

Stronach Township 2013 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan



Approved by the
Stronach Township Planning Commission
and
Adopted by the Stronach Township Board
(3/13/2013)



TOWNSHIP OF STRONACH
(Manistee County)
2471 Main St RR3
Manistee Michigan, 49660

Township of Stronach
County of Manistee, Michigan
Resolution No: 2

Township Board Resolution to Adopt the
2013 Stronach Township Master Plan and 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan

WHEREAS, the Michigan Planning Enabling Act (MPEA) authorizes the Planning Commission to prepare a Master Plan for the use, development and preservation of all lands in the Township; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission prepared a proposed new (OR updated) Master Plan and submitted the plan to the Township Board for review and comment; and

WHEREAS, on September 9th, 2012 the Stronach Township received and reviewed the proposed Master Plan prepared by the Planning Commission and authorized distribution of the Master Plan to the Notice Group entities identified in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, notice was provided to the Notice Group entities as provided in the MPEA; and

WHEREAS, the Stronach Township Board held an advertised public hearing on March 13th, 2013 after passing resolution asserting control over adoption of the Master Plan to consider public comment on the proposed new Master Plan, and to further review and comment on the proposed new Master Plan; and

WHEREAS, the Township Board finds that the proposed new Master Plan is desirable and proper and furthers the use, preservation and development of goals and strategies of the Township;

WHEREAS, the MPEA authorizes the Township Board to assert by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan;

THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED AS FOLLOWS:

1. Adoption of the 2013 Stronach Township Master Plan and 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan: The Township Board hereby approves and adopts the proposed 2013 Master Plan, including all of the chapters, figures, maps and tables contained therein. Pursuant to MCL 125.3843 the Township Board has asserted by resolution its right to approve or reject the proposed Master Plan and therefore the approval granted herein is the final step for adoption of the plan as provided in MCL 125.3843 and therefore the plan is effective as of March 13th, 2013.
2. Distribution to Notice Group: The Township Board approves distribution of adopted plan to the Notice Group.
3. Findings of Fact: The Township Board has made the foregoing determination based on a review of the existing land uses in the Township, a review of the existing Master Plan provisions and maps, input received from the Planning Commission and public forum and surveys, and with the assistance of the Manistee County Planning Department and finds that the new Master Plan will accurately reflect and implement the Township's goals and strategies for the use, preservation and development of lands in Stronach Township.
4. Effective Date: The Master Plan shall be effective as of the date of adoption of this resolution.

The foregoing resolution offered by Board Member: Phil Landis

Second offered by Board Member: Rick Gerber

Upon roll call vote the following voted:

"Aye" Jenni Tans yes
Phil Vadeboncoeur
Rick Gerber
Phil Landis
Barbara Rishel
(list of names voting "aye")

"Nay" NONE

(list of names voting "nay")

The Supervisor declared the resolution adopted.

Barbara Rishel
Barbara Rishel, Stronach Township Clerk

Acknowledgements

A Thank You is extended to all those who participated throughout the process by attending the public forum, answering surveys and attending planning commission meetings. Your input was very important to the production of this Master Plan.

A Special Thank You is given to the Township Board Members, Planning Commission Members, and Advisory Committee Members. Your hard work and diligence in working through the Master Planning process has provided you with a strong policy guideline for the land use decision making process in Stronach Township.

Stronach Township Planning Commission

Robert Rishel, Chairman
Annie Hooghart, Vice-Chair
Norman Herman, Secretary
Phil Landis, Twp. Board Rep.
Carl Lacki, ZBA Rep.

Larry Thompson, Zoning Administrator

Stronach Township Board

Phil Vadenboncoeur, Supervisor
Jenny Jans, Treasurer
Barbar Rishel, Clerk
Phil Landis, Trustee
Rick Gerber, Trustee

Stronach Township Advisory Committee

Eillen Iler
Ted Batzer
Terry Riley
Tom Waldon

Manistee County Planning Department

Robert Carson, Planning Director
Nancy Baker, Planning Assistant

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Sec. 1 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan

1.1 Introduction

The inclusion of the 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan as a chapter contained within the Township Master Plan was a component of the master planning process that the Stronach Township Planning Commission chose to undertake. The State of Michigan Natural Resources Department (DNR) requires an approved 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan to meet the eligibility requirements for submission of applications for grant funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund.

Under the authority of the Planning Enabling Act of 2008, additional plans such as a Park and Recreation Plan are allowed to be added as chapters within a Master Plan. The process for review and adoption of a Park and Recreation Plan differs from that of a Master Plan. Whereas a Master Plan has to meet the approval of the Township Planning Commission solely, the 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan has to be adopted by the Township Board and then afterwards forwarded to the State of Michigan DNR for their approval. Once approval of the plan is met at the state and local level, the Township will meet eligibility requirements for procurement of grant funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. As a requirement of the State for review of the 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan, the recreation chapter has been separated from the Stronach Township Master Plan. All references to chapters of the Master Plan have been left intact in the Park and Recreation Plan.

The Michigan DNR has provided an outline for what must be contained within a Park and Recreation Plan to meet their requirements. The sections to be included are as follows:

- Community Description
- Administrative Structure
- Recreation Inventory
- Resource Inventory (*optional*)
- Description of the Planning and Public Input Process
- Goals and Objectives
- Action Program

Each of the above headings can be found within this section of the Master Plan, although much more expansive information for the Community Description and Description of the Planning and Public Input Process can be found in the Master Plan Introduction and Methodology sections respectively.

The Resource Inventory, which is optional, is not included within this section. Rather, a Natural Resources Section is included as a section of the Master Plan in Section 10. The Natural Resources Chapter includes an environmental inventory and although it does not specifically locate areas for future recreational enhancement, the inventory provides the information and data needed to help determine the possible locations for future parks.

1.2 Community Description

The Master Plan which includes the 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan is being drafted for the whole of Stronach Township. Stronach Township is an organized township located within south-central Manistee County, where it borders Mason County. Stronach Township is a double township meaning that it contains almost twice the area of a normally bound 36 square mile township. The Township extends east from the shoreline of Manistee Lake to the western boundary of Norman Township located to the east.

Stronach Township was organized in 1855 as a three parent township. In 1868, Stronach Township saw the last split of land area from the original parent in the form of Filer Township which is located to the west. At this time, Stronach Township contained the land area that is currently contained within its jurisdictional boundaries.

Stronach Township has a population of 821 as of the 2010 US Census. There are slightly more males in the total population at 51%, but the total population of males decreased 3.2% from 2000 to 2010, while the female population increased 8.4%. The median age of the total population has increased from 42.0 years of age to 50.4 years of age from the 2000 to 2010 census. More in-depth data on social-economic characteristics can be found in the Socio-economic Profile in section 12 within the Master Plan.

The focus of the 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan encompasses the entire township and all available or warranted recreational sites. From the localized township-maintained parks to the recreational opportunities and sites found within the Manistee National Forest managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS), this plan provides an overview of all recreational opportunities located within the Township.

1.3 Administrative Structure

Stronach Township, a rather rural township, does not maintain a Parks Department. The Township Board, consisting of 5 elected officials, acts as the body that oversees recreation sites within the Township. At one time, the Stronach Township Improvement Association that oversaw beautification and recreation efforts within the Township was established by residents, but has since disbanded. Discussion among the Township Planning Commission members has identified the need for the reformation of this committee, as the volunteer group was successful in establishing the first park and recreation facility in the Township. This was accomplished through donations of land from the Richard Linke family who donated the southern portion of land on which the Stronach Park is currently located, in the unincorporated "Village of Stronach".

Without an established Parks Department, the Township does not maintain staff that is solely devoted to park maintenance and improvements. Rather, maintenance staff of the Township is given direction to maintain and make improvements to the parks as directed by the Township Board. This model effectively works for such a rural township, with minimal maintenance needed to the local park facilities. To further enhance park and recreation sites at the Township level, there is no evident need at this time for a full time staff but what may prove beneficial is development of an organized list of yearly or multi-year tasks that should be undertaken on an approved schedule.

