

	Comments
	Private Land Ownership and Adjacent State Land
1	good as is.
2	<p>Having lived in Otsego County previously and having an abiding interest in the Pigeon River Forest area that I still visit several times a year, I read your proposed Concept of Management for the Pigeon River Country with deep interest.</p> <p>It is good that Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) is concerned about maintaining the area for the benefit of the current and future citizens of Michigan.</p> <p>I respectfully submit that MDNR do this with due respect for the basic property and mineral rights of the private land owners in the area. Simple observation will reveal several fairly good sized acreage owners along Sturgeon Valley Road heading east out of Vanderbilt, Michigan. Yet in your draft MDNR seems to have singled out just Golden Lotus, Inc., with fewer than 8% of the total privately owned land in the area of concern, out of the 150 or so private owners.</p> <p>Any citizen of Michigan would expect that MDNR would be accurate and unbiased in their report and publications. I am appalled that a Michigan Public agency like MDNR would cite legally inaccurate statements virtually bordering on bias (Last paragraph of Page 9, line 3 through 7 of your Concept Draft). In 1984, the proprietors, who had been advised. Efforts to</p> <p>Please permit me to refer to the court's ruling in the litigation (Circuit Court for Otsego County, File No. 84-2871-CE (P) the</p> <p>“The true proximate cause of damage to the Pigeon River was the MDNR’s faultily-premised permit and its faulty sup</p> <p>Elsewhere in the courts ruling the court also recorded that:</p> <p>“Removal of the dam would yield substantial long-term damage to the River system by destruction of approximately 80 ac</p> <p>“There are 2,250 dams in the state of Michigan. 250 are owned by MDNR. Only Golden Lotus dam has been singled out fo</p> <p>What is MDNR’s policy and actions on the other 2,249 dams in Michigan, including the 250 that MDNR owns and operates</p> <p>Should you have further questions on my position, please contact me. Thank you.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>
3	<p>I am a member of Golden Lotus and I value what Song of the Morning Ranch brings to our state as a spiritual retreat center. The members of Golden Lotus are dedicated to promoting sound resource management to protect Pigeon River Country from overuse and overdevelopment and to maintain their land in a forested condition. The PUD maintains the forested nature of the land and manages forest resources in a sustainable manner.</p> <p>We are interested in alternative energy sources, organic gardening on the land, raising food for self-sufficiency, managing the water resources, and generally being good stewards of the land in the Pigeon River Country. Continuing Song of the Morning Ranch as private property will in no way compromise keeping the Pigeon River area as a pristine area and is consistent with maintaining the wild character of the forest.</p>

4	<p>The policy described in the "Pigeon River Natural River Plan" by the DNR as revised March 12, 2002 is oft repeated and stated in full capital letters that there is to be no confiscation of personal rights or property. This is under item H) Administration, 6) Land Acquisition.</p> <p>"The state may purchase or trade lands with owner consent on the designated river and tributaries to maintain or improve the river and its environment."</p> <p>In direct contradiction to this, one might argue a very major goal of this document is to provide a basis for the DNR bureaucracy and others to apply pressure and financial hardships in order to force out current property and rights owners. If these rules are implemented, I believe many of them will eventually be struck down in the courts at great cost to everyone including the State of Michigan tax payers.</p> <p>This document talks about the forest users but doesn't clearly define them. I believe that the main users of the forest are the people that live and have invested in the area. The forest is a vital part of the economic and cultural base. Everyone has a vested interest in the well being of the forest. The DNR seems to have forgotten that the landowners want a sound forest as</p>
5	<p>I believe you have misrepresented the parties involved with the 1984 mis-management of hydro-electric dam located in the Golden Lotus owned property.</p> <p>Let me quote the Court (Circuit Court for the County of Otsego File No. 84-2871-CE(P) ruling in paraphases to where the information matters on this situation:From Page 11 Lines 15 and 16. "The true proximate cause of damage to the Pidgeon River was the MDNR's faultily-premised permit and its faulty supervision of the permit execution."</p> <p>From Page 12 Lines 20 and 21. ". . . It is clear that Golden Lotus did not violate the 1 foot requirement of the permit"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(This is in reference to the rate of the drawdown)</p> <p>From Page 17 Lines 6-8 "In other words, defendant's responsibility, if any, is limited to 25% of the total fish kill"</p> <p style="text-align: center;">(Thus the MDNR was responsible for at least 75% of the fish kill.)</p> <p>Furthermore, I feel it is a voilation of morality, and of law to slander in such means.</p> <p>To add to this i am under the impression that it is generally inapporriate of the government (and in most cases the goverment)</p> <p>I ask that you please consider the items before you objectively, and without menace to private land owners located within the p</p> <p>There is no reason for the DNR to inhibit their pursuit of happiness that was gathered through the proper legal means. This in</p>

