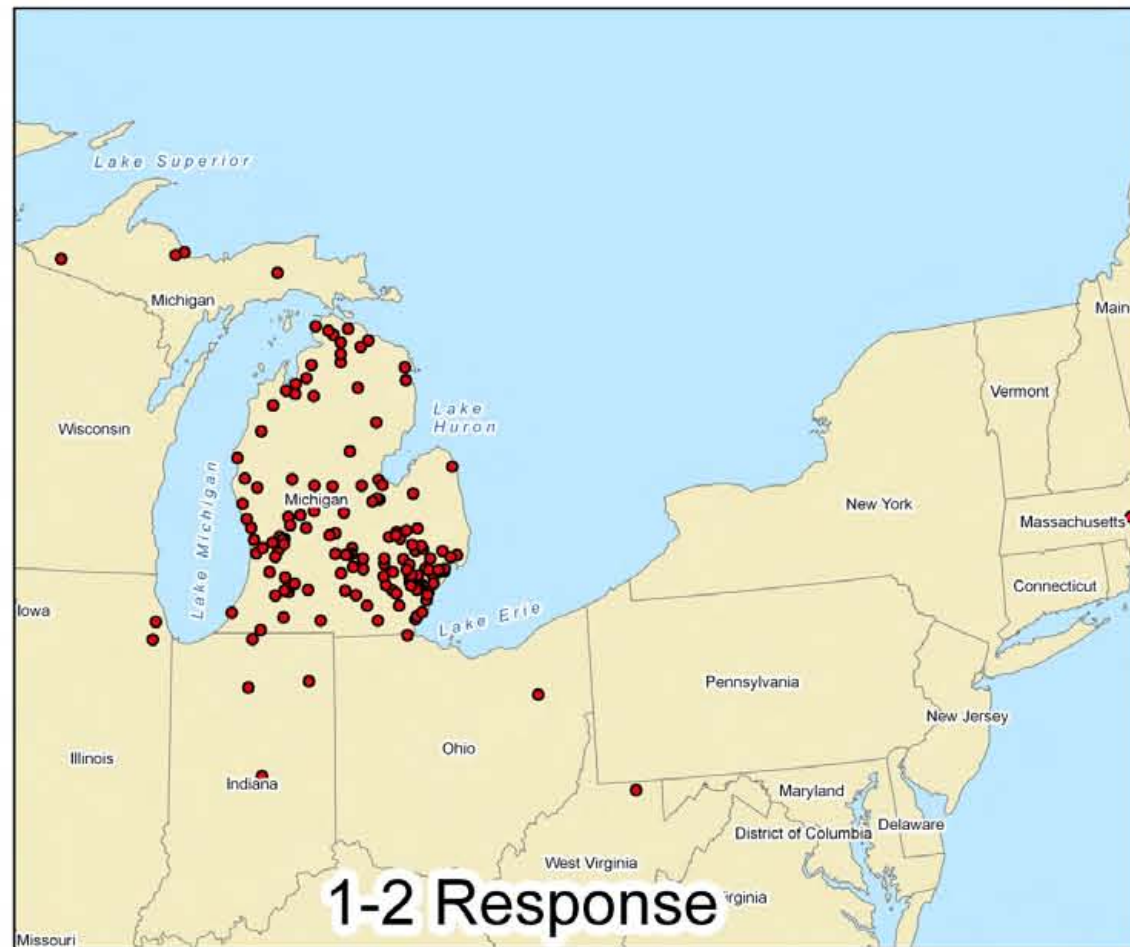
3. During what season do you primarily visit Wilderness State Park?			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Spring (March - May)		3.1%	8
Summer (June-August)		52.2%	133
Fall (September-November)		20.8%	53
Winter (December - February)		1.2%	3
I visit All Year Round		22.7%	58
answered question			255
skipped question			10

Wilderness State Park Survey Responses by Zip Code

Bliss, Cross Village, and Wawatam Townships
Emmert County, Michigan



- 1-2 Responses
- 3-4 Responses
- 5-6 Responses
- 7-8 Responses



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Sources: Michigan DNR,
Michigan Geographic Data Library
Map Created: October 14, 2013

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4. How many times per year do you visit Wilderness State Park?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Less than once per year		23.8%	61
1-2 times per year		53.1%	136
3-5 times per year		12.5%	32
6-10 times per year		4.7%	12
11 or more times per year		5.9%	15
		answered question	256
		skipped question	9

5. Do you typically visit Wilderness State Park as a day user or overnight camper?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Day User		46.0%	116
Camper		54.0%	136
		answered question	252
		skipped question	13




**6. As a Day User, what are your three most favorite things about Wilderness State Park?
Please check only 3 features.**

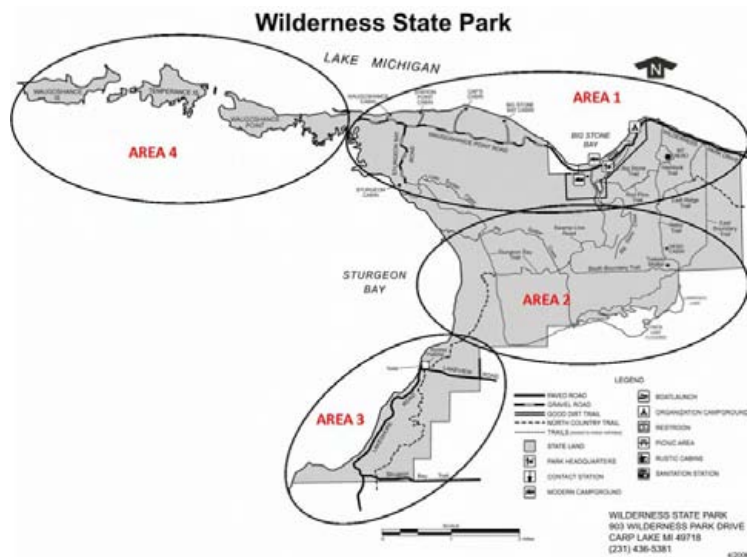
		Response Percent	Response Count
Swimming		23.5%	27
Sturgeon Bay (west) shoreline		35.7%	41
Lake Michigan (north) shoreline		29.6%	34
The Islands		8.7%	10
Great Lakes ship watching		12.2%	14
O'Neal Lake		5.2%	6
Boating/canoeing/kayaking		20.9%	24
Fishing		24.3%	28
Hunting/trapping		23.5%	27
Nature viewing/study		40.9%	47
Solitude of woods		35.7%	41
Solitude of beach		36.5%	42
Hiking/Trail running		29.6%	34
Mountain biking		7.0%	8
Cross country skiing/snowshoeing		8.7%	10
Snowmobiling		2.6%	3
	Other (please specify)		9
answered question			115
skipped question			150

**7. As a Camper, what are your three most favorite things about Wilderness State Park?
Please check only 3 features.**

		Response Percent	Response Count
Campgrounds, modern		39.6%	82
Cabins, rustic		20.8%	43
Camping, backcountry		10.6%	22
Camping, organizational		0.5%	1
Nature viewing/study		19.3%	40
Solitude of woods		32.4%	67
Solitude of beach		37.2%	77
Hiking/Trail running		23.7%	49
Mountain biking		7.2%	15
Boating/canoeing/kayaking		12.6%	26
Sturgeon Bay (west) shoreline		13.5%	28
Lake Michigan (north) shoreline		32.9%	68
Islands		4.3%	9
Great Lakes ship watching		6.3%	13
Swimming		20.3%	42
Hunting/trapping		10.1%	21
Fishing		19.3%	40
O'Neal Lake		0.5%	1
Cross country skiing/snowshoeing		1.0%	2
Snowmobiling		3.9%	8
	Other (please specify)		9
answered question			207

8. As a Camper, what is the typical length of your stay?

		Response Percent	Response Count
1-2 Nights		41.3%	83
3-6 Nights		41.8%	84
7 Nights or more		16.9%	34
answered question			201
skipped question			64

