

West Michigan
Blueways and Greenways Plan: Phase II
Public Access Inventory and Linkages

September 2012



WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION (WMSRDC)

The WMSRDC is a regional council of governments representing 120 local governments in the West Michigan counties of Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana.

The mission of WMSRDC is to promote and foster regional development in West Michigan… through cooperation amongst local governments.

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WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
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West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan: Phase II
Public Access Inventory and Linkages
Mason and Oceana Counties

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION & PLAN OVERVIEW

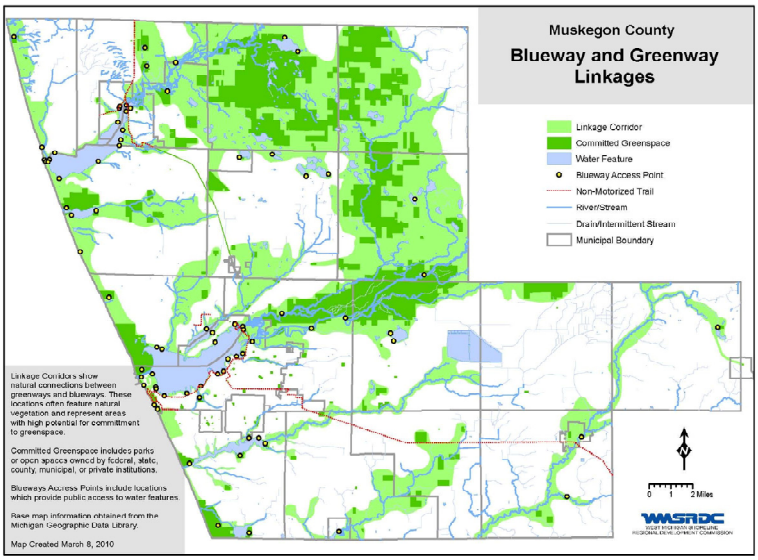
Introduction and Synopsis of the Plan

The West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan (Phase II): Public Access Inventory and Linkages was funded through a Michigan Coastal Zone Management grant. The premise of the plan is that the preservation and protection of blueways and greenways should be planned for regionally and implemented locally. The plan provides a detailed inventory of public access to both blueways and greenways within Mason and Oceana Counties. The document also builds upon previous work conducted within the region and proposes linkage corridors to protect and preserve public access to the regions abundant natural resources. Finally, the plan outlines recommendations and tools for local government decision makers to utilize when attempting to implement the findings detailed in this plan.

Phase I of the West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan was completed in 2010 and includes information for Muskegon County. Phase II builds upon the information presented in Phase I by focusing on recreation and public access to natural resources in Mason and Oceana Counties. The intent of the plan is that it will be utilized by local units of government when making land use decisions that will have an impact on public access to the region's abundant and precious natural resources, especially those within the Lake Michigan coastal zone.

Purpose of the Planning Process

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) has been promoting regional planning since its inception in 1970. In recent years, there have been several planning efforts focusing on the protection and restoration of the abundant natural resources found in the West Michigan area. In order to further these efforts and assist local governments in the continued preservation of public access, Regional Commission staff began developing the West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan. In order to serve the entire five-county region, the plan was broken into three phases: Phase I (Muskegon County), Phase II (Mason and Oceana Counties), and Phase III (Lake and Newaygo Counties). Phase I of the plan was completed in 2010 and made possible by a grant from the Michigan Coastal Zone Management Program. It is anticipated that Phase III of the plan will be initiated when additional funding becomes available.



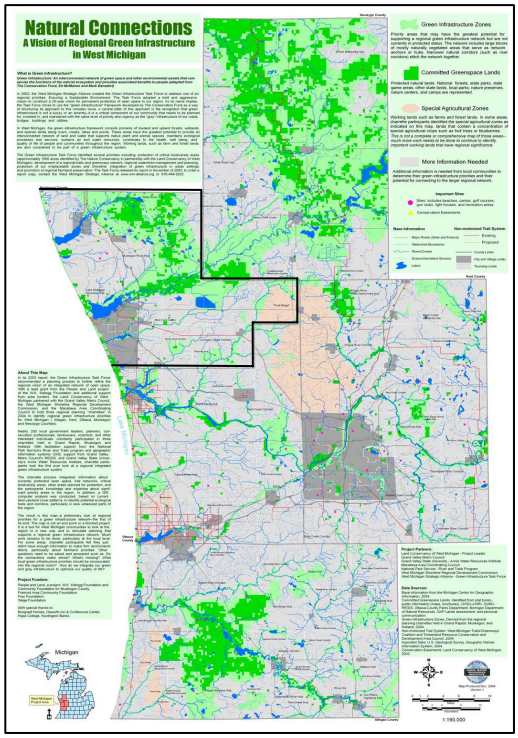
Source: West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

In 2005, community leaders in Muskegon County completed the Muskegon Area-wide Plan (MAP). The MAP represented approximately five years of planning and cooperation which included over 1,000 participants in the process. The mission of the MAP was to involve citizens in the shared vision for the future of Muskegon County and continues to serve as the community's vision. Participants in the development of the MAP embraced the Smart Growth Principles and have worked hard to incorporate each of the ten principles into the Muskegon area. The plan also identified five major vision areas including Land Use & Growth; Natural Resources, Open Space, & Environment; Economy & Jobs; Infrastructure; and Quality of Life. The West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan: Phase I (Muskegon County), which was completed in 2010, is a direct result of the Natural Resources, Open Space, & Environment Vision. The vision is defined as follows: *Protect and preserve natural resources and continually improve the quality of air, water, and land resources found in Muskegon County*. The development of a Green Infrastructure (Blueways and Greenways) Plan was identified as a goal under this vision.

Principles of Smart Growth

- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices
- Create walkable neighborhoods
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration
- Foster distinctive, attractive places with a strong sense of place
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective
- Mix land uses
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas
- Provide a variety of transportation choices
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities
- Take advantage of compact building design

(Source: Smart Growth Network)



Community leaders in the West Michigan area also participated in the development of the "Natural Connections, a Vision of Green Infrastructure in West Michigan" spearheaded by the West Michigan Strategic Alliance in 2004. The purpose of the vision was to construct a 25-year vision for permanent protection of open space in West Michigan including the counties of Allegan, Kent, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Ottawa. The organizers and participants of the vision believed that green infrastructure is a critical element of the West Michigan community. In the same way we plan for our gray infrastructure including roads, water/sewer, and utilities, we must also plan for, invest in, and maintain our community's green infrastructure network.

The purpose of the West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan is to build upon the previous studies and provide an extensive inventory of publicly

accessible blueways and greenways in the West Michigan region including Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties in one document. Many governmental jurisdictions in the region have prepared Community Recreation Plans which are required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to become eligible to receive state recreation grants. However, the Blueways and Greenways Plan differs from a typical community recreation plan in that it identified public access to blueways and greenways at multiple levels including local, county, state, and federal areas for the entire region. The plan also identified public school facilities and golf courses, which are often utilized by the public and considered to be recreational open space. In addition, goals and opportunities were developed through comments received from participants during public forums. The plan then offers suggestions to linking public access points throughout the region, as well as provides tools and techniques for local officials to utilize in implementing the potential linkages. As an additional tool for implementation of the document, each local unit of government in Mason and Oceana Counties will receive a wall-sized map of their jurisdiction listing all identified blueways, greenways, and linkage corridors.

The West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan is also consistent with a statewide effort to identify public access to blueways and greenways throughout the state. As an element of the plan, the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission is providing latitude and longitude coordinates to the Michigan Coastal Zone Management to assist in their efforts. These coordinates are located in appendix A.

Definition of Blueways and Greenways

A **Blueway** is a body of water that features public access, recreational opportunities, and promotes interaction with the water.

The terms blueway and greenway have become more prevalent over the past ten to fifteen years. In addition, the importance and efforts to preserve and protect these valuable areas within communities have also come to the forefront in recent years. There are a number of varying definitions that have been coined and used for each of these terms. The term blueway is fairly self explanatory. However, for the purpose of this study, a blueway is defined as a body of water that features public access, recreational opportunities, and promotes interactions with the water.

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) is the source for the greenways definition used in this document. The NRDC is a well known and successful organization founded in 1970. The mission of the NRDC is to safeguard the Earth; its people, its planet and animals, and the natural systems on which all life depends. It defines a greenway as undeveloped land usually in cities, set aside or used for recreation or conservation.

A **Greenway** is an undeveloped land usually in cities, set aside or used for recreation or conservation.
(Source: Natural Resources Defense Council)

Green Infrastructure is an interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, blueways, wetlands, parks, and forests that contribute to the health and quality of like for communities and people.

Although green infrastructure is not a specific element of this document, it is important to define in the context of the plan. The term green infrastructure is more difficult to define. Green infrastructure can in some ways be described as the environmental version of gray infrastructure such as roads and water/sewer lines. The term green infrastructure is used to describe an interconnected network of open spaces and natural areas, such as greenways, blueways, wetlands, parks, and forests that contribute to the health and quality of like for communities and people. Green infrastructure describes the natural environment's life support system – an interconnected network of protected land and water that supports native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to healthy communities.

Similar to gray infrastructure, green infrastructure needs to be strategically planned for and managed. The foundations of green infrastructure are natural elements such as woodlands, wetlands, rivers, grasslands, that work together as a whole to sustain ecological values and functions. Healthy functioning natural or restored ecological systems are essential to ensure the availability of "ecological services." Ecological services are the benefits that communities derive from natural features. They include benefits such as drinking water from groundwater resources, flood control from wetlands, and recreational opportunities from healthy forests, lakes, and rivers.

In addition to the core natural elements of green infrastructure, other elements can be strategically developed or preserved to enhance a green infrastructure network as well as the ecological services it provides to nearby communities. Such elements could include greenways, blueways, recreational facilities, cultural and historical sites, and agriculture. Often times, these components are interconnected and mutually benefit each other.

CHAPTER II: GROWTH TRENDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL FRAMEWORK

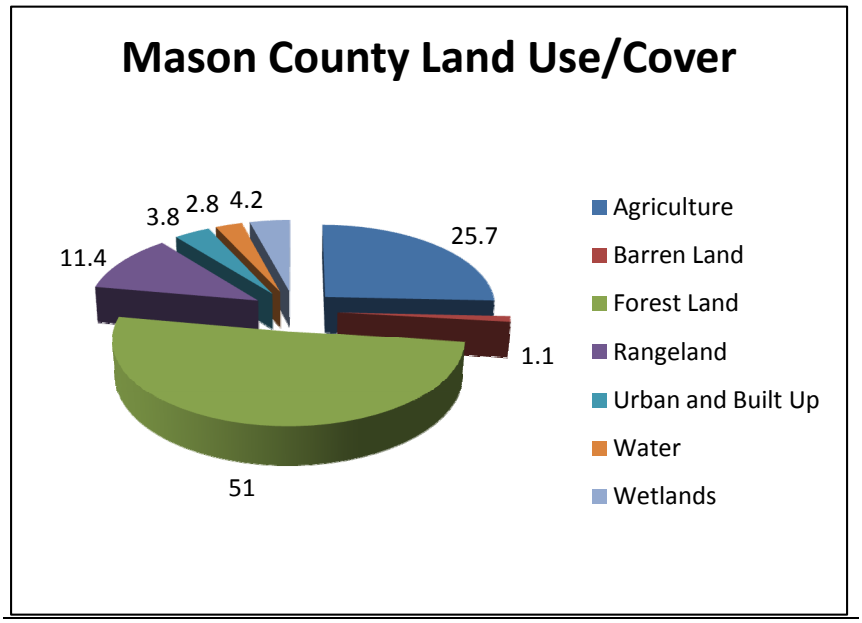
General Description of Mason and Oceana Counties

Mason and Oceana Counties are located on the western side of Michigan, midway up the state's lower Peninsula, along the shoreline of Lake Michigan. The area is characterized by coastal plains, immense lakeshore sand dunes, inland rolling hills, and high ridges. The rural counties are known for their abundant natural features including productive fruit orchards, expansive forests, and the 55.5 miles of Lake Michigan waterfront, 40 inland lakes, and more the 650 miles of rivers.

Table 1

Miles to Regional Destinations		
	Mason	Oceana
Detroit	252	233
Lansing	163	144
Chicago	242	222
Milwaukee	332	312
Cleveland	395	376
Indianapolis	357	338

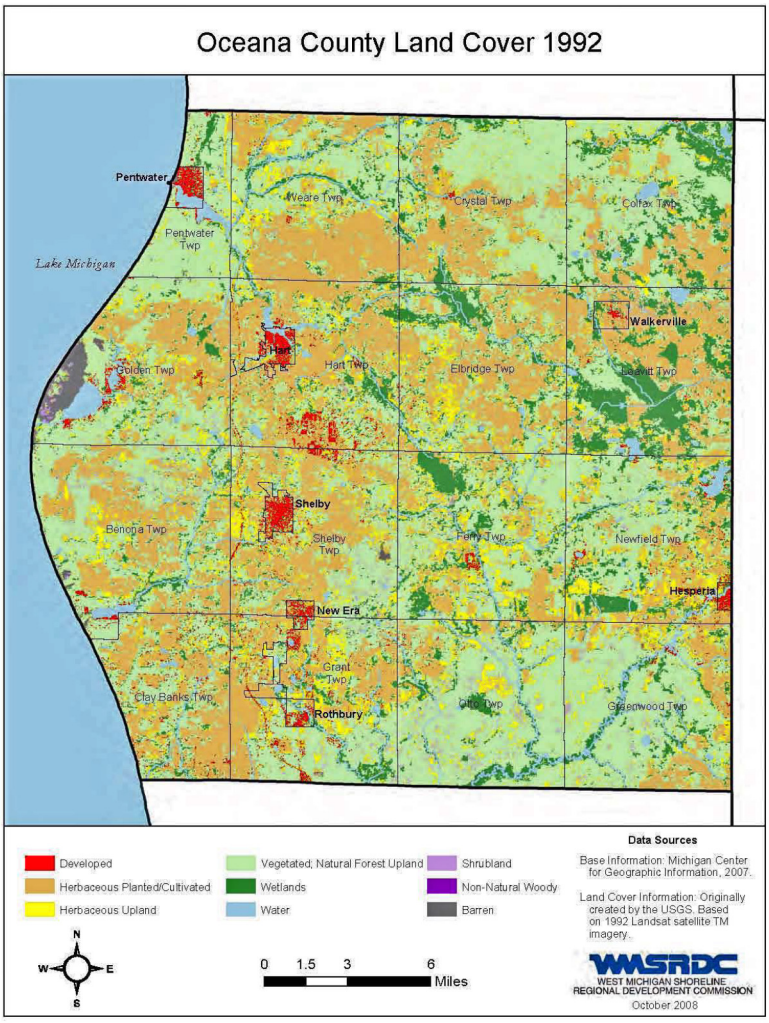
Table 2



Source: 2005 Mason County Data Book, 1978 Michigan Inventory Data

Mason County is bordered to the north by Manistee County, to the east by Lake County, to the southeast by Newaygo County, and to the south by Oceana County. Oceana County is bordered to the north by Mason County, to the north east by Lake County, to the east by Newaygo County, and to the south by Muskegon County. The counties proximity to regional destinations are listed in Table 1.

Mason County contains fifteen townships, two cities, and three villages as defined by Michigan law. The county seat is the City of Ludington, which is also the largest city in the county. Mason County is considered a rural county with a population of 28,705 residents in 2010. The county has a land area of approximately 510 square miles, or 326,313 acres. In 2010 the population density for the county was 56 people per square mile. Table 2 identifies the county's land use and cover. The table identifies the largest land uses as Forest Land, Agriculture, and Rangeland. These three uses total nearly 90 percent of the land in Mason County.



Oceana County contains sixteen townships, one city, and six villages as defined by Michigan law. The county seat is the City of Hart, which is the only city in the county. Oceana County is also a rural county with a total 2010 population of 26,570 residents. The county has a land area of 536 square miles or 343,040

acres. The population density in 2010 was 50 people per square mile. The map on page five illustrates the 1992 land cover for Oceana County. As can be seen in the map, the majority of land in Oceana County is categorized as Farm Land and Forest Land.

Demographic and Economic Analysis

Official population and demographic counts are provided by the U.S. Census Bureau every 10 years with estimates given every year through the American Community Survey 1, 3, and 5 years estimates. Table 3 depicts the total population figures for 2000 and 2010, as well as the actual and percentage difference between the two years. The table also identifies population distribution for both sex and race in Mason and Oceana Counties. Between 2000 and 2010, the most significant population increases by race occurred among the Other population category in Mason County with a 46.7% increase, the Black population segment in Oceana County increasing 38.3%, and the Hispanic population in Mason County at 35.0%.

Table 3

County Population by Sex and Race											
	Total	Male	Female	White	Black	American Indian	Asian	Native Hawaiian	Other	2 or More Races	Hispanic
Mason County											
2000	28,274	13,961	14,313	27,098	206	220	78	6	232	434	852
2010	28,705	14,168	14,537	27,225	172	289	132	0	340	547	1,150
Difference	431	207	224	127	-34	69	54	-6	108	113	298
% Difference	1.5%	1.5%	1.6%	0.5%	-16.5%	31.4%	69.2%	-100%	46.7%	26.7%	35.0%
Oceana County											
2000	26,873	13,544	13,329	24,284	86	279	67	8	1,640	509	3,119
2010	26,570	13,344	13,226	23,952	119	285	61	4	1,618	531	3,629
Difference	-303	-200	-103	-332	33	6	-6	-4	-22	22	510
% Difference	-1.1%	-1.5%	-0.8%	-1.4%	38.4%	2.2%	-9.0%	-50.0%	-1.3%	4.3%	16.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission prepares population projections for each county within the region. Using bi-annual county population estimates provided by the U.S. Census Bureau, the Regional Commission extrapolates populations of all minor civil divisions (townships, cities, and villages) within the region. The population is projected in five-year increments from the year 2015 – 2040 population projections, prepared by the Regional Commission and are listed in Table 4 for Mason County and Table 5 for Oceana County.

Between 2000 and 2010, Mason County grew by 1.5 percent (431 persons). Of the 20 communities located in Mason County, it is interesting to note that ten communities experienced population growth, and ten experienced population decreases. Four communities demonstrated population growth in double digits including Amber Township (23.3%), Branch Township (12.4%), Sheridan Township (10.6%), and the Village of

Fountain (10.3%). Similarly, four communities showed population loss in double digits. Those communities include Meade Township (-36.9%), the Village of Free Soil (-18.6%), Riverton Township (-13.6%), and the Village of Custer (-10.7%). By 2040, Mason County's population is projected to increase to a total of 30,038 persons. This represents a total population increase of 1,333, or a 4.6 percent over the 2010 Census.

Table 4

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
Demographic Projections

Population Forecast 2015 to 2040

Mason County	Actual Census Figures 1970	1980	1990	2000	Census Estimate 2010	Forecasted Population 2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Total Population	22,612	26,365	25,537	28,274	28,705	28,923	29,143	29,364	28,587	29,811	30,038
Population projections are developed at the County level.											
As a result of this, in-county migration from urban to non-urban areas may be understated.											
Amber Township	1,278	1,556	1,684	2,054	2,535	2,554	2,574	2,593	2,613	2,633	2,653
Branch Township	635	1,021	973	1,161	1,326	1,336	1,346	1,356	1,369	1,379	1,390
Custer Township	1,204	1,338	1,176	1,307	1,254	1,264	1,273	1,283	1,293	1,302	1,312
Eden Township	414	511	491	555	582	586	591	595	600	604	609
Free Soil Township	731	925	860	809	822	828	835	841	847	854	860
Grant Township	419	747	749	850	909	916	923	930	937	944	951
Hamlin Township	1,778	2,616	2,597	3,192	3,406	3,434	3,460	3,486	3,513	3,539	3,566
Logan Township	154	177	203	329	312	314	317	319	322	324	326
Meade Township	59	135	142	287	181	182	184	185	187	188	189
Pere Marquette Township	1,846	2,068	2,065	2,228	2,366	2,384	2,402	2,420	2,439	2,457	2,476
Riverton Township	1,151	1,177	1,115	1,335	1,153	1,162	1,171	1,179	1,188	1,197	1,207
Sheridan Township	433	828	837	969	1,072	1,080	1,088	1,097	1,105	1,113	1,122
Sherman Township	867	996	952	1,090	1,186	1,195	1,204	1,213	1,222	1,232	1,241
Summit Township	557	922	815	1,021	924	931	938	945	952	960	967
Victory Township	863	1,170	1,084	1,444	1,383	1,394	1,404	1,415	1,425	1,436	1,447
Cities											
Ludington	9,021	8,937	8,507	8,357	8,076	8,137	8,199	8,261	8,324	8,387	8,451
Scottville	1,202	1,241	1,287	1,266	1,214	1,223	1,233	1,242	1,251	1,261	1,270
Villages*											
Custer	320	341	312	318	284	286	288	291	293	295	297
Fountain	156	195	185	175	193	194	196	197	199	200	202
Freesoil	186	212	148	177	144	145	146	147	148	150	151

*Village population included in Township figures
Sources: Census Bureau, Internal Revenue Service and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Forecast by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

October 2011

Oceana County showed a negative population gain between 2000 and 2010 at -1.1 percent (-303 persons). Even though the county lost population as a whole, there were still some areas with population increases. Some of those areas include Otto Township (24.8%), the City of Hart (9.0%), and the Village of Shelby (7.9%). Communities with the greatest population decreases include Elbridge Township (-21.3%), Colfax Township (-19.5%), and the Village of Pentwater (-10.5%). Oceana County's population is projected to decrease to 25,681 persons by 2040. This represents a total population decrease of -889 or a -3.4 percent since the 2010 Census.

Table 5

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
Demographic Projections

Population Forecast 2015 to 2040

Oceana County	Actual Census Figures 1970	1980	1990	2000	Census Estimate 2010	Forecasted Population 2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
Total Population	17,984	22,002	22,454	26,873	26,570	26,420	26,270	26,122	25,974	25,827	25,681
Population projections are developed at the County level.											
As a result of this, in-county migration from urban to non-urban areas may be understated.											
Benona Township	818	1,293	1,133	1,529	1,437	1,429	1,421	1,413	1,405	1,397	1,389
Claybanks Township	557	733	679	831	777	773	768	764	760	755	751
Colfax Township	222	328	374	574	462	459	457	454	452	449	447
Crystal Township	453	692	656	832	836	833	829	824	819	815	810
Elbridge Township	799	889	820	1,253	971	966	960	955	949	944	939
Ferry Township	719	898	1,033	1,296	1,292	1,285	1,277	1,270	1,263	1,256	1,249
Golden Township	871	1,358	1,392	1,819	1,742	1,732	1,722	1,713	1,703	1,693	1,684
Grant Township	1,587	2,366	2,578	2,932	2,976	2,959	2,942	2,926	2,909	2,893	2,876
Greenwood Township	575	815	915	1,154	1,184	1,177	1,171	1,164	1,157	1,151	1,144
Hart Township	1,525	1,801	1,513	2,028	1,853	1,843	1,832	1,822	1,811	1,801	1,791
Leavitt Township	773	648	604	845	891	886	881	876	871	866	861
Newfield Township	1,551	1,988	2,144	2,483	2,401	2,387	2,374	2,361	2,347	2,334	2,321
Otto Township	196	426	404	662	826	821	817	812	807	803	798
Pentwater Township	1,154	1,424	1,422	1,513	1,515	1,506	1,498	1,488	1,481	1,473	1,464
Shelby Township	3,352	3,506	3,692	3,951	4,089	4,046	4,023	4,000	3,978	3,955	3,933
Weare Township	695	939	1,041	1,261	1,210	1,203	1,196	1,190	1,183	1,176	1,170
City											
Hart	2,139	1,880	1,942	1,959	2,126	2,114	2,102	2,090	2,078	2,067	2,055
Villages*											
Hesperia (Part)	525	529	586	599	615	612	608	605	601	598	594
New Era	486	534	520	481	451	448	446	443	441	438	436
Pentwater	993	1,185	1,050	958	857	852	847	843	838	833	828
Rothbury	394	522	497	416	432	430	427	425	422	420	418
Shelby	1,793	1,824	1,871	1,914	2,065	2,053	2,042	2,030	2,019	2,007	1,996
Walkerville	319	296	262	254	247	246	244	243	241	240	239

*Village population included in Township figures
Sources: Census Bureau, Internal Revenue Service and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Forecast by the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

October 2011

According to the 2005 – 2009 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, 87.4 percent of Mason County residents and 82.7 percent of Oceana County residents 25 years and older attained at least a high school education. During the same year, Mason County's Per Capita Income (PCI) was $21,726 and Oceana County's was $18,183. The State of Michigan's PCI was $25,172. Per Capita Income reflects the mean income of a county and is derived by dividing the total income of a particular county by the total population of the county. The same is calculated at the state level. Between 2000 and 2009 Mason's PCI increased by 22.7 percent and Oceana's by 13.6 percent. In comparison, Mason County's Median Family Income (MFI) for 2009 was $47,538, and Oceana County's was $46,007. The State of Michigan's MFI was $60,635. Median Family Income refers to the baseline income from which half of the family incomes in a particular area fell below and half of the family incomes rise above. An estimate 15.3 percent of persons in Mason County and 19.6 percent of persons in Oceana County fell below the poverty level in 2009.

The Regional Commission continuously retrieves employment statistics from the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth's (DELEG) web page. This information includes civilian labor force, employment, and unemployment figures, as well as the

historical annual averages for each of the above mentioned categories. The DELEG provides timely and useful information for evaluating the labor market for every county in the State of Michigan. Table 6 illustrates these annual averages for both Mason and Oceana Counties.

Table 6

Employment 2001 - 2011											
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Mason County											
Civilian Labor Force	15,450	15,360	15,309	15,139	15,191	15,118	15,040	14,945	14,585	14,576	14,153
Employed Persons	14,041	13,653	13,602	13,719	14,022	13,936	13,894	13,681	12,705	12,780	12,673
Unemployment Rate	9.1%	11.1%	11.2%	9.4%	7.7%	7.8%	7.6%	8.5%	12.9%	12.3%	10.5%
Oceana County											
Civilian Labor Force	13,486	13,425	13,518	13,863	14,380	14,785	14,510	14,193	13,980	13,866	13,381
Employed Persons	12,535	12,277	12,245	12,692	13,230	13,552	13,318	12,719	11,794	11,781	11,695
Unemployment Rate	7.1%	8.6%	9.4%	8.4%	8.0%	8.3%	8.2%	10.4%	15.6%	15.0%	12.6%

Source: Michigan Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic Growth (DELEG)

Table 7 depicts the major sector employment distribution for Mason County and Table 8 depicts Oceana County in 2001 and 2009.

Table 7

Mason County Employment By Sector 2001 & 2009				
Sector	**2001**	**2009**	**% of Total 2001**	**% of Total 2009**
Manufacturing	2,618	1,808	16.9%	12.4%
Retail Trade	2,521	2,009	16.3%	13.8%
Government	2,164	2,020	14.0%	13.9%
Health Care & Social Assistance	1,421	1,626	9.2%	11.2%
Accommodation/Food Services	1,166	1,056	7.5%	7.2%
Construction	980	889	6.3%	6.1%
Other Services, except Public Administration	805	761	5.2%	5.2%
Real Estate/Rental and Leasing	572	748	3.7%	5.1%
Professional and Technical Services	465	(D)	3.0%	N/A
Finance and Insurance	393	601	2.5%	4.1%
Total Employment	15,497	14,577		

Source: Regional Economic Information System

(D) – Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies; data are included in broader industry totals.

In 2009, the Government sector provided 13.9 percent of the total employment in Mason County followed closely by Retail Trade at 13.8 percent and Manufacturing at 12.4 percent. These three sectors total more than 40 percent of the counties total employment. The Health Care & Social Assistance sector accounts for another 11.2 percent. Altogether, these four sectors comprise more than 50 percent of the total employment in the county. The remaining sectors each contribute roughly 7.2 percent or less.

Table 8

Oceana County Employment By Sector 2001 & 2009				
Sector	**2001**	**2009**	**% of Total 2001**	**% of Total 2009**
Government	1,642	1,744	15.8%	17.3%
Manufacturing	1,364	1,536	13.1%	15.2%
Accommodation/Food Services	879	1,012	8.4%	10.0%
Retail Trade	1,051	921	10.1%	9.1%
Construction	722	574	6.9%	5.7%
Other Services, except Public Administration	551	526	5.3%	5.2%
Health Care & Social Assistance	516	497	5.0%	4.9%
Real Estate/Rental and Leasing	334	373	3.2%	3.7%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	258	209	2.5%	2.1%
Professional and Technical Services	359	(D)	3.5%	N/A
Total Employment	10,411	10,107		

Source: Regional Economic Information System

(D) – Withheld to avoid disclosing data for individual companies; data are included in broader industry totals.

In 2009, the Government sector remained the top employment sector with 17.3 percent, followed by Manufacturing with 15.2 percent, as well as Accommodation/Food Service and Retail Trade with 10.0 and 9.1 percent respectively. The remaining sectors made up approximately 5.7 percent or less of the total employment. It is important to note that Oceana County was the only county in the region to have an increase in Manufacturing between 2001 and 2009.

Environmental Review and History

Mason and Oceana Counties are part of the Great Lakes coastal wetland system and a part of the largest assemblage of fresh water sand dunes in the entire world. The region's exceptional recreational opportunities and quality of life depends on the quality and abundance of its natural resources. With large, coastal sand dunes, abundant forests, lakes and naturally impounded freshwater river harbors, the protection of the region's environment is a top priority for residents and community leaders. Pre-settlement vegetation maps illustrate that the region was once dominated by white pine/white oak forests, and a mosaic of beech/sugar maple, mixed conifer and hardwood swamps, oak/pine barren, coastal marshes, lakes and streams.

The region was inhabited by semi-nomadic Ottawa and Pottawatomi Indian bands in the mid-1700's. In the late 1700's and early 1800's, French fur trading posts were present

along some of the lakes in the region. The lumber era began in the region in the mid-1800's and peaked in the mid-1880's with several sawmills scattered along the lakes and rivers. The effect of lumbering within the river systems resulted in accelerated stream bank erosion and sedimentation, smothering aquatic habitats. Without a market for sawmill slab wood and sawdust, both were disposed of in large quantities directly into the lakes and rivers. This resulted in a loss of shallow water wetlands, the resulting stormwater runoff, degraded water quality, and nearshore benthic habitats.

The lumber era virtually ended along with the nineteenth century. During the early 1900's new industries began to locate in the region, mostly in the Ludington area. However, the majority of Mason and Oceana Counties are considered rural communities with abundant natural resources. The farms, forests, rivers, lakeshores, and dunes for these two counties are not only important natural resources, but also vital to the local economy. Today, many of the environmental concerns the counties are facing include nonpoint source pollution and loss of habitat. Major sources of nonpoint source pollution within the region include impervious surfaces such as streets, parking lots, and roofs; farm fields and livestock operations; chemicals from lawns; as well as industrial and commercial activities.

In 1968, Congress created the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. The purpose of the Wild & Scenic Rivers Act, signed on October 2, 1968, was to preserve various rivers that demonstrated outstanding cultural, natural, and recreational attributes for current and future generations to enjoy. The Act is most notable for its ability to preserve the unique character of the rivers, in addition to understanding and promoting their proper use development. It also encourages multi-jurisdictional planning and participation by the public in establishing goals for protecting the river. There are two rivers in Mason County currently carrying the federal Wild and Scenic River designation, and one river in Oceana County currently under consideration for federal designation. In addition, the State of Michigan in 1970 initiated the Michigan's Natural Rivers Program. The focus of the program is similar to the federal Wild and Scenic Rivers System. There are three watersheds in the area which carry the Michigan Natural River designation. They include the Upper Manistee River Watershed, Pere Marquette River Watershed, and the White River Watershed.

In 1975, the White River Watershed, including 253 linear miles of streams, received Michigan's Natural Rivers designation. Portions of the White River are currently being considered for inclusion in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System. Sixty-six miles of the Pere Marquette River was designated as a Wild and Scenic River in 1978. The segment runs from the junction of the Middle and South Branches to its junction with the U.S. 31 highway and is managed by the U.S. Forest Service, Huron-Manistee National Forest. In the same year the entire watershed including its major tributaries also received the Michigan's Natural Rivers designation. In 1992, 26 miles of the Manistee River received the federal Wild and Scenic River designation. The segment runs from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources boat ramp below Tippy Dam to the Michigan State Highway 55 Bridge. In addition, the Upper Manistee River Watershed received Michigan's Natural Rivers designation in 2003. The mainstream of the watershed runs 78 miles long at an elevation of 1,250 feet.

CHAPTER III: BLUEWYS INVENTORY

Introduction to Blueways

The term "Blueway" has been defined in this study as a body of water that features public access, recreational opportunities, and promotes interaction with the water. With extensive areas of shoreline along Lake Michigan, numerous inland lakes, rivers and streams, both Mason and Oceana Counties boast a significant number of locations that fit this definition. Some of the area's blueways are large enough to navigate, while some are only large enough to wade through. Table 9 lists the lakes in Mason and Oceana Counties that are 20 acres or larger.

Table 9

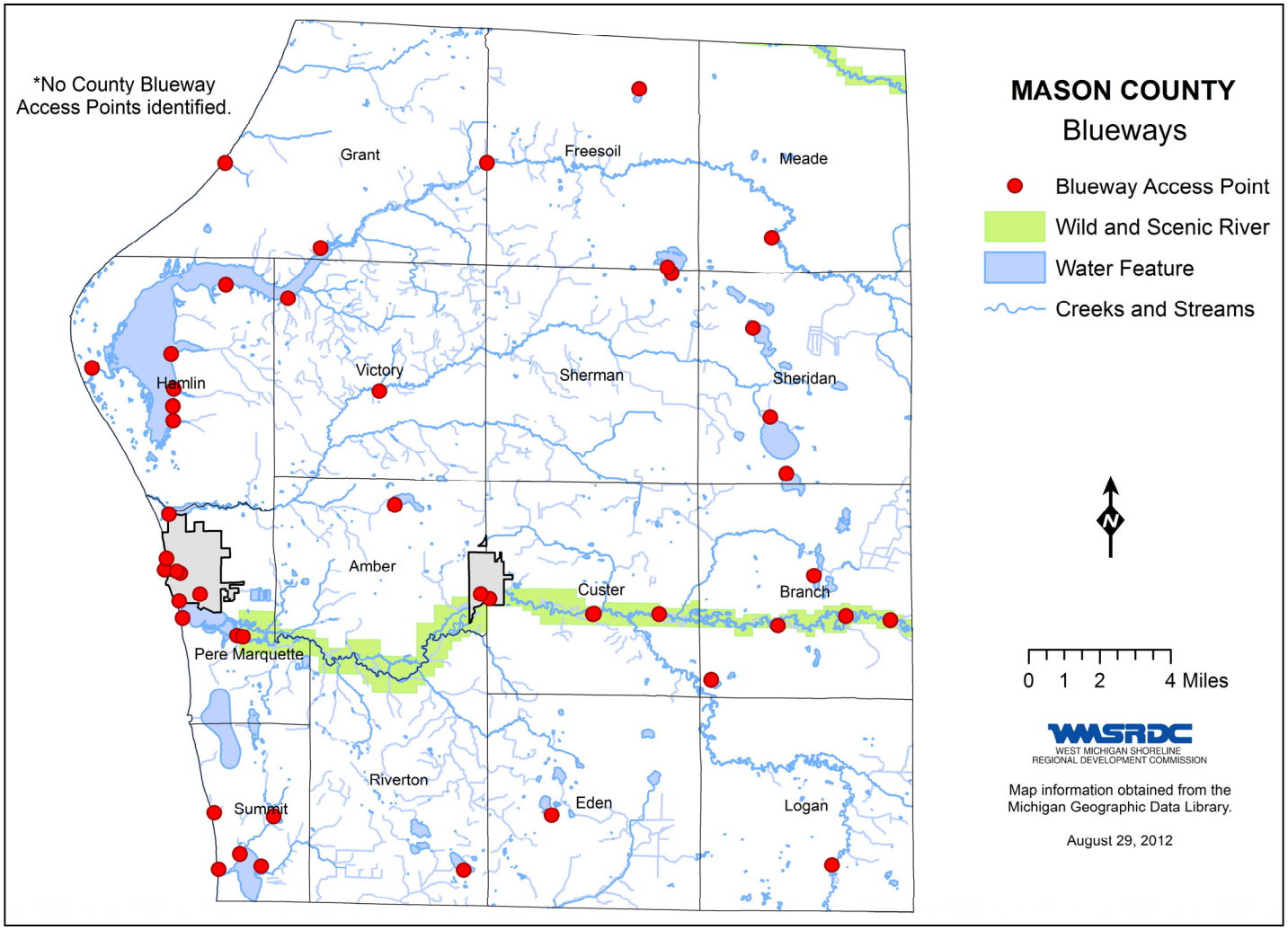
Lakes of Mason County				
Lake	**Alternative Names**	**Size (acres)**	**Max Depth (ft)**	**Location**
Lake Michigan		22,178	923	Ludington City; Grant, Hamlin, Pere
Hamlin Lake		4,750	79	Grant, Hamlin and Victory townships
Round Lake		571	10	Sheridan Township
Pere Marquette Lake		554	40	Pere Marquette Township
Bass Lake		524	12	Summit Township
Gun Lake		242	20	Free Soil and Sherman townships
Ford Lake		208	84	Sheridan Township
Tallman Lake		170	5	Branch and Sheridan townships
Lincoln Lake		156		Hamlin and Pere Marquette townships
Long Lake		136	50	Branch Township
Hackert Lake	Crystal Lake	125	52	Amber Township
Hopkins Lake		119		Pere Marquette and Summit townships
St Marys Lake		113		Riverton Township
North Oxbow Lake		105		Riverton Township
Pleiness Lake		98		Eden Township
Gooseneck Lake		77	20	Branch Township
Blue Lake	Chancellor Lake	69	50	Sheridan Township
Thunder Lake	Lake Woodward	65	20	Sheridan Township
Eden Lake		64	56	Eden Township
Emerson Lake		55	45	Branch Township
Casin Lake		48	5	Branch Township
Woodruff Lake		47		Eden Township
Bartons Lake		37	20	Eden Township
Cartier Lake		37		Sheridan Township
Picnic Lake		31		Sheridan Township
South Oxbow Lake	(east)	31		Riverton Township
Hoags Lake		27	18	Free Soil Township
South Oxbow Lake	(west)	25		Riverton Township
Batcheller Lake		22		Sheridan Township

Lakes of Oceana County				
Lake	**Alternative Names**	**Size (acres)**	**Max Depth (ft)**	**Location**
Lake Michigan		22,178	923	Pentwater Village; Benona, Claybanks, Golden and Pentwater townships
Silver Lake		690	25	Golden Township
Pentwater Lake		485	46	Pentwater Township
Stony Lake		278	40	Benona and Claybanks townships
McLaren Lake		271	70	Newfield Township
Hart Lake		240	28	Hart Township
Campbell Lake		187	41	Leavitt and Newfield townships
School Section Lake		182	26	Colfax Township
Gilbert Lake		176	16	Leavitt Township
Crystal Lake		76	30	Hart Township
Round Lake	Wyckoff Lake	43	27	Golden Township
Leavitt Lake	Mud Lake	41		Leavitt Township
Lucky Lake		37		Grant Township
Upper Silver Lake		37		Golden Township
Acker Lake		31		Greenwood Township
Wildcat Lake	Big Wildcat Lake	29		Grant Township
Heitman Lake	Mud Lake	28		Grant Township
Pebawma Lake		28		Colfax Township
Park Lake		27		Claybanks Township
Black Lake		26		Colfax Township
Carpenter Lake		23		Grant Township
High Tower Lake		22	20	Newfield Township
Cobmoosa Lake		21		Elbridge Township
Gold Fin and Feather Lake		21		Golden Township
Lake Tahoe	Schmidt Lake	21		Grant Township

The blueways inventory is organized by municipal city, village, or township boundaries. Each Mason and Oceana County community is listed in alphabetical order along with a map revealing the location of each blueway, and followed by brief descriptions of each blueway found within that municipality. Blueway descriptions typically include information of each site's location, waterway, size, owner/operator, and water uses. Below is the inventory of Mason and Oceana County Blueways.

Detailed Blueways Inventory

Mason County Blueways



City of Ludington

Cartier Park

Location – 1254 N. Lakeshore Dr.
Waterway – Lincoln River
Size – 68 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – 2,500 feet of Lincoln Lake frontage; Dirt ramp boat launch; Two fishing docks.

Copeyon Park

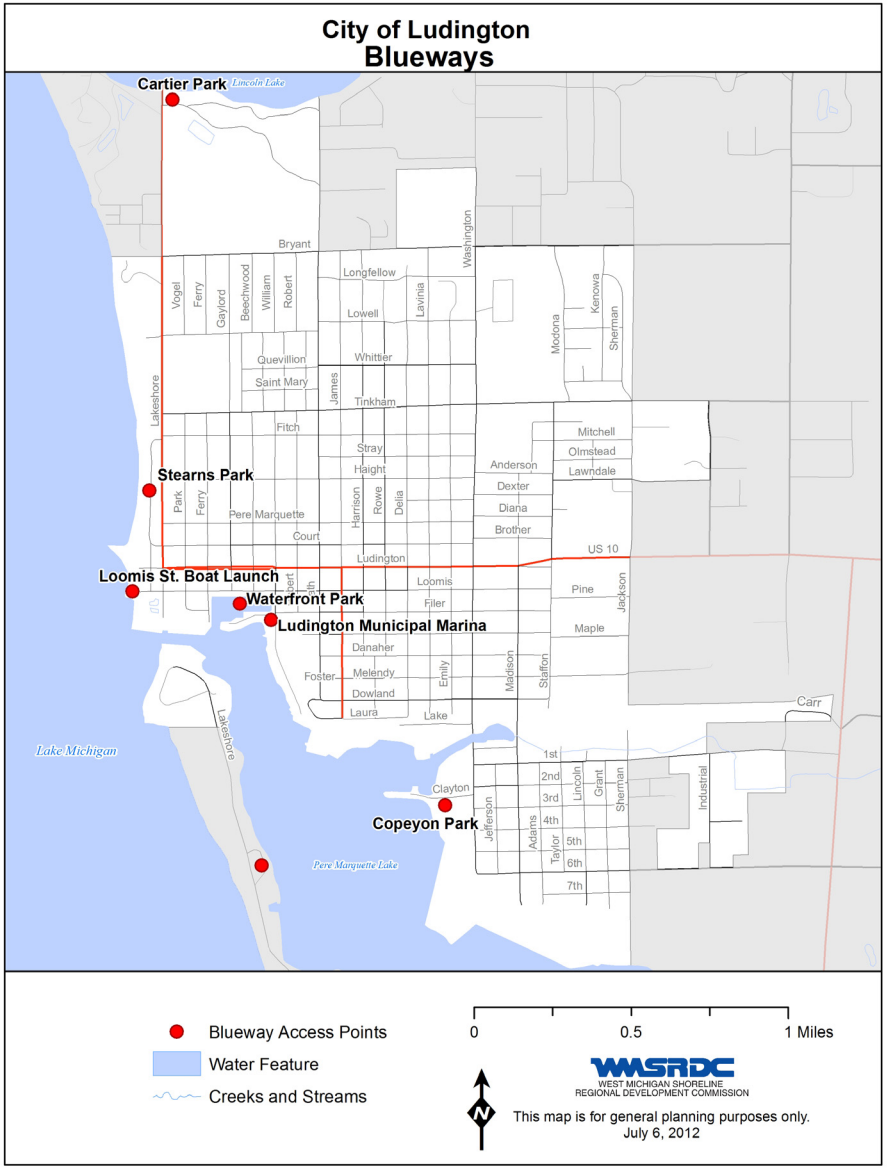
Location – S. Washington Ave., near Clayton Ct.
Waterway – Pere Marquette Lake
Size – 4.2 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – 400 feet of Pere Marquette Lake frontage; Paved boat launch; Fishing.

Loomis Street Boat Launch and Park

Location – West end of Loomis St.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – 3 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing from nearby seawall; Fish cleaning station; Parking for 120 boats, cars or trailers.

Ludington Municipal Marina

Location – 200 S. William St.
Waterway – Pere Marquette Lake
Size – 11 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – Fishing, 86 seasonal boat slips; 88 transient boat slips; Fish cleaning station.



Stearns Park

Location – Lakeshore Dr., north of Ludington Ave.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – 60 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – 2,500 ft. sandy shoreline; Swimming with lifeguards on duty.

Waterfront Park

Location – South end of William St.
Waterway – Pere Marquette Lake
Size – 5 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Ludington
Water Uses – Waterfront walkway; Fishing.

City of Scottville

Riverside Park and Boat Launch

Location – 700 S. Scottville Rd., Scottville, MI 49454
Waterway – Pere Marquette River
Size – 103 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Scottville
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Swimming; Fishing.

Village of Custer

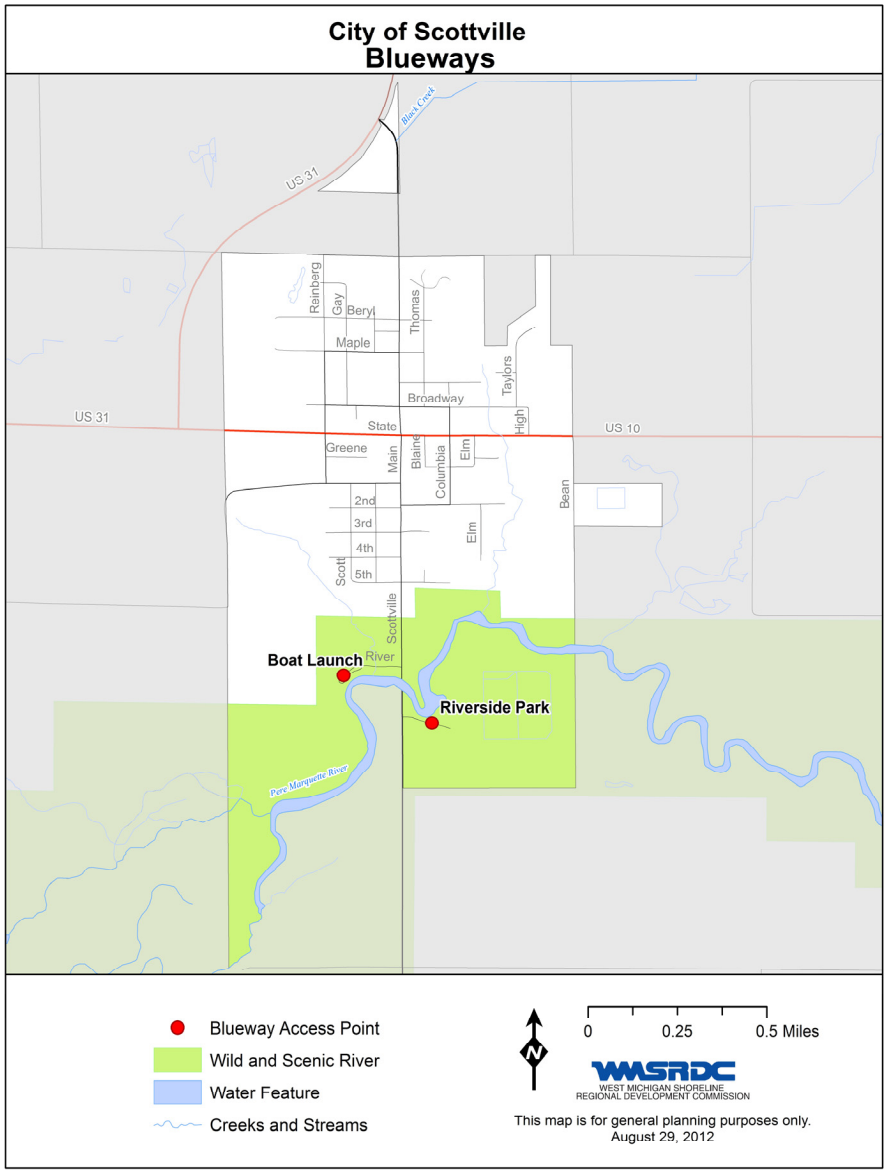
None

Village of Fountain

None

Village of Free Soil

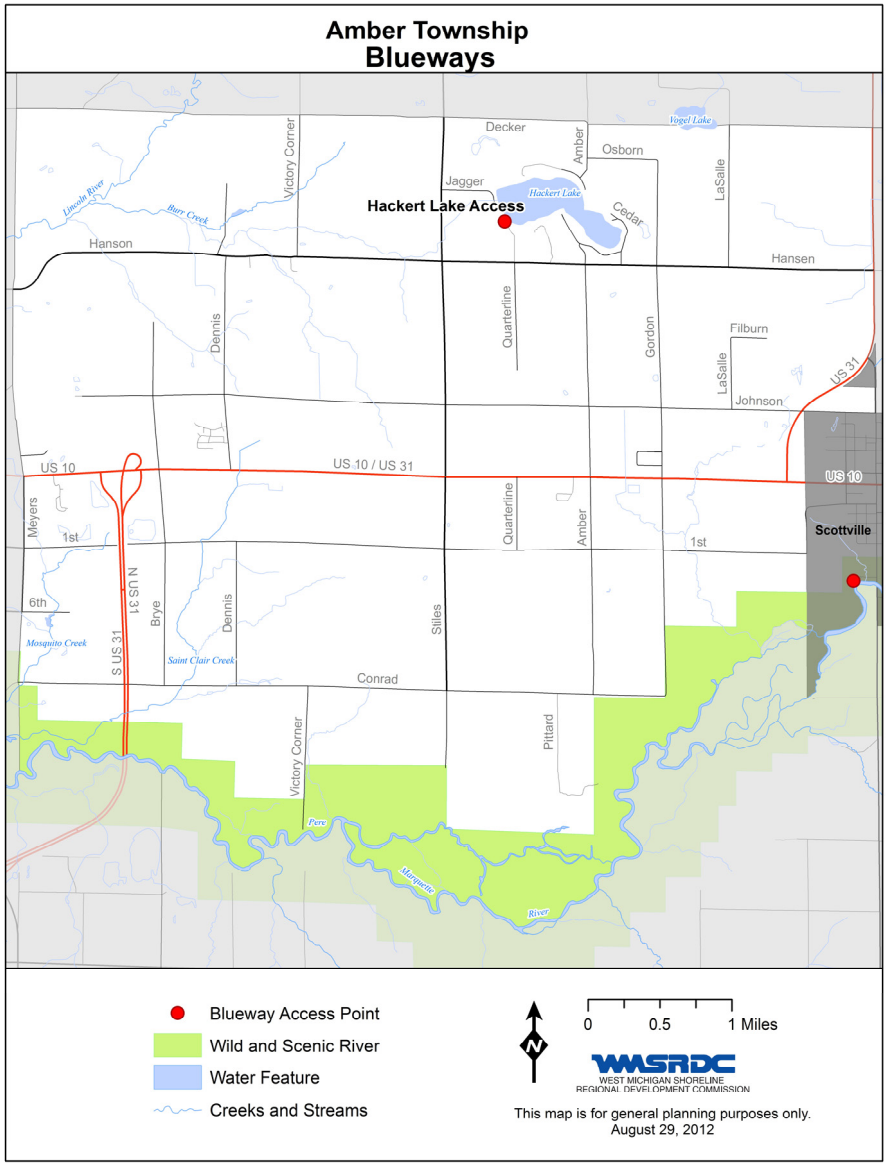
None



Amber Township

Hackert Lake Access

Location – N. Quarterline Rd., north of W. Hansen Rd.
Waterway – Hackert Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Cement boat launch; Swimming; Fishing.



