

Wildlife Management Report

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources



August 2012

Note: The following reports have been contributed by staff from the WDNR wildlife management and research programs and compiled and edited by Frank Trcka, and designed by Meaghan Cibarich. This report is intended to raise awareness of DNR staff and stakeholders regarding wildlife management activities, accomplishments, challenges and plans. We are hoping that these reports will help build a broad coalition working toward our shared vision of producing abundant wildlife for all who appreciate how wildlife contributes to their quality of life.

UPLAND GAME PROGRAM

Contributed by Scott Walter and Krista McGinley

Sharp-tailed Grouse Permit Levels

Sharp-tailed grouse are found primarily in the Northwest Sands Ecological Region of northwestern Wisconsin. Annual permit levels are set for individual Deer Management Units (DMUs) based on the results of spring lek surveys that estimate the number of dancing males. Surveys conducted on managed properties involve repeated counting of males dancing on individual leks, and the maximum number of males observed is recorded. Flush counts of grouse on leks are used on unmanaged properties in DMUs 2 and 9. These counts are assumed to include 75% males. A formula developed by the committee, and contained in the recently approved Sharp-tailed Grouse Management Plan, uses this DMU-specific index



Richard Baetson - USFWS

of population size in conjunction with recent permit success rates to establish both quotas and permit levels. The formula recommends zero permits for DMUs with fewer than 25 dancing males recorded during the spring survey.

The Sharp-tailed Grouse Advisory Committee met in May to review survey data and to determine prudent permit levels. According to surveys conducted in 2012, the number of dancing male grouse increased by 29% on managed properties, but declined by 12% in DMUs 2 and 9. A 4% decline was noted on private lands surveyed in Rusk County. There were more

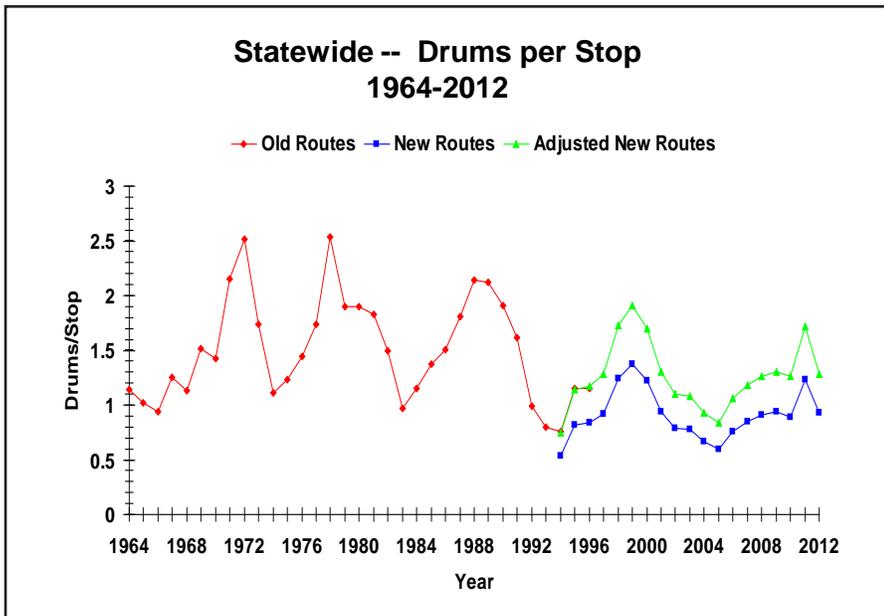
than 25 dancing males observed on unmanaged properties, therefore permits could be recommended for DMUs 2, 8, and 30. Recent genetic studies on the single, isolated lek at the Riley Lake State Natural Area in DMU 30 suggest grouse at this site are genetically distinct from other Wisconsin subpopulations, and possess reduced genetic diversity. The Sharp-tailed Grouse Management Plan suggests that Riley Lake should be considered for potential genetic rescue efforts via the intrastate translocation of grouse, and further recommends that no hunting be permitted on populations undergoing genetic rescue efforts. Therefore the Committee recommended maintaining zero permits in DMU 30.

The Committee reviewed information regarding both genetic and population-level concerns for population segments within each DMU and discussed the potential for harvest to impact population growth. It further recognized the recreational opportunities provided by the sharp-tailed grouse hunt. For the 2012 sharp-tailed grouse hunting season in Wisconsin, the Committee recommended that 200 permits be made available in DMU 2, and 35 permits in DMU 8.

NRB Approval of Sharp-tailed Grouse Management Plan Predation Addendum

At their June 2011 meeting, the Natural Resources Board approved the Sharp-tailed Grouse Management Plan. The Board asked that program staff more fully investigate the potential for predator control to be used as a tool to benefit sharp-tailed grouse management efforts. Upland program staff invested significant time reviewing the literature pertaining to predator control, and developed an addendum to the Plan which was presented to the NRB in April. The NRB voted unanimously to approve the addendum which outlines a number of reasons why predator control would not be an effective management tool. The addendum suggests maintaining efforts focused on improving the quality and quantity of barrens and barrens-like habitat in the Northwest Sands Ecological Region.

Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey Results



Preliminary results for the 2012 ruffed grouse drumming survey indicate that the statewide population may be beginning the downward leg of the cycle. The index declined statewide by 25% in 2012 based on the number of drumming grouse heard during early morning roadside surveys. Regional variations exist, most notably in the southern half of the state where ruffed grouse are fewer in numbers.

Drumming surveys were conducted along 90 transects throughout the state in 2012. These surveys have

been conducted annually since 1964. The surveys are a team effort with DNR wildlife staff, foresters, and wardens participating as well as cooperation from U.S. Forest Service personnel and Ruffed Grouse Society members.

Wild Turkey Management Plan Revision Process Update

The revision process for the statewide Wild Turkey Management plan has been divided into seven steps including:

- Review of the current plan and available literature
- Public opinion survey (April/May 2012)
- Summarization of survey results (June 2012)
- Drafting the plan (October 2012)
- Partner review and additional public input
- Wildlife Policy Team approval (December 2012)
- Natural Resources Board approval (April 2013).

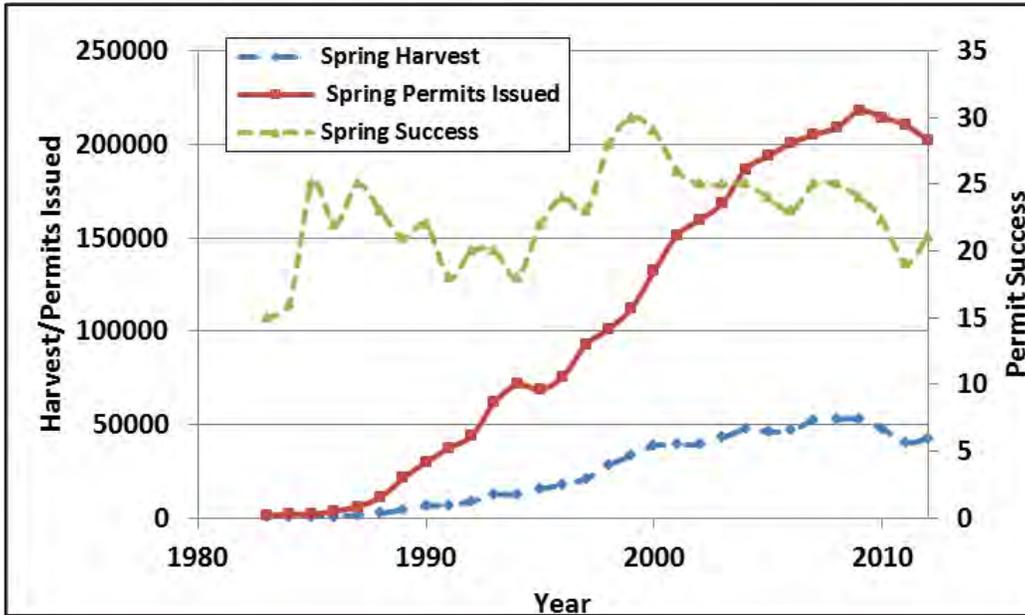


Scott Walter and Krista McGinley created a thorough public survey (with the help of internal DNR staff, in particular Jordan Petchenik, as well as external partners) which was made available online from April 19th through May 31st, and held a series of 11 public hearings statewide. Attendees had the option of filling out a hardcopy of the survey. Attendance was lower than expected at all public hearings but this encouraged better discussion. The public has a strong opinion of Wisconsin's Turkey Program. Despite differences between the seven Turkey Management Zones, public feedback was consistent at all meetings.

2012 Spring Turkey Season

With over 235,000 permits available, Wisconsin turkey hunters were offered another exciting opportunity to enjoy time afield in pursuit of a turkey during the spring 2012 hunt. 136,870 permits were awarded via the preference drawing. An additional 65,114 permits were sold via over-the-counter sales. The season framework differed from previous years in that each of the six time periods included a full week of hunting opportunity rather than five consecutive days followed by a two-day rest period.

Harvest data suggests that the 2012 spring harvest increased by 6%. The total statewide harvest



was 42,612 turkeys. Zone 1 led the way with 12,075 birds registered followed by Zone 2 (10,486) and Zone 3 (10,253). Hunter success (21.1%) was also up compared to 2011 (19.1%). Zone 2 hunters had the highest success rate at 26% followed by Zone 3 at 21% and Zone 1 at 20.1%. Success rates in Zones 4 – 7 were between 16 and 19%. The total number of permits issued (201,984) was down slightly from 2011, when 210,384 permits were issued.

Formation of Midwest Turkey Consortium

A number of upland game biologists from across the Midwest developed the idea for a ‘Midwest Turkey Consortium’ at the 2011 Midwest Deer and Turkey Study Group. The idea is to adopt a more regional approach to turkey management by standardizing monitoring protocol and collaborating on research efforts. Wisconsin did not have a turkey biologist at this meeting so did not contribute, but Scott Walter was recently made aware of this effort and is initiating dialogue with other states. Many of the questions that Wisconsin’s upland game biologists have regarding turkey management (e.g., best means of detecting change in population size; indexing or estimating population size; harvest impacts; and dynamics of northern turkeys;) are shared by other states, and such a Consortium may make it more logistically and/or economically feasible for states to participate in meaningful monitoring and/or research endeavors that will improve management of their turkey flock.

GHRA Pheasant Survey Summary

2012 marks another difficult year for ring-necked pheasants within the Glacial Habitat Restoration Area. Even with the mild winter, 2012 tied the 2011 record for the lowest number of roosters observed in the 22 years of the survey. A total of 147 roosters (6.7 roosters per unit) were observed. More than six roosters were observed in only 7 of the 22 survey units, and only one unit (Eldorado) met the 22-year GHRA average of 25.1 roosters. Over the last seven seasons, pheasants have decreased 82% within the study area.



Joe Kosack - PGC

Farm Bill Issues

- CRP General Signup 43 ended in April. Statewide, approximately 65,000 acres will expire in 2012, and ~20,000 acres were enrolled/re-enrolled during this signup period. As a result, there is a net loss of ~45,000 CRP acres in Wisconsin this year.
- NRCS will not allocate funding for the Working Lands for Wildlife program until the 2012 Farm Bill is authorized. This program would bring funding to Wisconsin for bobwhite quail and potentially woodcock.
- NRCS National has informed Wisconsin that our recently-submitted Driftless Area Landscape Conservation Initiative (DALCI) proposal will garner \$1.2 million in funding for the next fiscal year. This Initiative has four broad resource goals related to grassland, working lands, forest, and stream

conservation in the Driftless Area. Scott Walter drafted the forest component of the proposal. Staff is currently working with Wildlife Subcommittee members and NRCS staff to determine which practices to focus on, and how best to market the program to local staff and landowners. Successfully allocating these initial funds will increase our chances of full funding for the proposal, which would bring in more than \$25 million to Wisconsin for work in this area.

- The Senate has approved its version of the Farm Bill and the House began marking up its version on July 11th. It is expected that the conference process will be contentious. Thus, a new Farm Bill may not be finalized until after the November election.

