



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

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This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as a supplement to verbal reports that will be distributed to the Western UPCAC at the January 12, 2015 meeting in Baraga, MI.

Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator: Stacy Welling Haughey

Public Meetings

January 12	Western U.P. Citizens Advisory Council Meeting – Baraga Lakeside Inn
January 13	2015 Recreation Grant Workshop, Baraga Lakeside Inn (517-284-7268)
January 14	2015 Recreation Grant Workshop, Civic Center, Escanaba (517-284-7268)
January 15	2015 Recreation Grant Workshop, Little Bear East Arena, St. Ignace (517-284-7268)
January 15	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Lansing
February 5	Eastern U.P. Citizens Advisory Council Meeting – Comfort Inn, Newberry
February 12	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Lansing

U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities

January 16	Van Riper State Park – Lighted Snowshoe Trail
January 17	Porkies – Lantern Lit Ski & Snowshoe Trail & Guided Snowshoe Hike
January 24	Porkies – Lantern Lit Ski & Snowshoe Trail & Guided Snowshoe Hike
January 31	Porkies – Lantern Lit Ski & Snowshoe Trail & Guided Snowshoe Hike

Upcoming U.P. Recreation/Sporting Shows

January 17	Michigan Nature Association Snowshoe at Black Creek Nature Sanctuary, Calumet, www.michigannature.org
January 21	Michigan Nature Association - Snowshoe Hike at Handford Memorial, Deerton, www.michigannature.org
January 23-25	Noquemanon Ski Marathon, Marquette, www.noquemanon.com
January 30-31	3 rd Annual Ironline Sled Dog Race/Fat Bike Race, Iron River, www.theironline.com
January 31	Frosty 5K & Merry Mile, Iron Mountain, www.dicsami.org

Ski Grooming Funding - Response to Discussion at the December 1, 2014 Meeting

1. Where do cross country ski grooming dollars come from?

Most pathways on state forest lands are groomed with donations, grants or volunteers.

There are 3 pathways that have traditionally been funded with Recreation Improvement Fund (RIF) grants: VASA, Ogemaw Hills and Blueberry Ridge pathway.

In 2007, general fund dollars that supported state forest recreation pathways was reduced, and impacted the budget for the number of pathways that could be groomed. Trails that had been groomed using grant or donation dollars or by volunteers own efforts continued to be groomed, if there was enough funding.

Grooming in State Parks is done with Park Improvement Funds (PIF) and Park Endowment Funds (PEF).

2. Internally can we utilize those funds across division lines, for example can we use recreation dollars on forest management lands, if not, what would have to happen to make that happen?

Funding in Divisions is typically restricted. Park Improvement Funds, Park Endowment Fund dollars can only be used for recreation on state park lands.

Forest recreation funds can only be used for recreation on state forest lands. Recreation Improvement Fund grants are competitive and applied for annually for specific trail projects or work. Snowmobile funds can only be used to maintain the snowmobile trails.

Currently, the appropriation amount for Parks and Recreation Division (PRD) is totally spent each fiscal year. Therefore, PRD would need an increase in appropriation to consider options to “make that happen.”

3. How can the public get involved to volunteer and partner to groom?

We highly encourage groups to volunteer. We have been able re-open several trails due to volunteer groups stepping up. Some examples are: Ocqueoc pathway, Tisdale Triangle pathway and the Mason Tract. Of these, Ocqueoc is the only trail that has a donation tube. The other two trails are done and funded by volunteer organizations. In addition, the volunteers provide their own equipment to groom the pathways.

The other factor to consider is plowing of the corresponding parking lot. Like grooming, this is done in various ways from partners to staff plowing the lots.

First contact is made to the Forest Unit Manager for the pathway. He/she will contact the corresponding State Park Supervisor. Together they will work with the volunteers to develop a contract that meets their respective needs. There are many examples of this and we can certainly shepherd a group of volunteers to groom additional pathways.

All Division Staff Meetings in January – Marquette & Sault Ste. Marie

January 26, 2015 – Northern Michigan University

January 27, 2015 – Lake Superior State University

December 2014 Natural Resources Commission Meeting

AGENDA

Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee

1. Presentation on the Outdoor Adventure Center
2. Presentation on the Brighton Recreation Area General Management Plan
3. Youth Program Presentations on:
 - a. Stepping Stones
 - b. State Park Interpretive Programs
 - c. Explorer Program
 - d. Visitor Center Operations
4. Summer Youth Employment Program
5. Parks and Recreation General Updates

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

1. Fisheries Division Update
2. Wildlife Division Update
 - a. Snowshoe Hare Project Results

- b. Plum Creek Research Project

NRC Committee of the Whole

1. Director’s Report
 - a. Oil & Gas Auction Results
 - b. Island Lake Sand Reclamation
 - c. Trails Update
 - d. Natural Resources Trust Fund Board – Working with Foundations
 - e. Preliminary Deer Report
 - f. Graymont Recommendation
 - g. Wildlife Council Update
 - h. Nonresident Fish License
 - i. President’s Award-Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs
 - j. Law Enforcement Update
 - k. Hunter Education Instructor of the Year Award
2. Legislative Report (see below)