Currently, there isn't a devoted budget line item for parks and recreation in Stronach Township. Funding is withdrawn from the general fund for maintenance, improvements and acquisition of property. Discussion has ensued by the Planning Commission for the creation of a budget by the Township Board to be solely devoted to parks and recreation.

Since the disbanding of the Stronach Township Improvement Association that oversaw beautification and recreation efforts in Stronach Township, there is currently not an organized group of volunteers to assist with park and recreation endeavors. There is interest from community leaders, the Planning Commission and residents alike to create an advisory committee comprised of volunteers to oversee park and recreation maintenance and expansion. Creation of such a committee would be beneficial to the future of park and recreation needs within the community.

1.4 Recreation Inventory

Stronach Township has an abundance of recreational opportunities within the confines of its borders. The rich natural resources of the area allow for an ample variety of recreational opportunities, from fishing, kayaking and canoeing on the Little Manistee River to hiking, biking, horseback riding or hunting on the lands of the Manistee National Forest.

Stronach Township is in the unique position of having recreational opportunities through several governmental entities. These include recreational assets held by the Township, those held by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and those held by the United States Forest Service (USFS). This recreational inventory will be contained within three sub-sections. Each section will outline the recreational assets of each governmental entity as displayed below:

1. Local Recreation Sites (Township Ownership or County Road Access)
2. State Recreation Sites (Michigan DNR Ownership)
3. Federal Recreation Sites (USFS Ownership)

For recreation site locations, please refer to the Stronach Township Park and Recreation Sites Map on page 69. Each recreation site has a reference number on the map that is matched here in the text of the plan for location identification.

1.5 Local Recreation Sites

Local recreation sites are those recreational features that are owned by Stronach Township and under control of the Township Board, as well as a site (river access) that is located along the County road system and is under local authority of the Manistee County Road Commission. Information on the recreation site and the assets present at each site follow:

Site # 2: Stronach Township Park “Village of Stronach” (Stronach Twp.)

Stronach Township Park is located along Water Street in what is referred to as the “Village of Stronach”. This park is an informal active park and would likely meet the criteria of a Neighborhood Park under the Recommended Classification System developed by the DNR, although use of the park by residents seems to extend past the boundaries typically associated with users of a Neighborhood Park. The land area on which the park was developed that is owned by the Township is approximately 14 acres. The actual size of the informal active park is likely closer to 5 acres. The remaining Township owned land area is comprised of natural stands of trees or vegetation, manicured lawn and a vegetated buffer along Manistee Lake.



Stronach Twp. Park

Stronach Township Park is the most active developed park land in Stronach Township and is located in close proximity to the highest density residential development within the Township. Results from the mailed Master Plan Survey suggest that use of the park is rather high by landowners in the Township when compared to other locally managed parks. 76.92% of survey respondents stated that they rarely, sometimes or frequently use the park as compared to those respondents that never use the park at 23.08%. The Stronach Township Park is primarily used for local community and group meetings and outdoor activities, little league baseball games and children’s recreation.

Stronach Township Park contains the following recreational assets:

- 6 Picnic Tables
- 2 Grills
- Parking (approximately 20 paved spaces)
- Potable Water Source
- Playground Equipment (slides, swings and climbing equipment)
- 2 Covered Picnic Areas
- Baseball Field
- Signage
- Garbage Receptacles (Six 55 gallon drums)
- Restrooms



Volunteers maintain ball fields

Stronach Township Park was developed without the necessary features to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act access guidelines. The development of the land area as a park was prior to requirements for ADA accessibility. In determining the Assessment of Accessibility, according to the ranking system established by the DNR this park would receive a rating of 2: "some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines". Paved trails allow for some ADA access, but this could be greatly improved over time.

Site # 27: Claybank Park (Stronach Twp.)

Claybank Park is located on the east side of S. Skocelas Road just south of the M-55 intersection. This park is a passive recreational park with some site development. The park meets the DNR Classification System for a Community Park, and is approximately 42 acres in size. Much of the park is undeveloped natural area which is suitable for trail development.

The park space is not heavily used with only 48.72% of the respondents that were surveyed during the Master Planning Process rarely, sometimes or frequently use the park. When looking at those respondents who sometimes or frequently use the park, the percentage drops to 21.79%. The park is primarily used for community meetings, outdoor recreation and children's recreation. Land area within the park is available for further recreational site enhancement and portions could be used for the creation of hiking and cross-country skiing trails. Survey responses show that 67.95% of the community is in favor of the creation of more hiking and cross-country skiing trails, which was one of the top choices for recreational enhancement.

Claybank Park contains the following recreational assets:

- 7 Picnic Tables
- 4 Grills
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Potable Water Source
- Playground Equipment (basketball hoop, merry-go round, swings, climbing equipment, sandbox, teeter-totter and slide)
- 2 Large Picnic Shelters
- Signage
- Garbage Receptacles
- Restrooms
- ADA Accessibility



Entrance Signage

Claybank Park was designed with some ADA access. The park has compact, unpaved parking areas with handicap reserved spaces which allow for easy access to the park. Paths within the park are packed gravel allowing for circulation of pedestrians in a barrier-free environment. Some recreational features within the park are ADA accessible. In determining the Accessibility Assessment according to the ranking system established by the DNR, Claybank Park would receive a rating of 2 “some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 3: Stronach Road River Access (Manistee County Road Commission)

The Stronach Road River Access is an undeveloped recreational site found at the location of the Stronach Road bridge where it crosses the Little Manistee River. This location is the last bridge crossing immediately before the river flows into Manistee Lake. The undeveloped access, which consists of a small gravel parking area, is used by canoeists and fisherman for access to the lower river and drowned river mouth.

The river access is located within the right-of-way held by the Manistee County Road Commission, and thus, is a Manistee County River Access location. Survey responses display that 31.41% of respondents sometimes or frequently use the access location. The low usage rate may be attributed to the informal aspect of the river access site. Many residents within the Township and the County alike, as well as visitors, are unaware of the access location or its status as a public access.

Stronach Road River Access contains the following recreational assets:

- Parking (approximately 2 unpaved spaces)
- Canoe/Kayak Access (undeveloped)
- Fishing Access

Stronach Road River Access is an undeveloped river access location. The site has not been planned or designed as a recreational site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The Manistee County Road Commission has recently obtained grant funding for improvements to the river access. These improvements will likely include a pack gravel area for parking and improved access to the river itself. Currently, the Stronach Road River Access would rate a 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”, on the DNR’s Accessibility Assessment, but this could change in the near future with improvements slated to take place at this river access location.

1.6 State Recreation Sites

State recreation sites are those sites located on property owned or managed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) which provide recreational public access. Stronach Township has four sites that are under such authority. Information on the recreation site and the assets located at each site can be found below.

Site # 1: Manistee Lake Boat Launch (DNR)

The Manistee Lake Boat Launch is a DNR managed recreation site along the eastern shore of Manistee Lake just north of the Little Manistee River outlet. The property on which the Manistee Lake Boat Launch is located is owned by Stronach Township, but is leased and managed by the DNR. The boat launch area is approximately 4 acres in size and is used by fisherman and recreational boaters seeking access to lower



Manistee Lake. This recreational site underwent improvements as part of the “Explore the Shores” program, which seeks to have many ADA accessible water recreational sites by the year 2025 in Manistee County.

According to survey responses, 75.64% of respondents rarely, sometimes or frequently use this recreational site. When looking at only those respondents who sometimes or frequently use the site, the percentage still remains rather high at 48.72%. The use rate of this site is high and corresponds well with the recreational features that are available at this site. This site is the only boat launch to Manistee Lake located in Stronach Township. The site has a large paved parking area for both vehicles and vehicles with trailers. A paved boat ramp and accompanying ADA accessible pier are also found at the site affording opportunity for everyone to access the lake via boat or fishing from the pier.

