



M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route 2023 Corridor Management Plan Update



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DEDICATION

M-119 Heritage Route Committee 2002

Denise Simon, Friendship Township
Terry Franklin, Friendship Township
Diana Call, Readmond Township
Joe Engelhard, Readmond Township
Keith Lamkin, Readmond Township
Henry Singer, Cross Village Township
Naomi Singer, Cross Village Township
Frederick (Rob) Deane, Cross Village Township
Richard Cobb, Emmet County Lakeshore Association

The Original Management Plan for this route was developed through the commitment and work of this first committee along with the expertise and input provided by state and local agencies, partners and area non-profit groups.

We dedicate the current 2023 Management Plan Update to them.

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MISSION STATEMENT

Recognizing the unique value of M-119 and the area surrounding the roadway, the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan will strive to protect, preserve, and enhance the natural, scenic, and cultural character of the Heritage Route.



M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan does not attempt to address every issue or concern along the highway. This Plan update is a guide to protect and preserve the Tunnel of Trees, to achieve the vision of the communities, to provide local communities a voice in the management of the State highway, and to clarify the actions that are needed for protecting and preserving the intrinsic qualities.

M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee

The Committee is made up of appointed members from the four townships and the Emmet County Lakeshore Association. The chair and vice chair are appointed each year on a rotating basis between the Townships and the Association.

West Traverse Township

Carolyn Sandford
Joey Arbaugh

Friendship Township

Jane Newbury
Dale Scott

Readmond Township

Gerald Root
Larry Wallen
Joe Tomlinson

Cross Village Township

Laurelynn Harris
Naomi Singer
Sue Rentrop

Emmet County Lakeshore Association

Franz Neubrecht
Sue Rentrop

The Committee members work with the following Partners:

Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians
Emmet County Commissioners and the Planning, Zoning, and Building Department
Little Traverse Conservancy
Michigan Department of Transportation
Networks Northwest

The Committee works to assure the residents of Emmet County, that this Heritage Route will protect the "Tunnel of Trees" and to maintain its pastoral character. Committee meetings are held each year to implement the corridor management plan, address issues and concerns, and educate the adjacent townships, landowners, businesses, organizations, agencies, and citizens.

Photos provided by Paul Horgan Photography, Petoskey, MI

Chapter One: Introduction

I. Purpose of the Corridor Management Plan

The purpose of the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Management Plan is to provide an understanding of the designated route and the goals for the corridor. Due to the corridor's natural beauty and the community's commitment to its integrity it was designated as a Scenic Heritage Route.

II. Location

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route begins at the north city limits of Harbor Springs and heads north in West Traverse Township, Friendship Township, Readmond Township, and Cross Village Township ending at County Road 77/State Road. Other major roads that enter M-119 include Lake Street, Middle, Stutsmanville, and Robinson shown in Map 1. The location of the M-119 corridor is represented in Map 1 and Map 2.

III. Website

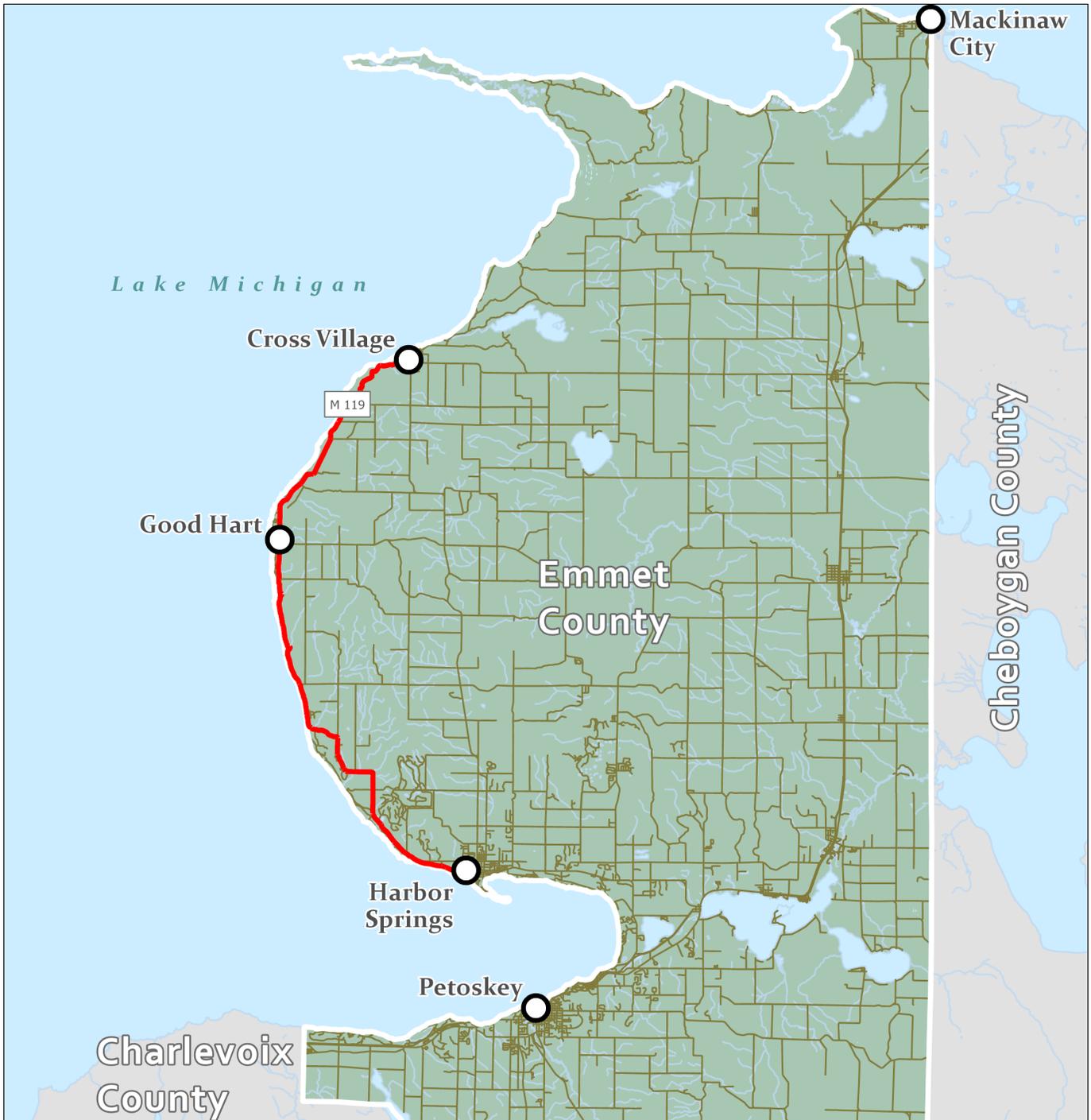
The M-119 Tunnel of Trees has a website that is currently being updated to reflect more accurate information and photos. The website is www.m119tunneloftrees.org.

Additional information for the corridor can be found at www.networksnorthwest.org.

Map 1 - M-119 Location



Map 2 - M-119 Location Map



Legend

 Villages / Cities	 Emmet County
 M-119 Corridor	 Water Bodies / Rivers / Streams
 Roads	



Chapter Two:

Accomplishments in the Past Five Years

I. 2022 Tree Health Assessment

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee requested an inventory and assessment of the trees for the upcoming 2023 Report. This tree inventory & health assessment is specific to trees located within the M-119 State Highway Right of Way (ROW) and does not include trees outside the ROW. The following report was submitted by Todd Neiss, North Region Resource Analyst, Michigan Department of Transportation.

Native Tree Species: Sugar Maple, Red Maple, American Beech, Eastern Hemlock, Ironwood, Red Oak, White Oak, Northern White Cedar, Red Pine, White Pine, Black Cherry, Basswood, Paper Birch, White Ash, American Elm, Balsam Fir, Quaking Aspen.