Thomas L. Washington Lifetime Commitment to Conservation Award: Bill Rustem

Public Appearances Before the NRC

Natural Resources Commission – Action

1. Approval of Minutes: October 9, 2014 Natural Resources Commission meeting
2. Approval of Minutes: November 6, 2014 Natural Resources Commission meeting
3. Salvage Regulations for Game Killed by Collision with a Motor Vehicle, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 16 of 2014
4. Elk Management Unit Technical Change, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 17 of 2014

Director’s Action

1. Silver Lake State Park Off-Road Vehicle Scramble Area
2. Oil and Gas Lease Auction
3. Land Transactions
 - a. Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Newberry Management Unit – Chippewa County, Land Transaction Case #20130254

NRC Meeting Summary by Ed Golder

The Natural Resources Commission met in Lansing today. Major actions approved by the Commission:

[An amendment to the Wildlife Conservation Order to change the rules on salvage regulations for game killed by motor vehicle.](#) The amendment conforms to a new law that changes the rules on salvage regulations for certain species. The new regulations allow a driver to keep a game carcass by reporting to the Department or maintaining a written record of the accident.

[An amendment the Wildlife Conservation Order to make a technical change in Elk Hunting season.](#) The change corrects a clerical error in the definition of an Elk Management Unit.

Director Creagh was unable to be at today’s meeting, but plans to give his approval in the next few days to:

[The results of the Oct. 29 Oil and Gas Lease Auction.](#) The department auctioned more than 152,000 acres of oil and gas leasing rights on public lands in 16 counties. The auction raised nearly \$3 million for expansion and improvement of public recreation in Michigan.

[An order allowing early supplemental feeding of deer in the Upper Peninsula](#). Supplemental feeding of deer is usually allowed on private land in the northern U.P. counties along Lake Superior beginning in early January and in the southern counties if accumulated snowfall meets established minimum depths by mid-January. However, with early snow affecting the U.P. Director Creagh will issue an emergency order allowing feeding across the entire peninsula to begin Dec. 15.

The director delayed a decision on a proposed new voucher system for ORV users at the popular scramble area at Silver Lake State Park. The system is designed to be more customer friendly and to protect public safety by reducing the long lines that form for the scramble area during peak use periods. Parks will review recent comments from the public before the director announces a final decision on the new system.

In addition, Director Creagh will approve five land transactions.

Those were the major decisions from today's meeting. The day started with a meeting of the State Parks Advisory Committee.

Vicki Anthes of Parks gave an update on the [Outdoor Adventure Center](#) in Detroit, the educational center with exhibits, displays and hands-on simulators that will serve as a gateway to the outdoors for people across Michigan, especially the urban audience of Southeast Michigan. The department plans to open the 42,000-square-foot center next year sometime.

Deb Jensen from Parks presented information on the Brighton Recreation Area Management Plan. Brighton is close to a large population center and sees nearly a quarter million visitors a year. The area covers nearly 5,000 acres and has a wide variety of recreational opportunities, including 41 miles of trails, a riding stable, nine lakes with four boating access sites, five campgrounds and five rustic cabins. The management plan will seek to expand recreational opportunities at this well-used recreation area. The committee unanimously adopted a resolution recommending approval of the Brighton Recreation Area General Management Plan.

Gary Williams from Parks told the committee about the Stepping Stones Program, which offers urban audiences educational experiences in Michigan State Parks. In 2014, the program served more than 3,000 youth and 618 adults with programs ranging from archery to nature exploration to camping to fishing.

Jon Spieles from the Marketing Division talked about the Michigan State Park Interpretation and Education programs. The programs incorporate a variety of focuses, including park interpretation, recreation programming and recruitment and retention of hunters and anglers. In 2014 those programs served more than 111,000 people. More than 300,000 people have attended our visitor centers. Jon talked about the importance of these encounters to educate the public regarding a range of natural resources issues, such as the threat posed by invasive species or how the department manages Michigan's wolf population.

Murdock Jemerson from Parks gave a report to the committee on the Summer Youth Employment Initiative, which connects at-risk youth with natural resources in Flint, Saginaw, Pontiac and Detroit. This past summer was the third summer the department has operated the program. The initiative works through non-profit agencies to engage young people in the outdoors and teach them workforce skills. This year the program served nearly 850 youth, ages 16-19.

