

Ruffed Grouse Society
Regional Biologist Annual Report
2008

National/Regional Level Activities

- Coordinated RGS Heavy Equipment program with various state, federal and private habitat partners.
- Organized and attended Grant Proposal training with the development office of Calvin College, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Provided biological expertise at the RGS display booth at the Sport Hunting and Outdoor Trade (SHOT) Show in Las Vegas, NV.
- Coordinated shipping and delivered annual supply of RGS Trail Mix to National Office.
- Developed agenda and coordinated travel for RGS staff meeting in Maine.
- Presented RGS perspective on Forest Service planning at Forest Service meeting in Mobile, AL.
- Guided hunters, checked in harvested grouse and woodcock, and assisted with banquets and dinners at the National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt, Grand Rapids, MN.
- Met with ASV, Incorporated at their Corporate Headquarters in Grand Rapids, MN, to discuss possible equipment acquisition and long-term relationship.
- Completed maps for each state showing where every RGS project from 1985 to present is located and placed them on the RGS website.
- Drafted a “Biologist Procedures” manual to guide new employees.
- Raised \$197,000 for habitat, \$127,000 for the biologist endowment, and \$31,397 in general operating funds.
- Obtained \$10,000 grant for 2008-09 habitat work on GMNF and began process of site prioritization with USFS District offices.
- Identified and solicited interest from potential donor of services for the Under Broken Wings program.
- Met with regional foresters and industry reps at NEFF-hosted meeting on carbon credits and the Northeast Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) regulatory framework.

- Attended Wildlife Management Institute Northern Forest Woodcock Initiative Executive Committee meeting to report on RGS activities.
- Conducted preliminary review of WMNF Mill Brook Project EIS for future comment.
- Conducted preliminary review of Silvio Conte Refuge CCP documents and commented/testified on behalf of creating additional managed habitats at scoping meeting in Hadley, MA
- Solicited ruffed grouse survey information from regional state and provincial biologists; compiled and submitted northeast 2008 regional grouse forecast to RGS Magazine editors.
- Provided review comments on MI American Woodcock Survey.
- Visited, photographed and reviewed the condition of various old MAP projects in MA and VT.
- Researched and tested RGS pickup/trailer combinations for transportation of CAT equipment.
- Provided review comments re: American woodcock stamp survey.
- Conducted phone, mail and email sale of raffle tickets for Parker Shotgun, Chevy Tahoe and Dream Hunt.
- Compiled RGS MAP project data for northeastern states into statewide database maps.
- Submitted press releases as appropriate.
- Appointed to NEFF Advisory Committee.
- Answered numerous emails re: hunting season forecasts, bird and project locations, etc.
- Attended annual meeting of National Association of State Foresters in Hyannis, MA to promote RGS.
- Provided review comments, created graphics, tables and other promotional materials for RGS Executive Summary of North American Ruffed Grouse Plan.
- Organized CAT skid steer and attachment training for USFS and other Northeast operators of RGS equipment.
- Represented RGS on the Lake States Resource Alliance and Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association Board

- Coordinated a private landowner management program with the Louisiana Pacific Corporation.
- Investigated land parcels with potential to benefit ruffed grouse and woodcock populations for possible acquisition.
- Participated in 25 media contacts (includes press releases/magazine articles/television and radio interviews).
- Produced 12 FAN Update newsletters and one e-posting to nearly 1400 members.
- Responded to approximately 2,000 individual requests for information.

State Level Accomplishments

Connecticut

- Attended CT Sportsmen's Legislative Caucus with Hartford Chapter members and partners with the Northwest Connecticut Sportsmen's Council.
- Met with DEP Commissioner regarding the potential for an RGS MOU on habitat improvement with CT DEP

Georgia

- Conducted a grouse drumming survey in partnership with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.
- Commented on various large habitat projects on the Chattahoochee National Forest.

Illinois

- Attended one chapter event.
- Assisted with development of 2009 Coverts Landowner Workshop for Illinois residents with land holdings in Wisconsin.

