

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Resources and Environment (RE) Committee Meeting  
Kellogg Centre, East Lansing, 9:30am – 2pm, November 10 2014**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of May 28 Meeting Notes – All
3. Update from June 27, September 12 and November 7 Travel Commission Meetings – Travel Commissioners Betty Workman and Christian W. Øverland
  - a. Changes to TC membership
  - b. New Travel MI VP

4. Review of RE Goal/Objectives – All

GOAL: Be internationally recognized for our stewardship of – and rich opportunities to experience – our natural, cultural, and heritage resources.

Objective One: Support and expand efforts to inventory resources critical to Michigan tourism and communicate results to relevant entities.

Objective Two: Identify key issues facing and threats to the integrity of Michigan's tourism resources and raise awareness of and support for these issues.

Objective Three: Raise the profile of Michigan's tourism industry as a national leader in resource quality and stewardship.

5. Updates from Other MTSP Committees and Potential Joint Meetings
  - a. Aquatic nuisance species/Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study – Brad, Dennis, others?
  - b. Pure Michigan trails legislation + PD committee – Maia, Ann, Sarah
  - c. Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository – Sarah
  - d. Joint meeting with PPGS – also invite Rep. Candice Miller? – Sarah
  - e. Other MI boards/commissions – Sarah
6. Review List of Michigan Superlatives/Brad's 'Awesomes' – All
7. Next Steps and Next Meetings – Sarah Nicholls
  - a. Next RE meeting
  - b. Joint meetings

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**Meeting Notes**

**In attendance:** Betty Workman (Co-Chair), Maia Turek (Co-Chair), Bill Anderson, Marci Cisneros, Dennis Eade, Christian Øverland, Sarah Nicholls.

**Absent:** Ann Conklin, Frank Ettawageshik, Brad Garmon, Christine Rector, Larry Wagenaar.

**Welcome and Introductions** – All.

**Review of May 28 Meeting Notes** – Notes reviewed and approved, no changes or additions made.

**Update from June 27, September 12 and November 7 Travel Commission Meetings** – Travel Commissioners Betty Workman and Christian W. Øverland, Sarah Nicholls.

June 27 (Betty): As of June the VP position remained unfilled. Much discussion of this topic, and of road/bridge quality and MDOT funding situation.

September 12 (Christian): Major topics of discussion included the VP position (unfilled as of September 12, announcement regarding hiring of David West made on October 13 (<http://www.michigan.org/pressreleases/david-west-named-vice-president-of-travel-michigan/>); the sponsorship of the Tigers and the Pure MI 400; and, the MTSP implementation contract with MSU. Two commissioners rotated off as of August (Susan Sherer and Betty Workman); to date one new member has been announced = John Madigan, General Manager/Co-Owner, Pictured Rocks Cruises.

November 7 (Sarah): Much discussion of road quality and need to develop a strategy for TC and broader industry to lobby for MDOT funding during the lame duck session. Also announced (by Leslie Hornung, MEDC) that Travel Michigan will not be purchasing any billboards in 2015.

**Updates from RE Committee Members and Other MTSP Committees** –

- **Aquatic invasive species** (Dennis, Marci, Maia): Updates on:
  - Asian carp (including the detection of their DNA in the Kalamazoo River near Allegan [http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/10/asia\\_carp\\_dna\\_detected\\_in\\_kala.html](http://www.mlive.com/news/kalamazoo/index.ssf/2014/10/asia_carp_dna_detected_in_kala.html));
  - Quagga and zebra mussels – a new molluscicide (Z EQUANOX®) is available, but the cost = \$9,000 per 160 sq. ft., there are 22 million sq. ft. of lake bottom in MI;
  - The algal bloom that occurred in Lake Erie in August;

- The possibility of a crash in Lake Michigan salmon (as occurred in Lake Huron in 2004). This article is from November 2013: “Lake Michigan Salmon Population in Danger” <http://www.wideopenspaces.com/lake-michigan-salmon-population-danger/>. This Jan 2015 piece is also of relevance: “Salmon catch limit remains five in 2015, but is that a good thing?” [http://www.mlive.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2015/01/salmon\\_catch\\_remains\\_five\\_fish.html](http://www.mlive.com/outdoors/index.ssf/2015/01/salmon_catch_remains_five_fish.html).
- **Pure Michigan trails legislation** (Maia): This is a set of six bills signed by Governor Snyder on June 26 2014 that amends Part 721 of PA 451 of 1994 (the MI Trailways Act) to reflect the 2013 Comprehensive Trail Plan. Recognises the importance of land- and water-based trails to Michigan. Allows for the designation of Pure Michigan Trails and Trail Towns by the Director of MDNR via an application process; DNR is working with MTGA to develop designation criteria. Legislation allows for four new trails staff within DNR Parks and Recreation Division. Program should be put into operation in 2015.
- **Governor’s showcase trail** (Maia): This is the placeholder name for the 900+ mile bicycling/ hiking trail proposed to run from Belle Isle Park in Detroit to Ironwood in the western UP, as part of the effort to establish MI as The Great Trail State. First proposed by Governor Snyder in his “Energy and Environment” speech in November 2012. Beginning development of the trail is a first-year priority in MDNR’s State Trails Implementation Plan ([http://michigan.gov/documents/dnr/State\\_Trail\\_Implementation\\_plan\\_440355\\_7.pdf](http://michigan.gov/documents/dnr/State_Trail_Implementation_plan_440355_7.pdf)). As currently outlined the trail will follow two routes, one bicycling, one hiking ([http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/Showcase-Trail-Route\\_469159\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/dnr/Showcase-Trail-Route_469159_7.pdf)). Much of the trail will follow and/or connect with existing routes such as the Great Lake-to-Lake Trail, the North Country National Scenic Trail and U.S. Bicycle Route 20. Approximately 30% of the right-of-way still needs to be acquired. A naming contest closed October 13; more than 8,000 submissions were received. Representatives from MDNR, MEDC, Michigan Recreation and Park Association (MRPA) and the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance (MTGA) will choose the winner from a shortlist of approximately 30, with an announcement of the winning name expected to be made by the Governor or MDNR in early December. *As of Jan 12 this has still not been announced.* A series of opening celebrations/ribbon cuttings is planned for June 6 2015 (also American Hiking Society’s National Trails Day®). For more information: “A Michigan Showcase Trail: “A Signature Pure Michigan Experience”” [http://www.mi.gov/documents/dnr/MI\\_Showcase\\_Trail\\_432192\\_7.pdf](http://www.mi.gov/documents/dnr/MI_Showcase_Trail_432192_7.pdf)
- **Agency anniversaries** (Maia): The National Parks Service celebrates its centennial in 2016 (<http://www.nps.gov/subjects/centennial/index.htm>); Michigan state parks celebrate their centennial in 2018.
- **Blue economy** (Marci): ““Blue economy” is an ongoing economic development strategy based on the preservation, research and health of water resources. The MI University Research Corridor (URC) held a five-city tour (with stops in Macomb County, Houghton, Muskegon, Traverse City and Chicago) during the fall to promote this approach. The URC is an alliance between Michigan State University, the University of Michigan and Wayne State University which aims to transform, strengthen and diversify the state’s

