



ruffed GROUSE
SOCIETY

*2008
Report to
Sponsors*



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

WAYNE JACOBSON ~ RGS NATIONAL BOARD PRESIDENT

This year the Ruffed Grouse Society has maintained momentum in creating habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and all the wildlife that shares their young-forest habitat. Some of our accomplishments in 2008 have been detailed in the following annual report, and wouldn't have been achieved without the hard work of our dedicated members and volunteers and the generosity of our many contributors.

In 2008 we launched our third capital campaign – RUFF – or Restoring Upland Forests' Future. Our goal is to raise 5 million dollars, funds will be used to endow our regional biologists and purchase a building for headquarters. The campaign is expected to take several years to complete, and is off to a great start. To date monies totally nearly half the goal – or 2.1 million dollars – have been pledged or received. We look forward to achieving our goal in the next several years, thereby strengthening our financial position for the future.

Several new board and staff members have been added this

year – their energy has helped to renew our enthusiasm in our mission and places us in a vibrant position for positive transitions in the new year.

There have been significant changes in our business model this year as well, a new banquet incentive program was launched and a cooperative project that is the first of its kind was completed between a state forest and RGS, to name a few. Changes like these, though they may come with initial difficulties to surmount at their inception, will enable us to be better prepared for obstacles that may appear on our horizon in the future.

The difficulty of our current economic times has impacted almost every aspect of our life – and RGS has not avoided being affected. However, our careful management of funds and better business practices will enable us to weather this storm and continue to impact the creation of habitat for ruffed grouse, American woodcock and other wildlife far into the future.

RGS CEO INDUCTED INTO NYS OUTDOORSMEN HALL OF FAME

Michael D. Zagata, executive director and CEO of RGS, has been inducted into the New York State Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame (NYSOHOF).

One of 11 new inductees, Zagata, a native of Otsego County, New York, is a former commissioner of New York's Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). The selection committee noted that Zagata was, (as commissioner) "...a strong supporter of programs to increase participation in outdoor sports by youth and women."

In making the announcement, NYSHOF President Leo Maloney said, "Mike Zagata was selected as an outdoor professional who as DEC commissioner made significant contributions to our outdoor heritage beyond what the job required. During his tenure, he supported many programs to increase participation by women and youngsters, including Free Fishing Days and Becoming an Outdoors Woman.

He was also active in supporting stream access projects for



the physically handicapped; emergency legislation to stop the spread of whirling disease in state fisheries,

Mike and his wife Beth at the New York State Outdoorsmen Hall of Fame induction ceremonies.

banning the snagging of salmon in Lake Ontario's tributaries, and the introduction of stocking larger two-year-old trout. These initiatives and his many other achievements will have a positive impact on future generations of outdoorsmen and women," Maloney said.

Upon learning of his induction, Zagata thanked the board; his wife Beth for her unquestioning support; and all those who supported his nomination. "This is truly a great honor, but with every honor comes a responsibility and being elected into the NYSOHOF is no exception," Zagata said. "Because of that newfound responsibility, I invite my fellow hall-of-famers to come together, for the good of the natural resources we are charged with stewarding for future generations, and work through the organizations we represent to push for increased support for, and proper use of, the Conservation Fund, educate the public and legislature about the environmental and economic benefits that derive from healthy fish and wildlife populations and, educate the public and legislature about the need to properly manage our waterways, fields and forests to provide for a diversity of wildlife – both hunted and non-hunted."



CAPITAL CAMPAIGN GAINS MOMENTUM

This year RGS announced RUFF – or Restoring Upland Forests' Future – Capital Campaign. The goal is to raise \$5 million dollars in the next two years. The money will be used to fully endow our team of biologists and to reduce operating costs by purchasing a building for the Ruffed Grouse Society's offices. To date 2.1 million dollars have been pledged or received.

2008 UNDER BROKEN WINGS RECIPIENT



Brittany Zebrasky attended the Ruffed Grouse Society's National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt (NGWH) at the invitation of the Under Broken Wings (UBW) program. She is the third participant in as many years to attend the hunt at the invitation of UBW. Jerry Snetsinger, the driving force behind the organization, believes that the event is "about letting these kids experience things we take for granted. When they see the dogs jump out of the kennels, their faces light up! And when they shoot their first bird, it's such a thrill."

Jim Hayett – a member of the RGS board of directors and one of the founders of UBW – remembers Brittany's hunt well. "The best part that will always stay in my heart was the moment I yelled, "shoot" to Brittany as the grouse took off and made a sharp left turn in the only open part of the forest. Still not sure that she downed the bird, we sent in the shorthairs. Our prayers were answered. Knotty retrieved [Brittany's] first grouse!"

Brittany and her family hunted with Hayett and Tom Knapp. Knapp – Benelli's American Birdhunter TV show host – was on-site to obtain footage for a future show. The show, featuring UBW and Brittany, first aired on the Outdoor Channel on February 9, 2009.

After two days of hunting, Brittany and her team had harvested enough grouse and woodcock to score 54 points and take second place in the NGWH Division III.

During the NGWH banquet, 11 different donors each pledged \$1,000 to purchase an RGS Life Sponsorship for Brittany. She received a Kimber Valier Grade II 20-gauge side-by-side shotgun as part of her Life Sponsorship. A UBW vest was also auctioned off during the festivities. This item, in addition to a mystery raffle held in concert with RGS, raised \$2,500.00 for UBW that evening.

Mike Zagata, UBW board member and CEO of RGS, said "The UBW program is really what it's all about. RGS and the UBW board work to involve youth in a sport we are passionate about and working with kids like Brittany is all the reward one could ever expect."

RGS BOARD OF DIRECTORS NEW MEMBERS



William B. Johnson recently joined the RGS board of directors. He has been involved in the forest products industry since 1973 when his father founded Johnson Timber Corporation. The family-owned chip mill has grown from the original mill, located in Hayward, WI, to mills in Ashland and Park Falls, WI. They also operate forestry operations in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan, produc-

ing over 400,000 cords of roundwood annually.

