

Sleeping Bear
Dunes National
Lakeshore (MI)

Fiscal Year:
2009

Acreage:
434.5

**Estimated Price
to National Park
Service:**
\$5,000,000

**Natural
Resources:**
Massive sand
dunes, bog
habitat, glacial
features, Great
Lakes

**Cultural
Resources:**
Maritime
navigation history,
rural historic
district, 1860s
harbor for trade
and travel

**Programmatic
Significance:**
Recreation,
education
opportunities,
public access,
scenic viewshed
protection

Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore (MI)



On the northwestern shores of Michigan's Lower Peninsula lies Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore, a hilly region fringed with massive shoreline sand dunes. It is a diverse landscape, home to quiet, birch-lined streams, dense beech and maple forests, sandy beaches, and rugged bluffs towering as high as 460 feet above Lake Michigan. North and South Manitou Islands also sit within the park's boundaries, surrounded by the unpredictable waters of one of our Great Lakes.

The distinctive features of Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lakeshore include the scenic and recreational assets of more than 60 miles of Lake Michigan shoreline. The park is home to massive sand dunes, pristine undeveloped beaches, forested hills, and quiet rivers and secluded inland lakes; and tells the geological history of continental glaciation, and the story of agricultural settlement, commerce, and maritime navigation.

Sleeping Bear Dunes is located in a rapidly developing area. Northern Michigan is a major destination for tourists, and the Leelanau Peninsula, on which the park is situated, is a very popular place for second homes and retirement living. There are nearly 150 private inholdings at the park, and park legislation directs the National Park Service to pursue acquisition of land within the park boundary when it becomes available from willing sellers. In FY09 the National Park Service has the opportunity to acquire seven parcels totaling a little more than 434 acres.

One parcel—180 acres in the Bow Lakes area—is of particular significance and importance to the Park Service. The Bow Lakes area was specifically identified as a "Resource Preservation Area" in 1982 by amendment to the Sleeping Bear Dunes legislation. The 975-acre area contains excellent examples of kettle lakes and long forested valleys that were formed when the great glaciers retreated, leaving behind immense ice blocks that melted into these kettle-like depressions. The area contains prime examples of plant succession, including a floating leatherleaf bog, an open marl lake, meadows and forest. These glacial features and bog habitat are found nowhere else in the park. The Bow Lakes area would be used as a day use area. The Glen Lake Schools is an adjacent landowner and although not able to fund land acquisition, it is a park partner and is supportive of acquiring the property and of the environmental education opportunities that would result.

Two additional parcels, although smaller, are just as vital to the park. The first parcel is a 36-acre property that was once part of an orchard. The park already purchased the house that formerly occupied the property but not the orchard. The land is highly visible from M22, a Michigan scenic heritage route, and as a result is vulnerable to either residential or commercial development. The second parcel is only half an acre but it is on the shore of Big Glen Lake. Big Glen is often referred to as one of the most beautiful lakes in the nation, but it has very little public access. Acquisition of all of these properties would help ensure not only the integrity of the park but also a high quality visitor experience.

FOR SALE