



# Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission

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## Commissioners

Zygmunt Dworzecki,  
Chairman  
Jason Davis,  
Vice Chairman  
Lana Martell,  
Secretary  
Kris McArdle,  
Treasurer  
Mike Zwerk  
Richard Peter  
Gerald Peterson  
Sarah Pistro  
Tom Striffler  
Lisa Valentine  
Angie Daniels,  
Office Secretary

## 2008 WORKING ACTION PLAN

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### Mission Statement

*The mission of the Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission is to provide and coordinate year-round recreational opportunities for people of all abilities, and to meet the needs of area residents and regional visitors while protecting wildlife and nature.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### ***Statement of Purpose***

The Tuscola County Board of Commissioners revitalized the Parks & Recreation Commission in 2007 in order to maintain, enhance and promote the parks and recreational resources within the county.

The purpose of the Parks & Recreation Commission is to:

1. Represent the people and Board of Commissioners of Tuscola County as active supporters of parks and recreational resources in the county,
2. Support all Tuscola County communities with their parks and recreational resources by sharing 'past and best' practices, facilitating grant requests, etc.,
3. Create a central resource/inventory of the parks and recreational resources in the county,
4. Conserve and preserve the county's natural resources, and coordinate and facilitate promotion of all parks and recreational resources in the county.

### ***Mission Statement***

The mission of the Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission is to provide and coordinate year-round recreational opportunities for people of all abilities, and to meet the needs of area residents and regional visitors while protecting wildlife and nature.

### ***Vision Statement***

The vision of the Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission is to lead and assist in the development and revitalization of community and natural resources which enhance the quality of parks and recreation for current and future generations.

### ***Keys to Success***

- Collaboration
- Teamwork
- Volunteerism
- Sharing of resources
- Leadership for public good
- Community-oriented
- Partnerships

### ***Objectives and Goals***

The key objective for the Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission is to unify the various parks and recreation resources in the county, establish joint ventures with municipal governing bodies, and collaborate with adjoining County governments for joint ventures and planning opportunities.

The following is designed to be used as a guide for Tuscola County's administrators, the Parks and Recreation Commission, and stakeholder groups as they work together to fulfill the parks and recreation goals as developed.

**GOAL 1: Establish stable and secure funding to improve and maintain county parks and recreation programs.**

- Fundraising activities- Work with existing volunteer organizations to increase membership and enthusiasm.
- Maximize volunteers' personal resources such as time and energy, monetary donations, real property, and physical and intellectual talents.
- County support- Request financial assistance from county administrators and residents.
- Local, state, and federal grants- Seek and apply for funding opportunities designated for specific projects and programs.

**GOAL 2: Improve accessibility by providing barrier-free/universal access to existing and future facilities.**

- Assessment- After thorough assessment of existing facilities, determine if improvements or additions are needed. Research the specifics of cost, time, etc. and develop a project priority list for each park.
- Planning- Incorporate barrier-free/universal design features in future developments.

**GOAL 3: Preserve and protect valuable water and land resources.**

- Acquire land- Seek opportunities to acquire land for the purpose of preservation.
- Develop policies- Through public input it is noted that the preservation and enjoyment of wildlife in its natural state is highly desired. Establish park preservation and protection policies and encourage responsible use through example. Encourage the county to adopt land use policies that enhance the protection of natural features, land, and water quality.
- Utilize educational opportunities- Develop and implement educational programs designed to promote land conservancy for the protection of high quality natural areas in the county.
- Support ongoing regional efforts- Support the efforts of the East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission (ECMPDRC) and Saginaw Bay Watershed Initiative (Saginaw Bay WIN) projects to protect Lake Huron Coastal areas, woodlands, wetlands, and the area surrounding the Cass River.

**GOAL 4: Preserve and protect properties with historic and cultural value.**

- Identification program- Request assistance from volunteer organizations, area colleges, historic societies, and the Chippewa Indians to identify properties with historic and/or cultural value.
- Preserve and protect- Promote activities and policies that will preserve and protect identified properties as well as provide rehabilitation and enhancement where needed.

**GOAL 5: Establish connections between existing and future trails and pathways including greenways and blue-ways.**

- Mapping- Work with the East Central Michigan Planning and Development Regional Commission (ECMPDRC) to develop maps indicating existing trail ways and possible locations for linkages.
- Systematic approach- Develop a prioritized systematic approach for the acquisition and development of properties that will directly connect existing trail ways.
- Regional approach- Pursue opportunities for connecting trail ways with neighboring municipalities in Michigan. (e.g. Tip of the Thumb Heritage Water Trails)
- Promote benefits- Develop a marketing strategy to promote the need for increasing desirable trail ways which will include paved and unpaved hiking and biking trails, non-motorized trails, waterways and open space greenways. Promote the increased health and economic benefits derived from the availability of enhanced and interconnected trail resources.
- Promote regional effort- Work with the neighboring counties, ECMPDRC and MDOT to promote the development of trails and improving connectivity.

**GOAL 6: Respond to changing demographics when planning recreational facilities and programs.**

- Understand changes- Maintain awareness of population growth areas. Understand the impact to recreational programs and facilities through changes in different age groups, conditions of health and disabilities, and socio-economic indicators.
- Plan accordingly- By seeking community support and input, define, plan, and develop projects that will meet the needs and desires of the changing demographic.
- Development and Improvement Projects- From previous recreation plans and surveys, and through current information gathered for Tuscola County specific projects and areas of improvement have been proposed and planned for. The five-year plan for those projects is in the next chapter “Action Plan”.

**GOAL 7: Enhance the positive working relationship with the Native Americans.**

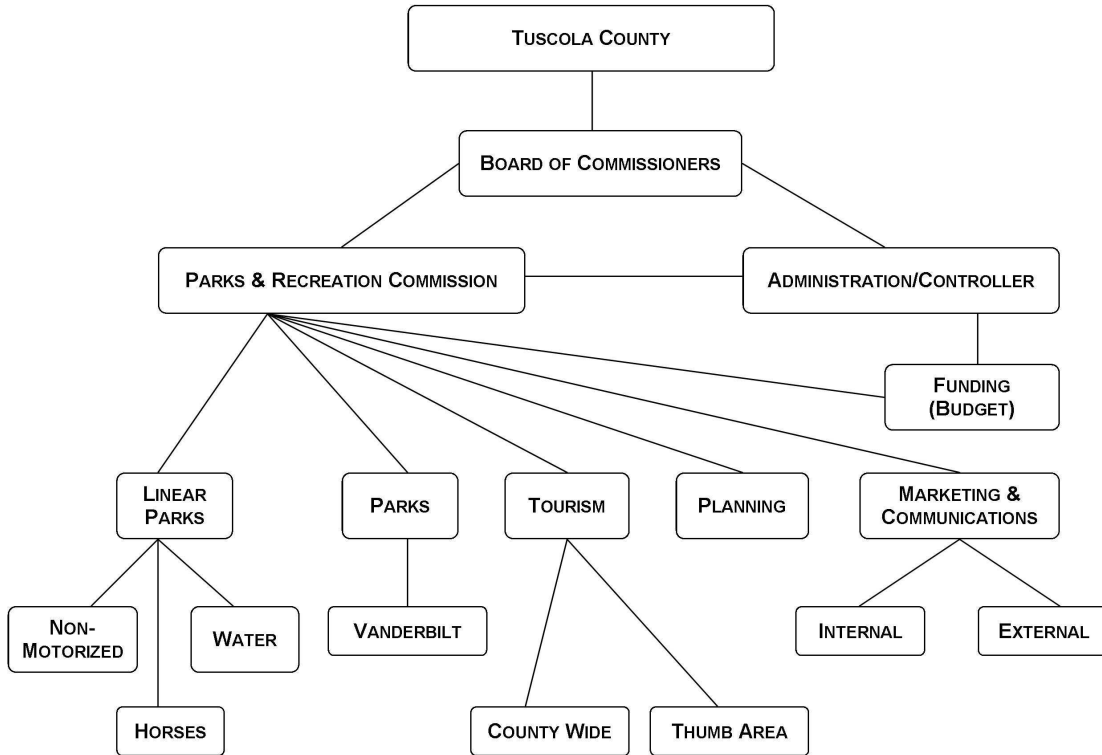
- Historic and cultural significance- Through partnerships with the Native Americans, educational programs could be established to increase knowledge and respect for the rich cultural history of Tuscola County’s first inhabitants.
- Natural resources- Seek to establish coordinated efforts for the protection and enhancement of natural resources and natural recreation areas. Seek input and cooperation for the identification and preservation of sites and properties that have historic and cultural value and promote rehabilitation and enhancement where needed.