Next came a meeting of the Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries. Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter updated the committee on the St. Joseph River [Berrien Springs Fish Cam](#), located in the viewing chamber of the fish ladder there. The Carbon Media Group put in the camera at no cost to the state, allowing anglers and the general public to watch fish move through. Jim spoke, too, about the department's 2014 Muskellunge Stocking program. The department stocked 36,000 fall fingerlings in 23 waters in 18 counties.

Jim reported on a Web-based system the department is using that allows fishing tournament organizers to schedule events. The system, which was new last year, allows the department to collect data and reduce conflicts among users. Fisheries plans to broaden use of this system in the coming season.

Next, Wildlife Chief Russ Mason talked about an interim order from the director to allow supplemental feeding in the UP (referenced above). Brent Rudolph of Wildlife and Chad Stewart, the department's new deer specialist, reported to the committee on the preliminary results of the 2014 deer season. There was a 6.6 percent decrease compared to last year in the number of licensed hunters during this year's firearm season. Activity at check stations was down. Brent estimates that UP harvest was down between 30 percent and 40 percent compared to 2013. Northern Lower was down about 10 percent year-to-year. Southern Lower was down about 5 percent.

Michigan is not alone in this reality. Back-to-back harsh winters have affected deer harvest numbers throughout the Midwest. Wisconsin, for instance, was down 39 percent in northern counties. Minnesota saw similar reductions. Our hunter survey will provide more precise information in coming months. The department continues to respond to concerns about the deer population with a variety of tools, including accelerated supplemental feeding.

Gary Roloff from Michigan State University reported to the committee on snowshoe hare in Michigan. A study conducted by Gary and his colleagues looked at the effect of climate change and other factors on snowshoe hare. One problem the typically prolific hare faces is that its protective white winter coloring is less effective against predators when there is no snow cover. The study found that a combination of climate change and habitat changes has reduced the population in Michigan by causing increased predation.

Bill Scullon from Wildlife and Charlie Becker of Plum Creek Timber told the committee about a cooperative program between the department and Plum Creek to manage deer wintering complexes. The program is an innovative partnership between wildlife managers and industry forest managers to find solutions that benefit both.

During the Committee of the Whole, Mary Uptigrove of Minerals Management updated the commission on the Oct. 29 Oil and Gas Lease Auction (results above). Mary and Parks Chief Ron Olson told the committee about the Island State Recreation Area reclamation project, which is moving forward.

Marketing and Outreach Chief Kristin Phillips told the commission that the Michigan Wildlife Council is currently seeking bids from firms to conduct a statewide information campaign to tell the public about the important role hunting and fishing play in natural resources management. The council hopes to select a firm in the next five months.

Forestry Chief Bill O'Neill told the commission about an incident this summer involving one of his divisions' fire officers. Fire Officer Bryan Russell was on his way to work at Yankee Springs Recreation Area on July 15 when he saw smoke pouring out of the top story of a home along his route. He called local firefighters then knocked on the door and found a man who did not know his home was on fire. The man told Bryan his two young grandchildren were upstairs. Bryan made his way through the smoke and rescued the two children, ages 3 and 5. The Michigan Association of Fire Chiefs honored Bryan with their President's Award for going above and beyond the call of duty.

Law Enforcement Chief Gary Hagler told the commission about recent successful investigations by his division, including an incident involving [the illegal shipping of uncertified bait to Michigan](#), and [an elk poaching case in Montmorency County](#). The chief informed the commission that LED has 44 recruits signed up for a January Conservation Officer Academy. Twenty-three new COs graduated from an academy earlier this year. The chief said that the 2014 firearm deer season was one of the safest on record. In November, there were only two reported hunter injury incidents, neither fatal. In fact for all of 2014 there have been only nine reported hunting injury incidents, all non-fatal.

The chief presented to Warren Meyer of Cheboygan the Hunter Education Instructor of the Year Award. Warren started teaching firearm safety in 1947 and has been a certified hunter education instructor since 1998. He participates in no fewer than three classes a year. Mr. Meyer is a World War II veteran who served his country in Germany and France.

The Commission then presented its first ever Thomas L. Washington Lifetime Commitment to Conservation Award. The award is named for the late Tom Washington, a Michigan conservation giant and member of the Michigan Conservation Hall of Fame and the Environmental Hall of Fame. The award went to Bill Rustem, who recently retired as director of strategy for Gov. Rick Snyder. Bill has been a long-time and passionate advocate for natural resources in Michigan, beginning with his work in the administration of Gov. Bill Milliken. Among other achievements, Bill Rustem spearhead the Michigan bottle bill in 1976 and in 1984 he coordinated the statewide campaign for the constitutional amendment that created the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund. Bill, a passionate hunter and angler, said he was "very humbled" by the award, especially because it was named after Tom Washington, "a great person who was a friend of mine and a mentor."

