



Eastern & Western Upper Peninsula Citizen Advisory Councils DNR Division Reports for Annual Joint Meeting

Date of Production: October 4, 2023

This documentation is provided by Michigan DNR staff as a supplement to verbal reports which will be given to the Eastern & Western UPCAC at the October 2023 Joint UPCAC Meeting in Escanaba.

Welcome to the Annual Joint Meeting of the EUPCAC & WUPCAC

DNR Public Meetings

For virtual or conference call meeting information, please go to [DNR Meetings](#) and click on the appropriate meeting and/or agenda for instructions.

October 10	Lake Huron Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee, 10am (call 231-330-5290)
October 10	Forest Management Compartment Review: Gwinn Unit (call 906-346-9201 x103)
October 11	Joint UP Citizens' Advisory Council Meeting, 3-5pm, Escanaba (call 906-226-1331)
October 12	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, 9am, Escanaba (nrc@michigan.gov)
October 12	Nonmotorized Advisory Workgroup, 10am (call 517-331-6219)
October 12	Forest Management Compartment Review: Newberry Unit (call 906-293-3293 x4740)
October 13	Northern Inland Lakes Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee, 11am (call 231-340-2621)
October 17	Lake Michigan Citizens Fishery Advisory Committee, 10:30am (call 269-204-7057)
October 18	Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund Board, 9am (call 517-284-5954)
October 19	Board of Foresters, 10am, (call 989-370-9557)
October 20	Timber and Forest Products Advisory Council, 8:30am (call 517-582-3220)
October 25	Michigan State Parks Advisory Committee, 2pm (call 517-284-6135)
October 26	Forest Management Compartment Review: Shingleton Unit (call 906-452-6227 x240)
October 27	Michigan Wildlife Council, 10am (contact 517-284-6056)
November 9	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, 9am, Lansing (nrc@michigan.gov)
December 14	Natural Resources Commission Meeting, 9am, Lansing (nrc@michigan.gov)
December 20	Eastern UP Citizens' Advisory Council Meeting, 6pm, Newberry (call 906-226-1331)

UP State Park & Other UP Recreational Activities

Please check with the state park before attending activity for any scheduling changes.

October 7	Fayette Historic State Park – Fayette Fall Fest
November 3-5	Hunting & Ice Fishing Expo – UP State Fairgrounds, Escanaba
February 17-18	Free Fishing Weekend
February TBD	Free Snowmobiling Weekend

Recent DNR Press Releases

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

- Fishing Lake Superior? DNR asks anglers to report marked splake (10/4/23)
- Catch Michigan's fall fishing magic (10/3/23)
- October hunting and trapping opportunities (10/2/23)
- DNR October meetings: Join us, share your thoughts (9/29/23)
- Showcasing the DNR: Discover the St. Marys (9/29/23)
- Archery deer season starts Sunday – what you need to know (9/29/23)
- Fall in love with Michigan trails (9/28/23)
- DNR News: Wetlands, werewolves, waterfowl and zip-line color (9/27/23)
- Showcasing the DNR: An open letter to Michigan's deer hunters (9/21/23)

- DNR stocks 9 million-plus fish (269 tons) so far this year (9/21/23)
- Invasive spotted lanternfly: See it. Squish it. Report it. (9/19/23)
- DNR News: Fall color, better bird habitat, Trails Week, state parks planning (9/19/23)
- Interactive online courses put hunters, boaters in real-life safety scenarios (9/14/23)
- Over \$1.5 million available for fisheries habitat, dam removal and more (9/12/23)
- Keep, swap or sell? DNR land review in 11 counties nears director approval (9/11/23)

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

UP DNR Customer Service Centers and Field Offices

Customer Service Centers have staff to answer questions, Monday-Friday, excluding holidays

Baraga Customer Service Center	906-353-6651	Ishpeming Field Office	906-485-1031
Escanaba Customer Service Center	906-786-2351	Naubinway Field Office	906-477-6048
Marquette Customer Service Center	906-228-6561	Norway Field Office	906-563-9042
Newberry Customer Service Center	906-293-5131	Sault Ste Marie Field Office	906-635-6161
Crystal Falls Field Office	906-875-6622	Shingleton Field Office	906-452-6227
Gwinn Field Office	906-346-9201	Stephenson Field Office	906-753-6406

September 2023 NRC Meeting Summary

The Natural Resources Commission met on the West Campus of Lansing Community College in Lansing on September 14. The Commission approved:

- Fisheries Order 215.23A: which increases clarity on regulations that allow for expanded walleye opportunity on the Lower Saginaw River.
- Fisheries Order 219.23, which makes editorial changes to underwater spearfishing regulations for clarity.
- Fisheries Orders 219.23 and 229.23, which makes editorial modifications to a boundary contained in those orders to account for a recent street name change in Mackinac County.
- Fisheries Order 240.23, which increases opportunities for Lake Sturgeon. The change will allow catch-and-immediate-release of Lake Sturgeon in the Ontonagon River in Ontonagon County, from Lake Superior to Victoria Dam Road from July 16 to March 15. This change is not anticipated to result in biological harm to the Lake Sturgeon population.

The Commission tabled recommended changes to Fisheries Order 206.23 for further discussion prior to next month's meeting.

New DNR Director Scott Bowen approved four land transactions. Details of those transactions can be found in the NRC agenda.

Fisheries Committee

Seth Herbst and Jay Wesley from the Fisheries Division gave a presentation on Steelhead management. The goal of our management of this species is to provide year-round Steelhead angling opportunities to diverse user groups with differing ability levels and preferred fishing methods in Michigan's Great Lakes and connected rivers. Steelhead are a non-native species in Michigan, introduced to the Great Lakes in the 1800s. Stocking efforts led to naturalized Steelhead in some rivers and the current fishery exists because of continued stocking efforts that are supplemented by natural reproduction. The two talked about the differences between Steelhead management in the Great Lakes and their tributaries and in the western United States, where the primary goal is recovery of a native species and management strategies have to adhere to requirements of the Endangered Species Act.