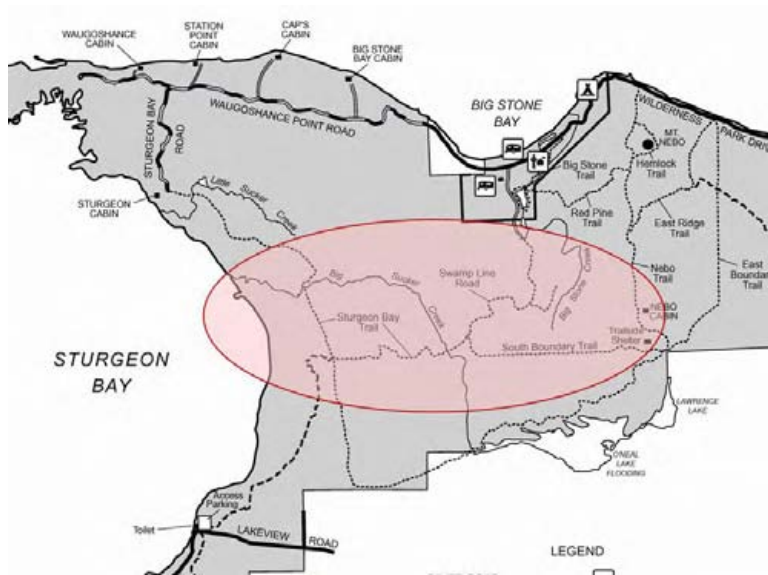


9. Looking at the map above, in which area of the park do you typically spend the most time?

	Most time	Some time	Not much time	Rating Average	Rating Count
Area 1 - Northshore/Campground	69.7% (140)	23.4% (47)	7.0% (14)	2.63	201
Area 2 - Interior/O'Neal Lake	12.8% (22)	46.5% (80)	40.7% (70)	1.72	172
Area 3 - Sturgeon Bay Shore	25.0% (45)	40.6% (73)	34.4% (62)	1.91	180
Area 4 - Waugoshance Point/Islands	17.3% (30)	38.7% (67)	43.9% (76)	1.73	173
answered question					224
skipped question					41

10. Do you ride a bike at Wilderness State Park?

		Response Percent	Response Count
Yes, primarily on park roads		36.1%	78
Yes, primarily on mountain bike trails		13.9%	30
I don't ride a bike in the park		50.0%	108
		answered question	216
		skipped question	49



11. Generally, would you like to see the backcountry area highlighted in the map above managed as even more of a "wild and natural" area? This designation would allow foot-traffic only in the area south of Waugoshance Point Road and east of Sturgeon Bay Road (excluding the Pines Campground).

		Response Percent	Response Count
It would be a great idea to have foot-traffic only!		29.5%	65
I need more information.		22.7%	50
Leave the area as it is.		26.4%	58
I have no opinion.		13.2%	29
Comment (please specify)		8.2%	18
		answered question	220
		skipped question	45

12. How would you rate your experience with the following facilities and recreational opportunities at Wilderness State Park?

	Poor	Fair	Good	Very Good	Excellent	N/A	Rating Average	Rating Count
Camping, modern	3.1% (6)	4.2% (8)	22.9% (44)	30.2% (58)	15.1% (29)	24.5% (47)	3.66	192
Cabins, rustic	0.0% (0)	0.6% (1)	8.9% (16)	11.7% (21)	16.1% (29)	62.8% (113)	4.16	180
Camping, backcountry	1.1% (2)	1.1% (2)	11.2% (20)	10.7% (19)	6.2% (11)	69.7% (124)	3.65	178
Camping, organizational	0.6% (1)	1.7% (3)	6.4% (11)	8.1% (14)	5.8% (10)	77.5% (134)	3.74	173
Hunting/trapping	1.7% (3)	5.0% (9)	10.6% (19)	5.0% (9)	4.4% (8)	73.3% (132)	3.21	180
Fishing	0.5% (1)	7.7% (14)	18.0% (33)	13.7% (25)	8.2% (15)	51.9% (95)	3.44	183
O'Neal Lake	0.0% (0)	2.8% (5)	15.3% (27)	7.4% (13)	6.8% (12)	67.6% (119)	3.56	176
Boating	0.0% (0)	1.1% (2)	13.1% (23)	17.0% (30)	7.4% (13)	61.4% (108)	3.79	176
Canoeing/kayaking	0.0% (0)	1.7% (3)	12.5% (22)	21.6% (38)	20.5% (36)	43.8% (77)	4.08	176
Sailing	0.6% (1)	1.2% (2)	5.4% (9)	6.5% (11)	6.5% (11)	79.8% (134)	3.85	168
Hiking/trail running	0.6% (1)	1.7% (3)	19.0% (34)	30.7% (55)	31.3% (56)	16.8% (30)	4.09	179
Biking	0.6% (1)	4.0% (7)	16.5% (29)	24.4% (43)	14.8% (26)	39.8% (70)	3.81	176
Cross country skiing	0.0% (0)	0.6% (1)	7.0% (12)	9.4% (16)	8.8% (15)	74.3% (127)	4.02	171
Snowshoeing	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	7.6% (13)	9.4% (16)	8.8% (15)	74.1% (126)	4.05	170
Snowmobiling	1.2% (2)	1.2% (2)	3.0% (5)	2.4% (4)	3.7% (6)	88.4% (145)	3.53	164
Nature viewing/study	0.5% (1)	2.7% (5)	14.7% (27)	25.0% (46)	46.7% (86)	10.3% (19)	4.28	184
Great Lakes ship watching	0.0% (0)	3.4% (6)	14.8% (26)	30.7% (54)	27.8% (49)	23.3% (41)	4.08	176
Research (water, geology, flora, fauna)	0.6% (1)	1.2% (2)	5.5% (9)	7.9% (13)	11.6% (19)	73.2% (120)	4.07	164
Explorer Guide Program	0.0% (0)	0.6% (1)	6.5% (11)	5.9% (10)	7.1% (12)	80.0% (136)	3.97	170
Swimming	0.6% (1)	1.1% (2)	12.9% (23)	20.8% (37)	42.1% (75)	22.5% (40)	4.33	178
Islands	0.0% (0)	1.2% (2)	9.2% (16)	16.2% (28)	24.3% (42)	49.1% (85)	4.25	173
Shoreline, Lake Michigan (north)	0.0% (0)	2.2% (4)	10.9% (20)	22.8% (42)	52.2% (96)	12.0% (22)	4.42	184
Shoreline, Lake Michigan (west)	1.1% (2)	2.2% (4)	7.3% (13)	20.2% (36)	47.2% (84)	21.9% (39)	4.41	178
Other (please specify)								16
answered question								215
skipped question								50

13. What, if any, additional opportunities or enhancements would you like to see at Wilderness State Park?

	No Need	Would be nice	A Must	Rating Average	Rating Count
Additional campsites, modern	37.3% (60)	40.4% (65)	22.4% (36)	1.85	161
Additional campsites, backcountry (hike-in)	31.6% (48)	57.9% (88)	10.5% (16)	1.79	152
Additional trails, foot-traffic only	26.5% (43)	60.5% (98)	13.0% (21)	1.86	162
Improved boat launch, Sturgeon Bay	40.6% (65)	42.5% (68)	16.9% (27)	1.76	160
Observation platforms	21.8% (37)	63.5% (108)	14.7% (25)	1.93	170
Designated pet-friendly beach areas	38.5% (65)	33.1% (56)	28.4% (48)	1.90	169
Interpretation/Education center	24.1% (40)	62.0% (103)	13.9% (23)	1.90	166
Basic day-use amenities, Sturgeon Bay	27.4% (46)	57.1% (96)	15.5% (26)	1.88	168
Additional cabins/alternative lodging	40.0% (62)	52.3% (81)	7.7% (12)	1.68	155
			Other (please specify)		31
			answered question		202
			skipped question		63

Question 14: What 3 words would you use to describe Wilderness State Park to some who has never been there?



STURGEON BAY BEACH



A Survey of Beach Use for Wilderness State Park

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Sturgeon Bay Beach

A SURVEY OF BEACH USE FOR WILDERNESS STATE PARK

INTRODUCTION

Wilderness State Park is currently updating its management plan, and in the process hopes to address the challenge of managing the Sturgeon Bay beach. In order to do so, the park first wishes to better understand beach use. Our project sought to provide this understanding by gathering information to characterize what constituencies are using the beach: where users come from, how often they visit, how they use the beach, and what their needs are. We also paid special attention to where users park along Lakeshore Drive (the road that runs parallel to the beach) and the presence of dogs on the beach which are two primary areas of concern for park managers.

Sturgeon Bay is found at the northwest corner of lower Michigan's Lake Michigan coast. Most of its shoreline is under the jurisdiction of Wilderness State Park. The southernmost portion of the shore is a beautiful and popular natural beach which, despite regular use, is irregularly managed due to at least two complicating factors. First off, Bliss Township owns a small section of beach in the heart of the most heavily used area, on which the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has no management authority. Additionally, there is no direct route through the park that connects the beach with Wilderness' headquarters in the northern part of the park. Any trip from headquarters to the beach requires a half-hour-long drive.