Manistee Lake Boat Launch contains the following recreational assets:

- 1 Picnic Table
- Parking (approximately 6 paved spaces for vehicles, 20 paved spaces for vehicles with trailers)
- Boat Launch
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Signage (history, angling, boating, fish species information)
- Fishing Access (ADA accessible pier)
- Restrooms (ADA accessible)
- ADA Accessibility



Fishery Trust Signage

Through the efforts of the “Explore the Shores” program, the Alliance for Economic Success working in conjunction with the DNR, obtained grant funding from the Great Lakes Fishery Trust to develop the Manistee Lake Boat Launch with a handicap accessible dock. On the DNR’s Accessibility Assessment scale, the boat launch would receive a 5 “the entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design”. The park allows for ADA access to all developed areas of the park including restrooms, the fishing pier/boat launch, and interpretive signage area.



Handicap Accessible Fishing Pier

Site # 5: Old Stronach Bridge (DNR)

The bridge on Old Stronach Road where it crosses the Little Manistee River is managed as a river access location. This site caters to fisherman, canoeists and kayakers who wish to access the river. Use of this site is rather high at 48.08% with respondents stating they sometimes or frequently use the site. The site is developed with paved parking and easy access to the river.

Old Stronach Bridge contains the following recreational assets:

- 1 Picnic Table
- 1 Grill
- Parking (approximately 15 paved spaces)
- Canoe/Kayak Launch
- Signage (map and history)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The Old Stronach Bridge access site was not designed to meet ADA requirements, although the use of pavement in the parking lot would not make the site unfeasible to be used by those individuals in need of ADA accessibility to the picnic table and/or grill. Access to the river itself does not meet ADA requirements. In providing a rating under the Accessibility Assessment, it would receive a 2: "some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines".

Site # 8: Little Manistee River Weir (DNR)



Entrance to the Weir Facility during a busy spring steelhead run

The Little Manistee Weir is a DNR operated fish weir and egg/milt collection facility. The facility is located off of the north side of Old Stronach Road between Old Stronach Road Bridge and 6 Mile Road Bridge. Each fall and spring, salmon and steelhead, respectively, ascend the Little Manistee River to spawn in the high quality waters and gravel beds. The DNR closes the weir gates to passage and the river to fishing during specific time periods to allow for the salmon and steelhead to enter the weir and hatchery facility unmolested. After the process of removing eggs and milt from the fish, they are returned to the river. When

the DNR reaches its egg take quota, the weir gate is opened back up to allow fish to ascend upstream to spawning locations.

The Little Manistee Weir provides a location for fisherman to access the river when the season is open. Canoeists and kayakers also use the site as a location to access the river. A very important asset of the weir is its use as an educational feature. The biological cycle of anadromous fish species (salmon and steelhead) is readily observable along the public lands adjacent to the river during the appropriate times of the calendar year and the fish hatchery and weir provide a visible display of the process for allowing fish to leave the river and enter the hatchery.

According to survey responses, the Little Manistee Weir is heavily frequented by residents of the Township. Survey tallies show that 83.33% of respondents rarely, sometimes or frequently use the recreational site. When only tallying responses for those individuals that sometimes or frequently use this site, the percentage only drops to 57.05%. It is important to note that this site, as determined through survey responses for those recreational sites contained within the survey, is the most utilized recreation site within the Township.

Little Manistee River Weir contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 25 spaces)
- Signage (weir operation, regulations, map)
- Camping (located adjacent to the weir property on the south side of Old Stronach Rd.)
- Fishing Access
- Canoe/Kayak Access

The current state of the Little Manistee River Weir does not allow for ADA accessibility. On the DNR's Accessibility Assessment, this recreational site would receive a rating of 1: "none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines". A grant has recently been obtained through the "Explore the Shores" program to make improvements to the site. One principle of the "Explore the Shores" program is for universal design to allow access to all recreational users. The implementation of improvements to the site will likely increase the rating to a 4 or 5 under the DNR's Accessibility Assessment once the project is completed.



A steelhead ascends the fish ladder into the hatchery in early March

Site # 23: 9-Mile Bridge (DNR)

This access site located at the 9-Mile Bridge is on lands owned by the DNR. The site is largely undeveloped, but more so than the majority of the recreation sites on the river. The site is heavily used by canoeists and kayakers seeking access to the river at the well maintained river access. The site is also frequented by fishermen seeking access to the river. To reach this recreation site, follow Skocelas Road south until reaching the 9-Mile Bridge, the access is located immediately adjacent to the south side of the bridge on the west side of the road.

9-Mile Bridge contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (large unpaved parking area for approximately 15 vehicles)
- Canoe/Kayak Launch (good primitive staircase access to river)
- Signage (DNR)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Fishing Line Recycling Box

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: "none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines". This may be improved in the future since this site is the most developed upstream site located in Stronach Township.

1.7 Federal Recreation Sites

Federal recreation sites are those sites that are located within the confines of the Manistee National Forest found in Stronach Township. The Township is in the unique position of having approximately 22,553 acres of land area contained within the Manistee National Forest which is managed by the United States Forest Service (USFS). The entire National Forest can be considered a recreational asset, but the specific sites listed in this section are identified by the Forest Service as being primary recreational access sites. Any planning by Stronach Township for areas in and around the national forest should comply with the approved Forest Management Plan for the Huron and Manistee National Forests prepared by the USFS.

The USFS allows for rustic camping anywhere within the confines of the Manistee National

Forest unless specifically addressed at a site, via signage, that it is not allowed. There are several requirements pertaining to rustic camping on National Forest lands, they are:

1. No parking in designated recreation site parking locations; campers must park roadside outside of the designated parking areas.
2. Rustic campsites must be set up at least 150' from any designated trail.
3. Rustic campsites must be set up at least 200' from any river or stream.

There are several recreation sites that allow camping immediately adjacent to the Little Manistee River and this is noted in the individual site assessments that follow.

Site # 4: Steinberg Trailhead (USFS)

This trailhead is located on the south side of Steinberg Road just east of the Stronach Road intersection. The trailhead is a starting location for those wishing to horseback ride the trail systems that extend through Stronach Township on USFS lands. The trail locations can be found on the Park and Recreation Inventory Map. The use of this trail system is primarily devoted to horseback riding, although some hiking takes place. The recreation site is developed and contains parking, restrooms and other amenities.

Steinberg Trailhead contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- 1 Picnic Table
- 1 Grill
- Restroom
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (kiosk style information)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The Steinberg Trailhead was not designed to meet ADA accessibility requirements and as such, receives a rating of 1: "none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines". It is unlikely that this site will be enhanced to meet ADA requirements in the future.

Site # 6: River Overlook (USFS)

The River Overlook can be reached via Little River Road heading east from Stronach Road. The Overlook is found at the end of Forest Road 8242 which heads south from Little River Road until one reaches the bluff along the Little Manistee River. The River Overlook is used primarily as an access site to the Little Manistee River by fishermen or those wishing to have a scenic view of the river itself.

River Overlook contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (River Overlook, no camping)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA

River Overlook on a snowy winter day



accessibility guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment, provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 7: Kennedy Farm (USFS)

Kennedy Farm can be reached by traveling east on Old Stronach Road then turning north on Forest Road 5600, just before reaching Custer Road. Kennedy Farm is a site where one can access forest service property along the Little Manistee River, and with a short hike from the parking area, access the river itself. Kennedy Farm is a rural recreational site and, as such, has very little site development.