Indiana

- Provided volunteers with data and powerpoint presentations to support their work with the Indiana DNR regarding the revitalization of the grouse management program.
- Attended the Indianapolis Banquet.

Iowa

- Spoke at two Private Landowner Workshops that were coordinated by the Iowa Department of Natural Resources in the heart of NE Iowa's ruffed grouse range.
- Submitted one grant request that resulted in funding to support three ongoing habitat related projects.
- Participated in two meetings with Iowa Department of Natural Resources personnel.

Kentucky

- Submitted a grant proposal to potentially support habitat projects in KY
- Coordinated a habitat seminar for a group of landowners with state biologists.

Maine

- Attended Maine Chapter banquet and worked to introduce new Regional Director Boyd Cooke to RGS members and organizational partners.
- Staffed RGS booth at Maine Sports Show and presented seminars on ruffed grouse habitat and life history.
- Met with Dr. Malcolm Coulter and Mr. Gary Donovan of the Wildlife Management Institute to examine where WMI and RGS can interface in Maine and cooperate with utility companies on habitat projects.
- Met with Small Woodland Owners Association of Maine forester for preliminary discussions on how RGS can partner on projects in Maine.
- Revisited 1200-acre NIPF parcel with NRCS officials re: RGS input into Maine WHIP program. Met with American Chestnut Foundation and Ducks Unlimited biologist on the parcel to explore opportunities for joint project partnerships, Could use as much as Grouse Trail Mix of approx. 1 ton if clearings are accomplished this year.
- Met with NRCS Conservationists in Maine to outline future partnerships on multiple projects in NW Maine.
- Met with Dr. Malcolm Coulter and RGS biologists regarding opportunities for habitat initiatives in the northeast and nationally.
- Toured Baskahegan Lumber land, Moosehorn NWR, Stud Mill Road and Grand Lake Stream regions to investigate options for habitat improvement during RGS staff meeting.
- Visited potential MAP site and discussed habitat project with Executive Director of Lake George Regional Park, Skowhegan, ME.
- Attended and staffed Maine Wildlife Fair with chapter members.
- Discussed potential for RGS television segment with Maine IFW I&E chief

- Conducted numerous NIPF visits w/ private landowners and foresters to provide technical expertise on habitat management for ruffed grouse and woodcock.
- Assisted Maine Chapter with coordination of LL Bean promotional activities.

Maryland

- Completed a 10 acre alder management project at Indian Springs WMA using CAT equipment and state and volunteer labor.
- Attended the Frederick Banquet.
- Provided a seminar on grouse and woodcock management to the Oakland Rotary Club.
- Submitted a grant proposal to obtain management equipment for MD DNR.

Massachusetts

- Provided written and oral comments on the Western Connecticut River, Northern Berkshire and Southern Berkshire District Forest Resource Management Plans to the Massachusetts DCR Stewardship Council.
- Attended Western Massachusetts Chapter banquet.
- Researched, wrote grant proposal and obtained \$17,500 for Central Mass. Comprehensive Habitat Program from the Partner Matching Grant Program of the Massachusetts Dept. of Conservation and Recreation. Met with DCR foresters and managers to plan and implement joint habitat projects on 4 Massachusetts state forests.
- Submitted 2009 MA DCR Partners Grant proposal for additional funding to implement Phase 2 of work completed in 2008.
- Conducted numerous NIPF visits w/ private landowners and foresters to provide technical expertise on habitat management for ruffed grouse and woodcock.
- Cooperated with Mass Wildlife to conducted two routes of the annual ruffed grouse drumming survey.
- Attended monthly meetings and worked with Massachusetts Forest Landowners Association to ramp up forest management advocacy in MA and develop constituency in outdoor and forest management user groups.
- Met with MA Lt. Governor at Forest Industry roundtable on land use, forestry regulations, forest production incentives and property tax overhaul for forest landowners and non-profit organizations owning forestland.

