



SBCI Monthly Meeting Notes – October 17, 2013

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

Laura Ogar discussed the Certificate of Appreciation for Warner Price for all his hard work on environmental issues. Clark Elftman will deliver the framed certificate to Warner Price.

Blueways Trail Update:

Harry Burkholder, Land Information Access Association (LIAA), was on the speaker phone to give an update and overview of the Blueways Trail project. Burkholder has worked on the St. Clair Coastal Water Trail and has a lot of experience with water trails throughout Michigan. Burkholder gave an overview of the Bay County Blueways Trail project. Laura Ogar mentioned that by the end of the meeting the group should have identified members for the Blueways Trail Project Steering Committee. Burkholder gave an overview of what we're looking to do, also about the training of volunteers to get access site data. He mentioned that it's a good idea to include not only the mileage between points, but also to identify the approximate paddle time and skill level required. It's a good idea to highlight cultural and natural sites that people will see on the routes. Ogar said that she already had some volunteers lined up to go out and evaluate access sites and possible water routes. Since it's late in the season, there will be a concentration on the evaluation and collection of land base data. Burkholder has a form that the evaluators can use at each site and fill out. Once the weather is better, a water base evaluation can be done of the sites.

Burkholder discussed the basic elements for access. He said that access can be identified anywhere there is access to the water such as marinas and road ends. It doesn't mean that these locations are the best access sites, however they should still be identified for the inventory. The work group will determine the best access sites based on their inventory and evaluations. The committee will also identify the best routes. Public land should be identified, especially for emergency exit purposes. The idea of using GPS units to locate access points was discussed. Burkholder feels there needs to be a connection with the DNR because they are willing to help with this project. With GPS coordinates can be placed on the State website map by Jay Anderson, the Bay County GIS Technician. It's important to remember that sites look very different from land than they do when you're in the water.

Ogar pointed out that the end result of this project will be providing water proof maps for people to use, as well as looking to see what can be done for smart phone users. Clark Elftman felt it would be very important to have good signage. Ogar thought that the use of signage and wind socks might be a good combination for marking sites. Burkholder said that the State was looking at what would be the best signage so that there would be consistency throughout the water trails in Michigan.

Burkholder would like to get someone to do training for the volunteers to show them how to use the evaluation forms and how to put that information out on the State Website. It's important to have water trails that connect with other water trails. Burkholder mentioned that it's important to have urban sites for access too. Potential sites should also be evaluated and have forms filled out for future planning purposes.



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Don Hamilton of Lapham Associates/Arenac County Parks & Recreation mentioned the importance of promotion of the water trail. It's important to let the public know that the trails are out there and available for use. Sam Lovall, of Lovall Associates, shared the Lake St. Clair Coastal Water Trail Paddling Routes map. It's a very nice color map, and was one of the first water trail maps in Michigan.

Ogar brought up the importance of working with the Historical Society for this project in order to help with the identification of historical landmarks and sites. Arenac County will be contacting the AuGres Historical Society and the Saginaw County Historical Society.

Meetings of Interest:

Saginaw Bay Water Access Public Input Workshop Meeting:

The public is invited to come and offer ideas and input on what they'd like to see to create better access to our own Great Lakes shoreline on **October 21, 2013** from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Davidson Room, DoubleTree Hotel in Bay City, Michigan.

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.

Blueways Trail Steering Committee Meeting:

The first meeting of the Blueways Trail Steering Committee will be held on Tuesday, **October 29, 2013** from **1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.** at the Bay County Building.

As there was no further business, the October 17, 2013 SBCI meeting was adjourned at 2:36 p.m.

The next SBCI Meeting will be on **Thursday, November 21, 2013** from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Bay County Building, 2nd Floor Old Chambers, 515 Center Avenue, Bay City, Michigan.