MIGRATORY BIRD PROGRAM

Contributed by Kent Van Horn and James Christopoulos

Mid-winter Waterfowl Survey

This U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service coordinated survey was conducted by numerous state and federal biologists during the week of January 2-6, 2012 and provides a snapshot of winter waterfowl numbers and distribution around Wisconsin and throughout the flyway. It also gives us important abundance indices for some species that are not readily monitored during spring breeding surveys. For those who are interested in the previous two years of survey results, they are available at: <http://dnr.wi.gov/topic/WildlifeHabitat/waterfowlmanagement.html>.

Many birds stayed in Wisconsin because of the mild winter, and counts were normal to above normal this year. In total, 170,000 Canada geese; 40,000 dabbling ducks; 48,000 diving/sea ducks; 30,000 mergansers; 747 trumpeter swans; 4,500 tundra swans; and 2,175 bald eagles were counted. State counts can fluctuate widely based on ice and snow conditions each year, so generalizations should not be made about overall populations because birds may simply be wintering here instead of further south.

Doves

In February, Kent Van Horn met with other state and federal representatives that are part of the Eastern Dove Management Unit. Topics of discussion included:

- a review of the 2010 dove banding efforts and coordination for 2011;
- proposed research to improve the spring call count (the survey used to measure trends in the dove population);
- presentations on a lead shot availability study in North Carolina;
- coordination of a national dove hunter survey on non-toxic shot; and
- state recommendations to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the 2012 hunting season.

In preparation for this meeting, staff assembled all the eastern U.S. state regulations on Eurasian collared doves to facilitate discussions on an exotic species that has been present in the south for some time, but is still relatively new to northern states.

Here in Wisconsin, we've been analyzing past year's dove call count survey data to identify a strategic means of directing an expansion of managed dove fields. These fields have become popular among dove hunters. At the request of our administration, biologists have been using creative thinking and cooperative agreements to provide more of these fields. We also completed the 2012 Dove Banding Plan which outlines banding quotas around the state. Thanks to the efforts of staff in the headwaters area, newly initiated banding efforts will continue in the northern part of the state as requested by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Winter Flyway Meeting

Kent Van Horn attended the Mississippi Flyway Council Technical Section meeting in February. Because ducks, geese, and other migratory game birds move between state and national boundaries, the Flyway Council was created to provide a means through which states and provinces can work together to collaboratively manage the shared resource. The following month, in conjunction with the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies meeting, Tom Hauge met with other Council members to vote on recommendations that are proposed by the Technical Section. Some highlights from the agenda include:

- Canada goose harvest management changes;
- redhead and wood duck harvest strategies;
- the potential for a sea duck proposal;
- updates on the new Kentucky sandhill crane hunting season; and
- a review of 22 federal grant proposals to work on 'webless' migratory game birds (i.e., doves, woodcock, and sandhill cranes).

The Mississippi Valley Population of Canada geese nests in northern Ontario and migrates through Wisconsin and other states in the fall. A cooperative budget to monitor this population in support of hunting seasons is shared among harvest states. Kent co-chairs this committee which developed the next 5 year plan and budget for field operations. As part of the flyway discussions about the future of Canada goose harvest management, Kent summarized all Canada goose hunter surveys related to framework (i.e., day and bag limits) and satisfaction data from states in the Mississippi Flyway. This information, along with harvest rates and population data, was reviewed in February to guide the future of Canada goose hunting. Based on the review of data during a 5-year stable season framework, the flyway council agreed to continue to liberalize in cautious steps. In Wisconsin, this may include lengthening our Exterior Zone goose hunting from 85 days to 92 days which, combined with the 15-day Early September Canada goose season, provides Wisconsin the maximum number of days (i.e., 107 days) allowed by international treaty.



Public Contacts

Many of the weekends during the winter months find department staff meeting with various waterfowl groups. In December, staff attended the Conservation Congress Migratory Committee meeting. After the holidays, staff spoke at the annual meeting of the Wisconsin Waterfowl Association, the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation, the Ducks Unlimited statewide meeting, the Mead Wildlife Area waterfowl hunters meeting, and the Wisconsin Waterfowl Hunters Conference.

State Rules and Legislation

Sandhill Cranes – Proposed legislation was introduced in the state assembly in February to establish a Sandhill crane hunting season, which spurred numerous public and press contacts from around the state and country, including the New York Times. Migratory Game Bird Ecologist Kent Van Horn was identified as the department spokesperson on this topic. He also served as lead author of the '2010 Management Plan for the Eastern Population of Sandhill Cranes'. This topic quieted down when the legislative session ended before the Assembly could consider the bill. The issue resurfaced less than a month later when the Wisconsin Conservation Congress announced that a question on Sandhill crane hunting was on the Spring Hearings ballot.

Spring Hearing Questions

Sandhill Cranes – The Conservation Congress spring hearing question ‘Are you in favor of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress asking the Wisconsin Legislature to give the DNR authority to develop a hunting season on Sandhill Cranes?’ generated considerable interest involving numerous public contacts, interviews, radio programs, and TV reports. The question passed statewide with a ‘Yes’ vote of 2,559 to 1,271 ‘No’ votes. It passed in 65 counties, failed in four, and tied in three. This was a Conservation Congress generated question and not a department proposal. The department’s role is to provide factual information to facilitate the public discussion about Sandhill cranes. We are working with staff from the Office of Communications on strategies to inform the public on discussions regarding Sandhill cranes and Sandhill crane hunting.



Open Water Hunting – This department advisory question on the Spring Hearing questionnaire proposed 13 new lakes for open water duck hunting based on the recommendations of an ad hoc committee of duck hunters and staff. All 13 lakes passed in a statewide vote with very similar numbers with roughly 1,900 ‘Yes’ votes and 800 ‘No’ votes. There was an approximate 50 votes difference on each lake. We will look at the local county vote since these regulations would be of a local nature. The local vote supported the development of open water hunting rules for 12 of the 13 lakes; open water hunting was not supported for Lake Koshkonong.

Other Spring Hearing Questions Passing Statewide

- Allow bow hunting on the closed area of Grand River Wildlife Area
- Revision of the 50% concealment rule for waterfowl hunting
- Exterior Canada goose season dates
- Delay the start of the spring crow season
- Change Canada goose tagging requirements for the Horicon Zone
- Eliminate Mecan Springs (Waushara County) closed Area

All the results can be viewed online at: http://dnr.wi.gov/org/nrboard/congress/spring_hearings/index.html

Spring Waterfowl Breeding Survey

The 2012 spring waterfowl breeding survey in Wisconsin began on April 23, about one week earlier than usual. Air and ground crews began the survey in the southern part of the state and worked northwards over the following two weeks. Thirty-two department staff and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service cooperators participate in this annual survey. This effort has been ongoing for 40 years, and is coordinated as part of a larger continental survey; the results of this survey are used at the national and state levels for managing populations and setting hunting regulations. Because spring breeding conditions from year to year have such a significant impact on waterfowl production, use of the current year’s survey data is necessary to develop accurate population estimates, but limits our ability to set regulations well in advance of the hunting seasons. This year, completion of the survey was hindered by several challenges, including early spring leaf-out, equipment issues, and weather delays. Although Wisconsin duck numbers were about average, the dry conditions are not encouraging for duckling survival and overall production. The north should be okay, but more duck breeding habitat is in the south.

The federal waterfowl breeding survey data from across the U.S. prairies, Canada, and Alaska have been released last, and although wetland numbers are down 32% from last year, conditions are still above the long-term average. Total duck numbers counted continentally were at a new high (48.6 million), with mallard estimated at 10.6 million and nearly all species up or unchanged from last year's record count. Pintails were the only species that dropped in number, and from the data it appears that they overflowed the prairie and went to the boreal forest. The record population count of last year combined with excellent breeding conditions in 2011 resulted in the record 2012 estimate.



DNR Photo

Goose Harvest Report

After receiving the final pieces of data derived from a Horicon zone mail survey, the 2011 Canada goose harvest report was completed and distributed. The final 2011 season estimated harvest numbers include: 18,746 geese in the Early September season, 8,458 geese in the Horicon Zone, and 32,689 geese in the Exterior zone. These numbers are similar to 2010 and recent years. The data collected and summarized in this report continue to be instrumental in making management and season framework decisions here in Wisconsin, and in guiding goose harvest discussion at the Flyway level.

Possible Horicon Zone Changes

We have been examining and mapping goose band recovery locations along with harvest data as we look at potential changes to the Horicon Zone. A meeting was held in May to gather feedback from wardens and wildlife management staff from within the Zone. This effort continues an ongoing effort to simplify the Canada goose hunting regulations that began in 2004; we have been able to take a step toward simplification nearly every year since then. Changes to Department of Administration print shop equipment may require a redesign of how we handle Horicon Zone goose tags for 2013.

Awards

Last but not least, Kent Van Horn attended the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Banquet on May 11, where he was presented with the Congress' Wildlife Biologist of the year award! Congratulation Kent!

Wetland Habitat Management

Contributed by Jason Fleener

- Planning continues for the August 21-22 Joint Venture Board meeting in Green Bay is ongoing. Barb Pardo (USFWS) has made the reservation for the Lambeau Field meeting site, and a block of hotel rooms for board members. Ducks Unlimited has pledged up to \$2,000 to sponsor a dinner on August 21. Jason Fleener and DU staff are planning a tour of Green Bay West Shores habitat projects for board members and JV staff.
- The "Marquette-Green Bay Coastal" standard NAWCA application/proposal is due on July 27. Sites proposed as match have been gathered from partners, and have been cleared within DNR programs. A budget and request to apply for a federal grant will be circulated within DNR and DOA for approval a couple weeks in advance of the deadline. Ducks Unlimited has committed to submitting and administering the grant. DNR has selected for projects which it would like to spend grant money on (\$730,000 total), including restoration projects at White River Marsh Wildlife Area and a land acquisition at the Lower Wolf River Bottoms Natural Resource Area.
- DOA has hired an independent auditor to examine the Waterfowl Stamp account from FY11 on July 10. Wildlife staff is providing supporting materials and background information to Finance to cooperate with the audit.

Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative

Contributed by Andy Paulios, Ryan Brady, and Yoyi Steele

Great Wisconsin Birdathon

WBCI partners worked with [Natural Resources Foundation](#) (NRF) staff to implement a pilot Great Wisconsin Birdathon project in May 2012. Overall, the project was successful as it met the \$25,000 fundraising goal. Most of this money was raised by pledges to the NRF celebrity teams that traveled their given areas looking for birds on one given day in May. WBCI Partner participation was minimal with less than 10 partners participating in an active level. On an encouraging note, 3 or 4 private citizens (not targeted) started their own teams and raised money for the effort! The Birdathon team will re-assemble in summer 2012 to implement improvements to the model and begin to formulate a plan for 2013. Suggested changes include:



Daniel Schwen

- upgrade the Birdathon website using a 3rd party to make communications and pledges much more simple;
- re-approach WBCI partnership about barriers to participation. This may include some WBCI webinars and training sessions for partners; and
- consult with NRF leadership about broader corporate sponsorship for the larger effort.

WBCI Grassland Conservation/Evaluation



The WBCI grassland science team has successfully completed its first year of a 3-year evaluation effort for the WBCI Strategic Grassland Conservation Plan. Michael Guttery, a UW-post doctoral student, will be entering data and performing initial analyses in August and September. Sampling took place on fields and along roadsides in the Western Prairie, Central Wisconsin Grasslands, and Southwest Grasslands landscapes to generate a baseline population status of focal species AND to generate density estimates by habitat type for planning efforts. Within each landscape, there are plans to host a landowner/volunteer barbeque in August or September to share results

and discuss plans for 2013. The grassland science team will be presenting initial results in August at the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring meeting as well as through regional working groups. The team will also be seeking additional funding through WDNR, grants, and WBCI partners to complete the 3-year project and allow for expanded sampling in other target areas.

WBCI Research and Monitoring Update

Due largely to the efforts of Ryan Brady, WBCI monitoring coordinator, we once again had a successful year for all four WBCI-sponsored monitoring programs. Ryan reports good participation in the owl, nightjar, and red-shouldered hawk surveys. Volunteers report very high numbers of Whip-poor-wills

in 2012, which may be due to good survey conditions and/or population increases. All three programs are set for internal and external reviews this fall in order to make recommendations for the long-term programs. These reviews are being done within the framework of the Midwest Coordinated Bird Monitoring effort.