Branch Township

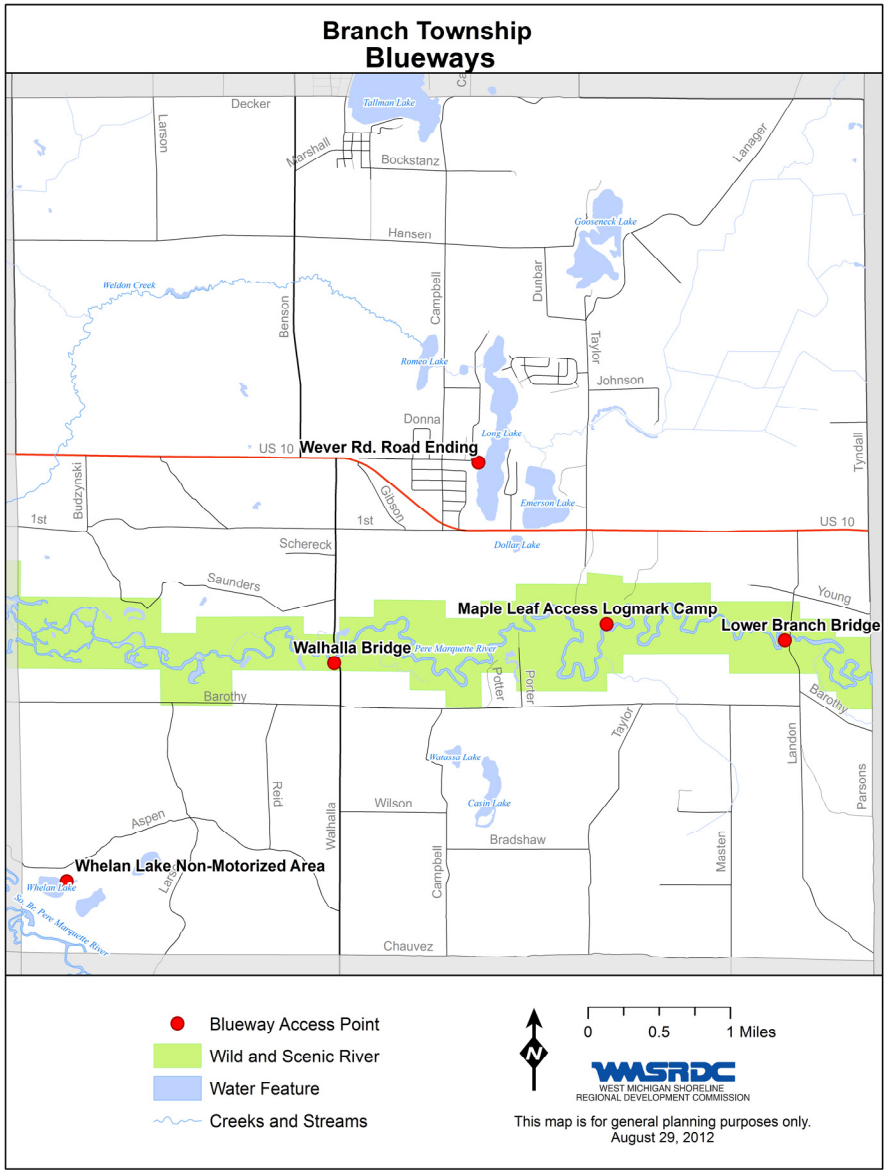
Lower Branch Bridge
- Location – Landon Rd.
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – USFS
- Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.

Maple Leaf Access & Logmark Campsite
- Location – FR 5580 (South end of Taylor Rd.).
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – USFS
- Water Uses – Canoe-in campground; Fishing.

Walhalla Bridge
- Location – Walhalla Rd.
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – MDNR
- Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.

Wever Rd. Road Ending
- Location – East end of Weaver Rd.
- Waterway – Long Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Branch Township
- Water Uses – Gravel boat ramp; Fishing.

Whelan Lake Semi-Primitive Nonmotorized Area
- Location – Aspen Rd.
- Waterway – Whelan Lake
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – USFS
- Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.



Custer Township

Custer Bridge

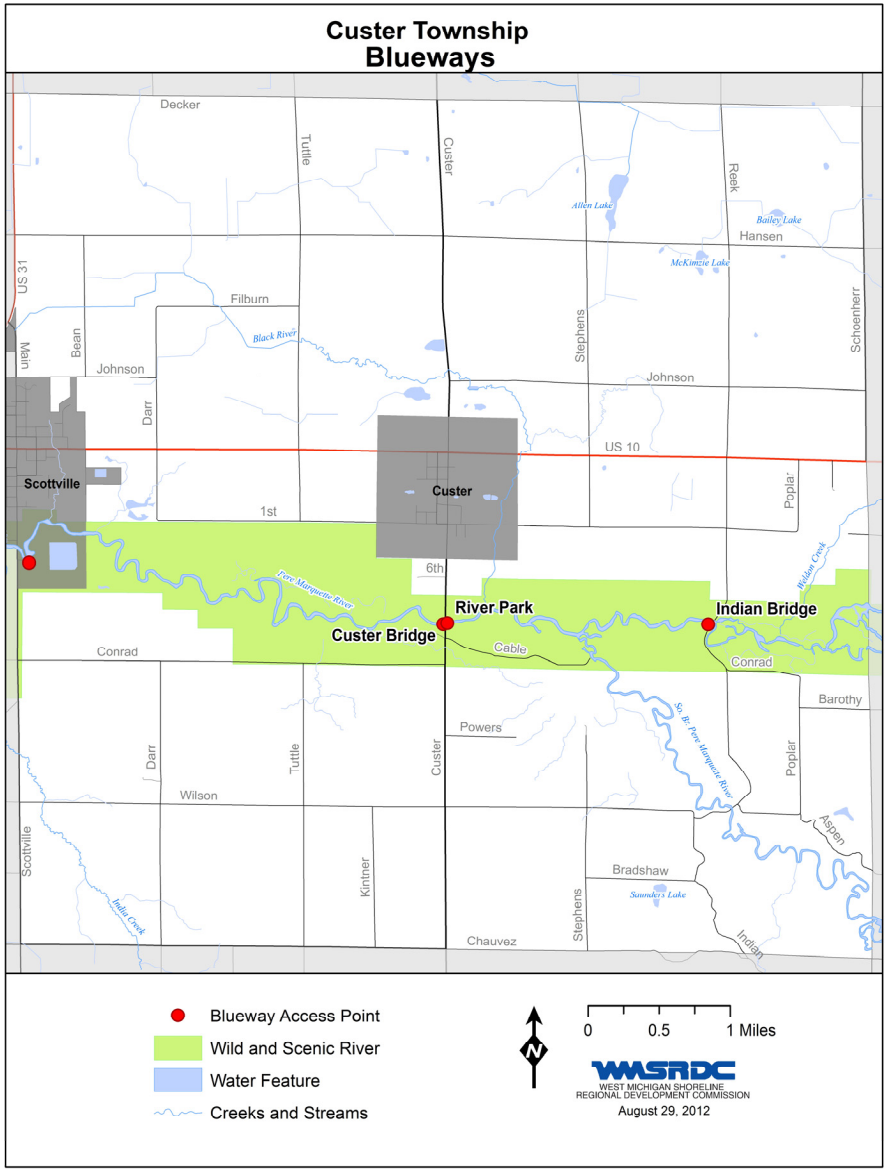
- Location – S. Custer Rd.
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – USFS
- Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.

Indian Bridge

- Location – Reek Rd.
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – N/A
- Owner/Operator – USFS
- Water Uses – Hard-surfaced boat launch; Fishing.

River Park

- Location – S. Custer Rd.
- Waterway – Pere Marquette River
- Size – 10 acres
- Owner/Operator – Custer Township
- Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.



Eden Township

Pleiness Lake Access

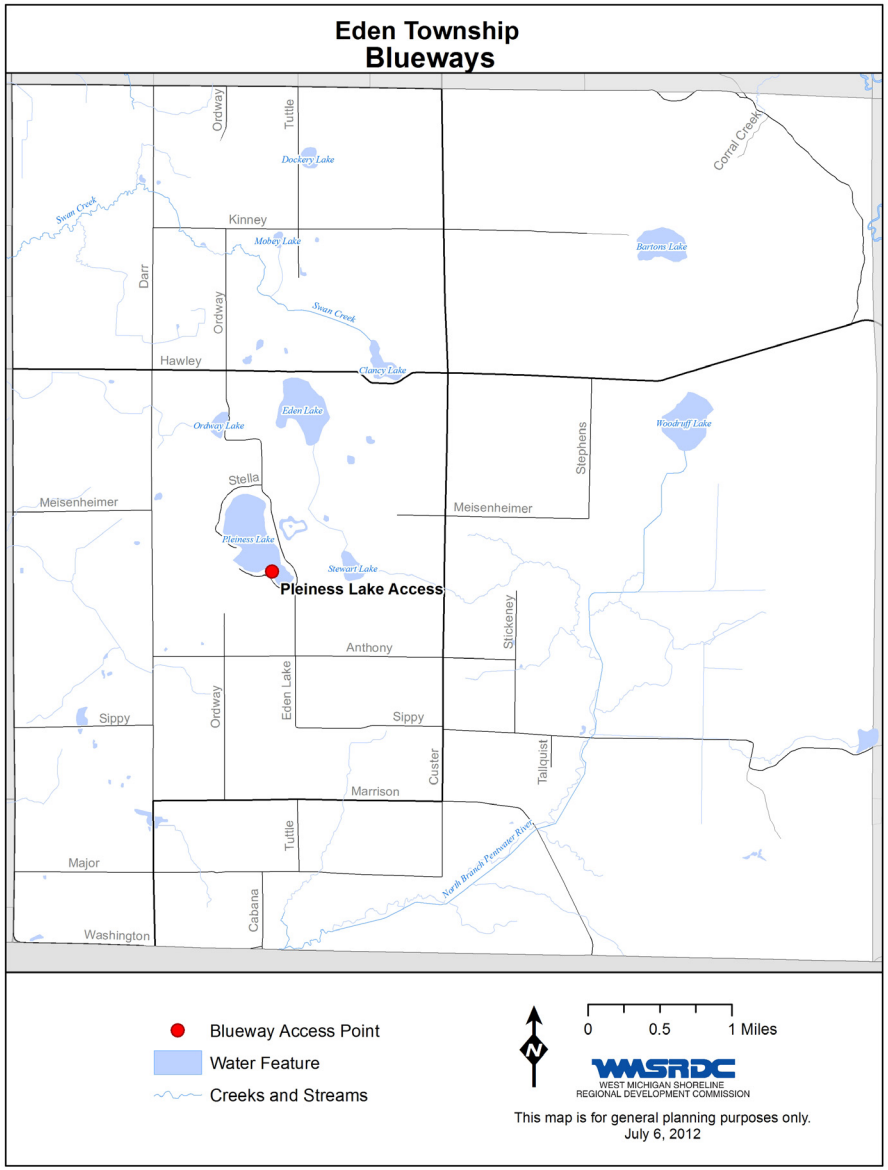
Location – Lone Pine Rd.

Waterway – Pleiness Lake

Size – N/A

Owner/Operator – MDNR

Water Uses – Gravel-surfaced boat launch; Fishing.



Free Soil Township

Gun Lake Boat Launch

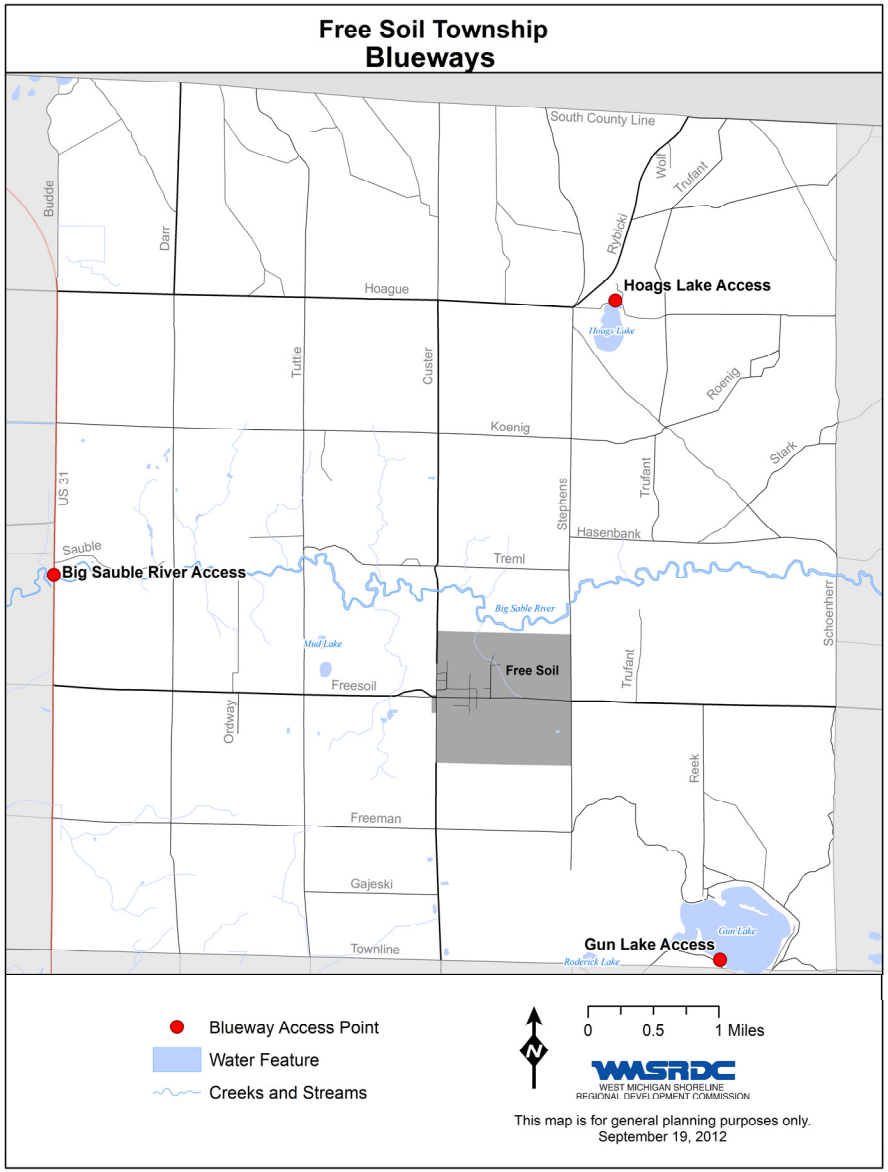
Location – Townline Rd. west of Poplar Rd.
Waterway – Gun Lake
Size – 40 acres, 300 feet of lake front
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Gravel-surfaced boat launch, dock, and Fishing.

Hoags Lake Day Use Area

Location – E. Hoague Rd., near Stephens Rd./Rybicki Rd. intersection
Waterway – Hoags Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Dirt boat ramp; Swimming; Fishing.

Big Sauble River Property

Location – US-31 at the Big Sauble River
Waterway – Big Sauble River
Size – 6 acres
Owner/Operator – Mason County
Water Uses – Unimproved river access; Fishing.



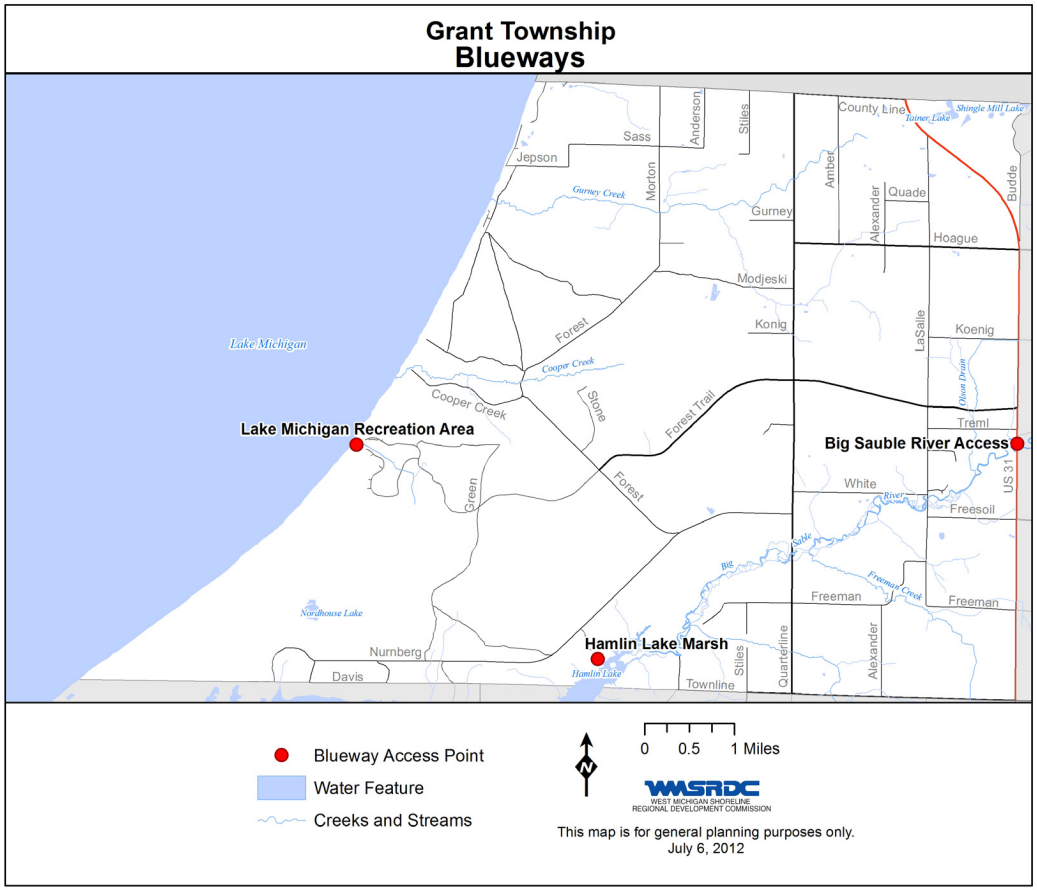
Grant Township

Hamlin Lake Marsh

Location – FR 5540 (South of Nurnburg Rd.)
Waterway – Hamlin Lake
Size – 100 acres
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Dirt boat launch; Fishing.

Lake Michigan Recreation Area

Location – FR 5629 (West end of W. Forest Trail Rd.)
Waterway – Lake Michigan; Porter Creek.
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Swimming; Hiking trail along Porter Creek.



Hamlin Township

Long Skinny Park

Location – N. Lakeshore Dr., between South and Middle bayous
Waterway – Hamlin Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – Hamlin Township
Water Uses –Fishing.

Ludington State Park

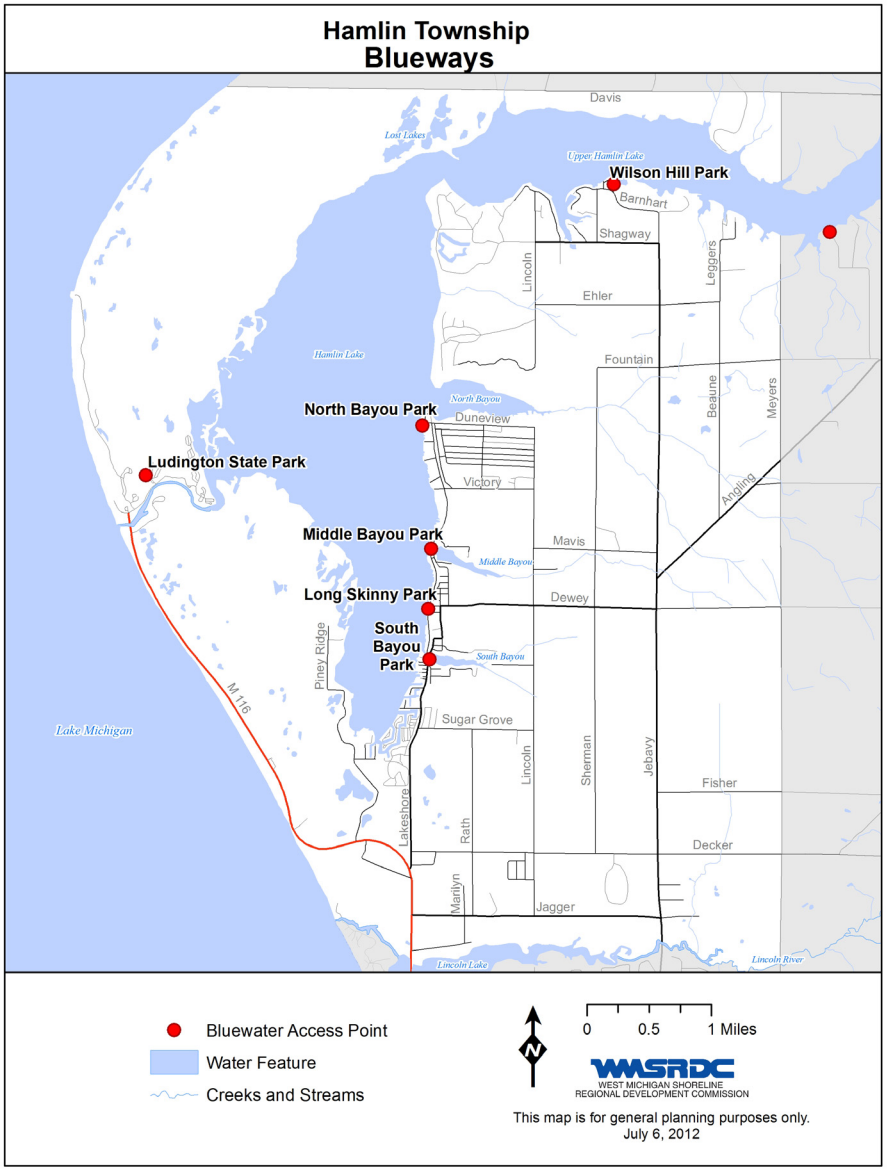
Location – 8800 W. M-116, Ludington, MI 49431.
Waterway – Lake Michigan; Hamlin Lake; Big Sauble River
Size – ~5,300 acres
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Miles of shoreline on both Michigan and Hamlin lakes; Swimming beaches on Michigan and Hamlin lakes; Boat rentals on Hamlin Lake; Canoe trail; Boat launch; Fishing.

Middle Bayou Park

Location – Lakeshore Dr., near Middle Bayou.
Waterway – Hamlin Lake
Size – ~0.1 acre
Owner/Operator – Hamlin Township
Water Uses – Swimming; Fishing.

North Bayou Park

Location – Duneview Dr.
Waterway – Hamlin Lake
Size – ~0.2 acre
Owner/Operator – Hamlin Township
Water Uses – Rustic boat launch; Fishing.



South Bayou Park

Location – N. Lakeshore Dr.
Waterway – Hamlin Lake, South Bayou
Size – ~1 acre
Owner/Operator – Hamlin Township
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.

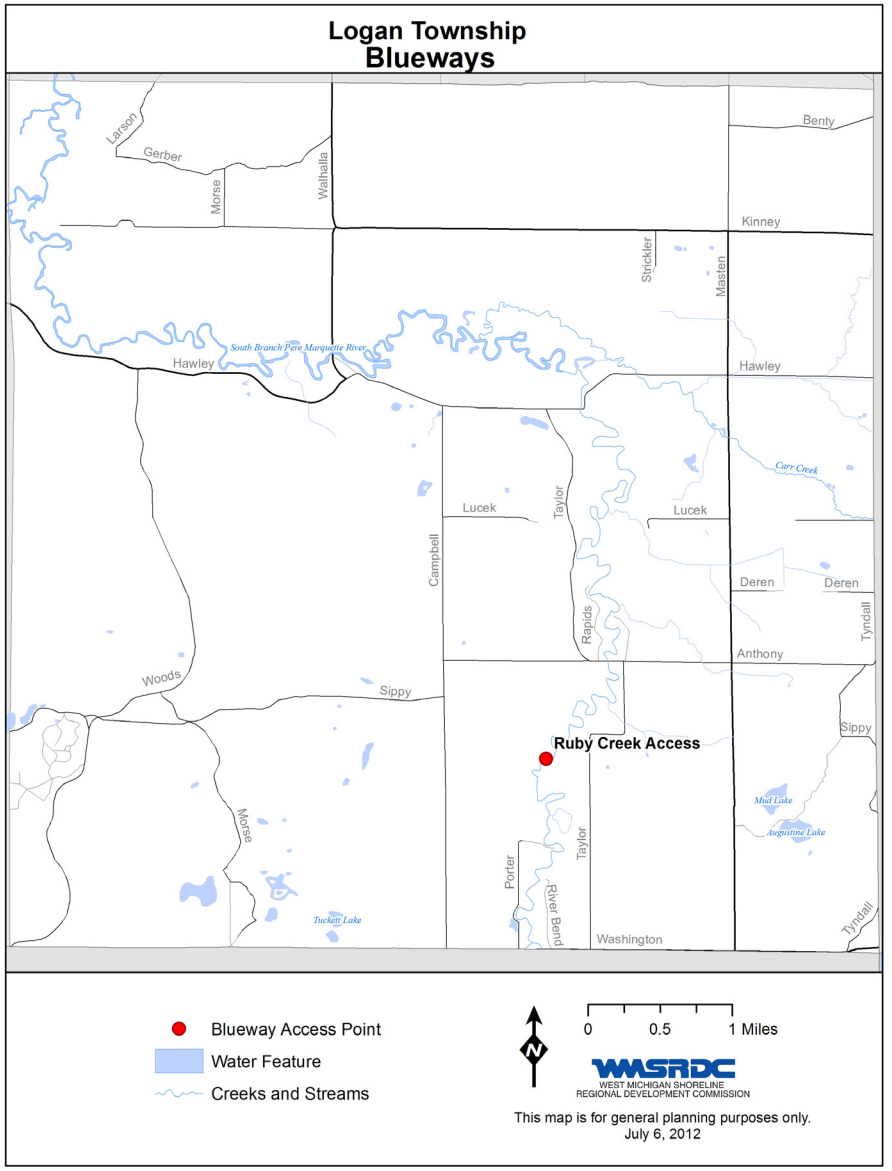
Wilson Hill Park

Location – Barnhart Rd.
Waterway – Upper Hamlin Lake
Size – 5 acres
Owner/Operator – Hamlin Township
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.

Logan Township

Ruby Creek Access

Location – Pere Marquette River, about 1-2 miles north of Washington Rd.
Waterway – Pere Marquette River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.



Meade Township

Upper Big Sable Access

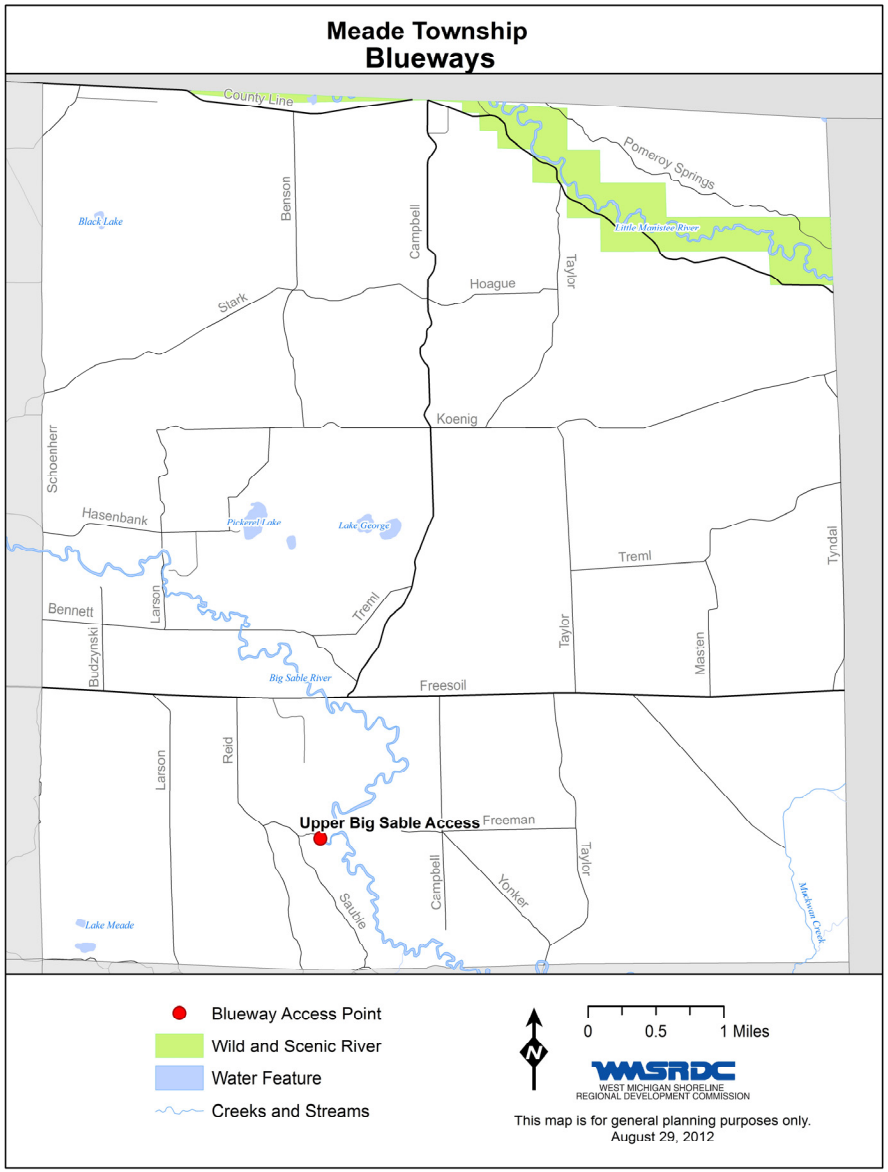
Location – E. Sauble Rd.

Waterway – Big Sauble River

Size – N/A

Owner/Operator – MDNR

Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.



Pere Marquette Charter Township

Father Marquette's Shrine

Location – S. Lakeshore Dr.
Waterway – Pere Marquette Lake
Size – 2.4 acres
Owner/Operator – Pere Marquette Charter Township
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; 400 feet of lake frontage; Fishing; Ice fishing access.

Buttersville Park

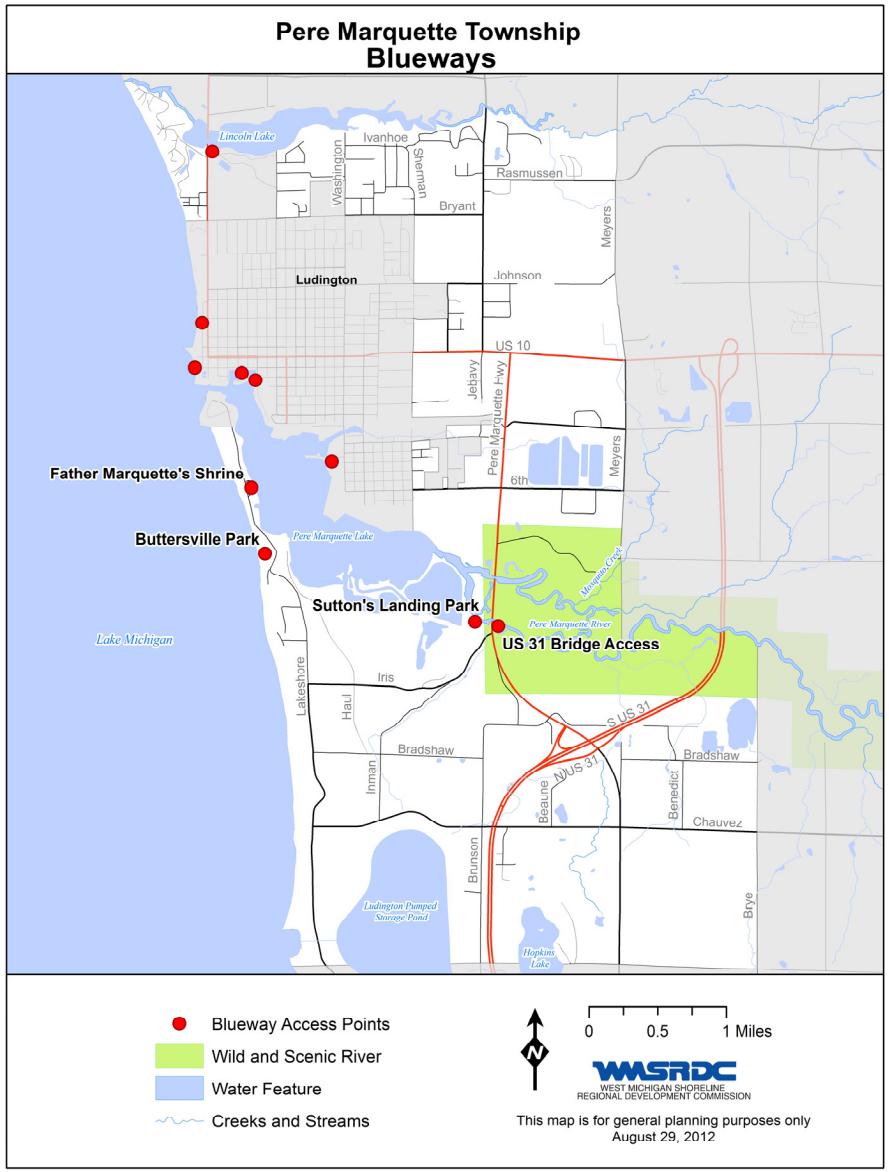
Location – S. Lakeshore Dr.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – 18.5 acres
Owner/Operator – Pere Marquette Charter Township
Water Uses – Swimming.

Sutton's Landing Park

Location – Iris Rd., near Pere Marquette Highway
Waterway – Pere Marquette River
Size – 34 acres
Owner/Operator – Pere Marquette Charter Township
Water Uses – Improved boat launch; Boardwalk along river; 425 feet of river frontage; Fishing.

US 31 Bridge Access

Location – Pere Marquette Highway, east of road and south of the river
Waterway – Pere Marquette River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.



Riverton Township

St. Mary's Lake Access

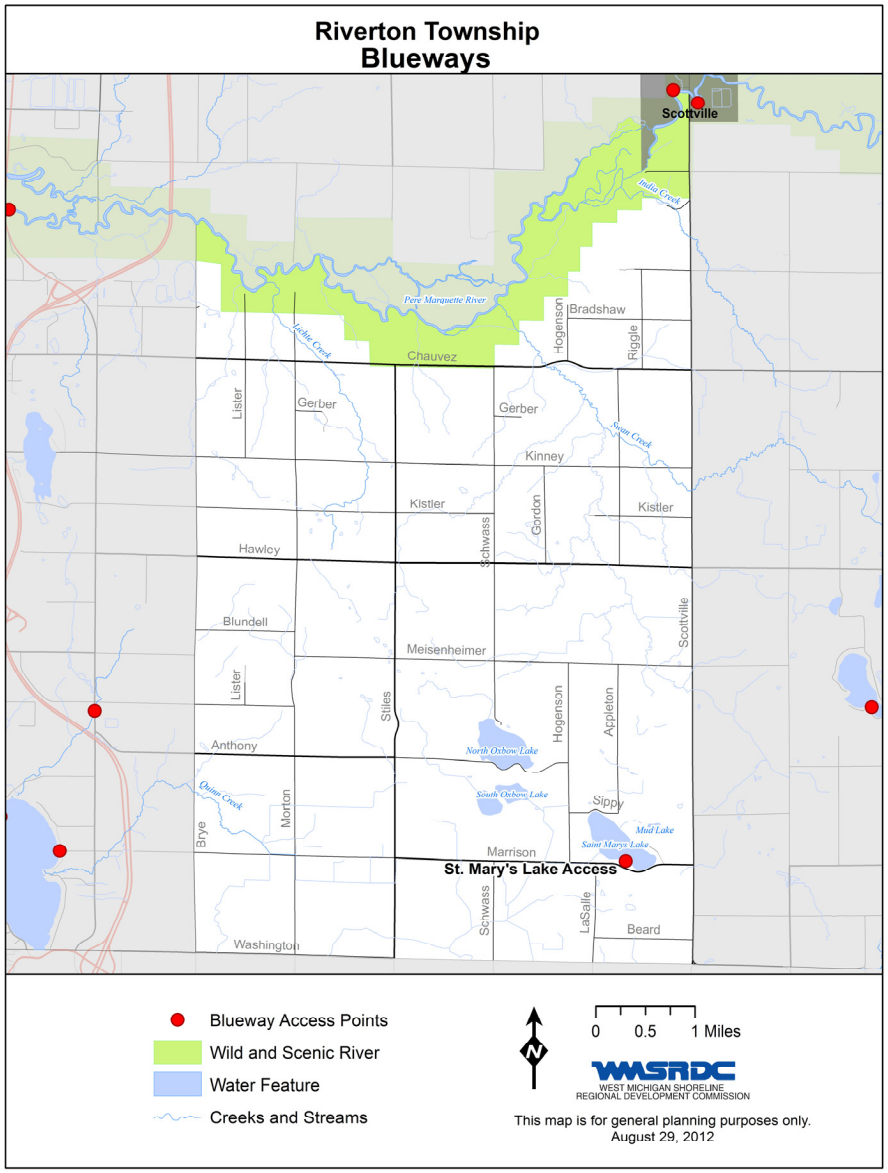
Location – Marrison Rd.

Waterway – Saint Mary's Lake

Size – N/A

Owner/Operator – MDNR

Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.



Sheridan Township

Ford Lake Public Access

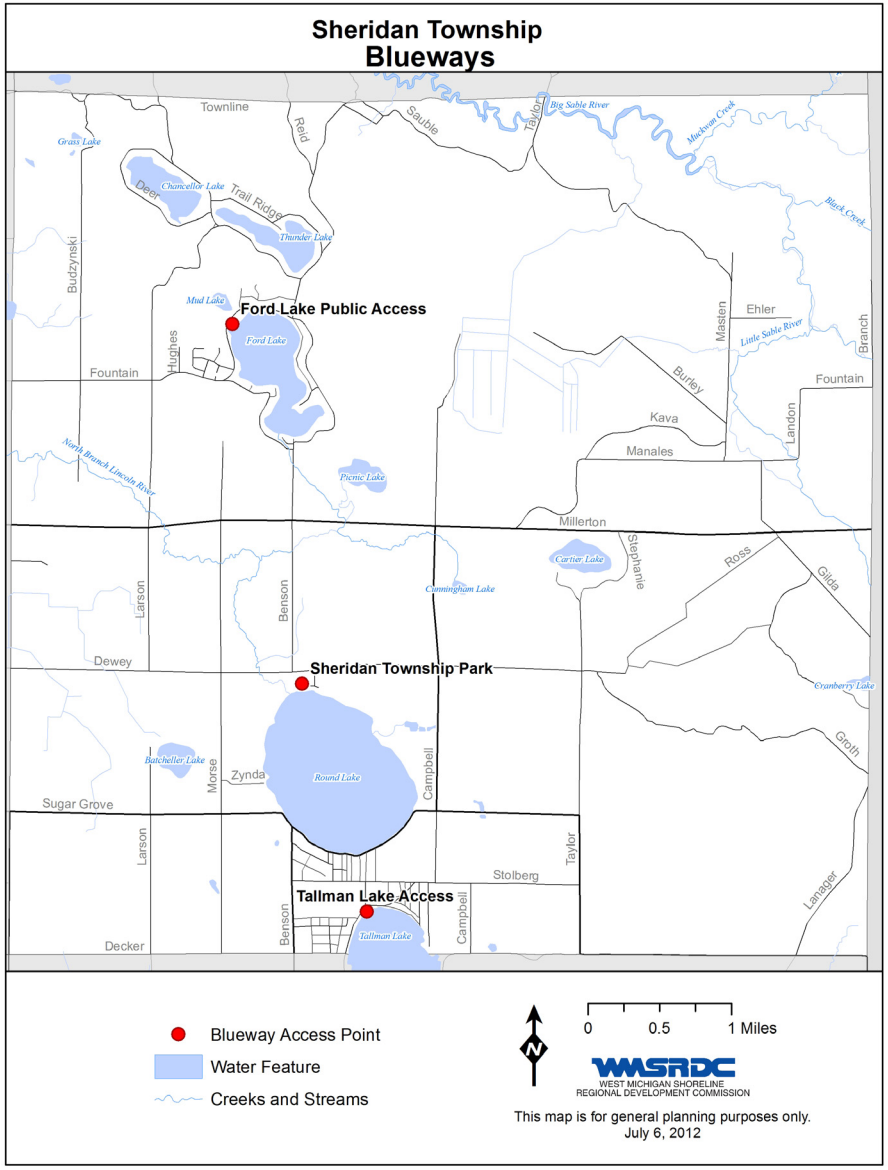
Location – N. Griffin Rd.
Waterway – Ford Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.

Tallman Lake Access

Location – N. Tallman Lake Rd
Waterway – Tallman Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.

Sheridan Township Park

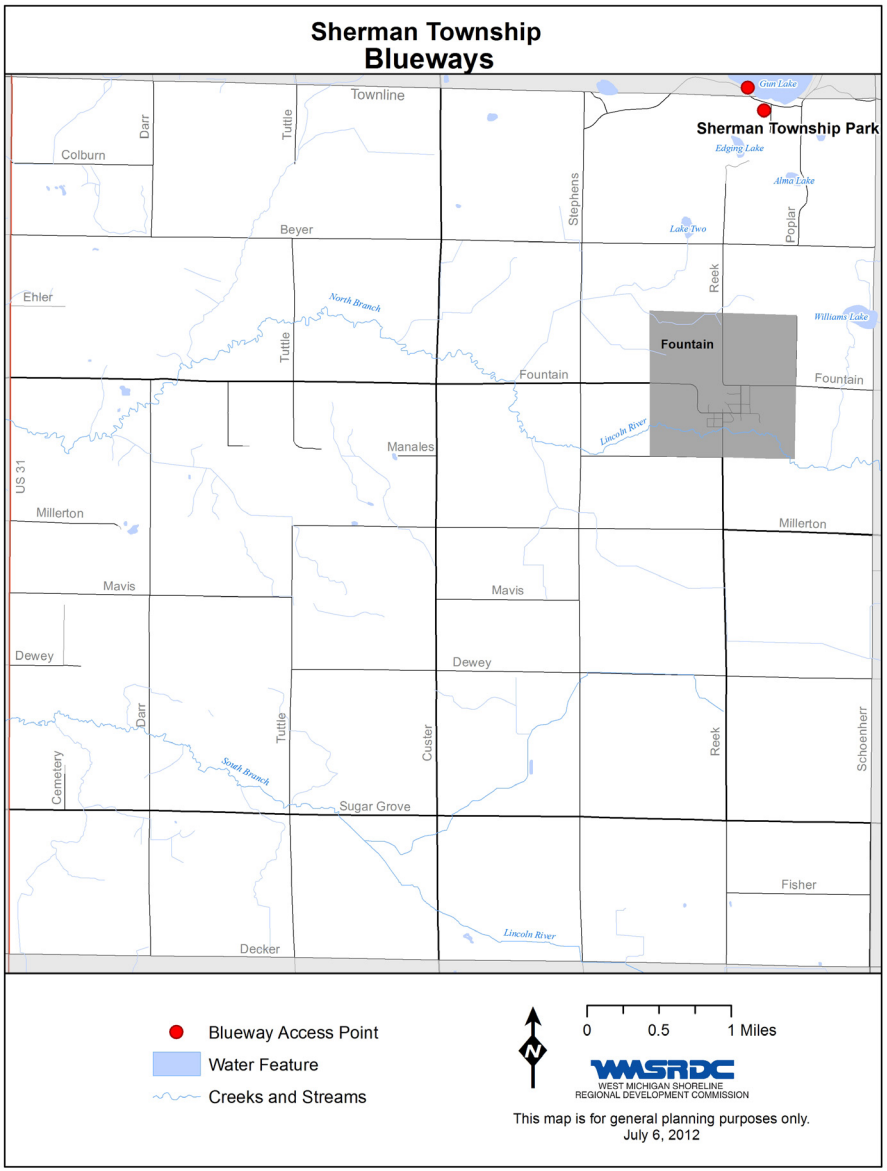
Location – Dewey Rd. at Round Lake
Waterway – Round Lake
Size – 9.1 acres
Owner/Operator – Sheridan Township
Water Uses – Gravel surface boat launch; Swimming.



Sherman Township

Sherman Township Park (Gun Lake Park)

Location – Town Line Rd., west of Poplar Rd.
Waterway – Gun Lake
Size – 40 acres, 300 feet of lake frontage
Owner/Operator – Sherman Township
Water Uses – MDNR maintain boat launch, Dock, Fishing, and Swimming.



Summit Township

Bass Lake Blvd. Public Access

- Location – Bass Lake Blvd.
- Waterway – Bass Lake
- Size – 30 feet
- Owner/Operator – Summit Township
- Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.

Bass Lake Outlet

- Location – Bass Lake Outlet near Thiele Rd. and Mack Rd.
- Waterway – Lake Michigan
- Size – ~1 acre
- Owner/Operator – Summit Township
- Water Uses – Swimming.

Kibby Creek Park

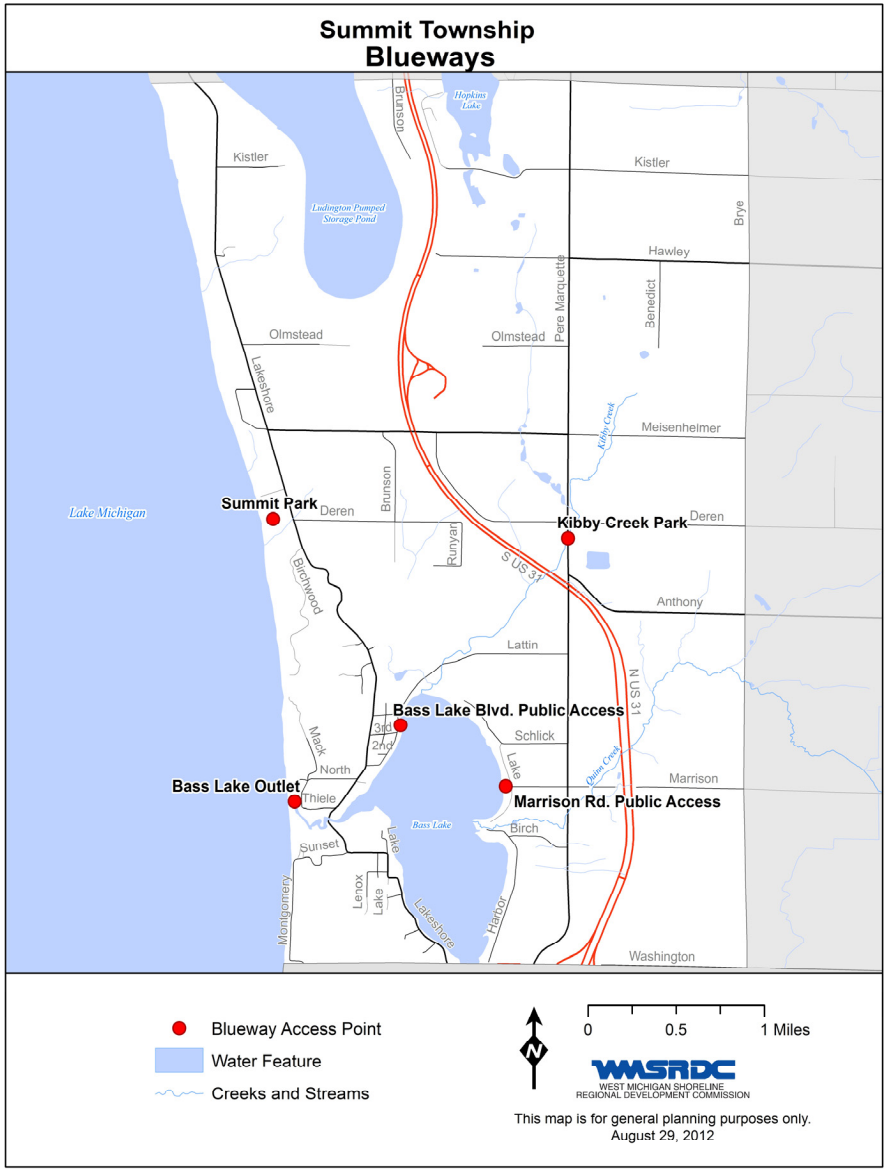
- Location – Pere Marquette Highway at Kibby Creek
- Waterway – Kibby Creek
- Size – ~1 acre
- Owner/Operator – MDNR
- Water Uses – Creek observation.

Marrison Road Park

- Location – West end of Marrison Rd.
- Waterway – Bass Lake
- Size – 0.5 acre
- Owner/Operator – Summit Township
- Water Uses – Unimproved boat launch; Fishing.

Summit Park

- Location – S. Lakeshore Dr., south of Meisenheimer Rd.
- Waterway – Lake Michigan
- Size – 34 acres
- Owner/Operator – Summit Township
- Water Uses – Swimming.



