

From: Mark Banker [mailto:rgsbank@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, September 21, 2010 9:21 AM
To: Southern Forest Action Network
Subject: FAN - Southern Apps

Forest Action Network Southern Appalachians Update



Picture: RGS Senior Biologist Mark Banker presents Corps of Engineers biologist Jeff Krause with a certificate of appreciation on July 10 for the thousands of acres of habitat, interpretive trails and forestry and wildlife program they have established at the Raystown Lake project in cooperation with RGS. The Corps also sponsored the first PA Statewide Habitat Objectives Team (SHOT) meeting where Krause gave the feature presentation on the project.

Please Get Involved with Grouse/Woodcock Hunter Surveys

Now is the time to start thinking about supporting your state game agency and grouse and woodcock conservation by participating in your state's hunter survey program. Not all states have them, but PA, MD and OH rely heavily on them to give them a feel for what the populations are doing.

This is a fun and inexpensive way to keep track of your flushes and kills for yourself and come to the aid of your state wildlife agency. All you have to do is GO HUNTING! I have been a cooperator for about 10 years. We strongly encourage you to get involved.

In Ohio, contact Mike Reynolds – mike.reynolds@dnr.state.oh.us

In Maryland, contact Bob Long – blong@dnr.state.md.us

In PA, contact Ian Gregg – igregg@state.pa.us

In NY, e-mail fwwildlf@gw.dec.state.ny.us (NY has an outstanding webpage dedicated to its Grouse Hunter Log program – www.dec.ny.gov/animals/9351.html. You can download your Hunter Log from the website directly.)

Outstanding Progress on Smathers Project at Cold Mountain Game Lands, Southwestern NC

RGS staff and volunteers from the Asheville Chapter visited the Jerry Smathers Memorial Project at Cold Mountain Game Lands near Canton, NC in August. Not only was the logging road paid for by the local chapter being put to good use, but an impressive swath of mature forest had been harvested and the resulting re-growth looked great. This is a project that has been stewarded and funded by the local chapter from the start and is an example of how rapidly habitat can be put on the ground when volunteers work closely with the state agency, in this case the NC Wildlife Resources Commission. The WRC worked quickly in installing the road using RGS funding and getting the timber sold and cut.

We also visited with the loggers on the site and they were great guys. We noticed with some concern that the cut had gone right up to the yard of a house that had been completely surrounded by mature forest in an isolated area, but the loggers said the owner thanked them for giving them an incredible view of the mountains rising around them that they hadn't had before. They will also have great wildlife habitat literally in their back yard.

Off and Cutting on CONSOL Energy Lands

RGS Consulting Forester Bernie Braun is cranking out the timber sales on CONSOL Energy lands, rapidly implementing the plan to greatly increase habitat for grouse and woodcock across a sizable landscape in southwest PA. Several sales are in the books and cutting should begin on the largest one very soon – a 60-70 acre patch.

Work on Mower Tract of Monongahela National Forest Moving Forward

The Monongahela National Forest continues to move forward with its project aimed at maximizing opportunities on the Mower (pronounced Mau-er) Tract off of Rt. 92 on top of Clinch Mountain south of Elkins, WV. The mower tract is extremely unique due to its surface mining history and high elevation. Grasslands and dense red spruce dominate the landscape, giving it a “western” appearance at first glance. The view of the WV mountains alone is worth the trip. The project, led by Biologist Shane Jones, is aiming to connect dispersed forest stands and create early successional shrublands and aspen stands. There are grouse present on the sight and lots of room for more.

So far, the following has been accomplished:

- Planted 3,000 native plants for restoration provided by NRCS
- Completed 50 acres of high elevation native plant restoration
- Cooperative work with WV Department of Forestry building ecological connectors -100 native aspen trees planted and cooperative spruce release.

The Forest Service is still looking for volunteers and professionals to get involved to help steward this project. So far, RGS has only been a small player. Local support would be a great help. Shane Jones does a great job of keeping us posted on progress and meetings. If you are interested in getting plugged in, contact Shane at scjones@fs.fed.us.

RGS 2011 National Raffle (see flyer below)

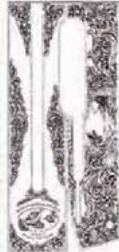
Three winners to be drawn on June 30, 2011. Tickets can be purchased on-line or from any RGS staff person.

