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Coordinating Sensible Stewardship Of The Land

Location: Traverse City Governmental Center, Commission Chambers
400 Boardman Avenue
Traverse City, MI 49684

Boardman River Dams Implementation Team

Grand Traverse County	City of Traverse City
Traverse City Light and Power Department	Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition	Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Michigan Department of Natural Resources	US Fish and Wildlife Service
Grand Traverse Conservation District (Ex officio)	Conservation Resource Alliance (Ex officio)
Rotary Camps and Services (Ex officio)	Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay (Ex officio)

Meeting Minutes

Date: October 15, 2009

Facilitator: Todd Kalish, Michigan Department of Natural Resources

Notes: Tape recording and hand written notes by Nate Winkler, Conservation Resource Alliance

Present:

Ben Bifoss (City of Traverse City)
John Sych (alternate-Grand Traverse County)
Becky Ewing (Rotary Camps and Services)
Steve Largent, Lew Coulter (Grand Traverse Conservation District)
Nate Winkler, Amy Beyer (Conservation Resource Alliance)
Jim Schramm (Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition)
Andy Knott (Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay)

Absent:

Jim Pawloski (Michigan Department of Environmental Quality)
Mark Rollenhagen (Traverse City Light and Power Department)
Dennis Aloia (Grand Traverse County)
Brett Fessell (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians)
Rick Westerhof (US Fish and Wildlife Service)

1:00-1:05

Introductions

Introductions were made around the chambers by those in attendance

1:05

Public Comment

No public comment was offered

1:05-1:10

Review and Approval of Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2009

Review and approval pushed to the end of the meeting while copies were made for those that did not bring their own.

1:10-1:15

Presentation by Gabe Schneider from Senator Levin's office regarding the Army Corps of Engineers

Gabe Schneider gave a legislative background on the Army Corps of Engineers and how section 506 and the Great Lakes Fisheries and Ecosystem Restoration (GLFER) program came into being.

Carl Levin has been able to secure \$4 million in appropriations to date, and for fy 2010 \$2.5 million is up for consideration and signing by the President. Funding in fy 2011 is expected to be included in the President's budget. Pending changes to legislation include non-federal interest may supply up to 100% of in-kind up to date to count for 35% match.

Current rules say that any work done prior to signing a Preliminary Restoration Plan (PRP) cannot be used as match but Levin's office is attempting to change such rules (bottom line-unsure of when this legislation will be passed).

Levin's office is supportive of this project which is why they are trying to push through this legislation keeping in mind there are 12-15 other GLFER projects in the Great Lakes.

1:15-1:20

Fundraising report: discussion item

Winkler reviewed the funding table provided in the meeting packet and went over recent grant proposals.

Beyer indicated that this was a first draft at consolidating funding opportunities and proposal activity of team members. Based on discussion, the following sources will be added to the prospective list for further investigation: Great Lakes Fish Trust (Kalish), Great Lakes Protection Fund (Schramm), and to the pending list: DNR Inland Fish Grant (Kalish).

Beyer asked that as we move forward, any funding opportunities and proposal activity be tracked through Winkler to keep the funding plan up to date.

It was agreed that a project budget should be developed to show both needed and committed funds.

1:20-2:05 Corps of Engineers vs private contractor analysis: discussion/decision item

Todd Kalish gave brief overview of the section 506 program and how it relates to the Boardman River Dams project

Kalish also elaborated on the ITs desire to get a timeline and cost estimate for both a private NEPA analysis and a construction/engineering design.

To that end, a document submitted to the IT which was generated by URS, ECT, and MACTEC gave a very rough estimate of timeframes and costs for the NEPA analysis and the design/construction.

Beyer noted that the Corps has provided nothing on paper regarding planning and cost estimates and should the IT ask the Corps to provide a written response.

Action (1)

It was agreed by the IT to generate a letter to be sent to the Corps regarding planning and cost estimates with a request for a written response.

Gabe Schneider indicated that the IT would be welcome to submit a letter with questions to Schneider and he would submit that to the Corps via Levin's office on letterhead.

Action (2)

A decision among the IT voting members was made to continue with proceeding with a letter of interest and a visit with the Army Corps at Detroit.

After discussion, open items were related including the November 2nd Army Corps top civilian tour of the project, explore options for lead agency on the NEPA analysis and construction/engineering design, cost and timelines for the Cass Rd. crossing, and including South Airport Rd. as part of the design.

2:05-2:25 Contract approval: discussion/decision item

The final version of the Consultant Agreement was presented, calling out especially the indemnification issue, one year or six month term, and the not to exceed amount.

Action

A vote was put to the IT to approve the contract and was unanimously accepted.

2:25-2:40 Open Meetings Act draft administrative rules: discussion/decision item

Winkler indicated that a copy of OMA rules from the city and was being re-worked to fit the IT framework. It would be distributed in draft form upon completion

2:40-2:50 Begin drawdown process of Brown Bridge and Sabin Ponds: discussion/decision item

Winkler indicated that it would be a positive step to drawdown ponds because water quality standards are being violated, it would reduce liability to owners, shows public that the process is not stalled out, and gives an indication of where the river channel will be upon completion.

A discussion followed on how and when to proceed with planning for drawdown. The group as a whole agreed that a management plan is needed prior to permit activity. Issues that need to be addressed include exposed sediment stabilization, the need to develop an invasive species management plan, the consideration of listed species (i.e. common loons, trumpeter swans), and safety issues.

Jim Schramm brought up the fact that it might take six years to draw the ponds down to accommodate sediment transport and stabilization and would be best to start earlier than later. It was agreed that more information regarding drawdown scenarios should be gathered.

2:50-3:00 IT Chair role

Kalish offered up the IT chair position to anyone interested. As there were no takers, Kalish indicated that he would continue in the role as IT chair.

3:00-3:10 Minutes

Discrepancies in the draft minutes were discussed with Winkler stating he would make corrections and additions.

Action

The draft minutes were approved by the IT with the changes noted.

3:10-3:15 Public Comment

Gabe Schneider indicated he had just received word that the President signed the FY10 Energy and Water Appropriations Bill, which contains \$2,471,000 for GLFER, into law

3:15 Meeting Adjourned