



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: January 2016

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 21, 2016 meeting in Baraga, MI.

Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator Update – Stacy Welling Haughey

DNR Public Meetings

- January 12 DNR Recreation Grant Workshop, Baraga Lakeside Inn, 9:00-12noon (no pre-registration)
- January 13 DNR Recreation Grant Workshop, Escanaba Civic Center, 9:00-12noon (no pre-registration)
- January 14 DNR Recreation Grant Workshop, Little Bear East Arena-St. Ignace, 9:00-12noon (no pre-registration)
- January 14 Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Thompsonville, MI
- January 19 UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Bruce Township Hall, Dafter, 1:30pm
- January 20 UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, DNR Shingleton Office, 6:00pm
- January 21 Western UP Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting, Baraga Lakeside Inn, 5:30pm
- January 21 UP Wildlife Habitat Workgroup, Red Rock Lanes, Ishpeming, 9:30am
- February 4 Eastern UP Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting, Newberry, 6:30pm

U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities

- January 22-24 Beyond BOW, Ski, Fish, Snowshoe Workshop, Munising
- January 30 Fayette State Park-Lantern Lit XC Ski/Snowshoe/Hike
- February 5 Van Riper State Park-Lantern Lit Snowshoe
- February 6 Straits State Park-Winter Family Fun Days
- February 6 Tahquamenon Falls State Park Guided Snowshoe Hike
- February 13-14 Free Fishing Weekend 2016
- February 13 Tahquamenon Falls State Park Lantern-Lit Ski and Stroll
- February 20 Tahquamenon Falls State Park Lantern-Tahquamenon Snowshoe Race
- February 27 Tahquamenon Falls State Park Guided Snowshoe Hike & Lantern-Lit Ski & Stroll

Upcoming U.P. Recreation Events

For a host of events around the UP, go to www.uptravel.com

- January 20 Superior Snowshoe Walks, Ironwood (see January 6 link)
- January 23 "Jig It" Ice Fishing Extravaganza, Escanaba, www.bbbsbayarea.org
- January 23-24 Noquemanon Ski Marathon, Marquette, www.noquemanon.com
- January 29-30 IronLine Sled Dog Race/Fatbike Race, Iron River, www.theironline.com
- January 29-31 Paradise Winter Carnival, Paradise, <http://paradisemichigan.org/calendar.html>
- January 30 Frosty 5K & Merry Mile, Iron Mountain, www.frosty5k.wix.com/dicsa
- January 30 Lake Antoine Dig It & Jig Ice Fishing Tourney, Iron Mountain, www.bbbsbayarea.org/events
- February 11-14 U.P. 200, Marquette, www.up200.org

Recent DNR Press Releases

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

- Showcasing the DNR: Busy 2015 marked with progress, successes (12/30/15)
- DNR lauds partners in battle against chronic wasting disease (12/29/15)
- DNR conservation officer academy starts Jan. 3 with 24 recruits (12/29/15)
- Recreation Grants 2016 Workshops (12/18/15)
- Showcasing the DNR: Exhibit highlights Upper Peninsula outdoor goods manufacturer (12/17/15)
- DNR awards more than \$1.3 million in Recreation Passport grant funding (12/16/15)
- 2015 year in review (12/16/15)
- Save-the-Date for the 2016 Winter Free Fishing Weekend (12/15/15)
- DNR awards \$1.24 million in Land and Water Conservation Fund grants (12/15/15)
- DNR to auction surplus land in eastern U.P. and northern lower Michigan... (12/11/15)
- Deer harvested in Clinton County confirmed to have chronic wasting disease (12/11/15)
- Early impressions show deer harvest up in Lower Peninsula, down in U.P. (12/10/15)
- Conservation officers to enhance snowmobile noise enforcement this winter (12/7/15)
- Firearm deer hunting season a mixed bag in the U.P. (12/4/15)
- Panel discussion on chronic wasting disease airs next week (12/4/15)
- Snyder applauds Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund board recommendations (12/4/15)
- Miner's Castle snowmobile trail closure (12/4/15)
- Lost hunter found in Mackinac County (12/1/15)
- DNR seeks public input on Tahquamenon Falls, Muskallonge Lake state parks (12/1/15)

