



# Citizens for Access to the Lakeshore (CAL)

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Web Site: [www.citizensforaccesstothelakeshore.com](http://www.citizensforaccesstothelakeshore.com)

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**Wilderness Study/GMP:** A new Wilderness Study will be conducted in conjunction with the new General Management Plan (GMP) that the National Park Service has begun developing for Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. CAL is grateful the Study will begin with a "blank map" rather than the 1981 Boundaries. CAL believes the Park Service's January 2006 GMP Newsletter 1 is a concise, descriptive depiction of how the Park Service intends to develop a new GMP/Wilderness Study. The NPS Newsletter clearly demonstrates that CAL's involvement to date has been influential: county roads and the need for access are among the first issues addressed. For all CAL's gains, however, the NPS Planning Team's GMP "Draft Purpose and Significance Statements" raise the same questions that have plagued the Park Service since 2002. CAL is disappointed to be forced to re-articulate the same substantive concerns that so many citizens and organizations expressed in 2002 with the NPS Planning Team's attempt at an **unauthorized revision of the statutorily determined "purpose" and "significance" of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore.** CAL's Comments also express concern with the **lack of a public statement of Park Service commitment to encourage and support Congressional action on the results of a new Wilderness Study, provided a consensus of stakeholder support is achieved.** The NPS GMP Newsletter 1 can be viewed on the Internet at: <http://www.nps.gov/slbe>.

**National Policies:** At the national level, Park Service leadership has proposed changes to the 2001 Management Policies of the entire NPS system. Several years ago, CAL had identified the 2001 Policies as the part of the impetus undergirding much of the more egregious aspects of the former proposed GMP Alternatives withdrawn under public protest in 2002. CAL is highly supportive of the improvements proposed at the national level and we hope they will be adopted. We have submitted Comments commending the leadership of the National Park Service and Department of Interior for recognizing the need for improvements.

**Port Oneida Preservation:** CAL is happy with the Park Service's decisions this past year to commit to and spend more resources on preservation within the Port Oneida historical area.

**Elected Officials:** CAL is happy and grateful for continued support from elected officials at all levels and from candidates for public office. Offices of Congressmen Pete Hoekstra and Dave Camp stay in touch, as do the Offices of U.S. Senators Carl Levin and Debbie Stabenow.

**CAL Treasury: We need your financial support.** Now that a new GMP/Wilderness Study has been announced, CAL will be even busier than ever. We encourage all members/friends to help us fund the immense paperwork involved by sending in your dues right away for the upcoming year. Dues are \$25/year; the fiscal year runs July 1 - June 30. Donations above the dues minimum are always appreciated, of course!

**2006 Annual Membership Meeting this summer:** CAL appreciates very much the hospitality extended by our local townships: Empire, Homestead, and Platte Townships have allowed CAL to hold Membership and/or Board meetings in their Township Halls. **This summer our Annual Membership Meeting will be held at Lake Township Hall on M-22 just north of Riverside Canoe Livery. Meeting starts at 7 pm on Tuesday, July 25. Members encouraged to attend!**

October 20<sup>th</sup> Meeting with local Park Service officials hosted & attended by Congressman Pete Hoekstra's Staff on behalf of CAL:



Left to right: Asst. Super. Tom Ulrich, Superintendent Dusty Shultz, CAL Pres. Jeannette Feeheley, Mr. Jon DeWitte, Director of Public Policy for Congressman Hoekstra, CAL Board Member Joanne Appelhof, CAL Road Commission Liaison Dave Van Hammen, CAL Board Member Phyllis Crowell Van Hammen

At Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> CAL Board meeting at Platte Township Hall:



CAL Board member Jack Feeheley, Mr. Gary Mack who asked to appear on behalf of Keith Butler running for Repub. nomination to U.S. Senate, CAL Secretary Alison Michalak, CAL member Kathy Stocklen

