

NATURE EDUCATION



The Grand Traverse Conservation District is responsible for managing the Grand Traverse Natural Education Reserve, a 420-acre preserve located along the Boardman River. The District offers a variety of summer hikes for kids and adults. Guided hikes include topics such as "Wetlands at Work, Amphibian & Reptile Hunt, Bird Search, Tree Identification, Basic Insect Collection, Aquatic Insects, Michigan Wildflowers, and Native Plants."

With the construction of the proposed nature center/office at the Grand Traverse Nature Education Preserve, the Conservation District is planning to expand its outdoor education program. One goal is to establish satellite areas around Grand Traverse County, for nature hikes and demonstrations. This park could function as one of those satellites. There is a good chance the Center at the Nature Education Reserve will be built next year. Nature hikes at the satellite facilities will become more visible once the nature center is complete.



In 2003, the District would like to do one youth hike and one adult hike (possibly more depending on response) on the Long Lake property. They would be advertised through the LLT newsletter, a brochure put out by the District about the hikes (with theme, time, leader, where to call info), newspaper, and radio. We

would then build on this in the future adding winter snowshoe hikes, and additional summer hikes. It may be possible for local schools to use this park for hikes. The main hindrances to developing such nature education programs at the park are the poor access road and the lack of a parking facility.

After construction of the trails and parking facility, and improvements to the access road, Long Lake Township should develop an interpretative brochure. The brochure should



have a trail map; information on flora, fauna and plant communities; and park rules. Several benches or wildlife viewing stations should be placed along trails and near wetlands. This plan also recommends construction of a kiosk next to the proposed parking facility. The Township should partner with the Grand Traverse Conservation District and seek grant funding to implement the educational and recreational components of this plan.

AESTHETICS MANAGEMENT

Since the property is a park, care must be taken when timber harvests are conducted. Log landings should be cleaned of logging debris, leveled and seeded with grasses. Whole tree chipping is recommend for the aspen harvests as this approach greatly reduces the amount of tops and logging debris in the woodlands. Wherever possible, buffer should be left along main trails in the park.

Sources of Information

Photographs by Richard Deuell and Rick Moore. Illustrations by Carlton Ryan and Tom Parker from the guidebook entitled, "Wildlife and Timber for Private Lands: A Landowner's Guide to Planning."
Books: Wildlife Watcher, Wildlife in Northeast, Field Guide for Birds, Landscaping for Wildlife, Woodworking for Wildlife and USDA Soil Survey of Grand Traverse County



Soils Map