Jay reviewed population estimates and catch rates on a variety of streams as well as regulations. He also highlighted the results of the 2022-23 creel surveys that were conducted on the Muskegon and Manistee rivers, which indicated Steelhead catch rates were comparable if not higher than previous years where creel results were available. Angler surveys suggest about 70 percent

of Steelhead anglers voluntarily practice catch and immediate release on most river systems, and the department believes that current harvest poses a low risk to Steelhead populations. The department isn't recommending changes to current regulations for the species, primarily because anglers are highly satisfied with Michigan's Steelhead fishery, and assessments indicate the Steelhead population in Lake Michigan is relatively stable over the course of the past 10-15 years.

Wildlife Committee

Justin Tomei from the Michigan United Conservation Clubs gave a presentation on resolutions from the organization related to natural resource management.

Committee of the Whole

Seth Herbst from Fisheries presented department recommendations for amendments to fishing regulations. These recommendations will be before the commission for action next month. The recommendations include changes to:

- Fisheries Order 200.23, which would add clarity to the regulatory boundary following a dam removal on the Dowagiac River.
- Fisheries Order 204.24, which would add clarity to the regulatory boundary following construction of a pedestrian bridge on the Boardman River.
- Fisheries Order 252.23, which would alleviate enforcement concerns related to arctic grayling, removing current language that prohibits anglers from "attempting to take" arctic grayling. Possession of arctic grayling – once the species is reintroduced into Michigan waters – would remain prohibited. This change is meant to protect anglers who catch and release the species.
- Fisheries Order 253.24, which would address enforcement concerns created by difficulties with anglers properly identifying similar looking species, specifically Lake Trout, Splake and Brook Trout. The regulation would combine the daily possession limits for Lake Trout and Splake in all Great Lakes and Great Lakes connecting waters. The combined limits would match current limits for Lake Trout.
- Fisheries Order 253.24, which would align our fishing regulations with the co-management strategy outlined in the 2023 Great Lakes Consent Decree, increasing the daily possession limit for Lake Trout from two fish to three fish in northern Lake Huron.
- Fisheries Order 254.23, which would increase angling opportunities for non-trout species on Half Moon Lake in Muskegon County and Reid Lake in Alcona County, where habitat is no longer suitable for trout species.
- Fisheries Order 254.23, which would adjust regulations to reflect a change in ownership by removing Youngs Lake in Luce County from the order.

How to Participate in the NRC Meetings

- If you're unable to attend the meeting but wish to submit written comments on agenda items, please write to: Natural Resources Commission, P.O. Box 30028, Lansing, MI 48909 or email: nrc@michigan.gov.
- If you would like further information or would like to address the Commission, please contact nrc@michigan.gov. Persons registering on or before the Friday preceding the meeting will be allowed up to five (5) minutes for their presentation. Persons registering after the Friday preceding the meeting or at the meeting will be allowed up to three (3) minutes. Persons with disabilities needing accommodations should contact the NRC Assistant.
- Look for the agendas and other Natural Resources Commission items at the Natural Resources Commission webpage (www.michigan.gov/NRC).

Division Updates

Executive Division

Stacy Haughey, UP Field Deputy

Important Deer Season Reminders

2023 Deer Hunting Preview - Upper Peninsula

The winter of 2022-2023 was once again severe, with several impactful snowfalls occurring late in the season, putting fear into the minds of many across much of the Upper Peninsula. While there was some adult and fawn mortality reported in select

areas, major die-offs from the harsh winter were, once again, avoided. Deer numbers remain low in many locations, especially along the Superior shoreline, the western counties, and even some locations in the eastern UP. This will, in turn, temper expectations for the overall harvest in the UP. The southern portions of the UP, including parts of Menominee, Delta, and even Dickinson, seem to have consistent deer numbers, and another good year is anticipated for those areas. However, it is essential to note that there will be places in the UP where deer densities remain low, and hunting efforts in some of these locations will prove extremely challenging. Where oaks are abundant, acorn production looks good for this year, and bowhunters may find added success by emphasizing these areas early in the season.

The big news in the Upper Peninsula this year is that the CWD Surveillance Zone surrounding the lone detection of a deer with CWD has been lifted. After testing nearly 2,100 deer since 2018, no other positive animals were identified. This led the DNR to recommend and the Natural Resources Commission to approve the removal of this zone. Of course, hunters who still want to get their deer heads tested can do so. If you're interested, you are encouraged to [see what options are available](#) in the area where you are hunting. Hunters in the previously defined CWD Surveillance Zone can resume baiting, which had been prohibited since the establishment of the zone. Also returning will be the "hunters choice" deer regulations, which allow any legal 3-inch buck to be harvested on a deer license, but hunters purchasing a combination license must hunt under an Antler Point Restriction, with a 3-point-per-side buck or greater dedicated towards the regular tag and a 4-point-per-side buck dedicated. The entire area of the CWD Surveillance Zone will have these regulations, consistent with the surrounding units, which should simplify our regulations.

Season information

- Independence hunt: Oct. 19 – 22, 2023
- Archery: Oct. 1 – Nov. 14 and Dec. 1 – Jan. 1, 2023
- Regular firearm: Nov. 15 – 30, 2023
- Muzzleloading (Zones 1, 2 and 3): Dec. 1 – 10, 2023
- Late antlerless firearm: Dec. 11, 2023 – Jan. 1, 2024

Review latest regulations in 2023 Hunting Regulations Summary

Before you head into the field, be sure to check the latest hunting regulations in your area by looking at the [2023 Hunting Regulations Summary](#). The sections below refer to specific pages of the regulations summary for more information on these topics.

For on-demand access to this info that travels where you do, without the need for internet access, download the [Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app](#).

Important regulation reminders

Baiting and feeding

Baiting and feeding is allowed in the Upper Peninsula only. Baiting and feeding is banned in the entire Lower Peninsula, except for those with a qualifying disability during the Liberty and Independence hunts.

For more information on baiting in the Upper Peninsula, see page 61.

