

Marquette County Recreation Plan

2020-2024

Prepared by the Marquette County Resource Management Department- Planning Division

Adopted on January 21, 2020 by the Marquette County Board of Commissioners



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Introduction

The intent of the Marquette County Recreation Plan, 2020-2024 is to identify the role of the County's recreational resources in meeting residents' recreation needs and to determine the best direction for future improvements to county-owned recreational facilities. It is the County's intention to enhance local recreational opportunities and not compete with local, state, federal, and private recreation facilities.

The plan was written in accordance with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources Guidelines for the Development of Community Park, Recreation, Open Space, and Greenway Plans. A five-year recreation plan is required to be eligible to apply for recreation grants administered by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Grants Administration Division. Funding for eligible projects comes from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund (MNRTF), the Federal Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Clean Michigan Initiative Recreation Bond Fund, and the Recreation Passport Grant Program.

A draft of the Marquette County Recreation Plan was released for public review on December 5, 2019. Notices were sent to each municipality in Marquette County announcing that the Plan was available for review and comment on the Marquette County website at www.mqtco.org and a notice of availability was posted in the local newspaper, the Mining Journal on December 7, 2019. The plan was available in print form for review at the Resource Management department and at the Peter White Public Library.

On January 8, 2020, the Marquette County Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on the draft plan. Notification of the public hearing was announced in the local newspaper of general circulation on December 9, 2019. No members of the public were present and no comments were received. The Marquette County Planning Commission voted unanimously to recommend the Marquette County Board of Commissioners provide a resolution of final adoption.

The Marquette County Board of Commissioners adopted the Marquette County Recreation Plan 2020-2024 on January 21, 2020 in according with the guidelines as provided by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Copies of the adopted plan were submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and to Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development (CUPPAD).

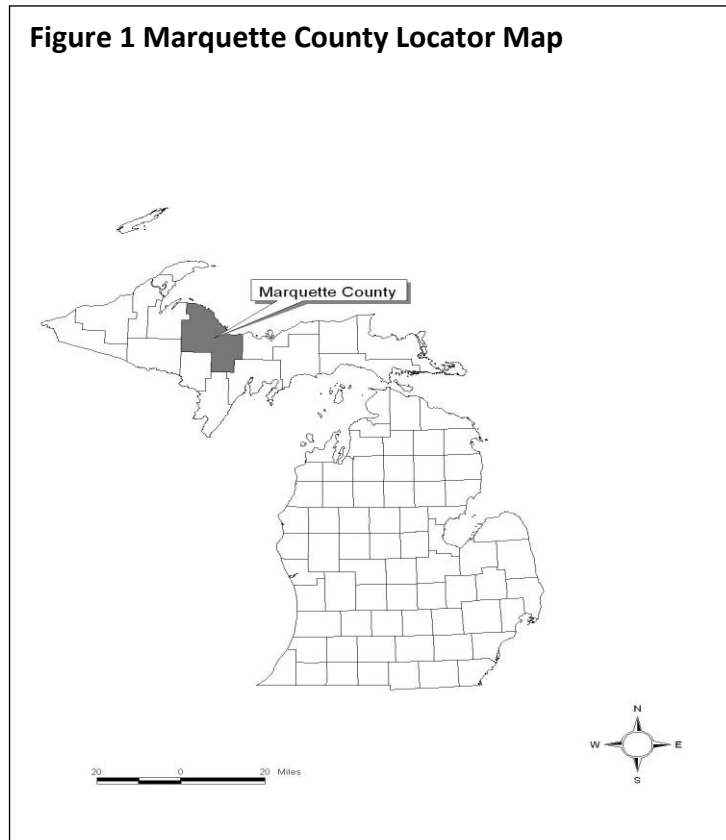


Community Description

Nearly all municipalities in Marquette County participate in recreation planning at their local level. County participation with local units is primarily through review and recommendation regarding recreation plans that local units produce. Further, recreation features that affect more than one jurisdiction, such as the Iron Ore Heritage Trail, receive support from the County both in terms of staff and other resources. The Marquette County Recreation Plan focus is primarily on County-owned facilities (scattered in several municipalities throughout the County) and coordinating with the “host” communities.

County facilities draw recreation participants from throughout the County and beyond. As such it is necessary to widely gather input to provide a product that meets County-wide needs.

Figure 1 Marquette County Locator Map



Administrative Structure

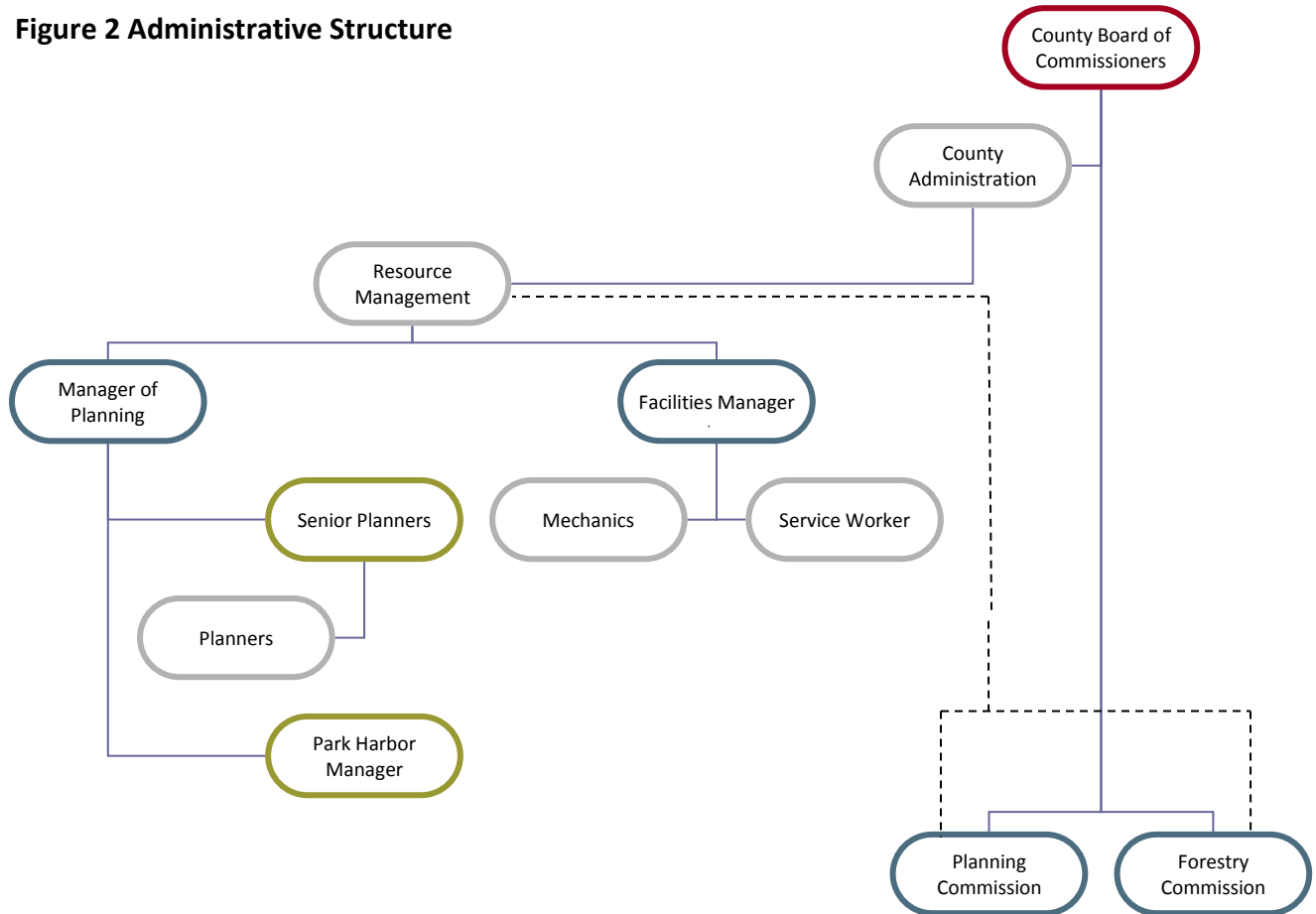
Roles of Commissions

The Marquette County Planning Commission assists in the development of the Recreation Plan. Once the Plan is created, they assist with implementation primarily by recommending grant applications to the County Board. The Marquette County Forestry Commission, under the authority granted to it by the County Board, monitors monthly budgets funded by the Forest and Recreation Fund.

General Operations and Staffing

The daily administration and maintenance of County recreation facilities is the responsibility of the Resource Management and Development Department Planning Division. The Department allocates 2.45 full time equivalents to the operation and maintenance of the facilities (1.8 Perkins Park, 0.24 Harbor, 0.31 Sugarloaf, and 0.10 Little Trout Lake). Other staff from the Facilities and Building Code Divisions are available to assist when necessary.

Figure 2 Administrative Structure



Funding Sources

Funding for Marquette County Recreation sites is provided by the Marquette County Forest and Recreation Fund. Revenues in support of recreation activities are derived from three sources; 1) timber sales in the County Forest, 2) user fees generated by campers at Perkins Park and boaters at the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge, and 3) grants.

Forest and Recreation Fund Administration

Ultimate authority over the Forest and Recreation Fund resides with the County Board through the budgetary approval process. The County Board has delegated this authority to the Forestry Commission, which is appointed by the County Board. Planning Division staff are responsible for direct oversight of facilities on a day-to-day basis.

Recreation Budget

The following table represents the current 2019 budget and the 2020 budget recommendation. Note the significant increases in anticipated expenditures on recreation. This increase will fund planned improvements to the Perkins Park playground, composting toilet, and docking system, several new yurts, a cabin furnace replacement, improved storm water management, and shoreline erosion control. Marquette County is also evaluating the water supply at the Big Bay Harbor and replacing the Harbor’s water heater and fuel pump, and making major improvements to the Sugarloaf Mountain parking lot.

Table 1 Marquette County Recreation Budget

Account	Revenue		Expenditure	
	Actual 2019	Anticipated 2020	Actual 2019	Anticipated 2020
Perkins Park	\$139,413	\$101,100	\$154,132	\$301,675
Harbor	\$26,541	\$15,130	\$ 23,812	\$ 59,340
Sugarloaf	None	None	\$ 0	\$ 355,000
Little Trout Lake	None	None	\$ 5,183	\$ 5,475

Capital Budgeting

There are two types of capital projects: 1) capital programming and 2) capital improvement.