This will be the last NRC report of 2014. I hope you and your families have a wonderful holiday season -- including some time to rest and relax -- and a happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you at the upcoming all-employee meetings we'll be holding around the state beginning in late January. -Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

December 2014 Legislative Update - Trevor VanDyke , Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

SB 78 – Prohibits the Designation of Biodiversity Areas – Sen. Casperson

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to prohibit the DNR and the NRC from promulgating or enforcing a rule or order that designates or classifies an area of land, specifically for the purpose of achieving or maintain biological diversity. The bill also eliminates the conservation of biological diversity from the DNR's duties regarding forest management, and requires the DNR to balance its management activities with economic values.

- This bill is before the House Committee on Natural Resources.
- The Administration has not taken a position on this legislation.

SB's 795-797 & 799-800 – Increases Penalties for Prohibited Species Violations and Adds Additional Prohibited Species – Sen's. Kowall, Meekhof, Pavlov, Green, Casperson, Walker, Moolenaar, and Hansen

These bills seek to amend various sections of the Michigan Compiled Laws to increase penalties for violations of introduction of prohibited, restricted, genetically engineered or nonnative aquatic species and also includes "insect" and "aquatic plant" in the prohibited list. To include additional criminal penalties; forfeiture of property; suspension or revocation of licenses or permits.

- These bills are before the full House for consideration.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

SBs 926 & 927 – Prohibits the Use of Aerial Drones for the Taking of Game – Sen's. Casperson and Pavlov

These bills seek to amend Sections 40102, 40111c, and 40112 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to prohibit the use of drones for the taking game or to interfere with or harass another individual who is hunting.

- These bills are before the full House for consideration.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

SB 1056 – Provides for the Conveyance of Certain Property in Calhoun County after Acquisition from the Federal Government – Sen. Nofs

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act by adding Section 2120a to require the Department to locate current de facto owners of certain lands in Calhoun County and convey a portion of the property to these de facto owners.

- This bill is before the full House for consideration.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

HB 5226 – Expands Crop Damage Permits to Include Bear– Rep. McBroom

This bill seeks to amend Section 40114 of the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to include bear as a species for which a crop damage permit can be issued. The bill establishes specific deadlines for responding to a request for a permit and also requires that only a person with a valid bear hunting license shall be allowed to shoot the nuisance bear.

- This bill is before the full Senate for consideration.

- The Administration is neutral this legislation.

HB 5563 – Creates a Disposal Process for Abandoned Vessels, ORVs and Snowmobiles – Rep. LaFontaine

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to create a process for the disposal of abandoned vessels, ORVs and snowmobiles.

- This bill is before the full Senate for consideration.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

HB 5952 – Removes the Use Restriction on Property Conveyed to Commerce Township Snowmobiles – Rep. Kesto

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to authorize the Department to receive and then convey property in Commerce Township for the development of a township library.

- This bill is before the full House for consideration.
- The Administration supports this legislation.

HB 6080 – Modifies the Accumulated Principal and Allowable Expenditure Limitations in the MNRTF and Recreation Endowment Fund – Rep. LaFontaine

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to modify the accumulated principal and allowable expenditures limitations.

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

HB 6085 – Allows a Homeowners Association to Apply for a Temporary Buoy Permit – Rep. Genetski

This bill seeks to amend the Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Act to allow a homeowners association that borders the great lakes or their connecting waterway to requires a temporary permit for the placement of buoys from June 1 until September 30.

- This 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.

Forest Resources Division: Jeff Stampfly, WUP District Supervisor (prepared by John Hamel, Inventory Planning Specialist)

- Forest Resources Division (FRD) staff are starting on the 2017 YOY inventory. Open house and compartment review schedules will be posted online when finalized at: Michigan.Gov/Forestry. The DNR Forestry website has been redesigned for easier use; click on find a forest to go to your local forest area.
- The Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) and the Sustainable Forestry Initiative (SFI) completed a Surveillance Audit of Michigan State Forest Lands in early October. The field portion was exclusively in the Upper Peninsula. The Corrective Action Requests (CARs) from last year were closed. It is expected that the final report from that audit will be posted online in mid-January. For more information on Michigan’s Forest Certification Program go to: Michigan.gov/ForestCertification.
- The State of Michigan provides a range of services to Private Land Owners. For more information about the DNR’s Private forest Land Program go to: Michigan.gov/privateforestland
- There has been some recent shifting of FRD staff. Jim Ferris, Gwinn Unit Manager is retiring. A new unit manager is expected to be in place by February. Jim Johnston, Forest Technician, will move over to Fire Officer in Gwinn to a vacancy created by the retirement of Jerry Maki. Jerry has served as fire officer for 25 years. Pete Holodnick will join the Gwinn staff as a Field Technician to fill the vacancy left by Jim Johnston. District Supervisor Jeff Stampfly has transferred to the East UP District, but will act as the WUP District Supervisor until it is filled, hopefully by spring. Lastly, former WUP District Supervisor Debbie Begalle has promoted to Assistant Chief of FRD, filling the vacancy created by Scott Heather’s retirement.

