

Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

Dave Heeres, Chairman

Betty Hoffmann

Michele Nerone

Carl Veenstra

Jacob Veenstra

Minutes April 15, 2015

Members present: Betty Hoffman, Carl Veenstra, Jacob Veenstra, Dave Heeres

Members absent: Michele Nerone

Others present: Janet Koch

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of May & October 2014 minutes

Motion by Betty Hoffman, seconded by Carl Veenstra, to approve the minutes of May 14, 2014 and October 22, 2014 as presented. Motion carried – unanimous.

4. 2015 Grass River Natural Area (GRNA) Educational Programming

James Dake, GRNA Education Director, presented a listing of the proposed summer educational activities GRNA would like to present at ACNA. Each program would cost \$150 for a total cost of \$450. The following programs would take place on Saturday mornings at 10:00 a.m. and would be conducted by Arlene Westhoven, GRNA Naturalist:

- Whistle Up the Bay with Betty Beeby – Saturday, July 11
- The Unique Flora of Antrim Creek Natural Area – Saturday, August 1
- The First Peoples of Antrim Creek – Saturday, August 22

Motion by Dave Heeres, seconded by Betty Hoffman, to approve the GRNA education proposal. Motion carried – unanimous.

5. Boat Launch – small improvements

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, told the members of the ACNA Commission that she'd been requested by the Parks and Recreation Advisory Board to investigate small improvements at the boat launch. The improvements currently being discussed are:

- a) Place 6" of gravel (Afton stone) in sandy launch area and possibly a number of pre-cast concrete slabs.
- b) Move boulders to widen the launch area.
- c) Rework existing drainage tile so that it doesn't drain across the roadway.
- d) Move some of the in-water boulders to clear the entrance to the natural harbor.

The ACNA Commission asked if any other improvements were being considered at the County level. Ms. Koch said she was not aware of any other discussions. She added that she will be working on completing the application for the permit, which will be filed jointly with the Department of Environmental Quality and the Army Corps of Engineers.

6. Earth Cache – attachment

Included in the Commission's packets was the information that Stanley Briggs provided on the Earth Cache website (**see pgs. 3-4**). The Commission reviewed the information.

7. Schoolhouse acquisition

At the October meeting, Carl Veenstra had indicated that 2015 might be a good time to approach the owner of the schoolhouse property, or the owner's representative, about acquisition.

Mr. Heeres asked what the ACNA Commission would do with the schoolhouse and the schoolhouse property should it be purchased. Betty Hoffman noted the part of the ACNA Master Plan that described possible plans for the schoolhouse:

“The old Antrim City Schoolhouse, located on Old Dixie Highway and surrounded by the Antrim Creek Natural Area, is an attractive opportunity for an interpretive display and education center. While its acquisition has not been identified as a primary goal, a strong sentiment for acquisition was expressed by several participants in public workshops. There is merit to a plan for acquisition, based upon its historic significance and its potential as an interpretive and educational center for the Antrim Creek Natural Area. Its acquisition would ‘complete’ the boundary of the natural area and, as its use would be controlled by management, would eliminate an existing impedance to hunting in that area resulting from safe clearances required for that use.”

Mr. Heeres said he would get the contact information for the schoolhouse owner or the owner's representative and pass it along to Ms. Koch, who said she would send a letter of inquiry regarding an acquisition.

8. Various Matters

Mr. Carl Veenstra suggested that the summer programming be advertised at the ACNA kiosks. Ms. Koch said she would follow through with that suggestion. The Commission also discussed the purchase of brochure holders for the kiosks.

Ms. Hoffman asked about an archaeological dig by Chuck Cleland this year. Ms. Koch said she hadn't been contacted about an excavation project. Invasive plant species were also discussed.

Website Data

At the last meeting, Ms. Koch had told the group she'd bring back data on the ACNA website. For the first quarter of 2015, there were 25 page views at the ACNA Commission page and 20 page views for the ACNA home page. She anticipated, however, that there will be more website visits during the warmer months.