- Met with Harvard Forest Director of Educational Programs to discuss potential for increasing visibility of RGS/early successional habitat management message at the Fischer Museum, Petersham, MA.
- Co-hosted and presented at field day organized by Berkshire County NRCS office, MA DCR and Mass Wildlife.
- Met with DCR forester to discuss possible MAP project at Savoy State Forest.
- Met with MA State forester to review DCR Stewardship Committee issues and cutting ban on state forests.
- Met with MA NRCS about future WHIP projects in MA and met with new field conservationist taking over Hadley office WHIP program.
- Made contact with various potential RGS donors very supportive of RGS work in Massachusetts, especially MOU with NEFF, WHIP projects implemented on NEFF properties in MA, and Partners Matching Grant habitat work.

Michigan

- Represented RGS on Michigan Bird Conservation Initiative Council, Western UP DNR Advisory Council and UP DNR Habitat Work Group.
- Attended three meetings with Forest Service staff and two meetings with Michigan Department of Natural Resources personnel.
- Provided RGS input to 13 Forest Service forest management projects and two Michigan DNR projects.
- Submitted and obtained one grant for habitat work that helped fund five Michigan projects.
- Coordinated RGS involvement in four ongoing habitat related projects and one research project.
- Conducted two on-site habitat consultations on over 10,000 acres.
- Participated in four chapter meetings and two field events.
- Attended three chapter banquets.
- Spoke at a Private Landowner Workshop.
- Expanded five year Challenge Cost Share project with the Hiawatha National Forest.

- Developed a grant proposal for \$101,000 to the Frey Foundation to acquire habitat management equipment for MI.

Minnesota

- Attended sixteen banquets and assisted Regional Directors with the events, gave presentation on RGS activities and met with individual volunteers.
- Reviewed three governmental forest management proposals and provided RGS input.
- Provided input on MN Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) and assisted with two low income housing projects built solely with MN forestry products
- Organized field day for wildlife managers and foresters in use of roller chopper to create woodcock habitat.
- Coordinated and planned construction of historic signage for Mille Lacs WMA recognizing Gordon Gullion's research efforts and RGS input.
- Surveyed twelve WMAS in Grand Rapids area for use of roller chopper for creation of grouse and woodcock habitat.
- Surveyed Mille Lacs WMA for potential areas to create and recreate additional grouse habitats.
- Met and coordinated with St. Paul wildlife officials numerous times to voice RGS positions.
- Promoted, coordinated and spoke on a state amendment to the constitution, Vote Yes, campaign a for tax increase commitment to MN's outdoor heritage, at banquets, sportsmen club meetings and press releases.
- Promoted RGS and grouse hunting in several articles including the following periodicals, the Outdoor News, Duluth News Tribune, St Paul Pioneer Press, and the Minneapolis Star Tribune.
- Reviewed and commented on several research proposals and on going efforts of University of Minnesota grouse research.
- Organized meeting of MNDNR research staff, University of Minnesota faculty, retired grouse researchers, chapter personnel, and RGS staff to speculate on grouse recruitment levels.
- Taught two all day workshops on grouse and woodcock behavior for MN Becoming and Outdoors Women workshops.

- Attended a two-day workshop on private landowners incentives to participate in wildlife management on private lands sponsored by Blandin Foundation.
- Provided consultation services to six private landowners interested in managing for grouse.
- Represented RGS on MN Department of Natural Resources Commissioners Committee on wildlife for the 2009 roundtable.
- Attended and participated in grant proposal training in Grand Rapids, MI.
- Completed surveys and production of manuals of potential state grant resources for RGS biologists.
- Completed grant and potential donor research for RGS Regional Directors and Biologists to assist in project funding.
- Received \$15,000 grant from MN DNR to complete woodcock habitat manipulation in Region II, Grand Rapids region.
- Received \$10,000 grant from Federal Cartridge for RGS billboard campaign.
- Taught three high school and junior high biology classes on grouse biology.
- Met with MNDNR Regional silviculture staff to discuss silvics of aspen ecosystem and the need for stand inventory documentation in north central region
- Met with MN Pointing Dog Assoc. on common interests with RGS.
- Coordinated efforts with the Nature Conservancy on the sale of Minnesota forestlands and impacts to MN's wildlife resources and hunting heritage.
- Met with paper industry representatives on sales of grouse habitat lands to private parties.