Kennedy Farm contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 6 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Kennedy Farm)
- Fishing Access (with a little hiking, on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

Kennedy Farm is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is a 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines” when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 9: Chicago Boy Rollway (USFS)

Chicago Boy Rollway can be reached via Little River Road heading southeast from Stronach Road. It is located on the south side of Little River Road just west of the Forest Road 8452 intersection. The name “Chicago Boy Rollway” is derived from an accident that took place in the vicinity of site. During the lumbering of the forested areas along the Little Manistee River, logs were piled and held back along this bluff before being released into the river to be floated to the sawmills around Manistee Lake. A boy from Chicago, working below the retained logs, fell victim to a horrendous accident which cost him his life when the restrained logs gave way and came crashing down upon him at the rivers edge. This is a rural site that allows access to the Little Manistee River and rustic camping. The site is undeveloped except for the installation of steps that allow one to access the river easily from the bluff. There are exceptional views of the river valley from this vantage point.

Chicago Boy Rollway contains the following recreational assets:

- Parking (4 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Chicago Boy Rollway, map)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)
- Fishing Access (via a staircase from the bluff to the river, on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

Chicago Boy Rollway is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is a 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines” when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 10: North Lodge (USFS)

North Lodge can be reached by following Little River Road southeast from the Chicago Boy

Rollway recreation site to Forest Road 5605 which heads south to the Little Manistee River. North Lodge is similar to the other rural recreational access sites on the Little Manistee River in that it is undeveloped and is used primarily as access to the river for fishing.

North Lodge contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (North Lodge, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.



Standard Signage for Federal Recreation Sites and Forest Roads

Site # 11: Link's Pond (USFS)

Link's Pond can be reached by following Old Stonach Road southeast from the location of the DNR weir until one reaches Forest Road 5601 at the junction on the north side of the road. Forest Road 5601 leads to a parking area at a bluff along the Little Manistee River valley. Trails extend from the parking area downhill to the river and a wetland area and pond adjacent to the river. Link's Pond was, at one time, a fish rearing facility along the river. The pond is now home to many wetland species of plants and animals. The site is primarily used for access to the pond and river by fisherman and hikers. Link's Pond is an undeveloped recreation site.

Link's Pond contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 6 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Link's Pond)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

Link's Pond is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is a 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines” when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 12: Brocki Cabin (USFS)

Brocki Cabin is located along Old Stonach Road off of Forest Road 8467 which can be accessed by heading south from the Forest Road entrance to Link's Pond. This rural recreational site was the location of the Brocki Cabin, an early settlement to the area. The site is primarily used for access to forest lands adjacent to the river.

Brocki Cabin contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)

- Signage (Brocki Cabin)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 13: 6-Mile West (USFS)

6-Mile West is a parking area with river access along the north side of the Manistee River at the end of Forest Road 5604. This recreation site can be reached by following 6-Mile Bridge Road southwest from Skocelas Road and then heading west on Forest Road 5604 which is located immediately before reaching the 6 Mile Bridge. This site is primarily used by fisherman, canoeists and kayakers for access to the river. This is a rural undeveloped site.

6-Mile West contains the following recreational assets:

- Parking (approximately 3 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (6-Mile West)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessments provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 14: 6-Mile South (USFS)

6-Mile South is a river access location off of 6-Mile Bridge Road at the end of Forest Road 5602. This recreation site can be reached by traveling south on 6-Mile Bridge Road from Skocelas Road, crossing over the Little Manistee River then taking a right onto Forest Road 5602. The forest road terminates in an unpaved parking area on a high bluff overlooking the Little Manistee River. Trails lead from the parking area to the river. The site is undeveloped and rural in nature.

6-Mile South contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 6 spaces)
- Signage (no camping)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

6-Mile South is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is a 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines” when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 15: 6-Mile East (USFS)

6-Mile East is the last of the 3 river access locations found in the immediate vicinity of 6-Mile Bridge. The recreation site can be reached off of 6-Mile Bridge Road by following it south from Skocelas Road, then taking a left onto Forest Road 5603 immediately before reaching the 6-Mile Bridge. This site is primarily used for fishing access, but unmarked trails leading from the site

can be followed until they reach Jaeckel Road and eventually 9-Mile Bridge Road for those interested in longer hikes. The site is located on a bluff with stairs accessing the river and is considered rural and undeveloped. Those wishing to canoe or kayak the river can drop watercraft at the bridge and proceed to park at 6-Mile East.



Kayak and canoe river access at
6-Mile Bridge

6-Mile East contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (6-Mile East)
- Canoe/Kayak Launch at Bridge (unimproved)
- Fishing Line Recycling Box
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 16: Gravel Pit (USFS)

The Gravel Pit is a river access site that is located at the end of Forest Road 8481. The site was the location of gravel pit which operated along the banks of the Little Manistee River. Accessing the Gravel Pit can be accomplished by following Little River Road east from the junction of 6-Mile Bridge Road, then following Forest Road 8481 south until it terminates at the river. The site is primarily used for rustic camping, and fishing access to the river.

Gravel Pit contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 3 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Gravel Pit, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessments provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 17: 9-Mile Bridge Road

9-Mile Bridge Road is a bit confusing as to the name and placement of the site. The site is located off of Jaeckel Road which is reached via 9-Mile Bridge Road. Following Skocelas Road south from M-55, one would turn onto 9-Mile Bridge Road where it breaks off heading southeast from Skocelas Road. After making the turn onto 9-Mile Bridge Road, an immediate right (southwest) onto the rural 2-track (Jaeckel Road) will lead to the recreation site. The confusion with the name not only stems from the road that it is located off of, which is not 9-Mile Bridge Road, but also from the similarly named DNR access site which is located at 9-Mile Bridge. This recreation site is located on

the north side of the river and is used as a rustic camping location and river access for fishermen.

9-Mile Bridge Road contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 10 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (9-Mile Bridge Road, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

9-Mile Bridge Road is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is 1: "none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines" when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 18: Bowman Farm (USFS)

Bowman Farm is located on the south side of the Little Manistee River at the end of Forest Road 8479. Bowman Farm can be reached by following South County Line Road west, approximately 2 miles from the intersection with Skocelas Road, then turning north on Forest Road 8479. South County Line Road is located immediately south of 9-Mile Bridge. This site is named for the Bowman family which operated an early farmstead here. The site is primarily used for access to the river by fishermen as well as those wishing to have rustic camping along the river. The site is undeveloped and rural in nature.



Bowman Farm contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 8 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Bowman Farm)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessments provides a rating of 1: "none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines".

Site # 19: Nancy's Bluff (USFS)

Nancy's Bluff is a river access location located at the end of Red Arrow Road on the north side of the Little Manistee River. This access site is located immediately adjacent to private land located to the west. The site can be reached by following 9-Mile Bridge Road southeast from the intersection with Skocelas Road approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ of mile until reaching Red Arrow Road. One would then follow Red Arrow Road until reaching the recreation site parking area. The site is primarily used for river access, but also offers great views of the river from the bluff.

Nancy's Bluff contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 3 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Nancy's Bluff, no camping)

- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessments provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 20: Elm Flats (USFS)

Elm Flats is a fishing access and rustic camping site located southeast of Nancy’s Bluff. Elm Flats can be reached by following Forest Road 8492 from it’s junction with Red Arrow Road. Forest Road 8492 terminates at the river’s edge. To reach Red Arrow Road, follow the same route as described for Nancy’s Bluff. The site is primarily undeveloped.

Elm Flats contains the following recreational assets:

- 1 Picnic Table
- Trails
- Parking (plenty of parking and rustic camping locations)
- Canoe/Kayak River Access (undeveloped access)
- Signage (Elm Flats, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

Elm Flats is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”, when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 21: Hopper Junction (USFS)

Hopper Junction is an undeveloped river access and rustic camping site located along the bluffs on the north side of the Little Manistee River. The site can be reached by following 9-Mile Bridge Road west from Skocelas Road until reaching Forest Road 8489 which leads south to the recreation site. 9-Mile Bridge Road is located immediately south of the intersection of Udell Hills Road and Skocelas Road and can be recognized as an unimproved two track which leads west from Skocelas Road. Trails and an old staircase lead to the river from the bluff.

