

Natural Resources Commission Meeting



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries
October 13, 2011

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

October 13, 2011

- Updates
 - Wildlife Division Chief Updates
 - Draft Elk Management Plan
 - Antler Point Restriction Update
 - Resident Canada Goose Update
 - Fisheries Division Chief Updates



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

October 13, 2011

- Director – For Information (Action in November)
 - 8 Fisheries Orders
- Director's Action
 - 3 Fisheries Orders
 - Regulations for coolwater species (2 Orders)
 - Commercial bait catchers reporting



Wildlife Division Update



Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
October 13, 2011



Updates

- Ashley Hippler
 - New Deer Program Biologist
- Spring turkey regulations
 - No changes for 2012
- Wolf Update



Thank You



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Draft Michigan Elk Management Plan



Brian Mastenbrook
NLP Region Field Operations Manager
October 13, 2011

Draft Michigan Elk Management Plan

- Process
- History of elk management in Michigan
- Elk management Goals, Strategies and Actions



Process

- Government to Government Tribal consultation
- Issue Scoping meetings
- Elk Management Advisory Team
- Wildlife Division Elk Work Group
- Plan writing
- Public Review and comment
- Director approval

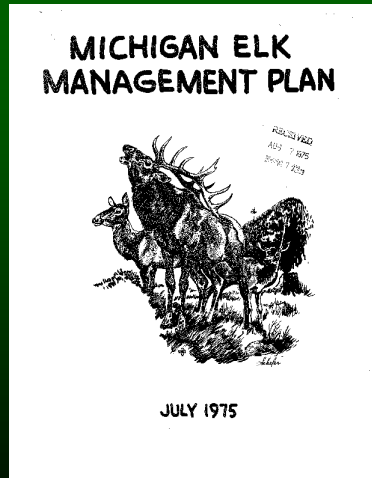


Michigan Elk Management History

- Late 1800s elk extirpated
- 1918 re-introduction success
- 1939 - 300-400 elk
- 1958 - 900-1000 elk
- 1964/65 – 1500? elk - elk hunt
- 1975 - 200 elk



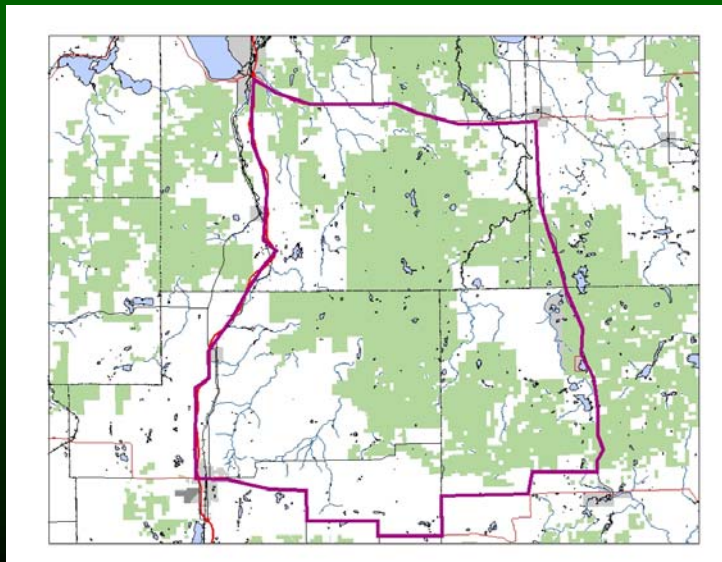
Michigan Elk Management History



- 1984 Elk Mgmt Plan
 - Population goal 600-800
 - Control numbers through recreational hunting
 - Maintain a viewable herd with high proportion of bulls



