

County of Gladwin

RESOLUTION TO OPPOSE THE CAMP GRAYLING USE OF STATE LANDS BY PERMIT

RESOLUTION NO: 2023-020

WHEREAS, The DNR and the Michigan National Guard have entered into a contract, entitled "Memorandum of Understanding" (MOU), as a framework for the issuance of a series of permits over the next five years and beyond, for the use of state lands up to 52,000 acres for military training exercises, and controlled trials of cyber and electronic warfare training technologies with up to 600 soldiers and "affiliated partner members".

WHEREAS, Northern Michigan relies on the recreational opportunities presented by their beautiful rich forests, pristine rivers, and open farmlands and the people of Northern Michigan want to retain what is left of its rustic and natural outdoor playground atmosphere, for the enjoyment of its citizens and visitors.

WHEREAS, the Guard is still dangerously vague about the planned activities they will be conducting and the potential for adverse effects on the lands, wetlands and wildlife; and that there is no provision in the MOU for an environmental impact statement or even an environmental assessment, which should be done on the entire acreage before any permit is applied for or issued.

WHEREAS, the Michigan National Guard has yet to demonstrate that they cannot conduct these military uses on their existing 230 square miles.

WHEREAS, the "access" by the public to these lands, as described in the MOU is a fallacy, because operations and maneuvers by as many as 600 soldiers and partners will interfere access by others.

WHEREAS, the permit process as outlined in the MOU and as provided by law does not provide the opportunity for the public to be heard and have input.

WHEREAS, the supposed restrictions on uses by the Guard are fallacies, because there is no mechanism for the DNR to track violations of these restrictions; no mechanism for people to report violations; no mechanism or obligation of the Guard to remedy violations; and there are no repercussions, including no potential for the termination of the MOU when the Guard violates any of the restrictions meant to protect these lands and allow continued public use.

WHEREAS, these proposed uses on these lands will disrupt the peaceful enjoyment of the natural resources and reduce the effectiveness of the "PURE MICHIGAN Campaign," reduce tourism dollars to community businesses and create even more hardships for its citizens.

WHEREAS, the MOU increases use within the Manistee, Muskegon and AuSable River watersheds, thus increasing the possibility of contamination in the Great Lakes; since the Manistee and Muskegon Rivers both flow into Lake Michigan and the AuSable River flows into Lake Huron.

WHEREAS, the proposed expansion of Camp Grayling's uses of state lands is directly contrary to the Mission Statement of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources: "**We are committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural**

resources for current and future generations.” and these uses are contrary to the DNR’s obligations by state law: “The department shall protect and conserve the natural resources of this state; provide and develop facilities for outdoor recreation; prevent the destruction of timber and other forest growth by fire or otherwise; promote the reforestation of forestlands belonging to this state; prevent and guard against the pollution of lakes and streams within this state and enforce all laws provided for that purpose with all authority granted by law; and foster and encourage the protection and propagation of game and fish.”

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Gladwin County Commission opposes the MOU and allowing these military uses of state lands by permits to be issued to the Guard.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the Governor and the DNR Director to immediately terminate the Memorandum of Understanding, as provided for in that contract.

IT IS FURTHER RESOLVED that we urge the DNR and the Governor to strike a better balance in favor of the environment and our community by denying the use of additional state lands by the Guard.

IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Gladwin County Commission directs the Clerk to forward a copy of this resolution to Shannon Lott, Director of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources, our County’s State Senator and State Representative, and Governor Gretchen Whitmer.

This Resolution was offered by O'Donnell; supported by Grove.

By roll call vote:

Those voting in favor:

Visnow - yes; O'Donnell - yes; Moore - yes;
Grove - yes; Taylor - yes

Those voting against:

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Those abstaining/absent:

0

RESOLUTION DECLARED ADOPTED.

County of Gladwin

Dated: May 23, 2023

By: Jule A. Jackson
Dep. County Clerk