

Eastern Great Lakes Region

FAN UPDATE

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Hunting Season Has Begun

The Michigan grouse and woodcock hunting seasons have begun and most of our extra time and energy are focused on hunting or planning to go hunting. Most of the leaves are still green and making hunting challenging yet in central Michigan. But conditions will keep improving over the next month.

Even though much of our time and energy is directed toward hunting at this time of the year, we cannot forget about the other grouse and woodcock related issues that impact our sport. In this FAN are a number of articles that request a response from you as a resource user and manager. These include things such as writing your senator, sharing the success of your hunt, reporting your observations, commenting on forest plans, buying tickets, and voting to win prizes.

Enjoy your hunting this fall, but do not forget the many young forest management issues that we need to address.

-Larry

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Focus On The Forest - Huron-Manistee National Forest

By the end of 2013, the Baldwin/White Cloud Ranger District will have conducted treatments to enhance habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock, and other wildlife species on over 60 acres in cooperation with the Ruffed Grouse Society and Wildlife Management Institute. So far, the District has contracted 6 acres of non-commercial aspen regeneration cuts and 10 acres of non-commercial tag alder cuts in Newaygo and Oceana Counties using dollars remaining from Drummer Funds received in 2012. In addition, the District used the remaining 2012 Drummer Funds to contract the planting of 1,000 berry-producing wildlife shrubs on 4 acres in upland openings and around the perimeter of recently cut aspen and tag alder regeneration sites in Newaygo and Oceana Counties. Drummer Funds received in 2013, which were augmented via support from the Wildlife Management Institute, have been used by the District to contract 8 acres of commercial aspen regeneration cuts in Newaygo County and 38 acres of non-commercial aspen regeneration cuts in Newaygo and Mason Counties. The District also used 2013 Drummer Funds to purchase and plant berry-producing shrubs on 8 acres in upland openings and around the perimeter of recently cut aspen regeneration sites in Newaygo County. Wildlife shrubs planted by the District are soft mast-producing shrubs that provide additional food sources, such as gray dogwood, high bush cranberry, elderberry, American hazelnut, wild grape and wild raisin, for ruffed grouse and other wildlife species. All contracted work will be completed by mid-November 2013. Additional acres might be treated by the District depending on final contract costs. To inform the public about our cooperative habitat improvement efforts, the District installed educational signs provided by the Ruffed Grouse Society at 5 recently cut aspen regeneration sites.

-provided by Heather Keough, District Biologist

Michigan Members - ACT NOW to Protect Ruffed Grouse and other Forest Wildlife

The U.S. Senate and House of Representatives are working out the differences between the versions of the 2013 Farm Bill that were passed in each chamber.

The House version includes an amendment (#55) that was sponsored by Rep. Herrera-Beutler. This amendment would clarify that rainwater runoff, from forest roads and trails, is **NOT** subject to permitting by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The U.S. Supreme Court recently ruled in a 7-1 decision to uphold the position that this runoff is **NOT** subject to EPA permitting. Unfortunately, a legal technicality allowed the original preservationist plaintiffs in the case to again file suit.

The Ruffed Grouse Society filed a brief in the original Supreme Court case to help the Court understand that the cost and complexity of this type of permitting process would greatly discourage landowners from managing their lands. Also filing against the plaintiffs were the attorneys general from 31 states, the National Governors Association, the National Association of Counties, the EPA and numerous forest landowner associations.

The Herrera-Beutler amendment is essential to protect the ability of public land managers and, more importantly, the owners of family forests in Michigan to be able to sustain habitats for the ruffed grouse, golden-winged warbler and the many other types of wildlife that require dense young forests.

Please contact Senator Stabenow and do the following:

* Urge her to **ensure that the final version of the Farm Bill includes the Herrera-Beutler amendment to the House version of the Farm Bill that protects forest owners from unnecessary EPA regulation of rainwater runoff from forest roads and trails.** This is critically important!

Please contact Senator Stabenow at her Washington office and voice your support for common-sense forest wildlife conservation.

Phone: 202-224-4822

Email: www.stabenow.senate.gov

This is the Senator's website; click on the "Contact" tab at the upper right to send the Senator an email.

**Thanks for voicing your support on behalf
of the critters that can't speak for themselves!**

Michigan Governor Signs Bill Restructuring State's Hunting and Fishing Licenses

[House Bill 4668](#), which outlines the restructuring of Michigan's hunting, and fishing licenses was signed by Gov. Snyder on September 17. Many conservation organizations and partners helped to forge and support this Bill, This new license/pricing structure will take effect March 1, 2014. To learn more about these new options, please visit the [license restructuring](#) page on the MI DNR website.

Costs for the coming fall and winter seasons will remain unchanged. When the new structure does take effect, hunters and anglers will have a smaller, simpler set of licensing options to choose from – an 82-percent reduction in license types – including a new “base” license, with resident, non-resident, junior and senior price points. With the estimated \$18.1 million in additional annual revenue generated by this new license package, the DNR will be able to improve fish and wildlife habitat, hire more conservation officers, and provide better outreach and education to hunters and anglers – important steps in Michigan's ability to offer Pure Michigan outdoor recreation to residents and visitors.

