

# State maps lose track of 4 national forests

By Lem Messee  
outdoors writer

**L**OST: nearly three million acres of recreational land in a state whose No. 2 industry is tourism.

Culprit: the state government of Michigan, which systematically ignores the existence of four national forests.

You've read this complaint in past years. Well, the situation isn't getting better. It has become worse.

Now the state Department of Natural Resources has joined the Department of Transportation in pretending four national forests don't exist. Some of DNR's material is positively misleading.

**ITEM:** The Michigan transportation map, commonly known as the "highway map."

The Ottawa, Hiawatha, Huron and Manistee national forests aren't shown.

Why not? One alibi given by MDTOT officials a few years ago was that showing them would "clutter" the map. Nonsense. Other vacation paradises such as Colorado show their national forests. Even Illinois, where Michigan DOT Director Jim Pitz previously worked, shows national forests on its transportation map.

In fact, as late as 1982 Michigan's official map showed national forests. It was easy. MDTOT used a green tint.

Another reason from MDTOT is that owners of private tracts within national forest boundaries objected to showing the national forests, claiming vacationers set up on their properties believing everything was in public ownership.

If that tale is true, then we have sunk a long way toward becoming a plutocracy where a handful of northern property owners call the shots on state policy.

**ITEM:** A DNR campground directory, which we picked up in the lobby of the State Capitol, indicates all northern property is in state forests. (See map.)

The DNR map is positively misleading. (Note the national forests map.) DNR ought to recall and correct it.

There are at least as many national forest campgrounds as state forest campgrounds. Moreover, many of the state forest installations are fire (three to eight sites), poorly maintained mosquito hatcheries.

Like the MDTOT map, the campground map could be easily corrected without becoming cluttered. National forests could be indicated in a different color. A sentence could be inserted saying that maps of the national forests and lists of campgrounds and other facilities can be obtained from U.S. Forest Service headquarters in Ironwood, Escanaba and Cadillac.

**ITEM:** DNR in 1984 published a "Mapbook of Michigan Counties." At \$9.95, it's a bad buy.

There is a full-page chart of state forest campgrounds in the front of the

**Tourists and campers mean sales to Michigan businesses and taxes to the state. State agencies should promote, not ignore, our four national forests and their dozens of recreational opportunities.**

book and another chart of state parks and recreation areas on the back cover. (Incidentally, why couldn't they have been run on facing pages?)

The only indication in the text that national forests exist is a series of telephone numbers on the back cover. The text never hints that these might have campgrounds, picnic sites, boat launches, skiing facilities or other tourist attractions.

For the vacationer, a much better buy is "Guide to Fun in Michigan" published by Michigan United Conservation Clubs. MUCC's guide lists all campgrounds — national, state park, state forest, county and township — by county. MUCC's guide also lists sizes and facilities in the campgrounds and sizes of lakes.

Although both guides have a lot of small, almost illegible, maps, the MUCC guide is the more nearly readable. The DNR maps are all on the scale of three-eighths of an inch to a mile. MUCC blows up its maps of northern counties with lots of recreational facilities and reduces maps of places like Wayne County with few campgrounds and lakes.

**IT'S AS IF** there were some kind of bad blood between state government in Michigan and the U.S. Forest Service, which owns and operates the national forests.

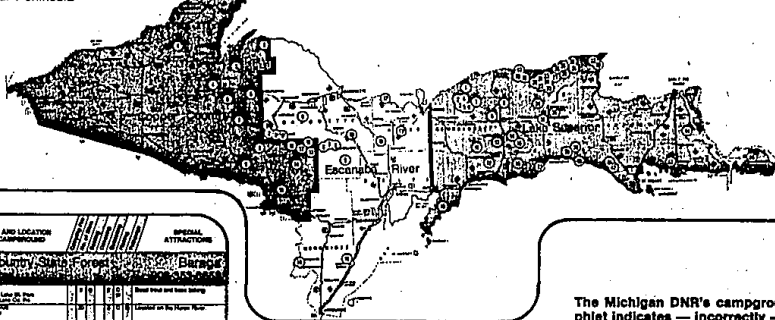
The state behaves as if the feds were its rival, as if General Motors were publishing a map of its dealerships and didn't want potential customers to know about Ford and Chrysler dealerships.

Tourists — even campers — mean money in the pockets of gas stations, restaurants, grocery stores, bait dealers, equipment shops and souvenir stands. Those retail sales generate taxes to the state and money for schools.

It's in the interests of both state government and business to inform people of the recreation resource known as national forests. State government should at least acknowledge the presence of — and even promote — these 2.7 million acres of national forests and their dozens of recreational opportunities.

**Editor's note:** The pen name of Lem Messee has been used by two dozen Observer & Eccentric writers over the past 18 years. In this article, Lem's "ghost" is Tim Richard.

## REGION 1 Upper Peninsula



The Michigan DNR's campground pamphlet indicates — incorrectly — that the entire Upper Peninsula is in three state forests. It fails to indicate the existence of the Hiawatha and Ottawa national forests.

## Blanchard orders tourism push

By Tim Richard  
staff writer

Gov. James Blanchard is ordering all state departments — particularly Natural Resources — to become more conscious of tourism.

"DNR's going to need more integration with other departments. It's an empire unto itself," Blanchard said in an interview.

The governor was told of outdoors writer Lem Messee's criticism that Michigan's Department of Transportation and DNR "systematically ignore the existence of four national forests." "That's the first time that issue has been raised with me," replied Blanchard, in the third year of his first term as Michigan's chief executive.

**"IT'S DIFFICULT** to get all state departments to think about tourism," Blanchard went on. He said he has ordered all depart-

**"We need to have coordination of slogans, themes, brochures. We need to sensitize DNR to tourism."**

— Gov. James Blanchard

ments to designate one staff member to sit on a committee that will coordinate promotion of tourism, Michigan's second largest industry.

"We need to have coordination of slogans, themes, brochures," Blanchard said. "We need to sensitize DNR to tourism."

Blanchard was interviewed by this writer and a group of Upper Peninsula newsmen in a Munising restaurant following his appearance in the Alger County centennial parade.

Cold, rainy weather that day drove downtown tourists from the beaches

and rivers into town for any kind of amusement.

"I like the UP," said Blanchard, who had flown in from his Mackinac Island residence. "This is my 15th trip here."

I'm the first governor to carry every county in the UP since Chase Osborn, and he was a UP resident." Osborn, a Sault Ste. Marie Republican, was a game warden and newspaper editor before being elected governor in 1910.

STATE REP. Pat Gagliardi, D-Drummond Island, agreed that departments of state government don't al-

ways work together.

"We are finally understanding that Michigan has a growth industry even during a recession — tourism," said Gagliardi, who attended the news conference.

The UP lawmaker praised Blanchard's appointment of an inter-departmental committee to coordinate tourism promotion, adding, "The federal government spends a paltry amount to promote foreign tourism in this country."

But Gagliardi wouldn't agree that there's no cooperation at all between state and federal agencies. He said Grant Peterson, superintendent at the Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore, has worked extensively with the state in promotion efforts.

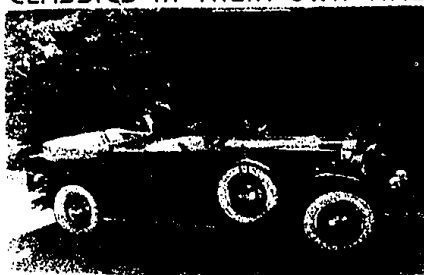
The state also has promoted the Seney National Wildlife Refuge and Isle Royale National Park, Gagliardi said.

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