

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT



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The **Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE)** is committed to the conservation, protection, management, and accessible use and enjoyment of the state's environment, natural resources and related economic interests for current and future generations – a role it has relished since creation of the original Conservation Department in 1921.

Governor Jennifer M. Granholm issued Executive Order No. 2009-45, stating that the consolidation of state government functions related to the natural resources of this state would facilitate the effective use of our natural resources in a sustainable manner, preserve Michigan's rich outdoor heritage, provide quality and accessible outdoor recreation, restore the Great Lakes and other degraded natural systems to ensure resiliency and sustainability, and promote stewardship of Michigan's natural resources through education, awareness, and action. Thus, on January 17, 2010, the former Department of Natural Resources and Department of Environmental Quality were abolished, and the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (DNRE) was created.

The executive order stated that, consistent with Section 3 of Article V of the Michigan Constitution of 1963, the director of the DNRE shall be appointed by the governor, subject to the advice and consent process and shall serve at the pleasure of the governor. The director functions as the department's chief executive officer, monitors program activities to ensure efficiency and effectiveness of department operations, and ensures that the department's mission, policies, and statutory mandates are met. The director's primary authority flows from the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994, as amended) and is authorized by Executive Order 1991-31 to delegate decision-making authorities to appropriate levels within the department.

Plans for the Department of Natural Resources and Environment included a clear ecosystem health focus and the organization of a new field management structure defined by 4 ecosystem regions along the Great Lakes watershed. The department also undertook an in-depth transition planning process, in which all aspects of the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality were to be evaluated and common program themes and responsibilities examined. Three overarching bureaus emerged: Stewardship, Resource Management, and Environmental Protection.

The **Stewardship Bureau** includes the Recreation Division and the Forest Management Division and has responsibility for the Michigan State Waterways Commission.

The **Recreation Division** protects, preserves, acquires, and manages Michigan's state parks, recreation areas, and boating facilities and over 1,000 boating access sites and operates 7 harbors and partners with 63 grant and aide public harbors that make up the harbors of refuge system, all for the benefit of current and future generations. Michigan's 98 state parks and recreation areas host more than 22 million visitors each year and play an important role in Michigan's tourism industry.



The **Forest Management Division** protects, manages, and guides the use of a healthy forest resource base for the social, recreational, environmental, and economic benefit of current and future generations. Spanning 3.9 million acres, Michigan has the largest dedicated state forest system in the nation. The division administers 6.4 million acres of Michigan's mineral estate, which includes leasing the rights to explore for state-owned metallic, nonmetallic, oil, and gas minerals and underground gas storage areas, including the monitoring of over 8,000 mineral leases, which contributes between \$40 million and \$55 million annually to Michigan's unique Natural Resources Trust Fund for recreational land acquisition and development and the Game and Fish Protection Trust Fund. This division also manages the use of forests for timber production, tree growth, and forest regeneration, soil and water quality protection, recreation, and wildlife habitat.

The DNRE's responsibilities include carrying out the work of the **Michigan State Waterways Commission**. The commission is responsible for advising the department concerning the acquisition, construction, and operation of recreational harbors, channels, docking and launching facilities, and administration of commercial docks in the Straits of Mackinac.

The **Resource Management Bureau** includes the Wildlife Division, the Fisheries Division, the Water Resources Division, and the Law Enforcement Division.

The **Wildlife Division** protects and enhances public trust in Michigan's wildlife resources, natural communities, and ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations. The Wildlife Division manages and protects more than 600 species of game and non-game birds and mammals and their habitats, along with 97 state game and wildlife areas. Biologists make recommendations on hunting regulations, habitat management, and public hunting access and protect more than 340 threatened and endangered plant and animal species.

Michigan is among the top states in the nation in almost every hunting category, with more than 800,000 licensed hunters contributing \$2 billion annually to the state economy, while some 2.6 million non-consumptive users contribute \$1.2 billion annually to Michigan's economy. The Nongame Fish and Wildlife Fund, supported through donations and the purchase of the Michigan Wildlife Habitat license plate, supports natural heritage research, education, and habitat restoration projects to identify, protect, manage, and restore native plant and animal species.