From our efforts, we found that beach users were almost evenly divided between local¹ and non-local as well as frequent² and infrequent visitors. The vast majority of all users were visiting the beach because of its unimproved quality and engaging in low-intensity uses while there. We found a regular dog presence on the beach, with most dogs owned by locals who come to the beach often and who realize that they are violating park regulations. Other beach users had conflicting views on the presence of dogs; some were in favor of allowing them on a section of beach, while others were completely opposed to any dog presence. Parking was concentrated along the county road which parallels the beach; at peak business cars evenly line both sides of the road in the most heavily-used stretch.

As the beach's pristine nature is a key reason for beach use, and use is predominately low-intensity, we recommend that the park maintain this area in as unimproved of a condition as possible. However, potential increasing use and unregulated parking suggest that some subtle increase in parking capacity, undertaken with care to avoid compromising beach wildness, may be worthwhile to protect the area from damage. Based on dog numbers and user

¹ Local: lives within Emmett or Cheboygan County

² Frequent: visits the beach daily, weekly, or monthly

Sturgeon Bay Beach

sentiment, we suggest that the park continues to enforce existing dog regulations on its property, while taking advantage of the fact that Bliss Township's inholding offers a preexisting dog beach.

METHODOLOGY

We collected information on beach use on the afternoons of July 4, July 14, and July 25. The first two dates were chosen to establish a picture of maximum beach use; the former because of the holiday and the latter because it was a Sunday that coincided with an influx of visitors attending Blissfest. July 25, a Thursday, was chosen to offer a baseline of normal use on a summer weekday. Weather in the afternoon of each day was similar, with highs around 80°F and clear skies, although the morning of July 4th was cool and rainy, which may have impacted the number of users.

In order to expedite surveying, minimize fluctuations in numbers of users, and avoid counting the same individuals multiple times, we divided the beach into segments which were each surveyed by a different team for a period of no more than two hours. After approaching each group of users, we marked their location with a handheld GPS unit and the total number of individuals represented by that marker. To avoid being a nuisance to beach users, we surveyed only one primary respondent for each group, (although others sometimes joined in) and delivered the survey in a conversational format. As a result, not all survey questions were consistently answered. Also, in interpreting the data, it was assumed that answers, including those of origin and beach use, applied to the entire group unless otherwise discussed. If a group declined to be surveyed or for any reason could not be approached by the surveyors, we still recorded their numbers and location in order to have a more complete picture of the overall density of use. Surveyors also recorded the presence of dogs.

During the interval in which beach users were being surveyed, another group of researchers collected data on cars parked along the road which parallels the beach, using a GPS unit to record location and also documenting each car's state or province of origin and possession or lack of a Michigan Recreation Passport.

RESULTS

Density

For all three survey days, users were most concentrated just south of the Bliss Township beach, within the state park. This is significant in that it means there is indeed a substantial concentration of population within the park, rather than just the Bliss Township inholding. Density of parked cars follows that of people, although the center of concentration seems a little farther north, within the Bliss Township section of the beach. It is clear that the parking lot at the north

end of the beach is fairly underused, and the small parking loop just south of the township section cannot accommodate the number of cars being parked in the area. When we were in the field, we did not encounter any problems associated with on-shoulder parking; it took place in an orderly manner, with a fairly narrow footprint on each side of the road.

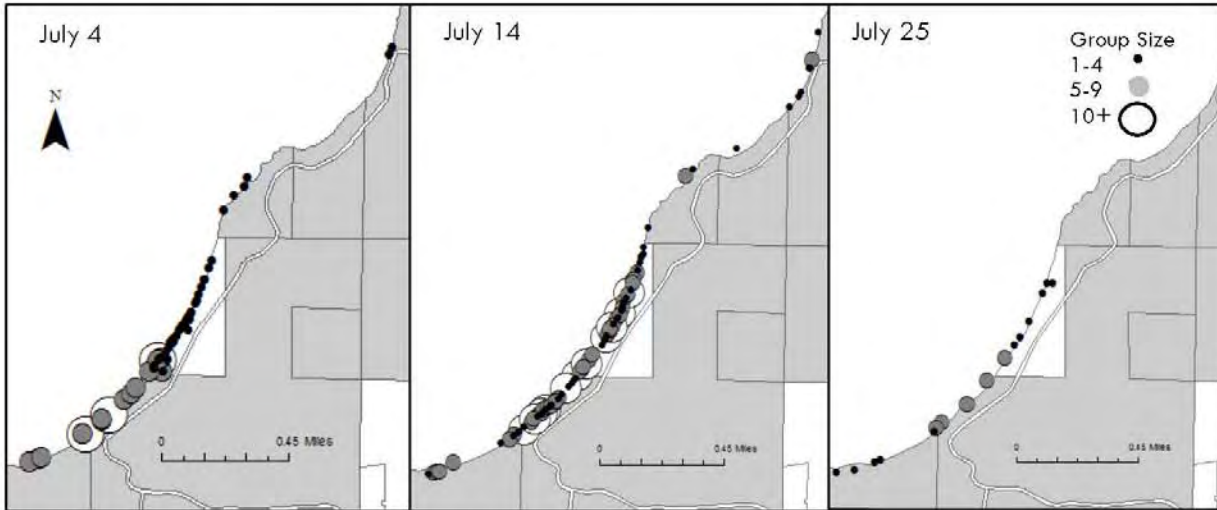


FIGURE 1: DENSITY OF BEACH USERS ON EACH DAY
 These maps illustrate the substantial concentration of beach users along the southern border of the Bliss Township beach and just south of the border on the Wilderness State Park beach.

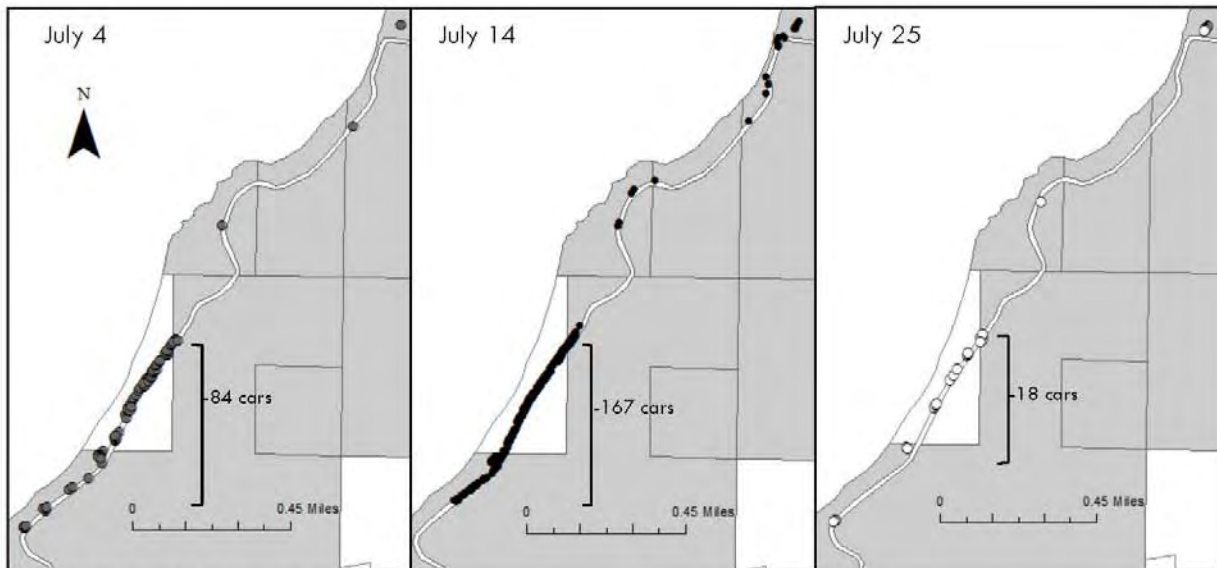


FIGURE 2: LOCATION OF CARS ON EACH DAY
 These maps illustrate the substantial concentration of cars within the Bliss Township inholding and just south of it.

Recreation Passports

Both beach users and cars parked along the road were surveyed to determine what percentage of users had recreation passports. When asked if they had a valid State of Michigan Recreation Passport on their vehicle, a majority of respondents said that they did. However the results from our vehicle survey indicated that less than 50% of vehicles at the beach had valid recreation passports. This discrepancy may be due to the fact that not all vehicle owners were surveyed although it is unlikely that this reason alone completely explains the inconsistency. An additional factor contributing to the discrepancy may be that the question about recreation passports typically came immediately after questions related to park ownership during which the fact that the park is largely state owned was discussed. Thus, when asked the following question about whether or not they had a valid recreation passport, unsure respondents tended to err towards responding “yes” because they often acknowledged that they knew Recreation Passports are necessary to for utilizing state parks.