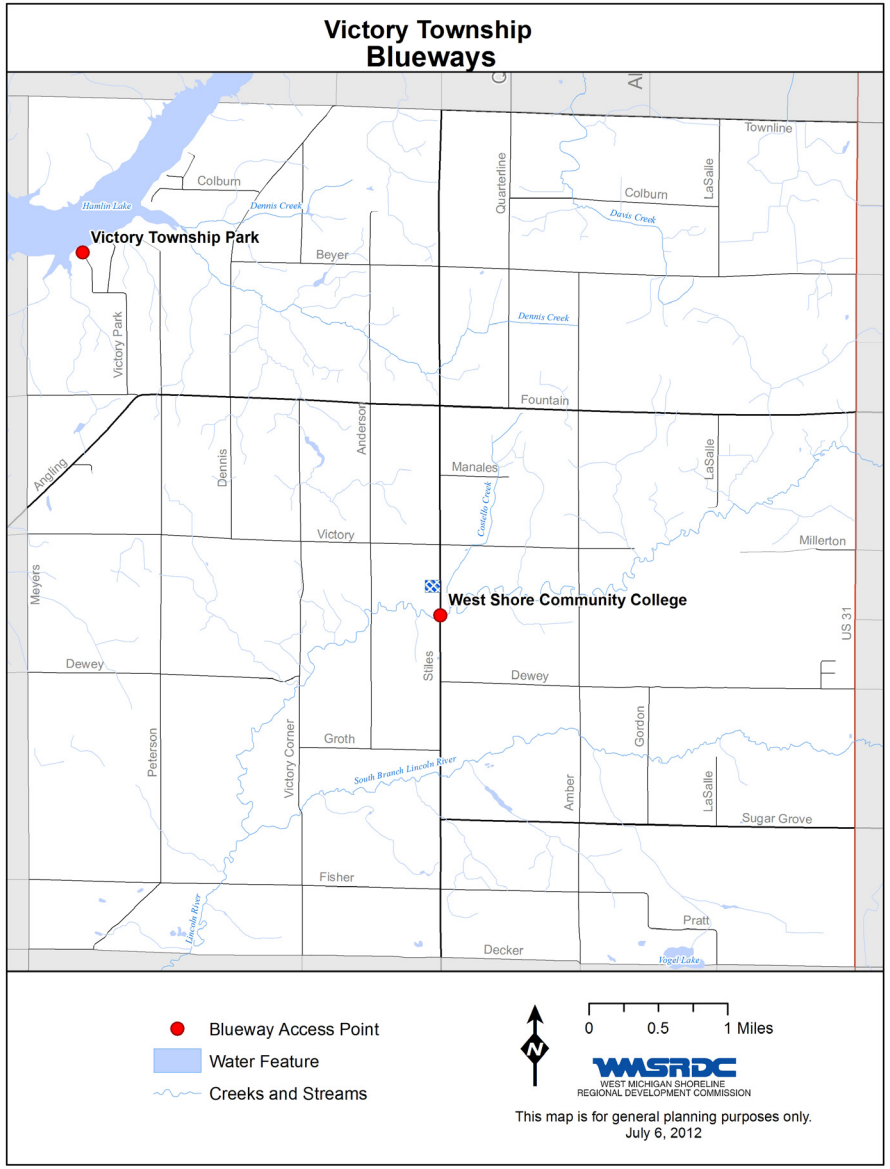
Victory Township

Victory Township Park

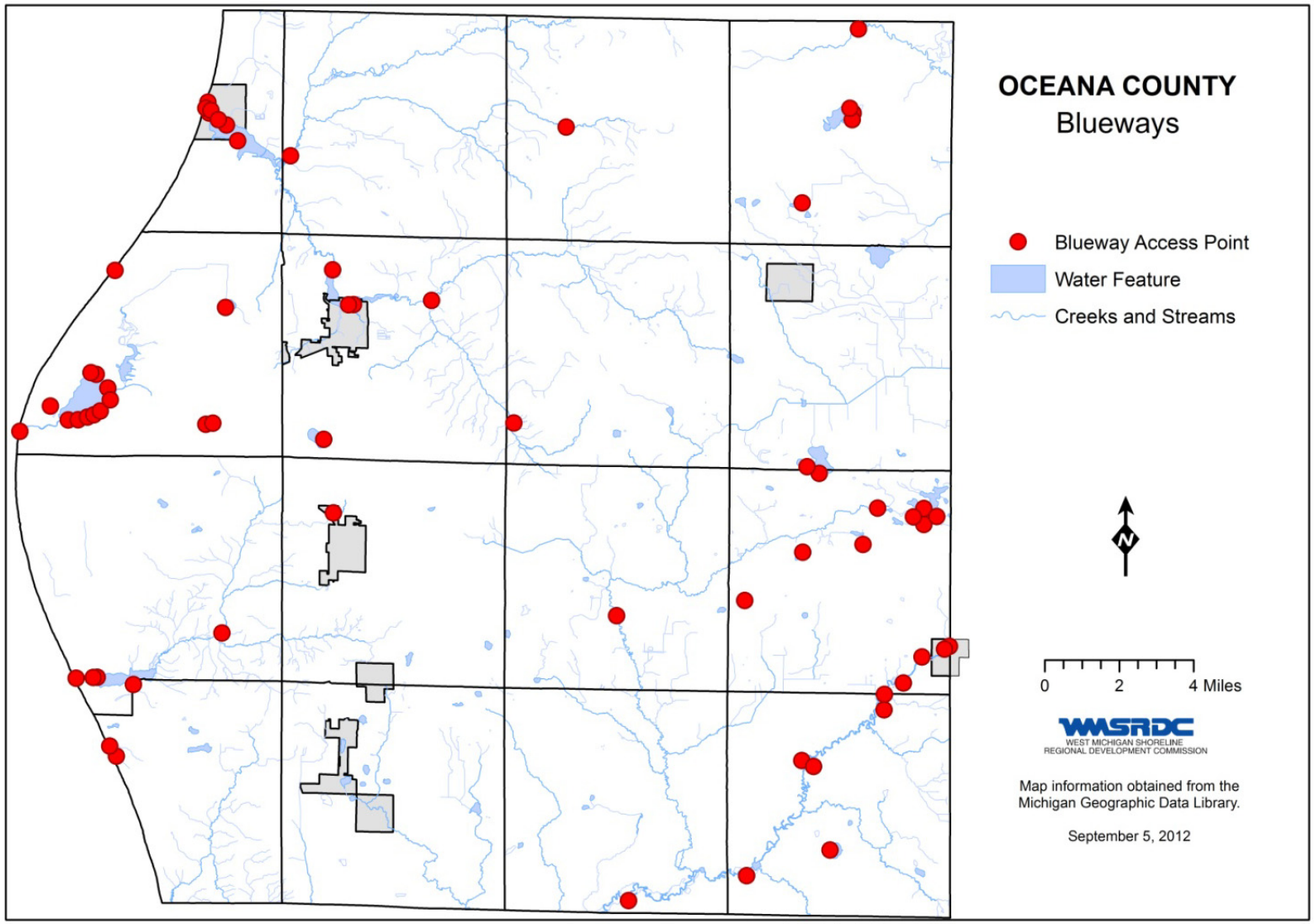
Location – Victory Park Rd.
Waterway – Upper Hamlin Lake
Size – 40 acres
Owner/Operator – Victory Township
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing; Swimming.

West Shore Community College

Location – 3000 N. Stiles Rd.
Waterway – Pond
Size – 360 acres (total campus)
Owner/Operator – West Shore Community College
Water Uses – Pond observation; Fishing.



Oceana County Blueways



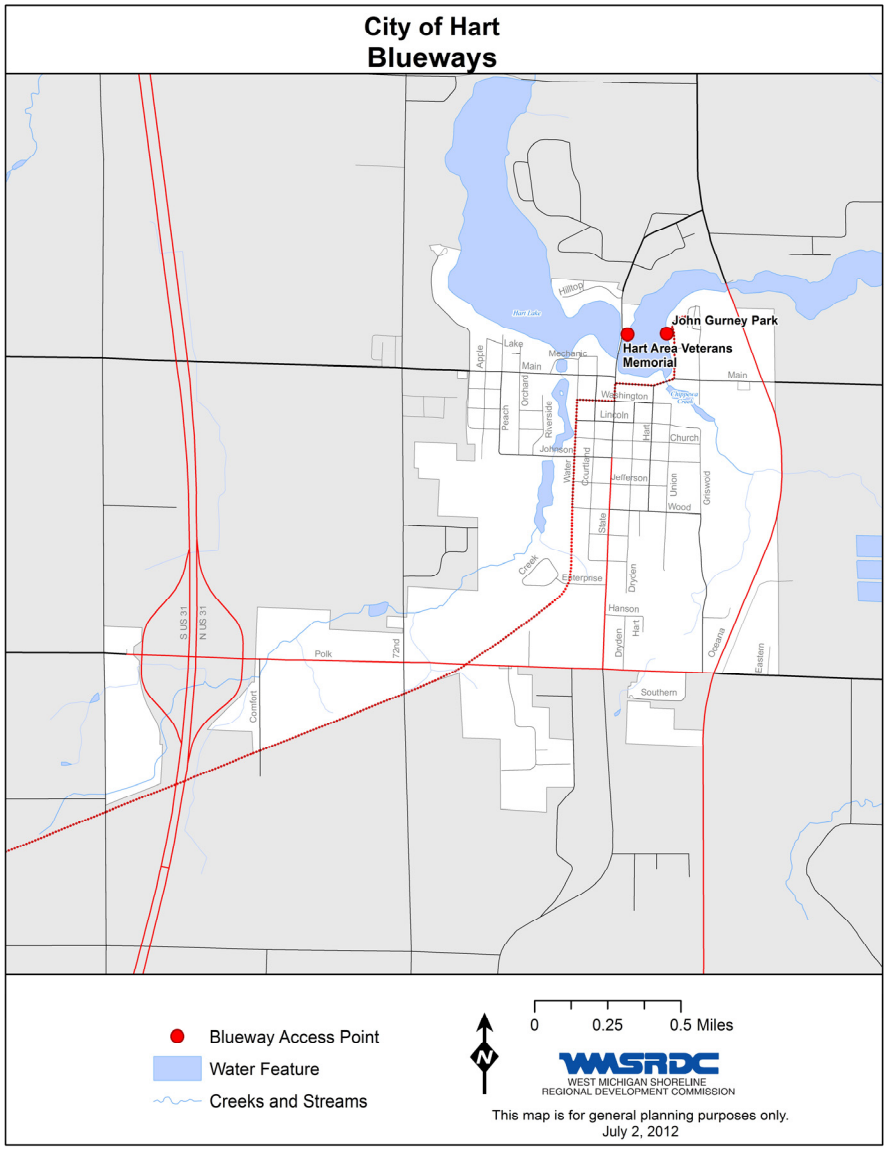
City of Hart

Hart Area Veterans Memorial

Location – N. State St.
Waterway – Hart Lake
Size – 0.5+ acres
Owner/Operator – City of Hart
Water Uses – Fishing.

John Gurney Park

Location – 300 N. Griswold St.
Waterway – Hart Lake
Size – 28 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Hart
Water Uses – Boat launch for small boats; Swimming; Fishing.



Village of Hesperia

Hesperia Sports Park

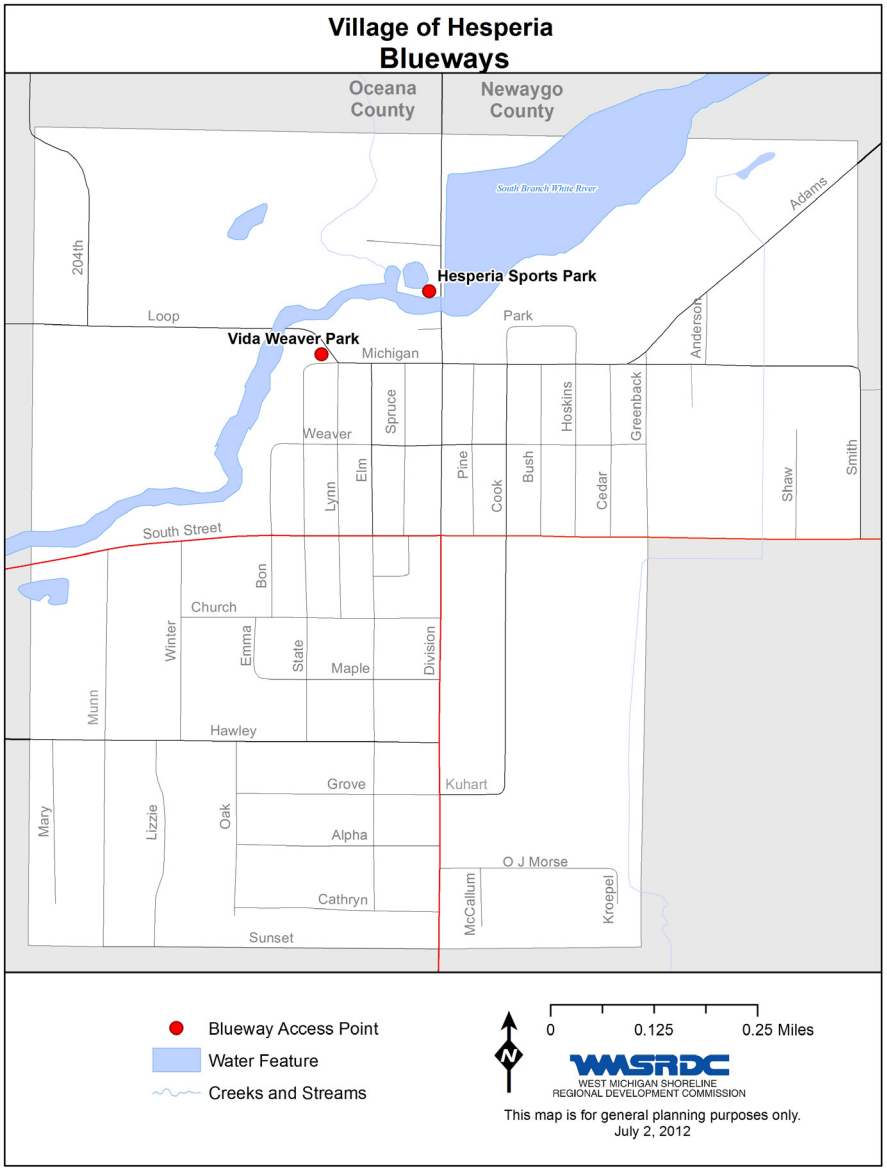
Location – Division St. north of White River
Waterway – White River
Size – 4.7 acres
Owner/Operator – Village of Hesperia
Water Uses – Swimming; Fishing.

Vida Weaver Park

Location – West end of Michigan Ave.
Waterway – White River
Size – 2 acres
Owner/Operator – Village of Hesperia
Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.

Village of New Era

None Identified



Village of Pentwater

Bridge Street Park

Location – Bridge St.
Waterway – Pentwater Lake Channel
Size – 1 acre
Owner/Operator – Village of Pentwater
Water Uses – Fishing.

Channel Lane Park

Location – Channel Lane
Waterway – Lake Michigan; Pentwater Lake Channel
Size – 0.25 acres
Owner/Operator – Village of Pentwater
Water Uses – Fishing.

Charles Mears State Park

Location – 400 W. Lowell St.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – 50 acres
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Swimming; Fishing.

Chester Street Park

Location – North end of Chester St.
Waterway – Lake Michigan; Pentwater Lake; Pentwater Channel
Size – 0.25 acres
Owner/Operator – Pentwater Village
Water Uses – Fishing.

Lake Street Boat Launch

Location – 191 E. Lake St.
Waterway –Pentwater Lake
Size – 170 feet
Owner/Operator – Pentwater Village
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Rack for kayaks and dinghies.



Pentwater Municipal Marina

Location – 519 S. Hancock St.
Waterway –Pentwater Lake
Size – 1.75 acres
Owner/Operator – Pentwater Village
Water Uses – 40 boat slips (21 seasonal, 14 transient, 5 charter fishing).

Village Third Street Park

Location – Third Street
Waterway – Pentwater Lake
Size – 30 feet x 60 feet
Owner/Operator – Village of Pentwater
Description – Tie-up for small boats and fishing

Village of Rothbury

None Identified

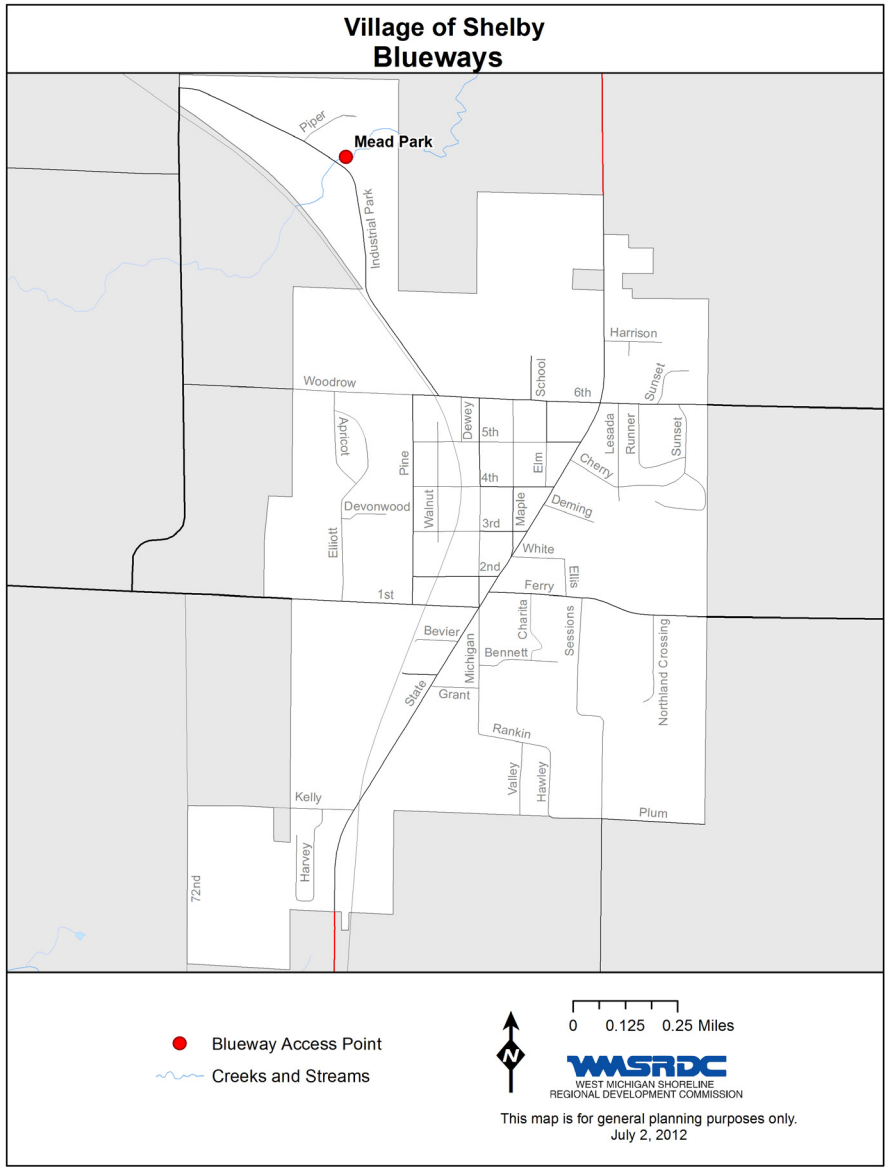
Village of Shelby

Mead Park

Location – Industrial Park Dr. at Piper Creek
Waterway – Piper Creek
Size – 33 acres
Owner/Operator – Shelby Village
Water Uses – Creek observation; Fishing.

Village of Walkerville

None Identified



Benona Township

Benona Township Park

Location – Scenic Dr.
Waterway – Stony Creek below Stony Lake Outlet
Size – 2.8 acres
Owner/Operator – Benona Township
Water Uses – Fishing; Marina with annual small boat and canoe slips for rent.

Benona Township Swimming Beach

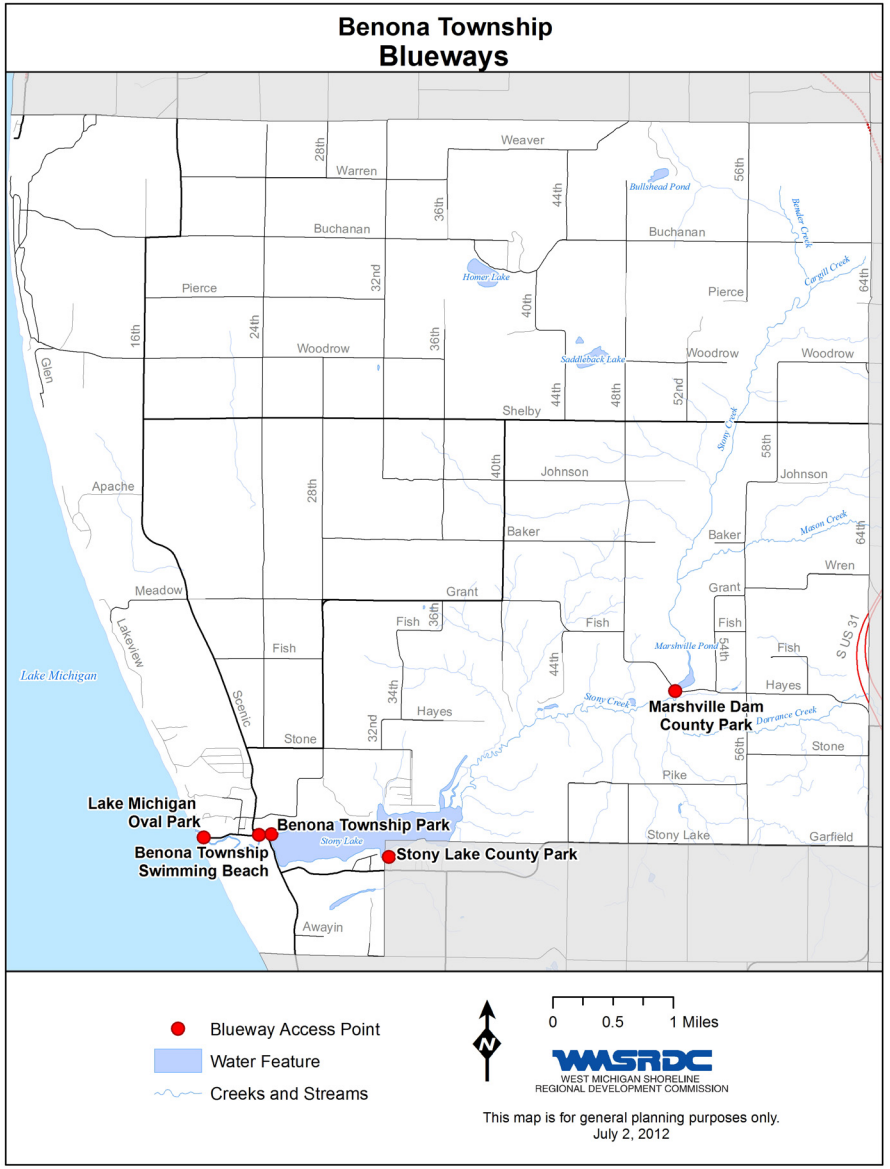
Location – Scenic Dr.
Waterway – Stony Lake
Size – 1 acre
Owner/Operator – Benona Township
Water Uses – Swimming.

Lake Michigan "Oval" Park

Location – Garfield Rd.
Waterway – Lake Michigan; Stony Creek
Size – 3.4 acres
Owner/Operator – Benona Township
Water Uses – Boat ramp; River boardwalk; Swimming; Fishing.

Marshville Dam County Park

Location – Marshville Dam Rd.
Waterway – Stony Creek
Size – 10 acres
Owner/Operator – Oceana County
Water Uses – Fishing.



Claybanks Township

Claybanks Township Park

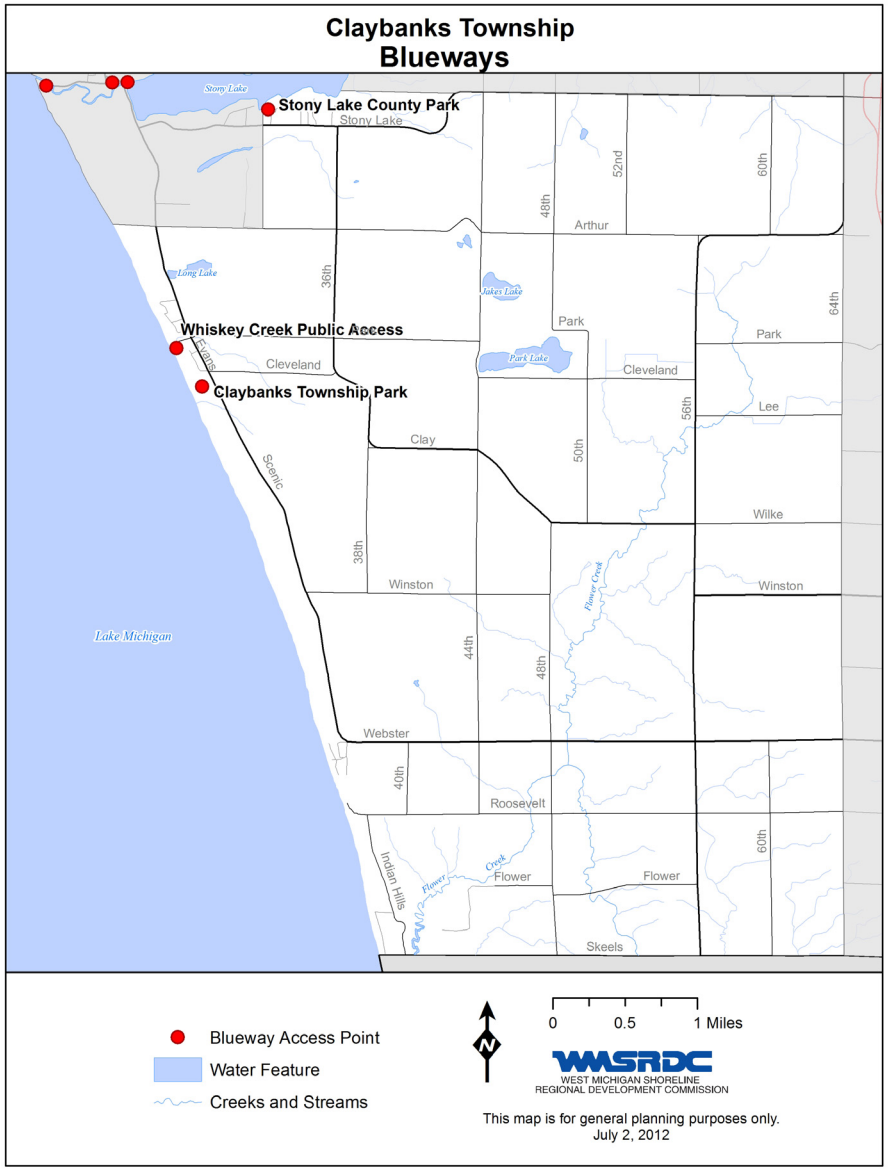
Location – 6407 S. Scenic Dr.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – 90 acres
Owner/Operator – Claybanks Township
Water Uses –2,700 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline; Swimming.

Stony Lake County Park

Location – Stony Lake Rd.
Waterway – Stony Lake
Size – 5.1 acres
Owner/Operator – Oceana County
Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.

Whiskey Creek Public Access

Location – Park Rd.
Waterway – Lake Michigan
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – Claybanks Township
Water Uses – Swimming.



Colfax Township

Black Lake County Park

Location – N. 176th Ave.
Waterway – Black Lake
Size – 100 acres
Owner/Operator – Oceana County
Water Uses – Swimming; Fishing.

Colfax Beach

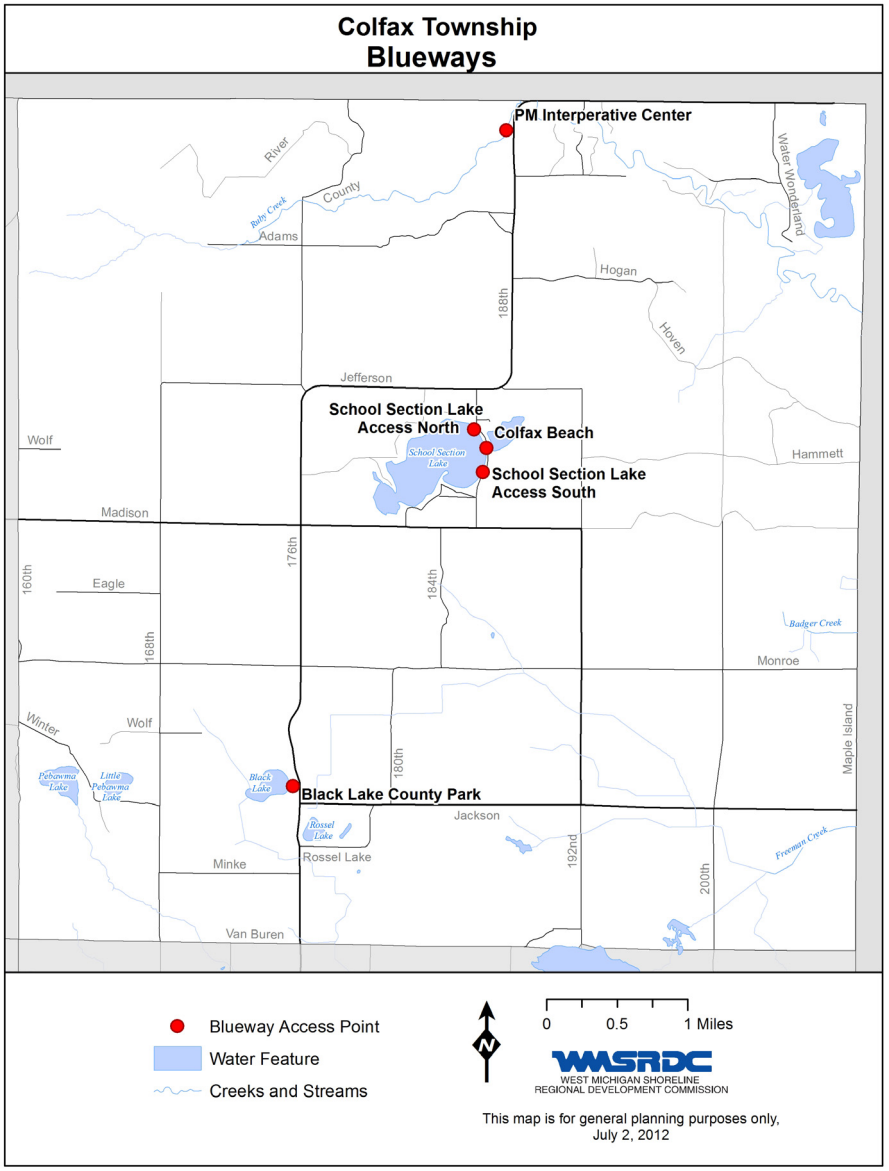
Location – 186th Ave.
Waterway – School Section Lake
Size – 1 acre
Owner/Operator – Colfax Township
Water Uses – Swimming.

Pere Marquette River Restoration Project Interpretive Center

Location – 188th just south of Washington Rd.
Waterway – Ruby Creek
Size – 40 acres
Owner/Operator – Ruby Creek Conservation Club
Water Uses – Fishing (catch and release in pond).

School Section Lake Access

Location – 186th Ave., north and south of Colfax Beach
Waterway – School Section Lake
Size – 66 feet
Owner/Operator – Colfax Township
Water Uses – Boat launch; Fishing.



Crystal Township

Crystal Valley County Park

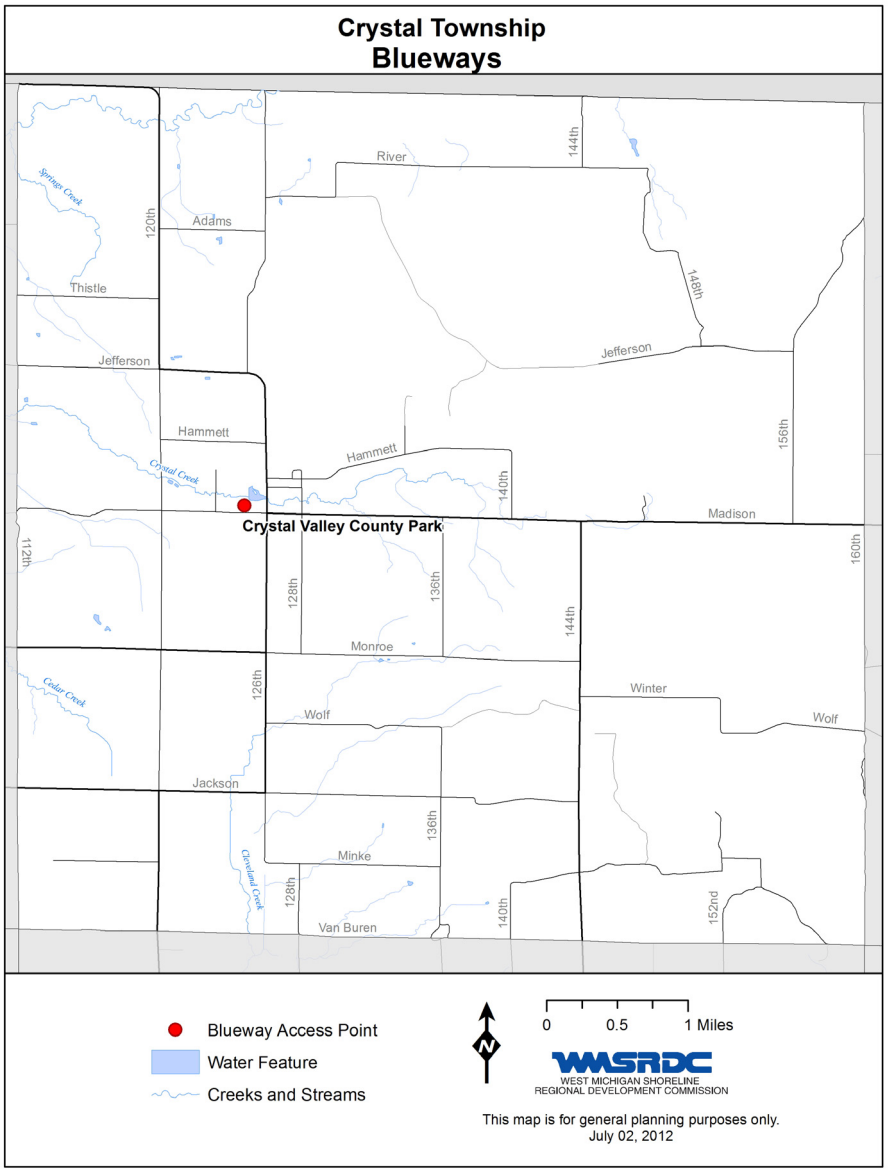
Location – Madison Rd.

Waterway – Crystal Pond

Size – 8.7 acres

Owner/Operator – Oceana County

Water Uses – Fishing.



Elbridge Township

Gales Pond County Park

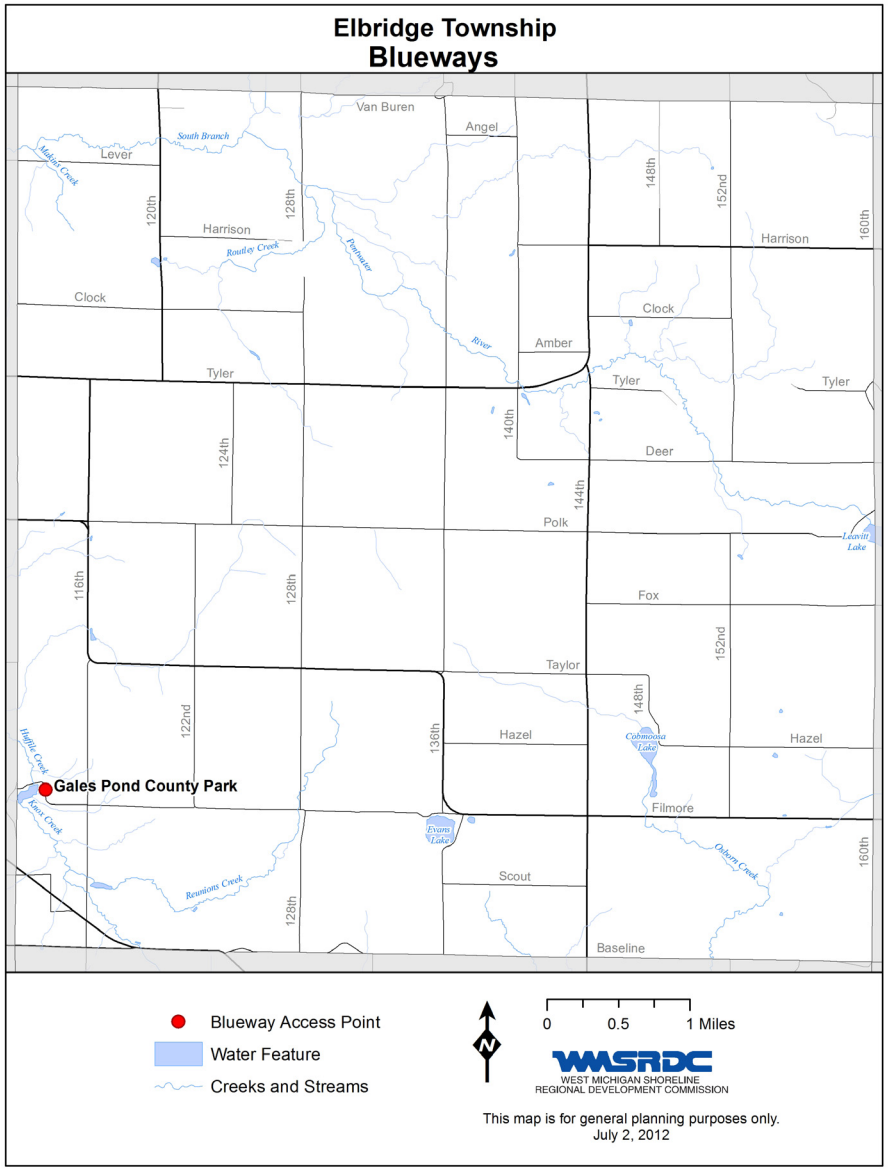
Location – Filmore Rd.

Waterway – Gales Pond

Size – 18 acres

Owner/Operator – Oceana County

Water Uses – Boardwalk across the pond.



Ferry Township

Mill Pond County Park

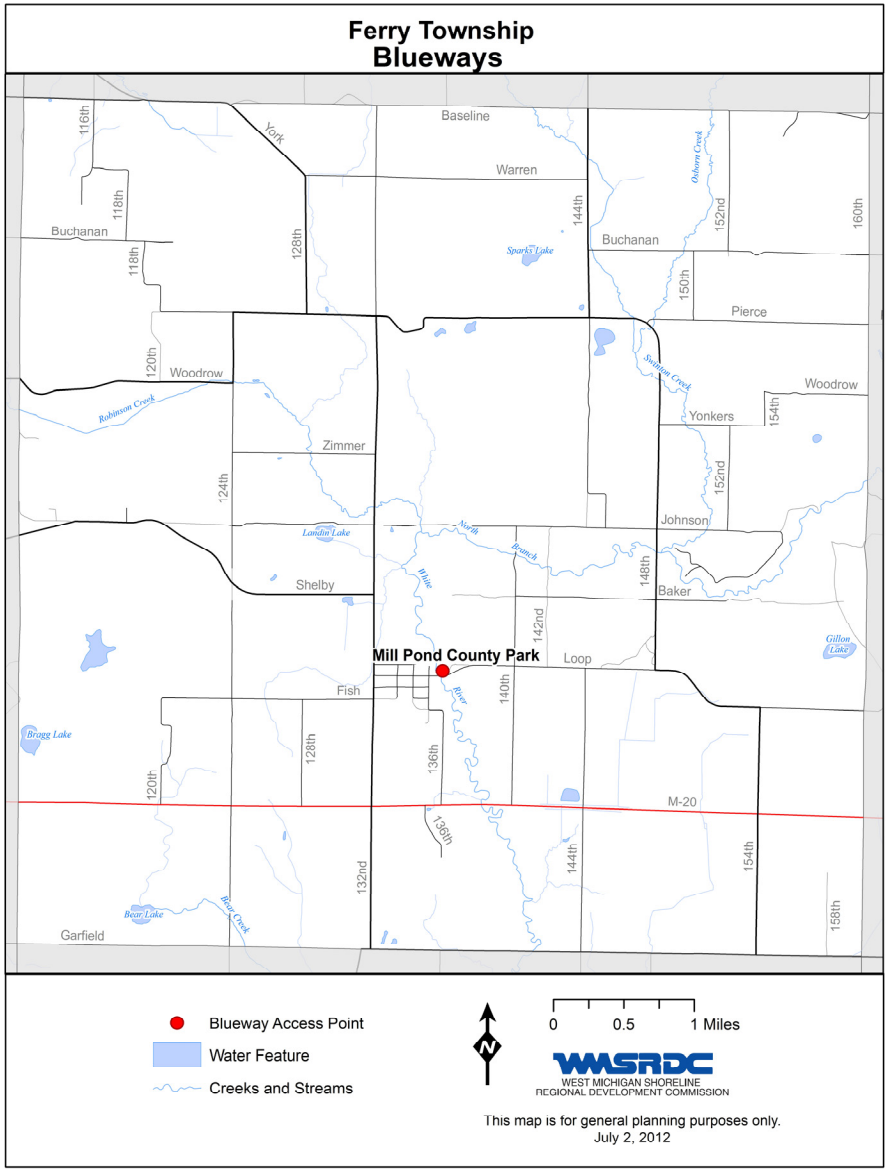
Location – Loop Rd.

Waterway – North Branch White River

Size – 8 acres

Owner/Operator – Oceana County

Water Uses – Fishing.



Golden Township

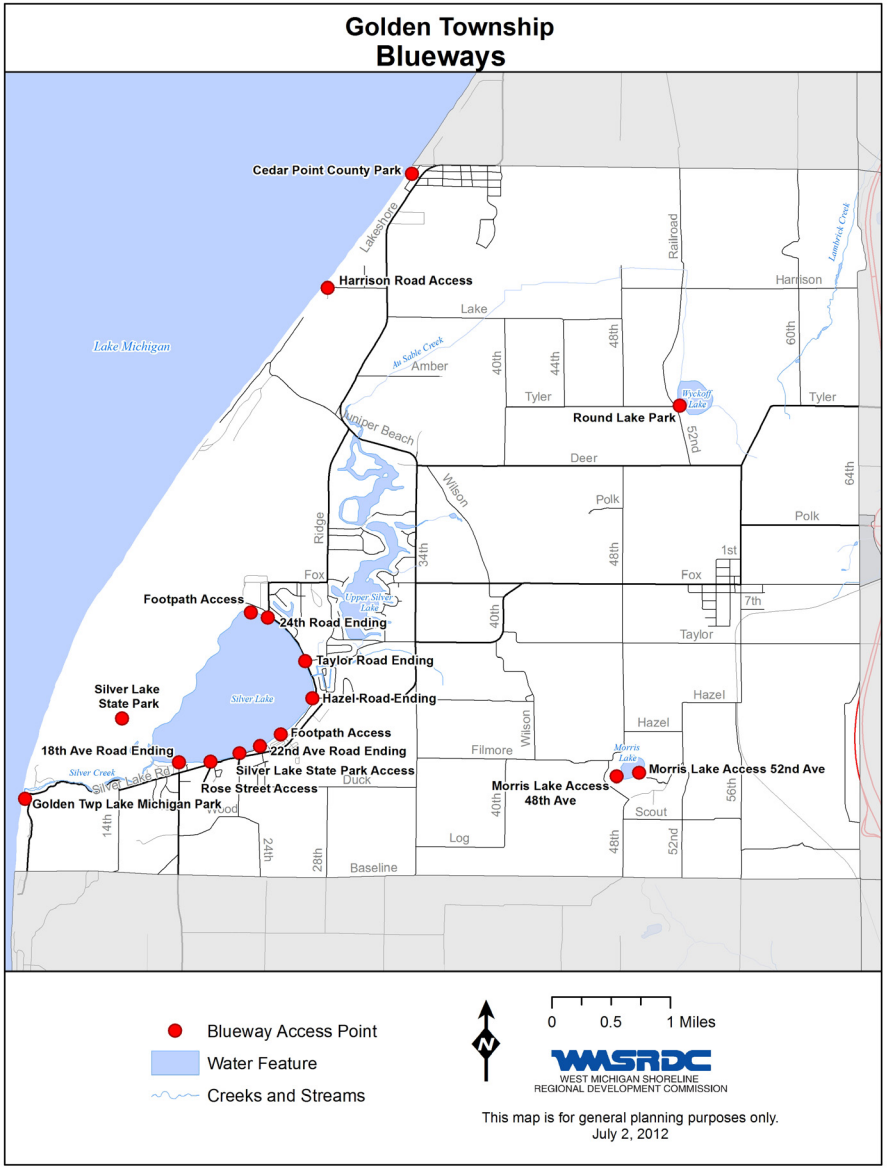
18th Ave Road Ending
- Location – 18th and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Boat Launch, Swimming, and Fishing.

22nd Ave Road Ending
- Location – 22nd Ave and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 33 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

24th Street Road Ending
- Location – 24th and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

Cedar Point County Park
- Location – Ridge Rd.
- Waterway – Lake Michigan
- Size – 2.5 acres
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County
- Water Uses – Swimming.

Footpath Access
- Location – Adelia Beach Plat
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 30 feet
- Owner/Operator – Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.



Footpath Access
- Location – Sylvan Shores Plat
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 30 feet
- Owner/Operator – Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

Golden Township Lake Michigan Park
- Location – N. Lighthouse Dr.
- Waterway – Lake Michigan; Silver Creek
- Size – 1.5 acres
- Owner/Operator – Golden Township
- Water Uses – Swimming.

Harrison Road Access
- Location – Harrison Rd and Lake Michigan
- Waterway – Lake Michigan
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

Hart Public Schools Morris Lake Access
- Location – 52nd Avenue
- Waterway – Morris Ave
- Size – 80 acres
- Owner/Operator – Hart Public Schools
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Morris Lake.

Hazel Road Ending
- Location – Hazel and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

Morris Lake Access
- Location – 48th Avenue
- Waterway – Morris Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Morris Lake.

Rose Street Access
- Location – Rose St and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 66 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission/Golden Township
- Water Uses – Swimming.

Round Lake Park
- Location – 52nd Ave at Tyler Rd.
- Waterway – Round Lake (aka Wyckoff Lake)
- Size – 2 acres
- Owner/Operator – Golden Township
- Water Uses – Launch area for small boats; Swimming, Fishing.

Silver Lake State Park
- Location – 9679 W. State Park Rd.
- Waterway – Lake Michigan; Silver Lake; Silver Creek
- Size – 2,000-3,000 acres
- Owner/Operator – MDNR
- Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Swimming; Fishing.

Taylor Road Ending
- Location – Taylor and Silver Lake
- Waterway – Silver Lake
- Size – 33 feet
- Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
- Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Silver Lake.

Grant Township

None Identified

Greenwood Township

Horseshoe Lake Access

Location – 184th Ave.
Waterway – Horseshoe Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.

Pines Point

Location – Pines Point Rd., East of 168th Ave.
Waterway – White River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Gravel boat launch; Fishing.

Podunk Boat Launch

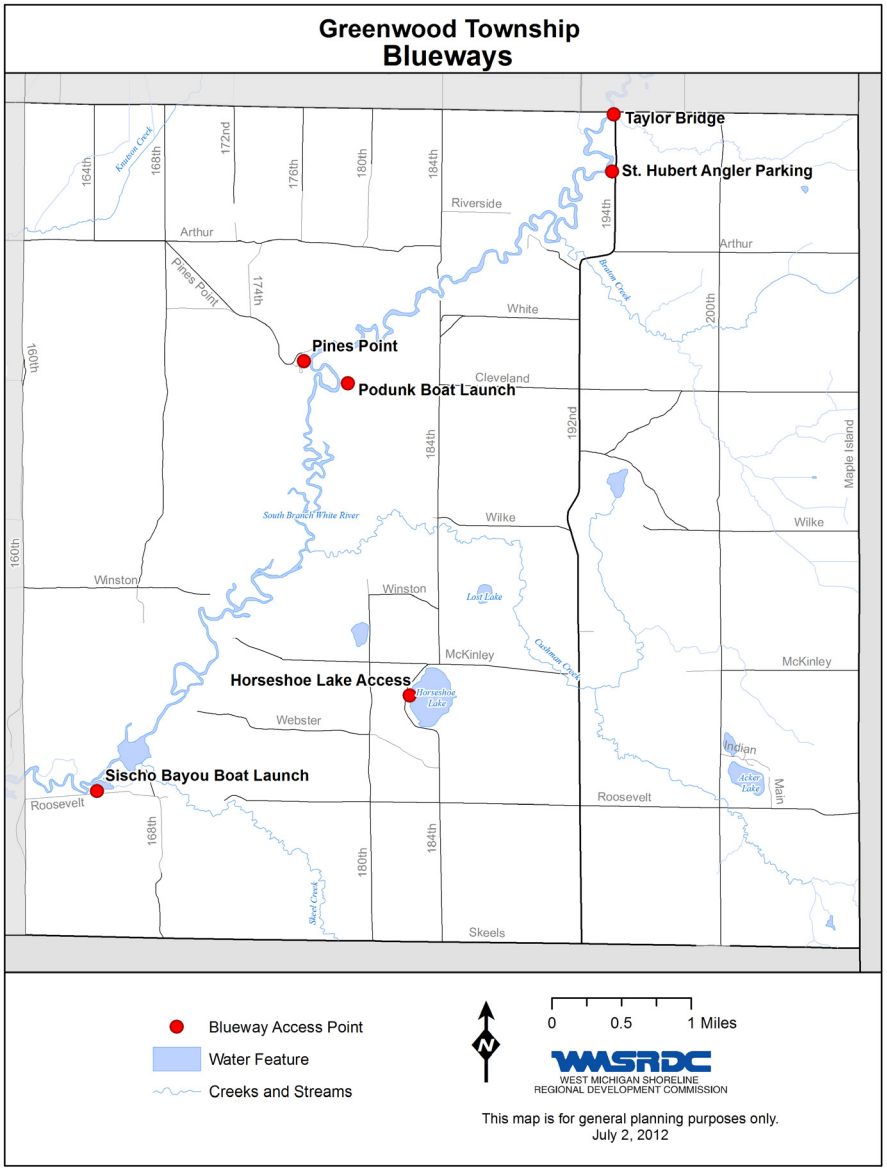
Location – Cleveland Rd. west of 192nd Ave.
Waterway – White River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Carry-in boat launch; Fishing.

Sischo Bayou Boat Launch

Location – .5 mile north of Skeels Rd.
Waterway – White River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Carry-in boat launch; Fishing.

St. Hubert Angler Parking

Location – 194th Ave. south of Garfield Rd.
Waterway – White River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Fishing.