The Marshbird Monitoring Program wrapped up its final year of the pilot statewide survey. This program is now being coordinated regionally through the Upper Mississippi River/Great Lakes Joint Venture and will be undergoing review for changes for the 2013-2023 years. It's likely that the survey will begin to scale back on trend/population size monitoring and will add survey efforts to help answer short-term management questions (e.g., impacts of restorations). Ryan is consulting with Kent Van Horn, WDNR Migratory Bird Ecologist, and targeted WBCI wetland partners in order to get a statewide picture of monitoring needs.



USFWS

Red-shouldered Hawk

WBCI Southern Forests

Yoyi Steele has been working with a joint team of Wildlife Management, Forestry, Science Services and WBCI partners to begin working on a collaborative vision of how to adaptively manage forests for birds and people. They've tentatively identified five Forest Conservation Areas which would be the starting point for developing a holistic set of conservation and socio-economic targets for other properties. Yoyi will continue working with the Driftless Area initiative and the WBCI team to push forward on steps towards this conservation effort.

The WBCI Southern Forests team has also finished, or soon will finish, four habitat pages for the major forest habitat types in Southern Wisconsin. These are posted on the WBCI All-bird Plan page and are marketed to appropriate audiences as needed.

BIG GAME PROGRAM

Contributed by Kevin Wallenfang, Dan Hirschert, and Scott Roepke

Deer Issues

2012 Deer Season

The deer program has been busy tidying things up from the 2011 season and getting ready for the 2012 deer season. A variety of tasks including form changes, hunting regulation edits, writing fall forecasts, and website updates have been occupying at least a portion of everyone's time.

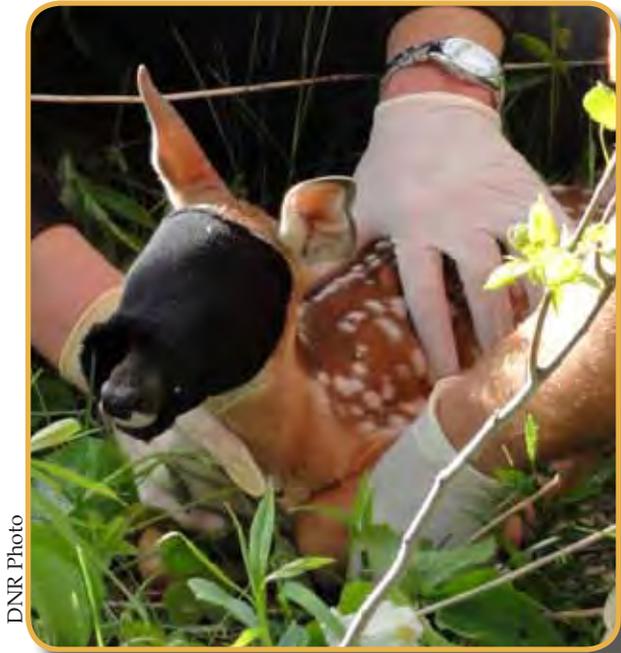
Staff News

We have a new deer, bear, and elk program assistant. Scott Roepke started work in June, and has already shown himself to be a great addition to all things 'big game' in Wisconsin. Scott most recently worked out of the Hayward DNR office in the elk program, but has great experience working in wildlife

jobs around the country. He recently finished up his M.S. at UW-Stevens Point working on Wisconsin elk genetics.

Upcoming Deer Meetings

In addition to departmental deer meetings, the summer calendar is filling up with requests for Kevin to attend speaking engagements.



DNR Photo

Deer Hunt 2012 TV show

Members of multiple bureaus as well as the Deer Communications Team have been meeting with Dan Small to design this year's Deer Hunt show. This year's show will include major segments involving Communications, Wildlife Management, Law Enforcement, Customer Service and Licensing, Science Services, and Forestry.

Deer Research

Kevin and his daughter had the opportunity to assist the research crew in fawn captures at the eastern study area. Kevin and Scott also attended the deer research appreciation picnic and had a chance to talk to many local landowners and volunteers who have gotten involved. This latest effort to involve the public in deer management is showing some great benefits and has people excited and engaged!

Restoration of the Apostle Islands Muzzleloader Deer Hunt

Through the great work of multiple department staff, the Apostle Islands October muzzleloader deer hunt will go on this fall. Special recognition should go to the local wildlife staff and to Mike Zeckmeister for facilitating the resolution of this situation.

Deer Trustee Final Report

Bureau of Wildlife Management Director Tom Hauge alerted staff on Monday, July 9, that the department would see the final report from the Deer Trustee the next day. He indicated that, 'just like other major deer program reviews (i.e., Legislative Audit, SAK Audit, and Deer 2000), the department always is looking for ways to improve our work. The deer trustee report is another opportunity to do so. Some of the recommendations will cover subjects that we've discussed for some time and this may be the opportunity to move forward with them.'

FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Population Management

1. Limit the use of SAK/accounting style models to monitoring deer population size and trends at the state and regional levels.
2. Do away with population goals and population estimates at the DMU level.
3. Replace the current DMU population goal definition of comparing the deer population estimate with the desired population goal for the DMU with a simplified goal statement of increase, stabilize, or decrease population density.
4. Develop a set of metrics to monitor progress towards the DMU goal of increasing, stabilizing, or decreasing population density.
5. Reduce the number of DMUs and combine the Farmland regions.

6. Revise the Wisconsin Deer Management Plan.

Hunting Regulations, Seasons, and Bag Limits

1. Simplify the regulatory process by setting antlerless harvest goals, harvest regulations, and antlerless permit quotas on a 3-5 year cycle.
2. Base Antlerless Permit Quotas on DMU historical demand.
3. Increase the cost of all antlerless tags for Regular and Herd Control Units to \$12.
4. Consider charging a fee for antlerless tags in the CWD Zone.
5. Establish a public lands antlerless permit system.
6. Limit antlerless deer harvest in Regular and Herd Control Zones.
7. Establish a Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) antlerless permit system.
8. Re-evaluate the effectiveness of the October antlerless seasons in the CWD Zone.
9. Maintain the current buck limit of one buck per Deer Gun License (may be used in muzzleloader season) and one buck per Archery Deer License.
10. Maintain the Bonus Buck Regulation in CWD Zone.
11. Resolve the cross-bow season issue through the public involvement process.
12. Resolve the baiting and feeding issue outside CWD affected areas.
13. Put the fun back into hunting by simplifying seasons, bag limits, and youth qualifications!

Predator Studies and Management

1. Continue to conduct research on the impacts of predators on the deer herd.
2. Involve the public as much as practical with field-based research projects.
3. Revise the Wisconsin Wolf Management Plan to include updated information and provide current public attitudes to guide management decisions through the early years of this post-delisting era.
4. Establish a wolf population management program to limit/decrease wolf societal conflicts.
5. Geospatial studies of predator distribution and densities, especially for wolves, should be encouraged and developed to assess long-term trends and issues.

Chronic Wasting Disease

1. We believe it is time to consider a more passive approach to CWD in the DMZ.
2. There is a clear need for a new sampling protocol for CWD in Wisconsin, one that gives a true picture of the progress of the disease; but more importantly, one designed to detect spread.
3. Dealing with wildlife diseases is not unlike responding to wild fires, and response plan should be developed on this model, focusing on early detection of 'break outs' and citizen involvement (active approach).
4. We recommend implementation of a statewide DMAP program; and, nowhere is such a program needed more than in the DMZ.
5. There is a need to provide more information about concerns for humans contracting a CWD variant.
6. The time required to receive CWD test results from hunter-killed animals must be decreased to a few days.
7. An annual meeting of DMAP cooperators would be an excellent venue for reporting on various aspects of CWD, in addition to the topics discussed earlier. This would greatly enhance public awareness and WDNR credibility.
8. WDNR should work closely (through the local biologist) with the Conservation Congress in

developing goals and strategies at the county level. We feel use of human dimensions research to anticipate, rather than reacting to issues as they arise would be very effective.

9. We feel use of human dimensions research to anticipate, rather than reacting to issues as they arise would be very effective.
10. Charlotte the Deer should become the 'Smokey Bear' of CWD in Wisconsin, serving as the centerpiece for a public education program developed with stakeholder organizations such as QDMA, Whitetails of Wisconsin, and Whitetails Unlimited.

Harvest Data, Herd Health, and Productivity

1. Involving the public in data collection produces many benefits, including buy-in on management and harvest strategies and cost-efficiencies of data collection.
2. Each field biologist should be required to organize and conduct at least one field necropsy study each year, conducted along with cooperators and volunteers during late winter.
3. Training should be provided to biologists and technicians to standardize methodologies and educate them on deer anatomy and basic physiology. An annual report should be prepared for each DMU and Region summarizing these studies and a Powerpoint/video presentation developed for annual DMAP workshops and public presentations.

Habitat

1. As both part of DMAP activities and public lands management, local biologists/technicians should be required to conduct annual range evaluations to assess habitat health and condition. Foresters also should be involved in these activities, public and private.
2. Training programs should be developed for state and private resource managers to standardize habitat/range assessment methodologies.
3. There is a need for modernizing the GIS and GPS capabilities of Wisconsin's agencies.
4. A statewide geospatial information system, similar to that used in Texas, should be developed which provides seamless support to all state resource managers across agencies, which also supports economic development, emergency planning and response, and a host of citizen services.
5. Form a Young Forest Initiative Task Force.
6. Funding for these activities should arise from fees assessed by stakeholders and landowners using these data and services, as well as grants and contracts for various state agency activities.
7. The WDNR should adopt an advocacy role in dealing with the National Forests of Wisconsin to encourage sustainable forest management, especially for early and mid-successional species (game and non-game).

People

1. Implement a Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP).
2. Each DMAP cooperator should receive an annual report summarizing current data and trend data over years to monitor progress toward goals.
3. Develop a public lands antlerless permit system.
4. In addition to providing hunting opportunities, the impacts of deer depredation on agricultural crops, forest regeneration and biodiversity, deer/vehicle collisions, the special significance of deer to the Ojibwe people, and other factors also must be considered in management of Wisconsin's white-tailed deer resources. This will include strict adherence to all agreements with the Voigt Intertribal Task Force (GLIFWC), the tribes serving as 'co-managers' where appropriate.
5. Expand public education/outreach efforts to serve landowners whose goals include management for white-tailed deer and other wildlife species.

DNR Research and Technical Publications

1. We strongly suggest establishment of a research steering committee, with representation from user groups, stakeholders and regional WDNR biologists, and Tribal representatives.
2. A significant effort should be developed in Human Dimensions research. Wisconsin is blessed with two excellent researchers (Holsman at UW-SP and Petchenik in house), and a plan for long-term monitoring of trends and issues should be developed between them.
3. We are concerned about long-term contracts for research services. There need to be milestones and project evaluations.
4. Projects should involve the public whenever practical.
5. There is a need for a long-term research plan (developed through 1), based on needs assessments, and prioritized for funding.
6. Synergies with other agencies and greater cooperative efforts, particularly with those in forestry and geospatial disciplines, would help leverage funding and strengthen projects.
7. Research projects should be of an applied nature, rather than basic research with clearly defined application to the needs for managing Wisconsin's deer and habitat resources.
8. Project results should be extended to the public through media, workshops and field days, as part of the DMAP program and regional stakeholder conferences.
9. In the long-term, we recommend developing a wildlife disease unit to: 1) respond quickly to CWD outbreaks; 2) monitor health and disease of other wildlife species; and, 3) train and support local biologists/technicians in conducting annual herd health surveys.

Conservation Congress

1. We feel the Conservation Congress must have a more active role in deer management decision-making at the local level.

Personnel

1. We strongly suggest addition of a Deer Management Assistance Coordinator, a highly qualified individual with the following characteristics: 1) considerable experience with DMAP or related programs; 2) well respected in both the scientific and public communities; 3) highly skilled communicator; and, 4) highly motivated to work with the public.
2. We also recommend development of a 'boots-on-the-ground' culture in the WDNR; and, job descriptions of field biologists be adjusted accordingly.

Elk Issues

Elk Management Plan

The DRAFT elk management plan has been completed and was presented to the Wildlife Policy Team in July. The plan has been reviewed and revised by the Elk Advisory Committee with input from both GLIFWC and Ho-Chunk Nation. We anticipate presenting the plan to the NRB this fall.

