

# *Pere Marquette River*

*A National Scenic River*



# Pere Marquette National Scenic River

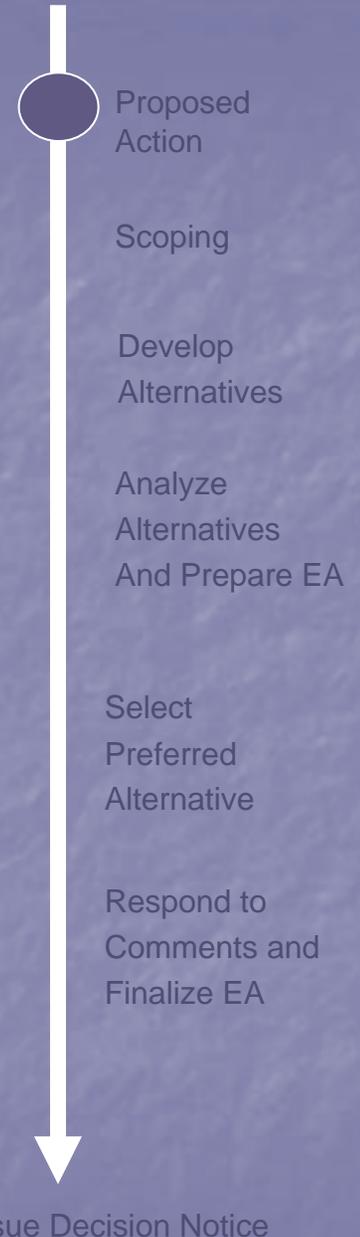
- 66.4 miles of the mainstream designated as Scenic and included in the Wild and Scenic River System in 1978
- The first river in Michigan to be included in the Wild and Scenic River System

# Pere Marquette National Scenic River

- 1983 - River management plan completed
- 1990 - Management plan updated to restore values and reflect current conditions, uses, and demands on the river resource.
- Now – update the management plan to address current issues and conditions

# Proposed Action

- Update the Pere Marquette National Scenic River Management Plan to reflect changes in use and resource conditions within the river corridor.
- Ensure that the river is managed to protect and enhance the **outstandingly remarkable values (ORVs)** for which the river was designated, while providing for public recreation and resource uses which do not adversely impact or degrade these values.



# Basis for W&S Designation

- Free flowing river (no dams, diversions)

+

- Exceptional water quality

+

- Outstandingly remarkable values

=

PM National Scenic River



# Outstandingly Remarkable Values

- Recreation
- Scenery
- Fisheries
- Heritage Resources



# Key Issues

- River access and facilities
- Recreation use and capacity



# Issues (continued)

- Shoreline appearance
- Aquatic and riparian habitat



# Management Issues

- Law enforcement
- Unified management of the river corridor
- Improved signing (consistent)
- Information and education
- Maintenance of existing facilities



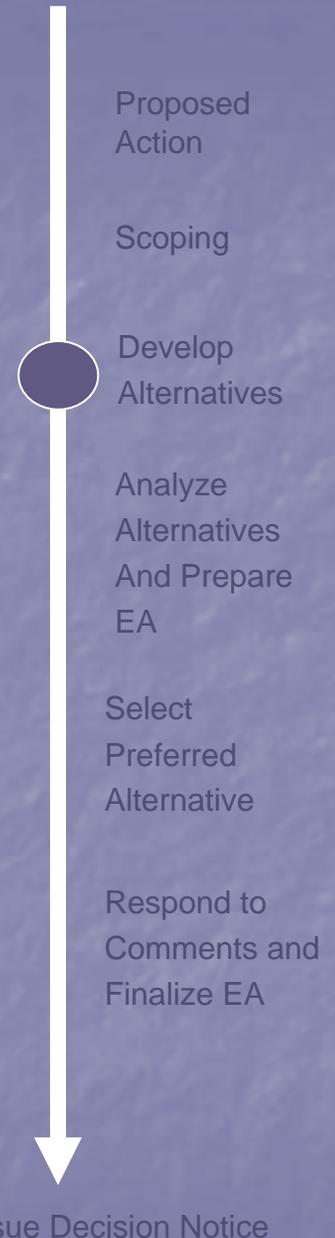
Department of  
**Natural Resources**

# Where are we at in the river plan update?



# Develop Alternatives

- Develop alternatives based on:
  - Public comment (issues)
  - Results from inventory and monitoring
  - Must include a “No Action Alternative” (= current river management plan)
  - Alternatives considered river use by season of year