Hart Township

Crystal Lake Access

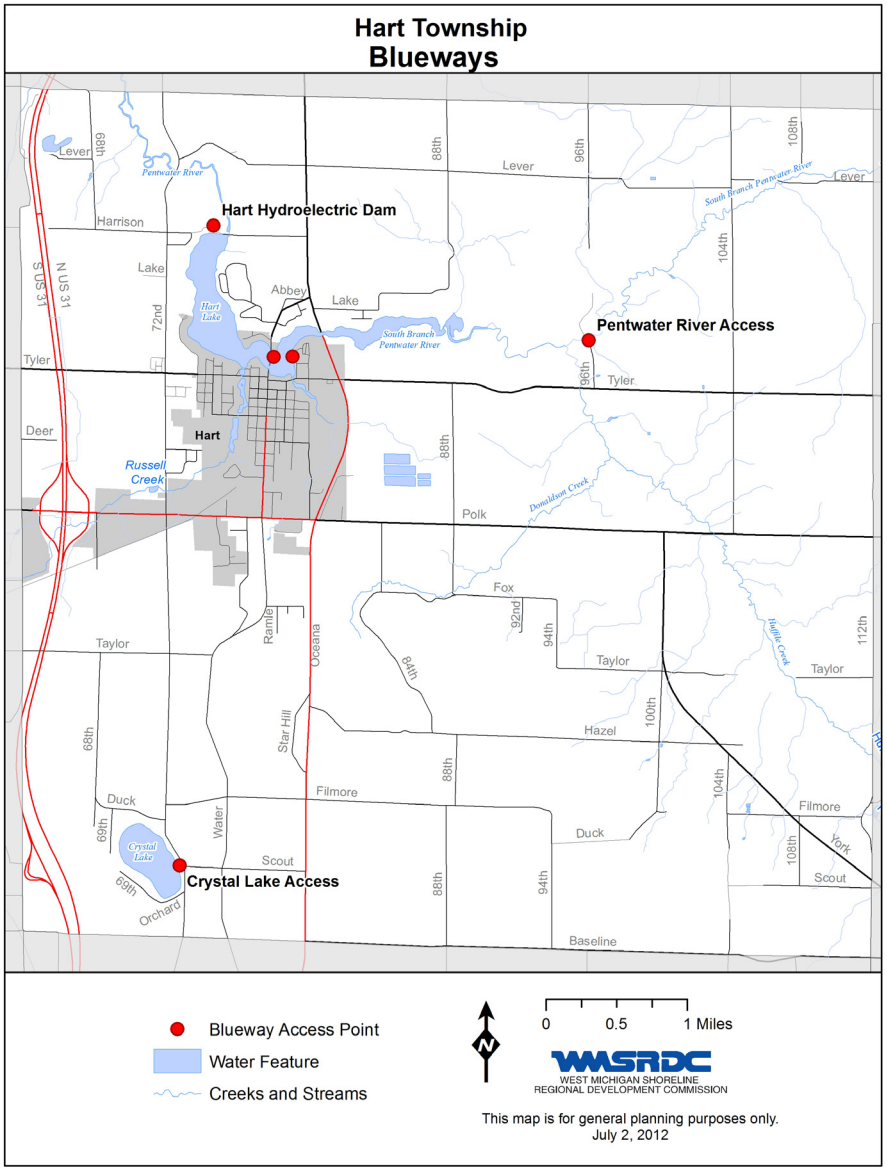
Location – 72nd Ave.
Waterway – Crystal Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Gravel boat launch; Fishing.

Hart Hydroelectric Dam

Location – Harrison Rd. at Hart Lake
Waterway – Hart Lake
Size – 30 acres
Owner/Operator – City of Hart
Water Uses – Fishing.

Pentwater River Access

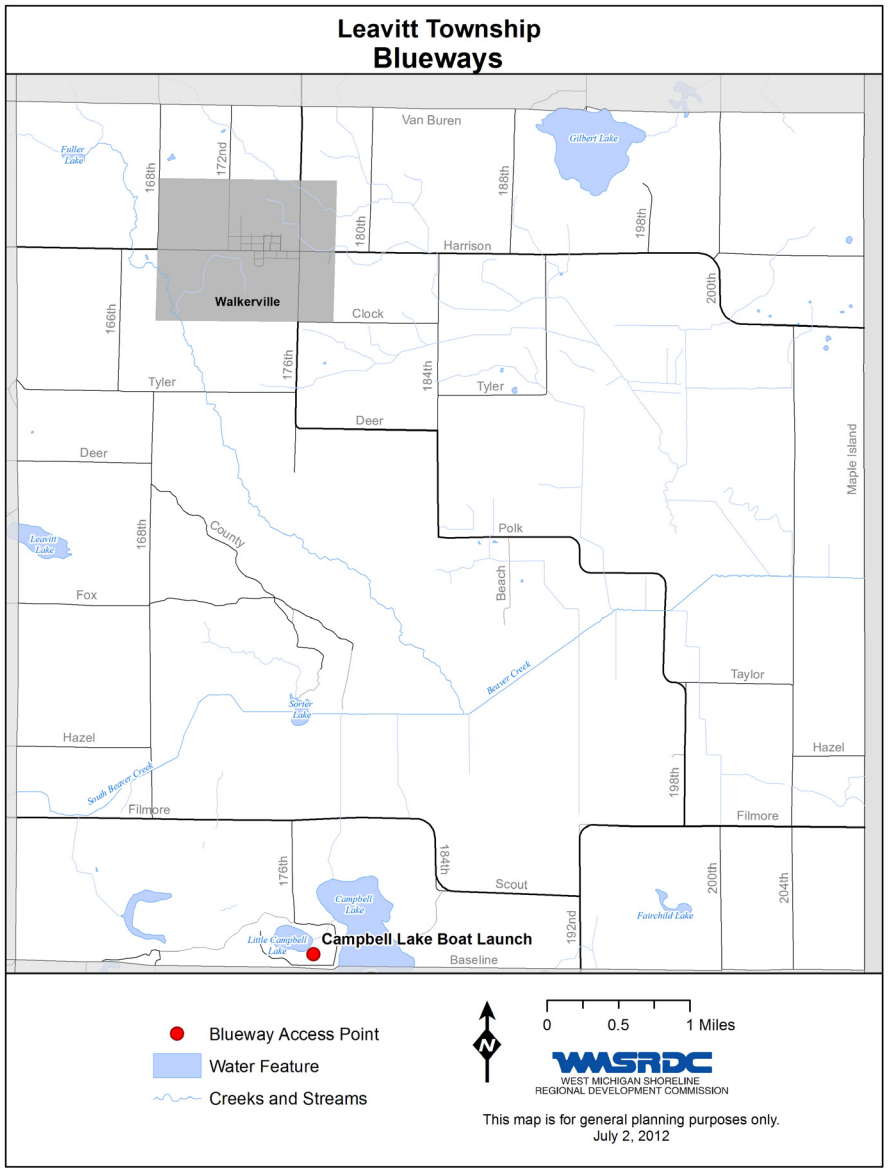
Location – 96th Ave. Abandoned Bridge
Waterway – Pentwater River
Size – <0.25
Owner/Operator – Hart Township
Water Uses – Limited access to Pentwater River.



Leavitt Township

Campbell Lake Boat Ramp

Location – Beech St. north of Peavey St.
Waterway – Campbell Lake
Size – 66 feet
Owner/Operator – Leavitt Township
Water Uses – Boat Launch.



Newfield Township

Blodgett Lake Access

Location – 176th Ave.
Waterway – Blodgett Lake
Size – 33 feet x 165 feet
Owner/Operator – Newfield Township
Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Blodgett Lake.

Buchanan Rd. Road Ending

Location – East end of Buchanan Rd.
Waterway – McLaren Lake
Size – 66 feet
Owner/Operator – Newfield Township
Water Uses – Undeveloped access to McLaren Lake.

Campbell Lake Access

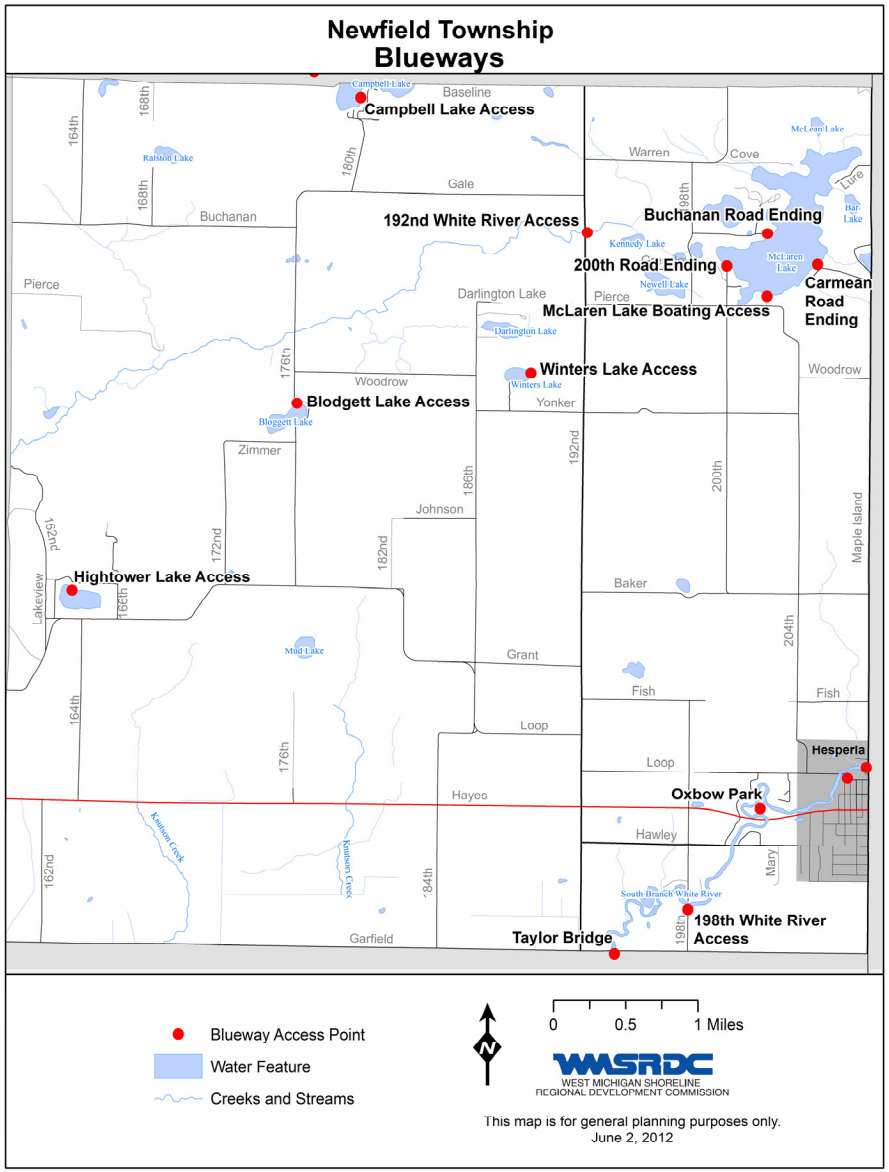
Location – 180th Ave. (3 road endings)
Waterway – Campbell Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
Water Uses – Boat launch.

Hightower Lake Access

Location – High Tower Lake Rd.
Waterway – Hightower Lake
Size – 1 acre
Owner/Operator – Newfield Township
Water Uses – Undeveloped access to Hightower Lake.

McLaren Lake Boating Access

Location – Pierce Rd.
Waterway – McLaren Lake
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.



Oxbow Park

Location – Hayes Rd. (M-20)
Waterway – White River
Size – 2 acres
Owner/Operator – Newfield Township
Water Uses – Fishing; Wheelchair accessible boardwalk; canoe/kayak launch areas.

Taylor Bridge

Location – Garfield R. at 194th Ave.
Waterway – White River
Size – N/A
Owner/Operator – USFS
Water Uses – Carry-down boat/canoe launch; Fishing.

200th Road Access

Location – 200th Road
Waterway – McLaren Lake
Size – 66 feet
Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
Water Uses – undeveloped by launch and fishing.

Carmean Road Access

Location – Carmean Road
Waterway – McLaren Lake
Size – 74 feet x 200 feet
Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
Water Uses – improved access to lake.

Winters Lake Access

Location – Younkers Road
Waterway – Winters Lake
Size – 1 acre
Owner/Operator – Newfield Township
Water Uses – Undeveloped boat launch and fishing.

White River Access

Location – East end of 192nd
Waterway – White River
Size – 40 acres
Owner/Operator – MDNR
Water Uses – Undeveloped access to White River designated to be developed by 2013.

White River Access

Location – South end of 198th
Waterway – White River
Size – 66 feet x 300 feet
Owner/Operator – Oceana County Road Commission
Water Uses – Developed access to White River for boats, canoes, kayaks, swimming, and fishing.

Otto Township

Diamond Point

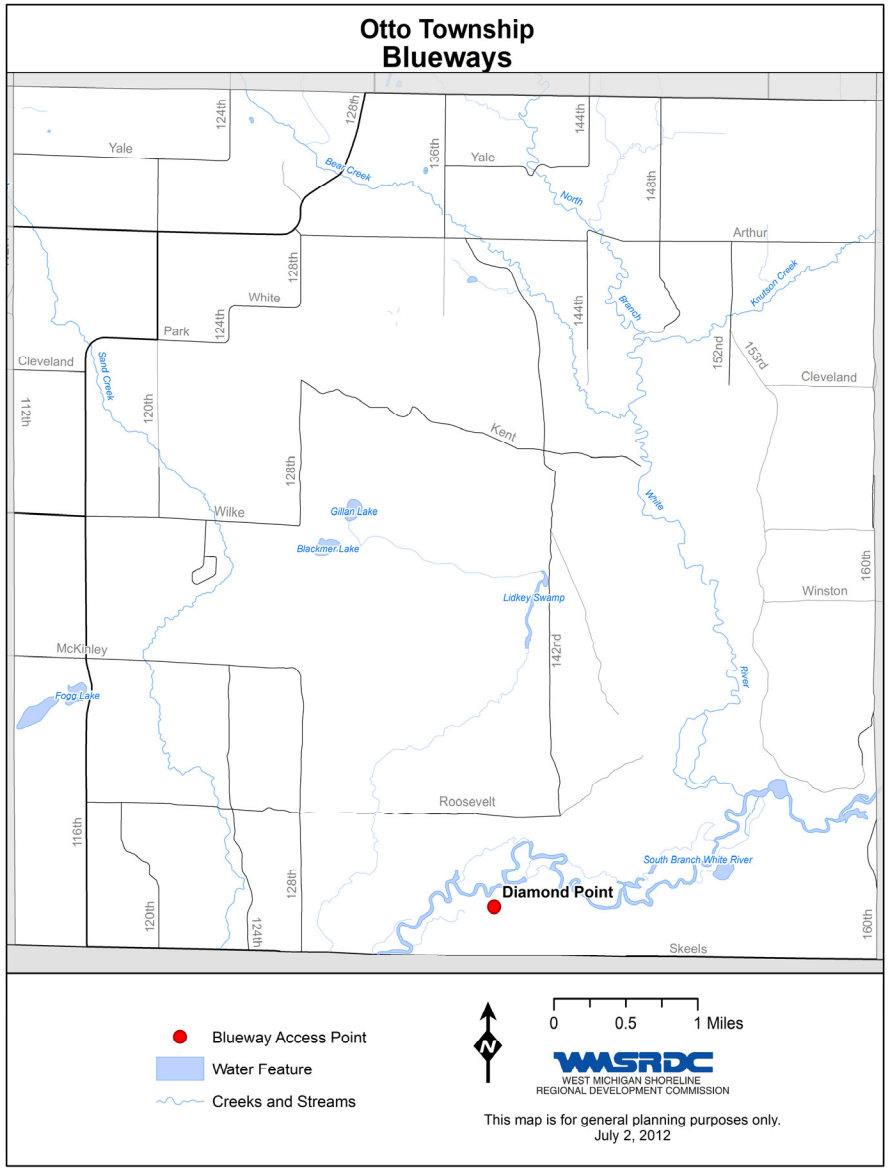
Location – FR 9304 (north end of Kops Rd.)

Waterway – White River

Size – N/A

Owner/Operator – USFS

Water Uses – Carry-down boat launch; Fishing.



Pentwater Township

Pentwater Township Boat Launch

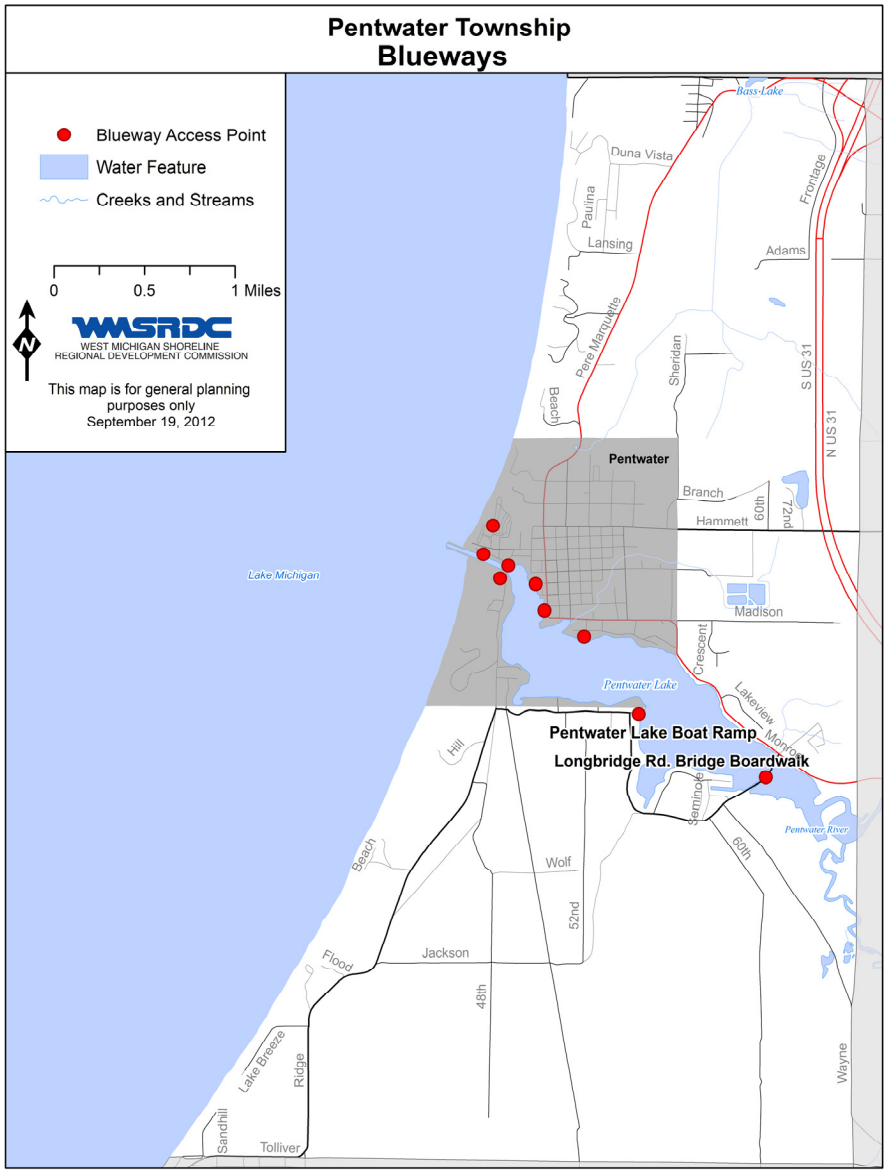
Location – Longbridge Rd.
Waterway – Pentwater Lake
Size – 70 feet
Owner/Operator – Pentwater Township
Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.

Longbridge Road Bridge Boardwalk

Location – Longbridge Rd.
Waterway – Pentwater Lake
Size – 400 feet
Owner/Operator – Pentwater Township
Water Uses –Fishing.

Shelby Township

None Identified



Weare Township

Monroe Rd. Bridge

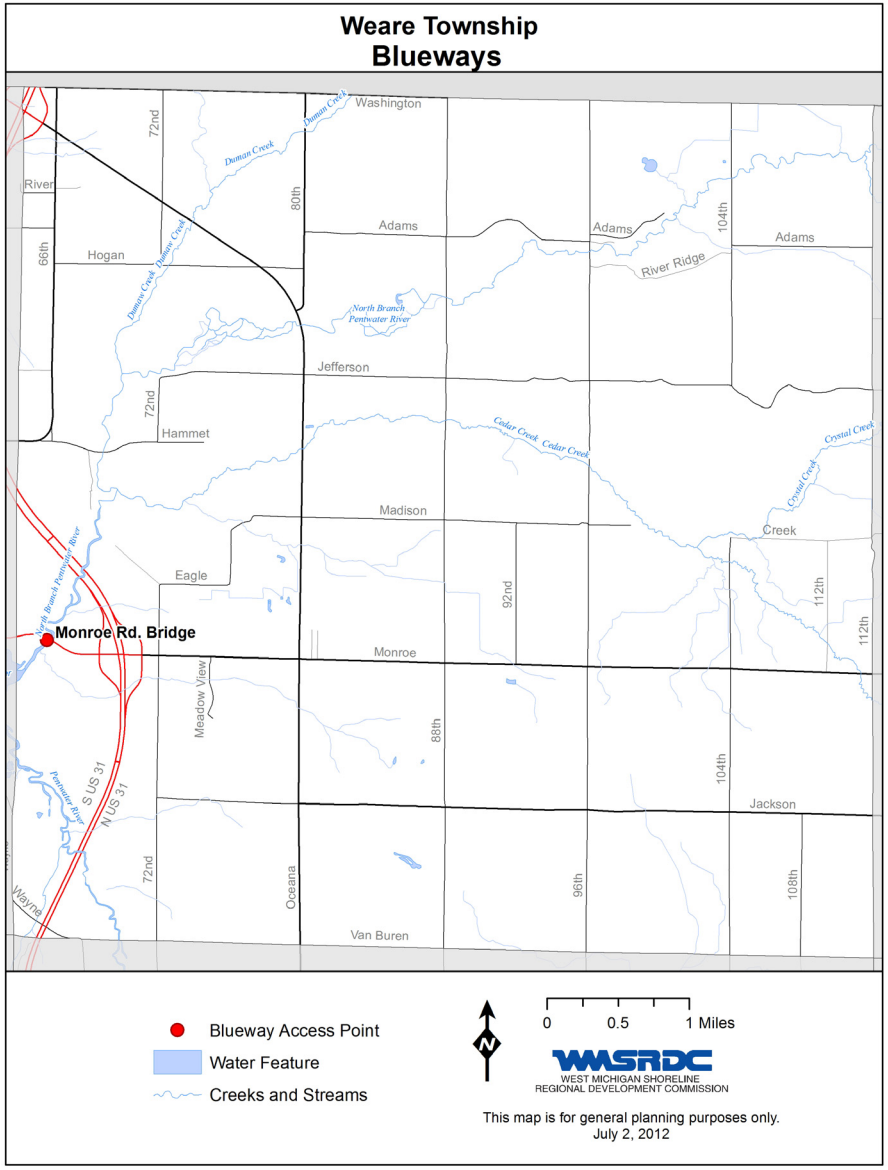
Location – Monroe Rd.

Waterway – North Branch Pentwater River

Size – N/A

Owner/Operator – MDNR

Water Uses – Paved boat launch; Fishing.



CHAPTER IV: GREENWAYS INVENTRY

Introduction to Greenways

The term Greenway is defined by the Natural Resources Defense Council as an undeveloped land usually in cities, set aside or used for recreation or conservation. In comparison, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) defines a Greenway as a continuous area of vegetation that may or may not be developed as a trailway for use by people – Greenways often connect open spaces. This chapter presents a detailed inventory of greenways present in Mason and Oceana Counties. A total of approximately 131,218 acres and 161 miles of greenways have been identified in the inventory. The greenways have been separated into three categories including Community, Forest Land/Open Space/Natural Areas, and Linear Parks/Non-Motorized/ORV Trails. In addition there are a variety of jurisdictions that operate and maintain the identified greenways. These jurisdictions include townships, cities, villages, county, state, and federal. Table 10 gives a synopsis of the greenways inventory for both Mason and Oceana Counties.

Table 10

Greenways Inventory Summary

Park Type	Jurisdiction	Total Number	Total Size
Mason County			
Community	State	1	2.75 Acres
	County	6	220.44 Acres
	Township	17	273.25 Acres
	City	12	238.55 Acres
	Village	3	5.66 Acres
	Other/Unknown	2	35.37 Acres
	Total	**41**	**776.02 Acres**
Forest Land/Open Space/Natural Areas	Federal	Various Locations	63,857.12 Acres
	State	Various Locations	6,470.94 Acres
	Total	**N/A**	**70,328.06 Acres**
Linear Parks/Non-Motorized/ORV Trails	Federal	Various Locations	54.61 Miles
	Total	**N/A**	**54.61 Miles**
Oceana County			
Community	State	4	91.35 Acres
	County	9	215.41 Acres
	Township	8	486.69 Acres
	City	6	44.78 Acres
	Village	19	36.41 Acres
	Other/Unknown	1	2.25 Acres
	Total	**47**	**876.89 Acres**

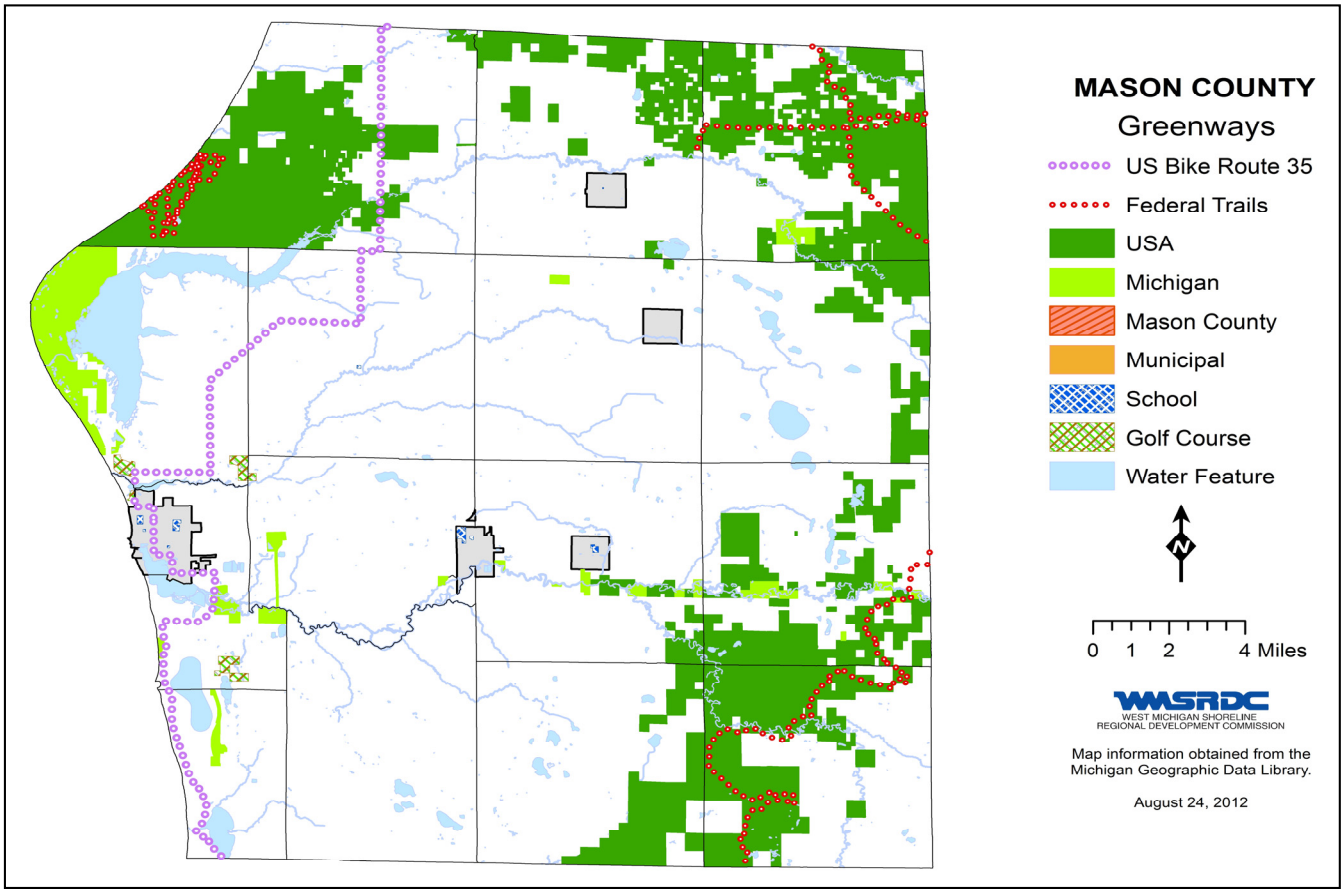
Forest Land/Open Space/Natural Areas	Federal	Various Locations	51,210.97 Acres
	State	Various Locations	8,026.21 Acres
	Total	**N/A**	**59,237.18 Acres**
Linear Parks/Non-Motorized/ORV Trails	Federal	Various Locations	78.87 Miles
	State	Various Locations	27.87 Miles
	Total	**N/A**	**106.74 Miles**

Source: West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

The greenways inventory is organized by municipal boundaries including cities, villages, and townships. Each community in both Mason and Oceana Counties are listed in alphabetical order along with a map identifying the location of each greenway, and followed by brief descriptions of each greenway found within that jurisdiction. Each map also includes schools and golf courses, as these properties often provide valuable greenspaces in both urban and rural settings. Below is the inventory of Mason and Oceana County Greenways.

Detailed Greenways Inventory

Mason County Greenways



City of Ludington

Cartier Park

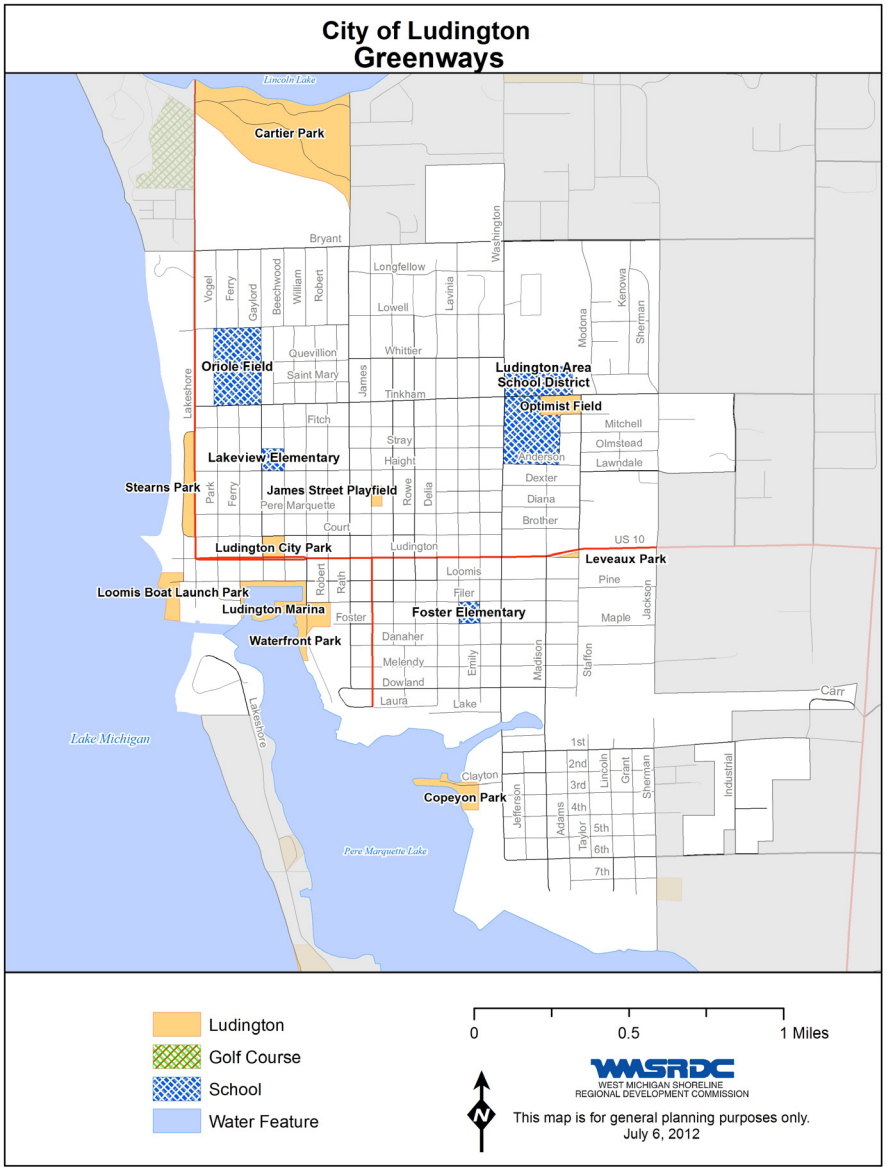
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: M-116, north of Stearns Park
Type: Community Park
Size: 68 acres
Description: Park amenities include a paved bike trail, forested hiking trails, dog park, playground, sand volleyball court, basketball hoop, two fishing docks, and small boat launch. The park also features nearly 200 campsites, both modern and rustic, and 2,500 feet of frontage on Lincoln Lake.

Copeyon Park

Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: S. Washington Ave., near Clayton Ct.
Type: Community Park
Size: 4.2 acres
Description: Park amenities include a paved boat launch on Pere Marquette Lake, a playground, restrooms, fish cleaning stations, and a picnic pavilion with windscreens.

James Street Playfield

Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: 300 block of N. James St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 2 acres
Description: This ball field, commonly known as the American Legion Ball field, also includes a playground.



Loomis Street Boat Launch and Park
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: West end of Loomis St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 3 acres
Description: This facility includes a boat launch, parking for 120 boats, cars or trailers, access to a Lake Michigan seawall, fish cleaning station, picnic tables, grill, and pavilion with roll-down wind screens.

Leveaux Park
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: 818 E. Ludington Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: 0.51 acres
Description: This small park includes a Gardening Club area and is a common setting for social gatherings.

Ludington City Park
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: Ludington Ave., between Gaylord Ave. and Lewis St.

Type: Community Park
Size: 2.5 acres
Description: This park lies three block west of downtown Ludington and features picnic tables, park benches, public restrooms, and the Kiwanis Band Shell.

Ludington Municipal Marina
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: 200 S. William St.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~12 acres
Description: The marina facility has a capacity of 174 slips, a service building with fish cleaning facilities, gas docks, pumpout station, restrooms and showers, a day room, laundry facilities, boardwalk, picnic shelter, and playground area.

Optimist Field
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: Staffon St. and Tinkham Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: 4 acres
Description: This park is adjacent to the Ludington High, O.J. DeJonge Jr. High, and Franklin schools. The Optimist service club adopted and developed the field, which has one ball diamond, one soccer practice field, and two fenced basketball courts.

Stearns Park
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: Lakeshore Dr., north of Ludington Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: 60 acres
Description: This park features 2,500 feet of sandy Lake Michigan beach, playgrounds, two concession stands, restrooms, boat launch, drinking fountains, shuffle board, volleyball courts, mini-golf, skate park, and a shaded picnic area with grills.

Waterfront Park
Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: South end of Williams St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 5 acres
Description: Sandwiched between two marinas, this park features scenic views of Pere Marquette Lake, picnic tables, playground equipment, bronze sculptures, restrooms, and an amphitheater.

City of Scottville

MacPhail Field

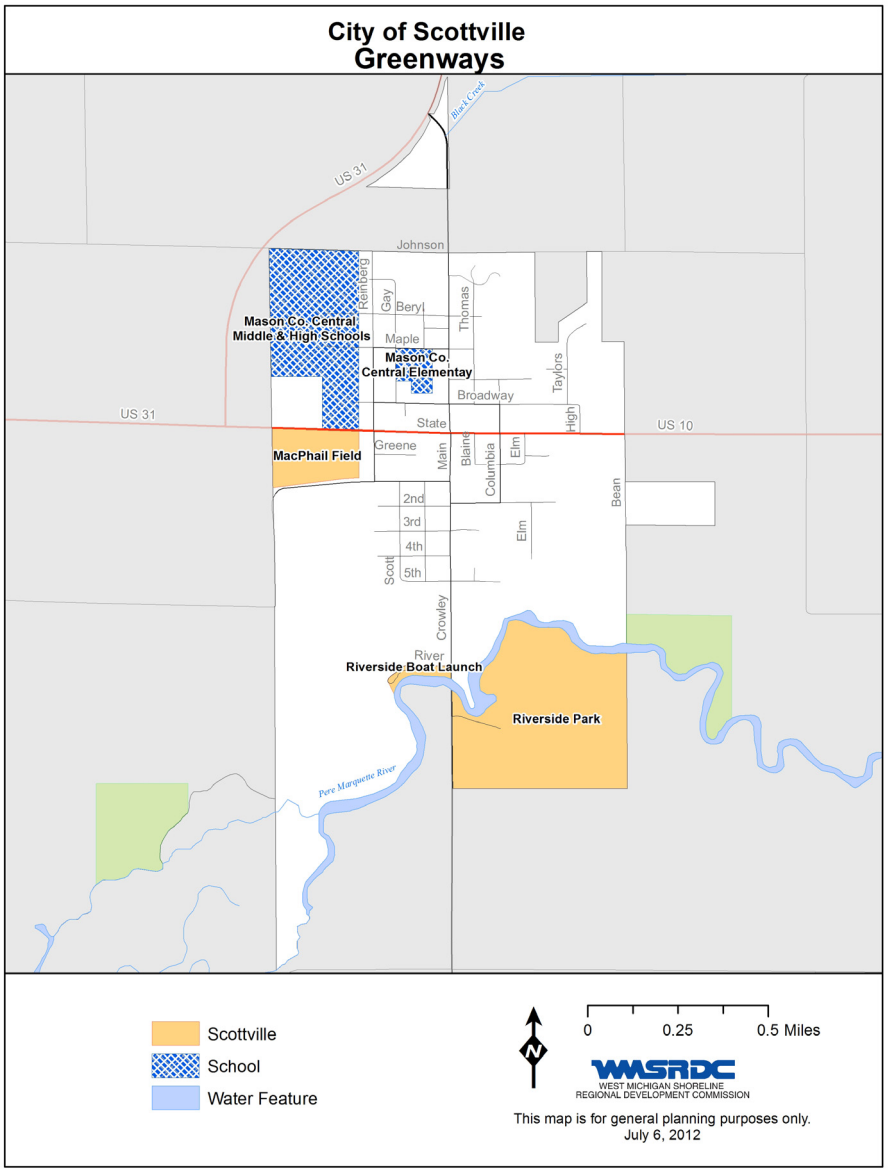
Jurisdiction: City of Scottville
Location: US-10, east of US-31
Type: Community Park
Size: 16.5 acres
Description: This park features tennis courts, baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, community playground, picnic tables, restrooms, concession stand, bleachers, press box, and building for meetings and storage.

Riverside Park

Jurisdiction: City of Scottville
Location: 700 Scottville Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 103 acres
Description: Situated along the both the north and south sides of the Pere Marquette River, this park features 52 modern and 10 primitive campsites. Amenities include picnic area, playground, restrooms, camp store, paved boat launch, heated pool, basket ball court, shuffleboard, horseshoe pits, picnic shelters, hiking trails, volleyball courts, portable docks, and boat launch. In 2011, a disk golf course named "The Edge" was added to the park.

Village of Custer

None Identified



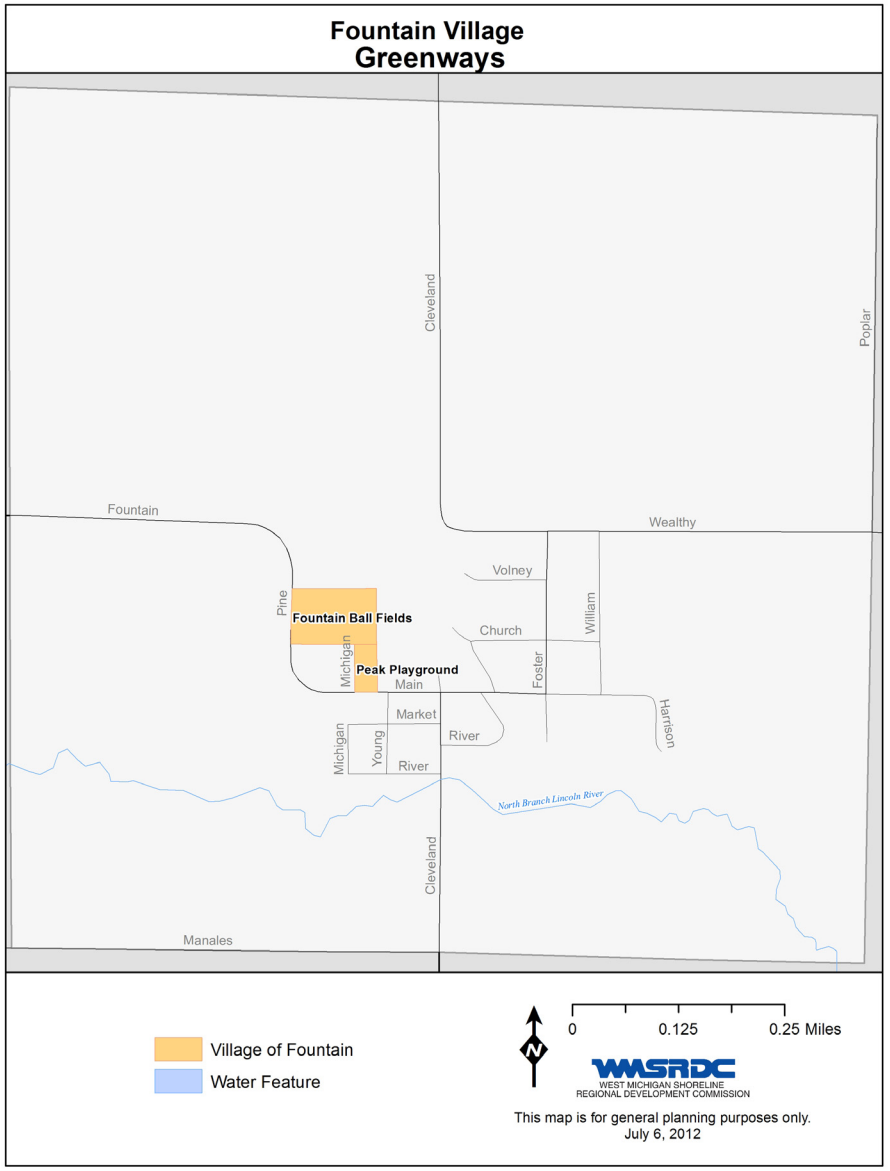
Village of Fountain

Fountain Ball Fields

Jurisdiction: Village of Fountain
Location: Main St.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~4 acres
Description: This park contains 2 ball fields.

Peak Playground

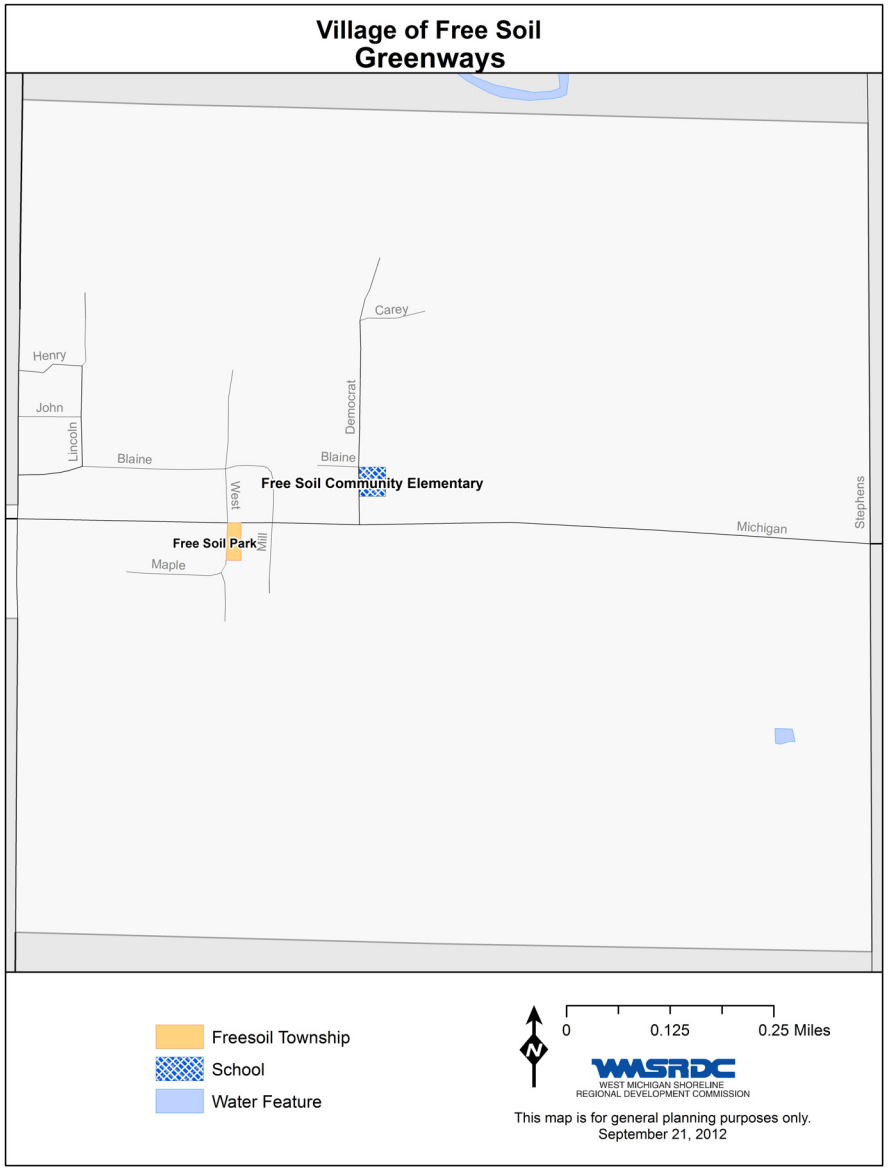
Jurisdiction: Village of Fountain
Location: Main St.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1 acre
Description: This park contains playground equipment.



Village of Free Soil

Free Soil Park

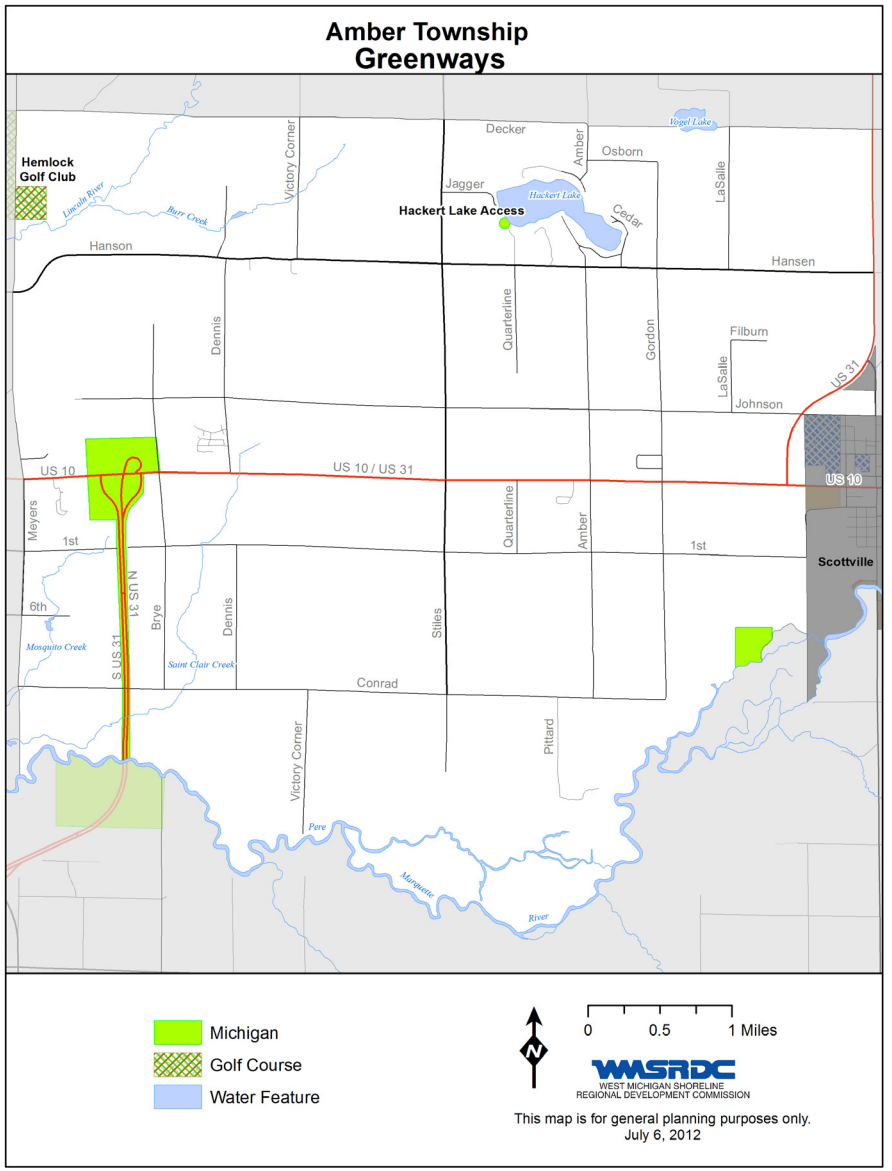
Jurisdiction: Free Soil Township
Location: Michigan Street
Type: Community Park
Size: > 1 acre
Description: Playground equipment



Amber Township

Hackert Lake Access

Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: N. Quarterline Rd., north of W. Hansen Rd.
Type: Public Access
Size: N/A
Description: This boating access site offers a paved launch, swimming area, and a latrine.



