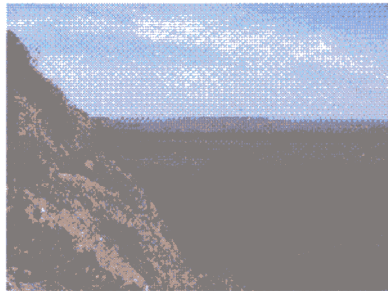


Fall 2006

Ten Natural Wonders of the U.P.



Trap Hills photo courtesy of
Hunt's Guide to Michigan's Upper Peninsula



Les Cheneaux Channel photo courtesy of
Les Cheneaux Chamber of Commerce

When you think about the Upper Peninsula, what comes to mind? Forests? Rocky trails? Vast expanses of open water?

Okay, now specifically what *places* in the U.P. pop into your head? At our annual meeting last April, hiker and outdoor writer, Eric Hanson, posed those questions to the audience. He asked us for our gut response: what did we perceive to be the iconic places in the U.P., the locales so tied up in our feelings about the U.P. that the U.P. just wouldn't be the U.P. without them? Then, for the rest of that evening, Eric entertained us with slides of favorite U.P. sites which he argued had achieved the status of revered icons.

Now it's your turn. What ten places in the U.P. boast such extraordinary environmental value and natural beauty that you would nominate them as icons? We'd love to hear from you and share your thoughts with the rest of our membership. After all, if our stated mission is "protecting and maintaining the unique environmental qualities of the Upper Peninsula," it good to know exactly which locations you feel possess the qualities worthy of that kind of (Natural Wonders continued on Page 3)



Lake of the Clouds, photo used with permission of Mich. Dept. of Natural Resources, Parks and Recreation Division

Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition

U.P. Environment

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UPEC Action...

UPEC assumes intervener status in Ottawa Forest appeal

With UPPAC and North Country Trails, UPEC provides guided tours of UP-PCO basins to raise awareness of impact of land sale

Don't Forget Those Econo Slips!

Thanks to you and EconoFoods, UPEC has earned several hundred dollars over the past few years from by submitting grocery receipts collected from that store by UPEC members. That amount represents 1% of total gross receipts from all the slips.

That may not seem like a lot, but, when you're a non-profit organization, every little bit helps. Of course, that amount could be even higher this year if more of you were to save your slips and send them to us!

Either save them up all year long and mail them off to us before the end of May, or simply hand them to a UPEC board member when you attend a meeting—whatever is most convenient. It's one of the easier ways you can offer your support.

About UPEC...

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition has a 30-year track record of protecting and seeking to maintain the unique environmental qualities of the U.P. through public education and watchful monitoring of industry and government.

UPEC seeks common ground with diverse individuals and organizations in order to promote sound planning and management decisions for all the region's natural resources.

Our newsletter, the *U.P. Environment*, is published four times a year.

You can send your comments or contributions to UPEC by standard mail at P.O. Box 673, Houghton, MI 49931, or e-mail us at srasch@up.net.



Earth Share of Michigan allows working people to donate to environmental organizations through workplace giving campaigns.

Each year Earth Share provides UPEC with critically-needed funding for environmental education and program operation.

If you would like to help us earn more funding for UPEC, consider letting your employer know you want the Earth Share of Michigan giving option at your workplace and give to the annual payroll deduction plan.

For more information, please call:
1 (800) 386-3326 or view the website at:
www.earthsharemichigan.org

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(*Natural Wonders* continued from Page 1)

vigilance. You can drop your nominations in the mail to us (at P.O. Box 674, Houghton MI, 49931) or simply go on-line at our website (upec@upenvironment.org) to offer your suggestions.

Recently, Edward G. Voss, UPEC member and Curator and Professor Emeritus of the University of Michigan Herbarium, e-mailed us his nominations. Dr. Voss' has spent a lifetime studying the plant life of the Great Lakes region, the result of which was the publication of a three volumes on *Michigan Flora* which find frequent use in state universities .

Like many of us, Dr. Voss had a hard time limiting himself to just ten places. Here, then, are his nominations for the 10 Natural Wonders of the U.P. with one to spare.