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, carlockm@michigan.gov
Recreation Passport Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, carlockm@michigan.gov
Aquatic Habitat Grant	Kelly Parker, 517-284-5957, parkerk4@michigan.gov
Michigan Invasive Species Grant	Kammy Frayre, 517-284-5970, frayrek1@michigan.gov
Wildlife Habitat Grant	Kelly Parker, 517-284-5957, parkerk4@michigan.gov
U.P. Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Grant	Bill Scullon, 906-563-9247, scullonh@michigan.gov

January 2016 Natural Resources Commission Meeting Agenda

NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration

1. Game and Fish Outcomes from the Hunting and Fishing License Structure
2. Deer Range Improvement Outcomes
3. Review of Forest Development Fund Expenditures
4. Audit Update

Joint Meeting of the Travel Commission and Natural Resources Commission

1. Outdoor Rec Economics
 - a. DNR Plans for Economics Reports
2. DNR Tourism-Related Promotions
 - a. Convention & Visitor's Bureau (CVB) Partnership Project
 - b. DNR Trail Data Project
3. Pure Michigan Hunting and Fishing Campaigns

- a. Metrics from 2015
- b. 2016 Campaign Review
- 4. Pure Michigan Big Picture and Vision
 - a. History, Return on Investment
 - b. Videos
 - c. MEDC Plans for Website, DNR Content
- 5. Discussion

NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- 1. Fisheries Update
- 2. Wildlife Update
 - a. Captive Game Order
 - b. Use of Suppressors in Hunting

NRC Committee of the Whole

- 1. Director's Report
- 2. Law Enforcement Division Lifesaving Awards
- 3. Presentation of Shikar Safari Officer of the Year
- 4. Legislative Report
- 5. Committee Reports
 - a. NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries
 - b. NRC Policy Committee on Finance and Administration

Public Appearances (Pre-registered): Jim Ludwig, Cormorants

REGULAR MEETING OF THE NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION - FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- 1. Use of Suppressors in the Taking of Game, Wildlife Conservation Order Amendment No. 1 of 2016

NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION ACTION

- 1. Approval of Minutes, December 10, 2015 Natural Resources Commission Meeting

DIRECTOR - FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- 1. Definitions, Exemptions, and Enclosure Requirements, Captive Wild Animal Order Amendment No. 1 of 2016

DIRECTOR'S ACTION

- 1. Land Transactions
 - a. Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Unadilla State Wildlife Area – Livingston County, Land Transaction Case #20140221
 - b. Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Traverse City Management Unit – Kalkaska County, Land Transaction Case #20150086
 - c. Sale of Surplus DNR-Managed Land, Cadillac District, Portage Lake BAS – Manistee County, Land Transaction Case #20150099
 - d. Wildlife Land Acquisition, Wigwam Bay State Wildlife Area – Arenac County, Wigwam Duck Club Tract, Land Transaction Case #20150090
 - e. Forest Resources Land Acquisition, Cadillac Management Unit – Lake County, The Weronko Tract, Land Transaction Case #20140204
 - f. State Forest Land Exchange, Atlanta Management Unit – Presque Isle County, Anderson Exchange, Land Transaction Case #20140281
 - g. State Forest Land Exchange, Atlanta Management Unit – Alpena County, Frede-Wieczorek Exchange, Land Transaction Case #20120248

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

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

- h. State Forest Land Exchange, Traverse City Management Unit – Benzie & Manistee Counties, Grand Traverse Regional Land Conservancy Exchange, Land Transaction Case #20140152
- i. State Forest Land Exchange, Grayling Management Unit – Oscoda County, Calcaterra Exchange, Land Transaction Case #20140189

January NRC Meeting Summary – Ed Golder, Public Information Officer

To be added for meeting packet copies as meeting is January 14.