Mr. Johnson (better known as "Butch") has been active with the American Forest & Paper Association since the early 1980s, as well as chairman of the Governor's Council on Forestry, in Wisconsin, from 1984 to 1998. He has also served on the state's Racing Commission, State Fair Commission, and chaired the State Lottery Board. Butch has been president of the Hayward Community Schools Board of Education, and held numerous positions within the Republican Party. He is currently a Director of Johnson Bank and on the board of the Nature Conservancy.

Butch and his wife, Patricia, live in Hayward, WI. They have six children ranging in age from 32 to 22. He enjoys watching his children (and grandchildren) participate in their various activities in school and sporting events. Butch has been a proud supporter of RGS for many years, and has even purchased a lifetime membership for both of his grandchildren.

Jim Hayett is a new member of the RGS board of directors. Born and raised in Wisconsin, Jim has been an avid grouse hunter for over 4 decades. His father, Art Hayett, first took Jim grouse hunting in the late 60's. "I didn't shoot my first grouse until 1972, [with] my dad's 1930 Browning."

Jim has been selling stocks and bonds since 1980. He owns his own business, a small fee-based money management firm near Milwaukee, Wisconsin. His company, Morgan-Aly Financial Group, is named after his two daughters. His wife of 19 years is Shellee.

Jim has been a participating member of the RGS David Uihlein Chapter for over 20 years. For the last 17 he has served as Chairman.



He also serves on the board for St. Rose's Family and Youth Center, a Wisconsin child welfare organization founded in 1848.

John C. Oliver recently joined the RGS National Board of Directors. John was born and raised in Cincinnati, Ohio, and attended both Roanoke College in Virginia and the University of Colorado.

While studying in Colorado, John enjoyed the area so much he spent the next 30 years of his life there as a professional ski instructor. His son Chadwick carries on the family tradition, and is a competitive snowboarder at the University of Colorado.

John's father was an avid fisherman and bird hunter. He opened up the world of field sports to John when he was very young. Today John has been hunting birds for over 50 years and has been on shooting trips to many different parts of the world. "Without a doubt," he concedes, "the ruffed grouse is still the king."

Several years ago John moved to Brays Island Plantation, South Carolina. Snow is rare, and he can work his Elhew pointers most of the year. John's only complaint is that he hasn't seen any ruffed grouse in the area.

"Since I spent the first half of my life chasing ruffed grouse, I now look forward to promoting their existence so future generations will have the opportunity to enjoy this incredible bird," he said.

George S. Rich is a managing partner of GRI Fund, L.P., an investment partnership specializing in consumer service businesses. George has served on the board of directors for many organizations throughout his career, and has lately become a director on the board for RGS.

George has a BA from Hobart College in Geneva, New York and a MBA from the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. He also holds the rank of colonel in the Maryland Defense Force.

In addition to being a member of the Board of Trustees of the Maryland Historical Society, George is also Vice President of the Maryland Military Historical Society.



CLEARING THE WAY FOR DIVERSE HABITAT IN OHIO COOPERATIVE PROJECT IS FIRST OF ITS KIND

RGS recently signed an agreement with the U. S. Forest Service to help maintain native shrubs and other wildlife habitat on approximately 400 acres of reclaimed strip mines on the Wayne National Forest in eastern Ohio. The Forest Service is battling invasive shrubs like autumn olive and multi-flora rose on these sites. The land provides habitat for a range of wildlife, particularly rare songbirds found nowhere else in the forest.

Vast acres of reclaimed mine lands in Ohio and surrounding states hold great potential for the creation of diverse wildlife habitat, especially when they are part of a public lands system. For example the Wayne National Forest covers a territory of 238,800 acres, most of which is mature forest. Some of the mine lands on Wayne, which have been reclaimed to grass, will remain areas of native grasses. These will provide much needed habitat for grassland songbirds and possibly even quail. Other portions of the former mine lands will be allowed to succeed to native shrubs and small trees. This stage of succession will provide prime habitat for grouse, woodcock, deer, and an entirely different group of songbirds.

One of the main difficulties in meeting these management goals are exotic shrubs. These invasive species tend to establish themselves on these sites more rapidly than the native species. The many birds that eat the seeds of these exotic shrubs further accelerate their establishment. Wayne Forest staff members are attempting to control these extremely fast growing, unwanted plants during the early stages of habitat progression.

"This is probably the largest cooperative project RGS has ever done with the Forest Service and the first of any kind for RGS in the Wayne," noted Senior Biologist Mark Banker, who is overseeing the project for RGS. "The Forest Service staff and local RGS members have really been the catalyst for getting things rolling. It's a very ambitious project, but a unique opportunity for RGS to support early successional habitat management in this national forest."

Cheryl Coon (r) and Art Martin discuss logistics as the project begins on August 18. Coon, the architect of the cooperative agreement, and Martin are Wayne National Forest staff members.

RGS and the Forest Service will share the cost of up to 500 hours of operation of a Caterpillar 297C multi-terrain loader, mulching head, and operator to eliminate the exotic invasive species and make room for native grasses and shrubs. The Forest Service will provide fuel and RGS will provide maintenance and repair of the equipment. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife is also working with RGS to provide transportation of the heavy equipment.

"The logistics of such a large project are a little complicated," explained Banker, "but it's all worth it - because at the end of the day this equipment makes us much more efficient at managing habitat".

The project, which began in late August, was completed by year-end with continuing work in 2009.

WOODCOCK STAMP PROPOSAL

Dedicated woodcock hunters tend to be passionate about their sport and the well-camouflaged critter that is the focus of their attention. So it isn't surprising that a cadre of woodcock enthusiasts has been promoting the idea of a federal "woodcock stamp."

Although some of the details of this proposal are still being ironed out, suffice it to say that a woodcock stamp would be analogous to the federal duck stamp and the other species-specific stamps required by various states (pheasant, wild turkey, trout, etc.). Sportsmen and women who wish to hunt woodcock in the US would be required to purchase this stamp before doing so.

