



Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan

2017 Update



**WEST MICHIGAN SHORELINE
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION
(WMSRDC)**

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.

The mission of the Commission is to promote and foster regional development in West Michigan through cooperation amongst local governments and other regional partners.



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Introduction

This document, the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan, is intended to guide present and future recreational resource development within the township to address the needs of all residents, including parkland, parks facilities, recreation programs, and public open space. It will cover the entire jurisdictional boundaries of the township, focusing on community recreation objectives within the township.

This plan, in addition to serving as a guide for recreation facility and program development, is prepared to satisfy the requirements set forth by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Recreation plans are required by the MDNR for state and federal grant eligibility to encourage communities to take a long-term view of their parks and recreation futures. Plans must not be older than five years and must be on file with the MDNR. For this reason, it is recommended that this plan be revisited in five years to review priorities, keep pace with changing conditions, and maintain grant funding eligibility.

Overview of the Planning Process

In 2005, Blue Lake Township contracted with the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC) for the purpose of developing a Community Recreation Plan. The resulting plan was adopted in 2006 and served the community through 2011. In late 2011, the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission conducted the five-year review of the recreation plan. That version was subsequently approved in early 2012 and served the community through 2017. For this 2017-2022 edition of the plan, Blue Lake Township enlisted WMSRDC to assist with facilitating and updating the plan once again.

Every effort has been made to present information that is current and accurate. Blue Lake Township and the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission shall not be held liable for any errors or omissions related to this plan. This plan is a general planning document. Therefore, a thorough investigation with original research materials should be undertaken before proceeding with any specific implementation decisions.

Citizen input is very important in addressing recreation-related issues facing the township. The planning process is most effective when all sectors of the citizenry provide input into the future of their community. The opportunity for input was provided through a public meeting, Township Board meetings, Planning Commission meetings, and public hearings. Notices of these meetings were published in the White Lake Beacon, a general circulation newspaper in Blue Lake Township, as well as on the township's website.

Function of the Plan

This particular plan is intended to *serve as a guide* for future township decisions and

actions related to recreation. It should be used by the decision-makers of Blue Lake Township based on the desire of the general public and the availability of resources.

The following are specific functions of this Plan:

- To provide a means for township residents to participate in determining the future of their community, thereby promoting the interests of the community.
- To establish goals and objectives to be used as a guide for future decisions regarding public recreation and open space and not to be competing with private enterprise.
- To outline implementation strategies that can ensure that future development is consistent with the goals and objectives of the township.
- To provide a detailed inventory of recreation facilities and assist decision-makers with development decisions related to those facilities.
- To designate suitable areas for future recreation development while encouraging the preservation and conservation of natural resources.
- To provide means by which grant funding can be secured for recreation related development projects.
- To prepare a plan that is consistent with Michigan Public Act 156 of 1917, as amended.

Legal Basis and Development

This plan is enabled by Michigan law, but does not carry the power of statutory law or ordinance. Its principles are derived from Public Act 156 of 1917, an act authorizing townships to operate systems of public recreation and playgrounds which states, in part that:

Sec. 1 (2-4). Townships may acquire, equip, and maintain land, buildings, or other recreation facilities. Townships may employ a superintendent of recreation and assistants. Townships may vote and expand funds for the operation of such a system.

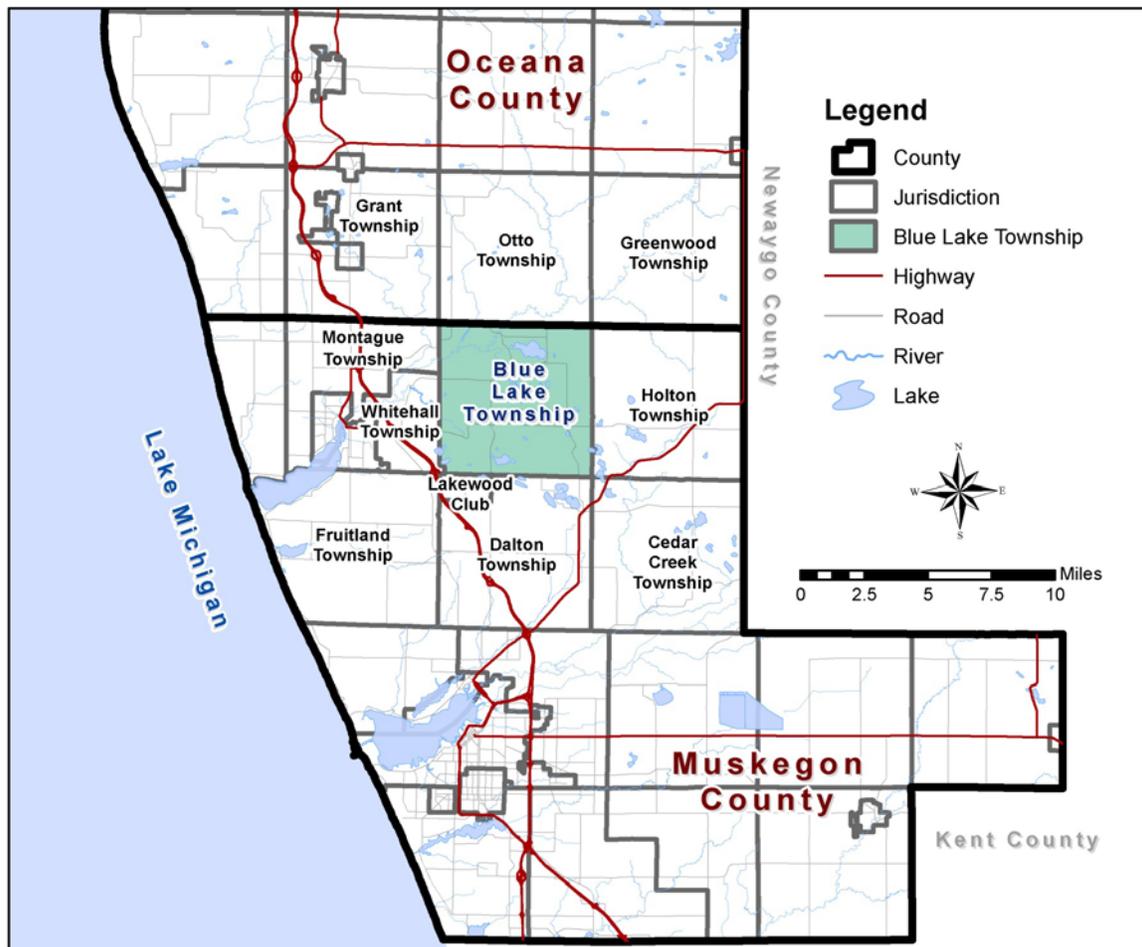
Sec. 3 (1-4). Townships may operate a system of public recreation and playgrounds independently, or cooperate with any other city, village, county, township or school district in its conduct in any manner in which they may mutually agree, or delegate the operation of this system to a Recreation Board created by any or all of them, and appropriate money, voted for this purpose, to such board.