January 2016 Legislative Update - Trevor VanDyke , Director, Legislative & Legal Affairs Office

To be added for meeting packet copies as meeting is January 14.

If you would like to learn more about these and other bills, you can access the Michigan Legislature website at www.legislature.mi.gov.

Eastern UPCAC Update

The next **EUPCAC Meeting** will be held on February 4th in Newberry at the LMAS Health Department conference room (agenda not yet set). Future meetings for the EUPCAC will be March 3 (Joint UPCAC in Marquette), April 21 in Newberry, June 16 in Munising, August 25 in Newberry, October 20 in Manistique, and December 15 in Newberry. Also, the East CAC Selection Committee met on January 7th and selected three new members for open positions on the EUPCAC. They will be notified in the next few weeks.

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

- The 2017 Year of Entry (YOE) inventory is complete, and the 2018 YOE inventory has been started. Open house and compartment review schedules are posted online, along with other state forest inventory information at: Michigan.Gov/Forestry.
- Recent personal activity includes the filling of the Baraga Forest Management Unit (FMU) unit manager position (Brad Carlson), WUP Timber Management Specialist (Robert Tylka) and the Wyman Nursery manager position (Sheila Clark). We've had a forester from Newberry transfer to Baraga (Ryan Mattila). Several promotions, transfers and retirements are happening throughout the state and we are working on several interview committees to backfill as staff movement continues.
- Foresters/technicians have started on the 2016 timber sale plan of work.
- As of December 11th, there were 277 open timber sale contracts in the WUP. This represents 30,211 acres of timber valued at approximately \$26.5 million. Currently there are 25 Active timber sales in the west UP totaling about 3,500 acres.
- Timber sales recently offered were sold with decent competition, but there are indications of softening prices in the markets. Reports from producers indicate that all markets (hardwood, aspen and softwood) are tight with mills having good supply in their yards. Prices received from the mill have dropped so producers will look at reducing their bid prices accordingly.

- Plum Creek Timber and Weyerhaeuser Corporation have announced a merger of their two companies. Weyerhaeuser stockholders will retain the larger share of stock. The combined equity value is predicted to be \$23 billion. Concern has arisen in Montana where it has been noted by state officials that the two companies manage their lands in different ways and particular concerns over easement rights are in question. No concerns have been raised in Michigan as it relates to the merger.
- Over the next few months, staff will be reviewing stands that are at high risk for loss due to the current outbreak of Spruce Budworm. Salvage sales will be set up to utilize the trees before mortality occurs. Budworm is a native insect that feeds on white spruce and balsam fir. Outbreaks of this insect occur every 20 to 30 years and can last many years. The last outbreak ended in the early 80's. For more information on this and other forest pests go to Michigan.gov/ForestHealth.
- The direct sale of three parcels of state forest land included in the Graymont transaction closed Sept. 18. This included 1,781 acres of surface and 7,026 acres of underground mineral rights. The land exchange portion of the Graymont transaction is still in progress. As part of the exchange, the DNR will have 120 days to review the parcels being offered by Graymont in the exchange. These parcels will be available for public review and comment prior to the director making a decision about the acceptance of these parcels.
- FRD is continuing to work with the USFS on the Good Neighbor Authority. WUP staff will be working with the Ottawa National Forest to prepare and administer timber sales in areas that have already been approved through their review process. The master agreement between the DNR and the USFS was signed at the forestry summit this fall. Work is continuing on the Special Project Agreements for the three individual national forests (Hiawatha, Ottawa and Huron-Manistee).
- Wyman Nursery purchased 600 bushels of jack pine and 80 bushels of red pine cones this fall. The cones will be sent to our facility in Brighton, where they will extract the seed. Approximately ½ pound of seed is gathered per bushel of cones. In order to grow the 4 million red pine seedlings that FRD plants per year, 200 pounds of seed is needed.
- In the WUP over 1100 acres of state forest land have been prepared for planting with pine in the spring of 2016. This represents a significant increase over the 168 acres of pine planted in the WUP region in 2015. At present we have about 350 more acres to prepare for planting in 2017, and we anticipate that this number will increase.
- Forestry communication is one of the major goals cited in our new Strategic Plan. The two latest stories with are IMG contract are [The Surprising Second Life of a Michigan Tree](#), and [Michigan's next generation of forestry talent](#).
- The Resource Protection Program activities will now switch heavily towards training. There are many sessions planned again this winter starting with Intermediate Fire Behavior in mid-December. In addition to training, fire officers will be spending time servicing and winterizing equipment.
- Firefighter fitness testing for the coming year was conducted during the month of December statewide. Testing for the UP was completed before the holidays.
- FRD/PRD staff has been working with the local snowmobile grant sponsors to ensure the trails are prepped and ready for the snowmobile season. Light snow throughout much of December has limited snowmobile activity.