Capital programming includes projects that are infrequent but substantial purchases such as replacement of picnic tables or fire rings, observation deck preserving/staining, etc.

Capital improvement funds are set aside in support of matching funds that are guaranteed in various grant applications.

Programming

The County is still in the early stages of program development. For the past two years, the Perkins Park Harvest Festival has taken place during the third weekend in September and has served as a pilot for recreation programming. Although the Harvest Festivals have proven to be a huge success, they do require a significant amount of resources to put on. With limited personnel, future programming must be carefully designed so staff are able to carry out routine functions. Any additional program development should be financially self-sustaining.

Volunteer Support

Various organizations have provided support at County recreation sites. The Boy Scouts have assisted with projects at Sugarloaf Mountain, the County Forest, and Perkins Park. The Audubon Society has aided in Kirtland Warbler surveys in the County Forest and trail hiker organizations have assisted at Sugarloaf Mountain.

Relationships with School Districts, Other Public Agencies or Private Organizations

Many groups, agencies, and organizations use County recreation facilities. Previously, County staff has teamed up with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to provide educational opportunities for middle school students in the Gwinn School District, featuring a field trip to the County Forest to learn about forest management and observe artificially created Kirtland Warbler habitat. The County also provides “no fee” licensing of a snowmobile trail through the Forest.

Perkins Park in Big Bay is another County facility used by various agencies and organizations. The Park is used as a “base of operation” for the Big Bay 550 Snowmobile Club Fishing Derby every winter and the Big Bay Sportsman Club sponsors a tournament every spring. The Park has served as the end point of the Big Bay Relay, a running race from Marquette to Big Bay facilitated by the Noquemanon Trail Network. Perkins Park has been used by the Department of

Natural Resources for lake access in both summer and winter as part of the *Becoming an Outdoor Woman* program. There is also a partnership between a local Boy Scout Troop and Perkins Park, in which fees are waived for a fall weekend and the scouts perform a community service project while they are there.

Bay Cliff Health Camp, a year-round non-profit therapy and wellness center for children and adults with physical disabilities, uses both the harbor and park. The Marquette Area Public Schools system sends students to Bay Cliff and uses the park and harbor every spring. Powell Township School District hosts an annual picnic at the park.

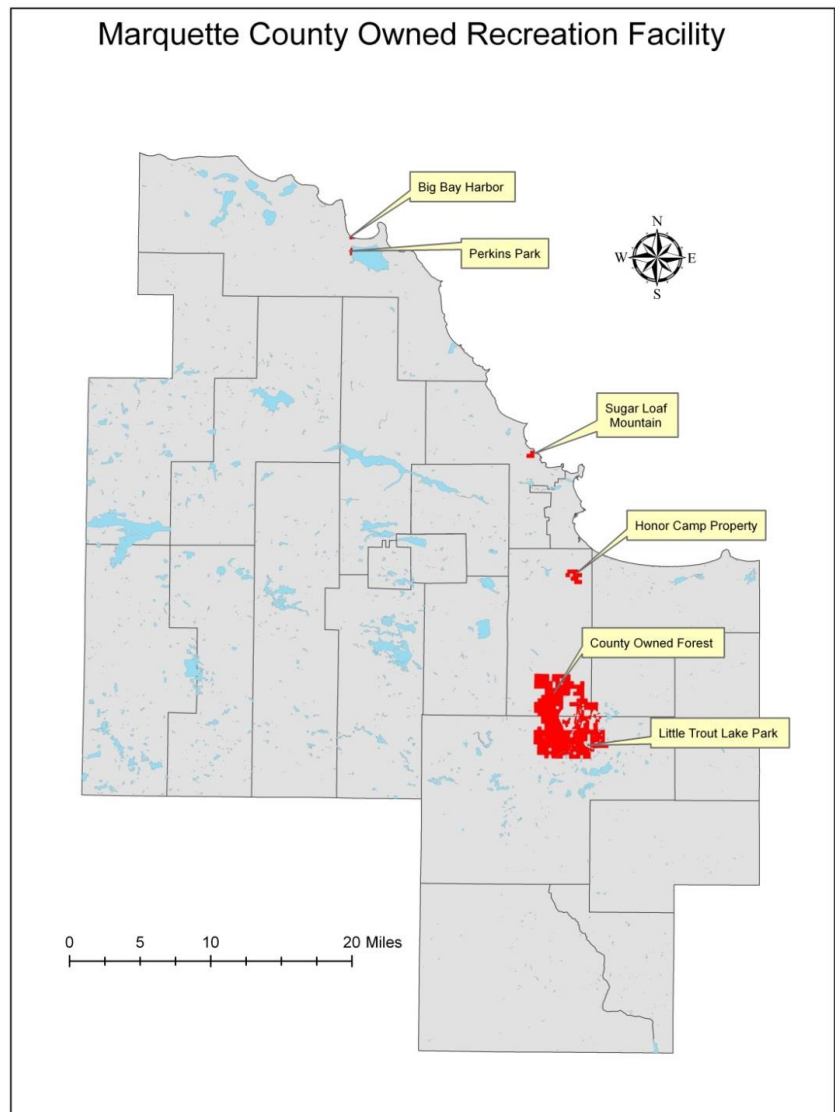
Recreation Inventory

County Owned Recreation Facilities

The County of Marquette owns, operates, and maintains four recreational facilities: Sugarloaf Mountain, Perkins Park, the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge, and Little Trout Lake Park. The County also owns nearly 10,000 acres of multi-use forest land, with approximately 9,500 acres in the County Forest and 420 acres at the Honor Camp.

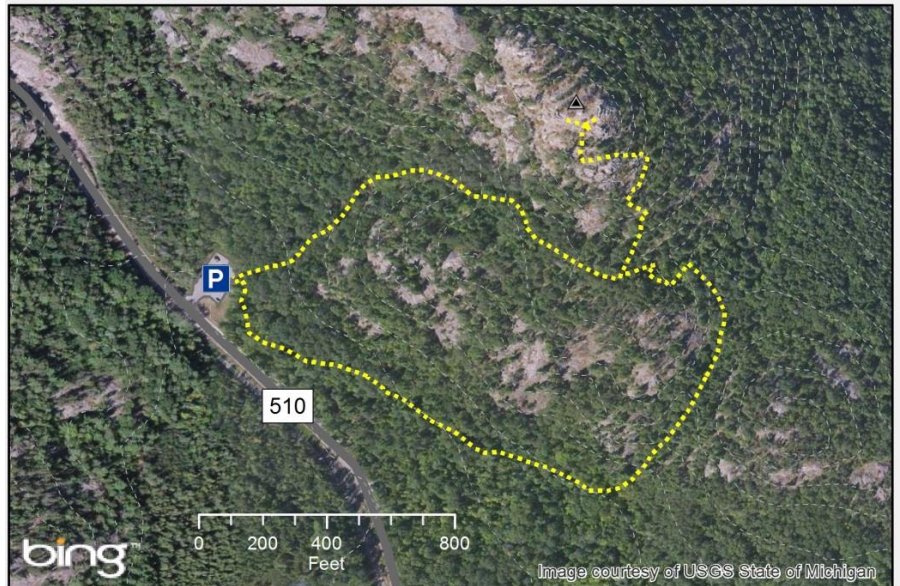
Right: Figure 3. Marquette County-Owned Recreation Facilities.

Figure 7.



Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area

Sugarloaf Mountain is owned by Marquette County and located in Marquette Township. Sugarloaf Mountain is one of the most popular scenic overlooks on the central Upper Peninsula coastline. According to the Marquette County recreation survey, Sugarloaf Mountain was by far the most popular recreation facility in the County, with more than 97% of survey respondents reporting that they had visited Sugarloaf.



Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area consists of a 3,200 foot trail of pathway and stairway segments that lead to the mountain's summit 470 feet above Lake Superior. There are viewing platforms on the mountain's summit, which provide a spectacular view of Lake Superior, the rugged lakeshore, and the surrounding forestlands for many miles. Marquette County owns 120 acres at the site, including a paved parking lot, the trail system, and some land west of County Road 550. The County Board has demonstrated their commitment to the preservation and improvement of Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area by funding several development projects. Recent improvements to the facility include upgraded stair and railing systems and repairs to the parking area. A development project currently underway includes the installation of interpretive signage, a smart waste collection system, picnic tables, a bike rack, and a web camera at the summit to allow people of all abilities to enjoy the beautiful view from the top of the mountain.

Perkins Park

The 45-acre park is located along the west shore of Lake Independence in the town of Big Bay in Powell Township. The Park has 75 campsites, 49 of which provide electrical hookups. Of those 49 sites, 28 have water and sanitary hookups. The south and central areas collectively provide 24 campsites without utilities.



The south campground has 20 primitive tent campsites with no individual utility hookups. However, there are 3 water spigots in the area to accommodate campers. In addition to the campsites, there is a swimming beach, bathhouse, playground and day use area, boat launch, fish cleaning station, restrooms and a barrier free trail. The park is open for use from mid-May to mid-October.

Big Bay Harbor of Refuge



The Big Bay Harbor of Refuge is located on Lake Superior in the town of Big Bay. The harbor development was a result of a statewide program to construct protective harbors around the Great Lakes so that no boater was more than 30 miles from a protective harbor. The harbor consists of a break wall, mooring bulkhead, boat launch, and a harbormaster's building. Previous improvements to the harbor include the installation of a water and sewer line, renovations to the restrooms to meet ADA compliance standards, the replacement of a gas dispensing system, and repairs to erosion on the east end of the mooring bulkhead. In 2013 the sidewalk was replaced and minor repairs to the mooring bulkhead were made. A 2013 state-funded dredging grant was used to improve harbor function, and the Harbor was dredged in 2019 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

The harbor has a 275-foot sheet pile and concrete mooring bulkhead. The bulkhead has 10 slips for seasonal and transient boaters. Water and power are available at each slip. The west end of the bulkhead has fuel and sewage pumping, restrooms, and shower facilities for slip renters. A boat launch and parking lot is open to day-use boaters.

The facility is currently used by both small and large watercraft. Larger boats tend to use the bulkhead for broadside moorage. Smaller craft tend to use the undeveloped east end of the basin where individual boat owners have constructed wooden docks extending from the sand bank. Boats are also allowed to anchor in the harbor basin.