We are currently planning to hold meetings on the draft plan in Park Falls, Black River Falls, and the Milwaukee area by early fall. In addition, we are creating an internet survey related to elk that we hope will help us prepare for the meetings.



Elk Advisory Committee

We are preparing for a sub-committee meeting of the department's Elk Advisory Committee in August. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the development of a long-term elk population model. The entire committee will meet again in August to discuss this issue, as well as other topics that we did not have time to cover at our May meeting.

VOIGT Stipulations

The Department is currently involved in the VOIGT Stipulations review process, which includes elk.

Bear Issues

Public Interactions

We have received a few calls from the public regarding the upcoming season, as well as nuisance bear complaints. People have been seeing a lot of bears across the state.

Form Changes and Season Prep

Dan worked with the bureau of Customer Service and Licensing (CSL) to streamline harvest data entry and revise the bear registration form. The staff in CSL is very happy as these changes will make data entry much faster and easier.

We have also been attempting to simplify and cut costs of the mailing to hunters. For example, the Borax rib sample bags are being distributed directly to registration stations this year, eliminating a large mailing cost and greatly simplifying the process.



WDNR Photo

Wolf Issues

2012 Wolf Hunting and Trapping Season Information

The Natural Resources Board approved the 2012 Wolf Hunting and Trapping Season on July 17. The approved emergency rule includes a quota of up to 201 wolves that could be harvested during the first season. The available quota and permits available to non-tribal hunters and trappers will be determined after tribes make their declarations of the harvest quota for the Ceded Territory.

The Board made three amendments to the proposal after listening to testimony from over 40 people:

1. Any wolf caught in a trap will be humanely dispatched.
2. There will be a zero wolf quota on the Stockbridge-Munsee tribal reservation.
3. The department will gather all possible data before the board votes on a permanent rule and the department will come back to the board in September with a timeline for updating the wolf management plan.



USFWS

Authorizing Legislation: Act 169 signed by Governor Walker on April 2, 2012

STATUTORY PROVISIONS

Season Dates: The season will run October 15, 2012 through February 28, 2013, except that a zone could close early if there is a risk of exceeding the quota for that zone.

Zone Season Closures: A protocol for the department to follow if it is necessary to close a wolf harvesting zone early was developed. This protocol requires notification of the closure through news release, on the DNR's website, and through the telephone reporting system.

License: Dual wolf trapping and hunting license

Fees: The application fee is \$10, and the license fee is \$100 for residents and \$500 for non-residents.

Use of Fees: License and application fees fund wolf depredation payments first and then other wolf management costs.

License Transfer: Transfer of a wolf license to a youth or adult is allowed by application to DNR no later than 15 days before the start of the season.

Preference System: One half of the licenses will be issued through a random drawing, and the second half of the licenses will be issued through the preference point system.

Legal Weapons: Firearms, bows, and crossbows

Shot Size: Shot sizes larger than BB are allowed.

Dogs: Hunters may use up to 6 dogs in a pack to track or trail wolves beginning the day after the deer season ends.

Night Hunting: Night hunting is a legal option beginning the day after the deer season ends.

Use of Lights: Flashlights may only be used at the point of kill.

Cable Restraints: Cable restraints may be used for trapping.

Baiting: Baiting is allowed for trapping, and allowed but restricted for hunting.

Calling: Predator calling, including the use of electronic calls, is legal.

Reporting and Registration of Harvest: Successful harvestors must report AND register their wolf.

Harvest Zones, Quotas, and Permit Levels: Harvest zones, quotas, and permit levels may be determined by the department.

Department Objective for 1st Wolf Season: Begin to reduce statewide wolf population; provide hunting and trapping opportunities; monitor, learn, and adapt for future seasons.

Voluntary Public Access

Contributed by Melissa Keenan

Enrollments (as of 7/10/2012)

- **Acres:** 34,770.70 (20,523.92 new – not formerly enrolled in the leased public hunting grounds program)
- **Enrollments:** 199 leases, of which 112 are new.
- **Funds spent:** \$641,783.16

Updates

- The Wildlife Management Program was given the green light by the Bureau of Finance and U.S. Department of Agriculture to extend our existing lease agreements and offer longer agreements to new participants.



- An amendment to the lease agreement is being developed for existing leases.
- We are considering officially recording all VPA leases in order to affirm that they stay in place if an enrolled property is sold.

New Staff

- Mike Locatelli started in March and is located in Janesville. Mike will serve as the VPA liaison covering Green and Rock counties.
- Justin Blindert started in April and is located in Hartford. Justin will be serving as the VPA liaison covering Washington, Ozaukee, Walworth, Waukesha, Racine, and Kenosha counties.
- Sam Blake, an LTE with forestry in Dodgeville, is Shelly's replacement for the southwest focus area.
- Rex Miller was hired on as the VPA Liaison out of Poynette. He will be serving as the VPA liaison for the 8 'new' counties in the central sands area that were added during the expansion in March.
- VPA funding was restored in both the approved Senate version of the Farm Bill and the current draft of the House Farm Bill.

Landowner Appreciation

Wisconsin Waterfowl Association and the Fox River Valley chapter of Pheasants Forever donated calendars for all landowners enrolled in the Voluntary Public Access Program as a token of appreciation. The department thanks these two important partners for donating the calendars.

Outreach Efforts

- Melissa worked with Bill Cosh and the Office of Communications to conduct a media blitz in mid-March. We showcased our accomplishment of enrolling 30,000 acres and announce that we had expanded into 12 additional counties. We also targeted turkey hunters who were 'looking for a new place to hunt' with a press release and a Facebook post.
- We staffed a booth at Farm Technology Days in New London from July 16-19. Property maps for all enrolled lands were available to view, as well as other materials for outreach and promotion.
- A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) allowing the release of CRP participant information was approved by Farm Service Agency (FSA), and signed by Secretary Stepp. Once the CRP participant information is received, a statewide mailing will be made to the list of CRP participants informing them of the VPA Program and offering them an opportunity to enroll their land. Postcards with program information will be available at all FSA offices during the crop reporting period so that we may target those landowners.
- Melissa Keenan, VPA Program Manager, wrote an article on the Voluntary Public Access Program for the August edition of the Natural Resources Magazine. The article includes a statewide map identifying participating counties and photos of successful turkey hunters this spring.

Dove Fields

Five VPA landowners have expressed interest in planting sunflower food plots on VPA lands for dove hunting opportunities. Some have chosen to install and maintain the plots themselves and others have requested department staff complete the work. Landowners will be reimbursed for the costs associated with installing and maintaining the plots if they do the work themselves. All landowners will be provided with start-up costs for the food plots. This year we have 5 sunflower food plots planted on VPA lands: These fields can be found in:

- Walworth County – one six acre field;
- Jefferson County – one four acre field;
- Calumet County – one six and a half acre field; and
- Rock County – one seven acre field and one six acre field.



DNR Photo

Conservation Education

Contributed by Mary Kay Salwey

Horicon Marsh Interpretive Exhibit Planning

This past month, Mary Kay met with the Horicon Marsh Exhibit Concept Plan Team and discussed final edits for the Exhibit Concept Plan. Salwey will spend some time in July assisting staff in writing the Request for Proposals that will be released for competition among the nation's best Interpretive Design/Build firms.

Wisconsin State Fair

A new on-line registration procedure for Wildlife Management staff to use to sign up for the State Fair was implemented by Mary Kay. She is in the process of designing the 'backdrop' banners for the Wildlife Management Booth. This year's background theme will focus on the [75th Anniversary of the Wildlife Restoration Act](#). The tracking booklet that will be used by kids visiting our booth and the MacKenzie Center Tent has been redesigned.

Education Strategic Plan

Mary Kay worked with Jeff Pritzl to finalize the K-12 Educators chapter of the Wildlife Conservation Education Strategic Plan.



DNR Photo



National Archery in the Schools Program

Contributed by Dan Schroeder

NASP Basic Archery Training (BAI)

In April, a NASP one-day Basic Archery Instructor (BAI) class was held in Madison. Staff from Blackhawk, Sherman, O'Keefe, and Cherokee middle schools attended and plan to offer the NASP curriculum starting next year. Also attending was staff from St. Paul's Lutheran school in Cudahy. They plan to offer the NASP curriculum in 2012/13. Also in April, we held a NASP 3-day Basic Archery Instructor Trainer (BAIT) class in Clear Lake. One participant travelled from Tennessee to attend! In June, NASP trainings were conducted in Oconomowoc, Neenah, Waupaca, and Manitowoc. A total of 42 people, representing 10 schools, were trained at these classes. Also trained were staff from Devil's Lake State Park, Baraboo Campground, Germantown Parks and Recreation, Camp Young Judea, and Neenah Parks and Recreation. Holiday Home Camp and Devil's Lake State Park ran a two-day NASP archery academy in July. A NASP BAI class was held on July 14th in Mequon. Plans are underway to offer another 3-day BAIT course next fall or winter in the southern part of the state. NASP BAI one-day trainings are scheduled in Mukwonago, Neenah, Manitowoc, and Waupaca over the next two months.

We will be reaching out to the Madison high school teachers in the coming weeks, as several teachers have expressed an interest in the NASP program and getting certified to teach this program.

The Wisconsin Youth Company in Madison is also planning to run four, week-long archery camps as part of their summer school program at Hamilton Middle School. Staff will be certified to run that program at a future NASP BAI class.

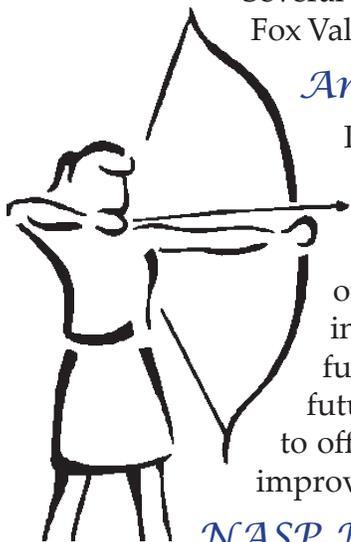
Schools Offering NASP

Interest in archery and archery programs hit an all-time high in 2012. Schools, park and recreation programs, after-school groups, clubs, and camps are offering or planning to offer archery curriculums. We are well ahead of our goal of 35-40 new schools joining NASP this year. We have added 30 schools to date with four more NASP BAI trainings scheduled at this time. This is on track with previous years, and pushes the number of schools in Wisconsin offering NASP at some level to over 420.

Several community park and recreation departments, including several in Madison, the Fox Valley, and Milwaukee, are offering archery as part of their summer programming.

Archery Events

In June, a Youth Archery Event was held in Combined Locks. Two archery clubs, several retailers, the local YMCA, Kimberly shooting sports, and 4-H shooting sports ran several different teaching stations at this event. It was held in conjunction with a 10-11 year old statewide baseball tournament. With over 200 people attending, the event was a huge success. Booths were set up to introduce kids and adults to various archery programs and opportunities. All funds raised by the Combined Locks shooting sports program will be used for future maintenance and upkeep, as well as new targets and equipment. Plans are to offer this event next year in Neenah, as they are now planning on updates and improvements to the archery range there.



NASP National Tournament

The NASP coordinators' conference is in May in Louisville, Kentucky in connection with the NASP national tournament. This will be the final year for this location as NASP and the Archery

Trade Association (ATA) have agreed to combine the NASP coordinators' conference and the ATA's Bowhunting summit to better fit everyone's schedules, and work together to grow all archery programs nationwide. This will be a huge step forward in the continuing growth of all forms, styles, and archery curriculums, and may be a great opportunity to provide more funding for schools and states for their programs.

NASP State Archery Tournament

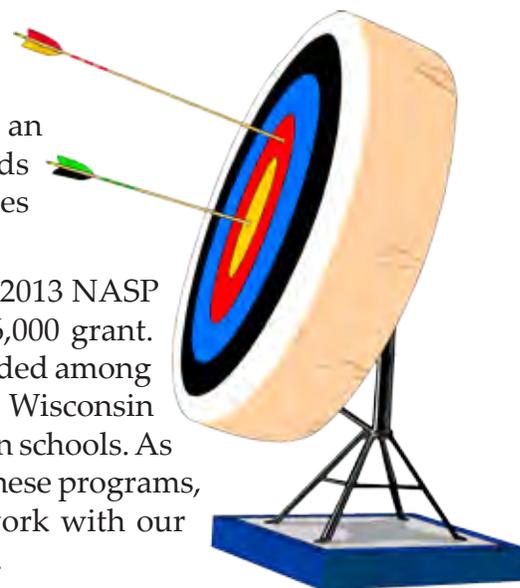
The 2012 Wisconsin NASP state tournament consisted of over 850 students from 47 different schools. This was an increase of almost 200 students and 10 schools from the 2011 tournament. Over 250 students from 15 schools competed at the 2012 NASP national tournament in Louisville, Kentucky. This year's national tournament was recognized by the Guinness Book of World Records as the largest indoor archery tournament in the world, with almost 8,000 archers competing!

A Draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was submitted to the Wisconsin Archery Alliance regarding their involvement with the NASP state tournament in the future. It was explained that all portions of the MOU would need to be reviewed and approved by the DNR legal department, and signed by the Secretary. The idea was to have them review the document, make suggestions for changes or improvements, open the lines of communication between the two organizations, and have the MOU implemented before the 2013 NASP state tournament.

Program Funding

Permanent and consistent funding sources are needed to continue the growth of NASP and all archery programs in Wisconsin. The Archery Trade Association (ATA) and NASP have expressed an interest in future partnering ideas to help with growth and needs at all levels. This would be a huge help with equipment purchases and program development.

The NASP national office has approved and released the 2012/2013 NASP grants. Currently seven schools in Wisconsin will divide the \$6,000 grant. Once the first round is awarded, the remaining monies will be divided among the states that have schools waiting for funding help. Last year, Wisconsin schools received funding help totaling \$8000 from NASP for eleven schools. As always, schools and others continue to struggle with funding for these programs, equipment purchases, and maintenance. We will continue to work with our hunting and shooting sports partners and sponsors on this issue.



Archery range updates and construction continues

- We are still working with the Dane County Parks Department on plans to build an archery range at a site in Madison; the exact site is yet to be determined. The United States Collegiate Archery Association (USCA) and others have expressed support for this plan. We will work to choose a location that best fits the needs and offers the easiest access for archers from Dane County and surrounding areas. It is also hoped that UW-Madison will have access to the range and will have an archery club that will join the USCA or other nationally recognized organization. If the range is built it will be considered a potential location for future regional and national college archery tournaments.
- Combined Locks has added 5 more targets, extended the shooting distance to 40 yards, built a state-of-the-art raised platform, and have added to their already amazing youth archery summer program.
- West Bend is currently working on a new range with targets out to 60 yards and a raised platform. It will be open later this summer, and they plan to include youth archery programs and shooting lessons as part of their archery curriculum once the range is complete.
- Neenah is currently taking bids on new targets, looking into increasing their youth archery

curriculums, and may include the ATA's Explore Bowhunting curriculum next year. They are also considering adding a 3-D range that would be open to the public one weekend a month.

- Germantown is building a range and offering youth and adult programs. They are looking for an archery curriculum director to take over the program and introduce new programs in the coming years.
- The YMCA in Kimberly started their archery program in 2012, and now have over 100 kids currently participating. Several other YMCA offices have inquired about offering archery during their summer programming

WILDLIFE HEALTH

Wildlife Health Screening and Research Assistance

Contributed by Lindsey Long

Routine health screenings were provided for an assisted-dispersal of Wisconsin's elk herd, translocation of sharp-tailed grouse, and trumpeter swans captured for management purposes. Assistance in the form of training and/or necropsy evaluation was provided for multiple research projects including the white-tailed deer buck recovery, American badger distribution and ecology, blue-winged teal production and survival, and American martin re-introduction projects.



Jonathunder

Wildlife Health Database

Contributed by Lindsey Long

A comprehensive, integrated wildlife disease and contaminants database has been in production for a couple of years. Historic disease surveillance and necropsy data has continued to be added to the current data. Further queries and reports have been built to assist with analyzing, tracking, reporting, and sharing data. Enhancements, such as creating applications for different types of users, continue to be added to this database.

Toxicology

Contributed by Sean Strom

- Staff is working with the Office of Great Lakes to secure funding to evaluate waterfowl consumption advisories within the Fox River/Green Bay and Milwaukee River Areas of Concern (AOC). Waterfowl collection of resident mallards and Canada geese for the Fox River/Green Bay AOC will likely commence in the summer of 2012, while collections of resident mallards, resident Canada geese, black ducks, ruddy ducks, and scaup for the Milwaukee River AOC will begin in 2013.
- Sampling of bald eaglets along the Fox River/Green Bay corridor began in May 2012. This sampling project is part of the Wisconsin Bald Eagle Bio-Sentinel project which hopes to correlate bald eagle population recovery with decreasing contaminant levels. We will also monitor newly emerging

contaminants in this eagle population. This is a collaborative effort between Wildlife Management, Science Services, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

- Staff is working with South Central Region staff regarding potential PCB contamination issues at the Badger Ammunition plant. The need for a PCB soil clean-up level that would be protective of both human and ecological health is currently being discussed.

CWD

Contributed by Tim Marien, Brian Glenzinski, Erin Larson, Lindsey Long, and Tami Ryan

Washburn CWD Positive Deer

A 3½-year old emaciated doe was euthanized by the Shell Lake Sheriff's Office on November 19, 2011, and tested CWD-positive. The location of this deer is 186 miles north of the furthest previously recorded CWD-positive deer in Wisconsin. All indications at this time support that this deer originated in the free-ranging population of the Shell Lake area. Following the finding of this CWD-positive deer, a feeding and baiting ban as well as a rehabilitation ban are now in place in the four northwestern counties within a ten mile radius of this CWD-positive deer. Primary surveillance will rely upon obtaining tissue from hunter-killed deer during the 2012 hunting seasons. In addition, samples are being collected by the local car-killed deer removal contractors and landowners willing to collect samples in advance to the 2012 deer season, and we will continue to remove and test any sick deer reported by the public.

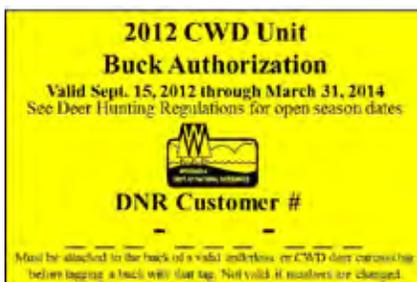
Wildlife Health Staff continue to work with the Washburn Response Team to address a variety of issues including genetic testing of deer, remediation of the CWD-positive deer carcass disposal site, operations, and public outreach.

A site specific remediation plan was developed for the CWD-positive deer carcass disposal site. In consultation with the U.S. Geological Survey and UW, Wildlife Health Staff developed a list of recommended site remediation options to consider based on conditions. The Washburn Response Team used this document to develop the preferred alternative as follows:

'The team discussed the importance of continued education of the public about the low risk of contamination, but ultimately decided to remediate the site with a cost effective strategy. Local wildlife staff will remove the top three inches of the soil in areas where the majority of remains were found and landfill the spoil. The area will then be capped with uncontaminated soil and seeded down. Hand crews will execute the plan to keep disturbance to a minimum. Temporary fencing will be installed until the site is fully vegetated and removed as soon as possible (August) at which point the site remediation will be considered complete.'

Wildlife Health Staff attended the Barron, Washburn, and Burnett county Spring Hearings, and answered questions pertaining to the finding of CWD in Washburn County. In April, section members served on an expert panel to answer questions at a public meeting in Spooner regarding the finding of the CWD-positive deer.

UW geneticists confidently placed the Shell Lake CWD-positive doe with the northern wild deer population based on genetics testing of the CWD-positive deer.



Bonus Buck

As in 2011, this fall within the CWD Management Zone we will continue to transition from Earn-A-Buck (EAB) to the Bonus Buck format. This involves a new 2012 Bonus Buck sticker design, and design of 2012 and 2013 CWD-MZ Carcass Tags. The EAB terminology is currently being updated on the website as well as in many supporting documents as we switch to Bonus Buck terminology.

CWD Outreach and Education

Over the past year, the Wisconsin DNR has been involved in developing a new CWD communications and outreach plan with Staples Marketing of Pewaukee, WI, and this plan is now being implemented. The 'brand name' of this plan is **Hunt.Harvest.Help**. Through this outreach and communication plan, Staples Marketing assisted the Wisconsin DNR with informing hunters, landowners, and legislators of issues related to CWD. Our goal is to get information about CWD 'onto the laps' of the public and legislators. Our aim is to educate hunters and landowners on the details of the DNR's CWD Response Plan, and move hunters and landowners to take an active role in preserving a healthy whitetail deer herd and rich hunting culture in Wisconsin. Our website can be found at KnowCWD.com.

Science Operations Center

Contributed by Melissa Clark, Nancy Businga, and Lindsey Long

Research and Training

Wildlife Health staff provided training for Bureau of Science Services researcher Ron Gatti and his blue-winged teal project staff. Training included surgical placement of a subcutaneous radio transmitter, administration of drug injections and fluids, and tube-feeding for captive teal that experience significant weight loss from the stress of placement in the decoy trap. Wildlife Health staff also screened the health

condition of the captive teal flock prior to sending them to the field as decoys. The teal had physical evaluations and were screened for antibodies to Avian Influenza Virus, New Castle Virus, and West Nile Virus, for which they were all negative. Follow up assistance for this project included examination and consultations for injured or stressed captive teal and necropsy of dead captive and wild caught teal. As of last week, all 88 radio-telemetry units were deployed on blue-winged teal hens.

Sick Deer Guidance

An ad hoc committee of Wildlife Health staff drafted statewide

guidance on procedures for department staff to follow when responding to reports of sick deer. New procedural recommendations include modifications to the necropsy and CWD databases for tracking all sick deer reports from the initial call through sample collection, shipment, testing, and result reporting. Carcass disposal recommendations were also included.

Wildlife Rehabilitation

Contributed by Mandy Cyr

- A news release and Public Service Announcement regarding orphan animals was issued on Tuesday, April 24. In situations where a presumed orphaned animal is found, we are encouraging the public to contact the department via the DNR information line (1-888-936-7463), so we can assess the situation and, if necessary, direct the public to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator.
- A communication with the Wisconsin Veterinary Medical Association (WVMA) was created and



Blue-winged Teal Drake

recently submitted for publication in their newsletter. This article provided information about the regulations pertaining to treatment of wildlife.

- The deer rehabilitation policy was updated with the discovery of CWD in northwest Wisconsin, and communication went out to the entire wildlife rehabilitation community. There are three licensed rehabilitators in the four county area that are now not able to rehabilitate deer. Because of this, there is a lot of concern on what to do with fawns in the west and northwestern part of the state, because the remaining deer rehabilitators are in Rhinelander, Green Bay, and Slinger.

Lead Action Plan

Contributed by Lindsey Long

The department created an outreach and public education program that illustrates the negative impact of lead ammunition and fishing tackle on wildlife and the environment, and will help reduce the amount of lead discharged into the environment. The harmful effects of lead to people are well known, and lead is a known environmental pollutant harmful to fish and wildlife. The goal of the department is an expansive outreach effort, with the DNR being a leader by example, which will help reduce the amount of lead discharged into the environment.

The action plan outlines objectives with associated action items to reduce the amount of lead in the environment in present day, as well as both short and long-term future. Some action items can be implemented with current levels of funding whereas others will require supplemental funding.

In the past year, the Wildlife Health section conducted copper bullet demonstrations and workshops within each region. The purpose of these workshops was to show the superior performance of copper bullets through hands-on participation. Our hope is that after attending these workshops, staff can then share their first-hand knowledge and experience with their constituents, as well as friends and family.

The workshops include both a classroom session, where information is shared regarding the current science of lead bullets and lead contamination, as well as a range session, where participants observe first-hand the performance differences between lead and copper bullets. This is an important step in sharing information which will hopefully result in increased use of non-toxic ammunition when hunting. Further, Wisconsin is now an official member of Cooperative North American Shotgun Education Program (CONSEP), and we are in the planning stages of hosting, with help from our partners, CONSEP-style shooting clinics in Wisconsin.

We also worked with partners to provide funding for non-toxic tackle exchanges being held at different lakes in Bayfield County.



