



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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MUSKEGON COUNTY EXPLORES ACQUISITION OF NUGENT SAND PROPERTY

Former sand mine in Norton Shores has 1,917' of Lake Michigan frontage, two lakes

Muskegon, MI – Muskegon County officials are considering a proposal to acquire the former Nugent Sand property in Norton Shores, Michigan, a tract of land along the Lake Michigan shoreline with approximately 377 acres of land and water, including two inland lakes. Nugent Sand ceased operations about two years ago and the land has been for sale since then.

The Land Conservancy of West Michigan and Shoreline Development Assistance are working with the County of Muskegon and the landowner's representative to develop a plan to acquire the property and develop it into a county recreation area. If the proposal moves forward, a combination of grant funding, foundation funding, and private donations will be sought to acquire the property. No general fund dollars will be used to purchase the property if it is acquired by Muskegon County. Officials hope to submit a Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) Trust Fund Grant to provide a portion of funding for the land acquisition.

The wooded property contains two lakes, 1,917 feet of Lake Michigan frontage, and a portion of the property sits on protected Lake Michigan critical dune. Total acreage is approximately 377 acres. The property is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, and is a frequent stop for resting waterfowl along the Mississippi Flyway, which encompasses the entire Great Lakes and the State of Michigan.

“This unique property – one of the largest remaining tracts of Lake Michigan frontage in the state of Michigan – presents Muskegon County with a unique opportunity to preserve outdoor recreational space for future generations,” said Mark Eisenbarth, Muskegon County Administrator. “A great deal of work remains to be done to bring this potential land acquisition to fruition, but we wanted to explore the idea and get the public's input on the future of this property.”

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Administrative Offices - County of Muskegon

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MUSKEGON COUNTY EXPLORES PROPERTY ACQUISITION – add one:

The process to acquire the Nugent Sand property and develop it into a recreational area could take up to two years, and Muskegon County officials will solicit community input and ideas on the potential acquisition and uses of the property at a public information session on Tuesday, February 11, at 7:00 p.m. at the Norton Shores Library, 705 Seminole Road in Norton Shores.

“If the county is fortunate enough to acquire the property, we would develop a master plan to add amenities that would provide residents and visitors a comfortable, educational experience in a critical dune area that is in close proximity to our county’s population centers,” Eisenbarth said.

Improvements could include trail development, directional signage, parking areas and accessible restrooms, accessible scenic overlooks, accessible kayak launches, fishing areas, and Lake Michigan or inland lake beach access. The lakes within the facility would be “quiet lakes” with no motorized boat traffic allowed, although kayaking, canoeing and stand-up paddle boarding would be available.

The Muskegon County Board of Commissioners will discuss the proposal at the Thursday, February 13 Community Development/Strategic Planning Committee meeting at 3:30 p.m. at the Hall of Justice building, 4th floor, 990 Terrace Street, Muskegon, MI 49442.

Following the public information session on February 11 and the Ways & Means Committee meeting on February 13, a required public hearing will be held on Tuesday, March 3 at 3:30 p.m. at the county’s Ways & Means Committee meeting at the County Building, 990 Terrace in Muskegon. The successful completion of that public hearing would pave the way for Muskegon County to pursue grant funding for property acquisition through the MDNR Trust Fund.

For more information on the project, please call the owner’s representative, The Cherette Group, at 616-842-6300.