



West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission

April/May 2018

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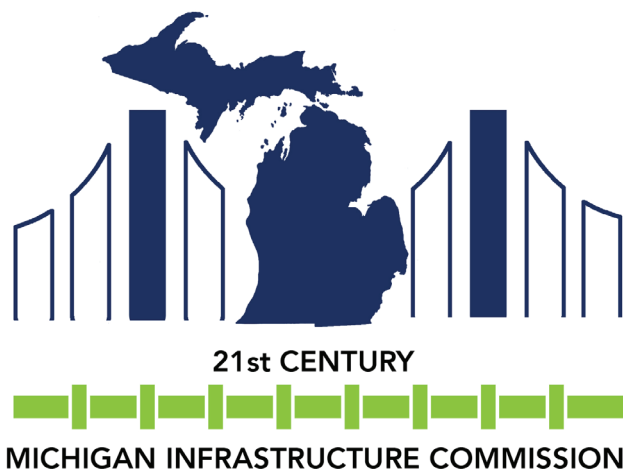
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21st Century Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot

On May 4, 2018, Governor Snyder unveiled the results of the 21st Century Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot project at a press conference held at Founders Brewing Company in Grand Rapids. Approximately 60 people attended the press conference including members of the pilot executive committee, advisory group, stakeholder

group, state department representatives, regional pilot leaders, private utility providers, and various media outlets. WMSRDC, along with the Grand Valley Metro Council (GVMC) and the Southeast Michigan Council of Governments, helped to coordinate the project from the two pilot regions. Governor Snyder spoke about the success of the pilot, the lessons learned, key outcomes of the project, as well as recommendations for advancing the initiative to a state-wide comprehensive asset management system. The Governor also noted the journey of the pilot project including the coordination and collaboration between the two pilot regions, state government, and private utility providers.

Following the press conference, WMSRDC and GVMC hosted a luncheon for the West Michigan Prosperity Alliance (WMPA) committee members and local government leaders that participated in the pilot project as subject matter experts, and representatives from the eleven communities that received mini grants from the WMPA for their participation in the pilot. The purpose of the luncheon was to thank attendees for their role in making the asset management pilot project a success. The event included a presentation of the pilot project results and a ceremony to present eleven mini grants to the communities from West Michigan. The mini grants were awarded to smaller communities that would not have otherwise been able to participate in the pilot project due to limited resources and capacity.





SPOTLIGHT PROJECT:

Rating Road Conditions

WMSRDC staff recently attended training for the Commission's annual Asset Management program and the data collection process began in May. Each year, WMSRDC staff, along with a Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) representative, and a county road commission employee, collect data for all the federal aid roads within the region. These ratings are the first step in a planning process known as Asset Management. Asset Management is based on a ratings inventory of each local road network within each of the municipalities and then applying the correct fix or maintenance for the road based on the rating.

According to Michigan's Act 51 (P.A. 499 in 2002 and P.A. 199 in 2007), local road agencies must report the condition of the road system under their jurisdiction to the Michigan Transportation Asset Management Council (TAMC) annually. To meet the requirements of this Act, the TAMC sets policies each year for road condition data collection.

The TAMC has adopted the Pavement Surface Evaluation and Rating (PASER) system for measuring conditions of paved roads in Michigan. The PASER system is a visual survey method that provides a simple, efficient, and consistent method for evaluating the condition of paved roads. This data collection effort requires the collection of three items: PASER rating, surface type, and the number of lanes. The PASER visual rating assessment system rates the road surface condition for a given segment on a scale of 1-10. This data collection process is part of an ongoing statewide program to evaluate the condition of the state's road system.



Once rating is completed, WMSRDC staff converts the data into a format that can be used with RoadSoft. RoadSoft is a management system for collecting, storing and analyzing data. RoadSoft is funded through the MDOT and developed, supported, and distributed by Michigan Technological University's Center for Technology & Training.

After the data has been converted into RoadSoft, it is sent back to each local road agency and to the State of Michigan. It is the intent of this program that the local units of government will use this information to better plan for needed infrastructure improvements.

Lower Muskegon River Revitalization

Restoration of the wetlands situated in the river and just upstream of Muskegon Lake are a driver for the overall health of Muskegon Lake. The reclamation is expected to increase opportunities for recreation and tourism within the larger Muskegon area. Addressing contamination and damaged habitat opens up opportunities for redevelopment in the Holton Road corridor. Removal of invasive cattails and other non-natives, along with the installation of native plants and flowers, will improve habitat for fish and wildlife, including migratory waterfowl.