Public Information Office: John Pepin, Deputy Public Information Officer

- Our “Keep the U.P. CWD Free” campaign featured segments aired in December on “Discovering” and “Media Meet,” which were broadcast across the Upper Peninsula. The programs are also available online at: “Discovering”: <http://www.906outdoors.com/906outdoors/videos/S174.html> and “Media Meet”: <http://wnmuvideo.nmu.edu/program/media-meet/>

- The CWD public education campaign, which included billboards, bumper stickers, information sheets and media interviews, sought to educate hunters and have them educate each other via resources at michigan.gov/cwd. Presentations were also made at both of the U.P.'s Citizen Advisory Councils.
- Three installments of "Ask the DNR" were broadcast live from the studios of WNMU-TV13 in Marquette in October, November and December. The next program, which is scheduled to feature Michigan Natural Resources Commission Chairman John Matonich, will air in April. For the first time, the live programs in late 2015 included viewer photograph and DNR photos of successful hunters and their bucks.
- I was recently assigned editorial duties for the DNR's "Showcasing the DNR" weekly feature stories, which are issued to more than 20,000 subscribers statewide. The stories highlight a range of DNR activities and partnerships across Michigan, along with insight into programs and activities the DNR is engaged in. Several upcoming stories are expected to focus on Upper Peninsula topics.
- To submit Showcasing the DNR story ideas or photos for possible inclusion on "Ask the DNR," send email to me at pepinj@michigan.gov or call my office line at 906-226-1352.