Non-Native Tree Species: Scotch Pine

OVERVIEW

The primary cover types consist of Oak/Maple, Northern Hardwood, Maple/Beech, Hemlock, and Hemlock/Cedar. The overall health of the trees is good for the area. Tree ages reflect a “climax community”, whereby most trees are at a mature age—with a small component of seedlings on the forest floor. There are mature long-lived species such as hemlock and white pine that are over 200 years old, with the average age of 60 years. The southern portion of the route has more homes with lawns that extend to the highway and the northern portion contains more of a natural landscape with the canopy of trees. Mature climax community trees are much more susceptible to disease and mortality than young trees. Due to the mature nature of the trees within the corridor—some have perished and should be removed. Some of the mature oak species along the corridor have dead limbs. This situation is known simply as oak decline. Oak decline is typically a slow acting disease—stemming from multiple biological and physical factors such as insects, drought, soil compaction, and just old age. Removing the dead limbs outside of oak wilt season is suggested.

Non-Native/Invasive Species

A stand of Scotch Pine is located about 3.5 miles south of Cross Village but are outside the right-of-way. If left unchecked, they could expand into the ROW, however, mowing will prevent any encroachment of Scotch Pine. Another invasive species to be wary of is Autumn Olive. Autumn Olive is an aggressive colonizing shrub, which when found should be removed—including the roots. If removal is problematic, it is recommended a licensed certified pesticide applicator treat the shrub stems with the appropriate herbicide after cutting them to 6 inches above ground surface.

Disease Concerns

The impacts of diseases are causing the canopy to become thinner, allowing slightly more sunlight to the surface, which promotes some seedling regeneration. Diseases also cause mortality resulting in an increased need for tree removals.

Beech Bark Disease

As mentioned in the 2017 assessment, Beech Bark disease is having an impact on the canopy in por-

tions of the highway especially between Cross Village and Good Hart. Evidence of beech bark disease was again observed in 2022. Beech bark disease is identified by the presence of "scale", which is a tiny insect like similar to aphids that feed on the sap of the beech tree. Scale is often white to grey in color. The scale infestation is a precursor to the fungus that causes beech bark disease and eventual death of the tree. The only effective method of control is using a specialized pesticide on healthy trees. Once started, pesticide applications must be continued until the disease is no longer present in the area.

Oak Wilt Disease

Oak trees are a major tree species along the entire corridor. Oak wilt is perhaps the biggest threat to the health of the trees in the Tunnel of Trees corridor. Fortunately, I did not witness any evidence of oak wilt during the 2022 assessment. Red oak is the dominant species with fewer white oaks in the area. Oak wilt is a fungus that can quickly kill the trees. The fungus can spread via root grafts, as well as by beetles that feed on the sap of wounded oak trees. The best defense against spreading oak wilt is to restrict all cutting or trimming of oaks between April 15th and July 15th, when various beetle species are active. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), Forest Health Unit has not verified oak wilt within the Tunnel of Trees area. This site provides a map, and current locations of verified oak wilt sites: <https://midnr.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=aa4075c218ad4b968f15f14f84b37387>.

Oak wilt is difficult to diagnose, and best determined by sending in small branch sample to an accredited University laboratory—such as Michigan State University.

Emerald Ash Borer

The Emerald Ash Borer has decimated the Ash tree component along the corridor. Fortunately, few ash are found within the forest, therefore the integrity of the Tunnel of Trees has not been significantly impacted by the decline of Ash trees.

Hemlock Woolly Adelgid

This small insect stresses the hemlock and if left unchecked overtime can kill the trees. At this time, no known Hemlock Woolly Adelgid has been identified in the corridor, however, the insect is moving North as our climate moderates. Annual monitoring for this pest should occur, and if found—appropriate pesticides applied by a licensed pesticide applicator can control the insect.

Replanting

When planting trees to replace others lost to damage or disease, it is best to choose a native species that will fit with the soils and hydrology at that specific location. Hardwood trees such as beech and ash can be replaced with maple, birch, or cherry. Conifers such as hemlock can be replaced with red pine, white pine, northern white cedar, or balsam fir.

II. MI Department of Transportation Adopt-a-Highway Program

- The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Committee participates in the Adopt-a-Highway Program and cleans up 4.5 miles of M-119. The Committee requested no signage recognition to decrease the number of signs in the Corridor.
- Coordinated with MDOT on pedestrian safety throughout the Good Hart, resulting in placement of signage areas.

III. Little Traverse Conservancy

- Five Mile Creek Preserve Addition – 6 acres, 310 feet
- Clarke Family Nature Preserve – 1.62 acres, 300 feet
- Seberon “Boo” Litzenburger Nature Preserve – 40 acres, 1256 feet

IV. Emmet County Scenic Resource Zoning

- Continued work with the Emmet County Planning and Zoning Staff on enforcement issues.

V. Private and Public Events Utilizing the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Corridor

- Worked extensively with the owner of the Zoo-de-Mac bicycling event that utilizes M-119 to improve the annual bicycle ride regarding safety, courtesy, facilities, etc.

VI. Educational Materials and Events M-119 Tunnel of Trees Guidebook

- The Guidebook was updated and is distributed to all new property owners along the Corridor by the County Planning and Zoning Department. Materials are available at the township halls along the corridor and upon request.

VII. Share the Road: Bike Etiquette and Common Sense for Travel along the M-119 Tunnel of Trees

- The brochure was updated and distributed to trail heads and local cycling shops.

VIII. Village Annual Parade and Cross Village Community Service

- Participated in distributing educational materials.

IX. Tree Diseases

- Provided update and condition of trees along the corridor.

X. Educational Community Symposium 2022

- The M-119 Scenic Heritage Route Fall Symposium was held on September 21st. See the flier on the next page for more details.



Wednesday
September 21, 2022
1:00pm-4:00pm

M-119 SCENIC HERITAGE ROUTE FALL SYMPOSIUM

1:00pm: Optional Field Trip at
Seberon "Boo" Litzenburger
Nature Preserve

2:30pm: M-119 Update at
Readmond Township Hall
(6034 Wormwood Lane, Harbor Springs):

- Land Protection Options
with Little Traverse Conservancy
- Tree Health with MDOT
- Emmet County Planning and Zoning

