



Western Great Lakes Region FAN UPDATE

Volume 12, Issue 4

December 21, 2012

Merry Christmas and a Happy 2013 to You!!

What a year 2012 has been and with the holidays upon us it certainly is time to look back at the year past and look forward to what the future holds. There definitely were some high points (pardon the pun) this year and in this region some of those are shown in the annual update below. From the grouse and woodcock standpoint most of us were pleased with grouse numbers this fall as we didn't see the big crash in populations that sometimes occurs as the grouse cycle starts on its downward decline. Woodcock were definitely a highlight with most hunters encountering numbers not seen in quite awhile. The memories of some of those hunts will last a long time.

As always, the holidays bring with it a time to reflect on all those dedicated RGS members who have helped to support RGS and my efforts along the way. The

dedication of our Chapter committees in supporting the organization is exceptional. I also need to especially thank my wife, Olivia, and our girls who have tolerated the long hours and many nights with me away from home that is part of this position. In addition and often overlooked are the tireless efforts of my fellow RGS staff members who work very hard on your behalf. Even though RGS has one if not the smallest staffs of any of the national conservation organizations, the professionalism of that staff is unparalleled and work hard to support the RGS mission. All that support has enabled us to accomplish a lot across the country and in this region in 2012 and I've summarized some of that below. Thank you all so much and Merry Christmas to you and yours! *Gary*

2012 REGIONAL BIOLOGIST REPORT

Here's a summary of the 2012 Regional accomplishments:

- Attended 45 meetings with resource agency staff/legislators and provided RGS input to 13 public land management projects.
- Involved in 21 media contacts (includes press releases/television and radio interviews).
- Conducted 10 reviews of existing or proposed Management Area Projects.
- Conducted 5 on-site habitat consultations.
- Speaker at 10 events on grouse/woodcock management.
- Participated in 20 chapter meetings or events.
- Attended 8 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 with the US Forest Service on the Lakewood/Laona Ranger District, RGS completed maintenance on an additional 25.1 miles of hunter walking trail and 28 acres of wildlife openings. Special thanks go out to the RGS volunteers coordinated by the NE Wisconsin that helped on this project.
- Testified to Congress on RGS concerns regarding National Forest Management.
- RGS habitat equipment (forestry loader with mulcher) completed over 177 acres of habitat work in Wisconsin this year. Since its arrival in 2009, this piece of equipment has treated over 578 acres.

Ruffed Grouse Society Works with Others to Expand Marinette County Habitat Management Area

The popular Pike River Ruffed Grouse and Woodcock Management Area, south of Dunbar in Marinette County, has been expanded by an additional 500 acres thanks to the cooperation of several organizations interested in increasing opportunities for ruffed grouse and woodcock. The original 1675 acre management area was established in

1988 as a cooperative project between the Marinette County Forestry and Parks Department, the land manager's of the area, and the Ruffed Grouse Society.

In 2010, the Dunbar Sportsmen's Club presented a proposal to expand the Pike River area to the west, as the area had additional habitat management potential and could provide additional opportunities for recreational hunting.

Funding and equipment for this project has been provided by the Ruffed Grouse Society, Dunbar Sportsmen's Club and US Fish and Wildlife Service under its Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program. These groups have worked closely with the Marinette County Forestry Department and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources during the development of this project.

Over the past two years a new looped walking trail was established in the expanded area along with a new parking area. In addition, pockets of upland alder were sheared to regenerate habitat specifically for woodcock and existing openings were maintained to improve both spring breeding sites for woodcock and summer brood rearing habitat for ruffed grouse.

Work is not finished in the area as the Marinette County Forestry Department plans to regenerate aspen stands through timber harvests in the next few years. This will provide additional habitat for ruffed grouse and woodcock in the area as the stands regenerate.

Time is Running Out!! Vote for RGS and Win Prizes!!

The second-annual TruckVault Cares ... for conservation, canines & kids closes December 31st. Cast your vote daily for RGS on <http://truckvaultcares.com> and earn funding to support ruffed grouse and woodcock management while also entering into random drawings for fantastic prizes including a South Dakota duck and pheasant hunt at Warne Ranch, Peet shoe dryers, Kent Cartridge ammunition, Filson apparel, a TruckVault, Ugly Dog Hunting Co. gear, and Happy Jack dog care products. This year prizes will be awarded every 5,000 votes as well as at the conclusion of voting.

RGS is currently in third place so pass the link on to your friends and help raise even more money for RGS.