Ruffed Grouse Society

2010 - 2011
NATIONAL RAFFLE
THREE CHANCES TO WIN

REMINGTON MODEL 1100 "F" GRADE
Semi-auto 28-gauge, exhibition-grade wood, skeet choke, hand-engraved by Remington's master engraver Don Talbot with two ruffed grouse on left side, two woodcock on right side, and RGS 50th Anniversary logo on top of receiver. Unique, only one made -- Serial #RGS50 Retail Value: \$9,000

Gun in Production
Engraving Sketches Pictured





CAESAR GUERINI
RGS 50th Anniversary Commemorative APEX
Over-and-under 28-gauge, 28" barrel length hand-engraved grouse on trigger guard, "RGS" above, "1961-2011" below -- one of a kind Retail Value: \$7,850





Actual Gun
Not Pictured

KIMBER VALIER GRADE II
Side-by-side 20-gauge, 28" barrel length. Last one available through RGS. Retail Value: \$5,000

Donation for each ticket is \$100. Up to 1,000 tickets to be sold. Drawing on June 30, 2011 at RGS HQ in Coraopolis, PA. First ticket wins Remington. Second ticket wins Guerini. Third ticket wins Kimber. Winners responsible for applicable taxes.

**To purchase raffle tickets, mail coupon to: Mark Banker, Senior Biologist
Ruffed Grouse Society - P.O. Box 1171 - Lemont, PA 16851
or call 814-867-7946 or e-mail: rgsbank@comcast.net**

Name _____ Phone # _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

_____ Tickets @ \$100.00 Each = \$ _____ Total Enclosed Signature _____

Billing Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

CHECK (Payable to RGS) CREDIT CARD # _____ Exp. Date _____

PA Drummer Graduates Showing Up at RGS Events

This year, the PA Institute for Conservation Education, Wildlife Leadership Academy, hosted its first PA Drummers program. It was 5-days of all-things grouse and woodcock, held on June 22-26 at Powdermill Nature Preserve, Westmoreland County. The 15 “graduates” are strongly encouraged to follow-up by sharing what they have learned at various events and public forums. Several of the students have already booked and/or attended RGS banquets and other events where they will have a chance to speak and show the displays they created at the Drummers program. Lauren Weeks of Bensalem (Bucks County) already attended the RGS banquet in Reading with her display, spoke to the crowd and has booked her local library for a show and tell of her Drummers experience. Andrew Hopkins also attended the Reading banquet with his display and also addressed the crowd of over 150.

Please consider supporting the PA Drummers program or encouraging a teenager 14-17 years-old to apply. RGS does much of the grouse and woodcock ecology instruction. This year’s program is scheduled for June 21 – 25 at the Powdermill. Contact Michelle Kittell at mkittell@picweb.org or check out the program at www.picweb.org. Or, contact me (Mark Banker).

Hoosier National Forest Proposes Timber Management Projects

The Hoosier National Forest has recently proposed forest management projects that are open for public comment. This is particularly notable given that such projects have been uncommon on the Hoosier for many years. The Hoosier NF in southern Indiana is one of the few places where grouse could be given one last foothold in the state if the habitat were managed to create young forest habitat across a landscape. Please visit www.fs.fed.us/r9/hoosier and click on “Planning” to check out recent projects. You can even contact the Forest and get on their mailing list to receive all notices of forest and wildlife management projects.

DON'T FORGET...

To check out the RGS website for all things grouse and woodcock at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org...

To check out www.timberdoodle.org for a great summary and description of many RGS and other projects in the eastern U.S. The website keeps growing as the Wildlife Management Institute (via Chuck Fergus) continues to compile info about woodcock, grouse and songbird habitat.

Ruffed Grouse Season has begun in the Lake States and New York and prairie grouse season is well underway on the Great Plains westward.

Have a Great Season!!!!

Mark Banker
Ruffed Grouse Society
Senior Biologist
State College, PA
814-867-7946 (office)
412-720-6034 (cell)

P.S. RGS National News items follow. If you haven't read the latest news in a September 2010 Regional Director Newsletter, I encourage you to read the following.