1. **TAHQUAMENON RIVER** [at least from Upper Falls to Lower Falls if this must be restricted -- or the Upper Falls if more restriction is required] The Upper Falls are the grandest between Niagara and the West, and the immediate context is a fine wilderness.

2. **GRAND SABLE DUNES** The grandest dunes in the state and not deteriorated by excessive use as are the Sleeping Bear dunes.

3. **PICTURED ROCKS** [if necessary to restrict, at least the Chapel Lake, Falls, & Beach area]. A little sentiment is involved here. I first drove (in a Plymouth sedan) to Chapel Beach in 1954, admiring the Lake and Falls en route, and thought everything was about the finest scenery I'd ever seen in Michigan.

4. **ISLE ROYALE** (including all the smaller islands in the archipelago] Michigan's most boreal, almost subarctic site, loaded with rare and interesting plants (and animals); the very much smaller "offshore" islands are charming and different from one another in details--I've explored a number of them.

5. **PORCUPINE MOUNTAINS** Wild country notable for the size of its relatively undisturbed northern hardwood forest and long stretch (I've hiked it all) of undisturbed Lake Superior shore.

6. **HURON MOUNTAINS** Magnificent views from elevations and fully primitive woods and lakes (some almost in canyons) long protected by private ownership and thus not overrun by people!

7. **SYLVANIA TRACT** Wonderful mosaic of forest (much old-growth) and about 50 assorted lakes and bogs, a magnificent range of wild undeveloped terrain away for the shore of the Great Lakes.

8. **McCORMICK WILDERNESS** Another marvelous example of forest not yet vandalized by chainsaw and mechanized transportation!

9. **BROCKWAY MOUNTAIN** [this could be expanded to more of the Keweenaw area!] Scenery and concentration of rare plants helps to overcome context of considerable accessibility and reminders of landscape marred by mining history.

10. **FIBORN KARST/CAVES** Perhaps Michigan's only good caves (in Mackinac Co. NE of Rexton), with the underground Hendrie River and adjacent Karst topography.

Dr. Voss goes on to write, "If I could add an 11th, I'd include the Raber fossil beds east of

(Continued on Page 4)

(Natural Wonders continued from Page 3)

Goetzville in eastern Chippewa Co., near (the) St. Mary's River. Magnificent concentration of fossils in the limestone beds, including right on the exposed surface.

As you can see, my criteria have included scenery, lack of human disturbance, naturalness of forest and other plant life, and superb rating among similar sites (if any) in the state. Good luck with the unenviable task of coordinating nominations!"

Thanks, Dr. Voss. We agree - it's going to be extremely tough limiting the list to ten places, but we're willing to give it a try. How about giving us some help with the task, folks?

Editor

Central Upper Peninsula Sierra Club Group Sponsors Wilderness First Aid Course



The Central Upper Peninsula (CUP) Group of the Sierra Club will be sponsoring a Wilderness First Aid course on Friday, November 17th and Saturday, November 18th. The session on Friday will run from 12-9 PM, and the session on Saturday will run from 9-6 PM. The course will take place in room 140 of the Physical Educational Instructional Facility (PEIF) on the campus of Northern Michigan University. Cost of the course will be \$100. For those interested in CPR certification, a session will be offered Thursday, November 16th from 7-9 PM for a small additional cost.

This 16-hour program covers topics ranging from preparation and prevention to assessment and treatment. Classroom lectures and discussions are supplemented by practical work and problem-solving exercises. The emphasis is always on hands-on experience. Scenarios are an important part of this training. The first day will cover patient assessment, shock, long-term patient care, and soft tissue injuries. The second day will cover environmental emergencies, fractures/dislocations, splint improvisation, and preparedness. The course provides a backcountry emphasis with long-term care and evacuation complications.