Missouri

- Worked with the Mid-Missouri Chapter and Missouri Department of Conservation to implement the River Hills Forest Habitat Project.
- Sought and received grant support for the ongoing River Hills Project. Nearly \$45,000 in non-RGS funds were obtained in 2008 for this project.
- Participate in a Private Landowner Workshop.
- Attended two meetings with Missouri Department of Conservation personnel.

- Conducted one private land consult.
- Conducted field review of an existing Management Area Project.
- Participated in two Chapter meetings.

New Hampshire

- Attended New Hampshire Wildlife Federation annual meeting to network with conservation leaders in NH.
- Conducted numerous NIPF visits w/ private landowners and foresters to provide technical expertise on habitat management for ruffed grouse and woodcock.
- Provided support and advocacy for NHF&G Grouse Wing and Tail Data Survey.
- Communicated w/ NHF&G re: using HIP database re: sending woodcock survey.
- Attended the NH meeting of Forest Resources Association in Berlin to discuss RGS programs and meet with commercial forest interests about their potential to partner w/ RGS on programs.
- Met with NH State Forester and Exec. Dir. of NH Timber Owners Association; followed up with each on RGS options to provide wildlife habitat expertise to their constituents.
- Co-developed, funded and implemented MAP at 2200-acre Freedom Town Forest, Freedom, NH.
- Administered RGS CAT usage on private and public land projects in NH
- Attended RGS fundraising shoots in Ossipee, NH.

New Jersey

- Coordinated with CAT to provide volunteers, state agencies, and NGOs with training on the use of RGS heavy equipment.
- Attended Sussex Banquet.
- Completed 10 acre aspen regeneration project at Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area with CAT and tree shear using all-volunteer labor.
- Met with the Division of Fish and Wildlife and volunteers about woodcock project at Manahawkin WMA and developed a plan.

New York

- Provided information on NYS MAPS to outdoor authors writing on RGS accomplishments in habitat work.
- Worked with RGS associate Art Lee on development of promotional materials and prospectus for introducing RGS to various new constituencies and supporters in NY.
- Worked with Reg. Director Ken Waite to identify priorities for NYS and RGS involvement in habitat work.
- Toured six sites in W. NY w/ NRCS personnel and private landowners to make recommendations for WHIP projects and increase RGS involvement on public/private lands.
- Met with Albany chapter member, NYDEC and Ken Waite about moving ahead with additional projects in E. NY and more deeply involving chapters in project formulation and implementation.
- Conducted numerous NIPF visits w/ private landowners and foresters to provide technical expertise on habitat management for ruffed grouse and woodcock.
- Interfaced with USFWS Partners Program for additional funding for Cornell Maple Lab MAP project and other options in NY.
- Provided Cornell Maple Lab personnel with information on baseline data collection for ruffed grouse, woodcock and songbird data preliminary to timber management activities scheduled for winter 2008/09.
- Conducted three habitat seminars at Gander Mountain stores in Rochester, Tonawanda and Syracuse. Met w/ various chapter members hosting sign-up tables at stores.
- Coordinated with NY radio personality David Dirks to appear on Albany-area outdoors radio show on 12/20/08.
- Coordinated schedule with Gander Mountain to conduct 4 seminars in 2009 at various NY store locations.
- Provided NY NRCS with information on brontosaurus and other equipment for habitat work in W. NY.

North Carolina

- Met with the supervisor of the 4 national forests in North Carolina to discuss cooperative work.
- Gave a seminar to the Asheville Chapter about developing and funding habitat projects.

- Helped coordinate funding and toured progress on the Jerry Smathers Memorial Project at Cold Mountain State Game Lands near Canton.
- Met with the new Franklin Chapter and the Forest Service about a cooperative project.
- Commented on Forest Service projects.

