



Founded 1987

# ANGLERS OF THE AU SABLE

An affiliated member of the Federation of Fly Fishers

Organization Headquarters

PO Box 200  
Grayling, MI 49738  
Telephone: (989) 348-8462  
Fax: (989) 348-2541  
[www.AuSableAnglers.org](http://www.AuSableAnglers.org)

June 23, 2017

Anglers of the Au Sable has recently engaged with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) on their ongoing process to inventory and open many state forest roads to off road vehicle (ORV) use. There is a limited window of opportunity for the public to provide comments regarding roads that should remain closed to ORV use. All other roads will be opened as a result of recent state legislation. More information on this process is available through the MDNR at [www.michigan.gov/forestroads](http://www.michigan.gov/forestroads). More details how this is proceeding and how you can be involved are provided below.

## **What**

Michigan [Public Act 288 \(PA 288\)](#), which was signed by Gov. Rick Snyder on Sept. 28, 2016, required MDNR to inventory and map all state forest roads, and committed to expanding ORV access to these roads in the Lower Peninsula. State-managed forest roads in the Upper Peninsula are already open to ORV use unless closed by MDNR. The opposite situation has been in effect in the Lower Peninsula, where state forest roads are closed to ORV use unless posted as open. About 7,600 miles of state forest roads in all 28 counties in the northern Lower Peninsula were inventoried by MDNR and preliminary recommendations regarding those that should remain closed were developed.

Anglers does not oppose legal ORV use on designated roads and trails in Michigan where established rules protect natural resources, sustainable forestry, water quality and wildlife habitat, and minimize user conflicts. Also, the roads that would be opened for ORV use through this process are already open to regular motor vehicles. However, our members possess knowledge of these forest roads that may help inform decisions to balance enhanced access with potential negative impacts, and we encourage that local knowledge to be shared.

## **Who**

All members of the public have the opportunity to provide input. Your comments will not serve as a "vote" to determine what roads should be opened or remained closed, but the local knowledge of Anglers members regarding conditions of roads and surrounding areas may help MDNR make better informed decisions. Public comments will be kept anonymous and only viewable by MDNR staff. Collectively and individually, we can make a difference, if we submit Public Comment.

Anglers of the Au Sable – Board of Directors is preparing comments regarding two aspects of this process, First, MDNR has recommended that all trails contained within River corridors, tributaries and wetlands (specifically: the Holy water, Mason Tract, and Deward Tract) remain closed to ORV use, and we fully support and expect that decision to be final. Second, MDNR has developed other criteria to warrant road closure, and we are requesting that more details regarding those criteria be provided so that our members and others may reference that justification when submitting their own comments in support of or asking for reconsideration of MDNR recommendations. Anglers of the Au

and others may reference that justification when submitting their own comments in support of or asking for reconsideration of MDNR recommendations. Anglers of the Au Sable would also support and encourage the DNR to perform an Environmental Impact Study; or at a minimum, Environmental Assessment.

## **When**

**The public comment period on these closure recommendations is only open from June 1-July 15, 2017.**

## **Where**

The most convenient ways to provide your input include navigating to the [online map viewer](#) developed by MDNR for the public to review and comment on these recommendations - tips on using this viewer are provided below - or by sending comments by email to [DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov). Details regarding several public meetings where comments may be provided and a mailing address to which comments may be sent are posted at [www.michigan.gov/forestroads](http://www.michigan.gov/forestroads).

## **How**

MDNR provided our staff a demonstration of the review and comment tool available at this link: [online map viewer](#), or by navigating to [www.michigan.gov/forestroads](http://www.michigan.gov/forestroads) and clicking on the link under "**Provide comments online.**" Here are a few tips regarding using this tool...

### **Basic zooming and navigation buttons are at the top left:**

- +/-: zoom in and out (**NOTE some features will appear or disappear as you zoom in and out**)
- Home button: reorient on Michigan's northern Lower Peninsula
- Search box: find an address or place
- Scope icon under the Home button: zoom to your location **if you are at a site you wish to view on a GPS enabled mobile device**

### **Additional mapping layers and comment instructions are at the top right:**

- Lightbulb and pencil icon: open the comment tool
- Legend button: explains different land ownership layers and road classes that appear on the map (**NOTE features will be added or removed as they appear or disappear with your zoom level**)
- Layer list: turn different road classes on/off (dropdown boxes next to these layers will show or hide their symbol)
- Basemap gallery: add other layers like aerial imagery, topographic features, street map
- Print: generate a printable .pdf or image you can save
- Information button: provides the website link for more information and email address for submitting comments, questions, or technical problems, and provides a few quick tips regarding submitting comments

**Your comments may support or oppose the MDNR recommendations, but will be most helpful if they provide reasons for your position.** It may be difficult to provide lengthy notes using the commenting tool. If you wish, as you use the tool to submit comments on a specific road segment, "tag" your comments with your name and a comment number. You can then provide more details in an email submitted to [DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov) and reference your brief submitted comment using

comments on a specific road segment, "tag" your comments with your name and a comment number. You can then provide more details in an email submitted to [DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-RoadInventoryProject@michigan.gov) and reference your brief submitted comment using your name and comment number.

---

**Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions about this issue,**

Tight Lines,  
Tm Baird