Parks & Recreation Division: William Doan, WUP District Supervisor

Unit Highlights

- **Baraga State Park:** Staff worked on replacement and relocation of fountain to accommodate a pull-thru campsite on site 3. This is in line with the park's electrical study and right-sizing which began in November. Along with the district planner, J.A. Lombardo & Associates and Nowak & Fraus Engineers are working with the park on this electrical study to determine the park's electrical, ADA, and campsite needs. Work has also begun on 2016 events, which is also the park's 95th anniversary. Camping was up 24% for the year and lodging numbers for the tepee and mini cabin were up for the year as well. Staff attended the Division Meeting in Traverse City.
- **Bewabic State Park:** There were good camping numbers at state campgrounds for deer season. Staff met with the Iron Line Dog Sled/Fat Tire race coordinators and discussed adding groomed fat tire bike trails to Bewabic this winter. A course has been laid out and we are moving forward with adding fat tire bike/snowshoe/un-tracked cross-country ski trails. Baraga Field Office completed a project on the campground registration road. They removed a lot of earth and re-graded around the building for proper drainage and to meet ADA accessibility standards. New drainage ditches were dug and gravel was hauled in. We submitted our 2016 district small project requests. Projects included ADA improvements to bathroom buildings, the campground registration road improvements, and updates to the headquarters building. We also submitted a request for \$15,000 to stewardship division to do some maintenance to the Beach House building in the day-use area near the beach.
- **Bond Falls Scenic Site:** Due to mild weather, there were numerous inquiries on site accessibility. The site was closed on October 21st, so visitors were directed on how to access the site in the off-season (hike-in access only, no vehicles).
- **Craig Lake State Park:** Staff hauled firewood to make sure yurt woodsheds were filled for our winter visitors. Access to the park was extended due to the mild start to our winter. Twin culvert replacements to a box culvert to improve water flow and beaver dam issues are at 50% review.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** Our campground is closed for the season. We have had cabin use at the Lake Fanny Hoe cabin. No activity inside the Fort Wilkins, or much day use due to very little snow. Some walkers are using the trails. Fishermen are fishing from shore at several of the access sites and there have been fishermen using the Copper Harbor marina docks daily. Planning for the Eagle Harbor Lifesaving Station for the boat launching catwalk repair is occurring and we continue to get bids for the Range keeper's dwelling electric upgrades to put the electric service underground on the site.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** Closed for this time period.
- **McLain State Park:** For November and December, the park had 0 camp nights, 5 Mini Cabin nights, 4 Rustic Cabin nights, 0 shelter rentals. Master Plan went out for bid; three companies were present during pre-bid walk through.
- **Menominee State Recreation Area:** Visitors are regularly registering at the self-registration pay station through the end of November. A mild fall/early winter extended the use season at Piers Gorge. We submitted two projects for

consideration for 2016 district small project funding: stain for vault toilets and parking lot improvements at Piers Gorge to increase capacity and improve surface.

- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Union Bay toilet/shower building is substantially complete. The Ski Chalet roofing project has received funding and will be completed in 2016. Half a dozen known nice white-tailed deer bucks were taken in the park during this firearm season.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** Activity has been uneventful last two months with usual maintenance, old and new table repairs, and working on equipment. A warm December has slowed down the snowmobile numbers and lodge rentals.
- **Van Riper State Park:** The Friends of Van Riper and Craig Lake State Parks have been successful in purchasing a \$130,000 playground for Van Riper State Park. Lodging numbers are on track with FY15 at this time.
- **Wells State Park:** A waterline leak was fixed in the campground with help from Escanaba Field Office personnel. Staff installed 4 new grills at cabins and the hand pump at Cedar River North campground is being refurbished.

Boating Reports

- **Baraga Field Office:** Hazard tree removal and fountain relocation has taken place at Baraga State Park. Staff also did some winter prep work at Otter Lake boating access site (BAS) and Big Eric's State Campground. For the second winter, the quad dump truck was sent to MDOC Alger Correctional Facility. This produces thousands of dollars in VTS savings for both facilities and worked well last winter. The field office used the truck little in the winter, but Alger was renting a similar vehicle for snow removal for a substantially higher cost. This inter-agency cost-savings measure has been a great success for both MDOC and MDNR. Preparations for upcoming projects at Bergland, McLain and Copper Harbor along with skid pier refurbishing are being made. A small equipment/garbage trailer was refurbished for Baraga State Park and equipment was serviced for winter. Staff attended the Division Meeting in Traverse City.
- **Cedar River State Harbor:** The ice suppression system bubblers were turned on December 28th - the latest date ever at this location-due to mild temperatures. This saves the unit at least \$3000 in electrical costs for the month.
- **Escanaba Field Office:** Faithorn BAS road was improved to divert water runoff and reduce site erosion. Repairs to Indian Lake accessible fishing pier ramp were completed.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** Bergland BAS has been funded for some parking lot and fishing pier improvements.
- **Menominee State Recreation Area:** A few community members have requested that a skid pier be added to the Squaw Lake State Campground boat launch. This is being considered. A request to dredge Witch Lake access site was made and site inspection was completed. It's been determined that dredging the site would not be beneficial due to the material that has settled in the channel and a formal response was made to the individual who made the request.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Union Bay BAS – water-ward dredging is complete - maneuverability improvements will take place in 2016.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** Cut downed trees after wind storm in November at BAS sites.
- **Van Riper State Park:** Staff has had a few questions on winter access to Lake Angeline BAS in Ishpeming. The ramp was pulled at an angle to avoid damage to the ramp, winter access is being provided adjacent to the new ramp.

