

December 18, 2007 – North Point Meeting – Lawrence

Potential Scenarios for North Point Conservation Area

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Scenario 3
Access/Parking	Expand Parking area off of Ruggles Road (20)	Expand Parking area off of Ruggles Road (20)	Expand Parking area off of Ruggles Road (20) and improve road from Syndicate Park to North Point and create parking in already cleared areas in the dunes (3)
Trails/access to dunes	Keep existing rustic/gravel with some reinforcement to prevent erosion (23)	Keep existing rustic/gravel with some reinforcement to prevent erosion (23)	Install wood/plastic observation deck on top of dune (3)
Signage	Add a sign at the entrance area explaining the importance of dune ecosystems and the need to respect the dune by not ascending the dune. (74)	Add a sign at the entrance area explaining the importance of dune ecosystems and the need to respect the dune by not ascending the dune. (74) Add trail way finding signs (49)	Add a sign at the entrance area explaining the importance of dune ecosystems and the need to respect the dune by not ascending the dune. (74) Add trail way finding signs (49) Add small tree/plant identification signs along trails (39) Add sign at top of dune explaining the importance of dune ecosystems and the need to respect the dune by not ascending the dune. (39)
Bathrooms	No bathrooms (8)	Install pit/vault toilet (5)	Install pit/vault toilets at Ruggles Road entrance and at parking area in dunes (5)
Other Amenities	Continue to provide a dumpster in parking area from April – November (20)	Add picnic tables, garbage cans and grills (13)	Add a pavilion with picnic tables, garbage cans and grills (5)
Group Use (non-profits, community or church groups)	Groups need reservations for overnight use. Establish a maximum number allowed per night. (35)	Groups need reservations for overnight use. Establish a maximum number allowed per night. (35)	Groups need reservations for overnight use and a fee is charged. (30)
Maintenance	Boy Scouts continue to care for the park (41) and establish an Adopt A Park program for volunteers to assist in park maintenance (29)	Boy Scouts continue to care for the park (41) and establish an Adopt A Park program for volunteers to assist in park maintenance (29) County staff/road commission/prisoner worker program/contract with private firm (15)	Boy Scouts continue to care for the park (41) and establish an Adopt A Park program for volunteers to assist in park maintenance (29) County staff/road commission/prisoner worker program/contract with private firm (15)

Marketing	Sign at entrance, County website www.vbco.org/norhtpoint.asp , word of mouth (29)	Sign at entrance, County website, word of mouth (29) Limited to no cost – add information to existing websites (tourism councils, City, Township, etc.), to County Road map, region bike map, press releases, etc (37)	Sign at entrance, County website, word of mouth (29) Limited to no cost – add information to existing websites (tourism councils, City, Township, etc.), to County Road map, region bike map, press releases, etc (37) Minimal cost – design, print and distribute brochure (20)
Programming	Develop a curriculum associated with using North Point (history – facts concerning South Haven, Van Buren County; Geology – glacier activity, dune formation; Ecology – development of forests (succession), bird watching, measuring dune movement Respect for nature – being quiet; Writing – narratives, poems, etc.) (14)	Develop a curriculum associated with using North Point (history – facts concerning South Haven, Van Buren County; Geology – glacier activity, dune formation; Ecology – development of forests (succession), bird watching, measuring dune movement Respect for nature – being quiet; Writing – narratives, poems, etc.) (14)	Develop a curriculum associated with using North Point (history – facts concerning South Haven, Van Buren County; Geology – glacier activity, dune formation; Ecology – development of forests (succession), bird watching, measuring dune movement Respect for nature – being quiet; Writing – narratives, poems, etc.) (14)

There was significant discussion about the advantages of having an easement held by a land trust such as the Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy. The group could suggest to the county that the commissioners should memorialize the North Point property for future generations to enjoy. The act would be a legacy to the future of Van Buren County and the State of Michigan. There was also interest in having expertise of the SWMLC for property management, especially to ensure that overuse of the property does not degrade the health of the forested dune ecosystem found at North Point. Forming an advisory board with SWMLC as a member could be suggested.

The next step will be to determine costs with each scenario and to prepare a write up of each.

The next meeting was set for January 15, 2008.