

Cass River Greenway Meeting Minutes
December 3, 2014
City of Vassar Office 1:00 – 3:00 PM

Tire Disposal Options

No report. This will be on next meeting's agenda.

Vassar Launch Project

The Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant award meeting was held on December 3 and the Vassar grant request was recommended for funding. **Congratulations Vassar!** Current plans call for the new launch and park site to be constructed in 2015.

Bridgeport Launch Projects

At their December 3 meeting the MNRTF recommended funding for Bridgeport Township's grant request for the Davis Park launch and facilities. **Congratulation Bridgeport Township!** Construction is targeted for 2015. Bill Wheeler further reported that their grant request for the development of the Hoffman site (Dixie Hwy) was not recommended for funding. Bill explained that he is working with other potential funders and hopes to secure funding for a scaled back launch/park plan at the site.

M-46 Launch Site

Joe Toth reported that his team had a very productive meeting with DNR personnel regarding our request to add a launch at the State Game parking lot location. The proposal includes upgrades to the parking lot, a protective gate and barrier, signage and access to the river. The DNR prefers not to have cement pads installed at the site. It was suggested that perhaps a Geotextile mat would be considered since it is environmental friendly – allowing grass to grow in the cells and preventing erosion.

Next steps include an archeological assessment, MDOT Right-of-Way approval and engineering drawings for permitting purposes and cost estimates.

Caine Road River Access Project

Michelle Zawerucha reported that the Tuscola County Road Commission would fund the design and construction of a colvert across the roadside ditch as part of the bridge repair project. This will provide access to a parking lot that will be funded by the DNR for access to their State Game Area. There will be a natural path from the parking lot to the river. Construction is planned to begin in Spring, 2015.

Phragmites Survey

Jim Iaquina and the Cooperative Weed Management Area group was successful in having the Mosquito Control Agency map phragmites in Bay, Saginaw and Tuscola counties as they drove and treated county roadsides. Bob Zeilinger reviewed the township maps that had been previously treated for phragmites by the Tuscola County Road Commission. The data suggests, as does some random windshield surveys, that the phragmites treatment is very successful. Therefore, we will continue to survey and treat “new” townships and not spend volunteer time surveying the effectiveness in treated townships.

Cooperative Weed Management Area (CWMA) Grant Request

A comprehensive grant request for treating invasive plants in the Saginaw Bay Watershed has been developed and submitted. The request includes funding to treat phragmites along the Cass River near the Sheridan Road crossing in Bridgeport Township. The Cass River Greenway has committed some volunteer time and funding to help with financial match requirements.

Streambank Erosion Grant Request

The Saginaw Bay RC&D has been spearheading several grant request to fund streambank tree revetments along eroding banks on the Cass River and Cole Creek. To date they have secured \$10,000 from the Bay Area Community Foundation, \$5,000 from USFWS, \$1000 from Star of the West Milling Co., \$300 from Frankenmuth Conservation Club and has a request for \$20,000 pending with WIN. Work would begin in 2015 and volunteers will be needed.

Watershed Management Plan Implementation

Jim and Tiffany reported that a grant request for \$435,000 has been submitted to the DEQ for a 3 year implementation project (2016, 2017 and 2018). The project would address the 3 highest priority remediation areas documented in the Watershed Management Plan – Ag/Livestock best management practices, septic system maintenance, and streambank erosion. DEQ funding decisions are expected sometime around June 2015.

Water Trail Maps

A discussion was held regarding updating and/or creating new maps after the new launches are complete. The group felt we should continue to publish paper maps like we now have, but also pursue some type of web-based interactive map. We will continue to explore alternatives in 2015.

**Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 4, 2015 1:00 – 3:00PM
Vassar City Office**

Bob Zeilinger
December 6, 2014