

18 February 2023

To Our Pentwater Neighbors—

The **Directors of the NCBA Conservation Organization (CO)** would like to remind you of the upcoming Open Meeting scheduled for June 17th to discuss our community's concerns about the CO's ongoing responsibilities, the management of its land holdings, and its future relationship with the NCBA.

For those who missed our previous emails [we have attached the statement we issued on November 2](#) explaining the obligations and responsibilities of the CO, which was founded with community support in September 2011. We have also attached [the resolution passed by the CO Board of Directors on November 21](#), which set a tentative date for the open meeting and stated the CO's intention to hold off on any further maintenance or development of trails until it received community input at the public meeting.

We are aware that a great deal of misleading and inaccurate information has been spreading throughout our community. We want you to know that the **Board of the CO wishes to be as forthcoming as possible** and hopes to set the record straight on a number of these issues before the June meeting by:

- **Issuing a series of short emails** that address topics of concern and questions that have come to the board's attention,
- **Posting documentary materials on the NCBACO website**, www.pentwater.com/NCBACO, including the minutes of NCBA's annual meetings (which routinely carried reports on CO activities) and other correspondence, and
- **Continuing to monitor the comments and recommendations** received via ncbacoptw@gmail.com.

We believe these venues will enable us to answer your questions, as well as counter the misinformation that has been circulating.

As the first in our series of short emails, **we wish to refute the claim that the CO's founders kept the organization's legal obligation to make its future holdings accessible to residents of Michigan a secret**. This is simply untrue. When the creation of the CO was first proposed and discussed by the community, the NCBA trustees made it perfectly clear that, in exchange for the benefits as a tax-exempt and qualified charitable organization, the creation of a nonprofit, conservation organization required a two-fold commitment--

- to protect the natural character of our community's undeveloped forested dunes in perpetuity, and
- to make its conservation lands accessible to residents of Michigan for non-destructive activities, such as hiking, nature study, birdwatching, and snow-shoeing.

To get a fuller understanding of the issues considered at that time, **we urge you to read the attached** "[Special Notice Regarding North Central Beach Association Land Protection - July 2011](#)," which went out to all NCBA Members with the announcement for the annual

members meeting back in 2011. We invite those who would like more information to review the official records documenting the founding and initial organization of the CO in 2011-2012, which can now be found on our website.

Through the documentary record, you will come to understand **why and how the NCBACO was created**. You will also see that members of the NCBA community were fully informed of the issues and obligations. All were given several opportunities to ask questions, provide comments, and express their support for or opposition to the concept before it was voted on by the NCBA Board of Trustees.

These early records, as well as later ones which will be downloaded in coming weeks, clearly demonstrate several important things. Since its founding—

- **The CO has been up front about its record of acquisitions and the intention to make its land holdings accessible to Michigan residents** for non-destructive recreational and educational use.
- **The CO lands have been open to Michigan residents** and have offered many people, including those who own or rent property in our neighborhood, the opportunity to walk the woods, enjoy the natural setting, and observe the ecology of the forested dune environment.
- **The CO has provided regular updates to the NCBA trustees and members on its activities and challenges**, including the need to encourage donations of land, to raise funds for direct acquisitions, to verify property boundaries, and to mitigate environmental threats such as the invasive Japanese barberry and Hemlock Woolly Adelgid (HWA).

We urge you to visit the NCBACO web page and read these documents for yourself.

We hope this information will answer some of your questions and help us all prepare for an informed and meaningful dialogue when we meet in June. The next in our series of short emails will address the question, “Alternatives to a CO Trail – What are they?” Please keep connected, and feel free to send your comments and suggestions to the CO Board of Directors at ncbacoptw@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Chuck Totten, David Reynolds, Steve Pierce, Linda McClelland & Jeff Hoenle

The NCBA Conservation Organization was founded in 2011 for the purpose of acquiring land within Pentwater Beach Additions 1 and 2 for conservation in perpetuity as a nature preserve. It is chartered by the State of Michigan and organized as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization. In keeping with our state charter, these lands are open to the public for non-destructive use such as walking, bird watching and nature study. Donations can be mailed to P.O. Box 1043, Pentwater, MI 49949.