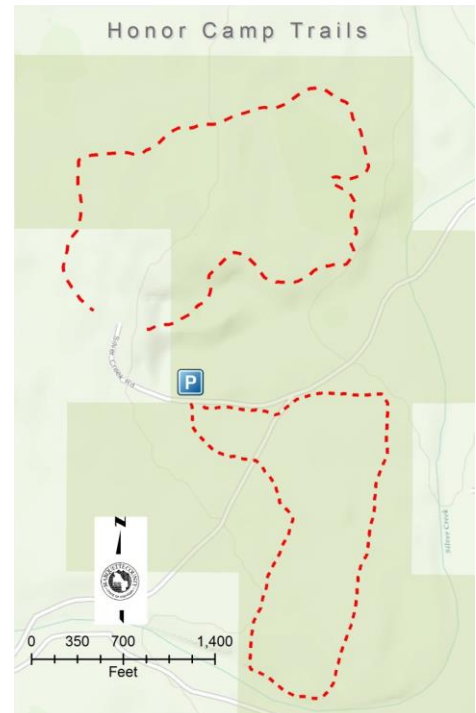
As a protective harbor, the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge is very important to the boating community on the south shore of Lake Superior. Storms can develop rapidly and catch boaters by surprise. By design, the harbor is always available for shelter and refueling.

In February 2007, an engineering study was completed to evaluate the condition of the existing land facilities and measure and evaluate the current rates of sand shoaling and dredging frequencies. Recommendations were made for improvements in maintenance and structural modifications to the land facilities. Further recommendations were made to improve and modify the existing breakwater structures in order to minimize periodic dredging activities.

In 2012 the State surveyed Michigan harbors for dredging needs. This statewide survey indicated a serious need for dredging, and the Legislature and Governor approved funding for an Emergency Dredging Program. Big Bay Harbor of Refuge was included in the program and dredging was performed in late 2013. The Harbor was dredged again in the Spring of 2019 through an initiative led by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

Honor Camp Property

The Honor Camp property is 420 acres in size and is located in the northwest corner of Sands Township. The property is heavily wooded and Marquette County uses it as multi-use forest which includes recreation, wildlife, and timber harvest operations. Features on site include Silver Creek, a portion of Silver Creek Road (County Road NKA), a 1.5-mile looped trail north of the buildings, and another trail loop about 0.2 miles in length south of the buildings. In 2001, all buildings and property, including the north loop trail head, within a forty-acre parcel were conveyed to Teaching Family Homes. Teaching Family Homes is a non-profit organization that works with troubled youth and their families. Teaching Family Homes, under license with Marquette County, has installed several exercise stations along the north loop. The facility is open to the public.



County Owned Forestland



The Marquette County Forest consists of approximately 9,500 acres of managed forest in Sands and Forsyth Townships in close proximity to the community of Sawyer. It is a multi-use forest, producing forest products and providing recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Some of the recreational opportunities include hunting, fishing, ORV riding, horseback riding, snowmobiling, berry picking, and bird watching (Kirtland Warbler of note). Marquette County's mission for the County Owned Forest is to manage and protect its resources on a sustainable basis while maximizing public benefits.

Little Trout Lake

This 111-acre park is located in Forsyth Township, near the town of Gwinn. The park was originally developed by the U.S. Air Force for its personnel and their families, but since the closure of K.I. Sawyer Air Force Base in 1995 it has been used as a recreation site for the residents of Forsyth, West Branch, and Sands Townships, the community of Sawyer, and other Marquette County residents.

The park consists of a 10-acre lake with a small swimming beach, pavilion for outdoor grilling, picnic tables, concession building, and a restroom facility. Other amenities include an outdoor volleyball court, outdoor basketball court, horseshoe pit, and recently updated playground equipment. Camping was once permitted at the park, but now Little Trout Lake is a day-use facility.

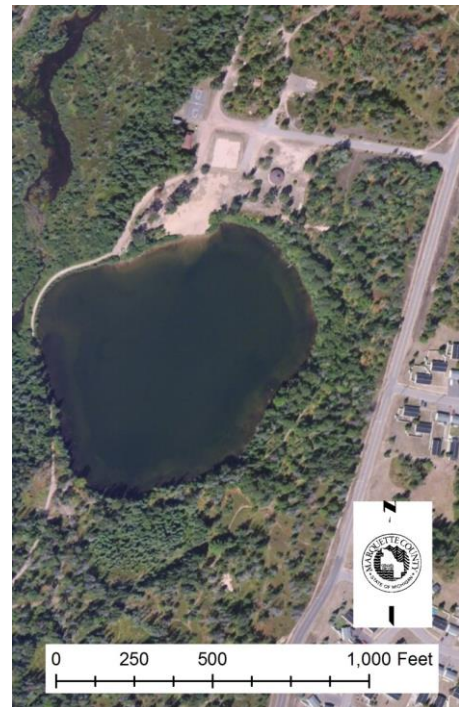


Table 2 Recreation Facility Inventory

Name of Park/Facility	Classification	Description	Acreage	Accessibility Rating*	Service Area
Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area	Natural Resource Area	Scenic overlook. Trails leading through natural forest surroundings to viewing platforms.	120	1	Regional
Perkins Park	Regional Park	Campground, swimming beach, picnic area, boat launch	45	2	Regional
Big Bay Harbor of Refuge	Special Uses Area	Boat launch, picnic area, mooring facility	6	2	Regional
Honor Camp Property	Open Space	Multi-use forest includes recreation trails, wildlife and timber management.	420	N/A	County
County Forest	Open Space	Multi-use forest includes recreation, trails, wildlife and timber management.	9,485	N/A	Regional
Little Trout Lake	Community Park	Picnic area, pavilion, playground equipment and swimming beach.	111	1	Community

*Accessibility Rating system as follows:

- 1 = None of the facilities/park areas meet the 2010 ADA accessibility guidelines
- 2 = Some of the facilities/park areas meet the 2010 ADA accessibility guidelines
- 3 = Most of the facilities/park areas meet the 2010 ADA accessibility guidelines
- 4 = The entire park meets the 2010 ADA accessibility guidelines
- 5 = The entire park was developed/renovated using the principles of universal design

Previous Grant Assistance

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources recreation grants program has played an integral part in meeting the recreational needs of Marquette County residents and visitors. The County has received assistance through most of the available grant sources, including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Clean Michigan Initiative Recreation Bond Fund, and the Recreation Passport Grant Fund. Federal recreation money managed by the State through the Land and Water Conservation Fund has also been used to fund upgrades and improvements at County recreational facilities. The following table lists grants received, their purpose, and the status of project completion and grant close-out.

Table 3 Status Report on Grant-Assisted Recreation Acquisitions & Development

Grant #	Park Name	Scope Item and Current Condition	Status
26-00057	Perkins Park	Two unit bathhouse with toilets, showers, change courts, utilities, boat launching ramp, access road for campgrounds and picnic area, grade and seed the beach and picnic areas.	Closed
26-00698	Perkins Park	Picnic area water system, site improvement, beach area, and Land and Water Conservation Fund sign	Closed
TF87-043	Sugarloaf Natural Area	Develop a summit platform, spur trail, and parking lot at Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area.	Closed
TF90-216	Honor Camp Access Road	Acquisition of approximately 168 acres of land to provide better access to the 460 acre county recreation facility.	Withdrawn
TF90-218	Shooting Complex	Acquisition of 160 acres of land for a public indoor/outdoor shooting facility	Withdrawn
TF92-084	Shooting Sports Complex	Development of a public shooting sports facility with multiple range capability to be located at the county forest site.	Withdrawn
TF95-189	Perkins Park	Construct boat ramp, fishing pier, boardwalk, floating docks, fish cleaning station, and two parking areas, bank stabilization and landscaping	Closed
CM99-169	Perkins Park	Construction of two shower/restroom facilities, demolition of an existing restroom and conversion of existing bathhouse to incorporate a pavilion at this County campground.	Closed
26-01604	Perkins Park	Construction of larger pull-through campsites and utility extension to sites, road reconfiguration, berm and vegetative screen, picnic area relocation, nature observation trail.	Closed
TF04-089	Sugarloaf Mountain	Upgrade existing trail and stair system to provide improved access to Sugarloaf Mountain and scenic viewing opportunities of Lake Superior.	Closed
TF08-028	Perkins Park	Development to include universally accessible improvements including a new park entrance building, campsite redevelopment, trail, universal access to Lake Independence, native landscaping, and universal design for playground.	Closed
RP12-416	Little Trout Lake Park	Development to include repurpose existing concession building into a public toilet facility and improve picnic space. Project will include sustainable elements and universal design features.	Withdrawn
RP16-0050	Perkins Park	Park improvements to include renovation of the fish cleaning station, replacement of the water supply valve and other necessary utility work, and a new roof on the restroom and bathhouse building.	Closed
TF17-0030	Sugarloaf Mountain	Development to improve the existing parking area, which also serves as a trailhead for the Iron Bell/North Country Trail	Open

		which traverses the park. Will also add picnic tables, bicycle racks, and a new solar-powered waste collection and compaction system. The waste system will alert maintenance staff when the remote location needs to be serviced. A webcam installed at the observation deck will provide access to Sugarloaf’s panoramic views to people of all abilities.	
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Data Source: Grants Management, Department of Natural Resources, 2019

Public Input and Planning Process

Public Input

The County of Marquette owns and operates several recreation facilities. It is the goal of this Plan, through public input, to develop, maintain, and utilize these facilities in a manner consistent with the needs and desires of Marquette County residents and other users of County recreational facilities.

In partnership with the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission (CUPPAD), the Marquette County Planning Division conducted an online survey using Survey Monkey, which was launched on Tuesday, October 1, 2019, and was closed on Tuesday, October 22, 2019. The survey was posted on the County Facebook page, promoted by CUPPAD using paid social media advertising, and shared via Facebook pages and email lists by several community organizations (see Appendix A-2 for a copy of the survey).

State guidelines require an opportunity of adequate length for the public to review and comment before the Plan is locally adopted. An advertisement announcing the release of the draft Plan appeared in the Mining Journal on December 7, 2019, beginning a 30-day review period. This was followed by a January 8, 2020 public hearing before the Marquette County Planning Commission and a public presentation to the County Board at their January 21, 2020 meeting.

Planning Process

There were three major components that went into development of this Plan: 1) public input from the online survey (Appendix A-1), 2) assessment of relevant demographics, and 3) a Recreational Facility Accessibility Report (Appendix A-2).

