



Western Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

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Happy Aldo Leopold Day

On Saturday, March 2nd, I was invited by long time RGS member Ken Blomberg to help celebrate Aldo Leopold Day by joining him and others at the Mead Wildlife Area in Central Wisconsin as one of the guest readers of essays from Leopold's famous book, *A Sand County Almanac*. Leopold's writings were first brought to my attention while a student at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point in 1974 and helped solidify my career choice as a wildlife biologist. Leopold was considered by many as the father of wildlife management and I feel that if he was with us today he would be proud of the work of the Ruffed Grouse Society and the passion its members have for two species that were very special to Leopold, ruffed grouse and woodcock.

A Sand County Almanac provides monthly observations of nature that Leopold so eloquently describes at his family's property in Central Wisconsin. My selected readings, of course, were selected from the month of October and included the Smoky Gold and Red Lanterns essays, both that should be required readings of all grouse hunters. Smoky Gold starts out with the quote, "There are two kinds of hunting; ordinary hunting and ruffed grouse hunting".

I'm sure most RGS members clearly understand what Leopold meant by that statement. RGS is proud that we have recently put that quote onto a beautiful oval (shown above) that is available at our 2013 banquets. It would be a great addition to any grouse hunters home or cabin.

Gary

Call for Action - Comments Needed

Michigan DNR Regional State Forest Management Plans

The Michigan DNR is seeking comments on its draft Regional State Forest Management Plans. These Plans will help the DNR sustainably manage Michigan's nearly 4 million acres of state forest land – and are now available on the DNR website at www.michigan.gov/regionalforestplans . The public comment period ends on Friday, March 8th.

The DNR developed three draft plans covering the eastern Upper Peninsula, the western Upper Peninsula and the northern Lower Peninsula. Once finalized, the plans will provide long-term, landscape –level direction for resource managers that will guide DNR decision about activities and treatments on state forest land.

We encourage RGS members to submit comments via email to forestplancomments@michigan.gov or by mail at DNR Forest Resources Division, Forest Planning and Operations Section, P.O. Box 30452, Lansing, MI 48909-7952.

Your comments may include:

- 1) State why the management of Michigan State Forest's are important to you (ie. you spend many hours each fall hunting grouse and woodcock these lands)
- 2) Mention that Michigan is one of the best places to hunt ruffed grouse and woodcock in the United States, in fact more woodcock are harvested in Michigan than any other state.
- 3) Because of their importance to recreational hunting and the economy of Michigan more State Forest Management Units should include ruffed grouse and woodcock as Featured Species.
- 4) Aspen management is crucial to ruffed grouse and woodcock populations and needs to continue to be emphasized in Michigan Forest Plans as these areas may comprise the best opportunity in Michigan to maintain this important resource on the landscape.

Ruffed Grouse Society Announces 2013 Wisconsin Drummer Fund Projects

Record 15 Projects Approved For Funding

The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) has selected 15 projects to receive over \$58,000 during 2013 through its Wisconsin Drummer Fund program. The projects are designed to benefit habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife species that rely upon young forests for survival.

Partners receiving RGS funding for projects in Wisconsin in 2013 include county forestry departments in Douglas, Florence, Marathon, Oconto, Washburn, Wood, and Vilas Counties, and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Other partners providing support for these projects include the American Bird Conservancy and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

According to John Eichinger, RGS President and CEO, "2013 is a record year for the Wisconsin Drummer Fund with the most funds being distributed to the highest number of projects that RGS has ever supported in Wisconsin. Our ability to fund these important projects is highly dependent on the dedicated efforts of the volunteer members of our local RGS Chapters in Wisconsin."

The Wisconsin Drummer Fund was initiated in 2010 and is the direct result of funds being raised specifically at Wisconsin RGS chapter fund raising events and through direct member donations. Since its inception, nearly \$157,000 has been made available through the Wisconsin Drummer Fund to support 40 Wisconsin grouse and woodcock projects. These funds have been matched by other agencies and organizations and have resulted in over \$350,000 worth of projects being funded in Wisconsin since 2010.