The cost of the proposed stamp is uncertain, but probably in the \$10 range. Administration of the stamp program and the disbursement of the revenues generated through the sale of a stamp would be the responsibility of the US Fish & Wildlife Service. The Service and state resource management agencies would deduct a proportion of the stamp revenues for administrative overhead. The remainder of the revenues would target woodcock

conservation. It has not yet been determined if conservation activities funded by stamp revenues would be limited to on-the-ground habitat management or would include research projects as well.

Woodcock need our help; which is why RGS continuously works to help the public, the media and state and federal land management agencies understand the role of forest habitat management in the conservation of forest wildlife.

Any proposal to establish a "woodcock stamp" will increase the amount of funds available for woodcock conservation and most likely will decrease the hunting constituency for this magnificent bird.



Photo by T. Flanigan



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**GULLION CIRCLE:
GOLDEN ASPEN RING, SILVER BIRCH RING,
& BRONZE MAPLE RING**

The Gullion Circle has been created to recognize lifetime contributors of \$250,000 or more. In addition, RGS is pleased to recognize those who have made contributions to be included in the Golden Aspen Ring (\$100,000 to \$249,999), the Silver Birch Ring (\$50,000 to \$99,999) and the Bronze Maple Ring (\$25,000 to \$49,999).



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The above listings are as of January 1, 2009.

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Mergenhausen Sales
Mighty Good Charters, LLC
Misty Pines Dog Park Co.
Moody and Associates, Inc.
Moosehorn Farm and Kennel
Mosebach Electric Supply
Nevels Foundation
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Jamie Nyce
Paul K. Ober
Eugene Orlando, Jr.
Paragon Packaging Products, Inc.
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Jeff and Michelle Perdue
Gregory L. Peters
Pittsburgh Equipment Co, Inc.
Kenneth H. Popko
Pricewaterhouse Coopers LLP
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Jim Pyle
Kent M. Quinter
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Stephen V. Riddell
Robin Dale Energy
Paul A. Rockar, Jr.
Daniel A. Rogowski
Roofner-Collins Funeral Home
R. Craig Rosenfeld
Lisa and Sergio Rossi
Richard Rush
Mark Sabina
Phyllis Shaffer
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Michael S. Shuman, DMD
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Charles Weyandt
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 William P. Smith
 Textron, Inc.
 Phillip Woody

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 Georgia Pacific LLC
 Dr. William C. Griffin III
 William Riner
 Joe Stone

SOUTH DAKOTA

Tim Kessler

TENNESSEE

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 Rick Brantley
 William D Christopher
 Domtar
 Claude D. Falls
 Norman Hughes
 Andrew Hulse
 Donnie R. Hutcheson
 International Paper
 Ken Ives
 James T. Mc Connell
 Larry Mc Cracken
 Roger Millwood
 C. Grant Murray
 Pat Finder Kennels
 Robert Receveur
 Gerald Russell
 William E. Warren
 B. G. (Chip) Young

TEXAS

Tom Ding
 Peterson Beckner Industries
 William L. Price

UTAH

Browning
 R. Heggie Wilson

VERMONT

Jim Baird
 Scott Bowen
 Warren Coleman
 Jim Dattilio
 Gerald Davis, MD
 Larry Dupont
 Dennis Fournier
 Patrick Gavin
 Vilas Gentes
 Dennis Havey
 Christina Incerpi and Randy Bean
 Eric Jacobsen
 Kenyon's Variety Store
 Michael Lavallee
 John Mc Cabe
 William K. Mooney, DDS
 Northern Vermont Oral Surgery

Peck Electric
 Robert Pelosi
 Perk Perkins
 James Pierce
 Tyler Pierce
 Peter Post
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 Lawrence Pyne
 Henry Rackliff
 Bruce Sanguinetti
 South S. Sigler
 Henry Slauson
 Smith Barney
 The Upland Almanac
 Sergio Tognelli
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 Appalachian Forestry Services
 Hunt B. Asbury
 Augusta Valley Animal Hospital, Inc.
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 Blue Ridge Appraisal Co
 Kenneth Bowman
 John C. Cabell
 I. Blair Clarke, Jr.
 Clay G. Coleman III
 Community Bank
 R. Reynolds Cowles Jr., DVM
 Cumberland Resources Corporation
 Scott Decker
 Dudley Electric
 Harlin C. Edwards
 Elliott Chevrolet
 Mike Elliott
 George W. Farson III
 Jeremiah Finks
 Kenneth W. Friberg
 Richard L. Friberg
 John P. Gammill
 Michael A. Giles
 Green Valley Hunter's Paradise
 Thomas D. Griffin
 Steve Grover
 Hon. William D. Heatwole
 John L. Hickman
 Ronald E. Holsinger
 Houff Transfer, Inc.
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 Robert Intemann
 Peter W. Jackson
 Miles Cary Johnston, Jr.
 Kauffman Trucking
 Charles E. Kent
 L. E. Wood Equipment Co., Inc.
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 Richard Mansfield, DDS
 Mead Westvaco Corp.
 Jerry Meeks
 Mountain Forest Products
 Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant
 Harold U. Nash
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 Eric Pool

Gary Quillen
 Brad Rhodenizer
 Adam M. Richards
 Runion's Hunting and Fishing
 Shenandoah Mountain Outfitters
 Shenandoah Stone
 James W. Shortt
 William A. Skelton
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 Denny Snyder
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 Michael Taylor
 Thomas H. Trentman
 U. S. Joiner
 VA. Herd Health Management Service
 Valley Blox, Inc.
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 Michael K. Borella
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 Clements General Construction /Larry
 Doug Forsythe
 Tod Fossetta
 Douglas A. Kuehn
 Robert C. Lyon
 Rod A. Mc Donald
 William L. Neal
 Robert Olson
 Rod Olson
 Joe Pauletto
 Mike Rutz
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 Greg Allman
 James Bennett
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 Dana and Sarah Campbell
 Cole Truck Parts
 Columbia Forest Products
 Dana Mining Co. of Pa. Inc.
 Dixie Edmond
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 Electric Motor Service
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 Bob Garrison
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 Jerry's Sporting Goods
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Nelson Brothers
 P & H Mine Pro Services
 Park Center Sporting Goods
 Dr. Harold L. Pickens
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 Rish Equipment
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 WV Forestry Association

