

PERE MARQUETTE RAIL-TRAIL OF MID-MICHIGAN



**AN INTRINSIC CASE STUDY
OF A
SUCCESSFUL
RAILS-TO-TRAILS**

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DEDICATION

This research project is dedicated to my wife Deborah A. F. Knickerbocker and my daughter Jillian Merewyn Knickerbocker. Deb who moved with me and worked while I spent two years of our lives getting an education from Michigan State University. And to Jill who died at the age of 23 on January 25, 1997 from Multiple Sclerosis, may she never be forgotten and may she always be remembered with love.

**W. C. Knickerbocker, Jr.
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PREFACE

The structure of this report has five primary sections beginning with an introduction, an historical perspective, legislation, a detailed study of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) and ending with conclusions and recommendations based on the information gathered. The introduction states the hypothesis and addresses the methodology used for the study. The historical perspective section contains a literature review, and examines the history of greenways and rails-to-trails. The section on legislation gives a thorough review of Interstate Commerce Commission Laws, State Transportation Preservation Act, Michigan Trailways Act, and the Federal Trail System Act. These are the basic statutes that authorize the development of rails-to-trails. The fourth section examines the PMRTMM. A detailed traveling description of the trail will be used that was taken from the home page of the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan. Articles from local newspapers, local fund raising events, and trail brochures are used to briefly summarize the comments of citizens who have been involved with the trail. A detailed participants trail survey comments section was taken from *A Vision for a Linear Park in Midland County from Midland to Clare, Michigan*, the master plan for the trail. Finally, the report summarizes an interview with William C. Gibson, the Director of Midland Parks and Recreation. The report concludes by analyzing the data collected during the study and offers recommendations and strategies which other communities can use when building their rails-to-trails.

The conclusion suggests that people as advocates and participants are the key element to a successful rails-to-trail. Recommendations for future study include what are the economic benefits of Michigan rail-trails, how many people are using the rail-trail, what is the difference between a standard park and a linear park, how does crime along the trail relate to crime in the community, and how are property values changed based on adjacency to the rail-trail.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explain the types of greenways and trails that are currently being designed in the United States and addresses various issues that are involved with greenways and trails. These issues include varied concerns of the citizens who abut greenways and trails, an enormous perception that trailways cause a lowering of property values, citizens' concerns about the potential for crime, that trailways are paths giving access to drug traffic, that vandals frequent trailways with their cans of spray paint ready to deface private property and concerns about how the greenways and trails in their community will survive after being built. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) a linear greenway constructed along an abandoned railbed, will be used as a case study, to address the issues involved with designating, constructing and maintaining greenways.

This study explains how community involvement has helped to mitigate these perceptions of trailways development and contribute to the success of the trailways system. Few studies have been completed that document the relationship between community involvement and the success of a railway system. Community involvement is central to the success and future of a railway. The major thrust of this paper is to add to the growing information on rails-to-trails.

Literature Review

Greenways are linear paths which provide recreational opportunities for such things as boating, biking, hiking, skating, snowmobiling, cross-country skiing, rollerblading, and birding. They also serve a variety of purposes such as protecting sensitive environments, allowing plant and animal species a path for movement from one protected area to another, and allowing a variety of recreational opportunities. Greenways are found in a variety of environments and are used to connect city parks to each other, protect the natural plant structure along a river, connect forest areas together to provide corridors between these forest areas.

Greenways are found along old railroad corridors in the United States. Over 500 of these railroad corridors have been converted from rails to trails. This phenomenon started in the 1970's when local hikers found that old abandoned railbeds were excellent places to walk. These abandoned railbeds were usually found out in the countryside and were away from automobile traffic. Eventually, users organized local groups, called Friends, to develop these railbeds into rails-to-trails and expand these linear recreational areas to include both rural and urban areas.

Case Study Site

This case study looks at how successful the PMRTMM has become and looks at how the PMRTMM has grown in the past nine years. Growth does not mean length, but the variety of opportunities that greet the trail user along the rail-trail. A successful rails-to-trails will command user interaction and demand

continuous growth and maintenance. Maintenance has become one way that Friends groups show their commitment to a rail-trail and show involvement with keeping the rail-trail a viable and useful recreational draw to their communities. This is a single case study of one excellent trail and can be used as a bench mark for other trails, although each trail is unique.

Research Methods

Methods used to study the PMRTMM include researching local and area newspaper articles about the trail, evaluating the trail master plan prepared by The Pollack Design Associates Consultant Team, and an interview with William C. Gibson who is the director of Parks and Recreation for Midland County. Newspaper articles have been found that address trail issues from when the trail was first proposed, completion of the Coleman Mile and the dedication of the complete trail. Letters have been received from the Secretary of the Interior, the Governor of Michigan and many citizens of the State of Michigan. The master plan is a comprehensive look at the history of the railbed, the design and layout of the trail and is an indicator of the importance the community placed on good trail design. Mr. Gibson's interview is a detailed vision of what he felt the trail could become and ultimately, what the trail has become.

There are some deficiencies in the study because data were not available concerning the number of people who are now using the trail and Mr. Gibson feels this kind of study must be done; however, it is possible to comment on the types of people who are using the trail and the great distances they are willing to travel to ride the 21 mile long rail-trail in Midland County.

Findings

The PMRTMM was built because of a strong personal and public commitment to building a rail-trail for the citizens of Midland County. Strong leadership was given to the building effort by individuals such as William C. Gibson, Tom Pounders, and Carl Gerstacker. All of these people believed in a rail-trail concept and committed themselves to developing the trail. Over time there has been a strong sense of public priority and public participation. A local Friends group was formed and the other communities along the trail committed themselves to trail development. Funding came from the Midland Foundation which relies on citizen contributions and the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA). The citizens of Midland County raised the matching funds for ISTEA money. No tax dollars have been involved with the development of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan.

INTRODUCTION



Purpose

The purpose of this study is to determine why a community such as Midland, Michigan, is capable of developing a successful trailways system, the Pere Marquette Trail of Mid-Michigan, despite a perception that trailways cause a lowering of property values, that trailways are for elite groups of cyclists and joggers, that trailways are paths giving access to drug traffic and that vandals frequent trailways with their cans of spray paint ready to deface private property.

“Rails-to-trails proposal risky

To the Editor:

I read an article posted in a gas station yesterday concerning a group that is trying to get the counties to take the old CSX railroad bed and make a hiking and biking trail. On paper that might sound like a good idea but what about reality? The hikers and bikers of today are fighters not sportsmen. If the motorcycle gangs and drug dealers want new territory why not let them buy it? A decent person or child or animal, wild or otherwise, would not be safe anywhere near that trail. Talk about highway robberies, how many people would be robbed or murdered just trying to cross the trail on a country road? Wake up, America.” (Letter of protest early in the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail’s history).

“In any case we do oppose the creation of any portion of the trail that may affect our area. We would fight this to the full

extent of the law.” (Portion of letter protesting the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail).

“The citizens of Charleston Township also respectfully protest our tax dollars being spent for such activities that special groups create. Not only do they waste our tax dollars, they jeopardize the peace and security of our families, our homes and our property. The serenity and lack of foot traffic is why we chose this area to settle.” (Portion of letter protesting the Kalamazoo River Valley Trail).

For the complete text of these letters and a response to the Charleston Township letter, please see Appendix A. In addition, it is the purpose of this study to determine how community involvement has helped to mitigate these perceptions of trailways development and determine what relationships exist between community involvement and success of the trailways system.

The need for this study is based on the lack of analysis of the successfulness of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid- Michigan and that no study has been completed that documents the relationship between community involvement and the success of a trailways system. Further, there is a need to study trailways system usage and the types of usage. This will help to create better system access and a better understanding of the recreational possibilities for additional systems across the state.

The problems that are being addressed by this study are why has the Midland railways system been successful despite opposition to systems in Michigan and what is the relationship between community involvement and railways success in Midland. As an extension of this study, it is hoped that more studies of other successful communities will be done and will be added to the literature of successful railways.

Hypothesis

It is expected that there must be strong individual advocates who create the necessary beginnings for the successful starting of a railways system. Further, if there is not strong community advocacy for a railways system, the railways system will be a failure. Therefore, a railways systems success is based on strong community involvement from the conception of the project to bring a railways system into a community. By using qualitative techniques, the advocacy of individuals and groups that were involved in the successful building of a railways system will explain the success of the railways system. If the community advocacy groups are not involved in continuing this support, the railways system in the community will be in decline. Community involvement must be shown for a railway to continue, to develop and grow. Community involvement generates newspaper articles, correspondence and the necessary financial backing to maintain a railway. It creates the publicity necessary to encourage users and a rail must be used to be sustainable. Without the involvement of individuals, groups and a broad community effort, a railways system will not be successful.

Research Methodology

The primary purpose of this study is to understand why a trailways system is successful. A case study of a trailways system is being conducted by using qualitative techniques such as interviews, researching correspondence from trail advocates and opponents and by researching newspaper articles that relate to trailways issues. Because a trail is being pre-selected for this study and because of the author's interest in the trail, this is an intrinsic case study. (Stake 1995, 4)

There is an intrinsic interest in this trail and why it has become successful.

Key Interview

The case study will interview the leading advocate for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) who has continued working towards making this trailways system an enduring success. By using a qualitative interviewing technique, this study is designed to understand the meanings that the individual is communicating to the interviewer. (Rubin, 1995)

Document Review

Much has been written about the PMRTMM, by selecting this rail-trail system it is possible to benefit from the amount of information that has already been prepared. All correspondence, newspaper articles, and survey responses were gathered from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the Midland County Parks and Recreation office and the Master Plan.

Analysis

The analysis of the qualitative data collected is done by looking for individual involvement, citizen involvement and community involvement during the

acquisition, construction and the continued growth of the trail after its initial completion. Continued growth does not mean growth in length, but rather adding to trail amenities.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE



Literature Review

Literature that deals directly with a trailways system success is extremely limited. Most literature that deals with this success is from the popular media or from the advocacy groups that are developing the trailways system. Peer reviewed articles that use sound qualitative or quantitative methods have not been found for this study. There is extensive literature that discusses what constitutes a greenway and how greenways should be designed¹ and ecological landscape experts are now developing whole procedures for designing greenways for the whole earth community². Even as a trailways system becomes more important to the community, most of the literature deals with the attachments people have to their recreational experience³.

The National Park Service has published a resource book that describes the *Economic Impacts of Protecting Rivers, Trails and Greenway Corridors* (US Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1992). However, not having a basic example to design a study for a trailways system success should be viewed as a challenge and an opportunity to extend the literature about trailways. With the availability of literature that discusses why people are attached to trailways system

¹ Flink, Charles A. and Robert M. Searns. Loring LaB. Schwarz, ed. *Greenways: A Guide to Planning, Design, and Development*. Washington, DC: Island Press, 1993. Little, Charles. *Greenways for America*. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1990.

² Fabos, Julius Gy, and Jack Ahern, eds. *Greenways: The Beginning of an International Movement*. The Netherlands: Elsevier Science, 1995. Smith, Daniel S. and Paul Cawood Hellmund. *Ecology of Greenways: Design and Function of Linear Conservation Areas*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993.

³ Moore, Roger L. and Alan R. Graefe. Attachments to Recreation Settings: The Case of Rail-Trail Users. *Leisure Sciences*. (1994) 16: 17-31. Stokols, Daniel. Instrumental and Spiritual Views of People-Environment Relations. *American Psychologist*. 45 (1990) 5: 641-646.

and the outdoors, perhaps starting a discussion on why a railway systems is successful, with relation to a perceived value to the experience, would start the process towards understanding why people work so hard to establish a railways system.

In looking at why people view the success of a railway as important, there are two possible and different philosophical views of how people react to their environment. (A third philosophical view, the minimalist viewpoint, will not be discussed in this study.) “The instrumental perspective views physical settings as ‘tools’ for supporting individual productivity and organizational effectiveness---as the physical means for achieving key behavioral and economic goals....In contrast....a spiritual orientation in which physical setting are viewed not as tools, but as ends in themselves---as contexts in which important human values can be cultivated” (Stokols, 1990). In the instrumental perspective land is viewed as an economic resource, whereas in the spiritual perspective land is viewed as a place to cultivate the human spirit and enrich the experience of living. Table 2.1⁴ addresses the differences between these two value systems. As this study progresses, it is suspected that people who have worked hard on a railways system will exhibit many of the spiritual characteristics that are listed above.

Roger L. Moore has been able to show that recreationalists develop place specific orientations and place attachments. These place attachments are dependent upon the distance a person has to travel to get to a railways system and

⁴ Table quoted directly from Stokols, Daniel. Instrumental and Spiritual Views of People-Environment Relations. *American Psychologist*. 45 (1990) 5: 641-646.

Table 2.1

Differences Between Instrumental and Spiritual Views of People-Environmental Relations

INSTRUMENTAL	SPIRITUAL
Environment viewed as a "tool" as a means for achieving behavioral and economic goals.	Environment viewed as an end in itself, as a context in which human values can be cultivated.
Emphasis on material features of the environment.	Emphasis on symbolic and affective features of the environment.
Environmental quality defined primarily in terms of behavioral, comfort, and health criteria.	Quality of environments measured in terms of the richness of their psychological and sociocultural meanings, as well as their comfort, healthfulness, and behavioral supports.
Emphasis on the development of design standards and environmental prototypes in accord with the activity requirements of general user-group categories (reliance on exogenous design guidelines).	Emphasis on customized design in keeping with the unique needs of specific individuals and groups (development of indigenous design guidelines that are suited to specific contexts).
Emphasis on the distinctness and separation of key functions associated with public and private life domains.	Emphasis on the integration of public and private domains and on the increasingly multifunctional nature of environmental settings.
Research viewed as the discovery and application of generalizable knowledge; research activities assumed to be value neutral and separate from the social dynamics observed and recorded with particular settings; <i>greater emphasis on quantitative than on qualitative methods</i> . (Emphasis added)	Research viewed as a communication process that can enhance the awareness, participation, and cohesion of environmental users, and as a process for articulating and strengthening the values of participants; equal emphasis given to qualitative and quantitative methods.

the frequency with which a person uses a trailways system. He finds that age is important and that the type of activity for which the trailways system is being used is equally important (Moore and Graefe, 1994). Place identity and place dependency play a strong role in how a trailways system is used. It is possible that a trailways system will be more successful if it is promoted and identified as a place where activities take place in a safe environment. People who use a trailways system identify with the system and the success of the system grows with use. It becomes more successful. "Study results imply that how attachments develop may in fact vary for place dependence and place identity. The more functional place dependence may develop relatively quickly as long as the setting is convenient and good for a user's chosen activity, whereas the more affective place identity could require longer periods of time to emerge. This is consistent with the finding that the users of the oldest trail (the 14 year-old, suburban Lafayette/Moraga Trail) had significantly higher place identity than the users of the other, younger trails, whereas no differences in levels of place dependence were found among trails of very different ages" (Moore and Graefe, 1994).

Economics also plays a role in developing a trailways system. What does the community get from the system after it is in place? The National Park Service has developed a basic table (Table 2.2)⁵ that shows what a person must spend to access a system when using a variety of activities. The National Park Service believes that these kinds of expenditures can stimulate the local economy of the

⁵ Prepared by Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance National Park Service, 1992.

Table 2.2

10-A

<i>ACTIVITY</i>	<i>PURCHASE</i>	<i>LOW END COST</i>	<i>MID-RANGE COST</i>
Bicycling	Bicycle	300.00	800.00
	Helmet	50.00	50.00
	Lock	30.00	30.00
	Bicycle Rack		25.00
	Bicycle Pack		50.00
	Water Bottle		10.00
	Shoes		45.00
	Clothing		50.00
	Car Rack		150.00
Total		<u>380.00</u>	<u>1210.00</u>
Hiking	Shoes/Boots	45.00	120.00
	Socks	10.00	45.00
	Daypack	20.00	40.00
	Water Bottle	5.00	5.00
Total		<u>80.00</u>	<u>210.00</u>
Birdwatching	Binoculars	50.00	150.00
	Spotting Scope		200.00
	Field Guide	10.00	50.00
	Camera, lenses, etc.		1000.00
Total		<u>60.00</u>	<u>1400.00</u>
Cross-country Skiing	Skis	85.00	250.00
	Boots	40.00	90.00
	Bindings	10.00	30.00
	Poles	15.00	30.00
	Wax	15.00	60.00
	Clothing		100.00
	Gaiters		25.00
Total		<u>165.00</u>	<u>585.00</u>
Horseback Riding	Lessons	250.00	250.00
	Hard Hat	40.00	40.00
	Boots	100.00	100.00
	Crop	15.00	15.00
	Horse		1000.00
	Tack		500.00
	Boarding (annual)		2400.00
Total		<u>405.00</u>	<u>4305.00</u>
Skating	Inline Skates	85.00	175.00
	Wrist Guards	20.00	20.00
	Knee and Elbow Pads	40.00	60.00
Total		<u>145.00</u>	<u>255.00</u>

community and literature from the Rails-To-Trails Conservancy supports this supposition. This is done by increasing the need for the type of equipment listed. The economic success of a trailways system may be tied to the kinds of retail outlets that are available in the community and could possibly direct the community to the kinds of businesses that need to be developed.

One of the arguments being used against the trailways system is that these systems are being used by elitists who peddle around on \$1500.00 bikes. From an economic viewpoint, this is not bad, but it does not address the perception that these trailways are being used by a limited group of individuals at the expense of the local land owner. Therefore, more research should be conducted about the real economic benefits to the community as a whole and not for an elite group of individuals.

Conflict plays a role in the continued success of a trailways system and this should be a component of future research. This form of conflict, however, is between the variety of trailways uses and users. Conflict of this nature could possibly result in the decline of the successfulness of a trailways system and should continue to be researched. "The National Recreational Trails Advisory Committee identified trail-user conflicts on multiple-use trails as a major concern that needs resolution" (Moore, 1994). There is extensive literature on these kinds of conflicts and should help add to the body of research on determining why a trailways system is successful.

Finally, the major component of this study is to find out why a particular trailways system is successful. At this time it appears that no one is conducting these kinds of studies and an attempt will be made to expand the search for this information. Because there are limited resources for this study, it makes this study all the more important. If this study can begin to understand why a community has succeeded in building a successful trailways system, it may help other communities when they begin the process of starting their system. Also, it should help future researchers with finding ways to view trailways system research.

Greenways

Open spaces grab the eye, charge the senses, accelerate the beating heart or calm the soul relaxing in meadows lying next to babbling brooks. Experiencing the pull of open spaces urges the outdoors person to visit new places, leads to the discovery of the Yellowstone of the West or islands that time forgot in passing. Open spaces contribute to the reality of being human while maintaining a separate wildness viewed by experiencing what this wildness brings through interaction with all of the random possibilities of encounters. However, as populations increase and open spaces fragment, the United States teeters on the edge of destroying its precious natural heritage and the continuity of wild open spaces. The need for open spaces continues to grow as the population grows with increased interaction with members of society and reduced spatial relationships (Stokols, 1972).

Greenways are linear open spaces established along natural corridors or railroad right-of-ways and are used by humans, animals and plants (Little, 1990).

These corridors link recreational areas, natural areas, cultural features or historical sites and can be located in either rural or urbanized areas. Millions of Americans enjoy greenways each year and, along with the recreational benefits, provide connecting links for many animals and plants in an increasingly human trodden environment. However, notwithstanding the obvious benefits of greenways to both the public and the natural environment, greenways are not without vocal and violent detractors. Active private property rights groups are becoming increasingly vocal and violent in their verbosity and in their outrage at the public's access to a variety of land types that traditionally have been left to the farmer and rancher. Planners must create a better understanding of the ways needed to mediate this divisive process while showing how greenways benefit both the private property advocate and the public access advocate by the economical development that springs from the additional people who enter a community via the greenway system.

Greenways connect the fragmented landscape broken by human uses found throughout the United States. Most people experience greenways without a cognizant realization of this use. Walking along the banks of the Red Cedar River in East Lansing, Michigan, the trees lining the bank spreads a canopy over the river and the casual jogger or avid bird watcher. In the simplest terms possible, a greenway is a linear space following a linear physical feature of the landscape. Greenways can be used to create a connection between multiple parks or natural areas in the landscape (Smith and Hellmund, 1993). "Greenways can range in

form from narrow urban trail corridors to winding river corridors to very wide, wilderness-like landscape linkages. They can straddle waterways, traverse ridgelines, or cut across upland areas independent of natural geomorphic features. They occur in different types of landscapes, from cities and suburbs to farmland and commercial forests” (Smith and Hellmund, 1993).

Greenways variety is not limited to either city or rural community, river or railroad bed, or road or highway. Greenways move people and wildlife through a maze of trails that resist categorization (Little, 1990). Little lists five major project types of greenways being developed by communities:

1. “Urban riverside greenways, usually created as part of (or instead of) a redevelopment program along neglected, often run-down city waterfronts.
2. Recreational greenways, featuring paths and trails of various kinds, often of relatively long distance, based on natural corridors as well as canals, abandoned railbeds (there are many of these, as we shall see), and other public rights-of-way.
3. Ecologically significant natural corridors, usually along rivers and streams and (less often) ridgelines to provide for wildlife migration and “species interchange,” and hiking.
4. Scenic and historic routes, usually along a road or highway (or less often, a waterway), the most representative of them making

an effort to provide pedestrian access along the route or at least places to alight from the car.

5. Comprehensive greenway system of networks, usually based on natural landforms such as valleys and ridges but sometimes simply an opportunistic assemblage of greenways and open spaces of various kinds to create an alternative municipal or regional green infrastructure” (Little, 1990).

In the United States, a community movement has developed around creating trailways to establish links connecting parks and other green spaces. Generally, these areas are linear in nature and are collectively called greenways. Greenways support a number of specific functions such as protecting riparian areas, forming corridors for wildlife to move from one green island to another green island or connecting a broken landscape created by human settlement patterns. Increasingly, greenways are being developed with a recreational function in mind and with a thought towards the peaceful enjoyment of quiet green spaces. Nevertheless forming community trailways is not without criticism and is inherently difficult for any trailways association.

Charles E. Little, the leading advocate for greenways and author of *Greenways for America*, has spent a significant part of his life researching how communities are developing greenways and the excitement being generated by successful greenways development; however, in the literature leading to trailways and greenways development, there are few specific studies being done on

successful trailways. Numerous references can be found where conflict has become a major component of trailways and greenways articles and, in general, the current political climate is strengthening an anti-trailways movement which is responsible for some of the conflict being seen in trailways growth.

The following are examples of the conflict between trailways advocates and the anti-trailways movement. These examples are one form of greenways---rails-to-trails:

- “Hundreds of miles of potential rails-to-trails in Indiana are suffering from a backlash created by the Indiana Farm Bureau and a handful of adjacent landowners in the center of the state. The anti-trail groups have been given extensive coverage in local newspapers following a court decision in their favor. In June, 1996, the Indiana Court of Appeals ruled in favor of adjacent landowners who challenged Conrail’s ownership of the Sugar Creek and Wabash Heritage Trail, a 29-mile corridor between Crawfordsville, Indiana and the Wabash River. The court held that any railroad deed referring to a property as a “right-of-way” will be construed as an easement that automatically reverts to adjacent landowners upon the abandonment by the railroad” (Trailblazer, 1996).
- In Michigan, “Corn does not appear to grow well in old rail-trail beds,” said Rails-to-Trails Conservancy’s Michigan Chapter Director Ann Beaujean after touring blockaded sites along the Fred Meijer Heartland Trail August 28 with Franz Mojdis, Stanton City Manager and Friends of the Trail President. The

sporadic blockades along the RTC-owned and Friends of the Trail-operated corridor have been erected by adjacent landowners who sued for ownership of the trail and lost. All sections of the trail are passable, despite the sewage drainage pipes and the plowing and planting of the corridor” (Trailblazer, 1996).

Bombastic verbiage abounds in the local media of communities who have or who are thinking of trailways, about private property rights being usurped or that crime is a problem along trailways. According to the Burlington Vermont Police Department, the Stowe Recreation Path is one of the safest places in the town because it is generating only 0.0013% of calls to police over a 27 month period. (Trailblazer, 1996). With this one exception, there is neither evidence to support or contradict these assumptions about trailways. Along with this lack of evidence, there appears to be little analysis of a community’s perception of trailways or the perception of trailways in the areas surrounding trailways. A trailways success is based on a community’s willingness to compromise and willingness to work continually in the community to keep the trailways successful.

Even though there is a lack of specific evidence to indicate how successful trailways can be, a number of trailways are being developed in the United States. With a number of major national trailways organizations and many local groups involved in trailways development, trailways enjoy wide support and wide usage by the general public. Many books and articles have been written about trailways development during the past 30 years; however, little has been written about the

data needed to support the amount of crime on railways, the economic benefits of railways development or how communities bond together to develop a successful railways system. By communicating with successful communities and collecting data surrounding successful railways, it will be possible to start the process of describing the railways movement in the United States and helping communities with the process of convincing their citizens how important railways are to the recreational needs and the preservation needs of their community.

Rails-to-Trails, A Brief History

Rails-to-trails began quietly in the 1960s when railroad companies started to experience increased financial difficulty and began to abandoned various rail corridors across the United States. The first trail users were people who realized that they could take a quiet walk along a safe path and would find themselves traveling through undeveloped rural areas, crossing over old trestles, going through old railroad tunnels and going through natural areas that were still similar to the original natural areas of their community before development took place. The fledgling rails-to-trails movement began when advocates for recreation and advocates for environmental preservation began to realize that this was a resource that could be used by the community and, at the same time, preserve natural areas (Nevel and Harnik, 1990).

The first rails-to-trails were purchased with state moneys such as the Illinois Prairie Path in Chicago, the Elroy-Sparta Trail in Wisconsin and the Burke-Gilman Trail in Seattle, WA. The importance of these rails-to-trails is as varied as

the trails themselves. The Illinois Prairie Path in Chicago provided a much needed greenway in the urbanized area of Chicago while the Elroy-Sparta Trail in Wisconsin brought needed tourist dollars to a rural area that is scenically beautiful, but lacked enough attractions to bring tourists into the communities along the trail. The major importance of the Burke-Gilman Trail was that it introduced the concept of rails-to-trails to the country as a whole. When people at the University of Washington realized that they had an abandoned railroad running beside their campus, they asked the Burlington Northern Railroad to donate the property to them for trail development. The railroad company refused and the Interstate Commerce Commission stepped in with binding arbitration and ultimately this rails-to-trails was developed (Nevel and Harnik, 1990).

In 1976, Congress enacted the Railroad Revitalization and Regulatory Reform Act which added the Rails-to-Trails Grant Program under the Department of the Interior. The act was passed to provide much needed reform to the railroad industry that was experiencing difficult times with competition from the trucking industry. It set up grants to entities that wished to build rails-to-trails and helped the railroad with the abandonment of rail corridors that were no longer profitable. Also, it included the provision that allowed for the possible reactivation of rail service along these corridors.

“(b) Information and Funding - The Secretary of the Interior, after consultation with the Secretary of Transportation, shall, in accordance with this subsection, provide financial, educational, and

technical assistance to local, State, and Federal governmental entities for programs involving the conservation of abandoned railroad rights-of-way to recreation and conservation used, in such manner as to coordinate and accelerate such conversion, where appropriate. Such assistance shall include --

(1) encouraging and facilitating exchanges of information dealing with the availability of railroad rights-of way, the technology involved in converting such properties to such public purposes, and related matters;

(2) making grants, in consultation with the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation of the Department of the Interior, the State and local governmental entities to enable them to plan, acquire, and develop recreation or conservation facilities on abandoned railroad rights-of-way, which grants shall cover not more than 90 percent of the cost of the planning, acquisition, or development activity of the particular project for which funds are sought;

(3) allocating funds to other Federal programs concerned with recreation and conservation in order to enable abandoned railroad rights-of-way, where appropriate, to be included in or made into national parks, national trails, national recreation areas, wildlife refuges, or other national areas dedicated to recreation or conservation uses; and

(4) providing technical assistance to other Federal agencies, States, local agencies and private groups for the purpose of enhancing conversion projects. To increase the available information and expertise, the Secretary may contract for special studies or projects and may otherwise collect, evaluate, and disseminate information dealing with utilization of rights-of-way” (Nevel and Harnik, 1990).

Although \$20 million was originally authorized by the act, only \$5 Million was actually spent in grant money. This act was the compelling force behind the start of the rails-to-trails movement and ultimately nine rails-to-trails received federal grant money. Since this act expired, no direct federal dollars have been spent on rails-to-trails. State and local governments are now doing most of the funding for rails-to-trails conversions (Nevel and Harnik, 1990).

The original rails-to-trails that were funded by these grants are Mill Valley-Sausalito Path (Marin County, California), Northern Central Railroad Trail (Baltimore County, Maryland), M-K-T Nature/Fitness Trail (City of Columbia, Missouri), Delaware and Raritan Multi-Use Trail (Central New Jersey), Mohawk-Hudson Bikeway (Albany and Schenectady Counties, New York), Little Miami Scenic Park (Southeastern Ohio), National Trails Towpath Bike Trail of Palmer and Bethlehem Townships (Northampton County, Pennsylvania), Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park (Northern Virginia) and the Preston-Snoqualmie Trail (King County, Washington). As with all rails-to-trails, these initial trails had problems and successes that were related to public opinion and the perception of the trail (Nevel and Harnik, 1990).

Problems cover a wide spectrum from the fear of misuse of the trail by vandals, fear of misuse by motorized vehicles and motorcycle hoodlums, fear of misuse by hunters, littering, abuse by carousing fraternity students, unsightly and unsafe conditions, fear that property values will decrease, and a fear that homes will be unsafe from users. Successes include a willingness by the public “to trust the government to spend its money wisely on programs that will benefit the whole community”, adoption of the trail by the community and taking personal responsibility for protecting the trail, location in an area because of the recreational opportunities provided by trails in the area, increased property values along trails, expansion of private business to supply users of trails, access to fishing areas, and the addition of new restaurants (Nevel and Harnik, 1990). The problems and successes of these rails-to-trails can help with understanding what areas need to be addressed when starting the process to develop a new trail.

None of these rails-to-trails would have been successful if not for citizen involvement. These rails-to-trails have been supported by bicyclists, naturalists, equestrians, joggers, local businesses, local, state, and federal politicians and the US Supreme Court. Local citizen involvement is repeatedly indicated as the major reason these nine trails were built (Nevel and Harnik, 1990). The major impediment to the successful building of a rails-to-trail has been the strong public distrust of the trail system and the perceived problems that come with trail development.

LEGISLATION



In the State of Michigan the legal framework for rails-to-trails is covered by a variety of laws and acts which are described by the Interstate Commerce Commission, State Transportation Preservation Act, Michigan Trailways Act and the Federal Trail System Act (Michigan Statewide Trails Initiative, 1992).

◆ **Interstate Commerce Commission Laws and Regulations.**

“The Interstate Commerce Commission (ICC) regulates railroad operations across the nation. ICC procedures govern the roles and actions of all involved in the rail abandonment process, including public agencies and organizations interested in possible conversion of corridors to public recreation use” (Michigan Statewide Trails Initiative, 1992).

◆ **State Transportation Preservation Act.**

“A section of the State Transportation Preservation Act (Act 295, 1976) had a direct impact on rails-to-trails efforts. This act requires railroad companies, when selling an inactive railroad right-of-way in Michigan, to offer it on reasonable terms first to the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and second to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). MDOT’s interest in acquisition is in the potential for continued or future railroad or other transportation use. The DNR’s interest in acquisition is based on the recreation potential of the corridor. The Act also requires MDOT to offer inactive right-of-ways it owns to the DNR” (Michigan Statewide Trails Initiative, 1992).

POTENTIAL MICHIGAN TRAILWAYS

NAME/IDENTITY OF TRAILWAY		(PROPOSED) MANAGER	LENGTH (MILES)		INVOLVED LOCAL ORGANIZATIONS
			TOTAL	SURFACED	
Trailways Complete					
1	Hart-Montague Trail St.Pk.*	DNR Parks & Rec.	21	21	Oceana-Muskegon Trlways Comm.
2	Kal-Haven Trail St.Pk.*	DNR Parks & Rec.	34	34	Friends of the Kal-Haven Trl.
3	Kent Trails	Kent Co.	9	9	
4	Mackinac Island--main roads	State Park & village	8	8	
5	Macomb County Bike Path	Local gov.\agencies	5	5	
6	Paint Creek Trail	P.C. Trailways Comm.	10	10	P.C. Trailways Comm.
7	Pere Marq. Rail-Trl.of Mid-Mi.	County\City of Midland	21	21	Friends of the P.M. Rail-Trl.
8	Traverse Area Rec. Trail	City of Traverse City	7	7	Friends of TART
9	West Bloomfield Rail-Trail	West Bloomfield Twp.	4	4	
TRAILWAY MILEAGE COMPLETE			119	119	
Trailways Under Development					
10	Fred Meijer Heartland Trail	Local commission	33		Friends of F.M.Heartland Trl.
11	Huron Valley Trail Phase I	Loc.gov.\agen.,DNR P&R	11		W.Oakl.Co.Rd.& Bike Path Dev.Com.
12	Ionia-Lyons Trail	City of Ionia\DNR	4		Ionia-Grand Ledge Trail Group
13	Jackson trailway	City of Jackson	3	2	Jackson Rec.Trls.Coalition
14	LakeLands Trail State Park	DNR Parks & Rec.	31	12	
15	Leelanau Trail	Private org.	13	1	Leelanau Trails Association
16	Muskegon Lakeshore Trail	City of Muskegon	8	2	
17	Ottawa-Muskegon Trail	Ott\Musk.Co.City	27		Friends of the Ottawa-Musk.Trl.
18	Pere Marquette State Trail	DNR For.Mgmt.\local gov.	56	4	Various
19	Riverside Trail	City of Grand Rapids	5		
20	Van Buren Trail State Park	DNR Parks & Rec.	15		
21	White Pine Trail State Park	DNR Parks & Rec.	93	2	Various
TRAILWAY MILEAGE UNDER DEVELOPMENT			299	23	
Corridors Acquired					
22	Bill Nicholls Trail ^b	DNR Forest Mgmt.	55		
23	Chatham Trail ^b	DNR Forest Mgmt.	33		
24	Hancock-Calumet Trail ^b	DNR Forest Mgmt.	17		
25	Mackinaw City-Alanson	DNR FM, local gov.	23		Top of Michigan Trails Council
26	Mackinaw City-Hawks	DNR FM, Mac.Isl.,local	60		Top of Michigan Trails Council
27	Manistee-Traverse(segmnets) ^c	DNR FM, local gov.	24		
28	Pere Marq.Trl.-Isabella Co.	Local gov.	8		Clare-Coleman RTT Committee
29	Sidnaw-Bergland ^b	DNR Forest Mgmt.	45		
30	Soo-Strongs ^b	DNR Forest Mgmt.	32		
31	Thornapple Trail	Private org. & local gov.	16		Thornapple Trail Association
CORRIDOR MILEAGE ACQUIRED			313		
Current Acquisition Opportunities					
32	Betsie Valley Trail	Local comm., DNR FM	23		Friends of the Betsie Valley Trl.
33	Blossomland River Trail	Local gov\commission	33		Blossomland Trail Association
34	Cheboygan-Gaylord	DNR FM, local gov.	47		Top of Michigan Trails Council
35	Falling Waters Trail	Jackson Co.	13		Falling Waters Trail Association
36	Ott.-Musk. Trl.--Musk.link	City\Co. of Muskegon	4		Friends of the Ottawa-Musk.Trl.
37	Petoskey-Alanson	Loc.,DNR FM\P&R	9		Top of Michigan Trails Council
38	Polly-Ann Trail	Local gov\commission	30		Friends of the Polly-Ann Trail
39	Saginaw Valley Trail	Saginaw Co.	10		
40	Wadhams-Avoca Rail-Trail	St. Clair Co.	10		
MILEAGE: CURRENT ACQUISITION OPPORTUNITIES			179		
Corridors Under Consideration (not on map)					
	Ionia-Owosso	Local gov\commission	41		
	Kalamazoo Riv.Valley Trlway	Local gov\commission	60		K'zoo R.Valley Trlway Partners
	Lyons-Eagle	Local gov\commission	20		Ionia-Grand Ledge Trail Group
	Oakland Co. Trailways	DNR P&R; local gov	20		Various
CORRIDOR MILEAGE UNDER CONSIDERATION			141		
GRAND TOTAL MILEAGE			1051	142	

^a Designated as Michigan Trailway by Natural Resources Commission in 1996
^b There are thousands of miles of trails in Upper Peninsula. These five trails may have greatest potential to be improved for multiple uses and designated as Michigan Trailways. Local partnerships will be needed.
^c Acquisition expected to be finalized soon

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Michigan Trailways Linking Opportunities

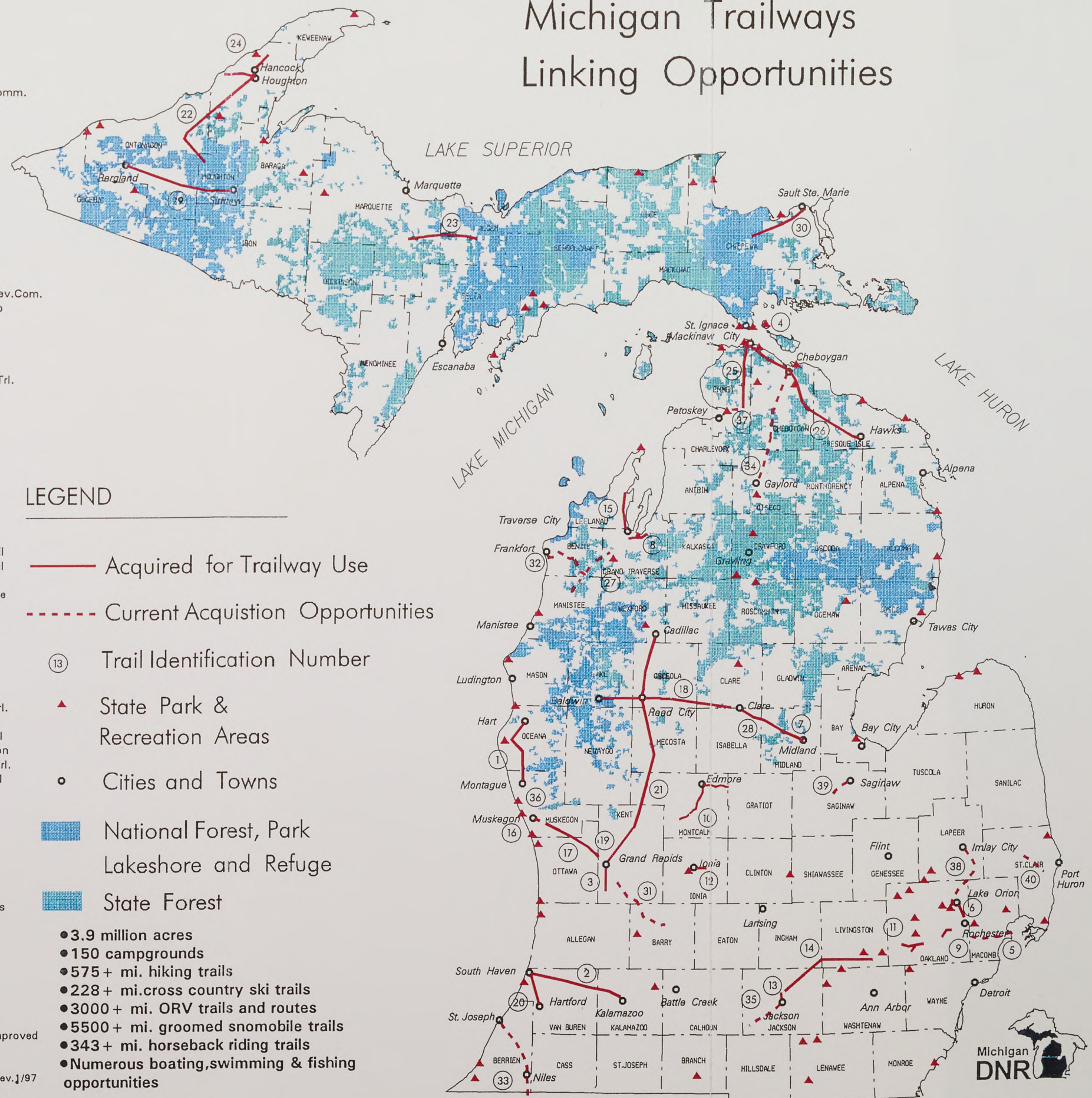


Figure 3.1

◆ **Michigan Trailways Act.**

“The Michigan Trailways Act (Act of 1993) gives the DNR and other trail managing agencies a strong incentive to address local concerns. The act allows the Natural Resources Commission to designate long-distance multi-use trails as ‘Michigan Trailways’ (Figure 3.1). A trail receiving this designation will be publicized as part of the trailway system and be eligible for trailways funding. For a trail to receive the designation, the DNR or other managing agency must ensure that local concerns have been addressed. Specific provisions of the act include:

- Potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property must be minimized through...adequate enforcement of trailway rules and regulations; continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes; construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway; and any other means.
- Where feasible, the trailway must offer adequate support facilities for the public—including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones—at reasonable frequency along the trailway, that are accessible to people with disabilities.
- A public hearing must be held in the vicinity of the proposed Michigan Trailway to gather public opinion on the designation, including what

uses will be allowed on the trail. Local units of government must be consulted in establishing uses to be permitted on the trail.

- A Michigan Trailway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway¹.

Authorizing Legislation

In 1993, the Michigan senate passed legislation that authorized the formation of a Michigan trailways system. The Public Acts of 1993 that deal directly with trailway designation are Act No. 27 (recodified in 1994 by PA 1994 Act 451 Part 721), Act No. 26 (recodified in 1994 by PA 1994 Act 451 Part 733) and Act No. 28 which were approved by the Governor on April 20, 1993. PA 1994 Act 451 Part 721 establishes the Michigan trailways designation process. PA 1994 Act No. 451 Part 733 deals with the liability that an adjacent landowner will or will not experience while living next to the trailway. Act No. 28 is a necessary change to the transportation Act No. 295 of the Public Acts of 1976. Acts 26 and 27 were recodified in 1994 as amended to Part 733 and 721. A synopsis of these acts follows:

PART 721—Michigan Trailways²

Sec. 324.72102. “The legislature finds and declares that a statewide system of trailways will provide enjoyment, health, and fitness; encourage

¹ Michigan Department of Natural Resources Brochure *Trailway Impact on Local Citizens: Questions and Responses*. Revised January 1994.

² Appendix B; PA 1994 No. 451 Part 721.

constructive leisure time activities; protect open space, cultural and historical resources, and habitat for wildlife and plants; enhance the local and state economies; link communities, parks and natural resources; create opportunities for rural-urban exchange, agricultural education, and marketing of farm products; and preserve corridors for possible future use for other public purposes. Therefore, the planning, acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of Michigan trailways is in the best interest of the state and is declared to be a public purpose.”

PART 733—Landowner Liability³

“An ACT to amend section 1 of Act No. 201 of the Public Acts of 1953, entitled as amended “An act restricting suites by persons coming upon the property of another for certain purposes; and to declare the limited liability of owners of property within this state. Sec. 1. (2) A cause of action shall not arise for injuries to a person who is on the land of another without paying to the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land a valuable consideration for the purpose of entering or exiting from or using a Michigan trailway or other public trail, with or without permission, against the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land unless the injuries were caused by the gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct of the owner, tenant, or lessee. For purposed of this subsection, a Michigan trailway or public trail may be located on land of any size including, but not limited to, urban, suburban, subdivided, and rural land.”

³ Appendix B; PA 1994 No. 451 Part 733.

Act 28—Transportation Preservation⁴

“An Act to amend section 10 of Act No. 295 of the Public Acts of 1976, entitled as amended “An act to improve and maintain transportation services in this state; to provide for the acquisition and use of funds; to provide for the acquisition of certain railroad facilities and certain property; to provide for the disposition and use of facilities and property acquired under this act; to provide for financial assistance to certain private transportation services; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state departments and agencies; to provide for the transfer of certain funds; to provide for the creation of a fund; and to provide for appropriations,” as amended by Act No. 210 of the Public Acts of 1984, being section 474.60 of the Michigan Compiled Laws. Section 10 (3) In preserving the right-of-way for future rail use, the department may do one or more of the following: (b) Transfer, for appropriate reimbursement, the right-of-way to the Department of Natural Resources for use as a Michigan Trailways pursuant to the Michigan Trailways act, if the deed includes restrictions on the use of the property that assure that the property remains viable for future rail usage, and includes a clause that provides that the Department of Natural Resources shall transfer, for appropriate reimbursement, the right-of-way to the department, upon a determination of the director of the State Transportation Department that the right-of-way is needed for use as a railroad line.”

⁴ Appendix B; Act No. 28 Public Acts of 1993.

Requirements for Trail Designation

Sec. 324.72103 (1) “Upon petition⁵, by any person or on its own motion, the commission may designate a railway in the state as a “Michigan railway”.

The petition or motion shall propose permitted uses of the railway. The commission shall not designate a railway a Michigan railway unless it meets, or will meet when completed, all of the following requirements:

- (a) The land on which the railway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement. If the land is owned by a governmental agency, the commission shall obtain the consent of the governmental agency before designating of the land as part of a Michigan railways.
- (b) The design and maintenance of the railway and its related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.
- (c) The railway meets appropriate standards for its designated recreation uses.
- (d) The railway is available for designated recreation uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.
- (e) The railway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

⁵ Appendix B; Letter to Philip Wells from William Gibson requesting railway designation.

- (f) The trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local areas.
 - (g) The trailway is marked with an official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.
 - (h) The trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at roadway crossings.
 - (i) Where feasible, the trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.
 - (j) Potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:
 - (i) Adequate enforcement of trailway rules and regulations.
 - (ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.
 - (iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.
 - (iv) Other means as considered appropriate by the commission.
 - (k) Other conditions required by the commission.
- (2) The commission shall not designate a trailway a Michigan trailway under subsection (1) unless a public hearing has been held in the vicinity of the proposed

Michigan railway to take testimony and gather public opinion on the proposed designation including, but not limited to, the proposed use of the railway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for the railway. The public hearing shall be held at a location and at a time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. A transcript or a summary of the testimony at the public hearing shall be forwarded to the commission.

(3) At the time a Michigan railway is designated under subsection (1), the commission shall, in consultation with governmental agencies in which the railway is located, establish uses to be permitted on the railway. In establishing permitted uses, the commission shall consider all of the following:

- (a) The safety and enjoyment of railway users.
- (b) Impacts on residents, landowners and businesses adjacent to the railway.
- (c) Applicable local ordinances.”

Process for Designation

What really happens? The process for getting an existing railway designated begins when a person, an organization such as a Friends group or the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) requests that an existing railway be designated a Michigan railway. Generally, the MDNR can request that a state owned railway be designated, but it is important that locally owned trails request designation. This can be done through a multitude of ways. It can be done by phone or letter⁶, but is not restricted to these methods and the process for

⁶ Appendix B; Letter to Philip Wells from William Gibson requesting railways designation.

designating a railway a Michigan railway is an ongoing cooperative process between multiple entities. Railway designation requires involvement.

After a request has been made, the MDNR Recreation and Trails Section will begin the evaluation process by having a staff evaluator visit the railway and conduct a determination of the fitness of the railway for designation. Meetings with the local railway manager will be made to explain how the determination process works. After this meeting, an assessment of the railway will be done using a determination assessment form⁷. The determination assessment form is an extensive evaluation tool that describes what an evaluator must look for on the railway and explains why it is important to look at this part of the railway. After careful consideration and if the railway meets all of the requirements, the staff evaluator will make a recommendation.

It is likely that a railway will be recommended and probable that the railway will be recommended with some modifications to the railway. An example would be some additional fencing, repairs to some parts of the railway due to erosion or additional signage. *Because a railway does not meet all of the requirements at the time of assessment does not mean the railway will not be recommended.* Designation may require that certain changes and improvements be made through time by railway management. An agreement by railway management to meet needed improvements would become part of the designation agreement. This should be viewed as part of the designation process and normal

⁷ Appendix B; Staff Determination of Eligibility for Michigan Trailways Designation.

to any trailway designation. And, if the requirements for designation are not met, trailway designation can be removed.

After a trailway has been recommended for eligibility by MDNR staff, a public meeting must be held and shall be held in an area close to the trailway seeking designation. These public meetings are required by statute and are considered necessary to the determination process. Public meetings give access to local citizens in the determination process and give adjacent landowners the opportunity to express concerns about the designation⁸.

Once public meetings have been held and concerns of the local citizens have been addressed, a Michigan Trailway Designation Agreement⁹ will be drafted with mutual coordination between the State Trails Coordinator and trailway management. Trailway management will agree to secure funding and design assistance to carry out trailway improvements as described in the agreement. Trailway management will agree to meet, on a continuing basis, the requirements of Sec. 4 (1) and 8 of the Michigan Trailways Act. This agreement will also recommend to the Natural Resources Commission that trailway designation be made. As part of this recommendation, it will be noted how the trailway will be used. Finally, the Natural Resources Commission will approve the recommendation.

⁸ Appendix B; MDNR announcement of public hearings for Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trailways.

⁹ Appendix B; Michigan Trailways Designation Agreement for Kal-Haven Trail.

Benefits

Is there a benefit to a trailway if it is declared by the state to be a Michigan Trailway? One of the first benefits of being designated a Michigan trailway, is that designation is a specific measure of success. After carefully analyzing the trailway designation requirements, a trail is deemed safe and suitable for public use. It meets with the requirements that it have a variety of recreational and ecological considerations in place at the time of designation.

Although separate state and local actions to develop individual trailways have great public benefit, creating a statewide system of designated Michigan trailways would have a number of additional benefits. These include:

- “Encouraging the development of an interconnected network of trailways.
- Allowing for consistent identification of trails that cross jurisdictional boundaries.
- Assuring that the segments of the statewide system are developed to consistent standards, and helping to standardize rules and fees for trailway use.
- Creation of the Michigan Trailway system would give the “product” a clear identity to residents and visitors (like “Holiday Inn”): they would know that any trail with the Michigan Trailway designation is a broad trail with gentle grades, usually separate from roadways, with adequate support facilities, and with a surface suitable for multiple uses; standard language because most agencies would use a variety of terms for various kinds of trails, which would tend to confuse the public.

- Facilitating clear understanding of the network concept in the minds of the public.
- Without the concept of Michigan Trailway designation, it would still be possible to develop a publication with maps and other information on trailways in Michigan; but the Michigan Trailway designation would give the public a clear focus and would highlight the concept of an integrated network. this would help in building public support and recognition.
- Giving agencies and local units an incentive to develop high-quality trailways, i.e., those that meet Michigan Trailway standards.
- The possibility of Michigan Trailway designation would provide incentives including publicity in statewide publications and possible funding assistance
- Providing a mechanism for trailway funding and user fees.
- Designation as a Michigan Trailway would make a trail eligible for funding from the proposed Michigan Trailway Trust Fund. This proposed fund would derive revenue from a variety of sources, and money from the refund would be apportioned to the various agencies managing Michigan Trailways. One revenue source may be a Michigan Trailway annual pass. The pass could be used on Michigan Trailways in lieu of other fees that might be charged for use of a particular trail. The annual pass approach would reduce administrative costs for managing agencies, prevent public confusion over fee requirements, and make it easier for trail users to contribute to trailway upkeep.”

Current Michigan Trailways Designations

The Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park¹⁰ and Kal-Haven Sesquicentennial Trail State Park¹¹ were considered together for Michigan Trailways designation. The following is a brief history of the designation process for these two trailways and should be considered a good example of the designation process. Please note that each trailway is unique and that no two trail designations will be like any other¹².

- Early 1994---Proposal for First Round of Michigan Trailway Designation---inter-office memo from Phil Wells to Hector Chiunti---not dated or signed.
- May 27, 1994---Staff Determination of Eligibility for Michigan Trailway Designation for Kal-Haven trail. Signed by State Trails Coordinator Hector Chiunti on September 15, 1995.
- October 25, 1994---Staff Determination of Eligibility for Michigan Trailway Designation for Hart-Montague trail. Signed by State Trails coordinator Hector Chiunti on September 15, 1995.
- March 9, 1995---Interoffice Communication from Philip Wells (Trailways Program Leader) to Hector Chiunti (Section Leader, Recreation and Trails Section). Proposed process for Michigan Trailway Designation using Hart-Montague as a "trial-run".

¹⁰ Appendix B; Michigan Trailways Designation Agreement for Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park between State Trails Coordinator and MDNR Parks and Recreation Division. 9-18-95.

¹¹ Appendix B; Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission. Subject: Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as Michigan Trailways. Resubmitted 12-11-95.

¹² Appendix B; Letters in chronological order on Michigan Trailways approval for Kal-Haven and Hart-Montague Trail.

- April 25, 1995---Interoffice communication from Hector Chiunti (State Trails Coordinator, Forest Management Division) to O.J. Scherschlight (Chief, Parks and Recreation Division). Proposed process for first set of Michigan Trailway Designations using Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven trails. Other trails were to be considered, but were later dropped.
- September 14, 1995---Interoffice communication from Philip Wells to Hector Chiunti. Letter addresses continuing problems with pesticide use next to trailways, but recommends that the designation agreements on Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven proceed. A proposed schedule is listed.
- September 18, 1995---Michigan Trailway Designation Agreement for Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park between State Trails Coordinator and DNR Parks and Recreation Division.
- September 18, 1995---Michigan Trailway Designation Agreement for Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park between State Trails Coordinator and DNR Parks and Recreation Division.
- October 19, 1995---DNR NEWS---Media Release---DNR Hosting Public Hearings on Michigan Trailway Designations.
- October 20, 1995---DNR Department Calendar---November 1 meetings in area on trailway designation.
- November 9, 1995 Resubmitted: December 11, 1995---Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission---Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as Michigan Trailways from O. J. Scherschlight (Chief Parks and

Recreation Division), Gerald J. Thiede (Chief Forest Management Division), Hector Chiunti (State Trails coordinator Forest Management Division), C. Edwin Meadows, Jr. (Deputy Director) and Michael D. Moore (Director, December 13, 1995).

- December 6-7, 1995---Agenda for Natural Resources Commission.
- January 11, 1996---Michigan Natural Resources Commission Approval of designation. Stamped on top right of November 9, 1995, Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission.

Future Michigan Trailways Consideration

On July 30, 1996, William C. Gibson requested that the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan be designated a Michigan Trailway. This process had been started when Philip Wells of the MDNR suggested that Mr. Gibson request trailway designation. The designation process has begun. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan is locally owned and managed by Midland County. It will become the first Michigan trailway that is not managed by the MDNR or managed as a state park. Being owned by the state of Michigan is not a prerequisite for trailway designation and shows how effective the management of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail has been. Additionally, the Paint Creek Trail, the White Pines Trail, the Polly Ann Trail and LakeLands Trail will be recommended for trailways status.

Lansing River Trail

In 1993 Mayor James A. Crawford requested that the Lansing River Trail be designated a Michigan trailway¹³. The MDNR responded that the “Lansing River Trail is an outstanding asset to the Lansing area” and that this “proposal will receive prompt and careful consideration.” After discussion between the MDNR and the Mayor’s office it was decided not to designate this trail as a Michigan trailway.

In an interview with Philip Wells of the MDNR, he noted that the Lansing River Trail does not meet with two of the criteria set by the enabling legislation that would allow a trail to be designated a Michigan trailway. Section 72103 (1) (f) states “the trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.” At this time, the Lansing River Trail does not appear to be drawing users from outside the Lansing area and the Lansing River Trail does not have the potential to link with the statewide trailway system. Section 72103 (1) (i) states “where feasible, the trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.” The Lansing River Trail relies on local users with knowledge of the facilities along the trail or their facilities at home. Additionally, no emergency telephones are located on the

¹³ Appendix B; Letters on Lansing River Trail designation.

trailway. No letters exist that have addressed these issues with the City of Lansing. At least there are no copies available for this report.