Ohio

- Worked with Ohio CAT and Ohio Division of Wildlife on equipment demonstration day
- Toured Consol Energy lands in eastern Ohio and discussed making them “Grouse Management Areas”.
- Developed and implemented \$80,000 cost share agreement with Wayne National Forest using RGS CAT to manage 400 acres of mine reclamation sites.
- Visited and advised private landowner on grouse management resulting in 30 acres of aspen management.
- Met with Forest Service, Ohio Division of Wildlife and Division of Forestry and RGS volunteers from Cincinnati about projects on Wayne NF and Shawnee State Forest.
- Provided information and arranged a meeting with the Forest Service for a magazine editor interested in how our CAT equipment was being used on the Wayne NF.

Pennsylvania

- Met with PA Game Commission on several occasions about habitat projects on state game lands
- Coordinated closely with USFWS Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program on equipment use throughout the state
- Set up RGS display booth at the Reading Outdoor Show
- Organized the volunteers and set up the display booth at the Eastern Outdoor Show in Harrisburg.
- Met with various banquet committees and attended new chapter meetings.
- Guided 3 auction hunts.
- Met with Mellon Foundation on numerous occasions.

- Met with USFWS and Western PA Conservancy about project on State Game Lands in western PA.
- Met with the DCNR and USFWS about woodcock projects on state parks.
- Acted as Regional Director for the State College banquet.
- Met with Mellon Foundation and Consol Energy regarding cooperative activities.
- Coordinated with Penn State Students and DCNR to present the 3rd Annual Woodcock Festival at Bald Eagle State Park
- Helped plan and implement field days with Washington and Reading Chapters.
- Attended Prescribed Fire Conference at Penn State and set up RGS display booth.
- Attended State College, Meadville, Reading, Altoona, Media, DuBois, Smethport,
- Worked with DCNR, PGC, NWTF, and PF to complete old field habitat project at Nescopeck State Park using CAT equipment.
- Moderated a session at the PA Wildlife Society/Society of American Foresters Annual Meeting in State College
- Lectured in a non-profit issues class at Penn State.
- Finalized timber rights acquisition in Somerset County.
- Worked with consultants to complete the first timber sale under the RGS timber rights agreement worth \$127,000.
- Attended PA Forest Stewards (Coverts) Annual meeting, lectured at annual training, attended strategic planning meeting, and steering committee meeting.
- Submitted management proposal for the Bill Goudy Memorial Project to the PGC and visited the site with the PGC planner, foresters, and land managers.
- Met with Delaware River Club about grouse management in Wayne County.
- Met with Corps of Engineers at Raystown Lake about on-going habitat projects.
- Worked with Mackin Engineering to complete the Woodcock Habitat Initiative pilot project at State Game Lands 39 and complete final report for National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant.
- Provided support for the Wildlife Leadership Adventure Camp.

- Spoke to Centre County Woodland Owners.
- Spoke to State College Bird Club.
- Spoke about Backyard Wildlife Management to landowners in near Gettysburg.
- Attended Bird Dog Days at Lion Country Supply and set up display booth.

Rhode Island

- Attended RI Coverts organizing committee to develop training session and provide input and technical expertise to organizers. Attended and spoke at inaugural COVERTS program and provided participants with “Landowner’s Guide to Habitat Management in New England” and an overview of how RGS works to increase habitat for early successional wildlife in New England and elsewhere.
- Commenced discussions with RI State Forester and DEM Wildlife Director to outline MOU between RGS and DEM.
- Attended RI RGS banquet.
- Communicated with RIDEM biologists on a proposal to fund another URI graduate student project.
- Attended and staffed River’s Edge Trading RGS Benefit Shoot in Addieville, RI.

Tennessee

- Submitted a grant proposal for \$10,000 to The Tucker Foundation to fund Southern Appalachians habitat projects.
- Helped fund a University of Tennessee publication on managing herbaceous openings and trails for wildlife.