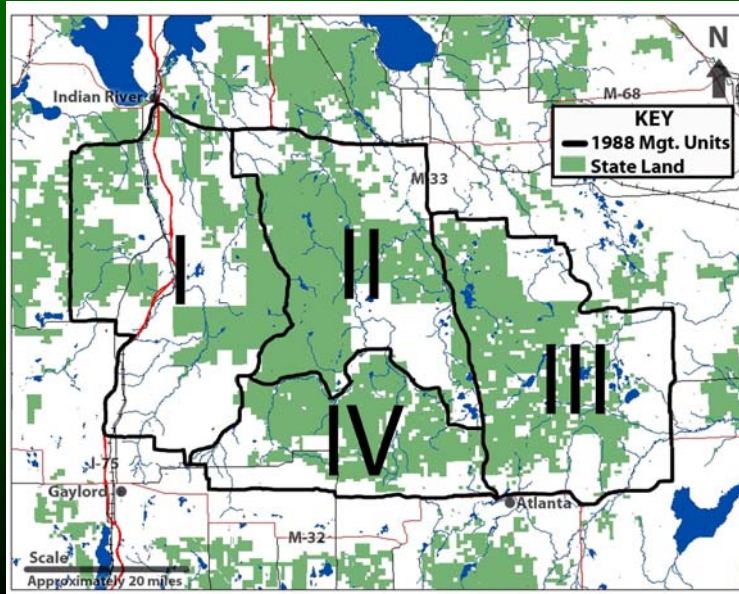
Michigan Elk Management History



- 1984 Elk Range

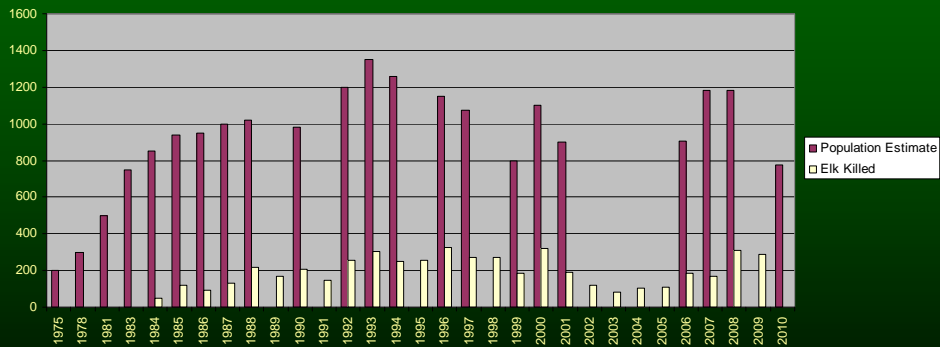


Michigan Elk Management History

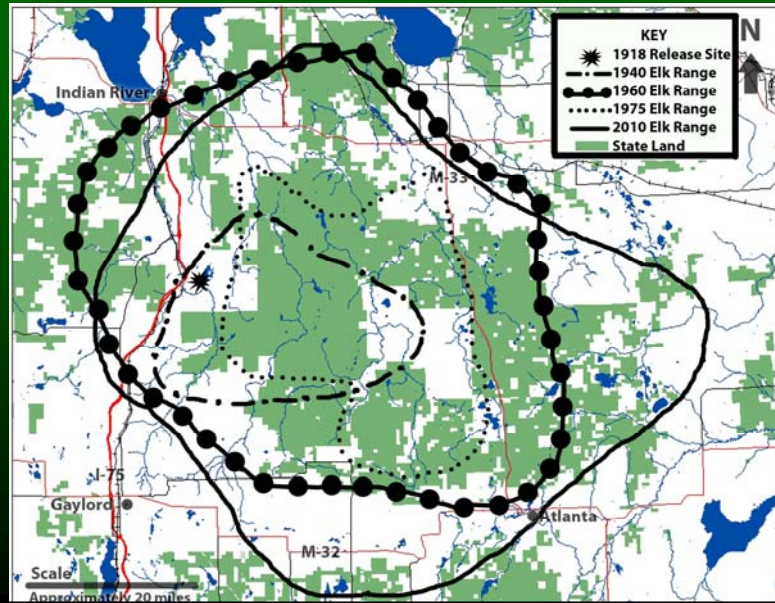


Michigan Elk Management History

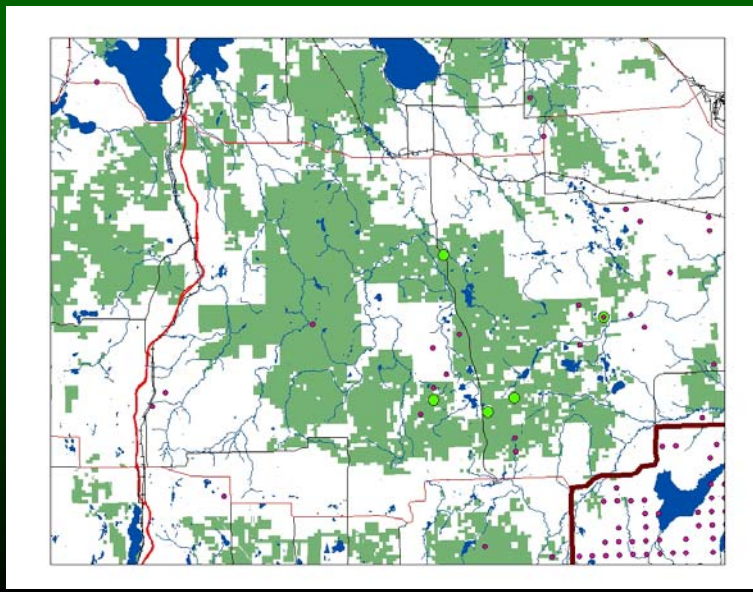
Michigan Elk Population Estimate and Harvest