Additionally, Mr. Wells noted that ultimately the Lansing River Trail will probably be considered for designation. The state trailway system will continue to develop and the Lansing River Trail will provide access to the interior of the city. It will also provide access to other trails in the state system and could become an important access point to the center of the Michigan trailways system.

Additionally, the Lansing River Trail has strong local support and this alone could convince the MDNR to proceed with Michigan trailway status.

◆ **Federal Trail System Act.**

“The passage of the Federal Trails System Act provided trail advocates with an opportunity to preserve rail corridors through “railbanking.” This approach avoids actual abandonment and thus the problem of reversionary property rights. Specifically, Section 8 (d) of that law provides that a rail corridor can be designated for ‘interim trail use.’ The use of the corridor is transferred to the entity intending to manage it for recreation. The concept of railbanking is the railroad rights-of-way have an inherent potential to be used as a railroad or for other transportation purposes sometime in the future. For this reason they are to be considered a national asset worth preserving. In the fall of 1989, the US Supreme Court upheld the railbanking concept. The court’s decision may have positive implications for rail-trails in Michigan. The DNR has begun to pursue railbanking of rail lines when railroads propose abandoning rail service.

Railbanking does not apply to past abandonments” (Michigan Statewide Trails Initiative, 1992).

PERE MARQUETTE
RAIL-TRAIL
OF
MID-MICHIGAN



Description

Rails-to-trails in Michigan are hybrid greenways that encompass a mixture of characteristics of greenways. Recreational greenways, ecologically significant natural corridors, scenic and historic routes and a comprehensive greenway system or networks describes some of the rails-to-trails in Michigan (Figure 4.1, Michigan Counties). The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan is a rails-to-trail and is used primarily as a recreational greenway. It is 27 miles long, running from Midland to Clare, and is jointly owned and managed by Midland County (Figure 4.2, Midland County) and the City of Midland. This trail is paved with asphalt on its whole length and is described by the Department of Natural Resources as the cadillac of Michigan trails.

“The park is situated on the abandoned CSX Railroad property (originally the Pere Marquette Railroad). The park parallels Saginaw Road (Old U.S. 10) for almost the entire distance as it passes through a variety of landscapes, over rivers and streams, beside existing parks and through small communities. The trail itself is designated for year-round non-motorized recreation and alternative transportation. The park, which totals about 400 acres, includes the 100 foot minimum width right-of-way for most of its length, widths of 200 feet to 300 feet in Sanford and Coleman, and a few parcels of varying size which are contiguous with the right-of-way” (Master Plan, 1992).

Additionally, the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail have now established a home page on the Internet (<http://users.mdn.net/formrt/midland.htm>)

COUNTY MAP OF MICHIGAN

Figure 3.1

MIDLAND COUNTY



SOURCE: Mapbook of Michigan Counties, Michigan Natural Resources Magazine, Michigan Department of Natural Resources, Published by Two Peninsula Press, May, 1988.

LEGEND

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| UNIMPROVED ROAD | BRIDGES | SCHOOLS |
| GRADED AND DRAINED ROADS | GENERAL BRIDGE | CHURCHES |
| DIVIDED ROADS | DRAWBRIDGE | CEMETERIES |
| DIVIDED HIGHWAY | SUSPENSION BRIDGE | FOREST FIRE TOWERS |
| SOIL SURFACED ROAD | ARCH | GOLF COURSES |
| GRAVELED OR SIMILAR ROAD | TRUSS OR GIRDER | OBSERVATION TOWERS |
| DIVIDED HIGHWAY WITH FRONTAGE ROAD | INTERCHANGES | MINES, QUARRIES AND PITS |
| PAVED ROADS | GRADE SEPARATIONS | SUMMITS OR PEAKS |
| GRAVELED ROADS | HIGHWAY GRADE SEPARATION | FORTS OR ARMY CAMPS |
| BITUMINOUS SURFACED ROADS | INTERCHANGE SHOWING RAMPS | DNR FIELD OFFICE |
| GOOD DIRT ROADS | NARROW STREAM | BOUNDARIES, STATE AND NATIONAL PROJECTS |
| POOR DIRT ROADS | WIDE STREAM (over 250 feet) | CAMPGROUNDS |
| TRAILS | FREE FERRY | OUTDOOR CENTERS |
| FIRE BREAKS | TOLL FERRY | ROAD AND REST AREA |
| INTERSTATE HIGHWAY | FERRIES | STATE ROADSIDE PARKS |
| UNITED STATES HIGHWAY | DAMS | STATE SAFETY REST AREAS |
| STATE HIGHWAY | DAM WITH ROAD | COUNTY, TOWNSHIP, MUNICIPAL PARK SAND PICNIC AREAS |
| BUSINESS LOOP | DAM WITHOUT ROAD | PUBLIC ACCESS SITES |
| BUSINESS ROUTE | INTERMITTENT LAKES | WILDLIFE FLOODING AREAS |
| BUSINESS SPUR | RIVERS AND STREAMS | RECREATIONAL HARBORS |
| MILITARY FIELD (SOME FACILITIES AVAILABLE) | INTERMITTENT STREAMS | STATE HOLDS EASEMENT FOR PUBLIC FISHING ALONG STREAM BANKS OVER THE 40 ACRES INDICATED |
| AIDS TO NAVIGATION | DRAINAGE DITCHES | |
| AIRPLANE LANDING FIELDS | FALLS | |
| AIRPORT, COMPLETE FACILITIES (COMMERCIAL OR MUNICIPAL) | RAPIDS | |
| AIRFIELD, LIMITED FACILITIES | SPRINGS | |
| LANDING AREA OR STRIP INCLUDING PRIVATE AIRFIELDS | FLOWING WELLS | |
| TOWNS | NATIONAL BOUNDARY | |
| RAILROAD (ANY NUMBER TRACKS) USED BY SINGLE OPERATING COMPANY | STATE BOUNDARY | |
| RAILROAD (ANY NUMBER TRACKS) USED BY MORE THAN ONE OPERATING COMPANY ON SAME OR ADJACENT RIGHTS OF WAY (NOT TRACKAGE RIGHTS) | COUNTY BOUNDARY | |
| RAILROADS | CIVIL TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY | |
| RAILROAD STATION | CONGRESSIONAL (U.S. LAND) TOWNSHIP BOUNDARY | |
| RAILROAD ABOVE ROAD | SECTION LINE | |
| RAILROAD BELOW ROAD | STATE CAPITAL | |
| RAILROAD TUNNEL | COUNTY SEAT | |
| NARROW GAUGE RAILROADS | TOWNS | |
| ABANDONED RAILROADS | UNINCORPORATED COMMUNITIES | |
| UTILITY LINES (LABELED AS TO TYPE) | INCORPORATED CITY OR VILLAGE | |
- STATE LAND
FEDERAL LAND
- SCALE IN MILES
On all county maps contained in this book 3/8 inch equals 1 mile.

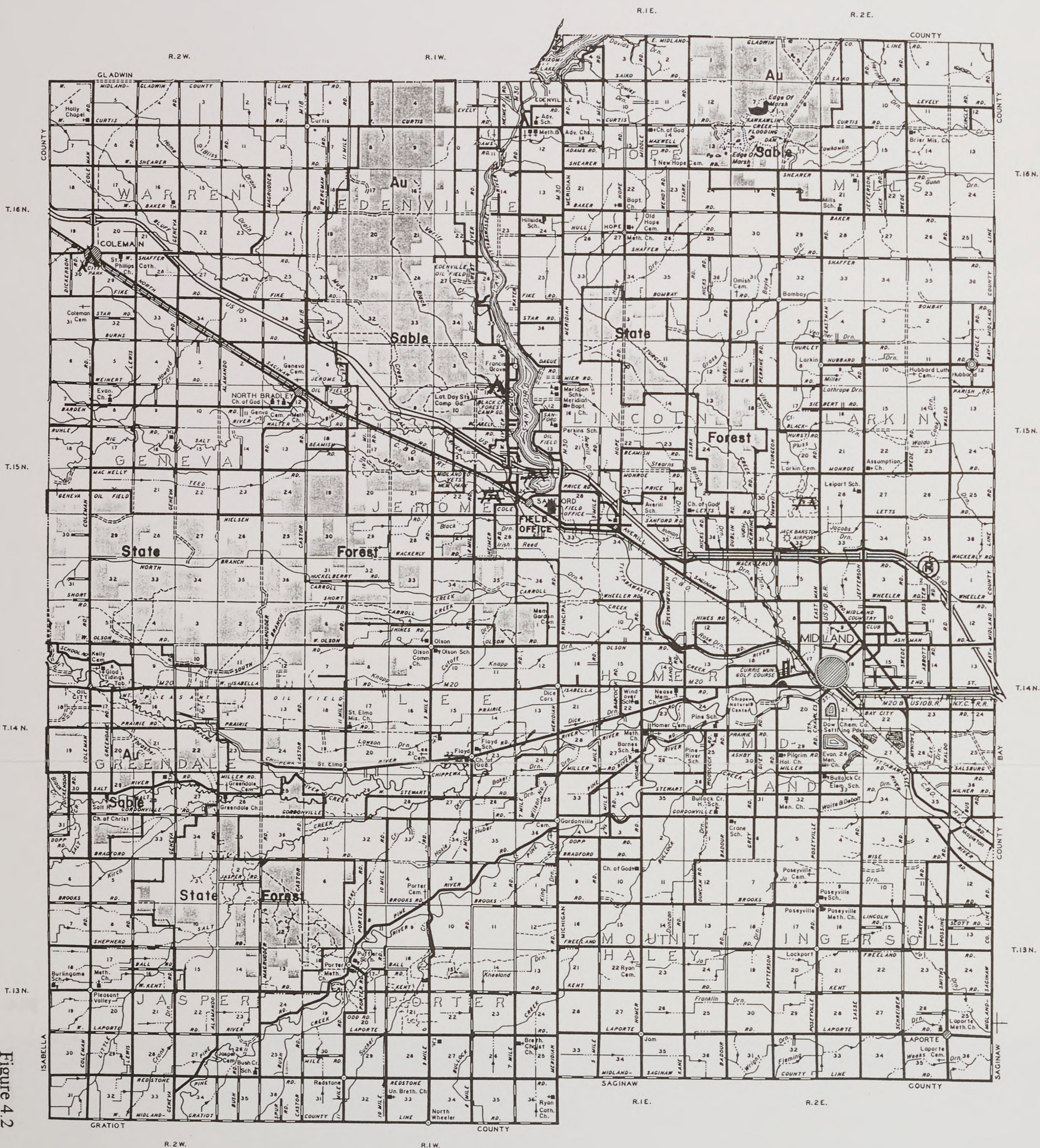
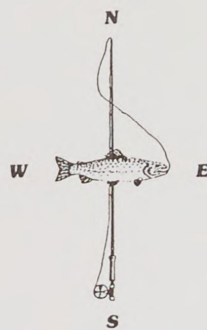


Figure 4.2

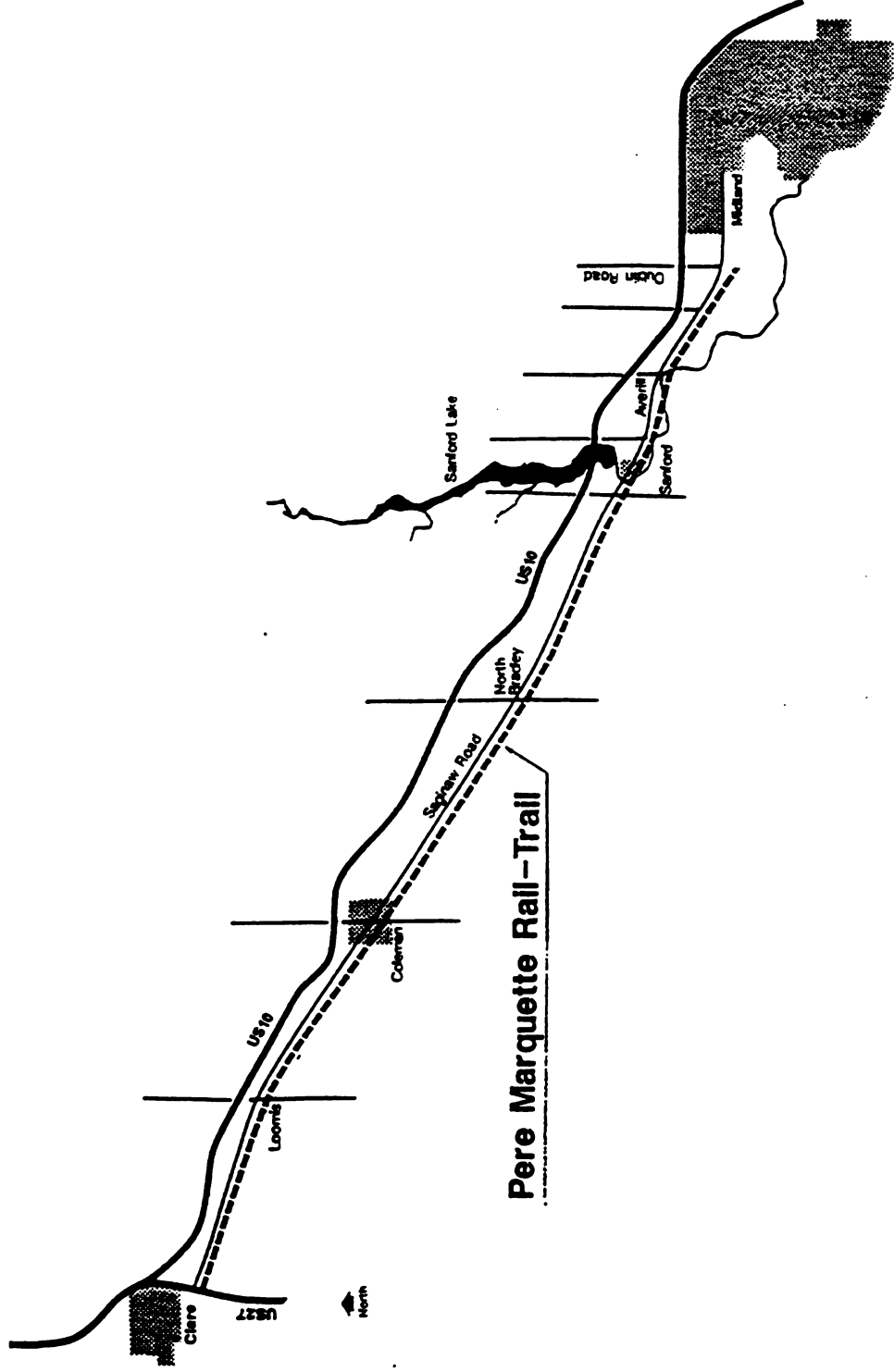
that describes the PMRTMM in great detail. The text of their homepage is quoted directly and is as follows:

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (Figure 4.3, PMRTMM) is a linear park that extends from downtown Midland, Michigan, to Clare, Michigan. Currently the trail is fully paved from Midland to Coleman, Michigan, 21 miles. The Park is situated on the abandoned CSX Railroad property (originally the Pere Marquette Railroad). It is designated for year round non-motorized recreation and alternative transportation. Those using the park are walkers, hikers, runners, bicyclists, wheelchair users, cross country skiers and roller skaters.

The trailhead is situated in the downtown area of Midland at the confluence of the Tittabawassee and Chippewa Rivers. This area has become a central part of the Downtown with the addition of the Tridge, (a unique three branched bridge) which joins three park areas, the Chippewasee Park, St. Charles Park and the Downtown area and Farmer's Market. Farmer's Market is open on Wednesday morning and Saturday morning during the spring and summer months. There are canoe rentals and fishing areas also located along the rivers. Starting at the Farmer's Market the trail winds northwesterly running parallel to Main Street. It

Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan

24 April 1992



SOURCE: Pollack Design Associates; A Vision for a Linear Park in Midland County from Midland to Clare, Michigan; PMR TMM Master Plan.

Figure 4.3

actually joins the former railbed as it crosses under the Robinson Bridge (M20) as it heads west from Midland.

The first portion of the trail follows the Tittabawassee River, until it reaches Emerson Park as Currie Parkway. Currie Parkway is the first intersection, and crosses the Tittabawassee River via the Upper Bridge. This Bridge is a State of Michigan Historical Site, and is an example of Pratt-through Truss design. The arches were added recently to provide additional reinforcement to the bridge and allow its continued access to the recreational facilities across the Tittabawassee River. At one time this bridge was the main north west route of the city until the Robinson bridge was completed in 1956. The trail then goes across the north side of Emerson Park. Emerson Park contains the Currie Stadium and additional softball diamonds used extensively for tournaments and championships from Scholastic, State, National and International. Emerson Park has been the site of the ISF World Championships in 1984 and again in 1996. Teams representing 22 countries competed for the World Championship. As the trail continues from Emerson Park, two significant historical sites are on the left, The Bradley House, a turn of the century home that is often the center of many of the Midland Historical Society activities about early life in the Midland area.

The Herbert H. Dow Museum is a replica of the first brine well and plant that was the beginnings of the Dow Chemical Company.

The trail begins to show the natural settings as it leaves the city area and heads to Dublin Road. The trail runs along the Northwood University campus to the south and the H. H. Dow High School on the north. An observation platform is located as a wetland site. This site is nature's musical paradise in the Spring as frogs and birds are heard making their seasonal calls in the evenings. It is quite common to see deer and wild turkeys along this portion of the trail, even though it is technically within the city limits.

As the park crosses Dublin Avenue (three miles from the Tridge) it leaves the city limits and becomes a Midland County park. From here the trail parallels Saginaw Road (nowhere is the trail in contact with Saginaw Road) for almost the entire distance as it passes through a variety of landscapes, over rivers and streams, along existing parks and through small communities. Numerous small businesses are located along Saginaw Road and in the communities and provide services to trail users.

Heading westward from Midland a wooded character is evident as there are woodlands on the side of the trail and the

north side of Saginaw Road. Adjacent to the Rail-Trail are woods rich in pine, maple, oak and birch with an interesting understory.

About 5 miles from Midland is the Averill rollaway. A short gravel trail leads to the placard that celebrates this area originally. The Midland area was a lumber center during the 19th century, and the Tittabawassee River was used to float the logs to Midland and on to Saginaw and Bay City. Logs were stored at the rollaway during the winter months and the river was frozen. With spring came the thaw, the logs were rolled down the banks into the river, heading to the mills downstream.

The trail enters Sanford, Michigan, on the south side and a staging area and rest area are located here. There are numerous establishments where food and drink are available. After crossing the Tittabawassee River Bridge, several attractions are near the intersection with 7 mile road. Across the road is the Sanford Historical Park. Several rehabilitated historical buildings from Midland County's past are here and are open to the public at certain times. Also, here is a steam locomotive and a caboose from the Pere Marquette Railroad. Signs also point the way to Sanford Veterans Memorial Park, the entrance is a short distance from the Rail-Trail. Sanford Lake Park is on the north side of Saginaw Road, signs also point the way. Here swimming is

available and picnic areas and a relaxing beach on Sanford Lake. During the summer season a refreshment stand is open. Admission is free although there is a parking fee for motorized vehicles.

Sanford Veterans Memorial Park has a nature trail and has some of the few remaining Old Growth trees in this part of Michigan. The Pine Haven, Midland County Recreation Area is a forested area with trails for mountain biking and cross country skiing, depending on the season. Wildflowers are prevalent in Pine Haven as they are along the Rail-Trail. Between the crossing of 8 mile road and 9 mile road, a small gravel pathway leads to Arbutus Bog. This is a pristine floating bog of state-wide significance. Please do not leave the wooden walkway and platform. The platform and walkway were established to allow visitors to experience the bog with minimal damage or interference.

The next several miles of the trail are evident of a Wet Sand Prairie that features a rare plant community with State Threatened and special concern species, this is also of state-wide significance. Please do not pick or damage flowers along the trail, efforts are being extended to preserve this setting for future generations to enjoy. Please take plenty of pictures, they do not wilt or change color. The wooded land continues to the North Bradley area. The trail has had a slight elevation to it. Just

before North Bradley is the West Salt River Bridge. This is the highest point on the Rail-Trail, not due to its elevation, but because the West Salt River has cut a valley through this part of the county. From North Bradley to Coleman the adjacent land use is primarily agricultural. There are some wooded areas along the fields. Pere Marquette Road now runs parallel to the Rail-Trail south of the trail. As you enter Coleman from the east you see the evidence of the agricultural basis of the community. The silos of the grain elevator are observed from outside the city limits. The City of Coleman is representative of a small agricultural community. Commercial development is along the north side of Saginaw Road, and residential on the south side of the trail.

Several projects have recently enhanced the Coleman downtown area in addition to the Rail-Trail. A streetscape project was recently completed and restoration of the old railroad station is underway. A senior center has been constructed to the south side of the trail. (This senior center was named after the trail). A full staging area for the Rail-Trail is also in the Coleman area. The section of the trail through Coleman is known as the Coleman Mile. This is in tribute to excellent participation of the citizens of Coleman in helping develop the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. A separate fund raising campaign was conducted by the citizens of

Coleman to pave the one mile section of the trail passing through their community. A challenge grant from the Gerstacker Foundation guaranteed half the funding if the citizens could make up the second half. In a very short time they had reached their goal and the Coleman Mile was completed in 1994. (They needed \$25,000.00 and easily raised \$31,000.00). It was 1995 before the rest of the trail connected to the Coleman Mile. The paved portion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail now is 21 miles long.

The balance of the trail, about 8 miles will reach the Clare city limits. Construction plans for this section of the trail are incomplete, however fund raising efforts are underway to complete this portion in '98 or '99.

Thank you for enjoying our trail. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail exists because the citizens of Midland County and now Clare and Isabella County have worked hard to provide this unique recreational opportunity. The Rail-Trail has only begun to make the connections to many of the previously under used recreational facilities available in our counties. The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail invite you to be part of the continued enhancement and improvement of our fine park. Join the Friends by completing the membership form. Contributions can also be accepted, the Friends are a Not-For-Profit-

Organization (501c(3)) and can be deducted on your income tax.

Donation boxes are also strategically located along the trail.

Trail Data

The following is the text of a letter from Rick Sigsby, a seasonal ranger on the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) to Paul Pounders, Parks Manager, and Bill Gibson, Parks and Recreation Director. This letter talks about the encounters Rick Sigsby has along the PMRTMM. Quantitative data do not exist for the number of trail users along the PMRTMM, but this letter does address the kinds of people who are using the trail and the distances these people will travel to get to the trail.

Encounters with Rail Trail Users

“As you know, Rail-Trails have seen a dramatic increase in popularity in recent years.”

“The PMRTMM is rapidly becoming a major attraction in Midland, Michigan, and throughout the Midwest. Word of mouth and promotions in regional/national publications have provided a tremendous boost in exposure for Midland County.”

“Through my work on the PMRTMM, I’ve had the pleasure of meeting many interesting people on the Trail enjoying “the sights”. They come from afar and close to home.”

“The distance record has to be a couple cycling from Vancouver, British Columbia, on their way to “probably Nova Scotia”. Twenty two miles of smooth

pavement, after riding over hundreds (many hundreds) of rough miles was a real treat.”

“A man riding a fold-up bicycle stopped me to ask directions just North of Sanford. Although he was a veteran Rail-Trailer from Brainerd, Minnesota, he wasn’t lost but he didn’t know where ‘the Trail’ ended either. He and his wife were staying at the Ashman Court Hotel. The wife went shopping so he went for a ride on the PMRTMM. Unfortunately his information came from a 1994 Rails-To-Trails book which showed the trail being only 3 miles long. I pointed out the book was correct but out dated. In fact he had already traveled 9 miles and had still 12 miles to reach trail’s end. He greeted the news with joy, as now he would be one adventure up on his wife.”

“An encounter with an elderly couple proved very informative. First, they were rollerblading - second, they were from Petoskey and this was their third trip to the PMRTMM. They had brought roller blades for their daughters who now lived in Massachusetts and they were going to visit them soon. Their trips to the PMRTMM were to practice and develop their rollerblading skills so they could keep up with their daughters. Although there is a Rail-Trail from Petoskey to Harbor Springs, I was told it is narrow and hilly. They liked the PMRTMM because it is much wider and relatively flat. Easier going for the oldies!”

“Several Boy Scout Troops from the surrounding area, i.e, Saginaw, St. Louis, Alma, Mt. Pleasant, etc. have used the PMRTMM as proving grounds for their hiking and cycling merit badges. The Trail is also quite popular with church

youth groups for weekend outings. So far I've met the Mennonites from Gratiot County; the Lutherans from Kent County and the Mormons from Isabella County."

"The PMRTMM has an excellent reputation for wheelchair users. Two individuals I've met are prime examples. One gentleman from Alma is a regular - he uses two different wheelchairs. One is for leisure trips with his wife (she accompanies him on bicycle), the other is a racing wheelchair that he uses on training trips from Coleman to Sanford and back. His wife follows in the car because she can't keep up."

"I met a couple from Edmore who bought a special wheelchair for their handicapped son, one with a hand crank to help build up his upper body strength. The PMRTMM has provided an ideal setting for family outings---their goal is a day trip from Coleman to Midland---maybe next year."

"People with cottages at Sanford, Wixom, Five Point, Smallwood and Secord Lakes all have made summer side trips to the PMRTMM. Many seem to originate from the Southeast Michigan area. I encounter quite a few Midlanders out showing visitors the Trail with many commenting on return trips specifically to use the Trail. The Ashman Court Hotel has also used the PMRTMM effectively in promoting weekend packages and rentals."

"Bicycling and rollerblading are the two most popular activities but a surprising number of hikers, runners, bird watchers, berry pickers and sightseers have been spotted. I met a few patrons that were there on doctors orders. Obviously, they recognize the benefits."

“Overall, the comments most often heard are that the PMRTMM is wider than most other trails, patrons are impressed by the cleanliness and lack of ground litter; and the friendly atmosphere. Many have commented about looking forward to the next trip to use the Trail. That certainly is encouraging.”

Along with Rick Sigsby’s letter, Bill Gibson has had a couple from Butler, Pennsylvania call and ask about the trail. They wanted to know where they could stay and how they could get access to the trail from their hotel. After using the PMRTMM, they were going to Mackinac Island to ride the trails there. Bill Gibson had never heard Midland and Mackinac Island used in the same sentence and finds this exciting.

Recently, two gentlemen in their early 70’s approached Bill Gibson and Paul Pounders in Coleman, Michigan. They expressed how happy they were with the trail and the distance of the trail. Having left Midland for a trip to Sanford, they felt so good that they continued on to Coleman for lunch. This means that these two gentlemen would be making a round trip of 42 miles.

Even without the support of specific numbers to indicate how the trail is being used, it is obvious to the managers and rangers along the trail that it is getting heavy use. The City of Midland keeps the trail clear in the winter and even on the worst days people are seen using the trail in the city. On any day where there is a break in weather, the trail is busy. It is estimated that 100,000 people use the trail every year and the numbers are growing. This is a remarkable number considering that most people are only aware of the trail through word of mouth.

Trail Survey—Participant Comments

The following are public comments from various meetings held by the county and from letters received during the early days of trail history. These selected comments are found in Midland County's master plan *A Vision for a Linear Park in Midland County from Midland to Clare, Michigan*. All comments were separated by topic. The master plan has been placed in the Planning Library of Michigan State University. All comments are quoted directly.

Special places that others would enjoy knowing about.

- The Red Keg in Averill.
- High back area at Averill.
- The confluence of the Salt River and Tittabawassee River.
- Buttonville.
- Historic society, nature center, Dow Gardens.
- Indian artifacts, digs, etc.
- Pine Haven.
- Down along the river banks.
- Attractive scenery around Salt River, beautiful fall colors west of Midland and approaching Clare.
- Upper and lower Vets Park.
- Yoder's Amish Auction.

Suggested park features.

- Covered wooden bridge, with benches and tables.
- Maybe a place to have a BBQ.
- Party store in or near the park .
- Playground for the children.
- Baseball diamond.
- Picnicking.
- Fishing areas, fishing platforms, river views and access.
- Gardens.
- Comfort stations, places to get water.
- Repair station.
- Mile markers.
- Skiing trails, mountain biking trails.
- Frisbee golf course.
- Birdhouses, natural habitats, place to buy food for birds.

- An activity or site at the destination end to encourage use.
- Nearby parking at several spots so hikes of 1-5 miles are available.
- Camping areas.
- Curves, zigzag so you can't see all along a straight trail.
- Ski rental place, horse rental place.
- Emergency phones, or directions to the nearest phone.
- Maps, brochures.
- First aid stations.

Comments on trail surfaces.

- Dirt or woodchips are inappropriate for bikers.
- Bike blacktop trail, 10-feet wide, smooth paths.
- Paved trail for wheelchairs, roller-skating, bicycling. Side trails could remain rustic.
- Hard surfaced, smooth path.
- (would least like to have) big wide trails, cemented walkways.

Desired park character.

- Trees. Trees. Trees. More trees and shrubs.
- Wildlife, the more the better.
- Safety, quiet, natural and police protected.
- Right-of-way wide enough to keep the trail from being spooky.
- Keep it as natural as possible, let it grow back the way nature takes it.
- Peaceful wilderness, natural beauty.

Features to avoid in/near the park.

- Views of commercial businesses
- Views of large buildings, homes, modern things, "city places".
- Motorized/off-road vehicles, motorcycles, snowmobiles (*NOTE: there were a few who wanted to accommodate these).
- Horse trails (*NOTE: there were a few who wanted to accommodate these).
- Irresponsible users, noisy music, unsafe partying.
- Criminals.
- Unnecessary development.
- Cutting down trees, damage to the natural scenes, littering. Billboards, advertising along the parkway, too many signs.

Positive comments, looking forward to the park.

- I think it's wonderful if the wide diversity of outdoor interests can be addressed.
- I'm proud we had the opportunity to preserve a part of our history.
- Our senior citizen biking group could safely ride to Sanford and we would probably eat there.

- We think it's great people are finally realizing that people want more out of life than malls and fast food places. We all have taken so much out of nature, it's time to start giving it back.
- We would enjoy using long stretches of this trail for bicycling; shorter stretches which are accessible to cars for cross country skiing, hiking, birdwatching; scenic areas of the trail or adjacent to the trail for other nature activities and photography.
- It's a great plan.
- It sounds like a wonderful park to enjoy and relax in, also away from city traffic and the "hustle bustle".
- (The park) has the potential of drawing thousands of people a year to use it ... thank you for allowing me to participate - if you need volunteers call me! (name and phone number).
- Cooperative arrangements between landowners and interested clubs (e.g. Nature Center, Nature Conservancy, Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited) could result in specially set-up wetlands, prairie, forest, etc. habitats for everyone's benefit and enjoyment (signed).

Owner's concerns.

- I don't like the location of the park it is out my back door and I like my peace and quiet and when the park goes in you can forget the peace.
- A lot of the property owners aren't thrilled about people walking almost on their doorstep...it's a shame that certain people in Midland are trying to force something on us people in the outlying districts that we don't want.
- (I'm) too old for these projects. See too many problems ahead. More police patrol.
- Any property owner who wants a fence between this and his property should have it free. Property rights, no rezone or effect on adjoining property.
- The biggest concern that I have, is how to prevent motorcycles, RV, etc...from using this park? In the area in which I live, they are constantly running down this trail.
- If this is developed I feel it will be impossible to keep the privacy of the property owners along the railroad right of way. Will the Parks and Recreation be responsible for damage to the owners of private property?
- Design it just as if it were 50 ft. from your front door, with a high fence to keep people off our property.
- (I would like a) meeting of all residents and taxpayers of abutting or nearby property.
- If you are going to go against the will of the people, enclose each side with about a 12 foot fence.

Money concerns.

- I feel that the money is not being used wisely.

- I believe that the taxpayers money is being used unwisely and unjustly. We have enough parks and recreational places to go and I do not believe that if you go through with your plans that it will help anyone or turn a profit!
- If it cost \$1 of public money to build or maintain then this should never happen. With all the real problems in the world county and state at this time, how can spending on this be explained. Scrap the idea! (Signed)
- Two parks in our county was closed due to lack of funds. This project will cost thousands of dollars.
- Who's paying for this? And who gets to use it?
- If you have so much money why don't you fix up our terrible roads?

Miscellaneous.

- I would like to see at least some consideration for people who own and like to ride offroad vehicles. If they are banned from the trail there will still be people that will ride on it. As long as people were required to have an ORV sticker and ride with some common sense I don't see a problem. I myself ride on the old railroad tracks and from my experience my motorcycle wouldn't do any more damage to the trail that a horse would.
- I have no good to say about your whole project. You are creating a haven for alcoholics and drug addicts from the larger city. I think we in the country deserve better, from all my contacts I have found NO ONE who wants it. Thank you.
- Tell how the PM Railroad opened this part of Michigan. This linear park is "hallowed ground" it took our boys to two wars and brought the dead home.

Comments such as the ones that have been listed above have been answered in many ways since these comments were incorporated into the master plan. Many of the ideas for what to do with the park have been done. None of the concerns of the abutting landowners has been realized. One letter cited during a conversation with Bill Gibson, stated that if there was one rape on the trail, the parks and recreation employees would be held responsible. This is the kind of sobering comment that made the process of supporting the trail very difficult for the parks and recreation employees. The individual who wrote this letter ran for political office recently and now fully supports the trail. Appendix C has the newspaper article that cites his comments.

The county parks and recreation department arranged for trips to see other operational trails in Michigan. All parties including those who were against the trail were invited to go by bus to the Kal-Haven and the Hart-Montague Trails. In general this was successful and either reinforced already convinced people or helped remove people who were on the fence. None of the people who opposed the trail attended this outing.

Community Support

This section of the report deals with public comments on the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) and uses articles from newspapers, letters, brochures and newsletters of the Friends to show how the PMRTMM has grown and become successful over the past 10 years. Copies of all documents are in Appendix C. What follows are small clips from the various articles, letters, brochures and newsletters. All are quoted directly from the articles without using additional quotes of people being interviewed in the articles. You are invited to read the articles to get a sense of the context in which these statements were made to the various reporters who wrote these articles.

Bike, foot trail proposed to link county parks

“Midland County park officials are hoping they can use abandoned railway lines for pedestrian and bike trails to link city and county parks...Now William Gibson, county parks and recreation director, says the elimination of railway lines also could be a boon to park operations...and would be a meaningful investment in

the community's quality of life." (Tuesday, November 17, 1987, Midland, Michigan)

Park plan is on track

"If Midland County decides to build a rails-to-trails 'linear park' it will join an effort to criss-cross the nation with hiking and biking paths that follow abandoned rail lines...Midland's rail-trail plan is in its infancy, says County Parks and Recreation Director William Gibson. The Midland Foundation is in the process of acquiring the right of way from CSX Transportation Inc. and formulating plans...Trail system opponents cite problems including trespassing, vandalism and littering by users, a decline in adjacent property values and lack of control...Gibson said such concerns are not well documented...On trails in operation, he said, the users have not littered or trespassed...right-of-way abuses by motorized vehicles declined after the path opened." (Article by Cathy Heng, not dated)

Abandoned track switched to trails a national trend

"No cost estimates are developed but work along the 26½ miles of abandoned railway likely must occur in phases, Gibson said...Proponents say the chance to provide linear parks shielded by a buffer of greenery is the wave of the future for both urban and rural areas. Just 200 acres of railroad right of way can create a park 20 miles long for use by a variety of outdoor enthusiasts." (Saginaw News, April 26, 1990 by Cathy Heng)

County parks board discusses trails financing

“Members of the Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission are looking at how the county will pay to maintain the proposed biking and hiking trail that may be built along the old CSX railway right-of-way from Midland to Clare...Most likely the property, if it reverted back to the surrounding land owners, wouldn’t create a noticeable increase in property values, said Scott Meyers, president of the New Era Chamber of Commerce...The Hart-Montague Trail runs past New Era in Oceana County... Meyers said the trail had been good for business...He said he is part owner of an ice cream store near the trail...20 percent increase in business over the prior year...bicycle sales in our area are up tremendously...The Hart-Montague Rail Trail has had a definite, positive economic impact on our area...said Eleanor Polley, executive director of the White Lake Area Chamber of Commerce in nearby Whitehall....Gibson said law enforcement personnel in that part of the state had few problems with crime along the trail...It doesn’t attract that kind of person.” (Article by Mark Ranzenberger Midland Daily News, June 7, 1990)

County accepts trails-to-trails gift

“Midland County today accepted the Midland Foundation’s offer to pay for the CSX Transportation right-of-way between Midland and Clare for use as a biking and hiking trail...The acceptance hinges on an environmental report which is expected to be finished by the end of the month....The Midland Foundation will

pay CSX Transportation \$225,000.00 to purchase the long strip of land.” (Article by Mark Ranzenberger Midland Daily News, July 24, 1990)

Community meetings for the linear park project

“The Midland County Linear Park Advisory Committee invites you to participate in a community meeting for the linear park being planned for the former CSX railroad right-of-way that runs parallel to Saginaw Road between Midland and Clare. (Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission, November 22, 1991)

Hikers jump the gun on rail-trail

“Although the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan won’t officially open until mid-July, bicyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts already are gearing up to use the trail’s first completed portion...Last week, I counted 13 people using it between Currie Parkway and Cook Road, said William C. Gibson...Technically, they’re not supposed to, but they just go around the barricades” (Article by Tracy Calabrese, Saginaw News, April 25, 1993)

Letter from Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt

“Congratulations! I applaud your hard work and dedication in developing the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, a 27 mile trail and greenway linking the cities of Midland and Clare. By breathing new life into an abandoned rail corridor, you have created a linear park which will be appreciated by thousand of Michigan citizens, whether they are bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, commuters, small business owners, or people with disabilities.” (Letter dated July 15, 1993).

Letter from Governor John Engler

“You must be extremely proud of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan as it has not only been a wonderful expansion for your community, but has influenced many cities across our state to transform their abandoned rail corridors into trail networks like the one in you community. In showing your commitment and dedication to the City of Midland, you have provided your area with state-wide recognition of its rails-to-trails system that will be enjoyed by the citizens of our state for many years to come.” (Letter dated July 15, 1993).

Letter from 4th District Congressman Dave Camp

“There are approximately 150 parks throughout the United States which have converted unused railroads to the rails-to-trails program. In fact, the idea is even catching on in Great Britain as more and more individuals the world over are making use of the benefits of recreation, paired with conservation and the appreciation of nature. However, obtaining these old railways to convert them to parks can sometimes be difficult, and the efforts that have gone into the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail should be recognized.” (Letter dated July 14, 1993).

Raise money for rail-trail? No problem, Coleman says

“By the time the money counting is done, people in the little city will have raised \$31,000 to \$32,000 for a mile of rail-trail, said Charles Amble, part of the 19-member committee that headed the drive...The city was assured of getting \$150,000 of the “Coleman mile” from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation. The challenge was raising \$25,000...How did the people of Coleman do it? They

divided up the territory---schools, churches, organizations, businesses. And they took the “direct approach” with mailings and personal visits, Amble said...”We asked for specific amounts from different groups...We informed them that this project is something that every member of the community could use and enjoy.”

(Article by Cheryl Wade, Midland Daily News, December 27, 1993)

Coleman deserves pat on the back

“Give the City of Coleman credit...Residents there needed to raise \$25,000 to help pay for construction of a mile of rail-trail through the city...but came up with an extra \$6,000 or \$7,000...And the city received its support from a number of areas, such as the Coleman Veterans of Foreign Wars, Chemical Bank Coleman and Coleman Lions Club. Local resident Donald McClive and others also donated to the cause...The rail-trail will be an asset to Coleman, as it has proven to be in Midland, thanks to those who came forth with donations to make the project a reality.” (Opinion Midland Daily News, December 27, 1993)

Rail-trail to Sanford takes riders back to the future on a bike

“This time, the spot was mid-Michigan’s Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. My transport was an efficient mountain bike---a quantum leap from the one-speed, pedal brake variety of childhood...That was proof that things have gone full circle in our family. The kids are driving; maw and paw are pedaling...This won’t be my last trip on the smooth highway reserved for bicyclists of all ages and athletic in-line skaters...Why? Simple...It’s a welcome escape from the hectic highway to the more tranquil time I left long ago.” (Opinion Chris Thompson, undated)

You School can help the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Close the GaP to Coleman!

“The Midland County Youth Action Council (MCYAC) is an organization affiliated with the Midland Foundation established to promote philanthropy amongst the youth of Midland County. Operating with an annual income generated by a \$1,000,000 youth endowment fund, MCYAC makes grants, sponsors events and helps raise funds for projects which affect the youth of Midland County...Fund raising is an important aspect of philanthropy. Therefore MCYAC pledged to aid the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail “Close the GaP” fund raising program...To reach our goal of \$10,000 from eleven schools in Midland County, MCYAC is sponsoring a fund raising opportunity for all participation schools.” (Midland Foundation, 5 pages, 1994)

Show your School Spirit for Earth Day ‘94

“Close the GaP

Recycling...Save plastics numbered 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7...Help your school win a recycled plastic lumber bench that will be donated to the Rail-Trail...What a great feeling to know that you have helped save landfill space, conserve natural resources and you get a chance to win great prizes!” (Flyer, Earth Day 1994)

Drive starts to fill GaP

“The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail want to “Fill the GaP” in the linear park between Sanford and Coleman...The group, formed in January 1993, is heading up a fund-raising campaign to raise \$320,000 over the next 10 weeks to

complete Phases III and IV of the project...Cliff Miles, former Midland city manager and a charter member of the Friends group, will direct the fund-raising effort. He said the goal is to collect a million pounds of glass and 4,500 pounds of plastic.” (Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, February 15, 1994)

Everyone can help with rail-trail project

“Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail have come up with a way everyone can take part in the linear park project---through recycling...That’s right, recycling...The glass will be used in what is being called “glassphalt,” a form of blacktop using glass instead of sand that will be used for the trail. The recycled plastic will be used to make signs and benches, and the red poles used at intersections to keep motorized vehicles off the rail-trail...So mark your calendars and give the project a hand. You’ll be helping the environment at the same time.” (Opinion, Midland Daily News, February 16, 1994)

You can help Close the GaP to Coleman

A letter and brochure explaining what the Friends group is and how local community can support rail-trail. Send money.

Pere Marquette is a model rail-trail

“Although it is designed for non-motorized use only, the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is becoming known as the “Lamborghini” of linear parks...Roger Storm, director of the Michigan Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, said the Pere Marquette is looked at as a model rail-trail throughout the state...This July will mark the third annual Michigander, a 250 mile bike ride across Michigan...and the ride will end up

in Midland on the Pere Marquette.” (Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, April 23, 1994)

Coming through—Coleman gets ready as rail-trail grows

“Bicycles, like cars, tend to break down. But a business here has expanded to specialize in fixing both in anticipation of more traffic through town...Coleman Auto Supply, 113 Railway St., has added a bike sales and repair shop to cater to future users of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail...Cassidey said he has converted about one-third of his display area to a bike shop...Chuck Amble, treasurer of the Coleman Downtown Development Authority, agrees that there will be more people passing through Coleman than ever before and that businesses need to adjust...”We have a slush machine and popcorn and we sell snack food”, said Ron Klump, manager of the Coleman Pharmacy, 201 N. Fourth St...” We are also going to add juices and some healthier things like that.” (Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, June 28, 1994)

You can help the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Close the “Recycling” GaP to Coleman

“Construction of the Rail-Trail will use one million pounds of recycled glass and 4,500 pounds of recycled plastic. The Midland Volunteers for Recycling will be co-sponsoring a county-wide collection of glass and plastic to Close the Recycling GaP...Three Saturdays.” (Letter from Group, April 1994)

\$3.3 million path really sparkles

“Some people using the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan are jarred by seeing chunks of glass on portions of the 26 mile path...However, most of the chunks actually are in the \$3.375 million trail, not on it...County residents donated more than 1 million pounds of glass in various colors, which was mixed into standard paving material to create glassphalt...The proof is in the pavement...Bits of blue, green, brown and transparent glass are clearly visible on the trail.” (Article by Tracy Calabrese, Midland Daily News, undated)

Letter

“The Michigan Society of Planning Officials is pleased to announce the “Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan” prepared by the City of Midland, County of Midland and the Midland Foundation for the Community of Midland, has been selected as one of five MSPO Community Honor Award Winners for 1994.” (Letter from Michigan Society of Planning Officials, September 8, 1994 with attachment and letter from William C. Gibson to Pollack Design Associates)

Top news stories in mid-Michigan in 1994

Picture of City of Midland Section of Pere Marquette Rail-Trail.

“Efforts to complete the Pere Marquette Rail Trail of Mid-Michigan---26 miles of abandoned railroad tracks from Midland to Coleman paved for recreational use---got a boost this year from a fundraising campaign that exceeded its goal....The project also started wheels turning in the heads of Coleman officials, who won nearly \$1 million in grants from foundations and governments, as well as

a \$150,000 donation from the town's Downtown Development Authority...The fact that the new look is a hit with retailers and residents alike didn't surprise William Cozat, Jr., chairman of the downtown group and the city's fire chief and public works director...It's a lot more appealing place to move to than it was prior to this." (Article by Tracy Calabrese, Saginaw News, December 25, 1994)

Midland County Economic Growth and Development

"Improved arteries of transportation will lure Midland people to other areas of the county, Bevirt said. One such means of travel is the rail-trail...The rail-trail, in its own little way, is tying the county together, Bevirt said. That's good news for communities such as Coleman and Sanford, which now are improving themselves, Bevirt said...Coleman was going the wrong way for a long time..it was just slowly deteriorating...But the city that will be connected to Midland by the rail trail by early summer has done its own streetscape and should grow." (Article by Doug Henze, Midland Daily News, January 1, 1995)

Ho-hum Rail-Trail almost finished

"With little fanfare, Pere Marquette Rail-Trail users soon will find they can travel from the Tridge to Coleman without encountering construction along the way...Crews will finish concrete work where the Rail-Trail crosses 11 roads between Sanford and Coleman by Saturday, July 1...We have no real counts and don't know the turnover. But on the city stretch, I recently counted 100 we could see. With ideal conditions, maybe 20,000 a month will use the trail...That is good since the trail reflects life in the Midland area...people can enjoy great views at

restored railroad bridges over the Tittabawassee River and east Salt River. With a jog off the main trail, users may visit the Dow Museum and Bradley House on Cook Road...The trail also meanders through farm fields that stretch as far as the eye can see near Coleman.” (Article by Cathy Heng, Saginaw News, 1995)

Towns welcome bikers with open tills

“New signs grace the backs of businesses along the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, facing its non-motorized travelers...A trash can carries the message, “Watch for Bikers”...Business is picking up along the nearly completed 22-mile Rail-Trail, merchants say...”The restaurants have definitely seen an increase in business,” said Earl Crawford president of the Sanford Area Chamber of Commerce... And it’s not just local. We have a group come regularly from Saginaw who park their cars and bike the trail here, stopping for meals...Both the Coleman Restaurant and the Cherry Land Market in Coleman have a “lot more activity,” said Coleman Mayor Harvey Gene Robinson.” (Article by Cathy Heng, Saginaw News, 1995)

Parks create recreation, business opportunities

“Gibson said he thinks the county parks system, especially the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail and Sanford Lake Park, brings more dollars into the community than what the county spends on his department...Places like restaurants along the rail-trail and bike shops have seen a huge increase in business. We’ve never done a study on the exact amount, but the parks bring people into the community and they spend money on other things like lodging and food. Gibson said a restaurant like Alex’s Railside in Sanford, which backs up to the linear park,

has 15 to 25 bikes parked outside on weekend mornings during warm weather...A new business on Saginaw Road near Dublin Avenue, Blazing Saddles, opened solely in response to the rail-trail. It rents bikes and in-line skates. Other bike shops in town have seen an increase in business and a Coleman auto parts store began selling bikes.” (Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, February 5, 1996)

Rail-Trail Attracts Family Excursions

“Recreationalists are filling the rail-trail this spring with roller blades, hiking gear and bicycles. Sanford area businesses and organizations are the beneficiaries of rail-trail recreationalists stopping over for ice cream cones, restaurant food and visits to the Sanford Centennial Museum...Jordan M. Garver, 2, rides the rail-trail in a child carrier with his grandparents. He enjoys an ice cream cone in Sanford at the end of the rail-trail....The rail-trail is safer said Diana Carey. Take your kids there. It’s good for them and it’s fun.” (Article by Kim J. Kent, The Coleman Tribune ~ The Sanford Express, June 7, 1995)

Foundation’s \$500,000 to help with rail-trail upkeep

“Financial worries for the Midland County portion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail are over...The Board of Commissioners Tuesday voted 9-0 to accept a \$500,000 gift from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation for maintenance of the linear park...The foundation specified the gift must be used only for the “preservation, improvement, maintenance and repair” of the rail-trail...The social contract between the foundations and the citizens of Midland has shown we can

husband these resources like the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, Wilson said. It is a resource that can be enjoyed by city and county residents, as well as visitors.”

(Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, October 11, 1995)

A building boom hits Coleman

“The development follows the 1992 opening of a new fire station in the heart of town, a fresh landscape for Coleman’s main street in 1994 and completion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan through town in 1995, Bevirt said.” (Article by Cathy Heng, Saginaw News, undated)

Two battle for District 3 seat on Midland County board

“Snyder said he was against the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail when the idea was proposed, but now favors it...it runs by my house and I’m surprised how popular it is. I didn’t think many people would use it.” (Article by Ted O’Neil, Midland Daily News, undated)

Rail-Trail Draws Family Groups

“Tim J. Little, of Midland County, brought his family from his residence on Gratiot County Line Road to the Sanford area for a recreational outing. It was a beautiful day and the girls wanted to roller blade and ride their bikes. We don’t have nice paved trails like this where we live...This is our first time on the Rail-Trail in Sanford.” (Article by Kim J. Kent, The Sanford Express, May 1, 1996)

Friends letter for the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

Information

Coleman's downtown experiences boom

“The Rail-Trail is a 26-mile long park which runs between Midland and Coleman, and is a paved trail used by residents for hiking, biking, roller blading and other outdoor activities. Any non-motorized mode of transportation is allowed on the trail, which is still a couple of years away from being expanded to include a trail between Coleman and Clare...A lot of people are interested in outdoor activities and are looking to get exercise these days...It is one of the higher classes of trails in the nation and has served as a model for communities looking to upgrade a similar idea in their area.” (Article by Mike Scott, Central Michigan Business Monthly, June, 1996)

Rail-Trail Links Greenways

“In many ways the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is the “ideal” community project. Like the railroad track it follows, the trail is linear, collecting and moving people through a variety of Midland County and Mid-Michigan settings ranging from large to small town, including urban/built and rural/natural landscapes...Midland's rail-trail is a successful adventure because of the efforts of many citizens and agencies. But the best is yet to come, for as more people use the trail, more ways for its use will be discovered. Some positive community impacts already evident include an increase in economic activity on adjacent property in the towns and villages and the attitude of those using the trail.” (Article by Peter M. Pollack, Michigan Planner, Fall, 1996)

Spring time means Rail-Trail time

“When the first signs of spring hit mid-Michigan---sometimes even before the first signs appear---area residents are headed for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail...When we get a nice day, there are people out there no matter what, County Parks and Recreation Director William Gibson said. In fact, they never really stop. I’ve seen people out on the city portion of the trail when the snow is flying.”

(Article by Jeff Aldrich, Midland Daily News, March 30, 1997)

All of the articles used here are found in Appendix C and additional articles may be found in the supplement of this paper. All of these articles were gathered from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Midland County Parks and Recreation offices.

Interview with William C. Gibson

- *How long have you been with Midland County?* Bill has been with Midland County since 1974 and has worked with the parks and recreation department for approximately 14 years. He is the director of the department.
- *How long have you been involved with the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan?* The trail has officially been opened since August of 1990; however, Bill has been involved with the trail since its inception and first started considering the idea of the trail in the early 1980’s.
- *What was the old railroad bed like?* The railroad bed was and is still in good shape. It had not been abandoned long. CSX removed the railroad ties, rails and ballast from the right-of-way.

- *Who decided to buy the railroad bed?* Bill decided that it would be a great way to connect county parks and create a linear park at the same time.
- *Where did the money come from?* The Midland Foundation has provided most of the money to buy the old railroad bed. Carl Gerstacker, who recently passed away, also saw that funds were directed to the trail. Mr. Gerstacker was a strong supporter of the trail concept. Many other community foundations have supported the trail.
- *What are the leading reasons that the trail got started?* The need for a place to ride bicycles and skate. Also, the need to keep people off the road where they were competing with automobiles.
- *When you got started what kind of brainstorming did you do?* Most of the brainstorming occurred over time and was with another of the parks employees, Paul Pounders. Both Bill and Paul have contributed many of the ideas that can be seen on the trail today.
- *Who were the key players?* From the beginning, Bill Gibson, Paul Pounders and Carl Gerstacker have shown the most support and done a lot of the work. As time has gone along, many other people have been involved. It has been a community effort.
- *With Whom did you work?* Bill has worked with many of the city officials, township officials, Hamlet officials, Village officials, citizens and the DNR.
- *How did you meet the people with whom you worked?* Bill has met most of these people through his job.

- *What kind of opposition did you meet when the trail was first proposed?* This question is answered in the section on public comments.
- *How did you overcome this opposition?* By setting up bus trips to other trails, setting town meetings in Coleman, Sanford and Midland (in this order) and by addressing problems in a straight-forward and honest way.
- *What are the leading reasons the trail has grown?* The trail is a great addition to the community and Bill has kept coming up with new and creative ideas to add to the overall charm of the trail.
- Paint Creek has a \$40,000.00 a year manager. *How have you managed not to have a manager for the trail?* They have kept the trail under the management of the department and have treated it like any other park.
- *What is your system for obtaining grants, endowments etc. for the trail?*
Working very closely with the Midland Foundation.
- *How important has the trail been to the other smaller communities in Midland County?* Hard to quantify, but he believes that the trail has had a number of direct benefits for the communities along the trail. During a drive along the trail, new bike shops and restaurants are being built. One of the restaurants is licensed by the county to operate along the trail. This needs more study.
- *How did you get schools involved?* Once again through the Midland Foundation. One of the trustees is involved with the school system and was able to go to the schools.

- *Do you think that the people of Midland County have taken ownership of the trail?* Yes the people of Midland County have taken ownership of the trail.
- *How has this been shown?* While riding behind a county parks vehicle on an inspection trip, the vehicle was stopped by an elder man and his granddaughter. The driver was told that he was not allowed on the trail. On another occasion, a lady was seen picking up glass in an intersection. She was concerned that cyclists might get a flat tire. Trees were planted between an auto parts dealer and the trail. At a later date, an inspection revealed that the trees had been cut down. When asked what happened, the manger confessed to cutting the trees down because it blocked the view of the trail and the “rollerbabes” that were using the trail.
- *How much citizen involvement is needed?* There can never be enough citizen involvement.
- *How have you managed to keep people involved with the trail?* People have taken ownership of the trail and have done many things on their own.
- *How did you come across the idea for the glass?* Glassphalt was seen as a more durable product for the trail. It has not worked well because the glass was not ground up enough and pops out of the trail under pressure. The jagged edges may be cutting some of the bicycle tires.
- *What are some of the current problems you are having on the trail?* Some vandalism and the bollards that were originally designed from recycled plastic have not worked well. Once people realized that they were not dealing with a

railroad company, we have had a number of requests to grant easements across the trail.