- Timber harvesting activity is strong. As of December 10th, we have 278 open timber sale contracts in the western UP. This represents 28,025 acres of timber valued at approximately \$23.4 million. At this time, 41 of these sales for about 5,000 acres are actively being harvested. With the early freeze it is expected that many of our winter access timber sale contracts will be starting soon.
- UP fire activity in 2014 was one of the lowest in recent memory. Fire officer activity will switch to major equipment maintenance, snowmobile program work and winter fire planning and training. The annual firefighter's fitness test for those wanting to be fire qualified for 2015 was completed in mid-December.
- With the early snowfall, snowmobile season was able to begin December 1. FRD staff, primarily fire officers, serve as the field contacts for the program while overall program management falls to Parks and Recreation Division. Lots of activity goes into getting ready for the season with trail inspections and grant sponsor meetings being completed by mid-December. Grooming of trails has started in many areas that have an ample snow base.
- In the UP, 137 bushels of Red Pine cones and 309 bushels of Jack Pine cones were collected for Wyman nursery.
- Wyman nursery cleared 7.5 acres to plant Oak. The nursery will be growing approximately 3,000-5,000 oak saplings per year for the Wildlife Division to plant on state forest land to replace beech trees lost from Beech Bark Disease.
- The Gwinn Unit continues to work with local skier interests at Blueberry Ridge Ski Trail as we seek to manage the land around the trail and accommodate concerns of the skiers. Unit staff met with members of the local ski club to discuss current and future forest management operations around the ski trails.

Fisheries Division

West Lake Superior Management Unit (Baraga Office-George Madison):

- Attended State-wide DNR management biologist conference in Roscommon.
- Co-hosted joint 2015 work planning meeting with DNR-Fisheries, Ottawa National Forest fisheries division, Keweenaw Bay Indian Community Natural Resources Department, and US Fish and Wildlife Service's Ashland Fisheries Resource Office.
- Hosted a joint aquatic resources meeting with Dead River Camper's Inc. and Michigan DNR-Fisheries.
- Summarizing 2014 lake and stream fisheries survey reports.
- Attend Great Lakes Fishery Commission Lake Superior Technical Committee meeting.

Marquette and Thompson Fish Hatcheries (Jan VanAmberg, Manager):

Marquette Hatchery

- Spawning of lake trout and brook trout started in late September and finished in mid-November.
 - Lake trout- 337,899 eggs
 - Splake- 633,237 eggs
 - Brook trout- 500,000 eggs
- Collected sufficient eggs to meet all 2015 and 2016 stocking assignments.
- Completed fall stocking of fingerling brook trout and adult brook trout (see <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/> for details).
- Installed a fish stocking unit disinfection station off premises.
- All fish to be stocked in the spring of 2015 are healthy and we expect all stocking assignments to be met.

Thompson Hatchery

- Hired a trades helper to assist with the hatchery maintenance program.
- Stocked surplus fingerling steelhead in several locations in the UP and NLP (see <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/> for details).
- Received Chinook eggs from Little Manistee Weir and brown trout eggs from Oden Hatchery and both groups have hatched and are doing well.
- Distributed Chinook eggs to 12 Salmon-in-the-classroom school programs in the UP

- All fish to be stocked in the spring of 2015 are healthy and we expect all stocking assignments to be met.
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From: Mistak, Jessica (DNR)

Sent: Wednesday, January 07, 2015 1:57 PM

Hi everyone,

I've accepted a transfer opportunity to serve as Fisheries Division's Habitat Management Unit Supervisor effective January 18, 2015. As some of you may know, the Habitat Management Unit is where I spent the first 10 years of my career and is the unit that oversees various regulatory and policy issues including hydropower licensing, Natural Rivers zoning, Dam Management and Aquatic Habitat grants, and land transactions among other things. I will continue to work out of the Escanaba office.

We have approval to internally fill the Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit Supervisor position, and it should be filled in the next few months. In the interim, Darren Kramer – the unit's Senior Fisheries Biologist – will be your main point of contact (kramerd@michigan.gov).

I look forward to crossing paths with you in my new role!