Community Description

Blue Lake Township is located along the northern border of Muskegon County. The county is situated along the eastern shore of Lake Michigan approximately halfway between Traverse City, Michigan and the Michigan/Indiana border. The township has a total area of 35.7 square miles, with 34.4 square miles of land and 1.3 square miles of water. The vast majority of township land is covered by forests and other natural vegetation. The township lies within the management boundaries of the Huron-Manistee National Forests, and includes over 3,000 acres of federally-owned land. There are also numerous privately-owned camps which collectively occupy over 6,000 acres of land.

Blue Lake Township is bordered by Otto Township in Oceana County to the north, Dalton Township and the Village of Lakewood Club to the south, Whitehall and Montague townships to the west, and Holton Township to the east. The county seat, the City of Muskegon, is located approximately 15 miles to the south.

MAP # 1: Blue Lake Township Regional Map



Administrative Structure

Blue Lake Township does not own or operate any parks or recreational facilities in the township. In addition, the township has neither an advisory board authorized to make such decisions, nor does it have any staff designated for recreational duties. As a result, the township does not currently have monies allocated for recreational purposes.

Blue Lake Township does not currently request or receive volunteer work for community operated recreation facilities. In addition, the township has no recreational agreements with school districts, other public agencies, or any private organizations within Blue Lake Township. Private youth camps in the township occasionally partner with schools in neighboring communities.

Recreation and Resources Inventories

Blue Lake Township is blessed with abundant natural resources, including untouched forest land, precious wildlife habitat, and pristine rivers and lakes. Township officials and Regional Commission staff worked closely to generate a detailed recreation and resources inventory for the township. Several methods were used to assist in conducting an inclusive inventory. Although the township does not own or operate any parks or recreational facilities, there are several privately-owned and operated recreational facilities within the township, as well as two county parks.

The first method used in conducting the recreation and resources inventory included an extensive tour of the township and the recreational facilities located within its jurisdiction. Second, township officials, along with Regional Commission staff, reviewed maps of the township and identified the location and amenities of each recreational facility located in Blue Lake Township. Finally, during the public meeting, attendees were presented with the Recreational Facilities map and asked to comment and provide additional information regarding the facilities and resources in the township.

The following is an inventory of the privately-owned recreational facilities, as well as the two county-owned parks and trails within the township. Again, Blue Lake Township does not maintain recreation facilities at this time, and has never received grant assistance to develop parks and recreation facilities.

Privately-Owned Facility Inventory

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp:

Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp is a national leader in the instruction of fine arts to youth from around the world. Many of the students who attend the summer sessions come from as far as Europe, Asia, and South America, thanks to the International Exchange Program. The 1,600 acre camp opened in 1966 on the shores of Little Blue Lake, at

the same site as a previous camp, Camp Hardy. Hardy, the first camp located in the township, began operation in 1910. Its operator and owner was the Chicago-based Lawrence Home for Boys.

In its first year, Blue Lake Fine Art Camp hosted 280 students. Each summer, the principal camp program serves more than 5,400 gifted elementary, junior high, and high school students with diverse programs in music, art, dance, and drama while offering more than 175 performances during its Summer Arts Festival. Financial aid is available for many of the students that meet certain criteria, such as audition or portfolio, arts instructor recommendations, and in some cases, financial need. The camp is an inclusive facility, providing housing, dining, and entertainment for its campers. Many popular entertainers have visited the camp, including the U.S. Army Field Band, U.S. Navy Band, Bill Cosby, Bob Hope, Count Basie, Dizzy Gillespie, and Victor Borge. Blue Lake has had over 300,000 campers in its first 50 years.

Website: <http://www.bluelake.org/>

Owasippe Scout Reservation:

The largest operating camp in Blue Lake Township belongs to the Boy Scouts of American Pathways to Adventure Council (formerly Chicago Area Council). Established in 1911, it boasts the title of the oldest continuous Scout Camp in the nation and is one of the five largest BSA-owned parcels in their “Central Region,” which encompasses 16 states in the Midwest. Owasippe Scout Reservation encompasses about 4,766 acres of land in the middle of Blue Lake Township, and is therefore very important to the township from several standpoints. With regard to land use, social activities, and economic and environmental concerns, the Boy Scouts of America have a significant influence in the township.