- *How do you plan to address these problems?* Vandalism is hard to stop. The bollards will be replaced with a better product that is being researched and new bollards further down the trail are steel. We have not granted easements and the parks and recreation commission has stuck to their guns. If we started giving in to every request for an easement, we would end up with a park that looks like a sidewalk with a lot of driveways cutting across it. It would affect the quality of the trail.
- *What are some of the problems you anticipate in the future?* Shrinking tax dollar and the fact that the endowment for maintenance will not quite cover what is needed each year.
- *How was the Midland Foundation created?* Carl and Esther Gerstacker started the foundation about 25 years ago and is modeled after the community foundation in Cleveland, Ohio. This is a community foundation. There are other similar foundations in the state.
- *What would be your requests for the future?* Bill suggests that a study should be done on the economic benefits of Michigan rails-to-trails, on who is using the PMRTMM and a study should be done that looks at when the PMRTMM is being used. how long people are on the trail and where do the people come from who are using the trail.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



Conclusion

It is expected that there must be strong individual advocates who create the necessary beginnings for the successful starting of a trailways system. Conversely, if there is not strong community advocacy for a trailways system, the trailways system will be a failure. Therefore, a trailways system's success is based on strong community involvement from the conception of the project to bring a trailways system into a community. If the community advocacy groups are not involved in continuing this support, the trailways system in the community will be in decline. Community involvement must be shown for a trailway to continue, to develop and grow. It creates the publicity necessary to encourage users and a trail must be used to be sustainable. Without the involvement of individuals, groups and a broad community effort, a trailways system will not be successful.

Midland County has become attached to the trail. The trail has become more than just a place. It has become a place which is developing a separate social system and cultural network where relationships with the other users of the trail and the relationship with the trail goes beyond a paved bike trail in Midland County. (Moore and Graefe, 1994) Here is where the environment of the trail is seen as a place where human values can be cultivated. Values such as picking up litter, defending the trail from motorized vehicles, or donating money and time to build the trail or help maintain the trail. The trail takes on a sense of place that is its own. (Stokols, 1990)

The results of this study were more than expected. William C. Gibson, Tom Pounders and Carl Gerstacker provided the individual advocacy for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) to become successful. These individuals have been a part of the trail since the beginning and even though Mr. Gerstacker has passed away the foundation he helped create is still supporting the trail with necessary funds. The Friends of the PMRTMM group has raised thousands of dollars to help build the trail and maintain the trail. School children in Midland County helped provide 1 million pounds of glass and 4,500 pounds of plastic to help construct the trail. The community in Midland County is deeply involved with the trail.

The numerous stories about the trail and the way the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan (PMRTMM) has directly affected the communities along the trail is well represented by newspaper articles and the new businesses that line the trail from the City of Midland to the City of Coleman. The PMRTMM belongs to the people of the City of Midland and the people of Midland County. To read the articles about the PMRTMM is to read about individuals who see the success of the trail and understand how the trail can affect the economic well being of their communities; however, it is apparent by their actions and thoughts that the trail means more to them than an economic investment for the future. The trail links communities together. It ties the future of the communities to each other and the destiny of the trail is tied to the continuing advocacy of the communities that are linked by the trail. The comments of the people who talk about this trail

indicate a love for the trail. It is no longer just an old abandoned railroad. The trail stands by itself as an entity ready to offer economic growth, recreation and a place to walk or ride with a person's family. It shares itself with the community that helped build it. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan is a success.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Five future areas of study should be considered to aid the planners of rails-to-trails:

1. Economic development as it relates to the trail and the economic benefits that the trail brings in to the community once it has been established. In comments from the public, the esthetic reasons, the recreational reasons and even the health reasons for the need of trail have been used to justify a trail being built; however, the practical public wants to see the dollars and cents or the economic benefits of spending the meager resources with which many communities are now struggling. Having good sound economic numbers from the area of the trail will aid the advocates when trying to win approval for the trail. A linear park tends to spread the economic benefits over a dispersed area and spreads the economic benefits over linear distance.
2. There is a need to study who is using the trail, how long they are on the trail and how far they travel on the trail. No studies have been done about how the trail is being used once people have this resource in their community. Knowing this kind of information will aid parks and recreation and the planners in a community who are having to design the trail for multiple uses, who are

having to design trailside facilities. This will help the designers to understand where they need to locate trailside facilities. Having concise information on the trail will also aid advocates who can describe the public who are using the trail and then being able to show just how important rails-to-trails are to local and regional communities.

3. The distinction between density and crowding should be considered as an alternative study. Linear parks offer a long narrow corridor which spreads the users out over long distances. Traditional parks tend to be of a completely different configuration i.e. square, rectangle and circular. In a 1972 article, Daniel Stokols discusses the need to change how density and crowding are studied...*On The Distinction Between Density and Crowding: Some Implications for Future Research*. A linear park that is 21 miles long and averages 58,000 users per year might see an average of three people per hour per day spread out over a mile. The usage sounds high, but the actual usage or density in a given area is low. However, a square park with the same area, which could be approximately 2100 feet x 5820 feet, would have 63 people in the park per hour and these people would be visible to each other.
4. A study on the amount of crime on trails versus the amount of crime in the area of the trail and the amount of crime in the community where the trail is located would help trail advocates to address the fear of crime associated with trails in general. Crime is probably less on a trail and reduced more once a trail is opened.

5. Studying property values and how the trail effects property values would be an important study. It is suggested that property values tend to go up once the trail is opened and adjacency to the trail is used as a benefit to sell property once the trail is finished. In the City of Midland, a home near the Tridge and on the trail is for sale and emphasizes this fact by placing a “for sale” sign in the back of the house so trail users can see the sign

Lastly, it is important not to forget the human side of trail issues. Social scientists should continue to study the people who are involved in the trail advocacy process. These are important people who have a lot to offer to the social learning process of advocacy. Additionally, the opinions of people who are opposed to trails should be studied. There are two sides to a trail and it will help to understand both sides. There seems to be little middle when a trail is being considered for a local community. Groups and individuals either love the trail or hate the trail.

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APPENDIXES



Appendix A

Rails-to-trails proposal risky

To the editor:

I read an article posted in a gas station yesterday concerning a group that is trying to get the counties to take the old CSX railroad bed and make a hiking and biking trail. On paper that might sound like a good idea but what about reality?

The hikers and bikers of today are fighters not sportsmen. If the motorcycle gangs and drug dealers want new territory why not let them buy it? A decent person or child or animal, wild or otherwise, would not be safe anywhere near that trail. Talk about highway robberies, how many people would be robbed or murdered just trying to cross the trail on a country road? Wake up, America.

Barbara Hettich
Eric M. Prechtel
4059 San Juan Ave
Battle Creek MI 49017
February 6, 1994

Patrica Adams
River Partners Program
1327 Academy St
Kalamazoo MI 49007

Dear Ms. Adams:

We are writing to express our opinion about the proposed recreational trail along the Kalamazoo River from Battle Creek to Allegan. We feel it is a well-intentioned, but bad idea.

We live in a small residential area in Battle Creek, and our back yard slopes down to the river. We have already had several years of experience with open access to the river in our back yard in the form of canoers. Many canoers are nature lovers and respect the river. Unfortunately, too large of a proportion of this population represents the opposite. They are loud and frequently use vulgar language--scaring and harassing wildlife, not to mention property owners. The river becomes the dumping ground for tremendous amounts of trash. Since we take the time and trouble to clean up the river around our home, we can verify that it's not pretty. Compounding the problem, some of these individuals trespass on our back yard, and we have even been asked access to our bathroom! We have also experienced hunters firing their weapons much too close to our home. We love the river and were willing to pay the price to live here, but our privacy certainly does not compare to others who do not have water accessible in their back yards. Everyone deserves the privacy of their own property.

It is a waste of a rare and wonderful natural resource to open it to those who won't assume responsibility for protecting it. Our wild areas continue to shrink and should be protected--not developed in the name of "progress." Perhaps a compromise would be to create parks, or areas of access, and charge consumers for the use of this. At least this way there could be funding for clean-up.

In any case we do oppose the creation of any portion of the trail that may affect our area. We would fight this to the full extent of the law.

Sincerely,
Barbara Hettich
Eric Prechtel
Barbara Hettich
Eric M. Prechtel

Mon, Dec 2, 1996

Michigan Dept. of Natural Resources
Attn: K.L. Cool, Director
Staven's T-Mason Building
Lansing MI 48909-7973

*Dir 01911
W
RM-FM
Thiede sig
12/20/96*

Dear Director:

I am writing in regards to the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway running through the Fort Custer Recreational Area in Charleston Township of Kalamazoo County.

At a public hearing held by the "Forum of Kalamazoo" on Sept. 18, 1996 at Galesburg High School, the citizens of Charleston Township voiced their opposition to the location of the proposed trail exiting the state park recreational area at 40th Street and Fort Custer Drive. The area is a quiet residential neighborhood which is approximately 65% of the voting public of Charleston Township (according to Mr. Whitehead, Township Treasurer).

During this meeting we were told by Mr. Kozmider (Ranger, Fort Custer Recreational Area) that this is a proposed plan, nothing is set in stone and alternative routes will be considered.

Speaking twice by phone since the meeting about alternative routes, I was told these trails are already existing and nothing is going to change that (no problem), but again nothing is set in stone. On or around Wed. 9/25, Mr. Kozmider invited me to attend the next meeting of the Augusta Trailway Committee, which I accepted gratefully. He asked for my phone number so he could call me when this meeting was to take place. On Wed. 11/6 at 8:05pm, Ms. Pat Adams (Kalamazoo River Trailway Partnership Program Director, Kalamazoo Forum) called to invite me to the Augusta Trailway Committee meeting at 6:30pm on 11/7. I do not know if this was their next meeting or not but Mr. Kozmider never called me back.

Upon arriving at the 11/7 meeting I took my seat at the back wall being the third person there. The Battle Creek City Parks & Recreation Representative came in asking Mr. Kozmider how the trailway was going. Mr. Kozmider replied that it was going great in Battle Creek and Galesburg, but there were big problems in Charleston Township - they don't like where we are putting the trail - and then he chuckled. Mr. Kozmider replied that it is too bad because it is the easiest way for them to go. Then, the Business Representative of the Village of Augusta who lives in Comstock Township expressed that it was too bad, but they had done their job. They were quite surprised when we introduced ourselves as the two Charleston Township Citizens Committee persons. Evidently Ms. Adams hadn't told them she had asked us to attend.

That evening, Mr. Kozmider explained how a local bike club had agreed to absorb the expense of construction of a parking lot within the north entrance of the park. We expressed our concerns about the trail exiting the south end of the park at 40th Street & Fort Custer (Charleston Township). Two members of the Augusta Trailway Committee suggested alternate routes away from 40th Street and Fort Custer Drive, going west to Galesburg but were quickly redirected by the trained facilitator Mr. Kozmider.

At the present time, the proposed trailway is to enter the north gate of the Fort Custer Recreational State Park, traveling east from Dickman Road. People are to enter the park, enjoy the 22 miles of trails in the recreational area, exit at the north gate, proceed west to

the Village of Augusta, *head back east to the front gate of the recreational area*, proceed south through the recreational area and exit through the 300+ acres designated as a protected fowl area.

These 300+ acres is used year-round by local farmers, small game hunters and deer hunters during deer season. We (local residents) do not use this area during deer hunting season for obvious reasons. This area also consists of a dirt service road for farm equipment: sprayers/ammonia, tillers, combines, grain haulers, semi trucks and bee hives.

Mr. Kozmider calls these existing trails, the farmers and citizens of Charleston Township call it a farm service road which leads to the corner of 40th Street & Fort Custer Drive (Charleston Township), where there is a gate closing it off to all other vehicle traffic. This service road doesn't meet the description of a trailway per Mr. Kozmider's comments at the 11/7 meeting. Mr. Kozmider stated that trailways do not allow the use of motorized vehicles. We agree and would like to remind Mr. Kozmider that this proposed trail leads to vehicular traveled roads (service and county roads).

My question is that since the Augusta Trailway Committee has already brought the trail to the Village of Augusta, why does Mr. Kozmider insist the trail be brought back to the recreational area instead of proceeding west from Augusta to Galesburg where it was intended to go? We are prepared to pick the trail up at the village limits and proceed to Galesburg according to the Kalamazoo River Valley Partnership's Plan.

I would like to know how the state park's determine the funding of individual parks. Do the number of people coming through the gate decide which parks stay open and which ones are closed/receive fewer funds?

Charleston Township has worked successfully with the Dept. of Natural Resources (DNR) since the conception of the recreational area. We consider you part of our township even though you are a separate entity... if nothing else, a beautiful neighbor.

Mr. Kozmider has assured me that his position on the Augusta Trailway Committee has nothing to do with their decision not to run the trail south of the Village of Augusta. Since the authority to run this trail from Augusta back east through our state park had to come from the DNR, we request the same authority for the citizens of Charleston Township, that we may also return the trail to its point of origin (our state park).

We request some type of assurance that other special interest groups will not be allowed to fund a parking lot at the south end of our park (40th Street & Fort Custer Drive) as the bike club has been allowed to at the north end. We would at least appreciate it if the DNR would appoint someone who would represent our views and concerns. This way we won't feel the need to constantly remind Mr. Kozmider that the citizens of Charleston Township pay his wages just as much, if not more so, as the citizens of the Village of Augusta.

We also request that these service roads not be allowed to be designated as part of the Michigan Trailway package. We wish to protect them from trailway traffic disrupting their current uses.

If the City of Galesburg, Village of Augusta and Charleston Township can work together on two intermediate school districts and a combined high school, why are we having trouble working together on this issue?

The citizens of Charleston Township also respectfully protest our tax dollars being spent for such activities that special groups create. Not only do they waste our tax dollars, they jeopardize the peace and security of our families, our homes and our property. The serenity and lack of foot traffic is why we chose this area to settle.

Enclosed is a copy of the petition we presented to the Charleston Township Board at their October meeting. The citizens who signed it are requesting that they seek alternative route(s) for this trail if it is going to participate in the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway program. The petition is signed by 100% of the residents on 40th Street and 97% of the residents on Fort Custer Drive. Also enclosed is a copy of the motion the board made to form our committee to seek alternate routes.

I look forward to your response. God bless you and thank you for your time.

Regards,



Dennis K. Ward
Citizens Committee
Charleston Township
859 N. 40th Street
Galesburg, MI 49053

The FORUM

FOR KALAMAZOO COUNTY

97

copy: Phil Wells

(616) 337-7002 1327 Academy Kalamazoo, MI 49006-3200

January 29, 1997

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Mr. K. L. Cool, Director
Box 30028
Steven T. Mason Bldg.
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Director Cool:

On behalf of the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway Program of the Forum for Kalamazoo County, we are responding to the letter written to you by the Citizens Committee of Charleston Township through Mr. Dennis Ward. We would like to share with you the Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway project, the manner in which we have taken it to the communities along the river and our results to date.

We also would like to express our concern over the unjustified attacks on Mr. William Kosmider, the Director of the Fort Custer Recreation Area and the chair of the Battle Creek to Fort Custer and Augusta segment of the trailway.

KALAMAZOO RIVER VALLEY TRAILWAY (KRVV) HISTORY AND PROGRESS:

The Forum for Kalamazoo County is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to improve the quality of life for all residents in this region. Our vision is to help communities build the capacity to identify issues and opportunities, create consensus-based change, and monitor the results of the change efforts. We operate through principals of: open dialogue, democratic discussion, inclusion and respect for diverse individuals and interests of the community in all phases of the change process, concerted action and results based on consensus.

Five years ago, about 80 community leaders unanimously recommended that The Forum take a leadership role in restoring the Kalamazoo River as a community resource. Forum received a River Partners grant from the DNR, organized the first vision conference in the area to ask 300 people what they wanted for the future of the river (Vision results enclosed). A common theme in the 17 groups was that of a linear greenway/trailway allowing people to enjoy and recreate along the river and bring economic dollars to those communities. We received 20 resolutions of support, formed the KRVV Steering committee of 33 area people from business, government and local citizens, created a



The second community meeting was held in the Kal-Haven - Kalamazoo Township area; then we went to Galesburg/Charleston, next to Comstock, back to Galesburg/Charleston and finally on to Parchment/Kalamazoo Township/Cooper area.

The product of each of our community meetings included a local Trailway team for each area with the exception of Galesburg/Charleston. Quite frankly, there was so much negativity and antagonism that we were unable to conduct the meeting. Instead we listened to those present and their concerns about "outsiders coming into the area", liability, parking, "not in my backyard". We then designed a second meeting to address those concerns instead of trying to go ahead with a consensus-based process.

The second meeting was held on a date of their choice with presenters from DNR (Phil Wells), a Kal-haven landowner previously opposed to the trailway, and others who spoke to the concerns we heard at the first meeting. We asked people to conduct small group discussions to explore alternatives. Again, it was difficult to get away from a public hearing format and the previous problems and anger created by siting landfills in Charleston township and the anger created. Our repeated attempts to engage in open dialogue and discussion of issues have resulted in negative reactions and anger at "outsiders" coming into our area and apparently heated discussions at the local 40th street group meetings. The Charleston Township residents do not want ANY bikers, hikers or strangers coming through their area. We realize Charleston Township has been through a lot in the past 2-3 years with sitings of landfills which citizens have fought fiercely. We respect their point of view, but do not want the good efforts going on in the other communities to suffer because of this one area.

To continue to address the concerns of the 40th street group we are taking the following actions:

- Our KRVV Executive committee and Fort Custer team members are meeting with National Guard leadership at Fort Custer to explore trailway options to the 40th street exit
- The Fort Custer February Team meeting has been scheduled for February 5th and will be held at Charleston Township Hall.
- A report on the results of the meeting with military will be given. We may try to look at some maps depicting POSSIBLE alternative routes.
- The regular agenda of the Fort Custer team meeting will also take place and that is to work on spring c construction planning.
- We will work out what is possible with the Charleston Township Citizens Group

One area that is at stake is the relationship between the City of Galesburg and Charleston Township. The City of Galesburg has already constructed a riverfront park with a trailway segment and is preparing to construct a footbridge crossing the river as part of their park and trailway initiative. This footbridge crosses into Charleston Township. Also, to save funds, a new sewer system to service the Galesburg/Charleston area would be constructed at the same time.

vision for connecting the Battle Creek linear parkway along the river where possible, to the Kal-Haven Trail and Kal. County's Maple Glen Park and eventually to Allegan.

The Steering Committee looked at many aspects of the railway concept. Out of their work came:

- *A design standard which, in turn, was applied to a ¾ mile section of trail along the Kalamazoo River in Sutherland Park;
- *A regional Partnership Workshop (designed by the R,C,D Council & funded by a Kellogg Foundation grant) which was held at the Kalamazoo Nature Center
- *A Partnership Agreement document was established and awaits use this year
- *An agreement with the National Park Service to be our consultant and to create a photo preference survey on railway designs which is being presented in conjunction with the River Partners local Trailway team formation and The Forum Greenways initiative

We realized our next step was to hold community meetings. We began upriver with an innovatively designed community process to invite the public and area landowners to participate in identifying issues, positives & negatives about a trailway in their area. Included in the meeting was a small group mapping process to find out where the community thought a trailway should and should not go. At the end of each meeting, citizens were asked to form their own steering committee (which we refer to as a Trailway team) to research the mapping ideas, come to some consensus on a trailway location in their area, give assistance and provide input for the completion of the ISTEA grant, and lastly help with implementation. We have made what we feel is an extraordinary effort to reach large numbers of local residents and landowners in all the communities along the river area. For each meeting we have sent out 2,000 to 3,000 notices inviting them to the first meeting and subsequent local team meetings.

Our first meeting outside the City of Kalamazoo was held at the Augusta Middle School. The Fort Custer Trailway Team was formed as a result of this meeting. Its 14 members looked at all the alternate routes mapped at the meeting by the public and chose what they felt was the best route connecting Dickman Road to the Fort's extensive system of mountain bike trails with a spur into Augusta. The Team, under the capable and professional leadership of Bill Kosmider, has worked with MDOT to obtain consent to build the required crossing of Dickman Road into the Fort as part of their road renovations within the next two years. The Team has produced a video on the future trailway route and scheduled work to begin on trailway construction along the old Harmonia Road for spring, doing what they can on public land while the site planning grant is completed.

Lastly, we strongly urge that no negative effect on the state level be targeted towards Mr. Kosmider. His primary objective has always been and continues to be the Fort Custer Recreation area. His support of the trailway effort compliments his goals and objectives. We respect, support and admire him and the work he does.

We realize there are some questions and issues we cannot give answers to regarding the Fort Custer-Charleston Township area. We hope things will be clearer after the February 5 meeting. If you wish, we will keep you posted on progress with the current trailway and local situation. We welcome any suggestions, input or direction you can give. We would appreciate a copy of your reply to the Charleston Township letter by Mr. Ward.



Patricia L. Adams
Executive Director



Toni Thompson, President
Kalamazoo River Valley Trailway



James Coury, Director
USDA Potawatomie Resource, Conservation, Development Council
Member: KRVV Executive Committee and Fort Custer Trailway Team

Appendix B

MICHIGAN PA 451 OF 1994, AS AMENDED

PART 721
MICHIGAN TRAILWAYS**324.72101 Definitions.**

Sec. 72101. As used in this part:

- (a) "Advisory council" means the Michigan trailways advisory council created in section 72110.
- (b) "Council" means a Michigan railway management council established pursuant to section 72106.
- (c) "Fund" means the Michigan trailways fund created in section 72109.
- (d) "Governmental agency" means the federal government, a county, city, village, or township, or a combination of any of these entities.
- (e) "Michigan railway" means a railway designated by the commission pursuant to section 72103.
- (f) "Railway" means a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72102 Legislative findings and declaration.

Sec. 72102. The legislature finds and declares that a statewide system of trailways will provide for public enjoyment, health, and fitness; encourage constructive leisure-time activities; protect open space, cultural and historical resources, and habitat for wildlife and plants; enhance the local and state economies; link communities, parks, and natural resources; create opportunities for rural-urban exchange, agricultural education, and the marketing of farm products; and preserve corridors for possible future use for other public purposes. Therefore, the planning, acquisition, development, operation, and maintenance of Michigan trailways is in the best interest of the state and is declared to be a public purpose.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72103 Designation as railway; public hearing; establishing and changing permitted uses; revocation of designation.

Sec. 72103. (1) Upon petition by any person or on its own motion, the commission may designate a railway in this state as a "Michigan railway". The petition or motion shall propose permitted uses of the railway. The commission shall not designate a railway as a Michigan railway unless it meets, or will meet when completed, all of the following requirements:

- (a) The land on which the railway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement. If the land is owned by a governmental agency, the commission shall obtain the consent of the governmental agency before designating the land as part of a Michigan railway.
- (b) The design and maintenance of the railway and its related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.
- (c) The railway meets appropriate standards for its designated recreation uses.
- (d) The railway is available for designated recreation uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.
- (e) The railway is a multiuse trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

(f) The railway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of railways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

(g) The railway is marked with an official Michigan railway sign and logo at major access points.

(h) The railway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at roadway crossings.

(i) Where feasible, the railway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the railway.

(j) Potential negative impacts of railway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

(i) Adequate enforcement of railway rules and regulations.

(ii) Continuation of access for railway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

(iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the railway.

(iv) Other means as considered appropriate by the commission.

(k) Other conditions required by the commission.

(2) The commission shall not designate a railway a Michigan railway under subsection (1) unless a public hearing has been held in the vicinity of the proposed Michigan railway to take testimony and gather public opinion on the proposed designation including, but not limited to, the proposed uses of the railway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for the railway. The public hearing shall be held at a location and at a time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. A transcript or a summary of the testimony at the public hearing shall be forwarded to the commission.

(3) At the time a Michigan railway is designated under subsection (1), the commission shall, in consultation with the governmental agencies in which the railway is located, establish uses to be permitted on the railway. In establishing permitted uses, the commission shall consider all of the following:

(a) The safety and enjoyment of railway users.

(b) Impacts on residents, landowners, and businesses adjacent to the railway.

(c) Applicable local ordinances.

(4) A change in the permitted uses of a Michigan railway established under subsection (3) relating to whether or not a motorized use is allowed on the railway shall not be made without approval of the commission after a public hearing held in the same manner as provided in subsection (2).

(5) The commission may revoke a Michigan railway designation if it determines that a railway fails to meet the requirements of this section. Before revoking a Michigan railway designation, the commission shall provide notice to all entities involved in the management of the railway. If the railway is brought into compliance with this section within 90 days after providing this notice, the commission shall not revoke the designation.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72104 Designation as railway connector.

Sec. 72104. (1) Upon petition by any person or on its own motion, the commission may designate a railway, bicycle path, sidewalk, road, or other suitable route that does not meet the requirements of this part for a Michigan railway as a "Michigan railway connector" if the connector meets all of the following:

- (a) The connector meets appropriate safety standards and appropriate design standards for its designated uses.
- (b) The connector connects directly to a Michigan railway.
- (c) The public agency having jurisdiction over the connector has consented in writing to the designation.
- (d) The connector is marked with an official Michigan railway connector sign and logo at major access points.

(2) An aquatic corridor capable of accommodating watercraft that connects to a Michigan railway may be designated as a Michigan railway connector if it meets the requirements of subsection (1)(a) to (d).

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72105 Operating and maintaining railway; agreement; provisions.

Sec. 72105. The department may operate and maintain a Michigan railway that is located on state owned land or may enter into an agreement with a council or 1 or more governmental agencies to provide for the operation and maintenance of the Michigan railway. An agreement entered into under this subsection may include provisions for any of the following:

- (a) Construction, maintenance, and operation of the railway.
- (b) Enforcement of railway rules and regulations including permitted uses of the railway.
- (c) Other provisions consistent with this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72106 Michigan railway management council; establishment; purpose; adopting operating procedures and electing officers; powers; dissolution.

Sec. 72106. (1) Two or more governmental agencies may establish a Michigan railway management council for the development and management of a Michigan railway pursuant to the urban cooperation act of 1967, Act No. 7 of the Public Acts of the Extra Session of 1967, being section 124.501 to 124.512 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

(2) Upon formation, a council shall adopt operating procedures and shall elect officers as the council considers appropriate.

(3) A council may do 1 or more of the following as authorized in an interlocal agreement entered into pursuant to Act No. 7 of the Public Acts of the Extra Session of 1967:

- (a) Operate and maintain that portion of 1 or more Michigan railways that is owned or under the control of the governmental agencies establishing the council.
- (b) Pursuant to an agreement under section 72105, operate and maintain that portion of 1 or more Michigan railways that is located on state owned land.
- (c) Coordinate the enforcement of railway rules and regulations and other applicable laws and ordinances, including permitted uses of the railway on railways owned or under the control of the governmental agencies establishing the council or, pursuant to an agreement under section 72105, railways that are located on state owned land.

(d) Receive any grant made from the fund or other funding related to that portion of a Michigan railway within its jurisdiction.

(e) Acquire or hold real property for the purpose of operating a Michigan railway.

(f) Perform other functions consistent with this part.

(4) A council may be dissolved by the governmental agencies that participated in creating the council. However, if a council has entered into an agreement with the department under section 72105, the agreement shall specify how the council may be dissolved.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72107 Closure during pesticide application.

Sec. 72107. In agricultural areas, a Michigan railway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the railway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the railway. The entity operating the Michigan railway shall post the closure of the railway or arrange with a landowner or other person for the posting of signs and the closure of the railway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72108 Commission; powers.

Sec. 72108. (1) The commission may do any of the following:

(a) Grant easements or use permits or lease land owned by the state that is being used for a Michigan railway for a use that is compatible with the use of the Michigan railway.

(b) Enter into contracts for concessions along a state owned Michigan railway.

(c) Lease land adjacent to a state owned Michigan railway for the operation of concessions.

(2) If the commission approves of the acquisition of land by the department, the commission may state that the specified land is acquired for use as a Michigan railway. Following acquisition of land that the commission states is acquired for use as a Michigan railway, any revenue derived from that land pursuant to subsection (1), except as otherwise provided by law, shall be deposited into the fund.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72109 Michigan railways fund.

Sec. 72109. (1) The Michigan railways fund is created within the state treasury.

(2) Except as otherwise provided by law, the state treasurer may receive money or other assets from any of the following for deposit into the fund:

(a) Fees collected from users of railways on state forest lands.

(b) Payments to the state for easements, use permits, leases, or other use of state owned Michigan railway property.

(c) Payments to the state for concessions operated by private vendors on state owned property located on or adjacent to a Michigan railway.

(d) Federal funds.

(e) Gifts or bequests.

(f) State appropriations.

(g) Money or assets from other sources as provided by law.

(3) The state treasurer shall direct the investment of the fund. The state treasurer shall credit to the fund interest and earnings from fund investments.

(4) Money in the fund at the close of the fiscal year shall remain in the fund and shall not lapse to the general fund.

(5) Money in the fund may be expended for any of the following purposes:

(a) The expenses of the department in operating and maintaining the Michigan railway system and enforcing Michigan railway rules and regulations.

(b) Grants to or contracts with councils or governmental agencies to operate and maintain segments of Michigan railways and to enforce Michigan railway rules and regulations.

(c) Funding Michigan railway construction and improvements.

(d) Acquisition of land or rights in land.

(e) Publications and promotions of the Michigan railways system.

(6) In determining the expenditure of money in the fund, the department shall consider all of the following:

(a) The need for funding for each of the purposes listed in subsection (5).

(b) The estimated cost of Michigan railway management for each governmental agency that manages a Michigan railway, based on previous costs, railway mileage, level of use, and other relevant factors.

(c) The need of each governmental agency that manages a Michigan railway for financial assistance in managing that railway, and the amount of money from the fund received by that agency in the past.

(d) The amount of revenue accruing to the fund that is generated from each Michigan railway.

(e) Other factors considered appropriate by the department.

(7) The department shall submit a report to the legislature on or before December 1 of each year describing the use of money appropriated from the fund in the previous fiscal year.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72110 Michigan railways advisory council; creation; appointment and terms of members; vacancy; removal; meetings; quorum; conduct of business; writings; compensation and expenses; duties.

Sec. 72110. (1) The Michigan railways advisory council is created within the department of natural resources.

(2) The advisory council shall consist of the following members appointed by the commission:

(a) One individual who is involved with the establishment or operation of a multiple use railway.

(b) Two individuals who represent Michigan railway user groups.

(c) One local government official from a governmental agency in which a multiple use railway is located.

(d) One member of the general public.

(3) The members first appointed to the commission shall be appointed within 90 days after April 21, 1993.

(4) Members of the advisory council shall serve for terms of 4 years, or until a successor is appointed, whichever is later, except that of the members first appointed, 2 shall serve for 1 year, 1 shall serve for 2 years, and 1 shall serve for 3 years.

(5) If a vacancy occurs on the advisory council, the commission shall make an appointment for the unexpired term in the same manner as the original appointment.

(6) The commission may remove a member of the advisory council for incompetency, dereliction of duty, malfeasance, misfeasance, or nonfeasance in office, or any other good cause.

(7) The first meeting of the advisory council shall be called by the commission. At the first meeting the advisory council shall elect from among its members a chairperson and other officers as it considers necessary or appropriate. After the first meeting, the advisory council shall meet at least annually or more frequently at the call of the chairperson or if requested by 3 or more members.

(8) A majority of the members of the advisory council constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business at a meeting of the advisory council. A majority of the members present and serving is required for official action of the advisory council.

(9) The business the advisory council may perform shall be conducted at a public meeting of the advisory council held in compliance with the open meetings act, Act No. 267 of the Public Acts of 1976, being sections 15.261 to 15.275 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

(10) A writing prepared, owned, used, in possession of, or retained by the advisory council in the performance of an official function is subject to the freedom of information act, Act No. 442 of the Public Acts of 1976, being sections 15.231 to 15.246 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

(11) Members of the advisory council shall serve without compensation. However, members of the advisory council may be reimbursed for their actual and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their official duties as members of the advisory council.

(12) The advisory council shall do both of the following:

(a) Make recommendations to the commission and the department on the expenditure of money in the fund.

(b) Advise the commission and the department on the implementation of this act and the establishment and operation of Michigan trailways.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72111 State agencies; duties.

Sec. 72111. All state agencies shall cooperate with the commission and the department in the implementation of this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

324.72112 Rules.

Sec. 72112. The commission may promulgate rules as it considers necessary to implement this part.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

PART 733
LIABILITY OF LANDOWNERS

324.73301 Liability of landowner, tenant, or lessee for injuries to persons on property for purpose of outdoor recreation or trail use, using Michigan trailway or other public trail, gleaning agricultural or farm products, fishing or hunting, or picking and purchasing agricultural or farm products at farm or "u-pick" operation; definition.

Sec. 73301. (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, a cause of action shall not arise for injuries to a person who is on the land of another without paying to the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land a valuable consideration for the purpose of fishing, hunting, trapping, camping, hiking, sightseeing, motorcycling, snowmobiling, or any other outdoor recreational use or trail use, with or without permission, against the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land unless the injuries were caused by the gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct of the owner, tenant, or lessee.

(2) A cause of action shall not arise for injuries to a person who is on the land of another without paying to the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land a valuable consideration for the purpose of entering or exiting from or using a Michigan trailway as designated under part 721 or other public trail, with or without permission, against the owner, tenant, or lessee of the land unless the injuries were caused by the gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct of the owner, tenant, or lessee. For purposes of this subsection, a Michigan trailway or public trail may be located on land of any size including, but not limited to, urban, suburban, subdivided, and rural land.

(3) A cause of action shall not arise against the owner, tenant, or lessee of land or premises for injuries to a person who is on that land or premises for the purpose of gleaning agricultural or farm products, unless that person's injuries were caused by the gross negligence or willful and wanton misconduct of the owner, tenant, or lessee.

(4) A cause of action shall not arise against the owner, tenant, or lessee of a farm used in the production of agricultural goods as defined by section 35(1)(h) of the single business tax act, Act No. 228 of the Public Acts of 1975, being section 208.35 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, for injuries to a person who is on that farm and has paid the owner, tenant, or lessee valuable consideration for the purpose of fishing or hunting, unless that person's injuries were caused by a condition which involved an unreasonable risk of harm and all of the following apply:

(a) The owner, tenant, or lessee knew or had reason to know of the condition or risk.

(b) The owner, tenant, or lessee failed to exercise reasonable care to make the condition safe, or to warn the person of the condition or risk.

(c) The person injured did not know or did not have reason to know of the condition or risk.

(5) A cause of action shall not arise against the owner, tenant, or lessee of land or premises for injuries to a person, other than an employee or contractor of the owner, tenant, or lessee, who is on the land or premises for the purpose of picking and purchasing agricultural or farm products at a farm or "u-pick" operation, unless the person's injuries were caused by a condition that involved an unreasonable risk of harm and all of the following apply:

(a) The owner, tenant, or lessee knew or had reason to know of the condition or risk.

(b) The owner, tenant, or lessee failed to exercise reasonable care to make the condition safe, or to warn the person of the condition or risk.

(c) The person injured did not know or did not have reason to know of the condition or risk.

(6) As used in this section, "agricultural or farm products" means the natural products of the farm, nursery, grove, orchard, vineyard, garden, and apiary, including, but not limited to, trees and firewood.

History: Add. 1995, Act 58, Imd. Eff. May 24, 1995.

Act No. 28
Public Acts of 1993
Approved by the Governor
April 20, 1993
Filed with the Secretary of State
April 21, 1993

**STATE OF MICHIGAN
87TH LEGISLATURE
REGULAR SESSION OF 1993**

Introduced by Senators Pridnia, Geake, Ehlers, McManus, Emmons, Cisky, Wartner, Honigman and Gast

ENROLLED SENATE BILL No. 225

AN ACT to amend section 10 of Act No. 295 of the Public Acts of 1976, entitled as amended "An act to improve and maintain transportation services in this state; to provide for the acquisition and use of funds; to provide for the acquisition of certain railroad facilities and certain property; to provide for the disposition and use of facilities and property acquired under this act; to provide for financial assistance to certain private transportation services; to prescribe the powers and duties of certain state departments and agencies; to provide for the transfer of certain funds; to provide for the creation of a fund; and to provide for appropriations," as amended by Act No. 210 of the Public Acts of 1984, being section 474.60 of the Michigan Compiled Laws.

The People of the State of Michigan enact:

Section 1. Section 10 of Act No. 295 of the Public Acts of 1976, as amended by Act No. 210 of the Public Acts of 1984, being section 474.60 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, is amended to read as follows:

Sec. 10. (1) In weighing the varied interests of the residents of this state, the department shall give consideration to the individual interest of any person, public or private corporation, local or regional transportation authority, local governmental unit, private carrier, group of rail users, state agency, other public or private entity, including a port authority established under the Hertel-Law-T. Stopczynski port authority act, Act No. 639 of the Public Acts of 1978, being sections 120.101 to 120.130 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, or any combination of these entities, expressing a desire to acquire or lease or secure an easement for the use of a portion or all of the real property owned by a railroad company. The property acquired by the department under this act may be conveyed or leased to an entity or combination of entities listed in this subsection with appropriate reimbursement, as determined by the department.

(2) Upon acquisition of a right-of-way, the department may preserve the right-of-way for future use as a railroad line and, if preserving it for that use, shall not permit any action which would render it unsuitable for future rail use. However, if the department determines a right-of-way or other property acquired under this act is no longer necessary for railroad transportation purposes, the department may preserve and utilize the right-of-way for other transportation purposes or may dispose of the right-of-way or other property acquired under this act for the purposes described in section 6, or may dispose of or lease the right-of-way or other property for other purposes, as appropriate. However, the department shall not dispose of or lease a right-of-way without first offering to transfer the right-of-way to the department of natural resources. If the department of natural resources desires to lease or purchase the right-of-way, the department of natural resources must indicate their desire within 60 days and accept the offered transfer within 1 year after the offer is made. If the department of natural resources does not indicate their desires within 60 days, the department may dispose of or lease the right-of-way as otherwise provided for in this act. If the department of natural

resources does not accept the offered transfer within 1 year after indicating their desire to lease or purchase the right-of-way, the department may dispose of or lease the right-of-way as otherwise provided for in this act. When appropriate, a right-of-way or other property shall be transferred or leased to a public or private entity with appropriate reimbursement, as determined by the department.

(3) In preserving a right-of-way for future rail use, the department may do 1 or more of the following:

(a) Develop the right-of-way for use as a commuter trail where the use is feasible and needed or lease the right-of-way to a county, city, village, or township expressing a desire to develop the right-of-way as a commuter trail. The lease shall be for an indefinite period of time, cancelable by the department only if the right-of-way is needed for rail usage. The trails, unless leased to a county, city, village, or township, shall remain under the jurisdiction of the department.

(b) Transfer, for appropriate reimbursement, the right-of-way to the department of natural resources for use as a Michigan railway pursuant to the Michigan railways act, if the deed includes restrictions on the use of the property that assure that the property remains viable for future rail usage, and includes a clause that provides that the department of natural resources shall transfer, for appropriate reimbursement, the right-of-way to the department, upon a determination of the director of the state transportation department that the right-of-way is needed for use as a railroad line.

(c) Lease the right-of-way to the department of natural resources, or upon approval of the department of natural resources, to a county, city, village, or township for use as a recreational trail. The lease shall be for an indefinite period of time, cancelable by the department only if the right-of-way is needed for rail usage. A recreational trail shall be reserved for non-motorized forms of recreation or snowmobiling only. Snowmobiling shall not be allowed on more than 50% of the mileage of the recreational trails established pursuant to this act.

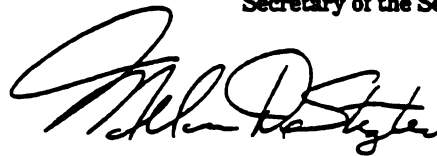
(d) In cases where a trail serves both a significant commuter and recreation function, authorize the joint development of the trail by the department and the department of natural resources, or the department and any interested county, city, village, or township. Administration of the trail shall be determined jointly by the department and the department of natural resources.

Section 2. This amendatory act shall not take effect unless Senate Bill No. 224 of the 87th Legislature is enacted into law.

This act is ordered to take immediate effect.



Secretary of the Senate.



Co-Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Approved _____





DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION¹¹¹

MIDLAND COUNTY SERVICES BUILDING • 220 WEST ELLSWORTH STREET

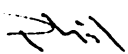
MIDLAND, MICHIGAN 48640-5194 • PHONE (517) 832-6870



WILLIAM C. GIBSON
DIRECTOR

July 30, 1996

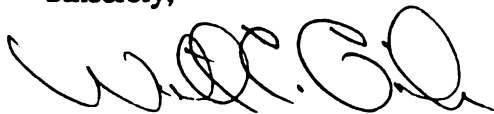
Philip Wells, Trailways Program Manager
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909


Dear Mr. Wells:

After review and discussion with the Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission, I am pleased to request, on their behalf, that the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan be considered for **Michigan Trailways** designation. The Commission feels that the Pere Marquette fulfills the requirements for inclusion, and looks forward to providing you with any information necessary to document same.

It would be an honor for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail to be part of the **Michigan Trailways** system. I look forward to hearing from you on the Commission's request.

Sincerely,



William C. Gibson
Director

xc Craig Gosen, President, Parks and Recreation Commission
Marc McGill, Administrator/Controller

WCG

File: c:\...pm.mtl

**STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION**

112

**Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
Recreation and Trails Section**

Name of Trailway _____

Trailway Manager (i.e., managing agency or agencies)

Authorized Representative: Name _____

Title _____ Address _____

City _____ ZIP _____ Phone _____

DNR Staff Evaluator: Name _____ Title _____

Date of Field Evaluation _____ Other Staff Present _____

Representative of Trailway Manager Present _____

Staff Recommendation: This trail is (*check one*):

☐ Eligible for Michigan Trailway designation (meets all requirements of the act)

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet definition of trailway stated in Sec. 3 of the Michigan Trailways Act ("a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses").

Explain _____

The corridor generally must not be shared with a street or road that is open to motor vehicles.

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet one or more requirements of the Michigan Trailways Act as described on pages 4-9 (*circle one or more letters*):

a b c d e f g h i j k l

State Trails Coordinator (print) _____

Signature _____ Date _____

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

Under authority of Section 4(1) of Michigan Trailways Act (Act No. 27 of Public Acts of 1993), Natural Resources Commission (NRC) may designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway." "Trailway" is defined in Section 3 as "a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses." To receive Michigan Trailway designation, trail must meet definition of trailway and all of the requirements presented in Sec. 4(1) and Sec. 8 of the act, as elaborated on the following pages.

Developed trailways must either meet all requirements at time of designation, or trailway manager must have written agreement with DNR Trailways Program Leader describing plan and schedule for meeting any requirements not currently met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation. For trailways not yet developed, trailway manager must have approved master plan or other approved document describing how and when requirements will be met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation.

If staff makes tentative finding that trail is eligible for Michigan Trailway designation, trailway manager must, per Sec. 4(2) of the act, hold public hearing in vicinity of trailway to take testimony and gather public opinion on proposed designation including, but not limited to, proposed uses of trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for trailway. Hearing must be held at location and time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. Transcript or summary of testimony must be forwarded to NRC with designation request.

Following the public hearing, any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation should comment to the NRC. Generally, the NRC will make decision on a proposed Michigan Trailway designation 30-60 days following the public hearing required by Sec. 4(2).

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council (MTAC) may also review the proposed designation before or after the public hearing. Any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation may also comment to MTAC.

Section 5 of the act provides for designation of "Michigan Trailway Connectors." This determination form does not address connector designation.

Description of Property To Be Designated (Trailway Boundary):

Attach legal description(s) and map(s).

**Staff Determination of Compliance With
Michigan Trailway Designation Requirements
Michigan 1993 Act 27, Sec. 4(1) & 8**

For each requirement (a-l), attach further explanation as necessary.

- a) The land on which the trailway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement.**

("Long-term control" is defined as at least 20 years from date of designation.)

Yes

No

Agency(-ies) controlling property _____

Nature of long-term control (fee simple ownership, easement, lease, etc.).

If more than one agency, indicate length and end points of each agency's control.

Attach maps and other documentation as appropriate.

If the land is owned by [non-state] governmental agency(-ies), the governmental agency(-ies) has given its consent for Michigan Trailway designation.

Yes

No

N/A

Explain _____

Attach documentation.

- b) **Design and maintenance of trailway and related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.**

Yes

No

Explain _____

Key considerations include (but may not be limited to): motor vehicle crossings (roads, streets, driveways); separation of trail from motor vehicles (including parking areas); bridges, sideslopes, signage, security.

- c) **Trailway meets appropriate standards for its designated uses.**

Yes

No

Explain _____

Designated uses: _____

List need not be exhaustive, but must include all motorized uses and must indicate whether general bicycling (as opposed to "mountain biking") is a designated use.

*"Appropriate standards" are defined as design guidelines found in **Trails for the Twenty-First Century**, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), Chapter 3; and, for trail designated for general bicycle use, **Planning Surfaced Bicycle Paths**, published by MDNR (1991), and **Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities** published by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1991).*

d) Trailway is available for designated uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trailway must be open to all citizens. If a nonresident user fee, or higher nonresident fee, is charged, fee or fee differential must be reasonable.

e) Trailway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trail must be planned, designed, operated, and publicized for multiple use, to include, at a minimum, walking. It must meet standards for accessibility to people with disabilities as presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and guidelines issued pursuant to that act.

f) Trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trail must be of more than local significance, as measured by the criteria stated in (f). Reasonable evidence or projections of substantial use by people from beyond the local area will be accepted, i.e., scientific studies and quantitative data are not required.

- g) Trailway is marked with official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.**

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trailway manager must agree to sign trailway at its expense if designated, and maintain designation signs.

- h) Trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at road crossings.**

Yes

No

Explain _____

Roadways open to motor vehicles are not eligible for Michigan Trailway designation. This includes paved shoulders.

- i) Where feasible, trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.**

Yes

No

Explain _____

*A reasonable effort must be made to meet needs for support facilities. These needs can be met by facilities provided by a public agency or private organization/business, as long as the facilities are open to all trails users, not just customers of the business. See *Trails for the Twenty-First Century*, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), pages 130-142.*

j) Potential negative impacts of railway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

i) Adequate enforcement of railway rules and regulations.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trailway manager must document enforcement accountability and procedures.

ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures allowing established crossings to be continued.

iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.

Yes

No

Explain _____

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures (1) for deciding where fencing is necessary and (2) providing for construction and maintenance of fencing, where found to be necessary, at trailway manager's expense.

k) (Allows for establishment of other requirements; none have been established)

- l) i) In agricultural areas, a Michigan railway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the railway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the railway [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe policies and procedures for responding to and evaluating requests for temporary railway closure for pesticide application:

- ü) The entity operating the Michigan railway shall post the closure of the railway or arrange with a landowner, or other person, for the posting of signs and the closure of the railway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe procedures for implementing temporary closures at sites where decisions are made to temporarily close the railway for pesticide application.



Department Calendar

Vol. 3 No. 22

October 30, 1995

Susan T.
3-21-99

Publication Schedule

The DNR Calendar is published every two weeks, on alternate Mondays, by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. We welcome your comments on style, format and information to ensure that this calendar is as informative as possible.

New DNR and DEQ Calendars

Pursuant to Executive Order 1995-18, a new Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and a new Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are created, effective October 1, 1995. The DEQ has a separate calendar dealing with matters pertaining to environmental issues, permitting and related regulations. Both calendars will be sent to those on the "old" DNR Calendar mailing list except for individuals who request otherwise.

Calendar Mailing Lists

For any changes or corrections to the **DNR Calendar** mailing list, call **Tina Kellogg** at 517-373-2997, or send your correct name and address to:

DNR Calendar
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing MI 48909-7528

For any changes or corrections to the **DEQ Calendar** mailing list, call 517-335-3153, or send your correct name and address to:

DEQ Calendar
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing MI 48909-7973

Internet Access

The DNR Calendar is now available on the Internet on the DNR home page, which is at [HTTP://WWW.DNR.STATE.MI.US](http://WWW.DNR.STATE.MI.US), and at the DNR's anonymous FTP site, which is INFOLINE.DNR.STATE.MI.US. If you would like to remove your name from the "paper" mailing list, call **Tina Kellogg** at 517-373-2997.

Dial-Up Bulletin Board System (BBS) Access

This calendar is also available on the DNR's dial-up bulletin board system (BBS). To use this system, call 1-800-699-MDNR, or locally call 517-373-3081. Set your modem to no parity, 8 data bits and 1 stop bit. All speeds up to 14.4 are supported. ANSI BBS protocol works best, but most others are supported.

Timetable for Decisions

No decision listed in the DNR Calendar will be made prior to seven days after the initial calendar publication date.

Game and Fish Orders

1996 SPRING WILD TURKEY HUNTING SEASON. Information Contact: **John Urbain**, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

DEER MANAGEMENT UNIT 215 REGULATIONS. Information Contact: **Ed Langenau**, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

LEGALLY BLIND HUNTERS. Information Contact: **David Purol**, 517-335-3411. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

USE OF GROUND BLINDS ON PUBLIC LANDS. Information Contact: **Ed Langenau**, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

Land Transactions

DIRECT CONVEYANCE OF DEDICATED LAND: Pigeon River State Forest, Otsego County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

DIRECT OIL AND GAS LEASE (NONDEVELOPMENT): Rapid River Township, Kalkaska County; Croton Township, Otsego County. Information Contact: **Gina Parks Klco**, 517-373-7666. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

EXCHANGES: Ottawa Muskegon Trail, Ottawa County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

FORESTRY LAND ACQUISITION: Pere Marquette State Forest, Wexford County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

MUNICIPAL CONVEYANCE OF UNDEDICATED STATE-OWNED LAND (326 LOTS & PARCELS): City of Algonac, Port Huron Township, St. Clair County; Cities of Detroit, Ecorse, Melvindale, Wayne and Wyandotte, Redford Township, Wayne County; Blue Lake Township, Village of Lakewood Club, Muskegon County; Village of Mancelona, Antrim County; City of Saginaw and Carrollton Township, Saginaw County; Village of Marcellus and Newberg Township, Cass County; Cities of Mt. Clemens and Warren, Macomb County; City of Jackson, Jackson County; Somerset Township, Hillsdale County. Information Contact: **Lois Hinkle**, 517-373-1251. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE, DECEMBER 12, 13, 14, 1995 - 26 COUNTIES. Information Contact: **Gina Parks Klco**, 517-373-7666. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

PARKS AND RECREATION LAND ACQUISITION: George Lake Access Site No. 65-9, Ogemaw County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

WILDLIFE LAND ACQUISITIONS: Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area, Clinton County. Allegan State Game Area and Kalamazoo Mini-Wildlife Area, Allegan County; Maple River/Gratiot-Saginaw

Connector, Gratiot County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

Other Decisions Before the Office of the Director

INTENT TO SELL STATE PARK USER DATA BASES. Information Contact: **Neil LaCasse**, 517-335-3025. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

RECREATION BOND FUND APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL RECREATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. Consideration of DNR staff recommendation to fund applications received April 1, 1995. Information Contact: **Michael McDonald**, Administrative Services Division, 517-335-3042. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

Public Hearings, Meetings, Events

Note: Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in any of the meetings noted in this calendar should call or write the appropriate meeting information contact listed below at least a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

NOVEMBER 1

BY THIS DATE, 165 SUCCESSFUL ELK HUNTERS WILL BE NOTIFIED THAT THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE DECEMBER 12-19 HUNT.

BY THIS DATE, APPROXIMATELY 295,000 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL RECEIVE THEIR ANTLERLESS DEER HUNTING LICENSES IN THE MAIL.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSURES IN THE NORTH ZONE.

RESIDENT MUSKRAT AND MINK TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 2.

RESIDENT RACCOON TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 3.

RESIDENT BADGER TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 3.

7:00-9:00 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION FOR HART-MONTAGUE BICYCLE TRAIL STATE PARK. Hearing to take public comment on proposed designation of the trail as a Michigan Trailway under the Michigan Trailways Act, to be held at the Shelby Village Hall, 189 Maple, Shelby (Oceana County). To obtain a copy of the designation materials, call 517-373-9483. Information Contact: **Philip Wells**, 517-335-3038.

NOVEMBER 2

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSURES IN THE SOUTH ZONE, EAST OF US-27/127. (See exceptions for goose management units in the Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide.)

7:00-9:00 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION FOR KAL-HAVEN TRAIL SESQUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK. Hearing to take public comment on proposed designation of the trail as a Michigan Trailway under the Michigan Trailways Act, to be held at the Gobles High School library, 409 North State Street, Gobles (Van Buren County). To obtain a copy of the designation materials, call 517-373-9483. Information Contact: **Philip Wells**, 517-335-3038.

NOVEMBER 7

4:30 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING OF THE BETSIE RIVER ZONING REVIEW BOARD at the Weldon Township Hall, Thompsonville, to decide on a request for variance from the Natural River Zoning Standards on the Betsie River. Information Contact: **Jan Fenske**, 517-275-5151.

NOVEMBER 8

9:00 a.m. MICHIGAN FOREST ROUNDTABLE with objectives to develop a shared vision, a set of principles, and a recommendation for action that will result in improved policies for our nation's forests. The roundtable will be held at Treetops Sylvan Resort, Gaylord (Otsego County). Information Contact: **Wanda Stevens**, Forest Management Division, 517-373-1056.

6:30 p.m. OFF-ROAD-VEHICLE (ORV) ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon (Roscommon County). Information Contact: **Margo Fuller**, Forest Management Division, 517-373-9483.

NOVEMBER 9

1:00 p.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Library of Michigan, 717 W. Allegan, Lansing. Public appearances before the NRC may be scheduled by calling Teresa Gloden. Information Contact: **Teresa Gloden**, 517-373-2352.

NOVEMBER 10

RESIDENT BEAVER AND OTTER TRAPPING SEASONS OPEN IN UNIT B. See Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for open and closed areas.

MUSKRAT AND MINK TRAPPING SEASON OPENS FOR RESIDENTS IN ZONE 3.

NOVEMBER 11

A DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTER will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Carl T. Johnson Center at Mitchell State Park, Cadillac, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 12

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Carl T. Johnson Center at Mitchell State Park, Cadillac, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSES IN THE SOUTH ZONE, WEST OF US-27/127. (See exceptions for goose management units in the Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide.)

NOVEMBER 13

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 14

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ARCHERY DEER SEASON CLOSES UNTIL DECEMBER 1.

PHEASANT SEASON CLOSES IN ZONES 2 AND 3.

WOODCOCK, CROW, SHARPTAIL GROUSE, AND RUFFED GROUSE SEASONS CLOSE.

(NOVEMBER 14, continued)

125

COYOTE HUNTING SEASON CLOSES IN ZONE 1.

BADGER TRAPPING SEASON CLOSES IN ZONE 2.

CANADA AND OTHER GEESE SEASONS CLOSE IN THE MUSKEGON WASTEWATER GOOSE MANAGEMENT UNIT. This area may be closed earlier if the quota has been reached.

RAILS AND COMMON SNIPE SEASONS CLOSE STATEWIDE.

NOVEMBER 15

FIREARMS DEER SEASON OPENS.

NONRESIDENT FUR HARVESTER SEASON OPENS. (See Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide.)

NONRESIDENT BEAVER AND OTTER TRAPPING SEASONS OPEN IN UNIT A. See the Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for open and closed areas.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSES IN THE MIDDLE ZONE.

9:30 a.m. MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK FINANCIAL ASSURANCE (MUSTFA) POLICY BOARD at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing. Information Contact: **Patty Morlock**, 1-800-4-MUSTFA or 517-373-6247.

NOVEMBER 16

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 17

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 18

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 19

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

DECEMBER 6

4:30 p.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing. Public appearances before the NRC may be scheduled by calling Teresa Gloden. Information Contact: **Teresa Gloden**, 517-373-2352.

DECEMBER 7

9:00 a.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Library of Michigan, 717 W. Allegan, Lansing. Information Contact: **Teresa Gloden**, 517-373-2352.