Survey Results

The survey results indicate that recreation is very important to the residents of Marquette County. The survey was conducted solely online, and included questions about Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area, Perkins Park, Big Bay Harbor of Refuge, Little Trout Lake, the Honor Camp Property, and the County-Owned Forest. Respondents were asked if they had ever visited each facility, what they liked about it, and what, if anything, has ever discouraged them from visiting it. We received a total of 317 responses to the survey. The following are the major survey findings:

Sugarloaf Mountain

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area. 314 respondents answered the question.

- 308, or 97.5%, said they had visited Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the facility.

- 85.7% selected "Spectacular view at the top of the mountain."
- 79.6% selected "The natural beauty of the area."
- 39.2% selected "Stairs and hand railings to assist with the climb."
- 15.9% selected "Improved parking lot."
- Written responses included "How it felt so remote and pristine, yet was so easy to reach from the City of Marquette," and "Options to climb up the natural trail or to use the stairs."
- One respondent requested that the County install restroom facilities near the parking lot.

Respondents were then asked "If you choose not to visit Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area, what is your reason?"

- 19.8% selected "It has become too popular, so I go elsewhere."
- 8.3% selected "Not enough parking."
- 3.3% selected "I can't climb the stairs to get to the top."
- Written responses included "Trails are becoming very eroded. Need to be reworked and areas revegetated. Loved to death as they say..." and "Way too many people, too crowded, paths have become over used."
- Multiple respondents requested more parking, restroom facilities, and trash receptacles.

Perkins Park

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited Perkins Park in Big Bay. 303 respondents answered the question.

- 146, or 48.2%, said they had visited Perkins Park.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the facility.

- 29.3% of all respondents said "Swimming in Lake Independence."
- 19.9% selected "Camping with full hookups."
- 15.3% selected "Maintenance of the restroom and showers."
- 13.6% selected "Park staff."
- Many respondents also cited barrier-free trails, campsites, restrooms, showers, and access to Lake Independence.
- Several written responses cited the spacious, peaceful nature of the Park and the barrier-free access, including barrier-free fishing.

Respondents were then asked "If you choose not to visit Perkins Park, what is your reason?"

- By far the most commonly cited reason for not visiting Perkins Park was a lack of awareness, with 37.0% selecting "I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the park."
- Many written responses cited the need for upgrades to the playground.
- Others said that they "Never heard of it" or "Didn't know about it," and some cited distance from home and the cost of staying at the campground as reasons for not visiting the Park.

Big Bay Harbor of Refuge

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge in Powell Township. 290 respondents answered the question.

- 70, or 24.1%, said they had visited Big Bay Harbor of Refuge.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the facility.

- 5.9% of all respondents selected "Restrooms and shower facilities."
- A handful of others selected "Parking lot," "Mooring services," and "Quality of boat slips."
- Written responses seemed to indicate that County residents who do not own boats also regularly use the Harbor for enjoying the "scenery" and the "beauty of the area."

Respondents were then asked "If you choose not to visit the Big Bay Harbor, what is your reason?"

- 50.0% selected “I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the Harbor.” As with Perkins Park, a lack of awareness seems to be the primary limiting factor for usage of the Big Bay Harbor.
- 14.8% selected “I do not have a watercraft.”
- Two written responses cited a lack of maintenance.

Honor Camp Property

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited the Honor Camp Property in Sands Township. 277 respondents answered the question.

- Only 18, or 6.5%, said they had visited the Honor Camp Property.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the property.

- Virtually everyone who had visited the property (15 of 18 respondents) selected “The natural beauty of the area” and “The trails.”
- There seemed to be virtually no awareness about the exercise stations on the property, with only 2 of 277 respondents (0.8%) indicating they had used the exercise stations.

Respondents were then asked “If you choose not to visit the Honor Camp Property, what is your reason?”

- 68.5% selected “I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area,” with no other responses being selected by more than 3% of respondents.
- Even Sands Township residents seemed to be unaware of the Honor Camp Property. “I have no idea what it is or where. And I live in Sands Twp.,” said one respondent, while another said “I did not know anything about the property for recreation, even though I live in Sands Twp. If it has recreation stations for exercise like the above question says, I would visit.” One respondent indicated that they were “Unsure how much it could be publicly used since it shares the property with the Teaching Family Homes operation.”

County-Owned Forest (9,500 acres of forest surrounding K.I. Sawyer)

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited the County-Owned Forest in Forsyth and Sands Townships. 269 respondents answered the question.

- 72, or 26.9%, said they had visited the County-Owned Forest.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the property.

- 20% of all respondents selected “The natural beauty of the area.”
- 18.0% selected “The trails.”
- 14.8% selected “Berry picking.”
- 8.4% selected “ORV riding.”

Respondents were then asked “If you choose not to visit the County-Owned Forest, what is your reason?”

- 50.0% selected “I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area,” with no other responses being selected by more than 3% of respondents.
- Very few written responses were received and no clear patterns emerged as a result, although one respondent stated that they were currently choosing not to visit the County-Owned Forest simply because “It's not the season for berry picking.”

Little Trout Lake Park

Respondents were asked if they had ever visited Little Trout Lake Park in Forsyth Township. 266 respondents answered the question.

- 46, or 17.3%, said they had visited Little Trout Lake Park.

Respondents were then asked what they liked about the facility.

- 10.3% of all respondents selected “The beach or swimming in the lake.”
- 6.0% selected “Berry picking.”
- 6.0% selected “Park amenities like grills, picnic table, and the pavilion.”
- 5.2% selected “Playground equipment.”

Respondents were asked “If you choose not to visit Little Trout Lake Park, what is your reason?”

- 60.0% selected “I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area,” suggesting that, like most other County recreation facilities with the exception of Sugarloaf Mountain, a lack of awareness is limiting usage.

- No other response were selected by more than 3% of respondents.
- One resident said they do not visit the Park because it “Needs well-developed trails.”

A copy of the complete survey with a report of the responses is available in Appendix A-2.

Demographics

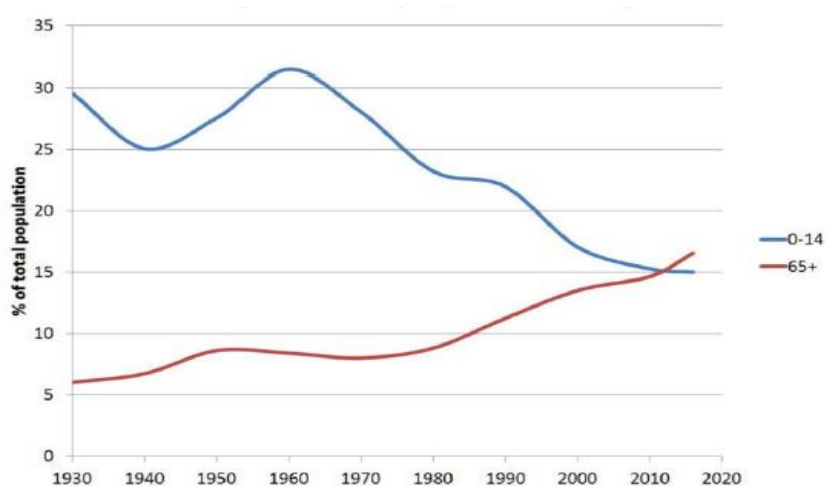
Though no longer required in a Recreation Plan, there is still relevance to the County in data related to the make-up of the population (particularly as it relates to age and physical capabilities) in determining trends that might affect long-term considerations in the development/redevelopment of County facilities. The following are tables and descriptions used in our analysis.

Community Population

The County of Marquette is the largest county in the State of Michigan (1,873 square miles), and the most populated county in the Upper Peninsula with a population of 67,077 (U.S. Census 2010) (see Figure 1). The median age is 39.4 years old with nearly equal male and female composition. The population is mostly white (92.1%), with approximately 2.0% of Marquette County residents identifying as Native American and 1.6% each as Black/African-American and Hispanic/Latino.

As in the rest of the United States, the population of Marquette County is aging. The number of people aged 65 or older is at an all-time high. The County’s population is aging at an even faster pace than the nation or the State. This is coupled with a decline in the youngest part of the population, to the point that the population of people aged 65 and older has exceeded the population of people under the age of 15 for the first time in Marquette County’s 176-year history.

Figure 3 – Marquette County Age Demographic Change, 1930-2017



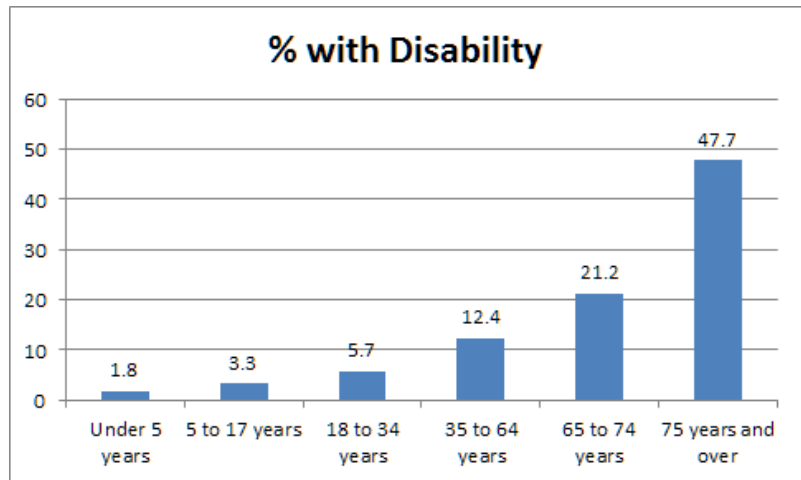
Persons with Disabilities

According to the 2017 American Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau from 2013-2017, 10.5% of the population of Marquette County, or 4,495 persons between the ages

of 16 to 64, had one or more of the following disabilities: hearing, vision, cognitive, ambulatory, self-care, and independent living.

A person is considered to have a disability if they have difficulty performing functions such as seeing, hearing, talking, walking, climbing stairs, or lifting and carrying. Disabilities also include difficulty performing daily activities or social roles such as schoolwork and working at a job.

The likelihood of having a disability increases with age. The U.S. Census reports that 33.2% of Marquette County residents age 65 and over are living with disabilities. As the population in Marquette County continues to age there will be an increase in residents with disabilities. The County of Marquette has



addressed this issue by seeking ways to upgrade county owned facilities to accommodate and enhance the recreational experience for disabled citizens.

