

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Resources and Environment (RE) Committee Meeting  
MRPA Offices, Okemos, 10am – 4pm, May 28 2014**

**Agenda**

1. Welcome and Introductions – All
2. Review of January 29 Meeting Notes – All
3. Update from March 9 Travel Commission Meeting – Travel Commissioner Betty Workman
4. Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting – All
5. Review of RE Goal/Objectives – Sarah Nicholls
6. At 11:15: Presentation by Jo A. Latimore, Ph.D., Aquatic Ecologist and Outreach Specialist, MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife – potential for collaboration between MSU Extension and RE committee?
7. Updates from Other MTSP Committees and on Relevant News, etc.
  - a. Aquatic nuisance species/Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study – Brad?, Maia?, Dennis?, others?
  - b. Midwest Invasive Species Information Network – Sarah
  - c. Pure Michigan trails legislation + PD committee – Maia?, Brad?, Ann?, Sarah
  - d. Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository + PPGS committee – Sarah
8. 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 – All
9. Next Steps and Next Meeting – Sarah Nicholls
  - a. Next RE meeting
  - b. Joint meeting with PPGS – also invite Rep. Candice Miller?

*A box lunch will be delivered at 12:30pm. Thanks to Blue Cross Blue Shield for sponsoring this!*

**2012-2017 Michigan Tourism Strategic Plan  
Resources and Environment (RE) Committee Meeting  
MRPA Offices, Okemos, 10am – 2pm, May 28 2014**

**Meeting Notes**

**In attendance:** Betty Workman (Co-Chair), Maia Turek (Co-Chair ), Bill Anderson, Marci Cisneros (joined at noon), Ann Conklin, Brad Garmon, Larry Wagenaar (joined at noon), Sarah Nicholls. Guest present for portion of meeting: Jo Latimore, Aquatic Ecologist and Outreach Specialist, MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife.

**Absent:** Harry Burkholder, Dennis Eade, Frank Ettawageshik, Christian Øverland, Christine Rector.

**Welcome** – Provided by Betty Workman and Sarah Nicholls.

**Introductions** – Made by all.

**Review of January 29 Meeting Notes** – Notes reviewed and approved, no changes or additions made.

**Update from March 9 Travel Commission Meeting** – Betty Workman.

This was the first TC meeting at which TCers provided their own updates on the work of the eight MTSP implementation groups. Also the first meeting at which the new funding/governance structure was followed; the TC members present voted unanimously to approve the PMC funding request for \$5,000 to cover the cost of a survey of international students at MSU.

George's Zimmermann retired from Travel Michigan, effective April 2014.

**Review of March 11 Annual MTSP Meeting** – Sarah Nicholls.

Meeting was attended by 100+ individuals and was well-received. Timing was not ideal (after final lunch, with no reminder of the meeting provided at that lunch); room was too large. Proposed that next year's meeting be held immediately following the TC meeting on the Sunday afternoon of the Governor's Conference (so March 22 in Grand Rapids).

**Review of RE Goal/Objectives** – Sarah Nicholls.

Noted that the term 'resources' is meant to be broad and inclusive, to include not just Michigan's natural resources but also its many cultural, heritage, historic, agricultural, architectural, etc. resources. The ultimate ambition of the goal is to encourage access and

use of these resources via more/better promotion while at the same time maintaining the quality and integrity of the resources.

- *Objective One: Support and expand efforts to inventory resources critical to Michigan tourism and communicate results to relevant entities.* Many inventories of various types of resources are underway around the state, at various scales and by various entities. The intent of this objective is to identify and attempt to unite those inventories in some consistent and central manner.
- *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.* This is a two-step process: (i) identify the issues/threats and (ii) raise awareness/support. This objective will be best addressed in concert with the Public Policy and Government Support (PPGS) committee.
- *Objective Three: Raise the profile of Michigan's tourism industry as a national leader in resource quality and stewardship.* Michigan is already a leader in many areas, yet in many cases these achievements are unknown/not well promoted. Question is how/where/to whom to disseminate these achievements in a consistent and effective manner. Stewardship in this case is intended to apply to all kinds of resources, not just natural.

**Presentation by Jo A. Latimore** – Jo is an Aquatic Ecologist and Outreach Specialist with MSU Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. Her position is 100% outreach, i.e., working with agencies and communities, and much her work focuses on invasives, mostly aquatic. Jo provided a series of handouts: (i) a brochure on The Michigan Inland Lakes Partnership (purpose: promoting collaboration to advance stewardship of Michigan's inland lakes, [michiganlakes.msue.msu.edu](http://michiganlakes.msue.msu.edu)); (ii) A Michigan Boater's Guide to Selected Invasive Aquatic Plants; and (iii) a sample MSUE bulletin entitled, 'Considering aquatic ecosystems: The basis for Michigan's new Water Withdrawal Assessment Process.' Boating = the #1 vector of aquatic invasives; Jo's work focuses on boater education, whether recreational or fishing tournaments.

**Updates from Other MTSP Committees/on Relevant News** – Brief discussion of the status of the Great Lakes Mississippi River Interbasin Study and the Pure Michigan trails legislation. Noted that the PPGS committee is tracking developments re. the proposed Ontario Power Generation Deep Geologic Repository.

**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 –**

Per discussion at previous meeting: Strength of Pure Michigan brand and success of campaign has set expectations high. Need to deliver on (meet or exceed) those expectations. All of the issues/threats identified in the RE committee's resource threats survey call our ability to deliver on that brand promise into question. Need to make

connection between resource issues/threats, tourism, and community/economic development. Need to make those connections for government officials, the tourism industry, residents and visitors. Most emphasis within results of survey was on water-related issues (invasive species, water quality/quantity/diversion). Desire of committee to give equal emphasis to culture/history and associated issues.

Further discussion of development of a statement on this topic. Such a statement could be presented to the Travel Commission for its endorsement and then shared with appropriate entities and individuals, e.g., legislators.

*Protecting and promoting our natural and cultural resources – especially our water quality – are vital to delivering on the Pure Michigan promise. Several critical threats compromise our ability to deliver on that promise.*

- *Halting the spread of invasive species is critical to delivering on the Pure Michigan promise.*
- *Improving the quality of our lakes, rivers and streams is critical to delivering on the Pure Michigan promise.*
- *Maintaining optimal levels and flows of our lakes, rivers and streams is critical to delivering on the Pure Michigan promise.*
- *Restoring and increasing financial support for natural and cultural resource protection and maintenance is critical to delivering on the Pure Michigan promise.*

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

Suggestion to develop a list of ‘Michigan resource superlatives.’ Brad will share his ‘Michigan awesome’ list.