Land Management System

Contributed by Jeff Walters

Department Infrastructure

The design and development of our Land Management System (LMS) is about 75-80% complete. We hope to collect information on basic infrastructure (e.g., buildings, dams, roads, parking lots, boat landings, signs, gates, bridges, culverts, and water control structures). The LMS will allow us to schedule inspections, set reminders through e-mail, text, and Outlook, enter inspection results, or even assign reminders to other staff.

We will need to plan on training sessions to make staff aware of how this detailed system works and the numerous options available.

The last few months another 'add-on' to the Land Management System was pursued. We are adding an 'activities' database, which means for the first time ever both DNR staff and the public can query the database to learn what the public can do on our state properties. Our activities list includes options such as boating, cross-country skiing, geocaching, and target shooting.

Select staff (largely web people) from across the department is taking the first attempt at populating activities information. Eventually this information will be made available to the public. For more detailed information on the project and its timelines, please contact Cindy Hoffland in the Bureau of Facilities and Lands.

Integrated Property Management is our next major system focus. A memo sent to Land Division supervisors is requesting staff to prepare to use LMS as a platform for standardizing the IPMM process to help facilitate decision making, data collection, documentation, and reporting. Thus, it will serve as the basis for conducting all Land Division IPM meetings. I will be working on detailed training in the next few weeks.

WILDLIFE AND FORESTRY RESEARCH

Estimating Wisconsin's Black Bear Population

Contributed by Dave MacFarland

How many bears are in Wisconsin? A collaborative effort with Science Services, Wildlife Management, and our hunting public was launched last spring to answer this question using a biomarker-based capture-recapture method. Bears were marked with tetracycline laced baits; tetracycline is a common antibiotic which is detectable in bone tissue several years after exposure. Rib samples collected in 2011 and 2012 will be analyzed for tetracycline exposure. Baiting and rib data will be used to estimate both statewide and bear management unit specific populations.

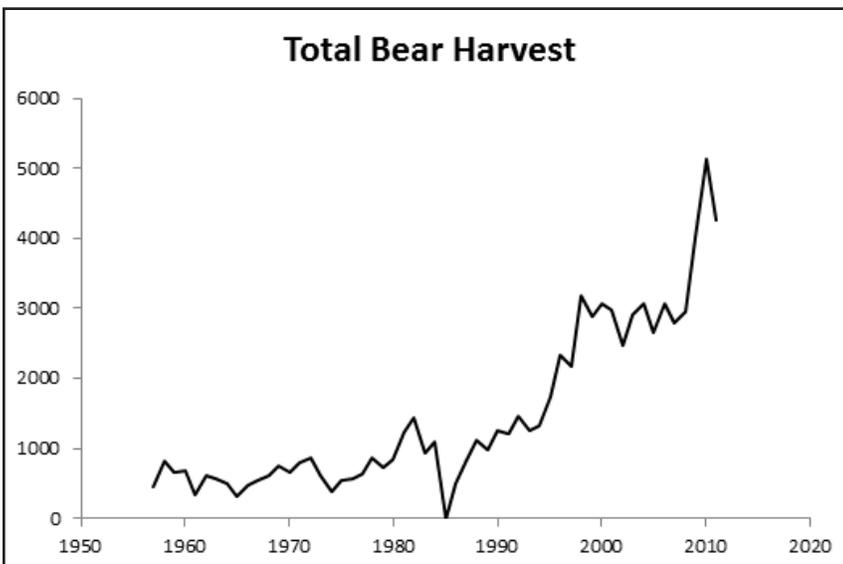


Figure 1: Total Wisconsin black bear harvest 1957-2011.

Table 1: County Specific Baiting Results

County	Baits set	Bears marked	% bear
Ashland	89	32	0.36
Barron	71	44	0.62
Bayfield	172	71	0.41
Burnett	96	21	0.22
Chippewa	108	26	0.24
Clark	136	38	0.28
Douglas	153	50	0.33
Dunn	96	8	0.08
Eau Claire	80	15	0.19
Florence	58	27	0.47
Forest	116	42	0.36
Iron	89	21	0.24
Jackson	97	17	0.18
Juneau	29	2	0.07
Langlade	98	53	0.54
Lincoln	100	28	0.28
Marathon	176	20	0.11
Marinette	143	42	0.29
Oconto	88	26	0.30
Oneida	138	40	0.29
Polk	96	41	0.43
Portage	77	21	0.27
Price	139	45	0.32
Rusk	104	38	0.37
Sawyer	141	41	0.29
Shawano	99	11	0.11
St Croix	83	30	0.36
Taylor	108	22	0.20
Vilas	114	32	0.28
Washburn	96	34	0.35
Waupaca	82	5	0.06
Wood	88	13	0.15
Total	3360	956	0.28

network of registration stations to ensure rib samples were properly collected. All this hard work paid off!

The baiting effort went very well this spring. Our goal was to place 4 baits per township, or 1 bait every 3 miles, across bear range. A total of 3,361 baits were placed in 32 counties. We successfully marked 957 bears (Table 1), well within our target range. Over 650 members of the public, including many from the Wisconsin Bear Hunters Association, volunteered to set and check baits.

Bait coverage was much improved over the 2006 effort. Greater involvement of DNR Wildlife Management staff provided local oversight of volunteers which helped ensure the success of the effort. The almost complete bait coverage coupled with the large number of marked bears will improve the accuracy and precision of the population estimate.

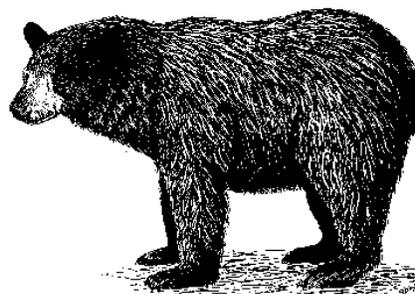
Rib Collection:

Thanks to the cooperation of hunters and registration stations, facilitated by our dedicated DNR field staff, rib collection was a great success. A total of 3,960 ribs were collected from 4,257 registered bears, over 93%!

Analysis and Results:

Rib and tooth samples were sent to Matson's Laboratory in Milltown, MT for analysis in mid-January. They will screen each rib for tetracycline exposure; teeth from tetracycline positive ribs will be analyzed for the year of exposure. We will incorporate the tetracycline analysis data into capture-recapture population models. An initial estimate of the bear population will be available in late 2012. A more accurate and precise estimate requires 2 years of data collection. This increases our sample size and reduces bias in the data. Ribs will again be collected in 2012 and final study results will be available in late 2013.

I'd like to thank everyone who worked so hard on this project, and an early thanks to those who will once again be involved in rib collection this fall. The study is on track to produce high quality results and make a significant contribution to bear management!



FEATURED DISTRICT: SOUTHERN

Contributed by Eric Lobner

~ SOUTHERN FOX AREA ~

Racine, Kenosha, and Southern Milwaukee Counties

Habitat Management

- Maintenance work on pheasant pens at Richard Bong State Recreation Area has been completed. These pens hold pheasants for the managed hunt on the property.
- Water was pumped out of the Tichigan Wildlife Area refuge, and the refuge area is being mowed in preparation for planting. The planting provides a food source for waterfowl.
- Management control effort for sweet clover at Kenosha dunes and woody re-sprouts at Chiwaukee State Natural Area are ongoing.
- We have been meeting with sharecroppers.

Outreach and Education

- Marty Johnson did a Wildlife Management presentation at a hunter safety class and at the Kenosha Boys and Girls Club.

Training

- Nate Symoens received ATV training.
- All staff received heavy equipment certification/recertification training.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Nate Symoens and Eric Tarman Ramcheck assisted with fawn capturing in the deer research project.
- The annual waterfowl survey at Richard Bong State Recreation was completed.
- A grassland bird survey at Richard Bong State Recreation was completed.

Current/Unique Issues

- New duck blinds were installed at the Richard Bong State Recreation Area. These blinds are used by duck hunters participating in the managed hunt.
- The first meeting on the dog trial management plan was held, and went well.

Washington, Ozaukee, and Northern Milwaukee County

Habitat Management

- The Pike Lake crew completed prescribed burns on May 16. We ended up burning only about 150 acres on private and public lands, not including the Plymouth area totals. Plymouth and Pike Lake Wildlife Management crews combine to burn together.

DNR Photo



- Pike Lake staff spent a ½ day on the airboat upgrading the north refuge boundary posting on Theresa Marsh.
- We're in the process of completing several small waterfowl and turkey stamp projects. As an example, Bob Zinkgraf completed several acres of tile break and scrape work on Jackson Marsh.
- A \$16,000 bid was accepted and work has begun on the 'Klug' restoration site on Jackson Wildlife Area. The Jackson Wildlife Area is a combined North American Wetlands Conservation Act, turkey stamp, and waterfowl stamp project to restore 56 acres of grassland and wetland.
- The Fox Valley Tech crew from Appleton came down and helped survey several wetland restoration sites.
- Angie Rusch over-seeded big bluestem on fields on Theresa and Allenton Marsh, and has been sorting and preparing seed and checking fields for several sites to seed in June.
- Justin Blindert has been busy contacting landowners for the Voluntary Public Access program, but so far has had one new landowner enroll in the program; 66 acres of land is now open to the public for hunting, trapping, fishing, and wildlife observation.
- We completed water level and dam management, including some bog removal, on Theresa Marsh, and water level management on Allenton Marsh.
- Contract work was completed to clear and chip a 4-acre savannah site on Jackson Marsh.
- We submitted the Program Statement to replace a bridge on Jackson Marsh and are waiting for Department of Administration approval for this project.



DNR Photo

Big Bluestem

Outreach and Education

- Angie Rusch and Justin Blindert participated in the Dodge County Youth Expo. Angie was there for three days including setup of the event, and Justin was there for two days.
- Tom Isaac spent a half day critiquing presentation on environmental issues by freshmen at Arrowhead High School.
- Tom Isaac met with Madison Department of Transportation to work out the final details of erecting information signs about Theresa Marsh at the Hwy 41 Rest Stops.
- A new AV projector was purchased with turkey stamp dollars to be used by Mike Ripp and other volunteer turkey clinic instructors.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Tom Isaac was one of five Southern Fox Wildlife Management staff participating in a day and a half of fawn capturing out of Shiocton. Seven fawns were captured by the crew when our staff was lending a hand.
- Angie Rusch completed two pheasant crowing surveys and one dove survey. Tom Isaac responded to numerous 'cougar sighting' calls in Washington County after a 911 caller reported seeing a cougar in a West Bend County Park; no cougar sighting were confirmed. Follow-ups included two media contacts and an interview with TV 58 focusing on what to do if you encounter a cougar.

Walworth and Waukesha Counties

Habitat Management

- We have been busy checking and maintaining all gates, spraying and mowing prairie invasive species, and mowing and prepping for new seeding at East Troy Sod Farm.
- We inherited a 96 acre new property, known as 'Himebaugh' through WRP/TCF. This acquisition will increase the Honey Creek Streambank Protection Area in Walworth County to a 426-acre complex. Department of Transportation owns 256 acres adjacent, and will be transferring the property to DNR within five years.



WDNR Photo

Wetland Restoration

- Staff used the Marsh Master from the Horicon Marsh Wildlife Area at Vernon Marsh to crush cattails to create a new channel.

Outreach and Education

- Tim issued a nuisance turkey removal permit.
- We have received a lot of general wildlife calls on fox, fawns, coyote, skunk babies, and raccoons.
- Tim and Tom Zagar led a Natural Resources Foundation field trip at Big Muskego Lake in boats

Training

- All of our staff received training and certification/recertification on the use of heavy equipment.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Dart and Fisher helped with fawn searching in the eastern study area, and helped to catch seven fawns.
- We finished our annual pheasant surveys.
- Multiple cougar sightings were reported in Washington and Waukesha counties, but no evidence supports these claims.
- There were also reports of a bear sighting in Waukesha County, but again there was no evidence to support the presence of a bear.
- There have been a large number of mute swans on the Vernon Marsh, among others.
- Fisher completed an eagle and osprey survey.

- Tim Lizotte, Rachel Anderson, and Travis Schroeder are working with Ducks Unlimited to finalize plans for a Vernon dike rebuild project.

- We are also working with Ducks Unlimited and the Waukesha County Land Trust to purchase the 'Davis' through the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant.