In 1994, a Master Plan was developed for Perkins Park. The master plan recommended 5 phases of improvements to the park. Marquette County implemented three of the 5 phases. All three of the phases included accessibility improvements. Today, the fishing pier is barrier-free, with a bumper railing at a specific height that allows individuals in wheelchairs to fish comfortably. Additional barrier-free parking was created immediately adjacent to the boat launch and fish cleaning station. Phase II of the master plan included accessibility upgrades to the park's showers and restrooms. Additional improvements were made to the park office, which is also in compliance with ADA accessibility guidelines. Phase III included the development of barrier-free trails, pull-through campsites, and other accessibility enhancements to day-use facilities.

The Big Bay Harbor of Refuge also received improvements that make access easier for individuals with disabilities. Several years ago, restrooms were upgraded to meet ADA requirements, and in 2013 the sidewalk along the mooring bulkhead was replaced and made fully accessible.

In the fall of 2019, in partnership with the Central Upper Peninsula Planning and Development Regional Commission (CUPPAD) and the Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL), the County conducted accessibility assessments at County-owned recreation facilities. The Accessibility Report for County Parks and Recreation Facilities (see appendix A-3) was received on November 15, 2019. As can be seen in the Accessibility Report and this Recreation Plan's Action Program, a number of deficiencies were identified that we intend to mitigate.

Goals and Objectives

A goal states a general concept or desired end. Objectives are more specific ways in which the goals are accomplished.

Goal: **Improve and maintain County recreation facilities in order to provide desired recreation opportunities for residents and visitors to the area.**

Objectives:

- 🌐 Provide and promote recreational areas for passive and active recreation.
- 🌐 Use facility master plans in determining and prioritizing capital investment.
- 🌐 Use federal and state assistance programs to develop recreational facilities.
- 🌐 Encourage more efficient use of existing facilities before building new facilities.
- 🌐 Perform regular maintenance to prolong use of existing facilities.

Goal: **Incorporate Universal Design in new facilities and when upgrading existing amenities.**

Objectives:

- 🌐 Implement findings of the Accessibility Report for County Parks and Recreation Facilities performed in November 2019.
- 🌐 Coordinate with local units of government to leverage recreation-related projects, including promotion and marketing.
- 🌐 Adherence to American with Disabilities Act Requirements in future development and grant specifications.

Goal: **Incorporate recreation planning as a component of the County Master Plan.**

Objectives:

- 🌐 Continue use of surveys and public meetings to solicit public opinion on recreation needs and facilities.
- 🌐 Complete studies/master plans of Perkins Park, Big Bay Harbor of Refuge, Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area and Little Trout Lake.

- 🌐 Include regional trail initiatives such as the Iron Ore Heritage Trail and Noquemanon Trail System in comprehensive planning.

Goal: **Promote cooperation among governmental units, other public and private organizations and businesses in developing recreational programs and facilities.**

Objectives:

- 🌐 Review proposed recreation plans for consistency with the County Master Plan and Recreation Plan.
- 🌐 When feasible, participate in local governmental recreation planning efforts.

Goal: **Continue provision of Harbor of Refuge for safety of Great Lakes boaters.**

Objectives:

- 🌐 Provide moorage, fuel and other essential services to boaters.
- 🌐 Monitor harbor water depths and solicit assistance to maintain sufficient draft depths.

Action Program

Through the public survey and Recreational Facility Accessibility Report, various needs were identified. Accordingly, strategies were developed as to how County recreation facilities could be best improved or modified to meet these needs. The following Action Program shows how a combination of County and grant funds can allow us to attain our goals for the upcoming 5-year planning period.

Table 4: Marquette County Recreation Action Program, 2020-24

Year	Facility	Improvements	Est. Costs	Funding Source	Responsible Agency
2020	Big Bay Harbor	Finger piers, kayak lockers, accessible picnic tables, barrier free parking and signage. Accessibility upgrades	\$300,000	Land & Water, Waterways, Boating Infrastructure, MNRTF, Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Big Bay Harbor	Water supply study	\$4,500	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Big Bay Harbor	Water heater replacement	\$1,500	Capital Outlay, RPG	RM/D
2020	Big Bay Harbor	Fuel pump replacement	\$25,000	Capital Outlay, RPG, EGLE	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Evaluate septic system and drainfield	\$12,000	Capital Outlay, EGLE	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Pavilion ceiling replacement	\$10,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Paint restroom and shower facilities, upgrade lighting and other energy efficiencies	\$16,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Cabin furnace replacement	\$4,500	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	ADA pathway and playground renovation. Stripe and sign accessible parking	\$55,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Yurt site development	\$15,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2020	Perkins Park	Infrastructure expansion. Conversion of sites to full hook-up, pull-through sites	\$10,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2020	Sugarloaf	Parking lot expansion	\$350,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2021	Big Bay Harbor	Big Bay Harbor Master Plan	\$60,000	CZM, MNRTF	RM/D
2021	Perkins Park	Accessible all-gender pit toilet	\$25,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2021	Perkins Park	Docking system expansion	\$15,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D

2021	Perkins Park	Install self-registration and information kiosk at park entrance	\$20,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2021	Perkins Park	Improve centralized materials management station to include concrete slab, screening, signage, additional materials collection containers	\$10,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2021	Perkins Park	New park entrance sign	\$10,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2021	Perkins Park	New Wi-Fi installation	\$20,000	Capital Outlay, MNRTF, RPG, Broadband	RM/D
2022	Perkins Park	Stormwater erosion control, shoreland stability improvements	\$50,000	Capital Outlay, RPG, EGLE	RM/D
2022	Sugarloaf	Trail and structure renovation and revegetation, new restroom facility.	\$150,000	MNRTF, RPG, CZM, Iron Belle	RM/D
2023	Perkins Park	Develop additional rental sites including construction of trail, pedestrian bridge, and road access.	\$150,000	MNRTF, RPG, CZM	RM/D
2023	Perkins Park	Renovate cabin, including basement to be used as an emergency shelter and controlled temperature storage in the off season.	\$100,000	MNRTF	RM/D
2023	Perkins Park	Bathhouse roof replacement	\$30,000	Capital Outlay, RPG	RM/D
2024	Perkins Park	Additional infrastructure expansion, continued conversion of sites to full hook-up, pull-through sites	\$60,000	MNRTF, RPG	RM/D
2024	Little Trout Lake	Accessible all-gender pit toilet	\$25,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2024	Big Bay Harbor	Pumpout replacement	\$20,000	Clean Vessels Act Pumpout Grant	RM/D
2025	Perkins Park	Redirect entering traffic, improve office layout and expand parking at park entrance	\$200,000	MNRTF	RM/D
2025	Perkins Park	Site leveling of 2-3 sites per year	\$5,000	Capital Outlay	RM/D
2025	Big Bay Harbor	Big Bay Harbor Master Plan implementation	\$300,000	Land & Water, Waterways, Boating Infrastructure, MNRTF, CZM, Capital Outlay	RM/D

Appendix A-1: 2019 Accessibility Report

Section I Introduction

The MQT County Parks and Recreation Committee is preparing to submit their proposed five-year plan for 2020- 2025 to the community. CUPPAD is assisting with the plan development which includes a review of the accessibility of the county parks. In discussion with CUPPAD and a few members of the MQT staff who oversee the parks in the county, SAIL agreed to conduct the accessibility portion of the review of four of the six county parks. To the casual observer without a disability, many of the surveyed spaces appear friendly to people with disabilities such as Little Trout Lake. However, to the individuals with disabilities who must move through the parks-- many spaces may be very difficult, or even impossible, to access. The decision to review Perkins Park and the Big Bay Harbor and Trout Lake and Sugarloaf was based on the assessment of County Parks staff that reviewing Honor Camp and the County Forest did not need to be included in this report as there has been no change at Honor Camp or the County Forest both of which are not developed county parks.

Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL) is the non-profit Center for Independent Living (CIL) charged with assisting individuals with disabilities and community partners in the fifteen counties of the Upper Peninsula. SAIL has been serving the UP for the last 21 years. SAIL provides ADA site reviews as part of their programming to help achieve local compliance with the standards developed through the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the American Disabilities Act of 1980 as amended in 2010

How to Use This Report

The existing County Recreation Plan was reviewed to prepare this report. The information on page 19 of the Plan demonstrates a strong drive for improvement and includes many ideas that speak to accessibility. SAIL notes that as the current plan ends, it appears few of the improvements suggested on page 19 were implemented in Perkins Park, the Big Bay Harbor, or the Little Trout. There may be one exception that the water at Little Trout Lake may have been improved with DEQ assistance. That improvement should be verified. SAIL is impressed by the targets outlined and imagines that the upcoming plan can seek to prioritize the parks and their needs and try to achieve the goals and improvements outlined in 2014.

Given the thoroughness of the existing County Recreation Plan, the SAIL review provides a current ADA snapshot in time of Perkins Park, Big Bay Harbor and Little Trout Lake and an update on Sugarloaf. It provides specific information about what actions need to be taken for achieving ADA standards or even looking beyond with universal design as outlined in Appendix C of the DNR grant applications. The evaluation of facilities should be an ongoing process.

This report is not intended to certify compliance or non-compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Many of the factors which can affect whether or not a facility is ADA Compliant are outside the scope of the evaluation performed by SAIL and may include:

- What date the original construction and any previous renovations?
- What is the cost of accessibility improvements in relation to the overall budget of the facility or its parent organization?
- Is it possible to meet ADA Guidelines given the physical constraints of the property?

- Would meeting the technical Guidelines of the ADA reduce the overall accessibility or usability of the facility?
- If it is not feasible to meet the ADA Guidelines, have alternate means of accessibility or accommodation been implemented?

In addition, compliance with ADA technical Guidelines does not guarantee that a facility is accessible to the maximum extent possible. The ADA is intended as a baseline standard that will result in minimum accessibility at a majority of facilities. Additions or improvements to a facility may be desired to improve facility functionality for the maximum number of users.

For the purpose of this report, key elements of the sites were evaluated individually. Unless specifically required by the ADA Guidelines, elements were not evaluated in relation to another.

Recommendations are divided into three levels:

- **Level 1** modifications which include staff training, minor modifications to existing equipment, etc.
- **Level 2** modifications include purchasing equipment, significant modifications to existing equipment, or significant research or planning.
- **Level 3** modifications likely require construction and/or significant expense.

Terminology:

Unless otherwise specified, the term “slope” is used to denote a continuous change of level in the direction of travel and the term “cross slope” is used to denote a continuous change of level perpendicular to the direction of travel.

