

# GREAT LAND

## Protect Michigan's Public Lands



Michigan is home to some of the most beautiful natural places in the United States. From dense forests in our Upper Peninsula, to bike trails and parks in South-east Michigan, to our freshwater beaches and sand dunes in West Michigan, nothing better embodies "Pure Michigan" than these places. Our public lands provide

significant tourism dollars, places to recreate with our families and friends, habitat for wildlife, and natural resource jobs for our economy.

Michiganders rely on our professional managers to use data-driven metrics and science in order to balance stewardship needs with public resource use when making decisions regarding the acquisition and management of public land. **However, throughout the 2011-2012 legislative session, Michigan citizens witnessed a shift in attitude toward these long-held values as dozens of bills weakening decades of protections were introduced or passed into law.**

The following list provides a snapshot of these attacks:

- Eliminated protections for coastal sand dunes
- Attempted to weaken Michigan's land conservancies

- Undermined management in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR)
- Politicized the non-partisan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board (NRTF)
- Limited the amount of land the state could protect.

Michiganders deserve better. **We need a true long-term plan for our public lands, one that builds upon our tradition of well-managed, sustainable land use.** This plan must account for the value of clean water, clean air, biodiversity, and non-motorized vehicle recreation in regard to the long-term health and ecological integrity of our state.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently embarked on a Public Land Management Plan to better assess the state's current land assets and establish objectives for acquiring and selling land going forward. It is imperative that the public and policymakers are engaged in a broad discussion on respecting the important role the DNR plays in managing and safeguarding our lands and resources. **Most importantly, bills meant to weaken protections for public lands must be halted before passed into law.**

For a full policy analysis and action items, visit [www.greatmichigan.org](http://www.greatmichigan.org)

### PRIORITY ACTIONS

- ✓ Halt bills meant to weaken protections for public lands.
- ✓ Incorporate public input and consider resource health, biodiversity, and conservation goals in new land management strategies.
- ✓ Enable and support the DNR, the Natural Resources Trust Fund and land conservancies to protect and acquire land for sustainable resource use, non-motorized recreation, and biodiversity stewardship.

GREAT MICHIGAN  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PRIORITIES

[www.greatmichigan.org](http://www.greatmichigan.org)

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