

# Alcona Park



ALCONA COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION

ALCONA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

ALCONA COUNTY PARK MASTER PLAN FEASIBILITY STUDY  
APRIL, 1978

ALCONA PARK MASTER PLAN UPDATE  
MARCH, 1984

ALCONA PARK  
MANAGED BY CURTIS TOWNSHIP  
2550 SOUTH AUSABLE ROAD  
GLENNIE, MICHIGAN 48737

(517) 735-3881



LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

FROM:

Alcona Park Board

Glennie, Michigan

April 9, 1984

DATE:

TO:

Township of Curtis

The Alcona Park Board hereby submits the attached Alcona Park Master Plan update for adoption by the Township of Curtis.

Upon adoption the Plan will be filed with the Department of Natural Resources, the Northwest Michigan Regional Planning and Development Commission and the County Planning Office.

The Plan will be subject to future review and update as deemed necessary by the Township of Curtis.

  
Chairman's Signature

RESOLUTION

Adoption of "Alcona Park Master Plan update"

WHEREAS, The Alcona Park Board was organized as an advisory  
body to the Township of Curtis.

WHEREAS, The duties of this body shall be to develop an  
"Alcona Park Master Plan update."

WHEREAS, With this authority the Alcona Park Board has  
completed and submitted for review and adoption  
an "Alcona Park Master Plan update."

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the township of Curtis  
go on record as adopting the above stated "Alcona  
Park Master Plan update."

Adopted: April 9, 1984 Moved by: Esther A. Thompson

Supported by: Dorothy Hummel

Attested by: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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ALCONA PARK  
TOWNSHIP OF CURTIS  
ALCONA COUNTY, MICHIGAN

TOWNSHIP BOARD

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## PREFACE

The Alcona County Park "Master Plan and Economic Feasibility Study" was computed in April of 1978 by Planning Consultant Services Incorporated of Lansing Michigan. The Alcona County Park and Recreation Commission used this study and the development recommendations to chart the development until the Park was then turned over to the Township of Curtis on April 29, 1982.

Operation and development of the Park have been continued through the dictates of this "Master Plan." The development recommendations are still valid and should serve as a guide until the project can be completed.

The "Master Plan update" is meant only to show current information that is outdated in the original plan. It is not the intent of the update to negate the planning information presented in the "Master Plan," operating on the premise that is something is sound and working; "Leave it alone -- If it's not working fix it." It is felt the long range goal should be strived for when funding is available. The development activities to date have not only opened new areas of the park but have added to the continued park usage and revenue.

Using the knowledge of a full time Park Ranger and the guidance of the Park Board and the Township of Curtis officials, the continued growth of services should continue.

The Park presently shows excellent usage throughout the year and it is felt that the continued expansion of cross country skiing will open additional areas of the Park for a complete yearround appeal to not only local residents but "downstate" as well as "out of state" participants.



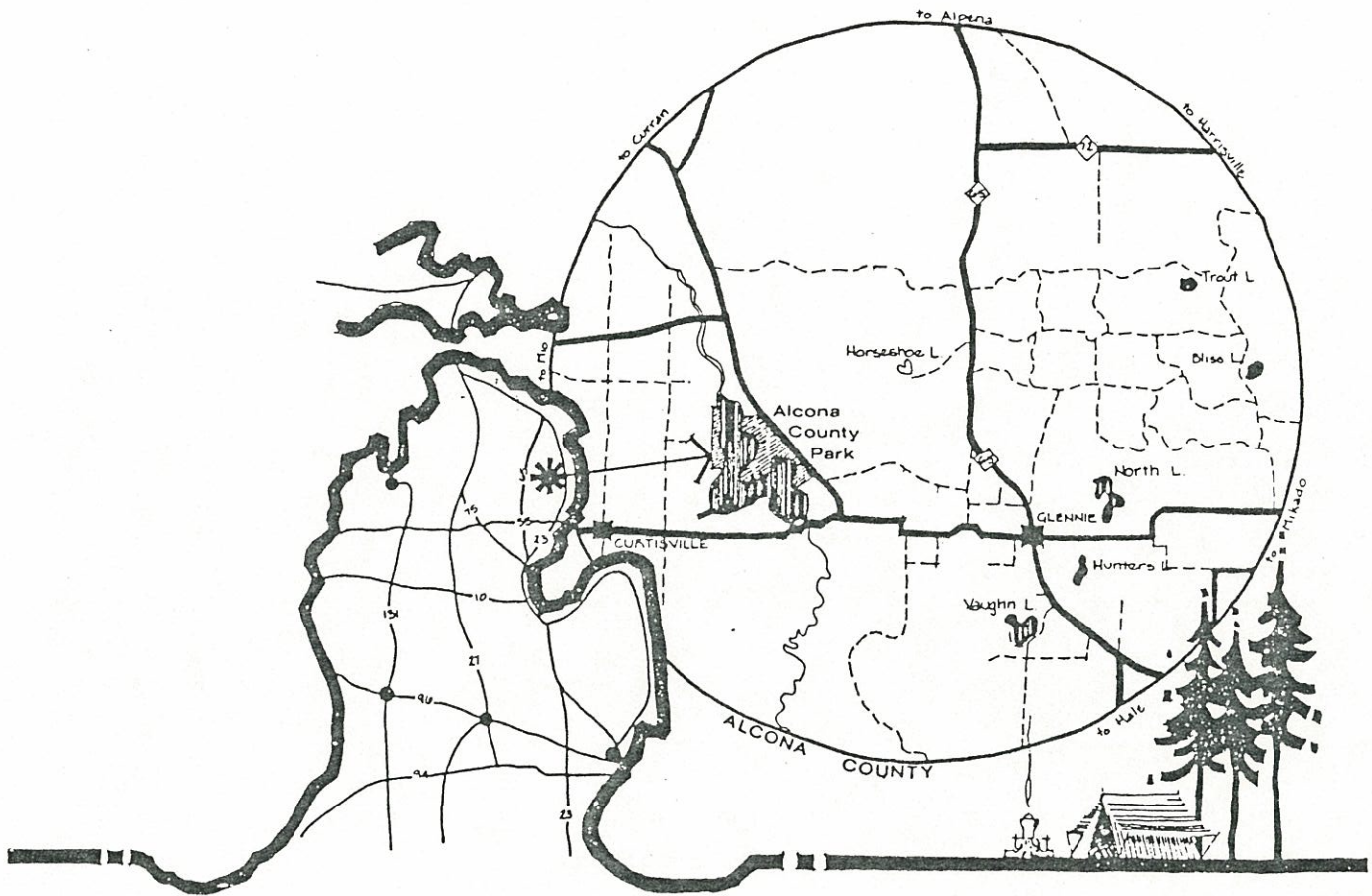
## REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Alcona County, Michigan is situated in the northeastern quadrant of the Lower Peninsula, bordered by Lake Huron on the east and Alpena, Oscoda and Iosco Counties on the north, west and south, respectively.

The natural resource wealth contained on the roughly 680 square miles within Alcona County is too extensive to describe in a few brief paragraphs. It is estimated that over 75% of the County is in tree cover, much of which lies within the 120,000 acres of National and State Forest. There are also some 60 streams and rivers with an additional 22 lakes located in Alcona County.

In the southwestern corner of the County, situated on a portion of the resource wealth mentioned above, is the Alcona County Park. The Park is located on the east and west shores of the Alcona Dam Pond (also known as Bamfield Pond) which is an impoundment of the AuSable River. It is roughly 30 miles from the Park to Harrisville which is the county seat and located on Lake Huron, northeast of Alcona Dam Pond. The closest settlement to Alcona County Park is the unincorporated area of Glennie, in Curtis Township, some six miles to the east. In a regional context, the park is approximately 90 miles north of the Tri-Cities Area (Saginaw, Bay City, Midland) or roughly a two hour drive. The major population concentration in Michigan is obviously the Detroit metropolitan area - Alcona County Park is a four hour drive north of Detroit or roughly, 180 miles.

As a brief introduction to Alcona County Park - the park site is slightly over 500 acres in extent and as mentioned previously is situated on the east and west banks of the Alcona Dam Pond. Primary orientation of the facility is towards camping (both modern and primitive sites are available) and outdoor recreation involving the water resource, namely fishing, swimming, boating and simply visual enjoyment. At present there are some <sup>369</sup> designated campsites at the Park, arranged in four sub-areas -- these are identified as the Lower Landing Modern Campground, Reed's Point, Upper Landing and the West Side Primitive Area. A detailed description of the Park and each sub-area follows in later sections of this report. The Park also contains a bathhouse facility in the Modern Campground complete with showers and restrooms, a park office, park manager's residence, dump station and several boat launch locations.