DECEMBER 12

10:30 a.m. SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon (Roscommon County). Information Contact: **Margo Fuller**, Forest Management Division, 517-373-9483.

MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION AGREEMENT
for
KAL-HAVEN TRAIL SESQUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK
between
STATE TRAILS COORDINATOR
and
DNR PARKS & RECREATION DIVISION

This agreement between the State Trails Coordinator and the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD) is entered into pursuant to the Michigan Trailways Act (Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, Part 721).

The State Trails Coordinator (STC) agrees to recommend to the Natural Resources Commission immediate designation of the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park as a Michigan Trailway. The STC also agrees to help P&RD secure funding and design assistance to carry out trail improvements as described below.

If the Natural Resources Commission designates the trail as a Michigan Trailway, P&RD agrees to meet, on a continuing basis, the requirements of Sec. 4(1) and 8 of the Michigan Trailways Act, which become part of this agreement, and to meet design requirements on any improvements to or extensions of the trail.

Permitted uses of the trail will include snowmobiling (except for east two miles of the trail) and all nonmotorized uses including general bicycling. Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.

P&RD also agrees to the following:*

1. As soon as the necessary funds and/or lands can be secured:
 - A. Redesign and modify parking area at 66th St. (CR687) in Kibbie so trail does not pass through parking lot. (b)
 - B. Provide direct trail connection to road at east trailhead so users arriving at trailhead by bicycle do not have to go through parking lot to access trail. (b)
 - C. Explore and pursue options to reduce grades and increase curve radii on both sides of Blue Star Highway underpass. (c)
 - D. Redesign and modify trail approaches to CR653 to reduce trail grades (to 5% or less if possible from current 10-12%). (c)

- E. Insure that east approach to railroad crossing in Grand Junction has grade of less than 10% (from current 14%). (c)
 - F. Insure safest possible snowmobile route through Grand Junction. (b)
 - G. Add diagonal "wings" to all four corners of bridge railing at Silver Saddle Drain. (b)
 - H. Redesign and rebuild trail crossing of CR388 (Phoenix Highway) just east of Bloomingdale to increase inside curve radius of trail on both sides of crossing to at least 40 feet (c)
 - I. When new west trailhead completed in So. Haven, eliminate nonaccessible toilets at temporary trailhead on Blue Star Hwy. (i)
2. When railings are replaced or added in future on any trail bridges or along the trail, build railing to height of 54", with rub-rail at 42" (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)
3. When camel-back bridge at Silver Saddle Drain is replaced in future, insure new bridge deck has maximum grade of under 10% (from current 14% max.). (c)

- 72103(1)
- Letters in parentheses following items identify requirements of Sec. ~~ATT~~ of the Michigan Trailways Act.

State Trails Coordinator:

Name (typed)

Hector Chiuneti
Hector Chiuneti

Signature

Date

9-18-95

Parks & Recreation Division Chief:

Name (typed)

O.J. Scherschligt

Signature

Date

9-18-95

MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION AGREEMENT**for****HART-MONTAGUE BICYCLE TRAIL STATE PARK****between****STATE TRAILS COORDINATOR****and****DNR PARKS & RECREATION DIVISION**

This agreement between the State Trails Coordinator and the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD) is entered into pursuant to the Michigan Trailways Act (Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, Part 721).

The State Trails Coordinator (STC) agrees to recommend to the Natural Resources Commission immediate designation of the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park as a Michigan Trailway. The STC also agrees to help P&RD secure funding and design assistance to carry out trail improvements as described below.

If the Natural Resources Commission designates the trail as a Michigan Trailway, P&RD agrees to meet, on a continuing basis, the requirements of Sec. 4(1) and 8 of the Michigan Trailways Act, which become part of this agreement, and to meet design requirements on any improvements to or extensions of the trail.

Permitted uses of the trail will include snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses including general bicycling. Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.

P&RD also agrees to the following: *

1. As soon as the necessary funds and/or lands can be secured:

- A. Realign trail crossings of roads to improve crossing angle and decrease crossing distance at three locations: (b)**

Walsh Rd. just north of south trailhead

Old US-31 (Oceana Dr.) on south side of Shelby (Land acquisition may be necessary)

Buchanan Rd. no. of Shelby

- B. Add diagonal "wings" to ends of railings on two bridges: north of M-20 and cattle crossing north of Shelby. (b)
 - C. Increase trail curve radius approaching Business 31 from south near north trailhead in Shelby. (c)
 - D. Increase curve radius of four curves around Kurdzick Co. parking lot in Rothbury to at least 40 feet (inside radius). (c)
 - E. Increase parking at south trailhead. (i)
2. When trail is resurfaced in the future, increase surfaced trail width from 8 to at least 10 feet (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)
3. When railings are replaced or added in future on any trail bridges or along the trail, build railing to height of 54", with rub-rail at 42" (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)

-
- * Letters in parentheses following items identify requirements of Sec. ⁷²⁰³⁽¹⁾~~441~~ of the Michigan Trailways Act.

State Trails Coordinator:

Name (typed) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti

Date 9-18-95

Parks & Recreation Division Chief:

Name (typed) O.J. Scherschligt

Signature O.J. Scherschligt

Date 9-18-95

STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION

130

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
Recreation and Trails Section

Name of Trailway: Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park

Trailway Manager (i.e., managing agency or agencies)

DNR Parks & Recreation Division

Authorized Representative: Name David Marsh, DNR, Parks & Recreation Div

Title Park Ranger, Kal-Haven S.P. Address Van Buren St. Pk. 23960 Ruggles Rd.

City South Haven ZIP 49090 Phone 616-637-4984

DNR Staff Evaluator: Name Philip Wells Title Trailway Program Leader

Date of Field Evaluation 05/27/94 Other Staff Present None

Representative of Trailway Manager Present David Marsh

Staff Recommendation: This trail is (check one):

☒ Eligible for Michigan Trailway designation (meets all requirements of the act)

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet definition of trailway stated in Sec. 3 of the Michigan Trailways Act ("a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses").

Explain _____

The corridor generally must not be shared with a street or road that is open to motor vehicles.

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet one or more requirements of the Michigan Trailways Act as described on pages 4-9 (circle one or more letters):

a b c d e f g h i j k l

State Trails Coordinator (print) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti Date 9.15.95

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

Under authority of Section 4(1) of Michigan Trailways Act (Act No. 27 of Public Acts of 1993), Natural Resources Commission (NRC) may designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway." "Trailway" is defined in Section 3 as "a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses." To receive Michigan Trailway designation, trail must meet definition of trailway and all of the requirements presented in Sec. 4(1) and Sec. 8 of the act, as elaborated on the following pages.

Developed trailways must either meet all requirements at time of designation, or trailway manager must have written agreement with DNR Trailways Program Leader describing plan and schedule for meeting any requirements not currently met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation. For trailways not yet developed, trailway manager must have approved master plan or other approved document describing how and when requirements will be met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation.

If staff makes tentative finding that trail is eligible for Michigan Trailway designation, trailway manager must, per Sec. 4(2) of the act, hold public hearing in vicinity of trailway to take testimony and gather public opinion on proposed designation including, but not limited to, proposed uses of trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for trailway. Hearing must be held at location and time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. Transcript or summary of testimony must be forwarded to NRC with designation request.

Following the public hearing, any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation should comment to the NRC. Generally, the NRC will make decision on a proposed Michigan Trailway designation 30-60 days following the public hearing required by Sec. 4(2).

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council (MTAC) may also review the proposed designation before or after the public hearing. Any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation may also comment to MTAC.

Section 5 of the act provides for designation of "Michigan Trailway Connectors." This determination form does not address connector designation.

Description of Property To Be Designated (Trailway Boundary):

All DNR-owned property along former railroad grade extending from 10th St., Sec. 2,

Oshtemo Twp., Kalamazoo County, to the City of South Haven, Van Buren County:

plus any land that may in the future be incorporated into the dedicated boundary

of the State Park.

Attach legal description(s) and map(s). See attached map.

Legal description on file with DNR, Real Estate Division.

**Staff Determination of Compliance With
Michigan Trailway Designation Requirements
Michigan 1993 Act 27, Sec. 4(1) & 8**

For each requirement (a-l), attach further explanation as necessary.

- a) **The land on which the trailway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement.**

("Long-term control" is defined as at least 20 years from date of designation.)

Yes

No

Agency(-ies) controlling property Michigan DNR

Nature of long-term control (fee simple ownership, easement, lease, etc.).

Fee simple ownership

If more than one agency, indicate length and end points of each agency's control.

N/A

Attach maps and other documentation as appropriate.

If the land is owned by [non-state] governmental agency(-ies), the governmental agency(-ies) has given its consent for Michigan Trailway designation.

Yes

No

N/A

Explain _____

Attach documentation.

Note: City of Hart's extension of trail could be considered for designation in future.

- b) Design and maintenance of trailway and related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.

☒ Yes

No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See designation agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Key considerations include (but may not be limited to): motor vehicle crossings (roads, streets, driveways); separation of trail from motor vehicles (including parking areas); bridges, sideslopes, signage, security.

- c) Trailway meets appropriate standards for its designated uses.

☒ Yes

No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See designation agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Designated uses: All non-motorized including general bicycling (horseback riding
allowed only on segment from 68th St. to Bloomingdale, 14 mi); snowmobiling (except
for east 2 mi.); motorized wheelchairs.

List need not be exhaustive, but must include all motorized uses and must indicate whether general bicycling (as opposed to "mountain biking") is a designated use.

"Appropriate standards" are defined as design guidelines found in Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), Chapter 3; and, for trail designated for general bicycle use, Planning Surfaced Bicycle Paths, published by MDNR (1991), and Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities published by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1991).

- d) Trailway is available for designated uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Fee is same for all users. (Snowmobilers are not required to buy trail pass because snowmobile registration and permit fees support trail operation.)

Trailway must be open to all citizens. If a nonresident user fee, or higher nonresident fee, is charged, fee or fee differential must be reasonable.

- e) Trailway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No significant deficiencies.

Trail must be planned, designed, operated, and publicized for multiple use, to include, at a minimum, walking. It must meet standards for accessibility to people with disabilities as presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and guidelines issued pursuant to that act.

- f) Trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Experience of park staff and local business document that substantial share of users come from beyond local area.

Trail must be of more than local significance, as measured by the criteria stated in (f). Reasonable evidence or projections of substantial use by people from beyond the local area will be accepted, i.e., scientific studies and quantitative data are not required.

- g) **Trailway is marked with official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Park staff will install and maintain signs when available.

Trailway manager must agree to sign trailway at its expense if designated, and maintain designation signs.

- h) **Trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at road crossings.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No segments of trail are directly attached to roadway.

Roadways open to motor vehicles are not eligible for Michigan Trailway designation. This includes paved shoulders.

- i) **Where feasible, trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See attached page for description of support

facilities. See Designation Agreement for description of improvements to be made in future.

A reasonable effort must be made to meet needs for support facilities. These needs can be met by facilities provided by a public agency or private organization/business, as long as the facilities are open to all trails users, not just customers of the business. See Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), pages 130-142.

- j) Potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

- i) Adequate enforcement of trailway rules and regulations.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain ^{seasonal?} Full-time ranger and ~~10-11 month~~ ranger have enforcement authority. Five seasonal staff have radios/phones: 2 on bikes 4 days/week in summer. Night patrol in winter for snowmobiling certain weekend nights. See attached letter from local officials.

Trailway manager must document enforcement accountability and procedures.

- ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Policy is to continue all established crossings. Court settlement requires DNR to issue free easements with \$50.00 administrative fee.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures allowing established crossings to be continued.

- iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Trail has fencing committee of township representatives. See attached criteria used for evaluating requests. DNR installs fence if warranted.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures (1) for deciding where fencing is necessary and (2) providing for construction and maintenance of fencing, where found to be necessary, at trailway manager's expense.

- k) (Allows for establishment of other requirements; none have been established)

- i) In agricultural areas, a Michigan trailway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe policies and procedures for responding to and evaluating requests for temporary trailway closure for pesticide application:

Park manager has never received request for temporary closure of any segment of the trailway. However, Parks & Recreation Division and Forest Management Division have developed the following position regarding decisions on temporary closure, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by those divisions.

When someone contemplates periodic application of pesticides to lands adjacent to a Michigan Trailway managed by Parks & Recreation Division or Forest Management Division, the applicator may ask the trailway manager that arrangements be made to provide for temporary closure of a segment of the trailway during application and appropriate reentry periods. In making such a request, the applicator shall provide full information about the proposed application, including: expected locations, frequency, methods, and extent of application; type(s) of pesticides used, documentation of health hazards posed by those pesticides, and current regulations on use of those pesticides. The division shall evaluate this information to assess the degree of risk to trail users posed by this application, taking into account the information provided by the applicator, likely amount of trail use during times when pesticides would typically be applied, distance of trail tread from area sprayed, extent of vegetative buffer between trail and spraying area, and other relevant factors. In all cases, temporary closure shall be considered a last resort. Preferred options include posting of signs such as "Agricultural Spraying Area--Use Trail at Own Risk" and applicator agreement to apply pesticides at times of minimal trail use.

- ii) The entity operating the Michigan trailway shall post the closure of the trailway or arrange with a landowner, or other person, for the posting of signs and the closure of the trailway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe procedures for implementing temporary closures at sites where decisions are made to temporarily close the trailway for pesticide application.

The divisions have developed the following position regarding implementation of temporary closures, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by the divisions:

If the division determines that occasional temporary closure is warranted, trail manager shall negotiate an agreement with the applicator as to how the closure will be implemented. If the agreement includes installation of gates and/or signs at trail access points or other points, the cost of procuring, installing and maintaining the signs/gates will be borne by the DNR. The agreement may allow the applicator to close gates and/or post signs when pesticide application is imminent. If so agreed, whenever the applicator closes gates, or post signs, the applicator shall be required to open the gates and/or remove the signs after the appropriate reentry period.

**Support Facilities along Kal-Haven Trail
(location and type)**

New east and west trailheads will be constructed in 1996-97 at 10th St. (near Kalamazoo) and in South Haven.

Parking:

Current: east trailhead--50 cars; temporary west trailhead--35 cars. Gobles, Bloomingdale, and Grand Junction have considerable free public parking lots and/or on-street parking. Small parking lot on trail corridor at CR687 (Kibbie).

New east trailhead will provide 75 parking spaces plus an overflow area for another 75 cars. New west trailhead will provide approx. 110 spaces.

Toilet facilities:

Current: 12 vault toilets: 2 at east trailhead, 2 at temporary west trailhead, 2 at Bloomingdale, 6 at intermediate locations along trail. All except temporary west trailhead are accessible.

New west trailhead will include modern toilet building.

Telephones:

Each town has at least one public phone near the trail.

STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION

140

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
Recreation and Trails Section

Name of Trailway: Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park

Trailway Manager (i.e., managing agency or agencies)

DNR Parks & Recreation Division

Authorized Representative: Name Pete Lundborg, DNR, Parks & Recreation Div

Title Mgr. Mgmt Unit, Silver Lk S.P. Address Silver Lake St Prk, 9679-W St Prk Rd

City Mears ZIP 49436 Phone 616-873-3083

DNR Staff Evaluator: Name Philip Wells Title Trailway Program Leader

Date of Field Evaluation 10/25/94 Other Staff Present None

Representative of Trailway Manager Present Pete Lundborg

Staff Recommendation: This trail is (*check one*):

☒ Eligible for Michigan Trailway designation (meets all requirements of the act)

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet definition of trailway stated in Sec. 3 of the Michigan Trailways Act ("a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses").

Explain _____

The corridor generally must not be shared with a street or road that is open to motor vehicles.

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet one or more requirements of the Michigan Trailways Act as described on pages 4-9 (*circle one or more letters*):

a b c d e f g h i j k l

State Trails Coordinator (print) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti Date 9.15.95

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

Under authority of Section 4(1) of Michigan Trailways Act (Act No. 27 of Public Acts of 1993), Natural Resources Commission (NRC) may designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway." "Trailway" is defined in Section 3 as "a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses." To receive Michigan Trailway designation, trail must meet definition of trailway and all of the requirements presented in Sec. 4(1) and Sec. 8 of the act, as elaborated on the following pages.

Developed trailways must either meet all requirements at time of designation, or trailway manager must have written agreement with DNR Trailways Program Leader describing plan and schedule for meeting any requirements not currently met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation. For trailways not yet developed, trailway manager must have approved master plan or other approved document describing how and when requirements will be met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation.

If staff makes tentative finding that trail is eligible for Michigan Trailway designation, trailway manager must, per Sec. 4(2) of the act, hold public hearing in vicinity of trailway to take testimony and gather public opinion on proposed designation including, but not limited to, proposed uses of trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for trailway. Hearing must be held at location and time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. Transcript or summary of testimony must be forwarded to NRC with designation request.

Following the public hearing, any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation should comment to the NRC. Generally, the NRC will make decision on a proposed Michigan Trailway designation 30-60 days following the public hearing required by Sec. 4(2).

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council (MTAC) may also review the proposed designation before or after the public hearing. Any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation may also comment to MTAC.

Section 5 of the act provides for designation of "Michigan Trailway Connectors." This determination form does not address connector designation.

Description of Property To Be Designated (Trailway Boundary):

All DNR-owned property along former railroad grade extending from the City of Hart,
Section 17, Hart Township, Ocean County to the City of Montague, Section 21, Whitehall
Township, Muskegon County; plus one land that may in the future be incorporated into the
dedicated boundary of the State Park.

Attach legal description(s) and map(s). See attached map.

Legal description on file with DNR, Real Estate Division.

**Staff Determination of Compliance With
Michigan Trailway Designation Requirements
Michigan 1993 Act 27, Sec. 4(1) & 8**

For each requirement (a-l), attach further explanation as necessary.

- a) **The land on which the trailway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement.**

("Long-term control" is defined as at least 20 years from date of designation.)

Yes

No

Agency(-ies) controlling property Michigan DNR

Nature of long-term control (fee simple ownership, easement, lease, etc.).
Fee simple ownership

If more than one agency, indicate length and end points of each agency's control.

N/A

Attach maps and other documentation as appropriate.

If the land is owned by [non-state] governmental agency(-ies), the governmental agency(-ies) has given its consent for Michigan Trailway designation.

Yes

No

N/A

Explain _____

Attach documentation.

Note: City of Hart's extension of trail could be considered for designation in future.

- b) Design and maintenance of railway and related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See Designation Agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Key considerations include (but may not be limited to): motor vehicle crossings (roads, streets, driveways); separation of trail from motor vehicles (including parking areas); bridges, sideslopes, signage, security.

- c) Trailway meets appropriate standards for its designated uses.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See Designation Agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Designated uses: All non-motorized including general bicycling (horseback riding
allowed only on 4.3 mi. segment from Rothbury to Fruitvale Rd.); snowmobiling;
motorized wheelchairs.

List need not be exhaustive, but must include all motorized uses and must indicate whether general bicycling (as opposed to "mountain biking") is a designated use.

"Appropriate standards" are defined as design guidelines found in Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), Chapter 3; and, for trail designated for general bicycle use, Planning Surfaced Bicycle Paths, published by MDNR (1991), and Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities published by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1991).

- d) Trailway is available for designated uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Fee is same for all users. (Snowmobiles are not required to buy trail pass because snowmobile registration and permit fees support trail operation.)

Trailway must be open to all citizens. If a nonresident user fee, or higher nonresident fee, is charged, fee or fee differential must be reasonable.

- e) Trailway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No significant deficiencies.

Trail must be planned, designed, operated, and publicized for multiple use, to include, at a minimum, walking. It must meet standards for accessibility to people with disabilities as presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and guidelines issued pursuant to that act.

- f) Trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Experience of park staff and local business (including bicycle rentals) document that substantial share of users come from beyond local area.

Trail must be of more than local significance, as measured by the criteria stated in (f). Reasonable evidence or projections of substantial use by people from beyond the local area will be accepted, i.e., scientific studies and quantitative data are not required.

- g) Trailway is marked with official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Park staff will install and maintain signs when available.

Trailway manager must agree to sign trailway at its expense if designated, and maintain designation signs.

- h) Trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at road crossings.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No segments of trail are directly attached to roadway.

Roadways open to motor vehicles are not eligible for Michigan Trailway designation. This includes paved shoulders.

- i) Where feasible, trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See attached page for description of support

facilities. See Designation Agreement for description of improvements to be made in future.

*A reasonable effort must be made to meet needs for support facilities. These needs can be met by facilities provided by a public agency or private organization/business, as long as the facilities are open to all trails users, not just customers of the business. See *Trails for the Twenty-First Century*, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), pages 130-142.*

j) Potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

i) Adequate enforcement of trailway rules and regulations.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Most enforcement is by park staff. See attached letter from Oceana County administrator documenting lack of complaints. Only two tickets written in 1994.

Trailway manager must document enforcement accountability and procedures.

ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Current policy is to continue all established crossings by issuing free annual use permits.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures allowing established crossings to be continued.

iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain See attached excerpt from trail master plan. Oceana-Muskegon Trailways Commission reviews fencing requests and makes recommendation to trail manager.
There have been only two fencing requests since DNR acquired corridor. First was turned down because landowner wanted decorative fence. Second was granted and fencing installed at DNR expense.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures (1) for deciding where fencing is necessary and (2) providing for construction and maintenance of fencing, where found to be necessary, at trailway manager's expense.

k) (Allows for establishment of other requirements; none have been established)

- l) **i) In agricultural areas, a Michigan trailway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe policies and procedures for responding to and evaluating requests for temporary trailway closure for pesticide application:

Park manager has never received request for temporary closure of any segment of the trailway. However, Parks & Recreation Division and Forest Management Division have developed the following position regarding decisions on temporary closure, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by those divisions.

When someone contemplates periodic application of pesticides to lands adjacent to a Michigan Trailway managed by Parks & Recreation Division or Forest Management Division, the applicator may ask the trailway manager that arrangements be made to provide for temporary closure of a segment of the trailway during application and appropriate reentry periods. In making such a request, the applicator shall provide full information about the proposed application, including: expected locations, frequency, methods, and extent of application; type(s) of pesticides used, documentation of health hazards posed by those pesticides, and current regulations on use of those pesticides. The division shall evaluate this information to assess the degree of risk to trail users posed by this application, taking into account the information provided by the applicator, likely amount of trail use during times when pesticides would typically be applied, distance of trail tread from area sprayed, extent of vegetative buffer between trail and spraying area, and other relevant factors. In all cases, temporary closure shall be considered a last resort. Preferred options include posting of signs such as "Agricultural Spraying Area--Use Trail at Own Risk" and applicator agreement to apply pesticides at times of minimal trail use.

- ii) The entity operating the Michigan trailway shall post the closure of the trailway or arrange with a landowner, or other person, for the posting of signs and the closure of the trailway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe procedures for implementing temporary closures at sites where decisions are made to temporarily close the trailway for pesticide application.

The divisions have developed the following position regarding implementation of temporary closures, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by the divisions:

If the division determines that occasional temporary closure is warranted, trail manager shall negotiate an agreement with the applicator as to how the closure will be implemented. If the agreement includes installation of gates and/or signs at trail access points or other points, the cost of procuring, installing and maintaining the signs/gates will be borne by the DNR. The agreement may allow the applicator to close gates and/or post signs when pesticide application is imminent. If so agreed, whenever the applicator closes gates, or post signs, the applicator shall be required to open the gates and/or remove the signs after the appropriate reentry period.

Support Facilities along Hart-Montague Trail

Support facilities are located in each town along the trail. These towns are spaced about four miles apart on average.

Current parking:

Montague: south trailhead parking is very limited. Negotiations with adjacent landowner not successful. Division is now working with City of Montague to extend trail south into city to a new south trailhead with a large parking area.

Rothbury: adequate parking at community park and along streets.

New Era: adequate parking at adjacent shelter and along streets.

Shelby: adequate parking on public land along trail.

Hart: paved parking at north trailhead

Current toilet facilities:

Montague: shelter with accessible rest rooms on city property adjacent to trail

Rothbury: shelter with nonaccessible vault toilets

New Era: shelter with porta-johns (not accessible); sign directs trail users to accessible toilet at nearby business

Shelby: shelter with nonaccessible vault toilet

North trailhead (Hart): porta-johns (not accessible)

Planned accessibility improvements:

By the Fall of 1995, DNR plans to make nearly \$80,000 in accessibility improvements to trail support facilities. Funds are from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. This includes accessible vault toilets at four sites: Polk Road trailhead, Buchanan Road trailhead, New Era rest area, and Meinert Road rest area. It also includes several barrier-free picnic areas and tables, drinking fountains, surfaced bench areas along certain stretches of trail near parking areas, and water pumps.

Telephones: public phones are available near the trail in all towns. Area has 911 system.

**NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION**

JERRY C. BARTNIK
KEITH J. CHARTERS
LARRY DEVUYST
PAUL EISELE
JAMES P. HILL
DAVID HOLLI
JOEY M. SPANO

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STEVENS T MASON BUILDING, PO BOX 30028, LANSING MI 48209-7528

MICHAEL D. MOORE, Director

APPROVED <i>January 11, 1996</i> MICHIGAN NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION <i>Deborah L. Hoken</i> (EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION)

November 9, 1995
Resubmitted: December 11, 1995

Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission

SUBJECT: Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as Michigan Trailways

Authority:

The Michigan Trailways Act of 1993 (now Part 721 of PA 451 of 1994, as amended), authorizes the Commission to designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway" if it meets the requirements of the act.

Discussion and Background:

The State Trails Coordinator has evaluated the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park and the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park, and found that they meet the requirements of the act. These are the first trails proposed for Michigan Trailway designation. The State Trails Coordinator and the Chief of the Parks and Recreation Division have signed a designation agreement listing certain improvements to be made in both trails in the future.

The act requires the Commission, in consultation with the governmental agencies in which the trailway is located, to establish uses to be permitted on the trailway. The act also requires that a public hearing be held in the vicinity of the trail to take public testimony on the proposed designation including, but not limited to, the proposed uses of the trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for the trailway.

The Department conducted a public hearing for the Hart-Montague Trail in Shelby on November 1, 1995, and for the Kal-Haven Trail in Gobles on November 2, 1995. The hearings were publicized through the Department calendar, a general news release, and special notification to local news media. All local units of government through which the trails pass were invited to send representatives to the local public hearing and/or to submit written comments.

No objections to designation were voiced, either at the hearings or in writing. No local unit or citizen proposed changes in the current permitted uses of the trails, which are as described in this memo.

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council, appointed by the Commission, chaired the public hearings and supports the proposed designations.

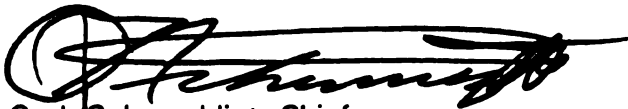
A report will be provided to the Commission presenting the text of the Michigan Trailways Act, transcripts of the public hearing testimony, and other information supporting designation.

Recommendation:

The Director recommends that the Commission designate the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park and the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park as Michigan Trailways, and that the Commission approve the following designated uses of the trails:

Hart-Montague: Snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses. (Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.)

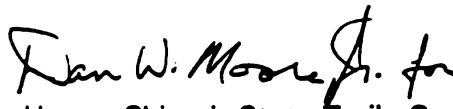
Kal-Haven: Snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses. (Snowmobiling and horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.)



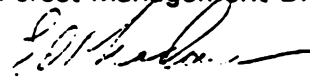
O. J. Scherschligt, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



Gerald J. Thiede, Chief
Forest Management Division

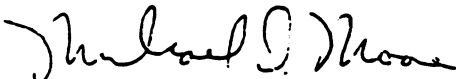


Hector Chiunti, State Trails Coordinator
Forest Management Division



C. Edwin Meadows, Jr.
Deputy Director

I have analyzed and discussed this recommendation with staff and concur.



Michael D. Moore
Director

12/13/95
Date

Proposal for First Round of Michigan Trailway Designations

Ask NRC to designate five DNR rail-trails as MI Trailways at their February 1995 meeting. The five include the four State Park trailways—Kal-Haven, Hart-Montague, LakeLands, and White Pine—plus Ottawa-Muskegon (proposed partnership trail). These trails all have at least a master plan, except White Pine. The proposed designation timing would coincide with the NRC's expected approval of the White Pine master plan at the same meeting.

The following schedule will meet this target:

	Conduct Field Review	Complete Staff Evaluation	Sign Designation Agreement	Hold Public Hearing(s)
White Pine	n/a	10-5-94	11-4-94	10-25/26/27-94
Kal-Haven	5-27-94	10-5-94	11-4-94	11-15-94
Ottawa-Muskegon	n/a	10-5-94	11-10-94	11-16-94
LakeLands	10-11-94	10-25-94	11-4-94	11-22-94
Hart-Montague	10-17-94	10-25-94	11-4-94	12-12-94

Evaluations of White Pine and Ottawa-Muskegon will be based entirely on the master plans since the trails are not yet developed.

The MI Trailways Advisory Council meets in Lansing 10-21-94. We will present to them the preliminary staff evaluations for White Pine, Kal-Haven, and Ottawa-Muskegon.

STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION

153

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
Recreation and Trails Section

Name of Trailway: Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park

Trailway Manager (i.e., managing agency or agencies)

DNR Parks & Recreation Division

Authorized Representative: Name David Marsh, DNR, Parks & Recreation Div

Title Park Ranger, Kal-Haven S.P. Address Van Buren St. Pk. 23960 Ruggles Rd.

City South Haven ZIP 49090 Phone 616-637-4984

DNR Staff Evaluator: Name Philip Wells Title Trailway Program Leader

Date of Field Evaluation 05/27/94 Other Staff Present None

Representative of Trailway Manager Present David Marsh

Staff Recommendation: This trail is (*check one*):

☒ Eligible for Michigan Trailway designation (meets all requirements of the act)

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet definition of trailway stated in Sec. 3 of the Michigan Trailways Act ("a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses").

Explain _____

The corridor generally must not be shared with a street or road that is open to motor vehicles.

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet one or more requirements of the Michigan Trailways Act as described on pages 4-9 (*circle one or more letters*):

a b c d e f g h i j k l

State Trails Coordinator (print) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti Date 9.15.95

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

Under authority of Section 4(1) of Michigan Trailways Act (Act No. 27 of Public Acts of 1993), Natural Resources Commission (NRC) may designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway." "Trailway" is defined in Section 3 as "a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses." To receive Michigan Trailway designation, trail must meet definition of trailway and all of the requirements presented in Sec. 4(1) and Sec. 8 of the act, as elaborated on the following pages.

Developed trailways must either meet all requirements at time of designation, or trailway manager must have written agreement with DNR Trailways Program Leader describing plan and schedule for meeting any requirements not currently met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation. For trailways not yet developed, trailway manager must have approved master plan or other approved document describing how and when requirements will be met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation.

If staff makes tentative finding that trail is eligible for Michigan Trailway designation, trailway manager must, per Sec. 4(2) of the act, hold public hearing in vicinity of trailway to take testimony and gather public opinion on proposed designation including, but not limited to, proposed uses of trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for trailway. Hearing must be held at location and time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. Transcript or summary of testimony must be forwarded to NRC with designation request.

Following the public hearing, any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation should comment to the NRC. Generally, the NRC will make decision on a proposed Michigan Trailway designation 30-60 days following the public hearing required by Sec. 4(2).

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council (MTAC) may also review the proposed designation before or after the public hearing. Any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation may also comment to MTAC.

Section 5 of the act provides for designation of "Michigan Trailway Connectors." This determination form does not address connector designation.

Description of Property To Be Designated (Trailway Boundary):

All DNR-owned property along former railroad grade extending from 10th St., Sec. 2,

Oshtemo Twp., Kalamazoo County, to the City of South Haven, Van Buren County:

plus any land that may in the future be incorporated into the dedicated boundary

of the State Park.

Attach legal description(s) and map(s). See attached map.

Legal description on file with DNR, Real Estate Division.

**Staff Determination of Compliance With
Michigan Trailway Designation Requirements
Michigan 1993 Act 27, Sec. 4(1) & 8**

For each requirement (a-1), attach further explanation as necessary.

- a) **The land on which the trailway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement.**

("Long-term control" is defined as at least 20 years from date of designation.)

☒ Yes

☐ No

Agency(-ies) controlling property Michigan DNR

Nature of long-term control (fee simple ownership, easement, lease, etc.).

Fee simple ownership

If more than one agency, indicate length and end points of each agency's control.

N/A

Attach maps and other documentation as appropriate.

If the land is owned by [non-state] governmental agency(-ies), the governmental agency(-ies) has given its consent for Michigan Trailway designation.

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ N/A

Explain _____

Attach documentation.

Note: City of Hart's extension of trail could be considered for designation in future.

- b) Design and maintenance of railway and related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.

☒ Yes

No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See designation agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Key considerations include (but may not be limited to): motor vehicle crossings (roads, streets, driveways); separation of trail from motor vehicles (including parking areas); bridges, sideslopes, signage, security.

- c) Trailway meets appropriate standards for its designated uses.

☒ Yes

No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See designation agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Designated uses: All non-motorized including general bicycling (horseback riding
allowed only on segment from 68th St. to Bloomingdale, 14 mi); snowmobiling (except
for east 2 mi.); motorized wheelchairs.

List need not be exhaustive, but must include all motorized uses and must indicate whether general bicycling (as opposed to "mountain biking") is a designated use.

"Appropriate standards" are defined as design guidelines found in Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), Chapter 3; and, for trail designated for general bicycle use, Planning Surfaced Bicycle Paths, published by MDNR (1991), and Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities published by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1991).

- d) Trailway is available for designated uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Fee is same for all users. (Snowmobilers are not required to buy trail pass because snowmobile registration and permit fees support trail operation.)

Trailway must be open to all citizens. If a nonresident user fee, or higher nonresident fee, is charged, fee or fee differential must be reasonable.

- e) Trailway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No significant deficiencies.

Trail must be planned, designed, operated, and publicized for multiple use, to include, at a minimum, walking. It must meet standards for accessibility to people with disabilities as presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and guidelines issued pursuant to that act.

- f) Trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Experience of park staff and local business document that substantial share of users come from beyond local area.

Trail must be of more than local significance, as measured by the criteria stated in (f). Reasonable evidence or projections of substantial use by people from beyond the local area will be accepted, i.e., scientific studies and quantitative data are not required.

- g) Trailway is marked with official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Park staff will install and maintain signs when available.

Trailway manager must agree to sign trailway at its expense if designated, and maintain designation signs.

- h) Trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at road crossings.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No segments of trail are directly attached to roadway.

Roadways open to motor vehicles are not eligible for Michigan Trailway designation. This includes paved shoulders.

- i) Where feasible, trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See attached page for description of support

facilities. See Designation Agreement for description of improvements to be made in future.

A reasonable effort must be made to meet needs for support facilities. These needs can be met by facilities provided by a public agency or private organization/business, as long as the facilities are open to all trails users, not just customers of the business. See Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), pages 130-142.

j) Potential negative impacts of trailway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

i) Adequate enforcement of trailway rules and regulations.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain ^{seasonal} Full-time ranger and ~~10-11 month~~ ranger have enforcement authority. Five seasonal staff have radios/phones: 2 on bikes 4 days/week in summer. Night patrol in winter for snowmobiling certain weekend nights. See attached letter from local officials.

Trailway manager must document enforcement accountability and procedures.

ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Policy is to continue all established crossings. Court settlement requires DNR to issue free easements with \$50.00 administrative fee.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures allowing established crossings to be continued.

iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Trail has fencing committee of township representatives. See attached criteria used for evaluating requests. DNR installs fence if warranted.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures (1) for deciding where fencing is necessary and (2) providing for construction and maintenance of fencing, where found to be necessary, at trailway manager's expense.

k) (Allows for establishment of other requirements; none have been established)

- l) i) In agricultural areas, a Michigan trailway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway [Act 27, Sec. 8].

Describe policies and procedures for responding to and evaluating requests for temporary trailway closure for pesticide application:

Park manager has never received request for temporary closure of any segment of the trailway. However, Parks & Recreation Division and Forest Management Division have developed the following position regarding decisions on temporary closure, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by those divisions.

When someone contemplates periodic application of pesticides to lands adjacent to a Michigan Trailway managed by Parks & Recreation Division or Forest Management Division, the applicator may ask the trailway manager that arrangements be made to provide for temporary closure of a segment of the trailway during application and appropriate reentry periods. In making such a request, the applicator shall provide full information about the proposed application, including: expected locations, frequency, methods, and extent of application; type(s) of pesticides used, documentation of health hazards posed by those pesticides, and current regulations on use of those pesticides. The division shall evaluate this information to assess the degree of risk to trail users posed by this application, taking into account the information provided by the applicator, likely amount of trail use during times when pesticides would typically be applied, distance of trail tread from area sprayed, extent of vegetative buffer between trail and spraying area, and other relevant factors. In all cases, temporary closure shall be considered a last resort. Preferred options include posting of signs such as "Agricultural Spraying Area--Use Trail at Own Risk" and applicator agreement to apply pesticides at times of minimal trail use.

- ii) The entity operating the Michigan trailway shall post the closure of the trailway or arrange with a landowner, or other person, for the posting of signs and the closure of the trailway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods [Act 27, Sec. 8].

Describe procedures for implementing temporary closures at sites where decisions are made to temporarily close the trailway for pesticide application.

The divisions have developed the following position regarding implementation of temporary closures, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by the divisions:

If the division determines that occasional temporary closure is warranted, trail manager shall negotiate an agreement with the applicator as to how the closure will be implemented. If the agreement includes installation of gates and/or signs at trail access points or other points, the cost of procuring, installing and maintaining the signs/gates will be borne by the DNR. The agreement may allow the applicator to close gates and/or post signs when pesticide application is imminent. If so agreed, whenever the applicator closes gates, or post signs, the applicator shall be required to open the gates and/or remove the signs after the appropriate reentry period.

**Support Facilities along Kal-Haven Trail
(location and type)**

New east and west trailheads will be constructed in 1996-97 at 10th St. (near Kalamazoo) and in South Haven.

Parking:

Current: east trailhead--50 cars; temporary west trailhead--35 cars. Gobles, Bloomingdale, and Grand Junction have considerable free public parking lots and/or on-street parking. Small parking lot on trail corridor at CR687 (Kibbie).

New east trailhead will provide 75 parking spaces plus an overflow area for another 75 cars. New west trailhead will provide approx. 110 spaces.

Toilet facilities:

Current: 12 vault toilets: 2 at east trailhead, 2 at temporary west trailhead, 2 at Bloomingdale, 6 at intermediate locations along trail. All except temporary west trailhead are accessible.

New west trailhead will include modern toilet building.

Telephones:

Each town has at least one public phone near the trail.

STAFF DETERMINATION OF ELIGIBILITY FOR MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION

Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
Recreation and Trails Section

Name of Trailway: Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park

Trailway Manager (i.e., managing agency or agencies)

DNR Parks & Recreation Division

Authorized Representative: Name Pete Lundborg, DNR, Parks & Recreation Div

Title Mgr. Mgmt Unit, Silver Lk S.P. Address Silver Lake St Prk, 9679-W St Prk Rd

City Mears ZIP 49436 Phone 616-873-3083

DNR Staff Evaluator: Name Philip Wells Title Trailway Program Leader

Date of Field Evaluation 10/25/94 Other Staff Present None

Representative of Trailway Manager Present Pete Lundborg

Staff Recommendation: This trail is (*check one*):

☒ Eligible for Michigan Trailway designation (meets all requirements of the act)

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet definition of trailway stated in Sec. 3 of the Michigan Trailways Act ("a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses").

Explain _____

The corridor generally must not be shared with a street or road that is open to motor vehicles.

☐ Not currently eligible for Michigan Trailway designation because it does not meet one or more requirements of the Michigan Trailways Act as described on pages 4-9 (*circle one or more letters*):

a b c d e f g h i j k l

State Trails Coordinator (print) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti Date 9.15.95

LEGAL AUTHORITY AND DESIGNATION PROCESS

Under authority of Section 4(1) of Michigan Trailways Act (Act No. 27 of Public Acts of 1993), Natural Resources Commission (NRC) may designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway." "Trailway" is defined in Section 3 as "a land corridor that features a broad trail capable of accommodating a variety of public recreation uses." To receive Michigan Trailway designation, trail must meet definition of trailway and all of the requirements presented in Sec. 4(1) and Sec. 8 of the act, as elaborated on the following pages.

Developed trailways must either meet all requirements at time of designation, or trailway manager must have written agreement with DNR Trailways Program Leader describing plan and schedule for meeting any requirements not currently met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation. For trailways not yet developed, trailway manager must have approved master plan or other approved document describing how and when requirements will be met; failure to meet this schedule may result in revocation of designation.

If staff makes tentative finding that trail is eligible for Michigan Trailway designation, trailway manager must, per Sec. 4(2) of the act, hold public hearing in vicinity of trailway to take testimony and gather public opinion on proposed designation including, but not limited to, proposed uses of trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for trailway. Hearing must be held at location and time calculated to attract a fair representation of opinions on the designation. Transcript or summary of testimony must be forwarded to NRC with designation request.

Following the public hearing, any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation should comment to the NRC. Generally, the NRC will make decision on a proposed Michigan Trailway designation 30-60 days following the public hearing required by Sec. 4(2).

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council (MTAC) may also review the proposed designation before or after the public hearing. Any individual, organization, or governmental agency that wishes to comment on a staff determination of eligibility for Michigan Trailway designation may also comment to MTAC.

Section 5 of the act provides for designation of "Michigan Trailway Connectors." This determination form does not address connector designation.

Description of Property To Be Designated (Trailway Boundary):

All DNR-owned property along former railroad grade extending from the City of Hart.

Section 17, Hart Township, Ocean County to the City of Montague, Section 21, Whitehall
Township, Muskegon County; plus one land that may in the future be incorporated into the
dedicated boundary of the State Park.

Attach legal description(s) and map(s). See attached map.

Legal description on file with DNR, Real Estate Division.

**Staff Determination of Compliance With
Michigan Trailway Designation Requirements
Michigan 1993 Act 27, Sec. 4(1) & 8**

For each requirement (a-l), attach further explanation as necessary.

- a) The land on which the trailway is located is owned by the state or a governmental agency, or otherwise is under the long-term control of the state or a governmental agency through a lease, easement, or other arrangement.**

("Long-term control" is defined as at least 20 years from date of designation.)

Yes

No

Agency(-ies) controlling property Michigan DNR

Nature of long-term control (fee simple ownership, easement, lease, etc.).
Fee simple ownership

If more than one agency, indicate length and end points of each agency's control.

N/A

Attach maps and other documentation as appropriate.

If the land is owned by [non-state] governmental agency(-ies), the governmental agency(-ies) has given its consent for Michigan Trailway designation.

Yes

No

N/A

Explain _____

Attach documentation.

Note: City of Hart's extension of trail could be considered for designation in future.

- b) Design and maintenance of railway and related facilities meet generally accepted standards of public safety.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See Designation Agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Key considerations include (but may not be limited to): motor vehicle crossings (roads, streets, driveways); separation of trail from motor vehicles (including parking areas); bridges, sideslopes, signage, security.

- c) Trailway meets appropriate standards for its designated uses.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See Designation Agreement for description of
improvements to be made in the future.

Designated uses: All non-motorized including general bicycling (horseback riding
allowed only on 4.3 mi. segment from Rothbury to Fruitvale Rd.); snowmobiling;
motorized wheelchairs.

List need not be exhaustive, but must include all motorized uses and must indicate whether general bicycling (as opposed to "mountain biking") is a designated use.

"Appropriate standards" are defined as design guidelines found in Trails for the Twenty-First Century, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), Chapter 3; and, for trail designated for general bicycle use, Planning Surfaced Bicycle Paths, published by MDNR (1991), and Guide for Development of Bicycle Facilities published by American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (1991).

- d) Trailway is available for designated uses on a nondiscriminatory basis.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Fee is same for all users. (Snowmobiles are not required to buy trail pass because snowmobile registration and permit fees support trail operation.)

Trailway must be open to all citizens. If a nonresident user fee, or higher nonresident fee, is charged, fee or fee differential must be reasonable.

- e) Trailway is a multi-use trail suitable for use by pedestrians, by people with disabilities, and by other users, as appropriate.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No significant deficiencies.

Trail must be planned, designed, operated, and publicized for multiple use, to include, at a minimum, walking. It must meet standards for accessibility to people with disabilities as presented in the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and guidelines issued pursuant to that act.

- f) Trailway is, or has potential to be, a segment of a statewide network of trailways, or it attracts a substantial share of its users from beyond the local area.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Experience of park staff and local business (including bicycle rentals) document that substantial share of users come from beyond local area.

Trail must be of more than local significance, as measured by the criteria stated in (f). Reasonable evidence or projections of substantial use by people from beyond the local area will be accepted, i.e., scientific studies and quantitative data are not required.

- g) **Trailway is marked with official Michigan trailway sign and logo at major access points.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Park staff will install and maintain signs when available.

Trailway manager must agree to sign trailway at its expense if designated, and maintain designation signs.

- h) **Trailway is not directly attached to a roadway, except at road crossings.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No segments of trail are directly attached to roadway.

Roadways open to motor vehicles are not eligible for Michigan Trailway designation. This includes paved shoulders.

- i) **Where feasible, trailway offers adequate support facilities for the public, including parking, sanitary facilities, and emergency telephones, that are accessible to people with disabilities and are at reasonable frequency along the trailway.**

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain No substantial deficiencies. See attached page for description of support

facilities. See Designation Agreement for description of improvements to be made infuture.

*A reasonable effort must be made to meet needs for support facilities. These needs can be met by facilities provided by a public agency or private organization/business, as long as the facilities are open to all trails users, not just customers of the business. See *Trails for the Twenty-First Century*, published by the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (1993), pages 130-142.*

j) Potential negative impacts of railway development on owners or residents of adjacent property are minimized through all of the following:

i) Adequate enforcement of railway rules and regulations.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Most enforcement is by park staff. See attached letter from Oceana County administrator documenting lack of complaints. Only two tickets written in 1994.

Trailway manager must document enforcement accountability and procedures.

ii) Continuation of access for trailway crossings for agricultural and other purposes.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain Current policy is to continue all established crossings by issuing free annual use permits.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures allowing established crossings to be continued.

iii) Construction and maintenance of fencing, where necessary, by the owner or operator of the trailway.

☒ Yes

☐ No

Explain See attached except from trail master plan. Oceana-Muskegon Trailways Commission reviews fencing requests and makes recommendation to trail manager. There have been only two fencing requests since DNR acquired corridor. First was turned down because landowner wanted decorative fence. Second was granted and fencing installed at DNR expense.

Trailway manager must document policies and procedures (1) for deciding where fencing is necessary and (2) providing for construction and maintenance of fencing, where found to be necessary, at trailway manager's expense.

k) (Allows for establishment of other requirements; none have been established)

- l) i) **In agricultural areas, a Michigan trailway may be temporarily closed by the entity operating the trailway to allow pesticide application on lands adjoining the trailway [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe policies and procedures for responding to and evaluating requests for temporary trailway closure for pesticide application:

Park manager has never received request for temporary closure of any segment of the trailway. However, Parks & Recreation Division and Forest Management Division have developed the following position regarding decisions on temporary closure, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by those divisions.

When someone contemplates periodic application of pesticides to lands adjacent to a Michigan Trailway managed by Parks & Recreation Division or Forest Management Division, the applicator may ask the trailway manager that arrangements be made to provide for temporary closure of a segment of the trailway during application and appropriate reentry periods. In making such a request, the applicator shall provide full information about the proposed application, including: expected locations, frequency, methods, and extent of application; type(s) of pesticides used, documentation of health hazards posed by those pesticides, and current regulations on use of those pesticides. The division shall evaluate this information to assess the degree of risk to trail users posed by this application, taking into account the information provided by the applicator, likely amount of trail use during times when pesticides would typically be applied, distance of trail tread from area sprayed, extent of vegetative buffer between trail and spraying area, and other relevant factors. In all cases, temporary closure shall be considered a last resort. Preferred options include posting of signs such as "Agricultural Spraying Area--Use Trail at Own Risk" and applicator agreement to apply pesticides at times of minimal trail use.

- ii) **The entity operating the Michigan trailway shall post the closure of the trailway or arrange with a landowner, or other person, for the posting of signs and the closure of the trailway during pesticide application and appropriate reentry periods [Act 27, Sec. 8].**

Describe procedures for implementing temporary closures at sites where decisions are made to temporarily close the trailway for pesticide application.

The divisions have developed the following position regarding implementation of temporary closures, applicable to all Michigan Trailways owned and/or operated by the divisions:

If the division determines that occasional temporary closure is warranted, trail manager shall negotiate an agreement with the applicator as to how the closure will be implemented. If the agreement includes installation of gates and/or signs at trail access points or other points, the cost of procuring, installing and maintaining the signs/gates will be borne by the DNR. The agreement may allow the applicator to close gates and/or post signs when pesticide application is imminent. If so agreed, whenever the applicator closes gates, or post signs, the applicator shall be required to open the gates and/or remove the signs after the appropriate reentry period.

Support Facilities along Hart-Montague Trail

Support facilities are located in each town along the trail. These towns are spaced about four miles apart on average.

Current parking:

Montague: south trailhead parking is very limited. Negotiations with adjacent landowner not successful. Division is now working with City of Montague to extend trail south into city to a new south trailhead with a large parking area.

Rothbury: adequate parking at community park and along streets.

New Era: adequate parking at adjacent shelter and along streets.

Shelby: adequate parking on public land along trail.

Hart: paved parking at north trailhead

Current toilet facilities:

Montague: shelter with accessible rest rooms on city property adjacent to trail

Rothbury: shelter with nonaccessible vault toilets

New Era: shelter with porta-johns (not accessible); sign directs trail users to accessible toilet at nearby business

Shelby: shelter with nonaccessible vault toilet

North trailhead (Hart): porta-johns (not accessible)

Planned accessibility improvements:

By the Fall of 1995, DNR plans to make nearly \$80,000 in accessibility improvements to trail support facilities. Funds are from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. This includes accessible vault toilets at four sites: Polk Road trailhead, Buchanan Road trailhead, New Era rest area, and Meinert Road rest area. It also includes several barrier-free picnic areas and tables, drinking fountains, surfaced bench areas along certain stretches of trail near parking areas, and water pumps.

Telephones: public phones are available near the trail in all towns. Area has 911 system.

MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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Interoffice Communication

March 9, 1995

Phil.
Please pursue
per your recommendation
outline.
Thanks
WC.

TO: Hector Chiunti, Section Leader, Recreation and Trails Section

FROM: Philip Wells, Trailways Program Leader

SUBJECT: Proposed Process for Michigan Trailway Designation

Enclosed are Michigan Trailway (MT) designation materials for the Hart-Montague Trail. Materials include a completed draft determination form, some attachments to that form, and a draft designation agreement between the State Trails Coordinator (STC) and the Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD).

The basic approach I am proposing is: the STC will agree to recommend immediate designation of the trail as a MT; P&RD will agree to take certain steps to improve the trail at specific locations as soon as the necessary funding and/or land can be secured. I am recommending this because there are a few "areas of concern" along the trail that I believe may not fully meet MT designation requirements; these are not serious enough to delay designation but should be addressed as soon as possible. These are listed in the draft designation agreement. The agreement also says the STC will help P&RD secure funding and design assistance to address these concerns.

The choice of Hart-Montague for this "trial run" is arbitrary. The situation will be similar for the other DNR trailways we plan to designate in the first batch--Kal-Haven, LakeLands, White Pine, and Ottawa-Muskegon--so I think a similar approach will be needed on those.

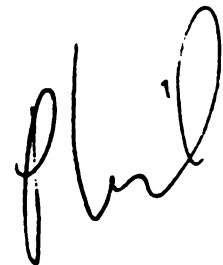
Proposed steps from here:

1. If this material meets with your approval, I would like to forward it to Pete Lundborg for his review and comment. I think he deserves first crack at it before it goes to higher levels for review.
2. Revise if necessary based on Pete's input; forward to Chiefs Thiede and Scherschligt for their review and comment.
3. If the basic approach is acceptable to the Chiefs, complete corresponding material for the other four trails.

Hector Chiunti
Page 2
March 9, 1995

4. Hold local public hearings on proposed designations for all of those trails but White Pine. (White Pine is taken care of, because the public meetings on the master plan also covered MT designation. However, we cannot recommend White Pine designation until the Director approves the master plan.)
5. Prepare NRC memo(s) recommending MT designation for the five trails.

Please advise how I should proceed on this. I would like to give the Michigan Trailways Advisory Council a proposal at their March 10 meeting.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Phil' or similar, written in a cursive style.

Enclosure
PW:mlf

Interoffice Communication

April 25, 1995

TO: O.J. Scherschligt, Chief, Parks & Recreation Division

FROM: Hector Chiunti, State Trails Coordinator
Forest Management Division

SUBJECT: Proposed Process for First Set of Michigan Trailway Designations

Enclosed are draft Michigan Trailway (MT) designation materials for three State Park trailways: Hart-Montague, Kal-Haven, and White Pine. Materials for each trailway include a draft designation agreement between the State Trails Coordinator (STC) and the Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD), a trail map, a completed draft determination form, and attachments to the form.

Our proposal is to present these three trails, as well as LakeLands and possibly Ottawa-Muskegon, to the Natural Resources Commission for designation as a package.

For the two developed State Park trails--Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven--the basic proposed approach is: I will agree to recommend immediate designation of each trail as a MT; P&RD will agree to take certain steps to improve the trail at specific locations as soon as the necessary funding and/or land can be secured. Managers of both trails have reviewed this material and their suggestions have been incorporated.

For the White Pine, the process is simpler because the trail isn't developed yet. Our evaluation is based on the draft master plan, which promises to meet all MT designation requirements. However, we will need adoption of the master plan before we go to the NRC for MT designation. We also ask to be involved in decisions on design and management of the trail to insure that MT designation requirements are met.

Proposed steps from here:

1. Trails staff conduct LakeLands site visit as soon as possible and prepare designation materials.
2. P&RD approve our proposed approach or suggest changes.

Mr. O.J. Scherschligt
April 25, 1995
Page Two

3. Forest Management decide whether to include Ottawa-Muskegon Trail in this first set of proposed designations.
4. Decide policy on temporary trailway closure for pesticide application.
5. Michigan Trailways Advisory Council review proposed designations.
6. As required by MT Act, hold local public hearings on proposed designations for all trails but White Pine. We would ask that trail managers participate. (White Pine is taken care of, because the public meetings on the master plan also covered MT designation.)
7. We prepare NRC memo(s) recommending MT designation for the trails.

Please let me know your thoughts on this.

HC:sgmc
Enclosures

cc: Mr. Bob Wilson, DNR
Dr. Gerald J. Thiede, DNR
Mr. Philip Wells, DNR

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hester", is written over the "cc:" list.

INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION

September 14, 1995

016/HC

TO: Hector Chiunti, State Trails Coordinator
Forest Management Division

FROM: Phil Wells, Trailways Program Leader, Recreation & Trails Section
Forest Management Division

SUBJECT: Michigan Trailway Designation for Kal-Haven and
Hart-Montague Trails

We are still trying to resolve the issue of a FMD/P&RD policy on temporary trail closure for pesticide application on adjacent lands. Frank Sapio is checking with the Department of Agriculture.

However, I think we can go ahead with designation agreements for Kal-Haven and Hart-Montague. Proposed agreements are attached. Trail managers and various other staff have already agreed to the content of these documents. If we can get your and OJ's signatures on these, we can probably have the NRC act on the designations at their November 9 meeting.