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 Robert Blersch
 Blue Diamond Equipment
 Dr. Randy Bohon
 Bothum Automotive
 Boyle Fredrickson, S.C.
 Breed Sportsman's Club
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 Dr. Richard B. Brown, DDS
 Thomas Buening
 Bull's Eye Sport Shop
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 Timothy Callahan
 Camp 36

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 Charter Bank of Eau Claire
 Patrick D. Cherney
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 Clover Distributing
 Community First Bank
 Conway True Value Hardware
 Andrew E. Cook II
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 Crandon Off-Road Raceway
 Thomas P. Crist
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 Dairy Queen of Eagle River
 Dan's Feed Bin
 Jerry Dassler
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 Double M Chiropractic
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 Matthew Erlandson
 Scott Estlund
 Ken Faanes
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 First Choice Mortgage
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 Gordon Fontaine
 Four Sail Realty
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 Schuster-Campman Abstract/Title Co.
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 Mark Torinus
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 Wickersham Jewelry, Inc.
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 David A. Zak
 Gary and Olivia Zimmer
 David W. Ziolkowski
 Scott Zoellick
 Karl J. Zore

**CANADA
 MANITOBA**
 Bill Bourdown
 Joe Cairns

NEW STAFF REGIONAL DIRECTORS



Boyd Cooke has been named the RGS Northeast regional director to better serve upland bird hunters and other sportsmen in the New England area. Cooke lives in Stonington, Connecticut, and will oversee regional activities in Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island and Connecticut.

A retired naval commander, Cooke is an avid grouse hunter and is active in the Southern New England Chapter of the North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association. Among his responsibilities with RGS will be broadening relationships with state natural resources agencies and other conservation-minded groups in addition to working with regional chapters on fund-raising activities and habitat restoration projects.

"Ruffed grouse and woodcock have been my passion for as long as I can remember," Cooke said. "And to be able to work on behalf of these magnificent game birds is like a dream come true. I look forward to working with RGS and the many New England chapters in my region. And, much like RGS, I'm committed to improving habitat so that future generations will be able to enjoy the thunder of a flushing grouse as much as I do."



Dave Hansroth has assumed the duties of RGS regional director covering southcentral and southeastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Maryland and northern Virginia. He holds a BS in wildlife management from West Virginia University and an MA in environmental biology from Hood College. Hansroth, a resident of

Gaithersburg, Maryland, is a community activist and a longtime RGS member. Prior to his RGS employment, he served 7 terms as president of the Maryland RGS Chapter.

Initially, Hansroth is scheduled to oversee 19 chapters and the projects in which they are involved.

An avid grouse hunter who trains his own bird dogs, Hansroth approaches his new assignment with RGS from the experience of an association of many years with the conservation organization. "He knows the chapters' concerns and will bring a fresh perspective to the region and to the many chapters he will represent," said Mike Zagata, Executive Director and CEO of RGS as he announced the hiring of the new regional director.

"As a chapter president, I understand the satisfactions and frustrations that come in obtaining the goals a chapter hopes to achieve," Hansroth said. "My plan is to capitalize on that knowledge by increasing communication between the chapters so they can share their own experiences with each other. It is also my intent to get each of the DNRs within my region to spend as much time and energy on upland bird projects as they do on deer and turkey.

"Habitat is critical to the success of wildlife populations," he continued, "and ultimately our enjoyment of hunting

grouse, woodcock and other upland bird and game animals as well as our enjoyment in observing wildlife – both game and non-game."



Ken Waite III has joined RGS as the New York area regional director. As a former principal in Stonewood LLC, Ken has 14 years of sales experience representing firearms, ammunition and accessory manufacturers throughout New England.

He and his wife Debbie have two children. Ken is an avid grouse and woodcock hunter, and he particularly enjoys hunting when accompanied by family and friends. He also collects vintage American shotguns, and enjoys reading outdoor books. In addition to being a long-time member of the Old Pat's Society, RGS and Parker Gun Collectors Association, Ken is a patron member of the National Rifle Association (NRA).

HEADQUARTERS' STAFF



Julie Caugherty joined RGS headquarters staff as the new Director of Membership and Marketing. She has close to ten years of marketing experience, and has worked primarily with sports' teams and non-profit organizations. She is excited about being a part of RGS, and is looking forward to utilizing her marketing background in her

new position. "Everyone here is very hardworking and motivated to grow and expand our programs for future generations," she notes. Her plans to increase awareness of the society and grow membership are going to keep her pretty busy.

Hailing from rural Indiana County, Pennsylvania, Julie is happy to call Pittsburgh home. She majored in communications at Robert Morris University in Moon Township, Pennsylvania and recently completed her MBA at Chatham University in Pittsburgh.

The best part of living in Pittsburgh is simple for Julie. "I love the Penguins," she says, "and I go to as many games as I possibly can."



Anna Stubna took over as editor of the RGS magazine this year. The former editor for 26 years, Paul Carson, retired and is currently enjoying life with his family and new puppy. Anna spent nearly three years as a Peace Corps Volunteer in West Africa from 2005 through 2007 and also worked as a freelance writer prior to joining RGS.

Though Paul left some pretty big shoes to fill, Anna is looking forward to putting together a magazine with the help of some talented freelance writers and photographers. "There is so much potential in the magazine to attract new members and keep current volunteers aware of what's happening in RGS," she said. "I'm looking forward to the challenge of putting together a magazine that can begin to realize these objectives."

STAFF PROMOTIONS



Gary Zimmer, 7-year RGS wildlife biologist, was recently promoted to senior regional biologist. and together with several gifts to the RUFF campaign designated to support the Wisconsin regional biologist position is now the Sally B. Searle Senior Regional Biologist. Zimmer has nearly 30 years of experience working in the wildlife profession.

His current projects include partnerships with the US Forest Service on the Chequamegon/Nicolet, Hiawatha and Ottawa National Forests. "[These projects] are really taking off. I'm looking forward to working with the Forest Service ... to greatly increase the effectiveness of our management projects on these forests." Zimmer said.