## BACKGROUND

### RECREATION INDUSTRY

One of the phenomenas of our present mobile, reasonable affluent and definitely recreation-oriented society, is the increased demand on the commodities of tourism and outdoor recreation. In the United States as well as Michigan recreation has been among the fastest growing sectors of our total economy. The impact on the state is definitely noticeable and depending upon the criteria used or source consulted the recreation sector is one of the largest industries in Michigan.

Leisure is a direct function of several variables, namely income and length of work week. Outdoor recreation and particularly such elements as camping, fishing and boating which are dominant at Alcona County Park, again serve as a function of leisure time. To understand as an example, the camping sector of the recreation industry, it is necessary to have some understanding of those conditions which generate outdoor activities. As a brief background, these factors are discussed below.

### LEISURE TIME AND INCOME

The work week in this country has obviously changed and with this change has come an impact on our leisure time and the demand for increased recreational opportunities. While the average work week in the 1870's was 68 hours in extent, by 1930 this had been reduced to 48 hours. In the post World War II years, the work week as a whole has continued to decrease in length. The 40 hour work week is what we perceive as the norm, however projections indicate a high probability for a less than 40 hour work week in future decades. Even more significant, is the fact that accompanying the decrease in time necessary for earning a living, is the increase in personal time available for leisure pursuits. Since the 1870's the average leisure time available per person per week has more than tripled.

While the length of the work week has declined, the amount of expendable income available for the average worker at the end of his work week has increased. The following series of tables establish the past trends in the United States,

Michigan and the Alcona County region, relative to income levels. Irrespective of inflation - personal per capita income is projected as continuing to rise.

#### MOBILITY

Historically, we find that in 1900 the average traveler covered only about five hundred miles a year. Today, thanks to the automobile and air travel, this yearly average has risen to roughly 5,000 miles. As a whole, the camping segment of our population is particularly mobile, with the majority of campers traveling from between 1,000 to 8,000 miles per season.



TABLE 1

## TOTAL AND PER CAPITA PERSONAL INCOME

1975 - 1980

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>TOTAL INCOME</u> (MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)		<u>PER CAPITA INCOME</u> (DOLLARS)	
	<u>MICHIGAN</u>	<u>UNITED STATES</u>	<u>MICHIGAN</u>	<u>UNITED STATES</u>
1975	54,559	1,259,430	5,990	5,845
1976	61,333	1,386,772	6,727	6,374
1977	69,237	1,533,768	7,561	6,979
1978	77,567	1,717,816	8,429	7,735
1979	86,414	1,939,486	9,343	8,637
1980	92,339	2,162,936	9,950	9,521

SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economics Information System

TABLE 2  
TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME BY COUNTY

1975 - 1980

(MILLIONS OF DOLLARS)

<u>COUNTY</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>	<u>1977</u>	<u>1978</u>	<u>1979</u>
ALCONA	33.1	38.5	43.3	47.3	54.1
ALPENA	156.4	172.8	191.2	215.9	239.9
MONTMORENCY	27.5	31.5	36.4	42.1	46.9
OSCODA	21.6	24.2	26.0	28.4	31.7
OGEMAW	56.2	64.8	69.1	77.3	91.1
IOSCO	130.1	146.5	156.1	169.2	186.5

SOURCE: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economics Information System.

TABLE 3

TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME, POPULATION AND PER CAPITA INCOME

<u>LOCATION</u>	1969, 1980, 1990		POPULATION THOUSANDS		PER CAPITA INCOME 1967 DOLLARS				
	TOTAL PERSONAL INCOME MILLIONS OF 1967 DOLLARS		1969	1980	1969	1980	1990		
	<u>1969</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1969</u>	<u>1980</u>	<u>1990</u>		
UNITED STATES	689,626	1,115,898	1,663,439	201,877	234,208	269,759	3,419	4,769	6,166
GREAT LAKES REGION	145,191	234,653	346,879	40,006	46,578	53,644	3,629	5,038	6,466
MICHIGAN	32,431	53,086	78,788	8,803	10,366	12,046	3,684	5,121	6,541

SOURCE: U. S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis



## PARTICIPATION

As reflected in Table 4, camping is one of the fastest growing form of outdoor recreation. Between 1965 and 1970 the actual number of camping participants, more than doubled. Increases are also shown in other areas of outdoor pursuits which have a direct impact on Alcona County Park - namely boating, swimming and fishing. We must realize however that various outdoor activities follow faddish patterns - witness the current craze about jogging or running. Also remember the heavy interest in power boating not too many years ago. The factors that have caused an increase in the popularity of camping are varied, depending upon the source one consults, however much of the increase is related to the introduction of new products. Motor homes, fifth wheel campers, tent trailers etc. have all increased dramatically in both sales and use, in the last decade.

TABLE 4  
 NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS IN SELECTED OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES, 1960-1965-1970  
 U. S. TOTALS IN MILLIONS  
 PERSONS 12 AND OVER

ACTIVITY	1960		1965		1970		% CHANGE		
	NUMBER	% OF POP.	NUMBER	% OF POP.	NUMBER	% OF POP.	1960-65	1965-70	
PICNICKING	69.2	53	80.5	57	73.8	49	16	- 8	
SWIMMING	58.7	45	67.8	48	67.7	44	15	Nil	
OUTDOOR GAMES AND SPORTS	39.2	30	53.7	38	51.5	33	37	- 4	
WALKING FOR PLEASURE	43.1	33	67.8	48	46.4	30	57	=47	
FISHING	37.8	39	42.4	30	44.1	28	12	Nil	
BOATING	28.7	22	33.9	24	37.6	24	18	11	
BICYCLING	11.7	9	22.6	16	28.8	19	92	27	
CAMPING	10.4	8	14.1	10	30.9	20	35	119	
NATURE WALKS	18.5	14	19.8	14	26.9	17	8	36	
									197
									45

SOURCE: 1965 Survey of Outdoor Recreation Activities; U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation;  
 1970 Survey of Outdoor Recreation Activities; Preliminary Report, U. S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation.

TABLE 5

MILLIONS OF OCCASIONS OF PARTICIPATION IN 16 MAJOR SUMMERTIME OUTDOOR RECREATION ACTIVITIES  
(1965 BUREAU OF OUTDOOR RECREATION SURVEY AND PROJECTIONS)

ACTIVITY	RANK	1965			1965-1980		PROJECTIONS		1965-2000
		1965	1980	% CHANGE	2000	% CHANGE	2000	% CHANGE	
WALKING FOR PLEASURE	1	1,030	1,539	49%	2,581	151%			
SWIMMING	2	970	1,671	72	2,982	207			
DRIVING FOR PLEASURE	3	940	1,423	51	2,146	128			
PLAYING OUTDOOR GAMES OR SPORTS	4	929	1,594	72	2,940	216			
BICYCLING	5	467	617	32	860	84			
SIGHTSEEING	6	457	705	54	1,169	156			
PICKNICKING	7	451	668	48	1,022	127			
FISHING	8	322	422	31	574	78			
ATTENDING OUTDOOR SPORTS EVENTS	9	246	352	43	535	117			
BOATING, OTHER THAN CANOEING OR SAILING	10	220	387	76	694	215			
NATURE WALKS	11	117	173	48	274	134			
CAMPING	12	97	173	78	328	238			
HORSEBACK RIDING	13	77	111	44	179	132			
WATER SKIING	14	56	124	121	259	363			
HIKING	15	50	89	78	159	218			
ATTENDING OUTDOOR CONCERTS, PLAYS	16	47	80	70	144	206			
TOTAL		6,476	10,128	56	16,846	160			

SOURCE: Outdoor Recreation Trends, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, April 1967.



TABLE 6  
PARTICIPANTS IN CAMPING

(1970)

NUMBERS OF PARTICIPANTS AND DAYS OF PARTICIPATION

<u>CHARACTERISTIC</u>	<u>NO. OF PAR.</u>	<u>% OF POPULATION</u>	<u>DAYS/PERSON</u>	<u>DAYS/PARTY</u>
TOTAL VS. 9 OR OVER	35,199,000	21.0	2.4	11.3
SMALL CITIES & SUBURBS	13,088,000	21.1	2.5	11.8
TOWNS & RURAL AREAS	18,248,000	22.8	2.6	11.2
TOTAL VS. 12 OR OVER	30,885,000	19.9	2.3	11.5
SMALL CITIES & SUBURBS	11,454,000	19.9	2.4	12.0
TOWNS & RURAL AREAS	16,031,000	21.9	2.5	11.5

SOURCE: 1970 Surveys of Outdoor Recreation Activities  
 Preliminary Report, Bureau of Outdoor Recreation, February 1972.