Additionally, the Legislature has added \$1 to the cost of each base hunting and fishing license, which will generate approximately \$1.6 million annually. These dollars will be used to create and promote more positive messaging about the value of hunting, fishing and natural resources to audiences that don't participate in those activities. This will build support for conservation and natural resource management among the general public.

Aside from bringing Michigan more in line with hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation license pricing in other Great Lakes states, there are four main “deliverables” this restructured package brings with it:

- A more simple, fair and efficient license structure
- Better and more outdoor recreation opportunities through enhanced wildlife and fisheries habitat
- Improved safety, education and protection for our natural resources and the people who enjoy them
- Stronger conservation efforts with partners

Tree-of-Heaven Treatment and American Chestnut Restoration on the Wayne National Forest

A \$35,000 award has just been received from the National Forest Foundation for aggressive treatment of Tree-of-Heaven, a non-native invasive tree species on the Wayne National Forest and for beginning restoration efforts to reestablish the American chestnut, a historically dominant tree species which was devastated by the chestnut blight. Numerous organizations and agencies have joined together in southeastern Ohio to address the invasive spread of Tree-of-Heaven and for the restoration of the American chestnut; these include the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF), the Wayne NF, The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS),

The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF), USFS Northeastern Research Station, and various volunteers from NWTF, RGS, TACF, Hocking College, and from Keep Southeast Ohio Beautiful (a coalition of numerous local groups). These agencies and groups will provide \$35,000 in matching funds for this \$70,000 project.

The project will focus Tree-of-Heaven treatments and American chestnut restoration efforts in association with the Pleasant Bear Vegetation Management Project, an on-going vegetation treatment project located near Marietta, Ohio. Tree-of-Heaven, if left unchecked will dominate and out-compete native species such as oak, thus altering the entire Appalachian ecosystem. Loss of oak forests would have catastrophic effects to the fauna of the region. This includes important game species and various listed species such as the wild turkey, ruffed grouse, white-tailed deer, black bear, blue jay, gray squirrel, cerulean warbler, Indiana bat, and other bat species. Oak forests are vitally important to wildlife for various attributes such as mast crop production, bark characteristics desirable for bat roosting, and insect production for gleaning birds, but are also essential to local economies for the forest products which are produced.

The American chestnut was once an extremely important hardwood tree within Eastern forests. The total number of chestnut trees in eastern North America was estimated at over three billion, with 25% of the trees in the Appalachian Mountains being American chestnut. The chestnut blight devastated this species throughout its range. Recovery efforts have been established through the American Chestnut Foundation.

This project is a call for action, where joint resources come together to accomplish a unifying goal that is to maintain oak/hickory forests and to reestablish the American chestnut back into the forested landscape where it has been missing for 100 years. Funding for this proposal will help the Wayne National Forest increase their ability to protect and maintain oak forest habitats, to restore the American chestnut within its range, to control non-native invasive species, to meet Forest Plan objectives, and continue to provide productive wildlife habitat for regionally important species.

Tickets Available for the RGS 2013 Fall National Raffle

Entry tickets are now available for the 2013 RGS Fall National Raffle. This raffle is covering a short time span as the three winners will be drawn on December 31, 2013 so enter early. Please help support RGS and maybe win one of the three fantastic prizes, each of which would make a great surprise Christmas present for anyone. Purchase tickets by calling RGS HQ at (888) 564-6747 or contacting Larry Visser at 231-768-4608 or LarryV@ruffedgrousesociety.org. The donation is \$20.00 per ticket. Winners are responsible for applicable taxes.

Three chances to win. WINNER'S CHOICE! - First winner selects choice of 3 prizes, second winner selects from remaining 2, and the third winner gets the remaining prize.

Prizes include:

First prize: Orvis Endorsed Northern Maine Grouse Hunt for Two in the 2014/15 hunting season at Libby Camps; includes 4 nights, 3 days of hunting. \$3,350 value. Libby Camps, Donor.

Second prize: Grand Traverse, Michigan Fishing, Golf and Wine Tour for Four; includes 4 nights, 5 days in Traverse City, Michigan during 2014. \$2,400 value, Fairfield Inn & Suites, Traverse City, Fish Hunter Charters, LochenHeath Golf Club, Celtic Shuttle & Tours, Donors.

Third prize: Northern Minnesota Fishing and Resort Stay for Two. One week stay at Driftwood Lodge Resort and Boat Rental on Lake Kabetogama during 2014/2015. \$2,000 value, Driftwood Lodge Resort, Donor.

Become a Michigan Ruffed Grouse and American Woodcock Cooperator

Each year hundreds of Michigan grouse and woodcock hunters assist the DNR in monitoring grouse and woodcock populations by providing information about their hunts. This survey, conducted since the 1950s, provides the DNR with an early indicator of the hunting season and population status of ruffed grouse and woodcock.