Antler point restrictions (APR)

- Mainland Lower Peninsula hunters may harvest an antlered or antlerless deer on their deer or deer combo licenses during archery, firearm and muzzleloader seasons.
- Be sure to check the APR chart before heading out this year:
 - Lower Peninsula APR chart, see pages 54-55.
 - Upper Peninsula APR chart, see pages 58-59.
- Youth hunters, age 16 and under, are exempt from antler point restrictions, even when hunting in an area where antler point restrictions exist for other hunters.

Harvest a doe – antlerless deer licenses available

If you're hunting in an area with high deer numbers or a disease-prevalent area, consider taking a doe this year to do your part in managing Michigan's deer herd. Harvesting does, the drivers of the deer population, is a key element in deer management. It is important to consider increasing doe harvest in areas with stable or overpopulated deer numbers to ensure healthy population ranges. This is especially crucial in known deer disease areas, where deer numbers often need to be lowered to help minimize the future spread of the disease.

Antlerless deer can be harvested on a deer or deer combo license in the mainland Lower Peninsula and during the archery season in parts of the Upper Peninsula. A universal antlerless license can also be used to harvest an antlerless deer, though some units in the Upper Peninsula prohibit or restrict the use of antlerless licenses (see pages 58-60 of the Hunting Regulations Summary).

Report your deer harvest online

Just like last year, all harvested deer are required to be reported. The easiest way to report a harvest is by downloading the Michigan DNR Hunt Fish app. Once the app is downloaded and you've signed in or created an account, you can enter the harvest report information.

You can also report a harvest online. Visit Michigan.gov/DNRHarvestReport on a computer or mobile device to go directly to the reporting page. Enter your kill tag license number and date of birth to begin the report.

If you don't have your hunting license/kill tag number, you can log in to eLicense (using your driver's license and birthdate, or user ID and password), then click on the Harvest Report tab to see the tags available to report. If you don't already have an account, you will have the chance to create one to enter your report.

Find more information on harvest reporting on the harvest reporting webpage. If you need assistance, you can call your local DNR customer service center or the main Wildlife Division line at 517-284-WILD (9453) during normal business hours, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday.

John Pepin, DNR Deputy Public Information Officer, Marquette

- The new season of "Ask the DNR" kicks off at 8 p.m. EDT Thursday, Oct. 5 on WNMU-TV13. The first show panel will include John Bauman, fisheries biologist, Escanaba, Brandon Maki, conservation officer, Alger County and wildlife biologist Heather Shaw, Shingleton. Additional show dates for this season will include Nov. 2 and Dec. 7, 2023 and April 4, 2024.
- We are looking for contributions and story ideas for our Showcasing the DNR feature story series. We are currently scheduling stories from mid-October through the end of January, 2024. We are always happy to work with new contributors and first-time writers. Our series has increased in subscribers to 15,000 a few years ago to nearly 37,000 today. The stories are often published by media outlets across the state. Writers receive a byline for the stories. Please contact me with any questions or ideas.



Bay College Forest Tech Students visit Escanaba Field Office

Students from Bay College's Forest Tech program visited the Escanaba Field Office's Fire Support Services recently. The students showed tremendous interest and asked a lot of questions about the equipment and the program in general. Open discussion and presentations were provided by Eric Thompson, Mitch Reger and Jay Osterberg regarding everyday forest tech plan of work. Great job promoting and encouraging new fire fighter candidates for the near future!

DNR Pocket Park at the UP State Fair - August 2023 Highlights

A special thank you to all the community volunteers, **including several UP CAC members**, and DNR staff who spent time this year at the DNR Pocket Park during the UP State Fair—almost 180 of you (a new record)! It was a FANTASTIC year and we owe it all to you! You all helped to create long-lasting memories for both yourselves and for the kids you mentored. Thank you all for taking time out of your day & summer to help kids enjoy our wonderful natural resources. AMAZING FACT: Over 104,000 people attended the UP State Fair this year, with an estimated 26,000 (1/4) coming through the Pocket Park—WOW!

A huge shout out to our special partners this year: Hiawatha & Ottawa National Forest staff who sponsored and covered all the stations on Thursday first shift, US Border Patrol in Sault Ste. Marie, Youth Works, Retired Senior Volunteer Program, DNR Fire Prevention staff, DNR LED Officers, Kathy Garland-DNR Archery Instructor, Kids Fishing Day Board Members, Bayshore Bait & Tackle, family, friends, and coworkers.



THANK YOU EVERYONE!
See you all next year
August 12-18, 2024

*-KRISTI & JO ANN
DNR POCKET PARK*





Finance & Operations Division

Jason Peterson, Acting Western UP Administrative Area Manager

- Jeff Sears has filled the Facilities Operations and Support Section Manager position and Jason Peterson continues in the working-out-of-class (WOC) role as the Western Upper Peninsula Administrative Area Manager within Finance Operations Division.
- Marquette, Escanaba and Baraga Customer Service Centers remain open M-F 8:00am-5:00pm EST. The Crystal Falls Field Office is open M,W,T,F from 7:00am-3:30pm CST, Norway Field Office is open on Tuesday's from 8:00am-2:30pm CST and Gwinn Field Office is open Monday's from 9:30am-4:30pm EST and Thursday's from 1:00pm-4:30pm EST.
- Offices are starting to get busy with bear and deer seasons upon us. The long awaited 2023 hunting digests have started arriving and even though these digests are available online, we are finding that many of our customers prefer to have the hard copy.
- The western UP area offices are updating building securities with remote door locks and camera systems. These updates have been made possible thru a Federal Homeland Security Grant Program. We have also just completed a reroofing project at the Ishpeming Field Office and are in the process of updating HVAC systems at the Marquette customer service center.

Becky Randazzo, Secretary, Eastern UP Area/Sault Ste. Marie Field Office

- New Mass Timber Newberry Customer Service Center: Earthwork has begun at the site of the project (see picture). The scheduled completion date is December 2024 but that is subject to change. The groundbreaking ceremony will be held on October 10, 2023.