Distribution Changes

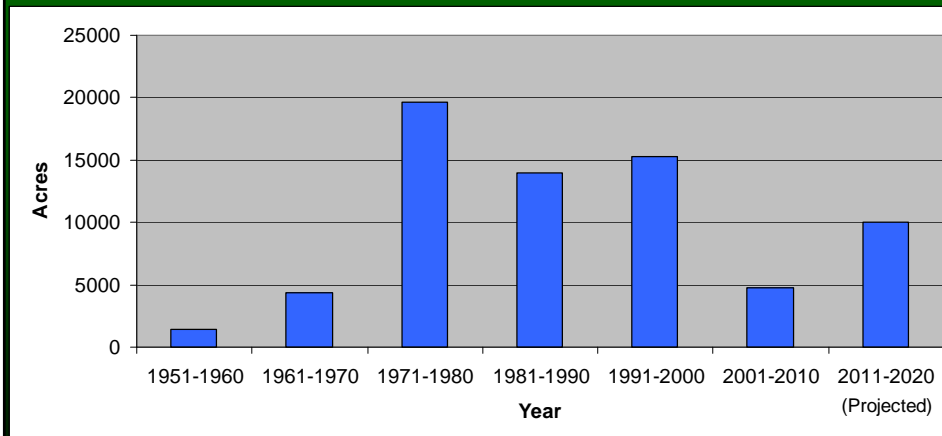


Disease Changes



Habitat Changes

Acres of 0-10 year old aspen in elk range



Landscape and Social Changes

- Increasing population
- Decrease in parcel size on private land
- Concern with elk-vehicle collisions
- More and different recreational pressures on state land

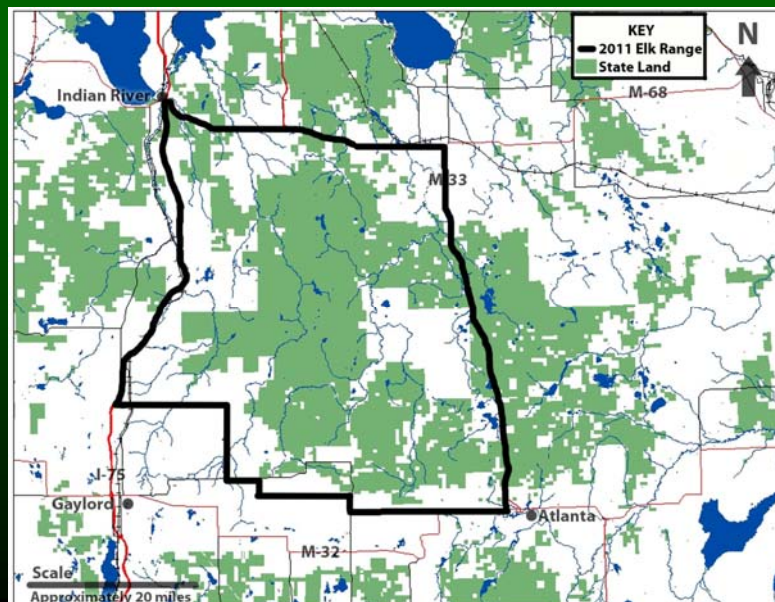


Tribal Involvement in Elk Management

- Elk range is within 1836 treaty-ceded area
- Department obligated to consult with tribes



2011 Michigan Elk Range



Elk Management Goals

- Goal 1. Manage for a sustainable elk population in balance with the habitat
- Goal 2. Use hunting as the primary method to control elk numbers, herd composition and distribution
- Goal 3. Enhance Public understanding of elk in Michigan



Goal 1. Manage for a sustainable elk population in balance with the habitat

- Strategy 1.1 Focus Habitat Management efforts within the elk management area where benefits are greatest and will have the greatest impact
 - Action 1.1.1 Forest Management
 - Action 1.1.2 Opening Management
 - Action 1.1.3 Private Land Management



Goal 1. Manage for a sustainable elk population in balance with the habitat

- Strategy 1.2 Monitor elk numbers, distribution and habitat
 - Action 1.2.1 Monitor elk numbers and distribution using the best available methods
 - Action 1.2.2 Use annual inventory data to determine habitat status of primary range