- Rachel and Molly are doing their first wetland restoration on the 23-acre Connolly parcel. Funding is through the SC Pothole NAWCA Grant.

- We worked to ground truth the aerial waterfowl survey.
- We completed an annual woodcock survey.

Current/Unique Issues

- Tim is working on a drainage permit for a neighbor to discharge tile lines through DNR land into Turtle Creek.
- Tim met with fleet to resolve truck/trailer towing capacity issues; one truck has been provided and others are to follow.
- Dart and Fisher completed CONSEP pattern boards.
- Tim conducted an 'Effective Wingshooting' clinic for the DNR administration on June 29.

~ POYNETTE AREA ~

Columbia County

Habitat Management

- Approximately 20 acres at Peter Helland Wildlife Area were sprayed, disked, and seeded with warm season grasses.
- During a work day at Peter Helland Wildlife Area, we burned brush piles.
- One known location of leafy spurge on Mud Lake Wildlife Area was sprayed.
- Holes in three dikes were repaired, and woody vegetation on one of the dikes was killed.
- We removed a beaver dam that was flooding a neighbor's land.
- We pulled garlic mustard in a newly infested area.

Outreach and Education

- Sara Kehrli attended a celebration for the Aldo Leopold Foundation becoming an 'Important Bird Area' partner.
- We attended a Pheasants Forever chapter meeting to discuss a possible land purchase.

Training

- All staff attended the Southern District Wildlife Management meeting.
- Bubolz went to Heavy Equipment Operator recertification training in Black River Falls.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Staff helped the Bureau of Endangered Resources erect 50 black tern nesting platforms at Schoenenburg Marsh and Grassy Lake WA.
- Bear were sighted near Wisconsin Dells, Portage, and Freisland.
- Al Ramminger helped locate and radio tag young Sandhill cranes.
- Staff helped Ron Gatti with blue wing teal trapping at Mud Lake and Schoenenburg Marsh.

DNR Photo



Black Tern

- Ramminger and Bubolz conducted nest searches at Swan Lake and French Creek.
- We picked up a sick bat that turned out to be positive for rabies.
- Members of our staff helped with the fawn searching project.
- We helped game farm staff with pheasant hatches.

Current Issues

- Swan Lake target shooting issues - We met with township staff, and are looking at ways to deter unsafe target shooting.
- Master planning on Columbia County properties is progressing. Staff toured properties with Bureau Director Tom Hauge to review 'final' boundary adjustments.
- We have received a lot of calls about nuisance wildlife, mostly involving woodchucks and raccoons.
- We have attended meeting to discuss the possible removal of Columbia County from the Horicon goose zone.
- We met with VPA liaisons to discuss potential landowners to contact about their inclusion in the Voluntary Public Access program.

State Game Farm:

- Pheasant hatch success continues to be high with all hatches over 80%.
- Pheasant egg collection ended the first week of June.
- New employee, Sara Borde, joined the team and Melissa Scherneck returned from UWSP for another summer.
- Friends of Poynette Game Farm continue to increase awareness of the organization and their mission to promote pheasant hunting in Wisconsin. They held a meeting with pheasant hunters from around Richard Bong Recreation Area at the end of June.



DNR Photo

Pheasants at the State Game Farm

- Staff continues the planning process for a new hatchery building. Initial cost estimates were higher than expected. Staff is working to reduce square footage and cost estimates to bring the project more in line with what was expected.
- Pen construction for rearing an additional 1,500 pheasants continues at Oregon Correctional Center.
- Staff conducted three tours of the game farm hatchery and rearing areas. Approximately 80 people received an education on pheasant production. Game farm tours are always well received and very popular.

MacKenzie Environmental Education Center

- We had a very busy spring with over 1,200 individuals, including students and chaperones, visiting the MacKenzie Center for overnight stays and day field trips. Each field trip offers a hands-on learning experience in our outdoor classroom.
- MEEC welcomes two new staff members! Adam Brandt has joined us as the new full time educator

and Kyle Coker joins us as the new part time wildlife technician. Both individuals are a great addition to our MEEC team as they have diverse backgrounds and passion for conservation and environmental education. Adam and Kyle are both employees of the Wisconsin Wildlife Federation.

- The MacKenzie Center participated in the Wildlife Camp on behalf of the WWF at the Wisconsin Outdoor Youth Expo that was held in Beaver Dam on May 17th and 18th. MEEC staff and volunteers lead activities in the wetland habitat teaching stations and assisted some DNR staff with forestry activities and tracking activities. The Expo welcomed about 3,000 students and chaperones for this two day event.

~ MADISON AREA ~

Dane County

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- spraying garlic mustard at Deansville Wildlife Area.
- spraying shrubs at Hook Lake Wildlife Area.
- spraying garlic mustard at Lodi Marsh Wildlife Area with Ice Age Trail volunteers.
- conducting a meeting at Gadwall EWHP to discuss girdling the aspen.
- planting sunflower fields at Deansville Wildlife Area.
- sorting, repairing, and stowing prescribed burning gear and equipment.
- repairing the seed drill.
- working on a timber sale with Steve Holaday for Nevin Springs Fishery and Wildlife Area.
- working on a timber sale with Randy Stampfl for Deansville Wildlife Area.
- inspecting and repairing mowers for use in summer invasive species control.



DNR Photo

Garlic Mustard

Outreach and Education

- Heidi attended two local meetings for shooting sports events (WITO) in Green County.

Training

- Nancy completed Fire Training S-390, 'Introduction to Fire Behavior Calculations'.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Heidi and Chris participated in two days of fawn searching in Shawano County.
- We completed our annual pheasant surveys.

Current/Unique Issues

- We completed master planning monitoring information for Nevin Springs Fishery and Wildlife Area and Goose Lake and Deansville wildlife areas.

- We met with the Dane County Highway Department about siting plans for a new parking lot at Goose Lake Wildlife Area.
- We have received a lot of phone calls concerning agricultural damage tags, goose tags, and orphaned baby mammals and birds.
- The Lang property is listed for sale near the Lodi Marsh Wildlife Area, but rankings in the purchase criteria is extremely low. The Bureau of Endangered Resources was notified of this opportunity.
- Don met on several occasions with SOD fisheries, staff from the Bureau of Lands and Facilities, and wildlife staff regarding the siting of a Chemical storage unit for the Nevin Springs campus.

Rock and Green Counties

Habitat Management

- Mike L. worked on VPA contacts and posting boundaries.
- Mike F., Grant, and Chris planted 230 park stock shrubs on the Dohm Trust acquisition at Brooklyn Wildlife Area to widen corridors for Brown Thrashers and other Species of Greatest Conservation Need.
- Brian and Mike F. worked on share cropping agreements and management, and Brian followed up with meeting all sharecroppers.



DNR Photo

Brown Thrasher

- Grant completed his work on the Brooklyn Marsh restoration, including completing a NAWCA project permit package and preparing for construction. Mike has worked with John Olson regarding contract bidding for the restoration work to be done this summer.

- Brian and Mike L. transitioned from prescribed burning to planting and spraying dove fields.

- Mike L. has been completing equipment maintenance to close out burn season, and also preparing for summer management by getting sprayers and seeders in good shape.

- Herbicides for summer were ordered and some initial spraying began for controlling invasive species.

Outreach and Education

- Mike F. and Grant helped arrange Albany School's Service Learning Day, which resulted in a large pick-up load of trash and tires being collected from Albany Wildlife Area and the Sugar River Trail.

Training

- Brian took Fire Training Certification and is now able to teach S-130/190, 'Basic Wildland Fire Training'.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Annual pheasant and quail surveys were completed.

- Mike L. assisted with two days of fawn searching in Shawano County.

Current and Unique Issues

- Brian and Mike F. took ‘countless’ orphaned baby wildlife and nuisance wildlife calls.
- Mike F. worked with Town of Milton on E. Storrs Lake Road resurfacing project.
- Mike F. issued one deer shooting permit and 1 PDMD permit.
- Mike F. worked on Conservation Infrastructure planning.
- In late April, Mike F. worked with Mike Ring to get a dock installed at Storrs Lake boat landing in preparation for fishing opener.



DNR Photo

Fox Pups

CWD Operations

- We met with Wildlife Health staff to discuss northern region CWD plans for the fall.
- We also met with CWD Team Leaders to discuss the current CWD budget, and plans for this fall's deer season in the CWD-management zone.
- We are beginning an inventory of supplies and plan to make a new purchase of supplies.
- We worked with Wildlife Health staff on a new CWD data kit order.
- We went out on sick deer calls. Of the four sick deer calls we received from Mid-April through May, all four proved to be positive for CWD.
- Travis updated state park deer hunting permits within the CWD-management zone by working with Bureau of Parks and Recreation staff as well as Law Enforcement to incorporate wording changes and concealed carry issues.

Outreach

- Don gave a presentation on deer ecology to Barneveld 7th and 8th graders.

Surveys:

- Renee Asmann, Lloyd Meng, John Hilfer, Meg Ziegler, and Don assisted with fawn searching two days in Shawano County.
- Don completed two pheasant surveys for eastern Iowa County.

Southwest Wisconsin Grassland and Stream Conservation Area

- We attended the Southwest Grasslands and Stream Conservation Area outreach sub-team meeting.
- We attended an oak savanna restoration demonstration that was conducted by The Nature Conservancy.
- We worked on a permit for a parking lot at the Sherven property.
- We attended the Dane County Board meeting for the approval of the Sherven acquisition.
- We worked on an appraisal request for purchase of the Gnewuch property in Perry/Primrose Bird Conservation Area.

- Attended bird point count training for bird monitoring within bird conservation areas.

Other

- Travis' position description was updated and we drafted and reviewed preliminary performance standards with him.
- We received several phone calls regarding what to do with sick raccoons.
- We were contacted by a landowner who was concerned that his neighbor had three wolf/dog hybrids in Iowa County. This issue was referred to the Bureau of Law Enforcement.
- We spoke with a landowner who had questions about payments for coyote damage.

~ HORICON AREA ~

Jefferson County

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- repairing approximately two miles of dike on a huntable impoundment at Prince's Point Wildlife Area.
- beginning a drawdown on Prince's Point Wildlife Area.
- applying Garlon to five acres of Fecon mowed brush at Waterloo Wildlife Area.
- planting 12 acres of sunflowers in two plots at Lake Mills Wildlife Area.
- removing approximately 600 yards of old wire fence at Waterloo Wildlife Area.
- finishing an additional eight acres of Fecon work at Waterloo Wildlife Area.
- mowing about three miles of dikes and trails on Prince's Point, including the beginning of new hiking loop.



Mark Musselman - USFWS

Prothonotary Warbler

- checking and monitoring 22 Prothonotary warbler nest boxes on Koshkonong and Prince's Point Wildlife Areas.
- spraying four acres of fields for prairie planting preparation on Holtzhueter.

Outreach and Education

- A presentation about wolves, bears, and cougars was held for the Rotary Club.
- A presentation on Kirtland's Warbler was broadcast on WPR's Larry Mueller show.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Sam assisted in the fawn capture project.
- We conducted mourning dove call count survey for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Current/Unique Issues

- We are preparing 12 new Wildlife Area access point signs and post frames for Waterloo Wildlife Area.
- We are acquiring estimates to fix storm damage to buildings in Jefferson.

Dodge County

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- assisting the Waukesha Wildlife Management crew with the Marsh Master at Vernon Marsh.
- spraying 16 acres for prairie/sunflower preparation.
- completing prairie seedings on 20 acres.
- assisting HRA with prescribed burning.
- planting an acre of dove fields at Mud Lake.
- spraying honeysuckle, autumn olive, and willow in grasslands and along fencelines.
- inspecting water control structures and beginning drawdowns on two impoundments.

Maintain Public Facilities

- We installed 14 new wildlife area signs and removed and dismantled 18 old ones.
- We removed and decommissioned eight gates to reduce infrastructure maintenance.
- We worked with Chris Rehlinger on conservation infrastructure projects involving seven parking lots.
- We met with the Director of Public Works in Horicon, and obtained bids from contractors to repave the Chestnut Street boat landing.
- John assisted with VPA mailings and contacts in Dodge County.

Outreach and Education

- We worked a day in the wildlife booth at Youth Outdoor Expo.
- We scheduled a National Archery in the School Program trailer.
- We are coordinating several volunteers.
- Several more goose kill permits and another deer agricultural damage permit have been issued.
- We attended the Horicon



DNR Photo

DNR Booth at the Youth Outdoor Expo

Education Center for a Friends' group meeting.