economy. According to the URC's "Innovating for the Blue Economy" report, the three URC universities have received nearly \$300 million in awards for water-related research and outreach from 2009 to 2013. The report also estimates that one in five Michigan jobs are directly or indirectly associated with water-enabled or water-related industries (<http://urcmich.org/news/2014water/>).

- **Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository** (Sarah, from PPGS): This is a proposed nuclear repository less than one mile from the shores of Lake Huron. A similar site in the US leaked. Michigan Senators Levin and Stabenow recently introduced a Senate resolution urging the administration to oppose the proposal to build this permanent nuclear waste repository in the Great Lakes Basin. This is a companion resolution to one previously introduced by Rep. Dan Kildee. The Senate resolution is co-sponsored by Sens. Mark Kirk, R-Ill., and Tammy Baldwin, D-Wis.

Congressman Dan Kildee Introduces Congressional Resolution to Protect Great Lakes from Threat of Nuclear Waste (August 28, 2014): <http://dankildee.house.gov/media-center/press-releases/congressman-dan-kildee-introduces-congressional-resolution-to-protect>

Levin, Stabenow introduce Senate companion to Kildee House resolution opposing permanent storage of nuclear waste in Great Lakes Basin (September 18, 2014): <http://www.levin.senate.gov/newsroom/press/release/levin-stabenow-introduce-senate-companion-to-kildee-house-resolution-opposing-permanent-storage-of-nuclear-waste-in-great-lakes-basin>

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission page on OPGDGR:

<http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca/eng/resources/status-of-new-nuclear-projects/deep-geologic-repository/index.cfm>

- **Other MI Boards/Commissions** (Sarah): After the September TC meeting (and at the request of the TC) Sarah prepped a list of all MI Boards/Commissions potentially relevant to the MTSP (at that meeting new TCer John Madigan had suggested the TC hold a joint meeting with the Natural Resource Commission; that meeting will take place on January 15). Those present reviewed the list of 16 entities that sound most relevant to the RE goal/objectives and identified the following nine as highest priority for future engagement in the MTSP process: Agriculture Preservation Fund Board; Commission of Agriculture and Rural Development; Great Lakes Commission; Michigan Humanities Council; Michigan Wildlife Council; Natural Resources Commission; Natural Resources Trust Fund Board; Michigan Trails Advisory Council; Waterways Commission. Engagement could include RE committee members attendance at board/commission meetings; presentation of the MTSP to these boards/commissions; invitation of key board/commission members to RE meetings; joint meetings between RE and full boards/commissions. Sarah will prep expand the descriptions of the nine groups listed above, including current members and 2015 meeting dates/locations. Might also be appropriate to convene a joint meeting of RE and PPGS (with or without members of these other groups).
- Above updates led into a discussion/proposal re. formation of some kind of stewardship award, to be presented at the Governor's Conference on Tourism starting

2016. Suggested that Christian could announce this new award at the 2015 conference. To enable that, committee would at a minimum need to develop a name for the award, form a judging panel/committee, develop a list of criteria, and choose a design (Christian offered that The Henry Ford could handle the award's design and production, as they do for TICOM's Governor's Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration).

### **Review List of Michigan Superlatives/Brad's 'Awesomes' –**

Sarah shared list to date (slightly revised/updated version attached). Committee members will each review and send Sarah additions/edits. Headings are arbitrary – edit/add to those too! Short discussion of how/where to distribute once completed, e.g., via Travel Michigan newsletter, MEDC and MDNR websites.

### **Other Notes –**

Next year's Annual MTSP meeting will be held immediately following the TC meeting on the Sunday afternoon of the Governor's Conference (so 3-5pm March 22 2015 in Grand Rapids).

### **Next Steps and Next Meetings –**

- Proposed by Marci to invite Bruce Washburn from MDEQ to speak at a future RE meeting.
- Proposed by Maia to hold fall 2015 meeting at the MDNR's new Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit ([http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10369\\_64258---.00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10369_64258---.00.html)).