

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Resources and Environment (RE) Committee Meeting  
Via Conference Call, 9-11am, June 26 2015**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of April 30 Meeting Notes – All
3. Update from June 5 Travel Commission Meeting – Travel Commissioner Christian Øverland
4. Relevant Updates from Other MTSP Committees – Sarah Nicholls
5. Review/Add to List of Michigan Superlatives/Brad’s ‘Awesomes’ – All
6. Discussion of Stewardship Award – All (Christian and Maia = leads)
  - Award name
  - Composition of judging panel/committee
  - Award categories
  - Award criteria
  - Award timeline
  - Application form/process
  - Pre- and post- awards marketing/PR plan
7. Discussion of Zero Waste Best Practices Toolkit – All (Marci, Maia and Ann = leads)
8. Next Steps and Next Meetings – All
  - September meeting at Outdoor Adventure Centre, Detroit
9. Committee Member Updates Relevant to RE Goal/Objectives (as time allows)

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.

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**Meeting Notes**

**In attendance:** Christian Øverland (Co-Chair), Maia Turek (Co-Chair), Marci Cisneros, Ann Conklin, Frank Ettawageshik, Brad Garmon, Betty Workman, Sarah Nicholls.

**Absent:** Bill Anderson, Dennis Eade, Larry Wagenaar.

**Welcome and Introductions** – All.

**Review of April 30 Meeting Notes** – Notes reviewed and approved, no changes or additions made.

**Update from June 5 Travel Commission Meeting** –

The June 5 meeting (at The Henry Ford, Dearborn) included an update on the website redevelopment process/RFP and announcement of three new TM positions (web manager, content manager, PR coordinator). Road funding was also discussed, as was the continued development of the Pure Michigan campaign, in terms of how to evolve the campaign and keep it compelling and relevant to new/younger audiences. The meeting was preceded by a tour of Detroit including a visit to the soon-to-open DNR Outdoor Adventure Center.

Annual TC leadership transitions were also voted on: new Chair = Christian Øverland (The Henry Ford) and new Vice Chair = Stephen Kircher (Boyne).

Additional discussion of resignation of David West and announcement of Dave Lorenz as Acting VP of TM.

**Updates from Other MTSP Committees** –

The PPGS committee continues to monitor the status of the proposed Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository (OPGDGR), and has written a letter to the Ontario Office of Tourism seeking their opinion about and willingness to partner with Michigan's tourism industry in opposition to the proposal.

Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission page on OPGDGR:

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

Canada delays ruling on nuke waste site near Lake Huron (Detroit News, June 8 2015):

<http://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/politics/2015/06/08/nuclear-waste-lake-huron/28699389/>

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

Additions received from Maia and Brad. Please send any more additions to Sarah ASAP and continue to do so on an ongoing basis.

## **Discussion of Proposed Stewardship Award –**

*The next page and a half is identical to the April meeting notes, as a reminder of the items to be discussed at the September meeting:*

As first discussed at November 2014 meeting, with overall purpose of creating/encouraging/inspiring an ethic of stewardship within Michigan's tourism industry. Intention is for award to be presented for the first time at the Governor's Conference on Tourism in 2016. In which case, would need to announce application process late fall 2015 (agreed that an application process is preferable to nominations). By which time would at a minimum need:

- A name for the award
- A judging panel/committee (the members of the RE committee?) (would need a policy for how to deal with applications from organizations with which committee members are affiliated)
- A list of categories and criteria
- Design for the award (Christian offered that The Henry Ford could handle award design and production, as they do for TICOM's Governor's Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration)

Categories – various alternatives suggested ...

- Just give one award, at least in the first year (so no categories per se)
- Give multiple awards but in no specific categories
- Sector-based categories, e.g., lodging, food and beverage, events, attractions, transportation providers, destinations
- Resource type-based categories, e.g., natural, cultural, heritage (discussion of difference between culture, heritage, history, etc.)
- Possibility of an overall 'people's choice award'

Criteria ...

