Should 15,000 camp at Highland?

Circuit Judge Robert Anderson must decide whether to block a weeklong convention of 15,000 campers at Highland State Recre-ation area in western Oakland Coun-

ty.
The scheduled "campvention" of the National Campers and Hikers Association will turn Highland "into "The scheduled "campvention" or the National Campers and Hikers Association will turn Highland "into a private recreational vehicle park for a one-week period in July," charges a group of environmental-ists banded together as the Highland Recreational Defense Foundation.
"A minimal environmental cost," replied William Pierce, a senior park planner for the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, the defendant in last week's trial.

FOUNDATION attorney Jeffrey aynes of Bloomfield Hills wants

Anderson to:

1) Prohibit DNR from doing any more tree cutting, brush clearing, read preparing and other site work for the private camping group.

2) Rule that DNR exceeded its lawful powers when it in effect leased the area bordering Teeple and Haven Hill lakes to the campers for \$75,000.

\$75,000.
Since 1985 the campers group has planned the convention and needs a natural amphitheater, beach and town where it can hold a parade. The village of Milford is to host the parade.

Child care called key to prison cost

AP — By investing a relatively small amount in prenatal care, preschool education and dropout prevention, Michigan could save millions of dollars it now spends on prisons, a legislative report said.

The report, issued Thursday by a special 18-member committee appointed last June by House Speaker Gary Owen, recommended the state create a new agency to oversee and families.

Rep. Teola Hunter who headed

families.

Rep. Teola Hunter, who headed the panel, said the report's 49 recommendations underscore the need to spend an additional \$45 million to expand successful programs already expand successful programs alrea in place in some parts of the state.

in place in some parts of the state.

THE FOCUS should be on providing more prenatal care, parent training classes, preschool education, teacher training, day care and alternative schools designed to prevent high school dropouts, the report said. Hunter, D-Detroit, said the state is about to build six new prisons, and if it gave up just one, it could save the money needed to pay for the panel's suggestions. She said a small investment now would pay dividends for years to come in reduced welfare and prison costs.



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Judge Robert Anderson will decide whether the state DNR was right or wrong in issuing a 'campvention' permit for a 15,000-member group in the Highland



State Recreation Area.

But opponents, including the East Michigan Environmental Action Council, say DNR violates its master plan for Highland, which says:
"The primary them or emphasis for the whole park is environmental education and outdoor nature orientation. The secondary emphasis is general outdoor recreation. The park will be day-use oriented."

DNR'S PIERCE spent parts of two days as a defense witness, say-ing the 6,500-acre area not only could accommodate the convention but was the best of 13 southeastern Michigan sites.

Michigan sites.

The property once was owned by auto magnate Edsel Ford, who was motivated in part to protect his children after the 1927 Lindbergh baby kidnapping — hence the name Haven Hill Lodge. The state acquired it in the 1940s.

wen Hill Looge. The state of the 1940s.

"We looked at the size, the number of acres of state ownership, soils, slopes, in some cases woodlots," Plantage of the state of the

erce said.
"We looked at buffers, access to
both highways and public roads in
the park. We looked at available utilities, possibilities of an amphitheater, the beach

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"We looked at how much disrup-tion of existing uses would occur, the adjacent overflow area; the beauty; and the availability of a nearby com-munity for a parade." Highland scored 34 points vs. 25 for Holly State Recreation Area, 21 each for Pontiac Lake and Seven Lakes, 20 for Island Lake and 17 for Maybury State Park.

USING OLD aerial photos, Pierce

USING OLD aerial photos. Pierce aboy Scott Jamboree for 15,000 in 1957, a Girl Scott Roundup in 1960 and a Boy Scott gathering in 1940. All used cropped fields and former meadows, Pierce said. But Haynes argued that a convention of 15,000 older adults in motor homes, trailers and campers requiring electricity was far different from 15,000 scotts in tents. "At two different times of year," replied Pierce, noting the sout Jamborees were in May while the RVs were gathering in less rainy July.

THE ENVIRONMENTALISTS' attorney said DNR's preparations changed land use patterns, made permanent improvements and cost 26,000 trees. "The natural succession

of trees was set back 30 years, Haynes said.
Pierce said the cut trees were one five inches in diameter and that 19,000 other trees were undisturbed, including 12,000 with diameters of six inches or more.
"The canopied forest — that's what we said we would not disturb," Pierce said.

what we said we would not discurd. Pierce acknowledged that Michl-gan Civilian Conservation Corps workers once made a mistake and cut into a stand of black locust trees. But he said DNR Immediately tigh-end its procedures, and "there were

no further incidents."

MUCH OF Haynes questioning was aimed at showing DNR didn't ask whether the campvention should be held, but how could it be accom-

be held, but how could it be accommodated.

"We tend to react," said Pierce
"There is no intent to make the
campaites permanent," Pierce said,
cetailing which structures would be
dismaniled after the campeention.
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