

From: Mark Banker [mailto:rgsbank@comcast.net]
Sent: Tuesday, November 02, 2010 4:52 PM
To: FAN Network
Subject: FW: Forest Action Network - Southern Appalachians

Forest Action Network Update Southern Appalachians



A "proud" hunter displays a woodcock and the 4 shells it took to subdue it.

Early Hunter Reports Are Generally Good

Grouse and woodcock seasons are well underway in the Lake States and New England and just getting cranked up farther south. Reports from the Lake States are good to very good. My experience in Minnesota was outstanding for grouse. Early reviews from the young southerly seasons are generally positive. The northern part of PA seems a lot like last year – pretty good. A hunt yesterday in Southcentral PA was better than expected even under very difficult hot, windy, dry conditions. Woodcock were surprisingly well distributed. One RGS volunteer got out and found a few birds in West Virginia. Have fun hunting and let us know how it's going.

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)

North Carolina Conservancy Seeking Input On Land Acquisition

RGS received the following communication (with some editing) from the Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy last week. We are still looking into the various aspects of this process, but we wanted to make RGS members aware as requested:

We are partnering with The Conservation Fund to purchase 8,000 acres in Transylvania County, NC. We don't need to raise funds right now, but we do need to raise awareness among hunters and anglers about the opportunity we have. Here are the essential facts: we have the opportunity to add 8,000 acres to the public domain. The Conservation Fund, a national conservation organization, partnered with Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy here in Hendersonville, to begin the process to permanently protect this tract, known as the East Fork Headwaters project. The project encompasses over 60% of the East Fork of the French Broad sub-basin.

The Conservation Fund needs a government entity to take the property over from it, because it is not set up to hold land for the long-term. The Conservation Fund can act as a bridge owner, but it must have a government partner to take over the 8,000 acres. NC State Parks already has Gorges State Park nearby, and the East Fork Headwaters are not contiguous. NC Forest Service already is managing 10,000-acre DuPont State Forest in Transylvania and Henderson Counties. Nor does the tract fall within the proclamation boundary of any national forest. Given that the land has been managed for hunting for over 20 years, the establishment of a Wildlife Resource Commission (WRC) game land on the acreage would be ideal. The tract contains 2,000 acres of planted white pine that must be harvested. The harvest, with careful planning, can result in the creation of superb upland bird habitat, as well as browse for deer. WRC fisheries biologists have identified several populations of rare, native Southern Appalachian brook trout as well. East Fork Headwaters harbors an incredible amount of water, over 250,000 feet of streams. Establishing a game land on East Fork Headwaters will add an estimated 5 miles of trout stream to public Delayed Harvest waters.

A pivotal meeting of the NC Wildlife Resource Commissioners is taking place on November 4th. The Commissioners need to hear that the hunters and anglers of North Carolina want the WRC to establish this game land on the East Fork Headwaters. We need the commissioners to receive as many sincerely written letters as possible by **November 3, 2010**.

Information about East Fork Headwaters, and instructions for writing and addressing letters, are found at this website: www.saveeastforkheadwaters.com.

This is the biggest chunk of land left in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The Conservation Fund and Carolina Mountain Land Conservancy are committed to raising the funds for this purchase. All we ask is that NC WRC resolve to establish a game land on East Fork Headwaters. We are told to 'never say never' but most doubt that we will ever have the opportunity to conserve this size acreage and high caliber habitat in the future. It truly is now or never. We hope we can count on the support of all anglers, hunters, and conservationists, especially members of the Ruffed Grouse Society. And we hope you will encourage RGS members to send in letters. Please don't hesitate to ask questions or make suggestions.

RGS 2011 National Raffle (see flyer)

Remington Model 1100 F-Grade RGS 50th Anniversary Edition (Retail Value: \$9,000)

Caesar Guerini RGS 50th Commemorative APEX (Retail Value: \$7,850)

Kimber Valier Grade II (Retail Value: \$5,000)

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, sheet 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







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







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 _____

RGS Members Provide the Horsepower for Achieving the Mission

The Society is approaching its 50th year of pursuing the creation and maintenance of grouse and woodcock habitat as our primary endeavor. We, like other non-profits, only persist because of our members and supporters. Thousands of volunteers greatly expand our ability to achieve our mission via donations and relationships that pave the way for habitat management and quality hunting. RGS volunteers steward large and longstanding projects that otherwise would not be possible. They attend countless meetings, write letters, and organize banquets and many other events. They keep us informed, plugged in, and motivated. Thank you.

DON'T FORGET...

That RGS habitat projects benefit more than just grouse and woodcock. We talk a lot about songbirds that need the same habitat, but two days ago I jumped one of the biggest bucks I have ever seen from a clearcut RGS helped create on public lands.

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

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.

Welcome New Biologists

Ted Dick is now the ruffed grouse habitat coordinator for Minnesota, a position that was created through a partnership between the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Ruffed Grouse Society. Ted is off and running and already getting his feet wet in the grouse woods. Ted can be contacted at the DNR's office in Aitkin, Minnesota by phone at 218-927-6915 ext. 250 or by email at Ted.Dick@state.mn.us.

Soon to arrive and fill a biologist position vacant for several years in the Society's Eastern Great Lakes Region (Michigan, Indiana and Ohio) will be Larry Visser, formerly of the Michigan Department of Natural Resources & Environment. Planned startup date for Larry is January 1, 2011. Contact information will be forthcoming for Larry.

Parting Shot...

We hear about hunters finding small snakes in grouse crops from time to time, but this year we saw pictures of a MN grouse with about a foot of a large garter snake hanging out of its mouth with another few inches already in the bird's throat. It tried to fly away from the hunter, but the extra cargo made it an easy target.

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