

June 23, 2025

Amber Tembreull
District Ranger
Kenton Ranger District
Ottawa National Forest
4810 East M28, Kenton, Michigan 49967
(906) 852-3500
Email: Amber.Tembreull@usda.gov

Dear District Ranger Tembreull,

We, the undersigned, urge you to use your authority as District Ranger to preserve the potential of the Trap Hills to be designated as federal Wilderness by removing it from inclusion in the North Victoria Vegetation Management Project (the Project).

If the Ottawa National Forest, however, does proceed with any logging or other Project activities in the Trap Hills, we urge you to ensure those steps would not impair the Wilderness qualities of the area. We ask that those activities be delayed until the last phase of the project's 30-year implementation to preserve the opportunity of the Trap Hills to be designated as federal Wilderness, as called for by the Keep the U.P. Wild coalition.

The 25,000-acre Trap Hills is rare gem worthy of the highest protection given – as the U.S. Forest Service describes – its “large tracts of undisturbed forest, rugged slopes and ridges, streams, waterfalls and ponds [offering] solitude and [a] sense of remoteness that is unique in the Great Lakes area.”

Residents of Michigan’s Western Upper Peninsula and visitors alike highly value the Trap Hills for its scenic beauty, spectacular views from Michigan’s highest sheer cliff, vast conifer and hardwood forest, abundant hunting and fishing opportunities, and popular hiking access along segments of the North Country National Scenic Trail.

Protecting the Trap Hills will help fight forest fragmentation and climate change. It will promote biodiversity in an area known for its rare and endangered species like gray wolves, moose, peregrine falcons, northern goshawks, and wood turtles. The area also features a diverse array of flora, including species like Braun’s holly fern and fairy bells (*Prosartes hookeri*), which Michigan lists as “threatened” and, east of the Rocky Mountains, is found only in Gogebic and Ontonagon Counties in the Western Upper Peninsula.

Preservation of the Trap Hills also will boost the Western U.P.’s multimillion-dollar outdoor recreation and tourism economy by enshrining special forms of recreation like hiking, camping, rock climbing, hunting, fishing, birding, kayaking, and snowshoeing – while prohibiting motorized vehicles and logging. Growing the outdoor recreational economy in all seasons is

essential here given the region's long-term declining population and job base and less reliable winters due to climate change.

For all of the reasons cited above, we call on you as District Ranger to preserve the potential of Trap Hills to be designated as federal Wilderness by removing it from inclusion in the North Victoria Vegetation Management Project or otherwise ensuring that no ONF activities impair the Wilderness qualities of the area. Our hope is that the Trap Hills will retain the unique characteristics recognized by the Forest Service so that current and future generations alike may one day enjoy the majestic area of mature and old growth forest as permanently protected federal Wilderness.

Sincerely, the undersigned organizations and businesses:

Aaron Peterson Studios	M-36 Coffee Roasters
Audubon Society of Kalamazoo	MadePerfect/LakePerfect
Big Sky Recording	MichCamo
Bivouac	MTU's Sustainability Demonstration House
BODEGA	National Wolfwatcher Coalition
Citizens for a Safe & Clean Lake Superior	Nukewatch
Copper Country Bird Club (formerly CC Audubon)	Old-Growth Forest Network
Endangered Species Coalition	Paddle Planner LLC
Flow Water Advocates	Stewards of Kleinstuck
Freshwater Future	Superior Coffee Roasting Co., Inc.
Friends of Sylvania	Temple Kol Ami (West Bloomfield, MI)
Into the Wild Fly Fishing Guide Service	Thunder Bay Trails Association
Kahtoola, Inc.	Twin Birch
Kall Morris Inc (KMI)	U.P. Wild Church
Keweenaw Outfitters	Winter Wildlands Alliance
L. Mawby, LLC	Wisconsin Forest Conservation Task Force