- Innovativeness
- Significance
- Statewide impact
- Inspirational

Also need:

- A fuller timeline
- An application form/process
- A pre- and post- awards marketing/PR plan

Some sample tourism awards:

World Travel & Tourism Council “Tourism for Tomorrow” Awards: “The WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow Awards are aimed at recognising best practice in sustainable tourism within the industry globally, based upon the principles of environmentally friendly operations; support for the protection of cultural and natural heritage; and direct benefits to the social and economic well-being of local people in travel destinations around the world ...

Candidates can apply in one of six categories: Community Award, Destination Award, Environment Award, Innovation Award, People Award and Sustainable Business Award.”

<http://www.wttc.org/tourism-for-tomorrow-awards/>

TICOM Governor’s Awards for Innovative Tourism Collaboration: recognize organizations and programs that demonstrate innovative collaborative alliances – four categories: marketing/promotion, education/training, experience presentation, non-traditional partnership/collaboration – 2015 application packet available here:

<http://www.mitourismcoalition.org/documents/2015CollaborationAwardsNominations.pdf>

*New discussion from June 26 meeting:* Maia met with counterparts from MDARD and MDEQ, both agencies are keen to collaborate on the development of the award. Maia will meet with these groups again before the Sept. meeting. Also opportunities to tie to the Michigan Cares for Tourism Initiative and to MRPA’s awards program.

### **Discussion of Zero Waste Best Practices Toolkit**

This idea grew out of the sustainability practices being implemented by Marci at the Grand Haven Salmon Festival. Sept 18-20 2015: <http://www.ghsalmonfest.com/>, Our Journey Towards Sustainability: <http://www.ghsalmonfest.com/about/sustainability/>. The festival hosts 7000-10,000 people but only generated 40 pounds of refuse that was unable to be composted or recycled in 2014. Goal is reach zero waste.

Marci described efforts to replicate this approach at the most recent Tourism Cares event in Alpena. Biggest challenge was transporting the materials back to the composter at GVSU. The DNR is in the process of prepping an RFP to support the greening of their events.

Toolkit needs to be a step-by-step guide that is easy to follow.

Discussion of incorporating this initiative into the 2016 Governor’s Conference on Tourism: (i) encourage companies that Marci worked with (Chef Container and World Centric) to have booths at the trade show, (ii) use their products/services through the conference or at least at one of the receptions. Sarah is on Governor’s Conference Planning Committee and will raise these ideas at next meeting . The Michigan Museums Association conference is in Ann Arbor in Sept-Oct – Christian will suggest same ideas to that group.

## **Committee Member Updates Relevant to RE Goal/Objectives –**

Brad – Michigan’s Water Strategy ...

“In November 2012, Governor Rick Snyder in his Special Message on Energy and Environment called upon the Office of the Great Lakes to lead the development of a comprehensive water strategy that takes an ecosystem approach, enhances our economic opportunities around water and strengthens connection to place. The Michigan Office of the Great Lakes has released the draft Water Strategy that provides a roadmap to achieve a 30 year vision to ensure Michigan’s water resources support healthy ecosystems, citizens, communities, and economies. The Strategy was developed in collaboration with the Departments of Environmental Quality and Natural Resources, Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development, and Michigan Economic Development Corporation. The draft Water Strategy, “Sustaining Michigan Water Heritage, A Strategy for the Next Generation,” places Michigan on the path to achieving this vision in a way that builds economic capacity while sustaining the ecological integrity of the resource and ensures that water resources are protected, valued and cared for by present and future generations. It is designed to protect, manage and enhance Michigan's water resources for the benefit of current and future generations.”

Find the full report as well as dates/locations of upcoming Water Strategy Community Conversations here: [http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313\\_3677\\_64891---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_3677_64891---,00.html)

Suggested that committee review document and develop a response as done for microbeads.

Maia – Michigan Trails Week is September 20-27. The DNR plans to site actual bells at either end of the Iron Belle Trail (which runs from Belle Isle to Ironwood) for hikers/bikers to ring on completion of their journey.

## **Next Steps and Next Meetings –**

- Co-Chairs of RE and PPGS will meet to identify areas of common interest and discuss possible joint efforts (this could include a response to the water strategy document).
- September meeting to be held 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)). Please respond to the Doodle ASAP!