Scout camping is not the only recreational use of the Owasippe Scout Reservation property. Throughout the year, it is frequently used by the public for activities such as hiking, mountain biking, cross-country skiing, fishing, and hunting. In addition, according to a 2002 BioBlitz assessment conducted by the Nature Conservancy, the property was home to 19 animal species listed by the State of Michigan as being threatened, endangered, or having “special concern”, and three of which were also listed at the federal level by the 1998 Federal Endangered Species Act. These three animals are the Karner Blue butterfly (endangered), Bald Eagle (threatened), and the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake (candidate for federal status). The Bald Eagle was delisted from the federal list in 2007, and the Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake was upgraded to threatened status in 2016. The Karner Blue Butterfly remains endangered.

Boy Scouts annually populate the Owasippe Scout Reservation during the summer months of June, July, and August. At its peak in the 1960’s, Owasippe annually hosted about 13,000 Boy Scouts, and had a capacity of 16,000. In the early 2000’s, the number of campers had reduced to approximately 1,300 Chicago-area Boy Scouts and approximately 1,300 Boy Scouts from other areas. Since then, annual attendance has gradually increased.

After years of consideration, the Chicago Area Council resolved in 2002 to sell the property because of the steady decline in campership and due to its financial situation. By 2004, the Boy Scouts had a prospective buyer and had asked the township for a rezoning request as a prerequisite to the sale of Owasispe. The request called for approximately 3,500 acres at Owasispe to be rezoned from forest/recreation to residential, allowing for the development of homes, condominiums, and camping lodges. The zoning variance was denied by the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission at its March 15, 2006 meeting, and the prospective deal fell apart in 2008 following a court decision upholding the township's rezoning denial.

Website: http://pathwaytoadventure.org/?load_cms=61

Camp Pandalouan:

Camp Pandalouan is a YFCA-sponsored four season camp that is an accredited member of the American Camp Association. It is located on 150 acres in Blue Lake Township near Big Blue Lake, the Manistee National Forest, and the White River. Pandalouan offers numerous programs throughout the year such as: overnight camps, day camps, family camps, seasonal events, and school programs. Pandalouan hosts several specialty camps and events, such as Women's Adventure Weekend and Halloween Camp, and is also available for retreats and rentals.

The camp maintains outdoor education programs throughout the year on topics such as Michigan history, outdoor science, physical education, and group skills. Camp programs may also be tailored to fit with school curriculum. Some of the camp's facilities include:

- ◆ One-half mile frontage on beautiful Big Blue Lake
- ◆ Outdoor chapel with seating for over 200
- ◆ Heated year-round cabins
- ◆ Nikana Lodge and dining hall with an incredible view of Big Blue Lake
- ◆ 2 Outdoor Pavilions
- ◆ Classrooms (indoors and out)
- ◆ The Great Bear Fire Circle
- ◆ 150 acres of mature oak and pine forest adjacent to Manistee National Forest
- ◆ 100-yard athletic field

Website: <http://www.pandalouan.org/>

Gerber Scout Reservation:

First opened in 1951, Gerber Scout Reservation is located in the Manistee National Forest and operates Boy Scout Summer Camp and Webelos & Cub Scout Summer Camp. The camp is located within the Boy Scouts of America President Ford Field Service Council of the Michigan Crossroads Council. The property is located directly to the east of Camp Owasispe, is almost 800 acres, and contains Big Britton Lake, Little Britton Lake, and Mayo Lake.

In recent years, Gerber Scout Reservation attendance has swelled from 900 in 1997 to

over 2,500 in 2012. Much of this increase can be attributed to the 1998 initiation of the Cub Scout and Webelos Adventureland, a section of the camp dedicated to Cub Scouts. Gerber currently has the capacity to accommodate 425 Boy Scouts, 200 Cub Scouts each week or session.

Activities offered at the camp include the Waterfront, Honor Ground, Climbing Tower/COPE, Scoutcraft, Handicraft, Environmental Resource Center, Archery, and Shooting Sports. In 2008, a Technology Center was added to the camp, offering a new-age spin on the traditional summer camp experience. The new dining hall, named the Frank K. Merrill Centennial Dining Hall, was completed in time for the 2010 summer camp season. Centennial Dining Lodge boasts state of the art facilities, a capacity of over 700, and a safe place to take shelter.

Website: <http://michiganscouting.org/outdooradventures/properties/gerber-scout-reservation/>

Pioneer Trails:

Pioneer Trails, formerly known as Camp Emery, rests on 48.8 acres, including ¼ mile of Big Blue Lake frontage, on the edge of the Manistee National Forest. With the help of Rotary International Muskegon sponsorship, Camp Emery began when Rotary members' interest in the Children's Home stimulated a movement to establish a summer camp for underprivileged children, with the dual role of improving physical condition and of aiding in character building. Rotary raised \$33,000 for the purchase of property from the Blue Lake Club on Big Blue Lake, and for the preparation of existing buildings for use as a camp. The Children's Home organization sought out underprivileged children to be given the benefits of the camp, and conducted the activities of the camp during the summer season, while the Rotary financed its operations and supervised the maintenance of the property. Later, Rotary financed camp additions and improvements, such as a dining hall and kitchen. In 1976, Rotary spent over \$30,000 to refurbish buildings, build new cabins, and update sanitary facilities. In 1988, Camp Emery was renamed to Pioneer Trails, and is now primarily used by Pioneer Resources. Pioneer Trails is the host site for camp programs serving many specialized populations, including the following:

Pioneer Trails Day Camp

Day camp packs fun and friendship into multi-week sessions throughout the summer. These sessions are designed to serve children and young adults with intellectual or developmental disabilities and to provide respite for families caring for children with special needs. To be eligible, campers must be between the ages of six and twenty-six and still attending school. Each session of camp lasts approximately three weeks and is in session Monday – Thursday.