Vermont

- Submitted final NFWF grant report for habitat work completed in VT in 2006 via grant in 2001-02.
- Received \$500 check from VTF&W for negotiated settlement of court case involving violation on state wildlife areas. By request, funding was used for VT WMA habitat work.
- Nominated for and accepted appointment to VT Fish and Wildlife Commissioner’s Panel on Wanton Waste regulation development.

- Appeared on WDEV radio show with Exec. Board member Terry Wilson to promote RGS programs and events.
- Attended special Vermont Traditions Coalition meeting with Agency of Natural Resources Secretary Crombie regarding the Groton State Forest Plan. Assisted with successful negotiation of unmanaged “forest reserve” acreage from the draft plan language to make majority of state forest land available for active habitat management.
- Met with VT F&W Commissioner Laroche to advocate for ongoing forest management on state WMA. Comm. Laroche has indicated he wishes to increase management and will seek assistance from RGS in conjunction with the Governor’s Green Vermont initiative re: carbon sequestration via increased harvest on state lands.
- Met with GMNF and Vermont Traditions Coalition to resolve joint appeal of the GMNF Land and Resource Management Plan. The Forest Service admitted modeling errors were made, and will increase harvestable timber volume on GMNF by approx. 35%.
- Attended USFS meeting of Regional Forest Stewardship Project Review Team and tour of stewardship projects on GMNF. Was requested by Team to become full partner in regional review of Region 9 projects.
- Reviewed and approved contract work for continuing habitat management on Steam Mill Brook and other state WMAs.
- Attended and staffed Green Mountain RGS Chapter shoot in Williston, VT
- Conducted numerous NIPF visits w/ private landowners and foresters to provide technical expertise and CAT work on habitat management for ruffed grouse and woodcock.
- Revised and submitted executive summary for 2004 RGS Northeastern States Research Cooperative project for deployment on Cooperative website at: www.uvm.edu/envnr/nsrc/projectpages/project.php?id=68

Virginia

- Attended Staunton Banquet
- Developed a position statement regarding wilderness on the George Washington National Forest for the RGS website and provided volunteers with a fact sheet to help with public input.
- Provided Bristol Chapter with display for outdoor show.
- Attended Forest Service public meeting regarding George Washington NF plan revision.

West Virginia

- Met with Forest Service and State biologists about coop project on the Monongahela National Forest
- Conducted CAT training at Canaan Valley private lands site and began work with CAT and mulching head on a 72 acre alder and aspen regeneration project (WHIP contract) in mid-winter, took follow-up pictures and assessed alder and aspen response in late summer.
- Worked with WV DNR on obtaining HIP date for woodcock survey.
- Worked with volunteers and state to provide comments for the Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge Conservation Plan.
- Worked with state biologist to develop a list of potential habitat projects on WMAs throughout the state.

Wisconsin

- Represented RGS on Wisconsin Bird Conservation Initiative Council.
- Attended 11 meetings with Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources personnel, six meetings with Federal agencies, and five meetings with non-governmental organizations.
- Provided RGS input to 17 Forest Service forest management projects and two Wisconsin DNR projects.
- Testified at a State Wildlife Rule Hearing.
- Audited and spoke at the Wisconsin Coverts Project.
- Submitted and obtained one grant to support the Wisconsin Coverts Project.
- Coordinated RGS involvement in three ongoing habitat related projects.
- Conducted three on-site habitat consultations.
- Conducted field reviews of four existing or proposed Management Area Projects.
- Facilitated the mowing of hunter walking trails by RGS members.
- In partnership with federal and state agencies, completed annual ruffed grouse drumming and breeding bird surveys.
- Participated in six chapter meetings and five field events.

- Coordinated the set up and staffing of booths at four outdoor related events.
- Attended nine chapter banquets.
- Spoke at a Private Landowner Workshop.

Canada

- Communicated with or answered requests from numerous RGS Canada staff, ministry officials, private landowners and land-trust representatives about forest management in the provinces of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario.