



## Eastern Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

**Date of Production: April 2016**

This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as supplemental information to the Eastern UPCAC members via email on April 14, 2016.

### Acting Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator: Jon Spieles

#### ***DNR Public Meetings***

April 14	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Lansing
April 19	Private Landowner/Deer Winter Habitat Meeting, Rogge Conf Room, Ford Center, Alberta, 6:00pm
April 19	Michigan Iron Industry Museum Advisory Board Meeting, Negaunee, 1:30pm
April 20	Private Landowner/Deer Winter Habitat Meeting, Crystal Falls Township Hall, 6:00pm CDT
April 21	Eastern UP Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting, Newberry, 6:30pm
April 21	Ask the DNR Program, WLUC-TV13, 7:00pm
April 25	Drummond Island Deer Management Meeting, Drummond Island Resort Lodge, 1:00pm
April 27	Conversations & Coffee with Fisheries Division, DNR Pocket Park-Escanaba, 6:00pm
April 27	DNR UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, DNR Shingleton Office, 6:00pm
April 28	Conversations & Coffee with Fisheries Division, Bay College West-Iron Mountain, 6:00pm CDT
May 11	DNR Parks & Recreation Division Strategic Planning Session, NMU Pioneer Rooms-Marquette, 2:00pm
May 12	DNR UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Great Lakes Sportsmen's Club-Escanaba, 6:00pm
May 12	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Lansing
May 17	DNR UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, HNF Ranger District Office-St. Ignace, 1:30pm
May 19	Western UP Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting, DNR Pocket Park-Escanaba, 5:30pm

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#### ***U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities***

April 4-10	Van Riper State Park - International Dark Sky Week
April 4-10	Tahquamenon Falls State Park - International Dark Sky Week
April 4-10	Fayette Historic State Park - International Dark Sky Week
April 23	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Earth Day Bat Program & Bat House Building
April 29-May 1	Whitefish Point – Spring Flight: Celebration of Bird Migration
May 7	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Introduction to Fly Fishing
May 14	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Pollinators Gardening
May 15	Michigan Iron Industry Museum Open House, Negaunee, 906-475-7857
May 20-21	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park – Crafting a Style of Native American Flute

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#### ***Upcoming U.P. Recreation Events***

For a host of events around the UP, go to [www.uptravel.com](http://www.uptravel.com)

April 16	Home, Business & Outdoor Recreation Expo, Iron River, <a href="http://www.iron.org">http://www.iron.org</a>
April 16	YMCA Run/Walk, Marquette, <a href="http://ymcamqt.org">http://ymcamqt.org</a>
April 23	Norway Spring Classic, Norway, <a href="http://www.uprrc.org">www.uprrc.org</a>
April 23	SISU Shuffle, Hancock, <a href="http://www.portagehealth.org">www.portagehealth.org</a>
May 1-31	Annual Keweenaw International Bird Migratory Festival, <a href="http://www.copperharborbirding.org">www.copperharborbirding.org</a>
May 6-9	Manistique Recreation Outdoor Expo, Manistique, 906-341-2290

## Recent DNR Press Releases

For full details, go to: <http://www.michigan.gov/dnrpressroom>

- Private landowners sought to improve deer habitat in U.P. (4/8/16)
  - DNR advises caution to prevent spread of oak wilt disease (4/6/16)
  - Snyder approves nearly \$28 million in outdoor recreation grants (4/5/16)
  - New backcountry camping changes for Porcupine Mountains (4/4/16)
  - Michigan's second consecutive hunting season with no fatalities (4/4/16)
  - Spring workshops offer research on lakes Erie, Huron, Michigan, St. Clair fisheries (4/4/16)
  - DNR sets Drummond Island deer management meeting (4/4/16)
  - Showcasing the DNR: Natural Resources Trust Fund celebrates 40 years (3/31/16)
  - DNR updates online system for registering bass tournaments (3/30/16)
  - DNR seeks applicants for NRC Youth Conservation Council (3/28/16)
  - Showcasing the DNR: Skiers warming hut opening celebrated in Marquette County (3/24/16)
  - Enjoy Free ORV Weekends June 11-12 and August 20-21 (3/23/16)
  - DNR seeks ORV safety education instructors (3/21/16)
  - Michigan confirms new CWD-positive findings; total is now seven deer (3/18/16)
  - DNR awards \$100,000 in U.P. deer habitat improvement grants (3/18/16)
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## Grant Contacts

For other grant information, to go: <http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-58225---,00.html>

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>
Recreation Passport Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, <a href="mailto:carlockm@michigan.gov">carlockm@michigan.gov</a>
Aquatic Habitat Grant	Kelly Parker, 517-284-5957, <a href="mailto:parkerk4@michigan.gov">parkerk4@michigan.gov</a>
Michigan Invasive Species Grant	Kammy Frayre, 517-284-5970, <a href="mailto:frayrek1@michigan.gov">frayrek1@michigan.gov</a>
Wildlife Habitat Grant	Kelly Parker, 517-284-5957, <a href="mailto:parkerk4@michigan.gov">parkerk4@michigan.gov</a>
U.P. Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Grant	Bill Scullon, 906-563-9247, <a href="mailto:scullonh@michigan.gov">scullonh@michigan.gov</a>

## March NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

The Natural Resources Commission met in Holland on March 10<sup>th</sup>. Major actions taken:

- Director Bill Moritz approved a land use order that prohibits the launching of watercraft with motors from state lands onto Ely Lake, Little Tom Lake and Crooked Lake in Clyde Township in the Allegan State Game Area.
- The director approved nine land transactions – seven sales and two acquisitions. Details can be found on the NRC agenda.

First up during the day was a meeting of the Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries. Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter told the committee about \$350,000 in grants awarded by the department for dam projects. This is the fourth year of the department's Dam Grant Program, which is used to repair and remove high-risk dams.

A new Michigan Fishing Tournament Information System is in operation. So far this year, 1,056 tournaments have registered using the online tool. The tool is not a reservation system but is meant to help tournament planners avoid conflicts with others. The system will allow the department to collect valuable catch data to inform fisheries management. Finally, Jim told the committee about changes to the Master Angler program, which have encouraged broader participation from interested anglers.

Nick Popoff of Fisheries reported to the committee on proposed changes to Fish Disease Control regulations, which regulate baitfish. The department worked with the bait industry to develop the new regulations.

Jay Wesley of Fisheries said the Lake Michigan Management Plan is currently under development. The largest lake wholly in the United States, Lake Michigan covers 22,400 square miles and supports a \$1 billion fishery. The plan should be completed by late fall, with tactics and management actions completed by mid-May of next year.

Wildlife Chief Russ Mason said his division is working to communicate to hunters the rules regarding transport of animals from CWD-infested states. Michigan has found five confirmed CWD-positive deer. The department plans to increase surveillance for the disease in the western Upper Peninsula during the coming hunting season.

Barb Avers and Joe Robison of Wildlife told committee about proposed 2016-17 Waterfowl Hunting and Managed Waterfowl Area Regulations. Those regulations will be before the commission for action next month.

Chad Stewart of Wildlife explained proposed Elk regulations for 2016 and 2017. The elk population is up significantly; proposed license quotas would grow accordingly.

Adam Bump from Wildlife described proposed liberalized hunting rules for coyotes and other furbearers based on concerns over impacts from those populations.

Kevin Swanson from Wildlife detailed proposed changes to bear harvest allocations, as well as efforts the department is making to address concerns about baiting bear with chocolate.