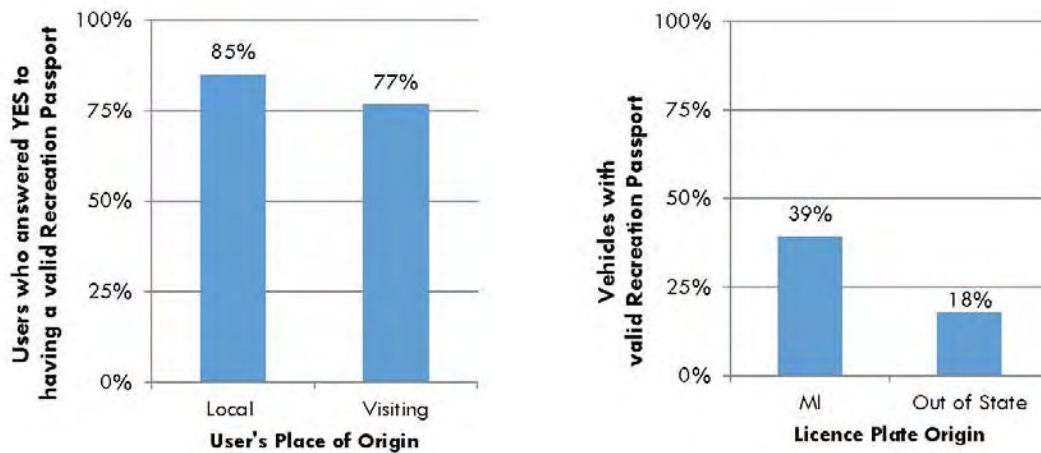


FIGURE 3: USERS WHO SAID THEY HAD A VALID RECREATION PASSPORT ON THEIR VEHICLE COMPARED TO VEHICLES THAT ACTUALLY HAD VALID RECREATIONAL PASSPORTS.

Although the majority of people surveyed claimed they had a recreational passport, our survey of vehicles along the road indicated otherwise. This may be due to several reasons including that we did not survey all car owners on the beach.

Place of Origin

Nearly half of users surveyed were permanent residents of the area meaning they lived within Emmett or Cheboygan County. Visitors, which included groups from the lower part of Michigan, Ohio, New York, Illinois, Wisconsin and even a group from Mexico, were the next largest subgroup. Summer residents (people who have summer homes in the area) were the least common. On the whole, answers from summer and visiting residents were sufficiently similar that for the purpose of discussion we grouped surveys as either local or non-local, with both visitors and summer residents in the latter category. When divided this way, beach users are almost evenly split. Locals and non-locals exhibited a small degree of self-separation; locals are concentrated in the state park just south of the township beach, while visitors from around the state and beyond are more concentrated in the township park and farther north in the state park. This reflects a tendency for the two constituencies to separate themselves, an impression that was anecdotally reinforced when several surveyed users said that locals stay on the southern part of the beach.

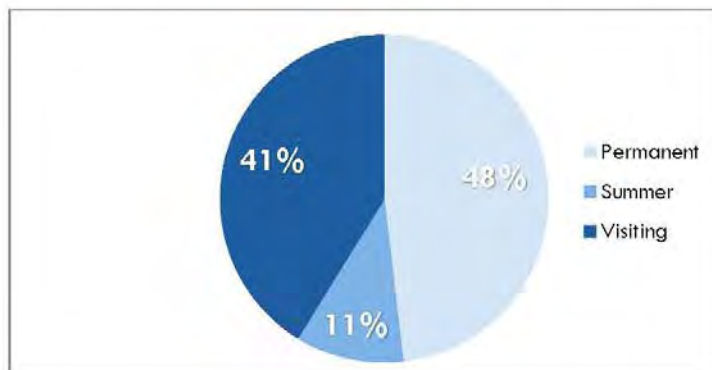


FIGURE 4: PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL BEACH USERS THAT ARE PERMANENT RESIDENTS, SUMMER RESIDENTS, OR VISITORS
 Percentages are derived from 99 primary respondents, accounting for 430 total users

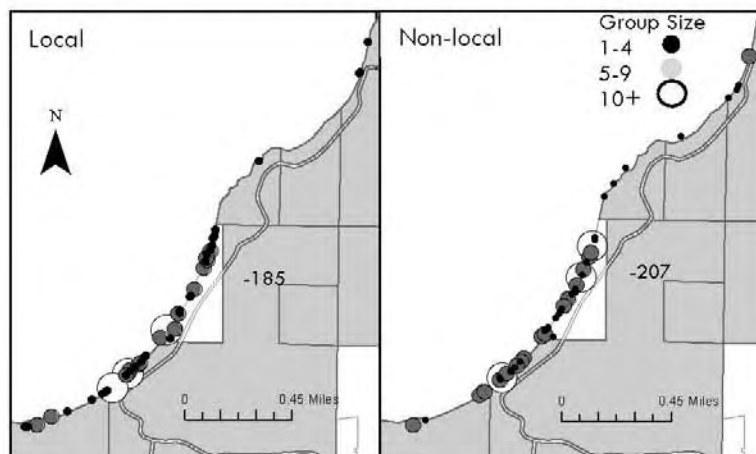


FIGURE 5: DENSITY OF LOCAL VS. NON-LOCAL BEACH USERS FOR ALL THREE DAYS COMBINED

Frequency of Visits

Interestingly, roughly as many surveyed users were daily or weekly users as were yearly or first-time users; overall it seems that users are evenly divided between frequent and infrequent trips to the beach. When we discuss brackets of frequent and infrequent users, we are grouping daily, weekly, and monthly in the former and yearly and first time in the latter. Frequent beach users heard about the beach through family or local knowledge, including local yacht and sailing clubs. Among first time users, nine said they found out about the beach through word of mouth and six from recommendations given to them by places they were staying. Other ways in which visitors heard about the beach include state park information and resources on the internet.

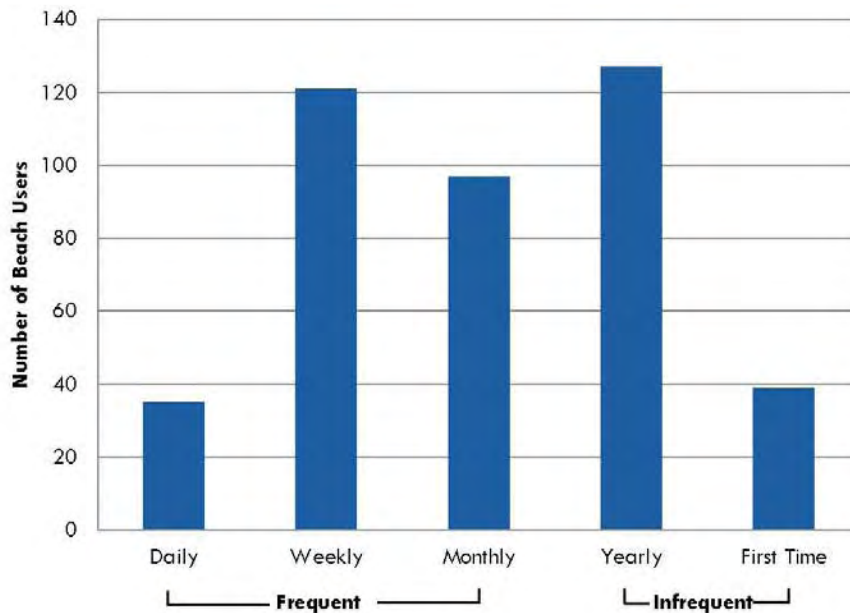


FIGURE 6: FREQUENCY OF BEACHGOING
Counts are derived from 96 primary respondents, accounting for 419 total users

Type of Use

Across all users, quality was most often cited as the attraction to this particular beach. Water sports were a much more common attraction for visitors than locals; the most common activities under this bracket were swimming, kiteboarding, and windsurfing. The fact that low population density and the quality of the beach were referred to by 63% of all users surveyed makes it clear that the pristine nature of the beach its greatest asset. Also important is that low-intensity uses predominate; only 16% percent of all users cited higher-intensity activities such as exercise, water sports, or dogs. The high number of “other” response among visitors is due to people referencing Blissfest as their reason for choosing to come to this beach. It is interesting to note that only visitors referred to dogs as a reason for coming, even though most dog owners surveyed were locals.