Refreshments & Treats Provided

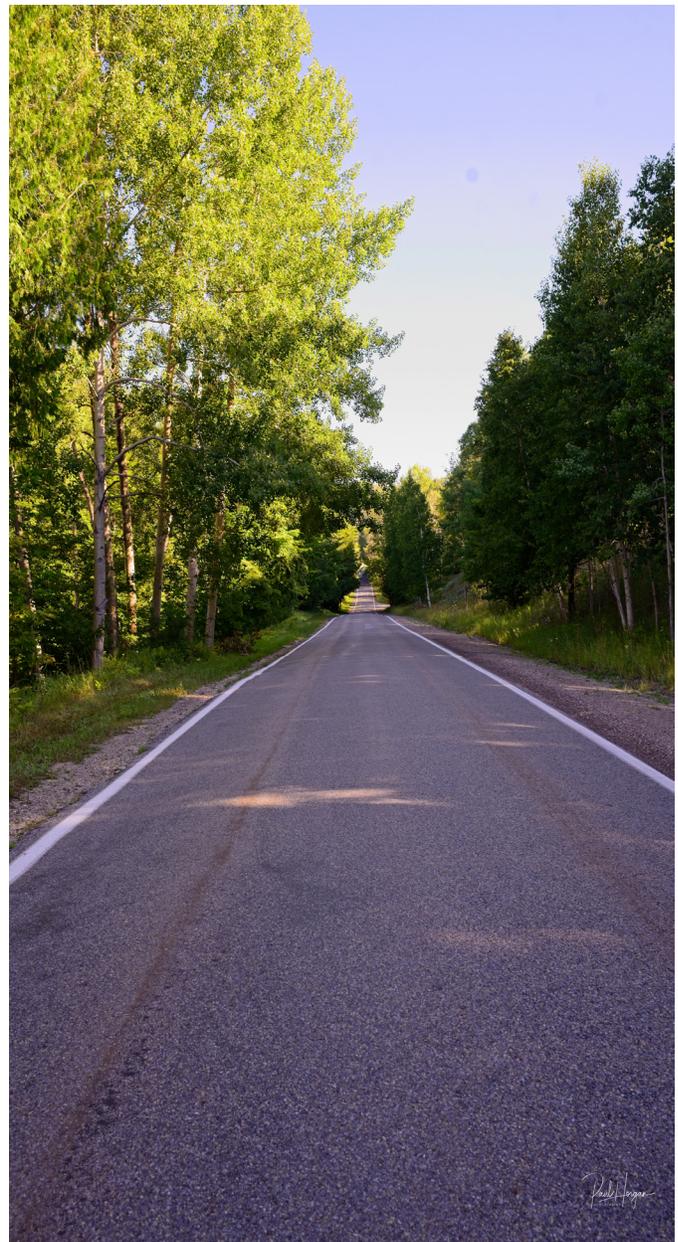
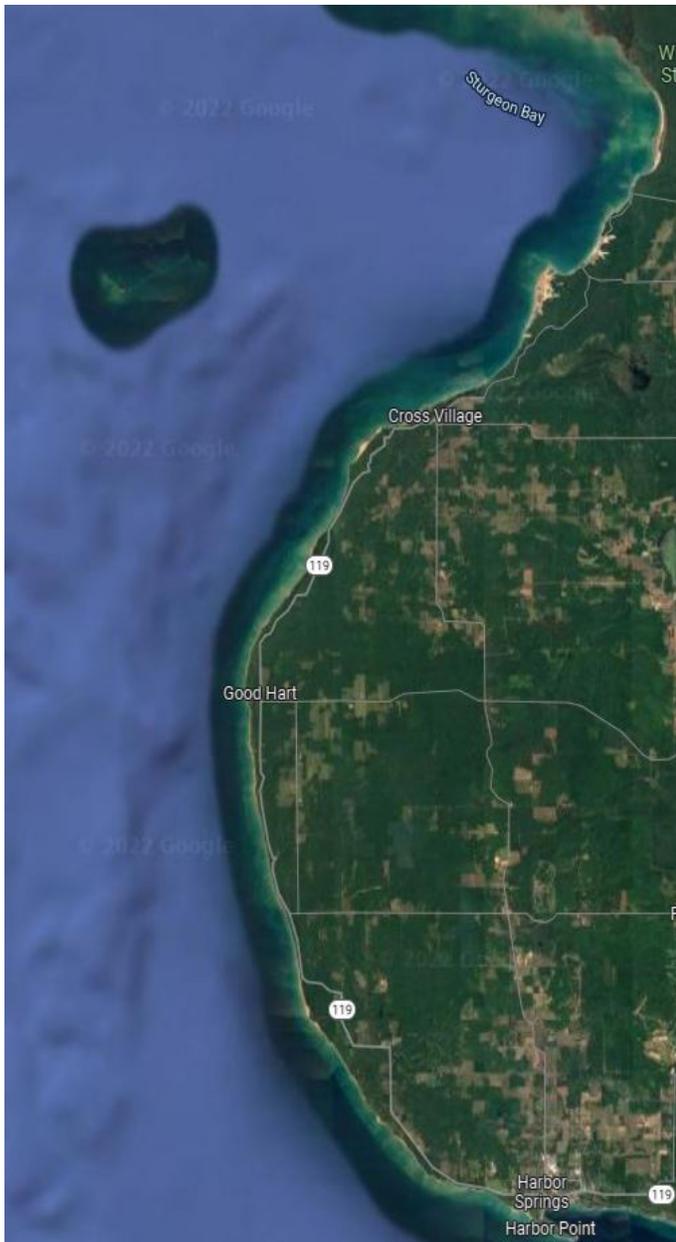
Registration:

caitlin@landtrust.org | 231.344.1010

Chapter Three: Inventory and Assessment

I. Delineation of the corridor

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route begins at the north city limit of Harbor Springs and commences at the intersection of Emmet County Road M-77 at Cross Village. The Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route section of M-119 is the only State highway without a center line.



No Centerline, no shoulders

Settlements

The four townships where the corridor is located include West Traverse, Friendship, Readmond, and Cross Village. There are no incorporated villages or towns. The unincorporated areas include Good Hart, Middle Village, and Cross Village.



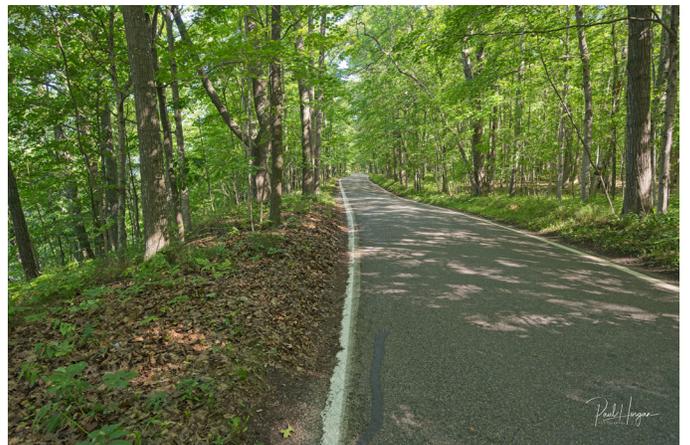
Water bodies

The main body of water is Lake Michigan that parallels the M-119 corridor. There are creeks and artesian springs in the area of the Thorne Swift Nature Preserve, Five Mile Creek, the drainage area from the Stutsmanville Bog, Horseshoe Bend, Devil's Elbow, and the Good Hart area to list a few.



Terrain

The M-119 highway corridor begins on a bluff overlooking Lake Michigan, goes inland over some rolling hills then curves around back to the bluff, crossing creeks and springs along the way.

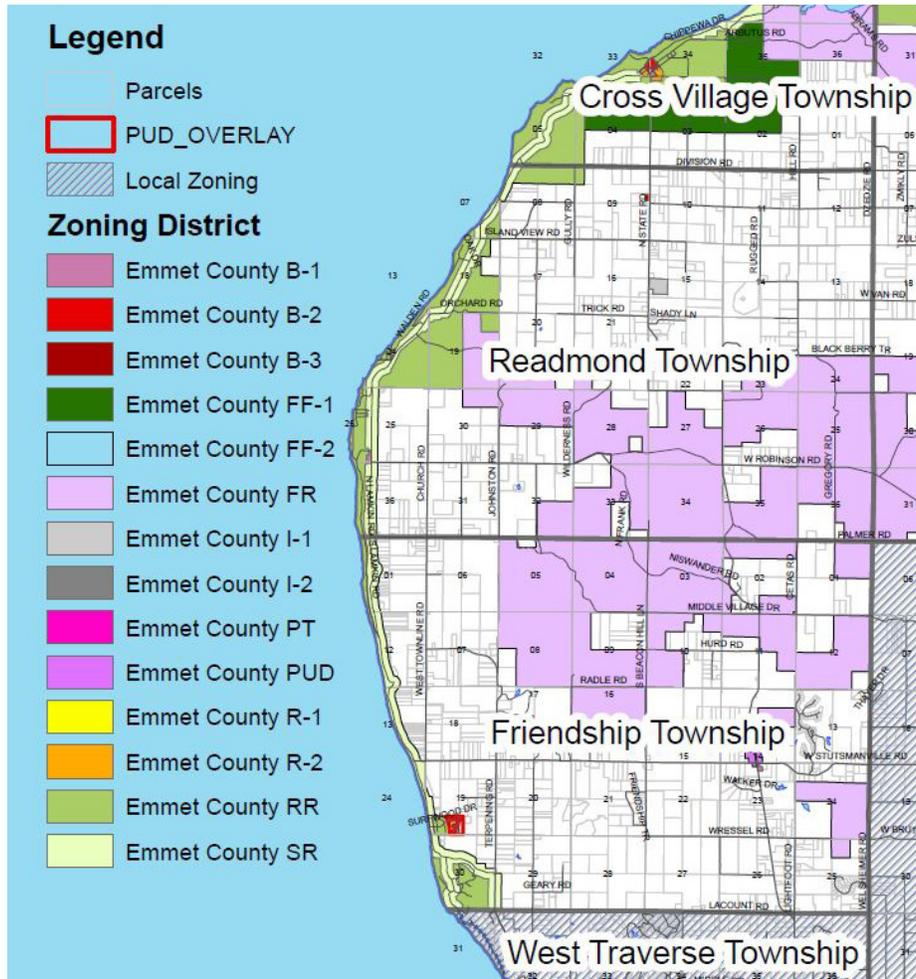


General Land Use:

The following zoning maps (Map 3 and Map 4) show that the general land use for the corridor is residential, conservation, and some small businesses.

