

“FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS”

PARK GENERAL SLEEPING BEAR DUNES NATIONAL LAKESHORE

Questions and answers will be added to this document from time to time, as we receive more comments and questions from you. The date that questions and answers are added will be clearly indicated.

February 26, 2007

The following questions and answers provide additional information about Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore:

Why did you purchase the land along the Crystal River?

The dune and swale terrain that guides the flow of the Crystal River is recognized as globally rare, and unique to the Great Lakes region. This area is now preserved from development and saved in perpetuity by and for the enjoyment of the American people. Many dedicated local citizens and the Friends of the Crystal River group worked hard to make this preservation possible. In particular, the Leelanau Conservancy played a key role by providing interim funding to purchase the land from The Homestead until the balance of funds could be secured. These partnerships were instrumental in preserving this one mile stretch of river frontage and 100 acres of globally significant adjacent land.

Why does the NPS allow The Homestead to dispose of waste on National Lakeshore property?

When the National Park Service purchased land adjacent to The Homestead from a private owner in 1979, it came encumbered with legal easements on two of the parcels. The easements allow The Homestead to utilize these areas for wastewater treatment. The areas are closely monitored by both the NPS and the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality to ensure compliance with state wastewater disposal standards.

Why don't you open the D.H. Day Farm to the public?

The D.H. Day Farm is privately owned. There are many privately-owned properties within the National Lakeshore, and the NPS respects the private property rights of the owners.

What are your plans for the Inn in Glen Haven?

Recently the Sleeping Bear Inn was stabilized along with other buildings in the historic Village of Glen Haven. The NPS tentatively plans to have a concessioner open the Inn

and provide lodging and meals to park visitors similar to what was provided when the Inn was in operation in the early 1900s.

Why is the park boundary fragmented, and why doesn't NPS purchase the private properties inside the boundary?

When the National Lakeshore was established, certain areas were designated to remain private in order to provide needed amenities and services, such as shopping and restaurants, for park visitors. The NPS is purchasing privately-owned properties inside the National Lakeshore's boundary from willing sellers as they come available, subject to availability of funds.

How do you determine which cultural resources to preserve and which ones are left to nature's forces?

Cultural (historic) resources may be cherished for their beauty or utility or for other reasons. For many, it's the connection of one generation with another that increases appreciation for historic resources. The physical attributes of cultural resources are, with few exceptions, nonrenewable. Our goal is to preserve as many historic structures and landscapes as possible given available funds and park priorities. When determining how to manage cultural resources, the NPS must evaluate desired conditions (such as those being described in the GMP), and the impacts of various management options. In addition, when planning and prioritizing work on the resources, we consider their significance, integrity, level of documentation, interpretive value, and suitability for park operations, as well as the cost of the work.

What is NPS going to do with the structures it has acquired?

Lands and buildings acquired by the NPS are evaluated under the park's resource management program. Non-historic structures are removed and the landscapes are returned to a more natural condition. Historic structures and landscapes are preserved, rehabilitated, or restored based on their significance, integrity, use, etc., as funds are available.

Why do you let partner groups occupy cultural resources that have been renovated?

Non-profit partner groups whose goals are compatible with the NPS can be instrumental in helping to rehabilitate and maintain cultural resources. These groups are able to raise money and provide volunteer time for preservation projects that the NPS might not otherwise be able to complete. One option within this program is for non-profit organizations to adopt historic properties for uses compatible with the NPS mission. In exchange, these organizations rehabilitate and maintain the adopted structure in accordance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation of Historic Buildings*.

Maintenance - Frequently Asked Questions

Why doesn't NPS maintain the gravel roads?

The NPS does maintain the few park-owned roads, including those that are not paved. The other roads traversing the National Lakeshore are State of Michigan and Leelanau and Benzie County road rights-of-way that do not fall under NPS jurisdiction for maintenance and upkeep.

Why don't you get rid of the noisy diesel generator on South Manitou Island?

We are in the process of replacing the generators on South Manitou Island with a photovoltaic system like the one on North Manitou Island. We have purchased batteries and inverters and hope to make additional improvements as soon as funds are available.

What are you doing to make the National Lakeshore handicapped accessible?

The National Park Service is committed to providing the highest level of accessibility for persons with disabilities, while preserving and protecting the resources at the National Lakeshore. Accessible parking, access ramps, special exhibits and restrooms throughout the National Lakeshore are available to persons with disabilities. The Visitor Center, the Blacksmith Shop in the historic Village of Glen Haven, the D.H. Day General Store, Cannery Boat Museum, Coast Guard Life-Saving Museum, all three campgrounds, and the Platter River Picnic Area are accessible. The Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive offers breath-taking views that can be appreciated from a vehicle, and it features accessible parking and toilets at four locations, along with hardened surfaces and ramps at some overlooks. Also, there are sand wheelchairs available for persons with disabilities at the Dune Climb and the Maritime Museum. For more information about accessibility, click on the following web link: <http://www.nps.gov/slbe/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm>

Ranger - Frequently Asked Questions

Why don't you change the rules so we can access the cemetery and the giant cedars on the islands more easily?