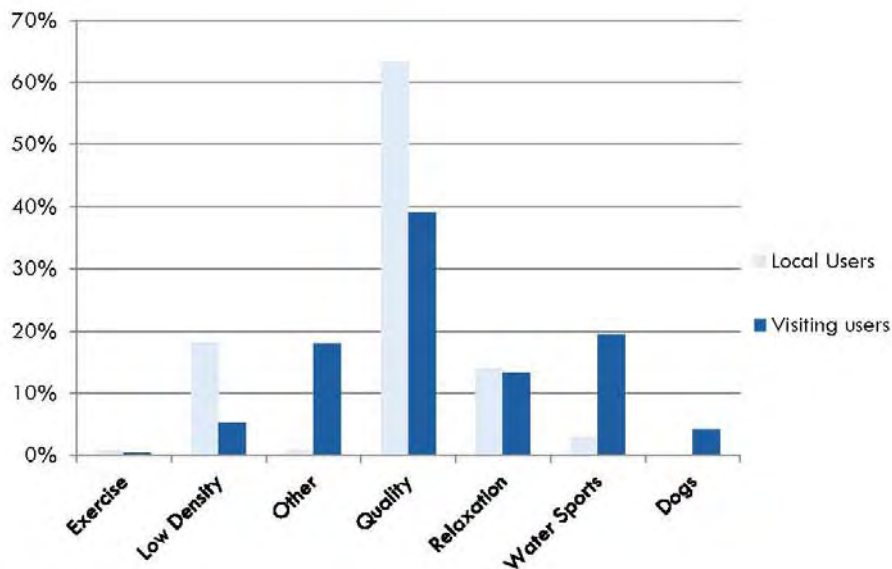


FIGURE 7: ATTRACTION TO BEACH FOR ALL USERS, LOCAL USERS, AND NON-LOCAL USERS
 Percentages are derived from 92 primary respondents, accounting for 520 total users

Dogs

For the most part, dog locations mirror trends in human populations, so a number of dogs are in fact in the state park's beach. As mentioned above, the vast majority of dog owners we surveyed were locals; only one group with a dog was found to be visiting. Half of dog owners surveyed were local and attend the beach daily or weekly, so any effort control dog presence should focus on regular local beach users. Because dogs are permitted on the Bliss Township section of the beach, we suggest that park management strategy take advantage of the inholding, in communication with Bliss Township, and focus on confining dogs to this area rather than simply keeping them off the park's beach.

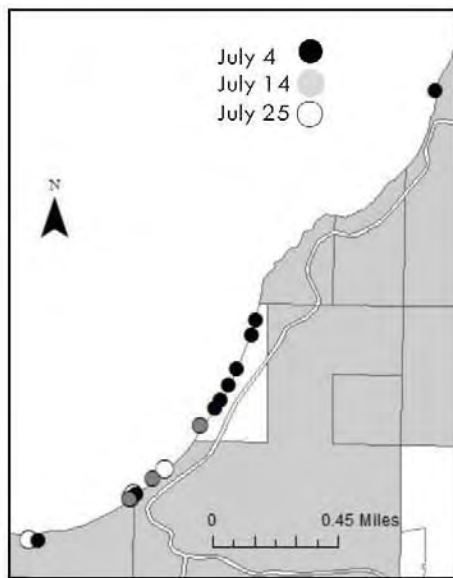


FIGURE 8: LOCATION OF DOGS ON THE BEACH

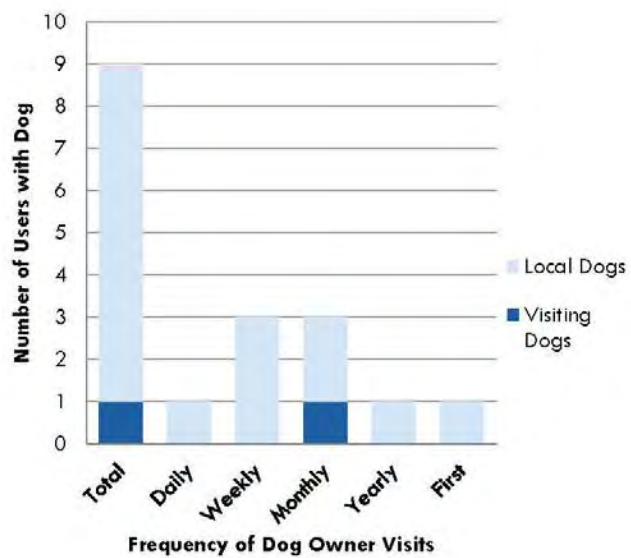


FIGURE 9: FREQUENCY OF DOG OWNER VISITS

Beach Ownership

The Sturgeon Bay Beach is functionally one beach, in spite of the fact that it is under two separate jurisdictions. The vast majority (60%) of beach users did not know that there are two beaches on the site, and there is no signage on the beach or along the road to suggest that part of the beach is not part of Wilderness State Park. Of those who did know about the split in ownership, none were preferentially going to one jurisdiction over the other. Anecdotal evidence also suggests that many of those who know about the distinction do not actually know where the boundary is; several people being surveyed pointed out where they thought the boundary fell, but none of their boundaries corresponded to the actual parcel boundary.

User Suggestions

For the most part, beach users value the pristine nature of the area. When asked if they have any suggestions for change on the beach, a majority said that they would not want anything to be altered. The second largest group suggested the addition of a bathroom. The most common responses in the “other” category were about dogs; these were evenly split between people saying that they wish there were no dogs on the beach and people saying that they would like to be able to have dogs on the beach. Most responses under “landscape change” were people wishing to see poison ivy removed. “Use change” typically referred to camping or driving on the beach. As a whole, this data reinforces the idea that any changes to the physical infrastructure around the beach should be undertaken with care to preserve the character of the area. The evenly split responses on dogs suggest that the park should not change its policy to allow dogs on a section of beach, particularly in light of the fact that dogs are permitted on the township beach.

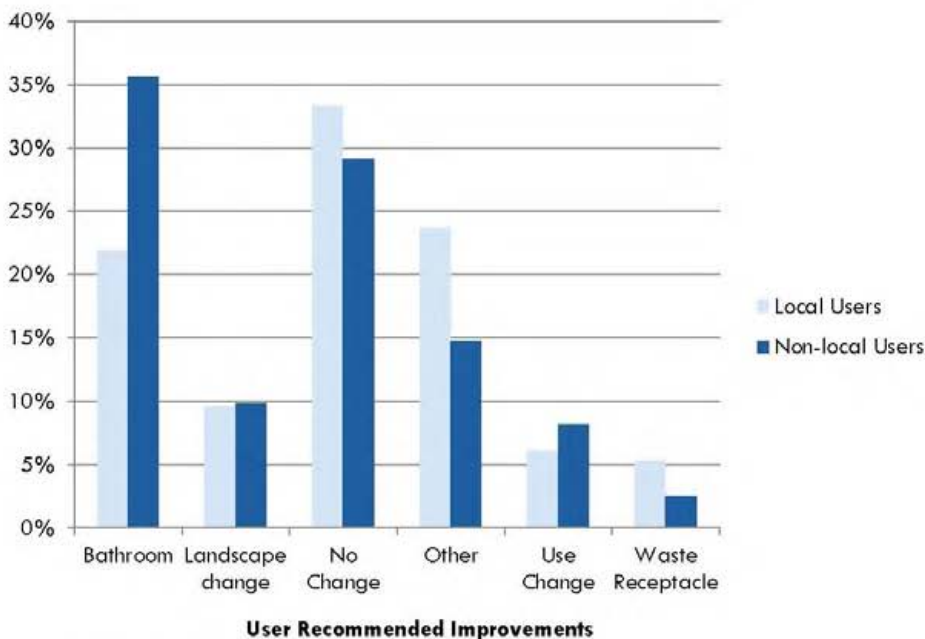


FIGURE 10: USER SUGGESTIONS FOR POSSIBLE CHANGES TO THE BEACH
 Percentages are derived from 89 primary respondents, accounting for 399 total users

RECOMMENDATIONS

Dogs

In light of the importance of breeding habitat for a federally endangered species (Great Lakes Piping Plover), as well as conflicting beach user views on the issues, we would advise the park to maintain its current policy banning dogs on its beach. However, this recommendation is given bearing in mind the fact that dogs are permitted in Bliss Township's inholding. As it is not possible for Wilderness State Park to ban dogs in that section, we would advise the park, in communication with the township, to focus on containing dogs to the area in which they are permitted. Most users bringing dogs to the beach are locals who know that they are not allowed to do so, which presents a good opportunity for education-based regulation, informing the local community as to why dogs are banned in the state park and where along the beach they are in fact permitted. Outreach which generates a sense of community investment in the Great Lakes piping plover, if feasible, could be an effective and exciting way to address the regulatory challenge.