Monthly Season Reminders – October & November 2023

- 10/14 Duck Hunting opener in the South Zone
- 10/15 Fox and Coyote trapping open statewide
- 10/15 Gray & Red Fox hunting opens
- 10/15 Badger trapping open in Zone 1 & 2 (for open areas of Zone 1, see p. 4 of Fur digest)
- 10/19 Independence Hunt for deer opens (through 10/22, see p. 44)
- 10/20 Pheasant season open in Zone 2 & 3 (through 11/14)
- 10/20 Quail season opens, close date 11/14 (see list of open counties p. 66)
- 10/24 LAST DAY TO ACQUIRE BOBCAT KILL TAGS
- 10/25 Beaver/Otter/Bobcat for MI Residents, Muskrat & Mink trapping open in UP
- 10/26 Late bear seasons close in the UP
- 10/29 Woodcock season closes
- 10/31 Fishing seasons close on Type A and Type D trout lakes.
- 11/1 Beaver & Otter trapping open in Unit B (for residents)
- 11/1 Muskrat & Mink trapping open Zone 2; Badger trapping opens in Zone 3
- 11/10 Beaver & Otter trapping open in Unit C (for residents)
- 11/10 Muskrat & Mink trapping open in Zone 3
- 11/10 Five Day Firearm Restriction Period begins (see hunting digest p. 50)
- 11/14 Badger trapping closes in Zones 1 & 2
- 11/14 Fall Turkey & Early Archery Deer seasons close
- 11/14 Grouse closes until 12/1; pheasant season closes in Zones 2 & 3
- 11/15 Firearm Deer season open (ends 11/30); ORV time restrictions begin
- 11/15 Frog, Toad, and Salamander seasons close

Fisheries Division

Darren Kramer, Western UP Fisheries Division

Management Unit Update

- Juvenile lake sturgeon were tagged and released out of the Cedar River streamside rearing facility (Menominee County) into the Cedar River in mid-September. A total of 196 fish were released and averaged 7.0 inches in total length.
- Lake sturgeon lift operations at the Menominee Dam on the Menominee River began on September 7th and continued through September 19th. Higher than normal water temperatures for early September delayed the start by a few days. A total of 74 lake sturgeon were captured with 46 transferred upstream of the Park Mill dam.
- Personnel from several management units, support units, and hatcheries assisted in clipping roughly 49,000 splake. The clipped splake are for stocking Lake Superior ports in Munising and Keweenaw Bay. Splake for Copper Harbor will be clipped in spring 2024. Splake clipping will continue in 2024 with the last cohort of clipped splake leaving in 2025.
- A virtual meeting was held September 11 during which the Lake Superior Committee (of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission) discussed strain evaluations, research priorities, Fish Community Objective indicators, Buffalo Reef research, and a potential pilot project using acoustic signatures to identify and enumerate vessels.

Fish Production Section Update

- Fish Production Section was well-represented at the annual American Fisheries Society meeting in Grand Rapids in late August. Several presentations were given, and staff also coordinated a Coolwater Fish Production Workshop during the conference. Lots of great presentations were heard and many professional connections were made and strengthened because of the myriad networking opportunities.

- Muskellunge arrived from Wolf Lake Hatchery to Thompson Hatchery on August 15th. Staff are currently feeding and caring for them until stocking time in late October.
- Mass marking of steelhead began at the end of September at Thompson Hatchery.

Research Section Update

- The annual fish community survey in the Bays de Noc (Delta County) was completed by staff from the Marquette Fisheries Research Section and Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit. Trawling was also completed in each bay and a gill net survey was completed in Green Bay sites near Cedar River and Menominee.
- During the recent AFS Conference in Grand Rapids, the North American Sturgeon and Paddlefish Society held their annual meeting. During the meeting, Dr. Ed Baker was awarded the “Order of Acipenser”. The award is presented to an individual for their outstanding contributions to the conservation, recovery, and/or management of sturgeon or paddlefish in North America. Ed has been employed by the Michigan DNR for over 27 years in which much of that time has been spent managing lake sturgeon. Ed has been an integral part of designing early monitoring studies for lake sturgeon and helped establish recovery programs.
- Staff Completed standardized stream fish community and habitat surveys upstream and downstream of beaver ponds at seven locations in the Upper Peninsula and Northern Lower Peninsula, as part of a collaborative study with WDNR and USFWS to assess effects of beaver ponds on trout streams.

Neal Godby, Eastern UP Fisheries Division

- Splake clipping completed at Marquette State Fish Hatchery. The clipped splake are for stocking Lake Superior ports in Munising and Keweenaw Bay. Splake for Copper Harbor will be clipped in spring 2024. The crew has worked to narrow down the number of fish clipped to only the quantity needed for Lake Superior. Splake clipping will continue in 2024 with the last cohort of clipped splake leaving in 2025. The Lake Superior Basin Team will be discussing whether to continue clipping splake for future years.
- Little Lake Harbor has not been dredged since 2017. Funding for dredging in 2020 was removed due to changes in the President’s budget. The channel to access the USACE Harbor of Refuge (recreational harbor) has been blocked with sediment and has resulted in high water levels in Little Lake affecting resort owner’s property and water fronts. Constituent inquiries to EGLE and the USACE have triggered an emergency dredging of the harbor to lower the water levels in the lake. Additionally, the USACE has secured funding to dredge the harbor channel completely using mechanical dredging this summer and fall, with dredging continuing in 2024 with hydraulic dredging. The USACE communicated with Forest Resources Division to secure a land use permit for potential use of state land for transporting and placement of the spoils. Fisheries Division communicated with USACE to recommend dredge timing to avoid spawning periods and juvenile/larval drift for lake whitefish.
- Au Train Lake Habitat Enhancement Project partners held a wrap-up meeting in Au Train August 30th. A total of 30 riparians and interested parties were present for the meeting. Fisheries staff shared a summary of the project process and images of the completed structures installed in the lake. A total of 90 structures were installed: 67 Fish Sticks and 23 brush bundles. Fisheries Division is working with Alger Conservation District and Upper Peninsula Resource Conservation and Development Council to utilize remaining Fisheries Habitat Grant funds from the 2022 award. The second phase of the project targets the installation of more Fish Sticks (up to 50) and possibly use an experimental design of parallel logs for establishing native macrophytes. The project has been well received and will continue to be used as a demonstration project for large-scale inland lake habitat projects.
- Fisheries Division met with EGLE Dam Safety staff to inspect all Fisheries owned dams across the EUP. EGLE conducts a safety inspection every 5 years on low hazard dams and is in accordance with EGLE and DNR policy for state owned dams.
- Field crews are currently conducting nighttime electrofishing on inland lakes to capture juvenile walleye. This effort occurs nearshore in water depths less than 5 feet. The boats are well lit and will have a generator running to conduct electricity in the water. These surveys will last through the end of September and into early October. Crews also recently conducted nighttime electrofishing on Raber Bay and Potagannissing Bay of the St. Marys River.
- It has been a banner year for Coho salmon in Lake Superior. Cohos have been upward of 6-7 lbs and in most cases a consistent 5 lbs. Assuming water levels remain in the streams, salmon runs on Lake Superior are highly anticipated by anglers this year.
- Northern Lake Michigan Management Unit biologist spent a couple of nights with staff from the Hiawatha National Forest searching for juvenile lake sturgeon in the Indian River, Schoolcraft County to confirm that natural reproduction is

