



## **SBCI Monthly Meeting Notes – September 19, 2013**

**Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 1:03 p.m. by Laura Ogar.

Introductions were made around the room.

### **Blueways Trail Update:**

Don Hamilton of Lapham Associates/Arenac County Parks & Recreation and Tom McConnell of McConnell & Associates gave an overview of the Blueways Trail project. Both Arenac and Bay Counties received CZM Grants for the Blueways Trail Project. Mr. Hamilton reviewed some of the sample maps for Arenac County that show possible access points for the Blueways Trail Project. The sites have been rated according to initial review as being sites of High/Excellent Access, Moderate Access, or Emergency Only Access sites. A group of Kayakers will be going out to check the sites along the shoreline in Arenac and Bay Counties to further determine possible sites and ratings of access locations. We are looking for sites that are already partially developed that will need little work to make them viable for this project. Laura Ogar stressed that only sites with land owner approval with signed statement for use will be included on the Blueways Trail map. The Bay County Historical Society is also a partner in this effort and will be providing the historical aspects and information of different sites and locations.

A power point presentation was given on the Marketing for Blueways Trails by Mr. Hamilton and Mr. McConnell. The following are the aspects that will be focused on for the marketing of the Blueways Trails: Branding/Logo, Website, Brochure/Maps, Signage System, You Tube Promotional Video, Connectivity, and a Press Release Campaign.

Laura Ogar provided a sign-up sheet for those interested in being identified as Stakeholders for the Blueways Trails project. At the meeting there were three people that signed up: Alicia Wallace, Joseph Sancimino and Frank Starkweather.

### **Phragmites Treatment Update:**

There will be treatment of phragmites in the southern part of Arenac County and in northern Bay County in Linwood (South and North Linwood Areas) and Pinconning (Pinconning Park).

Michelle Vander Haar of USFWS explained the treatment process for phragmites, stressing the importance of keeping up treatment of this invasive plant. The USFWS is helping homeowners in the northern Bay County area by providing two years of phragmites treatment to help get the plants under control so that homeowners will be able to continue maintenance. The homeowners have to sign a 10-year commitment to continue phragmites treatment on their property after the initial two years of treatment. Within the next two years we should be seeing an improvement of the shoreline and a restoration of our native vegetation. Michelle Vander Haar reminded everyone that they need to get burn permits in some areas and that there is no cost for burn permits, so it's important to check with your area before burning phragmites.

The Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy is also doing phragmites treatments in the area.



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### **Cover Crops & Soil Coverage Program:**

Ronnie Maurer, NRCS provided an update on the Cover Crops project for phosphorus reduction. This program is being run through the Bay County Soil Conservation Service. Within the last four months, there are 3,000 acres of cover crops lined up to participate which include 1 – 2 ½ miles of drainage ditch buffers. The interest in this program is spreading. They are currently working with U of M-Flint on the marketing of this program. There are plans for tours of the program sites next year.

### **Upcoming Meetings of Interest:**

#### ***Partnership for the Saginaw Bay Public Input Meeting:***

The Partnership for the Saginaw Bay will be holding a Public Input Meeting **on October 8, 2013** at 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the Wirt Library in Bay City to discuss the various de-listings of Saginaw Bay Areas of Concern (AOC). Warren Smith explained that this will be a conversation about looking at removing the 60% loss of fish habitat from the AOC because the Partnership feels that the goal of restoring habitat has been achieved. If you are unable to make the meeting, please feel free to email Warren Smith at [wfesmith@sbcglobal.net](mailto:wfesmith@sbcglobal.net). Frank Starkweather asked about the reports on bird deformities from the 2012 report and questioned how a fish habitat area that has birds with deformities in it can be de-listed. Michelle Vander Haar said that there was more research being conducted on exactly how these birds are getting contaminated, besides through eating contaminated fish. Laura Ogar pointed out that the bird deformities are taking place in habitat that the birds share with fish, therefore it shows that the habitat is still negatively affected and has not been restored. Laura Ogar further stated that Bay County opposes the de-listing of fish habitat and that there is a need for habitat restoration. Warren Smith felt that the Partnership set a target and attained their goal because it's important to shift energies and focus into other areas.

#### ***Partnership of the Saginaw Bay Speakers Series and Annual Meeting:***

The Partnership for the Saginaw Bay will be holding a Speakers Series Meeting at Saginaw Valley State University (SVSU) on **October 23, 2013**. The Partnership Annual Membership Meeting will follow this meeting.

As there was no further business, the September 19, 2013 SBCI meeting was adjourned at 2:49 p.m.

The next SBCI Meeting will be on **Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>** from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Bay County Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Old Chambers, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City, Michigan.