General Improvement

To reiterate, the pristine and unimproved quality of the beach is what makes it uniquely appealing. The bulk of users engage in low-intensity activities, with beach quality as a primary draw. The single most common suggestion for improvement was "no change". Taken together, all of these pieces of information suggest that the primary goal of the park in managing this stretch of shoreline should be to preserve its current character. Subtle changes, such as adding unobtrusive waste receptacles and primitive restroom facilities, would be a good way to balance these needs. Parking is not currently problematic, but on peak use days the area is near capacity. To protect the dunes from erosion by unregulated parking, it could be worthwhile to construct a few small, primitive parking loops along the county road, similar to that which already exists immediately to the south of the township beach. This along with small improvements in signage could also help to concentrate foot traffic from the road to the beach along a few paths, thereby reducing the overall footprint on the dunes. In short, management of the Sturgeon Bay beach should strive to preserve the unimproved character of the area while taking steps to accommodate and protect the beach from growing use.

Appendix C – Planning Team Meetings Summaries

Over the duration of the General Management Planning process, the Wilderness State Park Planning Team held three on-site team meetings and three virtual meetings. These meetings were critical to the development of the General Management Plan and particularly the creation of the 20-Year Management Zones and the 10-Year Action Goals for the park. Additionally, the meetings were an opportunity to review input received from stakeholders and the public.

Overview of Planning Team Meetings

- **Team Meeting #1 (April 24-25th, 2013)** – Located at Wilderness State Park, the kick-off meeting was an opportunity for Planning Team members to introduce themselves to one another, review the General Management Plan schedule, discuss the park, and begin drafting the management zones and significance statements. In addition, Park Manager, Burr Mitchell, led the team on a tour of the park.
- **Team Meeting #2 (May 30th, 2013)** –The Planning Team reviewed the draft management zones and significance statements and developed appropriate questions for the public input survey. Additionally, the Planning Team began brainstorming 10-year action goals for the park.
- **Team Meeting #3 (June 25th, 2013)** – The Planning Team reviewed the Significance Statements and Action Goals as well as the draft public input survey. The Planning Team discussed various methods for distributing the online survey link to park visitors.
- **Team Meeting #4, Go-To-Meeting (July 30th, 2013)** – The Planning Team reviewed and finalized the Significance Statements and Action Goals in preparation for the September 25th Stakeholder Input Open House.
- **Team Meeting #5, Go-To-Meeting (October 16th, 2013)** – The purpose of this meeting was to review the input and feedback received at the September 25th Stakeholder Input Open House. The Planning Team used the input to inform and revise the 10-Year Action Goals as deemed necessary.
- **Team Meeting #6, Go-To-Meeting (January 23rd, 2014)** - The purpose of this meeting was to review the input and feedback received at the Public Input Open House. The Planning Team used the input to inform and revise the 10-Year Action Goals as deemed necessary.

Planning Team Meeting #1
Location: Park Headquarters
Date: April 24-25th

Day 1: April 24th

1. Attendees – Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Rich Hill, Joyce Angel, Lisa Gamero, Debbie Jensen, Matt Lincoln, Glenn Palmgren, Keith Cheli, Susie Roble, Dave Birchler
2. Debbie Jensen covered intro slides and requested planning team’s input into supporting analysis; suggested 10-year action goals to be suggested at any time “as we go through the process”
 - a. We need to address Blue Ribbon Panel, SCORP, MiScorecard, Advisory Board Goals (to assist Debbie with the approval by the Advisory Board)
 - b. Survey intended to achieve broader participation than Public Input Open Houses have been able to generate
3. Tour of the Park led by Burr Mitchell and Dave Goheen

Day 2: April 25th

1. Schedule future planning team meetings
 - a. Team Meeting #2 - May 30th (May 29th as alternate)
 - b. Team Meeting #3 – June 25th (June 26th as alternate)
2. Burr’s WSP Powerpoint Presentation
 - a. About 20 miles of trails in park (North Country Trails Association Harbor Springs Chapter maintains their segment very well; part of National Park Service – true hiking experience, no bikes or horses allowed; do excellent job of keeping open)
 - b. O’Neal Lake Dam – was originally intended as seasonal water fowl habitat but never lowered and now private owners have “lake frontage”; dam breach likely caused by landowners attempting to raise and lower lake level
 - c. Lumber mill village, on piers in Sturgeon Bay – people have begun to remove artifacts
 - d. Other historic settlement sites in danger, due to artifacts being collected, removed
 - e. CCC Camp should be maintained as an educational facility
 - f. Best map of Natural Areas is in the Fire Plan
 - i. Need better idea of boundaries
 - ii. Need definition of what each N.A. means
 - g. Burr and Lisa have some historical photos that they will share; Susie saved Burr’s photos on flash drive after meeting
 - h. Sturgeon Bay – Bliss Twp. Park beach area – ORVs access park property through unprotected Twp. Site
 - i. BAS is used by Chippewa for fishing access – unauthorized driving on beach is occasional by-product
 - i. Site has been suggested as harbor of refuge
 - ii. Critical dunes, historic dunes (dunes – swale communities)

3. Critical Area – DEQ designation
 - a. High-Risk Erosion Area (also DEQ, where waves are undermining dunes)
4. Shoreline – 26 miles; easily accessible; proximity of roads to lakes effectively makes it a scenic drive; character changes, cobbles on north, dunes on south; critical and high risk areas
5. State Forest Camping – cross marketing potential; hiking and kayaking; Y-camp lake; French Farm Lake dispersed camping
6. Keith Cheli suggested a true “Wilderness” designation, like Porcupine Mountains; there would be associated management limitations. Could consider a unique “Wilderness Zone” that would only apply to WSP; Glenn noted that Primitive Zone designation would provide a comparable, appropriate level of protection
7. Significant Statements Activity – see accompanying photos
 - a. Only Lower Peninsula Park with an effective Upper Peninsula boreal forest
 - b. Bass fishing on south side of islands is some of the best in state (may be a result of historic bombing range that created holes and depressions favored by species)
 - c. O’Neal Lake – only inland lake in park; important for hunting (bear, bobcat, coyote, grouse, water fowl)
 - d. Offers modern to backcountry camping experience in an historic setting
8. Draft Management Zone Activity – the planning team began drafting management zones. Finalization of management zones will be completed at May 30th team meeting.
 - a. Developed Rec from Big Stone Creek on east to private homes on west. Pines Campground would include amphitheater and sewage plant (which should be zoned Visitor Services Zone)
 - b. Sturgeon Bay – NRR between lake and road; Primitive Zone from road inland
 - c. Developed Rec. at location of BAS, parking lot near Bliss Twp. Park and south near entrance
 - d. Show Bliss Twp. Park as NRC boundary to be acquired
 - e. Future Cabins – would be between Wilderness Park Drive and north shore; requires Natural Resource Rec. to permit snowmobile access on the road and rustic cabins (vault toilets, wood heat, no electricity, limited access)
 - f. Central area of park to Sturgeon Bay as Primitive
 - g. Existing trail network at east and east of Primitive would be Backcountry. The actual trail might be NRR, with specific areas that could accommodate cabins
9. Contact Emmet County about available higher definition aerial imagery
10. Stakeholder WIN Activity – numerous organizations/individuals added to list
 - a. Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians
 - b. Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians
 - c. MDEQ – Nancy Solar, Critical Dunes; Scott Rasmussen
 - d. Pellston Schools
 - e. University researchers

- f. State Senators, Reps, County Commissioners
- g. Francine Cuthbert – Univ. of Minnesota
- h. Tip of Mit Watershed Council
- i. Sea Grant

11. Supporting Analysis

- a. Replace all maps where we have better content
- b. Land cover is so general that it doesn't say much
- c. Plat map – like Burr has on wall in HQ building would be helpful
- d. Better Aerial – would be ok to break into 2 or 3 pieces
- e. MNFI Natural Communities Map – ok to include

Planning Team Meeting #2
Location: Park Headquarters
Date: May 30th, 2013
Time: 9 AM – 2 PM

1. Meeting Attendees: Debbie Jensen, Lisa Gamero, Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Keith Cheli, Heather Hettinger, Mark Monroe, Glenn Palmgren, Theresa Neal, Joyce Angel, David Birchler, Susie Roble

2. Glenn Palmgren's Presentation on Natural Areas at Wilderness State Park
 - a. There are 3 DEQ designated areas:
 - i. Critical Dunes (majority of Sturgeon Bay);
 - ii. Coastal Environmental Area (can be fish, wildlife or both) – very limiting on development and affects Waugoschance Point and the islands. Removal of plants is only allowed with a permit.
 - iii. High Risk Erosion Area – applies to the entire parcel touched by the designation but it only regulates structures. Clearzoning will revise map legend to read "High Risk Erosion Area"
 - b. NRC Natural Areas – there are four blocks of land that fall under the Natural Area designation and they are divided into two categories: 1) Natural Area Preserves (2 at WSP); 2) Nature Study Preserves (2 at WSP). The designations date to 1951. Natural Area Preserve is the more restrictive category (foot trails or fire protection lanes only).
 - c. Nature Areas Registry sites (2 at WSP) – voluntary agreements requiring DNR to notify The Nature Conservancy (TNC) of any changes. This area affects Waugoschance Point and Sturgeon Bay but is not visible due to other overlays – may require a separate map
 - d. There are 2 Proposed Natural Areas and 1 Proposed Wilderness Area via the Wilderness and Natural Areas Act – foot access only, vegetation removed only for foot or fire trails and motorized equipment is only permitted for natural area values and emergencies (not for maintenance of infrastructure unless related to natural resource values). The Proposed Natural Areas are to be managed as if they are approved until they are formally approved – but DNR has only 90 days to act on proposals. The team decided to remove the Proposed Natural Areas and Wilderness Area from the management zone map because there was never any formal approval.
 - e. Keith Cheli would like to present the "wilderness" designation to stakeholders and public and let the process work out whether we put in Backcountry corridors or change the designation of the existing trails to eliminate mountain bikes.