Wisconsin Drummer Fund Projects approved for 2013 include:

- Big Roche A Cri Alder Regeneration/Adams and Waushara Counties – WI DNR
- Clam Lake Wildlife Area Alder Regeneration/Burnett County – WI DNR
- Colburn Wildlife Area Alder Regeneration/Adams County– WI DNR
- Douglas County Alder Regeneration – WI DNR and Douglas Co. Forestry Dept.
- Hall's Creek Hunting Trail Expansion/Florence County – Florence Co, Forestry
- Kubisiak Ruffed Grouse Management Area Aspen Regeneration/Wood County – WI DNR and Wood County Forestry Department
- Marathon County Alder Regeneration – WI DNR and Marathon Co. Forestry
- Oconto County Grouse Hunting Trail Development – WI DNR and Oconto County Forestry Department
- Parker Creek Alder Regeneration/Polk County – WI DNR
- Peshtigo Harbor Woodcock Habitat Restoration/Marinette County – WI DNR
- Vilas County Hunting Trail Rehabilitation - Vilas County Forestry Department
- Washburn County Wildlife Openings – Washburn County Forestry Department
- Woodcock Management Video Development – WI DNR
- Wood County Buckthorn Treatment – WI DNR and Wood County Forestry
- Young Forest Private Landowner Outreach – Wisconsin DNR

The Wisconsin DNR is a recipient of funding for 12 projects in 2013 through this program. Chuck McCullough, DNR Area Wildlife Supervisor from Antigo states, "RGS continues to play a major role in funding habitat work for grouse and woodcock across Wisconsin. Their support is critical to the management of young forest habitat across the state."

"Though the Wisconsin Drummer Fund originated in 2010, RGS has been very active supporting habitat work in Wisconsin since 1985. Since that time, RGS has contributed over \$850,000 to fund over 100 projects in 44 of Wisconsin's 72 counties," reports RGS coordinating biologist Gary Zimmer.

Work Begins on Early Successional Habitat Project on the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest

According to Dan Eklund, Forest Biologist on the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest, harvesting has begun on several of the cooperative ruffed grouse and woodcock habitat management areas identified in the Early Successional Habitat Improvement Project. As you may recall, in March 2012, Forest Supervisor Paul Strong signed a Decision Notice for this project that targeted the regeneration of up to 6,000 acres of aspen, paper birch, balsam fir and jack pine forests over a ten year period. Most of these areas were designated in the late 1980's under a partnership between RGS and the US Forest Service.

The harvesting is near completion on the Blockhouse Ruffed Grouse Management Area near Park Falls and will soon begin on Squaw Creek. The timber on two other areas near Clam Lake, Ding Dong and Little Moose has been sold to contractors but harvesting has yet to begin. Several more areas are being prepared for sale at this time. We thank the staff of the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest for all their efforts on this large project.

Forest Service Names Atkinson New Regional Forester

Kathleen Atkinson is the new Regional Forester assigned to the Eastern Region that includes the Great Lakes States. Her previous position was the Associate Deputy Chief for Business Operations for the Forest Service in Washington DC, a position she held since June of 2011. Prior to that, she was the Director of Strategic Planning, Budget and Accountability for the agency. She has worked for the Forest Service for the past 30 years in a variety of positions and geographical locations.

Time Winding Down - Get Your 2013 RGS National Raffle Tickets Soon

Purchase your tickets by calling RGS HQ at (888) 564-6747 or contacting Gary Zimmer at 715-674-7505 or rgszimm@gmail.com until 5 pm Eastern DST June 27, 2013. The donation is \$20.00 per ticket; with up to 10,000 tickets to be sold. Four winners will be drawn on June 28, 2013.

Four chances to win. WINNER'S CHOICE! - First winner selects choice of 4 prizes, second winner selects from remaining 3, etc.