6	<p>I have read with interest your proposed Concept of Management for the Pidgeon River Country. I would specifically like to address comments made in the last paragraph of page 9 regarding Golden Lotus, Inc. These comments are both misleading and grossly incorrect. Please permit me to quote from the courts ruling in the litigation (Circuit Court for the County of Otsego File No. 84-2871-CE(P), which arose from the incident mentioned. While the first 18 pages of the ruling primarily itemize a long list of failures on the part of the MDNR, I would like to quote from three sections which are particularly pertinent.</p> <p>From Page 11 Lines 15 and 16. "The true proximate cause of damage to the Pidgeon River was the MDNR's faultily-premised permit and its faulty supervision of the permit execution."</p> <p>With regard to your comments about the rate of drawdown. From Page 12 Lines 20 and 21.</p> <p>"... It is clear that Golden Lotus did not violate the 1 foot requirement of the permit"</p> <p>From Page 17 Lines 6-8. "In other words, defendant's responsibility, if any, is limited to 25% of the total fish kill" (Thus the MDNR was responsible for at least 75% of the fish kill.)</p> <p>In the interest of truth and fairness, I suggest you obtain a copy of the court's ruling and make the appropriate corrections</p> <p>With respect to other areas of your document I do not believe we should achieve the objective maintaining a "Wild" env</p> <p>If you have any questions regarding my position, please to not hesitate to contact me. Most Sincerely,</p>
7	<p>The court case involving the DNR and Golden Lotus, Inc. showed clearly the responsibility of the silt spill and resulting fish kill rests on the DNR. Since I don't hunt or fish, it is important to me that a place is available where it is truly peaceful and the environment is treated with complete respect.</p>
8	<p>Private land ownership is desirable if those owners demonstrate the desire and ability to be good stewards of the land. Residents who wish to work with the DNR towards the common goals of good and safe forest management as well as healthy use of this pristine area should be encouraged. Private land ownership increases the stake for all of us to take care of the area.</p>
9	<p>Ladies & Gentlemen of the DNR,</p> <p>I am writing to encourage you to come to a mutual agreement with Song Of The Morning Ranch that will allow this lovely retreat to continue its blessings on Northern Michigan.</p> <p>I understand that there have been challenges between the state & SOM in the past. But it is my understanding that this organization is dedicated to preserving the natural beauty & eco-system of this grand parcel of land. It has made a significant contribution to Michigan.</p> <p>I would hope that @ some time in the near future you will allow SOM to begin its gas exploration.</p> <p>It has been my understanding that those who will embark on this project will be using the most up to date, land friendly techniques possible.</p> <p>Thank you for your time.</p>