Instructor for the course will be Chris Kostelansky who teaches first aid courses at Northern Michigan University and is certified by SOLO (Stonehearth Open Learning Opportunity). This is SOLO's twenty-seventh year offering its workshops in Wilderness First Aid. For more information about SOLO or the first aid courses they offer, see <http://www.soloschools.com/wfa.html>

If you camp, hike, ski, kayak, or take part in similar outdoor activities that take you out of range of a quick trip to the hospital or clinic, you will find this course beneficial. As sponsor of the course, we need a minimum enrollment of 12. The course is open to all, not just Sierra Club members. Be sure to tell anyone you know who might be interested about the course.

To sign up for the course, contact John Rebers, 612 Pine Street, Marquette, MI 49855. You can also telephone (906-228-3617) or send an email to john.rebers@michigan.sierraclub.org. Please indicate whether you are signing up only for the Wilderness First Aid course, or if you would like to complete the CPR course as well.

Submitted by John Rebers, President CUP-
Group of Sierra Club

DEQ Michigan Environmental Education Curriculum Support (MEECS)

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition (UPEC), in partnership with the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), is pleased to announce that Michigan is among only a handful of states in creating its own environmental education curriculum known as the Michigan Environmental Education Curriculum Support (MEECS). Five outstanding Michigan-specific science and social studies units are ready for Michigan classrooms consisting of Ecosystems & Biodiversity (grades 4-6), Land Use (grades 4-5), Water Quality (grades 6-8), Energy Resources (grades 7-9), and Air Quality (grades 7-9).



This project is designed to provide students in grades four through nine with an opportunity to learn about and to increase appreciation and understanding of Michigan's environment and its role in Michigan's economy. MEECS is aligned with science and social studies content standards and MEAP assessment. The curriculum units were carefully created by a team of experts with input from scores of scientists, writers, teachers, environmental organizations, and business groups. Through better understanding basic information about the environment – how it functions, how it is affected by human activity, and how harmony between human activity and the natural environment can be achieved – Michigan's students will be better able to address environmental challenges ahead.

From September 2006 through December 2006 twelve teacher training MEECS workshops have been scheduled. Visit the DEQ MEECS website www.michigan.gov/deq-meeecs for announcements of additional workshops as they are scheduled. These workshops are offered on each of the five MEECS units in a variety of teacher-friendly times and locations across Michigan. The workshops are little to no cost and materials are provided FREE upon completion. School districts are encouraged to schedule one or more workshops at the school as part of an in-service day. Contact your local Math/Science center www.mscenters.org, or visit the DEQ MEECS website for more information.

Each participant will receive a kit including:

- Binder of lesson plans for each unit
- CD-ROM with electronic version of units, extension lessons, supplemental resources and materials, PowerPoints, videos, and more!
- Background information for teachers
- Hands-on activities and experiments
- Pre- & Post-tests and MEAP-like Unit Assessments
- Colorful posters and worksheets

The DEQ website provides the workshop brochure online with workshop dates, times, and locations. Please check for updates as more workshops are scheduled. If you would like more information regarding MEECS contact Tom Occhipinti (517) 373-2379 or occhipit@michigan.gov.

Submitted by Olivia M. Cohn, Executive Div. Student Assistant
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality

Mine opponents considering legal options

Despite the September 15, 2006 decision by the Michigan Court of Appeals, the mining permit application submitted to the state by Kennecott Minerals is still on hold according to those involved with the case. Cynthia Pryor, Executive Director of the Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve (YDWP), said attorneys in the case have indicated that application review and action will remain on hold for at least 42 days after the Court of Appeals decision.

YDWP is one of the three plaintiffs in the case challenging the permit application for a proposed mine in northwest Marquette County. Joined by the Keweenaw Bay Indian Community and the Huron Mountain Club, the groups asked the courts to intervene after the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality deemed Kennecott's application administratively complete. While a judge in Ingham County Circuit Court stopped further review of the application until a hearing could be held, the Court of Appeals overturned that decision, leaving opponents of the mine to consider their next steps.

"The 42-day window gives us time to evaluate our options," Pryor said, including appeal to the Michigan Supreme Court in that list of options. "Kennecott and others are premature in their declarations that this project is again moving forward."