He is also planning to have RGS equipment on the ground in the Upper Midwest in the near future. This equipment will be used to assist private landowners in managing habitats for ruffed grouse, woodcock and other young forest wildlife. "This is a program that we have been working on for several years, and has the potential to have a significant impact on declining young forest habitats across the region," Zimmer added.

In addition to his wildlife work, Zimmer still finds time to dedicate to youth. Among his activities are organizing wildlife field trips and educational seminars for students of all ages, and coaching girls' softball.

Executive Director Mike Zagata noted, "Gary continues to do excellent work ... this much deserved upgrade is a direct result of Gary's professionalism and his many accomplishments on behalf of wildlife."

Zimmer joins Mark Banker as the second biologist promoted to the senior level, in recognition of outstanding contributions to RGS. A Wisconsin native, Zimmer will continue his work in the five state Western Great Lakes region in the same capacity as present.

NEW HEAD OF RGS CANADA NAMED



Gary McWilliams started as RGS Canadian Coordinator this year. He has been laying the groundwork to reestablish a Ruffed Grouse Society in Canada Board of Directors and hopes to hold three of what he terms "super banquets" in 2008.

McWilliams' vision for the board of directors is to have two representatives serving from each of the regions – Ontario, Quebec and the Maritimes. He has sent out letters to people he believes may be interested and is open to talking to anyone who would like to be a part of the board.

While working on putting together a board, McWilliams is also working on a marketing plan for the organization. "Once the new board is established, we plan to hold one major fund-raising banquet in each geographical area," he said, adding the new directors will hopefully recruit volunteers for the banquet committees.

In addition to his work with RGS, McWilliams also runs a festival and event consulting service.



Kayley White, wearing her new binoculars, is pictured here with her family's Gordon setter, Sydney, in Amberg, Wisconsin.

YOUTH POSTER & ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS ANNOUNCED

This spring we held our first junior RGS poster and essay contest. Thank you to everyone who sent in a poster or essay and helped to make our first junior contest a success.

The winner of the poster contest is 8-year-old Kayley White from Little Chute, Wisconsin. The topic was "Show some kinds of animals you might meet in a forest that's young and thick." Kayley put a lot of work into her winning poster. She even listed all the animals included in her forest drawing.

Kayley won a pair of 8x22 Steiner binoculars, and plans to use them on her next outdoor adventure with her dad, Mark White. She likes to save pictures from the RGS magazine to hang on her wall, so she was happy to hear she will also be receiving her very own copy of the magazine with her RGS junior membership.

Owen Morgan, a 12-year-old from Wytheville, Virginia, wrote his winning essay on this topic, "Describe your favorite day in the grouse woods." He won a Tri-Star Youth Model 20-gauge shotgun, an RGS membership, and a day in the woods with RGS biologist Mark Banker learning about young forests.



2007-2008 NATIONAL RAFFLE WINNERS

The 2008 RGS national raffles featured a 2008 Chevy Tahoe and a 2007 AAHE 28-gauge Parker shotgun. The winner of the Chevy was Jim Chase of Shelby Township, Michigan.

The winner of the Parker was Seth Cosans of Middletown, Delaware. Valued at \$49,000, the Parker features a beaver-tail fore-end, 26" barrels with twin ivory beads and an intricate engraving pattern. The shotgun was provided in partnership with Remington Arms.



Jim Chase (l) from Shelby Township, Michigan receives the keys to his new Chevy suburban from Kevin Beaver, general sales manager at Wright Chevrolet in Ambridge, Pennsylvania. Jim won the Chevy Tahoe 2008-2009 RGS national raffle in April 2009, and was able to upgrade to a Suburban.



Seth Cosans, from Middletown, Delaware, poses with his new 28-gauge Parker shotgun along with Mike Zagata, RGS Executive Director and CEO. Seth, a life-long outdoorsman, won the gun in the 2008 RGS national raffle. He and his wife, Kathleen, traveled to RGS headquarters to pick up the gun. "I'm probably never going to shoot it," he admitted. Seth works for a law enforcement and public safety distributor, and is an NRA benefactor member.

PRINT OF THE YEAR

The RGS 2009 Print of the Year is Autumn Delight by Georgette Kanach of Gray, Maine. Prints will be featured at all RGS 2009 banquets, and the original painting will be auctioned off at the National Grouse and Woodcock Hunt in October, 2009.

Georgette Kanach, a nature artist and also a Master Maine guide, has a lifelong love of nature. Her range of art includes paintings, relief carving, airbrushing and jewelry making. One of her specialties is working with natural mediums, and her hand-carved and wood-burned countertops and mantelpieces are showcased in many homes across the country.

When she isn't working on her art, Georgette spends time on her other passion – hunting. "I do what I love and love what I do, and that is grouse hunting with my Brittanys, Alex and Diamond, and nature art," Georgette says. To see more of her artwork, visit www.mainenatureart.com.



AN INSIDE LOOK AT THE 2008 CENTERFOLD ARTIST

Scott Ward is a nature artist currently residing in Unadilla, New York. He was selected to complete illustrations for the 2008 grouse centerfold in the magazine.

From his earliest work, nature's diversity and beauty have captivated Scott's attention. He began to study drawing and painting in his early teens. Throughout high school and then college, Scott studied art revolving around the human figure. His appreciation for the work and command of media by traditional Master Painters has inspired many of his works.

He holds a BFA in illustration and a minor in fine arts from the Fashion Institute of Technology, in New York City. Throughout his academic career, Scott received awards for excellence in painting and drawing. His work has been

published in Field & Stream magazine and featured in Mead Corporation's Timepeace calendar line. Galleries in New York City, Washington D.C. and Tokyo, Japan have also exhibited his work. Many of his pieces also reside in private collections in Canada, England and Japan.

Some of Scott's personal favorites from the RGS centerfold series include the great horned owl, red fox and young grouse – which were featured in the summer issue centerfold. All of the paintings and drawings featured in 2008, and prints of these works, are available for sale. For more information about these works, his private collection or custom people and pet portraits contact Scott Ward at drawsart@hotmail.com.