2011-2021 Goal Range = 500-900



Goal 1. Manage for a sustainable elk population in balance with the habitat

- Strategy 1.3 Monitor elk herd health
 - Action 1.3.1 Measure elk health parameters



Goal 2. Use hunting as the primary method to control elk numbers, herd composition and distribution

- Strategy 2.1 Facilitate positive interactions among hunters, the Department, private landowners and hunting guides
 - Action 2.1.1 Address private landowner conflicts with elk
 - Action 2.1.2 Continue and improve interactions between the Department and elk guides
 - Action 2.1.3 Increase hunter education efforts



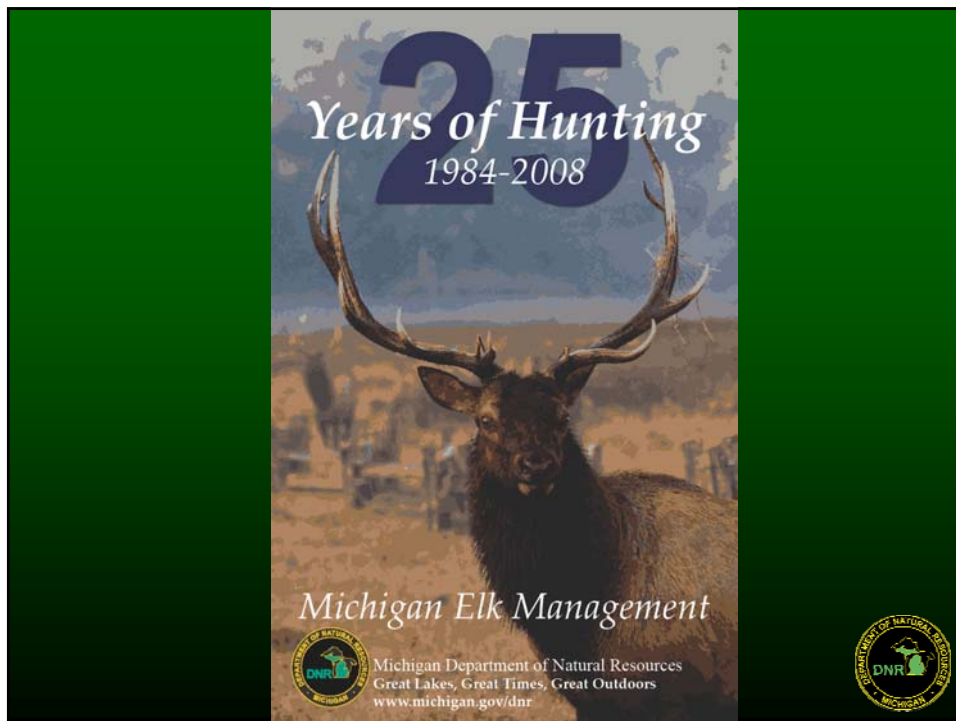
Goal 3. Enhance public understanding of elk management in Michigan

- Strategy 3.1 Coordinate with partners to develop and implement an elk communication strategy to ensure consistent and accurate information is available to the public concerning elk management
 - Action 3.1.1 Maintain or increase viewing opportunities on public land
 - Action 3.1.2 Support educational opportunities for staff and partners related to elk and elk management
 - Action 3.1.3 Ensure stakeholder engagement related to elk management decisions are considered and outcomes communicated
 - Action 3.1.4 Measure economic and social factors related to elk



Plan Monitoring and Review

- 10 year plan
- Annual Report



Thank You



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Antler Point Restriction Process



Brent Rudolph
Deer and Elk Program Leader
October 13, 2011



Quality Deer Management

Antler Point Restrictions in Context

“Quality Deer Management (QDM)... typically involves the protection of young bucks... combined with an adequate harvest of female deer to maintain a healthy population in balance with existing habitat conditions and landowner desires.”

(<http://www.qdma.com/who-we-are/what-is-qdm>)



Quality Deer Management

Antler Point Restrictions in Context

“Quality Deer Management (QDM)... typically involves the protection of young bucks... combined with an adequate harvest of female deer to maintain a healthy population in balance with existing habitat conditions and landowner desires.”