Camp Bold Eagle

Pioneer Trails is the host site for Camp Bold Eagle, a program of the Hemophilia Foundation of Michigan (HFM). Founded in 1969, Camp Bold Eagle is the oldest camp of its kind in the country serving children with hereditary bleeding disorders. Visit the Camp Bold Eagle page of HFM for information including camp dates and how to apply.

Camp Courage

For many years, Pioneer Trails has been the host site for this Harbor Hospice program. Any child who has experienced the death of a loved one can apply for Camp Courage. Planned activities help the children recall and preserve memories in a safe and secure environment. Visit the Camp Courage website for more information.

Camp Shout Out

Camp Shout Out brings together youth with fluency disorders, speech-language pathologists, and graduate students, guided by Board Certified Specialists-Fluency (BCS-F) to learn, teach and empower each other to become more competent communicators and therapists in a safe, fun and natural environment. Visit the camp website to learn more about Camp Shout Out.

Website: <http://www.pioneerresources.org/pioneer-trails/>

White River Campground:

The White River Campground is located in the northwestern corner of Blue Lake Township along the White River. Activities available at the campground include canoeing, kayaking, natural trails, tubing, fishing, basketball, volleyball, horseshoes, and wading creek. The facilities and services of the campground include cabins, full service camp sites, primitive camp sites, restroom buildings, camp store, recreation hall, picnic shelter, laundry room, heated pool, propane, dump station, pump out service, and free wireless internet hotspot. The White River Campground is open from May 1 through October 15.

Website: <http://www.whiterivercampground.com>

Happy Mohawk Canoe Livery:

Happy Mohawk Canoe Livery is located in the northwestern corner of Blue Lake Township along the White River. It offers choices from canoes, kayaks, rafts, and tubes for enjoying the beautiful White River. Happy Mohawk also provides two picnic areas along the river and encourages fishing. Trips include one, three, four, or seven hours with transportation provided.

Website: <http://happymohawk.com/>

Oak Knoll Family Campground:

Oak Knoll Family Campground is located on 20 acres on the north side of Big Blue Lake. The campground provides rustic sites or sites with electric, electric with water, and a full hook-up campground. Two cabins with ceiling fans and air conditioning that can sleep up to four persons are also available. Amenities of the campground include a camp store, laundry room, pavilion, modern bathrooms with showers, dishwashing station, playground (swings, slides, and climbing tower), games (tetherball, volleyball, basketball, and horseshoes), cabin rental, full amenity trailer rental, boat rental, and picnic table with fire ring on every site. The camp operates from mid-May through September.

Website: <http://www.oakknollfamilycampground.com>

County-Owned Facility Inventory

Deremo Boat Launch:

Deremo Boat Launch is a paved launch and is maintained for boating, water-skiing and fishing. The Deremo access site is located on Fruitvale Road on the north side of Big Blue Lake. Hours of operation are from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. and it is open year-round with limited snow removal. There are no fees for use of this boat launch or for parking at this site. No daily or annual permits are needed at this site.

Website: <http://www.muskegoncountyparks.org/park-facilities>

Blue Lake County Park:

Blue Lake County Park is located along the southeast shore of Big Blue Lake. The park is 25 acres with nearly 600 feet of frontage along Big Blue Lake. The park is a perfect place for fishing, boating, water-skiing, picnicking, swimming, sunbathing, and camping. Blue Lake County Park is open daily throughout the year. Hours vary: 8:00 a.m. to 10 p.m. May through September; and sunrise to sunset October through April.