Dwayne Etter from Wildlife talked about research to track and eradicate feral swine populations in Michigan. Hunters have sometimes interfered with this research. The department is proposing a 600-square-mile feral swine research area in Gladwin, Midland and Ogemaw counties. Regulations, for approval by the director, would limit hunting activities near posted research sites within this area during designated dates.

During the Committee of the Whole, Chairman John Matonich congratulated Director Moritz for receiving the Distinguished Service Award from the Michigan State University College of Agriculture and Natural Resources.

In the director's report, Parks Chief Ron Olson informed the committee that lodging reservations at state parks are up 13.3 percent and harbor reservations are up 7.9 percent. The Outdoor Adventure Center in Detroit received a Design Award for an Outstanding Facility from MParks. The redevelopment of Wilderness State Park's lakeshore campgrounds earned PRD a Statewide Planning Excellence Award for Public Outreach from the Michigan Chapter of the American Planning Association.

Ron and Forest Resources Division Chief Deb Begalle told commissioners about increasing equestrian opportunities in the Pigeon River Country State Forest. In addition, Deb told the commission about FRD's recent professional development training. FRD's incident management expertise has been tapped in responding to the Flint water crisis. FRD plans to conduct more prescribed burns this year over against last. FRD is making increased use of composite mats --interlocking mats that are laid on the ground to allow heavy equipment to access wet terrain.

Marketing and Outreach Chief Kristin Phillips -- along with Chelsea Maupin of GÜD Marketing -- talked about the upcoming campaign that GÜD will manage for the Michigan Wildlife Council. Funded by a dollar surcharge on hunting, fishing and trapping licenses, the campaign will inform the public about the important role hunting, fishing and trapping play in conservation. The statewide campaign launches in April through a variety of media, including television, billboards and social media.

**2016 U.P.  
NRC Meeting  
September 8, 2016  
Gogebic Community  
College  
Ironwood, MI**

**WUPCAC Meeting  
September 7, 2016  
Gogebic Community  
College  
Ironwood, MI**

Tammy Newcomb of the Executive Division reported to the commission on the status of invasive carp -- bighead, silver and black carp. There is no evidence of live invasive carp in the Great Lakes. However, invasive carp are moving closer to Lake Michigan. Of particular concern is the ability of small fish to entrain in the wake of barges and potentially move through electric barriers. The State of Michigan continues to focus on Brandon Road Lock and Dam in Illinois as a critical pinch point for stopping invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes.

### *April NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer*

The Michigan Natural Resources Commission met today in Lansing. The major actions taken:

- The commission approved regulations for migratory game bird hunting seasons in managed wetland areas.
- The commission approved elk regulations and license quotas, which take into account a winter elk population survey that showed a greater-than-expected herd estimate.
- The commission approved new coyote and nighttime predator hunting regulations that create a year-round coyote season.
- The commission approved bear harvest allocations for the Newberry and Red Oak management units.
- The commission approved fish disease control measures. The regulations affect bait harvest and use.
- Director Bill Moritz approved an order to regulate use of managed state wildlife and game areas. The order affects access at Nayanquing Point State Wildlife Area, Fish Point State Wildlife Area, Shiawassee River State Game Area and St. Clair Flats State Wildlife Area.
- The director approved an order to expand riding opportunities for equestrians at Pigeon River Country State Forest in Cheboygan and Otsego counties.
- The director approved an order to regulate access on certain state-managed lands in Gladwin, Arenac, Bay, Midland, and Ogemaw counties. The purpose of this order is to protect areas where research on feral swine is occurring.
- The director approved the May 4 Oil and Gas Lease Auction. The auction will offer 16,000 acres in 18 counties, a relatively small auction by historical standards.
- The director approved five land transactions. Details of these transactions can be found in the NRC agenda.

The day began with a meeting of the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee at the Demmer Shooting Sports and Education Center in Lansing. Deb Jensen of Parks showed the committee the Fisherman's Island State Park management plan. The committee reviewed the plan and the process that created it, including public engagement, and reviewed a proposed trail connection from Traverse City to Charlevoix that is part of the plan. The committee approved a resolution recommending approval of the plan.

Tim Machowicz of Parks and Recreation updated the committee on the Green Initiatives Team in state parks that has worked on important projects such as recycling and energy efficiency. The committee also received a report on the division's strategic plan update. The committee's input will be incorporated into the revised plan, along with input gathered at public meetings and advisory group meetings. The updated plan should be completed by year's end.

The meeting then shifted to the Diagnostic Center at Michigan State University, where the Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries met.

Todd Grischke, newly named assistant chief of the Fisheries Division, introduced himself to the commission. The division hasn't had an assistant chief since 1992. Todd said he was proud and honored by the promotion.

Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter updated the commission on egg take. Steelhead egg take is running late because of the delayed spring. Walleye egg take is completed and fry have hatched. Musky egg take will begin May 13. Jim recounted the April 4 event at Platte River State Fish Hatchery that celebrated the 50th anniversary of

salmon stocking in Lake Michigan, an important milestone in the history of the Great Lakes. Today, changing dynamics in Lake Michigan, where the forage base is at historic lows, may require further reductions in salmon stocking in order to maintain predator-prey balance in the lake. The division continues to take management actions that will ensure a diverse fishery.

Wildlife Chief Russ Mason updated the committee on winter severity in the Upper Peninsula. The delayed spring may have an effect on the deer population, but likely not a significant one. A new program undertaken with partners called Turkey Tracts will build areas in southern Michigan for turkey hunters. Turkey season starts next week and is expected to be good. The division has completed its draft Deer Management Plan. The plan will be reviewed internally and go to commissioners before a broader public review.

Al Stewart from Wildlife previewed proposed fall turkey regulations. Proposed quotas would remain the same in most management units and be reduced in one unit in southwest Michigan.

Chad Stewart of Wildlife reported on proposed regulation changes to manage chronic wasting disease (CWD) in Michigan's deer population. The department has tested over 5,000 deer for CWD since it was discovered in Ingham County in May 2015. Seven of those deer have tested positive for the fatal disease. Based on these additional positive results, Wildlife Division is proposing expanding the CWD Core Area -- where there is mandatory deer check -- and extend other regulations to broaden management and surveillance of the disease.

Barb Avers of Wildlife updated the commission on minor changes to migratory game bird hunting regulations. Joe Robison of Wildlife talked about the spinning wing decoy ban at St. Clair Flats Managed Waterfowl Area on Harsens Island. The ban has been in place since 2013. Surveys show an estimated 80 percent of hunters approve of the ban. The Wildlife Division is recommending that the ban stay in place.

Dan O'Brien of Wildlife reported to the committee on bovine tuberculosis surveillance in Michigan's deer herd. Since 1995 the department has tested 218,275 deer for the disease. A total of 794 of these deer have tested positive for bovine TB. Prevalence of the disease jumped in 2015 -- to the highest level since 1998 -- and the additional positives were geographically concentrated. The increased prevalence could be attributable to the activation of latent infections in older deer, Dan said. This sudden increase may have been triggered by winter stress.

Amy Derosier of Wildlife reviewed the Wildlife Division's updated strategic plan, "The GPS" (Guiding Principles and Strategies), which was just completed. Kelly Carter of Wildlife presented the division's just-completed annual report, covering the 2015 Fiscal Year.

