



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



RODNEY A. STOKES
DIRECTOR

October 17, 2011

TO: Rodney A. Stokes, Director

INFORMATION: Natural Resources Commission

Transaction: Parks and Recreation Land Acquisition and Boundary Dedication
Menominee River Recreation Areas – Dickinson and Menominee Counties
The Quiver Falls and Piers Gorge Tracts
Land Transaction Case #20110002

Purchase: 2,354 acres - \$2,534,400.00

Description: Multiple parcels in the Townships of Norway and Breitung in Dickinson County and Faithorn Township in Menominee County, as more completely described in EXHIBIT A in the case file.

Seller: The Wisconsin Electric Power Company, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Property Taxes: Property taxes for 2010 were \$16,883.93

Authority: Part 5 and 19 of Act 451, Public Acts of 1994, as amended

Notice: This item will appear on the Department of Natural Resources' (Department) October 31, 2011 Calendar and is eligible for approval on November 8, 2011.

Comments: The offered land includes two separate tracts. The first tract, known as "Piers Gorge," is located one mile south of the City of Norway and includes 145.35 acres of land and provides 1.5 miles of access along the Menominee River. Piers Gorge offers spectacular views and incredible whitewater rapids and waterfalls. It contains some of the fastest-moving water in Michigan and Wisconsin. It is not navigable for general canoeing, but has become one of the more popular destinations for expert class kayakers seeking challenging class IV whitewater. An undeveloped foot trail parallels the gorge for 1/2 to 3/4 of a mile, and offers beautiful scenery and good wildlife viewing opportunities for eagles, osprey, and waterfowl, as well as public fishing access.

The second location, known as "Quiver Falls", is eight miles south of Piers Gorge. This parcel includes 2,208.83 acres of land and provides eight miles of access along the Menominee River. This parcel in particular has important conservation value because it is adjacent to the Menominee River Natural Resource Area, a 4,450 acre tract, situated along five miles of river in Michigan and Wisconsin, and managed by the Department and Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources.

The Quiver Falls tract includes eight miles of river frontage on both shores of the Menominee River. Quiver Falls consists of scenic rocky gorges with significant drops in the river. This waterfall remained after construction of hydroelectric projects along the river eliminated most other waterfalls and major rapid areas. Hunters and fishermen are attracted to the area not only because of the game, but also the beautiful scenery around the falls. Throughout the seasons, the area provides popular sightseeing opportunities.

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This acquisition will serve as the culmination of extensive discussions by the Department and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to develop a joint public recreation venture on these sections of the Menominee River. The venture will be unique for Michigan as the Department's first jointly operated public recreation area and river corridor park. This joint state venture would protect over 5,000 acres along the Menominee River.

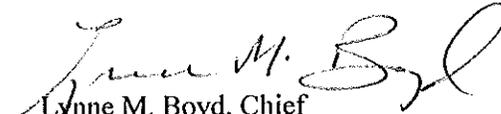
The purchase is a Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund "line item" project, with supplemental funds remaining from the Wisconsin Electric Energies project and the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund (LEFF), as needed. The LEFF Act allows the Department to sell rights in land and deposit proceeds in the fund, which is used to acquire replacement property.

The seller will convey any mineral rights that it may hold relative to the offered land.

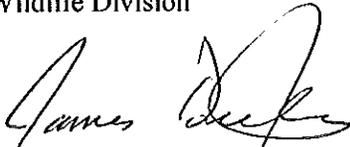
- Recommendations:
- (1) That the acquisition be approved, with payment to be made from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund, Quiver Falls and Piers Gorge Acquisition project line item, Act 16, Public Acts of 2011, the Wisconsin Electric Energies project, Act 278 of 2008 and the LEFF.
 - (2) That the property be dedicated as the Menominee River Recreation Areas.



Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division



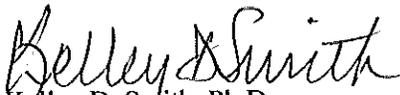
Lynne M. Boyd, Chief
Forest Management Division



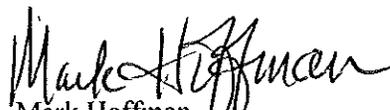
James L. Dexter, Acting Chief
Fisheries Division



Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Parks and Recreation Division



Kelley D. Smith, Ph.D.
Acting Natural Resources Deputy



Mark Hoffman
Chief Administrative Officer

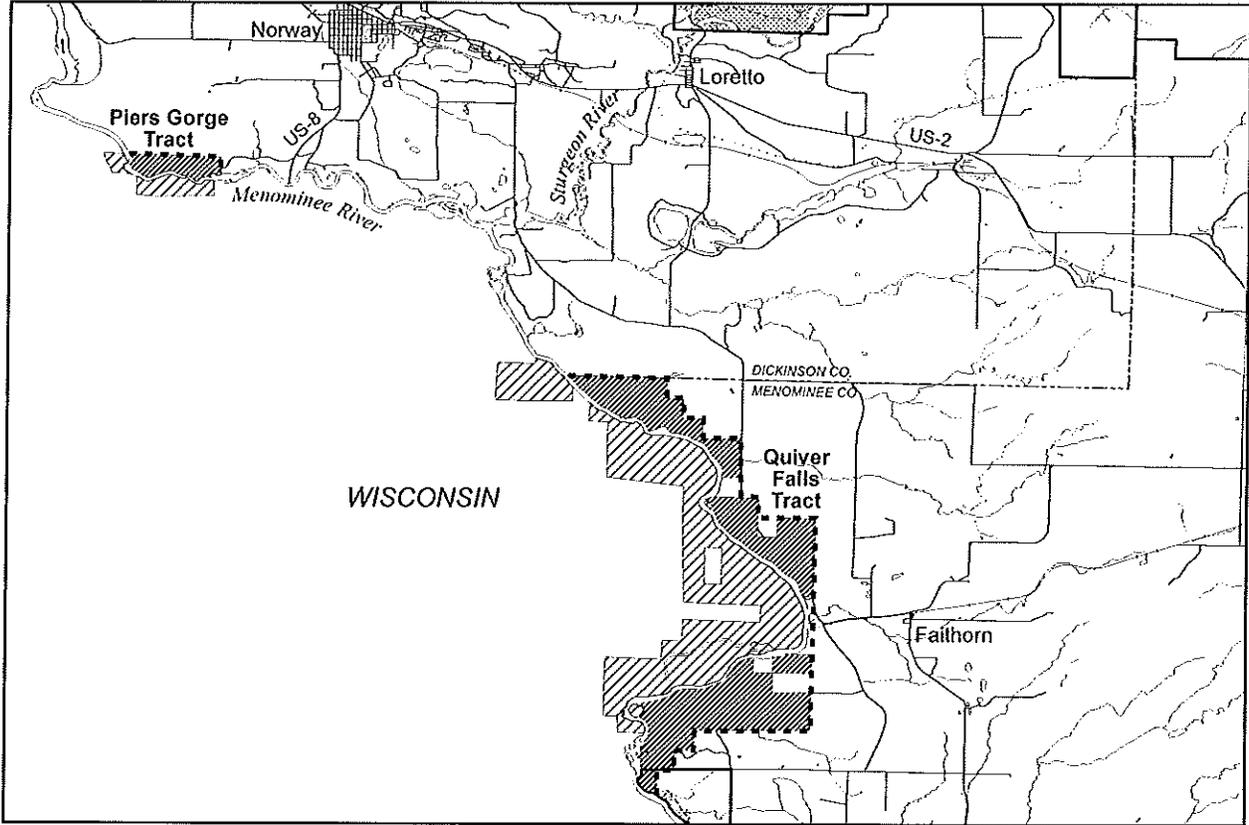
I approve the staff recommendations.

Rodney A. Stokes
Director

Date Approved

PARKS AND RECREATION LAND ACQUISITION AND BOUNDARY DEDICATION

Menominee River Recreation Areas - Dickinson and Menominee Counties
The Quiver Falls and Piers Gorge Tracts
Land Transaction Case #20110002



- State Forest boundary
- Proposed dedicated park boundaries
- ▨ Land offered to the DNR (2,354 acres - \$2,534,400.00)
- ▧ Land owned by the State of Wisconsin
- ▩ State land
- Private land



DNR-FMD
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10-17-11, 10:00 am