Resolution #20_024

Mauch Chunk Lake Park (MCLP) Restricted Use (Camp sites, pavilions, and swim area) During COVID-19 Yellow Phase

WHEREAS, the Mauch Chunk Creek Dam/Watershed Project was approved for construction in May 1968 at a cost of $3,000,000;

WHEREAS, the project's purpose included flood control, recreation, and water supply for the benefit of county residents;

WHEREAS, construction began on 20 June 1969;

WHEREAS, final construction was completed in May 1972;

WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk Lake Park opened for recreational activities in 1974;

WHEREAS, in 1978, Mauch Chunk Lake Park was named National Watershed of the Year;

WHEREAS, Mauch Chunk Lake Park is a county facility historically funded by county taxpayers;

WHEREAS, over the past decades, the park has seen an inordinate growth in use by non-county residents;

WHEREAS, the COVID-19 Virus has necessitated PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) activity restrictions to Hickory Run and Beltzville State Parks (50% of swimming capacity);

WHEREAS, recreational areas to include the Lehigh Gorge State Park, D&L Heritage Trail, and aforementioned parks, are strained during regular periods and excessively strained during this pandemic period;

WHEREAS, Carbon County was moved to a less restrictive Yellow Phase on 22 May by the governor;

WHEREAS, Carbon County's less restrictive COVID-19 environment, serves as a magnet for visitors from more-restrictive areas to include the extremely high COVID-19 cases areas of New York and New Jersey;

WHEREAS, the Governor of Pennsylvania has directed that citizens follow U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) guidelines;

WHEREAS, CDC guidelines for Visiting Parks and Recreational Facilities emphasizes:
Do: Visit parks that are close to your home; Don't Visit crowded parks; Do not visit
parks where you cannot stay at least 6 feet away from others at all times; and Traveling long distances to a park may contribute to the spread of COVID-19;

WHEREAS, the Government of Carbon County is legally obligated assure unfettered access to fishing and boating use;

WHEREAS, restricting Mauch Chunk Lake Park’s swimming and camping facilities to use by county residents would facilitate management of social distancing protocols and county resident adherence to CDC guidelines;

WHEREAS, this COVID-19 period has increased stress and anxiety on county residents;

WHEREAS, scientific research associate’s outdoor activities are related to both physical and mental health benefits;

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners assess that the increase psychological and physical benefits of restricting park use outweighs potential loss of revenue;

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners finds it appropriate to renegotiate vendor agreements to offset potential financial losses by vendors;

THEREFORE; the Board of Commissioners does hereby declare that while Carbon County remains in Yellow Phase, or through 30 June 2020, whichever is longer, use of Mauch Chunk Lake Park’s camping sites, pavilions, and swimming area will be restricted to Carbon County residents only.

DULY ENACTED at a regular meeting of the Board of Commissioners of the County of Carbon held the 4th day of June, 2020.

CARBON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Wayne E. Nothstein, Chairman

Rocky C. Ahner, Vice-Chairman

Chris L. Lukasevich, Member

ATTEST:

Eloise K. Ahner, Chief Clerk/County Administrator
Mauch Chunk Lake Park (MCLP) – County Resident Use Plan of Action

**Purpose:** Provide Carbon County residents a COVID-19 reduced threat environment for outdoor recreational activities to enhance physical and mental well-being in a U.S. Center for Disease Control (CDC) and PA Department of Health (PA DoH) guidelines compliant manner

**Method:** Implementation of five (5) synchronized and coordinated lines of effort (LoE) that facilitate safe, responsible, and Carbon resident restricted use of MCLP swimming and camping areas thru 30 JUN or until transition to Green Phase, whichever is longer.

### Primary Threats:
- COVID-19
- Traffic backup
- Insistent and resistant non-residents

### Facts:
- HRSP and BSP at 50% swimming capacity
  - Overflow pushed to MCLP
- Insufficient lifeguards to charge admission
- $66k in revenue (JUN ‘19)
- CDC states... recreate close to home
- MCLP will reduce capacity
- ID checking is less of a threat than cash handling
- Pavilions remain closed

### Assumptions:
- MCLP will reduce capacity
- Vendor sales impacted
- Carbon to Green NET 19 JUN
- Green Phase 75% max capacity at state parks
- MCLP Water Test - Good

### Constraints:
- Qty of lifeguards (3)
- Qty of seasonal rangers (8)

### Safety
- PPE for Employees
- CDC and PA DoH Guidelines
- Visitor questionnaire
- Sheriff’s Dept “presence”
- Modified traffic flow – Approach warning signs

### Residency Verification
- ID or Utility Bill

### Capacity
- Dry Beach (DB) – 40,000 sq. ft. = 800@50 sq. ft., 400@50%, or 600@75%
- DB - 40,000 sq. ft. = 1111@36 sq. ft., or 556@50% or 833@75%
- Wet Beach – 50,800 sq. ft. (Expect 1/3 in water)
- Parking – 300 Cars = 900
- Camping – 150 sites = 450 +

### Financial
- No-fee swimming (Swim at-your-own-risk)
- Fee-based camping
- Vendor contract modification
- County - $66K revenue loss mitigation

### Messaging
- Camp grounds, hotels, DCNR state parks, PMVB
- Social media, websites, print, radio and TV
- LEAs (State and local) & PennDot

### End State:
- Residents utilize opportunity
- CDC and PA DoH guidelines followed
- Traffic congestion minimized