The **Fisheries Division** is mandated to protect and manage the state's aquatic resources, including fish populations, other aquatic life, and aquatic habitat, which are held in trust for all Michigan citizens. The division promotes the wise use of these resources for the benefit of current and future generations.

Michigan offers a wealth of fishing opportunities with its 2 peninsulas that touch 4 of the 5 Great Lakes. The state is blessed with more than 11,000 inland lakes and 36,000 miles of rivers and streams, including 1,000 miles of blue-ribbon trout streams. Michigan has 3,000 miles of freshwater shoreline — more than any other state — and more total shoreline than any state except Alaska. In Michigan, you're never more than 85 miles from one of the Great Lakes.

Fish populations and other forms of aquatic life are monitored and studied by biologists, who strive to ensure their long-term protection while keeping fishing in Michigan among the nation's best. Up to 14 fish species are hatched and reared at 6 state hatcheries, which have state-of-the-art facilities to produce fish of very high quality. These fish are stocked annually into designated public waters throughout the state to maintain or improve fish populations. Michigan ranks eighth in the nation in fishing with 1 million resident licensed anglers, who, together with 400,000 non-resident anglers, contribute \$2 billion annually to Michigan's economy.

The **Water Resources Division** includes land and water management programs (except the Coastal Zone Management Unit) and the following programs: aquatic nuisance, invasive species, non-point source, pretreatment, wastewater discharge (both surface water and groundwater), water management, and water withdrawal. Its programs establish water quality standards; issue permits to regulate the discharge of industrial and municipal wastewaters; and monitor state water resources for water quality, the quantity and quality of aquatic habitat, the health of aquatic communities, and compliance with state laws.

This division also administers a variety of programs that help protect sensitive natural resources, including inland lakes and streams, wetlands, floodplains, sand dunes, and the Great Lakes. It is responsible for promoting the best use of these resources for their social and economic benefits and provides technical assistance and regulatory oversight over activities such as dredging or



filling wetlands, streams, and inland lakes; constructing marinas, seawalls, or docks; building in a designated critical sand dune, wetland, or floodplain; and protecting underwater shipwreck resources.

The **Law Enforcement Division** includes the former DNR Law Enforcement Division, the former DNR Emergency Management, and the former DEQ Office of Criminal Investigations. It boasts the nation's first salaried "game wardens," first commissioned in 1887. Today, Michigan's Conservation Officers are state-licensed law enforcement officers, with the primary responsibilities of protecting the state's natural resources, environment, public health, and safety through effective law enforcement and education, for current and future generations. This division provides investigative and law enforcement services for the department and includes criminal investigations into suspected violations of Michigan's environmental statutes and investigative support for civil and administrative enforcement actions initiated by other divisions. It also coordinates the emergency management and Homeland Security responsibilities of the department.

The **Environmental Protection Bureau** includes the Environmental Resource Management Division, the Remediation Division, and the Air Quality Division.

The **Environmental Resource Management Division** includes waste and hazardous materials, drinking water, source water protection, public health (such as swimming pools and campgrounds), Revolving Loan Program, Operator's Certification Program, and the Office of Geological Survey and is responsible for work carried out by the Hazardous Waste Site Review Board. Its programs provide regulatory oversight for all public water supplies; issue permits to regulate the discharge of industrial and municipal wastewaters; regulate and permit solid and hazardous waste sites; manage scrap tire piles; and regulate transporters of liquid and hazardous waste. The division is also responsible for plan review and approval for public water supplies, campground construction and public swimming pool construction.

The **Remediation Division** administers Part 201, Environmental Remediation; Part 211, Underground Storage Tank Regulations; Part 213, Leaking Underground Storage Tanks; and portions of Part 215, Refined Petroleum Fund, of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended (NREPA). In addition, the division manages the Aboveground Storage Tank Program, under the authority granted by the Michigan Fire Prevention Code (1941 PA 207, as amended), and portions of the federal Superfund Program, established under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA). Together, these statutes and the related administrative rules guide the division's efforts in the remediation and redevelopment of brownfield sites throughout Michigan.