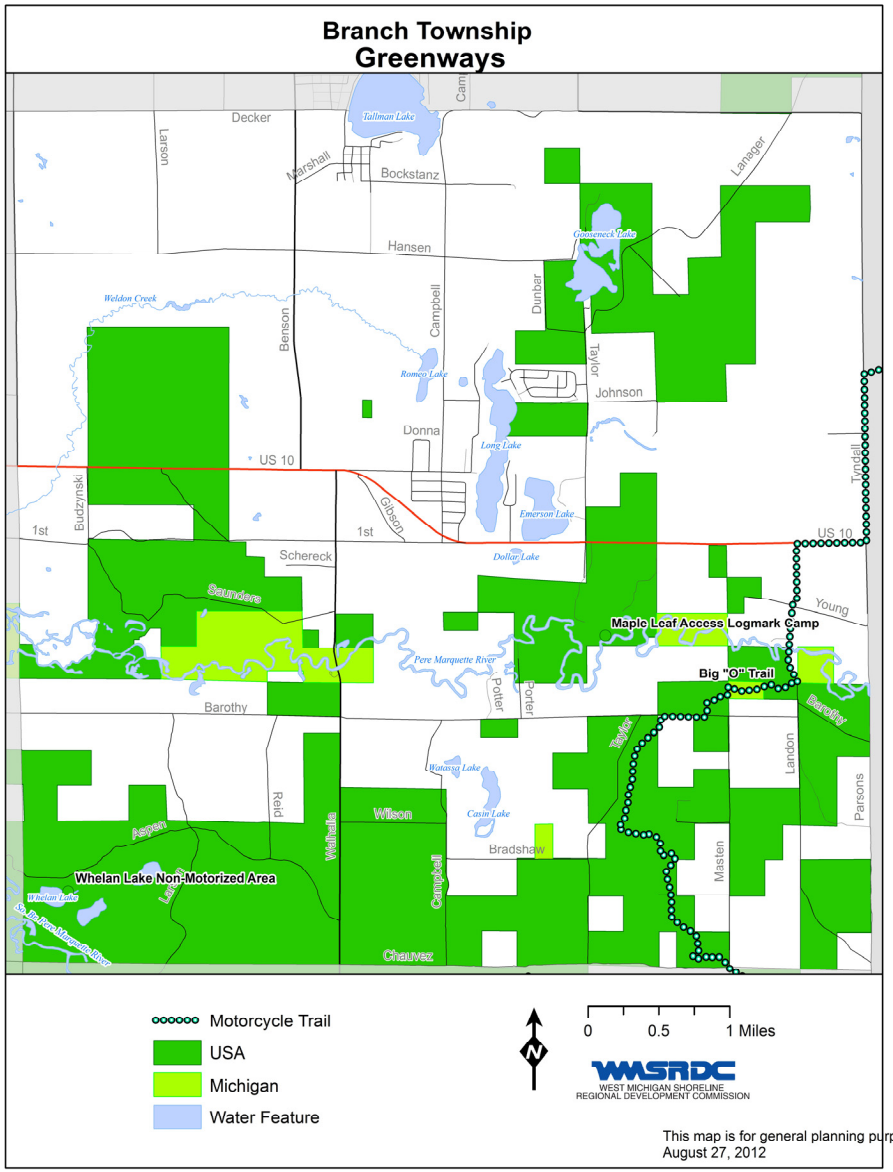
Branch Township

Maple Leaf Access & Logmark Campsite

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: FR 5580, south of S. Taylor Rd.
Type: National Forest
Size: N/A
Description: Nestled within the Huron-Manistee National Forest, this site provides fishing access to the Pere Marquette River. The Logmark is also a legal location to canoe camp if paddling down the river.

Whelan Lake Semi-Primitive Nonmotorized Area

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Aspen Rd.
Type: National Forest Camping Area
Size: N/A
Description: This site offers six semi-primative campsites and carry-down boating access to Whelan Lake within the Huron-Manistee National Forest.



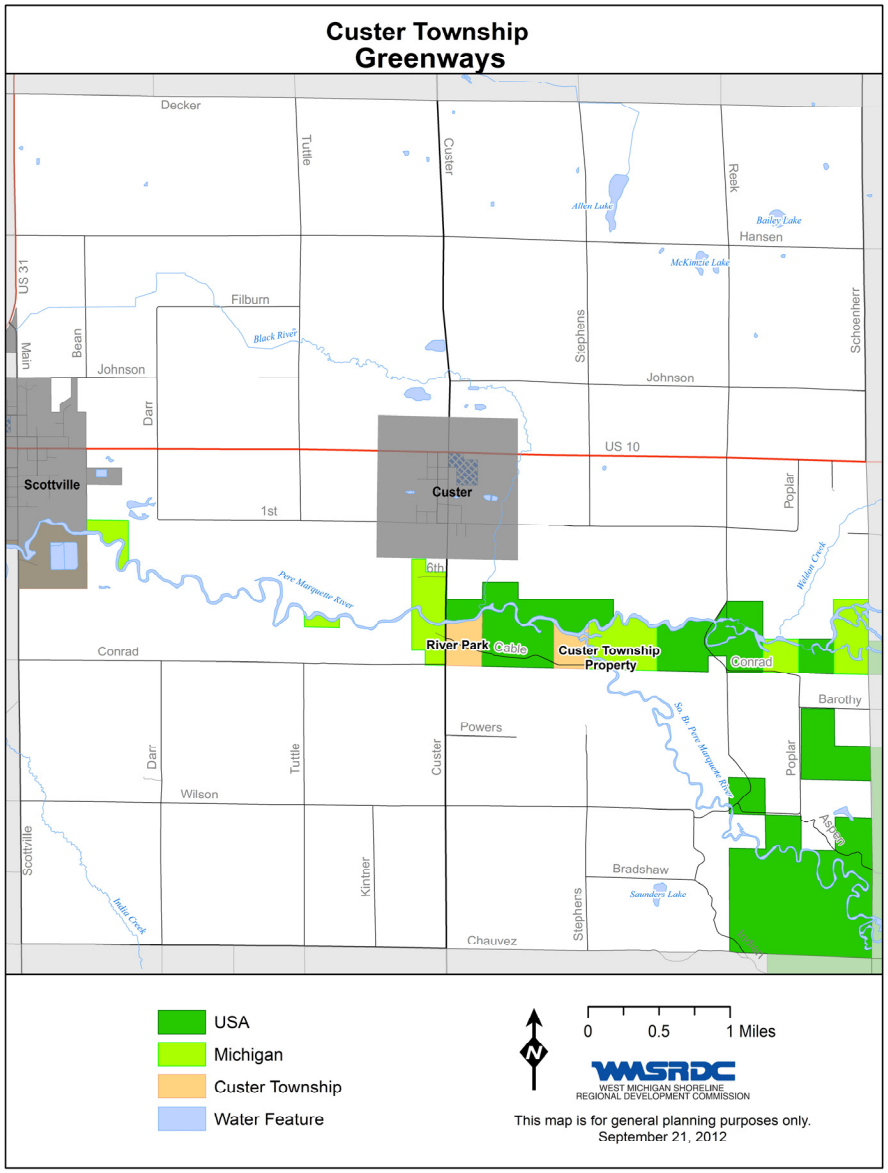
Custer Township

Custer Township Property

Jurisdiction: Custer Township
Location: Cable Rd. at the Pere Marquette River
Type: Township property
Size: 38 acres
Description: This is unimproved, township-owned property along the Pere Marquette River.

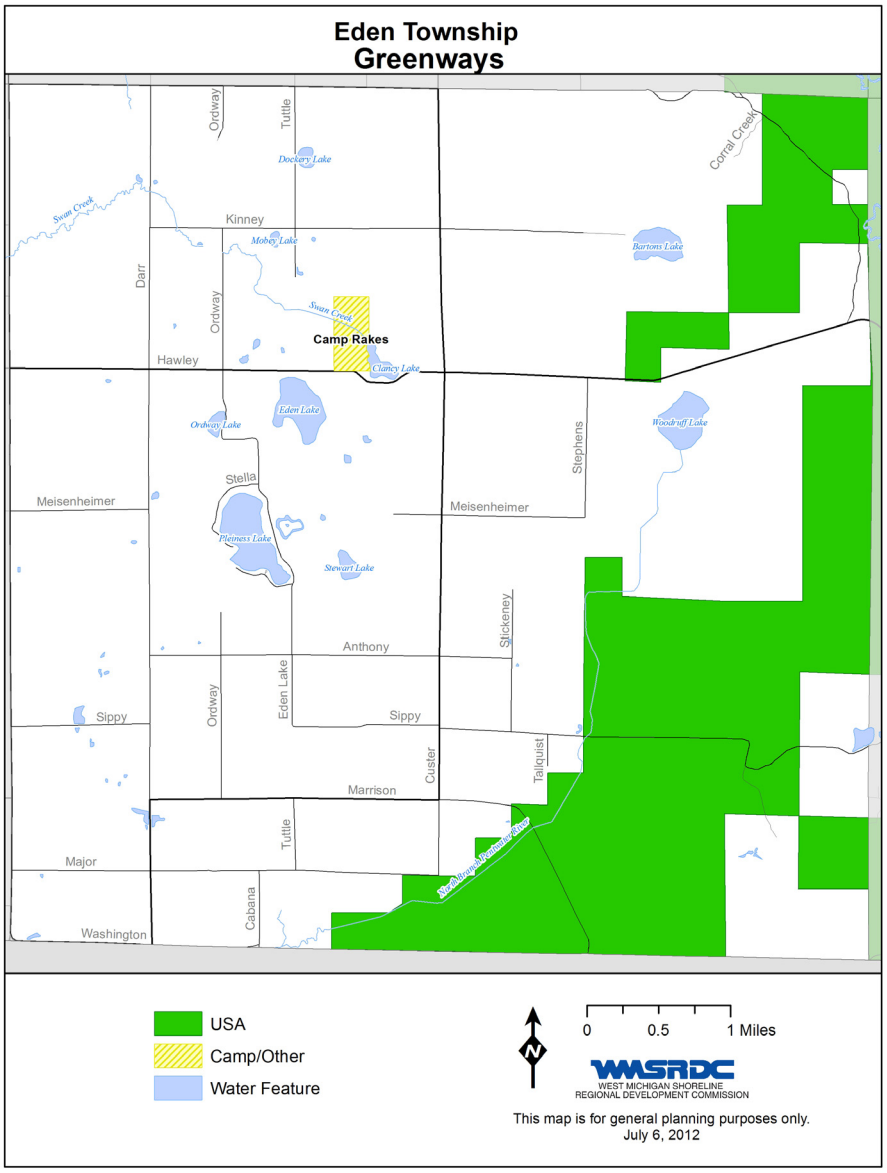
River Park

Jurisdiction: Custer Township
Location: S. Custer Rd. at the Pere Marquette River
Type: Community Park
Size: 10 acres
Description: This park provides a boat launch on the Pere Marquette River.



Eden Township

No local greenways identified. See Mason County Multi-jurisdictional Greenways



Free Soil Township

Big Sauble River Property

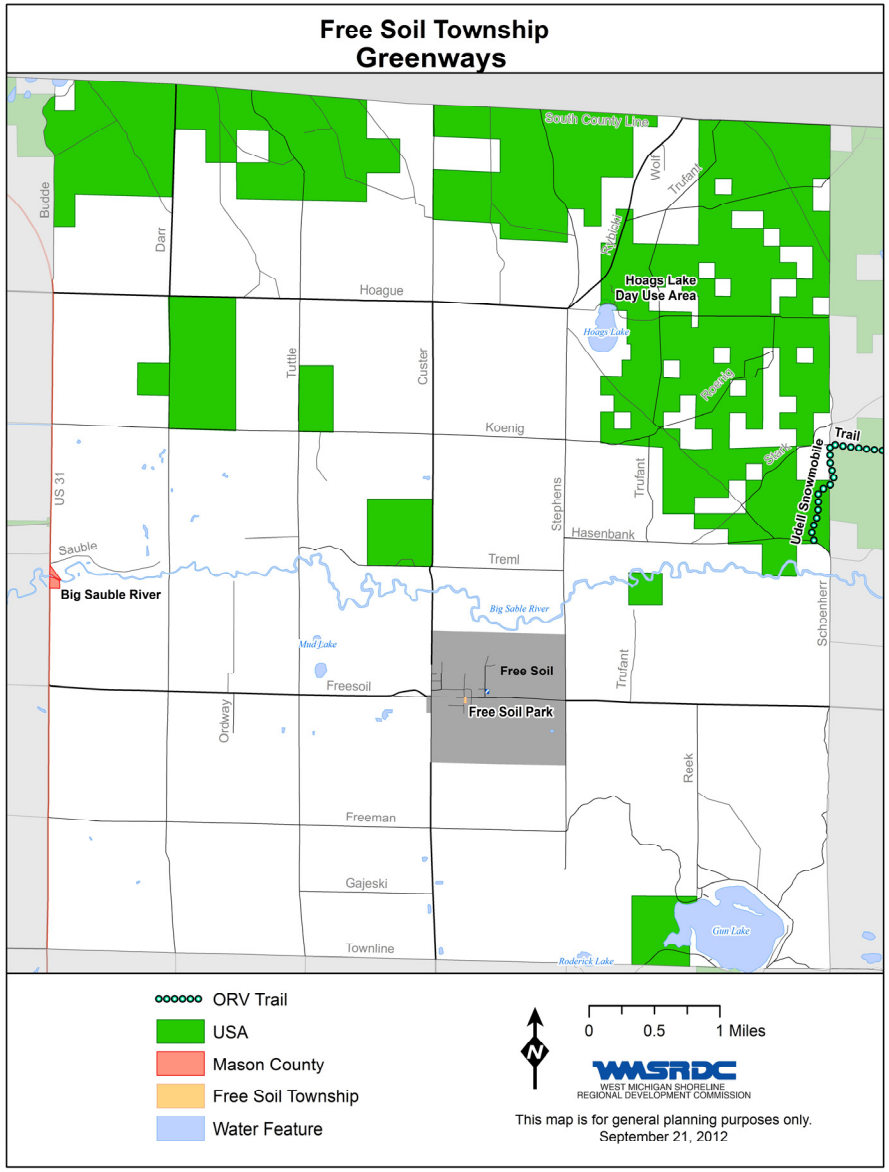
Jurisdiction: Mason County
Location: N. US 31 at the Big Sauble River
Type: County Property
Size: 6 acres
Description: This is a vacant, undeveloped property which was deeded to the county for parks purposes.

Hoags Lake Day Use Area

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: E. Hoague Rd., near Stephens Rd./Rybicki Rd intersection
Type: National Forest Day Use Area
Size: N/A
Description: Within the Huron-Manistee National Forest, the main asset of this small park is its access to Hoags Lake. Amenities at this site include a dirt boat ramp, swimming beach, and picnic area with benches and grills.

Free Soil Park

Jurisdiction: Free Soil Township
Location: Michigan Street
Type: Community Park
Size: > 1 acre
Description: Playground equipment



Grant Township

Hamlin Lake Marsh

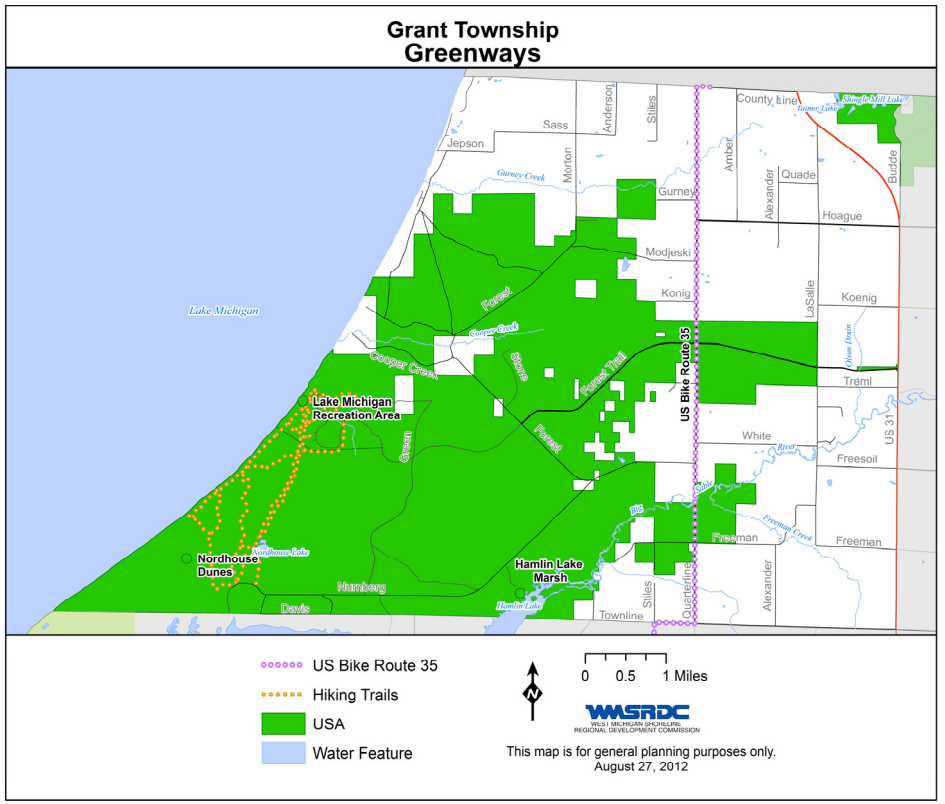
Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: FR 5540, south of Nurnburg Rd.
Type: National Forest
Size: 100 acres
Description: This natural area on the north shore of Hamlin Lake features a dirt boat launch and parking for 4-5 vehicles and trailers.

Lake Michigan Recreation Area

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: FR 5629, west end of W. Forest Trail Rd.
Type: National Forest
Size: N/A
Description: Nestled within the Huron-Manistee National Forest and along Lake Michigan, this camping and day-use area features 99 campsites, vault restrooms, potable water, picnic areas, a playground, beach, and numerous bicycle/hiking trails.

Nordhouse Dunes

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: West end of Nurnburg Rd.
Type: National Wilderness Area
Size: 3,450 acres
Description: This area is the only federally designated wilderness area in Michigan's lower peninsula. It is popular for hiking, camping, nature study and wildlife viewing. There are approximately 10 miles of trail that can be accessed from 2 developed trailheads at the end of Nurnburg Road and the Lake Michigan Recreation Area. There is space for picnicking, parking capacity for 24 vehicles, and latrines available at the Nurnburg Road trailhead.



Hamlin Township

Long Skinny Park

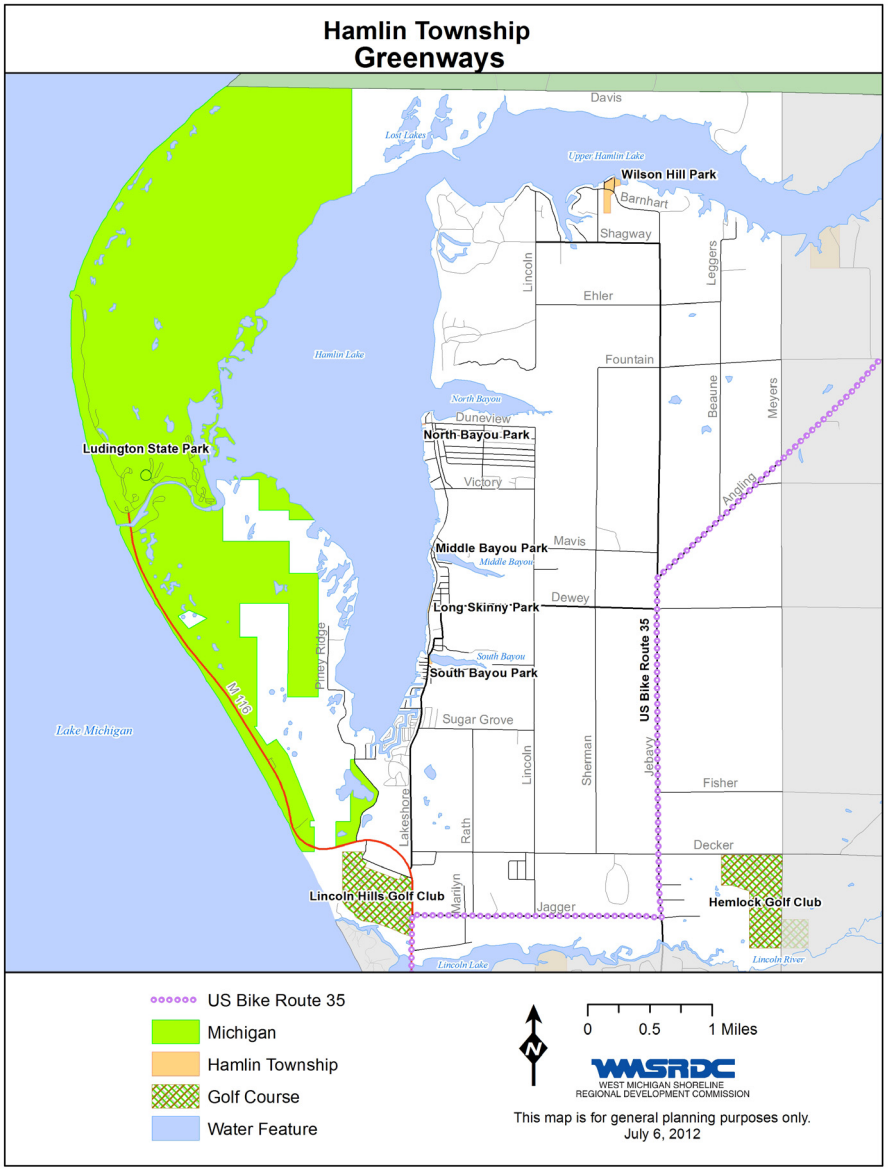
Jurisdiction: Hamlin Township
Location: N. Lakeshore Dr., between South and Middle bayous
Type: Community Park
Size: N/A
Description: This park is a thin stretch of land along Lower Hamlin Lake with grills and benches.

Ludington State Park

Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: 8800 W. M-116
Type: State Park
Size: 5,300 acres (approx)
Description: The park offers activities such as hiking, swimming, biking, cross-country skiing, paddling, boat rental, metal detecting, fishing, hunting, watchable wildlife, and interpretive programs. Facilities at this park include a sandy beach, beach house, concession/store, lighthouse, picnic shelter, picnic area, playground, electrical service, and modern restrooms. The park offers 352 modern campsites, 10 rustic sites, and 3 mini cabins for rent.

Middle Bayou Park

Jurisdiction: Hamlin Township
Location: N. Lakeshore Dr., near Middle Bayou
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.1 acres
Description: This small park offers swimming and fishing access to Lower Hamlin Lake as well as benches.



North Bayou Park

Jurisdiction: Hamlin Township
Location: N. Lakeshore Dr., near North Bayou
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.2 acres
Description: This park offers fishing access and a rustic boat launch.

South Bayou Park

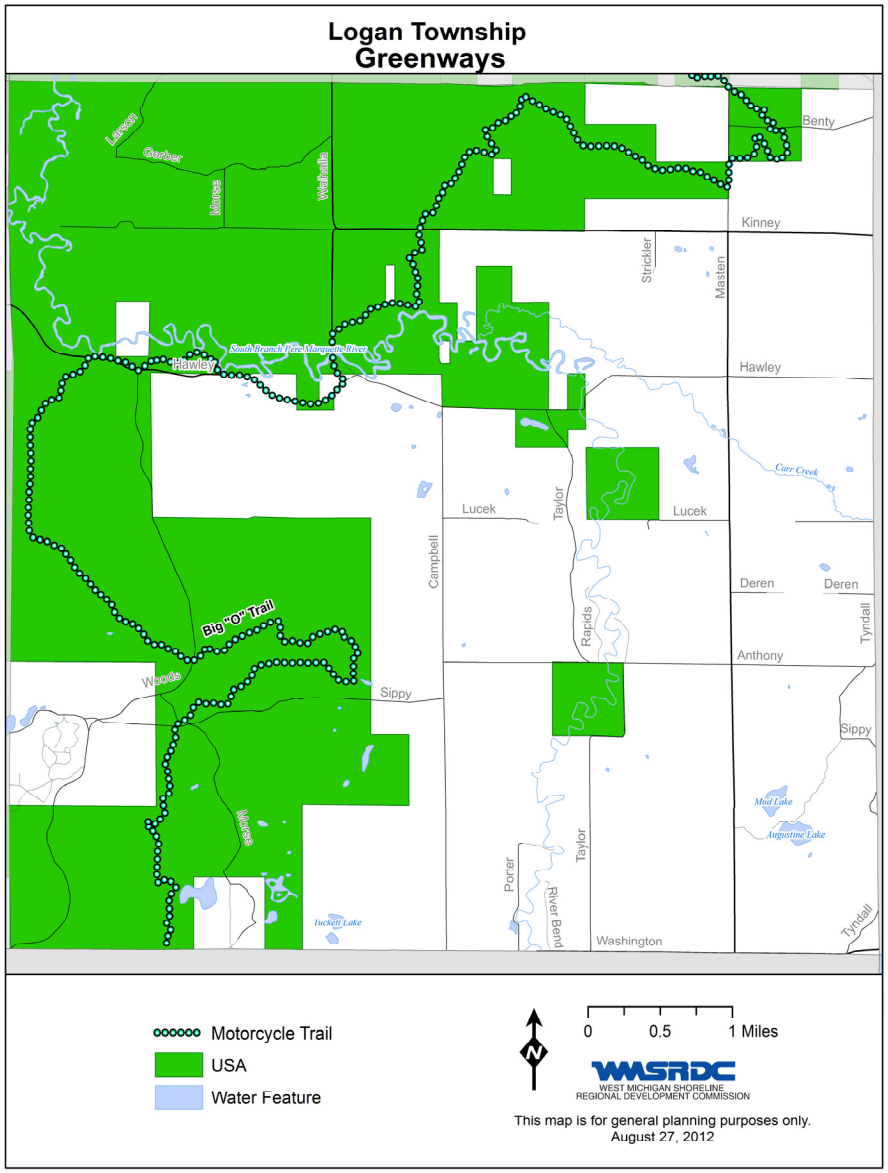
Jurisdiction: Hamlin Township
Location: N. Lakeshore Dr., near South Bayou
Type: Community Park
Size: 1.1 acres
Description: This park features a boat launch and dock for access to South Bayou and Lower Hamlin Lake. Other amenities include a playground, portable restroom, picnic tables, grills, and benches.

Wilson Hill Park

Jurisdiction: Hamlin Township
Location: Barnhart Rd., at Upper Hamlin Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: 5 acres
Description: Amenities at this lakeside park include a pavilion, picnic tables and grills, ball diamond, playground, electricity, running water, horseshoe pits, boat launch and dock, and portable restrooms.

Logan Township

No local greenways identified. See Mason County Multi-jurisdictional Greenways.



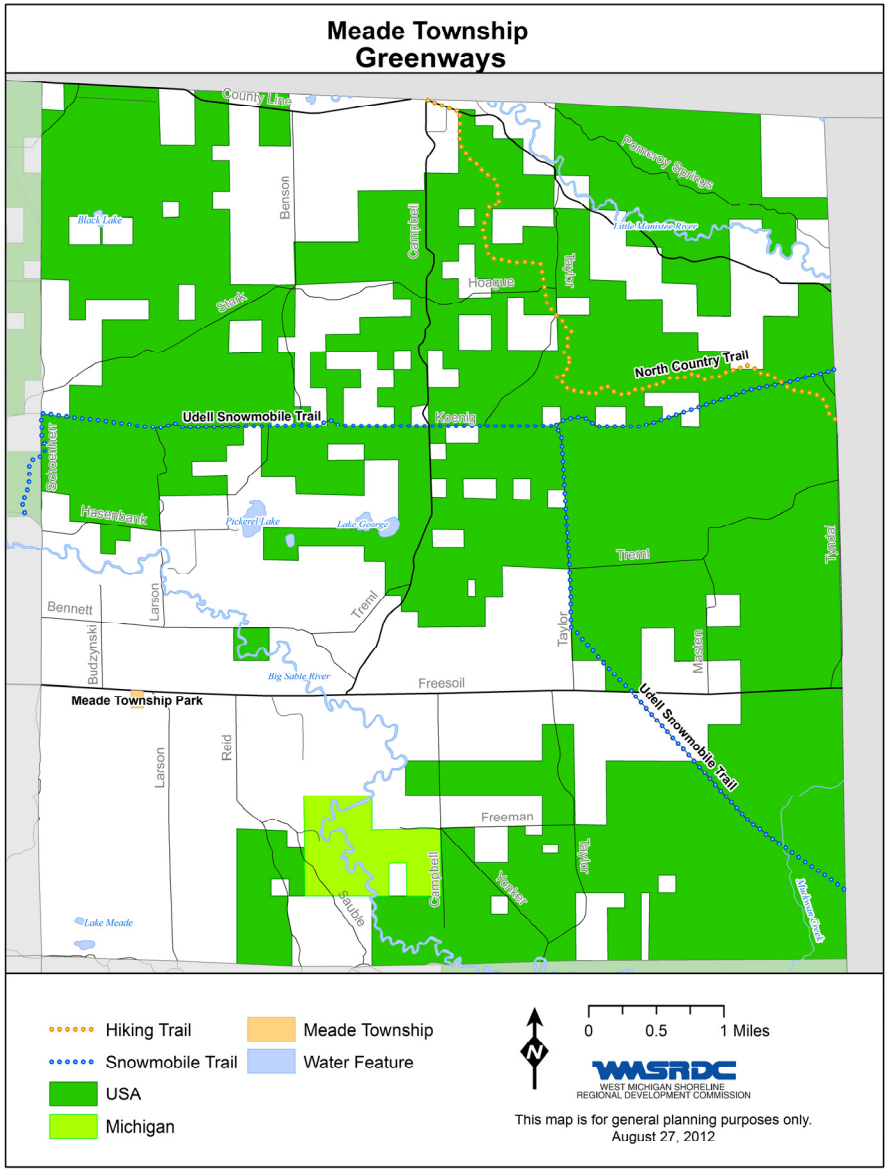
Meade Township

Meade Township Park

Jurisdiction: Meade Township
Location: 5435 Freesoil Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~7.5 acres
Description: N/A

North Country Trail

Jurisdiction: National Park Service
Location: Tyndal Rd. (FR 5203)
Type: National Scenic Trail
Size: 5.5 Miles (in Meade Township)
Description: This trail extends nearly 4,600 miles from eastern New York State to central North Dakota. It slices through northeastern Mason County for about 3 miles and is maintained by the Spirit of the Woods Chapter of the North Country Trail Association. This trail segment includes a 650-foot boardwalk through a marshy area which allows for hiking and bicycle traffic. Trailheads for this portion of the North Country Trail are located just outside of Mason County in Lake County on 8 Mile Rd. and in Manistee County at Nine Mile Bridge. The trail can additionally be accessed where the trail intersects Tyndal Rd. near the Lake County border.



Pere Marquette Township

Father Marquette's Shrine

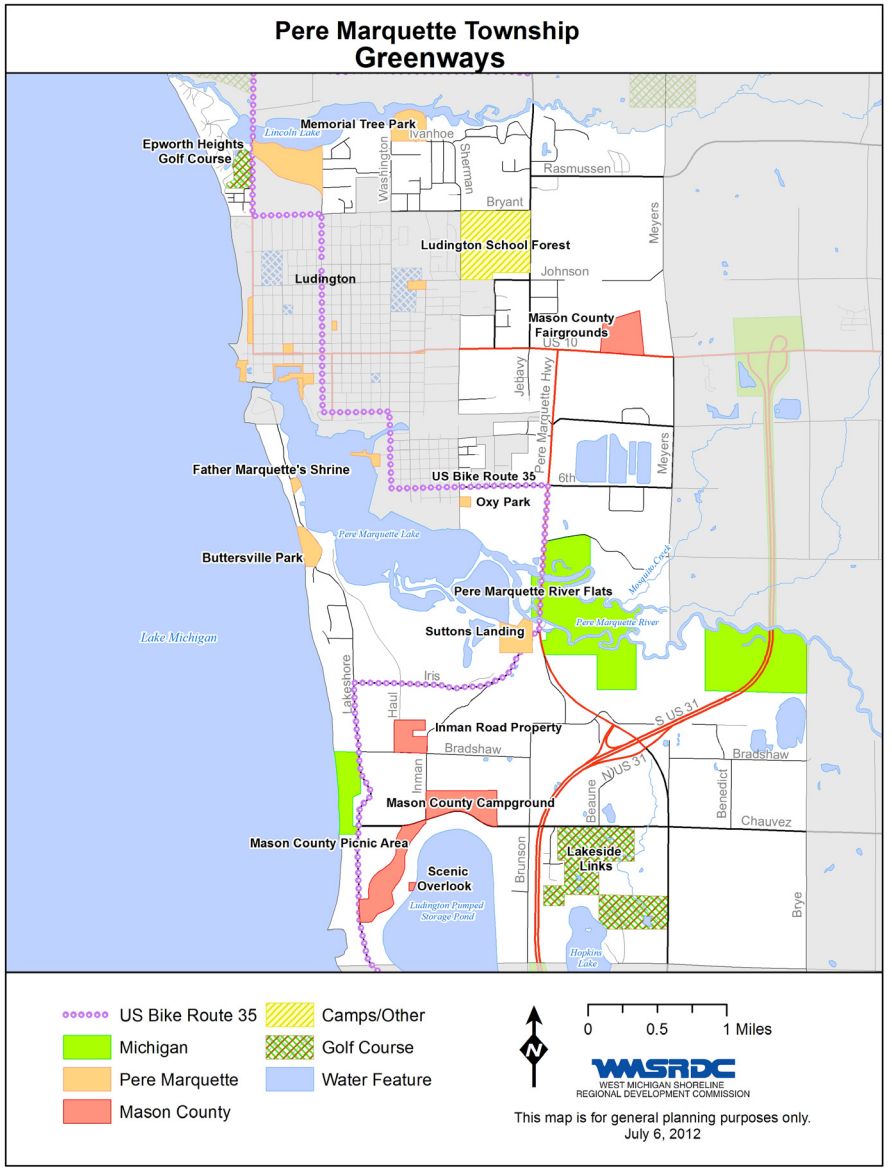
Jurisdiction: Pere Marquette Township
Location: S. Lakeshore Dr.
Type: Community Park
Size: 2.4 acres
Description: This park features 400 feet of frontage on Pere Marquette lake and contains a boat launch and a State of Michigan Historic Site memorializing Jacques Marquette.

Buttersville Park

Jurisdiction: Pere Marquette Township
Location: 991 S. Lakeshore Dr.
Type: Community Park
Size: 18.5 acres
Description: This park features 44 modern campsites with electricity, fire pits, and picnic tables. Other amenities include wooden stairway to Lake Michigan, beach, playground equipment, boat launch, fresh water, dump station, shower and restroom facilities, and a reservable pavilion.

Ludington School Forest

Jurisdiction: Ludington Area Schools
Location: West of Jebavy Dr., between Bryant and Tinkham
Type: School Property and Disk Golf Course
Size: 160 acres
Description: This property is host to a Mason County Disk Golf Association disk golf course, as well as numerous hiking and biking trails.



Inman Road Property
Jurisdiction: Mason County
Location: Inman Rd., ½ mile north of the Mason County Campground
Type: County Property
Size: 34 acres
Description: This is a vacant, undeveloped property.

Mason County Campground
Jurisdiction: Mason County
Location: 5906 W. Chauvez Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 60 acres
Description: This campground contains 56 campsites complete with electricity, fire ring, picnic table, and charcoal grill. Other amenities include a sanitary station, fresh water, and an A.D.A.-approved bathhouse.

Mason County Fairgrounds
Jurisdiction: Mason County
Location: 5302 W. US-10
Type: Fairgrounds
Size: 377 acres
Description: Owned by Mason County and overseen by the West Michigan Fair Association, this fairgrounds hosts a weekly flea market and an annual fair.

Mason County Picnic Area
Jurisdiction: Mason County
Location: 6501 W. Chauvez Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 150 acres
Description: Amenities include a 350 person capacity pavilion, 40 picnic tables, modern restrooms, playground areas with a slide, swings, and merry-go-round. The park is also home of the Mason County Disc Golf Organization and a 72-hole public disc golf course. There is also access to the observation area overlooking the Ludington Pumped Storage Plant, and a 210-step stairway leading to an overlook of the holding pond of the storage plant.

Memorial Tree Park
Jurisdiction: Pere Marquette Township
Location: N. Washington and Sherman
Type: Community Park
Size: 27 acres
Description: This park features picnic areas, a playground, an athletic field, restrooms, and a reservable shelter building.

Pere Marquette River Flats
Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: Pere Marquette Highway, at the Pere Marquette River
Type: Wildlife Area
Size: N/A
Description: This site features an observation deck overlooking the Pere Marquette River flats on the north bank of the river and on the east side of the Pere Marquette Highway. There is also a paved boat launch located on the south bank of the river, on the east side of the highway. The Pere Marquette River is a designated “Wild and Scenic River” to the east and upstream of the Pere Marquette Highway.

Sutton’s Landing Park
Jurisdiction: Pere Marquette Township
Location: Iris Rd. at Pere Marquette Highway
Type: Community Park
Size: 34 acres
Description: This park features 425 feet of Pere Marquette River frontage, boat launch, and a riverbank boardwalk. Other features include a reservable pavilion, restrooms, picnic tables and benches, and a playground.

OXY Field

Jurisdiction: City of Ludington
Location: 7th St. and Sherman St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 3 acres
Description: Also known at Dow Field, this park consists of a softball field, which was rebuilt in 2007. This is also the site of an ice rink during the winter months.

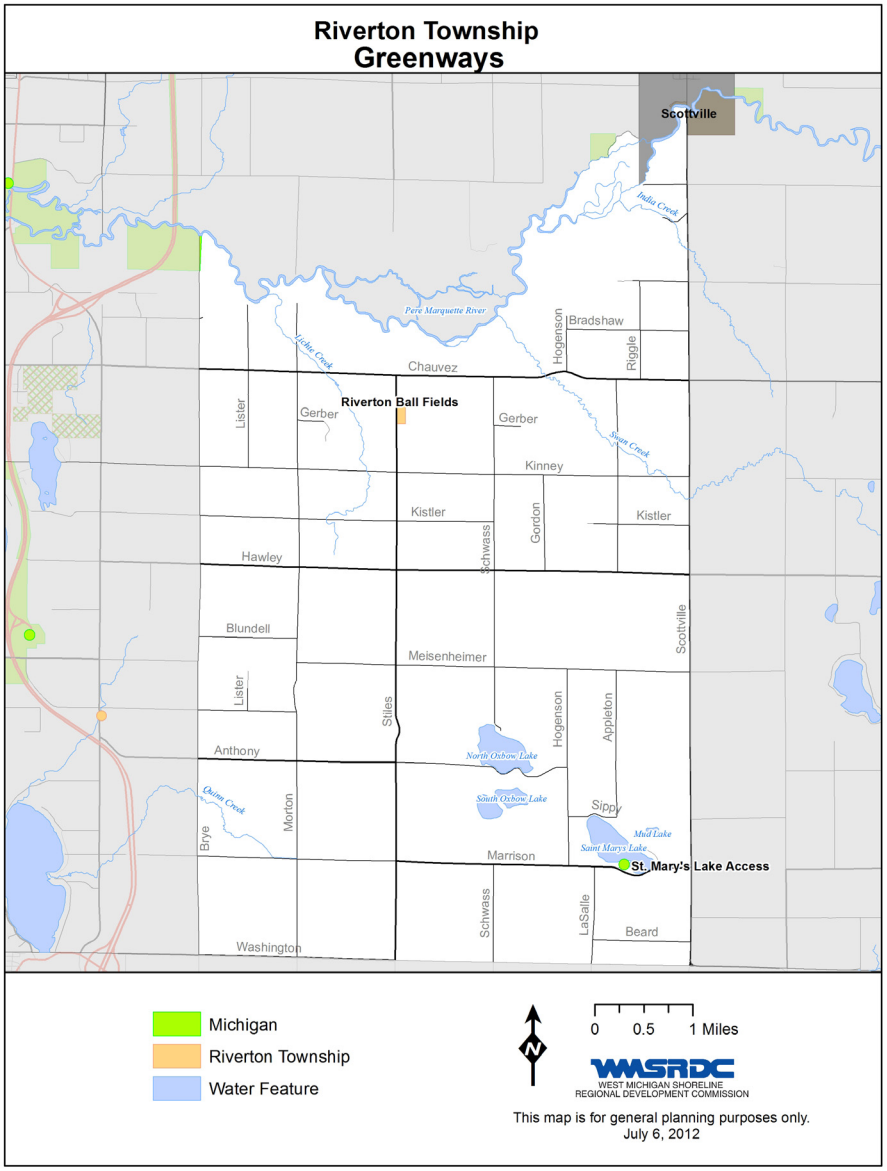
Riverton Township

Riverton Ball Fields

Jurisdiction: Riverton Township
Location: 3070 S. Stiles Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 40 acres
Description: This park consists of two ball fields.

St. Mary's Lake Access

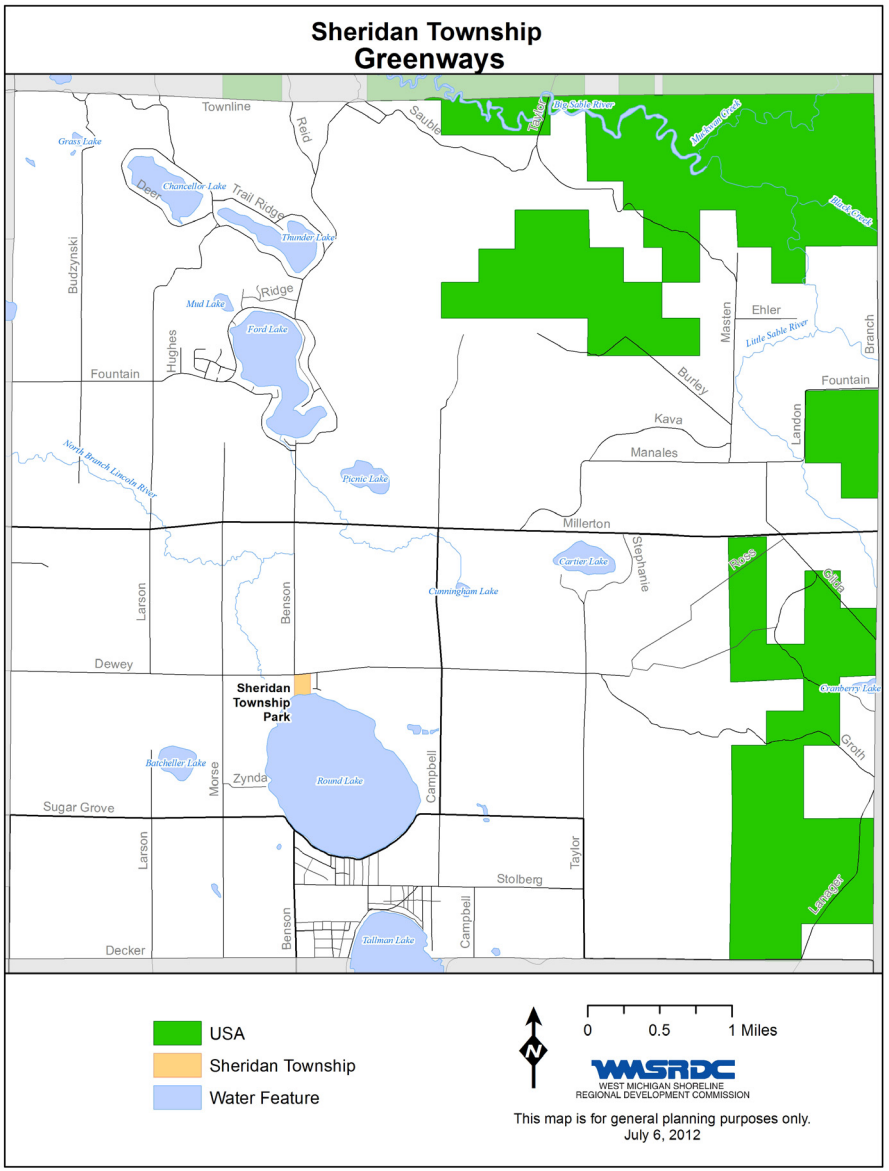
Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: Marrison Rd.
Type: Public Access
Size: ~5 acres
Description: This site includes a paved boat launch, restrooms, and parking on St. Mary's Lake.



Sheridan Township

Sheridan Township Park

Jurisdiction: Sheridan Township
Location: Dewey Rd. at Round Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: 9.1 acres
Description: This park provides picnic tables, a gravel boat launch on Round Lake, and a swimming beach.



Sherman Township

Sherman Township Park (Gun Lake Park)

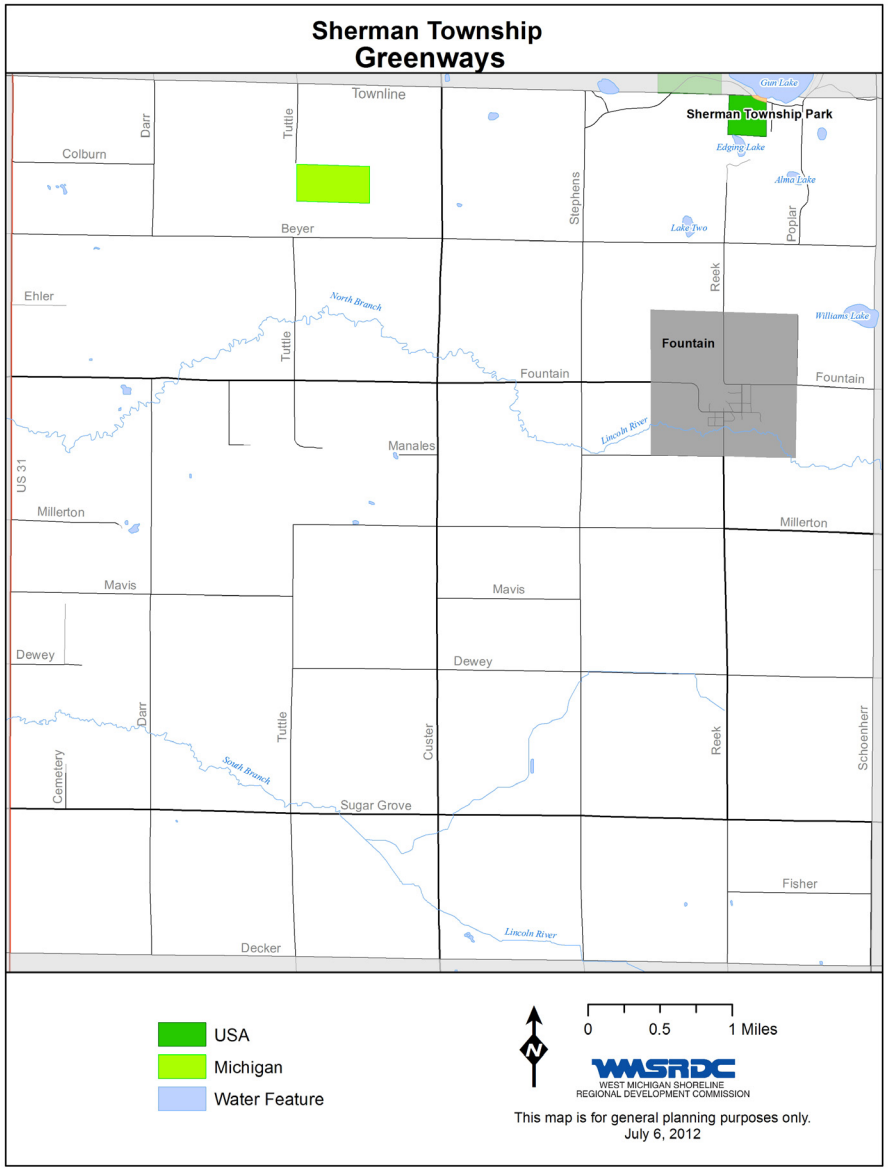
Jurisdiction: Sherman Township

Location: Townline Rd. west of Poplar Rd.

Type: Community Park

Size: ~2 acres

Description: Amenities at this park include parking, grills, restrooms, a swimming beach, and there is a MDNR boat launch nearby which provides boating access to Gun Lake. The park land is on a long-term lease from the United States Forest Service.



Summit Township

Bass Lake Outlet

Jurisdiction: Summit Township
Location: Bass Lake Outlet, near Thiele Rd. and Mack Rd.
Type: Public Access
Size: ~1 acre
Description: This location offers access to swimming and beach activities on Lake Michigan.

Kibby Creek Park

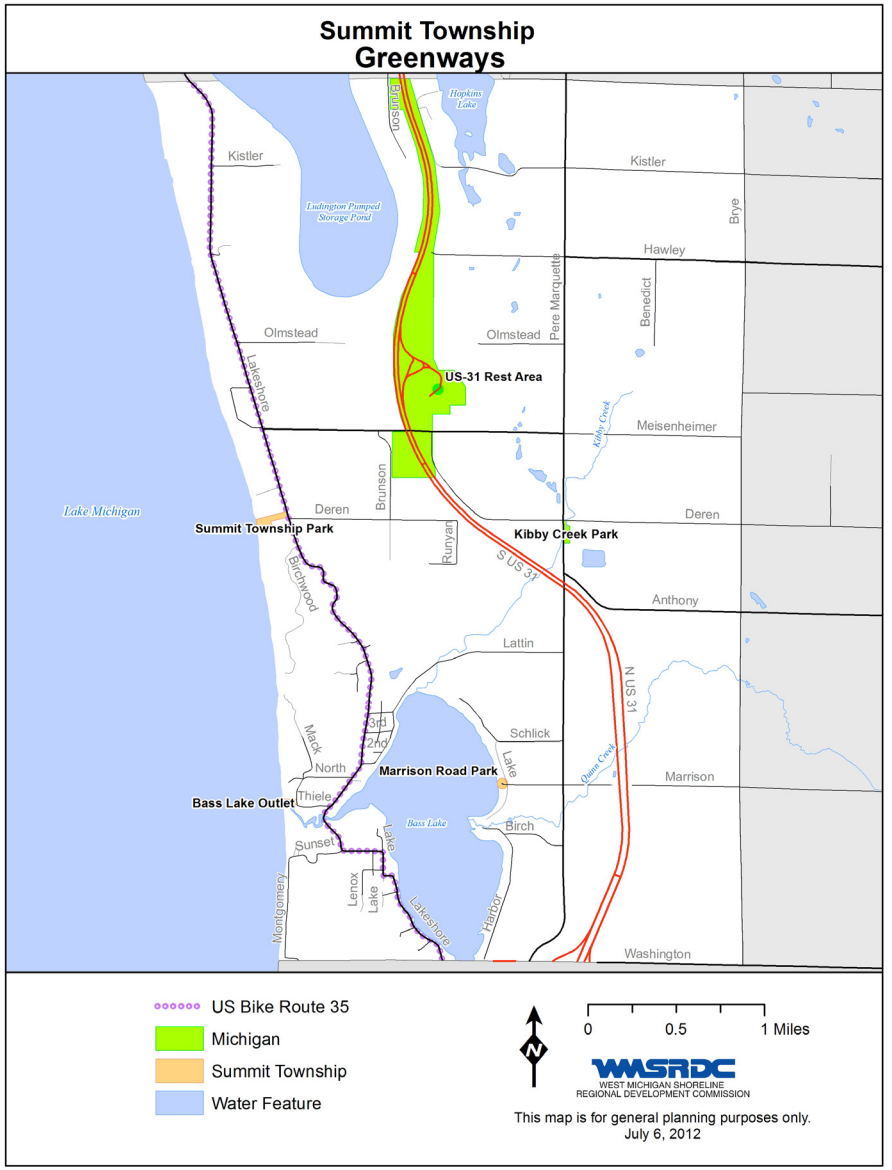
Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: S. Pere Marquette Highway, south of Deren Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~ 1 acre
Description: This roadside park consists of a picnic area with tables, grills, and latrines. There is also a small bridge over Kibby Creek, which flows through the site.

Ludington Rest Area

Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Transportation
Location: Northbound US-31, mile marker 163
Type: Rest Area
Size: N/A
Description: This highway rest area features a scenic outlook platform from which Lake Michigan can be viewed. Other amenities include a picnic area with tables and grills, restrooms, and running water.