Process:

On September 28, 2019, SAIL evaluated the Perkins Park and Big Bay Harbor. These evaluations were performed by SAIL Ambassador Team Members: Allen Beauchamp, a wheelchair user; Joan Beauchamp; and Lucy Wilcox, certified ADA Coordinator.

On October 16 & 17, SAIL evaluated Little Trout Lake Park. 10-16, Allen Beauchamp drove through all of Little Trout Park and did not believe he could maneuver his wheel chair in any of the areas. He did take photos of many areas in the Park. 10-17, Lucy Wilcox did drive and walk through Little Trout Lake and evaluated several of the areas Allen had photographed.

On November 8, 2019, Lucy Wilcox reviewed the current status of Sugarloaf via an aerial photo and the proposed site plan currently being implemented through a DNR grant with completion in the spring of 2020.

The Team members collected measurements on the elements located in the parking lots, the accessible routes connecting public elements and spaces, entry points to structures, and the signage in the park and key areas; the interior of restrooms, including but not limited to and the presence of clear floors spaces in restrooms, and specifications of restroom fixtures. Measurements were recorded and compared to the ADA Guidelines.

Michigan DNR grants emphasize Universal Design (UD). UD involves designing products and spaces so that they can be used by the widest range of people possible. Universal design evolved from Accessible Design, a design process that addresses the needs of people with disabilities. Universal Design goes further by recognizing that there is a wide spectrum of human abilities. Everyone, even the most able-bodied person, passes through childhood, periods of temporary

illness, injury and old age. By designing for this human diversity, we can create things that will be easier for all people to use. SOURCE: Universal Design.com

Please note that for many elements, such as a restroom mirror, the element must meet ADA Guidelines when it is provided even when that element is not required.

Recommendations for each fixture were determined based primarily on elements with a score indicating that it does not meet or exceeds the ADA Guidelines. In some instances, no recommendations for elements which do not meet ADA Guidelines were provided because it was judged likely that alterations were technically unfeasible or not worth the financial investment for a small gain. For the purpose of clarity, each park is reviewed in a separate section.

Section 2 Perkins Park (PP)

This park is one of the jewels of the Marquette County Recreation system. While it used to be more of a local secret—its popularity is increasing as it is a wooded park with a protected beach on Lake Independence. During the summer, reservations best be made in advance as the campground is in high demand. The County has made improvements at PP which encourage all types of campers to stay there. Efforts to improve accessibility are evident in the restrooms and the pea gravel pathways through the park.

➤ **The Parking Lots—There are three parking lots in PP.**

- The upper lot near the entrance has no signage for reserved handicapped parking. There is a handicap car parking space below the upper parking lot near the restrooms. The space is limited to a car and there is not a van accessible space except in the parking lot by the beach pavilion. Changing the one space provided near the upper restrooms to a Van Accessible space would make sense. In any case, the sign is not posted at the standard of 60 inches to the bottom of the sign from the pavement. ***Level 1 recommendations: Signage to direct individuals to handicapped parking near the restrooms and adjust the handicap parking sign to be the proper height to assure it is visible for any season or user. Consider making the one parking space car and van accessible and put up new signage.***
- The lower parking lot near the beach pavilion has an accessible parking spot but the handicap parking sign it is not at the correct height at 60 inches above the pavement to the bottom of the sign. The one space is sufficient if at least one space is marked correctly as handicapped parking that is van accessible. ***Level 1 recommendation to reinstall the sign to 60 inches above the pavement.*** Sail suggests there be two parking spaces with a shared access aisle. If both are van accessible the space needed would be 8 feet for both parking spaces and 8 feet for the access aisle between them.
- There is no handicap parking at the boat launch and fishing pier. This is not a problem if parking in the upper lot is corrected and signage corrected in the lower parking lot. If maintaining a single parking space for the single car/van, the van accessible space needs to be least 11 feet wide with an access aisle of at least 5 feet.

- **The Restrooms:** The restrooms in the pavilion below the upper parking lot and the pavilion near the beach are identical. Therefore, we will highlight the areas that require remediation



- All four restrooms have the signage appropriately placed on the wall adjacent to the door on the latch side of the door indicating the restrooms either for men or women. All the signs are incorrectly placed 59 inches from the finished floor. The pictures above illustrate the signs at the four restrooms are placed above the range for accessibility for Braille readers and one of the signs does not have an accessible icon nor Braille (although the women’s restroom is primarily accessible). To fully meet the ADA standards,

the signage must have contrasting characters, raised text, and braille. The signs should be mounted so that the lowest Braille characters are not more than 48-inches above the finished floor, and the highest characters are not higher than 60-inches above the finished floor. **Level 1 recommendation to replace the signage on the upper restroom Women's and the Men's restroom as it is damaged and place at correct level for Braille readers. The two signs at the beach pavilion are acceptable but need to be moved down to the correct height so lowest row of Braille is not more than 48 inches above the finished floor.**

- **The Restrooms** – the standards were met in the men and women's restrooms for the proper placement of the sinks; the mirrors (the base of the mirror being no higher than 40 inches from the floor); the toilets were placed at the right height (no less than 17" or more 19") and the grab bars were placed correctly.
- **The shower**—The shower was appreciated by the Ambassador Team member who is a wheel chair user. It is accessible by wheel chair and the one issue it is the wand would not be accessible to a wheel chair user. **Level 1 recommendation-lower wand to a max of 48 inches above the shower floor.**



- **The Restroom Towel Dispenser:** The paper towel dispenser is mounted on the wall at 42 inches and there is no obstruction. However, the force required to operate the towel dispenser is greater than 5lbs and requires 2 hands to pull the towel out of the dispenser. **Level 2 recommendation to replace the hand towel dispenser.**
- A critical issue in all the restrooms is that the flush apparatus for the toilets is built into the wall behind the toilet. The amount of pressure that must be used to push in the metal button on the wall is greater than 10 lbs. **Level 2 recommendation that the flush control be changed to a design that meets the standard that it can be operated with one hand without tight grasping, pinching or twisting of the wrist with the flush on the outside of the toilet, not near the wall.**

- Accessible Pathways—Perkins park has many pathways through the park. They go to the playground; to the restrooms; to the campsites. People can bike on the pathways; walk on them with their dogs; and push baby carriages. However, most of the pathways have slopes far greater than that allowed by the ADA to be considered accessible. There is an access pathway to the beach with a beach mat. Unfortunately, the mat had been put away for the winter season so SAIL could not evaluate its efficacy. There was good signage indicating the pathway to the beach. At a minimum, the pathway to the restrooms below the entrance of the park needs to be improved to be able to go down from the upper parking lot to the restrooms. Or signage needs to be created to direct people to drive to the lower parking lot and over to the accessible restrooms at the beach pavilion. The challenge at the beach pavilion is the pathway is sloped up to the restrooms and the slope of the pathways will need to be lessened all the way up to the bathrooms. The pathway to the beach access for wheel chair users from the lower restrooms should be sloped to ADA standards as to not exceeding 1:12 ratio.

Level 3 recommendations—create accessible pathways to move between the key parts of the Park. First efforts should be to create the pathways to the separate restroom buildings. The recommendation is to repair the concrete walkway up to the restrooms at the upper level of the park and assure the threshold up to the concrete path is no greater than ½ inch. These same efforts at the lower restroom would assure individuals could join their family and peers at the beach.

Accessibility Ranking: 2 = some of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards for Accessible Design. The Park is close to a score of 3 for “most” of the elements meeting standards when the bathrooms are modified and pathways to the bathrooms become accessible. To go beyond and into Universal Design, the fishing pier and boat launch would need to be revisited for accessibility.

Section 3 Big Bay Harbor

The Harbor is important as a safe harbor for boaters during bad weather and important for the beauty and enjoyment of the boating and fishing community. The boat launch is a critical popular access point to Lake Superior. It is a vital asset to the community and boaters exploring Lake Superior.

- The approach into Big Bay Harbor and the availability of parking could easily accommodate accessible parking and this was noted in the previous plan. Parking lines have been painted on the parking lot but there is no reserved handicapped parking. As with the discussions about Perkins Park—accessible parking should also be near an accessible route to the restroom. Both needs could be addressed with minimal expense by locating accessible parking near the Harbor Office. ***Level 1 recommendation-utilize handicap accessible signage and create at least one accessible car/van parking space. 11’ parking space and 5 ‘access aisle.***
- The previous plan noted inaccurately that the bathroom remodel brought the restroom into compliance with ADA standards.

- Signage to the restroom should meet the standards outlined above in the Perkins Park review. Since there is only one restroom—it should be marked as All Gender to inform visitors of its availability. **Level 1 recommendation- replace signage that meets ADA standards.**
- Overall the restroom meets standards for the entrance and sink and towel dispenser. A significant error was made installing a 15” toilet. Our wheel chair user could not have used the toilet independently. The standards require a 17” to 19” toilet be installed. **Level 2 recommendation- replace the toilet with one meeting ADA standards and assure that flush is on the open side of the toilet.**
- Access to the Harbor Office is available at the side door of the building right off the parking lot. However, the front of the office requires a step up of approximately 2 inches and is not accessible. **Level 1 recommendation- install a concrete ramp up on the same side currently accessible to side door for access to the Office.**
- Picnic tables are placed across the front of the Harbor on grass behind the concrete pathways and they are all movable. Some tables extend 9” at each end and could accommodate wheelchairs. None are fixed to the ground. **Level 1 recommendation- develop on area with a fixed table and accessible pathway around the picnic area.**
- Big Bay Harbor has a boat launch without wheelchair access. There are concrete ramps on either side of the boat ramp that become wooden ramps with railing up approx. 48 inches and extend out into the bay. The wooden walkways are not accessible and on the left side facing the water, one wooden board is unattached to the base. It does seem that the boat launch could be adapted for kayak launching that is accessible. Other sites have been working of such projects and Powell Township might be a good partner as they are exploring ways in increase tourism. Perhaps joint funding efforts could be pursued. The concrete walkway across the front of the Harbor for boat mooring is in good shape and is accessible. This was discussed in the previous plan and perhaps now is the time to continue the work to create accessible access to the boat launch. **Level 3 recommendation to improve the boat launch to be accessible and that may be out of the scope of the upcoming Recreation plan due to other priorities. Perhaps it could make the list of future plans.**

Accessibility Ranking: 2= some of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards for Accessible Design. This ranking would be a “3” with the level 1 recommendations completed. The outstanding Level 3 recommendation is improving the boat launch to be accessible for fishing and boating.

