## Timbering controversy

#### State official says timbering limits are low

"The National Forest Management Plan is the hottest issue in Michigan forestry today," said David Olson, a member of the state's Natural Resource Commission. The NRC oversess the operations of the Department of Natural Resources (NNR).

According to Olson, the sparks of controversy won't be extinguished when the plan is completed late this summer.

Summer.

The commissioner binted that if The commissioner little that if certain areas of conflict are not resolved, "there will be a formal notice of appeal filed to the plan by the Michigan Forest Products Industry Development Council and possibly the DNR."

Although most forest harvesting is done in the Upper Peninsula, many suburban residents have followed the Issue as it has been debated in Ann Arbor.

"MICHIGAN IS in the midst of a najor expansion of the forest indus-y. Over \$1.5 billion of forest indus-y expansion has happened since 380," said Olson.

"The plan states levels of timber production which are too low to al-low achievement of forest industry

Olson, district forester with the SU Cooperative Extension Service, made his remarks during a recent visit to the U-M School of Natural our land

Penny Wrlght

Resources. He said the plan was deficient in analyzing current demand and estimated production levels. Draited by the National Forest Service, of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service activities in three national forests—Huron-Manistee in the Lower Peninsula, Hiawatha and Ottawa in the Upper Feninsula, united the Agriculture of the Agricult

DISAGREEMENTS have centered on the issue of timber harvesting.
The plan proposes to more than double logging in the forests. The three national forests represent 19 percent of Michigan's commercial forest land.

land.
Such groups as the Wilderness So-clety have opposed the projected timber harvest goals. They contend timber sales in the national forests have lost money over the last six years, and that increased harvests

are unnecessary and damaging to the forests' wild resource values.

Timber industry representatives contend the plan's proposed timber harvest projections are set too low. They say increase logging will improve local economics, contribute toward better wildlife habitats and improve the quality of timber harvests will exceed costs.

OLSON, THE only person repre-senting the Upper Peniasula on the seven-member; governor-appointed NRC, addressed the forest industry point of view.

"The plan presently will detract from Michigan' ability to implement the statewide forest resources plan and the forest products target indus-try program," he said.

Olson believes forest industry goals could be met without any mod-ifications in acreage assigned to wil-derness, semi-primitive recreation and other uses which limit forest management.

He noted that resource and eviron-mental management is subject to po-litical pressures. "The big issues in the Upper Peninsula are jobs and the local economy. Traditionally the Forest Service has worked to help make labe.

The Forest Service is presently re-viewing public comments on the draft version of the plan. The flant version will be reviewed every 10 to 15 years.



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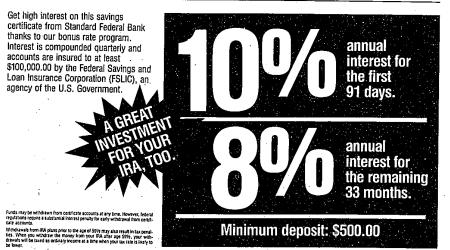
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