



Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Council DNR Division Reports

Date of Production: September 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 September 7, 2016 meeting in Ironwood, MI.

Upper Peninsula Regional Coordinator Update – Stacy Haughey, UP Regional Coordinator

DNR Public Meetings

September 6	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Bergland, 6:00pm
September 7	Western UP Citizen's Advisory Council Meeting, GCC-Ironwood, 5:00pm EDT/4:00pm CDT
September 7	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Ottawa Sportsman's Club-Pelkie, 4:00pm
September 7	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, DNR Crystal Falls Office, 6:00pm CDT
September 8	UP Natural Resources Commission Meeting, Gogebic Community College, Ironwood, 1:00pm CDT
September 8	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Great Lakes Sportsman's Club-Escanaba, 6:00pm
September 8	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, DNR Marquette Office, 6:00pm
September 13	Forestry Open House-Sault Ste. Marie Unit, Naubinway Field Office, 3:00pm
September 14	Forestry Open House-Sault Ste. Marie Unit, Kinross Township Hall-Kincheloe, 3:00pm
September 14	Forestry Open House-Alger/Marquette Counties, Chocolay Township Hall-Marquette, 3:00pm
September 20	UP Sportsman Coalition Meeting, Chippewa County Shooting Assn, Soo, 1:30pm
September 20	Public Open House for Little Presque Isle Non-Designated Trail Recommendations, Marquette Township Hall, 5-8pm
September 29	Forestry Open House-Shingleton Unit, Wyman Nursery-Manistique, 4:00pm
September 29	Forestry Open House-Crystal Falls Unit, Crystal Falls Field Office, 3:00pm CDT

U.P. State Park & State Sponsored Activities

September 9-11	Baraga State Park - 10th Annual Harvest Festival
September 9-11	Van Riper State Park - Harvest Festival
September 10	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Willow Tension Tray
September 11-12	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Initial Journal (2 Day Class)
September 16-18	Bewabic State Park - Harvest Festival
September 16-18	Van Riper State Park - Harvest Festival
September 17-24	Michigan Trails Week www.michigan.gov/trailsweek
September 17	Fort Wilkins Historic State Park - Geocaching
September 17-18	Porcupine Mountains State Park – Fall Color Chair Lift Rides
September 20-22	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Create a Cutting Board (2-3 Day Class)
September 22	Twin Lakes State Park - MI-TRALE Fall Senior ORV Ride
September 23-25	Wells State Park - Spooktacular (Harvest Festival)
September 23-25	Lake Gogebic State Park - Fall Fest
September 23-25	Van Riper State Park - Harvest Festival
September 23-25	Beyond BOW Fall Workshop - Backpacking, Fishing, Waterfalls at Porcupine Mountains State Park
September 24	Brimley State Park - Harvest Festival
September 24	Tahquamenon Falls State Park - Hike Between Da Falls
September 24	Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park - Landscape and Waterfall Photography Basics
Sept 29-Oct 1	Michigan Iron Industry Museum - Iron Ore and the Civil War

Upcoming U.P. Recreation Events

For a host of fall events around the UP, go to www.uptravel.com. Here are just a few...

September 9-11	Lake Gogebic Fall Walleye Tournament, Lake Gogebic, www.lakegogebicarea.com
September 10	Mackinac Island 8-Mile Run/Walk, www.runmackinac.com
September 10	Bryophyte Field Trip at Estivant Pines Nature Sanctuary, Copper Harbor, www.michigannature.org
September 10	Wakefield Marathon, Wakefield, www.uprrc.org
September 10	Off the Vine 5k Run/Walk, Bark River, www.heartofthenorthlions.org
September 10	Iron Mountain Road & Trail Half Marathon & Minithon, Iron Mountain, www.imrthalfmarathon.org
September 17	Cliff D'Arcy Last Chance Walleye Tournament, Cedar River, 906-235-7783
September 17	Tahquamenon Wilderness Canoe Race, Paradise, http://TahquamenonWildernessCanoeRace.org
September 17	Porcupine Mountains Trail Marathon & Half Marathon, www.greatlakesendurance.com

Recent DNR Press Releases

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

- September 14 state forest planning open house in Marquette (8/16/16)
 - DNR compares fall webworms and tent caterpillars (8/16/16)
 - DNR to honor former division chief with patrol boat dedication (8/15/16)
 - Looking for a new hunting adventure? Make a GEMS stop this fall (8/15/16)
 - Share ideas on forest planning for Chippewa, Mackinac counties (8/15/16)
 - Bureau of Indian Affairs issues update on Poverty Island wildfire (8/12/16)
 - Bergland Dock reopened in Ontonagon County (8/12/16)
 - Showcasing the DNR: Trust Fund 40th Anniversary Top 10 List (8/11/16)
 - Registration now open for K-12 wildlife programs (8/10/16)
 - Michigan's waters: Not a good home for pet fish (8/9/16)
 - Showcasing the DNR: Nongame Wildlife Fund aids species comebacks (8/4/16)
 - Take a free ride during Free ORV Weekend Aug. 20-21 (8/4/16)
 - Help prevent the spread of oak wilt; don't move firewood (8/2/16)
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Grant Contacts

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

Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Grant	Merrie Carlock, 517-284-5931, 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

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

There were no legislative updates in August.