**GOAL 8: Create and implement a marketing campaign to promote Tuscola County as a recreation destination for residents and visitors.**

- Understand the “draw”- By careful consideration of Tuscola County’s available amenities and through research of popular recreational and leisure pursuits, develop a marketing strategy to attract residents and visitors to the parks.
- Create promotional materials- Promote the attractions through proper design and placement of signs and through the development of the Park and Recreation Department’s website, Thumb Area Tourism Council and other related locations on the web.

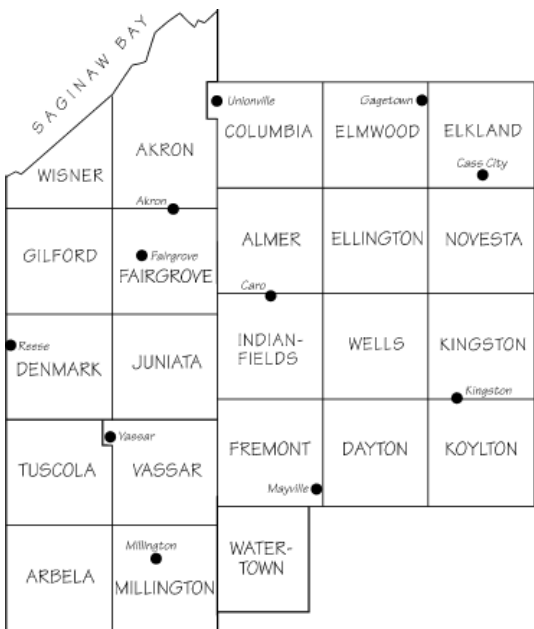
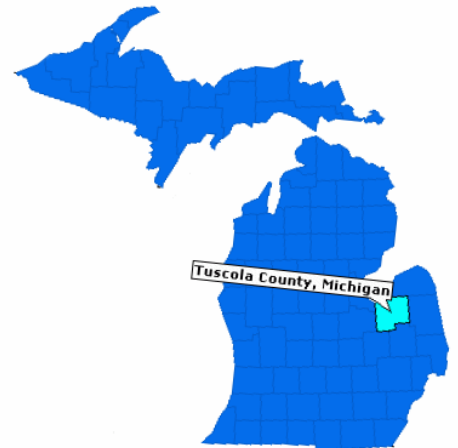
# ORGANIZATIONAL OVERVIEW

## Organizational Chart



## COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Tuscola County is located in the Thumb region of Michigan and consists of:



- About 58,000 residents according to the 2000 census
- 1 city, 10 villages and 23 Townships
- 519,744 acres of land
- 3,264 acres of water
- 29,476 acres of public recreation land
- 29,476 acres of state game/wildlife areas
- 20 miles of shorelines
- 184 miles of rivers & streams
- Year-round recreational activities

A more comprehensive, detailed description can be found in the Tuscola County Parks and Recreational Plan starting on page 11.

## COUNTY INVENTORY

A complete inventory is included in the Tuscola County Parks and Recreational Master Plan starting on page 47.

