



STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENT
LANSING

JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

REBECCA A. HUMPHRIES
DIRECTOR

SUBMITTED: March 8, 2010
RESUBMITTED: April 12, 2010

Memorandum to the Natural Resources Commission:

SUBJECT: Expanded Small Game Hunting Opportunities
Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 09 of 2010

Authority:

The Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, 1994 PA 451, as amended, authorizes the Director and the Commission to issue orders to manage wild animals in this state.

Discussion and Background:

The Natural Resources Commission (NRC) and the Department were asked to consider reopening the sharp-tailed grouse hunting season in Michigan's Upper Peninsula (UP).

Michigan has had a sharp-tailed grouse hunting season in the past. Biological data indicates that habitat and weather, not hunting, have the most significant impacts on sharp-tailed grouse populations. Sharp-tailed grouse populations fluctuate similar to ruffed grouse populations. The eastern Upper Peninsula (EUP) of Michigan has the highest numbers of sharp-tailed grouse in the state.

During the last ten years, emphasis has been placed on providing open lands habitat in this region of the state for sharp-tailed grouse and the suite of wildlife species that rely on this habitat. Currently, habitat improvement programs that benefit sharp-tailed grouse are being implemented in the EUP in partnership with federal, state, and non-governmental organizations.

Population monitoring activities for sharp-tailed grouse in the EUP have been enhanced based on recent research projects conducted in partnership with Michigan Tech University (MTU), Lake Superior State University (LSSU), and Michigan Department of Natural Resources and Environment research and field staff.

Department of Natural Resources and Environment employees have conducted meetings with a variety of conservation groups, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Sault Ste. Marie Tribe of Chippewa Indians, researchers from MTU and LSSU, Michigan Audubon Society, and the Michigan Sharp-tailed Grouse Association to develop recommendations for a sharp-tailed

grouse hunting season. Conservation organizations in the UP support the proposal to reinstate a fall hunting season for sharp-tailed grouse. Based on biological and social information available at this time, it is recommended that parts of Chippewa and Mackinac counties be open for sharp-tailed grouse hunting.

An amendment to the Wildlife Conservation Order concerning coyote hunting is also included in this proposal. To make coyote hunting regulations consistent throughout the state, it is recommended that coyotes may be taken from November 15 to November 30 in Zone 1.

Recommendation:

This order was submitted for information on April 8, 2010, at the Natural Resources Commission Meeting. This item appeared on the Department's April 2010 calendar and may be eligible for approval on May 6, 2010.

Russ Mason, Ph.D., Chief
Wildlife Division

Ronald A. Olson, Chief
Recreation Division

Lynne M. Boyd, Chief
Forest Management Division

Gary Hagler, Chief
Law Enforcement Division

Arminda S. Koch
Resource Management Deputy Director

Frank Ruswick
Stewardship Deputy Director

I have analyzed and discussed these recommendations with staff and concur as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Rebecca A. Humphries
Director

WILDLIFE CONSERVATION ORDER

Amendment No. 09 of 2010

Under the authority of sections 40107 and 40113a, Act No. 451 of the Public Acts of 1994, as amended, being sections 324.40107 and 324.40113a of the Michigan Compiled Laws, the Natural Resources Commission and the Director of the Department of Natural Resources and Environment ordered that effective May 7, 2010, the following sections of the Wildlife Conservation Order shall read as follows:

3.503 Sharp-tailed grouse hunting, open seasons; daily and possession limits.

Sec. 3.503 (1) The open season for taking sharp-tailed grouse in the zone 1 sharp-tailed grouse management unit, as described in section 12.751 of this order, shall be October 10 to October 31. The remaining portion of state shall be closed to the taking of sharp-tailed grouse.

(2) The daily limit shall be 2 sharp-tailed grouse, the possession limit shall be 4 sharp-tailed grouse and the season limit shall be 6 sharp-tailed grouse.

(3) A person licensed to take game as required by part 435, hunting and fishing licensing, of the natural resources and environmental protection act, act no. 451 of the public acts of 1994, who intends to hunt sharp-tailed grouse shall request and be issued a free sharp-tailed grouse stamp. The sharp-tailed grouse stamp shall be part of the license to hunt sharp-tailed grouse. A person shall not sell, loan, or permit in any manner, another person to use the person's sharp-tailed grouse stamp or use or attempt to use another person's sharp-tailed grouse stamp.

3.610 Coyote, open season; exceptions; person taking considered permittee; fur harvester's license not required to hunt.

Sec. 3.610 (1) The open season for taking coyote by hunting shall be July 15 to April 15 except:

(a) Coyotes may be taken all year on private property by the property owner or their designee when coyotes are doing or about to do damage to their property. A written permit is not required, and the person shall be authorized to take coyote all year by otherwise lawful hunting and trapping methods.

(b) Coyotes shall not be taken in state park and recreation areas from April 1 to September 14.

(2) A resident possessing a small game license may hunt coyote without securing a fur harvester's license.

12.751 "Zone 1 sharp-tailed grouse management unit" defined.

Sec. 12.751 "Zone 1 sharp-tailed grouse management unit" means that area of Chippewa and Mackinac counties bounded by a line beginning at the lake Huron shoreline and Smith road at Sheppard bay south of Cedarville in Mackinac county (section 6, T41N R1E) and proceeding north along Smith road to Meridian road (section 31, T42N R1E), then northerly to highway M-129 (section 30, T42N R1E), then northerly along highway M-129 to the northerly intersection with highway M-48 north of Pickford (section 24, T44N R1W), then westerly along highway M-48 to interstate 75 (section 21, T44N R2W), then northeasterly along interstate 75 to 3-mile road/city limits road at Sault Ste. Marie (section 24, T47N R1W), then easterly along 3-mile road/city limits road to Riverside drive and continuing due east to the St. Mary's river shoreline (section 22, T47N R1E), then southerly along the most western shoreline of the St. Mary's river system to the southern tip of Point de tour at lake Huron (section 15, T41N R4e) but also to include all of Sugar island and Neebish island, then westerly along the most northerly shoreline of lake Huron to the point of beginning.

Issued this 6th day of May, 2010.

Approved as to matters over which the Natural Resources Commission has authority.

Keith J. Charters, Chairman
Natural Resources Commission

Approved as to matters over which the Director has authority.

Rebecca A. Humphries
Director