

BREAKING NEWS» U.P. among areas to receive part of \$40 million for Michigan conservation projects

- News
- Sports
- Opinion
- Features
- Sections
- Extras
- Ads
- CU
- Services
- Service Directory
- Online Documents
- Ishpeming / Negaunee Map
- All Access E-Edition

BLACK FRIDAY BLOWOUT AUCTIONS

Nikon D5100
Auction Price **\$59.81**
UP TO 92% OFF! **BID NOW**

Canon T4i
Auction Price **\$42.16**
UP TO 96% OFF! **BID NOW**

New iPad
Auction Price **\$34.51**
UP TO 95% OFF! **BID NOW**

MacBook Pro
Auction Price **\$65.84**
UP TO 94% OFF! **BID NOW**

*Prices of previously won items
QuiBids

« 2 injured in SUV, logging tr... 'The Living Building Challen...»

Marquette addressing climate change

January 24, 2014
CHRISTIE BLECK - Journal Staff Writer (cbleck@miningjournal.net) , The Mining Journal

Editor's note: This is the second installment in a two-part series on climate change in the city of Marquette. The first segment, published one week ago, addressed issues facing the area, while this story focuses on recommendations and solutions.

MARQUETTE - It's no secret Marquette is blessed with a great location, what with being on Lake Superior and the tourism opportunities that provides. But being on a Great Lakes has its challenges, particularly as it relates to climate.

Because of that vulnerability, Marquette was chosen to be a focus of the "Adapting to Climate Change and Variability" project. A Michigan State University Extension team worked with city staff, the Great Lakes Integrated Science and Assessments Center and the Superior Watershed Partnership to create a process that involved community members to discuss their climate change concerns.



Getting rid of invasive species such as spotted knapweed...

What evolved was a report that detailed the issues facing the area, such as decreasing lake levels and snow depth, higher lake temperatures and less ice coverage.

According to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, most climate scientists agree the major cause of the global warming trend is people expanding the "greenhouse effect," or the warming that results when the atmosphere traps heat radiating from the Earth's surface.

The report included ways to adapt to these climate-related issues. Participants in a community meeting held to solicit input determined water resources was the top priority for climate change impacts. Recommendations included identifying and acquiring critical habitat to be protected along the Lake Superior shoreline and removing structures along the coastlines, impede natural regeneration of sediments and prevent natural inland migration of sand and vegetation.

The SWP already has undertaken local coastal restoration work. "That's one of the best things you can do: to have a resilient coastline," said Carl Lindquist, SWP executive director.

Agriculture and food might not be the first things that spring to mind when the topic of climate change is brought up, but extended periods of drought and changes in the typical growing season are pressing issues, according to the Marquette climate report.

Amending city ordinances and plans to encourage food production on city property such as community gardens is one way to help, according to the report.

It also was pointed out land use strategies are needed to address the potential of a growing population and human and development impacts from severe storms, flooding and shoreline erosion.

Dave Stensaas, city planner for Marquette, said most electrical systems are above ground, making them vulnerable to thunderstorm damage. However, city operations, maintenance and water services are well positioned to contend with floods and other emergencies, he said.

"Time is of the essence for life and property safety during severe thunderstorms and tornadoes and being better prepared for those storms through advanced warning systems could possibly be a priority for implementation," Stensaas said.

Beach closures, which plagued Marquette in 2012, are another unfortunate side effect of climate change because of warmer temperatures and a higher bacteria count. The report said increased and expanded beach-monitoring activities could detect harmful pathogens.

Even forests can be adversely affected by climate change because changes in weather patterns and temperature can attract new pests and diseases.

One suggestion was planting drought-resistant trees along streets, with polycultures (of many species) replacing monocultures.

With tourism such an important part of Marquette's economy, climate change can have negative economic implications on coldwater fisheries, marina access and activities such as snowmobiling.

Harbor dredging is one way to deal with the changes, the report states, while parks and recreation expenditures should be adjusted to support and capitalize on changes to outdoor recreation.

Funding is out there to help in dealing with climate change, Lindquist said. "What we're seeing is projects that used to be funded through, say, a Clean Water grant or habitation restoration grant are now falling under climate adaptation," he said.

Stensaas said efforts still need to be made on a local level and local authorities are responsible for implementing most of the report's recommendations.

Some can and are being addressed through planning such as identifying critical shore habitat, he said, while others involve crafting ordinances.

Others, too, are dependent on working with regional partners and acquiring funding for new infrastructure such as storm sirens, dredging or fighting invasive species like spotted knapweed.

Stensaas said the climate report recommendations are being provided to the public as well as public officials for consideration, and they will be incorporated into the Community Master Plan.

"It is ultimately the choices of the various elected and appointed decision-makers that will determine how the report is used," Stensaas said. "Public input certainly could play a large role in how that unfolds."

The full report may be accessed on the city planning website at www.mqtcty.org/plan.php, the city planning office at city hall, the Peter White Public Library and the Northern Michigan University Lydia Olson Library.

Christie Bleck can be reached at 906-228-2500, ext. 250.

Save |

Recommend Be the first of your friends to recommend this.

8+1 0

Subscribe to Mining Journal

Sponsored From Around the Web

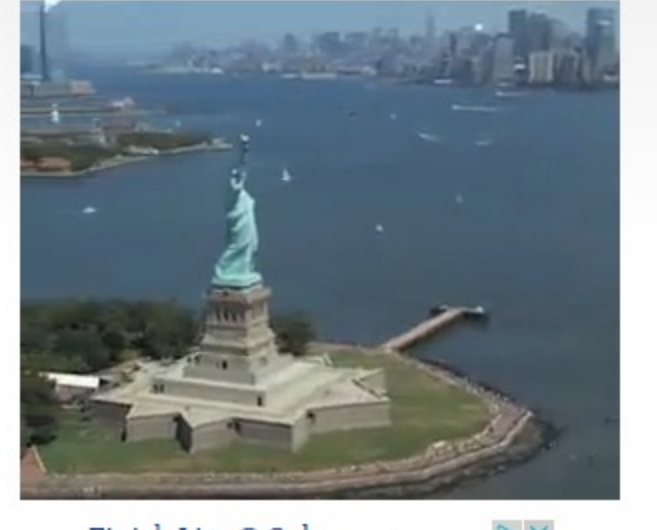
News, Blogs & Events

I am looking for:

 SEARCH

in:

News, Blogs & Events Web



Finish Line® Sale
Don't Miss Our End Of Season Sale. Save Up To 50%-Limited Time Only!

Liheap (Apply Now)
Find Local Energy Assistance Fast. Get Application. Apply Online Today

Are You Eligible for Aid?
Low Income Resource for US Citizens Suffering from Financial Hardship

Start your day off right with delicious NEW Big G items!

Save Now