The Natural Resources Commission met in Lansing on August 11th. Director Keith Creagh approved:

- An order to designate State Game Areas and State Wildlife Areas -- lands which are managed by the Wildlife Division.
- An order that regulates target shooting on these wildlife and game areas. This order prescribes, among other things, the hours target shooting can take place, the types of targets that may be used and the caliber of guns that may be used.
- An order that designates Watkins Lake State Park and County Preserve as a state park.
- Mineral Audit Program Fees, which are collected for the purpose of examining whether the state is receiving its proper economic share under the terms of leases for oil and gas extraction on state-managed public lands.
- Eight land transactions, the details of which can be found in the NRC agenda online.

The day began with a meeting of the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee. The committee reviewed the results of a recent camper survey. The survey showed that 91 percent of campers had a good or very good experience at state parks. Seventy-one percent of campers stay in motor homes, trailers or pop-up campers, and 28 percent stay in tents. The average stay at Michigan campgrounds is 4.25 days.

The committee learned that mineral revenues to the Park Endowment Fund for Fiscal Year 2016 have been less than projected. The committee reviewed the highlights of five parks projects currently under way, which include efforts to improve efficiency and contain costs at state parks. The committee heard about a unique partnership to develop emergency preparedness facilities in state parks using funds from the Federal Emergency Management Agency. Paul Yauk of Parks presented a general update on state trails -- motorized and non-motorized -- including the Iron Belle Trail.

The committee approved a resolution to support the management plan at Yankee Springs State Recreation Area. The next step will be to develop a detailed stewardship plan and review recommendations for implementation. Parks Chief Ron Olson reported that representatives from the City of Flint will present a plan for park and river enhancement in their city at the October meeting of the Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee.

Next, the Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries met. Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter talked about a study that looked at catch-and-release mortality of lake trout. There is an important relationship between the mortality of released fish and water temperature: the warmer the water, the greater the mortality. The study showed that mortality for released fish is 41 percent. The department plans to do outreach with anglers to educate them about the effects of catch-and-release on lake trout populations, encouraging them to fish fewer lines, keep smaller trout and stop fishing when they have achieved their bag limit.

Jim updated the committee on the department's response to the finding of New Zealand Mudsnaills in Michigan rivers. The harmful invasive species has been discovered in the Boardman River, the Pere Marquette River and the south, main and east branches of the Au Sable River. Other rivers have been sampled and no mudsnaills have been found in those locations. The department continues its sampling efforts and is conducting a threat analysis of the effects of the species on Michigan waters. The hope is to have that threat analysis done this fall sometime.

The state is recommending that the director extend for one year commercial fishing regulations. The extension will allow the department to work with the industry to undertake a more thorough rewrite of the regulations.

Wildlife Chief Russ Mason introduced Dr. Kelly Straka, the new veterinary supervisor for the DNR's Wildlife Health Section. Kelly, who held a similar job in Missouri, replaces Dr. Steve Schmitt, who recently retired from that post.

Russ informed the committee about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's discussions about possibly listing the northwest moose as a threatened or endangered species. The DNR has informed the Service that -- to the best of our knowledge -- moose in Michigan are of the eastern subspecies, not the subspecies under consideration for listing by the Service.

The State Game Area Blue Ribbon Panel, which focuses on game areas in southern Michigan, will present its report to the commission at the October NRC meeting.

The department is doing work at the Otsego Dam along the Kalamazoo River and must manage PCB contamination in the process. The department is recommending an order to restrict motorized vehicles along specific Grouse Enhanced Management System (GEMS) trails in Menominee County, Delta County and Alger County.

During the Committee of the Whole, under the director's report, Yu Man Lee and Rebecca Rogers from the Michigan Natural Features Inventory told the NRC about the organization's work tracking and mapping species and natural communities in Michigan and creating databases to inform natural resource management. The MNFI, housed in the Michigan State University Extension office, is an important partner with the DNR.

Parks Chief Ron Olson told the committee about a July 27 event at Interlochen State Park marking the release of the second part of Michigan's Water Strategy. The second phase touched on water trails and commercial and recreational harbors.

Ron reported on storms that occurred in the Upper Peninsula on July 10 and July 20. The storms enlisted a number of divisions and state departments in a coordinated response. The storms left damage at campgrounds, cabins, trails and bridges at Porcupine Mountain Wilderness State Park, as well as damage at Oman Creek Boat Access Site. The later storms caused damage at Emily Lake Forest Campground and Twin Lakes State Park. The storms also left a floating debris field from Saxon Harbor, WI which made its way to Michigan shores and required clean-up by DNR staff.

Ron presented to Susan Lackey a Partners in Conservation Award. Susan was executive director of the Legacy Land Conservancy in Ann Arbor from 2005 to 2016. A long-time advocate for public land and for striking the proper balance between nature and commerce, Susan was instrumental in helping to create Watkins Lake State Park and County Preserve, Michigan's newest state park.

The Michigan Wildlife Council reported to the commission on its efforts to inform the public about the central role hunting, fishing and trapping play in conservation. The council's campaign launched in April with a goal of reaching 85 percent of targeted audiences in West and Southwest Michigan nine times with campaign messages. The council has thus far dramatically exceeded that goal, reaching 95 percent of the targeted audience 17 times with messages. The campaign has relied on television advertisements, print advertisements, billboards, radio messages, bus wraps, social media advertisements, digital display ads and sponsored articles in publications. The first phase of the campaign introduced the public to the council and included broad messages about natural resources. The next phase will include more direct messages about hunting and fishing.

Resource Deputy Bill Moritz said the department continues to move ahead on recruitment, retention and reactivation of hunters, anglers and other outdoor recreation users. There was a meeting last week of partners to advance the state's R3 efforts.