“This is truly an historic opportunity for sportsmen and women across the nation. RGS members can be proud that the Society is playing such a key role in this effort to safeguard the future of hunting in America.”

- Dan Dessecker, RGS Director of Conservation Policy

THE VOICE OF HUNTERS A SPORTING CONSERVATION COUNCIL UPDATE

When the Sporting Conservation Council was founded in 2006, it was with the goal to provide advice and recommendations to the Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture on wildlife conservation and sport hunting related issues.

Two years later, Dan Dessecker, Director of Conservation Policy for RGS and an inaugural member of the council, is optimistic about the progress being made. “The Ruffed Grouse Society and other leaders in wildlife conservation have really stepped up to the plate to work with the current administration on behalf of wildlife and hunting,” says Dessecker.

Two meetings of the Sporting Conservation Council in 2008 have harvested results. In spring the Council took part in a Washington D.C. centennial celebration honoring President Theodore Roosevelt’s commitment to hunting and conservation.

The event was held exactly 100 years after Roosevelt’s Conference of Governors from May 13-15, 1908. Roosevelt called the 1908 conference together in order to address the environmental concerns raised by the rapid industrialization occurring in the nation at the time. It was an important step in our nation’s history when, during the opening speech at the conference, Roosevelt declared environmental conservation to be a national duty.

“As we celebrate the past achievements of one of history’s greatest conservationists, Theodore Roosevelt, we look ahead toward securing his legacy through the

upcoming White House Conference on Wildlife Conservation,” said Dessecker at the event.

In June the Sporting Conservation Council met again, this time to refine the recommendations they crafted for the White House Conference on Wildlife Conservation, held in mid-September. Dessecker is chairing the work group that is developing recommendations designed to enhance habitat for game wildlife on our National Forests and other federal lands. Aiding state fish and wildlife agencies in sustaining habitats sufficient to maintain populations of ruffed grouse and other game wildlife at state goals is the foundation of this effort.

The outcome of the White House Conference will be to identify solutions to the issues currently impeding hunting opportunities on federal lands. A 10-year Recreational Hunting and Wildlife Conservation Plan will also be created, and will outline concrete steps to move President Bush’s Executive Order 13443, signed last August and designed to enhance federal land hunting opportunities, into the next decade.

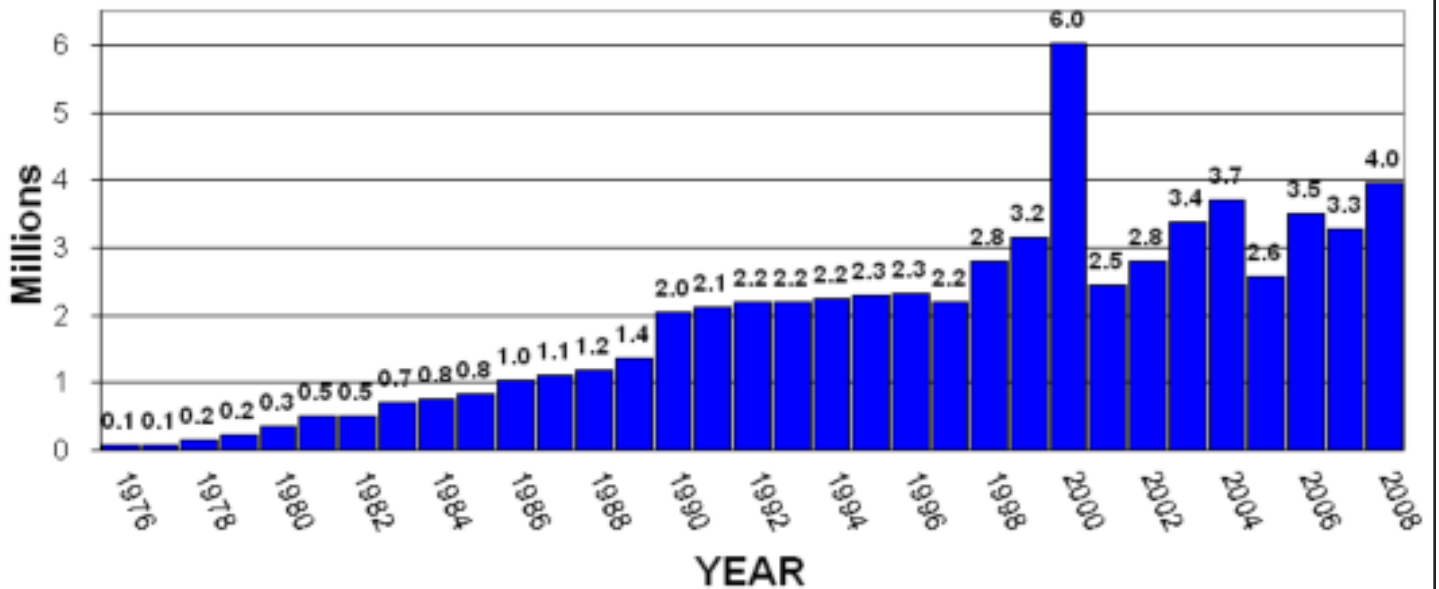
The White House Conference will be pivotal in shaping future conservation policy in the United States. “This is truly an historic opportunity for sportsmen and women across the nation,” says Dessecker, “RGS members can be proud that the Society is playing such a key role in this effort to safeguard the future of hunting in America.”

The *RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY* is a not-for-profit entity dedicated to improving the environment for the ruffed grouse, the American woodcock and many other species of forest wildlife. The accompanying financial statements include the accounts of the Society’s headquarters operations only and do not include the accounts and operations of the Society’s various chapters.