The **Air Quality Division** works with business and industrial air pollution sources and with the general public to maintain compliance with state and federal air quality statutes in order to minimize adverse impacts on human health and the environment. Staff members identify and reduce existing outdoor air pollution problems and prevent significant deterioration of the air quality through air emission control programs, air monitoring, control strategy planning, permit issuance, complaint response, and inspection of air emission sources.



Additionally, the DNRE encompasses the Marketing, Education and Technology Division; the Administration Division; the Media and Communications Office; the Office of the Great Lakes; the Science and Policy Office; the Natural Resources Commission; the Natural Resources Trust Fund; and the Mackinac Island State Park Commission.

The **Marketing, Education and Technology Division** provides a wide array of services to department programs including information services, recruitment and retention, web site administration, technology coordination, license sales customer systems, and marketing. The division also offers educational programs for all ages in the areas of environment, natural resources, Michigan history, and outdoor recreation. In addition, division staff provides public programming in the areas of pollution prevention, environmental compliance assistance, and maritime activities and preserves historic records through the Archives of Michigan. The division is also responsible for the department's non-emergency information line (1-800-662-9278).

The **Administration Division** provides a complete range of financial and administrative support services to the DNRE, including budget development, accounting, expenditure and revenue projections

and monitoring, procurement, facilities management, real estate, grants, field operations support, and business operations. The importance of utilizing customer-friendly service technologies, sound accounting principles, and best business practices, as well as proper contract administration in the management of Michigan's natural resources cannot be overstated.

The **Media and Communications Office** designs and coordinates the communication of core DNRE messages on a statewide basis to a variety of audiences, implements overall media and communication strategy, and works with management and the Marketing, Education and Technology Division to provide consistent, quality communications work for department initiatives, programs, and services, all in an effort to strengthen the public's connection to Michigan's natural resources and environment.

The **Office of the Great Lakes (OGL)** was established in 1985 by the Great Lakes Protection Act as the lead agency within state government to develop policies and programs to protect, enhance, and manage the Great Lakes ecosystem. The OGL focuses on Great Lakes protection and restoration efforts and reviewing regional requests for diversions of water under the Great Lakes Compact. The office implements the state's coastal management grant program, Area of Concern Program, and Lakewide Management Plan Program. The OGL director also represents the state in a number of binational and interstate organizations, including the Great Lakes Compact Council and Regional Body, the Great Lakes Commission, the regional Great Lakes Protection Fund, and the International Joint Commission's Water Quality Board.

The **Science and Policy Office** will focus its efforts on administrative rules and regulations, emerging natural resources and environmental issues, strengthening the department's relationship with the legislature, and evaluating and setting department policy.

The **Michigan Natural Resources Commission (NRC)** is a 7-member public body, whose members are appointed by the governor and subject to the advice and consent of the senate. The NRC's primary authority flows from the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act (Act 451 of 1994, as amended). This act codified nearly 200 applicable statutes, many dating back to the 1800s. Voter adoption of Proposal G in 1996 vests exclusive authority in the NRC to regulate the taking of game. Residents are encouraged to attend and become actively involved in the commission's regularly scheduled monthly public forums.

The **Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund** was created by Act 101 of 1985 for the purpose of determining which lands and rights-in-lands should be acquired and which public facilities should be developed for resource protection or outdoor recreation purposes. The board of trustees of the fund submits to the legislature a list of those lands, rights-in-lands, and facilities to be developed, in order of priority. The list must then be approved by the legislature before purchases are made.

The **Mackinac Island State Park Commission** is an autonomous entity with authority to acquire, construct, maintain, and improve property related to the historic Straits of Mackinac. The commission was formed in 1895 and is responsible for all aspects of managing Mackinac State historic parks. It meets approximately 5 times a year and is made up of 7 members appointed by the governor and confirmed by the state senate. Commissioners serve 6-year terms.

Additionally, there are several committees and councils that advise the department in some way. These include:

- Michigan Forest Finance Authority
- Forest Management Advisory Committee
- Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board of Trustees
- Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks

