

Improvements set for this year in many metroparks

BY TIM RICHARD
STAFF WRITER

Huron-Clinton Metroparks will invest a record \$13.6 in capital improvements in 1998, mainly because three major projects were delayed in 1997.

This will be "the first year of the authority's five-year recreation plan," said controller David L. Wahl as he submitted a \$48.6 million budget that the board approved.

The 13 Metroparks serving Wayne, Oakland, Livingston, Macomb and St. Clair counties drew nine million visitors last year, despite bad August weather that hurt pool revenues and continued Lake St. Clair pollution problems at Metro Beach.

Property owners — taxed .02236 mills or \$16.77 a year on a house with a market value of \$750,000 and taxable value of \$75,000 — provide \$22.1 million or a little less than half the total budget.

Major breakdowns: 45 percent for park operations, 28 percent for park capital improvements, and 10.5 percent for equipment, engineering, and administrative office.

With one major exception, the Huron-Clinton Metropolitan Authority's budget is aimed at developing recreational capital rather than land acquisition. It will add one full-time employee — to 188 — over last year.

HCMA carried over a whopping \$9.6 million it couldn't spend last year. "During 1997, delays were encountered in getting major construction projects off the ground," said Wahl. Among them:

- The temporary injunction against the Family Aquatic Center at Indian Springs prevented \$7.2 million of construction projects from being let. Located in Springfield and White Lake townships northwest of Pontiac, Indian Springs will see the \$9.9 million aquatic center become a reality this year.
- "Political uncertainties within Harrison Township officials cre-

ated a delay in awarding construction contracts for the \$1 million Metro Beach West Boat Launch." That highly publicized battle was over HCMA's plan to place a boat launch on the shores of Lake St. Clair. The present boat launch is upstream. The state will put up a \$750,000 recreational grant.

■ "Delays were encountered in obtaining appropriate permits from Michigan's Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the construction of the \$500,000 Lake Erie Shoreline Trail." With its wave pool, Lake Erie has leaped into third place, just behind Metro Beach, as a revenue-producer for HCMA.

■ HCMA also carried over \$200,000 for upgrading Maltby Road leading to Huron Meadows, in Green Oak Township of Livingston County. The newest Metropark, Huron Meadows has jumped into the middle of the revenue pack with its 18-hole golf course.

The major new acquisition will be Northbrook Golf Course near Wolfcamp Mill Metropark in the middle of Macomb County. An application for a state grant fell through, so HCMA will use its own funds.

Here are capital improvements planned for nearby popular Metroparks:

- Kensington, in Milford and Green Oak townships — \$318,000 for upgrading a comfort station near the east boat launch, pesticide storage building, lighting at the farm center and general equipment. The most popular Metropark, Kensington, starting its 60th year, provides nearly 20 percent of HCMA's operating revenue.

- Stony Creek, northeast of Rochester in Oakland and Macomb counties — \$256,000 for a fishing pier walk, picnic shelter, boat piers, and general equipment.

- Hudson Mills, Dexter-Huron and Delhi on the Huron

River northwest of Ann Arbor in Washtenaw County — Hudson Mills will see road and tennis court repairs, a pesticide storage building and general equipment; Dexter and Delhi have planning money.

Lower Huron and Willow, straddling I-275 in southern Wayne County — completion of a 3.2 mile hike-bike trail started last year. Willow will see \$262,000 in landscaping, picnic shelter and equipment improvements. Lower Huron will see repairs on the pool deck and waterside flume, along with a gypsy moth suppression program.

Oakwoods, downstream from Lower Huron and Willow — \$10,000 for a new canoe launch. The Huron meanders through wetlands in this largely natural area.

Entry fees are unchanged. For vehicles they will be \$15 for a season pass, \$8 for a senior citizen annual, \$3 for a one-day pass on weekends and holidays, \$2 weekdays but free on Wednesdays. For boat launching, fees are \$18 for a season pass, \$9 for a senior citizen season pass, \$4 for weekends and holidays, \$3 for weekdays but free on Wednesdays.

The eight-member board has seen only one change in the last year: Maxine Perry of Southfield vacated her Liquor Control Commission job to take a gubernatorial appointment. The other gubernatorial appointee is Macomb County board chair John C. Hertel.

Representing county boards are banker James Clarkson of Oakland businessman William E. Kregar of Wayne, professor Robert Marans of Washtenaw, James Young of Livingston and Thomas Welch, a Macomb County official.

HCMA was formed in 1939. Next year, voters approved a 0.25-mill property tax, which has been pared down to 0.236 by the Headlee tax limitation amendment.

Job fairs scheduled for 1998

Job seekers, get those resumes ready. The potential of finding employment may be increased when recruiters set up for job fairs coming up later this year.

An example, said job fair coordinator Chuck Vincent, is the Boeing Aircraft company, which last July sent 10 recruiters. They hired nearly 30 people on the spot with written job offers, pending a check of their work histories. Another 350 resumes were taken back to Seattle, where Boeing has hired so many workers there is a housing shortage, Vincent said.

Vincent, who was with the Michigan Employment Relations Commission for 24 years, now is president of the Job Fair Network of Michigan. Job fairs are scheduled Jan. 20 in Livonia for multi-industry employers, and Jan. 21 in Troy and Jan. 22 in Dearborn for technical employers.

Technical careers are for those seeking jobs in the computer, computer assisted design and engineering fields. Multi-industry fairs are for those seeking jobs in any field, according to Vincent.

Attendance at the job fairs is free to job seekers; however, employers are charged a fee.