**Fines for Parking along Lake Michigan Road off M-22 in Benzie County:**

Park Rangers did issue parking tickets with hefty fines ranging from \$75 to \$250 this summer in this area and will continue to do so. According to the Benzie Road Commission, the road is a county road and the Road Commission has posted no signs prohibiting parking, so parking is allowed on the shoulder of the road. However, according to NPS Assistant Superintendent Tom Ulrich, if people defy "traffic control devices" like a curb and take their vehicle over the curb to park onto the lawn of Park Service grounds or into the brush, the Park Service has and will continue to issue tickets in order to protect the grounds. Asst. Super. Ulrich explained to CAL that there is a range of fines with a specific amount for specific violations. He explained that \$250 is the designated fine for "Operating a motor vehicle off park roads, parking areas and outside of designated off-road routes". He also explained that besides the parking lot maintained by Lake Township, there are two parking lots maintained by the Park Service, and that anyone parking a vehicle in a Park Service lot is expected to pay the entrance fee. Benzie County Road Commission Manager Bob Weaver may have summed it up best in his advice that people should park their cars on the blacktop and avoid making "a footprint in the Park".

**Scenic Road in Benzie County:** The Park Service is continuing to purchase land along the ridge between Crystal and Platte Lakes pursuant to the boundaries established by legislation for the Park, presumably pursuant to previous intent to develop a scenic road there one day. There are some voices in Benzie County who oppose such development and some who support it, but the opportunity to remove this area from Park development was back in 1982 when Glen Lake residents successfully went to Congress to remove the then proposed scenic road from around Glen Lake. The Park boundaries were changed at that time pursuant to the Glen Lake efforts, but Benzie County did not participate in the effort at that time, so the Park boundaries remain as such, and properties along the ridge continue to be purchased from willing sellers by the Park Service.

At CAL Oct. 27<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, Platte Twp. Hall:



CAL Board Members shown are John Harkins, Jerry Brace, Jeannette Feeheley, Joanne Appelfhof, Bob & Alison Michalak

**Congressional Approval Needed:** Even though a new Wilderness Study is about to begin, any new proposal put forward will not replace the 1981 Wilderness Study and Boundaries until and unless the new Study achieves all of the approvals the first Study never achieved, that is, approval all the way through Park Service leadership, Department of Interior approval for submission to the President, the President's submission with recommendation for passage to Congress, and full Congressional approval via legislation required pursuant to the 1964 Wilderness Act. That's a tall order, considering that the 1981 Study reigns as a fait accompli, thanks to the Park Service's opinion that a few lines in the 1982 legislation on the Glen Lake matter requires Park Service personnel to basically treat the 1981 Study as if it had been fully designated by Congress, unless Congress says otherwise. So, unfortunately, the bottom line on the new Study is that, without full Congressional approval of the results, we may end up with a good Study and fine Recommendations that most agree to, but that the Park Service will not recognize: the new Study and Recommendations will simply sit on a shelf for the next twenty years while the 1981 Wilderness Study and 1981 Boundaries continue their hold over the management allowed in the Park. Local Park Service personnel are adamant that, until and unless the new Study would be Congressionally approved, they will implement only those items in the new GMP that have nothing to do with the 1981 Wilderness Study and Boundaries, and the new Study's recommendations will not be implemented.

**Timing:** Local Park Service officials estimate it will take them three years just to go through their steps to achieve approval by Park Service leadership of the Wilderness Study's results. However, three years from now will occur a major turnover of the federal government when personnel in the current administration are replaced by the next President. Such turnover will occur to greater or lesser degree regardless of which party sits next in the Oval Office. Those currently in the Park Service and Department of Interior who are familiar with Sleeping Bear and the issues may well be replaced. In addition, by that time, more elections, possible retirements, moves, changes, etc., would have occurred that may impact the makeup of our Michigan delegation, that is, our U.S. Senators, Congresspersons and their staffs. The momentum is with us now to get the necessary approvals along each step if the new Wilderness Study is acceptable to the local communities, but time is not on our side to get the Study the Congressional approval it will need after all is said and done. Any delay in the process now would only add to our concerns. CAL had hoped the Study would have begun three years ago when the previous GMP had been withdrawn, but local Park Service officials insisted on waiting until now. Time is not on our side. It appears we have little choice except to participate in good faith and hope for the best. (page 2 of 2 pages)