## THE ECONOMICS OF OUTDOOR RECREATION

In the context of identifying who participates in what outdoor activity and in turn how much are they willing to spend, the following series of tables provides us with relevant data. While it is projected that camping will increase by 78% (in numbers of occasions) from 1965-1980, it must be remembered that participants in outdoor recreation can be fickle. Therefore a successful campground operation must be cognizant of fluctuations in the camping market and employ economic analysis as a planning tool. As stated by Dice (Supply-Demand in Campgrounds, 1975).

"The current situation within the campground industry shows that this is a time in which the most forceful competitive weapons must be brought into action. The industry is confronted on the one hand with a serious uncertainty about available fuel supplies for its consumers, and an equally serious question about both growth potential and over-building of facilities.

In such a period, the reaction is to search for ways to become more competitive for the volume of users. Since the margin of profit is already small, campground owners cannot reduce rates as a means of appealing to customers because costs of operation can be expected to increase. The search for competitive marketing must be for ways of making operations more efficient and for expanding the income from the present investment in facilities, goods and services. Any additional investments will have to be examined for profit generating ability of their own as well as for ability to attract more customers. Actions will have to answer to the question of "what can and should be done in order to attract more customers and keep costs down".

### CAMPER CHARACTERISTICS AND EXPENDITURES

In that no detailed analysis of expenditures made by the typical camper at Alcona County Park is available, we will instead need to construct a reasonable model utilizing national norms. A primary variable is that of income - from what economic background does the average camper come from, and in turn based upon income - what type of accommodations will suit his needs and how much will he pay for them? The source for much of the data reflected in the following series of tables is a 1971 market survey of campers in the United States as compiled by Opinion Research Corporation. Information on expenditure for accommodations as well as a survey of State-wide campground fees for Michigan are also shown. These tables illustrate what is perhaps the obvious - that with

lower costs for accommodations when camping, the average camper has more funds available for food, active recreational pursuits and can travel farther to "get away from it all." On a national basis and in 1971 dollars, the average camper was willing to spend slightly in excess of \$3.00 for a campsite. The rate structure for most Michigan campgrounds exceeds the 1971 figure.



## REGIONAL INVENTORY

In a county containing 22 lakes, over 60 trout streams, 25 miles of Lake Huron shoreline and some 117,000 acres of State and National forest, it is obvious that other sites for outdoor recreation and in particular camping would have been developed. A recent study by the Alcona Parks and Recreation Commission indicated that there are 41 facilities or points of interest (both public and private) throughout the County that provide some form of recreational activity. Many of these are privately owned and include golf courses, shooting ranges, recreational communities and even a stock car and snowmobile race track. Most municipalities in the county have developed community parks for picnicking and softball. One of the largest parks in Alcona County is the Alcona Recreation Area near the Village of Lincoln. The ARA presently contains a large snowmobile racetrack, with other facilities to be developed in the future.

With the substantial acreage devoted to state and national forest use, there are additional sites in Alcona for camping within such forest areas. Table 13 below contains in capsule form, information on State Park as well as National Forest campgrounds.

TABLE 13  
STATE PARK AND NATIONAL FOREST CAMPGROUNDS

### HARRISVILLE

#### Harrisville State Park

Location: Harrisville on U. S. 23

Facilities: Electricity, flush toilets, showers, swimming  
boat launch, disposal station, picnicking,  
playground, hiking, fishing

Sites: 229 sites on 94 acres

### BARTON CITY

#### Jewel Lake - Huron National Forest

Location: East of Barton City

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, water skiing, fishing  
boat rental, boat launch, picnicking

Sites: Tent or RV - 32 sites

GLENNIE

Horseshoe Lake - Huron National Forest

Location: 3 miles north of Glennie on M-65

Facilities: Pit toilets, fishing, boat rental, water skiing,  
boat launch

Sites: Tent or RV - 7 sites

MIKADO

Pine River - Huron National Forest

Location: 8 1/2 miles west of Mikado on County 116

Facilities: Pit toilets, picnicking, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 11 sites

In addition to camping facilities within Alcona County there are numerous sites in adjoining counties yet within roughly a 30 mile radius of the Park. Campgrounds in the general area are described below. In addition figures 1 and 2 which follow illustrate recreational facilities in Alcona County - which range from the Huron National Forest Hiking and Riding Trail to the various township parks - as well as the location of all campgrounds in the county.

TABLE 14  
REGIONAL CAMPGROUNDS - ALCONA COUNTY AREA

CURRAN

Oscoda State Forest

Location: McCollum Lake

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, boating, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 32 sites

HILLMAN

Emerick Municipal Park

Location: State Street - Hillman

Facilities: Electric, water, disposal station, swimming  
boating, fishing, water skiing, snowmobiling,  
nature program, recreation room, playground

Sites: Tent or RV - 22 sites

Heine's Landing

Location: 4 miles south of Hillman on Route 32, then 3 miles  
south on Farrier Road

Facilities: Electric, disposal station, flush and pit toilets,  
boat ramp, fishing, playground

Sites: Tent or RV - 30 sites

Thunder Bay River State Forest - Ess Lake

Location: Ess Lake

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, boat ramp, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 30 sites

LUZERNE

Oscoda State Forest - Parmalee Bridge

Location: 5 miles north of Luzerne on County 489

Facilities: Canoeing, fishing, pit toilets

Sites: Tent or RV - 6 sites



MIO

Island Lake National Forest

Location: 10 miles south of Mio on M-33

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, boating, fishing, 14 day limit

Sites: Tent or RV - 17 sites

Mack Lake National Forest

Location: 3 3/4 miles south of Mio on M-33 then 4 miles east

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, boating, fishing, 14 day limit

Sites: Tent or RV - 42 sites

Oscoda State Forest - Muskrat Lake

Location: 12 miles northwest of Mio on M-72, County Road 608  
and Richeson Road

Facilities: Pit toilets, canoeing, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 6 sites

Oscoda State Forest

Location: Mio Pond

Facilities: Swimming, canoeing, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 24 sites

Pine Acres Travel Trailer Park and Campground

Location: 1/2 mile west of Mio on SF-72

Facilities: Electric, water, disposal station, laundry, propane,  
playground

Sites: Tent or RV - 40 sites

OSCODA

Acres and Trails KOA Kampground

Location: 1 mile south of Oscoda on U. S. 23, then 3/4 miles west  
and 1 mile south

Facilities: Electric, disposal station, laundry, groceries, propane,  
snowmobiling, nature trails, recreation room, play-  
ground

Sites: Tent or RV - 85 sites

Old Orchard Park - County Park

Location: 9 miles west of Oscoda on River Road

Facilities: Disposal station, flush and pit toilets, showers, groceries, propane, restaurant, swimming, boat ramp, fishing, snowmobile trails, nature trails, playgrounds - 21 day limit

Sites: RV only - 525 sites

Oscoda State Forest - Van Etten Lake

Location: 4 1/2 miles northwest of Oscoda

Facilities: Pit toilets, swimming, boat ramp, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 62 sites