Section 4 Little Trout Lake Park (LTL)

The accessibility review of Little Trout Lake Park presents a conundrum for the stewardship of the Parks and Recreation Committee. The County became responsible for a park that had been developed on an Air Force base that was closed in 1995. It is a large park of approximately 1100 acres. The park had many amenities for the many families that lived on the base. To this day the basketball courts, playground area and volleyball courts are still in usable condition but not accessible in any areas. There are garbage cans placed around the park and the areas are litter

free and there appears to be little to no vandalism or graffiti. There is a major picnic pavilion that has a middle section where there were four pits for barbeques. Water and electric services have been discontinued and the restrooms are completely locked. Yet there is evidence of use at the park: tire tracks on one of the two entry points; garbage in the garbage cans and tracks in the dirt/lawn to get to the playground. Attached are photos to capture the state of the park currently.



It is a challenge for the County to determine the future identity of this park. The park is currently getting visitors and appears to be primarily used by the residents of the area. The Ambassador Team is making no specific recommendations at this time. Creating accessibility at the park would be an extensive project. The Pavilion is potentially an accessible site through the gate. A pathway could be developed for access. The back side of the pavilion actually is graded with no threshold onto the pavilion. None of the restrooms are currently usable and there is logic in keeping the site without water and electricity. Other parks in the county do not have either water or electricity and are primarily day use. The restroom building in the second photo at one time included showers and a sink to wash up from the sandy beach. A single all gender pit toilet could be provided in the area near the primary pavilion which could be maintained relatively inexpensively after the initial cost. A primary question for the community and the Parks and

Recreation Committee is whether to keep the park as more of a residential asset or consider investing funding to encourage greater use from outlying areas and tourists?

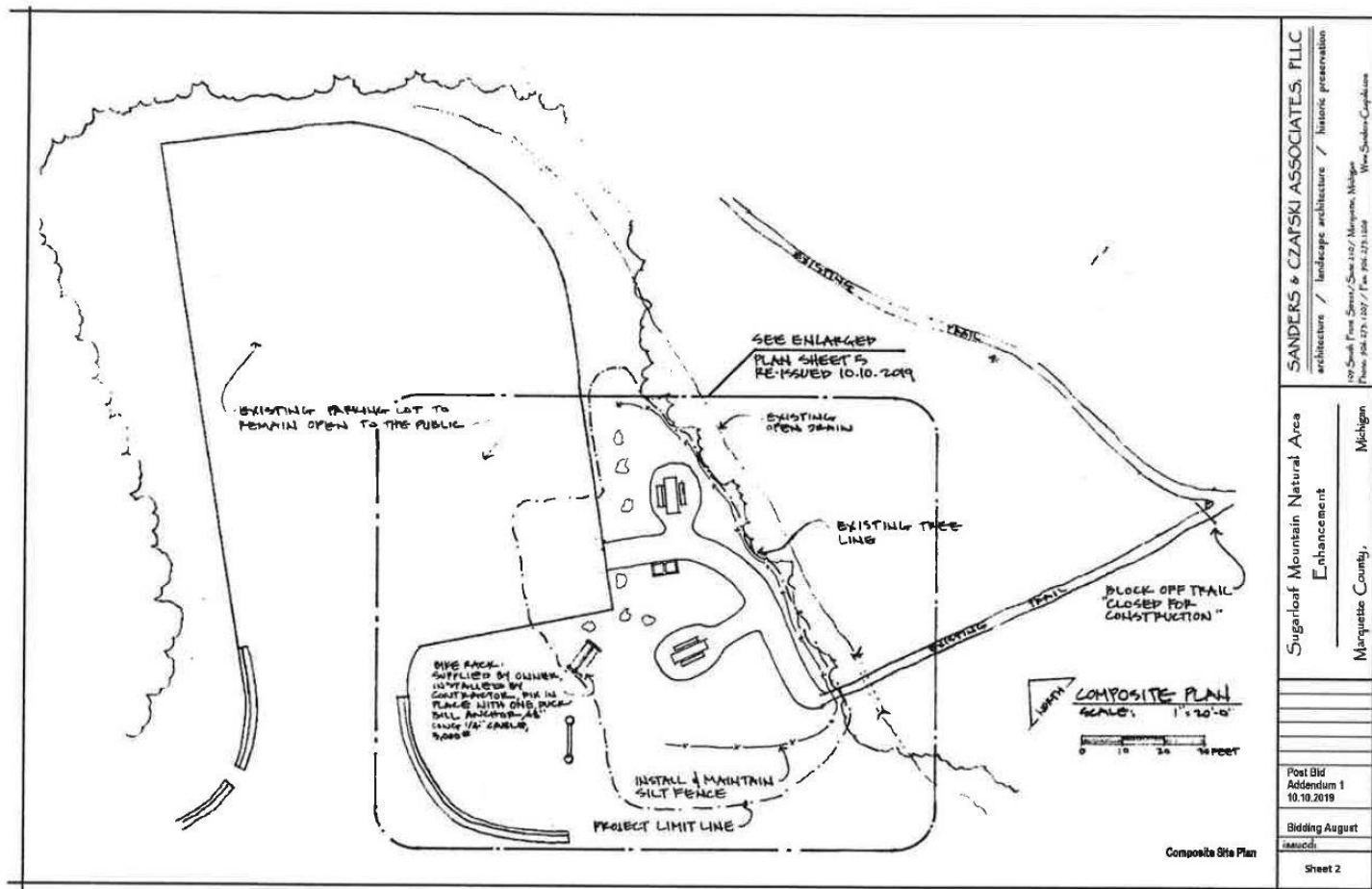
Accessibility Ranking: 1= none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards for Accessible Design

Section 5 Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area

Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area contains approximately 3,200 feet of trail and stairway segments that lead to the mountain's summit 470 feet above Lake Superior. At this time there are no existing restrooms or picnic tables. The photo below shows the existing parking lot with no accessible features.



The architectural rendering below outlines proposed changes to Sugarloaf where the trail to go up Sugarloaf will be focused near County Road 550 and the trail developed up through the rocks and trees to be abandoned. The improved pathway will include an enlarged entry trail with picnic tables and trash receptacles. A portion of the lower trail will be developed as an accessible pathway. An innovation the County is exploring involves use of a webcam at the overlook atop Sugarloaf that can provide daily feeds to their website for those visitors who do not climb to the top for whatever their accessibility issues.



Accessibility Ranking: 1= currently none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards for Accessible Design

Section 6 Summary

Perkins Park Accessibility Ranking: 2 = some of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards

Big Bay Harbor Accessibility Ranking: 2 = some of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards

Little Trout Lake Park Accessibility Ranking: 1= currently none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards

Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area: Accessibility Ranking: 1= currently none of the site elements meet 2010 ADA standards.

The Marquette County Parks and Recreation Committee and the Marquette Planning Commission deserve credit for their aggressive 2014 -2018 Recreation Plan. Much of the work that was outlined in the Plan (as noted on page 19 in the report) has not yet come to fruition. Improvements have been made at Perkins Park over the years and it is clearly a popular camping spot for Marquette residents and tourists. Big Bay Harbor has made strides to be more inclusive and so much more could be done with the boat launch to make it universal design friendly and a potential kayaking entry point for individuals with disabilities. Sugarloaf is a site that is by nature’s design inaccessible. But creating accessible parking; an accessible entry trail; and accessible picnic

areas can lead to less exclusion. And while the vast portion of the trail may not be made physically accessible for many, the concept of utilizing a webcam at the top of Sugarloaf is a creative approach to being able to virtually visit the top. Little Trout Lake Park is a challenge to the county as it remains inaccessible by ADA standards. The Marquette County Parks and Recreation Committee --through the goals and plans for outlined in their existing Plan and updated for 2020-2025 seek to improve their parks to inclusively serve their citizens and visitors. Doing so will take a slow and steady pace and involves committing to correct the Level 1 recommendations and developing the step by step plans to tackle the more challenging Level 2 and Level 3 recommendations. SAIL suggests asking for assistance across the entire process from individuals living with disabilities. ***Remembering the importance of nothing for us without us.*** In the coming years, Superior Alliance for Independent Living (SAIL) hopes to continue advising and assisting the Marquette County Parks and Recreation Committee with improving accessibility at the parks they are responsible for maintaining and improving. We offer our expertise in helping make future improvements throughout your recreation network.

If you have any questions or concerns about this report please contact me at Lucyw@upsail.org or call 906-236-0543. Thank you for inviting SAIL to assist in the realization of an absolutely accessible County Park System.

Sincerely,

Lucy Wilcox, Certified ADA Coordinator

Appendix A-2: Marquette County Recreation Survey 2019 (Online Only)

Marquette County Recreation Survey 2019

1. Have you ever visited the Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area?

Answer Choices

Yes	97.45%	306
No	2.55%	8

Answered 314
Skipped 3

2. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices

The natural beauty of the area	79.62%	250
Stairs and hand railings to assist with the climb	39.17%	123
Spectacular view at the top of the mountain	85.67%	269
Improved parking lot	15.92%	50
Skip to next question	3.50%	11
Other (please specify)	2.23%	7

Answered 314
Skipped 3

3. If you choose not to visit Sugarloaf Mountain Natural Area, what is your reason?

Answer Choices

I can't climb the stairs to get to the top	3.30%	10
Not enough parking	8.25%	25
I am not interested	1.32%	4
It has become too popular, so I go elsewhere	19.80%	60
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the park	0.00%	0
Skip to next question	65.68%	199
Other (please specify)	6.27%	19

Answered 303
Skipped 14

4. Have you ever visited Perkins Park in Big Bay?

Answer Choices

Yes	48.18%	146
No	51.82%	157

Answered 303
Skipped 14

5. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices

Swimming in Lake Independence	29.27%	84
Camping with full hook ups	19.86%	57
Camping with electric only	10.80%	31
Camping in tents without hook ups	10.45%	30
Barrier free accessible trails	6.97%	20
Barrier free accessible camping sites	6.27%	18
Barrier free access to Lake Independence	10.80%	31
Barrier free accessible restrooms and showers	8.36%	24
Pull thru camping sites for larger campers	12.20%	35
Campsite privacy	10.10%	29
Park Staff	13.59%	39
Maintenance of the restroom and showers	15.33%	44
Skip to next question	52.96%	152
Other (please specify)	5.92%	17