Employee News/Recognition

- **Baraga State Park:** All seasonal state workers (October) and ranger Jared Spencer were laid off for the season.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** Secretary Peggy Tanskanen is out for six weeks for surgery. She follows both Wayne who had surgery in the fall, and Paul Ketola who had surgery in the late summer.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** The lead ranger is stationed at Porcupine Mountains for the winter season. The seasonal ranger was laid off in early November.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** The entire staff did a wonderful job this last summer and we hope they return for next year; finding such talented personnel in our area truly amazes me. This includes our seasonal ranger, all of the state workers, and experience works worker.
- **Van Riper State Park:** Ranger E Matthew Topp was hired at Otsego State Park and Ranger E John Rowley has accepted a transfer from McLain State Park to Van Riper State Park.
- **Baraga Field Office:** Seasonal ranger Joe Freiberg went on seasonal layoff.

Challenges

- **Bond Falls Scenic Site:** It was a challenge this year to find state workers that could work the full use season.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** Regional field planner Eric Cadeau came to review future plans at Eagle Harbor life Saving Station, Lake Manganese Falls and some movement issues on the Copper Harbor Marina dock.
- **McLain State Park:** Short staffed due to layoffs.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** Working on equipment that is over 36 years old or the ones that are over 20 years old to keep them running is a challenge.

Multi-Use Trail Updates

- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** Walkers and hikers are using the trails until we get more snow. There is about 3" of snow on the ground.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Working on a possible reroute of the North Country Trail/Iron Bell Trail with the Ottawa National Forest and the North Country Trail representatives.

ORV Trail Updates

- **Twin Lakes State Park:** See a need for more grading of trails in the fall in order to keep the trail crowned and allow better storm water runoff.

Snowmobile Trail Updates

- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** No use, but the groomer was out in Copper Harbor this past weekend making a practice trip on the trails.

Equestrian Trail Updates

- **Van Riper State Park:** The park has received written approval from Sands Township Raceway to allow for a new equestrian trail proposal near Thunder Valley Equestrian Trail.

Pathway Updates

- **Bewabic State Park:** Met with volunteers interested in grooming the Lake Mary Plains Pathway this winter. They discussed the park making a small purchase for a shovel and broom to keep warming shelter open. They also discussed DNR equipment loans (snowmobile and groomer) to complete the grooming. Currently, there are 5 individuals signed up to groom out there with another 10 volunteers interested in helping in other capacities including, monetary donations and helping to keep the trails clear during the summer/fall. We are waiting for snow to do some training on equipment. We are very thankful for the community support to maintain these trails and are excited for the 2016 ski season! **(Note: This topic/suggestion was brought up at the December 2014 WUPCAC meeting by then member Jim Divine—great job!)**
- **Escanaba Field Office:** Crews spent a couple weeks clearing blowdowns and brushing poplar regeneration on Anderson Lake Pathway in preparation for ski season. Grooming equipment for Days River and Anderson Lake Pathways received much needed repairs and has been powder coated in preparation for ski season.
- **Van Riper State Park:** Mild start to winter with almost no snow, we didn't even have an opportunity to groom at Blueberry Ridge in November or December but were able to roll one time. Staff worked on securing a new plowing contract for Blueberry Ridge for the next few years. Supervisor Doug Barry put a lot of hours in to the new warming hut that the Superiorland Ski Club is building at Blueberry Ridge. Many thanks to Dan Nathan with FRD for putting in the septic system and drain field at this location. Supervisor Doug Barry has also been busy applying for grants for trail development as well as for the paving for the parking lot at the Blueberry Ridge warming hut.