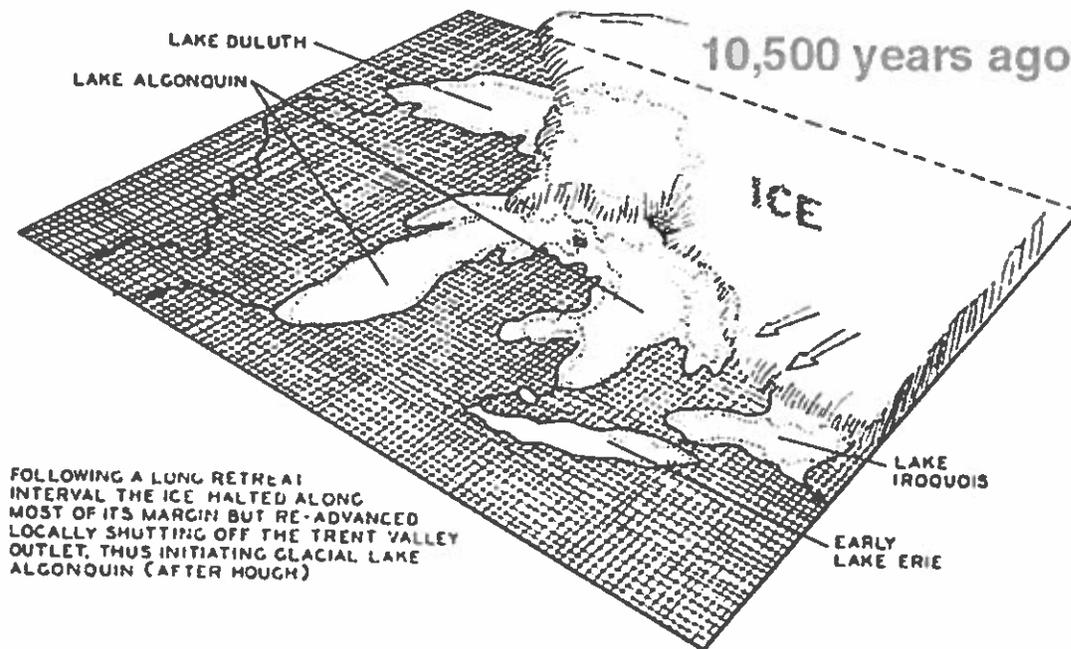
The meeting adjourned at 8:05 p.m.

Antrim Algonquin Earth Cache

http://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC4J7FV_antrim-algonquin-earth-cache

Geocache Description:

In doing this Earth Cache you will learn about the changes in the Great Lakes levels when the glaciers which covered this area until about 11,000 years ago started melting and receding. This will require some walking down and up trails.



From: GEO 333 Geography of Michigan and the Great Lakes Region a course at Michigan State University

At about year 11000 BP (Before the Present) as the last ice age glacier was melting and receding northward this area was covered by the waters of a huge lake called Lake Algonquin, which occupied the area of the northern part of what is now Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. As the weight of the ice reduced the land started tilting upwards. Over time this resulted in changes in the level of the lake, the area it covered, its shore lines and even the exit routes for the water to make its way to the ocean.

For about 5000 years the lake drained through North Bay in northern Canada. Around year 6000 BP the shape of the lake changed significantly. Outflow began at Port Huron and Chicago. The lake was then referred to as Nipissing Great Lakes.

Beginning about 4000 BP the outflow from North Bay and Chicago was cut off by changes in land levels and the lake levels changed again. These lakes are referred to as Algoma Great Lakes. At around 3000 BP the level lowered to about its modern levels. Each of these periods of lake

levels over time, because of the depositing of silt and sand on the bottom of the lakes, established terraces which can still be seen in many places today.

Antrim Algonquin Earth Cache was developed here in the Antrim Creek Natural Area because evidence of the geological history of glacial Lake Algonquin may be observed here in a compact location on public land. The Antrim Creek Natural Area has useful infrastructure for this study including parking, trails and well maintained information kiosks. In working on this Earth Cache you will be walking on a trail that will allow you to observe first-hand the historic terraces or beaches from that of Lake Algonquin to the present day. The posted coordinates will take you to a very nice information kiosk which shows several aspects of the Geology, History, and Nature of the area. You will observe a diagram which demonstrates the stages of the glacial lakes we have been talking about. You will probably want to return to this display after performing the required tasks to assist you in answering some of the questions.

