

## **Opportunity to share ideas on state forest planning for Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Manistee counties**

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will host open houses July 28 in Traverse City and July 29 in Kalkaska to talk about proposed forest management plans for 2017 in the Traverse City management unit, which includes Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau and Manistee counties. The open houses . providing great opportunities for interested residents to ask questions . are set for:

- **Tuesday, July 28, 3-7 p.m.**  
Traverse City DNR field office, 970 Emerson Road, Traverse City  
(Will cover proposed forest treatments in Benzie, Grand Traverse and Manistee counties)
- **Wednesday, July 29, 3-7 p.m.**  
Kalkaska DNR field office, 2089 N. Birch St., Kalkaska  
(Will cover proposed forest treatments in Kalkaska County)

### **What is forest inventory?**

Each year, DNR personnel evaluate one-tenth of the state forest. The inventory provides decision-making information for foresters and wildlife, fisheries and other resource managers. Staff also assesses the age, health, quality and quantity of trees and other vegetation, carefully considering timber management, wildlife and fisheries habitat, minerals, archeological sites, recreational use, wildfire potential, social concerns and other topics.

Because each forest inventory is completed approximately two years in advance (to properly prepare for treatments), a "year of entry" is assigned to indicate when treatments will begin. Information currently under review has a 2017 year of entry. This means that treatment activities on lands being reviewed this year will actually begin in 2017.

Proposed treatments, which may include timber harvesting, replanting and other management activities, are designed to ensure the sustainability of all forest resources,+ explained Bill O'Neill, chief of the DNR Forest Resources Division. We hold these open houses in advance to give folks an opportunity to comment on the science-based decisions we have made for the well-being of our forest resources now and in the future.+

### **How are all 4 million acres inventoried?**

To more easily and efficiently oversee the forest resources, the DNR divides each management unit into smaller units or "compartments." This year, the compartments under review are in Almira, Crystal Lake, Gilmore, Inland and Platte townships (Benzie County); Acme, East Bay, Union and Whitewater townships (Grand Traverse County); Bear Lake, Blue Lake, Excelsior, Garfield, Oliver, Orange and Springfield townships (Kalkaska County); and Cleon, Manistee and Marilla townships (Manistee County);

Maps and information regarding proposed treatments will be available at the open house. The information can also be found at [www.michigan.gov/forestry](http://www.michigan.gov/forestry). Compartment review packets for the 2017 year of entry can be found by selecting the "Find a Forest" button and clicking the "Traverse City" button on the map. Records of decisions, recorded timber harvests and other treatments for past years are available on this page.

On Aug. 24, the DNR will complete its formal compartment review to decide on final treatment plans for these areas. That review will take place:

- **Monday, Aug. 24, 9 a.m.**  
Stone House, 419 S. Coral St., Kalkaska

Those with disabilities who need accommodations for either meeting should contact Dave Lemmien, 231-922-5280, at least five business days before each meeting.

### **Can't attend in person?**

Those unable to attend either meeting are encouraged to submit comments via email to [lemmiend@michigan.gov](mailto:lemmiend@michigan.gov) using the subject line "Traverse City state forest open house comment." All comments must be received at least three business days before each meeting.

"Michigan's state forests truly belong to the people of Michigan," O'Neill added. "As caretakers of those forests, we genuinely are interested in hearing . . . either in person or through email . . . the public's ideas about the future use and enjoyment of these vital natural resources."

For more information about the state forest planning process, visit [www.michigan.gov/forestplan](http://www.michigan.gov/forestplan).