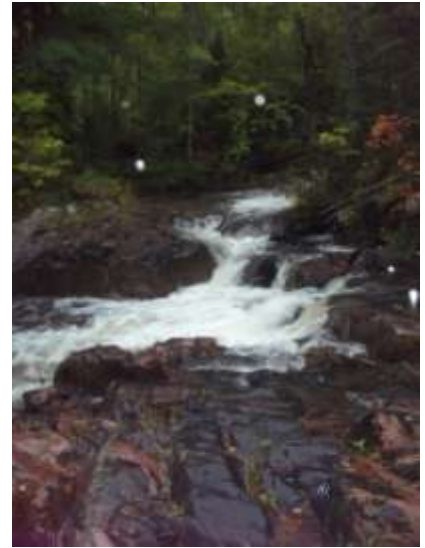


## Wilderness Preservation for the Community

By Amanda Harrington and Caleb Salo

Wilderness preservation in Michigan has become a controversial issue. Many forests and rivers scattered throughout the state have been preserved while others are not. Wilderness preservation benefits our animals and nature, but it also affects surrounding communities.

Communities in Michigan are economically boosted by wilderness preservation through tourism because it increases revenue. Approximately twelve million people nationwide visit different recreational areas on a weekly basis. Many shops around these areas rely on the sale of different souvenirs purchased by tourists. These souvenirs create opportunities for tourists to capture a piece of Michigan to bring back home. Tourist towns tend to have many hotels. The city of Marquette in Michigan has a wide variety of hotels around and they all seem to end up being booked. Many hotels will also assist in recreational activities which costs an extra fee. Dr. Lucas, a professor at Northern Michigan University, said “The biggest impact for communities when it comes to wilderness preservation is tourism.” The amount of money that communities get through tourism helps them to keep up technologically and to keep growing.



Photos by Amanda Harrington

Communities can suffer socially from the lack of wilderness preservation. A community is dependent on its environment. When an area is preserved, you have people visiting these areas daily. This creates an increase in social activity. Everybody is constantly meeting someone new who enjoys the same kind of outdoor activities. This creates a very friendly community, where people enjoy visiting because of the way they get treated by the residents. Marquette is one of the friendliest places we have ever been because of the social climate it has created. The area and its residents make us enjoy it more every day. Without wilderness the characteristics of Marquette would be altered and it would probably become a less friendly place. Families and people in general feel more secure when they are part of such loving communities.

Wilderness preservation also has an impact on pollution. Pollution can come from a number of things including factories, cars and the lack of trees in the community. Wilderness preservation ensures that forests and other places with living things do not become destroyed by pollution. Wilderness preservation helps maintain pollutant causing factors. Air and water pollution can cause a number of different health issues including serious illnesses like



Photos by Amanda Harrington

asthma and lung cancer. Polluted ground water is an issue too because many places have wells and use

ground water. Contaminated groundwater can cause serious illness or even death. Dr. Lucas had also said "Wilderness preservation helps to keep a healthy environment which helps the community because it makes more people want to live and have a family there."

In our English composition class we took a field trip to the Yellow Dog River. 412 acres of the Yellow Dog River have been bought and are being preserved. This area was one of the most peaceful places that we have ever been to. The Yellow Dog made us realize how important wilderness preservation can be for a community. Many communities have been hurt economically, socially, and environmentally due to lack of wilderness preservation; the community that we live in doesn't need to be one of those.