



# The Quarterly

## Southwest Michigan Planning Commission

*Planning that is Credible, Credentialed, and Connected*

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## APRIL 1, 2010-CENSUS DAY

When you fill out the census form, you are making a statement about what resources your community needs. Accurate data reflecting changes in your community are crucial in determining how resources will be allocated to your community. Below are a few reasons to make sure that everyone in your community fills out their census form. Census data:

- Determines how more than \$400 billion per year will be allocated for projects like new hospitals and schools. That's more than \$4 trillion over a 10-year period.
- Determines Michigan's number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives, and guides new legislative boundaries.
- Is used to determine additional needs for social services, including who receives community development block grants and other grant programs essential to our region's communities and residents.
- Is used by businesses to locate supermarkets, shopping centers, new housing and other facilities.
- Informs a diverse range of local initiatives, such as justifying the need for after-school programs, designating urban revitalization areas, and planning transportation services.

"Just like we can't survive without roads and bridges, the country doesn't function well without an updated Census to distribute funds to areas that most need them and to support community decisions about their own future."

Robert M. Groves  
Director U.S. Census Bureau

**Contents**

**Pg. 2**  
Walk and Roll TwinCATS  
Berrien County Birding Map  
Staff Departures  
Transportation Improvement Program

**Pg. 3**  
Welch Lackey Award  
Graham Woodhouse Award  
SWMPC Officers

Be sure to encourage all residents, including our seasonal/second homeowners who spend a majority of their time in Michigan, to fill out the census for their Michigan address. Reassure people that the Census is 100% confidential.

For more detailed information about the 2010 Census please visit

<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/>

Source: <http://2010.census.gov/>

## TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENT

### Birding Map Planned for Berrien County

The SWMPC has received grants from the Pokagon Fund and the Berrien Community Foundation to create a birding map for Berrien County. The funds will be used to develop a paper map and web-based map for resident and visiting bird watchers. The birding trail map is intended to provide bird watchers an overview of publicly accessible locations to view common and rare birds in the waterfront, woodland, duneland, and grassland environments of state and local parks, nature centers, and other locales.



A Peregrine Falcon sits on the windowsill of the SWMPC offices. Other places that have seen this bird include St. Joseph, Three Oaks, Warren Dunes State Park and Benton Charter Township.

Source: Berrien Birding Club, 2008

The project will promote ecotourism and public education about Berrien County's local ecology. Berrien County, a Lake Michigan community, is a popular tourist destination. Last year the Southwest Michigan Tourist Council recorded over one million contacts on its web

site; our region has a reputation for bird watching because of the variety of habitats.

Berrien County is home to three state parks, including Warren Dunes with more than one million visitors annually, and Silver Beach County Park with 250,000 visitors annually (55% out-of-county). The birding map will serve as a passport into the world of wildlife in southwest Michigan.

## Walk & Roll TwinCATS

A walking, rolling, and bicycling subcommittee has been formed for the TwinCATS region to discuss and plan for all modes of non-motorized transportation such as bike lanes, paved shoulders, sidewalks, and trails. The communities included in this planning effort include: City of Benton Harbor, City of St. Joseph, City of Bridgman, Village of Shoreham, Village of Stevensville, Benton Township, Lake Township, Lincoln Township, Royalton Township, Sodus Township, St. Joseph Township, Village of Grand Beach, and Village of Michiana.

Attend and share your thoughts about where you want to walk and roll in the greater Benton Harbor –St. Joseph area. What might make you more likely to walk or bike to the stores or to work? Please join us on Wednesday April 28, 2010, at 8:00 a.m., at Abonmarche, 95 W. Main St., Benton Harbor, MI.

[www.swmpc.org/walkbiketwincats.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/walkbiketwincats.asp)

### Public Comment Sought on Transportation Improvement Program

There will be a public comment period during the month of April for projects that will be placed in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for TwinCATS and NATS fiscal years 2011-2014.

The TIP documents road and transit projects that will take place in the near future within the TwinCATS and NATS boundaries.

For more information contact Anna Rahtz at [rahtza@swmpc.org](mailto:rahtza@swmpc.org) or at (269) 925-1137 x 23 or visit the websites at:

[www.swmpc.org/twincats.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/twincats.asp)

[www.swmpc.org/nats.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/nats.asp)

### STAFF DEPARTURES

The Commission would like to thank Nickolas Musson for his tremendous contributions to the SWMPC and to the communities of southwest Michigan. We wish him the very best with his move to Wisconsin.

# SWMPC HAPPENINGS

## 2009 Welch Lackey Leadership Award

Chair Victoria Chandler presented the 2009 Welch-Lackey Leadership Award to James Sayer of Dowagiac.

John Egelhaaf, SWMPC Executive Director, commented; "Mr. Sayer has served the SWMPC since 1999 as both a County Commissioner and Citizen Representative. He has served as Chair and continues as a member of our Administration Committee. His steady leadership has been a valuable asset to the SWMPC. We are fortunate to benefit from his spirit of service and are proud to call him a Welch-Lackey Award winner."