**Antler Point Restriction (APR):
one tool to address one
component of QDM**

(<http://www.qdma.com/who-we-are/what-is-qdm>)



Antler Point Restrictions

- An APR is understandable and enforceable
- Proportion of bucks and young bucks protected can be predicted using check station data
- Best suited to Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Peninsula



Antler Point Restrictions

- 1999 Michigan APR proposal guidelines
 - Workgroup of stakeholder organizations, Michigan State University (MSU), Wildlife and Law Enforcement Divisions
- Natural Resources Commission retains full authority over implementation and retention decisions
 - 18 surveys to establish or retain restrictions were conducted 2001 – 2007
- Some proposals divisive; process labor-intensive
 - Moratorium established April 2006



Concerns and Opportunities

- Recent emphasis of QDM proponents on cooperatives
 - More effective voluntary guidelines than APR
 - Neighbors reinforce habits (especially antlerless harvest)
 - Become networks of data/observation sharing
- Recent Wildlife Division emphasis on voluntary efforts
 - Landowner Certification Program
 - Memorandum of Understanding with associated organizations
 - Research: impacts of selective harvest and outcomes on deer management cooperatives
- Process is unique in providing direct opportunity to engage regulations-setting



APR Work Group Process

- Hunters & organization representatives
- Meetings aligned with NRC dates
 - October 7, 2010
 - November 4, 2010
 - December 9, 2010
- Staff provided detailed background
- Group recommended changes
- Intended reporting date of May 2011



APR Work Group Recommendations

- Survey of support
 - Retain minimum 50% response rate
 - With one strenuous objection, retain 66% hunter and landowner support (objection suggested reducing to 60% support)
 - Responses: “yes, no” (eliminate “no opinion, don’t care”)
 - Retain measure of support to maintain APR after 5 years
- Cost for sponsoring organization
 - Wide disagreement over \$2,000 per proposal
 - Could bill for full survey cost (likely \$6,000 – 7,000)
 - Increased fee could be prohibitive



APR Work Group Consent

- Areas to consider
 - New proposal for failed area only if sponsoring group demonstrates logical reason for different outcome
 - Larger areas will aid in evaluation, reduce potential confusion over potential “patchwork” regulations
 - Need for engaged sponsoring organizations precludes having a rigid framework
- Public notice and meetings
 - Wildlife Division will attend and provide information about the proposal and intended outcome
 - No longer print in hunting and trapping digest



Wildlife Division Recommendations

- Eliminate landowner sampling in survey
 - Did not influence any prior survey outcome
- If multiple proposals submitted for single region, select 1 to evaluate
 - Former limit: 2 per Management Unit
- Do not implement where antler development is unreliable indicator of age
 - Most of southern Michigan
- Report proposals received, evaluation plan to NRC



Decisions Needed

- Should the moratorium be lifted?
- Retain 66% margin of support?
- Eliminate landowner sampling in survey?
- Adjust \$2,000 contribution?
- Approve criteria (e.g., size, limited number) for selecting proposals to evaluate?
- Evaluation of Northwest Lower Peninsula proposal?



Thanks to Work Group Members!

Mr. Albert Almy – Michigan Farm Bureau
Mr. Jason Blitchok – Michigan Hunters Alliance
Mr. Michael Strunk – Michigan Hunters Alliance (Alternate)
Mr. Lynn Gould – Mid-Michigan Sportsmen's Alliance
Mr. Ron Shaver – Mid-Michigan Sportsmen's Alliance (Alternate)
Mr. Aaron Fulton – Quality Deer Management Association, Mackinac Chapter
Mr. John Knevel – Quality Deer Management Association, State Chapter
Mr. Leon Hank – Quality Deer Management Association, State Chapter (Alternate)
Dr. Ronald Lanford – Safari Club International, Lansing Area Chapter
Mr. James DeClerck – Saginaw Field and Stream Club
Mr. Maurice DeYoung – Sportspersons Ministries International
Mr. Robert Walker – United Sportsmen's Alliance
Mr. Tom Lounsbury – United Sportsmen's Alliance (Alternate)
Mr. Al Ettenhofer – Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance and UP Whitetails Association
Mr. Dale McNamee – Upper Peninsula Sportsmen's Alliance (Alternate)
Mr. Craig Dicus – Cheboygan County
Mr. Ricky Loper – VanBuren County
Mr. Leland Reed – Manistee County
Mr. Curtis Stone – Livingston County
Mr. James Sweeney – Grand Traverse County
Mr. Richard Taylor – Baraga County



Thank You!