occurring. Two juvenile sturgeon were sighted/captured during the survey related to what was considered good juvenile habitat. There is a small remnant STN population in Indian Lake (there are 2 dams between Indian Lake and Lake MI) and locals previously indicated that STN have been seen in the river spawning.

- Manistique dam: NLMMU manager has been participating in monthly calls with the other agencies working on the project (FWS, USACE, GLFC, etc.) towards building a new sea lamprey barrier on the lower Manistique River. DNR real estate folks have been working on acquiring key parcels for the dam and levee footprints and a couple more parcels need to be acquired (likely happen in 2025) before USACE starts full engineering design for the new dam. Currently the project is projected to be awarded for construction in summer/fall 2026.

Forest Resources Division

Tom Seablom, Western UP District Manager

- Field work on the 2025 Year of Entry (YOE) Inventory has been completed. We will be starting work of the 2026 YOE. Open house Comment Periods and Compartment Review schedules for the 2026 YOE units are posted online along with other state forest inventory information at: Michigan.Gov/forestInput.
- As of October 2nd, 289 timber sale contracts are open WUP Wide. This represents 896,592 cords of timber on 48,070 acres, valued at approximately \$34.0 million. Included in this are 21 GNA sales representing 84,315 cords of timber on 4,310 acres, valued at approximately \$2.7 million. As of October 2nd, 7 sales are available WUP Wide for the minimum advertised price. This represents 19,263 Cords. Find more information on State Forest timber sales at: Michigan.Gov/Timber.
- WUP Units are reporting 27 Active Timber Sales in the WUP totaling about 2,946 acres. Units report low demand for demand for all product categories. Producers with mill contracts are the only ones able to move wood. Little to no open market wood is being taken.
- Mike Brodeur is currently working in an out of class assignment as the acting Gwinn Unit Manager. Working Out of Class (WOC) assignments are short term opportunities that give an employee to take on added responsibility in a role they may want to promote into. Mike has been with FRD as a forester in Baraga working in the GNA program since 2016. Mike has a very strong work ethic, is highly motivated, and has been a leader in the WUP GNA program since its inception. Mike began his WOC assignment on August 6 and will serve in that position until the end of October.
- The forest utilization and marketing program staff along with the forest stewardship program staff attended the Great Lakes Logging and Heavy Equipment Expo in Escanaba September 7-9. Michigan DNR had a table in the main indoor exhibit space and uses the opportunity to connect with loggers, truck drivers, and mill owners.
- Commercial Forest staff are working on inspections of already enrolled parcels for compliance. For more information on the Commercial Forest Program go to Michigan.Gov/Commercialforest.
- Units have been working on road improvement projects on Lake Gerald Road, Clear Lake Road, Ross Grade, and the Miller Creek Road.
- Balsam woolly adelgid was confirmed in Missaukee County in the LP. Although we have no indication that this pest is present in the UP, it does increase concerns about this invasive pest of balsam fir and planted ornamental firs. More information at: [Invasive balsam woolly adelgid confirmed in Missaukee County \(michigan.gov\)](https://Michigan.gov/InvasiveBalsamWoollyAdelgid).
- There were three reportable fires in the UP for the month of September for a total of 3.4 acres. Although this acreage is small it takes a lot of time and effort to put these fires out. Ground fuels were present carrying the burning deep into the duff layer. To complicate things, access to the fire was limited. With these two-factor weighing heavily on the fires there was considerable time and expense for the few fires we did have. The Gwinn Management unit did burn 410 acres at the beginning of September for opening maintenance. There was great support from the other units in the UP to pull off the large burn. The burn was very successful, and objectives were met. The burn also allowed for some great training and

mentoring opportunities which will help in overall operations moving forward. The fire year is winding down as days become shorter. There is less time for fire conditions to build on any given day. Please note that drought conditions are still present in some locations of the UP and warm windy days can still carry fire if there is an ignition source. Thus, there is still reason to monitor and staff for fire conditions until the ground becomes blanketed in snow for the winter.

- 5 personnel from the UP were dispatched out-of-state in the month of September and statewide there were approximately 18 total. There were a few training positions in the mix as well as some people who were able to recertify to maintain their qualifications. Another year of opportunities that enhance the fire program.
- During the last week of the month the Great Lake Forest Fire Compact held their annual meeting for the entire membership which brings people together from: Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Ontario, and Manitoba to explore and reflect on our compact agreements and review our accomplishments for the year. Just a few areas which the compact delves into are fire suppression resource sharing and operations, fire prevention, fire training, law enforcement, prescribed burning, forest health and communication.

