

Ronald P. Burkert

From: Gary Zimmer [rgszimm@newnorth.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 15, 2009 5:24 PM
To: FAN Member
Subject: FAN UPDATE



Western Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

Volume 9, Issue 1

April 15, 2009

The Equipment is Coming, The Equipment is Coming!!

The Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS) recently received three grants totaling \$182,000 to purchase heavy equipment for managing habitat in the Upper Midwest. RGS has purchased two ASV/Terex PT-100 Forestry loaders (similar to the machine shown above) with mulching heads with grants of from the R.K. Mellon Foundation, the Frey Foundation of Grand Rapids, MI, and the

Charlevoix County Community Foundation located in East Jordan, MI.

The new pieces of equipment will service Michigan and Wisconsin as well as surrounding states. The versatile equipment will allow the RGS to help public and private partners aggressively manage neglected aspen, alder and brush habitats for ruffed grouse, woodcock and many other species. The RGS and its partners have been operating similar equipment in the Northeast for several years with excellent results.

The equipment program has allowed the Society and its partners to manage high quality habitats that typically are neglected because of the lack of proper equipment. Woodcock in particular have benefitted because large areas of old fields, prime woodcock habitat, that are typically left to convert to forests are now maintained as shrublands.

"We are extremely grateful to our funding partners who have allowed us to grow this program", stated RGS Executive Director and CEO Mike Zagata. "These machines will help us manage critical habitat on public and private lands in two crucial states".

"These pieces of equipment are important tools to help the Ruffed Grouse Society target habitat improvements for woodcock in habitat, like alder, that is not being managed by commercial harvests," adds Gary Zimmer, RGS Senior Biologist in the Western Great Lakes Region. "With this equipment the RGS will be one of the primary implementers of the Upper Great Lakes Woodcock and Young Forest Habitat Initiative."

Don't Miss Out! Only 76 Days Left! Enter the 2008/2009 RGS Upland Bird Dream Hunt Raffle Today

Thanks to all who have purchased a national raffle ticket so far. If you haven't, please enter soon or you might miss out on a upland game bird hunting trip of a lifetime.

First Place Prize - All Expense Paid Trip for Two to hunt from October 3-5, 2009 for sharptail grouse and Hungarian partridge at Bear paw Mountain Outfitters in Havre, Montana followed by participation in the National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt in grand Rapids, Minnesota from October 6-9. Both hunters also receive an SKB model 1785 o/u shotgun. Approximate value of package: \$18,000.

Second Place Prize - \$1,000 Cabela's Gift Certificate

Third Place Prize - Custom fitted Pair of upland hunting boots from Russell Moccasin Co. Approximate value of boots: \$400.

Donation for Tickets is \$50 each with winners drawn on June 30, 2009.

To Purchase Raffle Tickets Contact: Gary Zimmer

at 715-674-7505 or rgzimm@newnorth.net or mail the following to:

RGS P.O. Box 116 Laona, WI 54541

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ **State** ____ **Zip** _____

Phone Number _____

_____ **Tickets @ \$50.00 Each = \$** _____ **Total Enclosed**

CHECK (Payable to RGS) **CASH** **CREDIT CARD**

CC # _____ **Exp. Date** _____

Billing Address _____ **Billing Zip** _____

Signature _____

New CRP Program Promotes Habitat for Ruffed Grouse in Iowa

Landowners in Northeast Iowa have a unique opportunity to reverse the downward population trend of Ruffed Grouse, Woodcock, and many types of migrating songbirds. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) is offering a new Continuous

Conservation Reserve Program (CCRP) targeted at Early Successional Forest Species such as Ruffed Grouse.

The State Acres for Wildlife Enhancement (SAFE), or Early Successional Habitat program, is meant to develop CRP habitat on marginal crop ground that will provide specific food, nesting and cover needs required by numerous bird species that are showing nationwide decline. Early successional forest habitat is a very young forest, or edge habitat, characterized by a dense growth of saplings and shrubs. Periodic cutting is necessary to maintain this type of habitat. Aspen stands, for example, will die out if they aren't cut every 15 to 20 years.

Oak and Aspen are the preferred tree species for this practice. The oak will be left to grow to maturity to provide food for many species of wildlife, and the aspen will be cut to maintain dense, early successional growth for grouse and songbirds. Shrubs and a narrow grass buffer can also be implemented to maximize sunlight and nutrients next to existing crop ground.

Early Successional SAFE has many of the bonuses that other Continuous CRP programs offer, including a Signup Incentive Payment of \$100 an acre, up to 90% cost share to establish the desired habitat, and an annual rental payment for 10 or 15 years.

Greg Schmitt, DNR Private Lands Biologist for northeast Iowa says, "If anyone wants to plant trees on their marginal cropland and get paid to do it, this program is perfect for them. With the signup incentive, the cost share rates, and annual payment on poorer crop ground, it pencils out very well for a landowner's bottom dollar."

There is no Highly Erodible Land index requirement or a maximum amount for acres offered in Early Successional SAFE. Producers in Allamakee, Clayton, Fayette and Winneshiek counties in Iowa can submit offers to enroll cropland acres for 10 to 15 years. To be eligible for this signup, land must meet basic CRP eligibility requirements. CRP rental rates increased in October, 2008. For more information, contact Greg Schmitt at 563-422-6201, your district forester, or your local FSA office.

Forest Service Wins Two Court Decisions in Wisconsin

Judgements in favor of the US Forest Service were recently received on two vegetation management projects on the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest in Northern Wisconsin. On January 12th, District Court Judge Lynn Adelman of the Eastern District Court ruled that the Forest Service had adequately addressed cumulative effects in the Twentymile Project on the Great Divide Ranger District. This project includes over 9,000 acres of vegetative management. The plaintiffs in the case were the Habitat Education Center out of Madison, WI and the Environmental Law and Policy Center from Chicago. They claimed that the Forest Service failed to properly consider the effects of the project on forest species like the American Pine Marten, Northern Goshawk, and the Red-shouldered Hawk.

On March 19th, the same judge also ruled in favor of the Forest Service on similar grounds on the Fishbone Project, on the Washburn Ranger District. This project would impact approximately 5,000 acres within a 22,000 acre project area.

These decisions are good news for finally moving the implementation of the 2004 Forest Plan along but on March 13th the plaintiffs appealed the ruling in the Twentymile Project to the 7th Circuit Court of Appeals and have asked for a stay in awarding any timber sales in the area.

Wisconsin COVERTS Project Expands to Include Illinois Residents

Applications Due by June 15th

Building on its success, the Wisconsin Coverts Project will be expanding to two workshops in 2009. The traditional Wisconsin workshop for private forest landowners will be held August 13 - 16 at Kemp Natural Resources Station near Woodruff, WI. A second workshop targeting absentee landowners who own land in Wisconsin, but reside in Illinois is being supported by the T. Stanton Armour Chicagoland RGS Chapter. This workshop will be held at the Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation in Dundee, IL from August 27 - 30. These 3-day sessions have had rave reviews from past attendees that have become Covert Cooperators through past workshops.

Now starting its 16th year, 374 cooperators have attended these workshops. Sharing with others what they have learned these Coverts Cooperators have influenced the management of over 434,000 acres of land in Wisconsin. 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://forestandwildlifeecology.wisc.edu/wl_extension/wicovertsproject.html. Deadline for applications is June 15th.

Missouri Private Landowner Workshop on April 18th

The Mid-Missouri Chapter of the Ruffed Grouse Society and the Missouri Department of Conservation are once again sponsoring a Forest Management Workshop for Private Landowners on Saturday, April 18th on the Bill Haag property near Portland. Starting at 9 AM, the workshop will include forestry and wildlife specialists discussing tree identification, cost share opportunities, forest and wildlife management, and timber harvest methods. An optional dawn tour to listen for drumming grouse is also available. For information call Josh Stevens at 573-592-1400, ext. 4.

Forest Management Guidelines for Michigan Publication Now Available

The Michigan Society of American Foresters has put together a publication of forest management guidelines for both professional

foresters and landowners to assist in the management of our forest resource.

The forest management guidelines recognize the renewable nature of forests and the influence of forest management practices on the many uses of the forest including water, recreation, wildlife, timber, and aesthetics. Because of the diversity of forest conditions, values, and ownerships, no set of management guidelines can cover all situations. Professional and landowner judgment must combine scientific knowledge with these guidelines to determine management practices for a particular property.

The goal of these guidelines is to provide for conservation and stewardship of all forest lands in Michigan. The Michigan Society of American foresters challenges landowners, forest managers, forest industries, and timber harvesting contractors to follow these guidelines. They provide a common sense approach to better manage the forest lands of the state. This publication can be found at: <http://michigansaf.org/Business/MSAFguide/MainPage.htm> .

Upcoming RGS “Habitat” Events in the Region

April 18 - Missouri Forest Management Workshop for Private Landowners near Portland, MO. Contact Josh Stevens at 573-592-1400, ext. 4 for more info.

April 20 - Wildlife Habitat in Early Successional Forests Workshop at Michigan Technological University in the U.J. Noblet Forestry Building, Houghton, MI. Contact Michael Rose at 906-281-0899 for info.

April 25 - Intro to the Outdoors Youth Education Day near Marshfield, WI, sponsored by the West Central Wisconsin RGS Chapter. Contact Rich Chronquist at 715-387-1163 for info.

April 25 - Habitat Work Day on the Oconto Co. Forest near Breed, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

May 16 - Habitat Work Day on the Eagle River/Florence District of the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest . Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

June 15 - Sign Up Deadline for WI Coverts Workshops, Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlneck@wisc.edu .

June 20 - Habitat Work Day on the Cheq/Nicolet National Forest near Laona, WI. Contact Dave Bartz at 920-743-6004 for info.

August 13 to 16 - WI Coverts Workshop, Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlneck@wisc.edu .

August 27 to 30 - WI Coverts Workshop in Illinois, Contact Jamie Nack at 608-265-8264 or email at jlneck@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 Senior Regional Biologist, Ruffed Grouse Society
 P.O. Box 116 Laona, WI 54541 Phone: (715) 674-7505 email: rgszimm@newnorth.net

The Ruffed Grouse Society is the one international 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 .