OSSINEKE

Alpena State Forest - Ossineke

Location: 2 miles northeast of Ossineke on Lake Huron

Facilities: Boating, sandy beach, swimming, fishing, hiking

Sites: Tent or RV - 43 sites

ROSE CITY

Ogemaw State Forest - Rifle River

Location: 5 1/2 miles south of Rose City on M-33

Facilities: Pit toilets, canoeing, fishing

Sites: Tent or RV - 40 sites

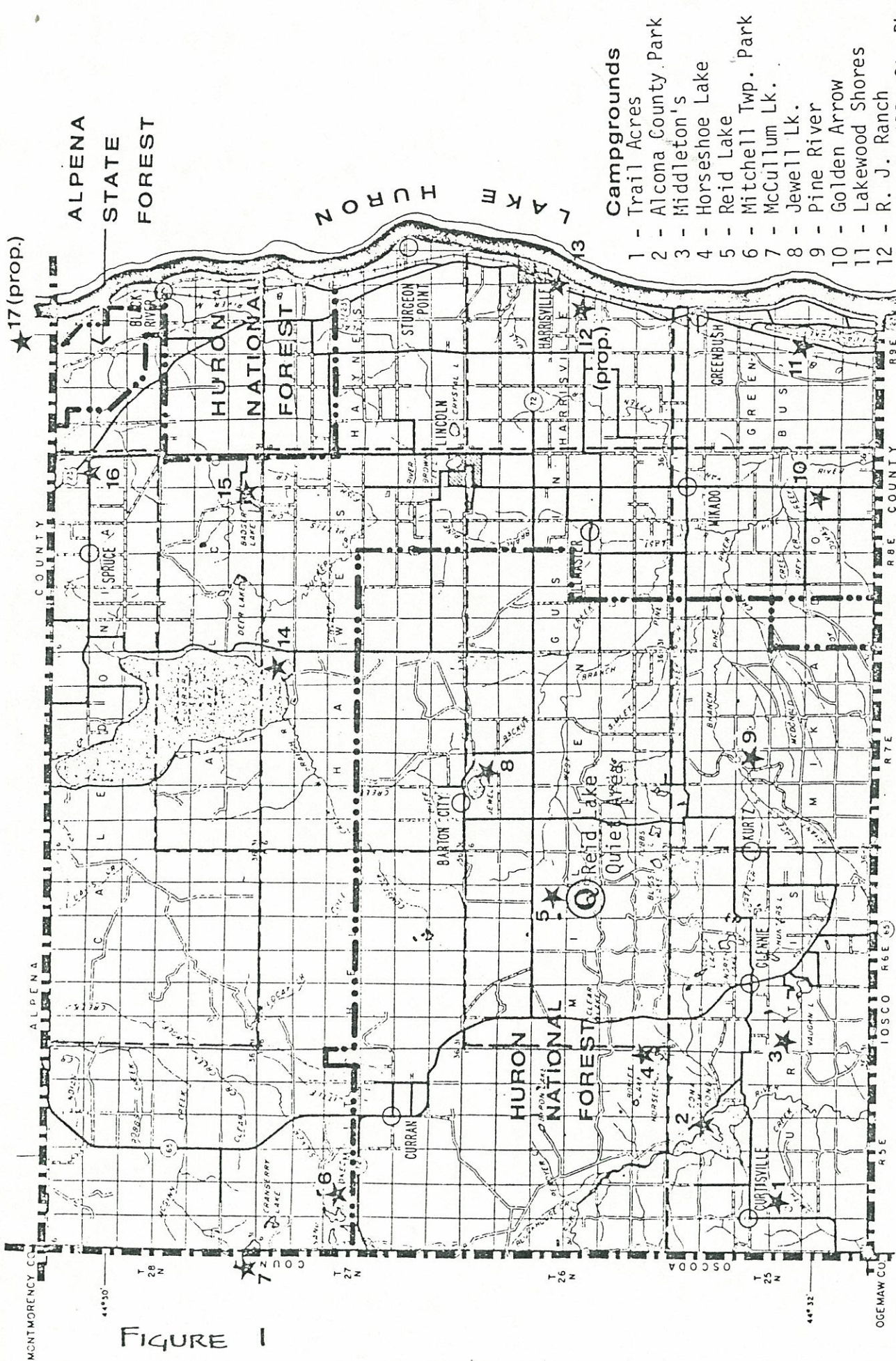
Rifle River State Recreation Area

Location: Lupton

Facilities: Swimming, boating, fishing, snowmobiling

Sites: Tent or RV - 139 sites



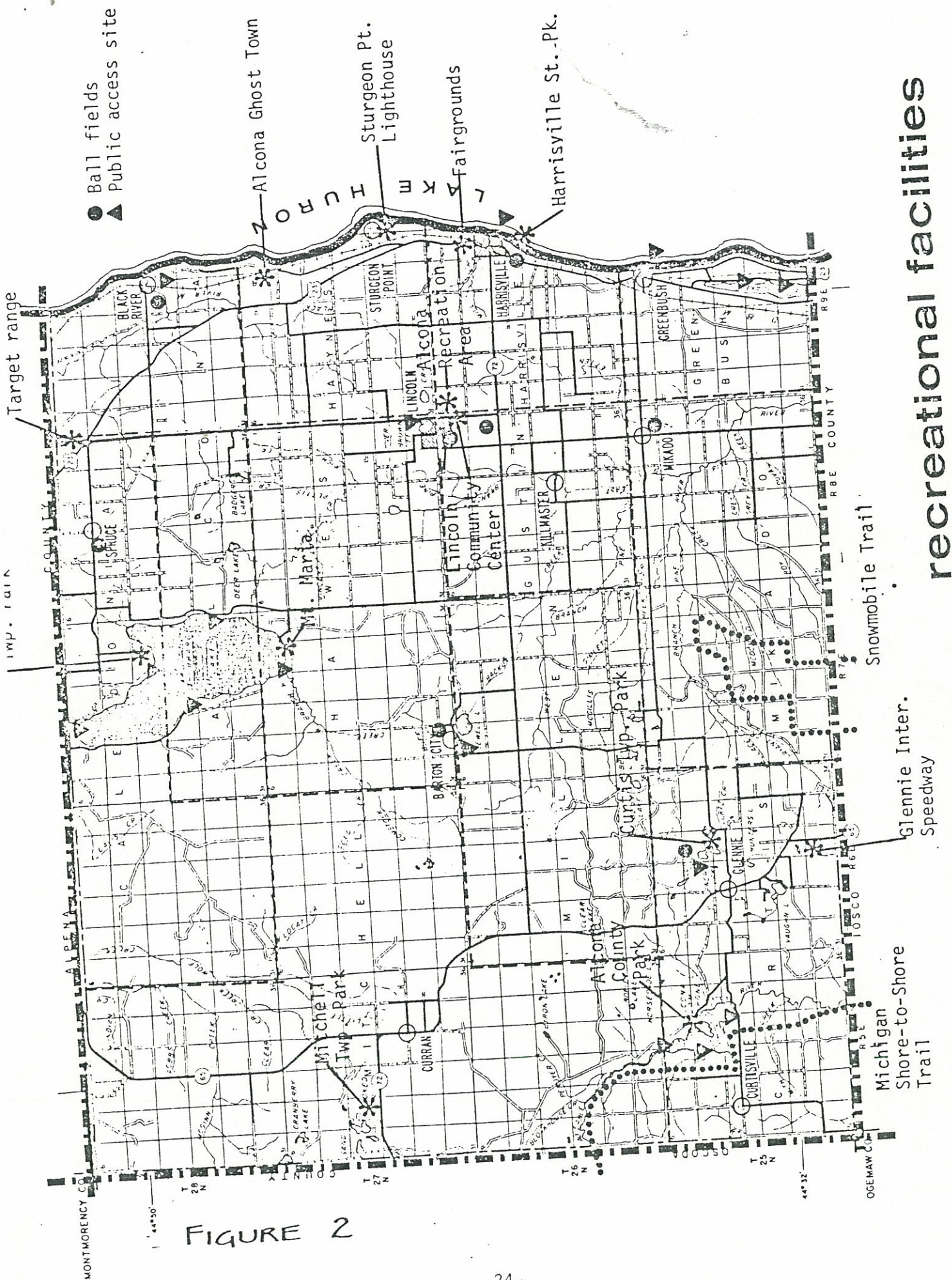


- Campgrounds**
- 1 - Trail Acres
  - 2 - Alcona County Park
  - 3 - Middleton's
  - 4 - Horseshoe Lake
  - 5 - Reid Lake
  - 6 - Mitchell Twp. Park
  - 7 - McCullum Lk.
  - 8 - Jewell Lk.
  - 9 - Pine River
  - 10 - Golden Arrow
  - 11 - Lakewood Shores
  - 12 - R. J. Ranch
  - 13 - Harrisville St. Pk.
  - 14 - South Bay Marina
  - 15 - Lost Lake Woods
  - 16 - Paul Bunyan KOA
  - 17 - Newegon St. Pk.
  - 18 - Rifle River

FIGURE 1

A.F.S.





- Ball fields
- ▲ Public access site

FIGURE 2

# recreational facilities



## ALCONA COUNTY PARK HISTORY

The land acreage which comprises the present Alcona County Park is owned by Consumers Power Company based in Jackson, Michigan. The impoundment and acreage on the AuSable River is similar to other sites and situations controlled by Consumers Power Company in northern Michigan. Initially the property was leased to Curtis Township at which time it was known as the Bamfield Impoundment Campgrounds. In 1966 management of the campgrounds was transferred to Alcona County. At that point a consulting firm was hired by the County to prepare a series of studies intended to culminate in a Comprehensive Plan for Parks, Recreation and Open Space. The planning program was an essential element, enabling the County to apply and compete for Bureau of Outdoor Recreation monies for development of campground facilities. Efforts were initiated in 1968 to create a County Parks and Recreation Commission (ACPRC) as empowered under Act 261. Such a Commission was established in 1969 and recognized by the Alcona County Board of Commissioners in 1970. In the same year Alcona County received \$40,000 in matching Land and Water Conservation Funds to develop a modern campground facility at the Park. The initial allocation was then enlarged to \$55,000 of 50% matching funds enabling the ACPRC to initiate a \$110,000 program at the Lower Landing Campground. As data yet to be presented will indicate, the 100 site Lower Landing Modern Campground has been an extremely popular and successful venture.