### **Parks**

<b>Place</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
1. Tuscola County	Vanderbilt County Park & Campground	17.85
2. Akron Village	Akron Village Park	6
3. Almer Twp.	Township Hall (Darbee School)	15
4. Almer Twp.	Darbee Farm Park	40
5. Almer Twp.	AYSO Soccer Park	8
6. Almer Twp.	Community Park	40
7. Arbela Twp.	Arthur Latham Park	32
8. Village of Caro	Atwood Park	.75
9. Village of Caro	Bieth Park - Tuscola County Fairgrounds	40
10. Village of Caro	Chippewa Landing Park	16
11. Village of Caro	Colonial Park	1.5
12. Village of Caro	Williamsburg Subdivision Park	1.5
13. Village of Caro	Northwood Heights Park	1.5
14. Village of Cass City	Cass City Recreation Park	82.5
15. Village of Cass City	Cedarwood Park	2
16. Village of Cass City	Cass City Walking Trail (a railway linear park)	1.5 miles
17. Village of Fairgrove	Fairgrove Community Park	8
18. Village of Fairgrove	Mulberry Park	5+
19. Village of Gagetown	Village Park	10.5
20. Indianfields Twp.	Indianfields Township Park	160
21. Indianfields Twp.	Bruisee Road Site	18
22. Village of Kingston	Kingston Memorial Park	5
23. Millington Twp.	Arthur Latham Park	78.3
24. Millington Twp.	Southern Links Trailway	
25. Village of Millington	Arthur Latham Park	
26. Village of Millington	Southern Links Trailway	
27. Village of Mayville	Ohmer Park	7
28. Village of Mayville	Bodeis Park	1 ½ blocks
29. Village of Reese	Reese Community Park	12
30. Village of Reese	Reese Memorial Park	4
31. Tuscola Twp.	Community Park	15
32. Village of Unionville	Unionville Community Park	44
33. Village of Unionville	Kemp Memorial Park	0.5
34. City of Vassar	Harper Park	8.5
35. City of Vassar	Hillside Park	0.5
36. City of Vassar	White Birch Park	9
37. City of Vassar	McKinley School Park	0.5
38. City of Vassar	Vassar Lion's Park	0.75
39. City of Vassar	Vassar Riverside Park	11.09
40. City of Vassar	Vassar Riverside RV Park	10.7
41. City of Vassar	Ivan Middleton Hall	4

42. City of Vassar	Vassar Memorial Park	48
43. City of Vassar	Vassar Rail Trail	1 mile
44. City of Vassar	Vassar Fairgrounds	
45. Watertown Twp.	Fostoria Park	1
46. Watertown Twp.	North Lake Murphy Park	1

**Linear Parks**

*Info still to come*

**Recreational Resources**

*Info still to come*

**Natural Resources**

*Info still to come - State game areas and DNR preserves*

**MARKET ANALYSIS**

*Info still to come from Master Plan and/or CAT Assessment*

**Economic Conditions**

Economic conditions impact how people recreate and spend their disposable income. The local and state economy also impacts how and where resources are being used and spent. Both of these conditions and more impact our plans. The Master Plan is a five year plan with this Action Plan being the yearly working document.

**SWOT Overview**

*Info still to come*

**Target Audience**

Traditional outdoorsmen and campers  
 Children, retirees and travelers  
*Not a final list ... more to come*

**Competition**

*Info still to come*

# FINANCIAL ANALYSIS

## Overview

### County-Approved Budget

**Tuscola County Parks & Rec Commission**  
Fund 208 County Parks & Recreation

	2008 Proposed	2007 Projected Actual	2008 Approved Budget	Rational
<b>Revenues</b>				
Peak Season Park Fees	\$2,000.00			Projected final 2007 earnings & increased by 5%
Off Season Park Fees	\$250.00			Projected final 2007 earnings & increased by 5%
<b>Subtotal 000-651-100: Vanderbilt Park Fees</b>	<b>\$2,250.00</b>	<b>\$2,400.00</b>	<b>\$2,400.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b> - slightly increased by the county but reasonable assumption on possibly fee income
General donations	\$1,000.00			Feel the group can successfully solicit \$1,000 in donations
Grants	\$27,110.00			Will represent 50% of proposed projects/renovations included within proposed budget - projects/renovations may not occur if we don't acquire these funds
Fundraising	\$27,110.00			Will represent 50% of proposed projects/renovations included within proposed budget - projects/renovations may not occur if we don't acquire these funds
Special Event Income (i.e. prize raffle)	\$350.00			Increased slightly from 2007 prize raffle monies
<b>Subtotal 000-691-000: Misc Revenue</b>	<b>\$55,570.00</b>	<b>\$350.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b> - the other dollar figures were included based on the assumption that the P&R Commissioners would raise the funds ... and this is still the assumption (the \$350 was raised from a prize raffle at Vanderbilt event)
<b>Subtotal 000-699-101: Transfers In-General</b>	<b>\$15,000.00</b>	<b>\$8,000.00</b>	<b>\$7,000.00</b>	Dollars from the county's General Fund for operational support <b>Question</b> - wonder why it's less than the projected year-end figure since it is the key source of operational funding Increased \$1,000 after 1st draft request
<b>Revenues Total</b>	<b>\$72,820.00</b>	<b>\$10,750.00</b>	<b>\$9,700.00</b>	