The Wednesday, Jan. 21, job fair is at the Management Center of the University of Michigan State University, 811 W. Square Lake Road, Troy. The Tuesday, Jan. 20, job fair is at Laurel Manor, 39000 Schoolcraft (I-96 service drive), Livonia. A job fair on Thursday, Jan. 22, is at 6000 Fairlane, Wayne. The Friday, Jan. 23, job fair is at the Fairlane Club in Dearborn, just north of the Fairlane Shopping Center.

Other job fairs are scheduled for April 29, July 23 and Oct. 21 in Troy, technical fields; April 30 and Oct. 19 in Livonia, multi-industry fields.

For information, contact Chuck Vincent at (313) 381-0093.



STAFF PHOTO BY JEFF KNEIBEL



Snow, cold combine for cool adventure

Winter enthusiasts were in their element at Pine Knob Ski Resort in Independence Township. Cool temperatures and some snow made for a fresh coating on the slopes.

Taking to the hills with delight were skiers and snowboarders, like Ryan Parrott (above) of Clarkston, who showed his takeoff from a mogul, all to the fascination of other youths.

And it was up and over for Brandon Knowlden (left), also of Clarkston, who used play time before the new year to demonstrate his expertise on the slopes.

Warmer temps at the end of the week were expected to keep snow-makers busy.

Candidates sought for state governor's service awards

BY NICOLE STAFFORD
STAFF WRITER

Do you know a longtime doer of good deeds? An individual who is always helping others, but who is rarely acknowledged for the efforts?

"A lot of people are very modest about what they do in the community," said Linda Reurink, assistant director of the Michigan Community Service Commission (MCSC), which recently announced the availability of nomination forms for the annual Governor's Service Awards.

"These finalists will then be invited to attend a May 4 dinner in Lansing, where they will be honored by Gov. John Engler and first lady Michelle Engler. In its fifth year, the service awards program has honored

more than 800 Michigan citizens. "We usually get around 250 nominations," Reurink said. "The nominations come from everywhere and the type of community service is also very diverse."

Last year, several Oakland County residents and organizations were recognized through the awards program. Temple Beth El in Bloomfield Hills won the Outstanding Adult Service Club/Organization award. White Lake Township resident Thomas L. Rugh walked away with the Outstanding Community Service Program Manager award. Also, FOX 2 WJLB in Southfield was a finalist in the media category.

The awards provide a way to honor those individuals that give up their time to make our community a better place," Reurink said.

To obtain additional information about the Governor's Service Awards or to request a nomination form, please call the Michigan Community Service Commission at (517) 335-4295.

A peer review panel comprised individuals working in the fields of non-profit, business and education will review each nomination form and select five finalists in each category, Reurink said.

"This is just a way to honor them for something they do everyday and believe in."

The Governor's Service Awards program enables Michigan citizens to nominate them-

Advisory board meets Jan. 7 for ORV review

State Capital capsules:

New look to tabs

Four new vehicle license plate tabs will have a new look, says Secretary of State Candice Miller. You'll notice:

- A single, slightly larger tab with both month and year of expiration instead of two tabs. Tabs expiring in January of 1999 will say: 01-99. Large trucks' numbers will be backwards: 99-01.

- Tabs with distinctive colors that change each year. The 1999 tabs will be bright orange.

- The license number of the vehicle printed on the tab. It will differ theft of tabs. Law enforcement officers can compare the tabs to the plate to determine whether the tab has been stolen.

- Tabs printed at the branch office on laser printers. No longer will the office have to keep cumbersome inventories.

"We have begun to phase in a new license plate tab that is designed to deter theft, offer customers added convenience, and bring new efficiencies to the Department of State," Miller said.

Tax cuts

State tax cuts you'll see in 1998:

- Personal exemptions on the income tax go to \$2,800 from \$2,500.

- You get additional exemptions for kids: \$600 for each child through age 6 and \$300 for each child ages 7-12.

- The college tuition tax credit goes to 8 percent of tuition with a \$375 maximum provided the college limits its tuition increase to the rate of consumer price inflation.

- For seniors, deductions for interest, dividends and capital gains will be hiked from \$3,600 to \$7,500 for those filing a single return; for joint returns, from \$7,000 to \$15,000.

Election dates

Democrats enjoy a House

majority of 58-61 with one vacancy now that David Jaye, R-Macomb County, has been elevated to the Senate.

Candidates for Jaye's vacant seat had until Dec. 23 to file and until Jan. 2 at 4 p.m. to withdraw.

Gov. Engler has scheduled a primary for Feb. 3 and the special election for Feb. 24.

DNR meetings

The Department of Natural Resources' Off-Road Vehicle (ORV) advisory board is scheduled to meet at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 7, in Quality Inn Hotel, 3121 E. Grand River, Lansing.

The Natural Resources Committee meetings will be Jan. 14 and 15 in the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan, Lansing. A committee of the whole will meet at 3 p.m. on Wednesday, the 14th, followed by public comments at 4:30 p.m.

Appearances may be scheduled with Teresa Gloden, assistant to the NRC, at (517) 373-2352.

NRC's main business meeting will begin at 9 a.m. Thursday, the 15th, in the Lansing Center.

Appointments

Gov. John Engler has appointed:

- Samuel Valenti III of Bloomfield Hills to a new term on the Investment Advisory Committee, which meets quarterly to review investment of state retirement funds. Valenti is president of Masco Capital Corp. and vice president for investments of Masco Corp. He will represent the general public for a term expiring Dec. 15, 2000.

- Kenneth Grabowski of Livonia to the Michigan Justice Training Commission, which oversees funds used by local units and colleges for in-service training of police officers. Grabowski is legislative director for the Police Officers Association of Michigan. His term expires Dec. 29, 1999.