Although successfully operated under the direction of the ACPRC, Alcona County Park lease was amended and the Township of Curtis on April 29th, 1982 became the lessee and took over operational control of the property. The operational structure has not changed from the original Alcona Park Master Plan and development efforts will continue as presented April of 1978. The Park has a fulltime manager and seasonal employees as required to maintain operations. The total number of employees working at the Park has varied in recent years in that they have been employed through various funded programs such as CETA and Governor's Youth Corps. The daily costs incurred in operation of the Park are paid through user fees. The accordance with the agreement between the Township of

Curtis and Consumers Power Company (April 29, 1982) all receipts paid for camping, and rentals actually comprise the annual park budget. All "profits" or receipts in excess of expenditures are "put back into" the park taking the form of various improvements.



## STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

In introductory comments to this text, the statement was made that in essence the Alcona County Parks and Recreation Commission was at a crossroads relative to decisions being made which would impact and direct the future of Alcona County Park. Expanded demand in recent years for camping and associated recreational activities at the Park has prompted the ACPRC to consider expansion to their existing facilities. It was realized however that prior to any actual sitework - before a new campsite was created or a road re-designed, two areas warranted close-examination. First, a basic master plan designating future use of all areas within the Park was needed. Such a plan should provide for economical and efficient site usage, as well as a document with the ACPRC could compete for park development grants. In conjunction with a master plan of the physical resources of the Park, a study of the fiscal operation was also critical. The ACPRC needed an analysis of the economic well-being of the Park operation - what had been happening in the recent past as far as income and expenditures and also what might the future and potential of the Park be? Finally the ACPRC having made preliminary policy decisions concerning the types of improvements needed at the Park the questions remained - could they be realistically accommodated on the site and would they prove economically feasible?

## ALCONA COUNTY PARK - DESCRIPTION

Existing Use - At present the 500+ acre Park receives heavy usage by campers spending both weekends and long-term vacations. Water is an obvious attraction for people interested in spending time outdoors and the Alcona Dam Pond is extremely popular for fishing (containing good population of trout, pike, perch and bass), swimming, canoeing and simple as a visual resource. Such a valuable natural facility as a portion of the total recreation experience at Alcona County Park has certainly been a major determinant in the past success of the Park and enhances its future potential. The backwaters of the AuSable River separate the Park into two segments with roughly 2/3 of the total area being on the east shore and the remainder sited on the west bank. Historically the Park has been divided in four sub-areas which are known by individual names or designations. The western third of the Park is referenced as the West Side

Primitive Area and contains 153 (informal) campsites. The West Side is serviced by a gravel access road, and contains limited development with all toilet facilities being pit privies. There is also a small storage structure and two informal boat launching areas. The eastern area of the Park has traditionally been known by various titles. The Lower Landing Modern Campground containing 106 full-service modern campsites is located in the southeast corner of the Park. This area contains a shower-washroom building, has electrical service to the individual campsites and a boat launch. To the immediate north of the Lower Landing Modern Campground is the Park entrance - it is here that the most intensive development has occurred, including the Park office, Park manager's residence, storage area, dump station and firewood supply. Moving to the northwest from the Park entrance the next area of development is a maintenance building and equipment storage area roughly 1/2 mile from the entrance. Beyond this area the shoreline and Park boundary line form an elongated peninsula which runs in a north-south direction. The northern half of this peninsula is known as the Upper Landing and the southern half as Reed's Point. Both areas are used as primitive campgrounds containing a total of 204 sites. As with the West Side, all facilities are limited to hand pumps for water and pit toilets. There is a swimming area at Reed's Point and a boat launch at the mid-point between the two areas. A more detailed analysis of the total Park is contained in a future section.

#### TOPOGRAPHY

The topography of Alcona County Park can be classified for the most part as gently rolling with abrupt changes in elevation occurring along the shoreline of the Alcona Dam Pond. The elevations at the northern edge of the property begin at approximately 860' (U. S. G. S. datum) and gradually slope to the south to meet the Pond elevation of 829.67'. Along portions of the western and eastern shorelines the elevations fall off drastically, creating steep banks up to 30' + in height.



## DRAINAGE

For the most part the entire site, which is composed of a narrow peninsula and band of land along the shore, has few well-defined drainage channels, as run-off from these areas is rather diffused, draining to the pond. However, several deeply cut swales serving as drainage systems for land behind the Park boundaries run across park land. These swales are found on the north and south ends of the West Side Primitive Area -- just north of the present managers office. Drainage is poor in several locations, primarily because the ground elevation in these areas slopes down to the surface of the water table. These areas are at the south end of the east tip of Reed's Point and at the south and east sides of the Modern Campground.

## SOILS

The site is composed of four major soil classifications as shown on Figure 3. Over 2/3 of the West Side Primitive Area is composed of East Lake Loamy Sand which are well to moderately well drained with only moderate restrictions on development for recreational purposes. The soils do tend to erode in the absence of good management practices.

The lower third of this area is composed of AuGres Sand which lies along the low area at the shoreline and generally follows the swale draining the lower portion of the West Side Primitive Area. AuGres Sand is a somewhat poorly drained soil with a seasonal high water table and moderate limitations for recreational developments.

The major portion of Reed's Point, Upper Landing and the shoreline area of the Lower Landing are composed of Rubicon Sand which are well to moderately well drained with only moderate restrictions on development for recreational purposes. The soil is of a sandy nature and is subject to wind erosion and drouthiness in the absence of good management.

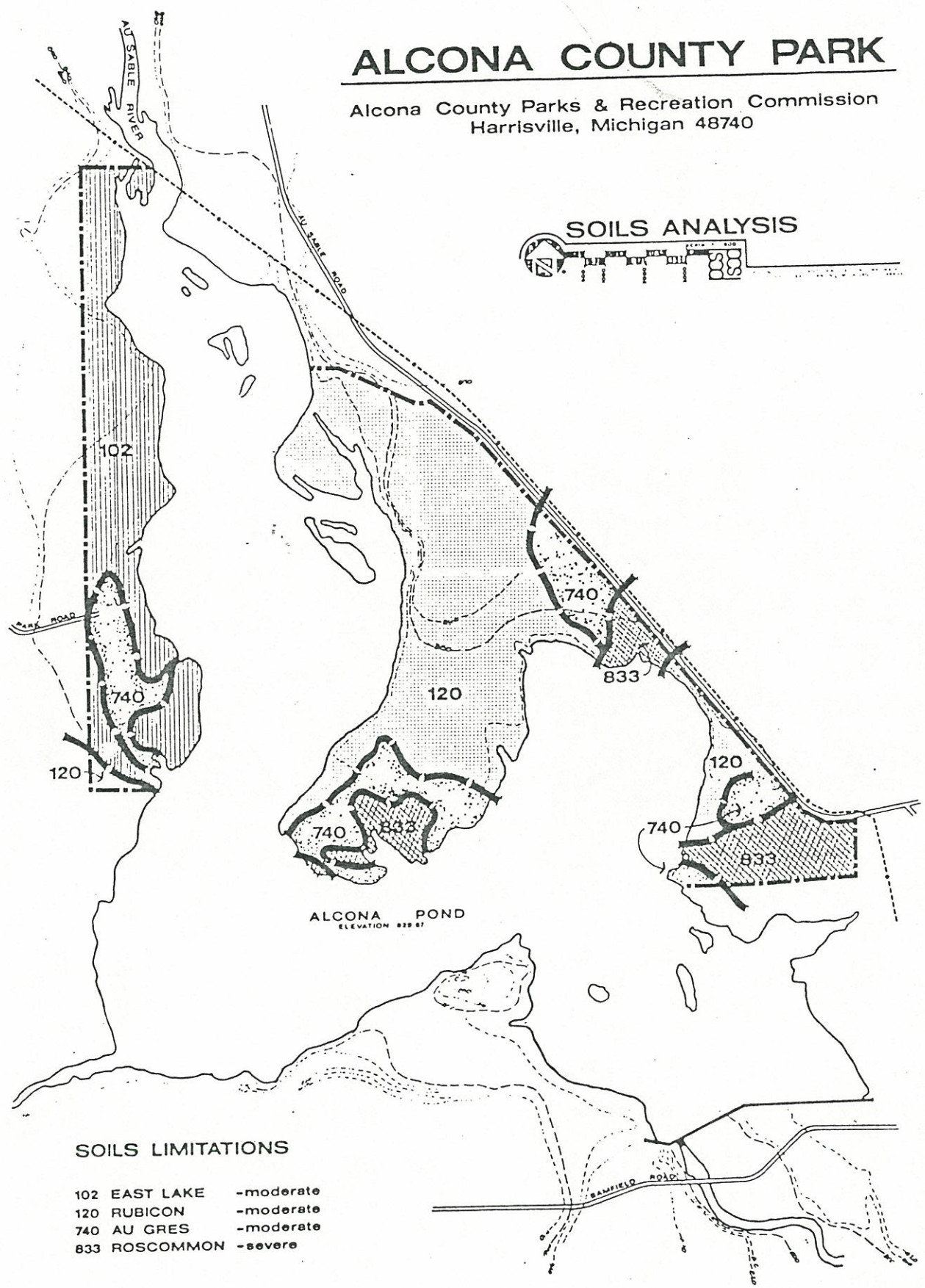
The tip of Reed's Point, the remainder of the Lower Landing and the strip of land joining Upper and Lower Landings are composed of both Augres Sand (see description above) and Roscommon Sand which is very poorly drained due to a high water table. This soil has severe limitations for recreational purposes of any sort.