<b>Expenses</b>				
Janitorial Supplies - Arnold Sales	\$200.00			Projected final 2007 earnings & increased by 50% will the anticipation of greater visitors and facility usage
<b>Subtotal 000-727-100: Vanderbilt Park - Supplies</b>	<b>\$200.00</b>	<b>\$3,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,200.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Park Host Commission	\$500.00			Estimated figure based on increased usage
Camp Site Permit Fee	\$300.00			A fee that the county should be paying but not sure which account it comes from.
Miscellaneous	\$200.00			Unknown items that the county pulls from this account
<b>Subtotal 000-801-100: Cont. SVCS Vanderbilt Park</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,000.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Electric	\$3,600.00			
Trash pick up - Richfield Management	\$960.00			
Cellular Phone	\$360.00			
<b>Subtotal 000-920-100: Utilities Vanderbilt Park</b>	<b>\$4,920.00</b>	<b>\$3,200.00</b>	<b>\$3,200.00</b>	<b>Question - county simple used their projected year-end figure ...ours came from an estimation of possible '07 expense taking into consideration that more visitors would be using the park &amp; camping - which would increase costs</b>
Mini-brush hog/weedwacker	\$800.00			New equipment purchase that could be used for parks & trails
<b>Subtotal 000-930-100: Equipment</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$800.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Septic Cleaning Service - Trisch	\$250.00			Estimated based on 2007 expense
Septic Medication - Technichem	\$650.00			Estimated based on 2007 expense
County maintenance crew expense	\$600.00			Estimation since % allocated from county is unknown - though, there may be a potential to work with the county jail to eliminate or minimize the expense
<b>Subtotal 000-936-100: Grounds Care/Maint Vanderbilt</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>	<b>\$1,300.00</b>	<b>\$1,500.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
Freestanding unisex ADA shower unit	\$2,000.00			Proposed improvement to attract more users until full-service restrooms/bath house can be developed
Vaulted septic system & water hook-up for shower unit	\$25,000.00			Required expense for use of shower unit
Permit fees	\$500.00			Permit fees required for various projects
Water Assessment for Yes! To Safe Water Project	\$1,000.00			Project assessment for project
Land leveling/clearing for trail to bay	\$10,000.00			Proposed expense to make trail from park to bay - expense may be eliminated or minimized based on donations/volunteer help
<b>Subtotal 000-970-100: Misc/Vanderbilt Park Renovation</b>	<b>\$38,500.00</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>	<b>\$2,000.00</b>	<b>Accepted</b>
<b>Subtotal 965-999-101: Transfer Out - General Fund Proposed New Expense Line Items</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>			
	<b>\$25,900.00</b>	<i>see below</i>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Expenses Total</b>	<b>\$72,820.00</b>	<b>\$10,500.00</b>	<b>\$9,700.00</b>	<b>Question - Refer to write up &amp; request for additional funding</b>