Answered 287
Skipped 30

6. If you choose not to visit Perkins Park, what is your reason?

Answer Choices			
I am not interested	3.11%		9
It does not offer the accommodations I am looking for	0.35%		1
The distance is too far from other recreational amenities	4.15%		12
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the park	37.02%		107
Skip to next question	48.79%		141
Other (please specify)	9.34%		27
Answered			289
Skipped			28

7. Have you ever visited the Big Bay Harbor of Refuge in Powell Township?

Answer Choices			
Yes	24.14%	70	
No	75.86%	220	
Answered			290
Skipped			27

8. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices			
The restrooms and shower facilities	5.93%		16
The quality of the boat slips	2.96%		8
The mooring services offered for the price	3.33%		9
The parking lot	3.70%		10
Skip to next question	87.04%		235
Other (please specify)	2.96%		8
Answered			270
Skipped			47

9. If you choose not to visit the Big Bay Harbor, what is your reason?

Answer Choices			
I am not interested	1.80%		5
I do not have a watercraft	14.75%		41
It does not offer the accommodations I am looking for	0.72%		2
The distance is too far from other recreational amenities	1.80%		5
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the Harbor	50.00%		139
Skip to next question	35.61%		99
Other (please specify)	2.16%		6
Answered			278
Skipped			39

10. Have you ever visited the Honor Camp Property in Sands Township?

Answer Choices			
Yes	6.50%	18	
No	93.50%	259	
Answered			277
Skipped			40

11. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices			
The natural beauty of the area	5.88%		15
The trails	5.49%		14
Exercise stations	0.78%		2
Skip to next question	91.37%		233
Other (please specify)	0.78%		2
Answered			255
Skipped			62

12. If you choose not to visit the Honor Camp Property, what is your reason?

Answer Choices		
I am not interested	2.96%	8
It does not offer enough accessibility for me to participate in activities	0.37%	1
The distance is too far to be convenient	2.22%	6
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area	68.52%	185
Skip to next question	26.67%	72
Other (please specify)	1.85%	5
Answered		270
Skipped		47

13. Have you ever visited the County-owned forest in Forsyth/Sands Townships?

Answer Choices		
Yes	26.87%	72
No	73.13%	196
Answered		268
Skipped		49

14. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices		
The natural beauty of the area	20.00%	50
The trails	18.00%	45
Hunting/ fishing	3.60%	9
ORV riding	8.40%	21
Horseback riding	0.80%	2
Bird watching	4.40%	11
Berry picking	14.80%	37
Skip to next question	72.00%	180
Other (please specify)	0.00%	0
Answered		250
Skipped		67

15. If you choose not to visit the County-owned forest land, what is your reason?

Answer Choices		
I am not interested	2.69%	7
It does not offer enough accessibility for me to participate in activities	0.77%	2
The distance is too far for it to be convenient	2.31%	6
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area	50.00%	130
Skip to next question	44.62%	116
Other (please specify)	1.92%	5
Answered		260
Skipped		57

16. Have you ever visited Little Trout Lake Park, in Forsyth Township?

Answer Choices		
Yes	17.29%	46
No	82.71%	220
Answered		266
Skipped		51

17. If yes, what did you like about it?

Answer Choices		
The beach or swimming in the lake	10.32%	26
The ADA compliant restrooms	1.59%	4
Park amenities like grills, picnic table, and the pavilion	5.95%	15
Playground equipment	5.16%	13
Sports amenities like the basketball, volleyball, horseshoes	2.78%	7
Berry picking	5.95%	15
Skip to next question	85.71%	216

Other (please specify)	1.59%	4
Answered		252
Skipped		65

18. If you choose not to visit Little Trout Lake Park, what is your reason?

Answer Choices		
I am not interested	2.31%	6
It does not offer enough accessibility for me to participate in activities	0.77%	2
The distance is too far for it to be convenient	2.31%	6
I don't know where it is, or I am not familiar with the area	60.00%	156
Skip to next question	35.77%	93
Other (please specify)	0.77%	2
Answered	260	
Skipped	57	

Big Bay Harbor 5-Year Recreation Plan

November 22, 2019



Prepared by the Marquette County Planning Division
in congruence with the Marquette County 2020 Recreation Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Name of Facility

The Big Bay Harbor of Refuge is a County-owned and operated Harbor on the south shore of Lake Superior in Michigan’s Upper Peninsula. Located in the community of Big Bay, Big Bay Harbor is located 25 miles northwest of the Presque Isle Harbor and Lower Harbor in the City of Marquette, and 4 miles west of the mouth of the Iron River, which connects Lake Independence to Lake Superior. Big Bay a small, quiet community with approximately 200 residents, and the natural beauty of the surrounding area draws many tourists and Marquette County locals to the area throughout the year. The Harbor was developed in 1945 as part of a statewide program to construct protective harbors of refuge so that no boater was ever more than 30 miles from a protective harbor of refuge while on the Great Lakes. The Harbor consists of a break wall, mooring bulkhead, boat launch, and a harbormaster’s building.

Size of Facility

The Harbor has a 275-foot sheet pile and concrete mooring bulkhead. The bulkhead has 10 slips for seasonal and transient boaters. There is a growing waiting list for seasonal slips. Currently, the waitlist is 18. Launch pass sales have increased over the past five years. Transient boater usage has also increased. The west end of the bulkhead has fuel and sewage pumping, restrooms, and shower facilities for slip renters. Water and power are available at each slip. A boat launch and parking lot is open to day-use boaters. Larger boats tend to use the bulkhead for broadside moorage. Smaller craft tend to use the undeveloped east end of the harbor basin, where a private dock system is in place. Boats are also allowed to anchor in the harbor basin.

ADA Accessibility

Big Bay Harbor has accessible concrete ramps on either side of the boat ramp that become wooden ramps and extend out into the bay, and the concrete walkway across the front of the Harbor for boat mooring is also accessible. However, as can be seen in the Recreation Plan Action Program and the site development plans below, significant improvements must be made to make the Harbor to meet all guidelines for ADA accessibility. Necessary accessibility upgrades will include installation of accessible picnic tables, barrier-free parking and signage, replacement of the toilet, and accessibility upgrades to the Harbor office and boat launch. According to the 2019 Accessibility Report (Appendix 1-A), the Big Bay Harbor has an overall accessibility rating of 2, indicating that only some facilities meet 2010 ADA guidelines.

Site Development Plans

Plans for further development at the Big Bay Harbor for the next 5 years are as follows:

Year	Action	Cost
2020	Finger Piers, Kayak Lockers and/or Launch, Accessible Picnic Tables, Barrier-free Parking and Signage, and Accessibility Upgrades.	\$300,000
2020	Water Supply Study	\$4,500
2020	Water Heater Replacement	\$1,500
2020	Fuel Pump Replacement	\$25,000
2021	Big Bay Harbor Master Plan	\$60,000
2024	Pumpout Replacement	\$20,000
2025	Big Bay Harbor Master Plan Implementation	\$300,000

Site Development Summary

Overall, Marquette County plans to maintain the assets that already exist at the Big Bay Harbor, while making much-needed upgrades to accessibility over the next 5 years.

Finger Piers, Kayak Lockers and/or Launch, Accessible Picnic Tables, Barrier-free Parking and Signage, and Accessibility Upgrades:

- Compliance with ADA accessibility requirements
- Improved recreational opportunities

Water Supply Study:

- Analyze the condition of the existing connection to the municipal water system and the water infrastructure within the Harbor.
- Learn more about long-term water infrastructure needs.

Water Heater Replacement:

- Ensure reliable supply of hot water.

Fuel Pump Replacement:

- Ensure reliable supply of fuel for boaters.

Big Bay Harbor Master Plan:

- Create a long term plan and comprehensive budget for future capital improvements at the Harbor.
- Identify needs and opportunities at the Harbor.

Pumpout Replacement:

- Ensure reliable onboard sewage pumpout service for boaters.

Big Bay Harbor Master Plan Implementation:

- Implement capital improvement plan and other plans for the Harbor starting in 2025.

Marketing, Events, & Partnerships

Big Bay Harbor currently participates in the U.P. Boat, Sport, and RV Show at the Superior Dome in Marquette, Michigan. Volunteer “Harbor Hosts” help conduct outreach to the boating community, and pamphlets about the Harbor are available at Perkins Park, a County-owned recreation area and campground in Big Bay. The Harbor is also promoted at National Night Out gatherings on the first Tuesday in August. The County also maintains a Facebook page and a recreation webpage on the County website, www.co.marquette.mi.us. There is one commercial fishing vessel currently operating out of the Harbor.

Events at the Harbor include Big Bay’s annual 4th of July weekend fireworks display “Fire on the Bay,” and the annual Aquatic Invasive Species Landing Blitz, which is part of a statewide campaign by EGLE, the DNR, and MDARD to raise awareness about the need to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species through recreational boating. The following is our 2020 Harbor events schedule:

Date	Event Name
June 2020	Aquatic Invasive Species Landing Blitz
July 2020	Fire on the Bay Fireworks Display

Dredging

Currently, the Harbor is not in need of dredging and does not project a need for dredging in the next 5 years. The most recent dredging project was completed in 2019 by the Army Corps of Engineers. The dredged material was relocated in Lake Superior. A 2013 state-funded dredging grant was used to improve harbor function, and the Harbor was dredged in 2019 by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The total cost of the project was approximately \$250,000.

Annual Maintenance Schedule

Repairs & Maintenance:	\$7,300
- Equipment repairs	
- Building & grounds maintenance	
- Water & sewer maintenance	
Operations:	\$9,740
- Salaries, benefits, insurance	
Supply Costs:	\$9,500
- Office supplies	
- Gas and oil purchases	
- Janitorial supplies	
- Equipment rental/lease	
Services:	\$1,800
- Natural gas	
- Electricity	
- Water & sewer	
- Bank service charges	

Small-Scale Infrastructure Maintenance & Replacement Schedule

Equipment/Infrastructure Replacement	Year	Projected Cost
Water Heater Replacement	2020	\$1,500
Gas Pump Repair	2020	\$600
Building Repair	2020	\$1,500
Launch Sand Removal	2020	\$500
Electrical, Plumbing, & Mechanical Repairs	2020	\$500

Large-Scale Infrastructure Replacement Schedule

Equipment/Infrastructure Replacement	Year	Projected Cost
Finger Piers, Kayak Lockers, Accessible Picnic Tables, Barrier-free Parking and Signage, and Accessibility Upgrades	2020	\$300,000
Fuel Pump Replacement	2020	\$25,000
Pumpout Replacement	2024	\$20,000