My proposed schedule is as follows:

✓ ~~15~~ ²⁸ Sept. P&RD & State Trails Coordinator sign designation agreements, staff arrange public hearings

~~18~~ ²⁸ Sept. Get public hearings on DNR calendar *for Oct. 16 (?)*

~~24~~ ^{2 Oct.} Sept. Distribute news release on public hearings; send copies of agreements to MTAC for comment

~~11~~ ^{1 Nov.} Oct. Hart-Montague hearing--Shelby or New Era?

~~12~~ ^{2 Nov.} Oct. Kal-Haven hearing--Bloomingtondale?

~~16~~ ^{13 Nov.} Oct. Submit NRC memo w/ background info.

How about
MTAC
holding meeting

Mr. Hector Chiunti
September 14, 1995
Page Two

30 Nov.

~~25 Oct.~~

Complete transcripts of hearings; send to NRC

7 Dec.

~~9 Nov.~~

NRC consider designations

Please advise if you think we can go ahead with the signing of the agreements.

PW:sgfh
Attachment

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'P. Chiunti' or similar, written in a cursive style.

MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION AGREEMENT
for
KAL-HAVEN TRAIL SESQUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK
between
STATE TRAILS COORDINATOR
and
DNR PARKS & RECREATION DIVISION

This agreement between the State Trails Coordinator and the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD) is entered into pursuant to the Michigan Trailways Act (Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, Part 721).

The State Trails Coordinator (STC) agrees to recommend to the Natural Resources Commission immediate designation of the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park as a Michigan Trailway. The STC also agrees to help P&RD secure funding and design assistance to carry out trail improvements as described below.

If the Natural Resources Commission designates the trail as a Michigan Trailway, P&RD agrees to meet, on a continuing basis, the requirements of Sec. 4(1) and 8 of the Michigan Trailways Act, which become part of this agreement, and to meet design requirements on any improvements to or extensions of the trail.

Permitted uses of the trail will include snowmobiling (except for east two miles of the trail) and all nonmotorized uses including general bicycling. Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.

P&RD also agrees to the following:*

1. As soon as the necessary funds and/or lands can be secured:

- A. Redesign and modify parking area at 66th St. (CR687) in Kibbie so trail does not pass through parking lot. (b)**
- B. Provide direct trail connection to road at east trailhead so users arriving at trailhead by bicycle do not have to go through parking lot to access trail. (b)**
- C. Explore and pursue options to reduce grades and increase curve radii on both sides of Blue Star Highway underpass. (c)**
- D. Redesign and modify trail approaches to CR653 to reduce trail grades (to 5% or less if possible from current 10-12%). (c)**

- E. Insure that east approach to railroad crossing in Grand Junction has grade of less than 10% (from current 14%). (c)
 - F. Insure safest possible snowmobile route through Grand Junction. (b)
 - G. Add diagonal "wings" to all four corners of bridge railing at Silver Saddle Drain. (b)
 - H. Redesign and rebuild trail crossing of CR388 (Phoenix Highway) just east of Bloomingdale to increase inside curve radius of trail on both sides of crossing to at least 40 feet (c)
 - I. When new west trailhead completed in So. Haven, eliminate nonaccessible toilets at temporary trailhead on Blue Star Hwy. (i)
2. When railings are replaced or added in future on any trail bridges or along the trail, build railing to height of 54", with rub-rail at 42" (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)
3. When camel-back bridge at Silver Saddle Drain is replaced in future, insure new bridge deck has maximum grade of under 10% (from current 14% max.). (c)

-
- 72103(1)
- * Letters in parentheses following items identify requirements of Sec. ~~411~~ of the Michigan Trailways Act.

State Trails Coordinator:

Name (typed)

Hector Chiunti
Hector Chiunti

Signature _____

Date

9-18-95

Parks & Recreation Division Chief:

Name (typed) O.J. Scherschligt

Signature _____

Date 9-18-95

MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION AGREEMENT**for****HART-MONTAGUE BICYCLE TRAIL STATE PARK****between****STATE TRAILS COORDINATOR****and****DNR PARKS & RECREATION DIVISION**

This agreement between the State Trails Coordinator and the DNR Parks and Recreation Division (P&RD) is entered into pursuant to the Michigan Trailways Act (Public Act 451 of 1994, as amended, Part 721).

The State Trails Coordinator (STC) agrees to recommend to the Natural Resources Commission immediate designation of the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park as a Michigan Trailway. The STC also agrees to help P&RD secure funding and design assistance to carry out trail improvements as described below.

If the Natural Resources Commission designates the trail as a Michigan Trailway, P&RD agrees to meet, on a continuing basis, the requirements of Sec. 4(1) and 8 of the Michigan Trailways Act, which become part of this agreement, and to meet design requirements on any improvements to or extensions of the trail.

Permitted uses of the trail will include snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses including general bicycling. Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.

P&RD also agrees to the following:*

1. As soon as the necessary funds and/or lands can be secured:

- A. Realign trail crossings of roads to improve crossing angle and decrease crossing distance at three locations: (b)**

Walsh Rd. just north of south trailhead

Old US-31 (Oceana Dr.) on south side of Shelby (Land acquisition may be necessary)

Buchanan Rd. no. of Shelby

- B. Add diagonal "wings" to ends of railings on two bridges: north of M-20 and cattle crossing north of Shelby. (b)
- C. Increase trail curve radius approaching Business 31 from south near north trailhead in Shelby. (c)
- D. Increase curve radius of four curves around Kurdzick Co. parking lot in Rothbury to at least 40 feet (inside radius). (c)
- E. Increase parking at south trailhead. (i)
2. When trail is resurfaced in the future, increase surfaced trail width from 8 to at least 10 feet (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)
3. When railings are replaced or added in future on any trail bridges or along the trail, build railing to height of 54", with rub-rail at 42" (as per AASHTO bicycle guidelines). (c)

-
- * Letters in parentheses following items identify requirements of Sec. ⁷²⁴⁰³⁽¹⁾~~411~~ of the Michigan Trailways Act.

State Trails Coordinator:

Name (typed) Hector Chiunti

Signature Hector Chiunti

Date 9-18-95

Parks & Recreation Division Chief:

Name (typed) O.J. Scherschligt

Signature O.J. Scherschligt

Date 9-18-95



MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
PO BOX 30028 LANSING MI 48909-7528

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
19 OCT 95

RESOURCE CONTACT: Philip Wells
517-335-3038

DNR HOSTING PUBLIC HEARINGS ON MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATIONS

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will hold public hearings on Nov. 1 and 2 to take public comment on the proposed designation of two State Park trails as "Michigan Trailways." The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council, created by the Michigan Trailways Act, will chair the hearings.

The first hearing concerns the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park, which follows a 21-mile inactive railroad corridor from Hart (Oceana County) to Montague (Muskegon County). The hearing will take place at 7 p.m. on Wed. Nov. 1 at the Shelby Village Hall, 189 Maple, Shelby (Oceana County).

The second hearing concerns the Kal-Haven Sesquicentennial Trail State Park, which follows a 34-mile inactive railroad corridor from just northwest of Kalamazoo (Kalamazoo County) to South Haven (Van Buren County). The hearing will take place at 7 p.m. on Thurs. Nov. 2 at the Gobles High School library, 409 N. State St., Gobles (Van Buren County).

The Michigan Trailways Act authorizes the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to designate a trail as a Michigan Trailway if the trail meets the requirements of the act. These requirements involve statewide significance, design standards, trail management, and response to concerns of adjacent landowners. DNR staff has tentatively found that these two trails meet the requirements.

(more)

Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven are the first trails proposed for Michigan Trailway designation. If designated, the trails will carry a special logo and be publicized as part of the Michigan Trailway system. Designation means the public can be assured that the trails meet, and will continue to meet, high standards of design and management.

After the public hearings, the DNR will decide whether to recommend that the NRC designate the two trails. The NRC is likely to consider designation at its Dec. 6-7 meeting in Lansing. To obtain a copy of designation materials, call 517-373-9483.

###



Department Calendar

Vol. 3 No. 22
October 30, 1995

Eason T.
3-21 99

Publication Schedule

The DNR Calendar is published every two weeks, on alternate Mondays, by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. We welcome your comments on style, format and information to ensure that this calendar is as informative as possible.

New DNR and DEQ Calendars

Pursuant to Executive Order 1995-18, a new Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and a new Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) are created, effective October 1, 1995. The DEQ has a separate calendar dealing with matters pertaining to environmental issues, permitting and related regulations. Both calendars will be sent to those on the "old" DNR Calendar mailing list except for individuals who request otherwise.

Calendar Mailing Lists

For any changes or corrections to the **DNR Calendar** mailing list, call **Tina Kellogg** at 517-373-2997, or send your correct name and address to:

DNR Calendar
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing MI 48909-7528

For any changes or corrections to the **DEQ Calendar** mailing list, call 517-335-3153, or send your correct name and address to:

DEQ Calendar
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 30473
Lansing MI 48909-7973

Internet Access

The DNR Calendar is now available on the Internet on the DNR home page, which is at [HTTP://WWW.DNR.STATE.MI.US](http://WWW.DNR.STATE.MI.US), and at the DNR's anonymous FTP site, which is [INFOLINE.DNR.STATE.MI.US](ftp://INFOLINE.DNR.STATE.MI.US). If you would like to remove your name from the "paper" mailing list, call **Tina Kellogg** at 517-373-2997.

Dial-Up Bulletin Board System (BBS) Access

This calendar is also available on the DNR's dial-up bulletin board system (BBS). To use this system, call 1-800-699-MDNR, or locally call 517-373-3081. Set your modem to no parity, 8 data bits and 1 stop bit. All speeds up to 14.4 are supported. ANSI BBS protocol works best, but most others are supported.

Timetable for Decisions

No decision listed in the DNR Calendar will be made prior to seven days after the initial calendar publication date.

Game and Fish Orders

1996 SPRING WILD TURKEY HUNTING SEASON. Information Contact: ***John Urbain***, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

DEER MANAGEMENT UNIT 215 REGULATIONS. Information Contact: ***Ed Langenau***, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

LEGALLY BLIND HUNTERS. Information Contact: ***David Purol***, 517-335-3411. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

USE OF GROUND BLINDS ON PUBLIC LANDS. Information Contact: ***Ed Langenau***, 517-373-1263. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

Land Transactions

DIRECT CONVEYANCE OF DEDICATED LAND: Pigeon River State Forest, Otsego County. Information Contact: ***David A. Yankee***, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

DIRECT OIL AND GAS LEASE (NONDEVELOPMENT): Rapid River Township, Kalkaska County; Croton Township, Otsego County. Information Contact: ***Gina Parks Kico***, 517-373-7666. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

EXCHANGES: Ottawa Muskegon Trail, Ottawa County. Information Contact: ***David A. Yankee***, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

FORESTRY LAND ACQUISITION: Pere Marquette State Forest, Wexford County. Information Contact: ***David A. Yankee***, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

MUNICIPAL CONVEYANCE OF UNDEDICATED STATE-OWNED LAND (326 LOTS & PARCELS): City of Algonac, Port Huron Township, St. Clair County; Cities of Detroit, Ecorse, Melvindale, Wayne and Wyandotte, Redford Township, Wayne County; Blue Lake Township, Village of Lakewood Club, Muskegon County; Village of Mancelona, Antrim County; City of Saginaw and Carrollton Township, Saginaw County; Village of Marcellus and Newberg Township, Cass County; Cities of Mt. Clemens and Warren, Macomb County; City of Jackson, Jackson County; Somerset Township, Hillsdale County. Information Contact: ***Lois Hinkle***, 517-373-1251. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

OIL AND GAS LEASE SALE, DECEMBER 12, 13, 14, 1995 - 26 COUNTIES. Information Contact: ***Gina Parks Kico***, 517-373-7666. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

PARKS AND RECREATION LAND ACQUISITION: George Lake Access Site No. 65-9, Ogemaw County. Information Contact: ***David A. Yankee***, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: ***DNR Director***.

WILDLIFE LAND ACQUISITIONS: Rose Lake Wildlife Research Area, Clinton County. Allegan State Game Area and Kalamazoo Mini-Wildlife Area, Allegan County; Maple River/Gratiot-Saginaw

Connector, Gratiot County. Information Contact: **David A. Yankee**, 517-373-1241. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

Other Decisions Before the Office of the Director

INTENT TO SELL STATE PARK USER DATA BASES. Information Contact: **Neil LaCasse**, 517-335-3025. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

RECREATION BOND FUND APPLICATIONS FOR LOCAL RECREATION DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS. Consideration of DNR staff recommendation to fund applications received April 1, 1995. Information Contact: **Michael McDonald**, Administrative Services Division, 517-335-3042. Decision-maker: **DNR Director**.

Public Hearings, Meetings, Events

Note: Persons with disabilities needing accommodations for effective participation in any of the meetings noted in this calendar should call or write the appropriate meeting information contact listed below at least a week in advance to request mobility, visual, hearing, or other assistance.

NOVEMBER 1

BY THIS DATE, 165 SUCCESSFUL ELK HUNTERS WILL BE NOTIFIED THAT THEY CAN PARTICIPATE IN THE DECEMBER 12-19 HUNT.

BY THIS DATE, APPROXIMATELY 295,000 SUCCESSFUL APPLICANTS WILL RECEIVE THEIR ANTLERLESS DEER HUNTING LICENSES IN THE MAIL.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSURES IN THE NORTH ZONE.

RESIDENT MUSKRAT AND MINK TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 2.

RESIDENT RACCOON TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 3.

RESIDENT BADGER TRAPPING SEASON OPENS IN ZONE 3.

7:00-9:00 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION FOR HART-MONTAGUE BICYCLE TRAIL STATE PARK. Hearing to take public comment on proposed designation of the trail as a Michigan Trailway under the Michigan Trailways Act, to be held at the Shelby Village Hall, 189 Maple, Shelby (Oceana County). To obtain a copy of the designation materials, call 517-373-9483. Information Contact: **Philip Wells**, 517-335-3038.

NOVEMBER 2

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSURES IN THE SOUTH ZONE, EAST OF US-27/127. (See exceptions for goose management units in the Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide.)

7:00-9:00 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING ON PROPOSED MICHIGAN TRAILWAY DESIGNATION FOR KAL-HAVEN TRAIL SESQUICENTENNIAL STATE PARK. Hearing to take public comment on proposed designation of the trail as a Michigan Trailway under the Michigan Trailways Act, to be held at the Gobles High School library, 409 North State Street, Gobles (Van Buren County). To obtain a copy of the designation materials, call 517-373-9483. Information Contact: **Philip Wells**, 517-335-3038.

NOVEMBER 7

4:30 p.m. PUBLIC HEARING OF THE BETSIE RIVER ZONING REVIEW BOARD at the Weldon Township Hall, Thompsonville, to decide on a request for variance from the Natural River Zoning Standards on the Betsie River. Information Contact: **Jan Fenske**, 517-275-5151.

NOVEMBER 8

9:00 a.m. MICHIGAN FOREST ROUNDTABLE with objectives to develop a shared vision, a set of principles, and a recommendation for action that will result in improved policies for our nation's forests. The roundtable will be held at Treetops Sylvan Resort, Gaylord (Otsego County). Information Contact: **Wanda Stevens**, Forest Management Division, 517-373-1056.

6:30 p.m. OFF-ROAD-VEHICLE (ORV) ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon (Roscommon County). Information Contact: **Margo Fuller**, Forest Management Division, 517-373-9483.

NOVEMBER 9

1:00 p.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Library of Michigan, 717 W. Allegan, Lansing. Public appearances before the NRC may be scheduled by calling Teresa Gloden. Information Contact: **Teresa Gloden**, 517-373-2352.

NOVEMBER 10

RESIDENT BEAVER AND OTTER TRAPPING SEASONS OPEN IN UNIT B. See Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for open and closed areas.

MUSKRAT AND MINK TRAPPING SEASON OPENS FOR RESIDENTS IN ZONE 3.

NOVEMBER 11

A DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTER will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Carl T. Johnson Center at Mitchell State Park, Cadillac, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 12

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Carl T. Johnson Center at Mitchell State Park, Cadillac, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., and at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSES IN THE SOUTH ZONE, WEST OF US-27/127. (See exceptions for goose management units in the Michigan Waterfowl Hunting Guide.)

NOVEMBER 13

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. To 5:00 p.m.

NOVEMBER 14

DEER SEASON INFORMATION CENTERS will be staffed by DNR personnel at the Clare and St. Ignace MDOT Welcome Centers from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

ARCHERY DEER SEASON CLOSES UNTIL DECEMBER 1.

PHEASANT SEASON CLOSES IN ZONES 2 AND 3.

WOODCOCK, CROW, SHARPTAIL GROUSE, AND RUFFED GROUSE SEASONS CLOSE.

(NOVEMBER 14, continued)

COYOTE HUNTING SEASON CLOSES IN ZONE 1.

BADGER TRAPPING SEASON CLOSES IN ZONE 2.

CANADA AND OTHER GEESE SEASONS CLOSE IN THE MUSKEGON WASTEWATER GOOSE MANAGEMENT UNIT. This area may be closed earlier if the quota has been reached.

RAILS AND COMMON SNIPE SEASONS CLOSE STATEWIDE.

NOVEMBER 15

FIREARMS DEER SEASON OPENS.

NONRESIDENT FUR HARVESTER SEASON OPENS. (See Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide.)

NONRESIDENT BEAVER AND OTTER TRAPPING SEASONS OPEN IN UNIT A. See the Michigan Hunting and Trapping Guide for open and closed areas.

CANADA GOOSE SEASON CLOSES IN THE MIDDLE ZONE.

9:30 a.m. MEETING OF THE MICHIGAN UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANK FINANCIAL ASSURANCE (MUSTFA) POLICY BOARD at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing. Information Contact: *Patty Morlock*, 1-800-4-MUSTFA or 517-373-6247.

NOVEMBER 16

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 17

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 18

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

NOVEMBER 19

DEER CHECK STATIONS will be open November 16-19, 10:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., at the Big Rapids and Shepherd rest areas and the Birch Run weigh station.

DECEMBER 6

4:30 p.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue, Lansing. Public appearances before the NRC may be scheduled by calling Teresa Gloden. Information Contact: *Teresa Gloden*, 517-373-2352.

DECEMBER 7

9:00 a.m. NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION MEETING, Library of Michigan, 717 W. Allegan, Lansing. Information Contact: *Teresa Gloden*, 517-373-2352.

DECEMBER 12

10:30 a.m. SNOWMOBILE ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING at the Ralph A. MacMullan Conference Center, 104 Conservation Drive, Roscommon (Roscommon County). Information Contact: *Margo Fuller*, Forest Management Division, 517-373-9483.

AGENDA
NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

December 6-7, 1995

Lansing Center
333 E. Michigan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan
-and-
Library of Michigan
717 W. Allegan
Lansing, Michigan

**WEDNESDAY, December 6, 1995 - 1:00 p.m. - 7th Floor Mason Building
Conference Room, 530 W. Allegan, Lansing**

Fish, Wildlife and Law Policy Committee Meeting (Agenda Attached)

**WEDNESDAY, December 6, 1995 - 2:30 p.m. - 7th Floor Mason Building
Conference Room, 530 W. Allegan, Lansing**

Forestry, Parks and Land Policy Committee Meeting (Agenda Attached)

**WEDNESDAY, December 6, 1995 - 4:30 p.m. - Lansing Center, Meeting
Rooms 204-205**

Commission Discussion

PUBLIC APPEARANCES: (The actual order of appearances MAY change
and MAY BE grouped by subject matter.)

**Maryann Noah, Chelsea - Sewer Development by Half Moon Lake and
Silver Lake State Parks**

**Elaine Suppes, Lakeshore Convention and Visitor's Bureau - Perch Fishing
Don Nichols, South Haven Perch Charter Boats - Perch Fishing**

AGENDA
Page 2
December 6-7, 1995

WEDNESDAY, December 6, 1995 - 7:30 p.m. - Lansing Center, Meeting Rooms 204-205

Safari Club Award Presentation

PUBLIC APPEARANCES: (continued)

Denny Grinold, Lansing - Summer Perch Fishing

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1995 - 9:00 a.m. - Library of Michigan

STAFF REPORTS

Director's Report - Michael D. Moore - Report of Activities including status of organization, legislative activity, litigation, transition and staffing.

I. OLD BUSINESS - NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION PAGES

None

II. RESOLUTIONS AND COMMUNICATIONS

1. NRC Committee Reports
2. Shikar-Safari Club International Award

III. NEW BUSINESS - NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION

Approval of Minutes - October 25, 1995 Natural Resources Commission Meeting

Approval of Minutes - November 9, 1995, Natural Resources Commission Meeting

IV. FOR INFORMATION ONLY - NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as
 Michigan Trailways - For Information Only 1-2

**NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION**

JERRY C. BARTNIK
KEITH J. CHARTERS
LARRY DEVUYST
PAUL EISELE
JAMES P. HILL
DAVID HOLLI
JOEY M. SPANO

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

STEVENS T MASON BUILDING, PO BOX 30028, LANSING MI 48906-7528

MICHAEL D. MOORE, Director

APPROVED <i>January 11, 1996</i> MICHAEL D. MOORE (EXECUTIVE SECRETARY TO THE COMMISSION)

November 9, 1995

Resubmitted: December 11, 1995

Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission

SUBJECT: Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as Michigan Trailways

Authority:

The Michigan Trailways Act of 1993 (now Part 721 of PA 451 of 1994, as amended), authorizes the Commission to designate a trailway in Michigan as a "Michigan Trailway" if it meets the requirements of the act.

Discussion and Background:

The State Trails Coordinator has evaluated the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park and the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park, and found that they meet the requirements of the act. These are the first trails proposed for Michigan Trailway designation. The State Trails Coordinator and the Chief of the Parks and Recreation Division have signed a designation agreement listing certain improvements to be made in both trails in the future.

The act requires the Commission, in consultation with the governmental agencies in which the trailway is located, to establish uses to be permitted on the trailway. The act also requires that a public hearing be held in the vicinity of the trail to take public testimony on the proposed designation including, but not limited to, the proposed uses of the trailway and whether or not motorized uses are appropriate for the trailway.

The Department conducted a public hearing for the Hart-Montague Trail in Shelby on November 1, 1995, and for the Kal-Haven Trail in Gobles on November 2, 1995. The hearings were publicized through the Department calendar, a general news release, and special notification to local news media. All local units of government through which the trails pass were invited to send representatives to the local public hearing and/or to submit written comments.

No objections to designation were voiced, either at the hearings or in writing. No local unit or citizen proposed changes in the current permitted uses of the trails, which are as described in this memo.

The Michigan Trailways Advisory Council, appointed by the Commission, chaired the public hearings and supports the proposed designations.

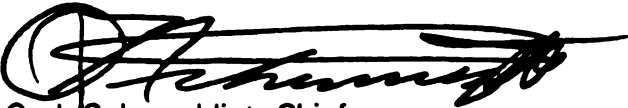
A report will be provided to the Commission presenting the text of the Michigan Trailways Act, transcripts of the public hearing testimony, and other information supporting designation.

Recommendation:

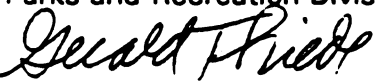
The Director recommends that the Commission designate the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park and the Kal-Haven Trail Sesquicentennial State Park as Michigan Trailways, and that the Commission approve the following designated uses of the trails:

Hart-Montague: Snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses. (Horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.)

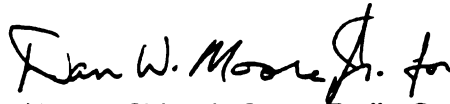
Kal-Haven: Snowmobiling and all nonmotorized uses. (Snowmobiling and horseback riding may be limited to specified segments of the trail.)



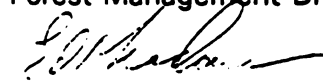
O. J. Scherschligt, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



Gerald J. Thiede, Chief
Forest Management Division

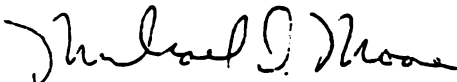


Hector Chiunti, State Trails Coordinator
Forest Management Division



C. Edwin Meadows, Jr.
Deputy Director

I have analyzed and discussed this recommendation with staff and concur.



Michael D. Moore
Director

12/13/95
Date

AGENDA**NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION****December 6-7, 1995**

**Lansing Center
333 E. Michigan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan
-and-
Library of Michigan
717 W. Allegan
Lansing, Michigan**

**WEDNESDAY, December 6, 1995 - 1:00 p.m. - 7th Floor Mason Building
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AGENDA
Page 2
December 6-7, 1995

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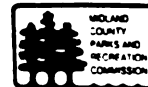
Designation of Hart-Montague and Kal-Haven Trails as
 Michigan Trailways - For Information Only 1-2



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION¹⁹⁶

MIDLAND COUNTY SERVICES BUILDING • 220 WEST ELLSWORTH STREET

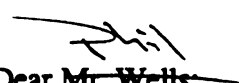
MIDLAND, MICHIGAN 48640-5194 • PHONE (517) 832-6870



WILLIAM C. GIBSON
DIRECTOR

July 30, 1996

Philip Wells, Trailways Program Manager
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
Forest Management Division
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909


Dear Mr. Wells:

After review and discussion with the Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission, I am pleased to request, on their behalf, that the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan be considered for **Michigan Trailways** designation. The Commission feels that the Pere Marquette fulfills the requirements for inclusion, and looks forward to providing you with any information necessary to document same.

It would be an honor for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail to be part of the **Michigan Trailways** system. I look forward to hearing from you on the Commission's request.

Sincerely,



William C. Gibson
Director

xc Craig Gosen, President, Parks and Recreation Commission
Marc McGill, Administrator/Controller

WCG

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James A. Crawford, Mayor

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

9th Floor, City Hall
124 West Michigan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48933-1694
(517) 483-4141 (Voice)
(517) 483-4088 (TDD)
(517) 483-7630 (FAX)

July 21, 1993

Larry DeVuyst, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission
Michigan Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. DeVuyst:

Pursuant to section 4 of the newly-enacted Michigan Trailways Act, I am hereby submitting the City of Lansing's petition for designation of the Lansing River Trail as a Michigan Trailway.

As you know, the Lansing River Trail is one of the country's longest urban trails that offers users a variety of recreational and educational opportunities.

The City of Lansing is also currently undertaking efforts to expand the River Trail both at its northern trailhead near the Grand River Bridge and at its eastern most location near Kalamazoo Street and Clippert.

The River Trail has proven to be one of the community's most valuable assets drawing people from all parts of the state and has the potential to be the genesis of the revitalization of the downtown area.

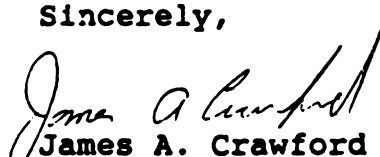
The City of Lansing is prepared to work with both the Department of Natural Resources and the Natural Resources Commission in meeting the criteria for Michigan Trailway designation as defined in section 4 of the Act, including the requirements for a public hearing.

Please contact R. Eric Reickel, Director of the City's Parks and Recreation Department for further discussion on this issue (517-483-4275).

Mr. Larry DeVuyt
July 22, 1993
Page 2

I am hopeful that the Lansing River Trail will be one of the first trails to receive the honored designation of a Michigan Trailway.

Sincerely,


James A. Crawford
Mayor

cc: Natural Resources Commission Members
Rollie Harmes, DNR Director
Jerry Thiede, Forest Management Division
Hector Chiunti, Forest Management Division
Phil Wells, Forest Management Division

ENCLOSURE

**NATURAL RESOURCES
COMMISSION**

**JERRY C. BARTNIK
LARRY DEVUYST
PAUL EISLE
JAMES HILL
DAVID HOLLI
JULY M. SPANO
JORDAN S. TATTER**

STATE OF MICHIGAN



JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

Stevens T. Mason Building, P.O. Box 30026, Lansing, MI 48906

ROLAND HARMES, Director

199

August 24, 1993

**Mr. James A. Crawford, Mayor
Office of the Mayor
124 West Michigan Avenue
Lansing, Michigan 48933-1694**

Dear Mayor Crawford:

I am responding on behalf of the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to your letter dated July 21, 1993, to Larry DeVuyt, NRC Chairman. Your letter proposes designation of the Lansing River Trail as a Michigan Trailway under the new Michigan Trailways Act.

We agree that Lansing's River Trail is an outstanding asset to the Lansing area. Be assured your proposal will receive prompt and careful consideration. Over the next few weeks, trails staff will be finalizing the criteria and procedures for Michigan Trailway designation. We will then be glad to work with the City to assess Lansing's River Trail in relationship to the criteria.

If you or your staff have any questions, please contact Hector Chiunti, State Trails Coordinator, at 335-3040.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gerald Thiede".

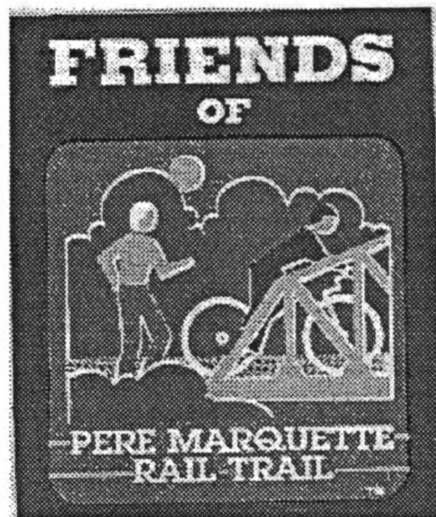
**Gerald J. Thiede
State Forester
517-373-1275**

GJT:mlf

**cc: Mr. R. Eric Reickel, Director of City Parks
Natural Resources Commission
Mr. Michael D. Moore, Deputy Director, MDNR**

Appendix C

-



*http://users.mdn.
net/fopmrt/
midland.htm*

Friends of The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail support the development and enhancement of the Rail-Trail from Midland, MI to Coleman, MI



Meet the Board Map



Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

Membership is \$10 per year for an Individual, \$25 per year for Family and \$50 per year for Business.

Send Membership to:

Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

P.O. Box 505

Midland, MI 48640- 0505

Upcoming Activities

- MARCH for PARKS April 19, 1997
- Magic Ride May 31, 1997
- Pere Marquette Summer Festival August 10, 1997
- Pere Marquette Century August 10, 1997

Come on back often for updates and additional information on what is happening with the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail.

- [Rails to Trails Conservancy](#)
- [Midland Daily News The Source](#)



- [Tri-City Cyclists](#) [League of Michigan Bicyclists](#) [American Trails](#) [Katy Trail](#) [Great Rail Trail](#)
[Information](#) [In Line Skater Magazine](#)

[Aggressive Skaters Association](#)

[White Pine Trail](#) (Cadillac)

[Pere Marquette Trail](#) (Reed City)

If you have comments or suggestions, email us at fopmrt@mdn.net

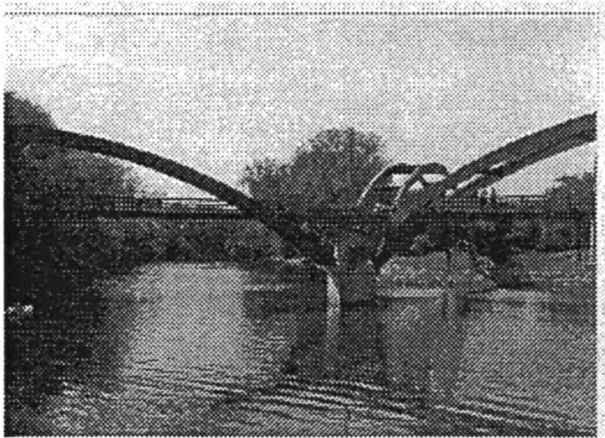


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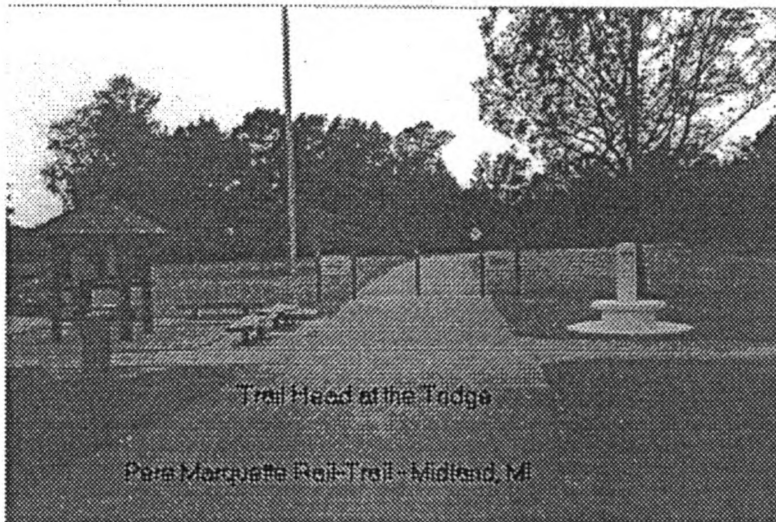
Welcome to the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan

203

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan is a linear park that extends from downtown Midland to Clare. Currently the trail is fully paved from Midland to Coleman MI, 21 miles. The Park is situated on the abandoned CSX Railroad property (originally the Pere Marquette Railroad). It is designated for year round non-motorized recreation and alternative transportation. Those using the park are walkers, hikers, runners, bicyclists, wheelchairs, cross country skiers and roller skates.



The trailhead is situated in the downtown area of Midland at the confluence of the Tittabawassee and Chippewa Rivers. This area has become a central part of the Downtown with the addition of the Tridge, (a unique three branched bridge) which joins three park areas, the Chippewasee park, St. Charles Park and the Downtown area and Farmers Market. Farmer's Market is open on Wednesday morning and Saturday morning during the spring and summer months. There are canoe rentals and fishing areas also located along the rivers. Starting at the Farmers Market the trail winds northwesterly running parallel to Main Street. It actually joins the former railbed as it crosses under The Robinson Bridge (M20) as it heads west from Midland.



go to: Next Stop Overlook,



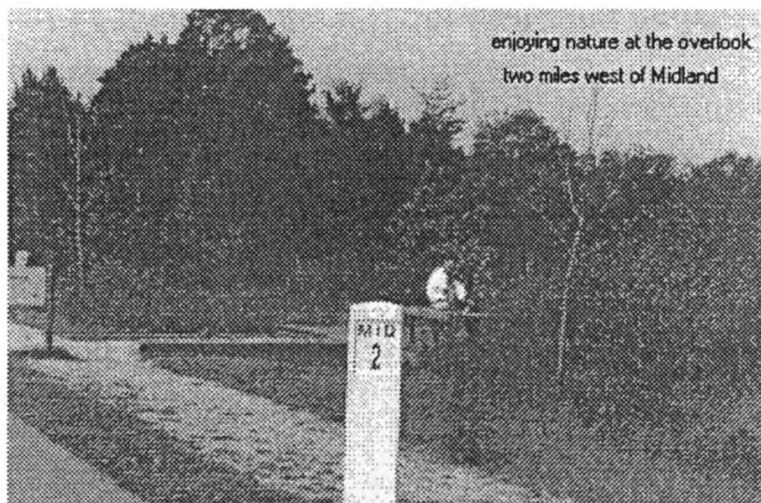
[FOPMRT Home Page](#)

Map



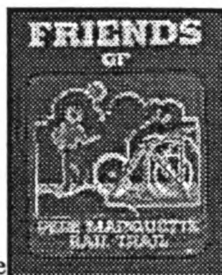


The first portion of the trail follows the Tittabawassee River, until it reaches Emerson Park at Curry Parkway. Curry Parkway is the first intersection, and crosses the Tittabawassee river via the Upper Bridge. This Bridge is a State of Michigan Historical Site, and is an example of Pratt-through Trust design. The arches were added recently to provide additional re-enforcement to the bridge and allow its continued use to the recreational facilities across the Tittabawassee River. At one time this bridge was the main route west of the city until the Robinson bridge was completed in 1956. The trail then goes across the north side of Emerson Park. Emerson Park contains the Curry Stadium and additional Softball diamonds used extensively for tournaments and championships from Scholastic, State, National and International. Emerson Park has been the Site of the ISF World Championships in 1984 and again in 1996. Teams representing 22 countries competed for the World Championship. As the trail continues from Emerson park, two significant historical sites are on the left, The Bradley House, a turn of the Century home that is often the center of many of the Midland Historical Society activities about early life in the Midland Area. The Herbert H. Dow Museum is a replica of the first brine well and plant that was the beginnings of the Dow Chemical Company.



The trail begins to show the natural settings as it leaves the city area and heads to Dublin Road. The Trail runs along the Northwood University campus to the South and the H.H. Dow High School on the North. An observation platform is located at a wetland site. This site is nature's musical paradise in the spring as frogs and birds are heard making their seasonal calls in the evenings. It is quite common to see deer and wild turkeys along this portion of the trail, even though it is technically within the city limits.

Next Stop [Averill](#).



or back to [FOPMRT Home Page](#)

[MAP](#)

As the park crosses Dublin Avenue (three miles from the Tridge) it leaves the City limits and becomes a Midland County Park. From here on the trail parallels Saginaw Road for almost the entire distance as it passes through a variety of landscapes, over rivers and streams, along side existing parks and through small communities. Numerous small businesses are located along Saginaw Road and in the communities and provide services to Trail users.



Heading westward from Midland a Wooded Character is evident as there are woodlands on the side of the trail and the north side of Saginaw Road. Adjacent to the Rail-Trail are woods rich in pine, maple, oak and birch with an interesting understory.



About 5 miles from Midland is the Avrill rollway. A short gravel trail leads to the placard that celebrates this area. The rollway is a carry over from the lumbering days that lead to the railroad coming to this area originally. The Midland area was a lumber center during the 19th century, and the Tittabawassee River was used to float the logs to Midland and on to Saginaw, and Bay City. Logs were stored at the rollway during the winter months and the river was frozen. When spring came and the thaw, the logs were rolled down the banks into the river, heading to the mills downstream.

Tittabawassee River



go to Next Stop [Sanford](#).



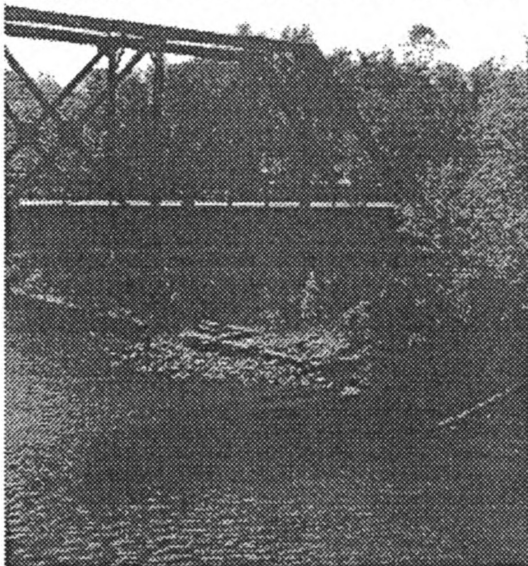
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[Map](#)

The trail enters Sanford, Michigan on the South Side and a staging area and rest area is located here. There are numerous establishments where food and drink are available. After crossing the Tittabawassee River Bridge, several attractions are near the intersection with 7 mile road. Across the road is the Sanford Historical Park. Several rehabilitated historic buildings from Midland Counties Past are here and are open to the public at certain times. Also here is a steam locomotive and a caboose from the Pere Marquette Railroad. Signs also point the way to Sanford Veterans Memorial Park, the entrance is a short distance from the Rail-Trail. Sanford Lake Park is on the North Side of Saginaw Road, signs also point the way. Here swimming is available and picnic areas and a relaxing beach from on Sanford Lake. During the summer season a refreshment stand is open. Admission is free although there is a parking fee for motorized vehicles.

Bridge over the Tittabawassee River-Sanford MI



Sanford Veterans Memorial Park has a nature trail and has some of the few remaining Old Growth trees in this part of Michigan. Pine Haven, Midland County Recreation Area. This is a forested area with trails for mountain biking and cross country skiers depending on the season. Wild flowers are prevalent in Pine Haven as they are along the Rail-Trail. Between the crossing of 8 mile road and 9 mile road, a small gravel pathway leads to Arbutus Bog. This is a pristine floating Bog of state wide significance. Please do not leave the wooden walkway and platform. The platform and walkway were established to allow visitors to experience the bog with minimal damage or interference.

The next several miles of the Trail are evident of a Wet Sand Prairie that features a rare plant community with State Threatened and special concern species, this is also of State-wide significance. Please do not pick or damage flowers along the trail, efforts are being extended to preserve this setting for future generations to enjoy. Please take plenty of pictures, they do not wilt or change color. The wooded land continues to the North Bradley area. The trail has had a slight elevation to it. Just before North Bradley is the West Salt River Bridge. This is the highest point on the Rail-Trail, not due to its elevation, but because the West Salt River has cut a valley through this part of the county. From North Bradley to Coleman the adjacent land use is primarily agricultural. There are some wooded areas along the fields. Pere Marquette Road now runs parallel to the Rail-Trail South of the Trail. As you enter Coleman from the East you see the evidence of the agricultural basis of the community. The silos of the grain elevator are observed from outside the city limits. The City of Coleman is representative of a small agricultural community. Commercial development is along the North side of Saginaw Road, and residential on the south side of the trail.

Several projects have recently enhanced the Coleman downtown area in addition to the Rail-Trail. A Streetscape project was recently completed, and restoration of the old Railroad station is underway. A senior center has been constructed to the south side of the Trail. A full staging area for the Rail-Trail is also in the Coleman area. The Section of Trail through Coleman is known as the Coleman Mile. This is in tribute to excellent participation of the citizens of Coleman in helping develop the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. A separate fund raising campaign was conducted by the citizens to Coleman to pave the one Mile Section of the trail passing through their community. A challenge grant from The Gerstacker Foundation guaranteed ½ the funding if the citizens could make up the second half. In a very short time they had reached their goal, and the Coleman Mile was completed in 1994. It was in 1995 before the rest of the Trail connected to the Coleman Mile. The

paved portion of The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail now is 21 miles long.

The balance of the trail, about 8 miles will reach the Clare City limits. Construction plans for this section of the trail are incomplete, however fund raising efforts are underway to complete this portion in 98 or 99.

Thank you for enjoying our trail. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail exists because the Citizens of Midland County, and now Clare and Isabella County have worked hard to provide this unique recreational opportunity. The Rail-Trail has only begun to make the connections to many of the previously underused recreational facilities available in our counties. The Friends of The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail invite you to be part of the continued enhancement and improvement of our fine park. Join the Friends by completing the membership form. Contributions can also be accepted, The Friends are an Not For Profit Organization (501c(3)) and can be deducted on your income tax. Donation boxes are also strategically located along the trail.



[Map](#)

[Back to FOPMRT Home Page](#)





DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

MIDLAND COUNTY SERVICES BUILDING • 220 WEST ELLSWORTH STREET

MIDLAND, MICHIGAN 48640-5194 • PHONE (517) 832-6870



WILLIAM C. GIBSON
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 19, 1996

TO: Paul Pounders, Parks Manager
Bill Gibson, Parks & Recreation Director

FROM: Rick Sigsby, Seasonal Park Ranger

SUBJECT: Encounters with Rail Trail Users

As you know, Rail-Trails have seen a dramatic increase in popularity in recent years.

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is rapidly becoming a major attraction in Midland, Michigan and throughout the Midwest. Word of mouth and promotions in regional/national publications have provided a tremendous boost in exposure for Midland County.

Through my work on the PMRT, I've had the pleasure of meeting many interesting people on the Trail enjoying "the sights". They come from afar and close to home.

The distance record has to be a couple cycling from Vancouver, British Columbia on their way to "probably Nova Scotia". Twenty two miles of smooth pavement, after riding over hundreds (many hundreds) of rough miles was a real treat.

A man riding a fold-up bicycle stopped me to ask directions just north of Sanford. Although he was a veteran Rail-Trailer from Brainerd, Minnesota, he wasn't lost but he didn't know where "the Trail" ended either. He and his wife were staying at the Ashman Court Hotel. The wife went shopping so he went for a ride on the PMRT. Unfortunately his information came from a 1994 Rails-to-Trails book which showed the trail being only 3 miles long. I pointed out the book was correct but out dated. In fact he had already traveled 9 miles and had still 12 miles to reach trails end. He greeted the news with joy, as now he would be one adventure up on his wife.

An encounter with an elderly couple proved very informative. First, they were rollerblading - second, they were from Petoskey and this was their third trip to the PMRT. They had bought roller blades for their daughters who now lived in Massachusetts and they were going to visit them soon. Their trips to the PMRT were to practice and develop their rollerblading skills so they could keep up with their daughters. Although there is a Rail Trail from Petosky to Harbor

Springs I was told it is narrow and hilly. They liked the PMRT because it is much wider and relatively flat. Easier going for the oldies!

Several Boy Scout Troops from the surrounding area, i.e., Saginaw, St Louis, Alma, Mt. Pleasant, etc. have used the PMRT as proving grounds for their hiking and cycling merit badges. The Trail is also quite popular with church youth groups for weekend outings. So far I've met the Mennonites from Gratiot County; the Lutherans from Kent County and the Mormons from Isabella County.

The PMRT has a excellent reputation for wheelchair users. Two individuals I've met are prime examples. One gentleman from Alma is a regular - he uses two different wheelchairs. One is for leisure trips with his wife, (she accompanies him on bicycle) the other is a racing wheelchair that he uses on training trips from Coleman to Sanford and back. His wife follows in the car because she can't keep up!

I met a couple from Edmore who bought a special wheelchair for their handicapped son, one with a hand crank to help build up his upper body strength. The PMRT has provided an ideal setting for family outings - their goal is a day trip from Coleman to Midland - maybe next year.

People with cottages at Sanford, Wixom, Five Point, Smallwood and Secord Lakes all have made summer side trips to the PMRT. Many seem to originate from the Southeast Michigan area. I encounter quite a few Midlanders out showing visitors the Trail with many commenting on return trips specifically to use the Trail. The Ashman Court Hotel has also used the PMRT effectively in promoting weekend packages and rentals.

Bicycling and rollerblading are the two most popular activities but a surprising number of hikers, runners, bird watchers, berry pickers and sightseers have been spotted. I met a few patrons that were there on doctors orders. Obviously, they recognize the benefits.

Overall, the comments most often heard are the PMRT is wider than most other trails; patrons are impressed by the cleanliness and lack of ground litter; and the friendly atmosphere. Many have commented about looking forward to the next trip to use the Trail. That certainly is encouraging.

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Bike, foot trail proposed to link county parks

By ROB REHG

Daily News staff writer

Midland County park officials are saying they can use abandoned railroad lines for pedestrian and bike trails to link city and county parks. The local business community already is enthusiastic about the donation by CSX Transportation Corp. and its Midland lines, because the removal of tracks will clear the way for increased development along the Tittabawassee riverfront.

William Gibson, county and recreation director, says elimination of railway lines also would be a boon to park operations.

"An abandoned right-of-way has considerable recreation potential," Gibson said in a letter to county commissioners.

"The right-of-way would provide a link between the developing downtown waterfront area and Emerson Park, W. Gardens and the Bradley Gardens," Gibson wrote. "(It also) provide a link between city and county parks and all points in between, including the historic Tittabawassee River roll-away near the city."

Gibson said Monday no cost estimates for such a project have been prepared and acknowledged it could be difficult to obtain approval because of the county's financial constraints.

In his letter to commissioners, however, Gibson stressed the park commission's belief the availability

of the right-of-way is a special opportunity and would be a meaningful investment in the community's quality of life.

"Such a link would be a tremendous asset for the community," Gibson wrote, regarding the proposed paths. "It would provide a unique opportunity for both residents and visitors to leisurely travel between many of Midland County's scenic, recreational, cultural and historic areas. The commission urges you to explore the recreational and economic benefits of the right-of-way with other potentially interested parties in the community."

To that end, Gibson sent copies of the letter to the chambers of commerce in Midland, Sanford and Coleman, as well as to the Midland County Visitors and Convention Bureau, the county's growth council and economic development corporation and the Midland Foundation.

Considering the county board's belief it lacks the proper finances to continue existing programs unless a tax increase is approved by voters next year, the chances of appropriating money for a substantial recreation project appear as remote as a comeback by the railroad industry.

By passing on this vision of a meandering bike and pedestrian pathway to civic groups, however, Gibson is hoping to encourage the type of enthusiasm that could lead to financial support from private organizations of more sound financial standing.

"I'd like to know why it was not in our pocket or on our agenda," LeVore said. He indicated that both supporters and opponents of the plan should have had one

more chance to be heard. "I feel we're comfortable voting on this today," said Commissioner Rose Marie McQuaid. "I feel if they (the public) wanted to comment on this, they would have given us a call by now."

The Midland Foundation will pay CSX transportation \$225,000 to purchase the long strip of land between the western Midland city limits and the Clare-Jenaballa county line northwest of Coleman. The foundation then will immediately assign the purchase agree-

ment to the county, according to foundation Executive Director M. Gene Arnold. The foundation's option to purchase the land expires Aug. 15, according to Midland Foundation President Eileen Stark.

The acceptance of the foundation donation does not commit the county to actual development of a trail or other form of linear park, according to the agreement between the county and foundation. The county's only immediate expense will be the cost of installing

"no trespassing" signs and barricading the bridges along the route. That is expected to cost about \$1,000, according to an operations and purchasing committee report.

The county also is expected to spend about \$1,500 to get an engineering assessment of the bridges at some time in the future. "The county is required to exert best efforts to obtain funds from either government or private sources to develop the property for the specified purpose," the report stated.

"We look forward to working with the county on development of this project," said Stark. The county will get about \$8,000 a year in lease income from the property. For now, that money will be funneled into a fund to help defray the costs of accepting and using the property.

Today's vote was 10 to 1 to accept the donation of the right of way. Commissioner James LeVore voted no. He objected to the fact that today's action was not on the published commission agenda, but came up under "other old business."

The acceptance hinges on an environmental report which is expected to be finished by the end of the month.

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County accepts rails-to-trails gift

MIDLAND DAILY NEWS JULY 24, 1990



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SAGINAW, MI

NEWS

F-54.513; S-57.549

APR-26-90

Abandoned track switched to trails a national trend

BY CATHY HENG
News Special Writer

MIDLAND — If Midland County decides to build a rails-to-trails "linear park," it will join an effort to criss-cross the nation with hiking and biking paths that follow abandoned rail lines.

The Michigan part of the vision is outlined in a 28-page "Discover Michigan Trails" report by the state chapter of the Rails to Trails Conservancy, a nationwide, non-profit organization that promotes the conversion of abandoned railroad corridors to multiple-use trails.

The conservancy does not promote abandoning railroads. But as rail companies close lines, members seek to create a transcontinental trail system along the unused corridors.

Michigan's railroad tracks have shrunk from 9,800 miles in 1927 to 4,500 today, with about 1,500 miles lost since 1974.

In the Lower Peninsula, communities have converted 70 miles of the abandoned tracks into trails, and 70 more miles are publicly owned and scheduled for development, the report notes. In the Upper Peninsula, 300 miles of abandoned lines are part of the state's snowmobile trail system.

Midland's rail-trail plan is in its infancy, says County Parks and Recreation Director William Gibson. The Midland Foundation is acquiring the right of way from CSX Transportation Inc. and formulating plans.

County acceptance of the right of way would cement the plan.

Nationally and statewide, the road to development of rails-to-trails projects often is bumpy.

The county would then ask residents what the project should include, Gibson said. Possibilities include hard surface, gravel, equestrian and Tittabawassee River-linked trails, he added.

No cost estimates are developed, but work along the 26½ miles of abandoned railway likely must occur in phases, Gibson said.

Nationally and statewide, the road to development of rails-to-trails projects often is bumpy.

Cost is a big concern, say Midland County officials who point to trails that now charge users. Oceana County instituted a user fee this year for its paved trail between Montague and Hart.

Gibson said fees are a possibility for funding a Midland County trail.

Other communities use tax money, while some state and federal funds are available.

Trail system opponents cite problems including trespassing, vandalism and littering by users, a decline in adjacent property values and lack of control.

Gibson said such concerns are not well documented.

On trails in operation, he said, the users have not littered or trespassed. Citing the Paint Creek Trail in Rochester, Gibson said the trail commission there found that right-of-way abuses by motorized vehicles declined after the path opened. Often, he added, trail users are the best policemen in reporting infractions.

Proponents say the chance to provide linear parks shielded by a buffer of greenery is the wave of the future for both urban and rural areas. Just 200 acres of railroad right of way can create a park 20 miles long for use by a variety of outdoor enthusiasts.

The state Department of Natural Resources is taking inventory of Michigan trails to develop and coordinate such efforts.

Midland's proposal is a long way from Seattle's Burke-Gilman Trail, which is dubbed an "interstate for bicyclists" and features paving, traffic signals, signs and police using radar guns to nab speeders.

But it is an initial step to providing new experiences in Michigan's outdoors, Gibson said.

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MIDLAND, MI

DAILY NEWS

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JUN- 7-90

218B

County parks board discusses trails financing

By MARK RANZENBERGER

Daily News staff writer
Members of the Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission are looking at how the county will pay to maintain the proposed biking and hiking trail that may be built along the old CSX railway right-of-way from Midland to near Clare.

The board Wednesday agreed in principle to ask the county for an increased budget, to restore the cuts made in parks and recreation services cut during the last few years.

"Midland County residents deserve the restoration of services that were cut during the lean times," said board member Dennis Starmer. He noted that recent

county projections show that an increasing tax base, mainly because of the Midland Cogeneration Venture and residential growth, will result in increased tax revenues.

Meanwhile, "we're trying to find innovative ways to handle the upkeep," said board member Marion Newman.

The trails-to-trails proposal has come under fire from some quarters. Opponents say they're concerned about safety and the fact that if the county takes over ownership of the 26-mile ribbon of land from Midland to Clare, it no longer will be taxable.

Parks and Recreation Director William Gibson said those questions had surfaced in connection

with almost every other rails-to-trails proposal. He said supporters of the Hart-Montague trail in western Michigan, which opened recently, had to deal with the same kinds of worries. "They haven't proven out," Gibson said. "We're ready, willing and able to address these things," said board chairman James Bradley.

"Most likely the property, if it reverted back to the surrounding land owners, wouldn't create a noticeable increase in property values," said Scott Meyers, president of the New Era Chamber of Commerce. The Hart-Montague Trail runs past New Era in Oceana County.

Meyers said the trail had been

good for business. He said he is part owner of an ice cream store near the trail. "We noticed approximately a 20 percent increase in business over the prior year," Meyers said. "Bicycle sales in our area are up tremendously," he added.

"The Hart-Montague Rail Trail has had a definite, positive economic impact on our area," said Eleanor Polley, executive director of the White Lake Area Chamber of Commerce in nearby Whitehall.

Gibson said law enforcement personnel in that part of the state had few problems with crime along the trail. "It just doesn't attract that kind of person," Gibson

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RECREATION DIV.

COMMUNITY MEETINGS

FOR

THE LINEAR PARK PROJECT



The Midland County Linear Park Advisory Committee invites you to participate in a Community Meeting for the linear park being planned for the former CSX railroad right-of-way that runs parallel to Saginaw Road between Midland and Clare.

Please come to contribute your visions, concerns and thoughts about the linear park. The discussions will be about the linear park as a whole, and more specifically how the park relates to the community in which the meeting is being held.

There will be three public meetings:

In Coleman: Monday, December 2, 1991 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the High School Auditorium (4951 N. Lewis Road)

In Sanford: Tuesday, December 3, 1991 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held at the Sanford Senior Center (113 W. Lincoln Street)

In Midland: Wednesday, December 4, 1991 at 7:00 p.m.

The meeting will be held in the Board Room of the County Services Building (220 W. Ellsworth Street)



MIDLAND COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

Hikers jump the gun on rail-trail

BY TRACY CALABRESE
News Staff Writer

MIDLAND — Although the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan won't officially open until mid-July, bicyclists and other outdoor enthusiasts already are gearing up to use the trail's first completed portion.