3. Management Zones/Trails Discussion
 - a. The team discussed that the boundaries of the designated areas need to be clearer. Glenn feels that the trails pose an issue and that mechanized equipment should not be permitted on trails. He would like to see all trails designated as Primitive or "wilderness." Dave Goheen offered that this would effectively make Nebo Cabin walk-in only.
 - b. Burr stated that all the designated mountain bike trails are well used.
 - c. Keith Cheli said that Nebo and Swampline Trail do not offer a true wilderness feel because they are so wide. Dave Goheen said that it's managed wide because the trails were originally developed by the CC as gravel roads. The team discussed the possibility of allowing the vegetation along this trail to grow back in.
 - d. Glenn said that the park was historically supposed to be managed as wilderness – very low level foot traffic.

- e. Debbie Jensen would like to have a draft plan made available on the website to get feedback from the public.
 - f. Add a Visitor Services management zone for sewage treatment area.
 - g. Keith recommended that we include a Primitive buffer along the northern Lake Michigan shoreline (extending from tree line to the shoreline).
 - h. Revise map near Sturgeon Bay Cabin so that NRR area is limited to access and cabin area (on north side of Big Sucker Creek).
 - i. O’Neal Lake Dam is a Wildlife Facility, paid for with Pittman-Robertson funds. The lake is mostly used for fishing and paddling; not as heavily used for hunting as originally intended. The various divisions will need to determine responsibility for future maintenance of the dam.
 - j. The website should present a timeline of the GMP process. The website could also be used to present draft zones and draft action goals for comment within the survey.
 - k. The Dining Hall is on the National Register of Historic Buildings and should have an education overlay
4. Significant Statements Exercise
- a. The team provided several revisions to the statements. Susie will make the revisions and send back to the team for additional feedback.
5. Online Survey Exercise—what do we hope to learn from the online user survey?
- a. Test draft management zones.
 - b. Keith would like Clearzoning to submit draft for comment before asking the Team’s input.
 - c. Should portion of park be true wilderness – no bikes and foot trails only? – described by specific area (ex: would you support Nebo Cabin walk-in only?).
 - d. If you are a cyclist, what area(s) of the park do you ride? (offer a list).
 - e. Would like to see additional: a) backcountry camp site; b) cabins...etc.
 - f. What draws you to the park?
 - g. During what season(s) do you visit?
 - h. How frequently do you visit?
 - i. Multiple choice questions need opt-out choice.
 - j. Survey lead-in should describe management planning process.
 - k. How do we develop the survey so that public input helps shape the process?
 - l. Can we get public to respond/comment on the progress of the management plan via the survey? The website?
 - m. How would you rate the _____ fill in the blank _____ experience at WSP?
 - n. Original intent of survey was to help team refine action goals.
6. Action Goals Exercise – what enhancements are needed? What improvements are desired? What protections are appropriate? Can visitor experience be enhanced?
- a. Entrance/control visitors at south (Sturgeon Bay).
 - b. Create development master plan for Sturgeon Bay contact center.
 - c. Re-purpose appropriate Natural Area(s) designation and rescind existing.
 - d. Implement Lakeshore Campground Redevelopment Plan.
 - e. Stewardship Plan.
 - f. Boundary revision recommendations.
 - g. O’Neal Lake – evaluate what it should be managed for, who will accept responsibility, nature of boating access (carry-in/out?).
 - h. Evaluate moving O’Neal Lake trail to address flooding.

- i. Evaluate snowmobile trail(s).
 - j. Evaluate condition of bridges on trails, develop repair/replacement program consistent with zone(s).
 - k. Expand education and interpretation opportunities (interpretive center).
 - l. Incorporate Dark Skies designation into all aspects of park planning, management and development.
 - m. Prepare forest –type inventory.
 - n. Define park boundaries on group with appropriate markers.
 - o. Review Capital Outlays List.
 - p. Create/improve safe Great Lakes boating access at WSP.
 - q. Historic structures restoration to bring all to operational level.
 - r. Improve park’s trails to fully function as an element of the regional trail network, in partnership with other trail sponsors.
 - s. Review Action Goals in relation to SCORP, Blue Ribbon, and other statewide goals.
 - t. Evaluate improving access (ADA, universal) to existing or new cabin(s), campsite(s).
 - u. Provide operational support for the enhancement of visitor services, facilities, experience.
 - v. Address timber management (fire hazard) related to blown-downs especially along roads and trails.
 - w. Promote, enhance partnerships with “friends” and other stakeholder organizations.
 - x. Promote, enhance partnerships with universities and other researchers.
 - y. Evaluate park’s trail network for user designation, connecting gaps, re-open closed historical segments.
 - z. Develop database from research project user permits that could be shared with proposed new projects.
7. Review of Stakeholder List
8. Scheduling Future Meetings – Susie will send out a doodle poll for Team Meeting #4 (which will be a Go-To-Meeting) and the Stakeholder Meeting, which will likely be held at the dining hall within the park.

Planning Team Meeting #3
Wilderness State Park
June 25th, 2013
9 AM – 2 PM

1. Meeting Attendees: Debbie Jensen, Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Glenn Palmgren, Joyce Angel, Keith Cheli, Paul Yauk, Dave Birchler, Jill Bahm
2. Review of Team Meeting #2 Summary
3. Review of Statements of Significance
 - a. Glenn will send his edits relating to ecosystem and natural resources
 - b. Debbie would like the camping statement to be modified to show scale of modern and backcountry camping
4. Discussion of Natural Areas
 - a. Per Glen, any proposed natural areas are first called “nominated.” It stays “nominated” until it goes through internal process. Once approved internally, it becomes “proposed.” The 90-day time period starts when the area becomes “proposed.” It then moves through legislation. Therefore, at WSP all “proposed” natural areas are removed. This process should be described in the Supporting Analysis – Glenn will assist with the text.
 - b. Any false nominations could be identified in the Action Goals.
 - c. It was confirmed that the primary difference between “Natural Area” and “Wilderness Area” is size
5. Management Zone Designations
 - a. Section 2 – add two-track at south end as an existing trail
 - b. Discussion about how to designate the plover nesting areas. Glenn suggested Ecologically Sensitive designation – may require separate seasonal zone map. The team determined that the entire Sturgeon Bay shore north to the creek should be zoned Ecologically Sensitive Zone (100 foot buffer). The islands and the northern shoreline of Waugoshance Point to Waugoshance Cabin should also be zoned Ecologically Sensitive (seasonal). We will create a separate map that shows seasonal Ecologically Sensitive Zone.
 - c. Debbie will see if Visitor Services could be renamed Management and Administrative Services
6. Online Survey Discussion