Eastern UPCAC Update

The EUPCAC met on August 25th in Newberry. Agenda items covered updates on CWD, Chumming Regulations, and the Naubinway Marina project. The Deer Subcommittee also reviewed with the Council a response from the DNR regarding the subcommittee's four deer management resolutions that were submitted after they were approved (two unanimously and two by majority) at their June EUCAC meeting. The subcommittee will meet again to discuss a response back to the DNR. Also on the agenda was the formation of an Information and Outreach Subcommittee to evaluate the goals of the Michigan Wildlife Council and develop ways to educate residents in the eastern U.P. Their next meeting is on October 20th in Manistique.

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

Recruit School #7 probationary conservation officers will complete their step #2 field training as of September 10th. To date, the 3 new officers slated for Gogebic and Menominee Counties are doing very well and are excited to get to work on their own beginning in early November. District 1 conservation officers are reporting things are rapidly switching over from the usual summer fare of fishing and boating contacts to more hunting season questions and contacts.

The following is a report on a few contacts conservation officers have had recently while working in the Western Upper Peninsula:

- **CO Brian Bacon and PCO Jeremy Sergey** worked the Waterfront Festival in Menominee. Numerous boats were checked for marine safety compliance. While working the festival, the officers were called to a boat in distress out in Lake Michigan. The boat was taking on water and the bilge pumps could not keep up. The vessel was located and all occupants were removed safely. A check of the driver of the vessel resulted in his arrest for BUI. The disabled boat and occupants were transported back to the Menominee Marina. The boat operator was lodged in the Menominee County Jail.
- **CO Ethen Mapes** was working an evening patrol when he pulled into the Ontonagon Village Marina. When CO Mapes drove towards the fishing docks he witnessed a man bend over and throw something off of the dock. Upon contact the angler and his son denied throwing back any fish. **CO Brian Lasanen** arrived on scene and began to question the son. Upon further questioning the angler admitted to catching a sturgeon and keeping it in hopes of showing his wife when he got home. Law enforcement action was taken for possessing a sturgeon in closed season.
- **CO Doug Hermanson** contacted two anglers on a pier while patrolling Lake Superior. The two men had no fishing licenses on them and indicated they were in a nearby vehicle. When CO Hermanson asked them to retrieve the licenses they then said they left them on another's boat. A check of the license sales system showed neither one had purchased a license in several years. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Jared Ferguson** was patrolling in southern Dickinson County for marine safety when he came upon an elderly subject at a Menominee River boat landing. The man had a flat tire when removing his pontoon boat from the jagged rocks in the water next to the boat landing. The citizen was unable to lift the trailer with his jack high enough to remove the tire. Utilizing equipment in his patrol truck, CO Ferguson was able to assist the man in fixing the tire and loading the boat on the trailer. The subject was very appreciative of the help rendered by CO Ferguson.
- **CO Shannon Kritz** interviewed a suspect regarding an illegal bear bait, illegal blind and illegal ORV trail created to access the bait site. A quick confession was obtained and enforcement action was taken.

Fisheries Division: George Madison, Western Lake Superior Management Unit

The following are the western Upper Peninsula fisheries division highlights for the period of July 21 – September 7, 2016:

Fisheries highlight and special "thanks" to the South Shore Fishing Association: On August 18th, the Michigan DNR Director, Deputy Director, our Governor, and others enjoyed a successful (everybody caught fish) lake trout fishing trip out of Marquette, courtesy of the South Shore Fishing Association.

Escanaba Field Office (Darren Kramer)

- Completed installation of shoreline brush bundles in Golden Lake to enhance habitat for minnows and juvenile fishes. Partners included the USFS-Ottawa National Forest and the Golden Lake Lake-Association.
- Attended the August 29th DEQ public meeting regarding the permit application Michigan Trout Unlimited has submitted to the Department of Environmental Quality to replace the road stream crossing at Schwartz Creek Road on Schwartz Creek in West Branch Township (Dickinson County).
- Staff attended the Michigan DEQ's freshwater mussel training workshop in the Gwinn area. Themes included biology, identification, best management practices, handling-transferring-relocation (in case of stranding), and how to properly photograph specimens during field surveys.
- Tagged and released approximately 995 juvenile lake sturgeon in the lower Cedar River (Menominee County). These fish were raised in the streamside rearing trailer at the Cedar River State Harbor.

- Completed electrofishing surveys on the Paint River (Iron), Iron River (Iron), Cooks Run (Iron), Escanaba River (Marquette), Hunters Brook (Delta), and Squaw Creek (Delta).
- Attended meetings with constituents from Lake Michigamme (Marquette) and Brevoort Lake (Mackinac).
- Completed limnology surveys and collection of water samples on Status and Trends lakes.
- Attended the DNR public meeting in Norway regarding the draft management plan for the Menominee River State Recreation Area.
- Participated in Forestry Management Unit (Gwinn, Escanaba, and Crystal Falls) pre-reviews and compartment reviews.
- Attended the constituent focus group meeting in Escanaba regarding the creation of a Lake Michigan Fishery Management Plan.