The Midland Foundation funded construction of the three miles of trail running from The Triage to Dublin Road.

The trail will provide a place for cyclists, walkers, runners, roller skaters and cross-country skiers to enjoy safely.

Work on the \$300,000 project began in August. Employees need to install signs and traffic barriers — to keep vehicles off the 12-foot-wide strip — but that's not keeping pedestrians and pacers away.

"Last week, I counted 13 people using it between Currie Parkway and Cook Road," said William C. Gibson, Midland County Parks and Recreation Department director.

"Technically, they're not supposed to, but they just go around the barricades."

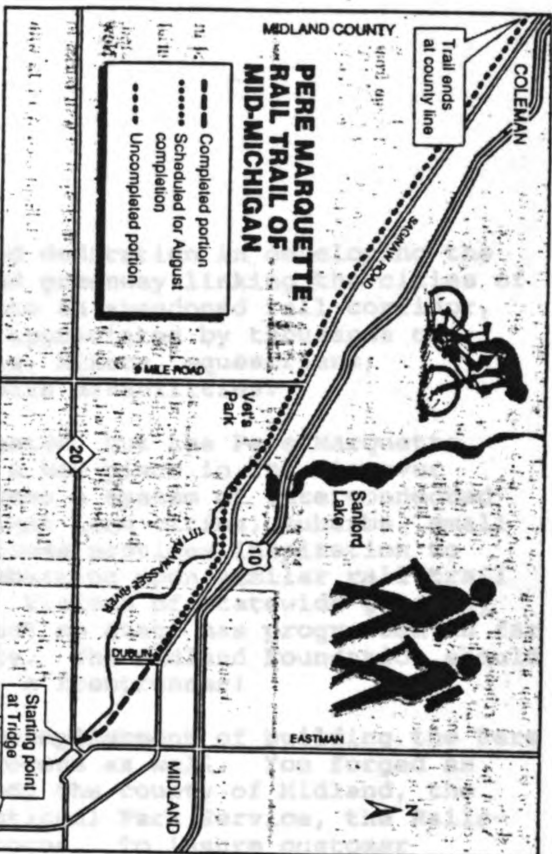
Plans call for the trail — established on abandoned CSX Transportation Inc. railroad tracks — to stretch 26 miles to the Clare County line.

Construction on the second stretch — from Dublin Road to Veterans Memorial Park in Sanford — is planned for mid-August.

A \$375,000 state Department of Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant and another \$566,000 stipend from the state Department of Transportation will pay for the work, Gibson said.

Although the trail isn't open, residents seem more than ready to give it a try, said Byron R. Plummer, owner of Ray's Bike Shop at 1000 E. Carpenter.

"Customers are talking about it. They're doing it."



News Staff / Photo Journalist

Bills promote uniform rules for rails-to-trails

LANSING (AP) — Gov. John M. Engler has signed three bills designed to promote a uniform approach to the use of abandoned railroad corridors as recreational trails.

The new laws, which took effect Wednesday, give the Natural Resources Commission the authority to designate a railway as a Michigan Trailway.

Communities that operate designated trails will have a chance for state funding, will join a statewide network of trails with uniform rules for operation and safety, and will have the opportunity to charge state-authorized user fees.

The Michigan Trailways designation also will protect property owners from civil suit liability. The state cannot grant the designation

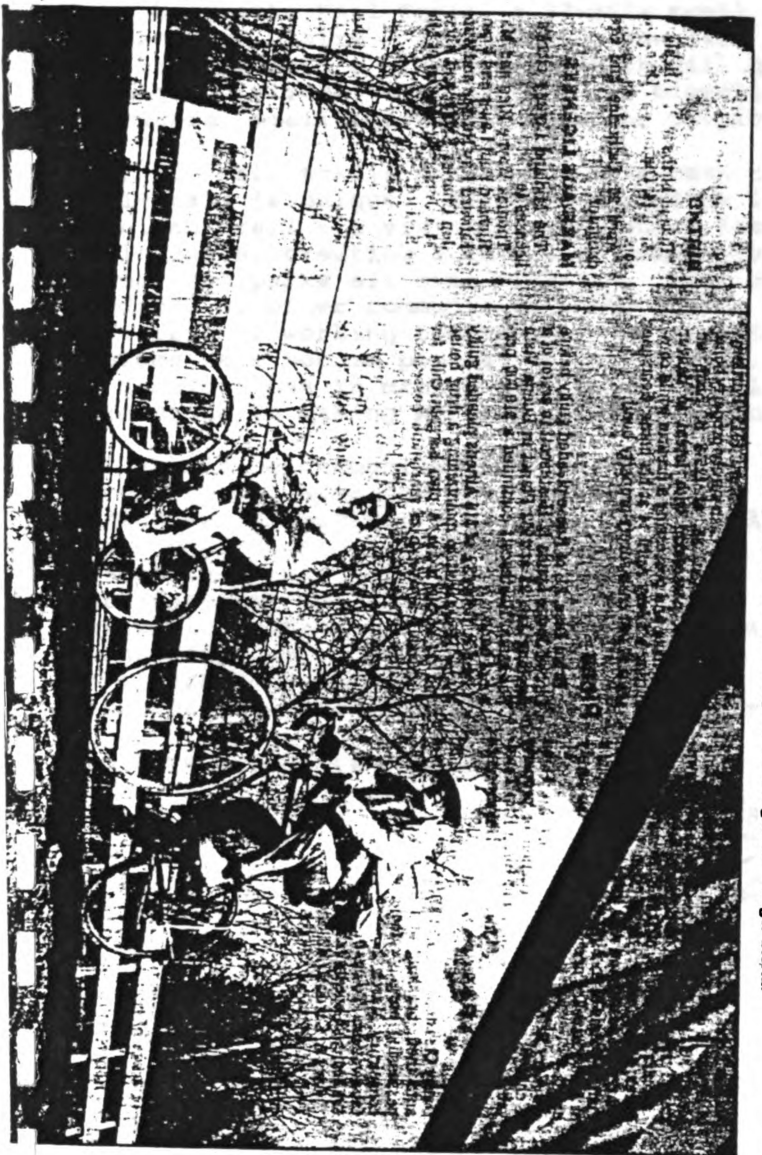
without minimizing the potential harm of railway development on adjacent landowners.

The package of bills signed by Engler also creates the Michigan Trailways Fund, which will help capture up to \$3 million in new federal funds for state trail use.

It also allows the Michigan Department of Transportation to transfer abandoned rail corridors to the Department of Natural Resources for trail use.

A spokesman for the Michigan chapter of the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy said the bills will help create an interconnected system of trails.

"This legislation provides the framework from which this vision can now become a reality," said Roger Storm.



"It's really doesn't draw the type of people that people want to see. It's just about."



THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR
WASHINGTON

JUL 15 1993

Midland Foundation
812 West Main Street
Midland, Michigan 48640

Dear Midland Foundation:

Congratulations! I applaud your hard work and dedication in developing the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, a 27-mile trail and greenway linking the cities of Midland and Claire. By breathing new life into an abandoned rail corridor, you have created a linear park which will be appreciated by thousands of Michigan citizens, whether they are bicyclists, hikers, equestrians, commuters, small business owners, or people with disabilities.

Over 500 rail-trails nationwide have been created, but the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is unique. The Pere Marquette is a key piece in The Discover Michigan Trail - a visionary plan which foresees a system of interconnected rail-trails, creating a series of greenways that link cities, suburbs, small towns, and parks all over Michigan. Your success provides inspiration to hundreds of other communities in the State embarking upon similar rail-trail conversions, working toward the same vision. Visions of statewide greenway systems have become popular in many States, but no State has progressed as far as Michigan has in making this dream a reality. The Midland Foundation should take pride in making Midland - and Michigan - a frontrunner!

You should be recognized not only for your accomplishment of building the Pere Marquette but also for your trail planning process as well. You forged an effective partnership with the city of Midland, the county of Midland, the State Department of Natural Resources, the National Park Service, the Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, and local volunteer groups. To insure customer satisfaction, you surveyed citizens, those who would ultimately use the trail, for their preferences by using computer imagery, the latest in design technology. Now, you've created a friends of the trail group to insure the Pere Marquette remains a vibrant community asset. The Midland Foundation has established a new standard for developing rail-trail linear parks.

The Pere Marquette is a great rail-trail - and role model!

Sincerely,



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STATE OF MICHIGAN
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
LANSING

JOHN ENGLER
GOVERNOR

July 15, 1993

Dear Friends:

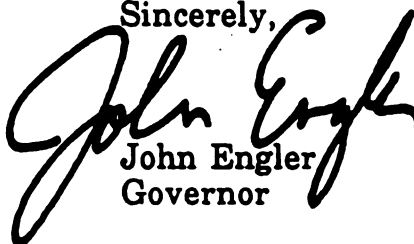
As Governor of the State of Michigan, it is my pleasure to celebrate with the citizens of Midland as you dedicate the City of Midland section of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan.

I would like to congratulate the Midland Foundation and the citizens of Midland in developing three miles of urban trails for outdoor enthusiasts of all ages. Through your efforts, you have created an innovative way for your community to use its abandoned rail corridors by providing a unique opportunity for many to enjoy the beauty and solace of nature as well as becoming reacquainted with the splendor of Midland and its neighboring communities.

You must be extremely proud of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan as it has not only been a wonderful expansion for your community, but has influenced many cities across our state to transform their abandoned rail corridors into trail networks like the one in your community. In showing your commitment and dedication to the City of Midland, you have provided your area with state-wide recognition of its rails to trails system, a system that will be enjoyed by the citizens of our state for many years to come.

Once again, on behalf of the citizens of the Great Lakes State, it is my pleasure to congratulate the Midland Foundation, the City of Midland and everyone else who was involved in making the Midland section of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan become a reality. Please accept my best wishes for continued enjoyment on your trail system.

Sincerely,



John Engler
Governor

JE/sk



DAVE CAMP
4TH DISTRICT, MICHIGAN

MEMBER:
COMMITTEE ON
WAYS AND MEANS

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
SELECT REVENUE MEASURES

SUBCOMMITTEE ON
HUMAN RESOURCES

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2204

July 14, 1993

220
137 CANNON BUILDING
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-2204
(202) 225-3561
FAX (202) 225-9679

DISTRICT OFFICES:

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MIDLAND, MI 48640
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3508 WEST HOUGHTON LAKE DRIVE
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HOUGHTON LAKE, MI 48629
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308 WEST MAIN ST.
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TOLL FREE 1-800-342-2456

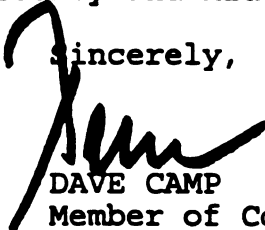
Dear Friends:

At this time, I would like to offer my sincerest congratulations to the Midland Foundation, Mr. William C. Gibson, Director of the Midland County Department of Parks & Recreation, and the hundreds of volunteers who have worked to make this day, the opening of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid Michigan, a reality.

There are approximately 150 parks throughout the United States which have converted unused railroads to the rails-to-trails program. In fact, the idea is even catching on in Great Britain as more and more individuals the world over are making use of the benefits of recreation, paired with conservation and the appreciation of nature. However, obtaining these old railways to convert them to parks can sometimes be difficult, and the efforts that have gone into the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail should be recognized.

Once again, I'd like to offer my sincere congratulations upon the opening of this trail, and wish many years of fun and peaceful use for the citizens of Midland County and Mid Michigan.

Sincerely,


DAVE CAMP
Member of Congress

DLC:jem

Raise money for rail-trail? No problem, Coleman says

By CHERYL WADE

Daily News staff writer
They won't enjoy it until summer but the people of Coleman have given themselves a present that will stretch for a mile through their city.

By the time the money counting is done, people in the little city will have raised \$31,000 to \$32,000 for a mile of rail-trail, said Charles Amble, part of the 19-member committee that headed the drive.

"The city was assured of getting \$150,000 for the Coleman mile from the Rollin M. Gertsacker Foundation. The challenge was raising \$25,000. But the community met and exceeded that challenge. By next summer, the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan will follow the old CSX Transportation railway bed through the city.

This rail-trail could be part of a statewide system that will benefit hikers, bikers, in-line skaters and anyone else who wants to use it. The campaign officially ended Saturday but the committee will accept money if people still wish to give, Amble said.

"It brings something to Coleman it hasn't had in years," Amble said. "The railroad left; it took a little bit of the commerce with it. I hope our merchants will be able to capitalize on it."

The rail-trail could be part of a statewide system that will benefit hikers, bikers, in-line skaters and anyone else who wants to use it.

The three biggest drivers were Coleman Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1071 with \$10,000, Chemical Bank Coleman with \$5,000, local resident Donald McClive with \$5,000 and the Coleman Lions Club with \$3,000. The VFW, bank and Lions will present their donations in a 1 p.m. ceremony at the VFW Hall in Coleman Thursday.

Roger Storm, state director of the Michigan chapter of the Rail-to-Trails Conservancy, called the money raising "unique." Other communities have donated labor and materials but Coleman's money raising power is "impressive," he said.

"With the economics today, people are throwing up their hands saying they don't have enough money," Storm said. "To have a small community come forward with the bucks, that says a lot."

How did the people of Coleman do it? They divided up the territory — schools, churches, organizations, businesses. And they took the "direct approach" with

mailable and personal visits, Amble said.

"We asked for specific amounts from different groups," he said. "We informed them that this project is something that every member of the community could use and enjoy."

The committee showed slides of other "linear parks" in the state and pictures of rail-trail construction in Midland.

"We wanted them to understand that this wasn't just Midland County's own little project," Amble said. "This thing's going to be a national effort with many communities around the United States."

The committee didn't plead, Amble said. Members presented the facts, and the people gave.

The city will use all the money people bring in, Amble said. There are plans for a "village green," a little park with benches and picnic tables.

"It'll be somewhere in downtown Coleman," Amble said. "We haven't yet decided the location or the size."



Hundreds of cyclists could arrive in July

By CHERYL WADE

Daily News staff writer
Roger Storm, state director of the Michigan chapter of the Rail-to-Trails Conservancy, is making plans to bring 800 to 1,000 mountain bike riders through Coleman during the annual Michigan ride, sponsored by the Detroit Free Press and the state Rail-Trail Conservancy chapter. The six-day ride in late July will start at South Haven and end in Midland.

Storm said he hopes some of the rail-trail money raisers will come to greet the riders as they come through Coleman.

"We wanted to get people excited in communities that have projects — to let them know that we're out there, that people will want to use them (the trails)," he said.

Our view Coleman deserves pat on the back

Tuesday, December 28, 1993

Give the city of Coleman credit.

Residents there needed to raise \$25,000 to help pay for construction of a mile of rail-trail through the city. The Rollin M. Gertsacker Foundation is picking up \$150,000 of the project cost.

Coleman not only raised the \$25,000, but came up with an extra \$6,000 or \$7,000. And the city received its support from a number of areas, such as the Coleman Veterans of Foreign Wars, Chemical Bank Coleman and Coleman Lions Club. Local resident Donald McClive and others also donated to the cause.

A state director of the Michigan chapter of the Rail-to-Trails Conservancy called the money-raising effort "unique." Roger Storm also noted, "With the economics today, people are throwing up their hands saying they don't have enough money. To have a small community come forward with the bucks, that says a lot."

Storm is right. The effort on the part of Coleman residents does say a lot about the community. And it is another example of the giving spirit that is such a strong part of life in Midland County.

The rail-trail will be an asset to Coleman, as it has proven to be in Midland, thanks to those who came forth with donations to make the project a reality.

Rail-trail to Sanford takes riders back to the future on a bike

The bicycle ceased as my main mode of transport at precisely the moment I received my driver's license.

It was some 40 years ago when my trusty two-wheeler was quickly cast aside for a VW Beetle convertible.

My car wasn't cool but that didn't matter. The bug - no matter how ugly and slow - was better than a bike because it expanded my horizons.

Until then, my bike was all I needed for a small world that extended some three miles from my boyhood Ohio home to a favorite swimming spot named Lake Mohawk.

Looking back at those idyllic 1950s, I can picture the flowers along the Ohio countryside and the easy pace of the bicycle.

A few years ago, I ran across an album photo of my old bike, taken as it stood by the road - looking abandoned and forgotten.

I don't recall who bought it - and didn't

much care at the time. After all, the move from the handlebars to steering wheel was an adolescent watershed.

Besides, we don't experience melancholy until much later in life.

A wise old carpenter once advised me "never look back." And I didn't.

Until last weekend.

A metamorphosis of sorts occurred on a peaceful paved stretch far away from the country road I knew years ago as a youngster.

This time, the spot was mid-Michigan's Pere Marquette Rail Trail. My transport was an efficient mountain bike - a quantum leap from the one-speed, pedal brake variety of childhood.

Fair Wife and I were invited by friends to give the trail a try. It proved a welcome change from the pushty, frenzied and threatening pace of the highway.

Getting there, however, took some doing. A pinched nerve in Fair Wife's shoulder prompted the purchase of a "cruiser" bike.



Roughly translated, that means a cycle with high handlebars, big whitewall tires and only six speeds.

It resembles the bikes we rode as kids - much to the chagrin of Numbuh Two.

Daughter who looked at the new purchase and proclaimed it "dorky."

That was proof that things have gone full circle in our family. The kids are driving, maw and paw are pedaling.

Some other things were evident in this switch.

When I set out for recreation in the 1950s with my biking buddy, all I needed were swimming trunks and a towel.

These new bicycle days call for, ah, stuff. That started with purchase of a bike car-

rier for the automobile trip to Midland where the rail-trail begins. And then ...

"Got a first aid kit?" Fair Wife asked.

"Ah, sure ..."

"Tools?"

"Nope." I replied.

"Better buy some."

So we did.

"Water bottles ..."

"I think so," I said.

"Get them."

And we did.

"Bungee cords?"

"I got rope."

"I said bungee cords."

Got a whole package of the stretchy little

devils.

"Locks?" she said, as if we were going to

inner Detroit, not rural Sanford.

"We can use the ski locks ... what's the

combination, remember?" I said.

"You mean you don't remember?"

"I'll remember."

"Right ... toilet paper?" said the One

Who Must Be Prepared For Anything.

"Ah ..." I stammered.

She handed me some rolled-up tissue to stuff in a bursting bike bag.

"Food?" she said about the Sanford

salad. "We need stuff to eat."

"We're going to stop at Alex's Raisin in

Sanford for breakfast."

"Maybe we'll get hungry later ..."

So we bought a food container. And a

couple of throwaway ponchos in case of

rain. And bug spray. And sunscreen.

And we were off. Finally.

(Later, we got padded pants to cut down

on the butt-breaks - which we didn't appreciate until the reality of a 26-mile ride had

fully seated.)

This won't be my last trip on the smooth

highway reserved for bicyclists of all ages

and athletic in-line skaters.

Why? Simple.

It's a welcome escape from the hectic

highway to the more tranquil time I left

long ago. ■



Your School can help the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Close the *GaP to Coleman!**

♦What is the Midland County Youth Action Council?

The Midland County Youth Action Council (MCYAC) is an organization affiliated with the Midland Foundation established to promote philanthropy amongst the youth of Midland County. Operating with an annual income generated by a \$1,000,000 youth endowment fund, MCYAC makes grants, sponsors events and helps raise funds for projects which effect the youth of Midland County.

Fundraising is an important aspect of philanthropy. Therefor MCYAC pledged to aid the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail "Close the *GaP*" fund raising program.

♦How can our school help Close the *Gap*?

To reach our goal of \$10,000 from eleven schools in Midland County, MCYAC is sponsoring a fund raising opportunity for all participating schools. Your school will reap many benefits from this event. First, it will show your support for an innovative addition to Midland County's park system. Raising funds will also provide an educational opportunity for the student body. Students will be actively involved in fundraising, and when the trail is complete, reap the rewards of philanthropy.

(Page 1 of 5)





In addition, MCYAC is granting \$1 to your student government for every \$2 raised for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. Your student government will be eligible to receive up to \$750 if it can raise \$1,500 or more! There is no minimum amount that must be raised in order to receive the MCYAC grant. The more money raised for the Rail-Trail, the more you will receive (up to \$750) from MCYAC! A pizza party will also be sponsored for the room which raises the most money!

Your district superintendent and school principal have been notified and have authorized a fund raising campaign. Except for two requirements, it is entirely up to your school to determine the method by which the funds are raised. First, we require all teachers be furnished with the supplied brochures. They are a vital part of informing your students of the purpose of the campaign. Furthermore, you must keep a record of room totals to determine the pizza party winner. To promote equity, we would like room totals to be calculated on a per-capita basis. This way large classes such as band or orchestra do not have an unfair advantage over smaller classes.

The official deadline for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail "Close the Gap" fund raising campaign is April 23. Your school's campaign must end on Friday, April 22, 1994. Please submit your contribution in the form of a check made payable to Midland Foundation / PMRT Fund no later than Friday, April 29, 1994. The MCYAC grant and winning room pizza party will follow in May!

MCYAC is supporting all your efforts. If there are questions regarding any aspect of the fund raising program, please contact your school's MCYAC representative, **Mike Rivard** at 835-5077, or the Midland Foundation at 839-9661.

(Page 2 of 5)

Midland Foundation
P. O. Box 289
Midland, Michigan 48640



Telephone: (517) 839-9661
Fax: (517) 832-8842



possibility that the Rail-Trail can eventually be extended through Clare, Farwell, Evart and Reed City and on to Baldwin or even Ludington.

♦**Who Will pay for Building the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail?**

The cost of constructing the Rail-Trail is being paid by a combination of state and federal grants and local fund raising efforts. Local fund raising is the responsibility of the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. Applications for state and federal funding are managed by the Midland County Parks and Recreation Department.

State and federal grants and private contributions have already been received to pay the \$1,190,840 cost of construction from the Tridge in downtown Midland to Cedar Street in Sanford. This phase of the project is scheduled for completion before June 30, 1994. In addition, local fund raising efforts in Coleman have been successful and will the cost of completing a one mile segment of the park.

♦**How much is still needed to Close the *GaP*?**

The goal of the current fund raising campaign is to raise an additional \$480,000 from individuals, schools, foundations and business organizations in Midland County.

The Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation has offered a challenge grant to this campaign. The Foundation will grant \$1 for \$2 received up to a maximum of \$160,000. When the \$320,000 is raised and matched, the campaign will have reached its goal. The \$480,000 will be added to a \$160,000 contribution already received. This will bring the total raised from the community to \$640,000, the amount required to qualify for \$795,000 in grants from the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources. The \$1,435,000 grand total will cover the cost of completing the Rail-Trail.

(Page 4 of 5)





PLEASE SEND YOUR CONTRIBUTION TO:

**FRIENDS OF THE PERE MARQUETTE RAIL-TRAIL
P. O. BOX 289
MIDLAND, MI 48640**

(Page 5 of 5)

Midland Foundation
P. O. Box 289
Midland, Michigan 48640



Telephone: (517) 839-9661
Fax: (517) 832-8842

Show your School Spirit for

228

Earth Day '94

Help the Midland Volunteers For Recycling



PERE MARQUETTE RAIL-TRAIL

*Closing the recycling G*A*P* is simple.* Save plastics numbered 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7.
(Look on the bottom of plastic containers for the number inside the )

*Help your school win a recycled plastic lumber bench** that will be donated to the Rail-Trail. A plaque on the bench will honor the school whose students, teachers, staff, and families bring the most plastics to the collection sites.

What a great feeling to know that you have helped save landfill space, conserve natural resources and . . . *you get a chance to win great prizes!*

You will receive a ticket for every five plastics you bring to a collection site (see other side for complete details). Tickets filled out with name, phone number, and school affiliation will be entered into a general drawing for gift certificates* and T-shirts*, that will be held at the Chippewa Nature Center's Earth Festival, April 23 at 3:30 p.m. Tickets will be tallied according to school affiliation before the drawing.

** Prizes donated by Dow Corning's "E.A.R.T.H." recycling program.*

(See other side for more information)

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For rail-trail

2/15/94
M.D.N.

Drive starts to fill gap

By TED O'NEIL
Daily News staff writer

The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail want to "Fill the Gap" in the linear park between Sanford and Coleman.

The group, formed in January 1993, is heading up a fund-raising campaign to raise \$320,000 over the next 10 weeks to complete Phases III and IV of the project.

Those phases will carry the path from Veterans Memorial Park in Sanford to Coleman. The Roland M. Gerstacker Foundation has offered a challenge grant of \$1 for every \$2 contributed up to \$160,000. That money will go toward a total of \$480,000 in local matching funds needed for the \$1.4 million project.

(See "Trail," page A2)



Trail ...

MON 2/15/94

(Continued from page A1)

Gene Arnold, executive director of the Midland Foundation and a member of the "Fill the Gap" steering committee, said about \$160,000, left over from Phases I and II, is available. The Friends group is hoping to get another \$90,000 from individuals, \$110,000 from foundations, \$70,000 from businesses and \$50,000 from corporations.

People who don't contribute money still can help out by saving their glass and plastic.

Recycled plastic will be used to make the signs at intersections, benches and the bollards, which are the red poles used to keep motorized vehicles off the trail.

Esther Daus, director of programs and operations for the Midland Volunteers For Recycling, said three Saturdays in April — the 9th, 16th and 23rd — have been set aside for special collections of the glass and plastic.

"This will help teach people about closing the loop with recycling, because the finished products will be on the trail," Daus said. "It will be something they can see."

Cliff Miles, former Midland city manager and a charter member of the Friends group, will direct the fund-raising effort. He said the goal is to collect a million pounds of glass and 4,500 pounds of plastic.

The glass that is collected will be used in glass-phalt, a product similar to asphalt that contains crushed glass.

Janet Sand and Gravel, which has the contract for the blacktop along the rail-trail, will make and install the glassphalt.

"We replace up to 15 percent of the aggregate material in asphalt with recycled glass," said Jan Birnbaum, president of Janet Sand and Gravel. The glass is finely ground up, almost back to the

silica sand form it was originally made from."

The glass replaces sand as an ingredient in asphalt.

"It (the glass) is crushed into very fine particles so it doesn't pose any problems to toes or tires," Birnbaum said.

"Filling the Gap" ends April 23 and ties in with Earth Day, which is April 22.

"Not only does this mean filling the gap in the trail between Sanford and Coleman, but also in the recycling effort," Arnold said.

Another group involved in the project is the Midland County Youth Action Council, which is planning several fund-raising events.

Julie Mills, president of the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail and a member of the fund drive steering committee, said the main goal is to get the trail finished as fast as possible.

"We had some real crowds out there last summer on just three miles," she said. "Our main thrust is getting this thing done and enjoying it."

Phase I of the trail, from the Tridge to Dublin Road, was finished last spring. Phase II, from Dublin Road to Veterans Memorial Park in Sanford, will be done this spring. The 30-mile linear park eventually will stretch to Coleman, where it will hook up with the "Coleman Mile." That mile through Coleman will be paid for by city residents.

The rest of the steering committee includes Paul Hyun, Fred Kahn, Bev Lauer, Jim McKimmy and Ron Schweigert.

Hyun and Kahn are with MCYAC, Lauer and Schweigert are with Chemical Bank and McKimmy is superintendent of the Midland County Intermediate School District.

Our view

2/16/94
M.D.N.

Everyone can help with rail-trail project

Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail have come up with a way everyone can take part in the linear park project — through recycling.

That's right, recycling. The group announced its "Fill the Gap" fund-raising project this week. Part of the project includes a goal of collecting a million pounds of glass and 4,500 pounds of plastic. The glass will be used in what is being called "glassphalt," a form of blacktop using glass instead of sand that will be used for the trail. The recycled plastic will be used to make signs and benches, and the red poles used at intersections to keep motorized vehicles off the rail-trail.

The "Fill the Gap" group hopes to raise \$320,000 over the next 10 weeks to pay the local match for the \$1.4 million project. The money would be used for Phases III and IV of the project, which would allow for blacktopping and signing of the park between Sanford and Coleman. If the group raises the \$320,000, the Roland M. Gerstacker Foundation has agreed to contribute \$160,000 toward the project.

But money is not the only way Midland County residents can contribute. The recycling effort also is of importance. The Midland Volunteers for Recycling have established three dates — April 9, 16, and 23 — for collecting the glass and plastic for the project.

So mark your calendars and give the project a hand. You'll be helping the environment at the same time.



FRIENDS OF THE PERE MARQUETTE RAIL-TRAIL

Box Number 505
Midland, MI 48640-0505

240

February 24, 1994

Dear: Friend

We represent the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan, an independent organization that includes all age groups interested in financing, building and maintaining this recreational rail-trail from Midland to Clare.

Our 1994 theme is, **Close the Gap**. You can help the Midland County Parks and Recreation Department finance the construction the PMRT to Coleman this year.

You are being asked to make a contribution to develop the PMRT. Please use the enclosed reply envelope for your check and make it payable to the **Midland Foundation/PMRT Fund**.

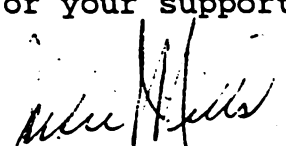
Our goal is to raise \$320,000 which will be matched with \$160,000 from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation for a total of \$480,000. With a successful campaign, plus state and federal grants totaling \$795,000, and \$160,000 contributed so far, a grand total of \$1,435,000 would be available to construct the PMRT from Sanford Veteran's Memorial County Park to Coleman.

To obtain the \$795,000 in state and federal grants, \$640,000 of local matching funds are required.

We are pleased to report that recycled glass will be used for the "glassphalt" base and recycled plastic for the signs, benches, posts, that is why we say, **Close the Gap, glass and plastic**.

To receive the required local matching funds this campaign will require fair share contributions from corporations, individuals, foundations, businesses, service clubs and secondary school students.

Don't delay, send your check in today, working together we are creating wonderful opportunities for all age groups. Thank you for your support.


Julie Mills, President


Cliff Miles, Campaign Director

Enc: Brochure- please read for details
Reply envelope



Where can I get more information about how I can help?

Individuals and organizations interested in obtaining more information about the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail can call Gene Arnold at 517/839-9661 or Bill Gibson, director of Midland County Parks and Recreation Department, at 517/832-687 or write to Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, P.O. Box 505, Midland, Michigan 48640-0505.

If you have questions about the recycling effort, please contact Esther Daus at 517/631-1668.

**You can help to
"Close the Gap"
by sending your
contributions to:**

**Friends of the
Pere Marquette
Rail-Trail**

P. O. Box 289
Midland, Michigan 48640

*(Please make checks payable
to the Midland Foundation/PMRT Fund.)*

**Who is on the committee conducting
the fund drive?**

Clifford Miles, *Chairman*
Retired Midland City Manager

Steering Committee

Gene Arnold,
executive director, Midland Foundation

Esther Daus,
director, Midland Volunteers for Recycling

Paul Hyan,
Midland County Youth Action Council

Fred Kahn,
Midland County Youth Action Council

Beverly W. Lauer,
Chemical Bank and Trust Company

James McKimmey,
*superintendent, Midland County Intermediate
School District*

Julie Mills,
president, Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

Ron Schweigert,
Chemical Bank and Trust Company



Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail

**You
can
help**

**the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail
Close
the
Gap*
to
Coleman.**



250

**Glass and Plastic. Construction of the
Rail-Trail will use one million pounds
of recycled glass and 4,500 pounds of
recycled plastic.*

What is the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan?

The Rail-Trail is a long, narrow public park which is being developed along a 25 mile long section of the right of way of the former Flint and Pere Marquette Railroad. Built during the height of Michigan's lumbering era in 1870, the right of way was abandoned in 1988. The City of Midland, the Midland Foundation and Midland County now own this property from downtown Midland to a point east of the City of Clare.

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is a family oriented facility for people of all ages, including the physically challenged. In addition to walking, running, bicycle riding, in-line skating and cross-country skiing, the park provides opportunities for historical and natural observations and interpretations. It will feature a wide, hard surface, closely spaced scenic attractions and rest areas along its entire length.

The trail surface from Dublin Avenue to Veterans Park in Sanford will be "glassphalt," which will contain more than one million pounds of recycled glass particles. All the benches, signs and posts will be made of recycled plastic.

Are there any Rail-Trails in other areas?

Yes, and ultimately, the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan will connect with a statewide network of rail-trails along former railroad rights of way all across the State of Michigan. At this time, there are at least 50 rail-trails in use or under construction throughout the state, ranging in length from one to 95 miles.

What is the status of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail at this time?

A three mile portion of the trail from the Tridge in downtown Midland to the Midland city limits at Dublin Avenue was completed in June, 1993, and people are extensively using and enjoying it. Another 5.5 mile section from Dublin Avenue on the Midland City/county line to Cedar Street in the Village of Sanford is under construction and is scheduled for completion before June 30, 1994. The "Coleman Mile" through that city will be built in 1994.

Funds are currently being solicited to "Close the Gap" between Sanford and Coleman which will complete construction of the currently planned portion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. There is a possibility that the rail-trail can eventually be extended through Clare, Farwell, Evart and Reed City and on to Baldwin or even Ludington.

Who will pay for building the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail?

The cost of constructing the Rail-Trail is being paid by a combination of state and federal grants and required local fund raising efforts. Local fund raising is the responsibility of the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. Applications for state and federal funding are managed by the Midland County Parks and Recreation Department.

State and federal grants and private contributions have already been received to pay the \$1,190,840 cost of construction from Dublin Avenue in Midland to Veterans Memorial County Park in Sanford. In addition, local fund raising efforts in Coleman have been successful and will cover the cost of completing a one mile segment of the Rail-Trail.

How much is still needed to Close the Gap?

The goal of the current fund raising campaign is to raise an additional \$480,000 from individuals, foundations, service clubs, corporations, and business organizations in Midland County.

The Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation has offered a challenge grant to this campaign. The Foundation will grant \$1 for \$2 received up to a maximum of \$160,000. When \$320,000 is raised and matched, the campaign will have reached its goal. The \$480,000 will be added to more than \$160,000 in contributions already received. This will bring the total raised from the community to \$640,000, the amount required to qualify for \$795,000 in grants from the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Department of Natural Resources. The \$1,435,000 grand total will cover the entire cost of completing the Rail-Trail from Veterans Memorial County Park in Sanford to Coleman.

When will the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail be completed?

Current plans call for the trail to be substantially completed and ready for public use all the way from downtown Midland to the western city limit of Coleman in November, 1994, if the current fund raising campaign is successful.

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Midland Daily News - 4/23/84 (Front Page)

Pere Marquette is a model rail-trail

By TED O'NEIL

Daily News staff writer
MOUNT PLEASANT —

Although it is designed for non-motorized use only, the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is becoming known as the "Lamborghini" of inland parks.

Roger Storm, director of the

Michigan Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, said the Pere Marquette is looked at as a model rail-trail throughout the state.

Storm spoke Friday morning at Central Michigan University as part of the Great Lakes Region Eco-tourism symposium.

"With the speed they are going

about getting that done, and the materials they are using, it is getting very popular," Storm said. "When it is finished, it will attract a lot of people."

The Pere Marquette, which will stretch from downtown Midland to beyond Coleman, is one of several linear parks being built

statewide along abandoned railroad beds.

Storm said Michigan ranks first in the country in terms of the most rail-trails. And the Great Lakes area, including Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Illinois, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Indiana,

(See "Rail," page A2)

Rail...

(Continued from page 1)

contains 50 percent, or 3,384 miles, of the nation's rail-trails.

Storm said rail-trails create spin-off business such as bike shops, ice cream parlors and restaurants.

"Over in Oceana County, the very first fast-food place was a Bodine's built right next to the rail-trail," Storm said. "And in Byron Center, a hardware store near a trail there started selling bikes and sold more than 300 the first year."

Storm said in-line skating also is becoming popular on rail-trails, and could be a big seller in places such as Midland soon.

Once the Pere Marquette is finished, Storm's group is looking forward to linking it with a proposed trail that will stretch from Clare to Reed City. That trail is to intersect with one that stretches from Grand Rapids to Cadillac.

This July will mark the third annual Michigander, a 250-mile bike ride across Michigan. This year, several rail-trails will be

used, and the ride will end up July 29 in Midland on the Pere Marquette. For more information, call Storm at (517) 393-6022.

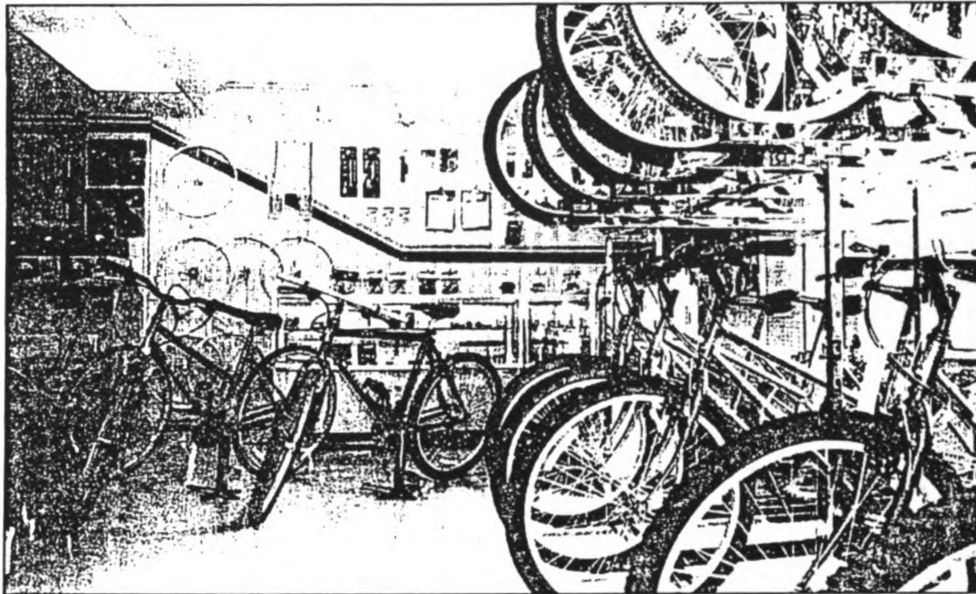
Today is the last day for dropping off glass and plastic to be used in the "Fill the Gap" campaign to complete the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. The glass will be used in glassphalt to pave the linear park, and the plastic will be

used in making signs and benches.

Organizers are trying to collect 1 million pounds of glass and 4,500 pounds of plastic. Drop-off sites, open from 9 a.m. to noon, are: Chemical Bank in Coleman, Chippewa Nature Center, Kroger, Midland Area Recycling Center, Dow Corning Corp. Midland Plant, Sanford Lake County Park and the Tridge.



LOCAL



Daily News/RICHARD PUCHYR

Raleigh bicycles have been added to the show room of Coleman Auto Supply in anticipation of the extension of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail.

Coming through Coleman gets ready as rail-trail grows

By TED O'NEIL
Daily News staff writer

COLEMAN — Bicycles, like cars, tend to break down. But a business here has expanded to specialize in fixing both in anticipation of more traffic through town.

Coleman Auto Supply, 113 Railway St., has added a bike sales and repair shop to cater to future users of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. The linear park will eventually stretch 22 miles from the Tridge in downtown Midland to Coleman.

The second leg of the trail, from Dublin Avenue in Midland to Cedar Street in Sanford, is scheduled to be completed Thursday. Bill Gibson, director of parks and recreation for Midland County, said the entire trail, which will hook up with the Coleman Mile, could be built by the end of fall.

While construction crews are putting the finishing touches such as hydroseeding, control signs and fencing on the leg to Sanford, it already is possible to bike there from Midland, Gibson said.

"As soon as they're completed and it's turned over to us, it'll be opened," Gibson said. "But they're using it already."

Meanwhile, the anticipation is growing in Coleman. "We've had a pretty good response so far," said Dan Cassidy, owner of Coleman Auto Supply. "People around here are starting to buy bikes and getting enthused about it."

The trail is being built along the abandoned CSX right of way. It could eventually stretch through Clare and hook up with a rail-trail that stretches to the south and west.

Cassidy said he has converted about one-third of his display area to a bike shop.

"We keep 20 or 30 bikes on hand," he said. "We are just now getting our feet wet."

Cassidy said he also carries accessories for bikes, such as tires and inner-tubes.

"People are starting to get excited, and I think it'll be good for the community," he said. "A lot of businesses are thinking about adding things, so we took the first jump on Memorial Day weekend."

Also adding to the excitement of Coleman's economic outlook

is a refurbished downtown area, similar to the streetscape project that Midland went through.

It involves new sidewalks, lighting, benches and flowers, as well as a greenway and gazebo. The rail-trail will be incorporated in that as part of the Coleman Mile.

"I am very optimistic about the effects this will have on our economy," Mayor Gene Robinson said. "I'm surprised at the potential it has for us."

Robinson said he was convinced about the rail-trail and streetscape project after visiting Midland recently.

"My wife and I were down there one evening, and we took a walk down to the Tridge," he said. "I couldn't believe how many people were on the trail and walking around looking in the stores."

Robinson said he hopes businesses in Coleman will take advantage of the increased traffic flow through the city.

"We need more food service businesses and souvenir-type places," he said. "Also things like antique shops will go over big."

Chuck Ambie, treasurer of the Coleman Downtown Development Authority, agrees that there will be more people passing through Coleman than ever before, and that businesses need to adjust.

"I'm not making a prediction, but some trails get tens of thousands of people a year," he said. "It's going to mean a lot to the local merchants."

But not all businesses are so enthused.

Shirley Morrison, owner of the Coleman Restaurant, 300 Railway St., said she doesn't know what kind of impact the trail will have on the city.

"I don't know if people will ride this far or not," she said. "But if there is a big difference, I might put some money into my business and make some changes if I think it will be worth it."

Even businesses off the main drag in Coleman are thinking of ways to cater to the bikers.

"We have a slush machine and popcorn and we sell snack food," said Ron Klump, manager of the Coleman Pharmacy, 201 N. Fourth St. "We are also going to add juices and some healthier things like that."

"As soon as they're completed and it's turned over to us, it'll be opened. But they're using it already."

— Bill Gibson, county parks director

Midland Volunteers for Recycling Inc.

BOX 128 ■ MIDLAND MICHIGAN ■ 48640

254

For Immediate Release

Contact: Esther Daug, 631-1668

You can help the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Close the "Recycling" GAP* to Coleman

*Glass and Plastic. Construction of the Rail-Trail will use one million pounds of recycled glass and 4,500 pounds of recycled plastic. The Midland Volunteers For Recycling will be co-sponsoring a county-wide collection of glass and plastic to Close the Recycling GAP.

- WHEN?** Three Saturdays, April 9, 16, and 23 from 9:00 a.m. until noon.
- WHERE?** 7 Collection Sites;
- 1) Midland Area Recycling Center, 4305 E. Ashman
 - 2) Tridge, Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, Trail Head
 - 3) Kroger, 2808 Ashman
 - 4) Dow Corning, 3901 S. Saginaw
 - 5) Chippewa Nature Center, 400 S. Badour
 - 6) Sanford Lake County Park
 - 7) Coleman
- WHAT?** Bring 1) Clean plastic #2, #4, #5, #6, and #7. (Please remove lids)
2) Any color glass bottles, dishes, window glass. (No light bulbs, no mirrors)
- WHY?** This section of the Rail-Trail will be paved with Glassphalt, a paving material that utilizes recycled crushed glass in place of sand. The signs along the Rail-Trail will be made of recycled plastic lumber, using the plastic collected during this program.
- As an added incentive, people will receive a ticket for every 5 plastics brought to a collection site. Tickets filled out with name, phone number, (and school affiliation, if applicable) will be entered into a drawing which will be held at 3:30 p.m. on April 23 at the Chippewa Nature Center. (Part of the Earth Festival, a free family event featuring environmental activities). The prizes for the drawing will be gift certificates and T-shirts donated by Dow Corning's "E.A.R.T.H." Recycling Program.
- Schools can also get involved. Show your school spirit! Encourage your teachers, students, and/or fellow students to bring plastics to the collection sites. Tickets will be tallied according to school affiliation and winning schools will be announced at the Chippewa Nature Center on April 23. (Dow Corning will donate recycled plastic lumber benches to the Rail-Trail in honor of the winning schools)
- GENERAL INFORMATION?** The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is a long, narrow public park which is being developed along a 25 mile long section of the railroad right of way. People will be able to enjoy walking, running, bicycle riding, skating and cross-country skiing, and see their recycled glass and plastic in use along the Rail-Trail.



State officials told friend and her three children to vacate their home in January, she says, but they haven't paid for the property yet.

The U.S. Environmental Protection

The purchase agreement 4th. They told me I would have in another week. I still have anything. They haven't met the bargain."

\$3.3 million path really sparkles

Glass on Midland County rail-trail is sending some enthusiasts into a spin.

TRACY CALABRESE
■ THE SAGINAW NEWS

MIDLAND — Some people using the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan are jarred by seeing chunks of glass on portions of the 26-mile path.

However, most of the chunks actually are in the \$3.375-million trail, not on it.

Users are fooled by the appearance of the "glasphalt" laid down over a 5½-mile stretch between Dublin Road and Cedar Street in Sanford and another mile in Coleman, said Paul Pounders, Midland County parks manager.

"We didn't realize there would be pieces in there. We thought it would be ground up," Pounders said.

County crews use industrial-strength blowers once a week to clear the path of debris, including stones, twigs, dirt and leaves. While on the trail, workers also collect glass pieces, he said.

"Most of what we pick up is from broken bottles. It looks like glass from the trail, but it isn't," Pounders said. "We have a particular problem with broken bottles along the Coleman Mile for some reason."

Officials first noticed the glass chunks emerging from the path last spring, and called in Washenaw Engineering Co. of Ann Arbor to inspect the pavement.

"The surface will perform as intended, but during the first several

years, the larger ¼-inch to ½-inch glass particles exposed on the surface may separate from the (pavement) during freeze/thaw cycles," Robert J. Wanty, a company engineer, wrote in his report.

"This process is no different than sand or gravel applications," he added, noting the mixture meets state Department of Transportation standards.

However, few bicyclists worry that an errant clump of sand or piece of gravel will ruin a tire, Parks and Recreation Director William C. Gibson said.

"The glass has been tumbled so the edges shouldn't be real sharp unless the pieces are broken," Gibson said.

"We're hoping it will stabilize in two or three years."

Following the initial complaints about glass coming out of the pavement, Pounders devised a test by stretching duct tape across the 12- to 14-foot-wide path.

"We did pick up some small particles, but for the most part, all we got was dirt and stones," Pounders said.

County residents donated more than 1-million pounds of glass in various colors, which was mixed into standard paving material to create glasphalt.

The proof is in the pavement.

Bits of blue, green, brown and transparent glass are clearly visible on the trail.

However, the pieces remain embedded in the pavement even when scuffed with a shoe.

Bike shop employees say they have fixed few tires flattened by glass.

"I've only fixed one flat from glass, and I don't know if it came out of the trail," said Dean A. Retzlaff, manager of Coleman Auto Supply, which features a bicycle sales and service shop.

Retzlaff said he repairs or replaces 10 to 15 tires each week during prime biking season. Most were damaged by curbs, embankments or logs.

"Most of what I see is human error, not something off the trail," he said.

At Ray's Bike Shop, on Carpenter at Haley in Midland, few customers complain about glass on the rail-trail, said manager Brad Chippi.

"We get a few people who talk about the glass. Last year it was tacks."

James A. Mertens, a member of Tri-City Cyclists, said three or four people told him glass caused their flat tires on the trail.

"Of course, you're never sure whether it's from the trail or a broken bottle," said Mertens, who also is a Board of Directors member for the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, volunteers who support the linear park. ■



DOUG KANTER/THE SAGINAW NEWS

Two pieces of glass lie on the Rail-Trail in Coleman.



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Michigan Society of Planning Officials

414 Main Street • Suite 202 • Rochester, MI 48307 • (810) 651-3339 • Fax (810) 651-3649

September 8, 1994

County of Midland
Mr. Bill Gibson, Director of Parks and Recreation
220 West Ellsworth Street
Midland, MI 48640

Dear Mr. Gibson,

Congratulations!!!

The Michigan Society of Planning Officials is pleased to announce the "Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan," prepared by The City of Midland, The County of Midland and the Midland Foundation for the Community of Midland, has been selected as one of five MSPO Community Honor Award Winners for 1994.

The independent Jury, composed of professional planners from the State of Kentucky, selected the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan from among a number of entries because it was outstanding from several perspectives. Attached is a write-up which explains why the Jury selected your project.

Two handsome identical plaques will be presented at the MSPO Annual Conference, September 29 - October 1, 1994 at the Amway Grand Plaza Hotel, Grand Rapids. The presentations will be made following the Thursday banquet, September 29. We hope you will attend for the presentation of the plaques. The Display Board describing the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail concept will be on view during the entire conference and during the series of 1995 MSPO training workshops to be conducted early next year.

In addition to the conference, a representative of the MSPO Board of Directors will present the award a second time to the City Council/Planning Commission upon your request. Again, congratulations on your achievement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David T. Downey".

David T. Downey
Deputy Director MSPO

attachments

cc: Deborah Kay Schutt, President
Leslie Kettren, Chair, MSPO Honor Awards Committee

Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan State of Kentucky Award Jury Comments

This plan addresses conversion of a rail corridor to a pedestrian/bicycle trail -- a prospect that will become particularly prevalent in the future as the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act takes deeper root. The use of "glassphalt," by recycling glass products into the finished surface of the rail-trail, demonstrates creativity and a local connectivity that causes the project to be even more meaningful from an environmental standpoint. Because of these creative concepts, and the quality of both the plan and the way it was presented, the Pere-Marquette Rail-Trail project has significant transferability to areas, not only in Michigan but throughout the country. By following the footsteps taken in this project, from planning through implementation (including creation of a 300-member citizen advocacy group), planners elsewhere can use this mid-Michigan experience as a model for their rail-to-trail conversion concepts.



DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

MIDLAND COUNTY SERVICES BUILDING • 220 WEST ELLSWORTH STREET

MIDLAND, MICHIGAN 48640-5194 • PHONE (517) 832-6870



WILLIAM C. GIBSON
DIRECTOR

MEMORANDUM

TO: Pollack Design Associates
Rails-to-Trails Conservancy of Michigan
Michigan Trailways Advisory Council

FROM: William C. Gibson, Director, Parks and Recreation

DATE: September 13, 1994

SUBJECT: Michigan Society of Planning Officials Award

We recently received some very good news. The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of Mid-Michigan will soon receive an honor award from the Michigan Society of Planning Officials. Details of the award are attached.

In many ways, you have each contributed to the success of our project. Our thanks to you.

WCG:jlq

File: MPO.2

Top news stories in mid-Michigan in 1994

Crime and punishment dominated headlines in 1994.

TRACY CALABRESE THE SAGINAW NEWS

People seeking the meaning of the phrase "trials and tribulations" need only review mid-Michigan news clips from 1994.

Avoid the bright spots — construction began on the conversion of M-20 from "Kamikaze Alley" to a five-lane highway; the Pere Marquette Rail Trail of Mid-Michigan rolled along; downtown Coleman got a spruce-up; and Bill Schutte made a victorious return to politics — were many stories of a darker nature.

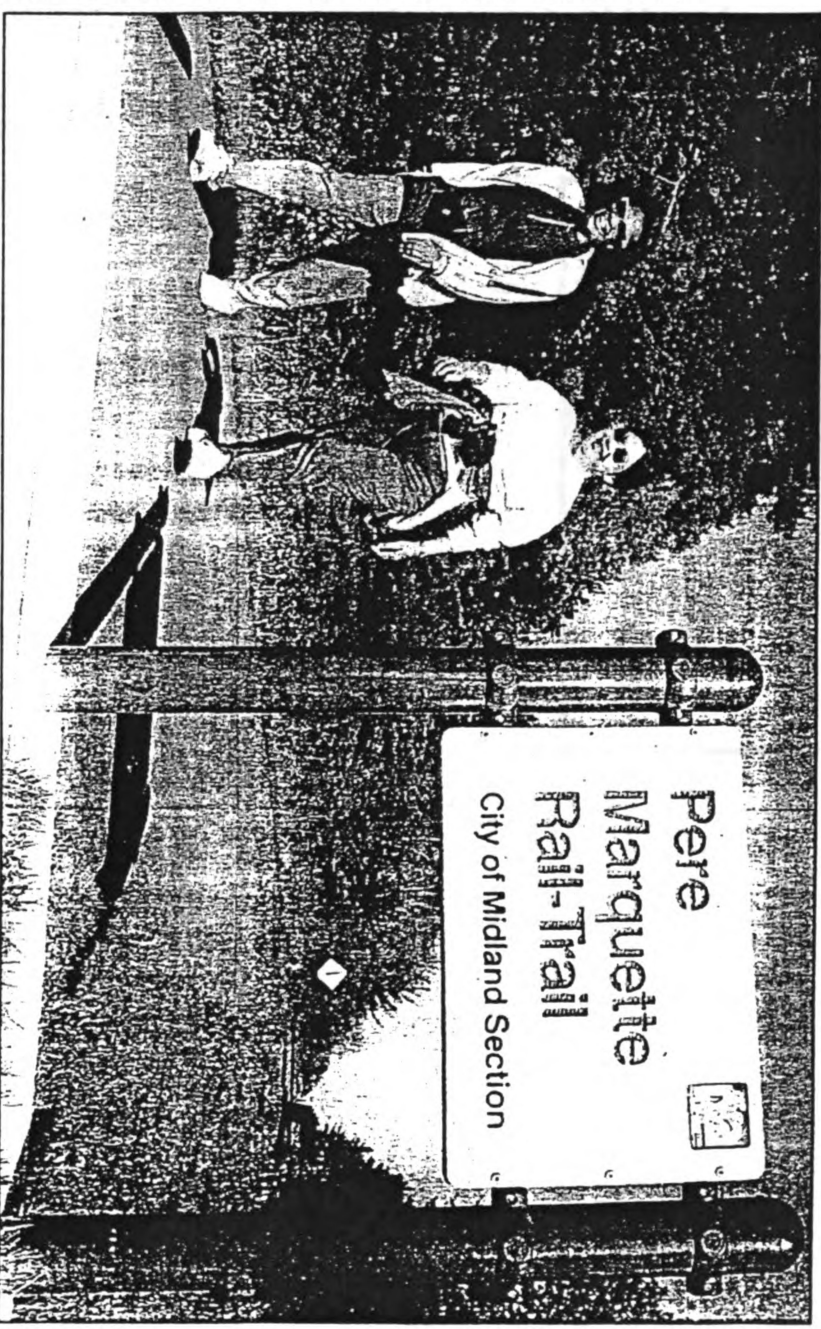
- A failed kidnapping in Gladwin County resulted in one dead and another wounded.
- Convictions in an August 1993 arson homicide sent two 21-year-olds to prison for life.
- The state Court of Appeals ordered resentencing of a Midland physician on criminal sexual conduct charges, a move that cost a Midland County circuit judge his job.
- Details of a 1982 double-homicide in Gladwin County surfaced after state police tracked down four suspects.
- Four Tuscola County officials were convicted of criminal violations of the state's Open Meetings Act.
- Dow Chemical Co. continued its corporate downsizing, laying off 770 workers.
- An Ithaca man lost his bid for a parole review of his life sentence in a 1970 murder, despite the fact the victim's daughter urged his release.
- The proposed consolidation of Midland County's four school districts, begged controversy and confusion.
- Here's the year in review:

A sole school district

Following March voter approval of Proposal A, which slashed property taxes for school funding, Meridian Public Schools officials began studying alternative ways to gain tax dollars.

Their search spawned a county-wide plan to merge the Midland, Meridian, Bullock Creek and Coleman districts and grab more state tax dollars in the process.

Voters in each of the districts would have to approve the merger, under which Midland Public School District and Meridian Public School District would be merged into a single district.



