



Western Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

Volume 11, Issue 4

December 16, 2011

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!!

With the holidays and end of the year in sight, it definitely is time to look back at 2011 and think about all the memories that were made pursuing our favorite birds. While some may disagree, most hunters including myself had a good fall and were especially pleased with the numbers of woodcock encountered. We hope that's an indicator of better hunts to come in future years and the recent ramped up efforts to improve habitat for those birds may be a part of the reason. The end of the year is time for me to thank so many of my fellow RGS members who continue to passionately support the organization and my efforts. I continue to be impressed with the dedication of our chapter committees as they continue to have successful banquets, youth days, shoots and habitat work days in support of the RGS mission. That support has enabled us to accomplish a lot in this region in 2011 and I've summarized some of that below. Thank you all so much. *Gary*

2011 REGIONAL BIOLOGIST REPORT

Here's a summary of the 2011 Regional accomplishments:

- Attended 49 meetings with resource agency staff/legislators and provided RGS input to 15 public land management projects.
- Involved in 24 media contacts (includes press releases/television and radio interviews).
- Conducted 9 reviews of existing or proposed Management Area Projects.
- Conducted 9 on-site habitat consultations.
- Participated in 14 chapter meetings, 2 youth events, 4 outdoor shows and 3 field events.
- Attended 9 chapter banquets.
- Responded to approximately 1,500 individual requests for information.
- Produced four FAN Update newsletters to about 700 members.
- Represented RGS on Lake States Resource Alliance, Great Lakes Timber Professionals Association, WI DNR Grouse and Woodcock Committee, UP Michigan DNR Habitat Work Group and the National Forest Resource Advisory Committee.
- Working in partnership, RGS and the US Forest Service maintained nine hunter walking trails totaling 36.7 miles of trail and 60 acres of wildlife openings on the East Side of the Chequamegon/Nicolet National Forest. Special thanks go out to the RGS volunteers coordinated by the NE Wisconsin and Chain O'Lakes Chapters that helped on this project on three work days.
- RGS habitat equipment (forestry loader with mulcher) completed over 165 acres of habitat work in Wisconsin this year. Since its arrival in 2009, this piece of equipment has treated over 400 acres.

Help RGS Protect Firearm Hunting on National Forests

Comments Needed by December 21st on Huron-Manistee NF Proposal

A September 2010 federal court ruling on the Forest Plan for the Huron-Manistee National Forest in central Michigan set a troubling precedent that could pose a serious threat to hunting on portions of our National Forests and other federal lands. The ruling by the 6th Circuit Court of Appeals directed the Huron-Manistee to consider banning firearm hunting on 66,000 acres designated as Semi-primitive/Non-motorized and Wilderness Areas of the Forest.

In response to this court ruling, the Huron-Manistee National Forest solicited input from the public and conducted an in-depth assessment of hunting on the Forest and surrounding public and private lands. The input received from the general public was overwhelmingly in support of continuing to allow hunting on the 66,000 acres in question. The Forest leadership heard the general public loud and clear and is indeed proposing to continue to allow hunting on all of the areas where it has been challenged. However, hunters aren't out of the woods yet. The Huron-Manistee is required to again solicit public input in response to its proposal and it's extremely important that the public again voice its support for hunting on the Forest.

Please take a few moments to send your own e-mail or letter to the Huron-Manistee National Forest to help protect hunting on the Forest. Your communication should reference the following:

1. Support the proposal announced by the Forest on September 23rd, 2011, to continue to allow firearm hunting on all 66,000 acres where hunting has been challenged.
2. The important role played by National Forests and other public lands in providing opportunities for hunting and other outdoor recreation as access for hunting, birding, etc. on private lands continues to diminish.

Send electronic comments to: comments-eastern-huron-manistee@fs.fed.us us. Comments sent via e-mail should contain the subject line: "Forest Plan SEIS"

Letters can be mailed to: Huron-Manistee National Forest, 1755 South Mitchell Street, Cadillac, MI 49601 or FAX to: 231-775-5551.

Please don't delay, the deadline for public input is December 21st, 2011

If you have any questions, please contact the Ruffed Grouse Society's biologist for Michigan: Larry Visser: rgsviss@gmail.com; 231-878-9599 or 412-228-9472.