There are several challenges on the road way including steep slopes, clear cutting, water drainage which are addressed through County planning.

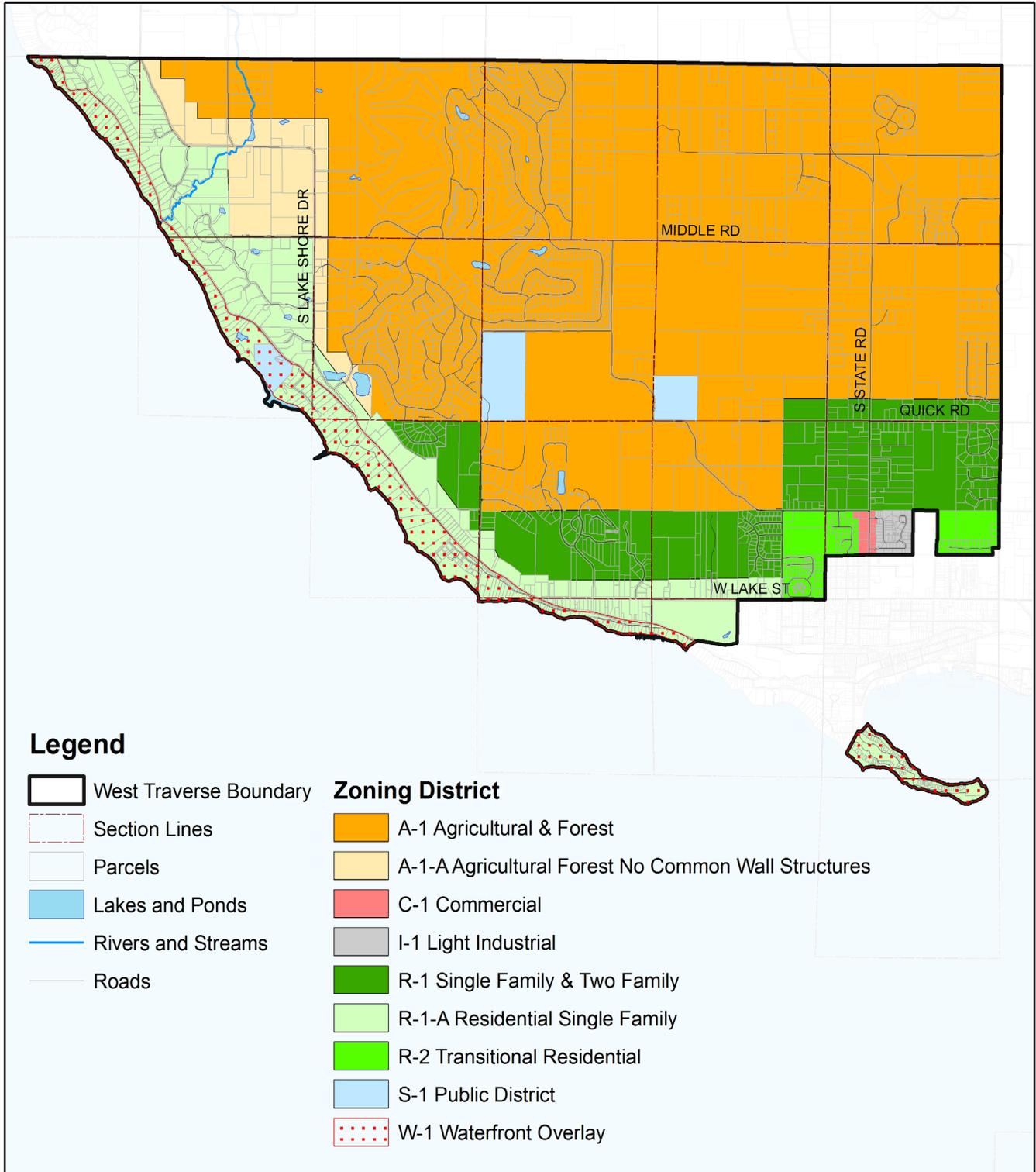
Map 3 - Emmet County Zoning Districts



Emmet County RR: As stated in the Emmet County Zoning Ordinance, the Recreational Residential District is designed to accommodate cottage and seasonal home developments. It is intended that the seasonal home areas be reasonably homogeneous, discouraging the mixing of recreation home areas with commercial resorts, business services and community services.

Emmet County SR: Because there exists in Emmet County numerous and varied resources that should be protected for their scenic values, environmental stability and character, the SR Scenic Resource District was established to protect scenic resources along rivers, highways and streets, lake shores and impounding waters.

Map 4 - West Traverse Zoning Map



1 inch = 4,000 feet

Emmet County
 Planning Zoning and
 Construction Resources
 3434 Harbor-Petoskey Rd, Suite E
 Harbor Springs, MI 49740
 231-348-1735
 pzcr@emmetcounty.org

This map is for general reference purposes only. It is not intended as a replacement, a substitute for, or a duplication of a survey or the official zoning map. Unintended errors and omissions may occur. If you find one, please contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 231-348-1735 or pzcr@emmetcounty.org.



Date Created: 8/15/2016

The M-119 Corridor continues into West Traverse Township which consists of different districts compared to Emmet County, the districts that apply to the corridor are the following and are represented in Map 4:

W-1 Waterfront Overlay District

The Waterfront Overlay District is enacted to implement a protection strategy for the West Traverse Township waterfront resource. The purpose and intent of the Waterfront Overlay District is based on the recognition that:

- The economic and environmental well-being of West Traverse Township is predicated on the preservation of its waterfront resource.
- Waterfront properties have unique physical, economic and social attributes.
- The existing viewsheds of waterfront property owners should be preserved.
- Many of the landscape features found in the waterfront district are susceptible to wind and wave erosion and should be protected from adverse human impact.
- Future land development and redevelopment should not be conducted at the expense of the West Traverse Township's natural features.
- The natural features of the waterfront district should be preserved and maintained for all West Traverse Township residents.