Sincerely,

Jessica

Law Enforcement Division (LED): Lt. Pete Wright, District 1 Law Supervisor

- CO Brian Bacon checked bluegill anglers on a small lake in Dickinson County. Two subjects were contacted walking back to their vehicle with an overlimit of bluegills. The two subjects had 78 bluegills, and one of the subjects had failed to purchase a fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.
- While on patrol near the Menominee River, CO Brett DeLonge observed multiple anglers fishing after dark. Upon contact the CO observed a bucket full of Whitefish near one of the anglers. After looking closely at the Whitefish CO DeLonge noted that four of the nine fish had snag marks. After interviewing the angler regarding the snag marks the angler admitted to illegally hooking and keeping the fish. Enforcement action was taken.
- CO Grant Emery conducted a snowmobile patrol in the Wakefield area. CO Emery stopped a group of snowmobiles to address the failure to display registrations. While talking with the group, one subject decided to flee rather than provide his documentation. CO Emery initiated a pursuit which eventually involved officers from the sheriff's department. The snowmobile fled multiple times from multiple officers, but was eventually apprehended. He was lodged in the Gogebic County jail on felony flee and elude charges.
- CO Brian Lasanen was working a late night shining patrol and observed a truck shine a field with the vehicle headlights. CO Lasanen followed the vehicle for over a mile and observed the vehicle travel from fog to fog line. CO Lasanen made a traffic stop on the vehicle and it was determined the driver of the vehicle was intoxicated and was arrested for operating while intoxicated and shining during the month of November.
- CO Brian Lasanen and Sgt. Ryan Aho were working the second day of the 2014 firearm deer season and observed a buck hanging on buck pole at a camp. It was tagged with the single deer license. The COs contacted the tenants at the camp and asked who shot the buck hanging in the yard. One subject responded that his brother shot the buck. Officers asked if he was at camp and he replied, "He is out hunting again." The subject then jumped on a snowmobile and took off to warn the hunter in question. After about a mile run to the hunter's blind the COs located the subject. It was determined the hunter had no deer license and was hunting over an illegal deer bait. Enforcement action was taken.
- CO Dennis Gast and Sgt. Ryan Aho worked a deer decoy in Keweenaw County. A wide range of violations were encountered. Violations included loaded, uncased firearm in a motor vehicle, possess open intoxicants in motor vehicle and hunt deer with firearm without hunter orange. Enforcement action was taken.
- CO Matthew Eberly and Sgt. Ryan Aho responded to a complaint of a lost hunter. After contacting the subject's cell phone carrier and receiving GPS locations of the hunter he was located unharmed.

- CO Matthew Eberly and Sgt. Ryan Aho responded to the complaint of a stolen heater from a deer blind. The suspects were contacted and interviewed. The heater was recovered and returned to the owner. Enforcement action was taken.
- CO Jason Wicklund received an early morning call about a deer that had fallen into a window well at a local residence. The CO responded and observed a fawn lying at the bottom of a brick window well that was over five feet tall. CO Dave Painter was called to assist and the COs used their truck's tow straps to make a sling which was fastened around the deer. The deer was then lifted out of the well and CO Wicklund secured the deer while CO Painter removed the sling. The deer suffered a few scrapes but was otherwise unharmed and ran away.
- CO Jason Wicklund was flagged down by a hunter who reported that his deer was stolen. The hunter had shot a six point buck and was removing equipment from his blind when he observed a vehicle pull up and grab his deer. The vehicle was described as a single cab grey Dodge pickup truck with a topper and was occupied by two males. Anyone with information on this theft is asked to call their local DNR office or the RAP hotline.
- COs Dave Painter and Jason Wicklund responded to a hunter harassment complaint in Iron County. The complainant reported that he was following a deer runway when a truck pulled up and the occupants threatened to shoot him for hunting too close to their blinds. The COs obtained a description of the vehicle and occupants. The COs stopped the suspect vehicle the next day and interviewed one of the parties involved. He also led them back to the camp of the other subject of the complaint. The
- COs obtained a confession and arrested one of the individuals for license fraud and another member of the camp for using too much bait.
- CO Marvin Gerlach contacted a 16 year old hunting without adult supervision. Returning with the youth to his deer camp, CO Gerlach contacted the boy's uncle. The uncle stated that the boy was responsible and didn't need supervision because he was very safe and, "This camp follows all the rules." CO Gerlach then pointed out that the youth was wearing a brown jacket and hat while lacking any hunter orange clothing. The youth also did not have his hunting license in possession. A second hunter was also contacted walking back into camp with a rifle. This subject did not possess any type of hunting license. Enforcement action was taken.

Wildlife Division: Terry Minzey, Wildlife Supervisor (prepared by John DePue, Wildlife Biologist-Baraga)

Deer

- Supplemental feeding of deer is usually allowed by permit on private land in the northern U.P. counties along Lake Superior beginning in early January and in the southern counties if accumulated snowfall meets established minimum depths by mid-January. However, with snow accumulating so quickly across the entire peninsula in November 2014, the NRC amended feeding rules to allow feeding by permit as of Dec. 15th. Permit applications and guidelines can be obtained at your local DNR office.
- The Michigan "predator-prey research project," headed up by Mississippi State University, is in the third field season in the mid-snowfall zone north of Michigan Reservoir. Researchers will be trapping and radio collaring deer this winter and tracking the deer through the summer to determine the role of predators, winter weather and habitat on deer survival. Additional information about the project can be seen at the following website:
<http://fwrc.msstate.edu/carnivore/predatorprey/>
- Wildlife Division established a cooperative habitat management pilot project in deer wintering complexes with Plum Creek Timber Company. The work is taking place in the Menge Creek deer wintering complex in Baraga County and the Huron Mountains deer wintering complex in Marquette County. Goals are to improve long-term sustainability of conifer cover, increase retention of hemlock, and promote hemlock regeneration. In October ~350 acres in the Menge Creek deer wintering complex were scarified to expose bare mineral soil and promote hemlock regeneration.

