



Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, Inc.

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2011 Projects List

Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail – This 27-mile non-motorized multi-use trail will generally follow M-22 and M-109 from the northern border of the Lakeshore (CR-651) to the Benzie/ Leelanau county line (Manning Rd. a couple of miles south of Empire). The trail will be built in the state and county right-of-ways and in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. We are fortunate to have TART trails coordinate the fundraising effort. This past year, we were involved in planning and fundraising activities.

Port Oneida Cultural Fair – The 10th annual celebration of the agricultural heritage of northern Michigan is coordinated in conjunction with the National Park Service and several local groups. The fair had over 100 demonstrators and artists and served about 3,500 visitors during the two day event. This year, the Friends donated **\$7,543** to cover Fair expenses.

Visitor Booklets – We've worked with Park Staff to develop some inexpensive guide books to provide visitors with more information about Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. There are now 12 booklets and almost 22,000 have been distributed since beginning in 2006. We added a new booklet entitled **Environmental Threats** describing invasive species and other threats this year that affect the habitats in the park. Donations for books and stickers this season amounted to \$8,700 which will be used for printing new booklets and other projects. This year we provided free maps and guides of the villages on North and South Manitou Islands.

Adopt-A-Beach – Over 60 volunteers pick up trash along 35 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline on the mainland as well as a few volunteers who walk the beaches on South Manitou Island in Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. The volunteers record the trash they pick up and report it to our partner, the Alliance for the Great Lakes. Beach Patrol is once per month on the individual's schedule.

Adopt-A-Garden – The gardens at the Lawr farm on M-22 were maintained throughout the summer for visitors to enjoy as they drive by or stop in for a picnic. Discussions have been started to investigate clean up the old entrance to the Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive (Great Lakes Picnic Area) located near the Dune Climb with the possibility of it becoming a Native Plant Garden. This area could be used to education school groups and visitors about the value of native plants and problems associated with invasive non-native plants.

Adopt-An-Orchard – Several old orchards exist in historic areas of the park. For several years, the National Park Service has conducted pruning workshops to teach members of the public how to care for old apple and pear trees like these. This year some of the workshop attendees offered to "adopt" an orchard to keep the trees pruned and grass mowed to help keep these orchards alive. We have just a few orchards adopted, and we are looking for more volunteers.

Adopt-A-River – This is the second year for this program to have volunteers kayak the Crystal River and pick up trash along the way. River Patrol is on the individual's schedule and they patrol at least once per month. This year we are working with the Traverse Area Paddling Club to include the Platte River.

Adopt-A-Trail – Over 35 volunteers pick up down branches and report to Park Roads & Trails crew any large trees down or erosion problems. Over 100 miles of trails are monitored. Volunteers walk their trail once a month on their own schedule. Once built, the Sleeping Bear Heritage Trail will be included.

Historic Landscape Maintenance – Many of the historic farm fields in the Park, especially in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District, are being overrun by trees which destroys the historic landscapes. The Friends manage volunteers who clear these fields by pulling trees and mowing the fields. The National Park Service management is developing a landscape management plan for Port Oneida Rural Historic District this year. This plan will provide guidance on which fields and the mowing boundaries.

Volunteer Search and Rescue Supplies - Last year a group of ten volunteers was assembled and trained in the basics of search and rescue. This VSAR corps provides park rangers with a team that can be called on short notice to quickly get trained volunteers to an area and reduce the likelihood of an extended event. Modeled after a similar group in Yosemite, the group has already been mobilized for a call once last year. **\$1,800**

Firewood Bags for Campground Firewood Exchange – The transport of disease and insects into non-infected areas in the National Park is largely by campers bringing infested firewood to the campgrounds. This year, the Park Service will be instituting a voluntary program to exchange any firewood brought by campers with local firewood. The campers' firewood will either be burned immediately or placed in heavy gauge plastic bags for them to take back home. This program will become mandatory in 2012. **\$1,000**

Herbicide for Black Locust Removal – The Lakeshore has a general agreement with the SEEDS Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) to cut and remove black locust from designated areas within the park over the winter months. The YCC has certified their young adults to use herbicide to treat the stumps following felling the trees. They also foliar treat the suckers on these sites during the summer months. The park has shared the costs with the YCC for the chemicals and additives needed to complete the work. These funds would be used to purchase chemical, additives, and application equipment for this project. **\$2,000**

Brush Cutter and Attachments – There is need for a brush cutter to efficiently remove large stands of honeysuckle, autumn olive, multiflora rose, lilac, and other shrubby non-natives that grow in thick monocultures under black locust stands. These dense monocultures cause black locust trees to become hung up when they are felled. This creates a safety hazard so the shrubs must be removed prior to felling trees. Funds would be used to purchase a brush cutter, various head attachments, and the associated PPE needed to run the equipment. **\$1,000**

Student Intern Housing – The Natural Resource Division has the option of supplementing paid staff with student interns each year. These individuals have the capability to assist with a multitude of programs, while gaining invaluable experience that will serve them well in their future natural resources endeavors. The work gained is a great bargain for the National Lakeshore, but also provides the interns with real world work experience that can give the individuals a real boost on their resumes. We are usually able to secure funding through the VIP program to cover the base stipend amount for these positions (\$20/day), but the funding has the stipulation that it is not to be used for housing costs, which we must also cover. Housing costs for these positions is \$1,000/position. We are requesting housing costs to cover up to four positions, but any number less than that would be appreciated. **\$4,000**

Trail Trekker Challenge – Two students from Glen Lake Schools worked with the Interpretive Division to develop a new hiking program at the park. The challenge was to hike all 100 miles of mainland trails in one season. They developed a brochure/record book to describe the program and keep track of trails hiked. The Friends printed 200 color copies for the program. **\$147**

Oral History – Tom Van Zoeren has been collecting interviews with people who lived in the Port Oneida Rural Historic District and around the Glen Lake area. These interviews need to be transcribed and indexed to make them more accessible for researchers and Park Interpretive Rangers. The Friends supports this project by paying for transcription. **\$667**

Projects planned for 2012

Wetland Restoration – A permanent deer enclosure fence will be built around the perimeter of an artificial wetland used to remove excess nutrients from effluent generated from a closed-loop fish cleaning station we maintain for visitor use. In addition to construction of the fence, this project involves re-establishing targeted wetland plant species in the wetland. **\$9,500**

Lake MI Access Stairs – Volunteers from Cherry Republic and the Friends will work with Roads and Trails staff from the park to build these access stairs at the end of the access road about a mile north of Lane Rd. in Port Oneida. The new stairs will provide a safe access to Lake Michigan and dramatically reduces erosion of the bank. **\$3500**

Crystal River Signs – Signs will be fabricated and installed at the four primary Crystal River access points, including two liveries, to indicate current water levels and associated boating precautions to protect the river environment. The signs will characterize the effects and experience of floating the river at different water levels, guide use toward lower draft boats at low levels, and discourage use at critically low levels. **\$2000**