



2021 ANNUAL REPORT SUMMARY Resource Management Services Brown Bridge Quiet Area

**Prepared by: Grand Traverse Conservation District Staff
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INTRODUCTION: Transformation of the 191-acre Brown Bridge Pond back to 2.8 miles of flowing, wild, and natural river through the removal of Brown Bridge dam in 2012 has changed the Quiet Area forever. Besides changes to the natural landscape, dam removal has piqued the public's interest in paddling the river. This along with the installation of two footbridges completing a loop trail system has brought a large increase in the number of visitors to the Quiet Area. The challenge is how to balance the variety of allowed uses while protecting the natural environment.

This document provides descriptions of notable management activities from 2021 as they relate to the four *Goals* of the property as described in the Brown Bridge Management Plan. **These Goals are as follows: Recreational, Natural Resource, Property Management, and Educational.**



Recreational Goal Statement: Provide safe sustainable access to the Boardman River and the designated trail system with careful thought given to impacts on flora and fauna.

- **Improved visitor navigation** by installing updated trailhead posters and trail intersection maps throughout the Parkland, and with the construction of a new InfoStation at the canoe landing (Figures 1 & 5)
- **Provided safe and sustainable trail and river access** by clearing fallen trees from the trails, parking areas, and from within the Boardman River channel. (Figure 6)
- **Created universal access** to Brown's Footbridge with the construction of a new ADA-trail (Figure 2)
- **Improved trailhead and trailside infrastructure** with the installation of several new benches and picnic tables (Figure 3 & 4)





Natural Resource Goal Statement: Promote native wildlife species and high-quality habitats through passive and active management practices.

- ***Improved aquatic habitat*** through the introduction of instream habitat wood and streambank shaping to stabilize an eroding streambank within the bottomlands.
- ***Promoted native plant communities*** through the installation of +8,100 bareroot seedlings and 77 large stock trees and shrubs.
- ***Protected habitat diversity*** through treatment of invasive phragmites, black locust, and honeysuckles on the bottomlands in conjunction with the Northwest Michigan Invasive Species Network.





Educational Goal Statement: Enhance visitor knowledge and appreciation of the area's history, natural features, and ecological processes to encourage thoughtful natural resource stewardship for all generations.

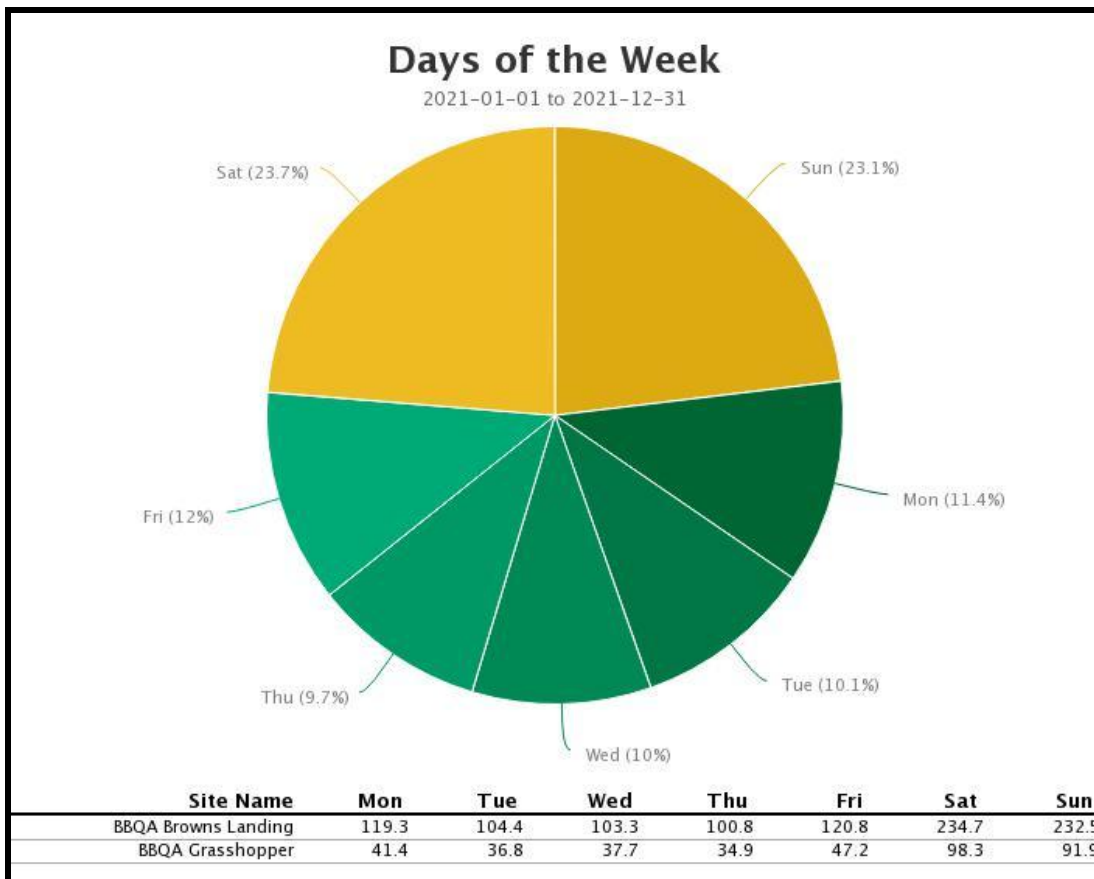
- **Provided a winter guided hike** to the public to share knowledge of the Quiet Area.
- **Led a field trip** of NMC Great Lakes Water Studies Institute students and planted several dozen trees and shrub seedlings while examining a recent restoration project site.
- **Facilitated an Adams Chapter of Trout Unlimited workbee** to plant trees along the river.
- **Provided an educational tour** to a group of Wildland Studies students for a Great Lakes Ecosystems course, then conducted a streambank restoration project.
- **Assisted the AuSable Institute** with educational programming for students from several local classrooms.
- **Installed a ChronoLog station**, aka a crowd-sourced photo monitoring station, atop the former dam berm that allows users to upload photos to a timelapse website containing information about the Boardman River and dams removal processes.