Prizes to include:

First prize: Orvis Uplander Deluxe; a 20-gauge over-and-under with 28" barrels, which will be produced in a limited edition of 10. \$7,995 value. **Orvis Company, Donor.**

Second prize: South Dakota pheasant hunt at Pine Shadows Daybreak lodge near Frederick. During the 2013-14 season, two people will enjoy three days and four nights

hunting pheasant on Orvis-endorsed wingshooting grounds. All meals, lodging, ammunition, dogs, guides, and bird-cleaning included as well as airfare up to \$1,000; upon arrival, transportation to and from airport and hunting grounds provided. The value of this package is over \$7,000. **Pine Shadows Daybreak, Hunt Donor.**

Third prize: Kansas quail hunt with certified Orvis wingshooting guide Steve Grossman. Two hunters will spend three days and four nights during the 2013-14 season in southcentral Kansas near Medicine Lodge, hunting wild bobwhite over English setters on over 22,000 acres - including open prairie, river bottoms and draws of cedar. Two hunters per guide, double guns only and fresh dogs will be on the ground all day long. All meals and airfare up to \$1,000 is included. The value of this package is \$5,800. **Double Gun Bird Hunts, Hunt Donor.**

Fourth prize: Attendance for two people at the **2013 National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt** in Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Three days/4 nights October 8-11, 2013 at the Sawmill Inn, Grand Rapids, Minnesota. Deluxe, guided hunt includes double occupancy lodging at the Sawmill, Outdoor Festival at the local gun club and two full days of grouse and woodcock hunting with experienced guides and trained bird dogs. All meals, bird cleaning, transportation to and from hunting areas, many extras and airfare up to \$1,000 is included. The value of the hunt is \$3,450. The winner of this prize has the option of waiving the hunt in lieu of \$2,500 cash - your choice!

All raffle participants will receive a free issue of *Orvis News*. Winners responsible for applicable taxes.

RGS Names New Editor of RGS Magazine

Ruffed Grouse Society President and Chief Executive Officer John B. Eichinger announced on Wednesday that Matt Soberg was chosen as the new editor for the *Ruffed Grouse Society* magazine.

“Matt was the best candidate due to his combination of outdoor writing skills and upland hunting experience. With a true passion for the outdoors and conservation, he has the knowledge and insight necessary to effectively communicate our mission,” according to Eichinger.

Soberg expressed gratitude and appreciation for being chosen: “I am extremely honored to be selected as the new editor and am excited to get started. The *Ruffed Grouse Society* magazine is a well-respected and effective voice for the organization. It communicates the true beauty of ruffed grouse and woodcock conservation, habitat and hunting through quality writing and photography. I support the society’s objectives and am thrilled to help us reach our goals.”

Soberg’s career includes a Juris Doctorate degree from William Mitchell College of Law and a Bachelor of Arts degree in psychology and sociology from the University of Minnesota. He was a law firm partner before publishing and editing the *Minnesota Sporting Journal*. His writing was previously published by the *Ruffed Grouse Society* magazine, and he has experience as a regular outdoors columnist and fishing correspondent. He is a gun dog owner and grew up hunting ruffed grouse and woodcock in Central Minnesota.

Soberg will start by editing the Spring 2013 issue of the RGS magazine. Welcome Matt!

Michigan DNR to Host Meetings on Wolf Management

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will host a series of public meetings in March to provide information to the public and answer questions regarding wolf management and the possibility of a future wolf hunting season.

The meetings will take place in the following locations from 6 to 8 PM local time:

- Tuesday, March 12, Gogebic Community College, David Lindquist Student Center, E4946 Jackson Road, Ironwood
- Wednesday, March 13, Northern Michigan University, Michigan Room, 2101 University Center, Marquette
- Tuesday, March 19, Wisconsin Street hall, 610 S. Wisconsin, Gaylord
- Thursday, March 21, Lansing center, Room 201, 333 E. Michigan Ave, Lansing

The meetings will include a presentation by DNR Wildlife Division staff on wolf management techniques, including the potential use of public harvest as a management tool as prescribed in the state's Wolf Management Plan.

Following the presentation, DNR staff will hold a question-and-answer session with members of the public. Meeting attendees will also be asked to participate in a survey regarding the possibility of the use of wolf hunting as a management tool in Michigan.

The DNR's recommendation on a wolf management season will be presented to the Natural Resources Commission for consideration no later than June 2013.

For more information about attending this series of public information meetings, contact Adam Bump at 517-373-1263. To learn more about the state's wolf population and Wolf Management Plan, visit www.michigan.gov/wolves.