Scott Lakosky, Eastern UP District Manager

Timber Sales

- Newberry Forest Management Unit
 - Newberry offered 10 sales for bid this past 2 months – 6 sold, 4 went unsold. Upland pine sales with larger wood sold. Lowland sales or sales with higher pulp volumes are drawing little interest. Most wood markets are very tight causing hesitation from loggers to buy additional stumpage.
 - Timber sale harvesting activity has been down for this time of year. Currently only a few active sales.
 - FY 23 timber sale prep is nearly complete and harvest proposals are being drafted for bid. Newberry prepared approximately 3,600 acres this fiscal year.
 - Forestry staff attended a SAF Conference in late September.
- Shingleton Management Unit
 - Offered 5 sales since last report 1 went no bid. The no bid was reduced, re-offered and sold. All the sales went near minimum. The only sale that had multiple bidders was the sale that was reduced which indicates the reduced minimum bids are nearing what the real market price is. Sale activity is a little slow. We have 2 contractors that are Long Term Contract holders and they are very steady. Most small producers have idled down. One of the local hardwood sawmills is still cutting but hauling pulpwood off-site to deck until markets improve.

Forest Inventory

- Field work for the 2025 planning year is complete and Compartment Review meetings are being held throughout October.
- Compartment Review dates: Sault Ste. Marie – October 5th, Shingleton – October 12th, Newberry – October 26th
- Pre-Inventory meetings for the 2026 planning year will be held this fall and field work will begin.

Cultivation

- Planting: Initial numbers for FY 2024 include: 523 acres being planted to jack pine across the Newberry and Shingleton Units and 1035 acres to be planted to Red Pine across the eastern UP.
- Pre-Commercial Thinning (PCT) work: EUP - 4 sites originally scheduled to be completed were done. 1 additional site was added and is also completed. Contractor started on this work 05/30/2023. Total acreage completed for PCT in 2023 = 200 acres.
- Roller Chopping: Originally - 414 acres of roller chopping to complete. Updated acres of roller chopping to complete – 249 acres. Currently about ½ of the acreage is complete – delays in the equipment getting to the EUP have pushed the completion well into October, but it is still on schedule to be completed.
- Trenching: Originally - 1293 acres of trenching to complete (of this acreage, 74.5 scheduled for RX burn – if burns not completed, sites will be trenched). Currently – roughly 570 acres completed. 73 acres were dropped. Due to 2024 budget constraints, up to 320 acres may be moved to 2024 to delay spraying those sites until 2025 to help with budget issues.
- Scarification: 1013 acres to be scarified (all contract, includes 209 acres in the Gwinn Unit). To date – Gwinn sites have been completed. EUP sites have yet to be started. Contractor is confident they will complete the work yet this fall.

- Red Pine Seed Orchard: Initial prep work on the Red Pine seed orchard on the Thompson Plains was completed this spring. Site will be used to collect RP seed for planting operations. **A good percentage of the Red Pine within the orchard had good cone production this fall. Pickers were using the site to collect cones.
- Aerial Site Prep Work: July 13th – July 18th – completed all aerial site prep spraying for 2023. Total of roughly 650 acres of site prep spray for Red Pine across all 3 Units. 4 days of spraying and 2 days with wind and weather out of prescription.
- Aerial Release Work: September 8th – 9th – Completed all aerial release work for 2023. One site was added to the POW. Roughly 273 acres completed in 2 days. Soo and Shingleton Units
- Skidder/Ground Site Prep Work: All Ground site prep work has been completed. 352 acres of ground/skidder site prep work.
- Release Work Ground/Skidder: 48.9 acres of ground/skidder release work completed.
- Red Pine Cone Collection: Red Pine cone collection project has started and is in full swing. Seeing an overall increase in the EUP this year of bushels brought in with well over 200 bushels collected to date.

Fire

- Staffing and Fire Response: Daily staffing thru August and September for Fire Danger as needed. DNR Staff responded to 4 fires in the EUP since last report. All required suppression action and totaled 39.7 acres burned. 1 out of country fire deployment to Manitoba. 7 out of state fire deployments to Washington, California, Montana, and Texas.
- Prescribed Burns: No burns conducted in the EUP since last report. Drought conditions prevented burning in many areas.
- Training: 2 staff were able to gain valuable training during out of state dispatches to work toward qualifications in higher level positions. 1 was able to complete their training for Tractor Plow Operator and will be evaluated for qualification this winter. The other made good progress toward completion of their training for Division Supervisor. 1 Forest Fire Officer is attending the FIT Leadership Academy.
- Prevention: Prevention efforts discussion/interview with local news outlets. Participated in Homecoming Parade for Newberry High School for prevention efforts. Smokey Bear attended the Chippewa County Fair with the Chippewa County Sheriff's Office, Michigan State Police, US Border Patrol, US Customs, and Chippewa County Central Dispatch for Special Needs Day.

Road and Bridge

- Many road and bridge projects were completed or are nearing completion across the East UP. These projects will improve access to state land for timber harvest and public use for many years to come.

Facilities

- Construction on the new Fire Shop in Manistique is nearing completion.
- Site prep has begun for the Newberry Customer Service Center.

Land Use

- Working to resolve a few recently discovered trespass cases involving timber and roads. Also reviewing applications for various uses and easements on state land.

Vacancies

- Filled Vacancies: Fire Officers at Sault Ste Marie and Newberry.
- In Process to Fill: Unit Manager for Sault Ste Marie Management Unit and East UP Inventory and Planning Specialist.
- Other: 2 Foresters, 1 each in the Newberry and Sault Ste. Marie Units. 2 Forest Technicians, 1 each in the Shingleton and Sault Ste Marie Units. 3 Forest Fire Officers: 2 in the Shingleton Management Unit and 1 in the Sault Ste Marie Management Unit.

Commercial Forest

- Compiling new commercial forest list applications, attending county hearings (virtual), and reviewing forest management plans.