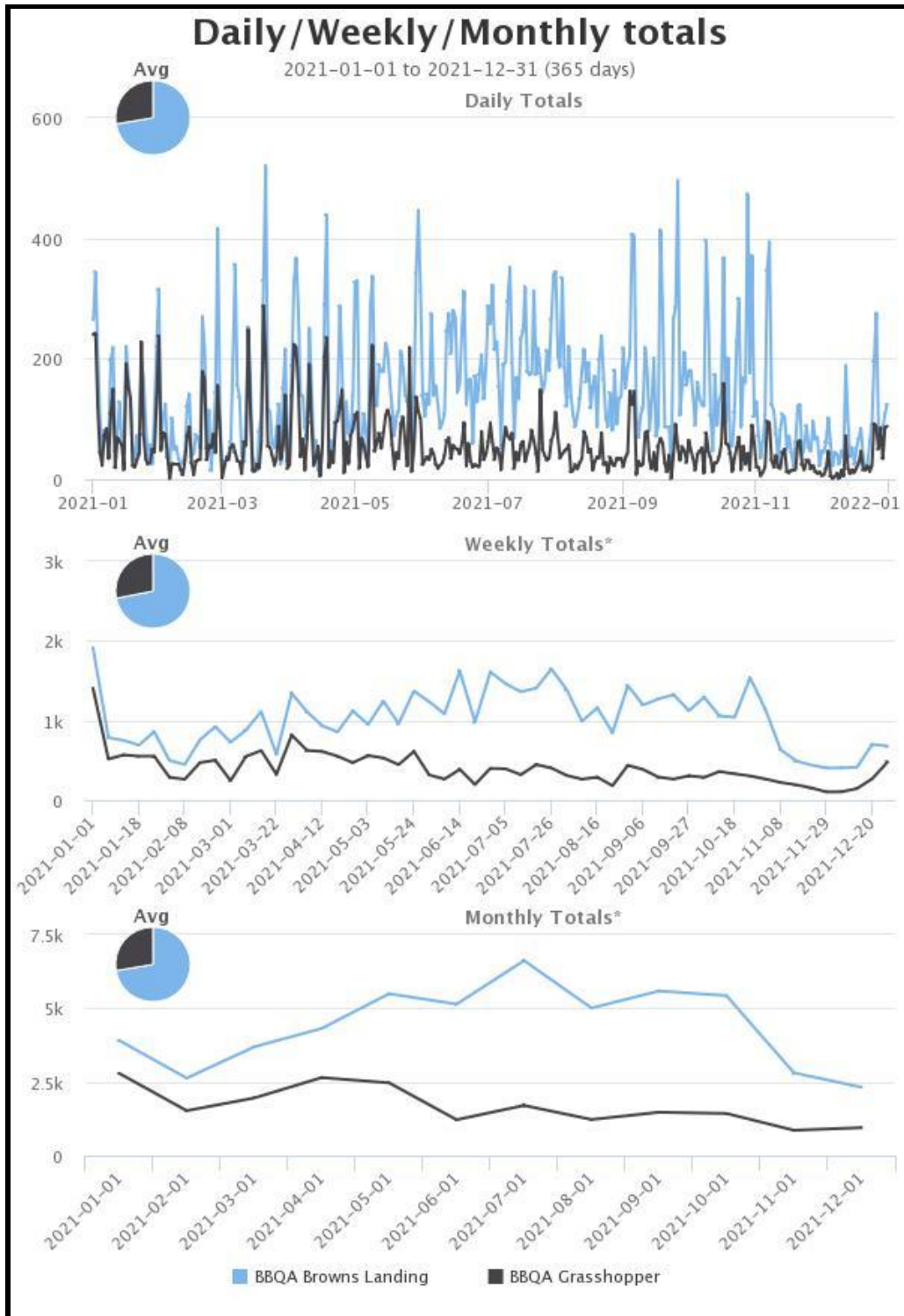


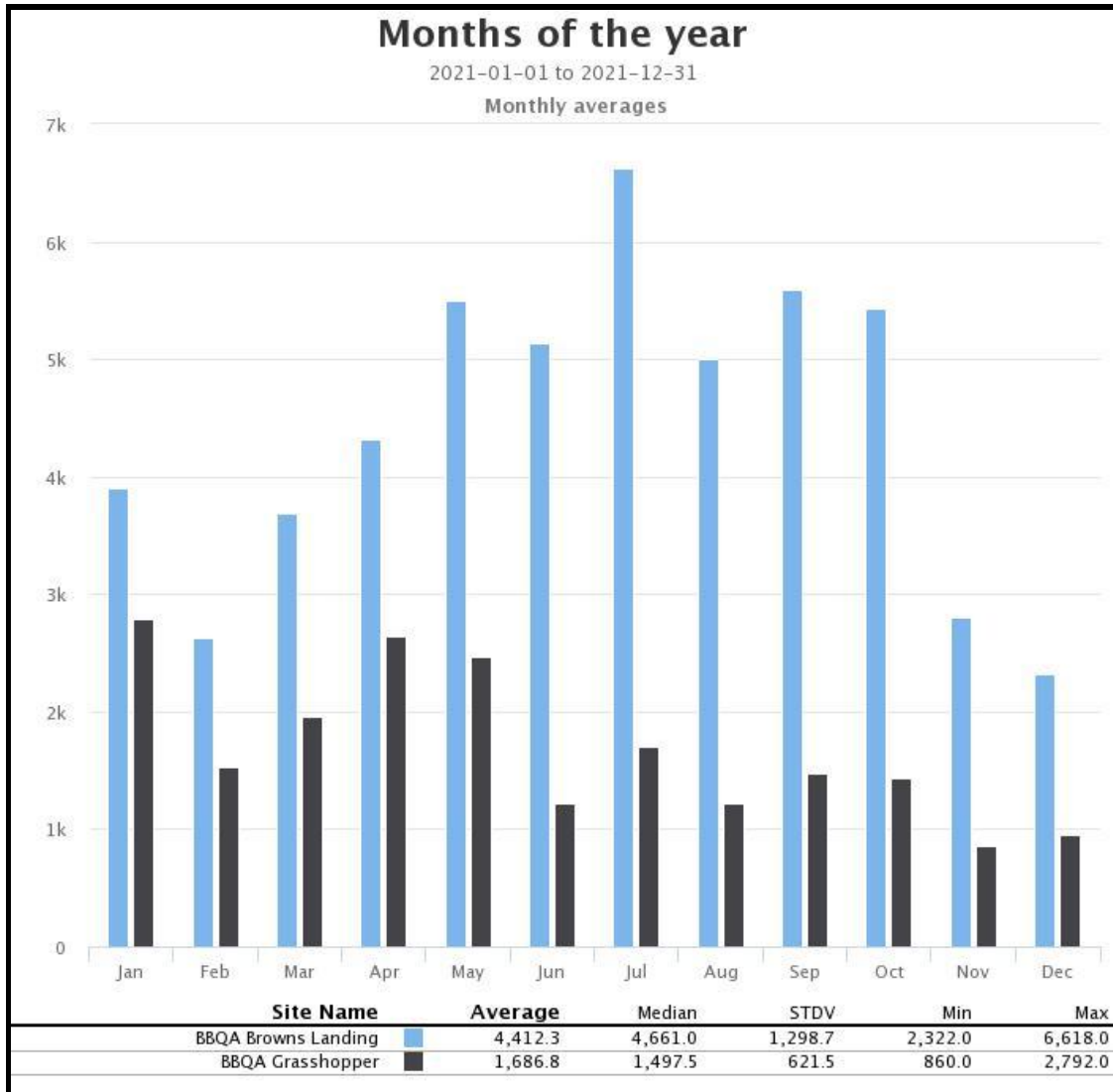


Property Management Goal Statement: *Maintain professional management of the Quiet Area that ensures decisions are based on sound Best Management Practices driven by data and made in the best interests of the river, wildlife, visitors, and the City of Traverse City.*

- **Maintained support staff** to the Brown Bridge Advisory Committee (BBAC) by developing agendas, writing meeting minutes, and by providing insight and updates regarding activity within Brown Bridge Quiet Area.
- **Provided the public** with stewardship opportunities by hosting several tree planting workbees, coordinating a Trail Steward program, and by guiding infrastructure improvement projects with Eagle Scouts.
- **Updated the Management Plan** under the direction of the Brown Bridge Advisory Committee.
- **Collected data** on parkland use through infrared trail counters to help guide management decisions and to use the information while applying for grants.
- **Addressed neighbor encroachments** through land surveys after facilitating discussions between City staff and several neighbors.









Thank you!