National News

FALL HUNTS

Northeast Grouse & Woodcock Hunt

October 28-30, 2010

Join the RGS for an exciting upland hunt this fall in Grand Lake Stream, Maine. The event will be hosted by Weatherby's Sporting Lodge.

Huntsmen will be provided and all meals are included. Banquets and fundraising events will be held each evening. Non-hunting guests invited to attend all meals and events.

Space is limited, so please make your reservations early.

For additional information: Tripp Way (607) 743-0760, trippway@gmail.com

To register: Alison Kelley (412) 262-4044, alisonk@ruffedgrousesociety.org

Pennsylvania Wilds Upland Bird Hunt

November 4-6, 2010

Hunt thousands of acres in the Pennsylvania Wilds. Hunter space is limited, reservations are required.

Huntsmen are provided. Registration is November 4, breakfast buffets included. Fundraising events and dinner held each evening. Non-hunting guests are welcome to attend all meals and events.

Base of operations will be at the Red Fern Inn in Kersey, Pennsylvania. Lodging is available in the St. Mary's area. Hunting lands include Allegheny National Forest, state game and forest lands.

To register contact: Mary Hosmer (814) 512-2101.

For more information contact: Chris Yeager (814) 776-1845, chris23@windstream.net

NATIONAL NEWS UPDATES

State Drummer Funds Established for Chapter Projects

In 2010 RGS established a new program called the *Drummer Fund* to fund statewide habitat projects. In every state where chapters hold a successful banquet, a statewide fund will be created.

Chapters can contribute to the fund through their banquet proceeds or other approved fundraising programs sponsored by RGS. The fund will be used for projects within the chapters' state for specific projects that are approved by RGS Regional Biologists via a ranking process.

A sliding scale model, detailed below, will be used to determine the money allocated from banquets:

Net Revenue = or > \$50,000: 20% of the net goes to the state Drummer Fund

Net Revenue of \$20,000 up to \$49,999: 15% of the net goes to the state Drummer Fund

Net Revenue of \$7,001 up to \$19,999: 10% of the net goes to the state Drummer Fund

Net Revenue < \$7,000: chapter receives no money for the state's Drummer Fund

All chapters are eligible to receive \$2,500 toward their state's Drummer Fund by recruiting a new fully paid Life Sponsor. After a successful banquet, chapters may also hold post-banquet fund raisers and put up to \$2,500 of the proceeds from those fund raisers toward their Drummer Fund.

Cooperative Project with CONSOL Energy Evolves

RGS sold its first timber sale on behalf of CONSOL Energy in southwestern Pennsylvania this past August in a joint effort to establish more young forest wildlife habitat on a landscape level. The initial timber sale, administered by Consulting Forester Bernie Braun, is about 60 acres in size. Several additional sales were in the works, as of the beginning of September. All of the lands are open to public hunting.

The cooperative project between the Society and CONSOL Energy includes a core area of 7,000 acres, but has expanded to include other special projects where forest needs to be managed. One new opportunity is a 1700 acre project designed to establish a quail population on a landscape owned by CONSOL Energy in Greene County. This project is being supervised by the Pennsylvania Game Commission and Natural Resources Conservation Service. RGS has been asked to handle the removal of the timber to make way for dense, brushy habitat that will not only benefit quail, but also woodcock and eventually grouse and likely many songbirds. Eventually, wild quail will be introduced from other CONSOL Energy lands in Illinois, where they currently thrive.

RGS Receives Coveted Four Star Charity Rating

For the second time in four years, Charity Navigator -- the largest charity evaluator in America -- has given the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) a 4-Star rating for "...its ability to efficiently allocate and grow its finances.

Based on the most current financial information, Charity Navigator has determined that RGS outperforms most charities in America in its efforts to operate a 'fiscally responsible' organization that spends its money fulfilling its mission.

The coveted 4-star rating is the highest charity rating available for a non-profit organization.

According to Ken Berger, Charity Navigator's President and CEO, approximately only a quarter of the charities evaluated have received our highest rating; indicating that the Ruffed Grouse Society executes its mission in a fiscally responsible way. "This 'exceptional' rating differentiates the Ruffed Grouse Society from its peers and proves that it's worthy of the public's trust," Berger said in making the announcement.