Marrison Road Park

Jurisdiction: Summit Township
Location: W. Marrison Rd. at Bass Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: 0.5 acres
Description: This small park offers an unimproved boat launch and space for picnicking.



Summit Park

Jurisdiction: Summit Township
Location: S. Lakeshore Dr., south of Meisenheimer Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 34 acres
Description: This park features a picnic area with a pavilion, tables, and grills overlooking Lake Michigan. Other amenities include a playground, restrooms, tennis courts, sports field area, and Lake Michigan beach access.

Victory Township

West Shore Community College

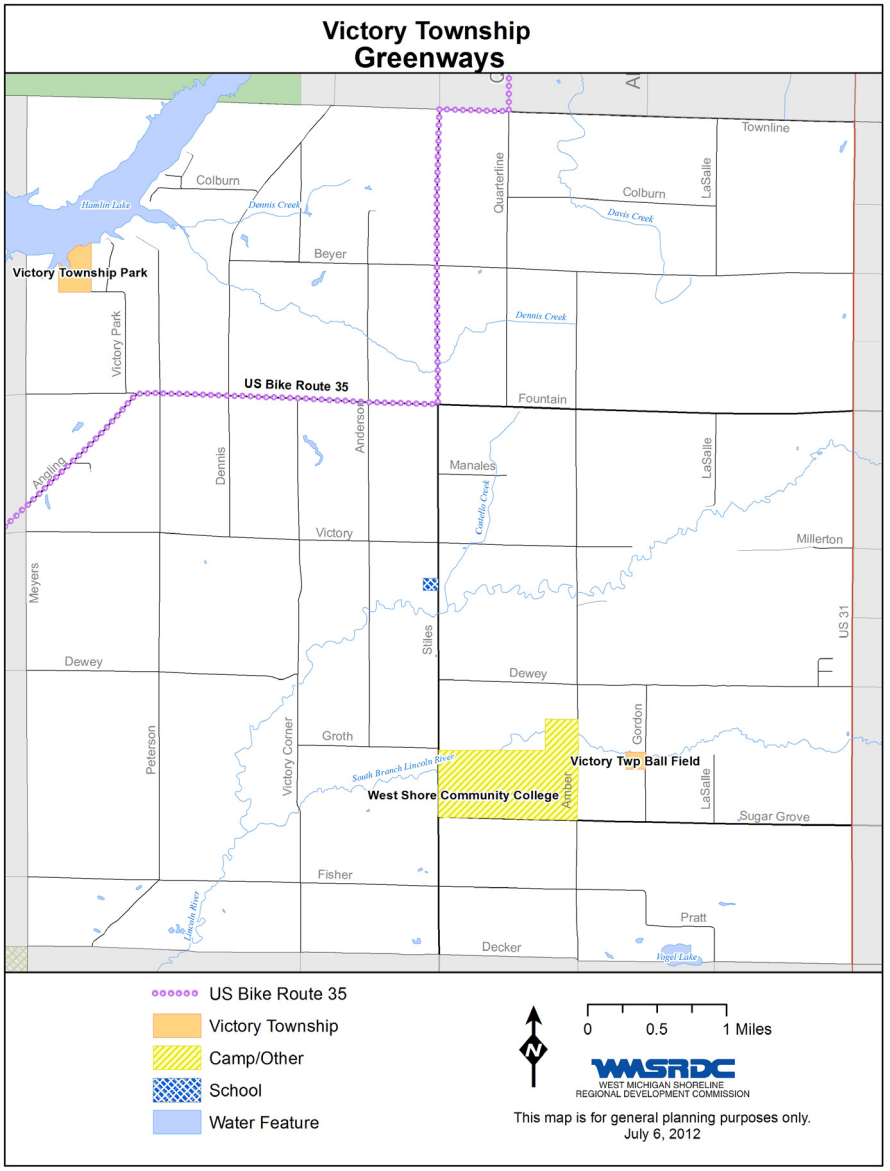
Jurisdiction: West Shore Community College
Location: 3000 N. Stiles Rd.
Type: Community College
Size: 360 acres (total campus)
Description: This college campus includes a number of day-use facilities and amenities. There are hiking trails, two picnic areas with tables and fireplace-equipped pavilions, playground equipment, potable water, and restrooms.

Victory Township Ball Fields

Jurisdiction: Victory Township
Location: Gordon Rd. north of Sugar Grove Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 40 acres
Description: This park provides two ball fields for youth sports.

Victory Township Park

Jurisdiction: Victory Township
Location: Victory Park Rd., off Fountain Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 40 acres
Description: Situated on Upper Hamlin Lake, this park features picnic tables, grills, restrooms, a pavilion, and boat launch.



Multi-Jurisdictional

US Bike Route 35

Jurisdiction: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
Location: Grant Township, Victory Township, Hamlin Township, City of Ludington, Pere Marquette Township, and Summit Township.
Size: ~35 miles (in Mason County)
Description: This is a designated bike route that runs from Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, through Michigan to Indiana generally following the Lake Michigan shoreline. It is planned to extend southward to US Bike Route 45 at the Mississippi River in Mississippi or Louisiana.

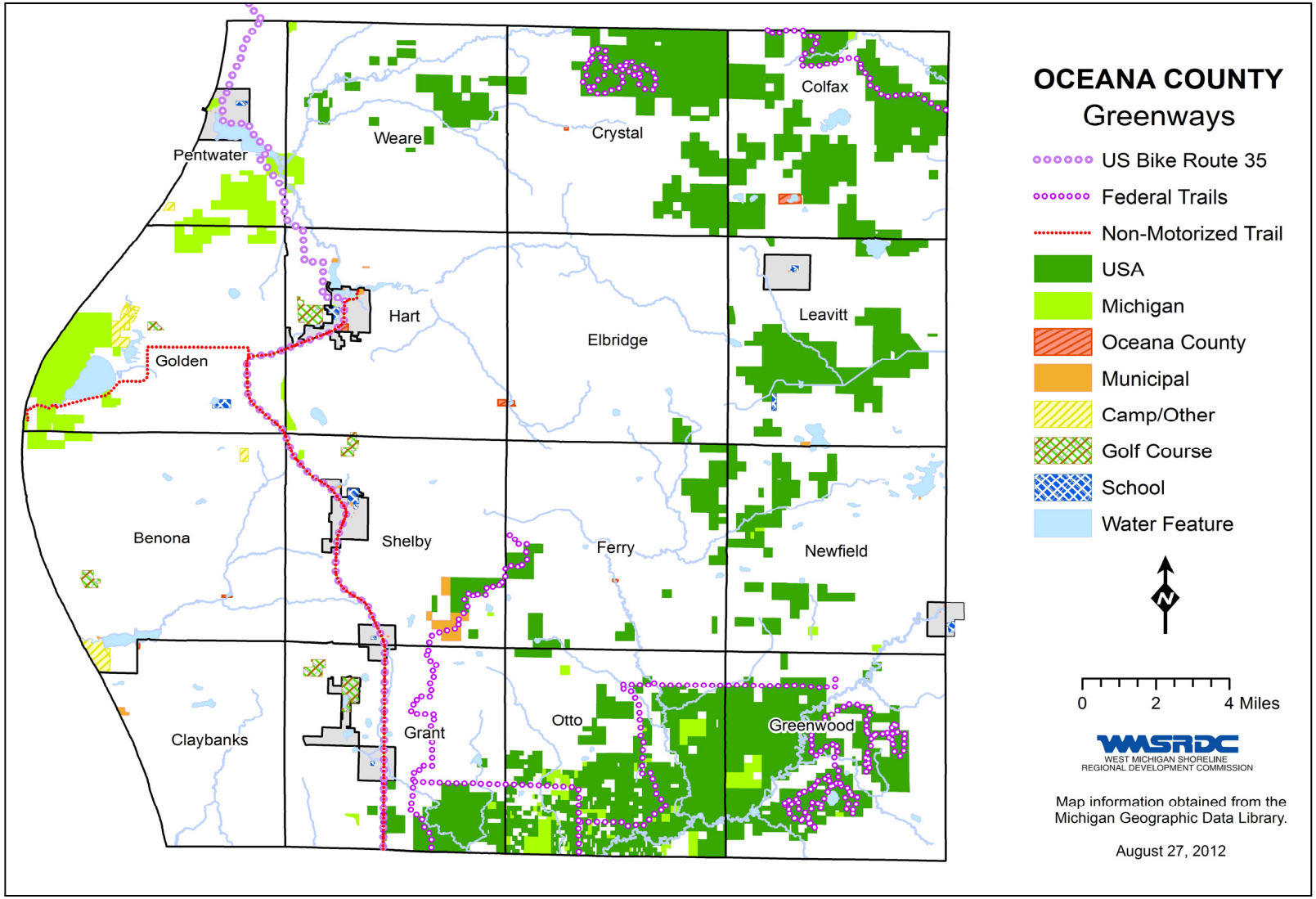
Udell Snowmobile Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Free Soil Township and Meade Township.
Size: ~11 miles (in Mason County)
Description: This snowmobile trail weaves through areas of the Manistee National Forest in Lake, Manistee, and Mason counties. Corresponding MDNR snowmobile trail numbers are 602 and 614.

Big "O" Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Branch Township and Logan Township.
Size: ~22.5 miles (in Mason County)
Description: This is an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail that runs 86 miles through areas of the Manistee National Forest in Lake, Mason, Newaygo, and Oceana counties. This trail is a part of the Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail system which spans 1,200 miles in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

Oceana County Greenways



City of Hart

Hart Area Veterans Memorial

Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: N. State St. at Hart Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.5 acres
Description: This park features a jet airplane from the Korean War and a large handicap-accessible boardwalk.

Hart Commons

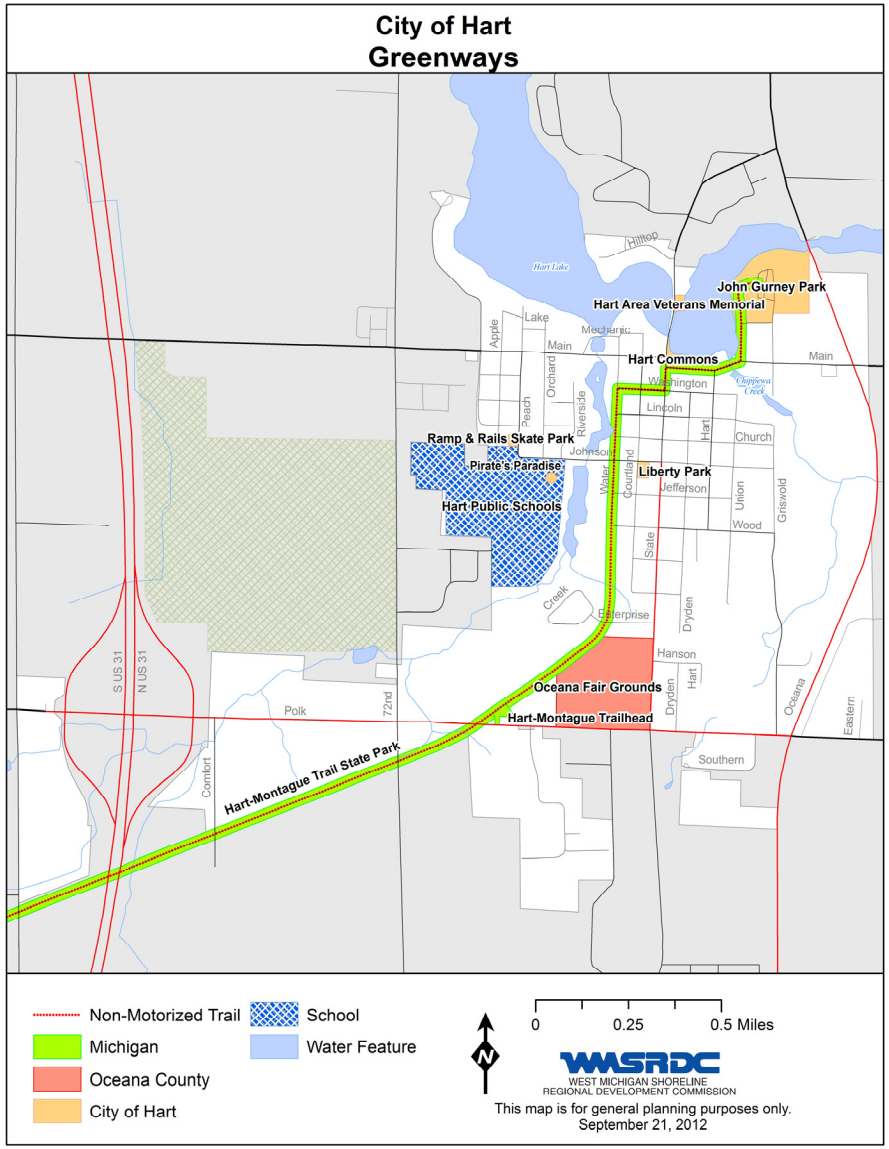
Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: E. Main St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 1 acre
Description: This park features great views of Hart Lake & picnic tables.

John Gurney Park

Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: 300 N. Griswold St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 28 acres
Description: This park is located on Hart Lake and contains an 85-site campground, the Hart-Montague Trail State Park trailhead, a pavilion, bath house, tennis court, baseball fields, basketball court, and a boat launch for canoes, kayaks, and small boats.

Liberty Park

Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: Courtland St. & Johnson St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 0.25 acres
Description: Located behind City Hall, this small park offers playground equipment and child-safe footing material.



Oceana County Fairgrounds

Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: 1025 S. State St.
Type: County Fairgrounds
Size: 38 acres
Description: The Oceana County Fairgrounds annually hosts the Oceana County Fair in late August. The fair is owned and operated by the Oceana County Agricultural Society and includes a midway, food, events, and exhibits. The 4-H and Youth Exhibition programs are organized through the Michigan State University Extension Office in Hart.

Pirate's Paradise

Jurisdiction: Hart Public Schools
Location: Johnson St.
Type: Playground
Size: 1 acre
Description: This is a large play area complete with swings, climbing areas, tunnels, activity centers, and twisty slides. Facilities include a picnic area and adjacent basketball court.

Ramps & Rails Skate Park

Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: Peach St.
Type: Skate Park
Size: ~0.2 acres
Description: This small lot provides 2 small ramps, 2 large ramps, and a number of grinding rails.

Village of Hesperia

Hesperia Sports Park

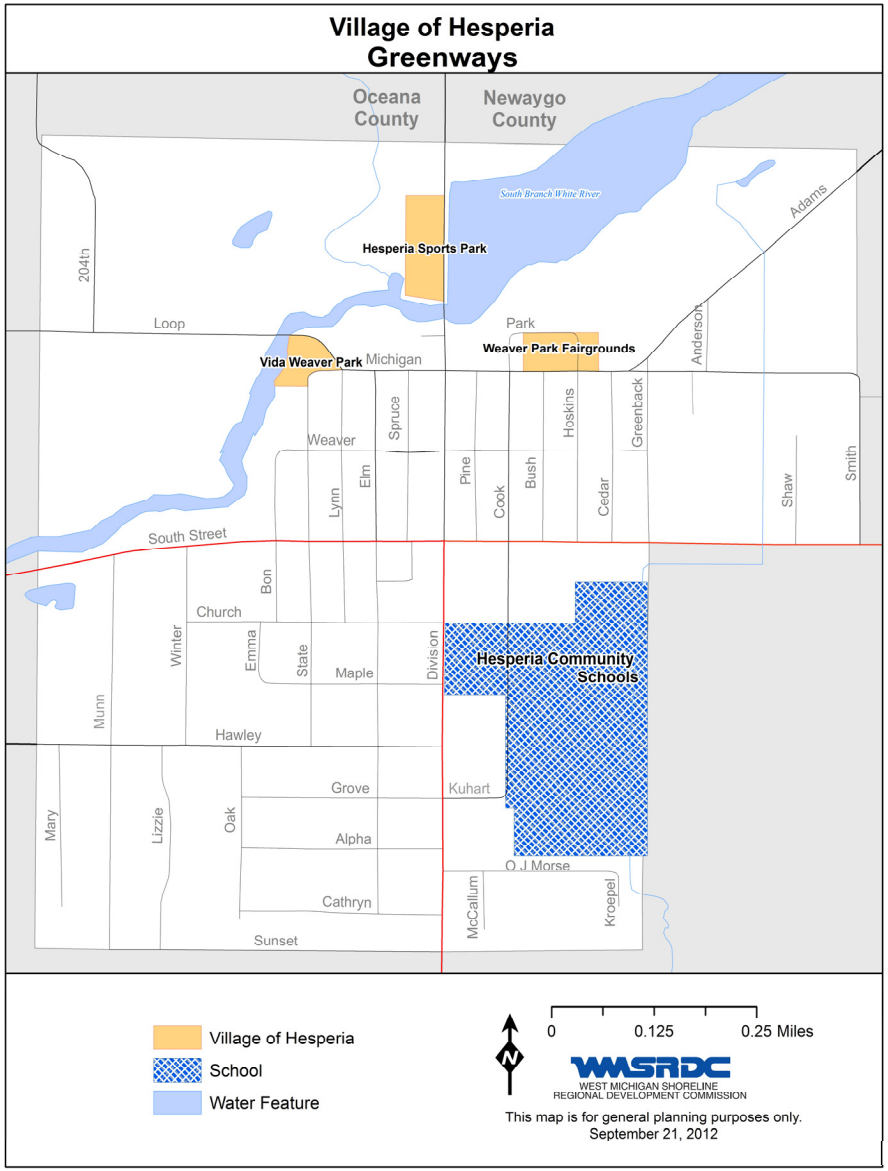
Jurisdiction: Village of Hesperia
Location: Division St. north of White River
Type: Community Park
Size: 4.7 acres
Description: This park features a swimming pond, ball diamonds, and restroom facilities.

Vida Weaver Park

Jurisdiction: Village of Hesperia
Location: West end of Michigan Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~2 acres
Description: This park offers greenspace along the White River and a boat launch.

Weaver Park Fairgrounds

Jurisdiction: Village of Hesperia
Location: East Michigan Street
Type: Community Park
Size: ~6 acres
Description: Pavilion, Picnic Tables, Restrooms, Kitchen Facility, Playground Equipment, Additional Large Building for future Farmers Market and Community Crafts.



Village of New Era

New Era Ball Field

Jurisdiction: Village of New Era
Location: James St. and Oak Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1.5 acres
Description: This park includes a baseball diamond and tennis court.

Village Park

Jurisdiction: Village of New Era
Location: Ray St. at the Hart-Montague Trail
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1 acre
Description: This park is adjacent to the Hart-Montague Trail State Park and has shelters and picnic tables on site.



Village of Pentwater

Bridge Street Park

Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: Bridge St.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1 acre
Description: The park includes parking, benches, and handicap accessibility to the North Pier.

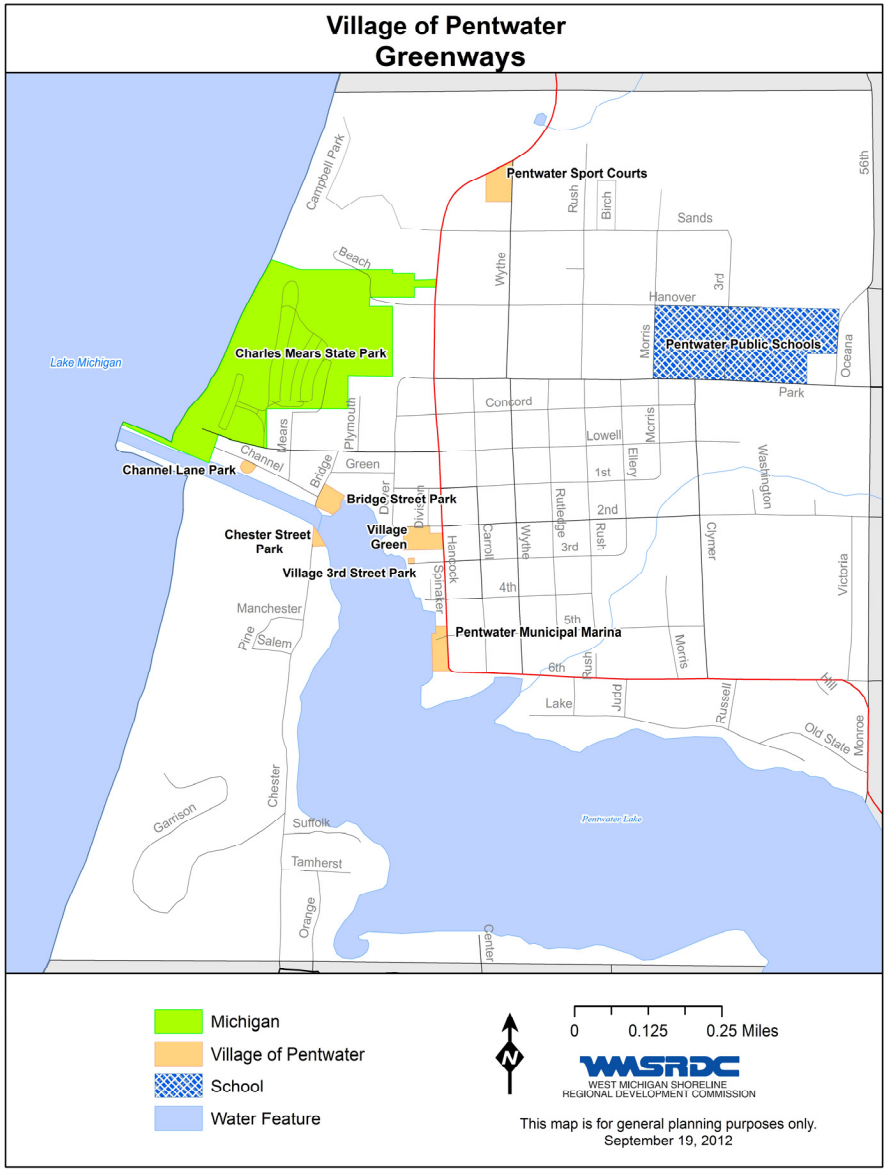
Channel Lane Park

Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: Channel Lane at the Pentwater Lake Channel

Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.25 acre
Description: This park is located along the north channel wall between Pentwater Lake and Lake Michigan. It has a medium-sized parking lot and two pavilions, one which remains open for public use and one which is available for reservation.

Charles Mears State Park

Jurisdiction: State of Michigan
Location: 400 W. Lowell St.
Type: State Park
Size: 129 acres
Description: The park offers activities such as hiking, swimming, snowmobiling, metal detecting, fishing, and the Michigan State Park Explorer Program. Facilities at this park include a 500 feet of sandy beach, beach house, concession/store, lighthouse, picnic shelter, picnic area, playground, sanitation station, electrical service, and modern restrooms. The park offers 189 modern campsites and 1 rental lodge.



Chester Street Park
Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: North end of Chester Street
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.25 acre
Description: The park includes parking, bike racks, restrooms, deck area with benches, and handicap accessibility to the South Pier walkway.

Pentwater Municipal Marina
Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: 519 S. Hancock St.
Type: Marina
Size: ~1.25 acres
Description: The Municipal Marina offers 40 boat slips (21 seasonal, 14 transient, 5 charter fishing), fish cleaning station, 20-space parking lot, picnic gazebo, tables, restrooms, and showers.

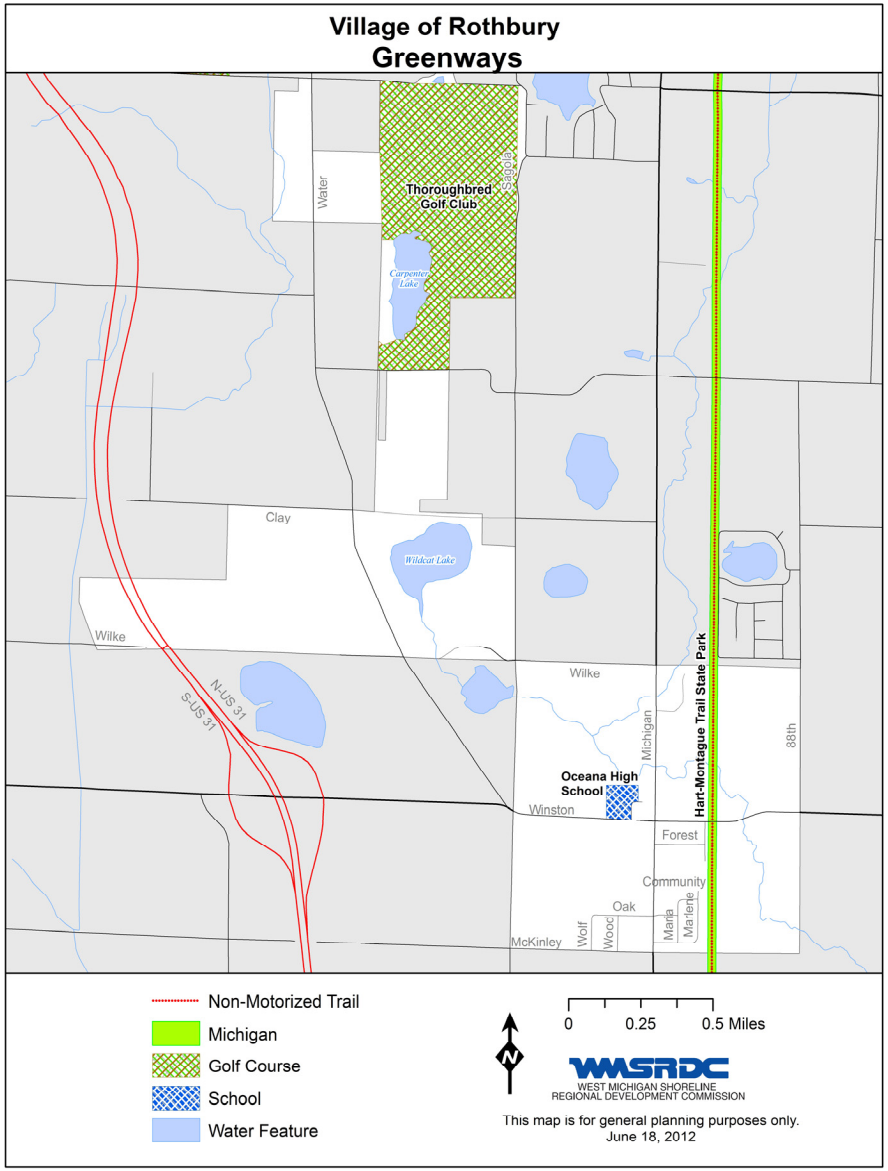
Pentwater Sport Courts
Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: N. Wythe & Hancock
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1.75 acres
Description: This park includes a parking lot, two tennis courts, one basketball court, and picnic tables.

Village Green
Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: Hancock Street in the Downtown
Type: Community Park
Size: 1.5 acres
Description: This park includes a band shell, tables, benches, greenspace, and restrooms in an adjacent building.

Village Third Street Park
Jurisdiction: Village of Pentwater
Location: Third Street
Type: Community Park
Size: 30 feet x 60 feet
Description: The park is located on Pentwater Lake and includes a tie-up for small boats, picnic tables, and benches

Village of Rothbury

No local Greenways Identified. See Oceana County Multi-jurisdictional Greenways.



Village of Shelby

DPW Park

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: 6th St. at the Hart-Montague Trail
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0 .15 acres
Description: Open play area and picnicking

Getty Park

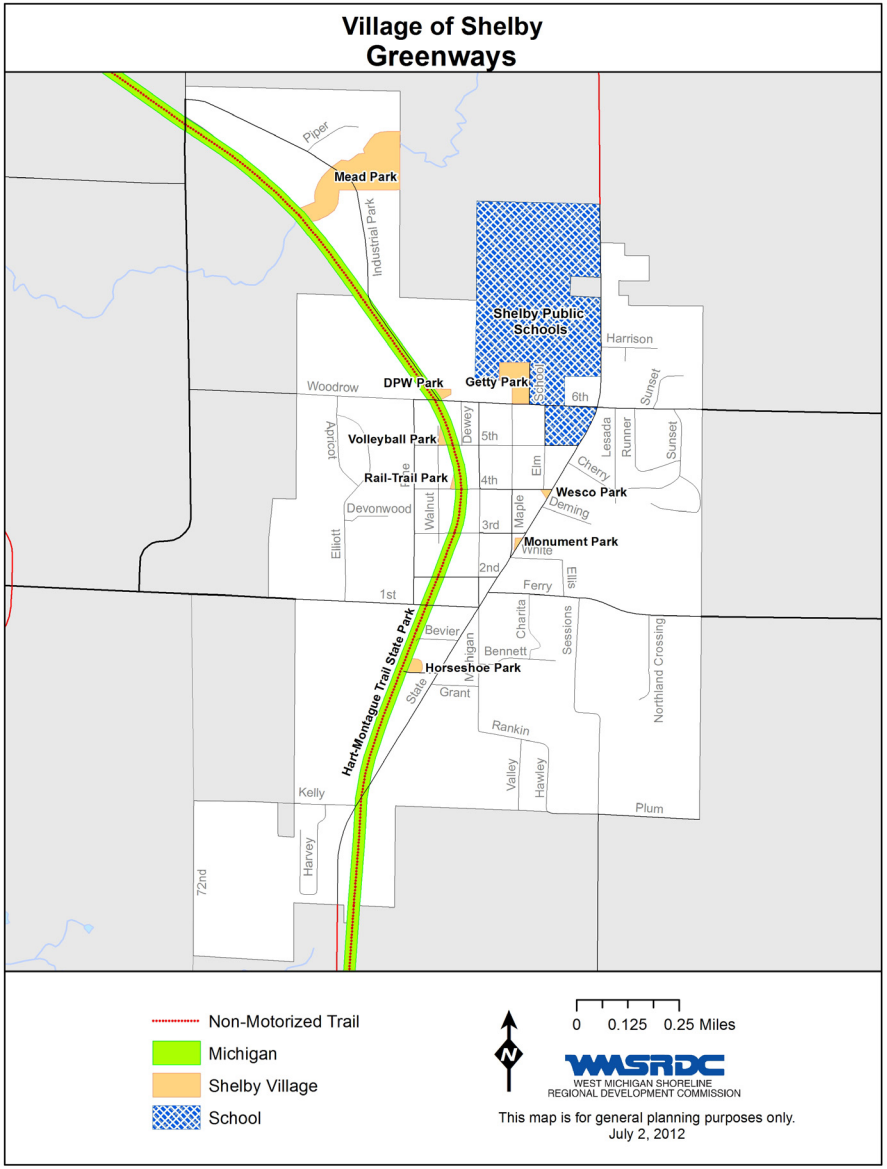
Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: School St. and E. 6th St.
Type: Community Park
Size: ~3.5 acres
Description: This park offers a number of recreation options, including a ball field, tennis courts soccer field, parking, sledding slope, and playground area.

Horseshoe Park

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: Lincoln St. at the Hart-Montague Trail
Type: Community Park
Size: ~0.5 acre
Description: Horseshoe, accessible restrooms, picnic tables, running water.

Mead Park

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: Industrial Park Dr.
Type: Community Park
Size: 15.5 acres
Description: Also known as Mead Field, this park offers a ball field and provides access to Piper Creek. The park has direct access to the Hart-Montague Trail, an open play area, and fishing.



Monument Park (Veterans Memorial Park)

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: State St. at 3rd St.
Type: Community Park
Size: <0.5 acres
Description: This small greenspace offers park benches, picnic tables, and a monument.

Volleyball Park

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: Walnut St. north of 5th St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 0.30 acre
Description: Volleyball net/pit, picnic tables

Wesco Park

Jurisdiction: Shelby Village
Location: State St. at 4th St.
Type: Community Park
Size: < 0.5 acres
Description: This small greenspace offers a picnic table and a shady lawn.

Rail-Trail Park

Jurisdiction: Village of Shelby
Location: Third Street
Type: Community Park
Size: < 1 acre
Description: Pavilion, picnic tables, running water and portable accessible restrooms.

Village of Walkerville

Village Park

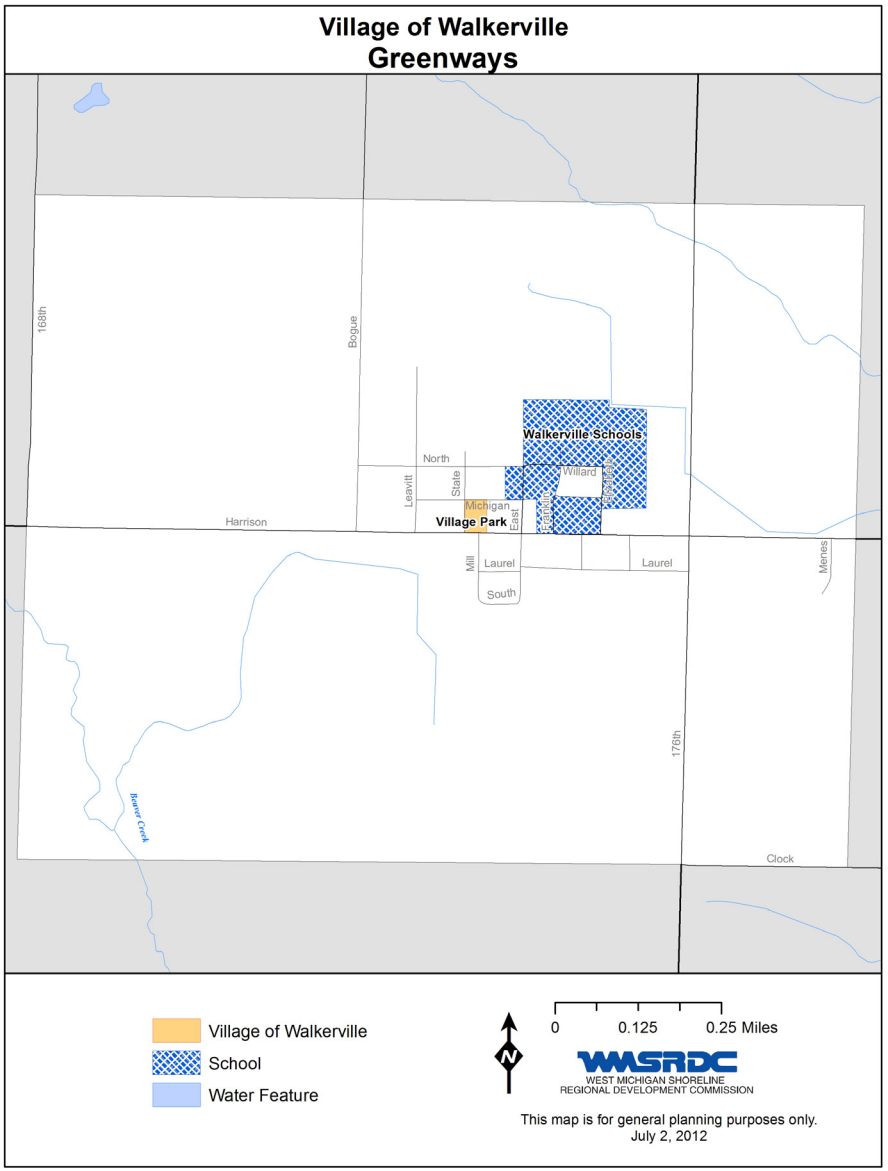
Jurisdiction: Walkerville Village

Location: State St. between Harrison Rd. and Michigan St.

Type: Community Park

Size: ~1 acre

Description: Play equipment, restrooms, picnic area, grills, tennis and basketball courts.



Benona Township

Benona Township Park

Jurisdiction: Benona Township
Location: Scenic Drive at Stony Creek
Type: Community Park
Size: ~2.8 acres
Description: Amenities include picnic tables and charcoal grills, a baseball diamond, playground, marina, portable restrooms, and fishing on Stony Creek.

Benona Township Swimming Beach

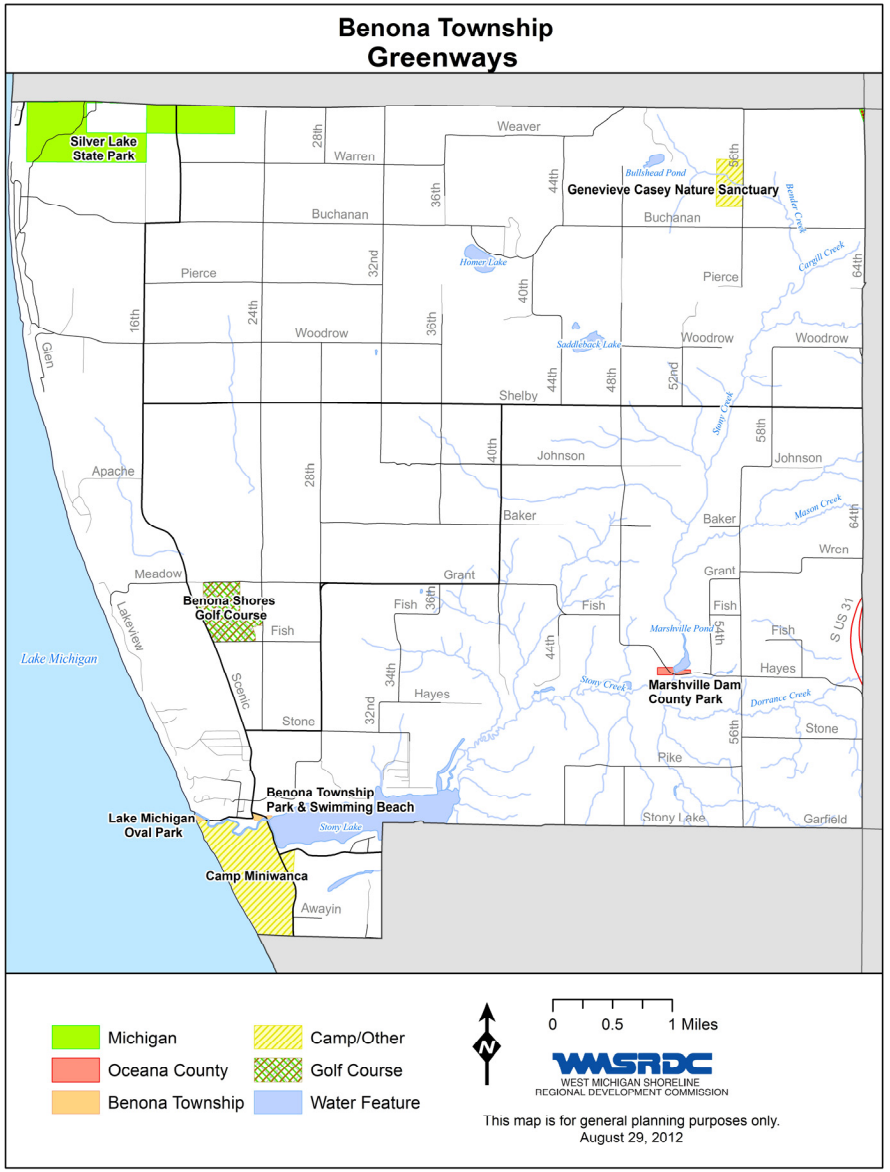
Jurisdiction: Benona Township
Location: Scenic Drive at Stony Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1 acre
Description: Amenities include a swimming dock, parking area, sun area, and portable restrooms.

Genevieve Casey Nature Sanctuary

Jurisdiction: Michigan Nature Association
Location: Garfield Road at Lake Michigan
Type: Nature Preserve
Size: 23 acres
Description: This property offers hiking and nature observation opportunities through its three predominate habitats: a large marsh in the north; groves of pine and cedar in the south; and a low-shrub and lichen barren area in the center.

Lake Michigan "Oval" Park

Jurisdiction: Benona Township
Location: Garfield Road at Lake Michigan
Type: Community Park
Size: 3.4 acres
Description: This park features swimming at Lake Michigan and the Stony Creek outlet, a boat ramp, portable restrooms, river boardwalk, and fishing. This park is handicap accessible.



Marshville Dam County Park

Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: Marshville Dam Rd. at Stony Creek
Type: Community Park
Size: 10 acres
Description: This is an undeveloped park mainly used for fishing and hiking.

Claybanks Township

Claybanks Township Park

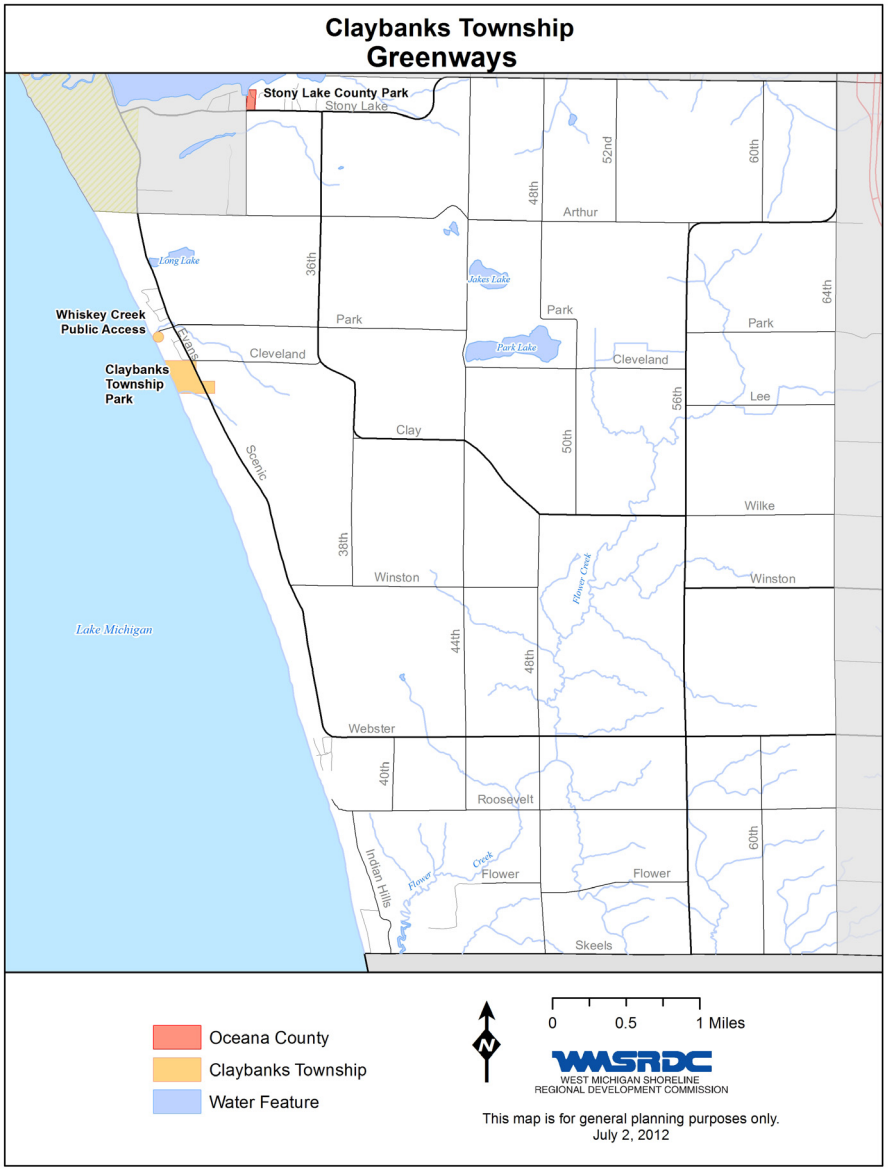
Jurisdiction: Claybanks Township
Location: 6407 S. Scenic Dr., New Era, MI 49446
Type: Community Park
Size: 90 acres
Description: This park features 2,700 feet of Lake Michigan Shoreline, 68 camping sites (42 electric, 26 primative), a Lake Michigan observation deck, a picnic pavilion, picnic tables, a children's play area, a volleyball court, horseshoes, primitive bathrooms, water, and a dump station.

Stony Lake County Park

Jurisdiction: Oceana County Park
Location: Stony Lake Rd. at Stony Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: 5.1 acres
Description: This park provides access and a boat launch to Stony Lake, a picnic area, and portable toilet facilities.

Whiskey Creek Public Access

Jurisdiction: Claybanks Township
Location: Park Rd., south of Stony Lake
Type: Public Access
Size: N/A
Description: This is a small public access to the Lake Michigan beach.



Colfax Township

Black Lake County Park

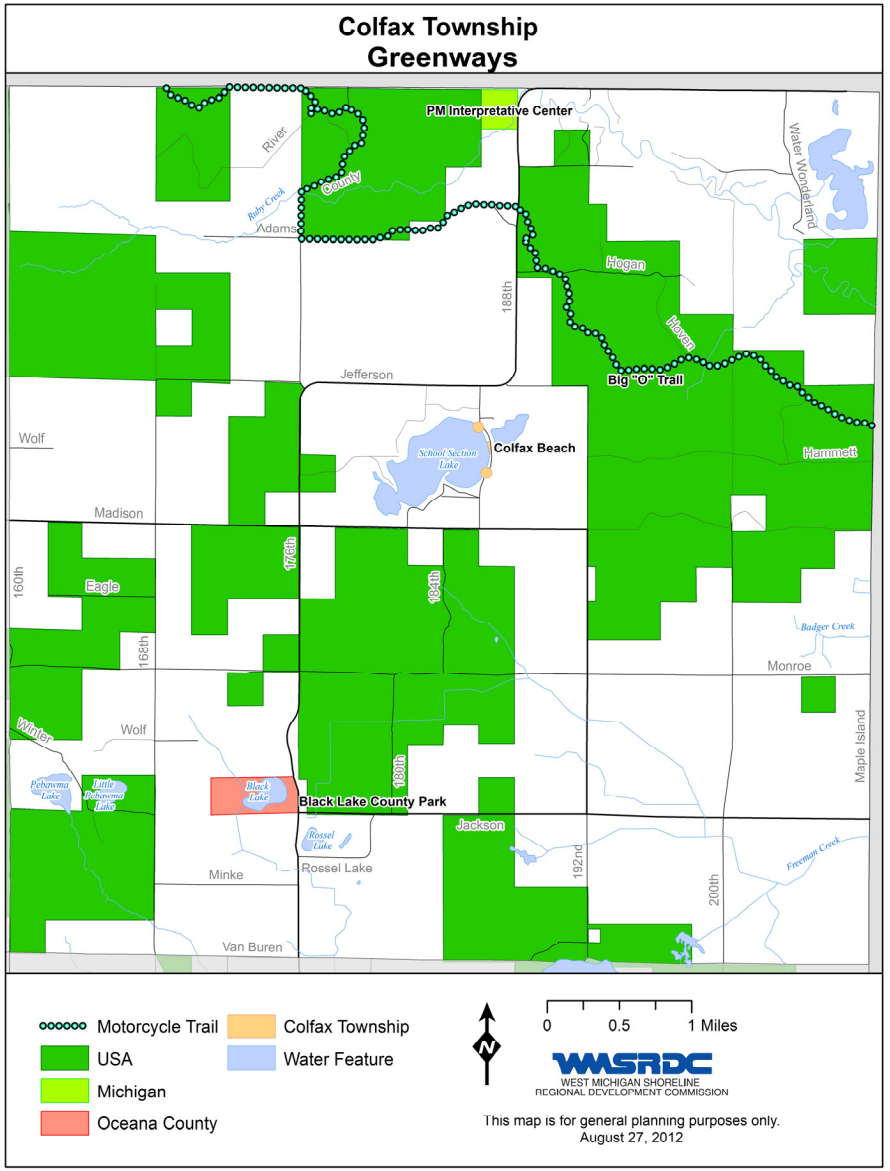
Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: N. 176th Ave. at Black Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: 100 acres
Description: This park features 15 campsites (11 electric, 4 rustic), all equipped with picnic table and fire ring. Other amenities include swimming, fishing, and a playground.

Colfax Beach

Jurisdiction: Colfax Township
Location: 168th Ave at School Section Lake
Type: Community Park
Size: ~1 acre
Description: This site features a public swimming beach and picnic tables, with two boating access sites nearby.

Pere Marquette River Restoration Project Interpretative Center

Jurisdiction: Ruby Creek Conservation Club
Location: 188th and Ruby Creek (Just south of Washington Rd.)
Type: Community Park
Size: 40 Acres
Description: The Interpretive Center is located on 40 acres on 188th Ave just South of Washington Rd, on the banks of Ruby Creek. The Center has an open air pavilion, outdoor privy, trail, and a small pond for catch and release fishing. There is also a flowing well for potable water, thanks to a grant from the Great Lakes Energy Company.



Big "O" Motorcycle Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Northeast corner of Colfax Township, just south and west of the Pere Marquette River
Type: Motorcycle Trail
Size: ~8 Miles (within Colfax Township)
Description: This is an Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) trail that runs 86 miles through areas of the Manistee National Forest in Lake, Mason, Newaygo, and Oceana counties. This trail is a part of the Michigan Cross Country Cycle Trail system which spans 1,200 miles in Michigan's Lower Peninsula.

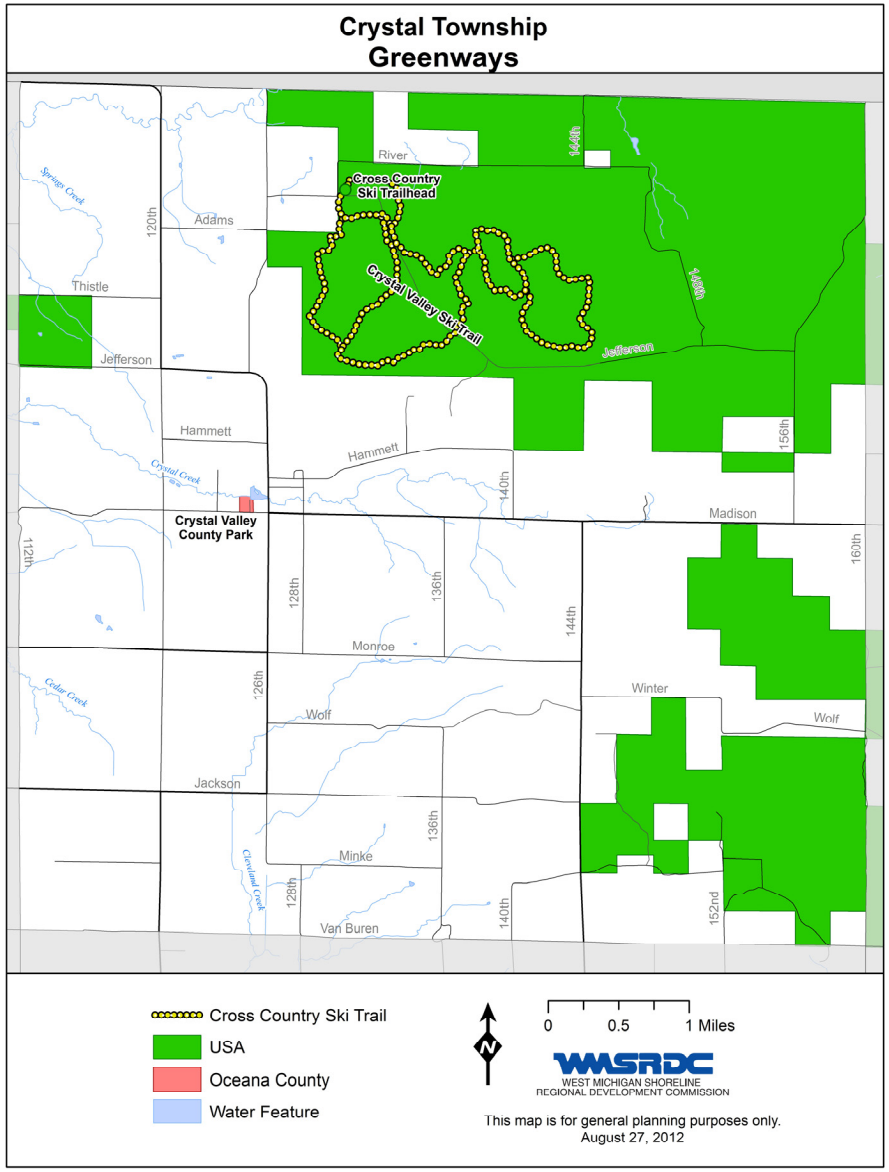
Crystal Township

Crystal Valley Cross Country Ski Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: E. River Rd. east of 126th Ave.
Type: Cross Country Ski Trail
Size: 4 miles
Description: This trail winds through a portion of the Huron-Manistee National Forest.