The NPS is considering different management zones and options for these areas through the current GMP process. One or more action alternatives might allow visitors to South Manitou Island to access the giant cedars by vehicle or bicycle. The cemetery is already vehicle accessible. The planning team is interested to hear what you think of these options.

Why do you allow hunting at the National Lakeshore?

Hunting was specifically authorized in the 1970 legislation that established the National Lakeshore. Hunting is a recreational experience that is highly valued by many.

Why don't you ban dogs from the National Lakeshore, or at least enforce the rules?

The National Lakeshore welcomes visitors and their pets to enjoy the park. There are some rules and regulations that pet owners must abide by, however. These regulations have been established for the safety and enjoyment of visitors and pets alike. Violations may result in a Federal Violation Notice (ticket) and possibly an appearance in federal court. Our Protection Rangers make every attempt to enforce these rules. In fact, penalties have recently been increased to send a message to irresponsible pet owners who violate the rules. Trained assistance dogs accompanying persons with disabilities are permitted. Hunting dogs are allowed for hunters. All pets must be controlled on a six foot long or shorter leash at all times. Pets are generally permitted within the National Lakeshore except in certain limited "no-pet" areas, which are identifiable by a "No Pets" sign and by referencing a map. A small percentage of the park has been closed to pets for the protection of wildlife and to ensure the enjoyment of all park visitors. For safety reasons, pets are prohibited on designated cross country ski trails from December 1 thru March 31. For more information about pets, click on the following web link: <http://www.nps.gov/slbe/planyourvisit/pets.htm>

Why don't you charge fees?

We do! The fees collected are used specifically for projects that benefit visitors. The National Lakeshore has few specified entry points and fee booths. Some people are unaware that they are required to purchase entrance passes to recreate in all areas of the National Lakeshore. Passes, which are non-transferable, are good for all areas of the National Lakeshore. You must show the pass to enter the Dune Climb area or the Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive, and display it on the front left area of your dash in all other areas within the park. If you have entered on foot, bike, boat, etc. you should carry the pass on your person. A National Lakeshore pass costs \$10 per vehicle and is good for seven days. An annual pass is \$20, and \$5 per person for members of organized groups or for those on foot, bicycle or motorcycle. You may buy a park pass at any of the following fee stations:

- Philip A. Hart Visitor Center in Empire
- Platte River Campground Office
- Platte River Point automated fee pay station
- Pierce Stocking Scenic Drive Fee Booth
- Dune Climb Fee Booth
- D.H. Day Campground Office
- Leland Boat Dock, during summer 8:30-10:00 a.m.
- North Bar Lake using the self service fee station with drop safe

Why don't you stop people from building campfires on the beaches and littering the place with ashes?

Beach fires are cherished by many, and are legal as long as they are built in the wash zone of Lake Michigan. Although the ashes eventually wash away, the charcoal does remain for a time on the beach, and this can negatively impact other visitors' experiences.

We continually evaluate ways to allow enjoyable and appropriate visitor experiences, and finding the right balance is often a challenge.

Why are jet skis, ATV's and snowmobiles banned from the National Lakeshore?

The noise, pollution and negative effects of these activities are inconsistent with the National Park Service mission "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations." (U.S.C., title 16, sec. 1.) The use of personal watercraft (PWC or "Jet ski") is generally prohibited in units of the NPS except where designated (36 CFR 3.24). Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore evaluated this use in 2000 and determined the impacts to be unacceptable, thus PWC use is not allowed. Off-road motor vehicle (ATV) use in national park units is governed by Executive Orders 11644 and 11989 and 36 CFR 4.10(b). The Superintendent has determined that unacceptable impacts would result from their use, so they are not allowed. The use of snowmobiles is generally prohibited in NPS units except where designated (Executive Order 11644 and 36 CFR 2.18.) Snowmobiles are allowed only within County Road rights-of-way within the National Lakeshore.

Why don't you get rid of downfall trees?

We generally allow downfall trees to remain in place because their decomposition is a natural process that contributes to the health and diversity of the natural environment. Exceptions are made if downed trees are blocking a road or trail or pose a safety hazard.

How far into Lake Michigan does the park extend?

One quarter mile from the shoreline.

Why don't you get more Rangers so you can enforce the rules you have?

There is not enough funding to add more Protection Rangers at this time.

Why don't you give park watch volunteers walkie-talkies so they can report violators?

We do not have a park watch program. However, many park volunteers who work in the field are provided with radios.

**Interpretation/Resource Management/Volunteer Program
Frequently Asked Questions**

Why don't you have rangers or volunteers lead walking groups in the a.m.?

There has not been enough participation in morning walks to continue them, but we do have ranger-lead walks in the afternoon.

Why don't you recruit volunteers to help eradicate invasive plant species?

We do. For example, we occasionally host special events in which volunteers help us remove garlic mustard or other invasive plants. If you are interested in helping, please contact the park at 231-326-5134.

Since park funding is low, why don't you recruit elderly and retiree volunteers to help with certain things at the National Lakeshore so you can free up rangers?

We do. In fact, over 800 volunteers contributed almost 30,000 hours to Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore last year. A variety of volunteer opportunities exist, ranging from trail work to office work, leading tours, to monitoring piping plovers. If you are interested in helping, please contact the park at 231-326-5134.