Vote Online to Raise Money for RGS and Win Prizes

Cast your vote daily for RGS on <http://truckvaultcares.com> and earn funding to support ruffed grouse management while also entering into random drawings for fantastic prizes including a Truck vault, a Fausti DEA SL shotgun, Filson apparel and TriTronics training collars. A pool of \$10,000 has been provided by TruckVault, Scott Linden's Wingshooting USA and other sponsors. Your vote is worth at least ten cents, maybe more, as every dollar will be allocated to beneficiary groups on a proportional basis. Everyone wins! Your vote turns into cash for your favorite group. Track votes by watching the puppy's bowl fill up. Currently RGS is in fourth place but with your help we can quickly move up before the voting ends on March 31. Pass the link on to your friends and raise even more money for RGS.

RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY



1961 - 2011
50 Years of
Managing Forest Habitat

DONATED BY JOHN C. OLIVER

2011 - 2012

NATIONAL RAFFLE

THREE WINNERS DRAWN JUNE 29, 2012

CONNECTICUT SHOTGUN A-10 AMERICAN DELUXE

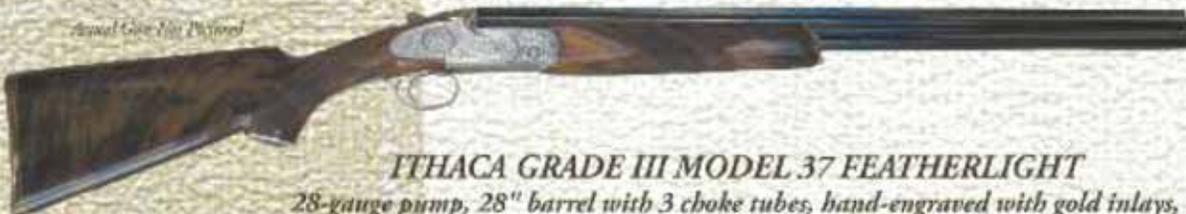
Over-and-under, 20-gauge, 28" barrels with 5 choke tubes, shallow frame, full sidelock with engraved game scenes, straight stock with exhibition grade wood and field forend. Includes combination and key locking case. Retail Value: \$9,400



CAESAR GUERINI RGS UNIQUE APEX GRADE

Over-and-under 28-gauge, 28" barrels with 5 choke tubes, one of a kind, hand-engraved grouse and woodcock design, Prince of Wales stock with exhibition grade wood, "RGS" on trigger guard. Retail Value: \$8,495

Animal Game Fair Prizes



ITHACA GRADE III MODEL 37 FEATHERLIGHT

28-gauge pump, 28" barrel with 3 choke tubes, hand-engraved with gold inlays, gold trigger, fancy AAA grade black walnut stock. Retail Value: \$3,500



Donation for each ticket is \$100. Up to 1,000 tickets to be sold.

Drawing on June 29, 2012 at RGS HQ in Cornopolis, PA. First ticket wins Connecticut. Second ticket wins Guerini. Third ticket wins Ithaca. Winners responsible for applicable taxes.

To purchase raffle tickets, mail coupon to: Gary Zimmer, Coordinating Biologist
Ruffed Grouse Society - P.O. Box 116, Laona, WI 54541
or call 715-674-7505 or e-mail: rgszimm@gmail.com

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 _____

Michigan DNR Authorizes Purchase of 2,354 Acres to Create Menominee River State Recreation Area

Michigan DNR Director Rodney Stokes has authorized the Department to proceed with purchasing 2,354 acres in Menominee and Dickinson Counties in the Upper Peninsula to create the Menominee River State Recreation Area. The DNR will purchase the land for \$2,534,400 in funding from the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and DNR land Exchange Facilitation Fund. The land is currently owned by Wisconsin Electric Power Company.

The acreage includes two separate tracts – Piers Gorge and Quiver Falls. Piers Gorge is located one mile south of Norway and includes 145.35 acres of land and 1.5 miles of access along the Menominee River. The acreage includes whitewater rapids and waterfalls, and contains some of the fastest moving water in Michigan or Wisconsin.

Quiver Falls is eight miles south of Piers Gorge and contains 2,208.83 acres of land and provides eight miles of access along the Menominee River. It is adjacent to the existing Menominee River Natural Resource Area, a 4,450 acre tract along five miles of the Menominee River managed by both the Michigan and Wisconsin DNR's. This parcel contains river frontage, scenic rocky gorges with significant drops in the river and waterfalls.