The Zephyr Oil Refinery Cleanup is located just south of Holton Road (M120) and east of the railroad tracks in Muskegon Township. The MDEQ is pursuing cleanup efforts in the upland portion of the site in collaboration with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. The cleanup is entirely on private property. Excavation of the wetlands began in April 2018. Access roads, bank stabilization structures, and the staging areas were constructed in fall 2017. Petroleum Product (NAPL) recovery continues. Recovered to date have been 28,850 gallons, with approximately 300 gallons recovered per month in 2018. The engineering contractor has begun chemical injection activities to make the petroleum release from the soil so it can be captured. The MDEQ will continue operation, maintenance and sampling to ensure contamination is not released to the river or allowed to migrate off site into the foreseeable future. Completion of aggressive remediation activities in the uplands and wetlands is anticipated by December 2018. The older remediation infrastructure is no longer needed, making acres of unused land available for redevelopment now.

The publicly owned wetland property (former Bosma Farm) situated between the Wood Street and Poulson Road ends is slated for restoration in 2019. Final engineering studies and wetland design are anticipated for public discussion through the Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership (MLWP) this summer.

Preparing for “Life After Delisting” the Muskegon Lake Area of Concern

WMSRDC and the Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership (MLWP) developed the Muskegon Lake Action Plan to ensure the continued coordination of natural resources stewardship in the Muskegon Lake Watershed. The new plan builds upon the cleanup and restoration progress made under the Great Lakes Areas of Concern (AOC) program over the past 20 years. Progress on the AOC was guided by the Muskegon Lake AOC Remedial Action Plan (RAP). The new Muskegon Lake Action Plan will seamlessly replace the RAP as the watershed community’s guiding document for ecosystem management and the protection of natural resources within the lower Muskegon River watershed. The plan was created with broad input from the general public, scientists, natural resources managers, landowners and other stakeholders.

The Muskegon Lake Action Plan is to be used, both now and into the future, once the lake is removed from the list of Great Lakes AOCs. It can be used to help coordinate and plan watershed improvement projects and stewardship activities by community organizations, academia, agencies, businesses, conservation groups, general public, local governments, students, watershed groups and other stakeholders. The MLWP and WMSRDC will track the plan’s implementation progress and report out at monthly MLWP public meetings. To be notified about monthly public meetings, please contact Kathy Evans at kevans@wmsrdc.org.

The community-based plan also supports many of the goals and objectives of other Great Lakes restoration plans, including the Great Lakes Action Plan II, Lake Michigan Lake Action Management Plan, Michigan Water Strategy, NOAA Muskegon Lake Habitat Focus Area Plan, Muskegon River Watershed 319 Plan, Bear Creek 319 Watershed Plan, MDNR Fisheries Management Plans for the Muskegon Lake and River as well as the new MDNR Lake Michigan Fisheries Management Plan. Development of the plan was supported by a WMSRDC grant from the MDEQ Office of the Great Lakes AOC Program.

Spring CEDS Meeting

The Spring CEDS Strategy Committee meeting took place on April 27 at the Muskegon County Airport in Norton Shores.

Economic development representatives from across the WMSRDC region were in attendance. The meeting featured a presentation from Marty Gerencer regarding the West Michigan Shoreline Food Processing Initiative.

The CEDS Strategy Committee convenes quarterly over lunch to discuss the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document and discuss the latest economic news and events throughout the region. WMSRDC coordinates the meeting and the overall CEDS process through a grant from the U.S. Department of Congress, Economic Development Administration.

The Summer CEDS Strategy Committee meeting will be scheduled for July or August and will be held in Oceana County.

Port of Muskegon Tour with Senator Peters

On March 9th, U.S. Senator Gary Peters visited the City of Muskegon for a tour of the Port of Muskegon. The purpose of the tour was to inform and educate the senator on the work being done around the port including environmental restoration, housing development, recreational opportunities, and economic development initiatives.

Approximately twenty community leaders, including WMSRDC staff, joined Senator Peters on the roof-top deck atop the nine-story Highpoint Flats in downtown Muskegon for a birds-eye view of Muskegon Lake. From there the group boarded a trolley to tour a variety of port properties.