The Marketing, Partnership, Youth & Outreach Advisory Committee met next. Tyler Czarnopis of the Marketing and Outreach Division gave an overview of the department's social media efforts. The DNR has 103,000 likes on Facebook, 5,600 Instagram followers, 27,000 followers on Twitter and 2,000 subscribers to the department's YouTube channel. These are powerful tools for marketing and communication, especially to a younger audience. One interesting tool is "boosted posts" on Facebook, through which the department pays to reach a broader audience on that social media platform. Recently, the department invested \$25 for a boosted Facebook post to promote turkey hunting. From that investment, the department was able to track \$1,000 in license sales. We are exploring other social media platforms, including Snapchat, the fastest-growing social media network among teens and millennials.

Maia Turek of Parks and Recreation reported on marketing plans for state parks. Parks is promoting camping on a regional basis, working through Pure Michigan and employing digital tools. The division is promoting alternative lodging options in State Parks such as cabins, yurts and lodges. Parks plans to promote stewardship to the public to enlist help in stopping invasive species and accomplishing other environmental goals. The division will continue marketing the Recreation Passport. Parks continues to foster partnerships such as an agreement with Chateau Grand Traverse that raises money for state parks through wine sales.

Elyse Walter of Fisheries reported on marketing plans for the Fisheries Division. The division is concentrating on increasing fishing license sales in targeted areas to targeted audiences, for example, lapsed female anglers

in Kent and Ottawa counties. The division is focused also on increasing awareness and education efforts around aquatic invasive species. Fisheries plans to increase by 5 percent the number of visits to fisheries-related locations such as weirs, hatcheries and interpretive centers by specific audiences. Finally, the division plans to increase by 5 percent the volume of use of the Trout Trails online application that highlights trout fishing opportunities across the state.

Kelly Carter of Wildlife presented her division's marketing goals. The division plans to increase turkey license sales by 5 percent over the next three years; increase the use of managed waterfowl areas by 5 percent over three years; increase Pure Michigan Hunt (PMH) applications by 5 percent over three years; increase PMH applicants by 10 percent in the first year and 5 percent in the successive two years; and increase deer license sales by 1 percent each year for three years. The division has identified distinct tools for each of these goals.

During the Committee of the Whole, under the director's report, Mark Sweatman, director of the DNR's Office of Minerals Management (OMM), talked about minerals management in the state. Through OMM's staff of 17, the state manages 6.4 million acres of publicly owned mineral rights. Mark talked about how lands are classified for potential development and what those various classifications mean. Last year alone, \$32 million in revenue was raised through mineral development for the State Parks Endowment Fund and \$2.9 million for the Game and Fish Protection Fund. Since 1976 more than \$2 billion has been raised through mineral development on state-managed public lands to advance outdoor recreation opportunities.

Parks and Recreation Chief Ron Olson told the commission that lodging reservations at State Parks are up 12 percent across the state, this year over last. The division is teaming up with MDOT to work on trail connections in Flint. The department is working toward acquiring acreage in Washtenaw and Lenawee counties to create a new state park. The Parks Division graduated 28 new rangers from its academy last week. Finally, Ron showcased a new pocket guide to state forest campgrounds in Michigan, which will be distributed across the state.

Wildlife Chief Russ Mason talked about the recent North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference in Pittsburgh, where DNR staff received many accolades for their work. In addition, Russ said, USDA is working on a poison that would be effective in removing feral swine from the wild.

Erik Eklund of Finance and Operations updated the commission on the Fiscal Year 2017 budget, which is moving smoothly through the legislative process. Mark Mills from Wildlife reported to commissioners on the Otsego Township Dam removal. The dam has been in operation since 1903. The state acquired the dam in 1964 and had targeted it for removal as far back as the 1980s. The removal process was complicated by contamination at the deteriorating dam, but significant progress is being made to remove it at a cost of \$3.5 million.

Jim Dexter and Russ Mason reported to the commission on fisheries and wildlife grants.

Legislative Liaison Trevor VanDyke provided an update on a number of bills in the Legislature that affect natural resources.

### *March 2016 Legislative Update - Trevor VanDyke , Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office*

#### **PA 36'16 (SB 588) – Tribal Conservation Officers – Sen. Casperson**

This public act amends Section 43516 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to require an individual who has been issued a hunting, fur harvester's or fishing license to exhibit the license upon the demand of a tribal conservation officer who complied with certain requirements.

#### **SBs 651 - 653 – Transitional Qualified Forest Property – Sens. Booher and Casperson**

These bills seek to create the Transitional Qualified Forest Property Specific Tax Act, to Amend Section 51108 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act, to amend Section 7jj and add Section 7vv to the General Property Tax Act to allow until September 1, 2021 up to 160 acres of property per township enrolled in the Commercial Forestland

program as of June 1, 2016 to be withdrawn, without penalty, and enrolled in the new Transitional Qualified Forest Program and receive property tax benefits for the enrolled property for a period of five (5) years.

- These bills were referred to the House Committee on Tax Policy.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 773 – Nonresident Commercial Fishing Guides – Sen. Zorn**

This bill seeks to repeal Section 48714 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act which limits the ability of nonresidents to act as commercial fishing guides.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee of the Whole.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

**SB 816 – Exempt Veterans from the Recreation Passport Requirement – Sen. Colbeck**

This bill seeks to amend Sections 74116 and 78119 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to exempt all veterans from the recreation passport requirement for entry into a state park or state operated public boating access site.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 817 – Free Fishing License for Honorably Discharged Veterans or Active Duty Military – Sen. Colbeck**

This bill seeks to amend Section 43537 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to provide for a free fishing license for honorably discharged veterans and active duty military personnel.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Veterans, Military and Homeland Security.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 833 – Funding for Firefighters Training – Sen. Hansen**

This bill seeks to amend Sections 2, 13 and 14 of the Firefighters Training Council Act to provide that funding for firefighter training shall be provided from the fund collected from the fireworks safety fees.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**SB 839 – Forest Roads, Pack & Saddle and ORV Use– Sen. Schmidt**

This bill seeks to add a new Section 72117 and amend Sections 72101 and 72115 of Part 721 and amend Section 81133 and repeal Section 81126 of Part 811 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow pack and saddle animals and ORVs to be used to retrieve legally harvested large game, to require that an inventory of forest roads be created, and to require that forest roads be open to motorized use by the public unless designated otherwise.

- The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Outdoor Recreation and Tourism.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**HB 5128 –Retired State Employees and Wildfire Suppression – Rep. Rendon**

This bill seeks to amend Section 68c of the State Employees’ Retirement Act to allow a retired state employee to contract with the Department of Natural Resources for wildfire suppression without loss of their retirement allowance.

- This bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Appropriations.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

**HB 5330 –Conveyance of Property in Muskegon County – Rep. Hughes**

This bill seeks to provide for the conveyance of state owned property in Muskegon County to Sullivan Township for public purposes.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

**HB 5352 –Providing False Information on Applications, Reports or Documents – Rep. Kosowski**

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act by adding Section 1521 which would make a person responsible for a civil infraction and a fine for intentionally providing false information on applications, reports or documents submitted to the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

### **HB 5269 – Department of Natural Resources Budget – Rep. Bumstead**

This bill seeks to make appropriations for the Department of Natural Resources for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2017, and to provide for the expenditure of the appropriations.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Appropriations.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

### *April 2016 Legislative Update - Trevor VanDyke , Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office*

### **PA 61 of 2016 (HB 5377) – Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund – Rep. Bumstead**

This act appropriates \$27.9 million from the MNRTF for 26 acquisition projects (\$20.0 million) and 44 development projects (\$8.0 million). Matching funds of \$21.6 million result in total project costs of \$49.6 million.