Trespass and Acquisition Updates

- **Stateline Trail:** The purchase of seven easement agreements in the Wakefield area is now complete. Beginning the process for the acquisition of 3 other private easements in another part of the township. Still in communication with Union Pacific Railroad for the acquisition of five parcels from them -- they recently provided land values and purchase terms for our review.
- **Permanent trail easements:** We received applications for 14.5 miles of permanent trail easements as a result of the information provided at the pre-season snowmobile meetings.

- **Trespass policy and procedure** is still being evaluated in order to possibly streamline the mitigation of these many issues.
- **Twin Lakes State Park** talked with a logger who put in trail access without a proper permit. Trails need more oversight to stop this from happening, no permits, failure to put up traffic control signage, and no reporting of logging operations in area.

Fisheries Division: George Madison, Western Lake Superior Management Unit

The following are the Western UP Fisheries Division highlights for the period of November 9–January 20, 2016.

Baraga Operations Service Center (George Madison)

- Participated with Michigan DEQ with a Dead River 2003 flood damage mitigation meeting
- Stocked 66,000 rainbow trout, Falls River (L'Anse), 66,000 rainbow trout, Ontonagon River, and 66,000 rainbow trout, Black River Harbor
- Adult brook trout were stocked in Alberta Pond (L'Anse), Courtney Lake, and Lake Roland (Skanee). These fish average 20-21 inches in length.
- Adult lake trout were stocked in Lake Fanny Hooe (Copper Harbor) and Lake Gerald (aka, Twin Lakes, Houghton County) to provide gamefish for the upcoming winter ice fishery
- Participated with engineers with a Sturgeon River (Houghton County) bank erosion meeting
- Attended a western UP work planning meeting, 2016 and 2017 survey planning
- Attended a Division-wide training session in early December
- Met with Michigan Tech University intro to Biology students
- Participated in a phone conference with Houghton County Drain Commissioner and Twin Lakes residents to discuss Lake Roland (Houghton County) lake level outlet structure
- Participated in Lake Superior Lake Sturgeon 2016 lakewide survey planning
- Attended Michigan Tech University Torch Lake Senior Design Project Presentation
- Attended Great Lake Fishery Commission, Lake Superior Technical Committee meeting
- Lake and river prescription management planning

Esplanada Field Office (Darren Kramer)

- All staff attended the Division-wide meeting in early December
- Staff are repairing equipment, entering survey data and aging scales and spines
- 2016 lake and stream survey analyses has begun and prescriptions are being written and reviewed
- Staff held a fall workplan meeting to prepare the list of lakes and streams to survey in 2016
- Staff attended training in Lansing in November and December
- Interviews were held for the biologist position in Esplanada were held in mid-December
- Staff attended the public meeting hosted by the DEQ in Stephenson regarding the Back Forty mine application

Marquette State Fish Hatchery (Jan VanAmberg)

- Fish Culture
 - Stocked out 33,000 brook trout- Assinica strain fall fingerlings (met rearing assignment)
 - Stocked out 560 adult surplus brook trout broodstock in assigned lakes
 - Spawned 202 families of lake Superior Lean lake trout to get approximately 663,461 eggs and a new broodstock year class started
 - Spawned 161 families of splake to get approximately 497,441 eggs
 - Spawned 211 families of brook trout (310,000 eggs total) and a new broodstock year class started
 - Egg eye-ups across all species are low this year 23-66%
- Maintenance
 - Completed raceway enclosure project by enclosing both ends of the lower production building
 - Well D4 failure. New pump, motor, drop pipe, new wiring from panel, cap and spindle rebuild. Total cost \$12,000
 - Moved and remounted sludge pump and poured concrete pads
 - Working on office space upgrades at research shop

Thompson State Fish Hatchery (Jan VanAmberg)