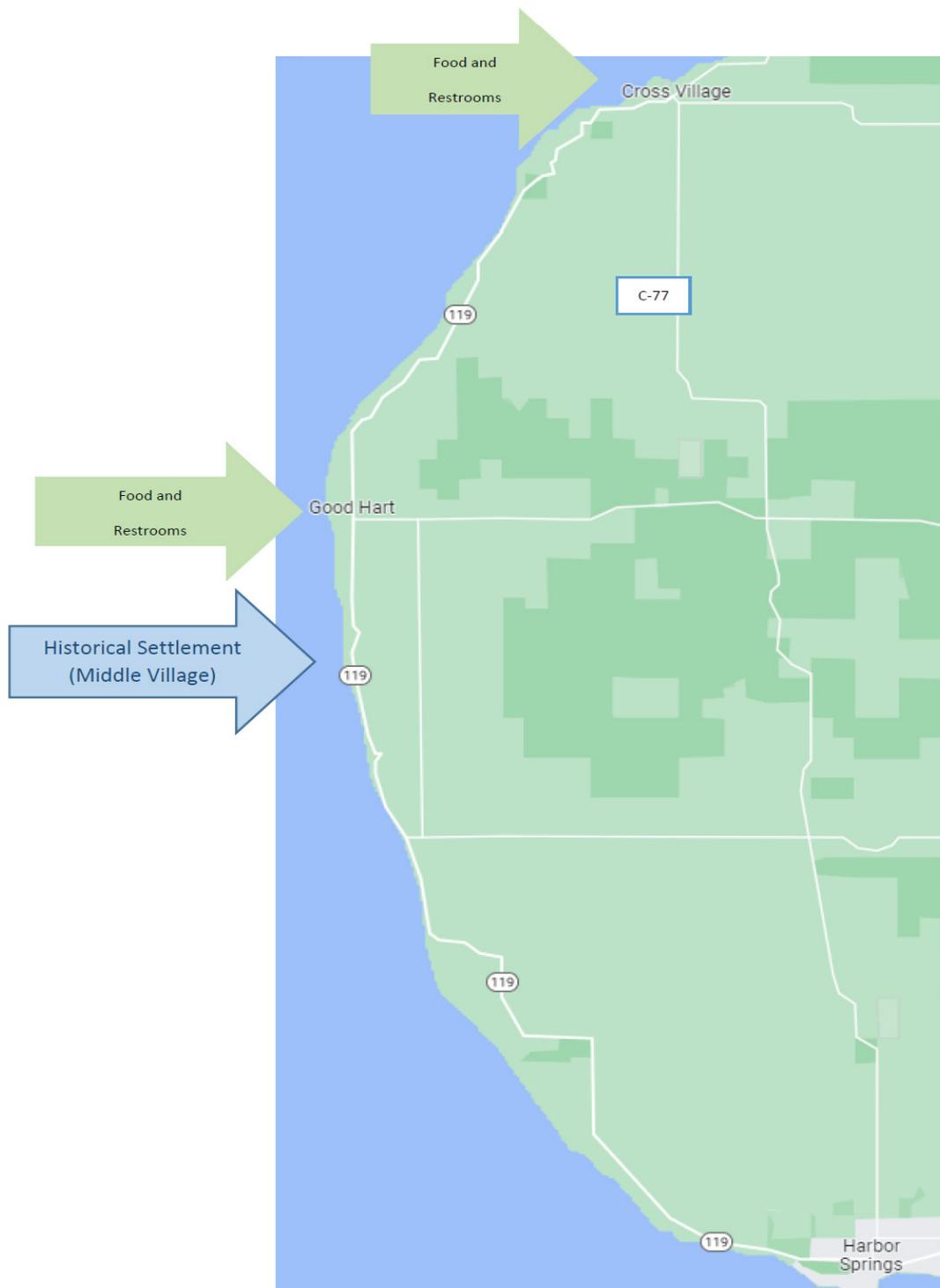
The R-1 (Single-Family and Two-Family District) and R-1-A (Single-Family) District are established to provide areas of general residential development. Desired development includes single family in R-1 and R-1-A.

The A-1 and A-1-A Districts are established in recognition of the areas of sparse development customarily occurring in agriculturally oriented communities. The areas which comprise the majority of these zoning districts contain the principal agricultural activities. It is not intended that high concentration of development be permitted in these districts except as authorized by this Ordinance.

II. Intrinsic Qualities Within the Corridor

- Enjoyment of the protection and preservation of the M-119 area
- Historical areas with interpretive signs
- Little Traverse Conservancy Preserves
- Traveling views of Lake Michigan
- Good Hart (Middle Village) and Cross Village areas
- Readmond Township Natural Area

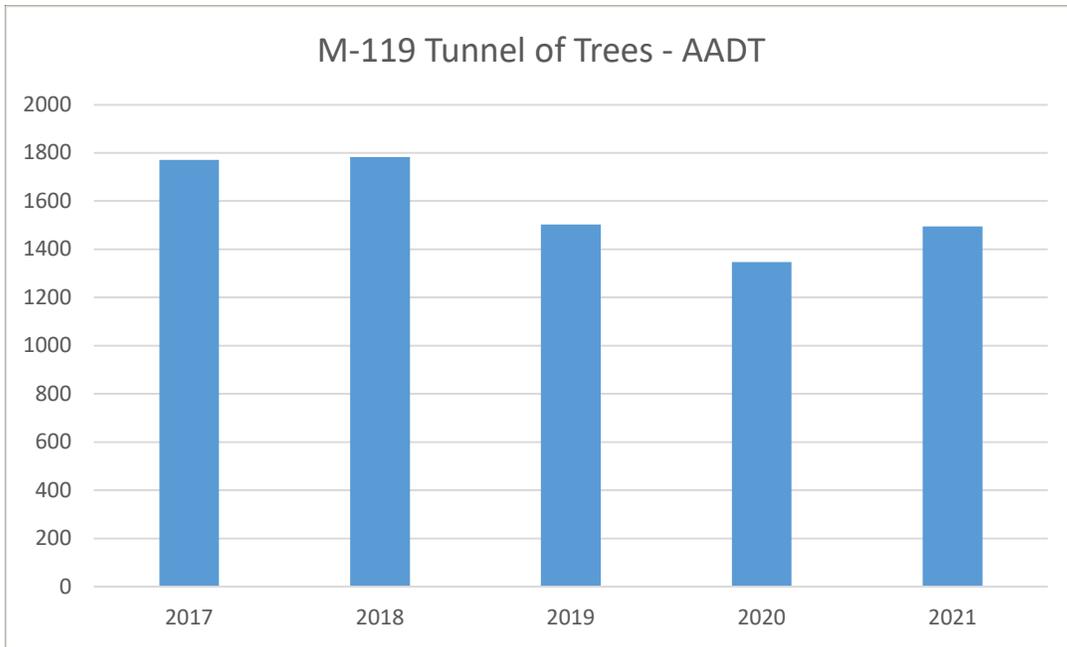
Map 5 - Food and Restroom Locations



III. Traffic and Safety Analysis

Traffic Counts

The Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts are the estimated mean daily traffic volume and are calculated by summing the Annual Average Days of the Week and dividing by seven.



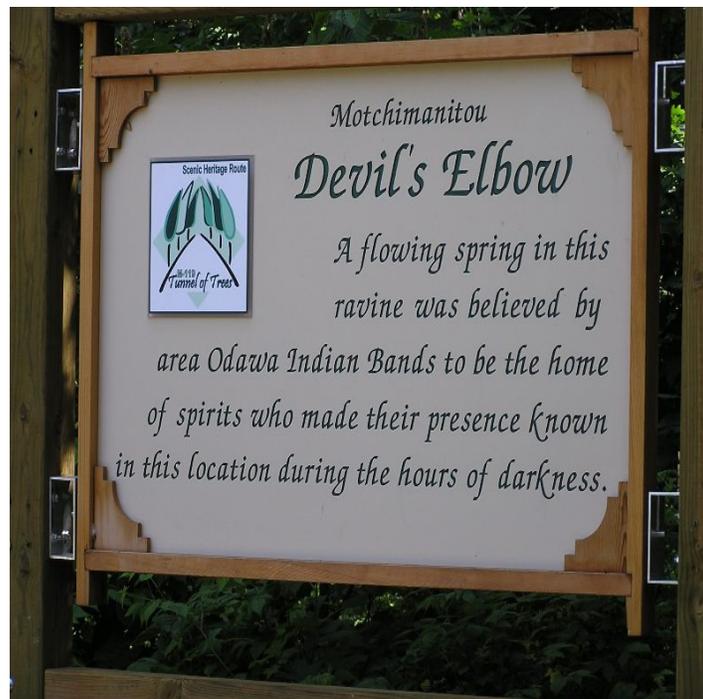
Year	Township	Crash	Crash with a Deer / Animal involved	Bicyclist	Total
2017	West Traverse	3 motor vehicles	3 motor vehicles and 1 motorcycle	-	7
	Friendship	1 motor vehicle	3 motor vehicles	-	4
	Readmond	2 motor vehicles	2 motor vehicles	-	4
	Cross Village	1 motor vehicles and 2 motorcycles	-	-	3
2018	West Traverse	2 motor vehicles	6 motor vehicles	-	8
	Friendship	1 motor vehicle	1 motor vehicle	-	2
	Readmond	1 motor vehicle	1 motor vehicle	-	2
	Cross Village	1 motor vehicle	-	-	1
2019	West Traverse	4 motor vehicles and 1 motorcycle	2 motor vehicles	-	7
	Friendship	1 motor vehicle	-	-	1
	Readmond	4 motor vehicles and 1 motorcycle	2 motor vehicles	-	7
	Cross Village	-	1 motor vehicle	-	1
2020	West Traverse	3 motor vehicles, 1 motorcycle	9 motor vehicles	1 involved bicyclist (rear ended)	14
	Friendship	1 motor vehicle	2 motor vehicles	-	3
	Readmond	-	1 motor vehicle	-	1
	Cross Village	-	-	-	0
2021	West Traverse	4 motor vehicles	3 motor vehicles	-	7
	Friendship	-	1 motor vehicle	-	1
	Readmond	2 motor vehicles	2 motor vehicles	-	4
	Cross Village	1 motor vehicle	-	-	1

Corridor Analysis

The corridor analysis includes physical, visual, and institutional surveys. This includes an inventory and analysis of the intrinsic qualities within the corridor and their context within the corridor. The six intrinsic qualities include Archaeological, Historical, Cultural, Natural, Recreational and Scenic.