### **SB 773 – Nonresident Commercial Fishing Guides – Sen. Zorn**

This bill seeks to repeal Section 48714 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act which limits the ability of nonresidents to act as commercial fishing guides.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

### **HB 5275 – Forest Roads, Pack & Saddle and ORV Use– Rep. Cole**

This bill seeks to add a new Section 72117 and amend Section 72115 of Part 721 and amend Section 81133 and repeal Section 81126 of Part 811 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow pack and saddle animals and ORVs to be used to retrieve legally harvested large game, to require that an inventory of forest roads be created, and to require that forest roads be open to motorized use by the public unless designated otherwise.

- The bill was referred to the Senate Committee on Outdoor Recreation and Tourism.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

### **HB 5330 – Conveyance of Property in Muskegon County – Rep. Hughes**

This bill seeks to provide for the conveyance of state owned property in Muskegon County to Sullivan Township for public purposes.

- This bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

### **HB 5484 – Allow Hunter Pink as a Hunting Apparel Color– Rep. Lyons**

This bill seeks to amend Section 40116 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow an individual to wear hunter pink in addition to hunter orange while engaged in the taking of game species as provided in the section.

- The bill was referred to the House Committee on Natural Resources.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at [www.legislature.mi.gov](http://www.legislature.mi.gov).

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## **Parks & Recreation Division: Tom Paquin, Eastern Supervisor**

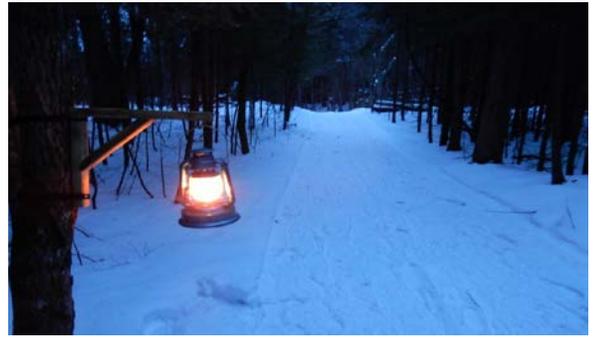
### ➤ **Fayette Historic State Park**

- Historic Townsite: The furnace stacks restoration is on hold until spring 2016.
- Harbor: The contract was awarded for a new dock system; 100% of the review is complete.
- Campground: Work is continuing to complete plans for the toilet/shower building, dump station & on-site sewage



treatment. Bids were due February 10, 2016, with planned construction in 2016.

- Updates continue on the emergency plan & safety plan.
- Brush piles at the race track site & stump dump is ongoing.
- Lodge: Tub enclosure has been redone and all new mattresses were installed.
- Seasonal rangers returned to work 3/21/16.
- The lantern light XC ski/snowshoe/hike was held January 30, 2016. Temps were in the mid 20's with very little snow. 153 people showed up!
- Carbon monoxide warnings came from residence detectors. Worked with a professional to clean the hot water heater and replaced parts on the furnace. All appears to be good now.



#### ➤ **Indian Lake/Palms Book**

- Repairs were made to the well at Indian Lake South. The work consisted of replacing the pitless adapter, 8 feet of well casing, a new well cap, and a new pump.
- The number of applications for summer workers is way below average compared to past years.
- Snowmobile traffic at Palms Book was about average.

#### ➤ **Straits State Park**

- Toilet shower building construction continues in the lower campground.
- Park staff is working on many other small projects which include new flooring in one of the upper toilet shower buildings and new energy efficient lighting in both upper toilet shower buildings.
- Continued work on the ice suppression system on Mackinac Island.
- Straits and Mackinac Island Harbor are seeking applications for summer employment and have a lot of openings for this year.
- A snowshoe event was held March 5<sup>th</sup> with 30+ visitors in attendance. Attendance numbers seem consistent as previous years with many folks coming out to hike and snowshoe around the campground roads and pathways.
- Eric Craymer was hired by the Michigan History Foundation to facilitate meetings to seek potential partners and to identify their interests and resources that they could bring to develop Father Marquette into a sustainable facility that draws visitors to the community.



#### ➤ **Tahquamenon Falls State Park**

- The lodge #2 remodel is in full swing. Staff have been repairing drywall, cleaning, painting, replacing fixtures, etc.
- We are in the process of filling our vacant ranger position as well as 12 vacant state worker positions. All seasonal rangers have been recalled from layoff.
- Spring day use attendance seems to be higher than normal, continuing the trend of increased use.

#### ➤ **Brimley State Park/Detour Harbor**

- Working on paperwork for sale/demo of Fehner property cabins (10 total structures).

- Planning on holding state worker interviews the middle of April. Brimley has 23 applications for 11 positions. Detour Harbor seasonal rangers will return to work on April 11<sup>th</sup>. The Brimley seasonal ranger will be back to work on April 12<sup>th</sup>.
- Brimley State Park opens for semi-modern camping on April 15, 2016 and modern camping on May 2, 2016.
- A new pedestrian counter was installed at Algonquin Pathway. Recorded 640 users in February and 407 in March.
- Brimley State Park was chosen as the eastern UP district site to display a new “Recycle, Michigan” sign, awarded by the PRD Green Initiatives Team. “Recycle, Michigan” is a marketing campaign developed by the MRC (Michigan Recycling Coalition), to raise awareness and participation in recycling programs across the state. Photos of the sign at the park will be highlighted on the Michigan Recycling Coalition website in the near future: [www.michiganrecycles.org](http://www.michiganrecycles.org). If spring ever arrives, the sign will be installed in the park.



#### ➤ **Muskallonge State Park**

- A bid was awarded for Phase I of the campground electrical upgrade. A pre-construction meeting was held on March 24<sup>th</sup> and work is scheduled to start in early May.
- Phase II design and engineering for the headquarters relocation has started with a target to have plans completed by October 1, 2016.
- Ranger Freeborn is back from seasonal layoff and working full time. Ranger Gribbell will graduate from the PRD law enforcement academy on April 8<sup>th</sup> and be back to work at the park on April 11<sup>th</sup>.
- We are in the process of interviewing and hiring short term workers for the upcoming season.
- The campground opens on April 15<sup>th</sup> (semi-modern).

### **EUP Wildlife Division: Terry Minzey, Wildlife Supervisor (by Kristie Sitar, Wildlife Biologist)**

#### ➤ **Wolf Population Survey**

- The DNR is nearing completion of the U.P. wolf population survey (done every other year) using a stratified random sampling technique.
- The UP is broken into wolf survey units based on wolf density and units are randomly selected each survey year to be counted. The survey requires staff to systematically survey predefined survey units using vehicle, snowmobiles, snowshoes, or whatever means possible to effectively find distinct animals and packs.
- The survey counts for each unit are entered into the designed model and a population estimate is produced. The U.P. wolf population estimate will be derived from this work typically in the month of April and then released to the public.

#### ➤ **Deer Surveys**

- Wildlife staff have been conducting road surveys of deer distribution across the U.P. These road surveys provided a quick, inexpensive, and expansive snapshot of the deer wintering locations throughout the region. There is considerable interest in deer winter range and this road survey will provide data for future updates to deer wintering complex boundaries.
- Wildlife staff are in their first year, following a pilot study, of a spring recruitment index for fawns. Deer camp survey data provides a recruitment index for fawns at 6 months of age but this information does not take into account losses that would occur during winter months. The spring fawn-to-total deer survey will provide information on an estimate of over-winter survival of fawns and recruitment into the population.

