

Cass River Greenway Meeting Minutes
May 17, 2023
Vassar City Office 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Cass River Water Trail Update

On April 11 the Cass River Water Trail was awarded a “Pure Michigan Water Trail” by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. The program – designed to help boost Michigan’s position as the “Trails State” – recognizes locations that represent some of Michigan’s best trail experiences.

Several Cass River Greenway members were in attendance at the ceremony held during the Governor’s Conference on Tourism.

Our application for recognition for a State Designated Water Trail is still in process.

Upcoming Events

- Free fishing weekend, June 10 & 11
- 12th Annual Paddle & Swim, June 17 (email to follow)
- Cass River Cleanups, see below for more details
- Great Lakes Rendezvous, Davis Park, August _____
- Lighted Kayak Paddle, Frankenmuth, August 5 tentative
- Lake Sturgeon Releases, August _ and September _

Cass River Launch Projects

-Evergreen Park, Sanilace County. Roger Ballard reported that their Trust Fund grant has been recommended and is waiting for the governor’s signature. The park is located on the South Branch of the Cass River near the M-53 Cass River bridge. The \$700,000 project will provide a significant upgrade to the park including a floating kayak launch.

-Cass City State Game Area. Larry Kolb and Tammy Giroux described the plan to install a rustic river access site, which will be located between Evergreen Park and Cass City. There will be limited parking available and a pathway through the forest will be cleared to allow access to the river. Volunteers will work with Tammy to complete the project.

-Caro Dam. Michael Clinesmith, Tuscola County EDC, reported that US Fish & Wildlife has granted the EDC seed money to further develop plans and costs to repair the dam and recreate a recreational pond upstream of the dam. A portage path around the dam is also included in the plan. Additional grant requests and letters of support are in process.

-The Parcels. This development is located at the site previously used as a correctional facility and state hospital, off Chambers Road and M-81.

Will Green reported that road modifications are being planned by the Tuscola County Road Commission. This will impact the design of road access and parking for the project.

-Beyer Road Launch. Joe Toth reported that the stairway leading down to river access is in need of cleaning up and repair. Frankenmuth volunteers and Frankenmuth Jaycees are interested in that, plus clearing some dead trees and brush from the site. **This, and a few other launch projects were discussed and it was decided to work on them instead of doing our traditional river cleanup.** More details on work to be done and timing will be distributed.

Water Quality Improvement

Bob reported on a W.Q. project submitted by the Saginaw County Conservation District on May 17, 2023. The proposed project would monitor 4 creek tributaries to the lower Cass River. These creeks have been studied in the past by DEQ/EGLE and found to exceed the maximum concentrations of e-coli set forth in Michigan's water quality standards. The proposed monitoring project would study Dead Creek, Cole Creek, Perry Creek and Millington Creek. The study would not only determine the levels of e-coli, but also the primary origins of the e-coli (ie. human waste, farm animal waste, wildlife waste, etc.). Cass River Greenway volunteers will take water sample at various locations at various time of the year and deliver the samples to Saginaw Valley State University for analysis and reporting. The intended results of the study is to provide insight into the best plan of action to reduce e-coli and attain safe levels of this pollutant.

Phragmites Control

Will Green reported the Tuscola County Road Commission has again budgeted \$2000 to treat roadside phragmites in our Cass River Watershed. The TCRC has been a consistant supporter for this effort and we sincerely appreciate their support.

Stephanie Hoyle, Saginaw Bay Area CISMA co-ordinator, will be invited to our next meeting to discuss area activities targeting control of various invasive plant speices, including phragmites.

Next Meeting: July 12, 2023 1:00pm Vassar City Office

Bob Zeilinger
May 21, 2023