Training

- Chris attended the Furbearer Committee meeting.
- A Southern District Meeting was held.
- Paul attended NHI training.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- John and Chris assisted with fawn capture in Shiocton.
- Black bear was sighted by a farmer near Richwood. The farmer he said he got pretty close to the bear but no pictures to back it up.
- We organized the goose banding operation.

Current/Unique Issues

- The sale of a shed on the Mud Lake Wildlife Area has been finalized.
- We are preparing to make and install duck identification kiosks at boat launches and the Horicon Education Center.
- The installation of disabled duck blinds is occurring this summer.
- We met with landowners to discuss cleaning out a ditch that runs through department land.
- We attended two Ducks Unlimited donor meetings; a Rock River floodplain meeting, and a DNR/FWS/ACOE joint Horicon system meeting.

~ Glacial Habitat Restoration Area ~

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- completing over 850 acres of prescribed burning.
- pulling and spraying garlic mustard at the Baber Island Woodlot.
- spraying for thistle and burdock in sensitive areas where large populations of these plants exist.
- foliar spraying invasive trees in grasslands and woodlots of several properties.
- constructing over-seeded berms.
- burning rows of mowed grass left by sharecropper on a first year planting. This was an easy and safe way to get rid of the grass.

SriMesh



Burdock

Public Facilities Management

- We repaired gates and signage at four GHRA properties.
- We repaired access at Hamre GHRA.
- We inspected all Designated Use Areas for the biennial report.



Elizabeth Czarzypata

Common Buckthorn

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- All annual pheasant crowing surveys were completed.
- Weidert completed a frog and toad survey on GHRA.

Current/Unique Issues

- We are administering a small NAWCA (\$75,000) grant for wetland restoration. Wade Oehmichen is assisting with designs. Bids to be sent out soon.
- Two new projects were approved for the Palmatory Shop Building Upgrades.
- We are working on NAWCA V grant. An extension was granted due to the timeline for a land purchase in the northern GHRA.
- Sharecropping issues continue to be a big time and money commitment.
- We are working on several boundary encroachment issues on GHRA properties with a fairly good response from neighbors. At least seven properties have issues that we are working to resolve.
- We are looking for a new prairie seed storage area because of Fisheries' need for additional storage in the current location.

Outreach and Education

- Weidert and Bodden assisted with the Fawn Mortality Survey in Shiocton.
- We handled two calls on second-hand cougar sightings in the Randolph area.
- We received several calls on wildlife concerns and complaints.
- We sent a letter to neighbors regarding encroachment onto DNR land. The response was very positive.
- We assisted neighbors with buckthorn removal from their property.
- We assisted two land owners in prairie establishment and maintenance.
- We received three calls about wetland restoration on private lands.

Training

- All staff attended Hearing Training at Horicon.
- All staff attended CPR and first aid training at Horicon.
- Bodden attended S-234, 'Ignition Operations' Training at Fox Valley Technical College.

Education

- We have wrapped up our busy spring school group season. Over 1,500 students participated in educational programs at the Horicon Education Center.
- We coordinated, trained, and scheduled volunteer naturalists to help with education programs and the youth expo.
- Education staff developed a new 'Bird ID' station for the Beaver Dam Youth Expo. Staff also conducted activities during the two days that saw about 3,000 students and chaperones.
- We hosted a lecture series on whooping cranes, and over 30 people attended.
- We helped with the Rock River Archeology Society's annual Archeology Weekend which brought in around 200-250 visitors to talk about historical encampments, throw atl-atls, view displays, and more.
- The four day Horicon Marsh Bird Festival was a huge success! Staff helped with activities and led tours for approximately 1,500 individuals.
- Mayville High School hosted an art show that brought in over 200 members from the Mayville community. It was a great outreach opportunity.
- Staff conducted two naturalist programs that were attended by over 30 people.
- We hosted an all-day teacher workshop for pre-service teachers from UW-Oshkosh.
- Staff have been weeding, mowing, and working to control invasive species around the education center.
- Staff attended Tour de Marsh meetings.
- Liz and Jen worked on exhibit components.



Whooping Crane

~ DODGEVILLE AREA ~

Grant and Richland Counties

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- completion of another successful burn season, and storage of all burn equipment.
- mowing and spraying invasive species in several Lower Wisconsin Scenic River Units (LWSR).
- planting a sharecrop field to native grasses and forbs in the LWSR.
- renting prairie seed drills to several landowners in Grant and Richland counties.

Outreach and Education

- Dan gave a presentation on the LWSR to UW-Richland Center's Natural Resources students.
- We provided technical advice to several landowners on nuisance animal complaints.

- Dan submitted weekly Outdoor Reports for his counties.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- Bob and Elizabeth went to Clam Lake to help assist with elk calf searching for two days and fawn searching in the Winter study area for one day.
- We completed two ruffed grouse and two woodcock survey routes.
- We completed the bald eagle and osprey nest survey summary spreadsheet and ground checked a few new eagle nests.
- We are keeping track of nesting trumpeter swans in the LWSR wetlands and lower Kickapoo River.
- Several bobcat trail cam photos have been coming in to us from folks in the Cassville area.
- Possible bear damage to bird feeders have been reported near Richland Center.

DNR Photo



Elk Fawn

Current/Unique Issues

- 1960s hunting, fishing, and trapping easements along the Pine River near Gotham, Mill Creek near Muscoda, and Willow Creek near Ithaca have not been inspected or posted for several years. Dan is working with the Bureau of Facilities and Lands to get a comprehensive summary of all easements and property rights, and will be working to inspect and re-post all easements during the summer. We anticipate some landowners may have questions about the new boundary posts or signs since some of these easements have not been properly posted since the early 2000s

Sauk and Northern Iowa Counties

Habitat Management

Habitat management activities have included:

- planting a former sharecrop field in the LWSR to native grasses and forbs.
- completion of another successful burn season, and storage of all burn equipment.
- renting prairie seed drills to several landowners in Sauk and Iowa counties.
- monitoring water levels on all flowages and maintaining dikes and control structures.
- working with the Bureau of Facilities and Lands to obtain funding for replacement of the water control structure at Long Lake Flowage near Lone Rock.
- Mike renewed several sharecrop and grazing agreements.

Outreach and Education

- Becky submitted weekly Outdoor Reports for her counties.
- Staff provided technical advice on numerous calls and complaints regarding nuisance, injured, or orphaned wildlife.
- Becky and Meg gave a tour of woodland plants to a school group at Tower Hill.
- Becky gave a presentation on Wisconsin wildlife to a school group at Governor Dodge State Park.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- There were bear sightings near Lake Delton and the Wisconsin Dells.
- There were cougar sightings near Wisconsin Dells and Reedsburg.
- Meg went to Clam Lake to assist with elk calf searching for two days and went to the Winter study area to assist with fawn searches for one day.
- We completed three ruffed grouse survey routes and one woodcock survey route.

Current/Unique Issues

- Master planning for the Sauk Prairie Recreation Area (Badger Ammo) is underway. Becky is working with PR on development of an interim deer hunting season for 2012.
- Becky worked with the Bureau of Law Enforcement to determine if any mute swans were nesting at Trappers Turn Golf Course and Pace's near Reedsburg; no nests were observed.

Southern Iowa County and Lafayette County

Habitat Management

- Grazing paddocks were set up on the Yellowstone Wildlife Area oak savanna restoration project site and a large herd of goats were brought back in to the site to begin their brush control work.
- We have been mowing and spraying a lot of invasive species on Yellowstone Wildlife Area.

Wildlife Surveys and Sightings

- We completed three pheasant crowing counts (two runs each) with the help of Travis Anderson.
- Bear sightings continue in the Mineral Point area. It appears we have a permanent resident bear in this area.
- Wolf sightings by a private landowner in early May between Dodgeville and Mineral Point sounded legitimate, but no further sightings have been reported

Current/Unique Issues

- Bruce continues to work with the Bureau of Law Enforcement and the Bureau of Facilities and Lands on lead reclamation and re-building the Yellowstone Wildlife Area shooting range. Lead reclamation is on track for summer, 2012.
- Heavy use of the Yellowstone Wildlife Area shooting range continues to require frequent maintenance, clean-up and removal of target backings, and re-building of targets.



DNR Photo

~ Southwest Grasslands and Stream Conservation Area ~

Acquisition

- Maureen and Travis attended several town board and county meetings with Mike LaBissionerre regarding zoning splits of the Sherven property parcels. Everything seems to be on track with local and county governments.
- Travis has been working with Mike L. and Eric on a potential acquisition of the Gnewch parcel east of Shervens.

Outreach and Education

- SWGSCA Outreach Sub-team met on May 11 to continue planning for the September Prairie Festival which will be held at Folklore Village near Dodgeville.
- Work continues on fine-tuning and building the SWGSCA website and landowner database.

Current/Unique Issues

- Maureen continues to work to obtain supplemental and cost-share funding for the GLIC Grazer Broker position with DATCP and Wallace Foundation Grants. The DATCP/GLIC Grazer Broker Grant and Wallace Foundation Grants have both been given preliminary approval (\$60,000 combined) but we need at least another \$50,000 to fund the Grazer Broker position.
- Britt Smith (LTE) will be leaving for grad school in July and Maureen will be working to hire another LTE on 2 concurrent ½-time positions beginning in July.

~ VPA PROGRAM ~

Southwestern Focus Area – Shelly Shivey

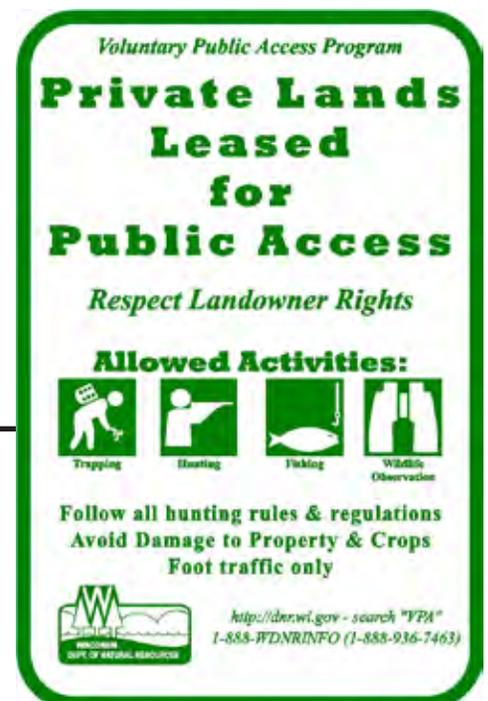
NOTE – Shelly Shivey accepted a new position with Forestry in Wisconsin Rapids in mid-May and we recently hired Same Blake, Dodgeville FR LTE, to work part-time on the VPA program out of the Dodgeville Office.

- Agreements: 19
- New Agreements: 4
- Old Public Hunting Grounds: none
- Acres: 1,856
- Funds Spent: \$47,281.76
- Total New Acres: 200
- Total New Acres Cost: \$ 4,000.00

Southern Fox Focus Area – Justin Blindert

Outline priorities, only one new contract so far.

- Contacts Made:
 - 150 Washington County
 - 35 Kenosha County
 - 29 Walworth County
 - 46 Waukesha County



31 Racine County

5 Ozaukee County

Southeastern Focus Area – Sam Jonas

- Agreements: 89
- New Agreements: 22
- Old Public Hunting Grounds: 67
- Acres: 15,188.07
- Funds Spent: \$236,664.01
- Total New Acres: 4,261.21
- Total New Acres Cost: \$88,942.28

Outreach

- Contacts Made
 - 2,500 Dodge County
 - 55 Columbia County
- I met with the Columbia County team to develop contact strategy.
- I referred four landowners interested in VPA, but outside of my liaison area, to the correct liaisons.
- I trained the new Columbia County VPA liaison.
- I trained the new VPA liaison, Justin Blindert.
- I replaced signs on two VPA properties; one in Dodge County and the second in Jefferson County.
- I checked VPA sunflower fields for proper planting and spray use in Jefferson and Walworth counties.



Missy Sparrow-Lien



Wildlife Management

Division of Land & Water Wisconsin DNR