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Table 1. Deer Management Units (DMUs) for which Wildlife Division conducted surveys to measure landowner and hunter support for implementing or retaining Antler Point Restrictions

DMUs	County	Year Surveyed	Percent support for the proposal		Type of regulation proposed	NRC action
			Land-owners	Hunters		
152, 155, 252	Alger, Dickinson, Delta and Marquette ¹	2001	68	73	3 pt on a side	Regulations Enacted
122	Iron, Menominee, and Dickinson ¹	2001	71	80	3 pt on a side	Regulations Enacted
032, 076, and 079	Huron, Sanilac, and Tuscola	2002	36	39	4 pt on a side	No Action
045	Leelanau	2002	63	66	3 pt on a side	Regulations Enacted ²
017	Chippewa and Mackinac ¹	2002	53	57	3 pt on a side	No Action
135	Iosco ¹	2002	81	74	Continuation of 2 pt	Regulations Continued ³
245	South Fox Island	2002	100	74	Continuation of 2 pt	Regulations Continued ³
035 and 135	Iosco	2003	57	59	3 pt on a side	No Action
053	Mason	2003	49	47	3 pt on a side	No Action
059	Montcalm	2003	40	44	4 pt on a side	No Action
117	Drummond Island	2003	77	81	Continuation of 2 pt	Regulations Continued ³
117	Drummond Island	2003	62	48	3 pt on a side	No Action
118	Clare ¹	2003	56	57	Continuation of 3 pt	Regulations Discontinued ³
017	Chippewa and Mackinac ¹	2005	59	58	3 pt on a side	No Action
Entire Upper Peninsula	Except Drummond Island	2005	63	61	3 pt on a side	No Action
152, 155, 252	Alger, Dickinson, Delta and Marquette ¹	2006	60	52	3 pt on a side	Regulations Discontinued
122	Iron, Menominee, and Dickinson ¹	2006	76	74	3 pt on a side	Regulations Continued
045	Leelanau	2007	72	72	Continuation of 3 pt	Regulations Continued

¹ portions of these counties included in DMU indicated

² delayed implementation of restriction until 2003 to collect additional baseline biodata

³ restriction initiated by NRC action prior to formal process being established



2011 Resident Canada Goose Program Update



Barbara Avers, Waterfowl & Wetland Specialist, Wildlife Division
 Tim Wilson, Wildlife Biologist, USDA Wildlife Services
 October 13, 2011



Goal of Resident Canada Goose Program

- Have a Canada goose population that provides sufficient recreational opportunity (including aesthetics) while minimizing human-goose conflicts



Issues

- Increased Human-Goose Conflicts
 - Urbanization
 - Tolerance appears to be decreasing
- Program Capacity
 - Limited release sites
 - Limited state resources (money and people)
- Management Conflicts
 - Differing values
 - Population distribution issue



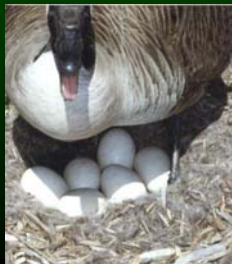
Background

- Significant program changes in 2010
- Continue to reduce Wildlife Division time and costs
- Partial outsourcing of program to USDA Wildlife Services in 2011
 - Processing of applications for nest destruction and round-ups
 - Development of database



2011 Nest Destruction Program Preliminary Results

- Expansion of nest/egg program to 14 new sites in 2011
- Nest destruction permits slightly more than last year (379)
- # eggs destroyed down slightly (7,065)



2011 Round-up Program Results

- Sites to relocate all geese (space for 6,530)
 - No killing and processing
- Contract for operation of holding pens
- Round up permits slightly less than last year (201)
- # geese rounded up declined 8% (5,996)



2011 Program Revenue-Fees

- \$628 for holding pen contract
- \$5,200 for contractor fees
 - 6 all goose activities @ \$500
 - 2 nest/egg only @ \$200
 - 3 transport only @ \$300
 - 3 self-transport @ \$300
- \$40,100 for round-up fees
 - 120 businesses @ \$200
 - 80 lakes @ \$200
 - 1 single residence @ \$100

Total of \$45,928



2011 Program Costs

- Total \$49,521
 - \$25,911 for 719 hours of DNR staff time
 - \$18,154 for USDA Wildlife Services
 - \$5,456 for contaminant testing on 20 birds
- ~ 93% of program costs covered by fees



2012 Program Plans

- 9 new sites eligible for nest/egg expansion
- Increase USDA Wildlife Services involvement
 - Continue processing nest destruction and round-up applications
 - Coordinate relocations
 - Data entry and reporting
- Contract holding pens
- Relocate geese to suitable sites
 - Kill and process surplus