Day at the Capitol Event Scheduled in Iowa

HuntingWorks forIowa, an organization of conservation groups that RGS is a part of, will be hosting a Day at the Capitol Event on April 17 in Des Moines. This is a great way for partners to meet their legislators, DNR representatives, and other partners. RGS is planning to have representatives at this event. For more details on joining other RGS representatives, contact Gary Zimmer at rgszimm@gmail.com. For more details on the event, contact Coordinator Mike Knuth at info@HuntingWorksForIA.com.

Signup Ends June 15th for 2013 Wisconsin Coverts Project

The next Wisconsin Coverts Project workshop targeting private landowners with an interest in managing their lands with a wildlife emphasis will be held August 22 - 25 at the Kemp Natural Resources Station near Woodruff, WI. These 3-day sessions have had rave reviews from past attendees that have become Covert Cooperators through past workshops and are open to folks from Illinois, Upper Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Now starting its 19th year, 553 cooperators have attended these workshops. Sharing with others what they have learned these Coverts Cooperators have influenced the management of over 810,000 acres of land in the region. This workshop is highly recommended for those landowners interested in better understanding their role as stewards of their property. For additional information on the workshop contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or by email at jlnack@wisc.edu . Attendance is limited. More information is available on the Coverts Project website at http://forestandwildlifecology.wisc.edu/wl_extension/wicovertsproject.html . Deadline for applications is June 15th.

North Central Young Forest Initiative Project

RGS and a number of other partners are working with the Wisconsin DNR on a large six county demonstration area in North Central Wisconsin to promote young forest habitat development. Recently an article highlighting this project was put together by writer Chuck Fergus and does a great job of describing the project and its goals and objectives. While space doesn't allow the entire article to be included in this Update please take a look at the following link for more information:
<http://www.youngforest.org/demo/north-central-wisconsin-young-forest-initiative>

Upcoming RGS Events in the Region

March 23 – Nicolet/Wild Rivers Chapter 22nd Annual Sportsmen's Banquet at the Crandon Community Center. Contact Craig Williams at 715-478-0981 for info.

April 5, 6 and 7 - Stop by the RGS Booth (#304) at the WI Deer/Turkey Expo. at the Alliant Energy Center in Madison, WI. If you would like to help staff the booth at some time during this event, contact Gary Zimmer at 715-674-7505.

April 15 – Missa-Croix Chapter 26th Anniversary Banquet at the Point Restaurant, Hastings, MN. Contact Mike Brown at 612-850-9288 for info.

April 20 – Habitat Work Day near Breed on the Oconto County Forest. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

April 22 – David Uihlein Memorial Chapter 32nd Annual Spring Banquet at the Milwaukee Athletic Club. Contact Colin Fouts at 715-817-0117 for info.

April 25 – Lakeshore Chapter 23rd Annual Sportsmen's Banquet at Range Line Inn, Kohler, WI. Contact Trent Hake at 920-458-5595 ext. 311 for info.

April 27 – West Central Wisconsin Chapter 24th Youth Outdoor Education Day, Lindsey, WI. Contact Richard Chronquist at 715-305-0420 for info.

May 2 – Duluth/Superior Chapter 33rd Annual Sportsmen's Banquet at the Elk's Club, Superior, WI. Contact Janie Fouts at 715-399-2494 for info.

May 11 – Habitat Work Day on the Eagle River/Florence District of the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

May 16 – Chippewa Valley Chapter 28th Sportsmen's Banquet at 29 Pines

Conference Center, Eau Claire, WI. Contact Dave Johnson at 715-492-5858 for info.

June 1(tentative) – Habitat Work Day on the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest near Lakewood, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

June 15 - Sign Up Deadline for 2013 WI Coverts Workshops

August 22 to 25 – 2013 WI Coverts Workshop, Kemp Natural Resource Station, Woodruff, WI. Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlnack@wisc.edu.

Reminder

To insure that you continue to receive timely FAN updates please notify me of changes in your email address.

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

Gary Zimmer, Sally B. Searle Coordinating Biologist,
Ruffed Grouse Society

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The Ruffed Grouse Society is the premier wildlife conservation organization dedicated to promoting conditions suitable for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and related wildlife to sustain our sport hunting tradition and outdoor heritage. For information on the Ruffed Grouse Society, please call 888-564-6747 or check out the RGS website at www.ruffedgrousesociety.org.