Moose

- The 2015 moose population survey started January 2nd and will continue through the month. The aerial survey is conducted from fixed-wing aircraft every other year. Survey crews fly over prime moose range in Baraga, Iron and Marquette counties and count moose sighted on the ground – which in typical winter conditions stand out in contrast to the white snow. Having reliable estimates of moose abundance is essential to making sound management decisions, including discussions about a possible harvest season.

Wolves

- On Dec. 19, 2014 the U.S. District Court in Washington, D. C. issued an opinion immediately placing wolves in Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin back on the federal endangered species list. There cannot be a wolf hunting season while wolves are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. In response to this decision, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Great Lakes States are considering how to proceed.

Habitat

- Wildlife Division staff across the U.P. are identifying management options for improving habitat in deer wintering complexes.

Parks & Recreation Division: William Doan, WUP District Supervisor

➤ **State Parks Report**

- **Baraga State Park** Some brushing and trail work was completed on a section of the Houghton-Chassell Rail Trail. The park buildings and equipment were winterized after the park closed. Work on the kiosk in the ORV/Snowmobile Staging Area was completed. The historical repairs to the North Toilet Building were nearly completed pending some finishing work by the vendor in the spring. Renovations were done in HQ shop to build a better work area for the park Explorer Guide. Heavy November snows halted any late fall maintenance work. Staff also attended a Career Day at a local high school. Planning and meetings for 2015 events have begun.
- **Bewabic State Park** No Report
- **Bond Falls Scenic Site** Inquiries about winter use have already begun as well as for use permit weddings for 2015. Baraga Field Office also replaced the walkway at the upper falls trail. Winter hikers and photographers are using the site and as ice formations develop, use will increase.
- **Craig Lake State Park** No Report
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park** A 95% Draft of the Historic Structures Report (HSR) for the Copper Harbor Range Light buildings has been submitted by Sanders & Czapski Associates to SHPO. When complete, the HSR will serve as a plan for restoring these buildings. Michigan Tech submitted their final report to SHPO for Archaeological Exploration related to the Pittsburg and Boston Mining Company sites located just north of Fort Wilkins along the shore of Copper Harbor. A contract is in place with McGrath Inc. for the replacement of the cedar shingle roof on the US Life Saving Station Boat House located in Eagle Harbor. Construction will take place in early summer.
- The Copper Harbor Trails Club is nearing completion of a two mile section of trail located on the south side of Lake Fanny Hooe that will connect the current Copper Harbor Trail System to North Mandan Rd. The construction of this trail is a partnership between the trails club and PRD, with the trails club providing construction services and the DNR providing \$10,000 in materials. The trail will be completed in the spring.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park** winterized park buildings and equipment and pulled skid piers. The seasonal ranger is on layoff and the lead worker is working at the Porcupine Mountains until spring.
- **McLain State Park** The erosion along the lake shore continues to encroach on the campground. There are areas where it is only a few feet from the edge of the road with a straight drop off. Many campsites are closed off due to this and reservations cannot be made on those sites. Staff will reassess the site closures in the spring.
- **Menominee State Recreation Area** No Report
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park** Interpreter, Bob Wild, will begin his guided snowshoe hikes and lantern lit ski/snowshoe trails on December 27th.

- **Twin Lakes State Park** moved snow. All camping and day-use is done for season, fishermen continue to check ice conditions, and cross-country skiers are using the trail.
- **Van Riper State Park** No Report
- **Wells State Park** fixed the pump house well after winterizing the campground. They also winterized the day use and the campground facilities. Weather was not favorable and there was lower than normal attendance for camping and cabins.

➤ **Boating Reports**

- **Baraga Field Office** pulled courtesy skid piers for the season. They installed a walkway at Bond Falls Scenic Site. Prep work for skid steer trailer refurbishing, installed 2 new doors in cold storage building, plowed snow and serviced equipment and made parts for skid piers and gates. The field office also has a great cost saving partnership with MDOC this winter season. They are borrowing and paying all fees for the unit's 20 yard quad dump truck to use for snow removal at Alger Correctional Facility. This saves Baraga Field Office all monthly VTS lease/insurance costs (approx. \$5100) for December – February and is estimated to save MDOC \$2500-\$3000 versus the contractor/dump truck rental fees they paid last winter!
- **At Cedar River State Harbor**, staff winterized the harbor and its buildings. We obtained approval to go ahead with the dock removal project in December.
- **Escanaba Field Office** assisted Muskallonge Lake State Park with building demolition due to lakeshore erosion concerns. Prepared Days River and Anderson Lake pathways for winter ski trail grooming and began grooming process. Developed alternate winter access to Little Bay De Noc at Kipling Boating Access based on public comments and existing conditions.