Next refer to the coordinates in the Waypoint Table and put them in your GPS device. These will take you to stopping points along the trail where you will be making the required observations.

REQUIRED TASKS

1. Follow the trail to each of the locations shown in the Waypoint table. Using the Altimeter function of your GPS device* measure and record the altitude of the ground level at that point. (place your GPS device on the ground for this measurement). Describe your Surroundings at each stop from a geological standpoint such as the soil, stones and rocks.
2. Return to the information kiosk and decide which stopping point corresponds to which beaches represented on the diagram. Record your answers for submission.
3. The Lake Algonquin beach level is outside the park at Stop 6. To reach that spot, upon leaving the park turn right. Turn left on the first road. Stop 6 is at the top of the hill. Measure and record its altitude.
4. Calculate how many feet above the present lake level each lake level was.
5. Please tell us something you discovered or learned by doing this Earth Cache

Please submit your answers to the questions in the form found [HERE](#) (preferred) or by E-mail through our profile.

In developing this Earth Cache we made our best guesses, based upon our research. The locations of the terraces could be off some. Because the areas closer to the lake are subjected to the effects of wind- blown sand and erosion, it would require a professional geologist making an extensive survey to make more accurate measurements. Antrim Creek, next to the trail is also interesting to observe. Over the centuries it has cut down through the sand and gravel, pushing much of it out into the lake forming a delta. You probably saw the sand bar peninsula out in the lake near Stop 5.

You are welcome (but not required) to post a picture with your log but please do NOT include a picture of the map in the kiosk.

Antrim Creek Natural Area Commission

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Minutes October 28, 2015

Members present: Betty Hoffmann, Carl Veenstra, Jacob Veenstra, Dave Heeres, Michele Nerone

Members absent: None

Staff present: Janet Koch

1. Meeting was called to order at 7:10 p.m.

2. Public Comment

None.

3. Approval of April 2015 minutes

Motion by Betty Hoffmann, seconded by Michele Nerone, to approve the minutes of April 15, 2015 as presented. Motion carried – unanimous.

4. April Meeting Follow Up

Janet Koch, Associate Planner, said she had not yet followed through with the purchase of brochure holders for the kiosks, but would do so over the winter. The holders will allow for the placement of brochures.

5. Permit Application Update

Ms. Koch told the Commission that the application for a permit to do small improvements at the boat launch had been submitted to the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality and the Army Corps of Engineers. She added that she was working to submit additional information that the Corps had requested.

6. Schoolhouse Letter

A copy of the letter sent to the owner of the schoolhouse had been included in the agenda packets. Ms. Koch said she had received no reply; the letter had been sent on August 20. It was the consensus of the Commission that Ms. Koch send a second letter and have it sent in such a way as to require a signature upon receipt.

7. ACNA User Request

Included in the agenda packets was an email from a frequent user of the ACNA. The email suggested that a new bench be added to the northern end of Trillium Ridge Trail, about 500 feet south of the north entrance road. It was the consensus of the Commission that Ms. Koch obtain the price for a new bench and request a budget amendment from the Board of Commissioners for the cost.

The email had also suggested that trail markers be added to the north end of the same trail to note the location of a bypass when the main trail was impassable due to water. Carl Veenstra indicated that he would follow through with placing markers; he had three post-type markers he could place on the trail.

Maintenance of the trails was discussed.

8. Snowplowing

Ms. Koch asked the Commission if they felt snowplowing the south entrance road was a worthwhile expenditure of ACNA funds. Carl Veenstra reported near-daily use of the park the previous winter.

It was the consensus of the Commission to go ahead with the snowplowing for the 2015-2016 winter.

9. Various Matters

Ms. Hoffmann questioned the usefulness of some of the Grass River Natural Area's summer programs due to low attendance.

Carl Veenstra asked about taking down diseased and hazardous trees in the Old Dixie Highway right-of-way. He said he would take them down at no cost in exchange for the firewood. Ms. Koch said she would bring the issue to the appropriate County committee.

The meeting adjourned at 8:20 p.m.