



C. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE



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I. Administrative Organization

a. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission:

The WCPARC plays an important role in the provision of active and passive recreation, parks, and other leisure services. The Commission is responsible for the acquisition, development, maintenance, management, planning and operation of the recreation delivery system at the county level. WCPARC has been proactive in the development of recreation parklands, facilities, and delivery of quality programs to residents.

The Commission consists of 10 members, including a member of the County Road Commission, the County Water Resources Commissioner, and other members appointed by the elected Board of Commissioners, at least one and not more than three of whom shall be members of the Board.

b. General Administrative Organization:

The Washtenaw County Parks system is headed by a Director and assisted by the Deputy Director. Each of the largest parks (Meri Lou Murray Recreation Center, Pierce Lake Golf Course & Park, Independence Lake, and Rolling Hills) has its own superintendent, building maintenance, and operations staff. Currently there are a total of 35 permanent employees, including park planners, administrative staff, two naturalists, a horticulturist, a greens superintendent, supervisors, workers, and laborers based at 6 different locations. In addition, the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC) employs nearly 300 seasonal employees throughout the year, including lifeguards, park rangers and managers, groundskeepers, concession workers, maintenance workers, gardeners, and interpretive naturalists.

c. Natural Areas Preservation Program:

Washtenaw County's Natural Areas Preservation Program (NAPP) purchases unique natural areas to ensure their preservation for the benefit of the County and its people, plants, and animals. NAPP was established in August 2000 by the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners through the passage of Natural Areas Ordinance No. 128, providing procedures and standards for the purchase of natural areas by the County. Funding for the program comes from a dedicated millage approved by a majority vote in the November 2000 election.

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This millage will be in effect for the period 2002-2011. WCPARC manages the program.

The program's goal is to identify lands which, through long-term preservation, will:

- Protect and preserve the natural and ecological diversity/heritage of Washtenaw County
- Complement the existing network of publicly and privately protected lands
- Maximize the public benefit

The land acquisition process begins when landowners nominate their property to the program. Properties recommended by the Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee (NATAC, discussed in next section) are reviewed by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission, the Washtenaw County Planning Advisory Board, and the local unit of government where the land is located.

Lands purchased with NAPP funds are owned and maintained by the WCPARC. WCPARC also partners with other land preservation organizations to find creative ways to protect and preserve natural areas.

The website for this program can be found at:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/parks_recreation/napp/pr_natac.html

d. Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee:

WCPARC's Natural Areas Technical Advisory Committee (NATAC) was established in accordance with Ordinance No. 128 of the Washtenaw County Board of Commissioners. NATAC functions as a 7-member advisory body to assist WCPARC in determining whether it should purchase a particular natural area parcel offered for sale to the County for its Natural Areas Preservation Program. Policies and operating procedures of NATAC are established by WCPARC.

NATAC members must be County residents and represent a) fisheries biology/aquatic ecology; b) botany/forestry; c) wildlife management; d) professional land use planning; e) environmental education; f) professional real estate or development practice; and/or g) land trust/conservation. Terms are two years in length, with staggered



expiration dates. Members may be reappointed by the County Board of Commissioners for successive terms.

e. The Washtenaw County Greenways Advisory Committee:

In 1999, the Urban Area Transportation Study (now known as the Washtenaw Area Transportation Study, or WATS, a multi-jurisdictional agency responsible for transportation planning in Washtenaw County) suggested linking 400 acres of public land in the Huron River corridor from County border to County border. Later that same year, WCPARC assembled the Greenways Advisory Committee (GAC) to assist the County in the development of greenway policies and plans. GAC recommended that the Huron River corridor be given the highest priority for greenway implementation due to its potential to provide public benefits such as education/interpretation, resource conservation, non-motorized transportation, and recreation. Thus the 35-mile Border to Border Trail was proposed. This trail will be discussed in further detail in Section D.

f. Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission Volunteer Program:

With over 3600 acres of parks and nature preserves, the County depends on volunteers to help keep the parks functioning. WCPARC has, in part, an active volunteer program that encompasses diverse facets of the park system, encouraging people of all ages and physical abilities to become involved, and the program is very flexible regarding time commitment. Interested people can fill out a volunteer profile sheet to let the program know their interests, skills, and availability. Individuals as well as volunteer groups are accommodated. The Parks and Recreation portion of the Washtenaw County website contains a link to volunteer information and opportunities at:

http://www.ewashtenaw.org/government/departments/parks_recreation/volunteer/vol_home.html

This "Volunteer Information Page" offers a link to the seasonal Calendar of Events so that interested persons know when volunteer events are approaching, such as stewardship opportunities. There are also other links to more detailed information on the volunteer positions of Nature Steward, Photomonitoring, Preserve Monitoring, and Swift Run Monitoring.



Nature Stewards actively care for habitats. This work involves cutting or pulling invasive species, going on nature hikes with naturalists to collect or distribute native seeds, and/or planting native plants. Nature Stewards work closely with staff learning about ecological restoration, native species, and habitats.

Photomonitoring seeks to duplicate the same photo frame over the course of many seasons to document the transformation that occurs in the care of Park lands and waters. General nature photography is also welcome.

Preserve Monitors hike the trails on a regular basis and report any maintenance needs back to staff. Some volunteers pick up trash along the trail, but this is optional. Others with specific botanical or animal knowledge report wildlife observations.