Baraga Operations Service Center (George Madison)

- Western UP review of possible new inland creel census monitoring sites at Courtney Lake, Sunday Lake.
- Otter Lake Dam (Houghton County) land survey to monument parcel of dam on Public ownership that will be transferred to the County of Houghton.
- Lake Superior rainbow smelt contaminant monitor samples were sent to Lansing for analysis.
- Prescribed new Trout Trails for submission in 2017 of the following sites; West Branch Otter River on Hazel Swamp Road, Alberta Pond, East Branch Ontonagon River at Sparrow Rapids, and Gogebic County's Black River at Hedburg Road.
- Met with a researcher from Toledo Ohio Lourdes University to review Lake Superior water quality topics.
- Attended DNR-Fisheries committee meetings in lower Michigan to improve lake/stream survey protocol and to include aquatic items such as crayfish and freshwater mussels with survey data.
- Staffed a day at the UP State Fair Pocket Park.
- Attended a Bond Falls Flowage dive team shut-down for repairs to the siphon bypass structure.
- Hosted two freshwater mussel training workshops; one in the UP and one in Gaylord.

Marquette & Thompson State Fish Hatcheries (Jan VanAmberg)

Marquette State Fish Hatchery

- Penny Bacon (Secretary for UP Hatcheries and Marquette Research Station) retired at the end of July. Her absence has left a big hole in administrative functions with many people around Fisheries Division stepping up to help while we recruit a replacement.
- Outside raceways have been restocked with fingerlings to be stocked next spring. Fish inventories are sufficient to meet all stocking requests this fall and the following spring.
- Lake trout for Great lakes stockings have been mass marked (clipped and tagged) by the USFWS (see video segment at from Discovery show at : <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KUoUJLjiMTc>)
- Technicians have been assisting Research Section on stream and Great Lakes surveys.
- Maintenance projects include adding insulation to the isolation building and replacing doors to aid in energy conservation efforts.
- Jordan Farmer resigned in July leaving our trades helper position vacant. Waiting on approval to refill position.
- Three staff members attended a fisheries genetics course in Lansing.

Thompson State Fish Hatchery

- Maintenance staff have been busy fabricating new raceway screen frames that allow interchange of screen size.
- Several energy conservation projects have been undertaken to reduce energy costs. Several old windows were replaced with modern, energy efficient windows.
- An emergency well repair was necessary to get our biggest coldwater well back up and running. Pump and motor and drop pipe were replaced.
- Power quality problems from the utility have been causing equipment failure recently. Staff is monitoring our equipment and working with the power company to remedy.
- Ryan Lytle has been hired as a new fisheries technician bringing us back to full staff.
- Provided a few hundred yearling steelhead for annual kids fishing events in collaboration with DNR Parks and Recreation and US Forest Service.
- Three staff members attended a fisheries genetics course in Lansing.

- Matt Bach, fisheries technician, represented Fisheries Division at the RAM Center providing a fisheries job overview and his personal background as part of a Detroit youth initiative (2nd annual Green Corps field trip).

Marquette Research (Ed Baker)

Surveys

- Lake sturgeon rearing is continuing in the Cedar, Whitefish, and Ontonagon river rearing trailers. Fish are feeding on blood worms and doing well. There was a significant mortality of sturgeon, presumably disease-related, in the Ontonagon trailer which resulted in loss of approx. 50% of fish.
- The R/V Lake Char was out of service for approximately three weeks due to failure of the e-troll on the starboard transmission. The vessel has been repaired and has started summer survey work. The breakdown resulted in lost survey time and MFRS was not able to participate in the lake-wide juvenile sturgeon index netting as was planned.
- Lake sturgeon work is continuing at the Black River field site.
- Data collection from commercial whitefish fisheries on lakes Michigan and Superior continues.
- Survey work has started in nearshore Lake Superior waters at Grand Marais and Munising and will continue in northern Lake Michigan waters once L. Superior work has been completed.

Meetings

- Biologists Sitar and Baker attended the Lake Superior Tech Committee meeting July.
- Biologists Zorn, Baker, Sitar, and Technician Sanford attended Basin Committee meetings.
- Biologist Baker attended the Sturgeon Committee meeting in July.

Office/lab/workshop/building activities

- Staff is busy with field work and has less time available for processing samples (otoliths, fin rays, scales, stomachs) collected during 2015 field surveys.
- Biologists are working on data analysis, reports, manuscripts for journal publication, and proposal preparation for GLFT and GLFWRA funding sources.
- Staff continues to work on net building/repair, equipment maintenance, etc. in between bouts of lab and field work.
- Lab repair work is complete and staff is now making full use of repaired space.

Outreach Activities

- Technician Sanford participated in an outreach event at the local public library for area schools.

Wildlife Division: Terry Minzey, Wildlife Supervisor

- **Bear Activity:** Bear activity reports and complaints have been down this year compared to previous years across the UP. Berry crops and soft mast availability seem to be much more prevalent this year across the UP than last year particularly blueberries, and may be helping with the reduced nuisance bear issues by providing bear with widely available natural forage. Most complaints have been successfully addressed by working with owners to eliminate attractants, such as taking down bird feeders and securing garbage.
- **Ruffed Grouse Drumming Survey:** Wildlife staff has been monitoring grouse numbers and broods while conducting their normal field work. In the West U.P. staff is reporting good numbers with many broods sightings. We suspect grouse numbers will be up slightly over last year's good season numbers. Making many local birds hunters very excited for the upcoming season.
- **Little Presque Isle Tract:** The Michigan Department of Natural Resources has begun a process to review recreational trails at the Little Presque Isle tract, a popular outdoor recreation site, situated roughly five miles northwest of Marquette. The Little Presque Isle property is a forested 3,040-acre tract located along both sides of Marquette County Road 550. This popular recreation area has a large network of trails – including some unauthorized trails which have been established by user groups and individuals. Over the summer field staff from DNR's Parks, Wildlife, and Forest Resources divisions has been compiling information and evaluating on-the-ground conditions along these trails. These reviews will allow for greater consideration of known sensitive habitats found within the tract, including a critical white-tailed deer wintering complex.