Website: <http://www.muskegoncountyparks.org/blue-lake-park>

Trails

Holton Loop Motorcycle Trail

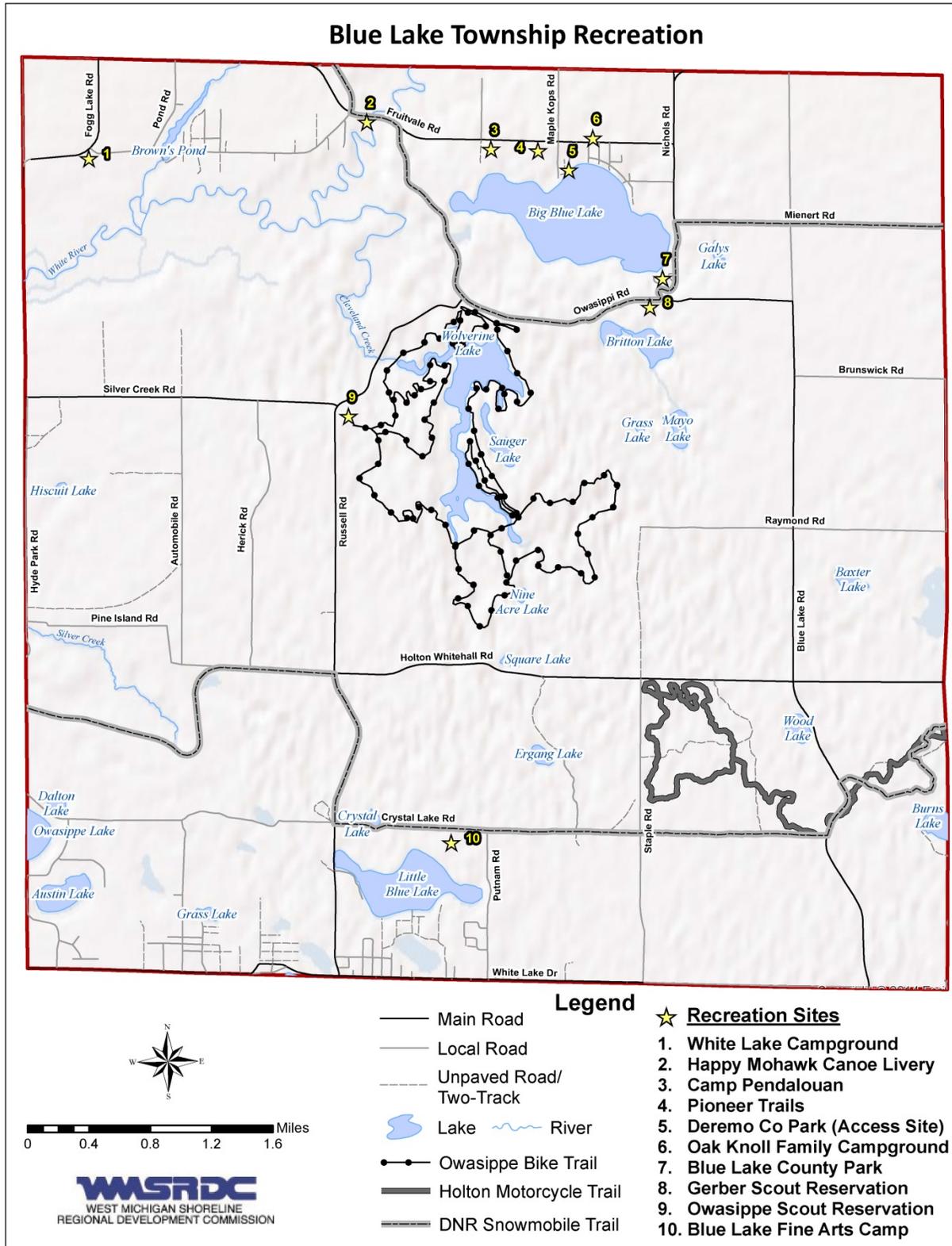
This trail extends into the southeast area of the township on federal land. It is for motorcycles only, and riders are required to have a MDNR ORV license, trail permit, and Secretary of State license.

White River Water Trail

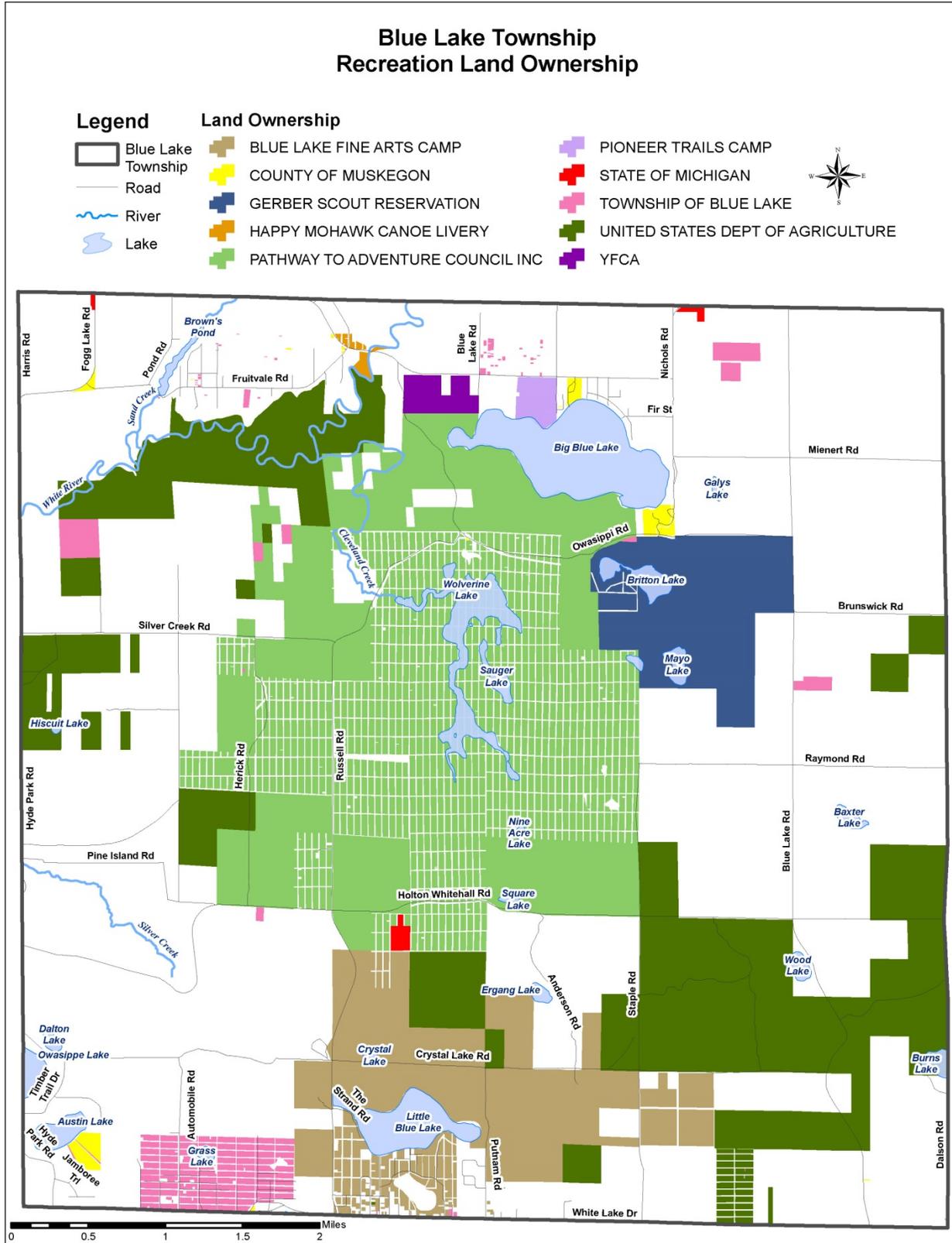
The Lake Michigan Water Trail Plan designates the White River from the Village of Hesperia downstream to White Lake as the 15-mile White River Water Trail. A portion of this trail winds through the northwest corner of Blue Lake Township. Generally speaking, water trails are recreational routes on waterways with a network of public access points supported by broad-based community partnerships. Water trails provide both conservation and recreational opportunities. The Lake Michigan Water Trail Plan is available for download at <http://wmsrdc.org/publications/>.