Artwork by Michael Keranen

Michelle Halley, National Wildlife Federation attorney, offered the legal explanation for the continued stay. "Michigan Court Rule 7.215(F)(1)(a) states that a Court of Appeals decision does not become effective until the time to file a leave for appeal at the Michigan Supreme Court runs out or until the Michigan Supreme Court disposes of the case. That means that the Court of Appeals decision is not yet effective and the Circuit Court's stay is still in effect," Halley explained.

Submitted by Save the Wild U.P.

Sulfide Mine Action Alert

Please sign this online petition (see address below) and send it to friends to stop metallic sulfide mining on the Yellow Dog Plains in the Upper Peninsula of MI. Currently, Kennecott Minerals is applying for a permit to mine nickel directly underneath the headwaters of the Salmon-Trout River. Metallic sulfide mining creates sulfuric acid and acts as a solvent for heavy metals which could leak into our water systems. As citizens of Michigan, we all need to do our part to keep wild places wild and keep our water clean. Voice your opposition to this project and let the DEQ and the Governor know that Michigan says NO to sulfide mining on the Yellow Dog Plains. The petition is located at www.ipetitions.com/petition/nosulfidemining.

For more information about metallic sulfide mining, visit www.savethewildup.org

Emily Whittaker, Yellow Dog Watershed Preserve



The Seaborg Math/Science Center of Northern Michigan University and the Great Lakes Center for Youth Development has announced they will be sponsoring the 7th Biennial Lake Superior Youth Symposium, Thursday-Sunday, May 10-13, 2007, in Big Bay, Michigan, at the Bay Cliff Health Camp. The educational meet is designed to bring together students from grades 8-12 with educators from areas that abut the Great Lakes – Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin and Ontario. Participants will share their knowledge and skills, as well as address current issues challenging the health of the Lake Superior Basin.

Marquette Senior High educator, Karen Bakula, is the organizer for this spring's event. She reported the symposium will offer wall-to-wall activities, including field trips, recreational opportunities, watershed research, hands-on investigations, chances for artistic expression, team/leadership building skills, and learning about the history and culture of the Lake Superior region. In addition, she noted, "Throughout the symposium, participants will work to develop a project that they will implement when they return home to improve and/or protect the quality of life in the Lake Superior Basin."

Those attending are asked to bring water from their region for the Gathering of the Water. The collected water, in turn, will be presented to the next group hosting the event.

Cost for the program is expected to be about \$125 per person. That will cover registration, meals, lodging and all activities. Rather than turn anyone away, however, organizers are hoping to find sponsors who will provide scholarships for those in need of them.

For more information about the symposium or to provide scholarship help, contact Bakula at kba-kula@mapsnet.org.

U.P. Environment

While planning continues for the 7th Biennial Lake Superior Youth Symposium, the many presentations already lined up promise to keep participants busy. They include exploring the following topics:

- aquatic invasive species
- stream sampling
- biodiesel production
- weather and rip currents
- ecological activities/games
- geological tours by bike
- Anishinaabe culture
- team problem solving
- creative writing and songwriting
- Finnish harmonica lessons
- Big Bay/Huron Mountain Club history tours
- birchbark art
- Lake Superior shipwrecks
- forestry
- air pollution
- orienteering

In addition, trips have been planned to the Munising/Pictured Rocks area. Once there, attendees can choose from a variety of activities: hiking Chapel Loop; touring area waterfalls; canoeing Beaver Lake or the AuTrain River; visiting a blast furnace, Coast Guard boat house and Bay Furnace; watching demonstrations of blacksmithing and Native American history and culture.



Call to Action



Bobcat by Michael Keranen

The Ottawa National Forest is looking for letters of support in their effort to purchase Wisconsin Electric (WE) Energies land within the Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness which recently were placed on the selling block.

The National Forest Service is asking UPEC members and others to send letters to Senators Carl Levin and Debby Stabenow and Representative Bart Stupak to persuade them of the need to keep these

lands in public hands, open to public access, rather than lose these wild lands to private development.

Feel free to use the letter on the next page or draft one of your own. But please take the time to let our legislators know much you value public ownership of this fragile and beautiful piece of our state.