In addition to Sayer's work with the SWMPC, his service to Cass County includes seats on the Cass County Transportation Board and the Woodlands Mental Health Board. The City of Dowagiac has recently appointed him to the Board of Pubic Works and Zoning Board.



Jim Sayer receiving the Welch Lackey award from 2009 Chair Victoria Chandler.

## 2010 Graham Woodhouse Award

The SWMPC is pleased to announce the selection of the Dowagiac/Silver Creek Youth Sports Park Project for the 2010 Graham Woodhouse Intergovernmental Cooperation Award. The project acquired 35 acres of privately owned land to expand youth sports activities in the Dowagiac and Silver Creek Township areas. Recipients receive the award in recognition of outstanding cooperative effort in problem solving.

Chair Victoria Chandler presented award plaques to the following representatives:

- City of Dowagiac-Gary Carlile, Grants Coordinator; Rozanne Scherr, Assistant City Manager; Matt Stack, Director of Grounds; Kevin Anderson, City Manager; and Leon Laylin, Mayor Pro Tem.
- Silver Creek Township-Supervisor Bill Saunders and Trustee Joel Moore.
- Michigan Department of Natural Resources-Jule Stafford, Grants Analyst for the Grants Management Program.
- Senator Jelinek-Robert Wagel, District Representative.
- State Representative-Sharon Tyler was included in the award, but was unable to attend.

In a congratulatory letter, State Representative Tyler commented; "It is wonderful that so many people have come together to make this project a success and that their hard work has been rewarded. I am thrilled that this project will enhance the beauty of our community and southwest Michigan."

According to John Egelhaaf, SWMPC Executive Director; "The idea of cross-jurisdictional, regional cooperation is essential to the SWMPC. It speaks to the efficient use of limited resources, the value of collaborative goal setting, and to the way that most of us see the world—not as jurisdictional lines on maps but as nodes of regional resources."



## 2010 SWMPC Officers

Two new officers have been elected to the SWMPC Board: Chair, Linda Preston and Vice-Chair, Jeff Radtke. Preston is the Cass County Townships Representative to the SWMPC Board and has been involved with the SWMPC Board since 2000. Radtke joined the board in 2002 as a Citizen Representative from Van Buren County. Officers retaining their positions are: Don Gast, Treasurer; Yemi Akinwale, Alternate Treasurer; and Fran Sage, Secretary.



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## Calendar of Events 2010

[www.swmpc.org/calendar.asp](http://www.swmpc.org/calendar.asp)

### April

2<sup>nd</sup> SWMPC offices close at noon  
 19<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
 21<sup>st</sup> 6:30 p.m. Ox Creek TMDL  
 Mtg (Benton Charter Twp Hall)  
 22<sup>nd</sup> 10:00 a.m. Galien River Mtg  
 (Chikaming Twp Hall)  
 22<sup>nd</sup> 3:00 p.m. Earth Day Event  
 (TK Lawless Park, Vandalia)  
 26<sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m. Green Infrastructure  
 Workshop (Fetzer Center,  
 Kalamazoo)  
 27<sup>th</sup> 1:30 p.m. NATS  
 28<sup>th</sup> 8:00 a.m. Walk & Roll  
 TwinCATS (Benton Harbor)

### May

3<sup>rd</sup> 6:30 p.m. Van Buren County  
 Recreation Plan Input Meeting  
 (Lawrence)  
 14<sup>th</sup> Tri-County Head Start Fun  
 Fair (Berrien Springs)  
 11<sup>th</sup> 3:00 p.m. Code Enforcement  
 Workshop (Berrien MSU  
 Extension)  
 17<sup>th</sup> 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
 24<sup>th</sup> 12:30 p.m. 360 Group Meeting  
 (Lawrence)  
 25<sup>th</sup> 1:30 p.m. NATS  
 31<sup>st</sup> SWMPC offices closed

### June

12-13<sup>th</sup> Free fishing weekend  
 21<sup>st</sup> 9:30 a.m. TwinCATS  
 22<sup>rd</sup> 1:30 p.m. NATS  
 30<sup>th</sup> 8:30 a.m. Trails Workshop  
 (Lawrence)  
 NATS=meets in Niles  
 TwinCATS=meets in Benton Harbor

### 2010 Board Meeting Schedule

#### SWMPC Full Commission Meeting

*Location: Southwestern Michigan College  
 Mathews Room West-Dowagiac, MI*  
 April 20, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.  
 July 20, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.

October 19, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.-SMC Tentative

#### SWMPC Administrative Committee Meeting

*Location: Vincent Place Conference Room-Benton Harbor, MI*  
 June 15, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.  
 September 21, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.  
 December 21, 2010 at 9:30 a.m.