The port tour included representatives from Muskegon County, WMSRDC, DEQ Office of the Great Lakes, Grand Valley State University Annis Water Resources Institute, City of Muskegon, Verplank Dock Co., Sand Products Co., Community Foundation for Muskegon County, Downtown Muskegon Now, Muskegon Lakeshore Chamber of Commerce, Muskegon County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Consumers Energy, Muskegon Lake Watershed Partnership, Parkland Properties, Muskegon Community College and local, state and federal elected officials, and other stakeholders.



Left to right: Kathy Evans, Senator Peters, Al Steinman, and Jon Allen.

MPO Update

Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) staff developed draft language for the FY2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program that will bring the document into compliance with recent federal requirements. A key feature of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015 is the establishment of a performance and outcome based program, originally introduced through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) Act.

The objective of a performance based program is for states and MPOs to invest resources in projects that collectively will make progress toward the achievement of nationally set goals. Federal law outlined seven different national performance goals, each with different timelines for compliance. The Safety Performance Measure was addressed in January at the MPO committee meetings where the MPO adopted the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) targets. MPOs have until May 27, 2018 to establish language that identifies how they will work toward meeting the adopted targets set by MDOT for the Safety Performance Measures. MPO staff will continue to work toward establishing targets and language to address the other measures that have later dates in 2018 and 2019 for compliance.

WMSRDC is also embarking on an update to the Public Participation Plan in Transportation Decision Making. This plan is being updated to include language to address amendments to the Unified Work Program, etc. A 45 day public review period is federally required before this plan can be adopted. Once a draft of the plan is approved by the MPO Policy Committee, the review period will begin. Proper notice of this revision and the public review period will be shared at that time.

West Michigan Pike

WMSRDC has been working over the past year with the Muskegon County Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) and other West Michigan CVBs to create a Corridor Management Plan for the West Michigan Pike. WMSRDC is providing coordination services for public and committee meetings, acting as a fiduciary agency for the committee, and writing the plan with input from the public and committee members.

The West Michigan Pike was designated as Michigan's newest Scenic Byway in July 2016. This route follows State Trunklines including US-31 from the State's southern border to US-10 near Ludington. Traveling through Berrien, Van Buren, Allegan, Ottawa, Muskegon, Oceana, and Mason Counties, the route is 184 miles long. The main goals of the designation are to promote tourism and the history of the area. The Pike was originally developed between 1911 and 1922 as a way to promote tourism in West Michigan.

A rough draft of the plan has been developed and forwarded on to the committee members. A final plan completion date is anticipated for late summer 2018.

Counting Cars

WMSRDC recently contracted with the engineering consulting firm AECOM for traffic counting services. AECOM will be conducting traffic counts at approximately 100 locations within the MPO boundaries.

