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NEARLY 400 ACRES OF RIVERFRONT LAND ACQUISITION DONE, EXPANDS KENT COUNTY'S PARK SYSTEM

Located in Ada Township, Chief Hazy Cloud Park will feature trails and more than three miles of Grand River frontage.

ADA, Mich.– (June 3, 2021) – The Kent County Parks Department has completed a series of land acquisitions that will expand the county's Chief Hazy Cloud Park into a 395-acre natural preserve which will include woods, wetlands and three miles of frontage along the Grand River.

Leaders from Kent County, Ada Township, the Kent County Parks Foundation, and others shared details at the park on Tuesday morning. Chief Hazy Cloud Park is located on Pettis Avenue in Ada Township and expanding it has been part of the Kent County Parks Master Plan for more than two decades. A shared goal of the partnership is to continue conservation efforts to preserve the Grand River and nearby upland and wetland habitats.

"The past year has reinforced the importance of having spaces where people and families can enjoy outdoor activities," said Kent County Board of Commissioners Chair Mandy Bolter. "For years, we've been committed to expanding this park to offer more opportunities for residents and we now look forward to giving people the chance to see this beautiful, natural green space for themselves."

Chief Hazy Cloud Park was originally established in the late 1920s. By the early 1990s, it had grown to 24 acres and Kent County Parks began considering expansion plans for the property. Now, with 395 acres, most of the property is largely undeveloped but currently allows excellent opportunities for fishing, kayaking, and canoeing.

A series of acquisitions of additional property near the current park were recently completed and represent another successful public-private partnership as the funds for the land acquisitions came from Kent County, Ada Township, private investors and a series of Michigan Department of Natural Resources grants. The long-term vision for the expanded 395-acre park is to transform the land into a major regional park, continuing to preserve the Grand River and upland and wetland habitats with the trails and natural areas eventually connecting, via a pedestrian bridge, to Roselle Park, a 240-acre park located on the opposite side of the Grand River.

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“We’re excited about the idea of a future bridge connecting these two remarkable parks with each other and with the township and county trail systems – allowing interconnected access to more than 600-acres of park and trails available to residents and visitors alike” said Ross Leisman, Ada Township Supervisor. “Our township residents recently passed a millage to grow and maintain our trail system, and we look forward to continuing to partner with Kent County on developing and connecting this unique, natural outdoor area.”

“Kent County will develop and run a master plan process to give the community an opportunity to provide feedback on the development of the park,” said Kent County Parks Superintendent Dan DeLooff. “We are excited about the opportunities this park has to offer, and we look forward to hearing resident ideas on how to develop the green space.”

In 1928, the Park’s name was changed to Chief Hazy Cloud from Grand River Park to commemorate the great Indian Chief Mnobinnakizhick, or Hazy Cloud. He and his tribe worked and traveled the banks of the Thornapple River and Grand River, and their tribal home was near where the Thornapple River enters the Grand River.

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