



CHAPTER 3 – Public Involvement

Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Trailway Plan

- 3.1 LEELANAU SCENIC HERITAGE ROUTE COMMITTEE**
- 3.2 ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS**

3.1 LEELANAU SCENIC HERITAGE ROUTE COMMITTEE

In the summer of 1999, a committee was developed to investigate the possibility of designating M-22 as a Scenic Corridor and as such, eligible for the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) State Heritage Route Program funds (National Scenic Byways) and Transportation Enhancement Act-21 (TEA-21) funds for projects. As part of this effort, the Leelanau Heritage Route nominating team developed the following mission statement:

“To promote measures which protect and enhance the scenic, historical and recreational characteristics of Michigan Highway 22 as it traverses the rural countryside and unique villages of Leelanau County.”

The nominating team also worked to compose and gather a list of concerned citizens from all parts of the County that would represent the opinions, views and concerns of the citizenry of Leelanau County. Community involvement encompassed many aspects including county, township and village government representation, local conservation groups, and private citizens. The Leelanau Conservancy helped secure initial planning and inventory funding to produce the **Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Management Plan**.

The M-22 Nominating Team—now the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee is still composed of representatives from each Village and Township along the Heritage Route Corridor which has expanded to include M-22, M-109, and M-204. Committee members include the Michigan Department of Transportation, Leelanau County Planning Commission, Leelanau County Road Commission, Leelanau Conservancy, Traverse Area Recreational and Transportation Trails, Inc. (TART), chamber of commerces, and citizens. The Committee is managed and coordinated by the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments. In 2006, the Committee completed the required five year management plan update which included the Trailway as a priority project.

Over the years, there has been much interest in developing an off-road non-motorized trailway parallel to the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route on M-22 and M-109 in the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. A non-motorized trailway along the corridor would enable bicyclists and pedestrians to enjoy the scenic beauty of Leelanau County while at the same time increasing safety, and connecting the Lakeshore features and local communities.

3.2 ENGAGING THE PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDERS

In 2006, the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee created a Trailway Work Group to develop a multi-use, non-motorized trailway along the M-22 and M-109 corridor in the Lakeshore in Leelanau County. The Work Group includes members from the Lakeshore, the Michigan Department of Transportation, townships and village, the Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, TART Trails Inc., and interested citizens.

By working through the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee and the Trailway Work Group, this project has provided many opportunities for public involvement. Below is the listing of the meetings and activities where the public has provided input and review.

Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee Meetings:

2005

September 26
October 24
November 28

2006

January 30
February 27
March 27
April 24
May 22
June 26
August 4-5: Port Oneida Days at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
September 25
October 30
November 27

2007

January 29
February 26
March 26
April 21
May 21
June 25
August 10-11: Port Oneida Days at Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore
September 24
October 29
November 26

2008

January 28
February 25
March 31
April 28
May 19

Trailway Work Group Meetings:

October 25, 2005
January 23, 2006
February 21, 2006
March 20, 2006
July 18, 2006
September 13, 2006
October 18, 2006
March 22, 2007
May 31, 2007
February 25, 2008

Introductory Presentations to Local Governments:

Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee staff with the support of the National Park Service, Rivers and Trails Program presented the proposed Trailway Project to the following governments in early 2006:

Empire Township
Village of Empire
Glen Arbor Township
Cleveland Township

The Trailway flyer handout/map (please refer to the following page) was distributed at these meetings. At the time, Centerville Township was not contacted because the trail did not go to that far in the first stages of planning. The township is now included and will be contacted to present and discuss the draft environmental assessment and plan.

Figure **Public Input Flyer**



Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Trailway Project

Who: The Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee’s Trailway Work Group is continuing the development of a multi-use, non-motorized trailway along the M-22 and M-109 corridor in Leelanau County. The Work Group includes members from the Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Committee (Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, the Michigan Department of Transportation, and local governments); Friends of Sleeping Bear Dunes, TART Trails Inc., cyclist clubs, recreation groups, and citizens.

What: The proposed 25 mile non-motorized Trailway would parallel M-22 and M-109 and connect national lakeshore park visitor sites and facilities, including campgrounds and other points of interest. The trailway would be separated from the roadway where possible and would provide a safe, alternative transportation opportunity for park visitors. It would also connect the Park to the adjacent communities of Empire and Glen Arbor, which will be working with the Trailway Work Group to consider the Trailway route through their communities.

When: The Work Group’s consultant has completed Phase One: Environmental Assessment and Pre-Engineering that includes recommendations for the preferred Trailway route, trail width, and surfacing and cost estimates. The primary concerns that have been studied include the impact of the Trailway on the park’s natural and cultural resources, providing a quality recreational experience for park visitors, and the Trailway development and maintenance costs.

The Leelanau Scenic Heritage Route Trailway Work Group is dedicated to the planning and creation of a public non-motorized trail from County Road 651 to Manning Road in Leelanau County, most of which goes through the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore. To fulfill this purpose, the work group will:

- Plan, promote, and secure funding for the project.
- Collaborate with local, state, and federal partners.
- Provide a safe and accessible trail for walking, running, biking, cross-country skiing and nature study for all ages and abilities.
- Promote the Trailway project to enhance the local economy by serving as a destination for outdoor recreational activities by residents and visitors alike.