Woodcock Video Available for Viewing

Dan Dessecker, RGS Director of Conservation Policy, recently forwarded a link to a video that woodcock enthusiasts would enjoy. It can be found at: <http://millergallery.shutterfly.com/1230> .

2011 Wisconsin Coverts Project Reunion and Advanced Training

By Tim Eisle, 1994 Coverts Cooperator and freelance outdoor writer and Jamie Nack, Wisconsin Coverts Project Coordinator, UW – Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology

Minong, Wisconsin---Ruffed grouse and woodcock depend on young forest habitat; that is no secret. And, in Wisconsin, hundreds of landowners have learned that direct correlation through the Wisconsin Coverts Project. In 2011, Coverts celebrated its 17th anniversary with a regular session for private landowners followed by a special reunion and advanced training for all past participants. The reunion and advanced training, held August 26 – 28 at the Heartwood Conference Center near Minong, attracted 80 landowners who had attended workshops from 1994 through 2010.

Coverts is co-sponsored by the Ruffed Grouse Society (RGS), Louisiana-Pacific Corporation, UW-Extension, UW-Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, and Sustainable Forestry Initiative, Inc. In addition, the Anne and Jason Spaeth family, Braun Woodlands, and Howard and Nancy Mead were sponsors of the reunion.

Jamie Nack, Wisconsin Coverts Project Coordinator for the UW-Madison Department of Forest and Wildlife Ecology, said that since 1994, 505 cooperators have been trained. They own 440 different properties totaling over 180,000 acres. "This is an important group to reach," Nack said, "because 67% of woodlands are owned by non-industrial private forest landowners." Cooperators are urged to manage their property for wildlife and also share information with their neighbors and other landowners.

"The project was originally started and funded by The Ruffed Grouse Society, as a way to reach out to private landowners," Jamie Nack said. The project has evolved over the years, with the help of grants from other organizations but RGS is still actively involved and the benefit can be seen when talking to the private landowners who attend.

"More than 60% of the people who attended the workshops found that the workshop changed their view of managing their land, and the rest said it reinforced their thinking," Nack said. One person noted that one of the best attributes about the workshop is that it "makes us think about actively managing our properties."

For information on Project Coverts, check the web site at http://www.fwe.wisc.edu/wl_extension/wicovertsproject.html or contact Jamie Nack, Wisconsin Coverts Project Coordinator, at (608) 265-8264 or e-mail jlack@wisc.edu. In 2012, Coverts intends to hold two workshops, dates and locations are to be determined, but woodland owners from Minnesota and Michigan, as well as Wisconsin will be invited to apply. Applications are available from Nack and are due by June 15, 2012.

Private Lands Available for Hunting in Wisconsin

At least 138 private properties totaling over 12,000 acres are now open for hunting, fishing, trapping and wildlife viewing under the Voluntary Public Access (VPA) program offered by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources. This program provides financial incentives to private landowners who open their property to these recreational activities. Funding for this program was authorized in the 2008 Farm Bill. The VPA lands open for public use are located in the southern two-thirds of the state, in areas with a limited amount of public land available. To learn more about this program or get maps of these open lands go to <http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/vpa.htm>.

RGS on Focus Outdoors TV Series

RGS recently completed 13 segments with the TV series Focus Outdoors. These segments explain to viewers what RGS is all about and provides information about our mission. RGS will be sending each Chapter President a DVD of the 13 segments that can be used to recruit new members at sporting shows or other Chapter events.

Great Christmas Present for a Grouse Hunter

Serious Grouse Hunting, Book 1 is a book written for all grouse hunters looking to improve their grouse hunting success. The book, written by Jay Kumar and Brendan Haines, is an insightful treatise on how to up your grouse game, with and without a dog. A portion of the proceeds from the sale of each book will be donated to the Ruffed Grouse Society. You can order your book at <http://www.seriousbirdhunting.com/books/sbh-books/serious-grouse-hunting-book-1/welcome-fellow-rgs-members> .

My Email Address Has Changed

Please remember to change my email address in your address book to rgszimm@gmail.com . If you're not getting responses from me to your emails this could be why. I do respond to all emails that I receive.

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
PO Box 116, Laona WI 54541 Phone: (715) 674-7505 email:
rgszimm@gmail.com

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.