Bruce Township

Parks and Recreation Plan

Bruce Township
Chippewa County
Michigan

Parks and Recreation Committee

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Section I

Introduction

Purpose: The purpose of the Bruce Township Parks and Recreation Plan is to list available recreational facilities; catalog recreational needs and document priorities for recreational programs and projects in Bruce Township under the broad general guidance provided by the Bruce Township Master Plan. A recreation plan is also a prerequisite for state grants.

Goals: Three of the goals arising from the 2005 Township Survey and incorporated into the Bruce Township Master Plan form the basis for the Parks and Recreation Plan.

- **The township should develop more extensive parks and recreation facilities.** This goal should be addressed by forward-looking park and recreation plan. According to the 2005 Bruce Township community survey, 71% of respondents support limited park/recreational development on property adjacent to the township hall; 69% support the expansion and improvement of Dunbar Park and 70% believe the township should aggressively promote and support improved boat launching facilities in the township.

- **The township should support and promote the concept of "community" in Bruce Township.** According to the 2005 community survey, 85% of respondents support this goal.

- **The township should help protect natural resources important to the future of the township.** These resources include the water quality of the St. Mary's River, inland lakes and inland streams; air quality; quality and quantity of groundwater available for private wells; wetlands and floodplains; woodlands and fish and wildlife. This goal should be addressed by appropriate land use planning and zoning.

Geology: The present topography and soil composition resulted from deposits from the Wisconsin Glacier, which melted 10,000 to 20,000 years ago. Bruce Township lies primarily in the lake plains of two major glacier lakes, Algonquin and Nipissing. Remnant shorelines from Nipissing Lake can be seen along Ridge Road. Moraine-like features in the township include isolated level to rolling hills and knobs of medium and coarse textured material. A moraine is an accumulation of earth and stones left by a glacier. Organic deposits occur as bogs and swamps.

Surface Water: A portion of the St. Mary's River (Lake Nicolet, the West Neebish Channel and Munuscong Bay) forms the eastern boundary of the township. The Charlotte River drains the central portion of the township and empties into the St. Mary's River. Tributaries of the Little Munuscong River (which flows into the St. Mary's River in Pickford Township) drain the southwest part of the township. Hursley and Sailors Creeks empty into the St. Mary's River in the northeast part of the township. Deer Lake, Muskrat Lake and Roach Lake lie in the southeastern portion of the township. Beaver ponds and manmade flooding can be found in the township.

Public Land: Bruce Township has 14 miles of St. Mary's River waterfront (of which ¾ mile belongs to Michigan State University) and 6500 acres of public land belonging to the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Michigan State University. A large amount of the state land borders the Charlotte River as well as branches of the Munuscong River, affording public access to hunting, trapping and fishing.

Section II

Administration

1. The Bruce Township Board is a five-person elected body responsible for the operation of the township and has direct responsibility for all township park and recreation programs. Park and recreation expenditures are made from the general fund.

2. The Parks and Recreation Committee are comprised of six volunteers responsible for plans and implementation of plans of the parks and recreational facilities within Bruce Township. The volunteers are residents of the township. The township board approves all plans before implementation.

Section III

Existing Facilities

1. **Dunbar Park.** Dunbar Park is a 3-acre picnic and swimming area located at the northwest bank of the confluence of the Charlotte and St. Mary's Rivers. The facility is under a long-term lease by Bruce Township from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, which has leased the property from Michigan State University. The facility presently consists of a concrete boat ramp for small boats on the Charlotte River with a removable dock maintained by the DNR. A small parking area has space for a maximum of 12 vehicles with boat trailers and another 12 vehicles without trailers. The Township mows the cleared area of the park. The Township provides a single outhouse and a dozen wood picnic tables. There is infrequent unsupervised swimming along the beaches of the St. Mary's River. There is neither a charge nor an entrance restriction for use of the park.

2. **Bruce Township Hall.** Residents use the township hall, situated on an 80-acre site on East Twelve Mile Road for parties, receptions and organizational meetings. The hall contains a large multi-purpose room with a kitchen and restrooms. Township offices are located in the front of the hall. In addition to the indoor facilities there are several picnic tables placed on the lawn for outdoor functions. As of June 2006, volunteers were constructing an outdoor pavilion that will also offer grills, 6 horseshoe pits, 2 basketball courts, play equipment and portable toilet stalls. Construction is projected to be complete by fall. There are no organized programs conducted at the Township Hall for either adults or children besides the Senior Citizens Dinner, which the local Homemakers Club plans and provides.
3. **Chippewa County Shooting Association.** The privately funded and operated Chippewa County Shooting Association is situated on 80 acres of land west of Ridge Road and north of East Seven Mile Road. The association offers trap and skeet ranges as well as rifle and pistol ranges. They offer a safety course that is required to apply for a state-issued concealed weapon permit and a youth safety course. The association hosts a cowboy shoot and events for youths. The association is self-supporting and does not rely on township funding for any of its budget.
4. There are no federal, state or county public recreational facilities located in Bruce Township.