"Upon learning of the prestigious recognition, Ruffed Grouse Society President and CEO Mike Zagata said, "The Ruffed Grouse Society is once again proud to be featured by Charity Navigator for living up to the high standards set within the nonprofit sector. This recognition is a tribute to the men and women who conduct the day-to-day operations, the team of biologists who work with landowners to improve conditions for ruffed grouse, woodcock and other species, including more than 80 species of songbirds, and to the thousands of dedicated volunteers who help make our fundraiser banquets and special events the success they have become. All should be proud that their efforts have been recognized."

First Year of PA Drummers Program Very Successful

The Wildlife Leadership Academy of the Pennsylvania Institute for Conservation Education (PICE) administered their first Pennsylvania Drummers program at Powdermill Nature Reserve near Ligonier in Westmoreland County on June 22 to 26. The camp focused on grouse and, to a lesser extent, woodcock ecology and management.

Dedicated PICE staff organized speakers and volunteers and administered every aspect of the camp. RGS Senior Biologist Mark Banker filled many roles as an instructor throughout the 5-days of the camp. RGS President/CEO Mike Zagata also presented a seminar on careers in natural resources and participated in several other programs while there.

The 15 attending youth, ranging in age from 14 to 17, were an unusually mature and focused group and proved very quick studies. They created impressive displays and PowerPoint presentations

based on their experiences during the week. The youth are following up by attending RGS banquets, setting up their displays and saying a few words at the podium. They are also expected to continue outreach efforts educate others about grouse and woodcock.

In 2011 Pennsylvania Drummers will be held June 21 to 25. Registration materials and more information can be found at www.piceweb.org and on Facebook.

RGS 50th Anniversary Publication Available for Pre-Sale

Celebrate 50 years of conservation by purchasing a copy of the unique, limited edition 50th anniversary publication of the RGS. Immerse yourself in the world of ruffed grouse and American woodcock. Read renowned outdoor writers on shotgunning, dogs and hunting. It includes tips from our expert field biologists on how to get more grouse and woodcock on the ground. This high quality, perfect bound publication of well over 100 pages will be a collector's item for years to come.

Issue price is \$14.95 plus shipping. Order online at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org, or by phone at (888) 564-6747. Product will arrive mid-January, 2011.

National Raffle Announced

The 2010-2011 RGS national raffle offers three chances to win this year. Three winning tickets will be pulled June 30, 2011. First place will win a Remington Model 1100 F-grade, semi-auto 28-gauge with exhibition grade wood and engraved ruffed grouse, woodcock and the RGS 50th anniversary logo. The retail value is \$9,000.

Second place will win a Caesar Guerini RGS 50th Anniversary Commemorative Apex, an over-and-under 28-gauge with a retail value of \$7,850. Third place will win a Kimber Valier Grade II, a side-by-side 20-gauge with a retail value of \$5,000.

To find out more and purchase a ticket, contact RGS at (888) 564-6747, or by contacting your local Regional Director.

2011 – RGS 50th Anniversary

In 2011 The Ruffed Grouse Society celebrates its 50th Anniversary, preparations are already underway. Special items commemorating the anniversary will include a collector's knife, belt buckle, several unique shotguns, a unique lost-wax process cast of a ruffed grouse, carved woodcock and apparel with the 50th Anniversary RGS logo. These items will be at our 2011 banquets and available for purchase through our website.

Pamphlets Available

As mentioned previously, there are many RGS publications available for your use at Sport Shows, including *The Other Silent Spring*, *The Impact on Wildlife from Ignoring Ecological Principles* and soon the *Woodcock in Hand* – as it is in the process of being updated and reprinted. Please contact RGS Headquarters to arrange having the brochures you need sent to you by calling 1-888-564-6747.

RGS to Attend NRA Annual Meeting

April 29 – May 1

The NRA will be holding its annual meeting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on April 29th through May 1st, 2011. In celebration of our 50th anniversary, RGS will be attending the event. We will be in booth #3626 on the main floor. Special offers to recruit new members will be our main initiative, so stop by to say hello. More information to come at a later date or see the event website www.nraam.org for details on tickets and the schedule of events.