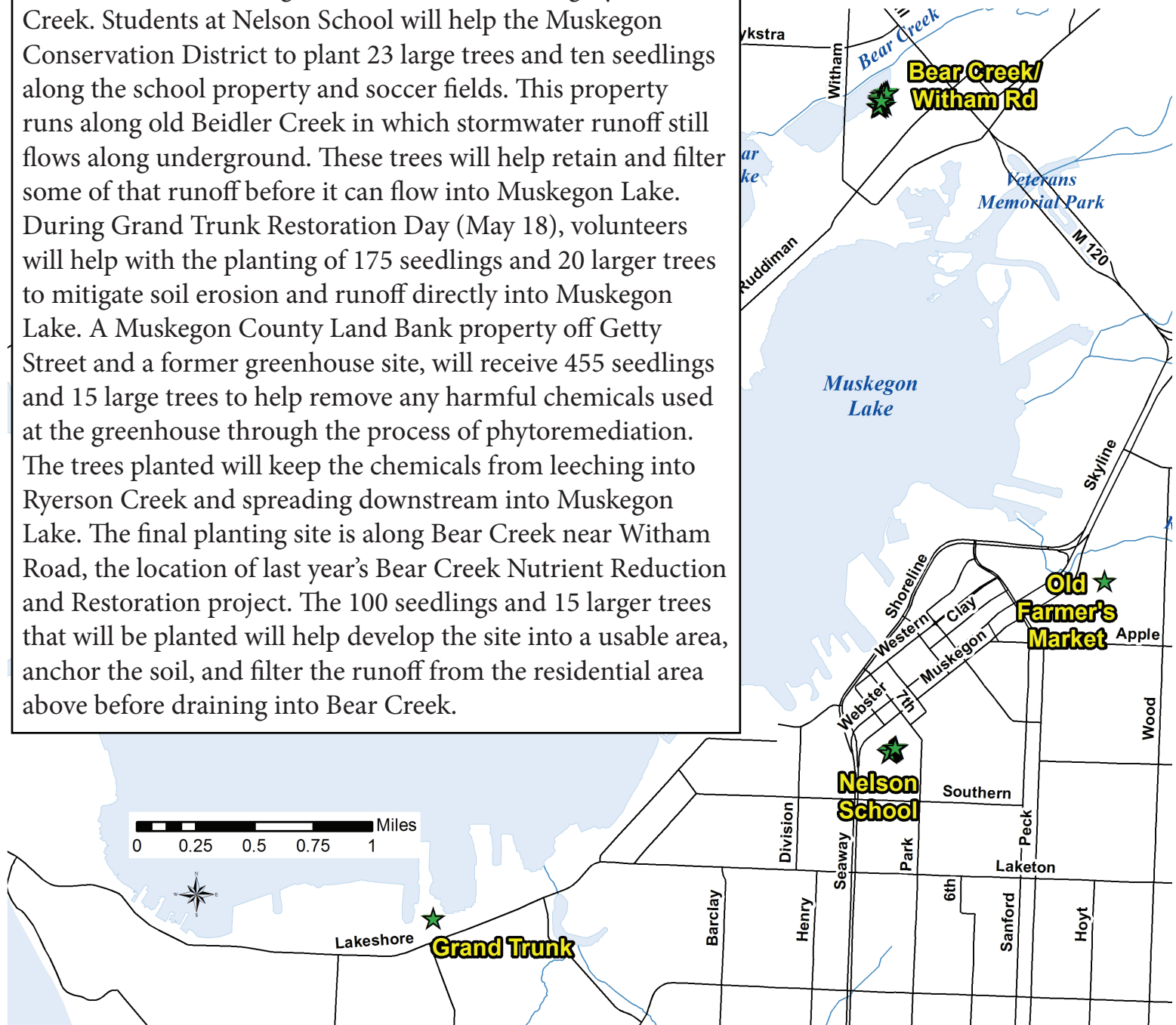
In order to ensure the most accurate traffic counts available, AECOM will be following traffic counting guidelines prepared by MDOT. These include: avoiding times of increased tourism, avoiding holidays and festivals, avoiding areas affected by road closures, and counts being done when local schools are in session to avoid changes in traffic patterns.

Once WMSRDC has received the count data from AECOM it will be entered into the Region's online traffic count data base system. WMSRDC maintains approximately 400 count locations in the database with counts being collected on a rotating basis over a four year cycle. This system is integrated with Google Maps to assist users in retrieving and presenting data and information.

Planting Trees

WMSRDC is continuing its Urban Runoff Grant to plant more trees. In May of 2018 trees will be planted at five locations around Muskegon Lake. Fifty large street trees will be planted near the former Muskegon Farmer's Market along Ryerson Creek. Students at Nelson School will help the Muskegon Conservation District to plant 23 large trees and ten seedlings along the school property and soccer fields. This property runs along old Beidler Creek in which stormwater runoff still flows along underground. These trees will help retain and filter some of that runoff before it can flow into Muskegon Lake. During Grand Trunk Restoration Day (May 18), volunteers will help with the planting of 175 seedlings and 20 larger trees to mitigate soil erosion and runoff directly into Muskegon Lake. A Muskegon County Land Bank property off Getty Street and a former greenhouse site, will receive 455 seedlings and 15 large trees to help remove any harmful chemicals used at the greenhouse through the process of phytoremediation. The trees planted will keep the chemicals from leeching into Ryerson Creek and spreading downstream into Muskegon Lake. The final planting site is along Bear Creek near Witham Road, the location of last year's Bear Creek Nutrient Reduction and Restoration project. The 100 seedlings and 15 larger trees that will be planted will help develop the site into a usable area, anchor the soil, and filter the runoff from the residential area above before draining into Bear Creek.

MRWA Tree Plantings Grant Urban Stormwater Runoff Mitigation 2018 Spring Planting Update



Golden Township Master Plan

Golden Township has contracted with WMSRDC to help update the township's master plan. Golden Township, Oceana County is situated on the Lake Michigan shoreline west of the City of Hart. The master plan will communicate the community's vision for the future of Golden Township over the next 5 to 20 years.