Website: www.michiganwatertrails.org

Map #2 – Recreation Sites



Map #3 – Recreation Land Ownership



Description of Public Input Process

In preparing the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan, two methods were utilized to solicit public input. The first method was conducted during the initial stage of plan development. The community was invited and encouraged to attend a public input meeting during the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission meeting on Wednesday, November 16, 2016 at 7:00 PM at the Blue Lake Township hall. The meeting coincided with a public meeting to gather community input for the Blue Lake Township Comprehensive Plan planning process. It was promoted in the White Lake Beacon, a paper of local circulation, as well as on the Township's website prior to the date of the public input meeting.

The public meeting was conducted by Regional Commission staff with participation from the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission members. During the meeting, attendees were presented with information regarding recreation planning including a description of the purpose and components of a recreation plan. Following the presentation, attendees were asked to complete a questionnaire regarding recreation opportunities and facilities within Blue Lake Township. The questions included the following:

- What do you like about the existing recreation facilities in Blue Lake Township?
- What don't you like about the current recreation facilities in Blue Lake Township, or what would you like changed?
- What new programs or facilities would you like developed in Blue Lake Township?
- Other comments regarding future recreation opportunities in Blue Lake Township.

After completing the questionnaires individually, participants were asked to share their responses with the group. The following responses were collected during the group activity. These results were used to evaluate the goals and objectives of the Community Recreation Plan.

What do you like about the existing recreation facilities in Blue Lake Township?

- Low-key, quiet
- "Great"
- Public access points on Big Blue Lake
- The snowmobile trail system is a good asset for residents
- There are dirt bike trails on the federal property
- Hunting on federal property
- Fishing
- Camping

What don't you like about the existing recreation facilities in Blue Lake Township, or what would you like changed?

- Blue Lake Park should be upgraded
- Lack of a bicycle trail connection to Hart-Montague Trail and Whitehall/Montague

What new programs or facilities would you like developed in Blue Lake Township?

- Better roads / wider / smoother
- More commercial camping opportunities
- Blue Lake Township Dude Ranch
- ORV use on side of road

What new programs or facilities would you like developed in Blue Lake Township?

- Advertise in state and adjoining states for township recreation opportunities
- Work on a recreation grant

Upon completion of the draft Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan, it was presented to the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission for their review and comment at their Wednesday, September 13, 2017 regular Planning Commission meeting.

The second method used to solicit public input was undertaken after the proposed draft was reviewed and agreed upon by the Planning Commission and the Township Board. The proposed plan was placed on display at the township hall and on the township's website for the required public review period. The public review period spanned September 18, 2017 through October 17, 2017. At the regularly scheduled Blue Lake Township Planning Commission Meeting on October 18, 2017, a public hearing was held to receive comments regarding the proposed Community Recreation Plan. Both the public review period and the public hearing were publicized on the township's website and through notices published in the White Lake Beacon on September 17, 2017 and October 8, 2017.

No public comments regarding the proposed draft plan were submitted in writing prior to the public hearing. No public comments were submitted during the public hearing. At its regular meeting, following the public hearing, the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission passed a resolution to recommend approval of the plan to the Blue Lake Township Board. The Blue Lake Township Board adopted this plan by official resolution at its regular meeting on November 13, 2017.

Goals and Objectives

During the recreation public input meeting held on November 16, 2016, the participants discussed many aspects of recreation within Blue Lake Township and provided valuable input regarding their wishes and desires regarding recreational programs and facilities within the township. The Planning Commission used this information to help evaluate community's goals and objectives, which had been identified for the previous edition of this plan. Many of the following items are carried over from the previous plan, however a few appropriate revisions were made to ensure the goals and objectives remain consistent with known public opinions and desires. Please note that the goals and objectives are listed in no particular order. Lastly, the following goals are referenced in the Goals & Objectives section of the 2017 Blue Lake Township Comprehensive Development Plan Update.

GOAL: Increase public recreational opportunities within Blue Lake Township for residents of all ages.

- Establish and maintain a township recreation committee/board to oversee recreational activities/programs within the township.
- Develop township-owned property in the southwest corner of the township for recreational uses.
- Encourage the expansion of recreational uses in the township, including the utilization of existing camps on a year-round basis and increased usage of existing non-motorized trails and water trails.
- Improve township roads to incorporate wider and smoother bike lane shoulders.
- Create cross country/nature/bike trails within the township and where possible connect the trails to existing local, county and state trail systems, such as the Hart-Montague Trail.
- Identify recreational opportunities for residents to take advantage of the community's natural resources on a year-round basis.

GOAL: Increase communication between Blue Lake Township and other recreational providers, including surrounding communities and private businesses.

- Communicate and work cooperatively with Muskegon County Parks and Recreation officials regarding the maintenance and improvement of county-owned parks within Blue Lake Township.