Thank You



Fisheries Division Update



Jim Dexter, Acting Chief
Fisheries Division
October 13, 2011

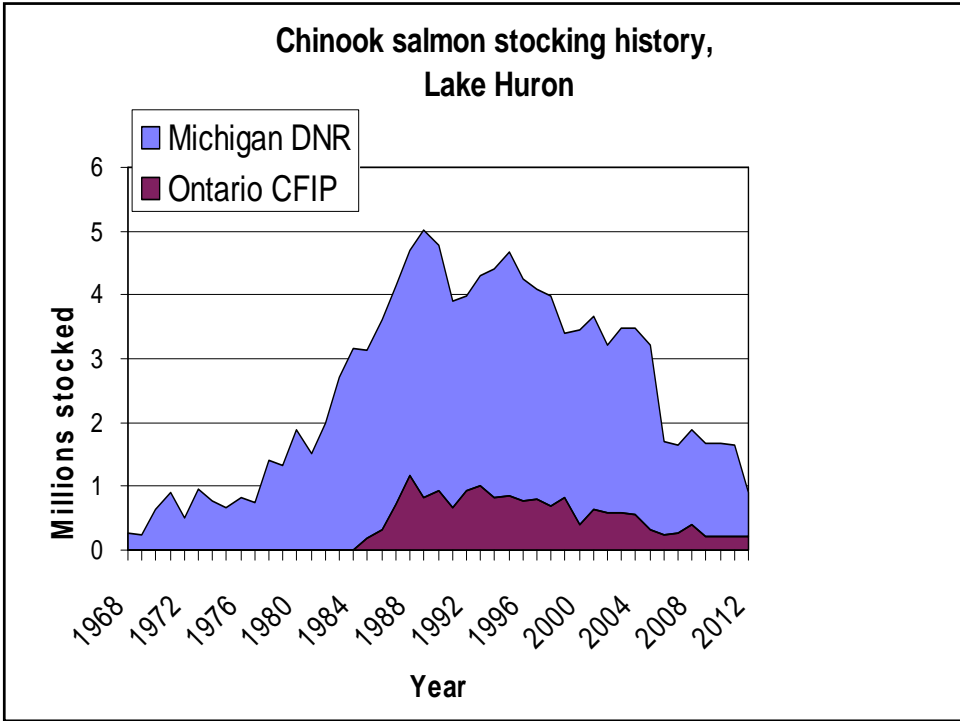


- Lake Huron
- Lake Sturgeon
- Fishing Reports and the internet









What else are we doing?

- Atlantic salmon trials
- Enhanced steelhead management
- Brown trout
- Cisco trials
- Lake Huron Citizen Fishery Advisory Committee



Weekly Fishing Report – Email Version

- Receive Weekly Fishing Report through email
 - Sign-up through Fisheries Division homepage
- Opt-in system
- Launched on September 8, 2011
- Current Subscribers = 954 (as of 10/04/11)

Michigan Department of Natural Resources

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Weekly Fishing Report Email Sign-Up

Get the DNR's weekly fishing reports sent to your email and have the best tips and tricks from the field, right at your fingertips! Simply join the Weekly Fishing Report email list and we'll take care of the rest.

Enter your email address below, click on "Go" and then you'll need to check the box next to "Weekly Fishing Report". Then click on "Save Profile Changes" and you'll start getting updates.

DNR Weekly Fishing Report email list



Weekly Fishing Tip – Website & Email

- Weekly tip for anglers in Michigan
- Launched on September 22, 2011
- Available online and sent to Weekly Fishing Report email subscribers
- Archived weekly to provide visitors ready access
- Pulls fishing tips from industry representatives – additional outreach will be made in coming months to obtain more



Fisheries Division Social Media Exposure

- Fisheries-specific messages started August – events, activities, announcements, etc.
- 8 of 21 messages provided have been shared via Facebook and Twitter to date

facebook

twitter



Kalamazoo River Restoration

Restore a state threatened species

Remnant
Population is Low

Egg and Larval
Survival is
Intermittent



Lake Sturgeon Public Release

September 24, 2011

587 People
106 Sturgeon Released
by Children Only



870 eggs collected with
drift nets
430 larvae reared at facility



Lake Sturgeon Public Release



40 kids fished
6 tours with 362 individuals



Thank You



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Fisheries Orders

For Information Only

- FO-200
- FO-203
- FO-204
- FO-205
- FO-210
- FO-216
- FO-219
- FO-244



FO- 200: Statewide Trout, Salmon, Whitefish and Lake Herring Regulations

- Removal of Johnson Cr. (Wayne Co.) from GRS to Type 1
- Two stream Type class changes
- One stream boundary modification
- Two stream removals
- Seven lake removals
- MH-1 Lake trout