Public input is an essential component of the planning process, and will serve as the foundation of the Golden Township Master Plan. This spring, a mail-in survey will be distributed to residents and land owners. In the summer, a series of public input meetings will be held to further identify the needs and desires of the citizenry. Members of the public will have yet another opportunity near the end of the planning process to review and comment on the draft master plan before it is officially adopted by the community.

WMSRDC will work closely with the Golden Township Planning Commission to complete the Golden Township Master Plan, which is expected to be finalized in early 2019. Please contact Stephen Carlson at scarlson@wmsrdc.org with inquiries regarding this or any other local government project.

Small Town and Rural Development Conference

WMSRDC staff attended the Small Town and Rural Development Conference on April 10 and 11 at the Crystal Mountain Resort in Thompsonville, Michigan.

The annual event, which is organized by the Michigan Rural Council, offers valuable networking opportunities and information about funding and technical assistance opportunities for rural communities. Breakout sessions featured presentations from local, state, and federal agencies on a breadth of topics, such as: rural broadband, workforce development, rural housing, civic engagement, and grant writing. The conference keynote speaker was Chuck Marohn, founder and president of Strong Towns. Coincidentally, the City of Muskegon recently won the international Strongest Town contest, hosted by Strong Towns.

As a result of attending the conference, WMSRDC is better equipped to serve rural communities throughout the five-county region.

Homeland Security Update

WMSRDC is in the process of wrapping up the fiscal year 2015 Homeland Security (HLS) planning grant which will officially close on May 31, 2018. Also in May, WMSRDC will begin work on the 2017 HLS planning grant. Work on the 2016 HLS Planning grant is well underway.

WMSRDC staff will attend the Michigan State Police Emergency Management Homeland Security Division (MSP-EMHSD) Annual Fiduciary Training on May 7 in Grand Rapids at the Amway Grand Plaza. The day-long training provides an opportunity for the fiduciaries administering the HLS Planning grants from across Michigan to gather together and learn about the roles and responsibilities of the fiduciaries, grant guidance, and new initiatives from both MSP-EMHSD and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA).

Welcome Our New Employee

WMSRDC welcomes Vicki Luthy. Vicki recently began working at WMSRDC in a part-time capacity in the environmental planning area. Vicki will also be working with the Homeland Security Grant Program. Vicki brings a wealth of experience and knowledge in environmental and financial management. Welcome aboard, Vicki.

Asset continued from page 1

WMSRDC thanks the local communities and subject matter experts that participated in the pilot from within the five-county region and the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) region. They include the City of Ludington, Pere Marquette Charter Township, City of White Cloud, City of Grant, Sherman Township, City of Fremont, City of North Muskegon, City of Muskegon, City of Muskegon Heights, City of Roosevelt Park, Muskegon County, Muskegon County Road Commission, Spring Lake Township, Village of Spring Lake, City of Ferrysburg, City of Grand Haven, Crockery Township, Grand Haven Township, Robinson Township, Ottawa County, and Ottawa County Road Commission.

Visit the WMSRDC website to learn more about the 21st Century Infrastructure Asset Management Pilot project and for a link to the pilot's final report and executive summary.

The West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission is a federal and state designated regional planning and development agency serving 120 local governments in Lake, Mason, Muskegon, Newaygo, and Oceana Counties. WMSRDC is also responsible for the management and administration of the homeland security program for the counties of Clare, Ionia, Isabella, Kent, Lake, Mason, Mecosta, Montcalm, Muskegon, Newaygo, Oceana, Osceola, and Ottawa. WMSRDC is also the planning agency for the metropolitan transportation planning (MPO) program for Muskegon and Northern Ottawa Counties.

James Rynberg, Chairperson, Mayor, City of Fremont
Wally Taranko, Vice-Chairperson, Mason County Commissioner
Bonnie McGlothlin, Secretary, Councilperson, City of Muskegon Heights
Kay Beecham, Councilperson, City of Norton Shores
James Brown, Oceana County Commissioner
Benjamin Cross, Muskegon County Board of Commissioners
Dean Gustafson, Oceana County Board of Commissioners
Jennifer Hernandez., Supervisor, Muskegon Township
Susie Hughes, Muskegon County Commissioner
Michael Krauch, Councilperson, City of Ludington
Charles Lange, Mason County Commissioner
Joseph Lenius, WMSRDC Appointee
Howard Lodholtz, Lake County Commissioner
James Maike, Newaygo County Commissioner
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Chris Ortwein, Newaygo County Commissioner
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