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

Boardman River Dams Implementation Team

Grand Traverse County
Traverse City Light and Power Department
Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition
Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Grand Traverse Conservation District (Ex officio)
Rotary Camps and Services (Ex officio)

City of Traverse City
Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians
US Fish and Wildlife Service
Conservation Resource Alliance (Ex officio)
Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay (Ex officio)
Grand Traverse County Road Commission (Ex officio)

Meeting Minutes

Date: June 17, 2010
Facilitator: Todd Kalish, Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment
Notes: Tape recording and hand written notes by Nate Winkler, Conservation Resource Alliance

Present:
Ben Bifoss (City of Traverse City)
Steve Largent (Grand Traverse Conservation District)
Nate Winkler, Amy Beyer (Conservation Resource Alliance)
Jim Schramm (Michigan Hydro Relicensing Coalition)
Rick Westerhof (US Fish and Wildlife Service)
Todd Kalish (Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment)
Mark Rollenhagen (Traverse City Light and Power Department)
Becky Ewing (Rotary Camps and Services)
Brett Fessell (Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians)
Andy Knott (Watershed Center Grand Traverse Bay)
Mary Gillis (Grand Traverse County Road Commission)
John Sych (Grand Traverse County)
Carl Platz (US Army Corps of Engineers-Detroit District (via conference call))

Absent
Dennis Aloia (Grand Traverse County)
Jim Pawloski (Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment)
1:00-1:05  Introduction
Introductions were made around the chambers by those in attendance.

1:05-1:10  Public Comment
Todd Kalish opened up the floor to public comment. Ms. Barbara Wright, property owner on Boardman Pond, spoke first and explained her concerns about the potential loss of wildlife habitat including loons and swan, fiscal responsibility on the county’s part. Mr. Norbert Tutlis, speaking on behalf of the Boardman Valley Preservation Society, expressed concerns about dam safety, Sabin Dam in particular. Primarily Mr. Tutlis indicated that to his knowledge there was no emergency action plan in place in case of dam failure. Ed Martell gave a synopsis, as he understands it, of riparian and bottomland ownership in the case of Boardman Pond. Mr. Robin Beardsley expressed interest in getting questions answered about the project especially cost estimates and potential recreation revenue income when the dams are removed. Mr. David Grebener, property owner on Boardman Pond, indicated his support of the dam removal project and noted that in his travels around the country, he believes the Boardman to be one of the best rivers he’s been on. He further indicated that the project in his opinion will only enhance the qualities the river exhibits currently.

1:10-1:15  Additions/deletions to the agenda
There were no suggested additions or deletions to the agenda.

1:15-1:20  Review and potential approval of the May 20, 2010 meeting minutes: decision item
There were suggested additions, deletions, or edits by the IT and subsequently the minutes were considered approved.

1:20-1:25  Army Corps update: discussion (Carl Platz, US Army Corps of Engineers)
Mr. Carl Platz gave an update on where the Army Corps was currently with regard to the project. Mr. Platz indicated that the development of a Project Management Plan (PMP) was underway and being performed by a private consulting firm. The PMP would be available in final draft form at some point subsequent to the middle of July. The PMP would be a road map of sorts with project milestones and cost estimates to move forward on the “Feasibility Phase” of the dam removal project. Several members of the IT indicated interest in reviewing the “95% Draft” PMP as soon as it becomes available.

1:25-1:45  Review and potentially approve “Hydropower Summary” and “Boardman River Restoration Q and A” documents: discussion/decision item (Nate)
Nate Winkler began the discussion by indicating the facts and figures located in the documents should have been cited and referenced as recommended by Mr. Robin Beardsley and Mr. Norbert Tutlis. Subsequent to that comment, discussion was opened up regarding components of the documents. These included elaboration of hydropower generation and a memo from ECT regarding the feasibility of hydropower generation on the Boardman River which provided the basis for much of the information in the summary and Q and A documents. Also discussed was a tiered approach to
disseminating information. Clarification was made on hydropower not being considered a "green" energy source by the Michigan Public Utility Commission due to associated negative environmental effects.

Specific comments regarding the Q and A document include correction regarding Cass Road crossing at the Boardman River and the clarification of the Boardman River Dams Project as opposed to the “Boardman River Project”.

Editorial comments were solicited by Beyer and Winkler in advance of each IT meeting after the packets have been reviewed.

Final discussion regarded the re-visitation of the feasibility of hydropower by the IT if they so chose. The impetus is to dispel any notion once and for all that hydropower generation was not feasible on the Boardman River. The City and County may have to decide if they have enough information to put the issue to bed. The point was brought up by Winkler that a private interest group in favor of dam retention could have their own analysis performed.

1:45-1:55  **Bottomlands ownership at Boardman Pond: discussion (Todd)**
Discussion ensued regarding ownership of exposed bottomlands. Kalish gave a brief background on the legal opinion rendered by a law firm chosen by a group of Boardman Pond property owners regarding ownership.

1:55-2:00  **Presentation of fundraising activity report and fundraising updates: discussion (Amy)**
Amy Beyer reviewed the fundraising activity report materials that were included in the IT meeting packet. There were no questions of Beyer regarding the report.

2:00-2:10  **Project Managers Monthly Report**
Nate Winkler referenced the one page monthly report included in the meeting packet which described CRAs activities for the past month. There were no questions from the IT regarding the report.

2:10-2:15  **Agenda items for the next meeting and meeting review: discussion/decision item (Todd, Nate)**
Todd Kalish noted that the hydropower and Q and A documents would be reviewed at the following month’s meeting.

2:15-2:30  **Public comment**
Mr. Ed Martell expressed displeasure at the legal opinion rendered by the legal firm tasked with answering the bottomlands ownership question. Mr. Norbert Tutlis inquired of the effort by Traverse City Light and Power to sell the facilities as referenced earlier in the meeting by Jim Schramm. In addition Mr. Tutlis indicated that in his
opinion Brown Bridge Dam is the structure causing the most damage to the Boardman River. Mr. Tutlis also related that in his opinion, further study of soils, wells, and septic systems should be undertaken. Mr. Robin Beardsley made comment concerning the effects of dam removal on South Airport Road as well as questioning the validity of the effort to sell the facilities. Patty Burke, Boardman Pond property owner, related concerns regarding potential flooding at Logan’s Landing, emergency action plans, issues regarding wells and septic systems, and potential loss of wildlife habitat.

At the conclusion of the public comment period, Ben Bifoss noted that the IT’s purview was not to decide whether or not the dams should be removed but how that process should occur. The decision to remove the dams has already been made by the owners, Grand Traverse County and the City of Traverse City. The discussion of hydroelectric generation is more a matter of explanation than re-visititation of feasibility.

2:30 Meeting Adjourned