Here are the addresses for area legislators:

The Honorable Carl Levin
United States Senate
269 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2202

The Honorable Debbie A. Stabenow
United States Senate
133 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510-2203

The Honorable Bart Stupak
United States House of Representatives
2352 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515-2201

Dear

The Michigan Wilderness Act of 1987 established formal wilderness designation for Sturgeon River Gorge and several other areas in the northern part of the state. While this was an important step in preserving a small percentage of Michigan's land as "forever wild," at the time of designation 1,800 acres within the wilderness was owned by Wisconsin Electric Power Company, which had eyed the area as a potential hydroelectric power site. No dam and power plant was ever built, but the land remains in power company hands, with the current owner being Wisconsin Electric Power Company's successor, We Energies.

We Energies recently announced that it wishes to sell 11,000 acres of land in Upper Michigan and northern Wisconsin (<http://www.we-energies.com/northernland/>). Included in that acreage is a 2,000-acre parcel of which 1,800 acres lies within Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness and 200 acres is adjacent to the wilderness.

We Energies' ownership within the Wilderness includes much of the most spectacular portion of the 350-foot-deep gorge, including Sturgeon Falls, the most highly visited site in the wilderness. Access to the falls is via the Sturgeon Falls Trail, which has parking facilities on We Energies land in the 200-acre area adjacent to the Wilderness.

Forest Service monitoring of the falls and parking lot in the 1990s indicated that several thousand visitors hike to the falls each year. The Sturgeon River within the gorge is a federally designated Wild River in the National Wild and Scenic River System. It is a top quality trout stream, with the quality of that fishing enhanced by the wilderness character of the surrounding land. In addition, it is a challenging white water canoeing and kayaking stream.

The Ottawa National Forest has considered this private land within Sturgeon Gorge Wilderness to be its top priority for land acquisition since the passage of the Michigan Wilderness Act. Purchase of this land would assure public access to Sturgeon Falls and the other heavily visited areas within the Wilderness. It would also protect the wild character of the gorge, its flora and fauna, and opportunities for a wilderness experience as can be found there today.

The Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition encourages you to support efforts by the U.S. Forest Service to purchase We Energies lands within and adjacent to Sturgeon River Gorge Wilderness. We Energies is first offering the land to state and federal agencies. If no agreement is made in the first offering, the land could be sold to speculators and land developers, with the possible scenario being lost public access, and possibly development within the this spectacular wilderness.

We Energies wishes to have a sale completed by 2007, so urgent action is needed

Thank you.



To You in Autumn

by Beth L. Virtanen

I was thinking about fall in Upper Michigan,
the smell of the first frost. It reminds me of
the wholesome smell of rotting melons,
you know, the kind you stick your thumb into
when you mean to pick them up.

When I heard today that they had
A blanket of snow in Marquette,
I knew it blanketed Houghton as well,
and then Toivola, too. And I know that pungent
smell of fall will emerge in the short
Indian summer when the snow melts.

But now the leaves are orange—orange, red,
yellow, and brown—and they are flattened
on the ground under the press of white and
soggy snow. Your boots will leave
prints in orange and red across the whitened
lawn as you walk to the garden to find
what it was you should have harvested
yesterday. You know better, but you
look anyway at the wilted leaves of pumpkin
plants and brown spots covering the tomatoes.

But when you turn a spade of carrots,
bright orange peeks from under the dirt,
parsnips are crisp white, and potatoes brown.
You rub the skin from a new potato on
the backside of your jeans and eat it,
the taste of fall delicious.

(Beth Virtanen is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Puerto Rico where she teaches in the graduate program. She holds degrees from the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor and Ball State University and a PHD from Michigan Technological University.

This poem first appeared in *Guarding Passage, Poems by Beth Virtanen*, published by Penfield Books, 215 Brown St., Iowa City, Iowa, and reprinted here with the publisher's and author's permission.)

A Tree Grows in Marquette

(In 2005, the Marquette County History Museum was one of the recipients of a UPEC Environmental Education Grant. The following is a letter from their executive director telling us about their successful project.)

"The Living Tree" was a \$7,000 project designed by local artists and built for the Marquette County History Museum. Many businesses and funding agencies supported the project. It represented cooperation between federal and state agencies, private foundations and corporations in very innovative and positive ways. Thank you for supporting a portion of the materials.