#### ➤ **Spring Wildlife Surveys**

- Sharp-tailed grouse surveys have begun in the east U.P. with staff in Chippewa County conducting section occupancy surveys within the Sharp-tail hunt zone and other staff conducting traditional lek surveys on known, current, and historic leks to gather information on abundance and distribution.
- American woodcock peenting surveys are beginning in late April and May where staff and volunteers conduct call surveys on established routes in the U.P. to use as an index to species populations. This is a federal survey that Michigan participates in to generate information across the nation.

➤ **Moose Observations**

- The wildlife division is interested in checking the distribution of resident moose to ensure that we are surveying the correct area (in the West U.P.) and getting a better handle on the distribution of moose in the East U.P. To gather this information we have put out a request to the general public and also identified folks from various agencies, commercial forest companies, and private consulting businesses and asked them to keep track of their observations. Please report moose observations or moose sign to your local DNR office or fill out a moose observation report online.

➤ **Habitat Planning:** As always when snow begins to disappear, habitat project planning ramps up for wildlife staff. The following are projects being worked on this spring by staff in the east U.P.

- Habitat plantings (clover and mast producing shrubs and trees) and infrastructure work is being planned at the Melstrand, Garden Grade, and Halifax GEMS.
- Red oak, apple, and clover planting are being planned in the Petrel and Sturgeon Hole deer wintering complexes (DWC's) and red osier dogwood planting is being planned in the Sage River DWC.
- Oak sapling plantings are being planned in the Batty Doe DWC and Luce County in addition to seedling plantings planned on Drummond Island.
- Spring prescribed burns are being planned as opening maintenance on Drummond Island, the Munuscong Potholes, and Hiawatha area to benefit sharp-tailed grouse and waterfowl species.
- The North American Wetland Conservation Act project to benefit waterfowl and wetland species in Munuscong area is furthering plans with upcoming meetings to discuss logistics.

➤ **Chocolate in Bear Bait**

- The DNR is considering not allowing chocolate to be present in bear bait due to theobromine toxicity concerns. No final decision has been made at this point but there will potentially be a warning in the 2016 Bear Hunting Digest regarding its use and impacts, and potential changes are being considered for the next bear regulations established in 2017.

**Public Information Office: John Pepin, Deputy Public Information Officer**

- Viewers of local news in the Upper Peninsula may have noticed some changes to interviews featuring DNR personnel. We have created a small set in the Marquette DNR office with an interchangeable background to focus on various issues as the year progresses. We are in the process of creating background materials including photographs, maps, graphs, charts and props to use during interviews with local news reporters. So far, we have taped a few interviews before a black background with a wooden DNR logo behind the speaker. Once completed, this studio set will greatly improve the presentation of our DNR news content to the viewing public.
- This month, Michigan Natural Resource Commissioners J.R. Richardson of Ontonagon and John Matonich of Bessemer will be making television appearances. Richardson will be featured on "The Ryan Report" on WLUC-TV6 discussing this year's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Matonich will be answering questions from viewers on the live "Ask the DNR" program April 21 on WNMU-TV13. These programs will be available on-line after they are broadcast:

The Ryan Report: <http://uppermichiganssource.com/features/the-ryan-report>

Ask the DNR: <http://wnmuvideo.nmu.edu/program/ask-dnr/episodes/>

- Work continues on our Showcasing the DNR feature story series which is issued each Thursday with additional stories released, mostly on Tuesdays, throughout the year. Some upcoming topics include dam removal, forest inventory, wetland wonders and the trout opener.
- Several recent press releases have been produced through the Marquette office including those ranging from significant changes for backcountry camping at Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park and an ORV instructor's academy in Escanaba to announcements on private landowner deer wintering complex meetings in Gogebic, Iron and Baraga counties.

### **Forest Resources Division: Jeff Stampfly, Eastern UP Supervisor**

- Plans are being finalized a busy 2016 cultivation field season. So far 1598 acres are contracted for jack pine scarification and 2021 acres are to be trenched in preparation for next year's planting. 1480 acres are ready to be planted with jack and red pine this spring. Some areas that are not fully stocked will be replanted totaling 540 acres. Parts of the duck lake fire will be roller chopped in preparation for planting totaling 300 acres.
- The snowmobiling season has officially ended and fire officers are completing end of grooming reports and processing final payments to grant sponsors. The gates along several private land trail sections have been closed. Areas along Lake Superior still have over a foot of snow yet where snowmobiling enthusiasts are still attempting to venture out for one last ride.
- Fire equipment is coming out of winter storage, being serviced and put into service for the upcoming fire season. The annual department fire refresher was April 5<sup>th</sup> and management units are holding their spring refreshers for local DNR staff and wildland firefighters (keymen). We have two limited term fire officer positions in the EUP this year, one at Newberry, which remains vacant due and the other at the Sault.
- Several EUP staff spent time in Lansing this past winter working as part of an incident management team working to support DEQ and their Flint work. As of April 1, all staff have returned from the assignment.
- All three management units have offered timber sales in the last quarter. All three also reported some sales went "no-bid" on the first offering. Markets are soft for winter work but fair for sales on good ground with decent volumes. Timber sale receipts on the Shingleton unit are running about 7% above last year. Activity has slowed with weight restrictions in effect.
- Winter sale preparation/harvesting was challenging in the EUP this past winter. A very wet fall, warm temperatures into January and generally poor snow/freezing conditions combined to impact accomplishments.
- Sault Unit staff will be starting on the Hiawatha NF Good Neighbor Authority timber sale preparation when the agreements and other details are completed in the near future.
- Several technology upgrades are occurring in Forest Resources Division. Many forestry staff are receiving ruggedized computers to take to the field to aid in timber sale preparation and inventory. At the state level, improvements to our timber sale and inventory programs now allow these computer systems to share information so once data is entered it is used throughout the process.
- Road and bridge plans are being finalized for the upcoming season. The EUP will be purchasing additional crane mats to facilitate access in low ground. All of the units have work planned and will begin operations once spring fire season is done.
- The 2018 Year of Entry (YOE) inventory is underway with staff gathering field information. The first open house in the EUP is in Sault St. Marie Unit on September 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>. The complete schedule is at: [www.michigan.gov/forestry](http://www.michigan.gov/forestry).

### **Eastern UP Fisheries Division: Steve Scott, Eastern UP Field Units Supervisor**

#### **Field Units (Steve Scott, Unit Manager)**

- Roxbury Ponds habitat project: Eastern Lake Superior Management Unit field staff and the US Forest Service out of Raco cooperated on creating brush bundles and tree drops for fish habitat. These ponds were once idle and not being actively managed for any fishery. Ponds have good access and are great for floating with kayak or canoes.

- Conducted 2 public meetings in Munising and Sault Ste. Marie. Statewide and local topics covered in fisheries.
- Steelhead are running well in eastern UP streams. Access is now an issue with new snowfall, but anglers are hitting the rivers.
- Field staff preparing for field season, making stocking runs for hatcheries, and heading to the Little Manistee Weir soon.

