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GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
LANSING



KEITH CREAGH  
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: June 21, 2013

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR

Information: Natural Resources Commission

Subject: Order to Regulate Use of Firearms on a Designated Portion of  
Traverse City Forest Management Unit, Grand Traverse County  
Land Use Orders of the Director Amendment No. 14 of 2013

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, authorizes the Director to issue orders to implement land use rules.

Discussion and Background:

The area commonly known as the Hoosier Valley Target Shooting Area is located along Hoosier Valley road in Blair Township, Grand Traverse County. Shooting use began in the 1960s or earlier and continues today. Fifty years ago this parcel was a 15-minute drive from the urban areas of Traverse City. There were few, if any, houses in the vicinity which likely made it feel like a remote location to most people. In addition, a steep ridge runs along the county road which acts as a natural backstop. The remote feeling combined with the steep ridge made this parcel very appealing for sighting in hunting rifles and for target shooting.

Many things have changed since 1960. Traverse City has expanded and Hoosier Valley is no longer a 15-minute drive from town. A large subdivision, built in the 1990s, sits within a quarter mile of the shooting areas and several local residents on Hoosier Valley Road are in close proximity. Target shooting use in the area has changed from primarily sighting in hunting rifles to recreational target shooting with a variety of firearms such as hunting rifles, hand guns and semi-automatic rifles with large capacity magazines. Also, the targets have changed from paper to exploding devices, appliances, and other metal targets.

In order to prevent people from entering on the county road and dumping large objects to shoot at, split rail fencing was installed in 2004 along with large boulders. The barricades have helped as the frequency of large items being dumped on site has decreased significantly. Local DNR staff have partnered with the Blair Township Board and also with the local residents and coordinated multiple clean up days.

As the years have passed, the shooting area has expanded. In the summer of 2012 measures were taken to remove and set back the encroachment of informal shooting areas that have crept closer to dwellings. Trenches have been put in and trees will be planted in a further effort to keep the shooting areas from expanding, especially near dwellings.

Today the shooting areas receive heavy, intermittent use. Some days, all shooting areas are filled and use spills over onto adjacent state and private lands, including a nearby power line corridor. Shooting times and frequency are unpredictable as are the types of firearms and targets used. Exploding targets and high-volume magazines have accelerated concerns over noise.

A public meeting with over 100 people in attendance was held June 6, 2013. Public comment was taken and used to draft proposed land use orders for the area to provide a certain level of immediate relief from the existing user/public conflicts while keeping the area open to recreational target shooting. By geographically delineating the area open to target shooting; instituting shooting hours; limiting the type of shooting devices, limiting ammunition style and capacity; and defining acceptable types of targets, this order should alleviate many of the existing conflicts until a long-term solution can be reached.

Recommendation:

We recommend that this amendment to the Land Use Order of the Director be signed to take immediate effect.

Bill O'Neill, Chief  
Forest Resources Division

Gary Hagler, Chief  
Law Enforcement Division

Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief  
Wildlife Division

Ronald A. Olson, Chief  
Parks and Recreation Division

James Dexter, Chief  
Fisheries Division

William E. Moritz, Ph.D.  
Natural Resources Deputy

# LAND USE ORDERS OF THE DIRECTOR

## Amendment No. 14 of 2013

By authority conferred on the Director of the Department of Natural Resources by Section 504 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, MCL 324.504, and in accordance with R 299.921 to R 299.933, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources orders the following:

### **4.21 Certain state-owned lands, Grand Traverse county, camping, motorized vehicles, dogs on groomed pathways, target shooting, prohibited conduct.**

Order 4.21 (1) A person shall not camp upon, use or occupy spider lake state forest campground, section 10, T26N R10W, Grand Traverse county, between the hours of 11 p.m. and 4 a.m.

(2) A person shall not camp, except with written permit from the forest management division, on any state-owned lands lying south and east of the Boardman river in the W $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  and E $\frac{1}{2}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 8, T26N R9W, Grand Traverse county.

(3) A person shall not operate a wheeled motorized vehicle upon the trail road running east from the center of sections 14 and 23, T27N R9W, to roots lake, or upon state-owned lands of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$  of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 35, T27N R9W, Grand Traverse county.

(4) A person shall not camp or use a motorized vehicle on any state-owned lands lying north of the Boardman river within the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of the NW $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 13, T26N R11W, Grand Traverse county.

(5) A person shall not operate a wheeled motorized vehicle on state-owned lands lying south of Supply road and west of the north-south pipeline line in the W $\frac{1}{2}$  of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 33, or within section 32, T27N R9W, Grand Traverse county.

(6) Subsection (5) shall not prohibit otherwise lawful use of the Boardman valley snowmobile trail by motorized vehicles.

(7) A person shall not possess or allow a dog upon the state forest designated and groomed Muncie lakes and VASA cross country ski pathways, Grand Traverse county, from December 1 to April 15 unless the dog is a hunting dog or guide dog being used by a licensed hunter or handicapped person for that purpose.

(8) On the state owned land in section 9, 14, and 15 of T26N, R11W, Grand Traverse county, a person shall not do any of the following:

- (a) Target shoot outside of the posted area.
- (b) Enter, use, or occupy the area for target shooting on Sunday.
- (c) Enter, use, or occupy the area for target shooting Monday through Saturday prior to 9:00 a.m. and after 7:00 p.m. or sunset, whichever is earliest; or as posted.
- (d) Possess or use for target shooting a firearm capable of holding more than 15 rounds in barrel and magazine combined.
- (e) Use incendiary, explosive, armor piercing, or tracer ammunition.
- (f) Use any device for target shooting other than:
  - (i) A hand-held rifle.

- (ii) A muzzle-loading rifle not exceeding .80 caliber.
- (iii) A shotgun.
- (iv) A pistol or revolver.
- (v) A crossbow or bow and arrow.
- (g) Target shoot at other than a paper, cardboard, or commercially-produced portable target designed and manufactured for the specific purpose of target shooting.
- (h) Target shoot at an explosive or incendiary target.
- (i) Place target upslope on a hillside.
- (j) Target shoot at a clay bird or other aerial target.

Issued on this 24th day of June, 2013.

Keith Creagh  
Director