An open house meeting has been set for September 20th, 5:00 to 8:00 pm at the Marquette Township Hall. During the open house, DNR staff will be available to answer questions. Maps and other information will be provided for public review at the meeting and online. This information will also be made available at the DNR's Marquette Customer Service Center, located at 1990 U.S.-41 South in Marquette. The open house will kick-off a 30-day period for submission of written public comments on the DNR trails proposal. Afterward, the DNR will compile the comments received and consider potential revisions before finalizing its Little Presque Isle trails proposal. Once this process has concluded, the trails proposal will be finalized, announced and put into effect, guiding future use of the Little Presque Isle trails.

- **South Marquette County GEM:** The Grouse Enhanced Management Sites (GEMS) are unique ruffed grouse hunting areas across the Northern Lower and Upper Peninsulas that provide great hunting opportunities for a variety of hunters, including youth, seniors, adults new to the sport and even seasoned bird hunters have taken advantage of the these unique hunting areas. Bill Rollo, the Marquette Wildlife Technician and life-long conservationist, who passed away unexpectedly in January this year, was instrumental in getting the South Marquette County GEM up and running. Please join us and Bill's wife and young children on September 9th at 9:30 am EST. for the formal dedication renaming the South Marquette County GEM to the Bill Rollo Memorial GEM. For more information or directions please contact DNR's Marquette Customer Service Center – 906-228-6561.

Forest Resources Division: Don Mankee, WUP District Supervisor

- The 2018 Year of Entry (YOE) inventory is nearly complete with staff finishing the final touches on treatment recommendations. The next open houses will be in the Gwinn unit on September 14th and the Crystal Falls unit on September 29th. Other Unit open house and compartment review schedules are posted online, along with other state forest inventory information at: www.michigan.gov/forestry.
- Foresters have been working on the 2016 timber sale plan of work. While the extended fall weather helped with completing activities on drier sites last fall, the mild start to winter has hindered inventory and sale prep work that is normally completed in wet areas during frozen conditions.
- The division is continuing to monitor stands that are at high risk for loss due to the current outbreak of Spruce Budworm. Aerial Detection flights are being used to detect the hardest hit areas. These areas will be reviewed in the context of the whole resource, salvage sales maybe set up to utilize the trees before mortality occurs. For more information on this and other forest pests go to www.michigan.gov/foresthealth. To date, over 3,600 acres of stands affected by spruce budworm have been identified for treatment.
- The division is continuing to work with the USFS on the Good Neighbor Authority. Work is being done to treatment approximately 300 acres of timber on the Ottawa National Forest in south Houghton, and Iron Counties this year. These sales should be coming out for bid in the next month or two
- As of August 10th, 296 timber sale contracts are open western UP-wide. This represents 508,778 cords of timber on 32,062 acres, valued at approximately \$28.3 million.
- All western UP units report 24 active timber sales totaling about 2,252 acres.
- All units report softening markets in the west UP with several sales going "No Bid". Pulpwood markets continue to cause concern. Mills are purchasing very little and quotas are very tight. There is a surplus of pulpwood decked and waiting for purchase around the state and Great Lakes region. Softwood lumber markets are a continual concern as politicians lay out new options for a new North American Softwood Lumber Agreement between the US and Canada. The one year cooling off period for the expired agreement is nearly up but there are few signs that a new agreement is ready to move into action.

- DNR is one of four partners on a Michigan Statewide Wood Energy Team that received a grant of \$250,000 to help open new markets for Michigan's forest resources, promote economic vitality, and use renewable energy while reducing overall energy costs. The primary objective is to identify a number of commercial and institutional buildings that now use fuel oil and propane for energy and replace those systems with innovative wood energy systems.
- Additional projects include road grading and improvement, bridge and culvert replacement work, ORV and recreation project assistance to the Parks and Recreation Division.

Public Information Office: John Pepin, Deputy Public Information Officer

- DNR Director Keith Creagh and Gov. Rick Snyder recently spent a week in the Upper Peninsula, which included several events attended and covered by media in the region.
- One of the highlights was a 40th Anniversary of the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund commemoration at Clark Lambros Beach Park in Marquette. This will be the sole Upper Peninsula commemoration for this historic celebration, with additional events scheduled in the Lower Peninsula.
- A press release, stakeholder letter, webpage layout and other items were created for an upcoming open house on trails designations at Little Presque Isle north of Marquette. The open house is set for Sept. 20.
- Show dates for "Ask the DNR" broadcasts have been issued for this fall, winter and next spring. They include Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 1, April 20, and May 25.
- We are planning Showcasing the DNR stories for the first half of 2017. Please send along any ideas for stories.