#### Marquette Research (Ed Baker, Station Manager)

- Staff are preparing gear for the start of the 2016 field season. The RV Lake Char was splashed April 7 and will begin the spring lake trout survey April 18. Walleye tagging on Little Bay de Noc will begin as soon as the weather cooperates (week of April 11 if forecast is accurate). Lake sturgeon work will take place on the Sturgeon, Menominee, Cedar, Whitefish, and Ontonagon rivers again in 2016.
- Biologists attended and also gave presentations at the Great Lakes Fishery Commission upper lakes meetings in Milwaukee, WI in March.

#### **Finance & Operations: Christina Hammill, Eastern UP**

2017 Pure Michigan Hunt (PMH) applications went on sale on March 1<sup>st</sup>. Individuals may purchase \$5 PMH applications at all license agent locations or on the DNR's E-license website. PMH application purchases are unlimited, so you can enter as many times as you wish to be entered into the drawing. You can also purchase them for others under their driver's license or sports card number or transfer a license/s to another individual if you win and choose to do so. The 2016 drawing had a total of 35,336 applications purchased by 13,055 individuals, which generated more than \$176,000 to help wildlife habitat restoration and improvements in Michigan.

#### **Dates to Remember:**

- 4/1 – Hand net size restrictions begin on trout streams (through 6/30)
- 4/15 – Coyote season closes and dog training closes
- 4/17 – Beaver & Otter trapping closes (Units A & B; designated trout streams close 4/30)
- 4/18 – Spring Turkey opener (for the early hunts)
- 4/30 – Trout opener (Inland Waters)
- 5/1 – May apply for Bear and Elk hunts
- 5/1 – Deadline for returning incidental trapping seals to DNR
- 5/4 – Last day to register Otter from Unit A designated trout streams
- 5/15 – Walleye, Pike, Muskie open in U.P. inland / U.P. Great Lakes / St. Mary's River
- 5/28 – Bass opener (Catch and Keep Season)
- 5/30 – Frog, Toad, Salamander/Mudpuppy seasons open (until 11/15)
- 5/31 – Hand net & dip net seasons close
- 6/1 – Deadline to apply for Bear and Elk hunts
- 6/11 & 6/12 – Free Fishing Weekend
- 6/11 & 6/12 – Free ORV Weekend

#### **Marketing & Outreach Division: Jon Spieles, Education Services Section**

- The Michigan DNR and its education partners presented to nearly 300 Michigan educators at the Michigan Science Teachers Association annual conference in early March. Seven consecutive programs highlighted natural resource and conservation issues and DNR education programs. Eighty five percent of the teachers gave these sessions the highest rating available. The DNR exhibit was also visited by many of the 1,800 attendees.
- The DNR Facebook page reached 100,000 followers or "likes" in March. This is a result of the quality content that is shared by staff and the engaging way our social media coordinator interacts with our fans. A more in-depth presentation is provided during the subcommittee meeting.

- DNR gave a crash course on steelhead fishing in early April. Experts guided offered basic instructions and practical advice on how to reel in steelhead during a two-day seminar at the Carl T. Johnson Fishing Center in Cadillac. Around 35 participants signed up for the class. *Cadillac News* covered the story.



- Our Finance & Administration staff completed monthly financial reports and is preparing budget templates for fiscal year 2017. They are working with the state team to convert to a new accounting system. They are also in the process of hiring approximately 124 seasonal state workers for field sites.
- Technology staff is visiting field offices across the state to address connectivity issues.
- A department team is working together to assess our programs that address recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3). We are inventorying our programs, will be developing metrics and specific marketing and communication strategies to target areas of opportunity, with a goal of increasing participation.
- The number of email subscribers continues to increase above 1 million (added 17,000 last month!). The Weekly Fishing Report continues to have the highest open rate, at over 27% last month. Our article—with a live cam—about the Platte River Hatchery’s nesting eagle had the highest engagement rate, with over 10% of recipients clicking a link.

- Marketing staff from across the department has been working with Gud Marketing on content for the Michigan Wildlife campaign launch in April, with Pure Michigan for the fishing campaign that launches in April and with some convention and visitors’ bureaus on fishing and trails promotional campaigns, which also launch in April.



- In March, Archery staff coordinated the live state archery tournament at Central Michigan University. A record number of shooters (more than 800) turned out, with Hartland taking the gold.

## **Law Enforcement Division (LED): Lt. Skip Hagy, District 2**

With all the late season snow, District COs have been working snowmobile enforcement well into April. On one patrol during the first week of April, an officer contacted and cited 7 different subjects for various snowmobile violations. Ice fishing, however, ended early due to the repeated thaws and poor ice conditions. COs also worked a number of fur harvester cases mostly involving over limits of martin, fisher, bobcat and otter.

Our CO Recruit School Academy is progressing well and getting closer to the June graduation date, a few more recruits have washed out since our last report and we are currently at 17. Assignments have not yet been made, but we are hopeful to have at least one officer added to the District from this school.

Below are some of the cases officers have been involved in since the last CAC.

- **CO John Wenzel** was on patrol when he observed a snowmobile with an expired trail permit and expired registration. After making contact with the operator, he stated he had forgotten his current stickers at the hotel where he was staying. Upon running the VIN, it showed the snowmobile was currently still expired. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO John Wenzel** assisted MSP troopers and local deputies with a road closure due to high winds and blowing snow. Several accidents had occurred on the road and the road was closed until the vehicles could be removed from the roadway.

- **COs Kevin Postma and Jeff Panich** were dispatched to assist a fisherman who could not get off the ice. The fisherman had gone fishing early in the morning when the weather was good. The weather began to get bad with blowing snow and white-out conditions resulting in heavy drifting. The fisherman attempted to get back to his vehicle but became stuck on his ORV. He then found his way back to his ice fishing shanty where he called his wife who eventually called 911. The COs located the subject's ORV and eventually located the fisherman and escorted him back to his vehicle.
- **CO Kevin Postma** approached a group of fishermen on Munuscong Bay and noticed one of the fishermen running to his snowmobile. CO Postma arrived just in time to see the fisherman pull two jig poles out of the water. After about 5 minutes of the normal "how's the fishing" conversation, CO Postma asked the fisherman how many lines he had out, the angler pointed at the two tip ups. CO Postma then questioned the fisherman about the two jig poles he pulled out as CO Postma approached. The fisherman advised that the lines weren't actually in the water. CO Postma disagreed and enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Bobby Watson** was conducting a plain clothes fishing patrol in response to numerous reports of illegal walleye being kept on Big Manistique Lake. CO Watson took position in a location where multiple groups of fishermen could be observed throughout the evening. Fishing was slow but when CO Watson saw a nearby fisherman have a tip up flag pop up, he witnessed the fisherman successfully land what appeared to be a small walleye. The fisherman was observed carrying the walleye to his truck, then continued moving around the area, checking his other lines. CO Watson made contact with the fisherman approximately ten minutes after the fish had been caught. When CO Watson identified himself as a Conservation Officer and addressed the walleye that was clearly under the legal length limit, the individual stated he was only transporting the short walleye to a hole far away from any of his other lines so that he would not re-catch the walleye. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Jon Busken** was on routine patrol when he came across three snowmobiles stopped on the plowed portion of M-123 near the Tahquamenon Falls. Contact was made with the operators who admitted to riding on the state highway and knew that they were not allowed to. However, one operator's snowmobile had broken a belt. Further investigation revealed one operator was suspended. Enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Jon Busken and Brett Gustafson** were on snowmobile patrol near Grand Marais. They observed a snowmobile without a registration being driven down the trail. Contact was made with the operator who stated that the registration must have fallen off. The operator then provided a registration that belonged to a second snowmobile and a paper registration that returned to a third snowmobile. It was found that the owner had never transferred the title of the snowmobile he was operating and had hoped that officers would not notice because of the additional registrations. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Jon Busken** contacted two anglers coming off Big Manistique Lake on snowmobiles. The anglers indicated they had not caught any fish. While checking the buckets they were transporting CO Busken found two walleyes. When asked about the fish the angler said, "They are mine and they are short. I will take my ticket.", which he did.
- **Sgt. Mike Hammill and CO Brett Gustafson** checked two fishermen on Big Manistique Lake. Both anglers were found to be fishing with too many lines, "nine" each.
- **COs Jeff Panich and Brett Gustafson** conducted a snowmobile patrol from Paradise to Little Lake Harbor, noticing a lot of traffic near the end of the season. Operators were cited for numerous violations including, unregistered snowmobile, no trail permit, and one operator from Pennsylvania who was cited for careless operation after coming over a hill on a corner, on the wrong side of the trail.
- **CO Chris Lynch** was ice fishing on his day off when he observed an angler next to him leave out his tip ups and go to shore. After waiting for 20 minutes CO Lynch called **Sgt. Jerrold Fitzgibbon** to come meet CO Lynch at the scene. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Chris Lynch** was on patrol when he observed an ORV trespassing alongside the railroad tracks. A traffic stop was conducted and contact with the driver was made. The driver was under the age of 16 and not supervised. The driver was educated on the ORV laws while waiting for his parents to arrive on scene.
- **CO Chris Lynch and Sgt. Jerrold Fitzgibbon** were on patrol when they observed an ORV operating down the state highway. A traffic stop was conducted and contact with the driver was made. Upon interviewing the driver, he stated he knew he wasn't supposed to operate down the state highway. Enforcement action was taken.