# ALCONA COUNTY PARK

Alcona County Parks & Recreation Commission  
Harrisville, Michigan 48740

## SOILS ANALYSIS



### SOILS LIMITATIONS

- 102 EAST LAKE -moderate
- 120 RUBICON -moderate
- 740 AU GRES -moderate
- 833 ROSCOMMON -severe

FIGURE 3

## VEGETATION

The forested areas of the surrounding Huron National Forest extend throughout the Alcona County Park. While the exact composition of tree stands varies within the Park depending on local soil and drainage conditions, the Park is, for the most part, heavily wooded with hardwood stands of Birch and Oak intermixed with Pine, Poplar and some Cedar. A limited area of the Park has been reforested with pine plantations by Consumers Power Company.

Where park development has occurred, forested areas have been selectively cleared of trees and brush to accommodate campsites. The current practice of poplar removal has also thinned the number of trees at campsites. Consumers Power Company has erected transmission lines paralleling the eastern park boundary and a wide corridor (60' - 80') has been cleared of all trees and brush. Lumbering operations in the northern most portion of Upper Landing have removed a few acres of trees through clear cutting practices.

## EXISTING UTILITIES

The Park is provided power by Consumers Power Company to service the entrance facility on the east side of the Pond and the Modern Campground at Lower Landing. The rest of the Park, which is in a primitive or undeveloped state is not serviced with power. The primitive areas do however have minimal sorts of services providing water and pit toilets.



## CAMPGROUND USAGE

The number of permits issued monthly by campgrounds are presented for the years 1974 and 1983 for comparison. Raw data is listed by month for each of the available areas. These years are used for comparison as the modern campground facility was introduced during the 1974 season. In general however the data does show a steady rate of usage for both the Primitive #1 (Reed's Point and upper landing) and Primitive #2 (West Side Primitive) campgrounds. While the Primitive #1 area has shown a decrease (-12.9) the Modern Campground has shown a considerable increase (+39.5) for the same comparison.

In our Michigan climate certainly the most pleasurable time for camping is during the summer months. Alcona Park received its peak camper usage during the months of June through August. Raw data again shows July to be the peak month for park usage. During the 1983 season 2,898 permits were issued for the three month period or 65.1% of the total permits issued. July was the peak month with 1,045 permits issued or 23.5% of yearly total. As the data indicates 556 permits were issued in the modern area (53.2%) with the balance about evenly split between Primitive #1 and Primitive #2.



PERMITS ISSUED BY CAMPGROUNDS

ALCONA PARK

1974 - 1983

	PRIMITIVE #1		PRIMITIVE #2		MODERN		TOTAL	
	1974	1983	1974	1983	1974	1983	1974	1983
JANUARY	7	4	0		2		7	6
FEBRUARY	7	53	12		0		7	65
MARCH	4	32	12		14		4	58
APRIL	16	48	17		14	47	30	112
MAY	223	219	143	126	183	218	549	563
JUNE	130	240	99	230	205	398	434	868
JULY	432	210	309	279	566	556	1,307	1,045
AUGUST	268	180	236	224	363	554	867	958
SEPTEMBER	169	94	134	118	177	214	480	426
OCTOBER	21	28	59	28	85	159	165	215
NOVEMBER	2	6	11	8	42	118	55	132
DECEMBER	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
TOTAL	1,279	1,114	991	1,054	1,635	2,281	3,905	4,449
PERCENT CHANGE		-12.9	+6.3		+39.5		+13.9	

PARK INCOME AND EXPENSES

The following tables reflect year end revenues and expenses as well as 1984 projections. Based on adopted budgets for operational year 1984.

	STATEMENT OF REVENUE 12-31-83	REVENUE PROJECTION 12-31-84
Permit Revenue	\$104,901.00	\$108,000.00
Dumping Fees	41.00	50.00
Ice Sales	1,688.00	4,500.00
Shower Fees	2,242.43	2,000.00
Wood Sales	32.00	1,200.00
Record Copying	114.55	125.00
Other Receipts	482.15	.00
Interest Income	2,074.43	1,000.00
Refunds	25,771.29	.00
Cash Over/Short	.00	.00
Total	\$137,336.85	\$116,875.00

OPERATING EXPENSES  
12-31-83

OPERATING BUDGET  
1984

Salary/Wages	\$ 48,558.76	\$ 45,500.00
Administration	2,216.26	3,000.00
Employer F. I. C. A.	3,188.76	2,000.00
Hospitalization	7,217.34	7,200.00
Unemployment Insurance		1,500.00
Office Supplies	1,892.94	2,000.00
Postage	356.85	500.00
Tools	622.00	700.00
Janitorial Supplies	1,606.00	1,800.00
Telephone	870.77	800.00
Travel	122.00	450.00
Gasoline	4,134.04	3,000.00
Printing/Advertising	1,865.29	1,800.00
Bonds and Insurance	3,521.00	3,000.00
Workers Compensation Ins.	Inc. Bonds & Ins.	1,000.00
Electric	8,779.20	8,000.00
Heat	705.02	800.00
Repair/Main Buildings	2,892.52	2,000.00
Repair/Main Equipment	2,781.09	2,500.00
Repair/Main Vehicles	2,407.10	2,000.00
Repair Main Grounds	5,780.33	9,000.00
Garbage Service	1,460.00	.00
Rent	1.00	1.00
Contingencies	.00	11,324.00
Other	1,383.35	500.00
Property Taxes	1,116.00	1,500.00
Wood Expense		1,000.00
Fee Cost		4,000.00
Michigan Youth Corps	15,552.00	.00
Total Operating Expenses	\$120,146.52	\$116,875.00