Crystal Valley County Park

Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: Madison Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 8.7 acres
Description: This park provides a baseball/soccer field, tennis/basketball court, picnic area with covered pavilion, fishing deck on Crystal Pond, water well, and portable restrooms.



Elbridge Township

Gales Pond County Park

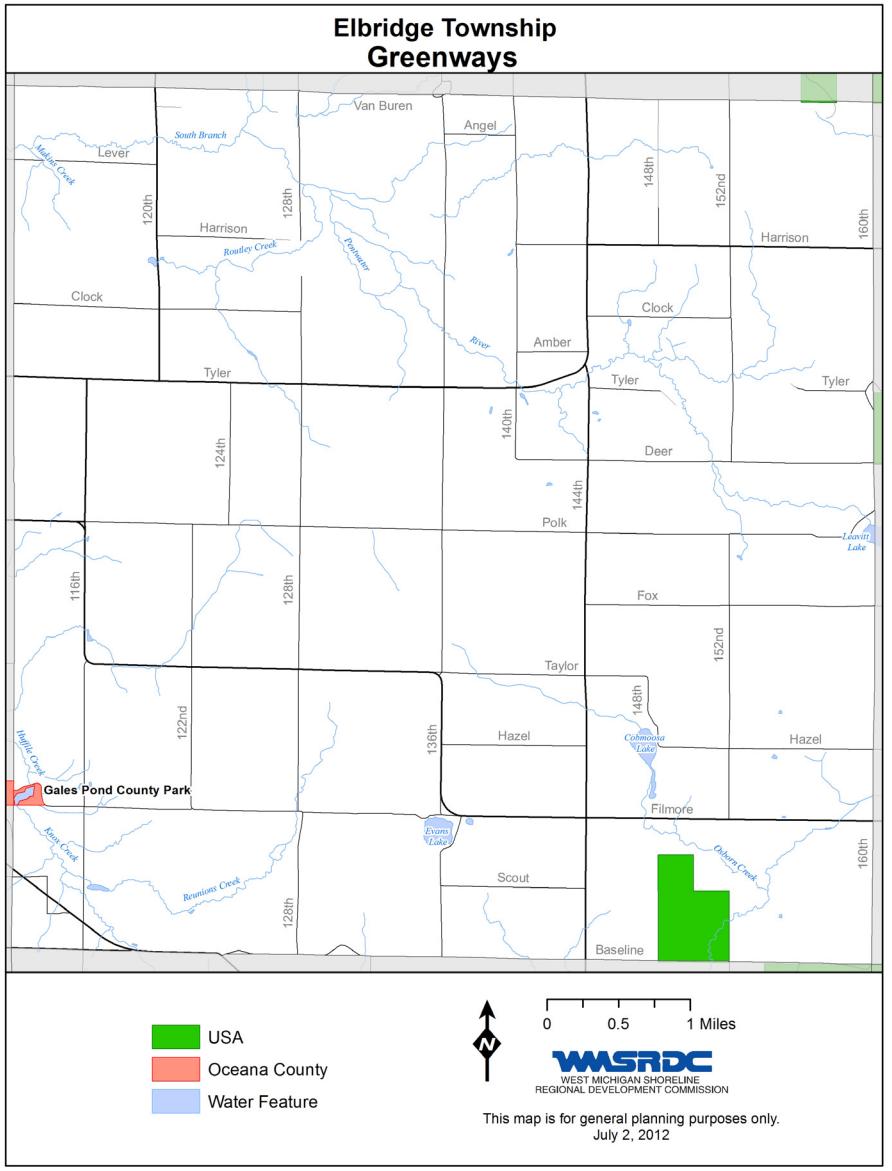
Jurisdiction: Oceana County

Location: 112th Ave. at Gales Pond

Type: Community Park

Size: 18 acres

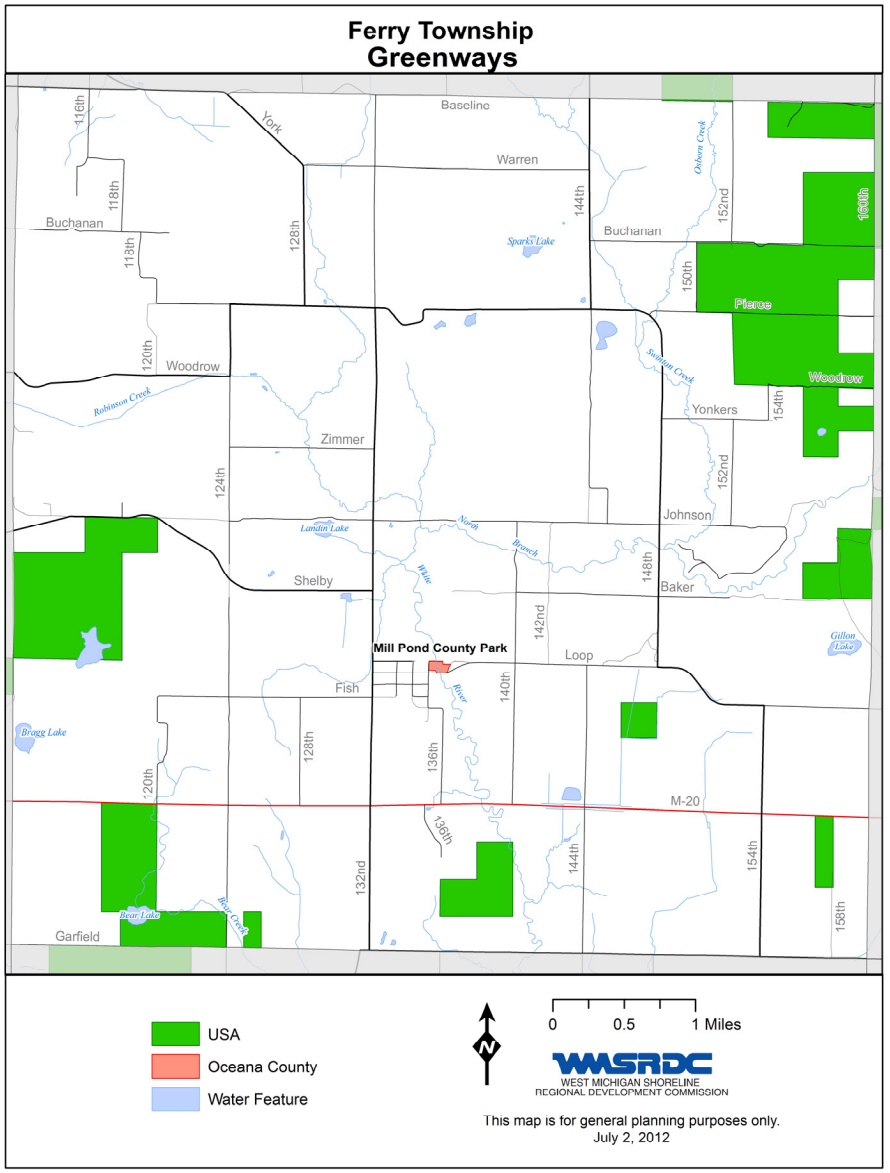
Description: This park has a 2,500 foot handicap-accessible boardwalk that extends across the pond and links up with nature trails along the back portion of the park.



Ferry Township

Mill Pond County Park

Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: Loop Rd. at White River
Type: Community Park
Size: 8 acres
Description: Amenities include access to the White River, picnic area with tables and grills, and portable restrooms.



Golden Township

Cedar Point County Park

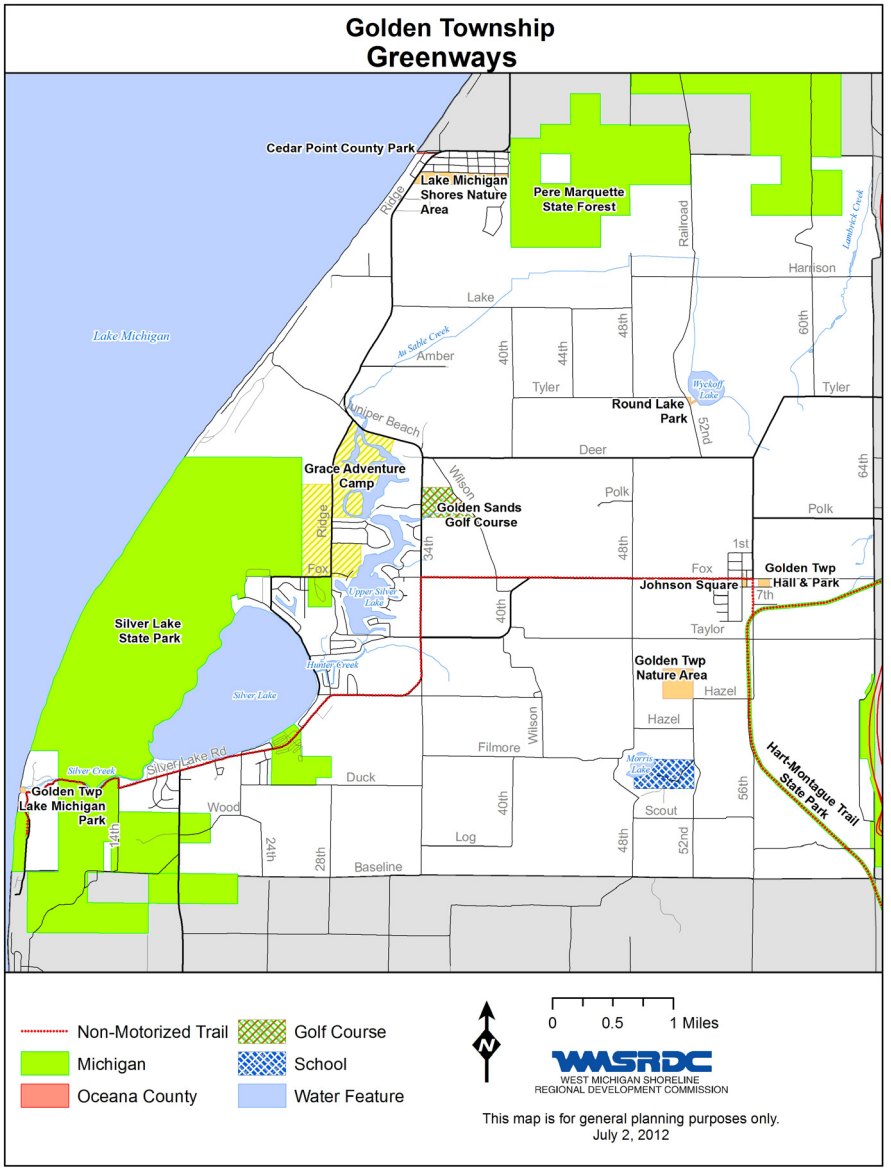
Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: Ridge Rd. near the Pentwater Township border
Type: Community Park
Size: 2.5 acres
Description: This park provides steps to access 133 feet of sandy Lake Michigan beach, paved parking, and portable restrooms.

Golden Township Lake Michigan Park

Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: Lighthouse Dr. at Silver Creek and Lake Michigan
Type: Community Park
Size: 1.5
Description: This park features a paved parking lot with handicap spaces, public beach, picnic area, and portable restrooms.

Golden Township Hall & Park

Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: 5527 W. Fox Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 3.25 acres
Description: This former school playground offers a basketball court, baseball field, and an unimproved play area for soccer, football, and other outdoor recreational uses.



Golden Township Nature Area

Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: Northwest corner of 52nd Ave. and Hazel Rd.
Type: Nature Area
Size: 40 acres
Description: An undeveloped natural resource property consisting of pine and hardwood woodlots that has potential for nature trail development and day use activities.

Johnson Square Park

Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: Fox Rd. between Center St. and Morrison St.
Type: Community Park
Size: 0.75 acres
Description: This park contains a gazebo used for community concerts and weddings, a walkway with decorative lighting, and open area used for an Arts & Crafts Show each summer.

Lake Michigan Shores Nature Area

Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: Between N. Ridge Rd and Birch Ave.
Type: Nature Area
Size: 45 acres
Description: This is an undeveloped natural resource property of woods and wetlands offering nature observation and limited access to Lake Michigan.

Round Lake Park

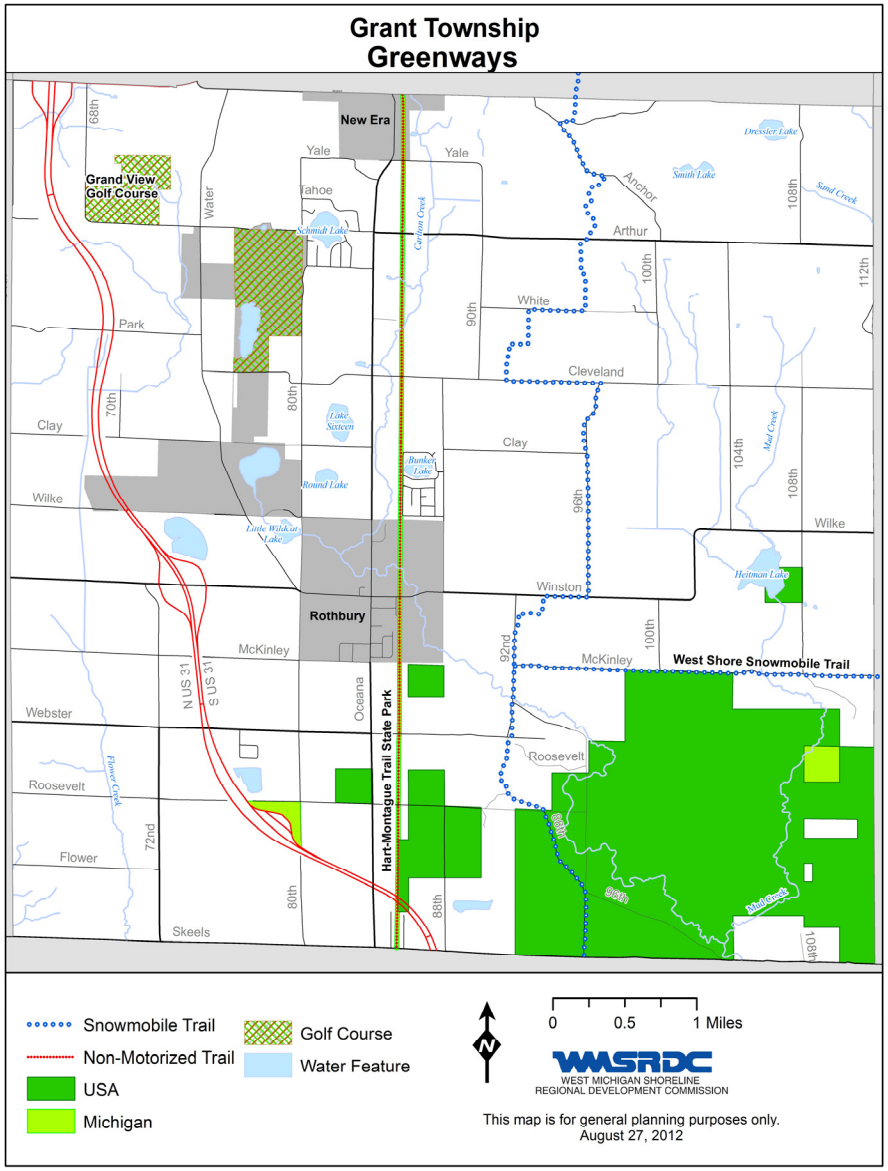
Jurisdiction: Golden Township
Location: 52nd Ave. at Tyler Rd.
Type: Community Park
Size: 2 acres
Description: Round Lake Park is an undeveloped public access to a small inland fishing lake. It has an area for parking, rustic family picnicking and a launch area for small boats.

Silver Lake State Park

Jurisdiction: State of Michigan
Location: 9679 W. State Park Rd.
Type: State Park
Size: 2,936 acres
Description: The park offers activities such as hiking, swimming, metal detecting, hunting, fishing, and the Michigan State Park Explorer Program. Facilities at this park include a beach, beach house, boat launch, lighthouse, ORV Trails/Routes, ORV Scramble Area, picnic shelter, picnic area, sanitation station, electrical service, and modern restrooms. The park offers 200 modern campsites.

Grant Township

No local Greenways Identified. See Oceana County Multi-jurisdictional Greenways.



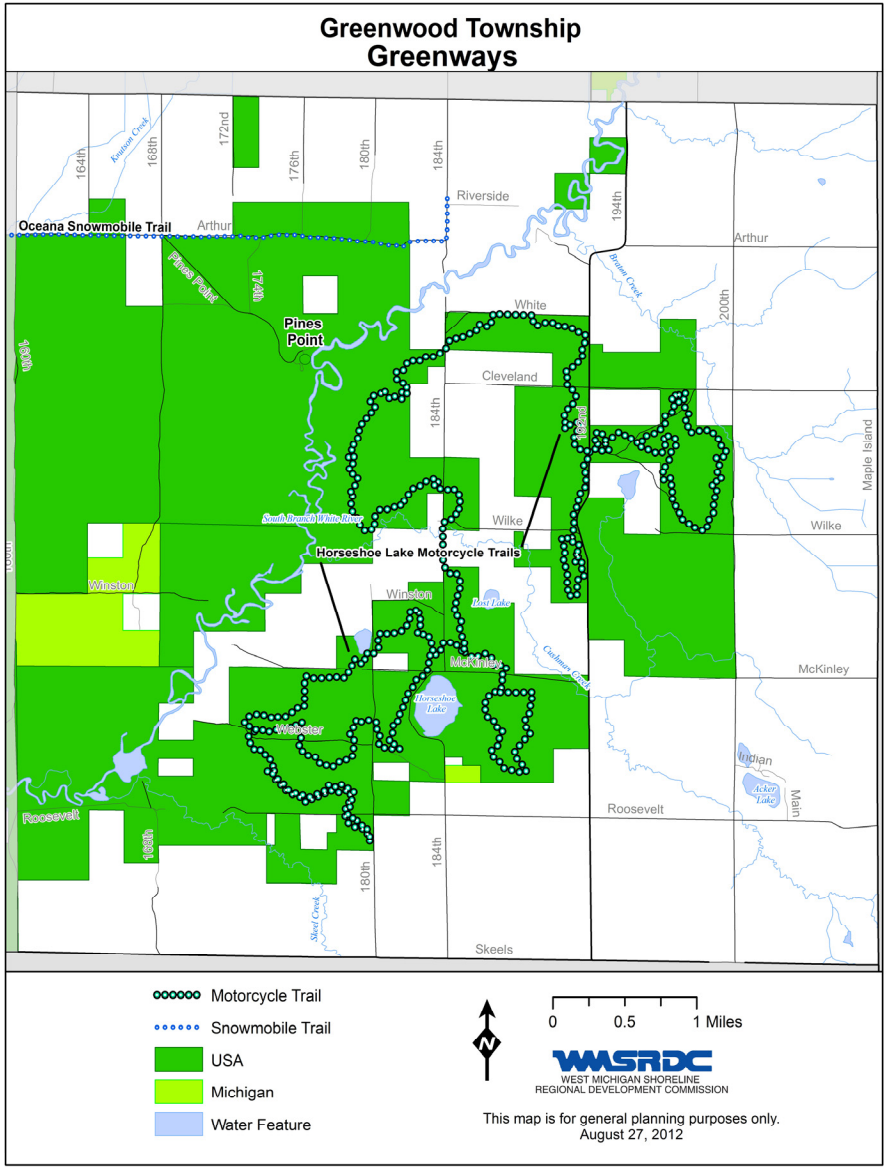
Greenwood Township

Horseshoe Lake Motorcycle Trails

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Within Manistee National Forest in Greenwood Township
Type: Motorcycle Trail
Size: 24.1 miles
Description: These trails consist of two motorcycle loops, with a trailhead located just north of Horseshoe Lake.

Pines Point

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Pines Point Rd., East of 168th Ave.
Type: National Forest Campground
Size: N/A
Description: This campground contains 29 primitive campsites and 5 group sites. There is access to the White River via carry-in boat launch. Parking is available for 40 vehicles.



Hart Township

Doolittle County Park

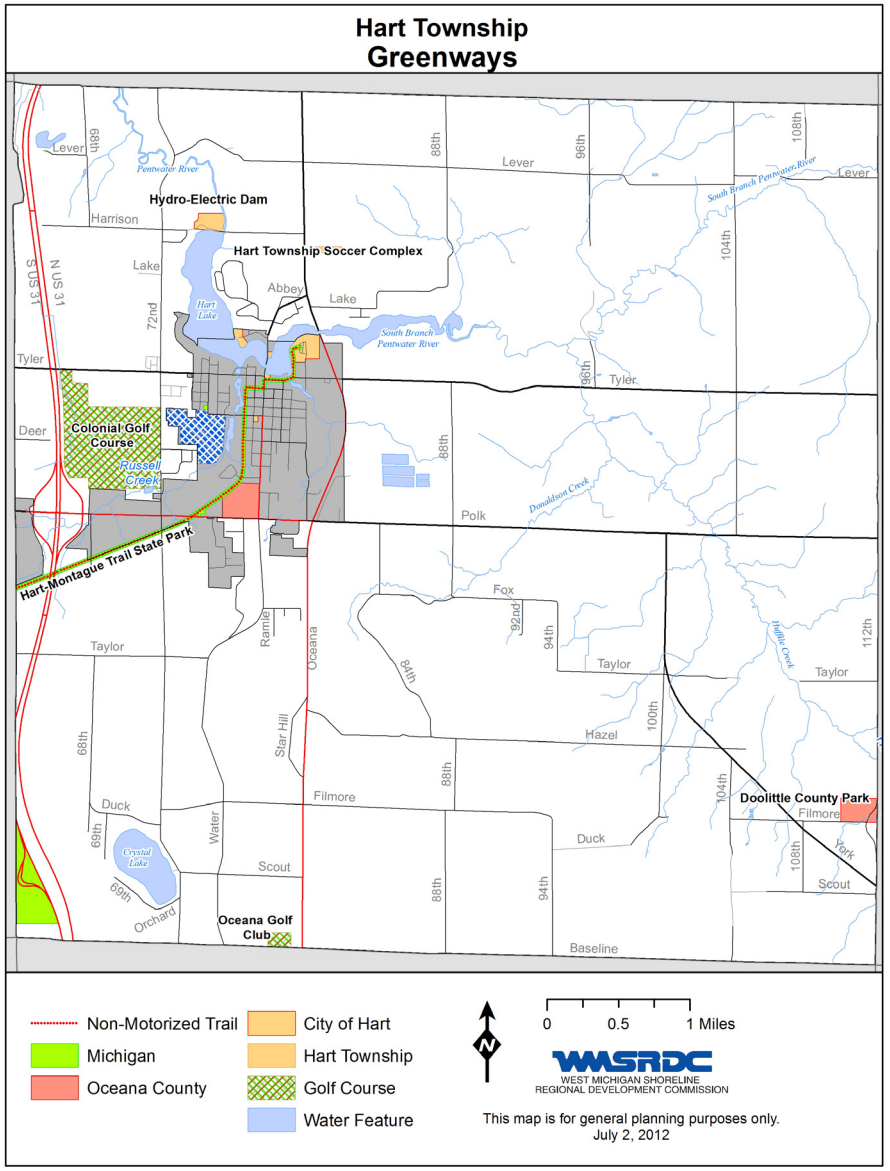
Jurisdiction: Oceana County
Location: Fillmore Rd. and 112th Ave.
Type: Community Park
Size: 40 acres
Description: Located near Gales Pond County Park, this park is mainly used for hiking and nature trails.

Hart Hydroelectric Dam

Jurisdiction: City of Hart
Location: Harrison Rd. at Hart Lake
Type: Hydroelectric Dam
Size: 30 acres
Description: This property offers public greenspace with picnic tables and fishing access on Hart Lake.

Hart Township Soccer Complex

Jurisdiction: Hart Township
Location: 3986 N. Oceana Dr.
Type: Community Park
Size: 10 acres
Description: This park is located behind the District #10 Health Department and Oceana County EMS, and provides a number of soccer fields.



Leavitt Township

Leavitt Township Property (Campbell Lake Boat Launch)

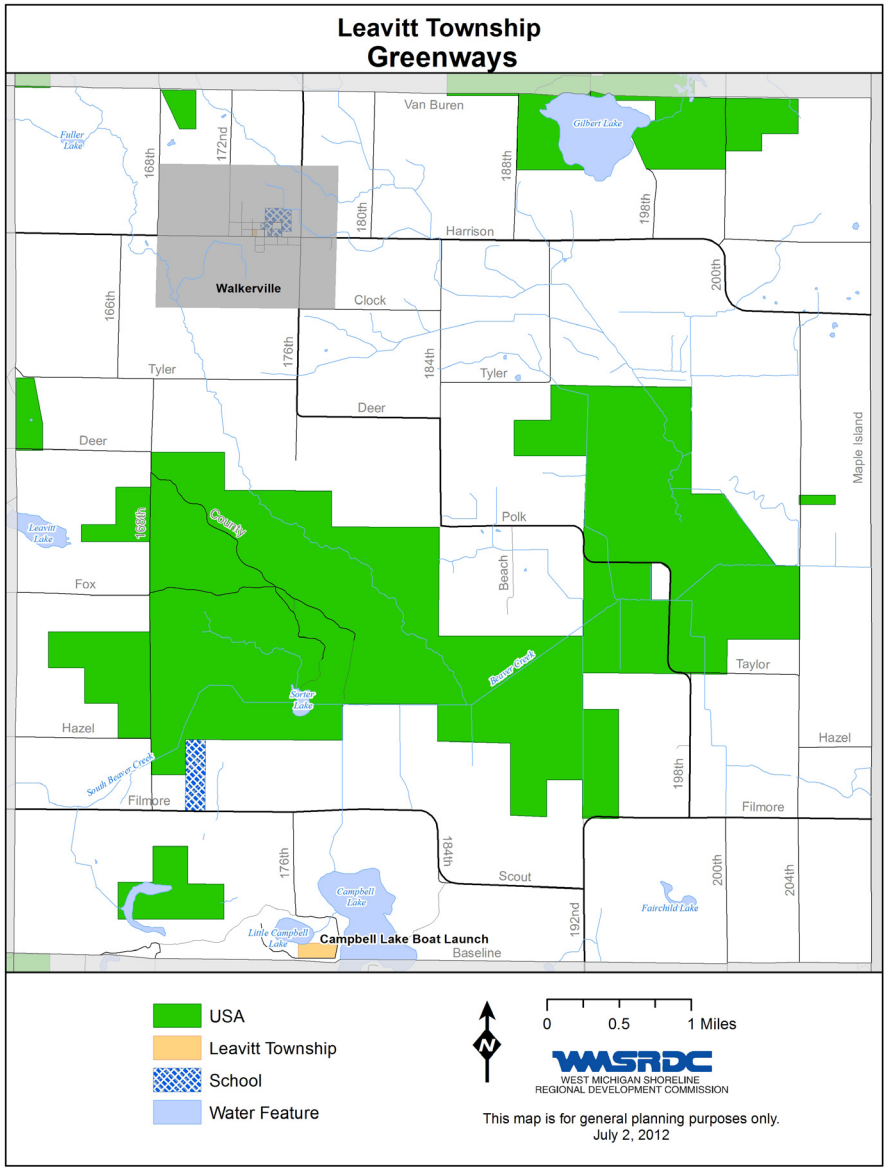
Jurisdiction: Leavitt Township

Location: Peavey St. and Beech St.

Type: Township Property

Size: 21 acres

Description: This is township-owned property that includes a gravel-surfaced boat launch on Campbell Lake.



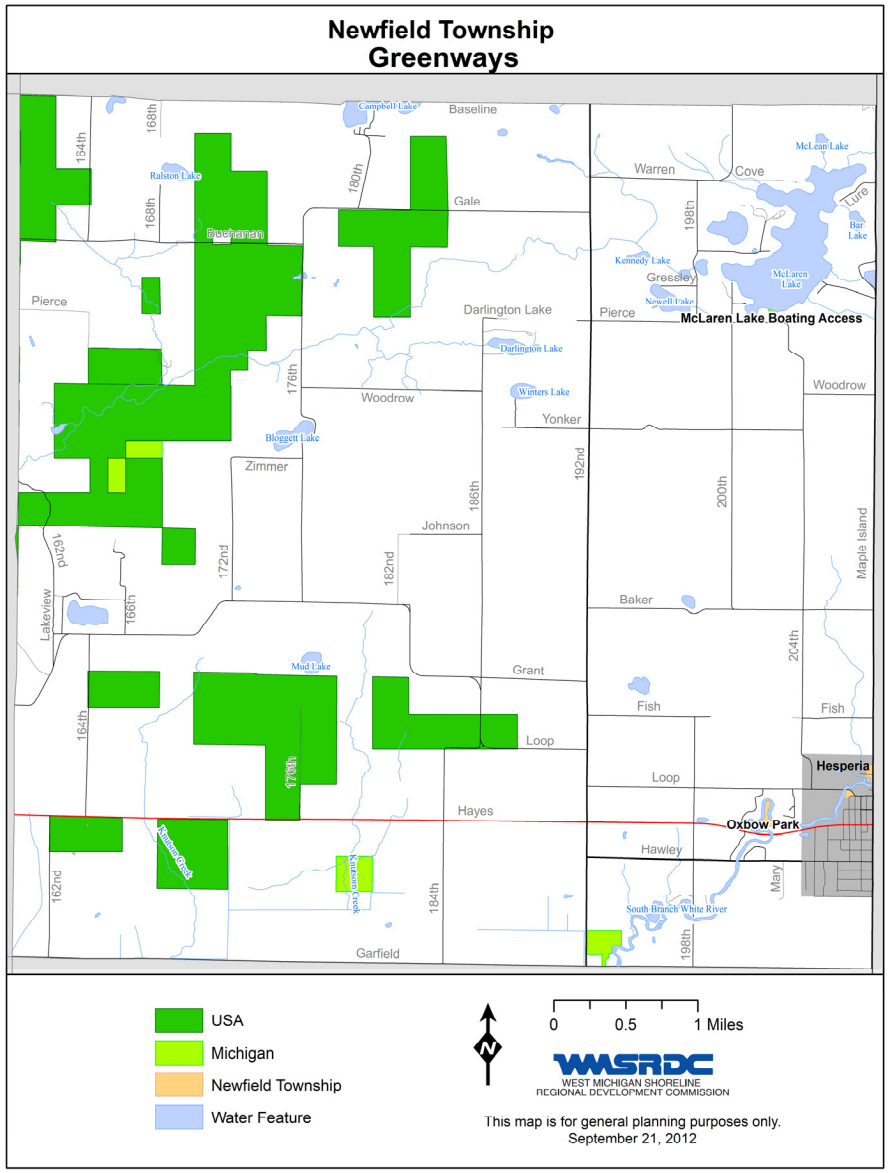
Newfield Township

McLaren Lake Boating Access

Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: Pierce Road
Type: Boat Launch
Size: 2 acres
Description: This site includes a hard-surfaced launch ramp, a courtesy pier, toilets, and 20 parking spaces.

Oxbow Park

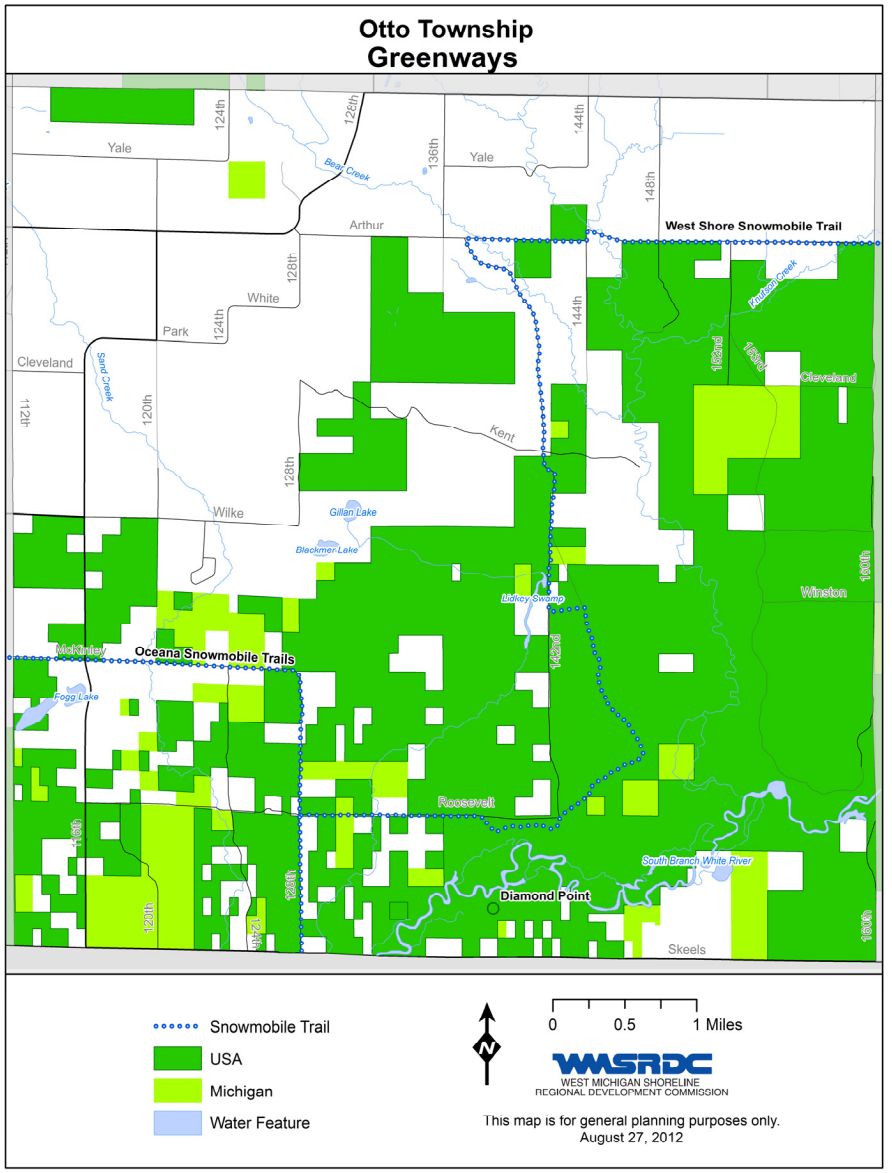
Jurisdiction: Newfield Township
Location: M-20 at the White River
Type: Community Park
Size: ~8 acres
Description: This park features a pavilion with tables, park benches, access to the White River, and a handicap accessible fishing boardwalk.



Otto Township

Diamond Point

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: FR 9304 (north end of Kops Rd.)
Type: National Forest Campground
Size: N/A
Description: This campground contains 2 primitive campsites and features access to the White River via carry-in boat launch. Parking is available for eight vehicles.



Pentwater Township

Lake Breeze Nature Preserve

Jurisdiction: Land Conservancy of West Michigan
Location: Lake Breeze Dr.
Type: Nature Preserve
Size: 35 acres
Description: Adjacent to a 65-acre Land Conservancy of West Michigan conservation easement, this preserve protects a coastal forest of white birch, white pines, hemlocks, beech trees, maples, and oaks, and the watersheds of two creeks. Public access is allowed on the nature preserve, but not on the conservation easement.

Pentwater Pathways Trail

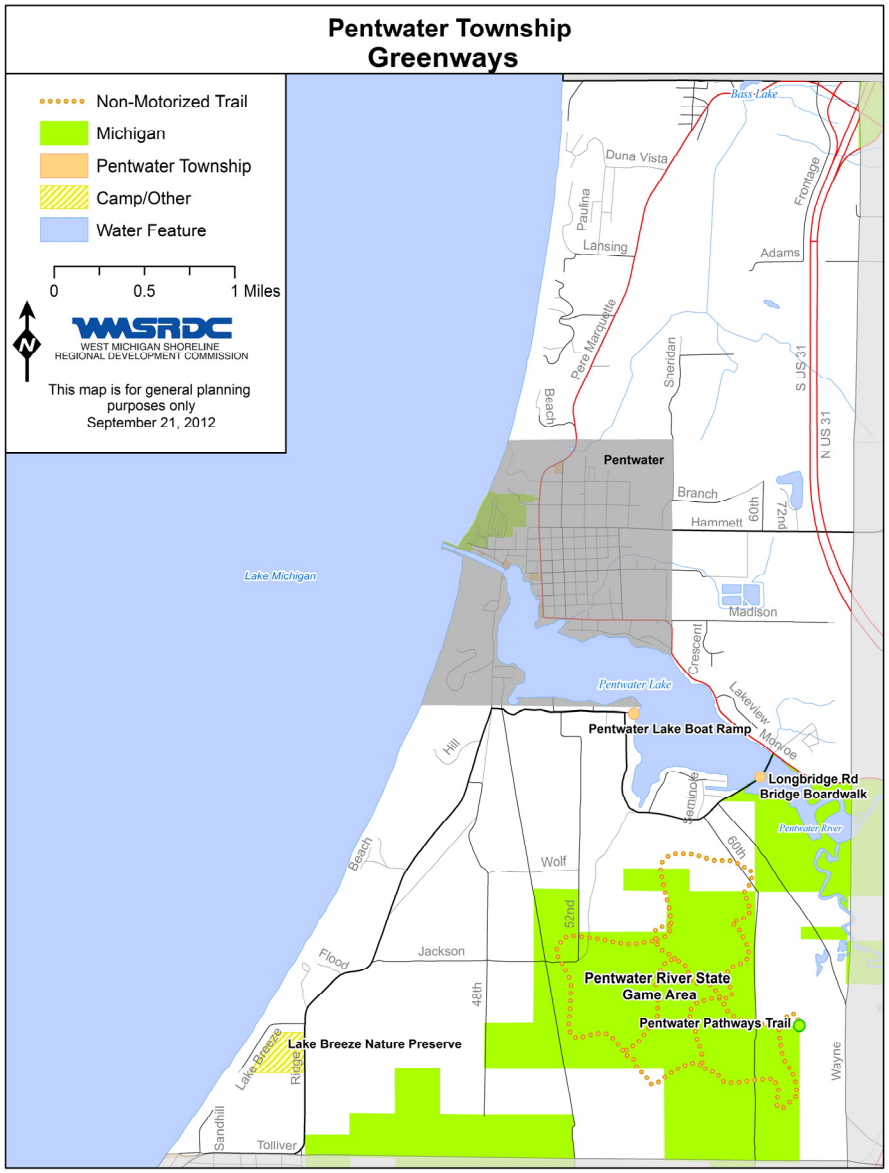
Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Location: Wayne Rd., south of Longbridge Rd.
Type: Pere Marquette State Forest
Size: N/A
Description: This state land contains about 7.2 miles of marked hiking and cross-country skiing trails.

Pentwater Township Boat Launch

Jurisdiction: Pentwater Township
Location: Longbridge Rd. at Pentwater Lake
Type: Public boat launch
Size: 70 feet
Description: This site contains a paved boat ramp, dock, and parking space for 5-6 vehicles.

Longbridge Road Bridge Boardwalk

Jurisdiction: Pentwater Township
Location: Longbridge Road
Type: Community Park
Size: 400 feet
Description: This park has parking, a barrier free boardwalk, and fishing.



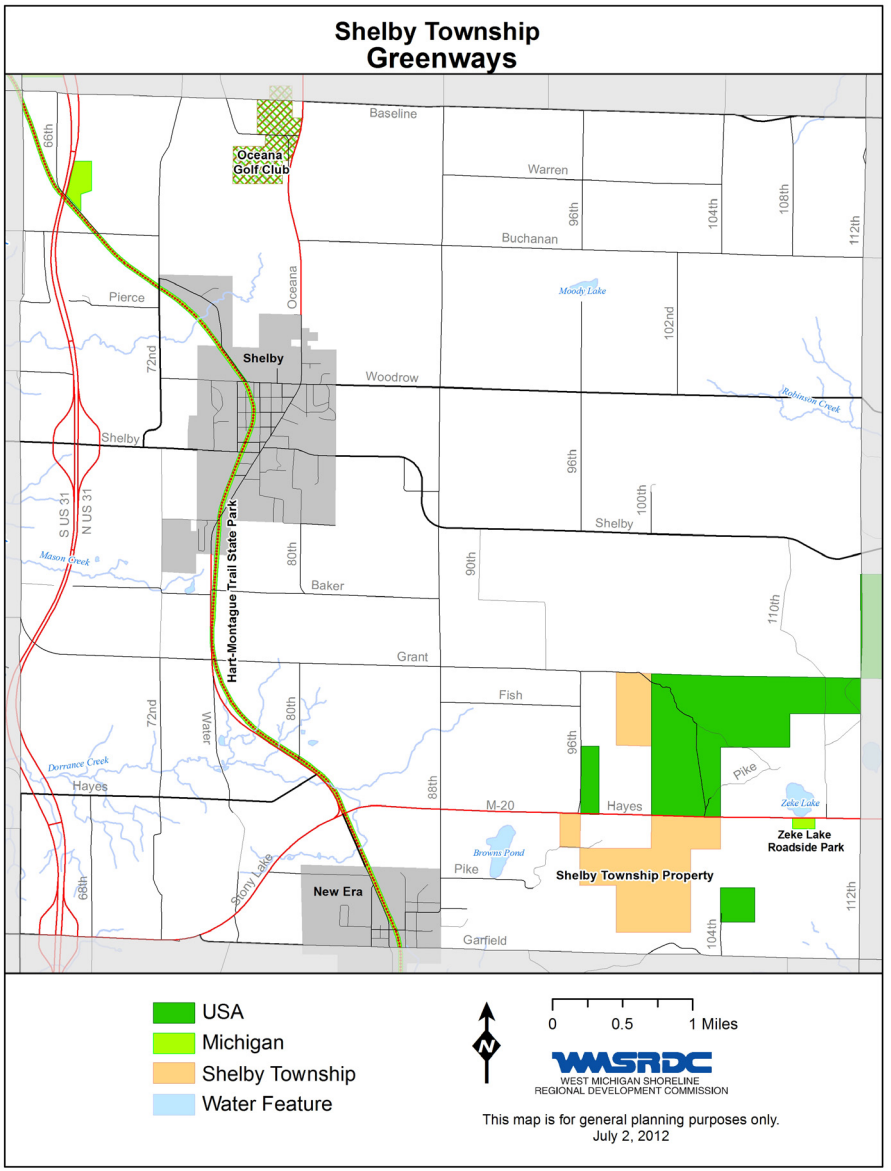
Shelby Township

Shelby Township Property

Jurisdiction: Shelby Township
Location: Grant Rd. East of 96th & M-20/Hayes & Grant Rd.
Type: Township property
Size: ~380 acres
Description: This property is township-owned land that is open to the public.

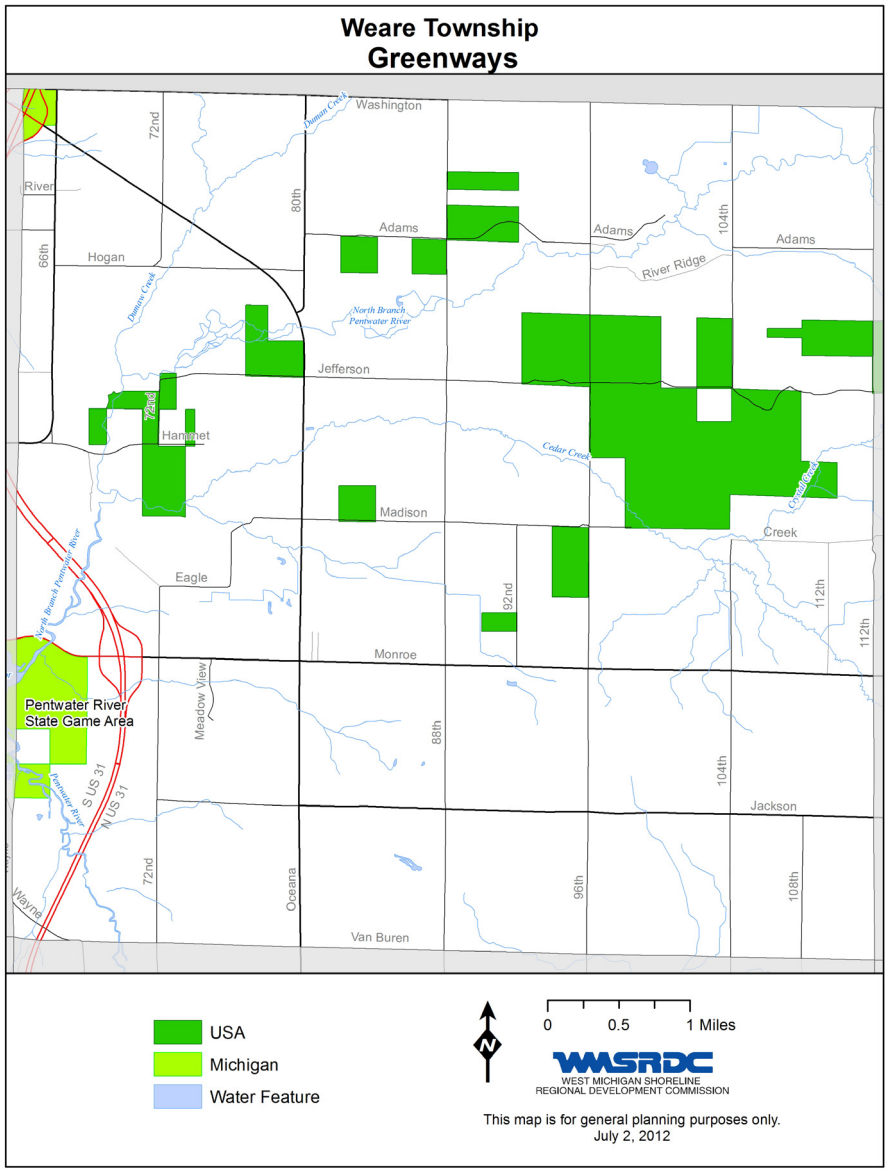
Zeke Lake Roadside Park

Jurisdiction: Michigan Department of Transportation
Location: M-20 near Zeke Lake
Type: Roadside rest area
Size: 12.3 acres
Description: This property is township-owned land that is open to the public.



Weare Township

No local greenways identified. See Oceana County Multi-jurisdictional Greenways.



Multi-Jurisdictional

Hart-Montague Trail State Park

Jurisdiction: State of Michigan
Location: City of Hart, Hart Township, Golden Township, Village of Shelby, Shelby Township, Village of New Era, Grant Township, and Village of Rothbury.
Type: Linear Bike Trail
Size: 22 miles
Description: The unique asphalt trail meanders 22 miles through several communities in the counties of Muskegon and Oceana. It is wheelchair accessible and can be used for non-motorized uses such as walking, horseback riding, biking, cross country skiing, in-line skating, and wildlife watching. In the winter, the trail is open for snowmobiling.

Oceana Snowmobile Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Otto Township and Shelby Township
Type: Snowmobile Trail
Size: 9 miles
Description: This snowmobile trail segment features a trailhead at the eastern terminus in Greenwood Township and connects to the West Shore Snowmobile Trail to the west in Otto Township. The corresponding Michigan DNR trail number is 194.

Pentwater River State Game Area

Jurisdiction: State of Michigan
Location: Pentwater Township, Weare Township
Type: State Wildlife Area
Size: 2,415 acres
Description: This state land contains a public boat launch on the North Branch of the Pentwater River at Monroe Road. Also featured is the Pentwater River Barn historic site.

US Bike Route 35

Jurisdiction: American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials
Location: Pentwater Township, Village of Pentwater, Weare Township, Hart Township, City of Hart, Golden Township, Village of Shelby, Shelby Township, Village of New Era, Grant Township, and Village of Rothbury.
Type: Bike route
Size: ~500 miles
Description: This is a designated bike route that runs from Sault Ste. Marie, Canada, through Michigan to Indiana generally following the Lake Michigan shoreline. It is planned to extend southward to US Bike Route 45 at the Mississippi River in Mississippi or Louisiana.

West Shore Snowmobile Trail

Jurisdiction: United States Forest Service
Location: Grant Township, Otto Township, and Shelby Township.
Type: Snowmobile trail
Size: 110 miles (Oceana and Muskegon counties)
Description: This trail is located on National Forest System roads, two-tracks and county roads, and private land. Many hills and curves make the trail exciting and may provide opportunities to see wildlife in their natural state. Trails are numbers and confidence markers are posted along the trail. They are reflectorized orange diamond shaped markers. Directional signing is posted along the trail for towns, food, staging (parking) areas, and gas. Corresponding Michigan DNR trail numbers for this trail are 19 and 196.

CHAPTER V: LINKING BLUEWAYS AND GREENWAYS

Linkages Overview

This chapter identifies "linkage corridors" which represent existing and potential connections between blueways and greenways. Several elements were considered during the creation of the corridors, and are further discussed below. It is important to note once again that these connections should be planned for through cooperative efforts on a regional scale, and implemented at the local jurisdictional level.

One of the elements used to identify the linkage corridors was the Natural Connections, a Vision of Green Infrastructure in West Michigan. This process, conducted in 2004, provided a multi-county approach to identifying a 25-year vision for the permanent protection of open space in West Michigan. Even though the Natural Connections Vision was primarily focused on Green Infrastructure on a regional level, it provided a valuable starting point in the identification of important greenways in The West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Phase I (Muskegon County). It also provided a template to follow for Phase II (Mason and Oceana Counties). The Vision identified regionally significant natural areas, which allowed this study to identify and inventory locally important greenspaces at county and municipal levels with greater detail.