- **COs Pat Hartsig, Mark Zitnik and Calvin Smith** patrolled snowmobile trails around the town of Grand Marais. Compliance was very high with only one citation being issued for careless operation of a snowmobile.
- While on a group snowmobile patrol, **COs Chris Lynch and Mark Zitnik** stopped a group of snowmobiles. One snowmobile did not have registration stickers. After a brief investigation, it was determined the operator had failed to transfer the registration since purchasing it three years prior. Enforcement action was taken.
- While on an ice fishing patrol on Little Bay de Noc, **COs Calvin Smith, Patrick Hartsig and Mark Zitnik** contacted over 400 fishermen. In all, the anglers were very happy to see the COs with minimal violations on the ice. A few citations were issued for ORV violations.
- While patrolling Munising Bay late one evening, **CO Mark Zitnik** observed several young adults burning an ice shack on the ice. The CO had them put the fire out and explained to them why it's illegal to burn the shack. He advised that once they got out of school the next day, they were to pick up the shack and its contents and dispose of them properly. If they did not they would be cited. The individuals had properly disposed of the shack the following day as instructed.
- **CO Michael Evink** was working a late night patrol when a medical call came out. CO Evink responded, along with a Sault Ste. Marie Tribal officer, MSP, and Manistique Public Safety. Officers performed CPR and deployed an AED in an attempt to aid an elderly male who had been found unresponsive on his deck. He was transported to Schoolcraft Memorial Hospital and later pronounced dead.
- **COs Pat Hartsig and Chris Lynch** worked a busy snowmobile trail crossing in Alger County where multiple violations and accidents had occurred in the past. Numerous snowmobiles were contacted. Citations were issued for no trail stickers and careless operation.
- Ice fishing season on Little Bay de Noc is winding down with the warm conditions. As **CO Pat Hartsig** conducted a foot patrol on the upper bay, he heard a call go out of a vehicle that had gone through the ice. CO Hartsig responded to the location and checked to see if the occupants were safe and uninjured. A bystander came walking out from shore to check on the commotion. As he approached on foot, he broke through the ice. Luckily it was in shallower water, and he was able to rescue himself. Shortly after that an ORV approached the vehicle that was just pulled from the water and the ORV and its driver also broke through the ice. Again, the driver was ok, and the ORV was winched from its location by bystanders. CO Hartsig contacted fishing parties nearby and instructed them to not use the dangerous access. Local bait shops were called and informed of the unsafe ice conditions in the area as well.
- While on routine patrol, **CO Robert Freeborn** located two fishermen fishing on a local pan fish lake. CO Freeborn noticed a couple empty beer cans in the shack. Unfortunately for them, their licenses showed the CO that they were both just under the legal drinking age. The subjects admitted they had brought a couple beers out with them for the afternoon and that the couple on the ice is all they had. Enforcement action was taken.
- **Sgt. Jerrold Fitzgibbon** was checking fishermen at the Anne River Pier on Munising Bay. Unfortunately, one of the anglers had decided to fish 2 poles while watching 2 additional tip ups. A citation was issued for fishing too many lines.
- **CO John Wenzel** attended the Northern Michigan University spring job fair. Many soon-to-be graduates were contacted about employment with the Department of Natural Resources Law Enforcement Division.
- **CO Brett Gustafson and CO Jason McCullough** conducted interviews with several individuals identified as suspects in a fur harvest investigation. During the investigation it was learned that one of the individuals had trapped four pine marten this past season. The individual had convinced his then girlfriend to register the fur in her name. Unfortunately for the individual, he had just broken up with his girlfriend, and she was more than willing to explain exactly what occurred.
- While on patrol, **COs Mark Zitnik and Calvin Smith** observed a pair of fresh foot tracks alongside a closed trout stream. The COs followed the tracks for over a mile before making contact with a husband and wife that were enjoying the scenery. The wife was amazed that the COs were able to locate them so far from the road.
- **CO Calvin Smith** patrolled the AuTrain area for fishing activity. While at a local boat launch, CO Smith observed a boat returning. A check of the fisherman's boat was conducted and the fisherman advised the CO they had caught a steelhead, Coho and a brown trout. CO Smith advised the fisherman that they had actually caught a very nice Splake instead of a brown, and

also advised them that their boat registration was going to expire on March 31. The fisherman said he didn't even notice his registration was about to expire and thanked the CO for pointing it out.