Hopper Junction contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 3 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Hopper Junction, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed)

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 22: 9-Mile South (USFS)

9-Mile South is a rustic camping and river access site which is located on a bluff along the south side of the Little Manistee River in very close proximity to 9-Mile Bridge. The site can be reached by following Skocelas Road south to South County Line Road, then follow South County Line Road west for a very short distance until the intersection of Forest Road 9095 located on the north side of the road. Forest Road 9095 leads north and terminates at the site. The site allows for rustic camping back away from the river and has trails and a staircase that lead from the bluff to the rivers edge.

9-Mile South has the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 8 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (9-Mile South, map)
- Fishing Access (on public lands only)
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping is allowed away from the river)

9-Mile South is considered a rural site and does not meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. The rating of the site is 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”, when using the DNR Accessibility Assessment.

Site # 24: Big M Trailhead (USFS)

The Big M Trailhead is a developed trailhead site located off Udell Hills Road. The site can be reached by following M-55 east from the City of Manistee, then turning south onto Udell Hills Road. The Big M Trailhead location is appropriately signed and can be found on the west side of Udell Hills Road down Forest Road 8234. This recreation site is an access location to the many hiking, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and mountain biking trails that are located in the Udell Hills. The site is well maintained and contains a large parking area, signage (including maps), well marked trails, restrooms as well as picnic areas and a lodge.

Big M Trailhead contains the following recreational assets:

- 6 Picnic Tables (inside lodge)
- Trails (groomed cross-country, snowshoe, hiking and mountain biking)
- Parking (approximately 20 paved spaces)
- Potable Water Source
- Large Enclosed Lodge
- Signage (Big M, trail map, general information)
- Fire Pits (with permanent benches)
- Garbage Receptacles
- Restrooms
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping away from parking area)



Restrooms (Hadicap Accessible)

- **ADA Accessibility**

The Big M Trailhead was designed with some ADA access in mind. The paved parking areas and recreation assets located immediately adjacent to the parking area are accessible to all. According to the Accessibility Assessment provided by the DNR, the site would receive a rating of 3: “most of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.



Trail and Parking Signage

Site # 25: Udell Hills Fire Tower (USFS)

The Udell Hills Fire Tower recreation site is located at the end of Udell Hills Fire Tower Road. Udell Hills Fire Tower Road is not to be confused with Udell Hills Road, which bears a similar name. To reach this recreation site, one should follow M-55 east from the City of Manistee to the Udell Hills Fire Tower Road intersection on the south side of M-55. The Udell Fire Tower was one of the historic fire tower locations within the Manistee National Forest and is one of only a few that still remain standing after decommissioning of fire towers took place in the 1970's. The recreation site contains interpretive signage, trails, and the steel structured fire tower. The fire tower is currently unsafe to ascend and measures have been taken to see that this does not occur. Future efforts may be made to make this tower safe to ascend which would offer fantastic views of the Udell Hills and the National Forest lands located in Stronach Township.

Udell Hills Fire Tower contains the following recreational assets:

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 8 unpaved spaces)
- Signage (Udell Hills Fire Tower, history, information)
- Steel Structured Fire Tower
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping away from the parking area)



Former Udell Hill Ski Resort

The rural nature of this site is not designed to meet ADA Accessibility Guidelines. Rating of the site according to Accessibility Assessment provides a rating of 1: “none of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 26: Udell Trailhead (USFS)

The Udell Trailhead is located just off of M-55 on Udell Hills Fire Tower Road. Reaching the site can be accomplished by following M-55 east from the City of Manistee; then turning south on Udell Hills Fire Tower Road, following it for a very short distance until reaching Forest Road 8142 located on the west side of the road. Forest Road 8142 terminates at the recreation site. The Udell Trailhead is part of the North Country National Scenic Trail. The North Country National Scenic Trail is an extensive system that, once completed, will extend 4,200 miles from near Crown Point, New York to Lake Sakakawea in North Dakota. In Michigan, the trail runs from the southern boundary of the Lower Peninsula to the farthest reaches of the western Upper Peninsula.

Udell Trailhead contains the following recreational assets:

- 2 Picnic Tables
- 1 Grill

- Trails
- Parking (approximately 6 unpaved spaces)
- Potable Water Source (summer only)
- Signage (Udell Trailhead, map)
- Garbage Receptacles
- Restrooms
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)
- Camping (rustic camping away from the parking area)
- ADA Accessibility

The Udell Trailhead was designed with some ADA access in mind. The unpaved parking area is compacted to allow for ADA access and recreation assets located immediately adjacent to the parking area are accessible to all. According to the Accessibility Assessment provided by the DNR, the site would receive a rating of 2: “some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines”.

Site # 28: Marzinski Trailhead (USFS)



The Marzinski Trailhead is located east off of Marzinski Road on Forest Road 9925. To reach the site, follow M-55 east from the City of Manistee, then take a right on Marzinski Road, turning east onto Forest Road 9925 approximately ¼ of a mile south of the M-55-Marzinski Road

intersection. The site is a campground and trailhead for horseback riding on the designated trails within the Manistee National Forest. The Marzinski Trailhead is one of two trailheads devoted to these horseback riding trails, the other of which is the Steinberg Trailhead summarized earlier. The Marzinski Trailhead is a developed site with many recreational amenities. Organized camping and the trails draw many users to the site.

Marzinski Trailhead contains the following recreational assets:

- 21 Picnic Tables
- 21 Grills
- Trails (20 miles of maintained horseback and hiking trails)
- Parking (21 unpaved spaces plus overflow area)
- Potable Water Source (summer only)
- Signage (Marzinski Trailhead, map of trail routes, information)
- Fire Pits (at each campsite)
- Camping (20 devoted campsites, rustic camping available away from parking area)
- Restrooms
- ADA Accessibility
- Hunting Access (on public lands only)



Trail and Camp Area Signage



Campsite with fire ring, picnic table, grill grate and horse hitching post

The Marzinski Trailhead was designed with some of the site being ADA accessible. The compact surface, although not ideal, allows for accessibility to the campsites and other recreation

features found at the site. On the DNR's rating of Accessibility Assessment, the site would rate a 2: "some of the facilities/park areas meet accessibility guidelines".

1.8 Description of the Planning and Public Input Process

1.8.1 Planning Methods

As a chapter to be contained within the Stronach Township Master Plan, the Planning Commission felt it important to create an all-encompassing recreation plan that captures all recreation sites within the Township, whether under Local, State or Federal jurisdiction. The detailing and inventorying of all sites creates a more defined and detailed account of what is available to the recreationist in Stronach Township.

The Plan was developed with two main purposes; 1) to meet the guidelines and requirements developed by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to be eligible to receive grant funding through the Natural Resources Trust Fund and other funding sources and 2) to promote recreation and tourism within the Township in an easily understood fashion that allows the reader to see all that Stronach Township has to offer with both text descriptions of recreation sites and accompanying map for locating these sites.

A rather rural township, Stronach Township prides itself on the vast natural resources that are available within the confines of the Township boundaries. These natural resources lend themselves through multiple recreational opportunities in the form of trails for hiking, biking, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing; river accesses for fishing, canoeing and kayaking; and lastly, vast federal land reserves for camping, hunting and other passive recreation.

The ample public land within the Township creates a public recreation space to population ratio that exceeds that of many communities. With the amount of public lands available spread throughout the Township, the acquisition of new recreational properties is not a top priority, but should not be entirely disregarded. Rather, acquisition of property should focus on those sites that are of importance in the context of protecting valuable natural resources and/or creating more active developed recreational sites.

Enhancement of currently established sites should be the primary focus of recreation efforts within Stronach Township. Locally owned recreation sites are analyzed in the recreation inventory, providing a summary of the assets and highest uses of the sites. These sites contain developed recreation features and further enhancement of the sites, to meet the desires of the community and create universal access, is an important task.