Niles Loefgren, left, of Zurich, Switzerland, and Marie K. Hewke of Midland walk the Pere Marquette Rail Trail near Cook Road in Midland. Efforts to complete the rail trail of mid-Michigan — miles of abandoned railroad tracks from Midland to Coleman paved for recreational use — got a boost this year from a fund-raising campaign that exceeded its goal.

The proposal remains at the starting gate as 1994 winds down

Robert A. Morgan, a 38-year-old Mount Morris man, wanted custody of his daughter, Cameron Lynn. The baby was with her mother, 21-year-old Audra L. Michael, at Gladwin County's Second Lake. Michael was hiding from Morgan, whom she accused of abuse.

Morgan filed a custody suit, but decided to take matters into his own hands.

Roundup up five friends, he headed to the home on North Lake-shore Drive to get his 6-month-old girl.

A lethal kidnap attempt

Robert A. Morgan, a 38-year-old Mount Morris man, wanted custody of his daughter, Cameron Lynn. The baby was with her mother, 21-year-old Audra L. Michael, at Gladwin County's Second Lake. Michael was hiding from Morgan, whom she accused of abuse.

Morgan filed a custody suit, but decided to take matters into his own hands.

Roundup up five friends, he headed to the home on North Lake-shore Drive to get his 6-month-old girl.

Dow keeps downsizing

Continuing with reductions announced in 1993, Dow officials issued pink slips to 770 workers this year while seeking increased efficiency.

"We can't support businesses that are not creating value for our customers," said a Dow spokesman.

Some political insiders counted on following the unsuccessful U.S. Senate bid in 1990, and he admitted to much soul searching before deciding to re-enter politics.

Sutton appeals, Beale out

It was among factors causing his defeat to Midland attorney Thomas L. Ludington.

Nine days later, Beale announced he would let Ludington represent Sutton to "avoid the appearance of impropriety."

That court session is not the only time Sutton will appear before the bench in 1995.

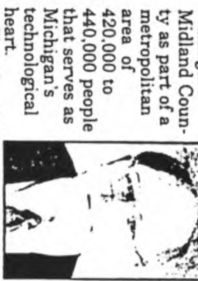
Individuals

The project is two years ahead of schedule and has proved popular with residents and visitors alike.

Midland County Parks and Recreation Director William C. Gibson said.

The project also started wheels turning in the heads of Coleman officials, who won nearly \$1 million in grants from foundations and governments, as well as a \$150,000 donation from the town's Downtown Development Authority.

By DOUG HENZE
Money & More writer



Joe Bevirt

Imagine Midland County as part of a metropolitan area of 420,000 to 440,000 people that serves as Michigan's technological heart.

That fantasy will be reality by 2000 if Joe Bevirt's vision is on target. Bevirt is executive director of the Midland County Economic Growth and Development Corp. Midland, Bay and Saginaw counties, which have a combined population of about 402,000, had roughly the same combined population in 1970. While the region had grown to about 422,000 by 1980, it declined to about 399,000 by 1990 and has remained relatively stagnant.

"For the first time (in years), we're going to see a growth in the Tri-Counties," Bevirt said. Midland County will grow the fastest but shouldn't suffer ill effects, he said.

"I don't see the character of Midland changing," Bevirt said. "We're not going to let that happen. The quality of people I don't see changing. We're looking for high-tech jobs."

Some of those jobs will come from The Dow Chemical Co. and Dow Corning Corp., the Midland area's largest employers. Bevirt predicts Dow, for example, will begin hiring 100 employees a year.

The company has had a virtual hiring freeze on and has let hundreds of people go. Still, other Midland companies combined have added an average of

300 manufacturing jobs a year, Bevirt said.

"For every one manufacturing job, you get four-plus other jobs in retail or service or education or government," Bevirt said. "Our labor force is growing faster than any attrition brought on by Dow."

The city's 3 percent unemployment rate and the county's 4.2 percent jobless rate, as of November, are the lowest in recent memory, he said.

While the additional jobs have been good news for Midland, Bevirt also is looking to land at least one more big fish in the near future to diversify Midland's job base.

Companies considering putting plants in Midland range from a paper recycler to a pharmaceuticals company.

Bervit said, not revealing any names. One company wants to build a \$1.3 billion plant, which would provide jobs to 3,500 employees, somewhere.

"There's probably a less than 1 percent chance they'll come (here)," Bevirt cautioned.

But that is the type of diversification Midland County is looking for, Bevirt said. Dow and Dow Corning supplied 28 percent of the jobs for the 39,000 Midlanders who were employed as of third quarter 1994, Bevirt said. That's down from 36 percent in 1991.

"Obviously, (diversification is) one of our goals, because we hired an attraction manager," he said. Joseph Skorcz was hired in February to bring new jobs to Midland.

So, what will draw people and their companies to this area?

For starters, the county is cleaning up its act, beginning with its downtowns, Bevirt said.

1995 A Look Ahead With...

Joe Bevirt

Predictions for area's future

Joe Bevirt, executive director of the Midland County Economic Growth and Development Corp., sees the following in this area's near future:

- Population of the Tri-Counties will jump from 402,000 to between 420,000 and 440,000 by 2000, marking the end of long-term stagnation in area population.
- Midland will add about 300 manufacturing jobs per year.
- Main streets in Midland and Coleman will continue changing, with Midland's downtown adding more businesses that can coexist with the Midland Mall.
- More mall spinoffs will spring up, with a driving range and TGI Fridays-type restaurant being built.
- Growth on M-20 in the next 10 years will exceed that of the past 40 years.

"Regardless of what we say, people judge our communities by our main streets," Bevirt said. "Main Street Midland is in a stage of transition."

That transition began with streetscape, a downtown spruce-up project that brought red brick sidewalks and street lamps. Change is continuing with the opening of specialty

Part of the draw is the addition of the Ashman Court Hotel, the first major downtown hotel and convention center Midland has had, Bevirt said.

The addition of the Midland Mall in 1991 may not be bringing Midland shoppers downtown, but it is keeping them close to home. Prior to the mall, Midlanders were spending 65 percent of their retail dollars at Fashion Square Mall in Saginaw Township.

Bervit forecasts further development near the mall here, including a driving range that may go in behind Jeff Bennett Toyota by next summer. Mall spinoffs will start up along Jefferson Avenue in the area near McDonald's Nursery Inc., he said.

"We'll see more buildings springing up ... maybe a five-story office building, maybe not that big, with a TGI Fridays (or a similar restaurant) in the ground floor," Bevirt projected.

Improved arteries of transportation will lure Midland people to other areas of the county, Bevirt said. One such means of travel is the rail trail.

The rail trail, in its own little way, is tying the county together," Bevirt said. That's good news for communities such as Coleman and Sanford, which now are improving themselves, Bevirt said.

"(Coleman) was going the wrong way for a long time," Bevirt said. "(It was) just slowly deteriorating."

But the city that will be connected to Midland by the rail trail by early summer has done its own streetscape and should grow, he said. The city has formed a downtown development authority and spruced up the Coleman library.

look at a sewer project that should make it a more attractive place to live and do business, Bevirt said. Funding is the issue there.

"They would like to have a revitalized downtown as well," he said.

Another artery tying the county together will be M-20, Bevirt said. The two-lane, often slow connector between the eastern and western parts of the county is being expanded to five lanes by 1996.

"In the next 10 years, we will see more growth (there) than we have seen in the last 40 years," Bevirt said.

Bervit predicts development of the city outward will continue in a managed fashion.

"We're not just gobbling up farmland to put in malls," he said. "When you put malls in the middle of nowhere, you have to build highways to them."

The growth of this area won't be limited to Midland County, Bevirt said. Bay City, for example, has brought in several U.S. Environmental Protection Agency projects, including a research ship, a super computer and research labs.

The city is beginning to take advantage of its frontage along the Saginaw River, as well.

center in the works and several condominium projects being proposed.

"If they get their act together, they could be bigger than Saginaw in a few years," Bevirt said.

Saginaw now has a population of about 71,000 while Bay City and Midland have populations of about 39,000.

Midland Daily News - Jan. 1, 1995

Ho-hum, Rail-Trail almost finished

CATHY HENG
■ FOR THE SAGINAW NEWS

MIDLAND — With little fanfare, Pere Marquette Rail-Trail users soon will find they can travel from the Tridge to Coleman without encountering construction along the way.

Crews will finish concrete work where the Rail-Trail crosses 11 roads between Sanford and Coleman by Saturday, July 1.

The only task remaining after that is erecting directional signs, said William C. Gibson, Midland County Parks and Recreation director.

"We hope to have the signs up by mid-July and the actual trail work completed," Gibson said. "We're pretty proud of the trail, and a lot of people are using it."

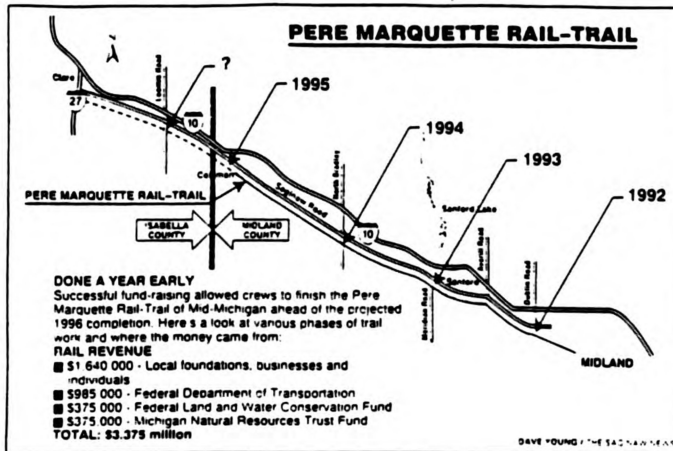
Gibson said no ribbon-cutting ceremony is planned. That was done in Midland upon completion of the first three miles, in Sanford last summer and in Coleman last week.

"We're pretty ribboned out," he said.

The 22-mile long trail stretches from downtown Midland to Coleman and was completed at a cost of \$3.375 million. Pollock Design Associates of Ann Arbor designed the "linear park."

"It is a Cadillac of a trail, but we wanted to do it right the first time," Gibson said.

He hopes Midland's trail will serve as a prototype for others, noting it features recycled materials, special bridge decking and preservative paint.



Gibson said the Midland County trail is the widest in the state — 14 feet in the county and 12 feet in the city.

"Most people said, 'Gosh, why do you need it that wide?' But we wanted to allow two bicycles riding abreast to be able to pass," he said.

He said the signs are made from recycled plastic, and will mark each road crossing. They will show a location map with a dot, name the road and indicate how far to the next trail marker both north and south, he said.

Both glass and plastic were recycled for use in the trail. Local volunteers collected 1 million pounds of glass in various colors and recycled it for use in the 5.5-mile "glassphalt" stretch from Dublin Avenue to Cedar Street.

Glassphalt also is in the "Coleman Mile" that was dedicated June 17.



Another 4,300 pounds of plastic came from local homes, and was recycled for use in road intersection signs and traffic control posts in Midland County's section of the trail. Benches along the trail also are made of recycled plastic.

Planning for the Rail-Trail started in 1987. The former rail line was built during the height of Michigan's lumbering era in the 1870s, but the right of way was abandoned in 1988.

The Rail-Trail covers 450 acres. Plans are uncertain for developing the remaining 8 miles from Coleman to the outskirts of Clare, Gibson said.

son said.

Phase I in the city was completed in 1992. The Midland Foundation purchased about 3 miles of the land. The county purchased the remaining land from CSX Transportation Inc. for \$225,000 with a grant from the foundation.

Crews completed another 5.5 miles from Dublin to Cedar street in Sanford in 1994. A fund drive that year to "Close the Gap" to Coleman raised \$350,000, allowing completion of the trail before the projected 1996 finish date.

Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail was formed in January 1993. The nonprofit group works to obtain local support and funding, and oversees the maintenance and use of the trail.

Bikers, hikers, walkers and in-line skaters are using the newest portion northwest of Sanford, even though they have to maneuver around construction sites such as those at Barden Road in Midland County or Cedar Street in Sanford.

Gibson estimates that as many as 5,000 people use the trail on a nice weekend.

"We have no real counts and don't know the turnover. But on the city stretch, I recently counted 100 we could see. With ideal conditions, maybe 20,000 a month will use the trail," Gibson said.

"That is good, since the trail reflects life in the Midland area. Users can see where early-day logs were stored in Averill, and then move on to Veterans Park and view the 175-year-old trees — the way the whole Saginaw Valley looked at one time," he said.

Gibson said people can enjoy "great views" at restored railroad bridges over the Tittabawassee River and east Salt River. With a jog off the main trail, users may visit the Dow Museum and Bradley House on Cook Road.

And the city of Coleman offers parks, restaurants and shops.

The trail also meanders through farm fields that stretch as far as the eye can see near Coleman.

Between Eight and Nine Mile roads, construction is starting on a \$65,000 boardwalk and observation deck near the Arbutus Bog.

A bog is like a wetland but has spongy ground. The 40-acre bog dates to the glacial age, and is virtually untouched and in "pristine" condition, Gibson said.

Also scheduled for completion yet this year are additional restroom buildings in the village of Sanford and city of Coleman. Other facilities are planned for Dublin Avenue and between North Bradley and Coleman.

Towns welcome bikers with open tills

CATHY HENG
■ FOR THE SAGINAW NEWS

SANFORD — New signs grace the backs of businesses along the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, facing its non-motorized travelers.

A trash can carries the message. "Watch for Bikers."

Business is picking up along the nearly completed 22-mile Rail-Trail, merchants say.

"The restaurants have definitely seen an increase in business," said Earl Crawford, president of the Sanford Area Chamber of Commerce.

"And it's not just local. We have a group come regularly from Saginaw who park their cars and bike the trail here, stopping for meals."

Crawford said the trail is "good for the community and all of Midland County. It is getting all the units — Midland, Sanford, Coleman — together to form a bond," he said.

Crawford said he sees a lot of trail use and foresees no problems. Both the Coleman Restaurant and the Cherry Lane Market in Coleman have a "lot more activity," said Coleman Mayor Harvey Gene Robinson.

He said the Rail-Trail has put his community in an upbeat mood. "One night on the trail, there were more than a dozen hikers and bikers at 9:30 p.m. on just one single mile," Robinson said.

"I am just thrilled about it," he said, noting that some people are



Dewey C. Loper, 46, of RCL Construction in Sanford trowels a concrete approach to the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail at Cedar Street in Sanford.

interested in developing the former Coleman railroad depot as a trail-related attraction.

"We are the trail end right now and are vital as an entrance to the Rail-Trail," Robinson said.

He is looking forward to construction of restroom facilities and other amenities tied to the trail.

Nancy Randolph, a cook at the Coleman Restaurant, said she's "busier" than ever working for new owner Mike Ortmann.

"We definitely see bikers in here. Saturdays and Sundays are

the busiest, and breakfast is always busy," she said.

The restaurant is open daily from 7 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Dennis Spencer, executive director of The Midland Foundation, called the project a "wonderful example of partners coming together to combine dollars in the best possible way to provide a facility to serve the entire community."

People ranging from school children to senior citizens have contributed money or materials to the trail, she noted.

Midland Daily News

Vol. 138, No. 281

Monday, Feb. 5, 1936, Midland, Michigan



35c Per Copy

Today

... weather

Tonight, mostly cloudy with scattered flurries this evening, becoming mostly clear overnight. Low near 5 above. Northwest winds 5 to 10 mph. Tuesday, mostly sunny. High in the lower to mid 20s. More weather information, page B10.

... in history

There are 330 days left in the year. On this date:

In 1631, the founder of Rhode Island, Roger Williams, and his wife arrived in Boston from England.

In 1887, Giuseppe Verdi's opera "Otello," based on the tragedy by William Shakespeare, premiered at La Scala.

In 1937, President Roosevelt

Parks create recreation, business opportunities

By TED O'NEIL
of the Daily News

Although the Midland County Parks and Recreation Department takes in less than a fourth of what it spends, the director says income it generates in the private sector far exceeds its budget.

The parks budget for 1936 is about \$360,000, a \$10,000 increase over 1935. Expected revenue is \$80,000, with the bulk of that coming from admission fees to Sanford Lake Park.

Parks Director Bill Gibson said county parks, such as the nine he oversees, are meant for enjoyment. Local parks include Black Creek Campground, Sanford Lake Park, Pine Haven Recreation Area, Laur Big Salt River Park, West Midland County Park, Chippewa River Access Site and Manitou Park.

"It's nice to have these places, and if we didn't do it, who would?" Gibson said. "It's like protecting public treasures. When we are long

gone, I hope people look back and think we did a good job protecting these things."

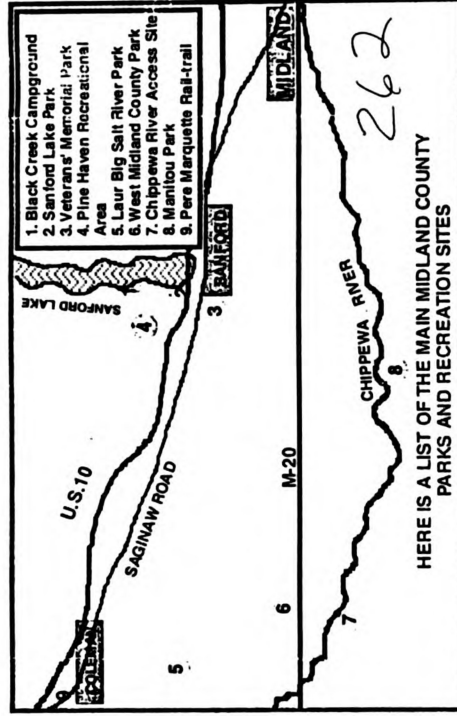
Gibson said he thinks the county parks system, especially the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail and Sanford Lake Park, brings more dollars into the community than what the county spends on his department.

"Places like restaurants along the rail-trail and bike shops have seen a huge increase in business," Gibson said. "We've never done a study on the exact amount, but the parks bring people into the community and they spend money on other things like lodging and food."

Gibson said a restaurant like Alex's Restaurant in Sanford, which backs up to the lineal park, has 15 to 25 bikes parked outside on weekend mornings during warm weather.

A new business on Saginaw Road near Dublin Avenue, Blazing Saddles, operates solely in response to the rail-trail. It rents bikes and in-line skates. Other bike shops in town have seen an increase in business, too

(See "Parks," page A2)



Wednesday, June 7, 1995

This Page Appears In The Coleman Tribune - The Sanford Express

Rail-Trail Attracts Family Excursions

By Kim J. Kent

Diana L. Carey, Vance G. Carey And Grandson Jordan M. Garver, 2, Bicycle On The Rail-Trail

Recreationalists are filling the rail-trail this spring with roller blades, hiking gear and bicycles. Sanford area businesses and organizations are the beneficiaries of rail-trail recreationalist stopping over for ice cream cones, restaurant food and visits to the Sanford Centennial Museum.

The Vance G. and Diana L. Carey family home fronts the rail-trail in Midland County. "We always use the rail-trail," said Diana Carey, "it's safer." The Carey family has used the rail-trail since early June, 1994 when it opened for use across from their house in the Stark Road area.

The Carey's bicycle on 18-speed mountain bikes. "We bicycle at least a couple of times a week. We bicycle into Cleveland Manor in Midland and to see my daughter on Poseyville Road. We go up over the tidge and catch Poseyville Road. We bicycle into Clare in the summer when it's nice and we can swim, to the Herrick gravel pits." Vance Carey said U.S. 10 road conditions make it a difficult trek. "The rail-trail makes it a lot more pleasant," he said. "On the rail-trail we don't have to fight with the traffic and dogs."

Jordan M. Garver, 2, rides the rail-trail in a child carrier with his grandparents. He enjoys an ice cream cone in Sanford at the end of the rail-trail. "The rail-trail is safer," said Diana Carey. "Take your kids there. It's good for them and it's fun."



Midland Daily News

Foundation's \$500,000 to help with rail-trail upkeep

By TED O'NEIL
of the Daily News

Financial worries for the Midland County portion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail are over.

The Board of Commissioners Tuesday voted 9-0 to accept a \$500,000 gift from the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation for maintenance of the linear park.

The foundation specified the gift must be used only for the "preservation, improvement, maintenance and repair" of the rail-trail.

The money also is contingent upon the county keeping the \$500,000 intact and only using the interest.

The county will place the money in a trust fund, which also can receive other donations.

The county owns a majority of the rail-trail stretching from Dublin Road to the city of Coleman. The first three miles of the trail, from the Tridge to Dublin Road, is owned by the Midland Foundation, but that group is asking the City of Midland to take over ownership of that leg.

The Midland Foundation gave the county the money to purchase its 27-mile stretch in 1990 from CSX Transportation Inc.

(See "Foundation," page A2)

Foundation ...

(Continued from page A1)

Board Chairman Otis Wilson said the gift is a "wonderful example" of a social contract between members of society.

"The social contract between the foundations and the citizens of Midland has shown we can husband these resources like the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail," Wilson said. "It is a resource that can be enjoyed by city and county residents, as well as visitors."

In May, the board approved \$23,552 to cover maintenance of the trail, rather than put a user fee in place. The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail then started

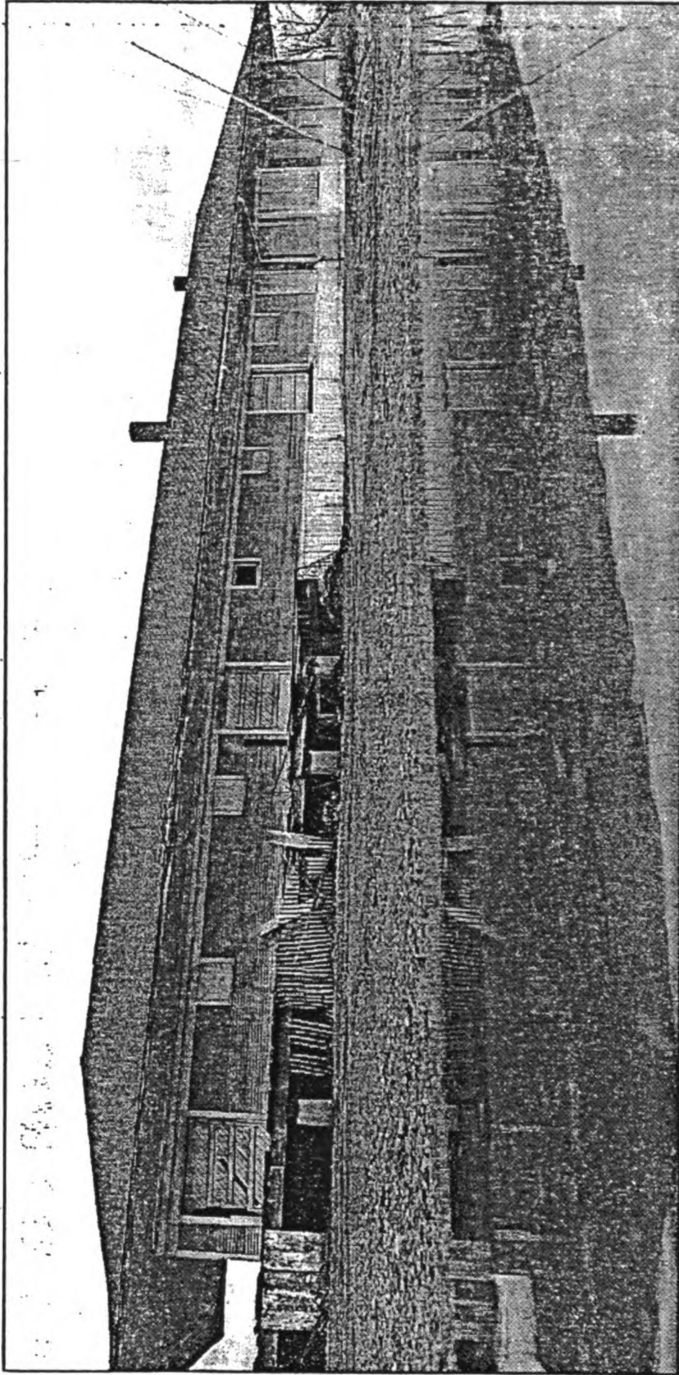
a fund-raising campaign to raise that amount, but the board agreed to cover any difference.

County Administrator/Controller Marc McGill said the gift is welcome and appreciated given the contributions of several area foundations in the development of the rail-trail.

"They were instrumental in the whole thing," he said. "Foundations provided close to half the funds used to build the trail."

The remainder of the money came from resident and corporate donations and grants from the state and federal government.

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DOUG KANTER/THE SAGINAW NEWS
A former railroad depot will undergo a face lift. The owner plans to remove part of the building and use the rest to house an ice cream parlor, souvenir shop and railroad museum.

A building boom hits Coleman

CATHY HENG
FOR THE SAGINAW NEWS

COLEMAN — Midland County's second city is poised for an explosion of construction this spring.

"When U.S. 10 was rerouted north of the city of Coleman (in 1963), vacancies appeared on Railway Street and the community was in transition — almost falling apart," said Joseph Bevirt, executive director of the Midland County Economic Growth and Development Corp.

"We had to sell Coleman to Coleman."



of its residents own their homes and the average household income is \$35,000 to \$37,000.

"With Coleman 20-plus minutes from the Midland Mall, it has the potential to become a really nice bedroom community," Bevirt said.

Mayor Harvey Gene Robinson said Coleman is getting into the building act for

Election
96

Two battle for District 3 seat on Midland County board

Ex-state trooper wants county seat

By TED O'NEIL
of the Daily News

A 25-year Michigan State Police veteran wants to be a member of the Midland County Board of Commissioners.

Conny Snyder faces incumbent Roland Weaver in Tuesday's Republican primary for the District 3 seat. No Democrats filed to run for the office. District 3 covers part of Jerome Township and all of Greendale, Jasper and Lee townships.

Snyder is the Jerome Township clerk, winning election in 1988 and re-election in 1992.

Snyder said he would be most interested in serving on the Law Enforcement and Judiciary Committee because of his background. "I'm very pro-public safety," Snyder said.

Snyder said he hasn't studied statistics on the overcrowding problem at the Midland County Jail, but that any such study would have to include a look at the court system. "I think we need a bigger jail,

but at this point I'm not sure we need a new jail," Snyder said. "We also need to look at the courts and why things take so long to move along there."

Snyder said he favors an elected road commission.

"That was my feeling before I started knocking on doors, but that's also what people have been telling me," he said. "I think the road commission members have to be accountable to somebody."

Currently, the commission is appointed by the county board, but is autonomous in its actions and decisions.

"Take Jerome, for instance, where I live," Snyder said. "We have a good tax base, but the roads really leave something to be desired."

Snyder said he was against the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail when the idea was proposed, but now favors it. "I was against it because tax



Conny Snyder

money of some sort is there, even if it isn't local taxes," he said. "But it runs by my house and I'm surprised how popular it is. I didn't think that many people would use it."

Friend of the Court also would get Snyder's attention.

"The staff there is about as rude as they can be to men, and that's not right," he said. "They act like women can do no wrong."

Snyder said he is against a plan that could possibly add camping to Veterans Memorial Park.

"We've got other parks in the county that need repair, so I can't see putting more money into that one," he said. "I believe in competition, but the county shouldn't be involved. Tax dollars should not be invested that way."

Weaver seeks 10th term on board

By TED O'NEIL
of the Daily News

Roland Weaver enjoys his role on the Midland County Board of Commissioners and wants to continue for another term.

Weaver, chairman of the Administration and Operations Committee, is seeking a 10th two-year term. He faces Conny Snyder in Tuesday's Republican primary for the District 3 seat, which covers part of Jerome Township and all of Greendale, Jasper and Lee townships.

"I've chaired a major committee for 16 of the 18 years I've been on the board and I've enjoyed it," Weaver said. "A&O handles all the bids and contracts for the county, and the negotiations with labor groups."

Weaver said most of the labor negotiations have kept contract increases in the 2.5 to 3.5 percent range.

"We've been pretty successful with the talks," Weaver said.

"Wages are about 85 percent of our cost, so it's important not to let them get out of hand."

Weaver also served as chairman of the county board for two years. He said he tries to attend all the township meetings in his district.

"I'm there to help, not to interfere with township business," he said. "I try to get back to constituents within 48 hours if they call me with a question."

Weaver said there's nothing about the job he doesn't enjoy.

"If I didn't enjoy it, I wouldn't be mixed up in it," he said. "I'm not in it for the money."

Weaver said he supports the Jail Advisory Team, which is studying the jail overcrowding problem.

"It's an old building," Weaver said. "We'll have to move fast."

Weaver also supports leaving Veterans Memorial Park as it is, instead of developing camping there.

"If we made it into a campground, it would cost us more than

it would make," he said. "We'd need someone there to watch it and clean it up."

Weaver supports elected road commissioners.

"I'd like to see five of them elected by district," he said. "That is being considered in Lansing now, because if we elected them today, they would have to be at large. If they all came from the city, that wouldn't be fair because most of the road commission work is done in the rural areas."

Weaver said the board as a whole is conservative and spends money wisely.

"I'm not afraid to make tough decisions," he said. "They don't make everyone happy, but I'm willing to talk it over so we part on a amiable basis."



Roland Weaver



The Sanford Express

VOLUME 27 - NUMBER 15
WEDNESDAY, MAY 1, 1996

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Rail-Trail Draws Family Groups

Photo and Text by: Kim J. Kent



The Little family, Rachel M., 7, Charity J., 10, Tracey J., 6, and Tim J. Little enjoy a family outing on the Rail-Trail.

Hikers, roller blades and bicyclists flowed along the Rail-Trail in a steady stream in mid April sunshine.

Tim J. Little, of Midland County, brought his family from his residence on Gratiot County Line Road to the Sanford area for a recreational outing. "It was a beautiful day and the girls wanted to roller blade and ride their bikes. We don't have nice paved trails like this where we live."

"This is our first time on the Rail-Trail in Sanford. We've walked on it in Midland at Emerson Park but we've never roller bladed or bicycled on it," he said. "My wife rides bikes but we were too scared to try roller blading but I think I may try it now. I see all of these people out here roller blading and I think I can do it too." Little's daughters had been roller blading

in his 30x40 foot pole barn after Little vacated the space but necessarily left the boat on the floor. "They have a 30x30 foot strip to roller blade on."

Charity J. Little, 10, said, "I've been roller blading ever since my feet were in a size three and my feet are size six now." Charity, Breckenridge Elementary fifth grader, joined the Breckenridge Little League softball team this year. Little has been warming his daughters up for the season. He pitches to the girls.

Rachel M., 7, will play ball for the first time this year for the Breckenridge Little League. Tracey J., 6, will play Tee Ball for Porter Township this season. "It's my first time," she said. "I like it up here in Sanford on the Rail-Trail," she said.

Midland Community Center Calendar

Wed., May 1
Building Hours 5:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., Alanon 10:00 a.m., Tops #720 9 - 11 a.m., Rec. Swim 5:30 - 8:15 a.m. length, 8 - 10 a.m. 50+, 11:45 - 1:15 p.m. length, 4:30 - 7 p.m. length, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. all ages, 9 - 10 p.m. adult, 10:45 - 12:45 p.m. Dow Length Swim.

Thurs., May 2
Building Hours 5:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., Tops

#84, 6-8 p.m., A.A. 6:30 p.m., Rec. swim, 5:30 - 8:15 a.m. length, 8-10 a.m. 50+, 11:45 - 1:15 p.m. length, 4:30 - 6 p.m. length, 10:30 - 11:45 a.m. women's rec, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. all ages, 9-10 p.m. adult, 10:45 - 12:45 p.m. Dow length Swim, Newcomers Club 9:30 a.m.

Friday, May 3
Building Hours 5:30 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., A.A. 7:30 - 9:00 p.m., Rec.

swim 5:30 - 8:15 a.m. length, 8-10 a.m. 50+, 11:45 - 1:15 p.m. length, 4:30 - 7 p.m. length, 10 a.m. - 9 p.m. all ages, 8-9 p.m. adults, 9-11 p.m. Teen Swim, 10:45-12:45 p.m. Dow length swim, Active 8's, 7:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 4
Building Hours 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m., Rec. Swim 11:15 - 2:15 p.m. length, 1-9 p.m. all ages.

Sunday, May 5
Building Hours 12 noon - 6:00 p.m., Rec. Swimming 12 - 3 p.m. length, 1 - 6 p.m. all ages, Bridge 5:30 p.m.

Is This How You Feel About Breast Cancer?



Learn the facts. It could make a world of difference.
Call 1-(800) 221-2141 weekdays, 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (Central Time Zone).

Y-ME

National Breast Cancer Hotline

Meridian Supports Students Who Excel

Meridian Public Schools' new Superintendent, William Newkirk plans to establish formal criteria to recognize students who excel, teachers and support staff members.

According to Newkirk, recognition programs have been beneficial and have built good public relations

where he has worked in the past.

Board president Terry Chrivia said Meridian has many students, staff members and community members who should be recognized by the board of education. Presentation of certificates may be scheduled in the near future.

WMU Student Win Scholarship

Rudy Stephen is among the prospective freshmen who have been selected to receive a share of \$8 million in academic scholarships from Western Michigan University this fall.

Stephen Rudy, the son of Michael J. and Myrna M. Rudy of Sanford, WMU Academic Scholarship, Meridian High School.

The awards are part of WMU's Medallion Scholarship Program. The recipients were among more than 1,100 leading high school seniors from 15 states who competed for the scholarships during events this past winter on campus. The competition included written testing and group problem solving activities for students and information session for parents.

To be eligible, participants had to be admitted to WMU by January 10 with at least a 3.7 grade point average in high school, or at least a 3.5 GPA and an American College Test score of at least 30.

The top students were awarded "Medallion Scholarships. Valued at \$25,000 over four years, those scholarships are among the largest merit-based awards in American public higher education. Several other top participants won Board of Trustees Scholarships of \$16,000 over four years.

The rest of the students received one of three types of awards: University Scholars Awards of \$12,000 over four years; University Excellence Awards of \$8,000 over four years; or WMU Academic Scholarships of \$4,800 over four years.

Sanford Senior Center Menu

May, 1996
Wed., May 1
Beef stroganoff, beets, carrot pennies, citrus fruit.
Thurs., May 2
Goulash, California blend vegetables, tossed salad, fruited gelatin.
Fri., May 3
Cod, Bela Vista, honeycomb potatoes, cauliflower with pea salad, lemon pudding cake.

Menus are subject to change without notice. Skim milk, coffee, bread and butter served at each meal. Fruit always available as a dessert choice.

Recent Births At MMRMC

Sandra and John Andrick of Sanford, Michigan, a daughter, April 12.
Jodie and Ken Klammer of Gladwin, Michigan, a daughter, April 12.
Heather and Robert Dickinson of Coleman, Michigan, a son April 15.
Joanne and Mark Weidner of Gladwin, Michigan, a son April 15.
Shellie and James Forbes of Beaverton, Michigan, a daughter, April 15.
Lana and Michael Callan of Sanford, Michigan, a son April 17.

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FriendsFax

5-26-96
FOPMRT

INFO:

FAX: 1-517-373-2443
Philip A. Wells
DNR Forest Management

FROM: Bill Wells
Friends of the PMRT
P.O. Box 505
Midland, MI 48640-0505

7 Page(s) including this page.

Although the fancy border is missing from the first page, this, otherwise, duplicates the current "Friends" newsletter that will be mailed out in a couple weeks.

P.S. This is faxed directly from my computer, not from paper fed into a fax machine, so I'm not sure how the two-column newsletter might come out on your end. Let me know if it's a mess!

FRIENDSLETTER

Vol. 4

No.2

Board of Directors:

Connie Good - President
Midland - 835-7190

Jim Mertens - Vice President
Midland - 635-1277
jamer1@aol.com

Julie Mills - Secretary
Midland - 835-1006

Tim Dyste - Treasurer
Midland - 635-4335

Bill Wells - Newsletter
Sanford - 687-7248
wewm@aol.com

E. Gale Dickinson
Coleman - 465-6590

Bryon Plumer
Midland - 835-9506

National Trail Day

On June 1 over one million Americans will hit the trail and celebrate the Fourth annual National Trail Day. Created by the American Hiking Society in 1993, National Trail Day is A nationwide day aimed at increasing public awareness and appreciation for trails.

The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail invite everyone to walk, jog, bike, skate, bring the strollers and wheelchairs and use the trail in observance of Mid-Michigan Trail Day. See you on the trail June 1.

- Julie Mills

Coleman Junefest Bike Ride

Have you ever wanted to ride the length of the Rail-Trail? Join the friends Saturday June 15th at 9:00AM at the Tridge trail head. The ride will pick up those preferring to leave from Sanford (Maple St. parking lot) at 9:45AM, then on to the festivities in Coleman. Bring money for food. We'll spend some time in Coleman and then ride back to Midland via the trail. The ride will be canceled in the case of rain or bad weather. In the case of "iffy" weather call Ed Elliot 832-2907, or Julie Mills 835-1006.

Board Meetings

Everyone is encouraged to attend our Board of Directors meetings. The meetings are held at 7:00pm in the Midland County Building 220 W. Ellsworth, Midland. Times and locations are as follows:

June 19	3rd floor Conf. Rm.
July 24	1st floor Conf. Rm.
Aug. 21	3rd floor Conf. Rm.
Sept. 17	1st floor Conf. Rm.
Oct. 15	1st floor Conf. Rm.
Nov. 19	1st floor Conf. Rm.
Dec. 17	1st floor Conf. Rm.

Thanks!!!!!! Scott

Thanks to Scott Sanderude for 2 1/2 years of dedicated service on the board of directors for the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. Scott is responsible for the great T-shirts, their design, production and sales. Scott and his son Paul spent many Saturdays on the trail selling T-shirts. We are truly grateful to Scott for the success of the T-shirts (Also, to Pauly for all his help). Scott has put in additional time helping with the Century Ride, creating fliers and a new trail brochure.

Scott is resigning from the board due to increased travel in his job. Thanks Scott for everything. Please know your efforts are appreciated and we'll

miss you, but look forward to seeing you on the trail when you're in town.

- Julie Mills

The Resignations of Scott Sanderude, and earlier this year Ann Southworth, have created two Board of Directors vacancies. If you are interested in joining the board, or know someone who is, please contact one of the current Board members.

- Connie Good - President

March For Parks

Three coordinated walks in Midland, Sanford and Coleman took place at 10AM on April 20th. These "Friends" sponsored walks were part of the national March For Parks promotion sponsored by the National Parks and Conservation Association. The local organizing committee of Gale Dickinson, Ed Elliot, Jim Mertens and Bill Wells want to thank all of the marchers and volunteers who participated in this fund raiser for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail. Dawn Dashner and Andy Dashner were the champion fund raisers for Coleman. Each turned in over \$50 for the trail. Jim Hamilton Jr. was the top fund raiser in Sanford, turning in over \$60. There were no outstanding fund raisers from Midland.

Each group of marchers met in their respective towns at the trail and walked about 3 miles on the trail, returning for a picnic lunch featuring vegetarian sloppy joe sandwiches. We will look forward to seeing more of you for the walk next year.

- Ed Elliot

Member-Get-A-Member

At last report we were about 500 strong and still growing. After you've read this exciting newsletter, pass it along to a friend! You might discreetly point out that a membership blank appears below.....

Your one-year membership begins when we receive your application!

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1996 Raffle Ticket Drawing

By the time you read this we should already have a winner of the Hon folding bicycle! The drawing was scheduled for June 8th at noon in Emerson Park. As stated in your last newsletter, all funds received after that time are being considered as donations. We will report the winner in the next "Friends" newsletter.

- Bill Wells

Thursday Night Ride

Every Thursday night at 6:30pm an informal group of the "Friends" depart from the Tridge area and travel via the trail to Sanford. Cyclists of all ages and levels of ability are encouraged to participate. - You might want to bring a little money for a snack or ice cream in downtown Sanford! - Occasionally, riders have started in Coleman at 6:30, to rendezvous in Sanford. Alternatively, riders have departed from Sanford early enough to arrive at the Tridge at 6:30, returning with the group to Sanford. Could this become a really big Thursday happening?

- Bill Wells

Pere Marquette Century Ride

August 11, 1996 7:30 AM

The Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail in partnership with THE LIONS CLUB present the Pere Marquette Century Ride (PMC).

Join the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, and the Lions Club in the Pere Marquette Century. The date is Sunday, August 11, 1996. This year a 100 mile cycling route is available for those who wish to do a full century. The route will follow the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail from Midland to Coleman. Then using county roads make a loop to Clare and back to Coleman, then follow the Rail-Trail back to Midland. Once back in Midland a final loop around Midland on city and county roads will complete the 100 miles. All shorter distances are also acceptable.

Optional short routes and estimated riding times (Times will depend upon the rider's conditioning and experience):

Midland-Sanford-Midland, 16 miles 1.5 to 2 hours; Midland-Coleman-Midland 40 miles, 3 to 5 hours; Midland-Clare-Midland, 70 miles 4.5 to 6.5 hours; Century route, 100 miles 5 to 8 hours.

Proceeds from the ride will support the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail, and the Charities of the Lions Club.

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is approximately 22 miles from downtown Midland to Coleman. A scenic 30 mile county road loop has been selected to reach Clare and return to Coleman. Another 30 mile loop around Midland is available to complete the 100 mile route. The pre-registration entrance fee is \$12.00 for individuals, \$15.00 Day Of Event (\$10.00 for Members of the Friends of PMRT). Commemorative "T" Shirts are also available for \$12.00, and must be ordered with pre-registration. See next two pages to pre-register.

Accommodations:

The Ashman Court Hotel in downtown Midland is offering a special rate for participants in the Pere Marquette Century. A double occupancy room for \$69.00 for Saturday August 10, 1996. You must make your reservations with the Hotel by July 20, 1996, to receive this special PMC rate.

Ashman Court Hotel
111 Main St.
Midland, MI 48640
Phone (517) 839-0500

Check in at The Tridge starting at 7:30 AM Sunday Aug 11. Riders can start any time after this. Riding time will depend upon distance and average speed of the riders. The last sweep of the full course will begin at 2 PM from Coleman to Clare. The Clare rest stop will close at 2:30 PM. Coleman at 4 PM Sanford at 5 PM and Midland at 6 PM. All riders not departing from the rest areas at closing will be offered one chance for a SAG ride in.

Pere Marquette Century Registration Form

Name: _____
 Age: _____
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Individual Registrations:

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 Day of event \$15.00
 Members of PMRT* \$10.00
 "T" Shirt \$12.00
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Total: \$ _____

* Pere Marquette Rail-Trail member-ships
 extending through Aug 1996.

Family Registrations:

First two family members same as above (\$12.00 each; \$15.00 day-of-event; \$10.00 for PMRT members). Additional family members @ \$2.00 each \$

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List all family names separately:

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In consideration of being allowed to participate in an activity sponsored by the Friends of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail (Friends):

1. I understand that participating in bicycling, skating, running, walking, or other activities of similar nature (Activity) can be hazardous and involve the risk of serious bodily injury. I FULLY ASSUME ALL RISKS ASSOCIATED WITH

THE ACTIVITY SPONSORED BY THE FRIENDS.

2. I understand I should not participate in any Activity unless I am medically able and properly trained; and by participating I represent That I am qualified to participate in such Activity.

3. I HEREBY RELEASE THE FRIENDS, OTHER PARTICIPANTS, ALL OTHER SPONSORS OF THE ACTIVITY, AND THE COUNTY OF MIDLAND, AND ITS AGENTS, THE CITY OF MIDLAND, AND ITS AGENTS OR OTHER OWNERS (past, present and future) OF THE PROPERTY ON WHICH THE ACTIVITY TAKES PLACE FROM ALL LIABILITY FOR INJURIES OR DAMAGES, AND HEREBY WAIVE ANY AND ALL RIGHTS FOR CLAIMS FOR INJURY OR DAMAGE.

I have read this Release and Waiver of Liability, understand that I have given up substantial rights by signing it, and have signed it freely without any inducement or assurance of any nature and intend it to be a complete and unconditional release of all liability to the greatest extent allowed by law .

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Coleman's downtown experiences boom

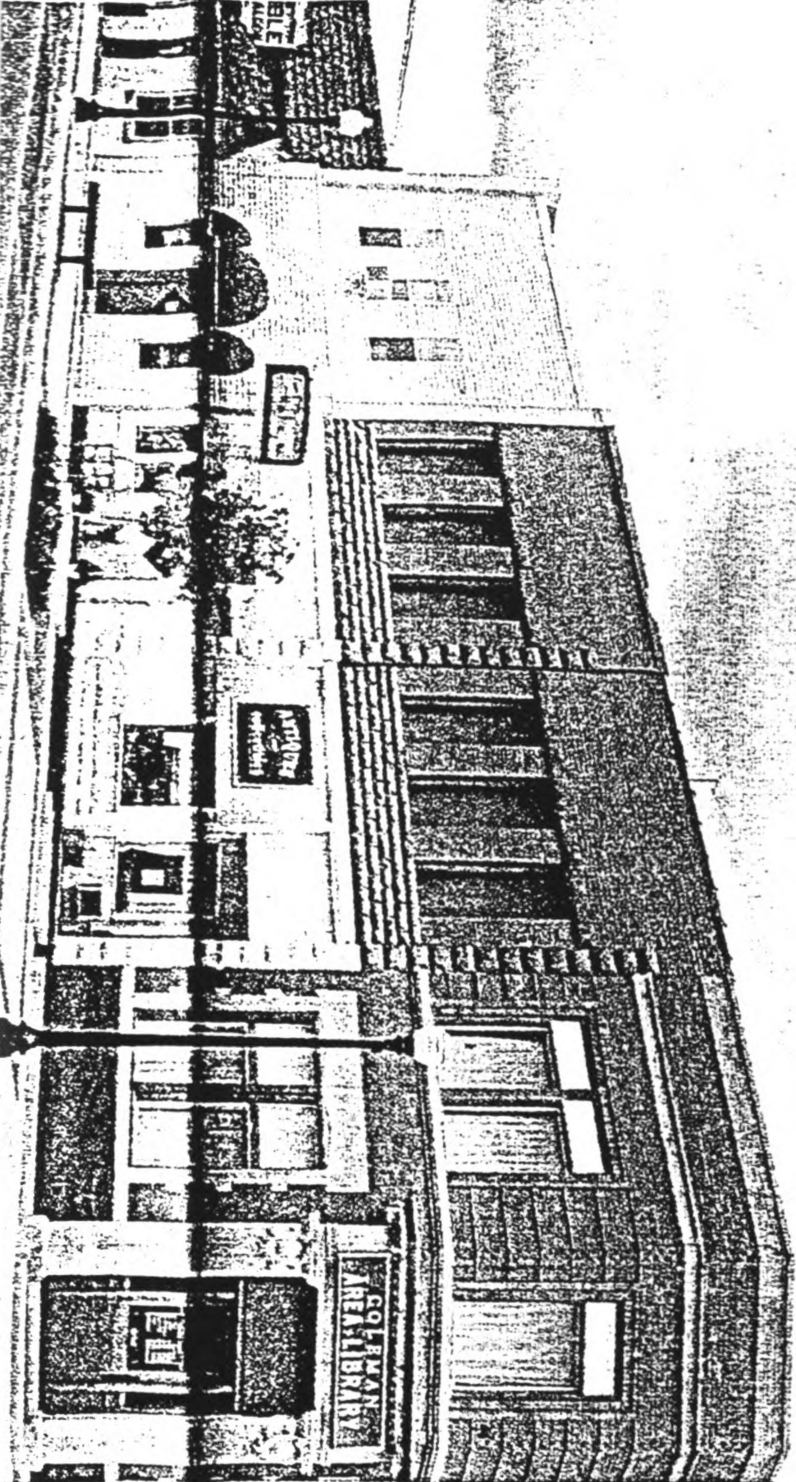


Photo by RODNEY BRAZEE

- For the business district of Coleman, the recent downtown development has been a tremendous boost to the local economy..
- However, the outlook might not be so rosy for the agricultural sections of the city. It is a trend which has been seen in other communities around the state.

If a building boom is one of the primary measures of economic success and healthiness in a community, then the city of Coleman could be in for some profitable months in the near future.

A number of new projects will be considered and should start taking place in Coleman this summer, which include a 7-acre industrial park, a town green and a new senior citizen estate.

This development follows the recent buildings of a fire station in the downtown area, the completion of a portion of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of mid-Michigan last year, and a landscape improvement on Coleman's main roads two years ago.

A number of large buildings were erected last year as well, including the Faith United Methodist Fellowship Hall and a Chevrolet car dealership.

The development of the Pere Marquette Senior Estate Housing complex might be the centerpiece to Coleman's continued community development project. This building is expected to cost approximately \$1.2 million, and will have 26 one-bedroom units and four two-bedroom areas.

The major portion of the financing for this project comes from public grants, and the city of Coleman itself has committed \$75,000 to work with the streets, sewers and sidewalks.

Clifford Miles, a consultant for the development corporation in charge of building the senior complex, said there is a need to senior housing within the community's limits to attract retirees from the area who otherwise would move out of the community for another area more conducive to the needs of seniors.

Miles hopes the new seniors complex, a facility comparable to Washington Woods in Midland, will be completed by Nov. 1.

Jack Tigner, president of the Coleman Area Chamber of Commerce said the building and city development has come as a result of a policy the city, in



Our Town profile

-part one

conjunction with the Lansing County Growth and Development Corp. to increase the economical health of the community.

"This is a popular area right now because there are many people who enjoy the small-town atmosphere and getting away from the big cities," said Tigner, who points to the street landscape project as a key factor in "sprucing up the area."

The Rail-Trail is a 26-mile long park which runs between Midland and Coleman, and is a paved trail used by residents for hiking, biking, roller blading and other outdoor activities. Any non-motorized mode of transportation is allowed on the trail, which is still a couple of years away from being expanded to include a trail between Coleman and Clare.

In time, according to Tigner, the trail might even join with the city of Ludington on the west side of the state.

"A lot of people are interested in outdoor activities and are looking to get exercise these days," he said. "It is one of the higher classes of trails in the nation, and has served as a model for communities looking to upgrade a similar idea in their area."

Coleman was considered to be a booming town in the middle part of this century as more residents of the state began to move to northern areas. In those years, the highway U.S. 10 ran directly through downtown Coleman. In the mid-1960s, U.S. 10 was slightly redirected to one mile outside of the downtown area, and this was probably a main factor in the reduction of traffic in city, and as a result, many small and privately owned businesses were unable to survive.

It has taken a long time in the opinion of some people for Coleman to institute a concentrated effort to improve the city's economic portfolio, and even through there are few large corporations or retail stores within the city, many community leaders feel Coleman serves as a viable option for businesses and private residents.

The town green should serve as a gathering area for the city, and will include a

Please see **COLEMAN** -

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COLEMAN

From page 1

large gazebo in the center of town. Tigner said he hopes that project is completed by summer 1997. It will be located between the Rail Trail and Main Street.

That area will also be landscaped. The city is looking for donations to fund the green's development, as well as volunteer labor to assist with the actual landscaping and planting, along with other forms of manual labor.

"We still want to keep a back yard atmosphere," he said.

Many of the area's businesses and buildings, such as



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the local V.F.W. post have been involved with structural facelifts which have improved the appearance of the downtown's atmosphere.

Kurt Gordon is one of the managers and owners of C.W. Gordon Chevrolet, which has been in the area for a number of years, but completed the construction of their new facility last August.

Gordon said the city of Coleman was virtually dying less than two years ago, but the large number of new things happening in the downtown area bodes well for the immediate future of the town.

"We've always been of the believe that people support those who support them," he said. "This has always been a good town for our business, and we are certainly pleased with the recent downtown developments."

The paving of the new Dickinson Road at the southwest end of town has enabled easier access to up to seven acres of public land, and 10 to 12 acres of private land for development purposes. Bill Gazette, director of public services for Coleman, said the area would be ideal for small manufacturing businesses which would employ anywhere from 30 to 40 employees.

"Overall, the population of Coleman is rising, and that's what we want," he said. "We would like to generate enough businesses that they could expand and flourish, and the whole town is confident a considerable amount of growth would be a positive result."

C.W. Gordon
Chevrolet

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There are many factors which could explain the so-called, "building boom" in the area. First, the economy in general is in relatively good shape at the present time.

Second, housing sales are good, and third, the location of Coleman is ideal to many businesses and residents looking for a small-town flair which still has close access to larger the cities residing in the tri-cities area.

This boom most likely will not affect the agriculture industry in the city, according to Robert Filhart, owner of Filhart Farm which has a feed manufacturing facility in both Coleman and Rosebush.

He said the redevelopment of Coleman is occurring primarily in the downtown area, and that the city is possibly moving from an agricultural town to a business-oriented community.

"These new places are creating a different kind of business atmosphere than what we've seen in the past," Filhart said. "It's sort of like what happened in Frankenmuth. The downtown activities didn't really affect the farms."

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'Rail-Trail' Links Greenways

by Peter M. Pollack

In many ways the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is the "ideal" community project. Like the railroad track it follows, the trail is linear, collecting and moving people through a variety of Midland County and mid-Michigan settings ranging from large to small towns, including urban/built and rural/natural landscapes.

This trail is designated for year-round nonmotorized recreation and alternative transportation. Those using it include walkers, hikers, runners, bicyclists, those in wheelchairs and baby strollers as well as cross-country skiers. The expected audience was, and has proved to be, both residents of adjacent communities and distant visitors who come specifically to use the trail.

By its very nature any rail-trail project draws people together. The planning, designing and building of a linear facility requires cooperation between public and private entities, adjacent governmental units and communities setting priorities for using their varied resources.

Midland's Pere Marquette Rail-Trail is a successful adventure because of the efforts of many citizens and agencies. But the best is yet to come, for as more people use the trail, more ways for its use will be discovered. Some positive community impacts already evident include an increase in economic activity on adjacent property in the towns and villages and the attitude of those using the trail.

Historically Speaking

The 30-mile, 400-acre parcel was bought soon after the CSX Railroad abandoned the route through Midland and Isabella counties in 1987. The Midland County Department of Parks and Recreation saw the property's potential and began to generate interest within the local community. The Midland Foundation became a supporter of the project, purchased the

property and gave it to the county to develop into an all-season nonmotorized recreational facility.

At the outset, a Linear Park Advisory Committee was established to guide the development of the trail. The Committee, which still functions today, has broad representation from all the communities along its route as well as support from organizations and citizens committed to seeing the project through to a successful conclusion.

The master plan, *A Vision for a Linear Park in Midland County from Midland to Clare*, was completed in early spring of 1992, which happily coincided with both the availability of Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) funds and the Department of Natural Resources' (DNR) giving higher priority to developing an extensive statewide trail system.

The initial construction project, generously funded by the Gerstacker Foundation, was two and one-half miles within the City of Midland. DNR, Department of Transportation (DOT) and local (but nongovernmental) matching dollars for Phases II, III and IV resulted in completion of a 20-mile trail (Midland to Coleman) within three

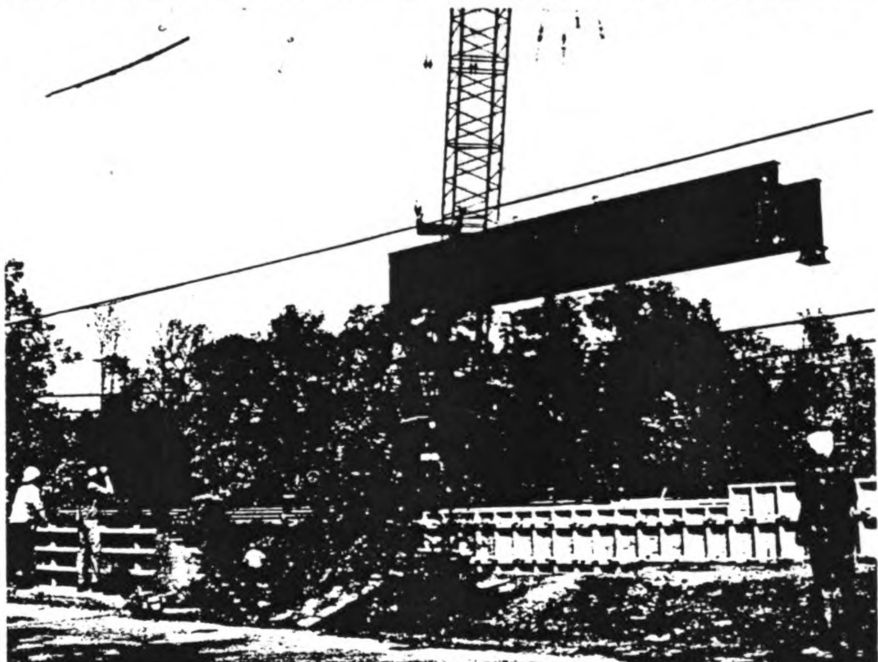
and one-half years. A trailhead exists in Midland and two others are underway in downtown Coleman and Sanford.