- **CO Jon Busken** was on patrol when he conducted a traffic stop of a vehicle for a registration plate violation. It was discovered the plate on the vehicle was actually for a different vehicle. The operator admitted to switching plates between vehicles. An unregistered handgun was also found in the vehicle. Citations were issued for operating a motor vehicle with an expired registration and for failing to register a handgun after purchasing it.
- **CO Bobby Watson** was patrolling a local river when a young individual was encountered fishing in an area known for having quality northern pike, walleye and musky. CO Watson informed the young man that walleye, pike and musky season was closed and if he was to catch one of the named species he would be required to immediately release it. The young man said he was not very proficient at identifying his fish species and was not aware of any size limit regulations. CO Watson took the opportunity to educate the young man on fish identification and provided the fisherman with a current fishing guide to reference in the future.
- **COs Robert Freeborn and Ben Lasher** were interviewing a suspect on an unrelated matter when they were invited into a subject's garage to talk. During the interview the COs noticed a salted spotted fawn hide hanging on the wall. When the COs asked the subject where he had obtained it, the subject became embarrassed and stated he forgot that was in the garage and that it was road kill from several years ago. The COs explained the law on possessing a spotted fawn. Enforcement action was taken and the hide was seized.
- While conducting follow-up interviews from a fur harvest investigation, **CO Robert Freeborn** noticed a fur registration showed the subject had purchased a fur harvester license late in the afternoon last December and registered a fisher the very next day. CO Freeborn was able to locate the subject at his residence and asked how his trapping season was. The subject stated he was able to get a fisher. CO Freeborn then asked how many days it took him to get the fisher after the traps were set out. The subject stated at least a week. CO Freeborn then asked the subject when he had purchased his fur harvester license. The subject stated he didn't know but after further questioning the subject admitted to trapping for several weeks and when he got the fisher, he purchased his license. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Pat Hartsig** worked with **CO Matt Liestenfeltz** investigating several individuals for potential fur harvester violations. During their investigation violations were found through license sale history, along with fur-bearer registration history. Contacts were made in the area and interviews were performed. Enforcement action was taken on 3 separate subjects for not immediately attaching kill tags to their animal. Several investigations continue.
- **CO Pat Hartsig** attended a meeting in Stephenson with the Forest Resource Division to answer questions about laws as they pertain to open burning and permits for burning.
- While checking for fishermen on Munising Bay, **CO Mark Zitnik** observed a vehicle with a PWC trailer blocking a boat launch for over an hour. While waiting for the rider to come off the water, the Sheriff's Office deployed their hover craft on the bay for a possible snowmobile stuck on the floating ice. After the Sheriff's Office spoke with the rider of the PWC and realizing it was not a snowmobiler, CO Zitnik motioned the rider to come to shore. The CO advised that he could not keep his truck and trailer sitting on the boat launch. While ending his patrol the CO assisted a state trooper with a traffic stop and arrest of the driver of the vehicle for operating under the influence of drugs.
- **COs Mark Zitnik and Bob Hobkirk** conducted a fur investigation and interviewed several trappers in the community about their possible trapping violations. The COs interviewed one subject who confessed to using his wife's marten/fisher tag to trap an extra marten. Enforcement action was taken.
- While checking anglers on Munising Bay late one evening, **CO Mark Zitnik** observed an angler rowing back to shore after fishing without any personal floatation devices on board for him and his partner. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Michael Evink** and Forest Service Officer Dave Tembruell were patrolling the Haywire Grade trailhead and Manistique River area. The officers observed an elderly male subject crawling along a trail toward the Haywire Grade trail. The trail was coming from the location of the dam. The officers went to the subject to render assistance and recognized the subject as a double amputee disabled veteran from the community. They discovered he had rolled his OHV mobility device in a hole approximately 100 yards further down the trail. The officers recovered the machine and returned it to the individual who was uninjured. The officers assisted the individual back onto the mobility device so he could return home.

- **COs Michael Evink and Robert Freeborn** participated in the annual Pigs vs. Punks basketball game. The game is the primary fundraiser for the Manistique High School senior all-nighter.
- **CO Kevin Postma** checked a snowshoe hare hunter in the Ozark area. CO Postma noticed a very small fire in the snow next to the hunter and thought this to be rather peculiar. While talking with the hunter, CO Postma detected the odor of marijuana. After further investigation with regards to the marijuana, it was determined that the hunter had a significant amount of marijuana. The individual also had an expired medical marijuana card. The small fire was an attempt to cover the smell of the marijuana. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Chris Lynch** located a litter pile and launched an investigation to see if he could reveal any potential suspects. After several follow up interviews, CO Lynch was able to develop a suspect, conduct an interview and obtain a confession. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Chris Lynch** was on patrol when he observed a large group of ORV operators in a closed area. When making contact with the group, one ORV with two occupants fled the scene. Contact with the rest of the group was made. Upon interviewing the individuals, no one seemed to know the individuals who fled on the ORV. Several tickets were issued and several warnings were given for no ORV licenses, riding with no helmets, riding double, operating in a closed area and no ORV certificates.
- **CO Chris Lynch** was following up on a fur harvester that was believed to have trapped a fisher without a kill tag. After interviewing the individual, enforcement action was taken for taking a fisher without a license.
- While on patrol, **CO Calvin Smith** observed an individual operating an ORV without a helmet. A stop was conducted and upon further investigation, it was also found that the operator had failed to license his machine. Law enforcement action was taken.
- **CPLs Shannon Van Patten, Marv Gerlach and COs Chris Lynch, Pat Hartsig and Calvin Smith** conducted a night time patrol in Delta county looking to enforce fishing violations. Activity level was slow.
- **Sgt. Jerrold Fitzgibbon, COs Pat Hartsig, and Chris Lynch** conducted the first part of a two-day hunter safety program held at the Escanaba field office. There were 27 students at the class along with several parents.
- **CO Mark Zitnik** stopped a vehicle for littering. It was observed that the tool box of the driver's vehicle had opened causing trash to exit from the box of the vehicle. A verbal warning was given for the debris and the driver was advised to pick up the trash.
- **CO Mark Zitnik** took advantage of some late season snow in Alger County for one last snowmobile patrol. He contacted several snowmobilers along with some eager ORV riders. Violations encountered on this patrol included fail to register snowmobiles, fail to obtain trail permits, open intox, and littering. There were 7 tickets issued on this patrol along with several verbal warnings.
- During a snowmobile patrol, **CO Mark Zitnik** had observed ORV tracks and several empty beer cans thrown out where the tracks had pulled over. Nearing the end of the day, CO Zitnik passed by an ORV and observed the driver holding a beer. As the officer went by, the driver threw the can into the woods. A short discussion with the officer and the driver retrieved the beer can and returned for the "consequences for his actions". Enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Pat Hartsig and Chris Lynch** responded to a domestic violence complaint in Escanaba that turned out to be a barricaded gunman. The COs assisted state and local agencies in closing roads to and from the area the gunman was located. The situation ended peacefully.
- **CO Pat Hartsig** received a call at home from the State Police post in Gladstone requesting help with marijuana grow operation in Garden. Officers had seized a trailer full of dried marijuana plants. The plants were transported in CO Hartsig's patrol truck due to the sheer quantity seized.
- While on routine patrol, **CO Robert Freeborn** and a Sault Tribal Officer located a subject operating an ORV without a helmet while transporting a passenger on the ORV that was not designated for a passenger. When talking with the suspect, he advised CO Freeborn that he had stopped him last summer as well. CO Freeborn asked the subject what it was for. The subject hung his head and stated for the same thing. Enforcement action was taken.

- **CO Robert Freeborn** and **Lt. Skip Hagy** checked a local boat launch for fishing activity and noticed an ice shack still on the shore that had not been removed from the parking lot. The COs were able to locate the owner and gave the subject until the end of the next day to remove the shack. CO Freeborn checked on the shack a few days later and it was removed.
- **CO Jeff Panich** contacted multiple anglers taking advantage of a new Splake season in the Hessel area. When one angler with several large Splake was asked for his fishing license, he quickly replied, "I haven't had a chance to get one yet". Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Jon Busken** and **Sgt. Mike Hammill** made contact with several snowmobilers taking advantage of the last snow of the season. One of the snowmobilers contacted showed an expired snowmobile trail sticker he had in his pocket. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Bobby Watson** and **Lt. Skip Hagy** worked the early Coho fishermen going out from Grand Marais. Most were having good success, although one bass boat that ventured out into Lake Superior took quite a beating as they returned in high winds had little success other than arriving safely back at the dock.