Historical/Cultural

The following signs provide details on the historical and cultural aspects of the corridor.





Natural

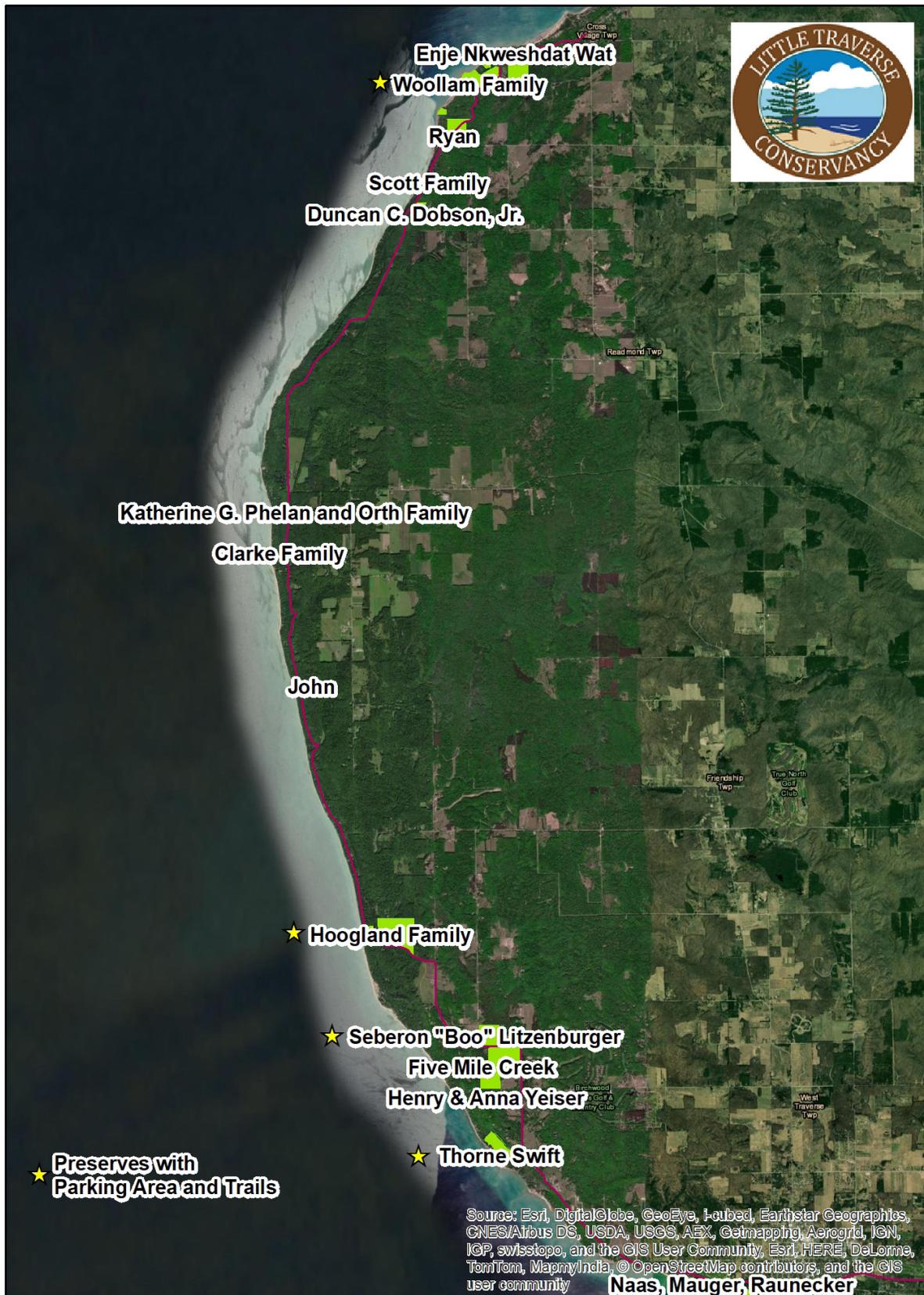
The Little Traverse Conservancy have many preserves along the M-119 corridor. For more information regarding the Little Traverse Conservancy, visit there website: www.landtrust.org.

See Map 6 for the Little Traverse Conservancy Preserves on the following page.

The following preserves along the corridor have parking areas and trails:

- Naas, Mauger, Raunecker Nature Preserve
- Thorne Swift Nature Preserve
- Seberon "Boo" Litzenburger Nature Preserve
- Hoogland Family Nature Preserve
- Woollam Family Nature Preserve

Map 6 - Little Traverse Conservancy Preserve Locations



Chapter Four:

Management Strategy

I. General Goals, Objectives and Action Goals

- 1** To promote protection and preservation of the “Tunnel of Trees” corridor
- 2** To assess existing community plans and regulations to ensure effective implementation of the goals and projects listed in the corridor management plan
- 3** To promote enhancement projects restoring character and showing the history of the Heritage Route
- 4** To unite the linear community through Heritage Route management

Objective 1: Promote Preservation and Conservation of the Tunnel of Trees for Balanced Growth and Development

Preserving the Tunnel of Trees is one of the high priorities of local citizens and property owners along the M-119 Corridor. Future land use along the corridor continues to be influenced by a variety of factors: individual landowner decisions, regulations administered by Emmet County and West Traverse Township, State legislation and regulations, the state of the economy, land values, and pressures resulting from changing demographics, recreational, and travel patterns. Land use encompasses a variety of subjects ranging from site-specific such as signage or tree clearing, general concerns about density and open space preservation, and current regulations that may not sufficiently protect the natural features or characteristics.

Action Steps

- Voluntary monitoring and providing guidelines for future redevelopment and new development. The Townships need to continue planning for any future development and/or redevelopment that complements the existing character of the Heritage Route corridor such as supporting development that is consistent with the Emmet County Master Plan and the West Traverse Township Master Plan.
- Support promotion and enforcement of existing regulations. Enforcement of existing regulations is critical to maintain the Tunnel of Trees and the community character of the Corridor. Property owners and the Townships should be encouraged to take a proactive role in the preservation and protection of the Corridor through the Emmet County’s Scenic Resource (SR) zoning district designation, soil erosion and sedimentation, etc.
- Maintain the Tunnel of Trees by providing guidelines for land use activities. Recommended guidelines should be promoted to ensure that the Tunnel of Trees, community character, and environmental quality are maintained. Inform landowners about the negative environmental impacts of tree clearing and the impacts to the aesthetic values. Continue to distribute the Guidebook and promote the preservation and regeneration of the trees, selective tree trimming for views, erosion control, signage, etc. Monitor present and potential tree diseases – educate the property owners and public.

- Promote a variety of methods for conservation and protection of land along the corridor. In order to preserve the unique character of the M-119 corridor it will be necessary to identify projects that preserve and protect land along the Corridor. Work with the Little Traverse Conservancy, Emmet County, the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Emmet County Lakeshore Association, and Scenic Michigan on conservation easements, land acquisition/donation for nature preserves and parks, promotion of greenbelts and buffers best management practices, regulatory measures such as zoning, and site plan reviews.
- Develop and Expand Partnerships. Continue to coordinate with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Emmet County, the Townships, the Little Traverse Conservancy, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, Emmet County Lakeshore Association, businesses, and landowners along the Corridor.
- Identify and utilize sources of funding for preservation and conservation of the Tunnel of Trees.