- Fish Culture
 - Thompson Creek and Williams Creek dam removals and stream restoration project completed in July with help from Parks and Recreation Equipment crew, Habitat Manage Unit (FISH) and Northern Lake Michigan Fisheries Management Unit and volunteers from Schoolcraft County Sport Fish Association. All Thompson Hatchery staff members contributed
 - Fisheries technician Dan McLeod retired and was replaced with Kevin Duby using an internal hiring process
 - Fisheries Technician Dan Operhall transferred to Platte River State Fish Hatchery and replaced with Matt Bach using the same internal hiring process
 - Obtained eyed CHS eggs from PL. Discrepancy in egg quantity led to examining egg enumeration methods and accuracy
- Maintenance
 - Large construction project to enclose the outside raceway buildings gable ends has been completed
 - Installed high efficient, self-modulating boiler
 - Replaced all LOX lines both above and below ground, including some new valves

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

- **Spruce Budworm Salvage:** Wildlife is working with FRD at the local level to review the stand treatment proposals for out-of-year spruce harvest in light of the spruce budworm outbreak.
- **Black Bear Hunting Season:** The black bear hunting season closed October 26th. The 2015 preliminary bear harvest statewide was 1,647 bears, up 12% from 2014. Harvest quotas for 2016 are anticipated to remain the same.
- **2015 Deer hunting Season:** The 2015 firearm deer harvest was down 15-25% from 2014 in the UP according to all indicators. This year a significant portion of the bucks harvested were from older age groups (3.5 to 4.5). Younger age bucks were noticeable absent in the harvest in many areas, as these ages classes have suffered very low survival rates these past few winters. It is expected that there will be fewer available bucks in the 2 ½+ age class next year due to these classes have been thinned through harvest and previous low survival/recruitment.
- **Fowl**
 - The statewide winter waterfowl survey was completed during the week of January 3rd, 2016. This survey is conducted each year to identify trends in concentrations of wintering waterfowl and provides population indices for most species of ducks and geese on wintering areas.
 - The Citizen's Waterfowl Advisory Committee (CWAC) meeting was held on January 9th, 2016 at the Roscommon Area District Library. The group developed recommendations for 2016-17 waterfowl seasons, 3-year duck opening dates, and statewide hunting zones.
 - The Escanaba Field Office will host a UP Region turkey management meeting in February. The group will review turkey management goals, and develop recommendations for the next 3-year period of stabilized regulations.
- **Deer habitat**
 - The Deer Habitat Improvement Partnership Initiative grant program was scheduled to open the request for proposals on January 15. A direct mailing to over 160 UP clubs and eligible organizations, web posting (DNR grants page), and press release kicked off the RFP. Proposals will be due by Tuesday March 1st. This year to total DHIPI grant budget has been increased to \$100,000 and the maximum amount for each grant has increased to \$15,000. If you have questions check our website or contact Bill Scullon Scullonh@michigan.gov.
 - The escaped Sika deer from WI was hit by a vehicle in Delta County, MI near Ford River (just south of Escanaba) on Sunday, Nov. 8th. The Sitka deer from WI tested negative for CWD.
- **Feral Swine:** USDA Wildlife Services has confirmed a total of 7 pigs that were killed in (NW Delta and SE MQT). The number of pig sightings and reports has declined substantially since the beginning of rifle season. Wildlife Services has deployed bait stations and trail cameras to try and locate pigs. They have not captured any images of pigs since November 30th.

- **Other:** This year the MI DNR will be hosting the annual Midwest Fish and Wildlife Conference in Grand Rapids, January 24th -27th. This gathering will feature wildlife professional from across the North America and internationally to discuss wildlife management issues.

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

Recruit School #7 began on January 3rd with 24 recruit conservation officers reporting to the Michigan State Police training facility near Lansing. They will spend the next 22 weeks learning about law enforcement and conservation law. Once all their training is complete, you can expect to see them hitting the field in early November.