In addition, the DNR recently funded Phase V, a grant for other recreational amenities and support facilities to serve the trail's growing audience.

Putting It Together

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail project utilized several available, but not usually included, procedures to evolve its master plan. Throughout the planning process, a broad-based participation effort ranged from the Advisory Committee and a Public Preference Survey to an extensive schedule of community meetings. Monthly meetings were held with the Advisory Committee to review progress and approve proposals.

All governmental units, including the villages, townships and cities which the trail passes through, were contacted for their development plans to identify any potential conflicts and to offer ideas. Comments were also received from the general public through meetings held in three locations - Coleman, Sanford and Midland - where design alternatives were presented. In



Construction of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail bridge over the Snake Creek in Emerson Park

Peter M. Pollack is President of Pollack Design Associates of Ann Arbor, designers of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail project.

addition, the Public Preference Survey was conducted simultaneously with the inventory and analysis phase of the work.

The resulting master plan is activity-based. It is first, focused on providing opportunities for recreation and second, on putting facilities in place to support those activities. As a result, the Linear Park is a setting built for having fun, for socializing, for health and exercise and last, but not least, for experience and learning.

The continued potential strength and excitement of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail lies in its diversity, with individual features along the trail linked together and presented to the community as a park system. The linkage exists not only in a linear manner in distance, but through time as well, where natural and built resources can be combined to portray the economic evolution from lumbering and agriculture to modern-day manufacturing.

Expanding Usage

There is potential to expand the trail system beyond the boundaries of the old right-of-way and into area-wide resources. Undeveloped utility corridors, other abandoned rail corridors, scenic roads, adjacent parks and state land can all be used to advantage in assembling a comprehensive greenway network. Canoeing on rivers and creeks that cross the rail-trail add yet another means to view and experience mid-Michigan landscape.

Existing stores and restaurants in adjacent communities supplement the basic services offered by the county in the park and exploring these towns can be an interesting side trip. Railroad bridges and historic structures can also be used to interpret the area's human history.

Current adjacent parks and natural areas that were once seen as separate entities can be linked by the rail-trail. By utilizing all the resources of the different parks and natural areas, a complete spectrum of recreational opportunities can be represented.

One of the few site characteristics of the linear park property that remains constant is the uniformity of the straight and relatively level railroad grade. This visually powerful remnant of the railroad era is the point from which one sees the adjacent sites' characteristics changing subtly and significantly from one quality to another. This, in com-



Completed rail-trail bridge

bination with the variety of plant communities found in the mid-Michigan north-to-south vegetative transition zone, can provide for rich and wonderful landscape and ecosystem comparisons. The arbutus bog walkway is one interpretive facility already in place.

The linear park can serve to coalesce many of the amenities along the way into a critical mass that could attract many visitors from southeastern Michigan who want to escape "up north" for a weekend without spending all of their time traveling. It can also acquaint the local population with unfamiliar and forgotten attractions. The linear park, in total, is an opportunity to remind all who travel its length about the heritage of Midland County.

Community Involvement

One should never underestimate how much people who support a project will do to make it happen. The request for opinions and preferences earlier in the project was followed by requests for financial assistance during construction.

Two specific examples include: 1) Coleman High School students held a fundraising dance and raised \$1,600 for the Coleman Mile by selling paper chain links used to decorate the gym for the event and 2) The countywide "Close the Gap" campaign where huge amounts of Glass And Plastic were collected for recycling into "glasphalt" to pave the "gap" in the trail between Coleman and North Bradley and into plastic bollards (a new product

designed and developed specifically for this project) that are part of the warning devices at all road crossings.

Participation continues through a "Friends" group, which has gained over 450 families and business members in its relatively short three-year history. Their activities include fundraising, clean-up days and general support for the county as it oversees and maintains the rail-trail.

Linear Park and Greenway

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail Team set out to conceive and construct a park where people could experience what Midland had to offer. It took a conscious and deliberate effort by all those involved to convert the idea into a reality specific to its location and design philosophy. Project goals, as evolved, are broad and can apply elsewhere:

- Create a regional outdoor recreational and educational resource
- Link the adjacent available resources into one cohesive and recognizable unit
- Provide full accessibility to a wide range of opportunities

Design criteria for trail configuration, width, surfacing, staging areas, maintenance considerations and public and private road crossings may also be transferable to other similar projects. The DNR is currently considering the rail-trail road crossing system and the steel bridge painting system used for restoration of four river crossings as "standards."

But the most important part of a linear park's or greenway's success is local ownership. That happens as a result of community involvement throughout the process and the response of committees and design teams to issues raised.

The Pere Marquette Rail-Trail of mid-Michigan is a county park, but one with a regional audience. Perhaps the most exciting visionary component of this, and any other greenway project, is its potential to connect with a state and national network of trails. In the not-too-distant future, it may be possible to access this linear park and travel throughout the State of Michigan and the United States on a continuous system of trails. However, to first be successful locally, the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail has to reflect its own people and its own place. □

RECREATION

Midland Daily News

■ Recreation news? Call Jeff Aldrich at (517) 839-4243

Sunday, March 30, 1997

Spring time means Rail-Trail time

Park has quickly become one of area's most popular

By JEFF ALDRICH
of the Daily News

When the first signs of spring hit mid-Michigan — sometimes even before the first signs appear — area residents are headed for the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail.

In only a few short years, the 27-mile-long rail-trail has become one of the area's most popular parks, attracting walkers, joggers, bikers and skaters. With the warm weather of late, Midland County Parks and Recreation workers have been busy getting the county portion of the trail ready for the onslaught.

"When we get a nice day, there are people out there no matter what," County Parks and Recreation Director William Gibson said. "In fact, they never really stop. I've seen people out on the city portion of the trail when the snow is flying."

The trail has gained a large following since first being discussed in 1991. After CSX Transportation abandoned its railroad tracks several years ago, the land was purchased by the Midland Foundation and later donated to Midland County. The total land area of the park is some 400 acres, but it runs in a strip less than 100 feet wide.

The first section completed, from the Tridge in downtown Midland west three miles to the city limits, was opened to the public in June 1993. A grant from the state allowed another 6.6 mile section to Cedar Street in Sanford to be built the following year, and two years ago, the trail was extended all the way to Coleman.

Last year, \$500,000 was donated towards the project by the Rollin M. Gerstacker Foundation, with interest from the money to be used in preservation, improvements, maintenance and repair of the park.

"There is quite a bit to getting the park ready for the spring," Gibson said. "We've got crews cleaning all the road intersections, getting rid of the debris where snow had piled up."

"Once we can get on the trail, we put a big blower behind a tractor and get rid of any debris on and around the trail," he added. "And we have to make sure we find any trees that were blown down over the winter and that sort of thing."

More improvements are on the way for the rail-trail, as \$167,000 in grants from the state and the Gerstacker Foundation were announced earlier this year. The



Daily News/ELLI GURFINKEL

Children and adults took to the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail in Midland on bikes, rollerskates and on foot, Thursday afternoon.

grants will allow the construction of two mini-bathrooms and four weather shelters, among other things.

"I'm not sure if we'll see any of those things this year," Gibson said. "Right now, we're looking at

different designs for the projects and later they will be bid on. Some of them may not be open until 1998."

Currently, a 2.5 mile gap exists between the end of the Pere Marquette Rail-Trail in Coleman and

the beginning of a state trail just west of Clare. In the future, as those trails and others become connected, outdoor enthusiasts will be able to travel from Midland to Ludington, Cadillac and even Grand Rapids.

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SUPPLEMENT



State parks are just a stroll away

Often, outdoors people are thought of anglers, hunters, or boaters, but there are many, many more opportunities to enjoy Michigan outdoor scene.

For instance, hiking Michigan's linear parks.

What's a linear park? That's a fancy designation for an abandoned railroad grade.

According to information from the Department of Natural Resources, at the present there are four such trails in Michigan: The Kal-Haven Trail, Lakeland Trail, Hart-Montague Trail and the White Pine Trail.

Some, like the 22-mile Hart-Montague Trail are hard-surfaced and allow hikers, wheelchairs, rollerblades, and in the southern part of the trail, horses.



JEFF STEELE
STAFF WRITER

The White Pine Trail, at 92 miles (76.5 open), is the most rugged of all the existing trails and is fit only for hiking or mountain bikes. The trail is covered with gravel and cinders.

Camping is not allowed in any of these trails (parks) but nearby camping or lodging may be available.

A few years ago my wife and I hiked the Hart-Montague Trail. We began where M-20 intersects old US-31 just south of Shelby. We walked a few miles through wood lots, open farm country, and over a small creek on a very nice bridge. We photographed wild flowers and birds and saw field mice, deer, and cows. We meet a couple from Germany, who were in Michigan on holiday.

We spoke to a trail ranger and asked if he'd ever run into strange situations along the trail.

He explained about a bicycle accident a few ago. A woman tipped over from her bike and was unable to get up. The ranger assisted, as well as he could, until the lady told him to grab her leg.

He seemed a little embarrassed as he continued the story.

"I grabbed her leg and she said, 'Pull'. I did and her leg came off," he said.

The ranger stood, shocked, as the lady explained that her prosthesis had gotten caught in the bike chain and removing her leg was the only way to free her.

Other than that incident, the ranger said, the trail was pretty quiet.

Trail passes are required to use the linear state parks. An annual pass costs \$25 for a family or \$10 for an individual. Daily trail passes cost \$5 for a family or \$2 per individual.

More than 100 different types of wildflowers grow along the White Pine Trail. The Kal-Haven Trail features seven bridges, including a covered bridge and an old camelback bridge. Several scenic overlooks of valleys and streams provide picture-perfect picnic spots along the Hart-Montague Trail.

A high-point on the Lakelands Trail is a field of black locust trees which bloom in the springtime.

Don't forget to bring your camera, film, and a tripod for close-up work.

Dept. of Transportation will purchase rail corridor; no plans for rail-trail development

By Rhonda Westfall

Part of the question of what the future holds for the abandoned Central Michigan Railway line between Owosso and Ionia was answered this past week.

The Michigan Department of Transportation is going to purchase the 41.3-mile stretch of line, but it says it will not sell it to the Department of Natural Resources for development as a rail-trail.

"The appraisal (of the railroad property) has been completed and we expect to have the review in hand next week," Doug Fishell, supervisor of the revenue and leasing unit at the Department of Transportation said this past Thursday.

"The department is going to purchase the line and keep it to preserve the integrity of the rail corridor. It will not be sold to the DNR for use as a rail-trail."

The dollar amounts associated with the appraisal will not be available for disclosure until the review process is complete, Fishell said.

The supervisor said it was his understanding that the decision not to move forward with a Rails-to-Trails project at this time was a result of local opposition to the development of a trail.

"Our office did not have any contact with individuals, but there were several municipalities where local people voiced their objections, and written petitions in opposition to a rail-trail were delivered to local municipalities," Fishell said.

Individuals associated with Concerned Citizens for Property Rights, the local group which formed in opposition to the development of a rail-trail on the abandoned line, said they had no knowledge of the completion of the appraisal, and questioned why MDOT would buy it without developing it as a rail-trail.

"We didn't know the appraisal was back," said Don Stump of Pewamo. "Why would they purchase it (the land) if they're not going to do anything with it?"

Proponents of a Rails-to-Trails project along the corridor were also unaware of the MDOT decision. Richard Godbold of the Ram's Horn Trail Blazers, a Laingsburg area resident who is assisting in the formation of a pro-trail group locally, said the decision was "expected."

"What the Department of Transportation does or doesn't do has little impact on us," he said. "We will still advocate for rail-trails, and we will continue to provide information to the general public on what rail-trails are all about."

"We don't want to go head-to-head with any opposition group. We just want people to have a full understanding about the benefits of rail-trails. There's a lot of misunderstanding and misinformation - we want to provide accurate information."

Jan 6, 1996

*St. Johns
Reminders
Paper*

From Our Readers

2-18-92
Michigan Farmer

Likes "Rails to Trails"

2/18/92 MICHIGAN FARMER

■ I'm writing in response to Don Klingshirn's letter in the December issue of the *Michigan Farmer*, which expressed opposition to the conversion of abandoned railroad right-of-ways to public hiking/biking trails.

I am a fruit grower who owns .75 mile of property along the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park in beautiful Oceana county. Prior to the development of our trail during the mid 1980s, there were many concerns about the problems that might result with the public having access to the "back 40". To date, we have not seen any evidence of trespassing or the stealing of any of our produce from our land adjacent to the trail. Litter is nonexistent. Our liability insurance has not increased.

We have, however, seen a lot of friendly people enjoying the benefits of a beautiful place to exercise without the dangers of public roads. This has been especially appreciated by

families with children who can go for a ride together in a relaxed environment.

Local businesses have enjoyed the influx of tourist dollars coming into the area. There were approximately 58,000 users of the trail this past summer, of which two-thirds were not local residents. This has been a blessing to local motels, bed and breakfasts, and eating establishments, as most people travel light and purchase what they need along the trail.

Our trail was not "forced" on us by the DNR, but was the result of years of work by local citizens who could see past the paranoia which seems to follow new ideas at times. The DNR has done a very good job of maintaining and patrolling the trail.

If your community is fortunate enough to have an abandoned railroad which is being considered as a "rail trail", embrace the idea without fear. If you are fortunate enough to

live next to a proposed trail, start making plans on how to capitalize on it. That may mean just cleaning up your bicycle, having a roadside stand, or starting a bicycle rental shop. As Abe Lincoln said, "Most people are as happy as they make up their mind to be."

—David Rennhack

Hart, Mich.

No women's pages

■ The *Michigan Farmer* has always been one of our favorites till the last year or so. You know most subscriptions are sent in by us wives. Where are some pages for us—recipes, patterns, homemaking articles, etc.? I was expecting jam, pickles, and good fall preserving recipes and maybe an inspirational poem, story, or something.

—Betty Peterson

Cadillac, Mich.

Midland Village would provide senior care

By CHERYL WADE

Daily News staff writer

Virginia Morrison said she'll be ready to move in if Midland gets a proposed senior citizen facility that would provide people lifelong care.

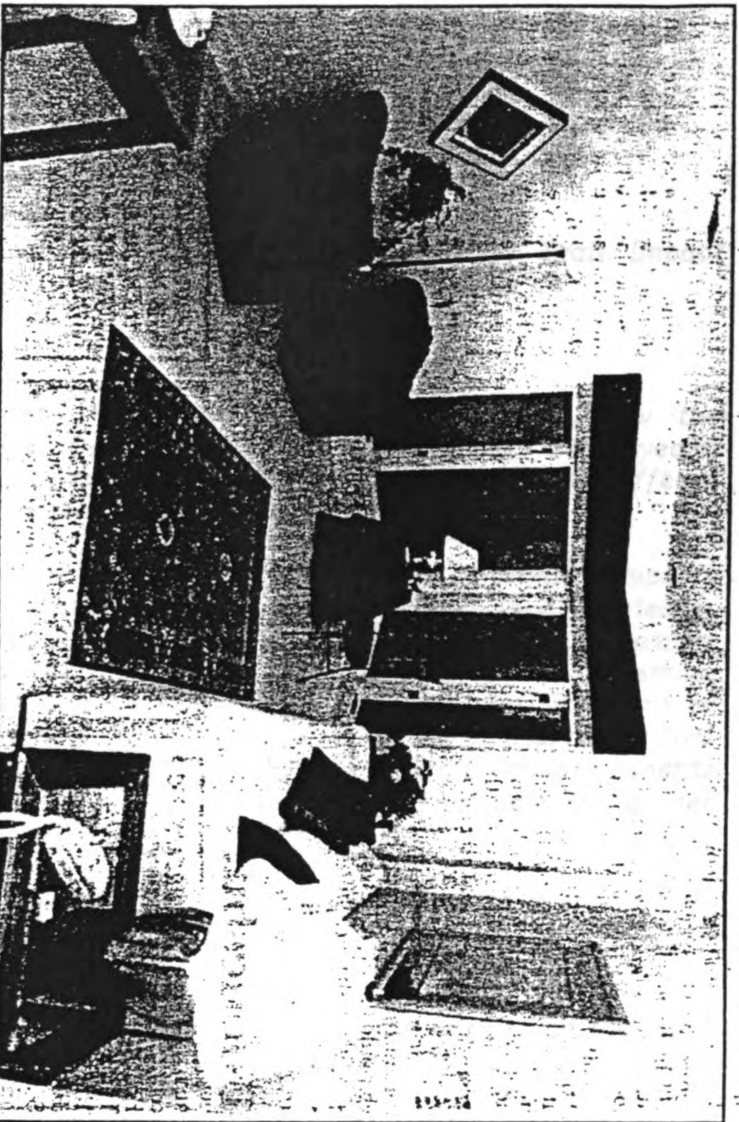
Morrison, 72, said she'd like to move into Trailblazer Village by the time she's 75. She could move from her big two-story house to an apartment and still would have a place for her children to stay when they come home for visits.

The idea behind Trailblazer Village, to be located west of H. H. Dow High School, where there were plans once for a Wal-Mart, is to provide lifelong care for seniors. A retiree could move into an apartment when he or she is healthy, get more help as needed, and then move into a "health center" for complete care. Directors for the project don't like to use "nursing home" to describe the third stage of care.

"It'd be a secure and comfortable feeling that, if you were ill, you would have care and attention in an area where you were known," said Morrison, who is on the board of directors for the village.

"I don't do a lot of cooking and cleaning for one person," she added. "All those things would be done for us."

A group of Midland retirees formed a private nonprofit corporation, Midland Living and Care Community, to make plans for developing the \$33.7 million village. Board members said they want to break ground by fall 1996, after they take two years to sign up prospective residents. Nine retirees already have said they want apartments, said marketing



Daily News/MICHAEL HONEWELL

This is what the living room area of a one bedroom, den unit will look like at Trailblazer Village. The company has a mock apartment set up complete with interior furnishings.

director Alice Paulius. "It's designed by seniors for seniors," she said. "What they're purchasing is a life lease. It's a long-term lease and it assures you a lifetime residency at Trailblazer Village for whatever level (of care) is needed."

With hard work, the complex could open by late 1997, said board member Julius Johnson.

The name comes from its location near the Pere Marquette Railroad of Mid-Michigan, said board member Ned Brandt.

Some 700 letters have gone out to senior citizens interested in the

concept. Planners have been discussing the idea since a meeting with 90 people in early 1989. Paulius already has set up her marketing office at 4322 N. Saginaw Road.

From Jan. 14-27, a mockup of a one-bedroom apartment will open for public inspection. After that, the board will mail information to 4,000 people on a purchased list of names. Some time in the next six months, the Economic Development Corporation of the County of Midland probably will approve a combination of tax-exempt and non-exempt bonds, said EDCCOM President

Earl Morris.

A person who wants an apartment pays \$76,500 to \$214,000, depending on the size and style.

Residents entering Trailblazer could select apartments ranging in size from 544 to 1,505 square feet. There are studio apartments and one- and two-bedroom dwellings. Depending on the model, apartments may have sunrooms, fireplaces, balconies or dens.

Plans call for 122 apartments for independent seniors, 40 for assisted living and 32 for skilled care. The board has yet to get state approval for the skilled-care

facility. When people move from full independence to assisted living, they get 90 percent of their original apartment fee back and pay a different fee for the added care.

Village members will have use of a large commons, large restaurant-style dining room, private dining room for parties, deli-cassens, an exercise area and fitness program and apartments where family and friends may stay when they visit.

Residents also would pay monthly fees to cover all utilities except telephone, dinner every day, housekeeping and linen service, 24-hour security and transportation to local events.

Johnson thinks Trailblazer Village will appeal to people who have lived a long time in Midland and have contributed to its community life. Many of these people don't want to move to warmer climates in the winter and become snowbirds, he said.

"We can't change the weather, but we can make it easier to tolerate, the way it's (the village) designed," Johnson said.

Market studies indicated the Trailblazer board could find enough people in a 15-mile radius of Midland to live in 160 apartments for independent seniors, Johnson said. That figure takes into account 4 percent of the people who are at least 62 and have enough income to move there. The board scaled the actual number of apartments to 122 when Stratford Village Estates, an upscale complex set up by the corporation that owns MidMichigan Regional Medical Center, came on the scene.

Paul E. Inglis
Oceana County
Administrator Fiscal Officer
P.O. Box 14
Hart, Michigan 49420

September 24, 1991

Mr. Joel Mikkelsen, Vice-Chairperson
Michigan Chapter of Rails to Trails Conservancy
Story Lake Road
New Era, Michigan 49446

RE: Montague - Hart Rail Trail Impact
on Oceana County

Dear Joel:

I have been requested to relate, from the County's perspective, how the Montague-Hart Rail Trail has impacted Oceana County during the past 2 - 3 years. Several things come to mind as I think about all the negative reasons that were offered several years ago for opposing the development and operation of the trail.

First, it was feared that users would litter the trails, trespass on private property and not respect the rights of others to use the trail. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no reported incidents of trespassing, vandalism or rights violations since the development and opening of the trail in Oceana County. I am quite certain that the Sheriff's Department has not been required to respond to any situations or incidents on the trail because of the dramatic increase in utilization. I have checked with the 79th District Court staff and they have not had any influx of misdemeanants in their system due to the issuance of citations on the trail for not securing a user permit or for failing to use the trail in the proper manner.

Second, the presence of the trail in Oceana County has provided a safe haven for bicyclists, joggers, walkers and snowmobile enthusiasts who do not have to fear being run over by a drunken, speeding or unattentive motorist.

Third, while I have not personally conducted a survey of the impact on the local merchants, the trail certainly has brought thousands of visitors to the communities of Rothbury, New Era, Shelby, Mears, Hart and even Pentwater beyond the end of the trail. These are people who would never have stopped to visit local attractions or shop in the local stores and retail businesses because the expressway would have taken them elsewhere for their recreational pursuits. It appears to me that the local gas stations, ice cream parlors and grocery stores have benefitted from the influx of trail users. I know for a fact that Postema Brothers Hardware in New Era sold bicycles for the first time this year and they even opened up a bike repair shop in conjunction with their lawn mower repair business (that is where I took my bicycle for a "tune-up").

Fourth, some start up businesses and business expansions have become reality due to the utilization of the rail trail. This includes bike sales and service and ice

cream shops along the trail.

Finally, and most significantly, the rail trail has provided thousands of people with an outlet for a healthy form of exercise and family recreation. Countless people in and out of Oceana County who have not exercised in years (or not at all) have taken the opportunity to improve their health with many hours of bicycling, walking or jogging in a safe environment while enjoying the beautiful scenery in Oceana County. No one can argue against the impact of the trail on the health and safety of the community as evidenced by the numbers of users ranging in age from 3 - 85 years.

It took some time and a great deal of perserverance on the part of you and several others but it appears that it has all paid off in the end given the heavy use of the trail. I have not heard one negative comment about its appearance or its location. My mother's property in the Village of Shelby abuts the trail and it has enhanced the appearance of the area (formerly, a deep and weed filled ditch abutted her property). There has never been a problem with weeds or unmowed grass on the right-of-way and litter has never been left on the neighboring lawns.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul E. Inglis
Oceana County
Administrator/Fiscal Officer

FEL/sj

cc: File

FEB- 9-89

Field honored for preserving rail trail

Oceana's William Field has been named a Michiganiaan of the Year, and the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail received a big boost in circulation when the two of them were featured in this past Sunday's Michigan Magazine edition of The Detroit News.

Field was one of 15 residents saluted across the state by the newspaper in its 11th annual awards program.

"In each case, large or small, someone went further than need be, went beyond the call, for the betterment of the community and of each of us," the magazine said.

Field was chosen for his successful struggle to save the abandoned Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad right-of-way or Michigan's first linear park, the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail.

The Shelby man first discovered the idea while on a family vacation in Wisconsin in the late 1960s. He saw what that state had done with its aban-



Bill Field

doned tracks and he hung on to the idea until the C&O announced it would be tearing up the tracks between Hart and Montague.

Field's proposal for the county to own the 22-mile rail corridor for a biking and hiking trail met with more than a little opposition. And when his fellow county commissioners formally rejected the idea, "I went out the next day and bought the property myself."

Field put up \$175,000 of his own money to save his 20-year dream, and then sold off excess property to recoup his investment.

The controversial trail probably cost him another term on the county board, but looking back he said this week it was probably a "godsend" the county turned him down. "It never

would have worked at the county level," he said. "The trail would have become politically fractionalized and broken up."

"I'm very pleased with the way it came out as a state park," he continued. "That answered all our insurance questions and they (the state parks) have a very good track record. I think it will be very well run."

Field noted the key support the trail project received from Joel Mikkelsen and Barney Steen and "many" others, as well as the City of Hart who threw its political weight behind the project and briefly took over ownership to pave the way for the state accepting it.

A fruit farmer by trade, the 61-year-old Field has been behind other preservation projects of Oceana County's history.

Today the trail is graded from Montague to Hart and is being used by snowmobilers and cross-country skiers. In the spring contractors, paid by the Michigan Land Trust Fund, will begin laying an eight-foot wide asphalt bicycle path between Hart and New Era, while funds are being sought to complete the paving to Montague.

The trail runs through many of Oceana's prettiest and most unspoiled spots, through the quiet places and near the villages which were once served by the C&O. A dedication of the trail is planned for early summer.

Field, the husband of recently retired county Clerk Elizabeth Field, said family members have been invited to an awards ceremony hosted by The Detroit News, but a date has not yet been set.

"Right now I'm just excited about spring coming and we can get some blacktop down," he said.

<

BILL FIELD
616-861-5991



PAUL E. INGLIS
OCEANA COUNTY
ADMINISTRATOR/FISCAL OFFICER

P.O. Box 14, Hart, MI 49420
Phone (616) 873-4835

September 15, 1993

Mr. Joel Mikkelsen
Michigan Chapter of Rails to Trails Conservancy
Box 269, Stony Lake Road
New Era, Michigan 49446

RE: Montague - Hart Rail Trail
Impact on Oceana County

Dear Joel:

I have been requested to relate, from the County's perspective, how the Montague - Hart Rail Trail has impacted Oceana County during the past 4 - 5 years. Several things come to mind as I think about all the negative reasons that were offered several years ago for opposing the development and operation of the trail.

It was feared that users would litter the trails, trespass on private property and not respect the rights of others to use the trail. First, the trail was developed and is maintained and patrolled by the Department of Natural Resources. To the best of my knowledge, there have been no reported incidents of trespassing, vandalism or rights violations since the development and opening of the trail in Oceana County. In one (1) instance of alleged trespassing, it was determined that the complaining party did not own the property; rather, the property was part of trail right-of-way.

Neither the Sheriff's Department nor the Michigan State Police have had to respond to any situations or incidents on the trail due to its increased utilization. I have discussed the matter with 79th District Court staff and they have not had any influx of misdemeanants come through their system due to the issuance of citations on the trail for not purchasing a user permit or for failing to use the trail in the proper manner. The DNR staff are responsible for writing permits and issuing citations. No local law enforcement personnel are involved.

Some other concerns raised were:

1. Increased Taxes - the DNR purchased, developed and maintains

the complete 21 mile rail trail at State expense. No local tax dollars were spent on the process. There has been no increase in costs to the County for law enforcement or fire protection services. The land removed from the tax base of the County was minimal.

2. Decreased Wildlife - much of the trail traverses portions of the County that are populated or on the fringe of populated areas. The wildlife have not been affected by the trail. Their routines may have been altered slightly but groups such as the Audubon Society report sightings of many birds and animals on the trail.

3. Increase in Crime Rate - this is probably the most often used reason given for objecting to the rail trail. As stated, there have been no incidents on the trail that would require increased law enforcement protection or activity. The trail is patrolled regularly by DNR staff. With respect to utilization, over 90% of the trail users are families from all parts of the country -- city and rural residents alike. There are no unauthorized vehicles on the trail and there have been no holdups or ambushes of trail users by thieves or petty criminals. There have been no reports of theft of farm produce along or near the trail right-of-way. Litter has never been a problem. The trail users are people who seek recreational enjoyment and exercise as their purpose for being on the trail. As Oceana County's Emergency Ambulance Services Director, our EMS personnel have never been dispatched to the trail to treat or transport patients.

Who would pay for the purchase, development and maintenance of the trail? Response -- the DNR with State Recreation Fund or State General Fund monies. The DNR would be responsible for policing the trail for permit sales and other law enforcement matters. Usage on the trail from Hart - Montague has been determined by the DNR. Bicyclers, joggers, walkers, cross-country skiers, horseback riders and snowmobilers are allowed. No motor driven vehicles are allowed. All points on the trail that intersect a public road are clearly marked with stop signs. Several parking areas have been developed at each end of the trail and in the municipalities through which the trail runs. Shelters for rest stops and picnics exist throughout the course of the trail.

The presence of the trail in Oceana County has provided a safe and enjoyable haven for bicyclists, joggers, walkers and snow sports enthusiasts who do not have to fear being run over by a drunken, speeding or inattentive motorist.

The DNR and local merchants have confirmed that the trail has brought thousands of visitors to the communities of Montague, Rothbury, New Era, Shelby, Mears, Hart and even Pentwater beyond the end of the trail. These are people who would never have stopped to visit local attractions or shop in the local stores and retail businesses because the US 31 expressway would have taken them elsewhere for their recreational pursuits. The local gas stations,

convenience stores, ice cream parlors and grocery stores have benefitted from the influx of trail users. Bike sales, bike rental and bike repair shops are open for business and all of them appear to be thriving.

Most significantly, the Hart - Montague Rail Trail has provided thousands of people with an outlet for a healthy form of exercise and family recreation. Countless people in and out of Oceana County who did not exercise for years (or not at all) because they had no outlet have taken advantage of the opportunity to improve their health with hours of bicycling, walking or jogging in a safe environment while enjoying the scenic beauty of Oceana County. No one can argue against the impact of the trail on the health and safety of people in and out of the community as evidenced by the number of users ranging in age from infant to 85 years.

I have not heard one (1) negative comment about the trail's appearance or its location. My mother's property in the Village of Shelby abuts the trail and it has enhanced the appearance of the area (formerly, a deep, weed-filled, mosquito-infested ditch abutted her property). There has never been a problem with weeds or unmowed grass on the right-of-way and litter and broken glass have never been left on the neighboring lawns.

If there is any additional information that I can provide you, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,



Paul E. Inglis
Oceana County
Administrator/Fiscal Officer

PEI/sj

cc: File

TOWNSHIP OF BLOOMINGDALE

POST OFFICE BOX 11
BLOOMINGDALE, MICHIGAN 49028
OFFICE 521-3800 FAX 521-3534

DAVID E. BLY
SUPERVISOR
521-3288

LINDA M. STANGE
CLERK
628-4432

GEORGE SCAMENORN
TREASURER
521-4414

November 23, 1994

Gerald Henshaw, Chairperson
Leelanau County Commission
C/O Village of Suttons Bay
P.O. Box 85
Suttons Bay, MI 49682

Dear Mr. Henshaw,

We understand that you are considering a linear trail in your area. We have the Kal-Haven Trail crossing our township, using the road bed of an abandoned rail road. Most people residing in this area consider the trail an asset.

When the Kal-Haven Trail was first proposed some of the land owners with property adjacent to the former rail road were concerned. They anticipated problems when the trail would be opened to public use. I'm happy to report that these fears were unfounded.

The DNR provides regular supervision of the trail. They check for trail condition, passes and any use not conforming to that which is approved. We rarely hear of problems.

Our trail is extensively used by families and groups such as scouts, churches, clubs, etc. The hikers and bikers are people who seem to take care of the property and are concerned about the environment. They are people we like to have passing through the area.

In conclusion, I believe the trail is a benefit to our community. It serves its intended purpose and has side benefits such as bringing business to the retail businesses. I would not hesitate to recommend such a trail if it functions as ours does.

Good luck in your endeavor.

CC; Richard Bahle, Supervisor

Sincerely,



David E. Bly, Supervisor

Alamo Township
7901 North 6th Street
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49009
(616) 382-3366

MR. DAVID MARSH

12-9-94

SUPERINTENDENT KA; HAVEN TRAIL

REF. THE KAL HAVEN TRAIL IN ALAMO TWP.

THE TRAIL HAS BEEN GOING FOR 4-5 YEARS THERE HAS BEEN NO
PROBLEM ON IT IN ALAMO TWP. IN FACT IT HAS BEEN A LARGE
SUCCESS IN THE TWP. IT GET A LOT OF YEAR AROUND USE, EVEN THE
SNOWMOBILERS AND THE SKIERS GET ALONG TOGETHER. THERE HAS
BEEN NO CRIME ON THE TRAIL AND THE PEOPLE WHO USE THE TRAIL
ARE VERY GOOD ABOUT THE LITTER, THEY EVEN PICK IT UP IF
THEY FIND ANY.

WE HAVE A RESTAURANT NEAR THE TRAIL THAT HAS PICKED UP
BUSINESS FROM THE TRAIL. IT HAS BEEN GOOD FOR TWP AND THE
PEOPLE IN THE AREA.

GARRY HELMER
ALAMO TWP SUPERVISOR



Pine Grove Township

P.O. BOX 28

KENDALL, MICHIGAN 49062

SUPERVISOR

Elenor Richards

CLERK

Judith Ritter

TREASURER

Vera Huittman

TRUSTEE

Mary Rundel

TRUSTEE

Craig Cooley

DECEMBER 6, 1994

DAVID MARSH, UNIT SUPERVISOR
23960 RUGGLES
SOUTH HAVEN, MI 49090

DEAR MR. MARSH,

THIS LETTER IS TO SUPPLY YOU WITH INFORMATION AS TO THE IMPACT
THE KAL-HAVEN TRAIL HAS MADE TO RESIDENTS OF PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP.

PINE GROVE HAS ATTEMPTED TO MAINTAIN A RURAL ATMOSPHERE. BY SO
DOING, THIS HAS PROVIDED THE USERS OF THE TRAIL AN OPPORTUNITY TO
VIEW THIS RURAL SETTING. WE HAVE FOUND THIS TO BE OF GREAT
BENEFIT TO RETIRED INDIVIDUALS. BY BIKING ON THE TRAIL THEY CAN
SEE NATURE AT IT'S BEST AND ALSO HAVE A SAFER AREA TO RIDE THAN
THE HIGHWAY. THE USERS ALSO HAVE BROUGHT ADDITIONAL BUSINESS IN
THE FOOD AND LODGING AREAS. WE HAVE RECEIVED LITTLE TO NO
NEGATIVE REPORTS FROM OUR RESIDENTS. WE CAN ONLY REPORT THAT THE
TRAIL HAS BEEN A BENEFIT TO OUR TOWNSHIP AND OUR TOWNSHIP
RESIDENTS.

SINCERELY,

ELENOR RICHARDS, SUPERVISOR
PINE GROVE TOWNSHIP

CHIEF OF POLICE, JOHN JOSTEN

VILLAGE OF BLOOMINGDALE

P.O. Box 69, Bloomingdale, MI 49026

Phone (616) 521-3100

Date: 12/6/94

Subj: Kal Haven Trail

To: David Marsh
23960 Ruggles Rd.
South Haven Mi. 49090

Dear Mr. Marsh,

The Village President has asked me to comment on vandalism on the Kal Haven Trail.

It has been my observation as being Chief Of Police for the Village of Bloomingdale for nearly two years that a problem with vandalism originating from the trail which passes directly through the Village of Bloomingdale is neqligible.

In fact the trail brings numerous amounts of bikers whom stop at Village convience stores in the summer time and make purchases. In the winter time we have numerous amounts of snowmobiles which pass through the village and make purchases as well.

Bob Lagay owner of the Four Way Convience store in Bloomingdale adds: "The Kal Haven trail is a major part of our business, I'd like to see more events on the trail."

Most persons using the trail are there to enjoy nature and being out of doors. If I can be any further assistance in this matter please feel free to call.

Respectfully Submitted,


John Josten Village Police Chief


Richard Dickerson Village President

MEIJER
November 29, 1994

Mr. Roland Harmes
Director of Michigan Dept of
Natural Resources
P. O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Mr. Harmes:

I read with much interest the enclosed article concerning the DNR and the Leelanau rail-to-trails project. I am so pleased with your decision; not only is it right, but it reinforces our Montcalm County efforts and the White Pine trail efforts.

I'm 75 years old and I remember when our fields were 3-10 acres; now with the big farm equipment the fields are 15-30 times that size, eliminating most of the nesting fence-foilage row areas. No wonder after spending 8 million dollars in ten years in Michigan, we couldn't bring back the pheasants.

Also with larger farm equipment and larger fields, there are less farmers doing the same amount of production. Those ex-farmers who are now city folk need a place for recreation in the country.

With every mile of rail-to-trail saved, we save 2 miles of foilage counting both sides. I hope we get all possible help from our Legislature for any and all of these projects.

These trails are a big plus for the tourist industry. I read where Canada is converting all vacated rail area possible to trails to assist their tourist industry. The Michigan economy needs our tourists.

Of course you know all these and many more reasons why these projects are so vital. I just wanted to encourage you to keep up the good work. Thank you for your efforts.

Sincerely,



Fred Meijer

CC: Larry DeVuyst
Tom Washington

P.S. Furthermore, I have over \$265,000 invested toward the Montcalm Hartland trail, plus I've pledged at least another \$25,000 and some matching funds. I'm committed for a lot of money for our common, very worthwhile goal.

Office of Village President
Shelby Village
P.O. Box 86
Shelby, MI 49455
October 15, 1991

Mr. Joel Mikkelsen
Rails to Trails Conservancy
913 W. Holmes, Suite 227-D
Lansing, MI 48910

Dear Joel,

As requested, I have taken a few minutes to reflect on the impact of the Oceana/Muskegon-Hart to Montague Rail Trail which runs right through the Village of Shelby. This trail runs along/through the old industrial section of Shelby Village next to Oceana Foods, the former Shelby Saw Mill, the former Harris Pie Co. and a busy feed and chemical vendor called Cheevers. In addition to the old industrial section of town, the trail runs next to the new industrial section of town but the trail is some distance from these buildings whereas the trail is next to the old buildings in the old section of town. (One can see loading docks etc. in the old section of town)

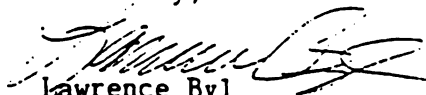
There were several business/industries which never gained support for the rail trail concept. It is my opinion that these industries generally are in the business of processing or selling commodities such as chemicals or fertilizers which may pose as a minimal risk to rail trail users in the event of leakage or if there was a trespass problem with rail trail users. I am not aware of any problems in the 6 years with any of these older or newer industries and rail trail users.

Most of the food vendors have really appreciated the rail trail and the added tourists to the area. A bed and breakfast business was recently established next to the trail in response for increased demand for rooms. The village in cooperation with the local Chamber of Commerce and Rotary Club have built a pavilion for local use and rail trail users.

The public bathroom situation continues to be a problem in our local parks including the rail trail area. It appears that por-ti-jons are the best way to go at this point.

Overall I have to say that the trail has had a real positive impact on our community including the elderly who enjoy walking, the young children who are first learning how to ride bikes, and all those in between. I guess if I were in the business of selling chemicals and fertilizers I would have some second thoughts about thousands of trail users next to my business but the overall benefit outweighs any potential problems that I have seen.

Sincerely,


Lawrence Byl
Shelby Village President

Oceana County Sheriff Department

FRED S. KORB, SHERIFF
KENNETH M. PRINCE, UNDERSHERIFF

PHONE (616) 873-2121
1-800-442-0043

P.O. BOX 32
HART, MI 49420

October 21, 1991

Mr. Joel Mikkelsen, Vice Chairman
Michigan Chapter, Rails to Trails Conservancy
Box 269
New Era, MI 49446

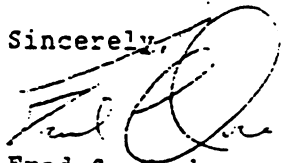
Dear Mr. Mikkelsen:

In reference your letter requesting information regarding the rail trail and the impact it has had on this department, please be advised that since this is a State Park, and is patrolled by the DNR, there has been no noticeable impact on our department.

We have had occasion to assist the DNR on a couple of occasions, but neither time has it been of any significance, and we have not had any enforcement problems of any kind.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Fred S. Korb
Sheriff

FSK:ab

STATE OF MICHIGAN



SOURCES COMMISSION
J. FLUMARTY
GUYER
IT MYERS
POUPORE

JOHN ENGLER, Governor

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

DELBERT RECTOR, Director

NEWAYGO STATE PARK

SILVER LAKE STATE PARK

HART-MONTAGUE BICYCLE TRAIL STATE PARK

September 30, 1991

Mr. Joel Mikkelsen, Vice-Chairman
Michigan Chapter
Rails-To-Trails Conservancy
Box 269
New Era, Michigan 49446

Dear Joel,

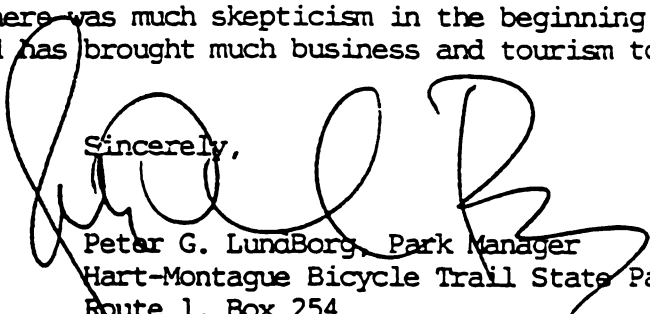
Our attendance for the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park this year has been just a bit over 58,000 compared with 42,000 last season. This figure is a guess based on hourly counts of users taken at different times over the period. A better gauge of activities are our permit sales records. Last year 1,340 daily and 533 annual type permits were sold. This year we have sold 5,800 dailies and nearly 1,200 annuals!

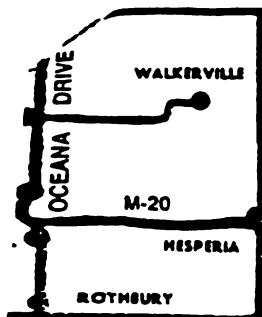
The year's sales have generated an income of about \$31,000. Our costs to operate the trail were about \$35,000/\$36,000. Those figures include salaries and wages; employee benefits; vehicle rental, maintenance, and gasoline; and trail maintenance costs.

Law enforcement problems have involved motor vehicle traffic on the trail, trespass by adjacent property owners, and vandalism to trail signs and facilities. The motor vehicle violations have been minimal for the last year as have other enforcement problems. With any new park facility, such as this, the vandalism rate for the first year or so always seems to be the greatest. Once people become use to the facility's existence damage decreases and that has been the case with this trail.

The trail's heavy use can probably be based on strong local support and the paved riding surface. Although there was much skepticism in the beginning, the trail has been a great success and has brought much business and tourism to the area.

Sincerely,

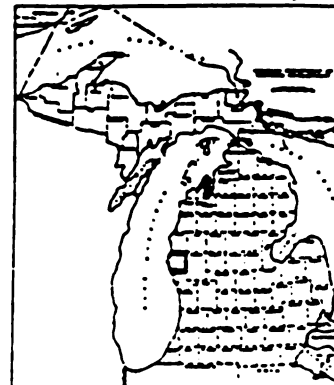

Peter G. Lundborg, Park Manager
Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail State Park
Route 1, Box 254
Mears, Michigan 49436
616-873-3083



Oceana County
Board of Commissioners

COUNTY BUILDING

HART, MICHIGAN 49420



September 26, 1991

Joel Mikkelsen, Vice Chair
Michigan Chapter, Rails to Trails Conservancy
R#1
New Era, Michigan 49446

RE: Hart-Montague Rail Trail

Dear Joel: ;

As you had much to do with development of the Rail Trail, I want to take this means to commend you and your organization on the great success of the project. As I drive along Oceana Drive between Shelby and New Era I am continually amazed at the number of Trail users. As the shelter building is going up behind my office, I have been keeping track of its progress, and have taken several photos of it at different stages of construction. It will be a fine addition to the Trail in Shelby.

Some friends in Lakeview told me that they had tried to organize a Rail Trail there, but with no success. They were very envious of what we now have.

Again, congratulations on a fine job.

Yours very truly,

Robert R Wheeler
Oceana County Commission

RRW/pa

Sunday, July 1, 1980

Rails to trails shows it can work in west Michigan

By MARK RANZENBERGER
Daily News staff writer
SHELBY — For 100 years, a ribbon of steel ran from Hart to Montague in western Michigan's Oasans and Muskegon counties. Today, the first 12 miles of a ribbon of asphalt runs along the same route, the old Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad right of way. The Hart-Montague Rail Trail opened last summer and more than 44,000 bicycle riders used the trail the first year it was open, according to Dale McDonald, Michigan State Park ranger. The state park system administers the Hart-Montague Trail.

A similar bicycle trail has been proposed to use the old CSX right of way from downtown Midland to Clare. Officials of the Midland Foundation have been talking to CSX Transportation officials about purchasing the right of way. Midland County Parks and Recreation Commission members have been studying how such a trail might be built and maintained.

A group of 23 Midlanders, including members of the Parks Commission, the Midland Foundation, Midland County government and other guests, went to Oasans County to ride the trail. Now it operates and learns from mistakes made in building west Michigan rail trail.

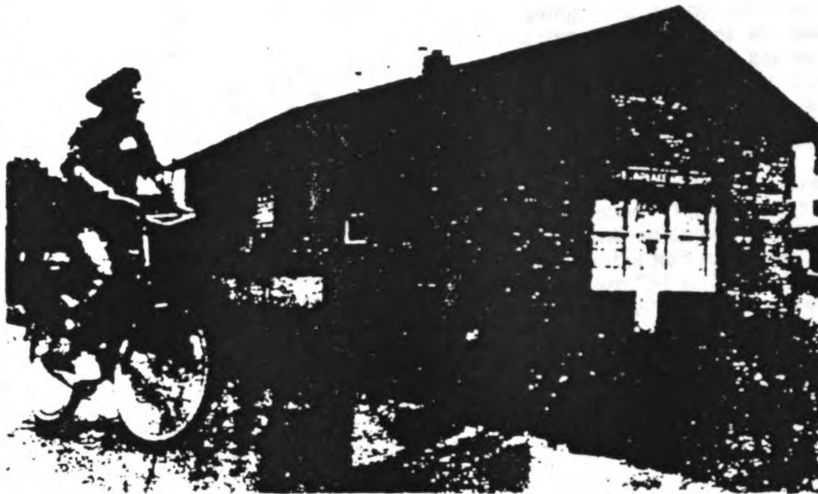
Like the proposed Midland County trail, the Hart-Montague Trail sparked its share of controversy, according to Roger Storm, a member of the Michigan Rails-to-Trails Conservancy. His up backs efforts to turn abandoned railroad rights of way into hiking, biking, skiing and equestrian trails.

Storm said former Oasans County commissioner William Deane first proposed the county lease the west Michigan right of way after the railroad was abandoned in 1962. The other county commissioners refused. Deane felt so strongly about it that he bought the right of himself.

Deane then gave the 22-mile strip of land to the state, which put it under the umbrella of state parks system.

Safety and the possibility of users trespassing continue to concern some adjacent owners.

The concept is to have fun and recreation and it's going to come at a price when someone gets hurt or killed," said Wil Feuhring, an asparagus farmer whose land abuts the trail.



Midland's Beth Kurtz peddles past the chigan. (Daily News photo by Mark Shelby Station, one of the landmarks along the Ranzenberger) trail between Hart and Montague in west Mi-

mer whose land abuts the trail. He said he's had a few problems with trail users raiding the asparagus from his fields. "But not any more than you'd get from the roadside."

Feuhring said a bigger problem comes from snowmobilers, who used the railroad right of way before it was turned into a bicycle trail. "We've had more trouble in the winter from people going off the trail," Feuhring said.

Under terms of the deal to the state, snowmobilers are still allowed to use the Hart-Montague Trail.

To promote safety, the state has erected stop signs to try to stop the bicyclists before they cross public roads. "There are stop signs, but bikers don't stop for stop signs in the city," said Montague Police Chief Robert Walker.

"We've had some close calls," park ranger Peter Lundborg admitted. "But I'd bet those people stop and look now."

Rangers and police officers said the trail is still safer than riding on the road. "We've taken large numbers of bicycles off our business routes," Walker said.

"If you were to put all the people who ride on this along U.S. 31 (the main state highway through the area), you'd have a very dangerous situation," Lundborg

said.

"People look out for each other," said Shirley McKay, who runs a bike rental shop along the trail near Mears. McKay estimated the average age of trail users was over 55. Some of the users are also handicapped, using motorized wheelchairs to traverse the trail's gentle grades.

McKay said her bike rental business is doing well. "My initial thought was, who's going to want to rent a bicycle? That's a stupid thing to do," McKay said. But older riders routinely take the single-speed, wide-tired Roadmaster bikes her family has for rent out on the trail.

The McKays are among several business operators who have decided there is a dollar to be made serving trail riders. In Shelby, Bedson's Drive-In Restaurant added a walk-up window facing the trail. Shelby businesses away from the trail advertise along it.

"We've got neighbors all up and down the trail who want to develop restaurants and that type of thing," McKay said.

"There was this fear of people trespassing on the adjacent property, but it turns out the adjacent property owners want people to come off the trail," Storm said.

The very popularity of the trail is proving to be a challenge in

some areas, according to Lundborg. Parking has the potential to become a headache in some areas. "We only own, maximum, a strip of land 100 feet wide," Lundborg said. "In the villages, it's only 30 feet wide." That does not leave much room for parking lots.

Local cities and villages, like Hart, Shelby, Mears and Montague, are now looking at ways to develop more parking for rail-trail users.

It was not cheap to pave the trail, according to McDonald. He

said the first 12 miles cost \$508,000 to pave; this year, engineering estimates put the price tag of paving the next 9.3 miles at \$312,000. State quality-of-life bond money paid the cost, the rangers said.

The law enforcement officers said development of the trail has actually reduced noise and vandalism problems for adjacent landowners. All-terrain vehicles are banned from using the rail trail and are rarely seen now. "The ATVs left after the bicycles came in," McDonald said.

The rangers have given out seven tickets for motorized vehicle violations this year, mostly on the unpaved section of trail. The tickets carry a \$100 fine and rangers have the authority to confiscate the machine until the ticket is paid.

Vandalism along the trail has been surprisingly low, according to McDonald, who patrols the trail. He said a number of signs identifying the trail suddenly disappeared last summer. "I'd bet if you looked in some college dorm rooms, you'd find a lot of Hart-Montague Rail Trail signs," McDonald said.

Feuhring, the asparagus farmer who originally opposed the trail and still maintains skepticism about it, told the Midland group, "I wished they would have solved the problems before they opened it."

Managers of the Hart-Montague Trail admit they are still learning how to administer a rail trail and make it work. But they say the problems have been few, and the benefits and potential benefits for recreation and local business are many.

"There was this fear of people trespassing on the adjacent property, but it turns out the adjacent property owners want people to come off the trail."

— Roger Storm
Michigan Rails-to-Trails Conservancy



Roger Storm

Bike trail users logged many miles

WILLA KENOYER

Ironicle correspondent

SHELBY — Snow may have dented Verna Craker to logging by 1,630 miles on the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail this season. She plans to be back for more miles next season.

Mrs. Craker, who will celebrate her 70th birthday later this month, began riding the 17-mile round trip from Shelby to Hart every day soon after the bicycle trail opened in May. "I was riding for 500 miles. At the weather stayed good. I kept on riding," she said last week.

When she and her husband, Earl, McKay, returned to Harlingen, Texas, sometime within the next two weeks, she plans to continue her daily bicycle rides.

Mrs. Craker was among the estimated 45,550 cyclists that used the Hart-Montague Bicycle Trail this summer, according to Peter LundBorg, manager of Silver Lake State Park.

"We came to that estimate by counting from 30 to 45 riders per hour who passed a given point between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. each day," LundBorg said.

SHIRLEY MCKAY, who operates McKay Scenic Trail Bicycle Rental in Mears with her husband, Perry, has watched a steady increase in the number of cyclists using the trail since Memorial Day weekend. "During the summer, traffic on the trail would be heavy by 7 a.m.," she said.



Craker



McKay

By summer's end the guest book left on the counter of the bike rental shop contained the names of riders from 45 different states including Alaska and Hawaii, several provinces of Canada, Venezuela and West Germany. "I didn't put the book out until the end of July, and not everyone who came in to rent bicycles signed," she said.

Most of the people who rented bicycles came during the middle of the week and often used them for less than two hours, she said.

"FOR MANY of these people, it was their first time on a bicycle in 20 years," she said. "And we reminded them that they were going to have to make a round trip — they'd have to ride back as far as they rode out."

The quick turn-around of bicycles meant that the McKays never had to turn anyone away who wanted to rent a bike, but at one point on July 3 they had only two cycles left in the barn. "That was our busiest weekend," she said.

The McKays saw many families and vacationers at the picnic tables near their shop. "And we never heard one negative comment from all the people we talked to," Mrs. McKay said.

MRS. CRAKER was one of the people Mrs. McKay saw often on the trail.

"During the summer I'd make the trip to Hart alone in the morning," Mrs. Craker said. "Lately, my friend Mary Morningstar has been riding with me in the afternoon. She has ridden 1,470 miles on the trail since it opened."

Mrs. Craker first learned to ride a bicycle when she was 50 years old. "When my husband retired, he said he was going to take up bicycling," she said. "I thought I was going to break my neck before I learned. I was black and blue all over." She persuaded her husband to make her a set of training wheels to make learning easier, she said.

"WE RIDE the trail together, sometimes," Mrs. Craker said. "My husband doesn't ride as much as I do, but he's seven years older than I am." Mrs. Craker enjoys the exercise and the scenery along the trail. "One day we saw seven deer, and another time a family of raccoons," she said. "And there are always the rabbits. Mrs. Morningstar once saw a fox."

LundBorg said he expects trail use to drop slightly when park rangers begin selling user permits in the spring. "There is always resistance to user permits at first," he said. "But we have no other way to raise operating revenue for the trail." It is expected users will be able to buy individual, family, daily and season permits from private vendors or from park rangers.

"The fee schedule we have received from the Natural Resources Commission lists individual annual permits at \$10, and individual daily permits \$2," LundBorg said. "Family annual permits will be \$25, and daily \$5."

COLD WEATHER will change trail use, but won't end it, LundBorg said. With deer season starting Nov. 15, LundBorg stressed that hunting from the trail is banned.

"We will be patrolling the trail," he said. "Hunters will be able to use the trail to get where they are going, but they cannot hunt from the trail. You can't drive down the trail. They can carry guns as long as they are unloaded, just as they have been carrying their bows in a case."

Once a four-inch pack of snow has been developed, snowmobiling will be allowed along the trail. "We will have to resolve the question of who will be grooming the trail," LundBorg said.