The special exhibit, "Into the Woods," has been one of our most successful exhibits, and "The Living Tree" was one of the reasons. Children could climb into the treehouse, sitting under the branches and role play with puppets of animals that are found in this area, such as squirrels, raccoons, rabbits and bats. Children were also able to identify bird calls and frog calls. It has been a wonderful hands-on exhibit area. These areas are often difficult to create in a history museum as so many items are delicate and/or irreplaceable. We believe this type of exhibit area truly helps children learn, and they have fun! Girl Scout Troops sang songs in the treehouse and had puppet shows, Boy Scout Troops cleverly placed the bugs and birds all around as if they were in their natural environments. More than 1000 children visited on field trips from local schools and home-schooling groups to learn about nature and the importance of trees in ecology. Other visitors included families, tourists, and social groups. It was a great success.

We would also like you to know "the Living Tree" will be moving to the new facility and will have a place among the many wonderful hands-on exhibit areas we are planning for children and adults alike in our natural history area. This has been an amazing opportunity to teach people about ecology in an interesting way and to utilize local artists to create a unique work of art.

Submitted by Kaye Hiebel, Executive Director
Marquette County History Museum

Yes! I Want to Help UPEC Make a Difference!



Name: _____

I'm already a member, but I'd
like to make an additional contribu-
tion to:

E-mail: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

UPEC Land Acquisition/Protection
Fund

UPEC Environmental Education Fund
UPEC Endowment Fund*

I would like to support the goals of UPEC
by enclosing a contribution for (please check
one):

_____ Regular Membership (\$20)
_____ Supporting Membership (\$50)
_____ Student/Low-Income (\$15)
_____ Other (\$ _____)

*If you make your check out to the Mar-
quette Community Foundation (MCF)
and put UPEC FUND on the memo line,
you can take a 50% tax credit on your
Michigan State Income Tax (up to \$200.
for individuals, \$400 for couples).
OR you can make a contribution directly
to UPEC. As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organi-
zation, dues and contributions are tax deductible.

**Upper Peninsula
Environmental Coalition**

Return Service Requested

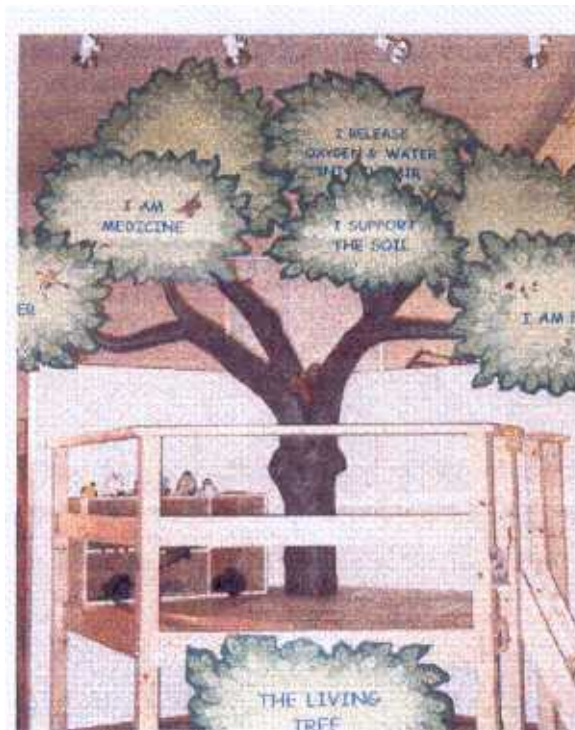
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Phone and Fax number: (906) 524-7899
Email: upec@upenvironment.org
www.upenvironment.org



*Protecting and maintaining the unique
environmental qualities of the Upper Peninsula
of Michigan by educating the public and
acting as a watchdog to industry and government*



The Living Tree, part of the Marquette History Museum's "Into the Woods" exhibit, which was funded in part by the Upper Peninsula Environmental Coalition. Be sure to check it out!

You can find the museum at 213 North Front St. in Marquette.