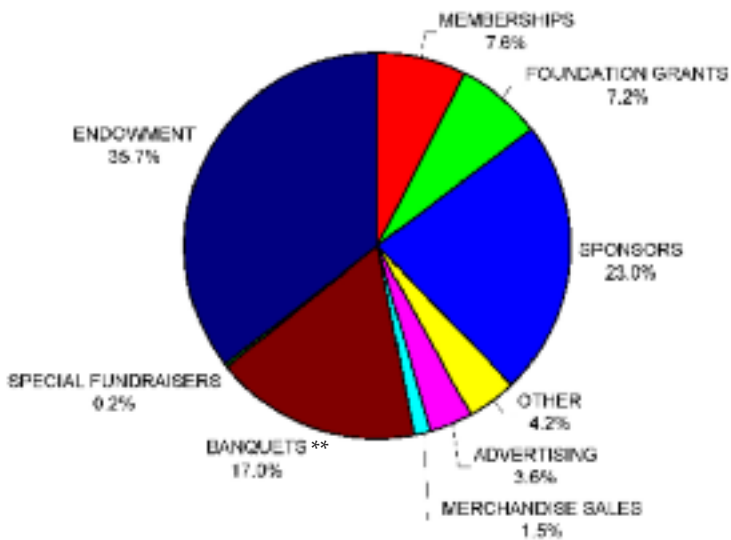
The Society is exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Income from certain activities not directly related to the Society’s tax-exempt purpose, however, is subject to taxation as unrelated business income.

Notes pertaining to the Ruffed Grouse Society audit are on file at the Ruffed Grouse Society headquarters.

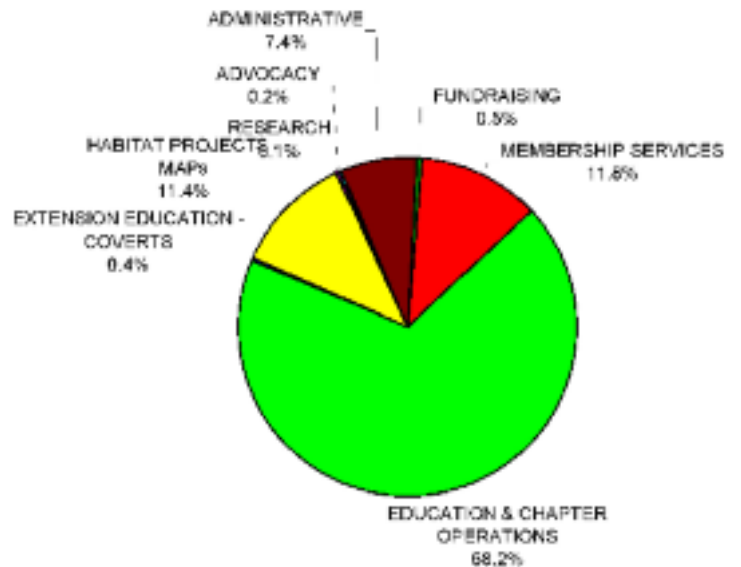
RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY INCOME (Includes Direct Contributions to FWF)



SOURCES OF INCOME (2008)



WHERE YOUR DOLLAR GOES 2008



**BANQUETS does not include payments for Regular and sponsor memberships made via banquets. these payments are included with all others in the categories "MEMBERSHIPS" and "SPONSORS."

RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION
DECEMBER 31, 2008

(With comparative totals for the year ended December 31, 2007)

CURRENT ASSETS	2008	2007
Cash & cash equivalents, temporarily restricted, designated & undesignated	\$ 1,666,210	\$ 897,795
Short-term investments	\$ 1,966,563	\$ 2,807,210
Accounts receivable	\$ 139,354	\$ 186,495
Pledges receivable	\$ 1,419,373	\$ 301,465
Contribution receivable	\$ 66,406	\$ 70,518
Inventory	\$ 264,339	\$ 192,370
Land held for resale	\$ 193,652	\$ 193,652
Property & equipment (net)	\$ 245,691	\$ 296,542
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 5,961,588	\$ 4,946,047
LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS		
CURRENT LIABILITIES		
Line of Credit	\$ 708,609	\$ 407,987
Accounts Payable	\$ 99,872	\$ 134,655
Payable - retirement fund	\$ 25,963	\$ 26,471
Accrued expenses	\$ 18,750	\$ 18,797
Deferred revenue	\$ 44,921	\$ 39,881
Notes payable	\$ 79,851	\$ 56,442
TOTAL LIABILITIES	\$ 977,966	\$ 684,233
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted:		
Undesignated (net deficit)	\$ 1,018,635	\$ 631,179
Designated	\$ 3,443,317	\$ 3,245,585
Temporarily restricted	\$ 521,670	\$ 385,050
TOTAL NET ASSETS	\$ 4,983,622	\$ 4,261,814
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$ 5,961,588	\$ 4,946,047

RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES
DECEMBER 31, 2008

(With comparative totals for the year ended December 31, 2007)

	2008	2007
REVENUES, GAINS & OTHER SUPPORT		
Contributions	\$ 3,512,056	\$ 1,551,005
Membership dues	\$ 382,095	\$ 389,537
Proceeds from banquets/events	\$ 704,509	\$ 817,951
Sales of merchandise (net)	\$ 60,294	\$ 41,451
Advertising income	\$ 143,172	\$ 154,127
Fundraising	\$ 8,814	\$ 11,620
Investment income	\$ 90,175	\$ 95,520
Realized gain (loss) on sale of investments	\$ (95,772)	\$ 187,400
Unrealized gain (loss) on investments	\$ (878,856)	\$ 6,193
Gain (loss) on disposal of property & equipment	\$ 3,097	\$ (5,597)
Miscellaneous income	\$ 36,267	\$ 29,073
TOTAL REVENUES, GAINS & OTHER SUPPORT	\$ 3,965,851	\$ 3,278,280
FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES		
<i>Program services</i>		
Membership services	\$ 382,797	\$ 381,155
General education & chapter operations	\$ 2,212,438	\$ 2,210,899
Habitat projects	\$ 369,820	\$ 370,744
Extension education	\$ 12,976	\$ 11,381
Research	\$ 3,244	\$ 3,893
Advocacy	\$ 6,488	\$ 5,989
<i>Supporting services</i>		
Management & general	\$ 240,059	\$ 242,503
Fundraising	\$ 16,221	\$ 15,271
TOTAL FUNCTIONAL EXPENSES	\$ 3,244,043	\$ 3,241,835
Changes in net assets	\$ 721,808	\$ 36,445
NET ASSETS BEGINNING OF YEAR	\$ 4,261,814	\$ 4,225,369
NET ASSETS END OF YEAR	\$ 4,983,622	\$ 4,261,814



Four Gateway Center, 9th Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
Tel: 412-281-8771 • Fax: 412-281-7001
email: info@louisplung.com

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' REPORT

To the Board of Directors of
The Ruffed Grouse Society

We have audited the accompanying statement of financial position of The Ruffed Grouse Society (a nonprofit organization), as of December 31, 2008, and the related statements of activities and cash flows for the year then ended. These financial statements are the responsibility of the Organization's management. Our responsibility is to express an opinion on these financial statements based on our audit. The prior year summarized comparative information has been derived from The Ruffed Grouse Society's 2007 financial statements and, in our report dated May 30, 2008, we expressed an unqualified opinion on those financial statements.

