



GRETCHEN WHITMER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES
LANSING



DANIEL EICHINGER
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: September 29, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO THE DIRECTOR

Subject: Closure of North Pioneer Road DNR Range located on state forest land in Benzie County, Traverse City State Forest
Land Use Order of the Director Amendment No.6 of 2021

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, authorizes the Director to issue orders to implement land use rules, and MCL 324.504(11) authorizes the Director to issue orders for emergency management purposes.

Discussion and Background:

Over the last five years, informal target shooting within the Traverse City State Forest has become increasingly popular for recreational target shooters. Prior Land Use Orders of the Director (LUOD) restricted target shooting in parts of Grand Traverse County to improve safety and regulate target shooting activities following the opening of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Supply Road Shooting Range. Expanded target shooting activities in Benzie County have created unsafe conditions for public land users and neighboring landowners in the vicinity of North Pioneer Road. The DNR has received and investigated numerous complaints regarding unsafe conditions and projectiles leaving the informal target shooting area on North Pioneer Road. These complaints have been both through direct contact with DNR Law Enforcement Division (LED) officers, as well as via the Benzie County Sheriff's Department.

Following receipt of these complaints, DNR staff took action to drive responsible and safe target shooting at this location. Forest Resources Division staff posted signs at the site to encourage shooters to fire from the base of the hill, rather than from the elevated parking area. Shooting benches/tables were relocated to the base of the hill, and local LED staff made concerted efforts to contact target shooters and encourage responsible use of the area.

Despite these efforts, user conflict and safety issues have continued and additional complaints of projectiles leaving the target shooting area have been received. Given the increased and continuing safety concerns and conflicts, it is recommended that the area commonly known as the North Pioneer Road DNR Range be closed to target shooting immediately until such time as the public safety concern can be eliminated at the site. The DNR will utilize traditional press release messaging, post an update on the "Closures" page, and utilize social media to assist in messaging out this closure.

This order will protect the users of the state forest and the neighboring property owners from these safety issues.

LAND USE ORDERS OF THE DIRECTOR

Amendment No. 6 of 2021

By authority conferred on the Director of the Department of Natural Resources by Section 504 of the Natural Resources Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, MCL 324.504(11), and in accordance with R 299.921 to R 299.933, the Director of the Department of Natural Resources orders the following:

4.10 Certain State-owned lands, Benzie County, use or occupancy prohibited at certain times, prohibited conduct.

Order 4.10 (1) A person shall not use or occupy for any purpose the following described state-owned lands in Benzie County between the hours of 1 a.m. and 4 a.m.:

(a) Homestead dam boating access site located within section 2, T25N R15W.

(b) US-31 boating access site located within section 2, T25N R15W.

(c) Grace road boating access site located within section 34, T26N R15W.

(2) A person shall not do any of the following on state-owned lands within section 2, T25N R15W:

(a) Camp.

(b) Establish or tend a fire for any purpose.

(3) On state-owned land commonly known as the North Pioneer Road DNR Range in the NW ¼ of the SW ¼ of section 11, T26N, R14W, Benzie County, a person shall not target, trap, or skeet shoot until December 29, 2021, unless this section is rescinded sooner by order of the department.

This Order shall be posted on or after 12:00 PM, the 30th day of September.

Issued on this 30th day of September 2021.



Daniel Eichinger
Director