

## **CHAPTER SEVEN: RECREATION**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Within Burt Township there is an array of recreational facilities and attractions. This chapter will examine those opportunities that are available to residents and tourists.

### **RECREATION ADMINISTRATION**

Burt Township has been actively involved in the planning of recreation facilities for a number of years. Because the area economy is heavily dependent on the tourist industry, facilities for both transient visitors and local residents are a high priority. To this end, the Burt Township Board acts as the administrative body for recreation in the Township.

Burt Township employs two persons responsible for maintenance, security and operations at Township owned/operated facilities. The marina attendant is responsible for pumping gas and maintenance at the Marina. A manager at Woodland Park is responsible for its operations, assisted by part-time seasonal (summer) laborers. The Township Supervisor is responsible for supervision of these employees.

### **EXISTING FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS**

Recreational facilities in the Grand Marais area are owned and maintained by the Burt Township Board; see Map 7-1, or the National Park Service.

1. Bicycle Path and Walkway: Begins at the pier on Coast Guard Point and then branches off to Agate Beach, up through Woodland Park and to the corner of Brazel Street.
2. Bay Shore Park: West Bay, day use includes: rest room, bathhouse, playground equipment, swimming beach, bandstand/pavilion, picnic tables and grills.
3. Grand Marais Marina Docking Facility: Includes: toilet, boat launching ramp, water, electric hookup for boats and fuel.
4. Woodland Park: Burt Township Tourist Park includes: weekly or daily camper spaces (modern and rustic sites), tennis courts, playground area, recreation building, picnic areas (both on and off sites), picnic grills, softball field, toilet and shower facilities, basketball court, Donahey Woods.
5. Coast Guard Point Park: Includes: Grand Marais Historical Museum housed in former Coast Guard housing building, park, breakwater parking lot (25 car capacity) by National Park Service in cooperation with Burt Township. National Park Service will be restoring the original 1900 façade.
6. Edward Street Beach Access Site: Includes 350 foot frontage.
7. Carpenter Creek Beach Access Site: Includes 100 foot frontage.

8. Smith Brothers Beach Site: Includes 250 foot frontage.
9. Pickle Barrel Museum: Owned and operated by the Historical Society and is open during summer months. Also maintains an heirloom flower garden.
10. Post Office Museum: Owned and operated by the Historical Society and is open during the summer months. Also maintains an heirloom rose garden.
11. Disc Golf Course: 18-hole course located within the School Forest and maintained by Burt Township School.
12. Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore: A variety of geological, scenic and cultural attractions are located within the Lakeshore area. Recreational facilities of the Lakeshore area located in Burt Township are listed below:

Chapel and Beaver Basins Area

- Chapel parking area: 37 parking spaces, handicapped vault toilet, trail with overlook to Chapel Falls
- Little Beaver Lake: 20 parking spaces, 8 drive-in campsites, launch ramp, water pump, handicapped vault toilet, self-guiding nature trail, interpretive program circle
- Beaver Basin parking area: 15 parking spaces
- Six back country campsites along Lakeshore Trail

Au Sable Area

- Au Sable Point: Au Sable Light Station
- Twelve Mile Beach: 23 parking spaces, a picnic area, 37 drive-in campsites, 4 handicapped vault toilets, 3 water pumps, self-guiding nature trail, interpretive program circle. It is in the process of being renovated.
- Hurricane River: 10 parking spaces (lower), 22 drive-in campsites (10 at lower, 12 at upper), 4 picnic sites (lower), 2 handicapped vault toilets, 2 water pumps
- Two back country campsites along Lakeshore Trail

Grand Sable Area

- Grand Sable Lake Overlook: 8 parking spaces, 2 picnic sites
- Sable Falls: 58 parking spaces, trail system to falls and Lake Superior, comfort station
- Abrahamson Farm: 30 parking spaces, visitor contact facility, comfort station, cross-country ski trailhead (10 miles of trail)
- Log Slide: 15 parking spaces, vault toilet
- One back country campsite along Lakeshore Trail
- Boat Launch: Boat launch ramp, toilet facilities, picnic sites.
- Canoe in Camp Ground: Toilet facility and fire ring

## **RECREATION NEEDS**

In order to determine the type of recreational areas and facilities, which should be provided for in a given community, it is necessary to follow recreation guidelines.

Through Township Board and Public Planning Forums, where recreation facilities were discussed, the following recreation needs have been identified by Burt Township officials and the public:

- Improvements to Donahey Woods area, including stairs and trails to beach, top soil at entrance, protective posts. Plans to build footbridge over 1<sup>st</sup> Creek connecting with National Park Trails to Sable Falls.
- Improvements to Marina, including additional mooring buoys, floating dock for small boats and bathhouse.
- Improvements to Bayshore Park including playground equipment; benches, acquire additional park land and develop parking area.
- Develop a bicycle path and walkway to begin east of town at Ellen Street and continue along H-58 to the Burt Township/Luce County Line.
- Work with NPS to develop a bike path to Sable Falls parking area
- Improve sidewalk conditions and connect dead end sidewalks
- Improved Cross Country ski trails and mapping of existing trails in School Forest.
- Professional cement skate park near beach.
- Better tourist trails, markings for tourists and available maps. . Tour guide possibility.
- Continue to diversify recreation activities to draw new youth to area as well as to encourage tourist to remain in town longer.
- Develop and continue to pursue the Green Communities Challenge seeking grant funding for recreational activities
- Improve aesthetics and use of Green Space.
- Develop an outdoor Recreation and Educational Camp facility within the School Forest.

- Work with NPS to return Sable Lake back to recreational area by draining south end of lake. There is a need for further campground development, and a legitimate swimming area. There is also a need to improve the boat ramp.

At past public Township Board and Planning Commission meetings, Board members discussed the various projects and needs for improving recreational facilities. Through consensus of the group and input from the recreation committees, the Township Board has presented a schedule for the recreation projects. The schedule is based on a number of factors, including anticipated demand, available funding and the desire to improve recreation facilities throughout town.

### **RECREATION DEVELOPMENT SCHEDULE**

As part of past Burt Township Recreation Plans, a recreation development schedule was prepared. This schedule identified a number of proposed projects along with an estimated cost and potential funding source. The schedule outlined projects for a five-year period, which is consistent with the planning period as recommended by the MDNR for recreation plans. The plan needs to be updated and approved by the MDNR so the Township is eligible to apply for various recreation grants.

### **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Burt Township's natural features offer an abundance of passive and active recreational opportunities throughout the year. Expansion of recreational activities and facilities promoting the natural beauty of the surrounding area may be beneficial to residents and visitors.
- The Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore Sandstone includes cliffs, beaches, sand dunes, waterfalls, lakes, forests and shoreline to attract visitors. Hiking, camping, sightseeing, and four season outdoor opportunities abound.
- The age and condition of some Township-owned recreational facilities will involve capital investment in the near future. Burt Township has planned improvements to each Township-owned recreational facility.
- Burt Township will continue to place accessibility/barrier free facilities and programs very high on all priority lists.
- The Township currently does not have an updated and Michigan Department of Natural Resources approved recreation plan; the Township is not eligible to pursue grant funding available through the MDNR at this time. It is a priority to update the Plan.