- Maintain an open relationship with the federal government regarding federally-owned and operated land within the township.
- Establish and maintain an open relationship between Blue Lake Township and private recreational providers within the township.
- Facilitate coordination of recreation programs between local schools and the township's camp facilities.
- Create and maintain a working relationship with county, state, and federal officials to investigate recreational facility development within the township.

GOAL: Maintain the natural resources and rural character of Blue Lake Township through recreational uses.

- When possible, maintain property for open space and recreational opportunities in order to retain the township's natural resources and rural character.
- Maintain and/or improve the water quality in the Township's lakes, rivers, and streams.
- Utilize the White River Water Trail, designated in the Lake Michigan Water Trail Plan, for increased water resources conservation and recreation opportunities.

GOAL: Utilize and/or promote the vast amount of public land, open space, water bodies, and forested areas in Blue Lake Township for recreational purposes.

- Create an outreach program that will maintain the vast natural resources and recreational opportunities in Blue Lake Township.
- Consider installing signage for community facilities and programs within Blue Lake Township. Identify public and private lands for public ingress/egress.
- Create an inventory of possible outdoor and recreational activities the township has to offer and devise a strategy to maintain them.

Action Program

Over the next five-year period, the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan will be used by the leaders of the township to accomplish the goals set forth through this planning process. Through the planning process, it became apparent that the township is dedicated to providing recreational opportunities to community residents and visitors; capitalizing on the township's abundant natural resources while maintaining the community's rural character. Township officials also recognize that this will not be an easy task, but are committed to achieving the goals established through the creating of the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan.

A major theme of this plan is to support communication and coordination with other recreational providers. The township recognizes the importance of maintaining open lines of communication with recreational providers, not only within the township, but also in surrounding communities. These providers include private business owners, youth camps, the local school districts, as well as county, state, and federal recreational officials. Township officials will strive to work closely with these and any other recreational organizations in order to increase the opportunities for recreation to all residents within Blue Lake Township.

As one of the first steps toward accomplishing the goals and objectives of this plan, the township would like to establish a recreation committee to assist in recreation planning within the township. The recreation committee will work closely with both the Township Planning Commission and Township Board to bring the goals and objectives to fruition. The township will seek community participation in the process by asking for volunteers to serve on the recreation committee, which will be appointed by the Township Board. Once established, the recreation committee will be responsible for accomplishing and maintaining the goals and objectives of the Community Recreation Plan.

Blue Lake Township owns property in the southwest corner of the township. The previous edition of this plan cited desires to develop this property for recreational uses, including nature trails, a ball field and/or soccer field, and playground equipment for residents to enjoy. The recreation committee, with assistance and approval from the Planning Commission and Township Board, will be responsible for recommending an appropriate recreational use for the property. In addition, the development of this property will require extensive community input and support which will be solicited by the recreation committee.

Above all, it was demonstrated throughout the planning process that the township officials, as well as the residents of Blue Lake Township, wish to help maintain the natural resources and rural character of the township through recreational uses. The township offers abundant natural resources including its lakes, rivers, streams, groundwater, woodlands, and unique wildlife habitats. The residents of Blue Lake Township cherish these resources and consider it an utmost priority to preserve and protect these features. In addition to preserving and protecting the natural resources, participants of the planning process also found it important to provide recreational uses

for residents to experience the many valuable natural treasures found within the township. Therefore, it will be a priority of the Blue Lake Township Board, Planning Commission, and recreation committee to provide recreational opportunities that will protect, preserve, and highlight the unique natural features found within the township and to take prudent steps to assure that the water quality in the Blue Lake Township's lakes, rivers, and streams is maintained. This process may include the development of outdoor cross country/nature/bike trails throughout the township, as well as the purchase of additional property to remain in open space or for recreational uses.

Conclusion

If properly used, the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan will assist Blue Lake Township in properly managing future recreation development. This plan is a guide for decisions, and should be consulted regularly. Public input is an essential facet of planning for recreation and should be utilized when recreation decisions need to be made.

The Plan should be updated as the local situation warrants, or every five years as required by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to allow the township to remain eligible for grant consideration.

Appendix A

Public Input and Plan Adoption Process

NOTICE OF PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING

Blue Lake Township Master Plan and recreation plan

The Blue Lake Township Planning Commission, with assistance from the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, has begun the process of updating Blue Lake Township's master plan and recreation plan. These planning documents will communicate the community's vision for the future of Blue Lake Township over the next 5 to 20 years. The master plan is intended to guide and support decision making by township leaders. Successful completion of the recreation plan will qualify the township for recreation grants offered by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Both plans must be reviewed and updated as needed every five years.

All Blue Lake Township citizens are invited to attend a public meeting on November 16, 2016 at the Blue Lake Township Hall, 1491 Owasippe Rd, Twin Lake, MI 49457. The meeting will feature SWOT Analysis to identify Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats to Blue Lake Township, as well as an opportunity to comment on recreation in the township. The meeting will begin at 7:00 pm.

For additional information about the Blue Lake Township master plan, recreation plan, or the public meeting, please contact Mr. Stephen Carlson, Program Manager, at (231) 722-7878, extension 11 or at scarlson@wmsrdc.org.