Forest Health

- Aerial surveys were completed with limited defoliation mapped. Pockets of large aspen tortrix defoliation were mapped in Luce and western Mackinac counties. Some spruce budworm and jack pine budworm defoliation was also present.
- Balsam woolly adelgid was confirmed in Missaukee County in the lower peninsula. Although we have no indication that this pest is currently present in the UP, it does increase concerns about this invasive pest of balsam fir and planted ornamental firs.

Snowmobile

- Field Staff are working with Park and Recreation Division Staff and local snowmobile clubs to prepare for the upcoming snowmobile season.

Wyman State Forest Nursery

- Development of the process for hardwood production continues.

Law Enforcement Division

Lt. Ryan Aho, District 1 (Western UP) Law Supervisor

- **CO Brian Lasanen** contacted a bear hunter who was hunting over an illegal bait. The hunter was cited for the infraction and educated on the requirements for legal bear baits.
- **COs Brian Lasanen and Zach Painter** worked an ORV patrol in Ontonagon County. The COs stopped a side-by-side that was driving down the center of the road, crossing over the center line. The driver and passengers all had open intoxicants in the side-by-side. The driver was issued a ticket for open intoxicants on side-by-side.
- **CO Alex VanWagner** was patrolling Iron County and observed a vehicle in front of him cross the center line numerous times. A traffic stop was initiated, and the driver showed signs of impairment upon contact. Sobriety tests were administered, and a preliminary breath test (PBT) sample was given. The driver was arrested for operating while intoxicated (OWI) and lodged at the Iron County Jail.
- **CO Alex VanWagner** was contacted by a Michigan State Police (MSP) Sergeant and requested to respond to a residence in Ontonagon County for a domestic assault as there were no local units available. CO VanWagner arrived on scene with MSP troopers and assisted on scene. A female subject was arrested for domestic assault and the incident was turned over to the MSP.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey** located an illegal bear bait on state land containing several plastic buckets with bait inside of them. CO Sergey continued to document the illegal bear bait for several weeks. COs Sergey and Jackson Kelly checked the bait one morning during the first bear hunt period and discovered a bear hunter hunting the illegal bait pile from an unlabeled tree stand. Branches were also cut between the tree stand and the bait pile. Citations were issued for an unlabeled tree stand, failing to remove containers used to carry bait out on state land, and hunting over bait containing plastic. Warnings were issued for litter, cutting tree branches on state land, and placing bait other than directly on the ground.
- **Sgt. Mark Leadman** located a side-by-side ORV parked under an apple tree at the Goose Lake Boat Launch. A check revealed the ORV was unregistered and the subject was picking apples for deer bait. The subject was possessing a shotgun and was grouse hunting on the opening day of the season. The operator said they usually stay on their private property which was quite a distance away. The subject was ticketed for having an unregistered ORV.
- **CO John Kamps and Sgt. Mark Leadman** stopped an ORV for not having a helmet. The individual that was stopped had a large burlap sack of apples and was on his way to bait for deer. The COs educated the individual on baiting laws, informing him that baiting was not allowed until September 15th. A citation was issued for not wearing a helmet on an ORV.
- **CO Jenni Hanson** received a phone call from a resident on Lake Gogebic who advised there was a boat operating with registration that expired in 2014. CO Hanson located the boat and contacted the vessel owner who advised that he has not registered the boat in nine years. He claimed to have only used the boat for one week of the year. CO Hanson issued a citation for fail to display registration.
- **CO Alex VanWagner** observed two subjects fishing in a pond in Iron County. The CO approached the subjects who immediately reeled their lines in. The subjects told the CO they talked about getting fishing licenses that day but decided to take the chance fishing without one. Both subjects were issued citations.
- **CO Alex VanWagner** responded to a single vehicle crash scene in Iron County with MSP troopers and an Iron County deputy. The vehicle had been engulfed in flames and a courageous passerby was able to remove the driver prior to arrival of law enforcement and EMS. The driver was transported to UP Health Systems Marquette, where he ultimately succumbed to injuries. The incident was handled by the MSP.
- **Sgt. Brian Bacon** contacted a vessel returning to the dock on a local lake. The operator stated that he was out all weekend and was just loading it up. The vessel showed an expired 2005 registration. The operator stated that it's been sitting and never really uses it. A citation was issued for an expired boat registration.