Universal design is an important concept that is included within this chapter. Site inventories provide a snapshot as to the status of ADA accessibility at each individual site. Sites owned and/or maintained by the Township should be primarily considered for future ADA accessibility enhancement. The State of Michigan DNR is progressively managing sites and is including ADA accessibility as a focus when improvements are made to some State owned sites. The Federal recreational sites as inventoried fall short of DNR ADA accessibility requirements in most cases within Stronach Township, due to the rural and undeveloped nature of many of the sites. Maintaining a rural character to many of the federal sites is a priority, and thus further ADA accessibility site enhancement isn't likely at many of these inventoried sites.

The detailed inventory of recreation sites found within this chapter, coupled with the

information received during the public input process and the environmental inventory found in Section 10, lend itself well to determining objectives and goals for future recreational site enhancement or acquisition of new parcels for recreation.

1.8.2 Public Input Process

The master planning process entailed a dual approach to capturing the input of residents on all aspects of the plan, including recreation. The two approaches used were; 1) a community survey which was mailed out to all property owners within the Township and 2) a public forum in which residents were invited via mail, an advertisement in the local newspaper and placement on outdoor information boards at the Township Hall and Township Fire Barn.

1.8.3 Community Survey

The community survey which was mailed to property owners in early December, 2011, contained questions pertaining to existing recreation site use and quality as well as enhancement and maintenance. The information received was very valuable and provided a good snapshot reflecting the desires of the community. The tables below represent findings from the community survey with percentages of survey responses:

Table 13.1 *Question # 1: How important is the development or enhancement of the following types of recreation?*

Enhancement Type	Unimportant	Not Sure	Important	Enhancement Ranking
Boating Access	8.97%	8.33%	82.69%	1
Fishing Access	8.33%	9.62%	82.05%	2
Lands for Hunting	10.26%	10.90%	78.85%	3
Hiking/Skiing Trails	16.03%	16.03%	67.95%	4
Playground Equipment	17.31%	17.95%	64.74%	5
Swimming	17.95%	25.64%	56.41%	6
Snowmobile Trails	24.36%	19.87%	55.77%	7
Snowmobile use of Roads	33.33%	15.38%	51.28%	8
ADA Access	24.36%	25.64%	50.00%	9
ORV Trails	13.33%	17.95%	48.72%	10
ORV use of Roads	33.97%	19.23%	46.79%	11
Athletic Fields	33.97%	21.79%	44.23%	12

1.8.4 Findings & Summary

Survey responses pertaining to the importance of enhancement or development for specific types of recreation can be found in table 13.1. Enhancement of developed sites for boating and fishing ranked among the highest. Boating access locations dictate a need for developed boat ramps for the launching of watercraft; fishing access can often be met through less developed recreation sites, unless ADA access is a priority. It can be stated that Stronach Township has an abundance of rural and undeveloped fishing access locations as shown through the recreational inventory. With this information, development of ADA accessible fishing locations should be a top priority when undergoing recreation site enhancement. Playground equipment enhancement to recreation sites also ranked fairly high among survey respondents. The two locally owned and maintained parks

both currently contain playground equipment; continued maintenance and upkeep of this equipment should remain a top priority and thought should be given to the installation of playground equipment at newly acquired Township park spaces.

Passive recreation site enhancements and development such as hiking and skiing trails, as well as lands for hunting, ranked rather high amongst survey respondents. The abundance of public lands creates an opportunity to meet these requirements. Further purchasing of lands for hunting is likely not a priority as the federal land reserves in the form of the Manistee National Forest already provide many opportunities for this form of recreation. Rather, it may be wise to develop information materials that can be provided to the public on the abundance of lands open to hunting. Creation of hiking and skiing trails is a recreational enhancement that should be pursued. Trails currently exist for hiking and cross-country skiing as well as mountain biking, horseback riding and snowmobiling. Cooperation between interested community groups or organizations, the Township and the United States Forest Service may be the best avenue for pursuing further development and expansion of trail systems. The remaining enhancements not discussed in the paragraph on the preceding page still garnered support ranging from 44% to 64% approval of those surveyed. These remaining enhancement types should be listed as secondary priorities in terms of importance to development of recreation sites and should be included in future recreation site improvement planning where warranted

Table 13.2 **Question # 2: Would you support the following improvements to Park and Recreation areas within the Township?**

Improvement Type	No	No Opinion	Yes	Improvement Ranking
Restroom Facilities	7.69%	19.23%	73.08%	1
Picnic Tables/Seating	10.90%	19.87%	69.23%	2
Signage (Rules/Layout)	8.97%	26.28%	64.74%	3
Painting/Staining Fencing	12.18%	26.28%	61.54%	4
Signage (historical/cultural)	8.97%	30.77%	60.26%	5
Cooking Grills	14.10%	26.92%	58.97%	6
Playground Equipment	9.62%	35.26%	55.13%	7
Fire Pits/Rings	19.87%	26.28%	53.85%	8
Trail Construction	15.38%	32.05%	52.56%	9
Parking	19.87%	30.13%	50.00%	10
Landscaping	21.15%	28.85%	50.00%	10
Camp Sites	23.72%	28.21%	48.08%	11
Ball Fields	17.31%	38.46%	44.23%	12

1.8.5 Findings & Summary

Recreation improvement to existing sites was a question presented in the community survey. The question outlined many different types of improvements that could take place at recreation sites and asked the respondents whether they approved or disapproved of each of the improvements listed. Each of the improvements listed in the question gathered approval of at least 44% of the surveyed population, with all but 2 of the 13 improvements achieving 50% or greater. (See table 13.2)

According to the survey results the top 5 recreation improvements with support are: restroom facilities, picnic tables or seating, signage (park rules/layout), maintenance of fencing and signage (historical/cultural). The locally owned and maintained recreation sites (Stronach Park and Claybank

Park) currently have the top 5 improvements from the survey installed at each park location. Continued maintenance should remain a priority to keep each recreation site and site features in good condition. High percentages for approval of the other recreation site features listed in the survey should also warrant exploration for incorporation into sites. Although not all features can be located on every park space available within the Township, the survey helps to determine those features that could be given consideration.

State and federal recreation sites range from having few to none of the improvements to containing a whole host of those listed. The agencies responsible for maintaining and improving these sites can utilize the survey results to determine those improvements which could be incorporated on more developed sites in the future.

Table 13.3 **Question # 3: Would you support using the following types of funding for improvements to Township parks and recreation?**

Funding Source	No	No Opinion	Yes	Funding Ranking
Private Foundation Grants/Donations	6.41%	13.46%	80.13%	1
Grants	9.62%	10.90%	74.49%	2
Township General Fund	26.28%	26.92%	46.79%	3
Millage	60.26%	25.00%	14.74%	4

1.8.6 Findings & Summary

Funding of improvements to recreation sites or purchasing of new parcels for recreation is a strategy that all jurisdictions must handle. To obtain an understanding of the desires of the community's residents in how to distribute or obtain funding for recreation, the survey asked about various funding sources and the support available for each. The ranking of the funding sources according to survey responses is displayed in table 13.3. Not surprising, donations or grants from foundations or community groups ranked highest amongst funding sources. General grants (from public entities) came in second, followed by expenditures from the Township's General Fund and lastly, the creation of a special millage for recreation.

Grants from both private foundations and those from public entities received upwards of 80% approval from the survey. The overwhelming support of the residents within Stronach Township suggests that the Township officials and appointed committee members should explore various grant opportunities and avenues for recreation site development and enhancement. The use of expenditures from the general fund received notably less support at 46.79%. The use of general funds for recreation site improvements is not lost however; only 26.28% were against the use of general funds while the remaining 26.92% of respondents had no opinion on the topic. The Township should create a budget line item for recreation, setting aside some funding for yearly maintenance and improvements. Determination as to the amounts that should be set aside should be carefully weighed to meet the needs of community. The lowest support for a funding mechanism came in the form of a recreation millage. 14.74% of respondents were in favor of a millage, while the vast majority 60.26% was against the introduction of a millage. The Township should explore various grant opportunities and creation of a recreation budget before looking towards creation of a recreation millage.