Parks & Recreation Division: Doug Rich, WUP District Supervisor

State Park/Recreation Area/Scenic Site/Forest Rec Units

- **Baraga State Park:** Camping, day-use and lodging have been strong. Both camping and day-use are up around 20% over 2015 YTD and mini cabin nights are up about 17%. Teepee nights are also up about 5%. The park was without power for about 35 hours in one of the severe storms in July. We have also been experiencing some infrastructure issues along with the issues from Mother Nature. We have three campsites closed due to saturation, one may be due to an underground water leak (this is being investigated). We had short issues with the mini-cabin due to carpenter ants and the teepee due to wasps. Along with our ongoing electrical issues, we are also experiencing water pressure issues in the north part of the campground when toilets are flushed. We have had a contractor in to work on this problem. Forest recreation sites have had average use and we had assistance from LED for yearly enforcement issues on the 4th of July holiday at Big Lake SFCG. There were several events that brought many guests to the park. Events included: 4th of July Festivities, 2 Kayaking 101/202 events, Christmas in July, a women's evening kayak event and several guest speakers along with host and explorer guide programs. Park staff has also been assisting with storm damage purchasing/planning/cleanup needs for Oman Creek and Emily Lake and also with purchasing and implementation of culvert replacement at Union Spring Dam at the Porkies.
- **Bewabic State Park:** Our camping attendance has been up nearly 10% - July was especially busy for us. Day use area was well attended until the middle of August and then our use starts to drop off. Had two garage doors at our headquarters building replaced.
- **Bond Falls Scenic Site:** Use was good during the holiday week. We are already experiencing staffing shortages which is resulting in revenue loss at this site.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** Camping has been up 12-16% this summer as compared to last year. Our Mini cabins are always filled every day in the summer so there is no comparison from last year. The Michigan Battery D event did well with about 1600 people for the three day event, the Copper man triathlon had 550 people participate and watch for the July 30th event, and our Meteors and S'mores had 50 out for the campfire the sky viewing was cancelled due to clouds and rain on August 10. The park staff continues to work on the exterior of the Range keepers dwelling. The siding is done and the work is now on the windows and fascia boards.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** Kayak 101 activities held for a week in August resulted in 47 users over a 3 day period.

- **McLain State Park:** McLain has been very busy with camping and day use visitors. McLain has been full or near full since the 4th of July.
- **Menominee State Recreation Area:** Has been full-swing into our daily cleaning and mowing routines. Staff has been working on replacing roofs on several vault toilets and rebuilding several kiosks/bulletin boards at few access sites and a state campground.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** All campgrounds and cabins have been consistently full every weekend July/August. New backcountry check-in procedure is still working thus far; we are capturing good use numbers which will help with stewardship/ future directions.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** Emily Lake Campground remains closed until August 29th due to major storm damage on July 20th. Some sites are open after major cleanup efforts. Storm damage occurred also at Twin Lakes State Park and on the park trails and ORV trails such as the Bill Nichols trails. Cleanup efforts are ongoing and there are still hazard trees needing removal. Camping has been up, lodging has also been up. Day use has also been strong.
- **Wells State Park:** Our overall numbers for camping to date are up 9% from this time last year, 9% higher for rustic cabin rental, and down 8%. Shelter rental are down 6%. Attendance for events is higher than last year.
- **Baraga Field Office:** Staff assisted with storm damage cleanup at Emily Lake State Forest Campground and Twin Lakes State Park and the Bill Nichols ORV trail in Houghton County. One staff member also assisted with Porkies storm damage assessment/cleanup.
- **Escanaba Field Office:** State Forest campground occupancy has been on a continual rise, and as of August 21st, is up by 7.8% compared to August 23rd of FY15-or- \$1,508 of camping revenue. Field Office Staff assisted Eastern Upper Peninsula District with the replacement of vault toilets administered by Indian Lake State Park. Staff and Supervisor assisted Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park with moving Speakers cabin following a major storm event. Staff replaced two aging vault toilets at Bass Lake State Forest Campground, and retained old toilet buildings for refurbishing.

Boating Reports (BAS = Boating Access Sites)

- **Bewabic State Park:** Fire Officers brought in some gravel and graded Silver Lake BAS road in August.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** The Lighthouse boat tours had 1132 people out to the Lighthouse in July and 750 visitors out to the lighthouse August 1-21.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** Hazardous parking area and fishing pier at Bergland Dock was refurbished by the major maintenance crew out of Baraga. Lots of positive feedback. Boat wash station was utilized at Lake Gogebic State Park during the construction work at Bergland Dock.
- **Menominee State Recreation Area:** Staff have been working on replacing roofs on several vault toilets and rebuilding kiosks.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Union Bay is complete and open to the public. There have been several positive reviews from the public. Big Iron BAS has been dredged 4 times with springtime assistance from FO staff.
- **Twin Lakes State Park** There was also some storm and tree damage at boating access sites by the park.
- **Baraga Field Office:** worked on the Bergland Dock Boating Access Site fishing pier and parking lot. Work also included at dredge at the Marquette Fish Hatchery. Review and assessment of storm damage at Oman Creek Boating Access Site in Gogebic County was done. Staff also cut posts for skid piers with the sawmill.
- **Cedar River State Harbor:** Cedar River Harbor attendance has the same amount of nights from last year this time up 1 night from 2015. We have one less seasonal boater from last year.
- **Copper Harbor/Eagle Harbor/Lac LaBelle:** The overnight stays at Copper Harbor marina are down as compared to last year. We had several wet and windy weekends during the busy time of the season.

Other Issues, Challenges or Items of Note

- **Baraga State Park:** wet campsites, a potential water main leak, insects, water pressure issues and other minor infrastructure and equipment issues have all been challenges.
- **Bewabic State Park:** has had a lot of campers participating in the camper storage program. Everyone is very thankful for the option!
- **Bond Falls Scenic Site:** No staffing and loss of revenue; having to use Baraga State Park staff to cover vacant STW positions has been a challenge.

- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** The East campground toilet building water heater had to have repairs in July, but the unit was repaired and is working ever since.
- **Lake Gogebic State Park:** There have been many campers this season that have been bringing ash wood into the park. There have been 6 Director's Order citations written in this time period for having ash wood on state land with signs of EAB infestation. Staff put a message up in Camis that the call center must read to customers and online users have to agree to in order to complete their registration warning them not to bring ash wood to the park if it has bark on it and that rangers at the park will strictly enforce that rule in order to protect one of the last stands of uninfected ash trees in the U.P.
- **McLain State Park:** Short staffing has made it a challenge to get through the summer.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Weather related infrastructure damage and projects have resulted in some normal maintenance duties being delayed or not completed especially in our backcountry/cabin areas. Big Carp River Bridge is still out. We are working through design and purchasing details. Speakers Creek Bridge is slated for repair this week.
- **Twin Lakes State Park:** Routine maintenance is suffering due to storm damage cleanup, even though Baraga FO and FRD staff have been a tremendous help.
- **Escanaba Field Office:** Staff assisted Baraga Field Office with Fisheries dredge work at Marquette State Fish Hatchery. Staff has continued providing support at the Pocket Park located within the UP State fairgrounds, and will be preparing to winterize.

Multi-Use Trails

- **Rail-Trail Projects**
 - **Menominee River Bridge – 475' Trestle in Dickinson County:** Engineering on this proposed multi-use bridge is nearly complete. Construction cost estimates are being developed at this time.
 - **Stateline Trail Acquisition – Korpela Road to Wakefield – 4 miles:** We now have a signed agreement with Union Pacific Railroad to purchase the remaining private ownership between Korpela Road and Wakefield. Closing is set for September. The next step will be to secure funding through the ORV program to install two needed bridges.
 - **South Branch of Ontonagon River Trestle – 400' Trestle in Ontonagon County:** Engineering is complete. Funding has been secured. Reconstruction work on this trestle will begin next summer.
 - **Escanaba to Hermansville – 26 mile rail-trail:** Construction on this rail-trail is mostly complete. The trail was resurfaced with limestone and the bridges were engineered and repaired. The next step is to fix/develop a crossing of US-2 in Hermansville. That work is being bid out this fall. A ribbon cutting will occur in the spring.
 - **Little Lake to Chatham – 25 miles of trail:** Work just beginning on developing this rail-trail into ORV route. DNR trails staff are working with Rock River Twp., Village of Chatham, and others to develop a plan for working with landowners and filling in gaps in ownership.
 - **St Louis Box Culvert, 327' Very Large Box Culvert North of Lake Linden:** Construction on culvert will begin August 29th and be complete in November. During construction a trail reroute will be in place taking the trail through the village of Laurium.
 - **Lake Linden Washout, Hammel Creek, and DEQ Violation:** Easements from private landowners have been secured. The streambed remediation work mandated by DEQ will begin next spring. The cost is estimated at \$106,000. The DNR is looking for funding.
- **Iron Belle (IBT) Projects**
 - **Escanaba to Gladstone:** Working on a route to get the IBT off of US-2 in this busy area.
 - **Iron County:** Working with Iron County Heritage Trail group on connecting Heritage Trail between Crystal Falls and Iron River.
 - **Gogebic County, Ironwood to Bessemer – 6 miles:** Construction has begun on hike/bike path. This will be a paved trail. Construction includes new deck and railing on 3 historic RR bridges and an interesting rail-trail bridge that crosses another rail-trail.
 - **North Country Trail – Hiking Portion of IBT:** Working on improving communications between NCT volunteers and DNR. This was prompted by a Forest Certification audit in Baraga. In order to comply with Forest Certification a new form is being developed.
 - **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** The bicycle trails in the park are heavily used. The mountain bicycle use from Copper Harbor is very busy. We were able to brush the trail that is parallel to U.S.#41 that the Triathlon uses.

- **Escanaba Field Office:** Staff has begun preparing the surface of the Felch Grade for resurfacing 1.5-3 miles in early September.

ORV Trails

- **2017 grants:** Trail maintenance and special maintenance projects have been submitted by sponsors and are currently being evaluated by Trails Specialists.
- **ORV route, Marenisco to Korpela Road – 16 miles:** Recently approved. The Western U.P. Trail Association will begin improving the trail this summer.
- **ORV route, Ishpeming to Negaunee – 6 miles:** City of Ishpeming passed an ORV ordinance to enable the Iron Ore Heritage Trail and the DNR to extend the ORV route through Ishpeming and Negaunee. Trail proposal has been approved.
- **Champion to Michigamme Route – 9 miles:** DNR staff are working with ORV club TEAM and Townships on developing an ORV route in western Marquette County. This is in very early stages.
- **Gwinn to Arnold ORV Route – 26 miles:** DNR staff from FRD, WLD, and PRD worked together to develop recommendation for establishing this route. Proposal has been approved. Funding is being sought to make route improvements and develop special signage for portion of the route that trails through the Grouse Enhanced Management Area.
- **Trail Inspections:** DNR Trails Specialists have completed inspections of ORV trails throughout U.P. Overall, the grant sponsors are doing well. Work that needed to be improved included brushing, signing, and boardwalk improvements.
- **State Park Connectors:** The construction project to open Bewabic State Park to ORV's is now complete. The campground is now connected to the State Line ORV route. This is the 4th State Park in the Upper Peninsula to be opened to ORV camping.
- **Baraga State Park** there has been more ORV campers in the park this season.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park** Lots of use through town and by the park on US #41 going out to the point.
- **Twin Lakes State Park** dusty conditions have somewhat slowed ORV trail use.