Objective 2: Promote Wise Land Use Development

Action Steps

- The Committee and their Townships and the Emmet County Lakeshore Association should continue to support the Emmet County Steep Slope Ordinance and any efforts to make it more effective through public education and interagency communications. Residents along the M-119 corridor have continued to express concern regarding development on steep slopes on the Lake Michigan coastline. The steep slope ordinance works to protect the unique geology, and lakeside bluff, buildings, and the highway. Make the information available to landowners along the Heritage Route corridor.
- Review M-119 corridor local land use plans and coordinate with MDOT. Encourage the Townships to review and compare the Heritage Route goals and objectives with existing land use plans such as the Emmet County and West Traverse Township Master and Future Land Use Plans, zoning ordinances, and parks and recreation plans. These documents may express similar intentions to protect or preserve particular scenic qualities, natural features, or landscape aesthetics.
- Educate landowners, realtors, developers, and those conducting land transactions about Best Management Practices (BMPs). Best Management Practices are land use management actions that reduce the impact on the environment. They include many techniques that help minimize stormwater runoff, soil erosion, and sedimentation on the highway, driveways, yards and water resources, and stabilizes soils. Identify other environmental effects and recommend actions to alleviate impact on the corridor.
- Continue to share observations regarding erosion issues with MDOT and Emmet County Planning and Zoning Department staff. Continue to provide communication with County staff regarding citizen concerns along the corridor.

Objective 3: Prevent Intrusions to the Scenic Character

Intrusions to the scenic character include any built structure, landscape elements such as lighting, fencing, signage, and utilities that contrast with the scenic and natural character of the corridor.

Action Steps

- Promote signage guidelines that preserve the Tunnel of Trees character and promote the use of natural or natural looking materials.
- Signage, both temporary and permanent, continues to be a threat to the character. Actions should be considered that result in fewer signs and signage that blends with the natural environment. There are both regulatory requirements which include MDOT and Emmet County, and non-regulatory ways to deal with signage. The Emmet County Zoning Ordinance regulates signage throughout the County and infers an intention to promote natural materials, it does not require them to be used. Promote the use of the MI Heritage Routes Signage Strategy that lays out the type and size that is appropriate for the scenic, historic, cultural and natural qualities of the Tunnel of Trees. Continue to work with MDOT, Emmet County Planning and Zoning Department staff, and West Traverse Township on permitting regulations.
- Encourage Dark Skies/light pollution management policies and practices for outdoor lighting. Dark Skies lighting improves visibility, safety, security and energy conservation. The dark skies recommendations are included in the Heritage Route Guidebook and used as an educational tool for property owners. Also, post the information on the Heritage Route's website.
- Promote underground utilities. Educate the landowners and developers about the value of placing utilities underground to protect the viewshed.
- Focus on communication. Utilize all available methods for enhancing communications on preventing intrusions on the scenic character. Update written materials and make them available on the public website, www.m119tunneloftrees.org.

Objective 4: Balancing Roadside Safety with Aesthetics

Safety is of primary importance along the Corridor. Speed and road design both influence the safety of the motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. For the protection of the Tunnel of Trees, the highway should not be widened, straightened, shoulders added, the speed limit changed, or changes to the physical appearance in any way.

Action Steps

- Communicate regularly with the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT). As a designated Scenic Byways, M-119 qualifies for a number of special considerations including that any MDOT highway project should balance safety, aesthetics and cost effectiveness. The local communities should partner with MDOT to determine effective ways to solve safety challenges.
- Encourage community involvement in promoting responsible road maintenance and development along the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route corridor. Support routine road maintenance for public safety. Regarding runoff of sand and gravel onto the highway, work with Emmet County's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control staff regarding control measures. Suggest additional maintenance such as sweeping and/or vacuuming by entities that will be utilizing the highway for events.

- Continue to participate in the MDOT Adopt-a-Highway Program. The Adopt-a-Highway Program is designed to help keep the State’s highway roadsides clean and attractive. Participants adopt both sides of a section of State highway. The Committee is responsible for 4.5 miles of M-119 for trash clean pickup three times per year with no sign recognition to reduce the number of signs on the Heritage Route.
- Promote the enforcement of existing regulations. For the protection of community safety, character and aesthetics, encourage enforcement of existing regulations such as speed limit, bicycles sharing the road, noise, and signs. Identify areas of concern and report appropriately including illegal parking and other detriments to steep slopes on the corridor along M-119.
- Support access Management rules. Promote that Emmet County, West Traverse Township, Friendship Township, Readmond Township, and Cross Village Township work with MDOT on any new development or redevelopment with regards to access management (entrances and exits to all developments and driveway cuts).

Objective 5: Promote Appropriate Use of the Corridor and Alternative Routes

The highway has many curves, no paved shoulders, no center line and the Tunnel of Trees is a road less traveled in the off-tourist season which are characteristics that the local communities would like to continue. The Heritage Route Committee should continue to focus on promoting the appropriate use of the highway.

Action Steps

- Support ongoing review of traffic patterns. The Committee will review the most recent traffic counts and crash data available. Update the M-119 Heritage Route brochures with information on the unsuitability for large and/or wide vehicles and through traffic, and make them available at local businesses, museums, and chambers of commerce, and posted on the Heritage Route website.
- Continue to support the use of directional signs that promote County Road 77 (C-77)/State Road as an alternative route. Traffic data does indicate that many local travelers already utilize C-77. Continue to encourage the use of County Road 77/State Road to reach destinations north of Harbor Springs by large vehicles such as motor homes, trucks, tractor-trailers, logging trucks, tour buses/motor coaches, and travelers going directly to the Cross Village area. Continue to provide this information in the Heritage Route brochures and website
- Event owners, businesses, townships, organizations, agencies, and citizens should keep the Heritage Route Committee up to date on any planned events or projects. Work with MDOT, the Emmet County Road Commission, the Emmet County Sheriff’s Department, and the Michigan State Police.

Objective 6. Education

A major objective to implement the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan is providing educational materials and activities.

Action Steps

- Research and provide educational resources for the Heritage Route Committee to distribute to the appropriate entities for the protection of the Tunnel of Trees.
- Develop and distribute educational resources for Committee members, Emmet County staff, township boards and halls, landowners, and at local events.
- Keep the website up to date with educational materials.
- Provide safety information to the users of the Heritage Route which includes events.
- Schedule and host Educational Summits with topic speakers as needed.
- Identify potential Historical Markers/Signs sites. Continue maintenance of the historic marker signs.



II. Management Measures

Proposed Project	Potential Partners
<i>Identification and protection of priority sites; identify potential funding opportunities. Potential Funding: Little Traverse Conservancy, American Farmland Trust, foundations, private donors, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indian.</i>	Townships, Emmet County Lakeshore Association, Emmet County, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Little Traverse Conservancy, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council
<i>Continue to work with the Little Traverse Conservancy to encourage protection of land through purchase, conservation easements, purchase of development rights, transfer of development rights.</i>	Little Traverse Conservancy
<i>Provide guidelines for future new development and redevelopment to maintain the Tunnel of Trees.</i>	Townships, Emmet County
<i>Work with Emmet County and the Townships regarding the Scenic Resource zoning district and the Emmet County Steep Slope Ordinance.</i>	Emmet County Planning and Zoning
<i>Continue to educate corridor property owners on tree management such as tree cutting, tree trimming; tree disease, steep slope protection; protecting wildlife habitats; invasive species; use of native vegetation.</i>	Emmet County Planning, Emmet Conservation District, Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Little Traverse Conservancy, Tip of the Mitt Watershed Council, MI Department of Natural Resources, MI Department of Environmental Quality, realtors, developers, landscapers
<i>Complete a tree health assessment as needed.</i>	MDOT
<i>Continue to promote signage guidelines (Michigan Heritage Route Signage Strategy) - type, purpose, size and placement location, and permitting</i>	Emmet County, West Traverse Township, MDOT
<i>Support and promote outdoor lighting standards (dark skies/night sky viewing). Post on the Heritage Route Website</i>	Emmet County Planning Commission, West Traverse Township Planning Commission, developers, and landowners
<i>Monitor Use of Highway- size of bicycle and other events, weight and speed of trucks, size of RV's, appropriate speed; noise concerns such as motorcycles.</i>	Emmet County and Public Safety
<i>Continue to participate in MDOT's Adopt-a- Highway Program.</i>	MDOT
<i>Review, update, distribute, and post on the website educational materials.</i>	Emmet County, Townships, Emmet County Lakeshore Association, chambers of commerce, museums, etc.
<i>Provide Maintenance of historical markers and develop a maintenance strategy.</i>	Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Harbor Springs Historical Society, Townships
<i>Participate in local events with educational displays and materials.</i>	Cross Village Community Services
<i>Maintain the M-119 website and update as needed</i>	Networks Northwest
<i>Utilize various forms of communication to increase community awareness and to thank those involved in the continued efforts to maintain the beauty, health, and safety of M- 119 (website, newspapers, radio, etc.)</i>	Networks Northwest
<i>Schedule an educational summit as needed</i>	LTC, Emmet County and Partners