Financing Available at Super Low Rates
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HEATING & AIR
231-766-9133

NOTICE OF PUBLIC REVIEW AND MEETING REGARDING THE BLUE LAKE TOWNSHIP RECREATION PLAN

Please be advised that Blue Lake Township, with the assistance of the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission (WMSRDC), will hold a public meeting on Wednesday, October 18, 2017 to receive comments regarding the proposed Blue Lake Township Recreation Plan. The hearing will take place at 7:00 PM at the Blue Lake Township Hall located at 1491 Owasippe Road, Twin Lake, MI 49457. The meeting is open to the public. Those with an interest in the Blue Lake Township Recreation Plan are encouraged to attend. A copy of the Draft Recreation Plan will be available to the public for review at the Blue Lake Township Hall from September 18 through October 17, 2017 during regular business hours.

Written comments regarding the proposed draft may be submitted by Wednesday, October 18, 2017 to the West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission, 316 Morris Avenue, Muskegon, MI 49440 or via email at scarlson@wmsrdc.org. Questions should be directed to Mr. Stephen Carlson (231) 722-7878 (extension 11).

11/20/2017

Oct 18 – Special Public Hearing Minutes – Blue Lake Township

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Oct 18 – Special Public Hearing Minutes

Posted on October 25, 2017 by bladmin in - Planning Commission, Minutes

Special Public Hearing
Blue Lake Township Planning Commission
Blue Lake Township Hall
1491 Owasippe Rd
Twin Lake, MI 49457
October 18, 2017

The meeting started at 7:00 PM

Present were Jim Cordray, Barb Veldman, Mike Sikkenga, Mark Slater, Lyle Monette

Guests: Stephan Carlson from WMSRDC

The purpose of the meeting was to note any public comments regarding the Blue Lake Township Recreation Plan.

No comments were made.

The hearing closed at 7:10 PM

Michael Sikkenga
Secretary

Thank you for visiting the bluelaketownship.org. Please [contact us](#) anytime if we can assist you.

<http://www.bluelaketownship.org/2017/10/oct-18-special-public-hearing-minutes/>

1/1

Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan

Blue Lake Township, Muskegon County, MI

WHEREAS, Blue Lake Township has undertaken a planning process to determine the recreation and natural resource conservation needs and desires of its residents during a five-year period covering the years 2018 through 2022, and

WHEREAS, Blue Lake Township began the process of developing a community recreation plan in accordance with the most recent guidelines developed by the Department of Natural Resources and made available to local communities, and

WHEREAS, residents of the Blue Lake Township were provided with a well-advertised opportunity during the development of the draft plan to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the recreation plan, and

WHEREAS, the public was given a well-advertised opportunity and reasonable accommodations to review the final draft plan for a period of at least 30 days, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing was held on Wednesday, October 18, 2017 at the Blue Lake Township Hall to provide an opportunity for all residents of the planning area to express opinions, ask questions, and discuss all aspects of the proposed Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan, and

WHEREAS, Blue Lake Township has developed the plan as a guideline for improving recreation and enhancing natural resource conservation for Blue Lake Township, and

WHEREAS, after the public hearing, the Blue Lake Township Board of Trustees voted to adopt said Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan, and

WHEREAS, the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission passed Resolution #RESPC 20171019-01 recommending adoption of the Blue Lake Township Recreational Plan for a period of 2018-2022.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED the Blue Lake Township Board of Trustees hereby adopts the Blue Lake Township Community Recreation Plan.

Motion by Debbie Therman Support by Lyla Monette to adopt resolution #RES 20171113-01

Roll Call vote

Yeas: 5 Nays: 0 Absent: 0

ORIGINAL COPY

I, Jeff Abram, Clerk, do hereby certify that the foregoing is a true and original copy of a resolution adopted by the Blue Lake Township Board of Trustees at a Regular Meeting thereof held on the 13th day of November, 2017

Jeffery T Abram
Jeffery T Abram

Blue Lake Township
Muskegon County, Michigan

Resolution # RESPC 20171019-01

WHEREAS, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires a complete parks and recreation master plan as part of the criteria for grant funding from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund and other DNR grant programs.

WHEREAS, the Blue Lake Township Board and the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission have developed a five-year recreation plan covering the years 2018-2022; and comment period of 30 days; and

WHEREAS, the plan was developed with public input, including a public meeting, public review, and a comment period of 30 days; and

WHEREAS, the plan identifies the Township's commitment to provide recreational opportunities within Blue Lake Township.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission pass a resolution to recommend the adoption of the proposed Blue Lake Township Recreational Plan for the period of 2018-2022 by the Blue Lake Township Board.



Signature

Michael Sikanga Secretary Blue Lake Township Planning Commission
Printed Name and Title

10-19-17

Date

November 29, 2017

West Michigan Shoreline Regional Development Commission
Erin Kuhn, Executive Director
316 Morris Avenue, Suite 340
Muskegon, MI 49440

Dear Ms. Kuhn,

On behalf of the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission and the Blue Lake Township Board of Commissioners, pursuant to the requirements of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, we are transmitting to you the recently adopted Blue Lake Township Recreation Plan 2017-2022.

Please contact me at (231) 894-8898 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lyle Monette
Blue Lake Township Trustee

Enclosure

November 29, 2017

Muskegon County Convention and Visitors Bureau
ATTN: Bob Lukens
610 W. Western Avenue
Muskegon, MI 49440

Dear Mr. Lukens,

On behalf of the Blue Lake Township Planning Commission and the Blue Lake Township Board of Commissioners, pursuant to the requirements of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, we are transmitting to you the recently adopted Blue Lake Township Recreation Plan 2017-2022.

Please contact me at (231) 894-8898 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lyle Monette
Blue Lake Township Trustee

Enclosure

316 Morris Avenue - Suite 340 - PO Box 387 - Muskegon, MI 49443-0387

Telephone: 231/722-9362 - Fax: 231/722-9362

www.wmsrdc.org - wmsrdc@wmsrdc.org