10	<p>My wife and I live at Song of the Morning Retreat (adjoining the Pigeon River Country), which the DNR referred to in its Concept of Management. All of us here are committed to preserving the natural condition of the forest, clean air and the wildlife of the Pigeon River Country, and we want this area to remain unspoiled by sound pollution and overdevelopment. Within our boundaries, we do not allow for ATVs and snowmobiles to traverse. We take it one step further and do not allow hunting. Song of the Morning is a haven of peace, where people of all faiths can come to contemplate and meditate on God in silence and solitude. What better use could there be for private land in this wild and beautiful area?</p>
11	<p>I was appalled by the attitude taken in the Concept of Management. Rather than trying to work with the private landowners, the attitude is to make them out to be a problem. Why not attempt meaningful dialogue...private landowners love nature as much as you do, and just like you also profit from mineral rights and lumber. In your case, money is set aside in segregated accounts to buy land and mineral rights while at the same time campgrounds are closed for lack of funds, or in the case of the campground on Sturgeon Valley Rd, because of a lack of funds to fix a well problem. Trees fall across trails and it takes months to get them cleared.</p> <p>I noticed a big discrepancy in your discussion of the Lansing Club Pond dam issue. My understanding is that the court found that the DNR was more to blame than Golden Lotus. And from what I know, a large part of that was because the DNR was trying to tar Golden Lotus and refused to allow the lake to be refilled when it could have been and allowed thousands of those beloved trout to die. You need to tone down that statement you made or remove it entirely.</p> <p>Given, also, that the PUD that was passed for the Golden Lotus property, is a reality, would it not be wisest for you to work with</p>
12	<p>Private Property RIGHTS are the very basis of America. Without the guarantee of Property Rights, there would be no investment or development for the future. Private Property Rights must be respected at all times.</p>
13	<p>There is large historical precedence for private land ownership in the Pigeon River Forest (as well as in other areas). I would like to see a supportive and encouraging role, not restrictive and adversarial, with regard to any relationships and guidelines developed between the MDNR/DNR and private landowners.</p>
14	<p>Your comment in " Concept of Management Document for The Pigeon River County" is an insult . The DNR was 75% responsible for the fish kill. Did you take responsibility and pay for damages? Read pages, 9,11,12 and 17 from the court decision. This is illegal slander as my attorneys have pointed out and should be changed and admit your negligence. From the court decision on the Dam spill is not your right to publish.</p>
15	<p>The comments printed in the concept of management document for the pigeon river county is incorrect. In actuality, the DNR was 75% responsible for the high mortality rate of the fish. Was responsibility taken by the DNR? Or did the tax payers assume this responsibility?</p> <p>Read pages 9, 11, 12, and 17 from the court decision. My attorney's have brought to my attention that illegal slander has been committed and negligence should be admitted to the public.</p>
16	<p>Include language referring to the landowner assistance offered by DNR Service Foresters and LIP biologists. What is the Pigeon River Habitat Initiative and why is it not mentioned earlier and why is it not in the appendix and why is it not explained briefly here?</p>

17	<p>First, I want to commend the DNR for its proactive role in protecting the beautiful Pigeon River and the Pigeon River Country Forest. I have always had a good feeling about the DNR.</p> <p>In your draft, you mention Golden Lotus, which is where I have lived for the past 12-1/2 years (my stay here is temporary, however). I was not here in 1984 when the dam situation occurred. My question about that incident is this: In the nearly quarter of a century since that occurrence, has the river recovered from the damage that occurred? If it has, I'm not clear as to why that incident is mentioned in your draft. Another question: In the years since 1984, has Golden Lotus done anything else that has damaged the river or its environs? From what I can tell, Golden Lotus has cooperated with DNR regulations regarding the river.</p> <p>The draft also mentions the PUD at Golden Lotus and says "...a few thousand people..." might be living here. As far as I know, there are only 80 lots. If each home has only, say, 2 people living in it, then that would be only 160 residents, with maybe an additional 10 people or so for staffing the retreat center. Most of the people who come here or live here seem to me</p> <p>I live in the boathouse and thus have a unique vantage point from which to observe the Lansing Club Pond. I want to speak he</p> <p>I'm telling you all of this because I strongly feel that the Lansing Club Pond needs to be protected every bit as much as does th</p> <p>In the time I've lived here, I've had the uncomfortable feeling that Golden Lotus and the DNR have been at odds with each oth</p> <p>Human encroachment is threatening wild places all over the globe. It's going to get increasingly harder to keep wild places wild</p> <p>Henry David Thoreau said, "In wildness is the preservation of the world." It's as true today as when he said it back in the 1800</p> <p>Thank you for your time, and, again, for your commitment to keeping the Pigeon River Country as pristine as possible.</p>
18	Agree as outlined in the Draft.
19	I am a member of golden lotus at song of the morning ranch. The ranch has been a haven of peace for the wildlife in the area, there is no hunting or fishing no motors on the lake. we enjoy the peace of the forest and plan to keep it that way
20	I have commented on this before - (DNR, PLEASE TRY TO WORK WITH PRIVATE LANDOWNERS, AND EXPLAIN THE BENEFITS AND BONUSSES OF MANAGING THERE LAND FOR WILDLIFE) Less taxes and many other benefits for them.