Historical Interpreters give tours of the two historic mills.

Swift Run Monitors check for dog tags, answer questions, and remind patrons of park rules.



Volunteers Assisting with Ecological Inventory.
Source: WCPARC

Volunteers also assist in educational programming, perform gardening duties in various park gardens, and tend bird boxes.

2. Financial Summary

a. Revenues and Expenditures:

Table 1 outlines the revenues and expenditures as of December 31, 2008 for the parks. The information for 2009 will not be available until the end of January, 2010. Table 2 provides information for the Preserves, which are funded through a separate millage.

It is usual for the County to show a surplus every year.

Predictions for 2009 through 2012 are that revenues will decline by 5 – 10% and expenditures will increase by 3 – 5%.

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**Table 1 - Revenue & Expenditures for Parks
December 31, 2008**

Parks and Recreation Master Plan	2008 Budget	Administration	MLM Rec Center	Park Operations I	Sharon Mill	Independence Lake	Staebler Farm	Parker Mill	Rolling Hills	Pierce Lake	TOTAL
REVENUES											
Property Tax	6,768,844	7,111,137	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7,111,137
State Grant Funds	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Fees & Services ²	2,686,000	-	1,202,143	-	9,893	147,839	-	-	1,012,646	411,623	2,784,145
Concessions	439,000	-	-	-	-	25,066	-	-	149,029	139,600	313,695
Interest Earnings	200,000	661,477	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	661,477
Other Revenue & Reimbursements	2,000	88,632	-	-	-	-	-	-	21,727	-	110,359
Transfers In	1,993,695	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL:	12,089,539	7,861,246	1,202,143	-	9,893	172,905	-	-	1,183,402	551,223	10,980,813
EXPENDITURES											
Personnel Services ³	(4,531,244)	(962,687)	(932,592)	(420,160)	(4,959)	(395,701)	-	-	(804,832)	(420,575)	(3,941,506)
Supplies & Other Services ⁴	(1,456,500)	(251,084)	(422,044)	(65,873)	(12,328)	(69,305)	(70)	(9,163)	(356,794)	(269,232)	(1,455,895)
Internal Service Charges	(435,745)	(432,577)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(432,577)
Capital Outlay ⁵	(5,666,050)	(2,757,057)	(35,818)	-	-	(12,603)	-	(100)	-	(75,766)	(2,881,343)
TOTAL	(12,089,539)	(4,403,405)	(1,390,454)	(486,033)	(17,288)	(477,609)	(70)	(9,263)	(1,161,626)	(765,573)	(8,711,321)
BALANCE	-										2,269,492

NOTES:

1. Park Operations include maintenance.
2. Fees & Services include deductions for Sales Tax, Refunds & Credit Card discount fees
3. Personnel Services include salaries and benefits.
4. "Other Services" include operating supplies and service contracts.
5. Capital Outlays are for equipment, land, and major improvements.

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**TABLE 2
REVENUES AND EXPENDITURES FOR NAPP**

Description	2008 Budget	2008 Actual	Budget Variance
REVENUES			
Current Property Tax	3,225,483	3,629,392	403,909
Interest	100,000	262,873	162,873
Miscellaneous	2,000	41,984	39,984
	-	-	-
TOTAL	3,327,483	3,934,248	606,765
EXPENDITURES			
Personnel Services:			
Per Diem	2,500	1,500	1,000
Salaried	36,472	22,213	14,259
Part-Time	-	-	-
Fringe Benefits	19,393	13,577	5,816
SUBTOTAL	58,365	37,290	21,075
Supplies & Other Services:			
Operating Supplies	2,000	2,213	(213)
Travel	1,000	-	1,000
Consulting & Contracts	5,000	4,900	100
Public Information	2,500	-	2,500
Grounds Care & Maint.	5,000	17	4,983
SUBTOTAL	15,500	7,130	8,370
Capital Outlay:			
Land Acquisition			
Land Development	7,740,000	7,221,117	518,883
Contingency	10,000	-	10,000
SUBTOTAL	7,750,000	7,221,117	528,883
TOTAL	7,823,865	7,265,537	558,328

b. Funding Sources:

The primary source of funding for the WCPARC are two county millages at 0.2367 mill apiece, levied countywide to pay for parks. One millage goes to capital improvements (including land acquisition) and park development, and the other goes to general park operations and expenses such as payroll, personnel, fuel, and utilities. Originally the two tax levies were 0.25-mill, but were rolled back as the total value of property grew countywide. Under those

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Headlee Amendment rollbacks, the tax rates are now 0.2367 mills. The first Parks 10-year 0.25 millage for development and land acquisition was approved in 1976, and was overwhelmingly renewed a third time in 2008. It will start in 2010 and will end in 2020. The park operation millage was approved in 2004 and ends in 2016.

The nation-wide drop in assessed value of property that began in 2007/2008 and continued into 2009 has decreased the tax base and, as with practically every community in Michigan, affected the County budget. Michigan is expected to experience a historic low in commercial real estate value in 2010 that is expected to last several years.

NAPP receives their funding through a County millage generated from the Natural Areas Ordinance No. 128. This millage will be active during the period 2002-2011. WCPARC manages the program, identifying and caring for lands with special ecological characteristics.

The parks are also funded by various park fees and services, federal and state grants, concessions, interest earned, and sometimes by private donations. WCPARC receives no County general fund dollars.