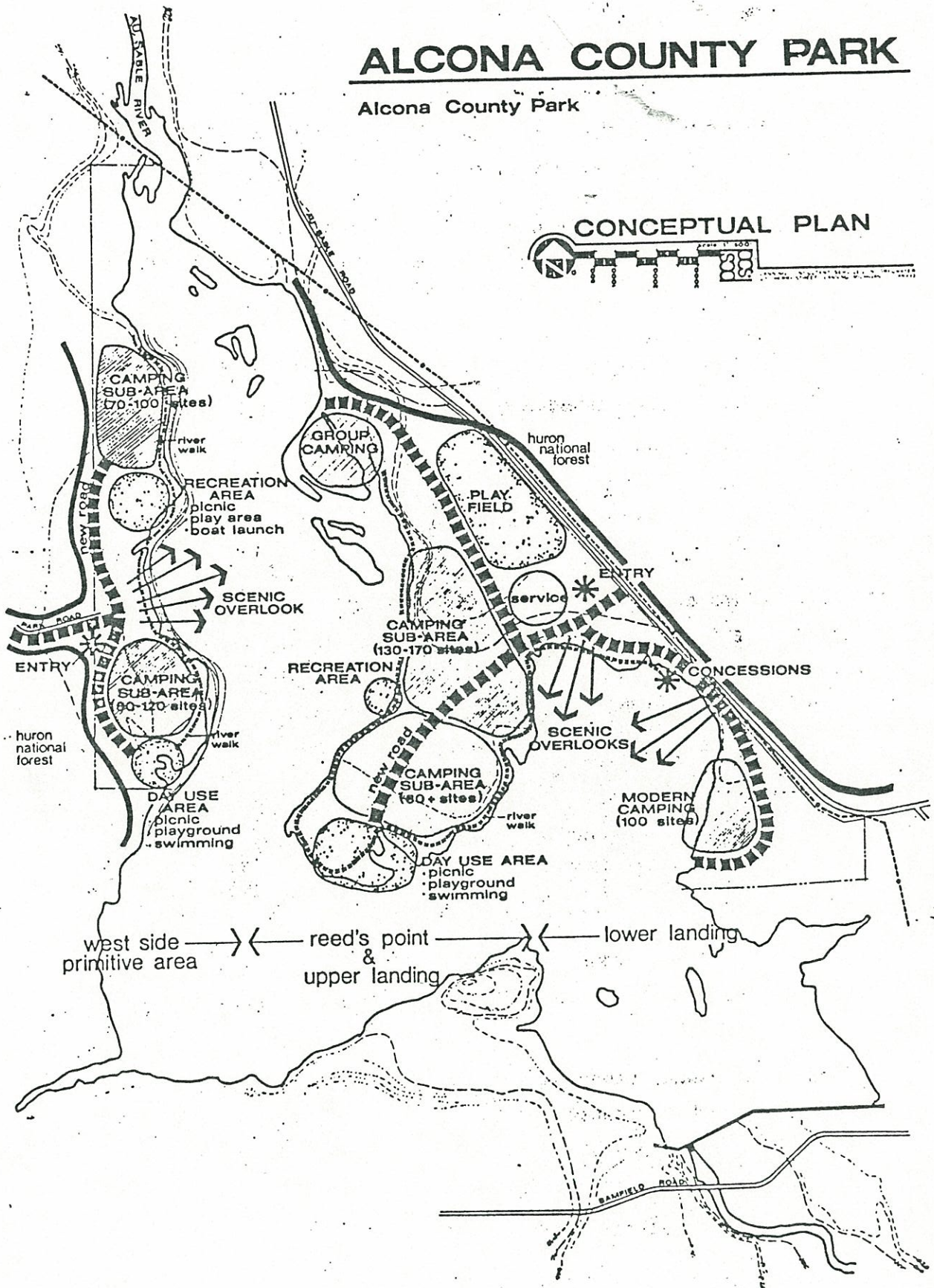
PROPOSED PROJECTS LOCATION MAPS

The following maps show proposed areas for development in the Alcona Park.

# ALCONA COUNTY PARK

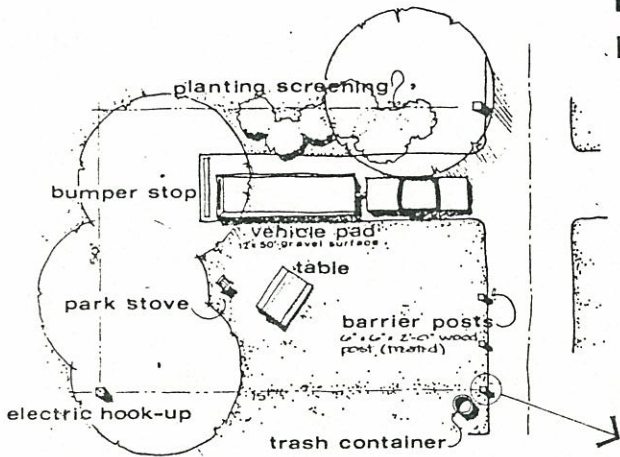
Alcona County Park

## CONCEPTUAL PLAN





## LOWER LANDING MODERN CAMPGROUND

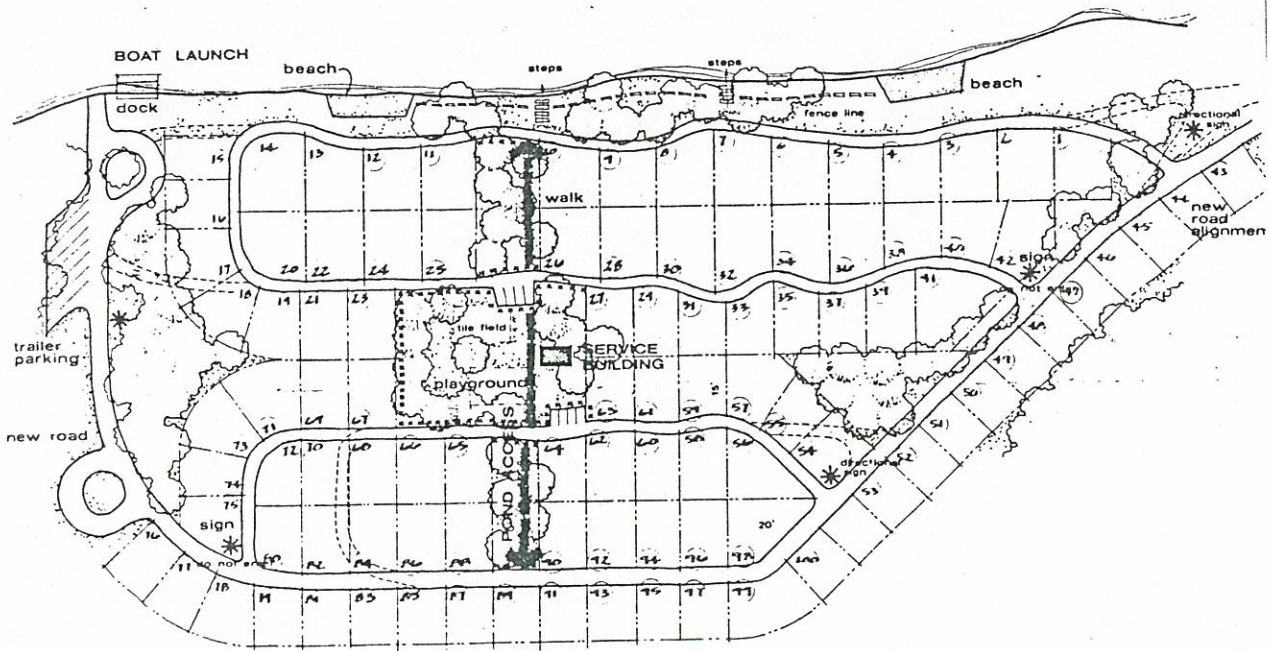


**TYPICAL MODERN  
CAMPSITE**



**CAMPSITE  
MARKER**

6" x 6" x 24" treated wood post  
 \* Campsite numbers  
 \* registration card holder



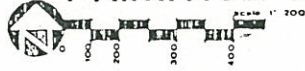
**MODIFIED CAMPGROUND LAYOUT**



# ALCONA COUNTY PARK

Alcona County Parks

## WEST SIDE PRIMITIVE AREA



huron national forest

OVERFLOW & GROUP CAMPING

8 campsites

18 campsites

16 campsites

14 campsites

picnic & playground

RECREATION AREA

dock

boat launch

alcona pond

gatehouse

ENTRANCE

service area

16 campsites

22 campsites

12 campsites

22 campsites

DAY-USE AREA

picnic & playground

beach

dock

property line

boat tie-up

UPPER CAMPING AREA (70-100 sites)