Planning Team Meeting #4
Go-To-Meeting
July 30th, 2013
9:00 AM - Noon

1. Attendees – Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Rich Hill, Joyce Angel, Lisa Gamero, Debbie Jensen, Glenn Palmgren, Mark Monroe, Keith Cheli, Susie Roble, Dave Birchler
2. Review of Team Meeting #3 Summary – Debbie Jensen provided some minor revisions
3. Review of Statements of Significance – the Team had no further suggested revisions
4. Review of Ecologically Sensitive Zone Maps
 - a. Revise Ecologically Sensitive Zone maps to look similar to other Management Zone maps
 - b. Add to map legend, “seasonal zone – only applies when/where piping plovers are actively nesting”
 - c. Delete Preserves/Registry/Critical Dunes from maps; should only show Ecologically Sensitive Zone
5. Review of Management Zone Maps
 - a. Add to Dedicated Boundary in legend, “NRC Approved 2004”
 - b. Revise Historic Trail in map and legend as less bold. Change “proposed” to “considered”
 - c. Trails should be revised so they are easier to see (increase width of buffer or line weight)
 - d. Change “East Boundary Trail” to “Old East Boundary Trail”
 - e. Change snowmobile trail to “O’Neal Lake Trail”
 - f. Add trail name, “Wiikenhs Trail” to trail that travels northeast between Big Stone Trail and Nebo Trail
 - g. Move Big Stone Trail to the north so that it extends to the road
 - h. Change the color designated for Critical Dunes (so that it differs from trail color)
 - i. Shift the snowmobile trail (O’Neal Lake Trail) north so that it falls within the property line
 - j. Label the road adjacent to O’Neal Lake as a County Road
 - k. The Team discussed how to label roads. Dave suggested that we don’t differentiate between types of roads, rather just label the roads accordingly
 - l. Add note/call-out box to map that Primitive Zone buffer along Lake Michigan extends from lake to the treeline
 - m. Bump out the Natural Resource Recreation Zone around Station Point Cabin
 - n. Have arrow pointing south at the south edge of park (Sturgeon Bay) boundary to indicate that North Country Trail continues southward
 - o. Burr noted that the Army Corps of Engineers does “munitions surveys” and sometimes needs to take equipment out onto islands/shoreline to remove them for safety
6. Glenn Palmgren gave a presentation on Wilderness area nomination (this impacts General Action Goal/Natural Resources #7).

- a. He illustrated the proposed Wilderness nomination area. He based his recommendation on the following boundary parameters:
 - i. 50-100 ft buffer east of the road
 - ii. A 40 ft buffer for the trails – text should note that our trail buffer is 40 feet (20 ft each side of the trail centerline)
 - iii. The area north of O’Neal Lake Trail is included but the area south of the trail is not
 - iv. The northern boundary of the Wilderness Area should be park road
 - v. Wiikenhs Trail as the north boundary west of Nebo Trail
 - b. Burr expressed his concern that reopening of the trail following the powerline needs a buffer to allow its uses as a fire break
 - c. The Team agreed to buffer Nebo Trail, cabin, and trailside shelter
 - d. Glenn will add buffer along Sturgeon Bay where Natural Resource Recreation Zone is located
 - e. The Team decided that the backcountry camp site is appropriately located in the Wilderness Area
7. Review of Draft Action Goals
- a. Glenn or Debbie will send revision to Ecologically Sensitive Zone lead-in
8. Review of Public Input Survey
- a. The survey is up and running. There have been 200 responses already.
 - b. The Team decided not to send the survey link to the Lakeshore Campground email list because it may cause confusion. The Team also decided not to put the survey link on the Lakeshore Campground website.
9. Upcoming Stakeholder Input Open House - Sept. 25th
- a. Susie will send out stakeholder list to the team. Susie will send out invites in mid-August
 - b. The Dining Hall can accommodate up to 75 people

Planning Team Meeting #5
Stakeholder Input Review Meeting
Go-To-Meeting
October 16th, 2013
9:00 AM – 11 AM

1. Attendees – Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Joyce Angel, Lisa Gamero, Debbie Jensen, Glenn Palmgren, Mark Monroe, Keith Cheli, Susie Roble, Dave Birchler
2. Review of Input from September 25th Stakeholder Input Workshop
 - a. Look into repaving the county road that provides access to Wilderness Park Drive
 - i. Debbie commented that there are funding opportunities for road improvements for roads that provide access to a state park. The funding comes from a three-way split among the DNR, County, and MDOT. Funding priorities are for those roads with trail elements. Burr commented that he has talked to the County about this issue in the past, and he will have a follow-up conversation with the County.
 - b. Consider a designated pet-friendly beach/area
 - i. Burr commented that putting a designated pet-friendly beach/area in Sturgeon Bay would be in direct conflict with the Director’s Order, which prohibits dogs in Sturgeon Bay in order to protect the piping plovers
 - ii. Burr thinks that Big Stone Bay may be a better location and the pet-friendly beach could be incorporated into campground redevelopment plan
 - iii. The team decided to add a Developed Recreation/development goal to evaluate location for and designate a pet-friendly beach area on the north shore.
 - c. The US Fish and Wildlife reps were concerned about Developed Recreation zoning along Sturgeon Bay and the potential impact on piping plover nesting.
 - i. Burr expressed his concern that we would be restricting ourselves from any future development if we change from Developed Recreation Zone.
 - ii. Dave Birchler made the point that just because it’s zoned as Developed Recreation Zone, does not mean we have to develop to that level.
 - iii. Glenn suggested we put Natural Resource Recreation buffer from beach up to the fore dune
 - iv. Dave Goheen agreed and noted that we cannot develop anything along the shoreline anyway
 - v. Debbie suggested adding a note in the General Management Plan to reinforce that any development would be mindful of the surrounding sensitive areas and natural features. Debbie also suggested using High Risk Erosion line as our guide for the Natural Resource Recreation zone along the shore
 - d. The team commented that the Cross Township Supervisor was very enthusiastic about the importance of Sturgeon Bay to local residents

3. Survey Results Evaluation
 - a. Susie provided the team with a summary of the survey results
 - b. Dave Goheen commented on the results of Question 8. He believes that the percentage of respondents that stay 7 or more nights at the park is lower than what actually occurs.
 - c. Responses suggest that more campground sites are desirable (for the busiest season)
 - d. Converting organizational campground to modern has limitations: too small; cobble beach; sensitive/historic cultural resources (including building foundations require protection)
 - e. Shore fishing improvements would be difficult in context of management zone (fishing opportunities are more at an expert level)

4. Review of Management Zone Map and Draft Action Goals
 - a. It was determined that the Primitive buffer should be removed from the North Country Trail in the Developed Recreation Zone at the intersection of Lakeshore and Lakeview Roads
 - b. All trail buffers should be 50 feet wide (25 feet on each side). The buffer width should be discussed in the text of the General Management Plan.
 - c. Burr would like any necessary trail re-routes to include the 50-foot buffer (include this in text as well) with other options (ex: boardwalk over problem section)
 - d. Add the word 'hiking' to General Action Goal, "Evaluate gaps and closed historical segments of the park's hiking trail network for possible connection/reopening"
 - e. In the Primitive Zone and Natural Resource Recreation Zone (under Recreation Opportunities), reference water trail sites as camping opportunity
 - f. Bluewater trails generally need to be addressed in terms of where you can put-in, take-out canoe/kayak, or rustic camp. Add General Action Goal, "Work with partners to identify/develop water trail opportunities."
 - g. The Team determined that the U of M students study of Sturgeon Bay would be most appropriate in the Appendix, but it should be mentioned in public input section of the GMP. It should be indicated that the study was intended to be an educational experience for the students.

5. Discussion of Public Input Meeting
 - a. Meeting should be held in Mackinaw City because it is easily accessed
 - b. Susie will send out a doodle poll to the team with potential dates

Planning Team Meeting #6
Public Input Review Meeting
Go-To-Meeting
January 23rd, 2014
9:00 AM – 10: 30 AM

1. Attendees – Burr Mitchell, Dave Goheen, Lisa Gamero, Debbie Jensen, Rich Hill, Keith Cheli, Susie Roble, Dave Birchler
2. Review of Input from December 12th Public Input Workshop and comments received via email
 - a. Look into repaving the county road that provides access to Wilderness Park Drive
 - ii. Debbie recommended that we revise General Action Goal/Natural Resource #8 to read, “Implement early detection and rapid response to invasive species control”
 - iii. The team decided to revise General Action Goal/Historic Resources #4 to reference the Secretary of Interior Guidelines. It should read, “Maintain historic characteristics of historic structures consistent with Secretary of Interior Guidelines”
 - iv. Lisa has uncovered historic map of fire trails which she will email to the team.
 - v. Addition of new goal under General Action Goal/Recreation Opportunities to address comment regarding more detailed trail information for users. The goal will read, “Evaluate trails and rate level of difficulty” with a 2 year time frame.
 - vi. Revise Developed Recreation Zone/Historic Resources #1 to address the Wellhouse and the Secretary of Interior Guidelines. The goal should read, “Work with partners to restore Wellhouse consistent with Secretary of Interior Guidelines and repurpose for recreation use.”
 - vii. Debbie recommended adding a statement to address funding sources and DNR’s responsibility to manage the park accordingly in the legal mandates section.
 - viii. Add pitchers thistle as a rare and endangered species
3. Final GMP
 - a. Susie will update the General Management Plan and Appendices and email to Debbie and Planning Team members for final review.