**Proposed new line items that were NOT accepted by the County Commissioners:**

<b>Advertising</b>				
TATC Gold membership	\$250.00			
MI Camping Directory listing	\$100.00			
MARVAC directory listing	\$185.00			
MI Camping/RV Park.com listing	\$20.00			
Miscellaneous Advertising/Sponsorships	\$245.00			
Signage	\$500.00	?		<i>Know new signs were made, many by Steve Erickson's connection, but don't see the expense</i>
Brochure reprint	\$1,000.00	\$913.00		<i>07 expense applied to 000-727-100</i>
Postage	\$0.00	\$10.66		<i>07 expense applied to 000-727-100</i>
<b>Subtotal 000-000-000: Advertising</b>	<b>\$2,300.00</b>	<b>\$923.66</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Promotional Marketing</b>				
Vanderbilt Season Grand Opener	\$1,500.00	\$1,153.66	\$0.00	<i>07 expense applied to 000-727-100</i>
2nd event @ park or trails	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>07 expense applied to 000-727-100</i>
Fundraising efforts	\$500.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	<i>This is a figure that would be raised by P&amp;R Commissions through donations.</i>
<b>Subtotal 000-000-000: Promotional Marketing</b>	<b>\$3,500.00</b>	<b>\$1,153.66</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Trails Development/Maintenance</b>				
ITC/Tuscola Trails	\$4,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	See narrative for more detail
Cass River Water Trails	\$2,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	See narrative for more detail
Horse Trails	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	
Vanderbilt improvements/renovations	\$0.00	\$1,116.94	\$0.00	See narrative for more detail
<b>Subtotal 000-000-000: Trails Development/Maintenance</b>	<b>\$7,000.00</b>	<b>\$1,116.94</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Land/Property Acquisition</b>				
Adjacent land to Vanderbilt	\$13,000.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Current price tag - expense may be off-set by grants, donations and/or a reduction in the cost
Wells Township Hall	\$100.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	Estimate
<b>Subtotal 000-000-000: Land/Property Acquisition</b>	<b>\$13,100.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	
<b>Expenses Total</b>	<b>\$25,900.00</b>			

**Key Supporters**

*Friends of Rail Trails*  
*Local Parks and Recreation Organizations-Names and Contacts*  
*Not a final list ... more to come*

### **Other Funding Sources**

*MDNR Trust Fund*  
*Community Foundation*  
*Civic Clubs*  
*Conservancy Organizations*  
DNR, MDNR Trust, local organizations (such as Jaycees, Women's Clubs, Lions, etc.)  
*Not a final list ... more to come*

## **PROJECT OVERVIEW**

### **Parks**

Vanderbilt County Park & Campground

- Establish subcommittee with interested volunteers
- Develop specific action plans
- Establish short term goals – 1 to 2 years and long-term goals

### **Linear Parks**

Non-motorized Trail  
ITC Trail

Waterways & Water Trails  
Vanderbilt County Park & Campground  
Cass River

Horse/Equestrian Trails

### **Marketing & Tourism**

Thumb Area  
Promoting via the Thumb Area Tourism Council Web site  
*Not a final list ... more to come*

County Wide  
*Info still to come*

Statewide  
Need to contact MDOT so we can get our brochures in at the Welcome Centers  
*Not a final list ... more to come*

### **Planning**

*Info still to come*

**Funding**

*Info still to come*

## APPENDIX A

### Tuscola County Parks & Recreation Commission

<b>Name</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Position</b>
Zygmunt "Zygy" Dworzecki	Akron			Chairman
Jason Davis	Caro			Vice Chairman
Lana Martell	Millington			Treasurer
Kris McArdle	Caro	(989) 672-0323	infinitecs@earthlink.net	Secretary
Richard Peter	Kingston			
Jerry Peterson	Vassar			Tuscola County Board of Commissioners Liaison
Sarah Pistro	Caro			Tuscola County Drain Commissioner
Tom Striffler	Caro			
Lisa Valentine	Fairgrove			
Mike Zwerk	Vassar	(989) 551-5936	mikezwerk@yahoo.com	
Angie Daniels	Caro			Office Secretary

### Vanderbilt County Park & Campground Subcommittee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Position</b>
Zygmunt "Zygy" Dworzecki	Akron			
Carol Dworzecki	Akron			Volunteer
Lana Martell	Millington			
Lisa Valentine	Fairgrove			

### Tuscola County Trails Subcommittee

<b>Name</b>	<b>Residence</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>	<b>Position</b>
Jason Davis	Caro			
Richard Peter	Kingston			