1.8.7 Public Forum

The public forum for the master planning process was held on December 13th, 2011 at the

Stronach Township Hall. A mailing to each property owner within the Township notified them of the upcoming public forum, as well as advertisement in the local newspaper and notification on Township information signs located at the Hall and Fire Barn.

Emphasis of the public forum revolved around the Master Plan and all items that are contained within the Plan, including recreation. The public forum was accomplished in a roundtable format, by dividing the citizens into five groups with a Planning Commission member presiding over each group.

Two questions were asked of each group:

1. *What are the strengths pertaining to land use issues within the Township?*
2. *What are the weaknesses pertaining to land use issues within the Township?*

The information gathered from each of the five groups was tallied and summarized. Those results which were echoed by another resident at the forum have a number within parenthesis noting the number of duplicate comments. The items pertaining to recreation for strengths and weaknesses can be found below: (The complete summary of public forum results can be found in Appendix 5.)

Weaknesses pertaining to recreation (public forum results):

- Need Civic/Senior Center at Claybank Park (2)
- Improve maintenance at Claybank Park
- Lack of trails at Claybank Park
- Lack of a dog park at Claybank Park
- Need improvements to Claybank Park
- There is no longer a beautification committee
- Need more outdoor activities
- Need to capitalize on recreation areas
- Need more docks at existing DNR boat launch on Manistee Lake
- There is no designated swimming area within the Township

Strengths pertaining to recreation (public forum results):

- Outdoors (2)
- Rivers/Streams (4)
- Udell Hills (2)
- Horse trails
- Wildlife
- Parks
- Cross-country ski trails
- Boat access (2)
- Open space/natural resources
- Fishing and hunting
- Udell Hills trails
- National Forest lands

The public forum allowed the residents of the Township time to meet face to face with the appointed members of the Planning Commission and provide comments and ask questions pertaining to the master planning process. The importance of meeting directly with the citizens can be placed on the specificity of the comments that were received. Comments were often times direct, and identified specific items of concern to be addressed through the planning process. The questions dealt with both

strengths and weaknesses, and as shown by the responses detailed above, there were some in both categories.

The comments pertaining to strengths pointed towards the abundant natural resources and their use, as well as parks and recreation site assets. It is important to note that many of the strengths identified in the public forum were also evident in the responses to the survey pertaining to important recreational assets.

Weaknesses identified through the public forum process were unique in that they identified multiple items, but several of those were very specific in regards to Claybank Park. Residents identified Claybank Park as having some deficiencies in terms of the developed park space and routine maintenance. The park itself is developed with many amenities, but with the land area available, there is room for enhancement. Items identified, such as improvement of maintenance, can be completed as noted in the administration portion of this chapter. Creating a detailed list of weekly, monthly and yearly tasks to be undertaken and completed, as well as identifying the responsible party, will go a long ways towards improving maintenance. Enhancements to the park itself for the items identified, such as creation of a dog park, trail development or siting of a senior/civic center, should be given individual consideration; whereas trail development and even creation of a dog park are less costly improvements depending upon the scale, siting of a senior/civic center is a more costly improvement that should undergo a proper planning process to determine the feasibility of the project.

Water recreation site weaknesses were identified as a need for more docks at the DNR Boat Launch on Manistee Lake and creation of a swimming area within the Township. Each of these can be explored cooperatively between the Township and the State to see if further enhancement of the recreation site on Manistee Lake could permit such additions.

Lastly, a notable identified weakness is the lack of the presence of the Improvement Association. Noted earlier in this chapter, the Improvement Association oversaw recreation sites as one of the priorities of the committee. The issues of a need for more outdoor activities and capitalization of recreation sites can be handled through the formation of a new Improvement Association which would advise the Planning Commission and Township Board. Many outdoor activities do exist and the recreation sites are present on which to capitalize. What may be needed is informational materials to market all that Stronach Township has to offer in terms of recreation. Outdoor activities not currently sited within the Township can be a project undertaken by this committee to identify what may be needed and how the Township can cater to these needs.

1.9 Park and Recreation Goals and Objectives

The development of goals and objectives is the backbone of the plan and provides a list of identified needs through the collection of data contained within the plan. Goals should be feasible in terms of the expectations for meeting the objectives that are derived from them. It is not too ambitious to place goals within the plan that may be several years out from actually being able to be implemented, since initiating a goal early leaves ample opportunity to mold an implementation strategy to see it through to completion. The goals and objectives displayed below have been derived from the information contained within this plan and are displayed with the accompanying objectives and the responsible party. It is task of the responsible party to develop strategies for the implementation of the objectives. The goals in this chapter pertain strictly to recreation, while a separate write-up located in section 15 of the Master Plan covers the broader reaching all encompassing goals developed through the master planning process.

13.9.1 Recreation Goals

Goal #1: Create a budget line item for township owned recreation areas

- Objective 1: Determine past expenditures
- Objective 2: Review projected expenses
- Objective 3: Approach Township Board for approval

Responsible Party: Planning Commission & Township Board

Goal #2: Create an administrative structure for recreation

- Objective 1: Determine responsible party
- Objective 2: Public notification (web, fliers, bulletin boards, etc.)

Responsible Party: Planning Commission

Goal #3: Create a weekly, monthly and yearly project list for maintenance activities at recreation sites

- Objective 1: Maintain and enhance sites
- Objective 2: Meet with maintenance personnel
- Objective 3: Solicit Futures/Beautification Committee input

Responsible Party: Planning Commission

Goal #4: Form an Improvement Association

- Objective 1: Locate past /and start a current members list
- Objective 2: Solicit volunteers
- Objective 3: Determine the scope of the committee
- Objective 4: Committee appointment

Responsible Party: Planning Commission & Township Board

Goal #5: Work cooperatively with Local, State and Federal agencies on recreation sites and activities within the Township.

- Objective 1: Identify and contact agencies
- Objective 2: Enhance communication
- Objective 3: Coordinate and schedule informational meetings between all parties

Responsible Party: Planning Commission and Township Board

Goal #6: Create marketing materials for promotion of recreation sites, use of web based information as an important resource that should be pursued

- Objective 1: Hire a web-master
- Objective 2: Pursue a Township owned website
- Objective 3: Keep website up-to-date and populated with interesting material
- Objective 4: Create printed promotional materials for distribution and download (.pdf)

Responsible Party: Planning Commission, Township Board, Advisory Committees

Goal #7: Compile and implement the list of site enhancements warranted through public input

- Objective 1: Determine enhancements
- Objective 2: Prioritize list

- Objective 3: Pursue funding
- Objective 4: Implementation

Responsible Party: Planning Commission, to be handed over to the Beautification Committee

Goal #8: Search out grant funding efforts for site enhancement

- Objective 1: Identify grant writer(s)
- Objective 2: Identify potential projects
- Objective 3: Research grants

Responsible Party: Planning Commission

Goal #9: Periodically revise and update this chapter to capture improvements/enhancements and land acquisitions for recreation spaces on a minimum 5-year interval

- Objective 1: Review plan on a yearly basis
- Objective 2: Review and revise plan on a 5-year basis

Responsible Party: Planning Commission

1.10 Action Program

Taking action or implementation of the recreation chapter's goals and objectives is the next step in the process after completion of the Park and Recreation Plan and Master Plan. Creating an implementation strategy is the purpose behind the action program and the following process can be tailored to each of the outlined goals and accompanying objectives for both recreation and the broad reaching Master Plan goals.

The process for developing an action program for each individual goal would be to first assemble the responsible party and ensure that everyone identifies with the purpose of the goal and how the objectives fall under that goal. Collectively as a group, the responsible party should then analyze each objective and discuss the strategy for meeting each individual objective. The strategy would look towards identifying responsible individual(s) for meeting each task in the strategy and would set up a time frame for working through to completion for each strategy which will ultimately lead to meeting the desired goal.