We conducted our audit in accordance with auditing standards generally accepted in the United States of America. Those standards require that we plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. An audit includes consideration of internal control over financial reporting as a basis for designing audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Organization's internal control over financial reporting. Accordingly, we express no such opinion. An audit also includes examining, on a test basis, evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements, assessing the accounting principles used and significant estimates made by management, as well as evaluating the overall financial statement presentation. We believe that our audit provides a reasonable basis for our opinion.

In our opinion, the financial statements referred to above present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of The Ruffed Grouse Society as of December 31, 2008, and the changes in its net assets and its cash flows for the year then ended in conformity with accounting principles generally accepted in the United States of America.

Our audit was conducted for the purpose of forming an opinion on the basic financial statements taken as a whole. The schedules of functional expenses and unrestricted and temporarily restricted net assets on pages fourteen through seventeen are presented for purposes of additional analysis and are not a required part of the basic financial statements. Such information has been subjected to the auditing procedures applied in the audit of the basic financial statements and, in our opinion, is fairly stated in all material respects in relation to the basic financial statements taken as a whole.

Louis Plung & Company, LLP

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
May 14, 2009

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Certified Public Accountants
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RUFFED GROUSE SOCIETY
FUNCTIONAL EXPENDITURES

Year ended December 31, 2008 (Unaudited)

	PROGRAM SERVICES EXPENDITURES						SUPPORTING SERVICES EXPENDITURES		TOTAL EXPENDITURES
	Membership Services	Gen Educ, Chpt Opers, Bqt. Support	Habitat Projects	Coverts	Research	Advocacy	Admin-istration	Fund raising	Total Expenditures
Advertising	\$1,504	\$8,893	\$1,453	\$51	\$13	\$25	\$940	\$64	\$12,746
Bank Charges	706	4,108	868	24	6	13	444	32	6,023
Chapter Activities Expense	45,595	263,464	44,039	1,545	366	773	28,587	1,932	386,511
Chapter Expenses	24,733	142,950	23,895	838	210	419	15,511	1,048	209,604
Cost of Sales	5,421	31,351	5,237	184	46	52	3,430	230	45,941
Data Processing	2,600	15,030	2,512	88	22	44	1,631	110	22,037
Depreciation	13,466	77,843	13,012	457	114	228	6,446	571	114,139
Dues and Subscriptions	656	3,789	633	22	6	11	411	28	5,696
Educational Programs	1,293	7,472	1,249	44	11	22	611	55	10,957
General Support	2,734	15,741	2,631	52	23	46	1,708	115	23,080
Habitat Workshops	131	755	126	4	1	2	82	6	1,107
Insurance	3,172	18,332	3,064	108	27	54	1,989	134	26,880
Interest	2,972	17,178	2,871	101	25	50	1,884	126	25,187
Investment Fees	1,140	6,588	1,101	39	10	19	715	48	9,660
Legal and Accounting	4,843	27,991	4,579	164	41	82	3,037	205	41,042
Meetings and Conferences	1,819	10,512	1,757	62	15	31	1,141	77	15,414
Miscellaneous	4,660	26,933	4,502	158	39	79	2,922	197	39,490
Miscellaneous Contributions	1,251	7,290	1,219	43	11	21	791	53	10,689
Postage & Delivery	3,218	18,597	3,109	109	27	55	2,016	136	27,269
Printing	1,536	8,877	1,484	52	13	26	953	65	13,016
Promotional Merchandise	3,521	20,348	3,401	119	30	60	2,208	149	29,836
Rent, Utilities & Cleaning	16,740	96,751	16,172	567	142	204	10,490	709	141,663
Research Projects	295	1,705	265	10	3	5	195	13	2,501
RGS Publications	25,627	156,555	22,326	801	200	400	14,617	1,001	200,227
Salaries & Benefits	169,402	979,064	163,559	5,742	1,436	2,871	106,235	7,178	1,435,607
Supplies and Equipment Rental	8,659	50,045	8,365	254	73	147	5,430	367	73,380
Telephone	5,193	30,013	5,017	176	44	88	3,257	220	44,008
Travel and Auto	31,916	164,463	30,934	1,062	270	541	20,015	1,362	270,473
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$382,797	\$2,212,438	\$368,920	\$12,978	\$3,244	\$6,488	\$240,059	\$16,221	\$3,244,043

CFC PARTICIPATION

RGS participates in the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) as a member of the Conservation & Preservation Charities of America Federation under the listing of "National Federations." RGS' permanent ID number is 12058. Federal employees are encouraged to add RGS to their payroll deduction plans.



PLANNED GIFTS AND GIVING

RGS is eligible to receive tax-deductible gifts of cash, stocks, land, bequests, and other forms of planned gifts. Members are encouraged to add RGS to their estate plans by providing the information available on those subjects on the RGS website, www.ruffedgrousesociety.org on the

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NATIONAL OFFICE

Ruffed Grouse Society
451 McCormick Road
Coraopolis, PA 15108
(412) 262-4044
Toll Free (888) 564-6747
www.ruffedgrousesociety.org
E-MAIL: rgs@ruffedgrousesociety.org

RGS CANADA

Contact Gary McWilliams, Chief Administrative Officer

John Lockerbie, RGS Canada Chapter Information
Coordinator