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Michigan DNR Prohibits Drilling, Protects Au Sable River's Holy Waters

Michigan LCV applauds decision

ANN ARBOR --- Michigan LCV commends the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) for agreeing to make oil and gas drilling off-limits within areas of the Au Sable River's Holy Waters corridor today. The Michigan DNR announced that they intend to change leases on nine parcels of land to be "non-development" agreements, which would not support infrastructure needed for fracking operations or other surface drilling.

"Today's decision is a clear win for Michigan's rivers, fisheries and water-based economy," said Jack Schmitt, Deputy Director for Michigan LCV. "The Au Sable River is legendary for its world-class trout fisheries and pristine landscapes. The DNR made the right decision to keep it that way."

The leases to be amended were set aside for Encana, a Canadian company that revealed plans to drill hundreds of fracking wells in Northern Michigan last summer. The parcels of land are located in a renowned section of the Au Sable River, known as the Holy Waters, for its immaculate fly-fishing conditions and pristine beauty. Neighboring fracking wells would have the potential to put water quality, blue ribbon fisheries and quality of life on the Au Sable River in jeopardy.

"We commend the Michigan DNR for recognizing the value in protecting one of Michigan's most renowned rivers," Schmitt said. "Our state's water-based economy is driven by clean water and healthy fisheries, and we cannot afford to put either of those on the line."

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