Snowmobile Trails

- **Western U. P. SnowShakers – Gogebic County:** The snowmobile club in western Gogebic County has been reformed. A new board is in place. The DNR assisted the club with rebuilding. We're confident the 2016/17 season will see improved grooming and communication.
- **Tri County Snowmobile Club – Dickinson County:** DNR staff working with Tri-County Snowmobile and ORV Club on additional ORV and snowmobile development in Dickinson County.
- **GPS tracking in Groomers:** Working to implement process for installing GPS units in groomers. Will use to collect data and streamline grooming reimbursement request process and grooming reporting. Evaluating contractors now.
- **Alger Co. SORVA:** This club will become the official Grant Sponsor for the Munising area trails for the next season. Alger Co. SORVA will be changing their name to "Snowmobile & ORV Association of Alger County". They are taking over grooming responsibilities from the Munising Convention and Visitors Bureau.
- **Moose Country and Baraga Convention and Visitors Bureau:** Working to reroute 8 miles of trail # 8 in Baraga County (near Nestoria) that frequently cannot be groomed due to hills and wet areas. Recently received some positive feedback from Baraga County Road Commission regarding a temporary reroute.
- **Permanent Easement Program:** DNR trails staff are working with MSA and others on implementing the Snowmobile Easement Grant program. Many grant applications were submitted last fall and we are working through implementation process. A request for proposals (RFP) to bring on Land Company to help with the work has been sent through the Bid for Michigan system.
- **Trail 11N and 11S Gogebic County – 46 miles:** These trails are still closed due to loss of land permissions. DNR and club continue to look at options. Nothing will be in place for this coming year.
- **Trail 160 North of Ironwood, Mud Creek Bridge (45'):** This bridge is being replaced. Engineering is underway right now. We hope to have enough grant money to proceed with construction this fall, if not trail will be closed.
- **New Groomers:** Two new groomers were approved to be purchased this year in the U.P. One will go to Gogebic Area Groomers and the other to Keweenaw Trail Services.

Equestrian Trails

- **Thunderberry Trail Proposal, Marquette County – 4 miles:** This is a proposed connector trail in Sands Township. The last remaining private land permit was submitted last week. Trail proposal is in process.
- **Lake Superior Trailhead:** This proposal to develop an equestrian trailhead east of Marquette has been approved. Funding for engineering is now necessary.
- **Headquarters Lake Equestrian Campground – Luce County:** Additional toilet has been built, working on permit to install. Evaluating trail plan for this area. An additional three drive through campsites are being constructed.

Pathways

- **Keweenaw Bike/Hike Pathway – Copper Harbor to High Rock:** This proposal has been entered in the trail proposal database and is being reviewed. This proposal is near the approval stage. The proposal looks like it will be approved contingent upon maintaining a close relationship with DNR to avoid specific areas of concern.
- **Little Presque Isle (LPI) Pathway Project:** This is a project to properly designate and sign 19.2 miles of bike trail at LPI north of Marquette. The DNR divisions have worked together to develop recommendations for specific trails preliminarily approving about 17 miles of the 19. A public open house will be held on September 20th to give the public a chance to comment on the preliminary agreement.
- **Bewabic State Park** continues to mow the Lake Mary Plains Pathway twice a month to the delight of hikers and mountain bikers. The cross-country ski trail users have thanked us for this effort as well as it makes skiing more enjoyable - not having grasses and ferns popping up through the snow.
- **Escanaba Field Office** Staff has continued to maintain, and remove new Aspen growth on the Anderson Lake Pathway in Gwinn, due to logging operations, new aspen growth is a continual challenge.

Trespass and Acquisition Report

- **Event/Use Permits/Land Transactions**
 - Logging on Rail Trails
 - Bike/Running Races
 - Rail-Trail Crossings
 - Land Transaction reviews
 - FRD Compartment Review participation
- **Trespass Cases**
 - A rail-trail trespass work team made up of MDOT, Attorney General, and DNR staff is being developed to help address trespass and encroachment issues on State owned rail-trails. The focus of the work team will be to address current encroachment issues in the Keweenaw and find ways to prevent further encroachments.
- **New Trails Staff**
 - A new Motorized Trails Specialist is being hired by the Trails Section. The new person will be based out of Cadillac and will start August 29th. This person's responsibility will be to help refresh the snowmobile and ORV grant handbooks, sign manuals, etc. There are numerous other responsibilities that this new position will undertake and overall it will be a net gain for our motorized trails program.

Planning Report

- **Bewabic State Park:** We did not successfully bid the ADA shower renovation project. We will be putting the project out for bids a second time.
- **Fort Wilkins Historic State Park:** A contractor has been hired to do an engineering study of the brick spalling problem at the Lighthouse and Keepers Dwelling. They have met once to date and will be at the location on Friday.
- **Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park:** Union spring Dam Removal planning continues and is delayed due to permitting. Chalet Roof project bid process is complete, pre-construction walk through is happening soon.
- **Escanaba Field Office:** Felch Grade resurfacing plans are complete, and work should begin early September, and is expected to take up to two weeks. Vault toilets from various sights have been replaced and old toilet buildings are being prepared for refurbishing for both unit and district needs. Planning has begun for the replacement of Carney lake access site vault replacement, with an expected completion of late September.