



## Mid-Atlantic / S. Appalachian Forest Action Network Spring 2015



*As I travel through the Mid-Atlantic Southern Appalachian Region I finally see, smell and hear signs of spring! Although there is still snow this first week of April there are the usual number of dancing woodcock in my area of McKean County PA as we continue to wait the thawing of the heavy snow pack and deep freeze. Follow the path of the woodcock on the RGS webpage: [Tracking American Woodcock](#) the 18 woodcock that have been captured and outfitted with satellite transmitters in Louisiana and Texas are on the move. Birds are already as far north as central Missouri, Kentucky and Virginia, some appear to be still migrating while others seem to have reached their northern grounds. Enjoy the spring and the renewal it brings each of us and all things natural.*

*Linda*

### 2015 Pennsylvania WNV (West Nile Virus) Study Continues

The **Pennsylvania Game Commission** (PGC) is initiating a second phase of a challenge study to identify, assess, and manage potential factors limiting grouse populations in Pennsylvania regarding WNV presence. If you remember our hunters participated in blood sample collections at the UBH (Upland Bird Hunt) last fall and we are awaiting those results. This second phase will include the collection of clutches (4-5) from PA, preferably prior to incubation. These eggs will then be propagated and reared in a laboratory by another partner in Idaho until approximately 6 weeks of age. The chicks will be tested for the presence of WNV antibodies.



Captured grouse from PA attempt to collar females. Is this male or female...

Photo Lisa Williams

Blood samples will again be taken from harvested birds at the 2015 UBH with the voluntary cooperation of our hunters this November. RGS staff and member volunteers will [assist with the nest location](#). Partial funding for this study is provided by the Ruffed Grouse Society.

Lisa Williams, PGC grouse and web-less bird biologist, is instrumental in developing this pilot research with Dr. Justin Brown PGC Vet. Habitat is the most observable and well documented factor in the decline of grouse populations. Other contributing factors such as loss of consistent food resources are additive over longer periods of time and mingled with weather and, yep management. This study may help determine any effects WNV has on the PA grouse population.

Samples were collected from 116 harvest birds from the 2005 RGS National Hunt in MN. Of those samples only one came back with a positive WNV antibody. Support the PGC in their efforts. It is important to cover all bases and identify with evidence what are factors and those that are not as we work to keep the KING drumming!



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To all those wandering the PA woodlands this spring:



**WANTED: GROUSE NEST LOCATIONS**

**DO NOT DISTURB NESTS!!** Please relay GPS LOCATIONS of grouse nests to LISA WILLIAMS, Game Commission biologist:

[liswilliam@pa.gov](mailto:liswilliam@pa.gov) (814-422-8243) office

(814-505-8659) cell [More info...](#)

### State Drummer Funds (SDF) enter 5<sup>th</sup> Year of Habitat Projects Across The Region

<b>2014 funds / 2015 PA Drummer Projects</b>				
PROJECT	CHAPTER	AFFILIATES	Acres	DESCRIPTION
M.K. Goddard State Park	Allegheny Northwoods	WMI, PA DCNR Parks, PGC, Friends Of Goddard	100	Woodcock and young forest initiative project area. Over grown singing grounds from the 1970's and removal of hardwoods, invasive honeysuckles, herbicide application, fruit tree pruning. Contractor and volunteer work. Few woodcock on these grounds but in area and goal to attract back to historic grounds is feasible.
Raystown	Red Brush	ACE	630	Commercial timber sales and brood habitat creation. Continuing project.
Pymatuning State Park	Meadville	WMI, PA DCNR Parks	240	Timber stand setback for improved woodcock habitat. Initial phase of new management plan. Critical to initial implementation.
Erie National Wildlife Refuge	Erie	WMI, USFWS,	20	Habitat enhancement and set back treatments. They are starting a new plan with new director in favor of timber management. Mostly woodcock some grouse in area.
Blue Marsh	Reading	ACE, PGC	31	Phase III of continuing project for woodcock demonstration area. Cutting of alder is the focus with our funding.
SGL 73	Altoona	PGC	556	Regeneration of pole stands for grouse. This has been a very successful project in the past and will continue to be.
SGL 91	NE PA	PGC	1,000	Commercial timber management for grouse. This project is within a very large management unit with previous timber harvests and good grouse population.
<b>Amount Available for 2015 Projects (2014 funding) = \$45,371.00</b>				
<b>Total Project Costs = \$176,45.00</b>				
<b>2,577 acres. Cost of \$17.50 from the SDF / Acre</b>				

WMI = Wildlife Management Institute ACE = Army Corps of Engineers PGC = Pennsylvania Game Commission  
DCNR = Department Conservation and Natural Resources

**Virginia** Habitat Committee comprised of representatives from all VA RGS chapters met to discuss project dispersal. A portion of the SDF will be designated to the Wallace Tract on the Jefferson National Forest where



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continued work is being done with the NWTF (National Wild Turkey Federation) for the creation of young regenerating forest habitat. VA members and RGS staff will also visit the Chickahominy WMA in the eastern part of the state to work with the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (VDGIF) wildlife biologists and land managers there to develop a woodcock project on the WMA.

We would like to congratulate and thank **Edward C. Bradley** the winner of the Get-a Member campaign for this Region. He has graciously chosen his \$2,500.00 award to remain within the state of VA for habitat work.

**Maryland** SDF funded two projects this year. Potomac-Garret State Forest will continue to cooperate with Garret College students in monitoring woodcock use of past habitat work. Newly planned work will concentrate on enhancement of the condition of the current small openings for woodcock. This project is supported by the Backbone Mtn. Chapter. The second project is a new project located on the Millington WMA and will consist of alder plantings in three fields that currently are being maintained as openings through mowing. These plantings will convert the suitability of the habitat structure more to woodcock and other wildlife species with the newly established structure. This project is supported by the Potomac Valley Chapter.

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### July 21-25 2015 PA Drummer School

#### Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education



<http://picweb.org/drummers-tour/>

RGS staff will once again participate in the 2015 PA Drummer School. This is an outstanding educational opportunity for young adults to participate in. If you know of a potentially interested attendee or if you are interested in volunteering as a possible leader visit the website provided above. There is a cost involved for attending so there are also opportunities for sponsoring a youth to attend. Feel free to contact me for information not provided on their website.

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### RGS Events Within The Mid-Atlantic Southern Appalachian Region

- April 4** – 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Habitat Field Day – Charles E. Bechtel Chapter- Contact John Cave – [Cavescorner@comcast.net](mailto:Cavescorner@comcast.net)
- April 10** – 38<sup>th</sup> Annual Greater Pittsburgh Area Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Banquet – Contact Sergio and Lisa Rossi 724-693-9032 [lisar@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:lisar@ruffedgrousesociety.org)
- April 11** – Leigh Valley Chapter Habitat Day – Contact Jim Boburka 610-882-5977 [info@boburkavideo.com](mailto:info@boburkavideo.com)
- April 11** – 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Cumberland Valley Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Banquet – Contact Tom Snicak 717-236-1300 [RuffedGrouseSociety@hmslegal.com](mailto:RuffedGrouseSociety@hmslegal.com)
- April 17** – 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Red Brush Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Banquet – Contact Jerry and Kathy Dittmann 818-867-5250 [jdittmann2@comcast.net](mailto:jdittmann2@comcast.net)
- April 23** – 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Delaware Valley Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Banquet – Contact John Hopkins 610-659-5986 [jhopkins@psualum.com](mailto:jhopkins@psualum.com)
- May 6** – Consulting Forester Workshop – MK Goddard State Park. Contact Linda Ordiway 412-720-6034.
- May 9** – Georgia Chapter Fun Shoot – Contact – Monte 770-983-3019 [mseehorn@comcast.net](mailto:mseehorn@comcast.net), Stan 678-427-2923 [stan@howeconstruction.com](mailto:stan@howeconstruction.com), Roy 678-975-0746 [Rts363@aol.com](mailto:Rts363@aol.com)
- May 23** – Highland Drummer Chapter Lewisburg WV Inaugural Sporting Clays Shoot – Dublin Clays – Contact W.J. Worrell, Jr. 540-230-3485. [wjworrell@comcast.net](mailto:wjworrell@comcast.net)
- June 5** – 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Sporting Clays Shoot – Southern Appalachian Chapter – Contact Don Mallicoat 828-633-1806 [don@wingsnclays.com](mailto:don@wingsnclays.com)
- June 12** – 6<sup>th</sup> Annual Rappahannock Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Shoot and Dinner – Contact Mike Null 540-752-2765 [Mikelsten@yahoo.com](mailto:Mikelsten@yahoo.com)
- June 20** – 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Bonasa Chapter Conservation and Sportsmen Banquet – Contact Sandy McGary 814-236-0176 [smcgary@cenclear.org](mailto:smcgary@cenclear.org)

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Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions and notify me of any email address changes:  
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Email: [lindao@ruffedgrousesociety.org](mailto:lindao@ruffedgrousesociety.org) –

*-The Ruffed Grouse Society is North America's foremost conservation organization dedicated to preserving our sporting traditions by creating healthy forest habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife. For information on the Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society, please call 888-564-6747 or check out the RGS website at [www.ruffedgrousesociety.org](http://www.ruffedgrousesociety.org).*