# Draft Alternatives (4)

- Alt 1 – No Action (current management)
- Alt 2 – Proposed Action. Theme is a balance between recreation use and the protection of river resources.
- Alt 3 - Theme is to enhance river resource protection with minimal change to the existing access sites.
- Alt 4 - Theme is to provide for the highest level of recreation use while protecting river resources.

# Actions Common to All Alternatives

- Interagency cooperation (unified mgmt)
- Improve enforcement of rules
- Existing watercraft numbers stay the same (May 15 –September 10)
- Improve information and education
- Continue land acquisition and exchange
- Continue maintenance of existing facilities
- Continue recreation enhancement fee program
- Continue aquatic and riparian habitat restoration and/or stabilization

# Actions Common to Alternatives 2, 3 and 4

- Reissue landowner permits
- Rafts capped at 2006 levels
- River resource and use monitoring



## Alternative 2 (balance between recreation use and river protection)

- Winter (Nov – Feb) – plow Rec Fee access sites
- Spring (March 1 – May 14) – Limit use at developed access sites based on parking capacity (approximately 20 % more than the current 500 spaces).
- Summer (May 15 – Sept 10) – pooled permits for watercraft use on Mon – Thurs (excluding holidays)

# Alternative 2 (balance between recreation use and river protection)

- Fall (Sept 11 – Oct 31)
  - 11PM – 4AM closure of developed access sites
  - Allow current levels of permitted 2006 USFS and DNR commercial use (guiding)
  - Limit use at developed access sites based on parking capacity (approximately 20 % more than the current 500 spaces).

# Alternative 2 (balance between recreation use and river protection)

## ■ Year-round

- No parking on roads adjacent to developed access sites
- USFS, DNR, and river users continue to cooperatively manage large wood navigation hazards

# Alternative 2 (balance between recreation use and river protection)

- Major Access Point Changes
  - Gleasons Landing – new fall/spring overflow parking (20 vehicles); replace boat slide
  - Rainbow Rapids - new fall/spring overflow parking (10 vehicles with trailers only);
  - 40<sup>th</sup> Street – new 3-5 car parking lot for walk-in access (1/4 mile)
  - Lower Branch Bridge – boat access with parking for 10 vehicles plus trailers, toilet, no camping
  - Maple Leaf – develop one new and expand two existing parking areas for 60 total vehicle, toilet, no camping, rehab shoreline and degraded trails

## Alternative 3 (emphasizes river protection)

- Winter (Nov – Feb) – no USFS plowing access sites
- Spring (March 1 – May 14) – use based on current parking of 500 spaces. Potential for future fishing permit system.
- Summer (May 15 – Sept 10) – current watercraft management system

# Alternative 3 (emphasizes river protection)

- Fall (Sept 11 – Oct 31)
  - 11PM – 4AM closure of developed access sites.
  - Decrease current levels of permitted 2006 USFS and DNR commercial use (guiding) by 25 % as businesses change.
  - Capping use at developed access sites based on current parking capacity of 500 spaces.

# Alternative 3 (emphasizes river protection)

## ■ Year-round

- No parking on roads adjacent to developed access sites
- Only USFS and DNR manage large wood navigation hazards

# Alternative 3 (emphasizes river protection)

## ■ Major Access Point Changes

- Gleasons Landing –replace boat slide only
- Lower Branch Bridge – no developed access, no camping
- Maple Leaf – move lower parking lot to top of bench, and limit to 12 vehicle capacity, close Taylor Road beyond re-located lot to public use, retain second lot with current 10 vehicle capacity, toilet, no camping, rehab shoreline and degraded trails.