The example below runs through a "potential" action program for goal # 1, objective 1:

Goal #1: Create a budget for township owned recreation areas

- Objective 1: Determine past expenditures
- Objective 2: Review projected expenses
- Objective 3: Approach Township Board for approval

Responsible Party: Planning Commission & Township Board

A joint meeting should be held with the Planning Commission and Township Board. At this meeting the purpose of the goal should be agreed upon by those present, which is to establish a line item budget for recreation expenditures. The objectives present under the goal were developed through the Planning Commission, and with a review having taken place by the Township Board each party should be agreeable.

With these steps accomplished it is now time to strategize for each objective and define the exact responsible individuals, and a time frame for implementation of the strategy. For “objective # 1: Determine past expenditures,” it is likely that the Township Supervisor and Treasurer with the assistance of a Planning Commission member would be the best possible responsible parties to undertake the objective and develop the strategy. The strategy should take form in a manner that would outline how to accomplish the objective. The strategy could read;

“Review past records of payments made that are solely recreation expenditures, categorizing the expenditures as park improvements, park maintenance or staff compensation.”

With a strategy developed it is now time to set a time frame for completion of the strategy. This should follow a chronological order that would move through those steps that are necessary to complete the strategy. The time frame would be developed in a manner such as is displayed in table 13.4.

Table 13.4

Time frame	Responsible Individual	Step
Late Jan. 2013	Supervisor/Treasurer/PC Member	Set a time to review expenditures from the year 2011
Early Feb. 2013	Supervisor/Treasurer/PC Member	-Review expenditures from 2011 and identify those for recreation -Categorize recreation expenditures into improvements, maintenance or staff compensation -Determine total expenditures for each category and as a whole for recreation during the year 2011

The process for moving through each goal and objective to develop a strategy and action program as displayed above will ensure that the purpose of the goal is met in an orderly fashion. Moving forward with a proper action plan and implementation strategy is the key to successfully applying the final product of this planning process, and should be completed for each individual objective as displayed in the example in table 13.4.

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Stonach Township Park and Recreation Sites



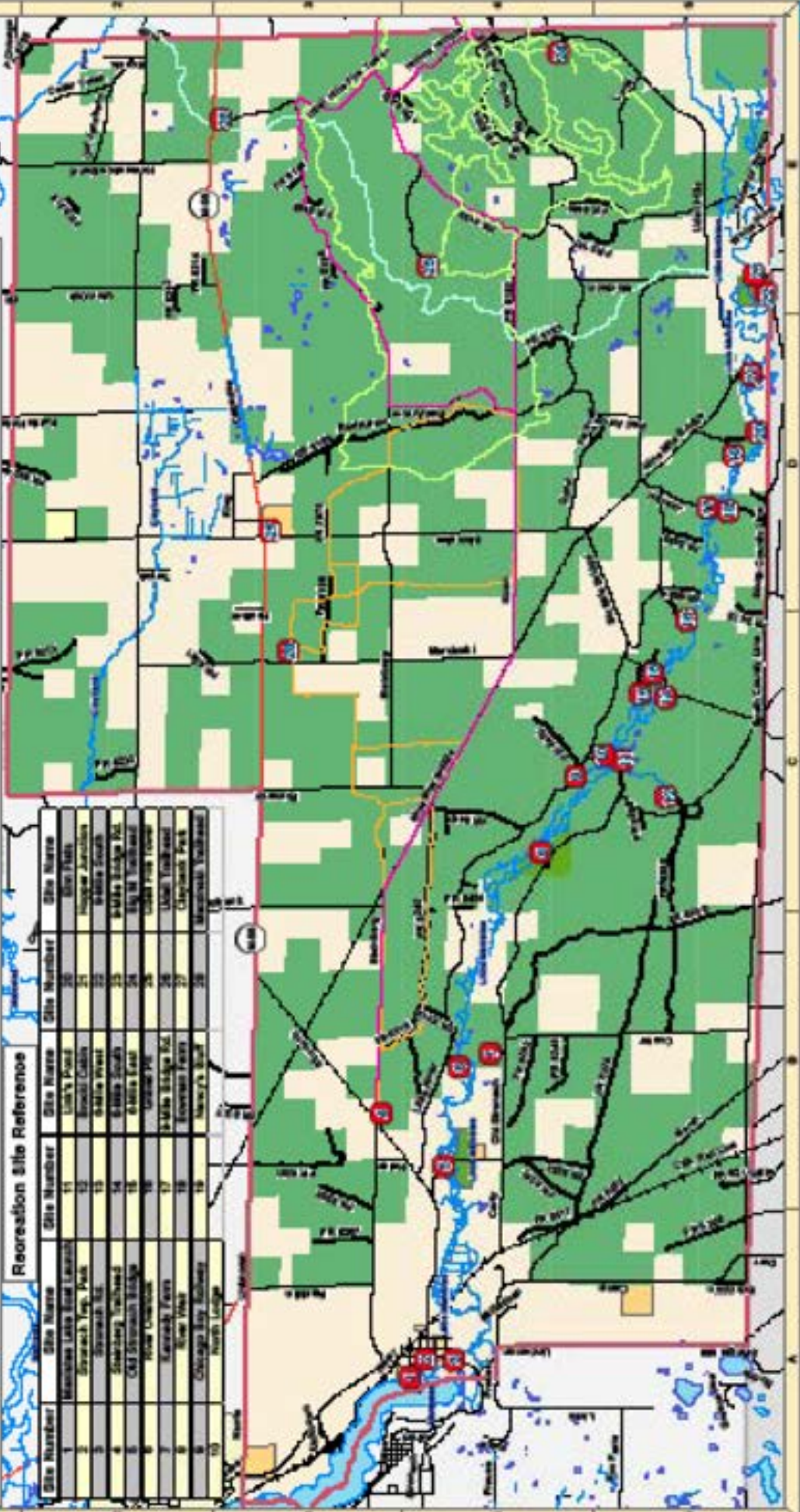
Map produced by
Marquette County
Planning Dept.

Recreation Site Reference

Site Number	Site Name	Site Number	Site Name	Site Number	Site Name
1	Marquette Lake State Park	11	Loch's Pond	20	Stonach Park
2	Stonach Township Park	12	Small Cabin	21	Hoggar Junction
3	Stonach Lake	13	Stonach West	22	Stonach South
4	Stonach Lake	14	Stonach South	23	Stonach Lake Rd
5	Old Stonach Village	15	Stonach East	24	Stonach Township
6	Stonach Lake	16	Stonach Park	25	Stonach Township
7	Kenah's Park	17	Stonach Lake Rd	26	Stonach Township
8	New York	18	Stonach Park	27	Stonach Park
9	Chicago Bay	19	Stonach Park	28	Stonach Township
10	North Lodge				

Legend

- Highways (Red line)
- Roads (Black line)
- USFS Open Woods (Yellow box)
- Railroad (Black line with cross-ticks)
- Streams (Blue line)
- Lakes (Blue area)
- Stonach Township (Red outline)
- Village of Escanaba (Yellow outline)
- Marquette County (White box)
- Marquette County (Grey box)
- Stonach Park & Rec. Sites Counter (Red circle with number)
- Trail 3-County Stilling (Yellow line)
- Trail Inconceivable (Black line)
- Trail Horseshoe Stilling (Black line)
- Trail Hiking (Black line)
- Trail Mountain Site (Black line)
- Stonach Public Lands (Green box)
- Stonach Township School District (Yellow box)
- State Parks Div. (DNR) (Green box)
- U.S. Forest Service (Light Green box)



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Inquires concerning the content of this 5-Year Park and Recreation Plan or the policies derived from it should be directed to the Stronach Township Planning Commission and/or the Stronach Township Zoning Administrator.