RGS Again Approved Recipient for 2013 Combined Federal Campaign

Federal employees can support RGS during their local Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) by specifying the RGS CFC# 12058 and a dollar amount on their giving form.

RGS has participated in the CFC for years, most of them as a national organization, and most recently as part of the Conservation & Preservation Charities federation.

2013 RGS National Raffle Tickets Available Now

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.

Michigan DNR Seeks Input on Management of State Forest Land

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is seeking input from anyone interested in the health and sustainability of the Michigan state forests. The DNR has prepared draft Regional State Forest Management Plans that are available for review at www.michigan.gov/regionalforestplans. Comments may be submitted via email to forestplancomments@michigan.gov. The review period was recently extended through

March 8, 2013.

The DNR developed three draft plans which cover 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 decisions about activities and treatments on state forest land. The plans also ensure wildlife habitat and opportunities for recreation are protected.

Following public review, the DNR will assess the feedback it has received, consult with stakeholders, revise each plan accordingly and prepare for final review and approval by the DNR director at a future meeting of the Natural Resources Commission. Implementation of the Regional State Forest Management Plans will begin with the 2015 compartment review process and will continue over the 10-year life of these plans.

New WI DNR Online Map Shows 1.1 Million Private Acres Open to the Public

More than one million private acres classified as open for public use under a landowner-incentive program are easier for outdoor enthusiasts to find thanks to a new online state mapping tool. Created by the DNR, the web-based mapping tool will help users find privately owned land open for specific recreational activities under the Managed Forest law. Lands enrolled as “open” in this program must be accessible.

To access the mapping tool which also includes lands enrolled under the Forest Crop Law, visit the DNR web site at <http://dnr.wi.gov/> and type “MFL open land” in the Search or keywords field..

American Forest Foundation Makes Planning Tool Available to Woodland Land Owners

The American Forest Foundation has developed a land management planning tool that can be used by private woodland landowners when making management decision for their property. This tool, found at <http://mylandplan.org/> allows landowner's the ability to map their land, set management goals and find ways to achieve them. MyLandPlan offers a unique and specialized set of tools to help the landowner find, store and use material that is especially tailored to their needs.

RGS on Northland Adventures TV Series

RGS recently was involved with filming of two episodes of the outdoor TV show Northland Adventures produced by WQOW-TV of Eau Claire, Wisconsin. Filmed with long-time host Dave Carlson one episode entitled “*Time to Regenerate*” focused on the Society's Wisconsin Coverts Project and the management done by RGS supporters Terry and Joanne Ides. The second episode, entitled “*Tackling the Tags*” emphasized the Society's efforts to manage tag alder habitat for woodcock. Both episodes can be viewed at <http://www.wqow.com/category/183584/northland-adventures> .

DNR Seeks Youthful Take on Michigan's Outdoors, Invites Applications to NRC's Youth Conservation Council

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is inviting young people between the ages of 14 and 18 who are passionate about the state's great outdoors to apply for membership to the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) Youth Advisory Council on Fishing, Hunting, Trapping and Conservation.

The council - referred to informally as the Youth Conservation Council - was created by NRC resolution earlier this year to provide a forum where a diverse group of conservation-minded youth can share ideas and opinions about the best ways to 1.) protect, promote and enhance the state's outdoor recreation, and 2.) create new opportunities for consumptive (e.g., hunting, fishing, trapping) and non-consumptive (e.g., hiking, wildlife viewing, kayaking) uses of Michigan's natural resources.

Members of the council will:

- Take part in broad-ranging discussions about Michigan's outdoors and the current and future recreation opportunities available statewide;
- Make recommendations to both the NRC and the DNR about policy, program and legislative changes that members believe will boost young residents' interest and involvement in the outdoors; and
- Gain valuable leadership skills and public-service experience that will aid them in the future.

Members are expected to participate in at least four meetings each year. Two of them will be offered as weekend training sessions at a state facility; the other two will be shorter meetings with possible attendance through teleconferencing and/or Web-based applications.

Applications are available on the DNR website, along with a roster of frequently asked questions that offers more detail about the Youth Conservation Council. Visit www.michigan.gov/dnr, choose Education and Outreach, and then find the Youth Conservation Council information under Programs for Families and Individuals.

Completed applications must be postmarked by Jan. 18, 2013, and should be sent to:

ATTN: NRC Youth Conservation Council
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, MI 48909

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 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.