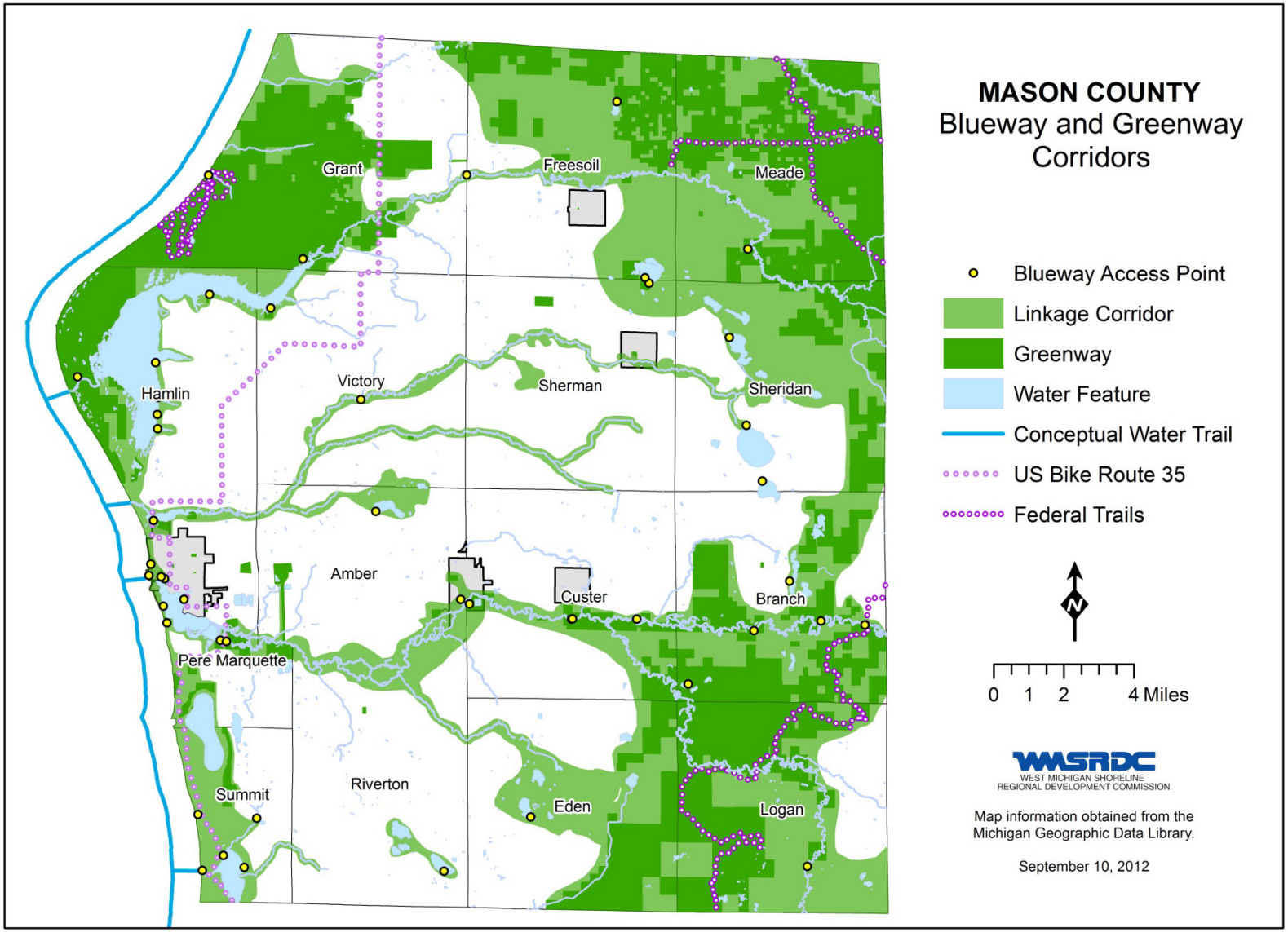
The most significant element considered in the determination of the linkage corridors was the inventory of locally significant blueways and greenways compiled at the onset of this study. These inventories are discussed in Chapter III and Chapter IV of this document. The compilation and subsequent mapping of blueways and greenways inventories reveals a comprehensive view of all public access blueways and greenways in Mason and Oceana Counties. This includes parks or properties owned by federal, state, county, municipal, and private institutions, public blueways access points, as well as golf courses and schools.

A water trail on the Michigan shoreline of Lake Michigan and its tributaries is currently being developed through a collaboration of local governments, the State of Michigan, kayaking/canoeing groups, and regional agencies. Once completed the trail will enable sea kayakers and canoeists to travel along the shores of Lake Michigan and have campsites along the way to overnight at. The Michigan trail will link-up with trails in Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin where similar efforts are underway.

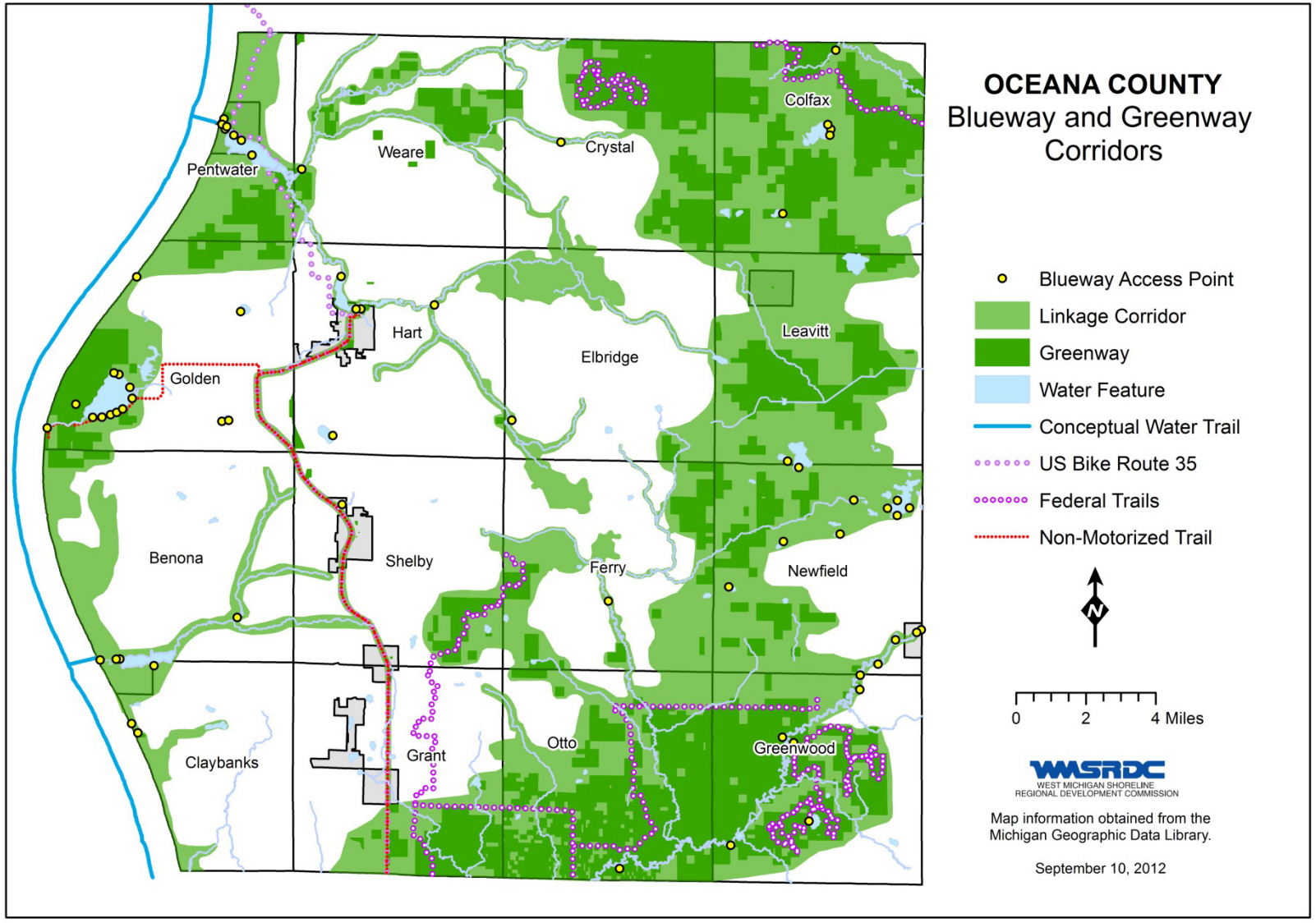
Identification of Potential Linkages

The map below identifies recommended linkage corridors which were based on information obtained through previous works, the Blueways and Greenways inventories, and an analysis of aerial photos taken in 2004. They were carefully drawn to make logical connections between blueways and greenways, water features, and significant areas of natural vegetation. It is important to note that the linkage corridors are recommendations, and that more detailed research should be conducted at the city, village, and township level when moving forward with implementation.

Blueways and Greenways Linkages Mason County



Blueways and Greenways Linkages Oceana County



CHAPTER VI: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Public Input Process

On October 26, 2011, WMSRDC staff hosted a West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Workshop. The workshop was geared toward local government officials and environmental/watershed groups. The successful workshop focused on the West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan (Phase II). The purpose of the workshop was to ask attendees to comment on preliminary blueway and greenway public access maps of Mason and Oceana Counties. Participants were also asked to identify potential areas and opportunities to create linkages between these public access points. The feedback gathered during the workshop assisted in the accuracy of the maps and establishment of the linkage corridors.

Another method the Regional Commission used to provide information and encourage feedback during the development of the plan is the Commission Communications, a bi-monthly newsletter published by the WMSRDC as well as the Commission's e-newsletter. Several issues of the Commission Communications during the duration of the project contained an article updating the readers and providing contact information to those with additional questions. The Commission Communications has a distribution list of approximately 500 within West Michigan and across the country. The newsletter is also available on the WMSRDC website in order to have a broader outreach.

During the summer of 2012, WMSRDC staff mailed individual packages to all 45 local units of government within Mason and Oceana Counties, as well as the Counties. The packages included a cover letter explaining the project, in addition to the contents of the package; maps of the community identifying both blueways and greenways within the jurisdiction; and a brief survey to be completed. Each community was asked to review the maps and make corrections and/or additions as necessary. They were then asked to return the maps and completed survey to the Regional Commission to be incorporated into the Blueways and Greenways Plan. WMSRDC staff was able to gain valuable input through this process.

Recommendations: Goals and Opportunities

Goal: *Preserve and protect existing public access to blueways and greenways in West Michigan*.

Local government officials have the opportunity and responsibility to provide public access to the community's natural areas. West Michigan residents believe the area's abundant natural resources and its proximity to water are the region's most valuable assets. In addition, the protection of these areas are of equal importance to the region's residents.

Goal: *Strive to expand and enhance the blueways and greenways in West Michigan.*

Where possible, local governments and community leaders are encouraged to seize opportunities for community partnerships and grant funding where existing blueway and greenway public access can be either expanded through the purchase or donation of land, or enhanced through public access and aesthetic improvements.

Goal: *Continuously seek opportunities and utilize available tools to create additional public recreational opportunities.*

There are many tools available to local governments and interested land owners seeking opportunities to add and improve the region's blueway and greenway public access. A list of available tools is provided in this chapter under the section titled Tools for Implementation. It is recommended that local government officials remain informed regarding new opportunities and tools as they become available, and to build and maintain partnerships with regional planning, private consulting, watershed, trails and conservation organizations for assistance with grant proposals.

Goal: *Identify and work towards the implementation of linking existing and future blueways and greenways in West Michigan.*

This document is a region-wide perspective regarding public access to blueways and greenways. As stated earlier in the document, each local jurisdiction is responsible for land use decisions within their respective community. Individual communities are encouraged to use this document to guide more detailed local planning (i.e. Community Recreation Plan) and action plans for implementation of activities that provide for more localized linkages.

Goal: *Work cooperatively across jurisdictional boundaries and with appropriate environmental agencies for the betterment of blueways and greenways throughout the region.*

Even though each community is responsible for their own land use decision making, it is important for local governments to work cooperatively amongst themselves to provide for blueway and greenway linkages across jurisdictional boundaries. Therefore, it is encouraged that local officials continually foster existing and seek new opportunities to collaborate regionally, including partnerships with regional planning, watershed, trails and conservation organizations.

Goal: *Continuously educate the citizens in addition to community leaders in the region about the value and benefit of the blueways and greenways.*

The average citizen, although they may value the local recreational opportunities available within the area, may not understand the valuable benefits provided by the green infrastructure. Local governments, universities, conservation

organizations, watershed groups, and community leaders are encouraged to continually provide educational opportunities to the public and area citizens.

Goal: *Develop policies and regulations to address the quantity and quality of water resources.*

The quality of surface waters used for recreation depend on the capabilities of communities to manage the quality and the quantity of stormwater runoff, and to control sources of non-point pollution from a wide variety of land uses. In West Michigan, Stormwater Committees coordinate an effort to minimize stormwater pollution. The County Road Commissions and the Drain Commissioners have responsibilities to maintain roads and drainage systems, while protecting water quality. An expanded, region-wide, watershed approach is needed to effectively address stormwater pollution, and communities are encouraged to voluntarily join this effort.

Goal: *Link natural resource protection with development to reduce the loss of important natural resources and open spaces in urban and rural areas.*

It is important that projects for the acquisition and enhancement of public outdoor recreation lands include the preservation of natural areas. Strategic site design can also link any surrounding isolated or fragmented natural habitats to create larger natural systems. Often, lands located at the headwaters of lakes and streams are not valued for their natural resource benefits. Most of these areas contained wetlands that functioned to control water runoff, before being developed. As part of the built environment, these areas drain the land by way of ditches, storm drains and soil/groundwater infiltration. The development of recreational amenities can incorporate rain gardens and other design techniques that prevent accelerated amounts of stormwater runoff from entering ditches and storm drains. Communities are encouraged to seek expert ecological advice when reviewing site development designs, and to develop natural features inventories that identify these critical areas.

Goal: *Foster increased environmental sensitivity and voluntary stewardship through public-private partnerships, federal-state-local cooperation, and public education and outreach.*

The first step in the process of environmental and natural resources protection is to fully understand nature and the ecosystem concept, including how the interactions of the natural landscape, water features and the built environment result in the quality of communities and the environment. Communities are encouraged to become informed and educated by joining local watershed groups. Watershed groups actively discuss these concepts and provide information about real-world preservation and restoration needs. Active participation at local watershed group planning meetings is also an effective way for communities to build partnerships with local, state and federal agencies. These partnerships are

critical when it comes to successful project and proposal development and the acquisition of grant funds to implement them.

Goal: *Protect the watersheds and shorelines of Lake Michigan and the inland lakes of the west Michigan region.*

The Lake Michigan Lakewide Management Plan (LaMP) and the LaMP Forum, provide an updated management plan for Lake Michigan, and its surrounding watersheds. Communities are encouraged to review this document, located at http://www.epa.gov/lakemich/. In the region, watershed groups, regional planning organizations, universities, commercial and recreational port landowners and companies actively participate in Lake Michigan Forum projects. To view projects go to the Lake Michigan Watershed Academy website at http://lakemichiganacademy.org/. Local governments are also encouraged to become involved with the watershed group or groups that best fit the needs of their community. For information about local watershed efforts and for contact information, see the West Michigan Watershed Partners Inventory (WMSRDC, 2008) on the WMSRDC web site at http://www.wmsrdc.org/Download/Watershed%20Partners%20Inventory.pdf.

Tools for Implementation

Local governments already have many of the tools and resources they need to preserve and protect the natural resources within their own communities. These tools and resources lie within the land use and zoning authority given to each jurisdiction under state law. Several of the 45 local units of government in Mason and Oceana Counties currently exercise their right to plan and zone. It is important for these jurisdictions, utilizing their land use and zoning authority, to incorporate green infrastructure planning into other existing planning. These planning activities and opportunities include:

- Master Planning
- Recreation Planning
- Zoning Authority
  - Planned Unit Developments (PUDs)
  - Conservation Easements
  - Utility Service Districts
  - Site Plan Reviews
  - Zoning Overlays
- Transportation Planning
- Sewer and Water Service Area Planning
- Watershed and Habitat Planning
- Purchase of Development Rights
- Economic Development Planning

There are many resources available to assist communities in utilizing this authority. The resources listed below can be used to maximize a community's impact on the preservation, protection, and restoration of natural resources.

Michigan Township Association (MTA)

The Michigan Townships Association promotes the interests of township government by fostering strong, vibrant communities; advocating legislation to meet 21st century challenges; developing knowledgeable township officials and enthusiastic supporters of township government; and encouraging ethical practices of elected officials who uphold the traditions and unique characteristics of township government and the values of the people of Michigan.

Contact:
Michigan Township Association
512 Westshire Drive
Lansing, MI 48917
Phone: (517) 321-6467
Fax: (517) 321-8908
Website: http://www.michigantownships.org

Michigan Municipal League (MML)

The Michigan Municipal League is the one clear voice for Michigan communities. Our goals are to aid them in creating desirable and unique places through legislative and judicial advocacy; to provide educational opportunities for elected and appointed officials; and to assist municipal leaders in administering community services. Our mission is that of a non-profit, but we act with the fervor of entrepreneurs to passionately push change for better communities and a better Michigan.

Contact:
Michigan Municipal League
1675 Green Road
Ann Arbor, MI 48105
Phone: (734) 662-3246 or (800) 653-2483
Website: http://www.mml.org

Planning and Zoning Center

Since it was first founded in 1982, the Planning & Zoning News has published the only state-specific monthly magazine on planning and zoning issues. Each month, **Planning & Zoning News (PZC)** offers its estimated 6,000 readers:

- A summary of recent case law
- Attorney general opinions
- Pending legislation
- A feature story on an issue of contemporary interest
- Practical guidance on typical planning and zoning issues
- Information on a variety of new publications

- Training opportunities and conferences and other notices

Contact:
Planning and Zoning Center
715 North Cedar Street, Suite 2
Lansing, MI 48906-5275
Phone: (517) 886-0555
Fax: (517) 886-0564
Website: http://www.pzcenter.com

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment

State Revolving Loan Funds Water & Sewer

- Clean Water State Revolving Fund: This fund backs a low interest rate loan financing program that assists qualified local municipalities with the construction of needed water pollution control facilities.
- Drinking Water Revolving Fund: Designed to assist water suppliers in satisfying the requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act by offering low interest rate loans to eligible water suppliers.

Contact:
Water Bureau
P.O. Box 30273
Lansing, MI 48909-7773
Phone: (517) 373-2161
Fax: (517) 335-0743
Website: http://www.michigan.gov/deq

Brownfields

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality offers grants and loans for environmental assessments and cleanups at properties with known or suspected contamination. Funds are targeted to projects that promote economic development and reuse of Brownfield properties. Some of the Brownfield funding sources include: Michigan Brownfield Redevelopment Loans (BRL) and Grants (BRG), Site Reclamation Grants (SRG), Revitalizing Revolving Loan (RRL), Site Assessment Funds (SAF), Waterfront Redevelopment Grants (WRG).

Contact:
Remediation & Redevelopment Division
P.O. Box 30426
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 335-1104 or (517) 373-9540
Fax: (517) 373-2637
Website: http://www.michigan.gov/deq

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency - Brownfields

EPA's Brownfields Program provides direct funding for brownfields assessment, cleanup, revolving loans, and environmental job training. To facilitate the leveraging of public resources, EPA's Brownfields Program collaborates with other EPA programs, other federal partners, and state agencies to identify and make available resources that can be used for brownfields activities. In addition to direct brownfields funding, EPA also provides technical information on brownfields financing matters.

- Assessment Grants: Assessment grants provide funding for a grant recipient to inventory, characterize, assess, and conduct planning and community involvement related to brownfield sites.
- Revolving Loan Fund Grants: The purpose of Revolving Loan Fund Grants is to enable States, political subdivisions, and Indian tribes to make low interest loans to carryout cleanup activities at brownfields properties.
- Cleanup Grants: Cleanup grants provide funding for a grant recipient to carry out cleanup activities at brownfield sites.
- Job Training Grants: Job Training Grants are designed to provide funding to eligible entities, including nonprofit organizations, to recruit, train, and place, predominantly low-income and minority, unemployed and under-employed residents of brownfields-impacted communities with the skills needed to secure full-time, sustainable, employment in the environmental field and in the assessment and cleanup work taking place in their communities.
- Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants: Training, Research, and Technical Assistance Grants provide funding to eligible organizations to provide training, research, and technical assistance to facilitate brownfields revitalization.
- Targeted Brownfields Assessments: The Targeted Brownfields Assessment (TBA) program is designed to help states, tribes, and municipalities–especially those without EPA Brownfields Assessment Pilots/Grants–minimize the uncertainties of contamination often associated with brownfields.

Contact:

U.S. EPA
Office of Brownfield and Land Revitalization
Mail Code 5105 T
1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20460
Phone: (202) 566-2777
Fax: (202) 566-2757
Website: http://www.eps.gov/brownfields

Other Resources

Listed below are other tools and resources to consider and utilize when planning for blueways and greenways within your community and regionally. Each tool and resource consists a brief description, as well as contact information and, where possible, a website.

INtegrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services Tool (INVEST)

GVSU's Annis Water Resources Institute has created a web-based tool, the INtegrated Valuation of Ecosystem Services Tool (INVEST). INVEST creates a framework that allows West Michigan to measure the costs and benefits of green infrastructure preservation. It estimates the economic value of green infrastructure and its associated ecosystem services to the region, and "monetizes" those preliminary value estimates so that they can be introduced into public and private market decision-making. By valuing ecosystem services, this tool provides a basis for better balancing development and conservation, which will inform the policy discussion and lead to better decision making.

Contact:

Grand Valley State University – Annis Water Resources Institute
Lake Michigan Center
740 W. Shoreline Drive
Muskegon, MI 49441
Phone: (616) 331-3749 or (231) 728-3601
Website: http://gvsu.edu.wri/

West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition

The West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition is a non-profit group of like-minded donors, organizations and volunteers who are dedicated to developing non-motorized trails and greenways into a linked system that connects wilderness areas, parks, historic landmarks and cultural sites throughout West Michigan. The West Michigan Trails and Greenways Coalition addresses over 585 miles of regional connections, provides a forum for local trail groups, networking opportunities with partners, assists "friends" groups with funding assistance for local projects, and maintains a regional perspective.

Contact:

West Michigan Trails & Greenways Coalition
P.O. Box 325
Comstock Park, MI 49321
Website: http://www.wmtrails.org
E-mail: info@wmtrails.org

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy is a nonprofit organization based in Washington, D.C., whose mission it is to create a nationwide network of trails from former rail lines and connecting corridors to build healthier places for healthier people.

Contact:

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy

The Duke Ellington Building
2121 Ward Ct. NW, 5th Floor
Washington, DC 20037
Phone: (202) 331-9696
Website: http://www.railstotrails.org/index.html

Contact (Midwest Office):
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Midwest Regional Office
10 South High Street, Suite A
Central Winchester, OH 43110
Phone: (614) 837-6782

Transportation Enhancement Program

Michigan's Transportation Enhancement program is funded through a 10 percent set-aside of Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds. This amounts to $20-$25 million annually. The Transportation Enhancement program is administered by the Office of Economic Development (OED) of the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). There are 12 activities eligible for Transportation Enhancement funding, including:

- facilities for pedestrians and bicycles,
- preservation of abandoned railway corridors (Including the conversion for pedestrian or bicycle trails),
- provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists,
- landscaping and other scenic beautification,
- acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites,
- control and removal of outdoor advertising,
- scenic or historic highway programs,
- historic preservation,
- archaeological planning and research,
- establishment of transportation museums,
- rehabilitation and operation of historic transportation buildings,
- environmental mitigation to address water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat continuity

Contacts:
Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT)
Office of Economic Development (OED)
Phone: (517) 335-1069.
Webpage: www.michigan.gov/tea

Recreational Trails Program

The Recreational Trails Program (RTP) is a program of the Federal Highway Administration that provides funds to States to maintain and develop recreational trails and related facilities. Each state administers its own program. Michigan's allotment amounts to just over $1,000,000 annually.

Michigan's Recreational Trail Program is administered through the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE). The DNRE must always be the applicant but local projects can be considered if they contribute to DNRE goals, link to a trail on DNRE land, or are located on DNRE land. Projects are selected on the following criteria:

- Project need and benefit
- Site/Project quality
- Balance among project types
- Balance among trail uses
- Geographic distribution of projects
- Balance among programs/divisions

Contact:
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Forest, Mineral and Fire Management
Phone: (517) 335-3037

Safe Routes to School (SR2S)

Michigan's Safe Routes to School program is managed by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT), with training, logistical, administrative, and technical support from the Michigan Fitness Foundation.

The purposes of Safe Routes to School programs are:

- To enable and encourage children, including those with disabilities, to walk and bicycle to school
- To make bicycling and walking to school a safer and more appealing transportation alternative, thereby encouraging a healthy and active lifestyle from an early age
- To facilitate the planning, development, and implementation of projects and activities that will improve safety and reduce traffic, fuel consumption and air pollution in the vicinity of elementary schools

A federal Safe Routes to School program was authorized as part of the surface transportation bill signed into law in August 2005. As a result, every state now has dedicated dollars to help with infrastructure improvements (e.g. new sidewalks and traffic calming projects) and non-infrastructure activities to encourage and enable students to walk and bicycle to school.

Contacts:
Safe Routes to School
Website: http://www.saferoutesmichigan.org

Michigan Fitness Foundation
P.O. Box 27187
Lansing, MI 48909
Phone: (517) 347-7891

Toll-Free: (800) 434-8642
Fax: (517) 347-8145
Website: http://www.mighiganfitness.org

The Great Lakes Fishery Trust

The mission of the Great Lakes Fishery Trust (GLFT) is to provide funding to nonprofit organizations, education institutions, and government agencies to enhance, protect, and rehabilitate the Great Lakes fishery. Since 1998, the GLFT has awarded over $44 million in grants to enhance the Great Lakes fishery. Each year the GLFT provides funding for creating, enhancing, or improving shore-based fishing access. GLFT funds are used for:

- Increased fishing access, including land acquisition and site enhancement, to the Great Lakes fishery for shore-based angling and tribal fishing
- Public education relating to the Great Lakes fishery
- Research on the Great Lakes fishery, with special emphasis on rehabilitation of lake sturgeon and lake trout
- Fishery habitat protection and restoration, with special emphasis on the Muskegon River Watershed

Nonprofit organizations and government agencies may submit applications at any time. Applications and supporting materials are available on the GLFT website or by calling the GLFT offices at (517) 371-7468.

Contact:
Great Lakes Fisheries Trust
600 W. St. Joseph, Suite 10
Lansing, MI 48933-2265
Phone: (517) 371-7468
Fax: (517) 484-6549
E-mail: glft@glft.org
Website: http://glft.org

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund

With this source of funding, state and local units of government are able to acquire land for public recreation and for protection of land for its environmental importance or scenic beauty. A limited amount of the funds may be used for the development of public outdoor recreation facilities. Over its 32-year history, the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund has had a tremendous impact on Michigan's landscape. Approximately $781 million has been awarded to state and local units of government and has been used to acquire and develop recreation land in all 83 counties of the state.

Contact:
Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund
Grants Management Office
P.O. Box 30425
Lansing, MI 48909-7925

Phone: (517) 373-9125
Website: http://www.michigan.gov/dnr-grants

Land and Water Conservation Fund

The National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior provides Land and Water Conservation Fund grants for up to fifty percent (50%) of costs for the acquisition of land and the development of public outdoor recreation sites and facilities. The President's budget for FY 2010 proposed a $30 million appropriation for LWCF State grants. The LWCF State Assistance program provides matching grants to States, and through the States to local governments, for the acquisition and development of public outdoor recreation areas and facilities. Planning grants are also available to the States to assist in the development of Statewide Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plans (SCORP). The goals of the LWCF State Assistance Program are to:

- Meet state and locally identified public outdoor recreation resource needs to strengthen the health and vitality of the American People.
- Increase the number of protected state and local outdoor recreation resources and to ensure their availability for public use in perpetuity.
- Encourage sound planning and long-term partnerships to expand the quantity and to ensure the quality of needed state and local outdoor recreation resources.

Contact:
Grants Management
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
P.O. Box 30425
Lansing, MI 48909-7925
Phone: (517) 241-4717
Email: mctiernanl@michigan.gov

Land Conservancy of West Michigan

The Land Conservancy of West Michigan (LCWM) permanently preserves West Michigan's natural landscape by:

- **Establishing Nature Preserves**: LCWM acquires natural land through donation or purchase of high priority land for the purpose of creating nature preserves. LCWM nature preserves are open to the public.
- **Creating Conservation Easements**: Conservation easements are voluntary legal agreements between a landowner and a land conservancy or government agency that permanently limit development of the property in order to protect the conservation values of the land. The land remains in private ownership and can continue to be used by the landowner. The Land Conservancy also works with developers to create easements preserving important natural land in open space developments.
- **Assisting Local Communities:** LCWM assists local governments with identifying important natural areas, preserving lands and creating community parks.

Contact:

Land Conservancy of West Michigan
1345 Monroe Ave. NW, Ste. 324
Grand Rapids, MI 49505
Phone: (616) 451-9476
E-mail: lcwm@naturenearby.org

Rain Gardens of West Michigan

Rain Gardens of West Michigan is located in the West Michigan Environmental Action Council (WMEAC) offices in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Project strategies include local and regional partnerships, and collaborative projects. Rain Gardens of West Michigan develops partnerships with local and national businesses and volunteers participate by donating their time and skills.

Contacts:

Rain Gardens of West Michigan
Website: raingardens.org

West Michigan Environmental Action Council
1007 Lake Drive SE
Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506
Phone: (616) 451-3051
E-mail: info@wmeac.org
Website: http://www.wmeac.org

Low Impact Development Urban Design Tools

This resource website, developed through a Cooperative Assistance Agreement under the U.S. EPA Office of Water, provides watershed managers with a new set of tools and techniques that can be used to meet regulatory and receiving water program goals for urban retrofits, redevelopment projects, and new development sites. It features an interactive design page for a range of LID techniques and land uses.

Contacts:

Website: http://www.lid-stormwater.net/

Smart Growth and Water: Resources and Tools

This set of Web pages includes residential and non-residential low impact development tools. Website: http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/smartgrowth/resources/plan.htm

- Streaming video program on LID, *Reining in the Storm - One Building at a Time*: This engaging 30 minute film explains low impact development to the uninitiated. It is ideally suited for educating local government officials and key decision-makers on the merits of low impact development in a way that breaks down barriers for adoption of these practices and directly addresses real concerns.
- LID for Big Box Retailers: Developed with input from a major big box retail corporation, this EPA-funded manual is designed to provide large building and site footprint high volume retailers with strategies that integrate innovative and highly

effective LID stormwater management techniques into their site designs for regulatory compliance and natural resource protection.

- Low Impact Development Center: The Low Impact Development Center was established to develop and provide information to individuals and organizations dedicated to protecting the environment and water resources through proper site design techniques that replicate pre-existing hydrologic site conditions.

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment Grants & Loans Catalog:
http://www.michigan.gov/documents/deq/deq-essd-grantsloans-catalog_210643_7.pdf

Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenways Plans:
http://michigan.gov/dnr-grants

In addition to the numerous resources and tools provided in the document, there are several private consulting firms that provide valuable resources and assistance in preserving and protection natural resources at the local level.

CHAPTER VII: CONCLUSION

The West Michigan Blueways and Greenways Plan Phase II was intended to build upon Phase I which created the first extensive inventory of public access to water bodies, parks and natural areas at the county-wide level. While the inventory portion includes public access to local, county, state, federal, and privately-owned properties, the linkages portion identifies areas with high potential for connecting blueways and greenways. Finally, the plan includes a detailed list of tools and resources to assist local officials' future blueways and greenways planning efforts.

This Blueways and Greenways Plan fits in with goals and objectives laid out in numerous regional efforts, and is intended to be utilized by local governments, environmental groups, and property owners when making land use decisions. It is also hoped that this plan will enhance awareness of existing blueways and greenways, and lead to increased protection and expansion of these areas.

The development of the document was made possible through the support of the Michigan Coastal Zone Program, as well as through local input provided by various units of government and community organizations.

Appendix

Mason Blueway Coordinates

Name	Owner	Latitude	Longitude
Bass Lake Blvd. Public Access	Summit Township	43.83893680600	-86.41785706570
Bass Lake Outlet	Summit Township	43.83263608440	-86.42984263140
Big Sauble River Access	Mason County	44.12064938730	-86.27999238540
Boat Launch	City of Scottville	43.94519778770	-86.28265867180
Buttersville Park	Pere Marquette Township	43.93490299700	-86.45084937840
Cartier Park	City of Ludington	43.97720957460	-86.45884699180
Copeyon Park	City of Ludington	43.94465472300	-86.44117159370
Custer Bridge	USFS	43.93715935200	-86.21927923980
Father Marquette's Shrine	Pere Marquette Township	43.94184254580	-86.45288444820
Ford Lake Public Access	State of Michigan	44.05374220310	-86.12912330630
Gun Lake Access	State of Michigan	44.07837084800	-86.17757314610
Hackert Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.98143636250	-86.33145056840
Hamlin Lake Marsh	USFS	44.08566502830	-86.37391685550
Hoags Lake Access	USFS	44.15107860590	-86.19385778230
Indian Bridge	USFS	43.93720558790	-86.18191571060
Kibby Creek Park	State of Michigan	43.85436808690	-86.39894687660
Lake Michigan Recreation Area	State of Michigan	44.12005638000	-86.42824688190
Long Skinny Park	Hamlin Township	44.02103561830	-86.45702510360
Loomis St. Boat Launch	City of Ludington	43.95446846050	-86.46123208030
Lower Branch Bridge	USFS	43.93490661500	-86.05127225930
Ludington Municipal Marina	City of Ludington	43.95393232900	-86.45438111400
Ludington State Park	State of Michigan	44.03643335640	-86.50290005710
Maple Leaf Access Logmark Camp	USFS	43.93654851230	-86.07639595250
Marrison Rd. Public Access	Summit Township	43.83397557600	-86.40587423150
Middle Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.02805976530	-86.45663223900
North Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.04246241810	-86.45815414220
Pleiness Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.85534374060	-86.24220063780
River Park	Custer Township	43.93726619390	-86.21870553950
Riverside Park	City of Scottville	43.94330092210	-86.27767642170
Ruby Creek Access	State of Michigan	43.83510566090	-86.08413315870
Sheridan Township Park	Sheridan Township	44.01737520680	-86.11927177150
Sherman Township Park	Sherman Township	44.07607617510	-86.17528073000
South Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.01511574610	-86.45678386790
St. Mary's Lake Access	Riverton Township	43.83280480620	-86.29172654990
Stearns Park	City of Ludington	43.95914049670	-86.46019783930
Summit Park	Summit Township	43.85580423150	-86.43244663380
Sutton's Landing Park	Pere Marquette Township	43.92740489110	-86.41676054110
Tallman Lake Access	Sheridan Township	43.99435856310	-86.11016182100
Upper Big Sable Access	State of Michigan	44.09022104800	-86.11852310280
US 31 Bridge Access	State of Michigan	43.92783188380	-86.42015081400
Victory Township Park	Victory Township	44.06530457210	-86.39229118830
Walhalla Bridge	USFS	43.93255805080	-86.11475599430
Waterfront Park	City of Ludington	43.95318287850	-86.45237858980
West Shore Community College	WSCC	44.02760233750	-86.34033798790
Wever Rd. Road Ending	Branch Township	43.95301391080	-86.09445738100

Whelan Lake Non-Motorized Area	Branch Township	43.91039334440	-86.15236162260
Wilson Hill Park	Hamlin Township	44.07078243790	-86.42738064270

*Coordinate data created by WMSRDC using Arc Map 10.1

Oceana Blueway Coordinates

Name	Owner	Latitude	Longitude
18th Ave Road Ending		43.65985746400	-86.51298353660
192nd White River Access	Newfield Township	43.62662161220	-86.07851561480
198th White River Access	Newfield Township	43.55870706790	-86.06456930140
200th Road Ending	Newfield Township	43.62324223290	-86.05922814920
22nd Ave Road Ending		43.66099289510	-86.50276441520
24th St. Road Ending		43.67766134110	-86.49810021370
Benona Township Park	Benona Township	43.55979103640	-86.49872063150
Benona Township Swimming Beach	Benona Township	43.55984794500	-86.49664920890
Black Lake County Park	Oceana County	43.74524097370	-86.11917481910
Blodgett Lake Access	Newfield Township	43.60945374570	-86.11861601510
Bridge Street Park	Village of Pentwater	43.78046531360	-86.43722306330
Buchanan Road Ending	Newfield Township	43.62652503150	-86.05361636060
Campbell Lake Access	Newfield Township	43.64017171650	-86.10984259130
Campbell Lake Boat Launch	Leavitt Township	43.64275404500	-86.11631241600
Carmean Road Ending	Newfield Township	43.62339737610	-86.04669932860
Cedar Point County Park	Oceana County	43.73320519310	-86.47282275280
Channel Lane Park	Village of Pentwater	43.78136819470	-86.43996622700
Charles Mears State Park	State of Michigan	43.78364269340	-86.43893914110
Chester St. Park	Village of Pentwater	43.77942110690	-86.43811575900
Claybanks Township Park	Claybanks Township	43.52930629190	-86.48612093340
Colfax Beach	Colfax Township	43.78013595660	-86.09179345640
Crystal Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.65282946200	-86.37583572170
Crystal Valley County Park	Oceana County	43.77455054680	-86.24612273040
Diamond Point	USFS	43.47395522250	-86.21161954050
Footpath Access		43.66335366350	-86.49583489860
Footpath Access		43.67825296850	-86.50097264800
Gales Pond County Park	Oceana County	43.65945684110	-86.27373356800
Golden Twp Lake Michigan Park	Golden Township	43.65527414980	-86.53890335800
Harrison Road Access		43.71809237330	-86.48832180010
Hart Area Veterans Memorial	City of Hart	43.70519325580	-86.36280143470
Hart Hydroelectric Dam	City of Hart	43.71870040610	-86.37145363910
Hazel Road Ending		43.66777868330	-86.49051786800
Hesperia Sports Park	Village of Hesperia	43.57295869430	-86.03994889340
Hightower Lake Access	Newfield Township	43.59066923160	-86.14967179090
Horseshoe Lake Access	USFS	43.49371208990	-86.10381869190
John Gurney Park	City of Hart	43.70523335610	-86.36013006340
Lake Michigan Oval Park	Benona Township	43.55943109600	-86.50785744720
Lake Street Boat Launch	Village of Pentwater	43.77484212670	-86.42882393430
Longbridge Rd Bridge Boardwalk	Pentwater Township	43.76363692310	-86.40871637260
Marshville Dam County Park	Oceana County	43.57736117180	-86.42986830510
McLaren Lake Boating Access	State of Michigan	43.62026389210	-86.05368697180
Mead Park	Village of Shelby	43.62427268180	-86.37039191760
Mill Pond County Park	Oceana County	43.58469582000	-86.21832893160
Monroe Rd. Bridge		43.76300117100	-86.39435824350

Morris Lake Access 48th Ave		43.65844012220	-86.43915917620
Morris Lake Access 52nd Ave		43.65889292590	-86.43536249550
Oxbow Park	Newfield Township	43.56878602100	-86.05459298410
Pentwater Lake Boat Ramp	Pentwater Township	43.76867700000	-86.42275200000
Pentwater Municipal Marina	Village of Pentwater	43.77690719740	-86.43320314820
Pentwater River Access	Pentwater Township	43.70702721340	-86.31816472770
Pines Point	USFS	43.52846901350	-86.11895839940
PM Interperative Center	State of Michigan	43.81288485650	-86.08897946080
Podunk Boat Launch	USFS	43.52620562560	-86.11265769700
Rose Street Access		43.65994611770	-86.50766573510
Round Lake Park	Golden Township	43.70391080710	-86.42882805180
School Section Lake Access N	Colfax Township	43.78205176290	-86.09352919920
School Section Lake Access S	Colfax Township	43.77767025310	-86.09228594830
Silver Lake State Park	State of Michigan	43.66520419390	-86.52259822870
Silver Lake State Park Access		43.66189924220	-86.49931156160
Sischo Bayou Boat Launch	USFS	43.48373144160	-86.14841719770
St. Hubert Angler Parking	USFS	43.54824575380	-86.07494179850
Stony Lake County Park	Oceana County	43.55718620200	-86.47719892270
Taylor Bridge	USFS	43.55420947290	-86.07471760910
Taylor Road Ending		43.67233235000	-86.49179589590
Vida Weaver Park	Village of Hesperia	43.57185618200	-86.04253672340
Village 3rd Street Park	Village of Pentwater	43.77898800000	-86.43418600000
Whiskey Creek Public Access		43.53313870660	-86.48969229720
Winters Lake Access	Newfield Township	43.61254054080	-86.08629851520

*Coordinate data created by WMSRDC using Arc Map 10.1

Mason Greenway Coordinates

Name	Owner	Latitude	Longitude
Bass Lake Outlet	Summit Township	43.83244884520	-86.42904282380
Big Sauble River	Mason County	44.12038629480	-86.27998979940
Buttersville Park	Pere Marquette Township	43.93619299940	-86.45017357680
Cartier Park	City of Ludington	43.97694692570	-86.45953933540
Copeyon Park	City of Ludington	43.94501028960	-86.44129109040
Custer Township Property	Custer Township	43.93308238150	-86.19932299600
Fountain Ball Fields	Village of Fountain	44.04647831270	-86.18284242460
Free Soil Park	Free Soil Township	44.10703883020	-86.21611757850
Hackert Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.98143636250	-86.33145056840
Hamlin Lake Marsh	USFS	44.08566502830	-86.37391685550
Hoags Lake Day Use Area	USFS	44.15017321280	-86.19651090880
Inman Road	Mason County	43.91702744890	-86.43763547740
James Street Playfield	City of Ludington	43.95853155210	-86.44759608840
Kibby Creek Park	State of Michigan	43.85467005130	-86.39861432130
Lake Michigan Recreation Area	USFS	44.12005638000	-86.42824688190
Leveaux Park	City of Ludington	43.95578982640	-86.43495781920
Long Skinny Park	Hamlin Township	44.02162696880	-86.45688395000
Loomis Boat Launch Park	City of Ludington	43.95447219130	-86.46007253370
Ludington City Park	City of Ludington	43.95564705730	-86.45353789610
Ludington Marina	City of Ludington	43.95341214070	-86.45209724070
Ludington School Forest	LASD	43.96723427710	-86.42462331370
Ludington State Park	State of Michigan	44.03643335640	-86.50290005710
Maple Leaf Access Logmark Camp	USFS	43.93654851230	-86.07639595250
Marquette's Shrine	Pere Marquette Township	43.94195468430	-86.45273284220
Marrison Road Park	Summit Township	43.83404468090	-86.40571618540
Mason County Campground	Mason County	43.90724329010	-86.42699418810
Mason County Fairgrounds	Mason County	43.95590191170	-86.40831442390
Mason County Picnic Area	Mason County	43.90622151480	-86.43735325910
McPhail Field	City of Scottville	43.95504497380	-86.28562019650
Meade Township Park	Meade Township	44.10572489900	-86.14559947340
Memorial Tree Park	Pere Marquette Township	43.97792584420	-86.43947459070
Middle Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.02805756620	-86.45666885410
Nordhouse Dunes	USFS	44.09158186470	-86.45705840410
North Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.04258674160	-86.45803841540
Optimist Field	City of Ludington	43.96326507590	-86.43699146170
Oxy Field	Pere Marquette Township	43.94069488180	-86.42930478940
Peak Playground	Village of Fountain	44.04604133870	-86.18297493150
Pere Marquette River Flats	State of Michigan	43.93313544670	-86.41810492890
River Park	Custer Township	43.93577288180	-86.21898515160
Riverside Boat Launch	City of Scottville	43.94555881080	-86.27939112380
Riverside Park	City of Scottville	43.94355795510	-86.27936479920
Riverton Ball Fields	Riverton Township	43.89900429720	-86.33856438380
Scenic Overlook	Mason County	43.89990448420	-86.43594414650
Sheridan Township Park	Sheridan Township	44.01857177390	-86.12050396080

Sherman Township Park	Sherman Township	44.07714261880	-86.17624518830
South Bayou Park	Hamlin Township	44.01499854710	-86.45681530140
St. Mary's Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.83280480620	-86.29172654990
Stearns Park	City of Ludington	43.95657743640	-86.45933730510
Summit Township Park	Summit Township	43.85642677340	-86.43040309770
Suttons Landing	Pere Marquette Township	43.92594947980	-86.41890284210
US-31 Rest Area	State of Michigan	43.86638534920	-86.41324887360
Victory Township Park	Victory Township	44.06366132010	-86.39096293860
Victory Twp Ball Field	Victory Township	44.01153109440	-86.31027552290
Waterfront Park	City of Ludington	43.95351563230	-86.45200517130
West Shore Community College	WSCC	44.00880934370	-86.33400340310
Whelan Lake Non-Motorized Area	USFS	43.91039334440	-86.15236162260
Wilson Hill Park	Hamlin Township	44.06983147780	-86.42747504950

*Coordinate data created by WMSRDC using Arc Map 10.1

Oceana Greenway Coordinates

Name	Owner	Latitude	Longitute
Benona Township Park	Benona Township	43.56028345450	-86.49900866310
Benona Township Swimming Beach	Benona Township	43.55982905030	-86.49730697400
Black Lake County Park	Oceana County	43.74576957940	-86.11827563630
Bridge Street Park	Village of Pentwater	43.78065933230	-86.43729761440
Campbell Lake Boat Launch	Leavitt Township	43.64169192630	-86.11920797560
Cedar Point County Park	Oceana County	43.73320519310	-86.47282275280
Channel Lane Park	Village of Pentwater	43.78142480850	-86.43938977530
Charles Mears State Park	State of Michigan	43.78419469210	-86.43809251860
Chester Street Park	Village of Pentwater	43.77949758670	-86.43747531750
Claybanks Township Park	Claybanks Township	43.53079732520	-86.48521965810
Colfax Beach	Colfax Township	43.78080229710	-86.09177960160
Cross Country Ski Trailhead	USFS	43.80693365070	-86.23216037630
Crystal Lake Access	State of Michigan	43.65282123800	-86.37583016190
Crystal Valley County Park	Oceana County	43.77382496370	-86.24556280480
Diamond Point	USFS	43.47394701880	-86.21161404960
Doolittle County Park	Oceana County	43.65954187060	-86.27803140640
DPW Park	Village of Shelby	43.61601585410	-86.36592175430
Gales Pond County Park	Oceana County	43.65973024910	-86.27677468320
Genevieve Casey Nature Sanctuary	Michigan Nature Associa	43.63696300000	-86.42042700000
Getty Park	Village of Shelby	43.61588457300	-86.36153993840
Golden Twp Hall and Park	Golden Township	43.68152052220	-86.41651469190
Golden Twp Lake Michigan Park	Golden Township	43.65613510980	-86.53878257820
Golden Twp Nature Area	Golden Township	43.66936672480	-86.43063279980
Hart Area Veterans Memorial	City of Hart	43.70498016680	-86.36322891430
Hart Commons	City of Hart	43.70275101100	-86.36266849850
Hart Township Soccer Complex	Hart Township	43.71560125140	-86.35810123630
Hart-Montague Trailhead	State of Michigan	43.68925626610	-86.37233657780
Hesperia Sports Park	Village of Hesperia	43.57375516410	-86.03966968370
Horseshoe Park	Village of Shelby	43.60637596390	-86.36740070580
Hydro-Electric Dam	City of Hart	43.71808551050	-86.37321904550
John Gurney Park	City of Hart	43.70541180410	-86.35781830960
Johnson Square	Golden Township	43.68164297950	-86.41981964410
Lake Breeze Nature Preserve	Land Consevancy W. MI	43.74120900000	-86.46143800000
Lake Michigan Oval Park	Benona Township	43.55939078500	-86.50701322400
Lake Michigan Shores Nature Area	Golden Township	43.72990942680	-86.46700979780
Liberty Park	City of Hart	43.69857381620	-86.36387977180
Longbridge Rd Bridge Boardwalk	Pentwater Township	43.76363692310	-86.40871637260
Marshville Dam County Park	Oceana County	43.57751960260	-86.42969688830
McLaren Lake Boating Access	State of Michigan	43.61988400000	-86.05372800000
Mead Park	Village of Shelby	43.62351606850	-86.37006613860
Mill Pond County Park	Oceana County	43.58419239490	-86.21913083600
Monument Park	Village of Shelby	43.61071408160	-86.36221139840
New Era Ball Field	Village of New Era	43.56124613430	-86.34220716750
Oceana Fair Grounds	Oceana County	43.69045723470	-86.36432310020

Oxbow Park	Newfield Township	43.56777545190	-86.05285036140
Pentwater Lake Boat Ramp	Pentwater Township	43.76867719600	-86.42275230160
Pentwater Municipal Marina	Village of Pentwater	43.77639180530	-86.43274230760
Pentwater Pathways Trail	State of Michigan	43.74367900000	-86.40425400000
Pentwater Pathways Trail	State of Michigan	43.74367905440	-86.40425357180
Pentwater Sport Courts	Village of Pentwater	43.78849568580	-86.43075321610
Pines Point	USFS	43.52846079550	-86.11895293080
Pirate's Paradise	Hart Public Schools	43.69847048000	-86.36976629540
PM Interpretative Center	State of Michigan	43.81390098540	-86.09049253250
Rail-Trail Park	Village of Shelby	43.61287429540	-86.36523416260
Ramp & Rails Skate Park	City of Hart	43.69990640480	-86.37180504200
Round Lake Park	Golden Township	43.70333497600	-86.42883101680
Shelby Township Property	Shelby Township	43.57119739510	-86.30060873740
Silver Lake State Park	State of Michigan	43.66519597620	-86.52259262320
Stoney Lake County Park	Oceana County	43.55661891220	-86.47725454990
Vida Weaver Park	Village of Hesperia	43.57152870640	-86.04297372260
Village 3rd Street Park	Village of Pentwater	43.77898800000	-86.43418600000
Village Green	Village of Pentwater	43.77995738160	-86.43348929340
Village Park	Village of New Era	43.55954635440	-86.34394429970
Village Park	Village of Walkerville	43.71466799460	-86.12516004050
Volleyball Park	Village of Shelby	43.61442769380	-86.36581572370
Weaver Park Fairgrounds	Village of Hesperia	43.57201000000	-86.03682200000
Wesco Park	Village of Shelby	43.61238135200	-86.36080136830
Whiskey Creek Public Access	Claybanks Township	43.53313050890	-86.48968671590
Zeke Lake Roadside Park	State of Michigan	43.57051900000	-86.28642100000

*Coordinate data created by WMSRDC using Arc Map 10.1

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