

**Michigan Department of Natural Resources
1994 Public Act 451, Section 503(9) Report
Fiscal Year (FY) 2022**

With the enactment of Public Act 240 of 2018, the Legislature approved the implementation of the *Department of Natural Resources Managed Public Land Strategy* (Strategy) dated July 1, 2013. The Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is required to provide a report to the Legislature including the following information and post this information on its website:

(a) Report on the implementation of the plan.

The Strategy includes measurable objectives related to three major goals:

- Provide quality outdoor public recreation opportunities.
- Foster regional economic prosperity.
- Protect natural and cultural resources.

When the Strategy was originally formulated, total state-wide land ownership was 4,589,000 acres, with 3,889,000 acres north of the Mason-Arenac line and 700,000 acres south of the line. As of September 2022, the total state-wide acreage increased to over 4,595,600 acres, with the total acreage north of the Mason-Arenac line decreasing to approximately 3,862,400 acres, and the total acreage south of the Mason-Arenac line increasing to over 733,200 acres.

In April 2021, the DNR provided the 1994 Public Act 451, Section 503(10) report that detailed the progress the DNR has made regarding the three Strategy goals. In FY 2022, key areas of focus included the following:

- Continuing the statewide land review of 240,000 acres of DNR-managed lands that are 200 acres or less, are isolated from other state lands, and are difficult to manage.
- Conducting public land auctions for surplus properties.
- Acquiring land holdings within state project boundaries.

The statewide land review commenced in FY 2021 and is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2023. The DNR is reviewing properties that meet the evaluation criteria in batches of ten or eleven counties at a time and has included a public-facing internet site ([State Land Review - DNR](#)) where the public can comment on the parcels under review. The parcels are classified into the following categories: retain in state ownership, dispose (at public auction), offer to a local unit of government or to an alternate conservation partner, or make available for land exchange. As required by PA 240 of 2018, before the DNR Director approves parcels that are over 80 acres for disposal, details of the transaction are posted on the DNR's website and published in a local newspaper, letters are sent to each local unit of government where the property is located, and a public hearing can be requested.

The review of 40 counties has been completed, and the DNR has declared over 8,300 acres as surplus to be disposed of by land exchange or sale. Prior to any parcel being available at a public auction, it is made available to local unit governments for purchase at the appraised value. In addition, 2,400 acres have been approved to be potentially conveyed to alternate conservation agencies that would be better equipped to manage the parcels.

The DNR recently concluded its summer 2022 public auctions on 181 properties consisting of 4,000 acres across 30 counties. Winning bids totaling over \$5.4 million were received on 138 properties covering 3,100 acres. Approximately \$5 million of the auction proceeds will be placed in the Land Exchange Facilitation Fund to be utilized for future priority land acquisitions. Parcels not sold at auction

will be available for purchase on the DNR's website ([Land Auctions and Sales - State of Michigan](#)) in December 2022.

In FY 2022, an emphasis was placed on acquiring inholdings within state project boundary areas. DNR Director Eichinger approved the acquisition by purchase or exchange of 1,750 acres that were completely or significantly surrounded by existing state ownership. Other important acquisitions approved by the Director included 955 acres in Delta County with 1.5 miles of frontage on Lake Michigan and a gift of 1,285 acres from the Upper Peninsula Land Conservancy that is now part of Craig Lake State Park in Marquette County. In southern Michigan, the DNR has started the acquisition process on 835 acres in Berrien County for a new state game area and 200 acres adjacent to the Pinckney Recreation Area in Washtenaw County. These major land transactions received support from the local counties and townships.

In July 2021, the DNR updated the Strategy, and it was submitted for review and consideration to the Legislature. The Strategy was developed with the engagement of nearly 400 stakeholders and members of the public to comment on the existing Strategy and the proposed changes, including the opportunity to complete an online survey regarding public lands. Presentations and facilitated sessions were conducted, and virtual public meetings were held with multiple stakeholder advisory groups and councils. The goals of the proposed Strategy are focused on the following:

- Protect natural and cultural resources.
- Provide access to outdoor public recreation opportunities.
- Perform responsible natural resource management.

(b) The number of acres of land in which the DNR owns surface rights (as of September 2022):

Acres North of the Mason-Arenac Line:	3,862,383
Acres South of the Mason-Arenac Line:	<u>733,242</u>
Total in Michigan:	4,595,625

(c) Information on the total number of each of the following (as of September 2022):

- (i) Acres of land managed by the DNR: 4,962,000 (including leased lands and conservation easements conveyed to the DNR)
- (ii) Acres of state park and recreation area land: 358,847
- (iii) Acres of state game and state waterfowl areas: 364,104
- (iv) Acres of land managed by the DNR and open for public hunting: 4,514,411
- (v) Acres of state-owned mineral rights managed by the DNR that are under a development lease: 365,410
- (vi) Acres of state forestland: 3,862,801
- (vii) Public boating access sites managed by the DNR: 1,045
- (viii) Miles of motorized trails managed by the DNR: 7,738
- (ix) Miles of nonmotorized trails managed by the DNR: 4,780

In addition, there are 1,024 miles categorized as both non-motorized and motorized trails.