boat tie-up

boat tie-up

boat tie-up

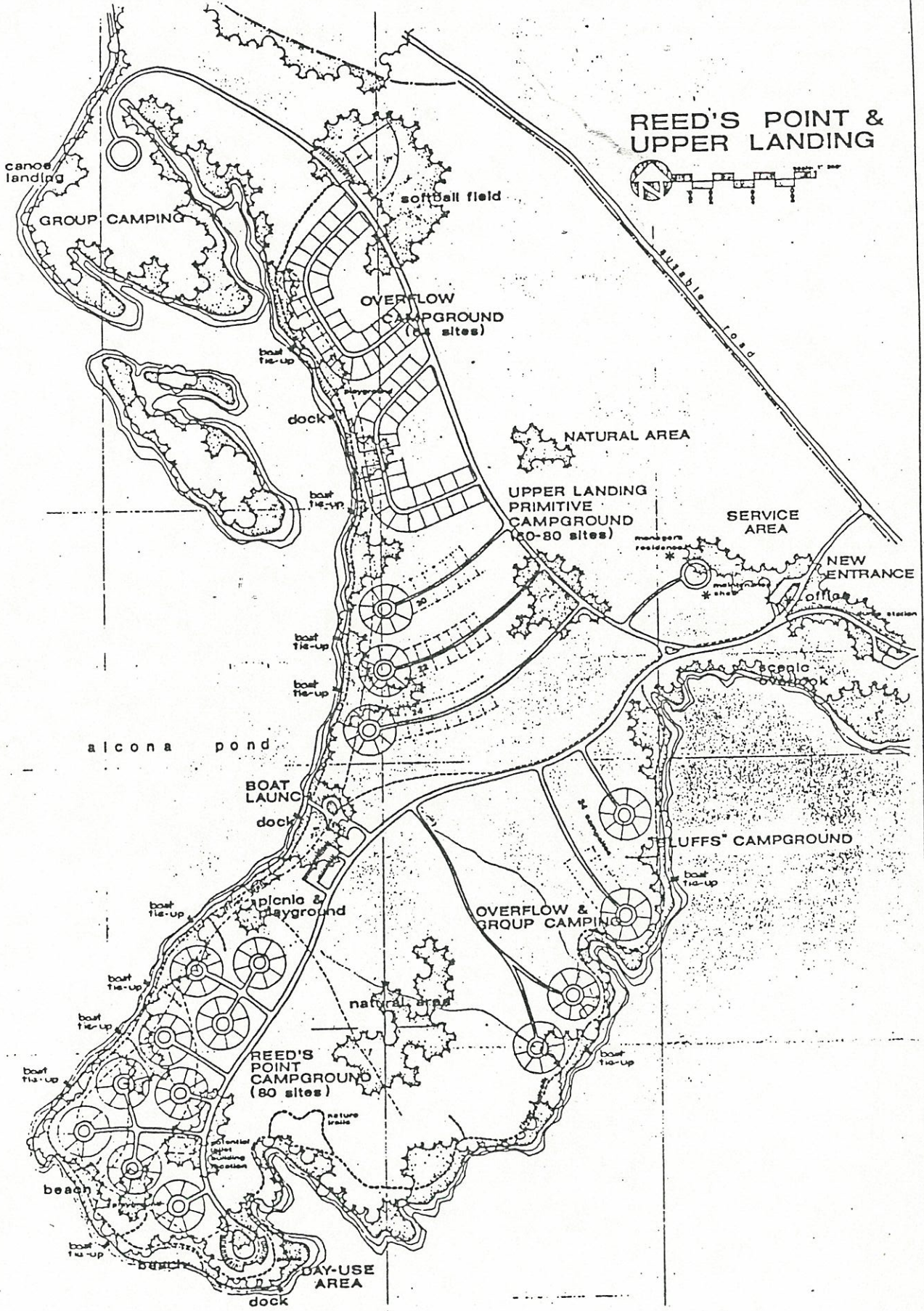
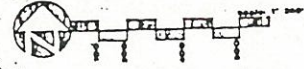
boat tie-up

LOWER CAMPING AREA (80-100 sites)

boat tie-up

dock

# REED'S POINT & UPPER LANDING





## PHASING AND GENERAL COST ESTIMATES

The following schedule for phase development and cost breakdown constitutes a recommendation for a logical sequence of construction toward total project completion. The final sequence was based on the Alcona County Park and Recreation Commission's expressed priorities and logical developmental sequence of park facilities.

It should be remembered that the projected estimates are based on the assumption that all labor and materials costs for construction would be provided and/or performed by private contractors.

The totals reflect this assumption, but can be substantially reduced by utilizing park staff and county employees and locally available materials. For instance, the cost of picnic tables provided by a park equipment manufacturer is 4 or 5 times greater than the equivalent tables constructed by the park staff. Playground or picnic shelter costs can be reduced by 1/3 through utilization of park staff labor to install the prefabricated equipment.



<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT COST</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
PHASE 1 - NEW PARK ENTRANCE			
NEW MAIN ENTRANCE			
new approach road and parking (gravel)	2,355 sy	\$ 2.25	\$ 5,300
entry and directional signs	4	200.00	800
new dump station (re-use existing tank)	L. S.		3,000
soil borings	2	250.00	500
NEW SERVICE AREA			
service area	1,065 sy	2.25	2,400
manager's residence (prefabricated)	900 sf	30.00	27,000
RENOVATE EXISTING ENTRANCE			
approach and entry screening/barriers	L. S.		7,500
revise turnout area	L. S.		500
close existing office structure	not applicable		
dump station removal	L. S.		400
UPPER LANDING CAMPGROUND (LOTS 107 - 119 AND GROUP AREA)			
campsite cul-de-sac roadway (Bluffs Campground)	2,800 sy	2.25	6,300
campsite development	24 sites	880.00	21,120
overflow group camping access	3,700 sy	2.25	8,300
overflow group camping development	15 sites	800.00	12,000

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT COST</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
PHASE 2 - MODERN CAMPGROUND MODIFICATIONS			
REVISED CAMPGROUND LAYOUT AND BOAT LAUNCH ACCESS			
gravel road extension	20,000 sf	\$ 2.25	\$ 4,500
upgrade existing sites	93 sites	200.00	18,600
SERVICE AND RECREATION FACILITIES			
upgrade service building area exterior playground	L. S.		1,300
	L. S.		6,000
EROSION CONTROL (S. C. S. ESTIMATE)			
fence stairways and retaining walls			15,000
PHASE 3 - WEST SIDE PRIMITIVE AREA			
ENTRANCE AND ACCESS DEVELOPMENT			
survey and marking of park boundaries	L. S.		2,000
new gatehouse and service area	L. S.		4,500
removal of existing campsites	153	30.00	4,590
development of new main road (gravel)	3,700 sy	2.25	8,300
entrance and directional signage	L. S.		800

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT COST</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
<b>DAY USE AREA</b>			
gravel parking area	1,000 sy	\$ 2.25	\$ 2,250
playground equipment	L. S.		6,000
service facilities (toilets, water)	L. S.		3,300
beach area development	L. S.		2,000
<b>CAMPSITE DEVELOPMENT (UPPER)</b>			
main access road	6,600 sy	2.25	14,850
campsites	70	880.00	61,600
<b>RECREATION AREA</b>			
gravel parking area	1,000 sy	2.25	2,250
service facilities (toilets, water)	L. S.		2,500
playground	L. S.		5,000
clear area for games	L. S.		300
<b>RIVER EDGE TREATMENT</b>			
fencing and pathway	2,500 lf	1.50	3,750
stairways to water	15	350.00	5,250
boat facilities (7)	7	120.00	840
timber retaining walls	L. S.		3,000



<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT COST</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
PHASE 4 - REED'S POINT DEVELOPMENT			
REED'S POINT CAMPGROUND MODIFICATIONS			
remove existing roadway and campsites (120 sites existing)	120	\$ 30.00	\$ 3,600
development of access roads (gravel)	8,600 sy	2.25	19,350
RIVER EDGE TREATMENT			
fencing and pathway	1,000 lf	1.50	1,500
stairways to water	2	350.00	700
boat mooring facilities (5)	5	120.00	600
REED'S POINT CAMPGROUND MODERNIZATION			
electrical service	L. S.		5,000
electrical hookup to campsites	80	100.00	8,000
service building	L. S.		50,000
water well, lighting	L. S.		5,000
sanitary system, lagoon	L. S.		62,000
DAY USE AREA			
gravel parking area	1,000 sy	2.25	2,250
playground equipment	L. S.		6,000
picnic shelter	L. S.		6,000
BOAT LAUNCH AREA DEVELOPMENT (D. N. R. STANDARDS)			
playground equipment	L. S.		3,000

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>UNIT COST</u>	<u>TOTAL COST</u>
PHASE 5 - UPPER LANDING DEVELOPMENT			
REED'S POINT CAMPGROUND MODIFICATIONS			
remove existing roadway and campsites (70 existing campsites)	70	\$ 30.00	\$ 2,100
development of main access roads (gravel)	2,500 sy	2.25	5,600
development of campsite access roads			
development of campsites (primitive)	60	880.00	52,800
campsite service facilities (toilets/water)			
RIVER EDGE TREATMENT			
fencing and pathway	2,000	1.50	3,000
stairways to water	10	350.00	3,500
boat mooring facilities (7)	7	120.00	840
OVERFLOW AND GROUP CAMPING DEVELOPMENT			
development of overflow campsite access roads	7,300 sy	2.25	16,425
development of primitive campsites and road campsite service facilities (toilets/water)	64 sites	880.00	56,320
development canoe landing at group camping area	L. S.		500
develop softball field parking	L. S.		6,000

Does not include the cost of engineering or architectural services (10%) or contingencies (10%).  
 For every additional year construction is delayed, increase the above cost estimates by an  
 inflation factor of 10%.