➤ **Planning and Trail Reports**

Planning

- Management planning process continues for McLain State Park and Menominee River Recreation Area.
- Bid packets currently out for Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park toilet/shower building replacement.
- Engineering/plans for rehab of Union Bay boating access site continues with desired construction to occur in 2015.
- Replacement roof for Eagle Harbor Life Saving Station awarded and construction to occur spring of 2015.

Trails

Ongoing Projects:

1. Menominee River Bridge: This is an effort to develop the Menominee River Bridge near Iron Mountain into a multi-use trail bridge. Currently it is only open to snowmobiles. Efforts are underway to develop a Memorandum of Understanding with Wisconsin and then put decking and railing on the bridge to accommodate pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, ORV's, etc.
2. Stateline Trail Connector – Wakefield to Bessemer:
3. Houghton to Chassell rail-trail:

Successes:

1. Brule River Bridge – Connection near Iron River between Wisconsin's Nicolet State Trail and Michigan's Stateline trail now complete. This has been over 8 years in the making. This project was grant funded with ORV dollars and RTP dollars. This was a collaborative effort between Michigan, Wisconsin, Florence County, and Iron County.

Snowmobile Trail Updates:

1. Wet Fall Causing Trail Problems:
2. Trail 11 South from Wakefield to Winchester WI Remains Closed:
3. Mineral River Bridge, White Pine:
4. Permit Sales and Budget:

Equestrian Trail Projects:

1. New Signage:
2. Simar Campground Proposal:
3. Thunderberry Trail Proposal:
4. Cedar River Campground Proposal:

Pathway Projects:

1. Keweenaw Bike/Hike Pathway – Copper Harbor to High Rock:

➤ **Employee News/Recognition**

- **Bewabic State Park** Kasey Mahony started as the new Supervisor on 11/3/14, transferring from Porcupine Mountains.

Welcome to New Unit Supervisor of Bewabic State Park and Menominee River State Recreation Area, Kasey Mahoney: *I have worked for the Department as a Supervisor for close to three years. I started at the Porcupine Mountains in February 2012 and transferred to Bewabic at the beginning of November. Prior to the Michigan DNR, I worked for Texas State Parks north of Dallas as an assistant manager for nearly two years. Both of my previous positions have been at very large parks with heavy emphasis on working with various volunteer groups and partnering with other outside organizations. Besides regular daily park operations I have been involved with numerous capital outlay projects, worked briefly with the snowmobile program, have worked to secure funding from several different DNR funding sources (including various grants), helped private landowners with easements, etc. I encourage communication and welcome discussion regarding the area I am responsible for managing: my west boundary is Iron River, north boundary is Amasa east to Republic, and my east boundary is east of Norway. If there are concerns outside of my area of responsibility I will do my best to find the right person to talk to. I try to regularly attend meetings with local organizations with similar goals and interests as the DNR, the winter is when I have the most availability. My contact information is: Crystal Falls Office: (906) 875-3324, Cell: (906) 284-3632, Fax: (906) 875-6195*

- **McLain State Park** has a new unit supervisor. Jamie Metheringham transferred to McLain State Park from Bewabic State Park and Menominee River State Recreation Area and started working at McLain on Nov. 3rd, 2014.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park** Supervisor 10 position is vacant. Rangers Paul Squires, Jimmy Newkirk, and Ellis Fryer were able to successfully rescue three backcountry users that were unable to make their way out due to the early November snow storms.
- **Van Riper State Park** Ranger Mike Knack promoted/transferred to the Porkies to the Ranger A position from Van Riper State Park.

➤ **Challenges**

- **Lake Gogebic State Park** Early winter storms made fall shutdown and skid pier removal difficult.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park** Early winter storms, some areas receiving up to 3 feet, caused us to close campgrounds and back country cabins/yurts early (November 11th). Our snow removal equipment is not adequate to deal with that amount of snow in such a short period. Not many complaints received due to this early shut down.
- **Twin Lakes State Park** The large amount of snow that fell during the month of November was a challenge to deal with. The field office and lodge roofs had to be shoveled and snow moved. With no park staff here, getting this done at a timely manner is hard. Some roofs didn't get shoveled. Sometime in the future this needs to be addressed, by either a full time staff member or a part time person. Snow total for November was 79 inches.

Finance and Operations Division: Tim Melko, Administrative Area Manager

No report.

Public Information Office: Debbie Munson-Badini, Deputy Public Information Officer

No report.