# Alternative 4 (emphasizes recreation use)

- Winter (Nov – Feb) – plow Rec Fee access sites
- Spring (March 1 – May 14) – Limit use at developed access sites based on parking capacity (approximately 40 % more than the current 500 spaces).
- Summer (May 15 – Sept 10)
  - No permits required for watercraft use on Mon – Thurs (excluding holidays)
  - Authorize commercial watercraft permits below Indian Bridge.

# Alternative 4 (emphasizes recreation use)

- Fall (Sept 11 – Oct 31)
  - Access sites open 24 hours daily
  - Increase levels of permitted 2006 USFS and DNR commercial use (guiding) by 25 %.
  - Limit use at developed access sites based on parking capacity (approximately 40 % more than the current 500 spaces).

# Alternative 4 (emphasizes recreation use)

- Year-round

- River users manage navigation hazards within USFS – MDNR guidelines.

# Alternative 4 (emphasizes recreation use)

## ■ Major Access Point Changes

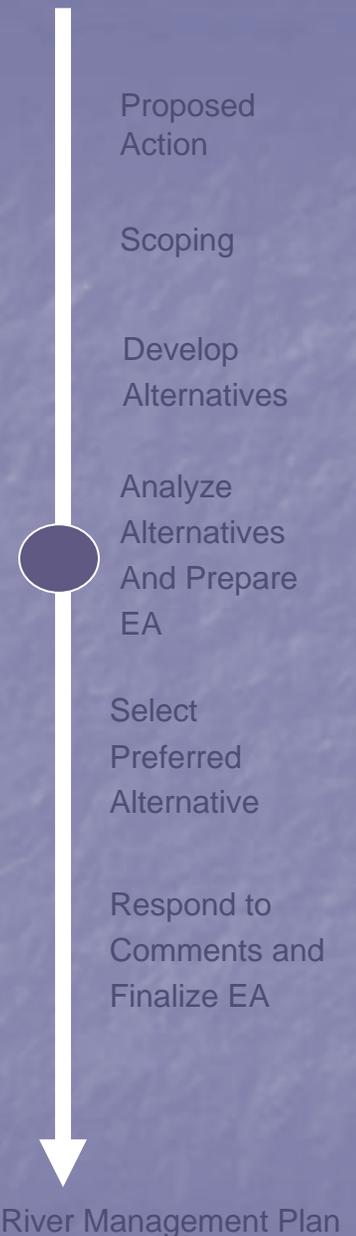
- Green Cottage - new fall/spring overflow parking (10 vehicles);
- Gleasons Landing – new fall/spring overflow parking (40 vehicles); replace boat slide with back-down launch.
- Rainbow Rapids - new fall/spring overflow parking (10 vehicles with trailers only);
- 40<sup>th</sup> Street – new 10-15 vehicle parking lot for walk-in access (1/4 mile)

# Alternative 4 (emphasizes recreation use)

- Lower Branch Bridge – boat access with parking for 10 vehicles plus trailers, toilet, no camping.
- Maple Leaf – develop one new and expand two existing parking areas for 80 total vehicles, toilet, no camping, rehab shoreline and degraded trails.
- Indian Bridge – raise bridge to accommodate watercraft (drift boats).

# Next Step - Prepare Environmental Assessment

- Finalize alternatives based on input.
- Prepare draft Environmental Assessment (Feb 1 target date).
  - Develop estimates of recreation capacity to sustain outstandingly remarkable values.
  - Evaluate environmental impacts of management alternatives.



# Questions?



# Comments and Feedback

- Email: [dtwalker@fs.fed.us](mailto:dtwalker@fs.fed.us)
- Mail: Les Russell, District Ranger  
650 Michigan Avenue  
Baldwin, MI 49304
- Telephone: (231) 745-4631