FO- 203: Waters Closed to the Take of Minnows for Personal Use

- Addition of Kent Lake (Livingston/Oakland) due to recent findings of Koi herpes virus
- Includes tributaries to Kent Lake and the Huron River upstream to Hubbell Millpond Dam



FO-204: Spawning Closures

- Clinton Creek, Presque Isle County
- Lower Platte River weir, Benzie County
- Pere Marquette River, Mason County



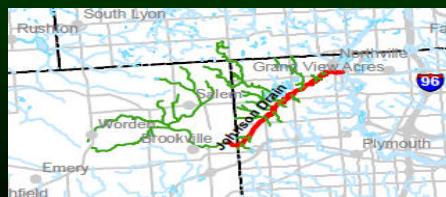
FO- 205: Michigan-Wisconsin Boundary Water Regulations

- Daily possession limit of 10
 - Lake Whitefish
 - Cisco



FO- 210: Designated Trout Streams

- Adding Two new streams, Cedar and Dynamite Creek, Cheboygan County
- Removing three streams
 - Flowerfield and Little Swan Creek, SW Michigan
 - Paint Creek, Washtenaw County
- Dowagiac Creek, Cass County boundary change



FO- 216: Regulations for the taking of Minnows for Commercial Use

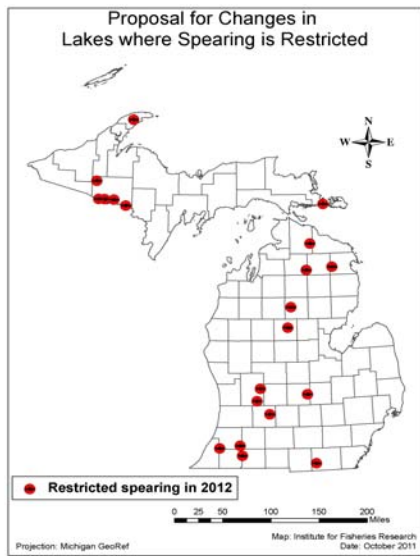
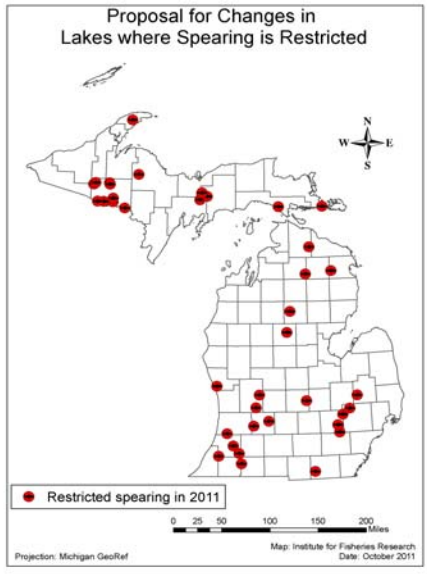
- Prohibiting take from Kent Lake (Livingston/Oakland) due to recent finding of Koi herpes virus
- Includes tributaries to Kent Lake and the Huron River upstream to Hubbell Millpond Dam
- Opens Lake Superior waters

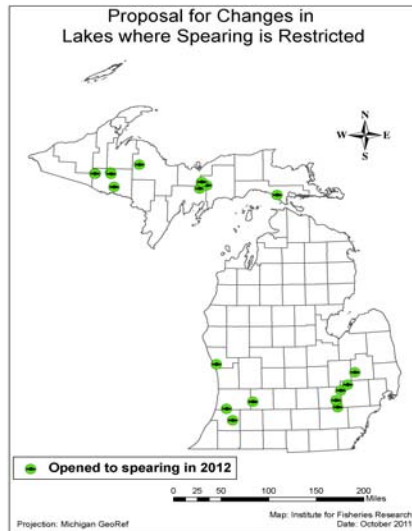


FO- 219: Spearing Regulations - Statewide

- Expanding the season on many waters
- Expanding the waters bodies open
- Expanding the type of gear that can be used
- Expanding the list of species
- Elimination of many restrictions and exceptions = **simplification**







Justifications for Closures

- Musky broodstock (3)
- Backup musky broodstock (3)
- Protect stocked musky (2)
- Protect stocked musky and low pike populations (3)
- Low level natural populations of musky (5)
- Reduce harvest on pike (2)
- Closed by statute (1)



FO- 244: Guidelines for the Selection of Quality Non-Trout Fishing Lakes

- Adding Upper Bushman Lake, Oakland Co.
- Well balanced fish community
- First non-trout fishing lake in SE Michigan



Thank You



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