Hunters interested in becoming a cooperator can go to the Michigan Wildlife Division website, http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10363_10958_10967-75235--,00.html, and then download and print the cooperator form. To fill out the form, simply record the date, county or counties you hunted, the amount of time spent hunting and how many grouse and woodcock you flushed. If you hunt more than one county per day, please record hunting information for each. At the end of the season please return the form to the address indicated on the form. You will then be added to the cooperator list and receive information through the mail from that point on.

Ruffed Grouse Society Magazine Wins 2013 APEX Award For Publication Excellence

Coraopolis, PA – The *Ruffed Grouse Society* magazine has been awarded a 2013 APEX Award of Excellence in the "Magazines & Journals – Print Over 32 Pages" category for the Spring 2013 issue. This issue was the first for Editor Matt Soberg and was constructed with the help from Paul Carson, a prior editor of the magazine. The design and layout was created by Brittney LaCoste of Campbell LaCoste, Inc. in Black Earth, Wisconsin. The Apex Awards included over 2,400 total entries this year.

The Spring 2013 magazine cover highlighted *The Fall Shuffle*, a painting by Chris Smith that was the RGS Print of the Year. The issue featured a woodcock sky dance article by Tim

Flanigan and other features from longtime RGS contributors Art Wheaton, Nick Sisley, Lisa Price, Bob West, and Doug Forsythe. RGS President and CEO John Eichinger provided a message about the Drummer Fund, and RGS Director of Conservation Policy Dan Dessecker included an article about working lands for wildlife.

“We are honored to be awarded a 2013 APEX Award. The Society works hard to create a quality magazine that effectively communicates our mission and provides engaging articles and beautiful photographs for our members,” said Eichinger. RGS won the APEX Grand Award in 2011 for its 50th Anniversary Issue and two APEX Awards in 2012.

In its 25th year, the APEX Awards for Publication Excellence is an international competition open to writers, editors, publications staff, and business and nonprofit communicators. The awards are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence. The Apex Awards are sponsored by Communications Concepts, Inc., a leading publisher of business communication reports.

RGS to Once Again Provide Woodcock Migration Mapping

The Ruffed Grouse Society is pleased to once again provide the American woodcock migration mapping system. Accessible on the Society’s website at <http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org/migration-map>. The site, used by hunters and bird watchers to monitor the woodcock migrations will be active from September 2013 through April 30, 2014.

This page displays current month prior daily and weekly maps, which when compared will show the general movement of the birds during migration

TruckVault Supports RGS – Vote Daily and Win Prizes!

Seven groups will share in the funds and national publicity provided via Scott Linden’s Wingshooting USA television series in the fourth annual “TruckVault Cares ... for conservation, canines & kids” initiative.

Lead sponsor TruckVault is joined in the effort by co-sponsors Filson, Kent Cartridge, Happy Jack, Webley & Scott, Royal Flush Adventures, Scott Linden’s Signature Series of dog gear and Pursuit Channel television network. Wingshooting USA viewers are urged to vote online at <https://www.truckvaultcares.com> for their favorite organization.

Each vote directs funds on a proportional basis so that all organizations receive dollars for their treasury. This year’s beneficiary groups include: AKC Canine Health Foundation, Scholastic Shooting Sports Foundation, American Brittany Rescue, Ruffed Grouse Society, National 4H Shooting Sports, International Hunter Education Association, and the U.S. Sportsman’s Alliance Foundation Trailblazer Adventure program.

New this year will be a voting component on the TruckVault Cares Facebook page in addition to the <https://www.truckvaultcares.com> web page. Voting ends on December 31, 2013. Voters can win prizes throughout the effort, ranging from a South Dakota hunting trip to a “sport utility building,” Webley & Scott shotgun, Filson apparel, Happy Jack dog care products, Kent ammo, Scott Linden dog training gear and the grand prize, a TruckVault.

Michigan DNR Invites Public Input on Forest Plans for Five Forest Management Units this Fall

The Department of Natural Resources will host the following Forest Management Unit Open Houses this fall:

Atlanta	10/16/2013	Atlanta Field Office
Cadillac	11/7/2013	Carl T. Johnson Center
Grayling	10/8/2013	Grayling Field Office
Newberry	11/07/2013	Newberry Field Office
Shingleton	10/15/13	Wyman Nursery

These open houses are used by the DNR to provide information and receive public comment on proposed forest management treatments for 2015. Maps and information regarding proposed treatments will be available at the open house. The information can also be found at www.michigan.gov/forestplan. Compartment review packets for the 2015 year of entry can be found by selecting the shown map and clicking on the Forest Management unit button. Records of decisions, recorded timber harvests and other treatments for past years are available on this page.

This is a good opportunity for ruffed grouse/woodcock hunters to express their interests in maintaining habitat for their favorite birds on these public lands.

Reminder

To insure that you receive timely FAN updates, please notify me of your current email address. Also note that mine has changed.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions:

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