Section IV

Issues and Needs

1. **Issues**
   a. A small rural township has limited resources and revenues. Bruce Township is not eligible for Community Development Block Grants because it is too affluent according to HUD data (the formula and data elements for which are not divulged to the public).
   b. There are grant programs for various categories of projects.
   c. The Bruce Township Board and Parks and Recreation Committee should identify township parks and recreation needs independent of funding requirements; develop short and long-range projects to meet those needs; prioritize the projects and aggressively seek grant money to assist in funding the projects.
   d. It must be understood that parks and recreation projects must compete with other demands on the township's general fund.

2. **Needs**
   a. There are no other indoor or outdoor public or commercial recreational facilities for adults or children in Bruce Township other than those listed in Section III.
   b. There are no camping facilities in Bruce Township, although some resorts located here have a few hook-ups available for recreational vehicles.
   c. Dunbar Park has the only improved public boat launch in the 20 miles of the St. Mary's River between the DNR site on the Munuscong River in the Munuscong State Forest and the City Marina in Sault Ste. Marie, located to the north. The few resorts located in the township have limited launching capabilities and parking capacities for daily visitors. There are no public, developed launch sites for larger recreational boats on the St. Mary's River between Sault Ste. Marie and DeTour Village.

Section V

Short Range Projects (1-5 years)

1. Pavilion, horseshoe pits and basketball court at Township Hall complex. This project is currently underway.
2. Playground equipment at Township Hall complex.
3. Pavilion and playground equipment to be installed at Dunbar Park.
4. Fishing pond at Bruce Township Hall on East Twelve Mile Road.
5. Boat launch and parking facilities to be installed on Nine Mile Road. The township has made an offer to purchase the property at this location, contingent upon funding.
6. Construct permanent outdoor restroom facility and handicapped-accessible drinking fountain at Township Hall complex.
7. Encourage Boy Scouts and other organizations to utilize facilities in Bruce Township.
8. Add lighting and electricity to pavilion.
9. Install fire rings and post signs designating approved burn areas at Dunbar Park.
10. Place rocks in Dunbar Park to deter motorists from entering pedestrian zones.

(5-10 years)

1. Construct a soccer field located at Township Hall complex.
2. Construct an outdoor ice rink at Township Hall complex.
3. Create nature trails at Dunbar Park and on Township Hall property. Some of these trails can also be used as bridle paths and for snowmobile trail access.
4. Cross-country ski trails at Dunbar Park and on Township Hall property.
5. Skateboard Park at the Township Hall complex.
6. Purchase and install new playground equipment at the Township Hall complex and Dunbar Park.

Section VI

Long Range Plans (10-20 years)

1. Youth activities/programs
2. Community Garden
3. Ball field sited and graded at Township Hall complex.
4. Create and maintain elder programs
5. Host community events
6. Continue to improve and upgrade township recreational properties

Section VII

Bruce Township Parks and Recreation Committee Action Plan

Pavilion Project (2006-2007) In progress...

•Excavation of an area approximately 120x130 feet, filled with approximately two feet of sand with yards of topsoil planted with grass in the horseshoe pit area.
•Construction of a 28x40 foot pavilion with a concrete slab floor and two barbecue grills mounted in the concrete floor.
•Construction of a 28x40 foot concrete slab basketball court with basketball nets and poles mounted in cement.
•Six horseshoe pits at the end of the pavilion for personal and tournament use.
•Playground equipment to be installed: slide, swing set, jungle gym with slide, teeter totters, sandbox and merry-go-round.
•There will be 10-12 picnic tables for use in the area.
•Possible expansion of the playground area in the future.

Boat Launch Project (2006-2009)

•Purchase 28 acres at the end of Nine Mile Road (known as Nine Mile Point). Nine Mile Road location to be lifted, widened and black topped.
•Construction of a lighted parking lot to accommodate 40-50 vehicles with boat trailers to a combined length of 60 feet.
•Construction of boat launch with docks and dredging of launch site to accommodate deep-water boats.
•Construction of an enclosed building with electricity and running water for use as a fish-cleaning station and attached unisex bathroom.

Dunbar Pavilion Project (2007-2008)

•Replace existing pavilion with a 28x40 foot pavilion with concrete slab floor with two barbecue grills mounted in floor under pavilion.
•Install 10-15 picnic tables under pavilion with two park benches permanently mounted in the ground outside pavilion.
•Playground equipment to be installed: swing set, teeter totter, merry-go-round and slide.
•Several park benches placed along shoreline of the Charlotte River and permanently installed to deter theft or vandalism.
•Update restroom facilities to accommodate more people using the park.

Pond Project (2008-2009)

•Kidney shaped pond 150 feet wide by 300 feet long, at an average depth of 12 feet.

•Top soil will be used for landscaping around edges of the pond, planted with grass, shade trees and plants. There will be 10-15 picnic tables set up around the pond, with 5 benches overlooking the pond. An aerator pump with fountain and solar-powered light will be set up in the middle of the pond.

•Construction of a gazebo placed in the sitting area overlooking the pond.

•Have trout planted each spring in the pond.

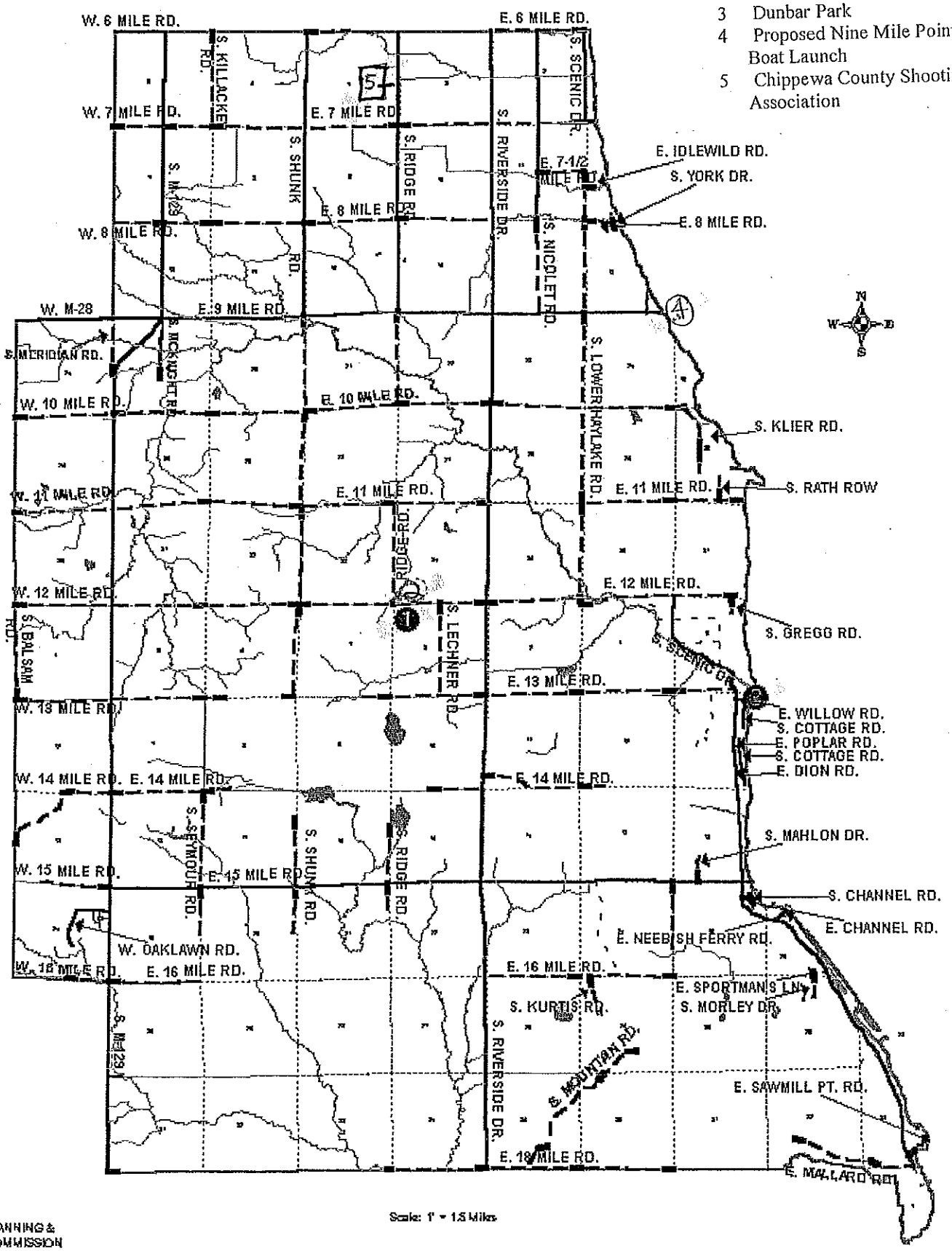
•Host adult and youth fishing tournaments and allow for daily fishing by local residents under the age of 16.

MAP 3

BRUCE TOWNSHIP

Recreation Sites

1 Bruce Township Hall
2 Bruce Township Elementary School
3 Dunbar Park
4 Proposed Nine Mile Point Boat Launch
5 Chippewa County Shooting Association



Scale: 1" = 1.5 Miles

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