III. Public Outreach and Engagement

- Committee meetings
- Committee members report to their local governments and the non-governmental organizations
- Partners are kept up to date through meeting notices, provided updates on any activities on the Heritage Route
- Public educational symposium: media release, flyers distributed, word of mouth
- Participation in community events and activities: booth/table with educational materials

IV. Financial Plan

The M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route Committee will continue to organize and prioritize proposed projects each year with regards to funding opportunities. A budget will be established each fiscal year. Listed below are funding opportunities for the Heritage Route Committee, the communities, and partners:

- Federal Highways Administration State Planning and Research funds for educational materials
- Michigan Department of Transportation: Transportation Alternative Program
- Michigan Department of Environmental Quality Coastal Management Program for project planning
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund for land acquisition
- Public and Private Foundations
- Local Utility Foundations
- Private donations
- Networks Northwest

Appendix
M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route
Management Plan

M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route History and Summary

The initiative to protect and preserve the M-119 corridor originated in 1936. Mrs. C. F. (Alice) Irwin, an early preservationist and naturalist living in Harbor Springs was able, via her state-wide newspaper column, to initiate a grassroots effort to protect and preserve the corridor. At that time several hundred people met to consider protecting the corridor as opposed to other plans being entertained that would have significantly modified the route to accommodate growing usage. Mrs. Irwin successfully petitioned the State legislature to protect and preserve the road in its natural state. Based on a desire to control soil erosion and preserve the natural beauty the preservationists carried the day.

The protection and designation as a Michigan Scenic Heritage Route was championed by the Emmet County Lakeshore Association (ECLA) with the full support of Emmet County Planning, Emmet County Commissioners, Little Traverse Conservancy, Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians, and the community at large. That movement continues to the present day.

The following is a timeline of events from 1964 on that continue to accomplish the original goal:

December 1964: Emmet County Road Commission Scenic Route Study

Summer 1972: Emmet County Lakeshore Association (ECLA) formed by like-minded property owners to protect and preserve the corridor

July 1990: the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) completes an Origin and Destination Study

Summer 1990: Preservation discussions begin

December 1990: MDOT contracts with the Little Traverse Conservancy to conduct a scenic inventory of the route

Michigan Scenic Heritage Highway Public Act 69 of 1993

February 1993 MDOT Traffic Accident History Study is conveyed to the Little Traverse Conservancy

March 1993: First informal public meeting held

April 1993: MDOT Base Plots conveyed to the Little Traverse Conservancy

May 1993: Property acquisition information request from Little Traverse Conservancy

September 1993: Review of Scenic Corridor Study Draft begins

November 1993: ECLA passes unanimous resolution supporting the Heritage Route Designation

November 1993: County Commissioner and long time 'activist' ECLA president, Paul Lenahan requests State Attorney General's opinion on liability issue to the Townships

November 1993: Public comments on Scenic Corridor Study Draft

January 1994: Public hearing on Heritage Route guidelines

February 1994: The Little Traverse Conservancy's M-119 Scenic Corridor Study is submitted to MDOT

February 1994: Final M-119 Scenic Corridor Study is sent to interested parties

December 1994: ECLA survey indicates 95% of their membership supports a Heritage Route Designation

February 1996: Public meeting at Little Traverse Township Hall to discuss Heritage Route Designation

May 1996: Discussion and debate on the designation of M-119 continues through September 1996

September 1996: Meeting at West Traverse Township Hall where MDOT publicly proposes the Designation of M-119 as a Scenic Heritage Route

September 1997: Pete Hanses becomes the MDOT Heritage Route program director

June 1998: MDOT applies for a National Scenic Byways Grant to develop the M-119 Management Plan

January 1999: The National Scenic Byways Grant is awarded to MDOT

February 1999: The M-119 designation discussions resume

March 1999: MDOT requests that the Northwest Michigan Council of Governments (NWMCOG) develop Corridor Management Plan

Summer 1999: Discussions with Emmet County Planning Department and Emmet County Board of Commissioners to proceed with developing the Management Plan for M-119

October 1999: MDOT contracts with the NWMCOG to develop the Management Plan

Fall/Winter 1999-2000: NWMCOG begins preliminary discussions with the Townships

March 2000: Draft Outline for the contents of the Management Plan

Spring 2000: Meetings with the Townships and the City of Harbor Springs to solicit input on the Management Plan Outline

Spring 2000: Formation of a M-119 Scenic Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan Committee which is an advisory committee comprised of three delegates from each Township: Friendship, Readmond, Cross Village; three delegates from ECLA; in partnership with the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, MDOT, and Emmet County Planning and County Commissioners

Summer 2000: Scheduled monthly meetings for the drafting of the Management Plan through the winter of 2001

January 2002: Formal adoption of M-119 Heritage Route Management Plan

June 28, 2003: Dedication of the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route at the Cross Village Township Hall

Summer 2003: Rollover of the Management Plan Committee to an Implementation Committee

Summer 2004: Historical Signs developed and funded by the Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians, Friendship Township, Readmond Township, Cross Village Township, Petoskey Harbor Springs Community Foundation; unveiling Ceremony at Devil's Elbow

Summer 2006: Community Preference Survey sent to households and businesses in the Heritage Route corridor

2007: Tree Species identification and Health assessment

Summer 2007: Township Resolutions in support of Survey Results and Committee Actions

July 2007: Inventory, health, and recommendations of the Tree Species

Fall 2007: West Traverse Township becomes a member of the Heritage Route Committee with three appointees

September 2008: Statewide Heritage Highway Conference Traverse City

Spring 2009: Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan five-year Update

2010: Tree Health Assessment Update

2011: Tunnel of Trees Aerial Inventory

Summer 2013: Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan five-year Update

2016: New interpretive, historical sign dedicated at Five Mile Creek

2017: Tree Health Assessment Update

2017 September: Educational Symposium

2018: Heritage Route Corridor Management Plan five-year Update

Other Committee Actions:

- Regular Committee meetings open to the public and implementation of projects continue
- Developed a "Guidebook" for property owners, townships, county, businesses, etc. and mailed copies to all property owners on the Heritage Route; updated
- Developed a "Share the Road: Bike Etiquette and Common Sense for Travel along the M-119 Tunnel of Trees"; updated
- Participate in the Good Hart Fair each year with a table of educational materials

In essence: Many years of citizen-volunteer efforts and persistence!

- Initial drive began in 1936
- More recent efforts beginning in 1964
- ECLA was created in 1972 for the purpose of corridor protection and preservation
- Dedication of the M-119 Tunnel of Trees Scenic Heritage Route June 28, 2003
- Unveiling of Historical Signs 2004
- Hosted Educational events on topics

This Heritage Route would not exist without the dedication and commitment over the years of the M-119 Scenic Heritage Route Committee and the expertise and input provided by state and local agencies, non-profit organizations, landowners, and individual citizens.