- **COs Steve Sajtar and Jared Ferguson** contacted a taxidermist in Menominee County. In 2022, a bear hunter had dropped off a bear that had been shot unlawfully. The bear hunter did not have a valid bear permit and tagged the bear with his wife's permit. The bear hunter took the unlawfully killed bear to the taxidermist. Rather than report the unlawfully taken bear, the taxidermist accepted and sealed the bear. When confronted about the bear, the hunter admitted to shooting it without having a valid bear permit. The COs seized the bear hide from the taxidermist as evidence. A citation was issued to the taxidermist for improper records and a report was submitted to the prosecutor.
- **Menominee and Marquette County conservation officers** executed a search warrant in Marquette County after a homeowner had shot at a group of goose hunters with a .30-06 caliber rifle. Upon arrival to the house, the COs were not able to locate the suspect or his dogs. After searching the suspect's property, the COs seized multiple firearms, empty rifle casings, drug paraphernalia, cocaine, and other evidence related to the crime. A report was submitted to the prosecutor.
- In Menominee County, **CO Steve Sajtar** responded to a complaint of two unlawfully shot deer lying in a field. Upon investigation, it was determined that one of the shot deer was a 4-point buck. A witness had called the RAP Hotline and reported the license plate number of the suspect's vehicle. CO Sajtar tracked down the suspect and interviewed him. It was determined that the suspect was shooting under a Deer Management Assistance Program (DMAP) permit. The DMAP permit allowed the taking of does only. When CO Sajtar interviewed the suspect, a full confession was given. At one point the suspect stated, "The deer had its head down in the alfalfa, so I just assumed it was a doe". Additionally, the suspect admitted to leaving the deer in the field without tagging it for several hours. Rather than report the buck as an accident, the suspect field dressed the deer and took the meat to his local processor. The deer head, meat, and empty rifle casings were seized for evidence. The seized venison was donated to a family in need. A report was submitted to the prosecutor.
- **CO Jeremy Sergey and Sgt. Mark Leadman** were patrolling the Goose Lake outlet when a dirt bike illegally crossed through the stream and was attempting to illegally cross the railroad tracks. A citation was issued for operating in a stream.
- **COs John Kamps and Jackson Kelly** were on patrol when they recognized an individual with warrants sitting in a work vehicle. They COs pulled up the road and confirmed that the suspect had two warrants out of 25th Circuit Court. By the time the COs returned to contact the individual, he had left area. After a brief search, the COs located the individual a short distance away working on the railroad road. The COs arrested the individual and turned him over to the Marquette County Sheriff's Department.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were on marine patrol when they observed a man catch a fish and place it on his stringer attached to his boat. The COs contacted the man and asked him how his fishing day was going. He stated it was good as he caught a walleye that was right at the minimum size requirement. The man showed the COs his walleye on the stringer and when the COs measured the fish, it was well short of the minimum size requirement. The man stated he used a ruler in his boat to measure the fish, but his eyes must have read the ruler wrong. The fish was taken, and he was issued a citation for taking a short walleye.
- **COs Phil Helminen and Jared Ferguson** were on marine patrol when they observed a pontoon boat pulling a tube with three men on it and none of the three had on a PFD. The COs stopped the boat and the driver stated they must be getting stopped for not having life jackets on the tube. They stated they did not have any life jackets on the boat that were comfortable to wear while on the tube. A check of life jackets was conducted on the boat and COs found there was not enough life jackets on the boat for the people on board. The COs gave the boaters enough life jackets and followed them back to shore where citations were issued for no PFDs while being towed and towing without a PFD.
- **CO Phil Helminen** was on patrol when local dispatch put out a call of a single motorcycle crash with both people on the motorcycle injured. CO Helminen responded to the scene to assist Michigan State Police troopers. The passenger on the motorcycle was seriously injured and was transported to a local hospital and then airlifted to a trauma center. The driver of the motorcycle had failed to negotiate a corner and went off of the roadway and overturned.
- **CO Jared Ferguson** participated in the law portion of Hunters Safety at the Sagola sportsmen club. There were 33 students in attendance.
- **COs Jackson Kelly and John Kamps** attended a kid's fishing derby on the Dead River Storage Basin. The CO's spoke with many of the kids and parents. Although the lake was wavy, many of the kids were able to catch fish.
- **CO Cody Smith** was catching up on paperwork near a local stream when he observed an angler carrying a bucket to their vehicle. CO Smith checked the angler and discovered they were in possession of two undersized brown trout. Being one was still alive; it was returned to the water. Enforcement action was taken, and the angler was written a citation for possession of undersized trout.
- **CO Cody Smith** had recently clocked out of service when he received a call from Baraga County Deputies Scroggs and Gustafson regarding a stranded pontoon on Keweenaw Bay that was experiencing motor issues. CO Smith met the deputies at the dock where they navigated to the stranded vessel. After securing the vessel for tow, CO Smith brought the vessel to the L'Anse marina. The four boaters were able to trailer their vessel as they watched the sunset over Lake Superior.

Lt. Skip Hagy, District 2 (Eastern UP) Law Supervisor

Fall is in full swing and all officers are very busy working bear season, fish runs, archery deer along with small game and waterfowl season. There is no lack of activity any way they turn. The two new officers who will be assigned to Mackinac and Chippewa Counties are doing well with their training and anxious to hit the field later this fall. Below are some of the activity's officers have been involved in since our last CAC.

DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 8-7-2023

- **Sgt Mark Zitnik and CO Andrea Dani** assisted the Michigan State Police with a report of a possible active breaking and entering. The COs were first on scene and found the building to be secure and undamaged.
- **CO Brandon Maki** was patrolling down a two-track road when he encountered two individuals operating their four-wheelers without wearing helmets. The riders had helmets in their possession but when asked why they weren't wearing them they stated it caused them to sweat profusely. CO Maki explained the safety reasons why helmets are required and issued one citation. CO Maki cleared the scene after hopefully changing their minds to operate safely in the future.
- CO Brandon Maki responded to a one car rollover along the Seney stretch with deputies from the Alger County Sheriff's Department. Both the driver and passenger were ejected through the sunroof of the vehicle due to not wearing their seatbelts. Miraculously, both subjects survived after the vehicle had rolled five times. It was determined that the operator of the vehicle swerved for a dead coyote that was laying in the road and lost control. CO Maki cleared the scene after the patients were brought to the hospital and the scene was documented.
- **CO Michael Evink, GLEU Cpl. Michael Hammill and Communication Officer Katie Gervasi** conducted a marine safety patrol of vessels participating in the Manistique Sportfishing Trout and Salmon Derby. This year the derby had more than 400 participants entered. The compliance level was very good in reference to marine equipment. One individual did show to have valid warrants out of Wisconsin with no extradition, additionally he did not have a Michigan fishing license. He was advised of the warrants and issued a ticket for fishing without a license.
- **CO Mike Evink** responded to a complaint of reckless dirt bike operation in the city of Manistique. CO Evink located a group of teens sitting outside and apartment complex in the area of the complaint. They were not riding the dirt bikes at the time. CO Evink passed by and parked a few blocks away. Within 30 minutes the bikes fired up and the reckless operation continued. CO Evink contacted the two riders and their group of friends. CO Evink issued two civil infractions for the operation. While CO Evink was interacting with the group of teens a female on the second floor of the complex became very vocal and was screaming disparaging remarks about police and at CO Evink for his interactions with the teens. The female then began removing clothing flashing onlookers while continuing to scream obscenities. CO Evink requested assistance from Manistique Public Safety Officers. The additional Officers were able to hear the woman screaming from more than two blocks away. The female would not comply with their request to calm down. Manistique Public Safety Officers determined the female was displaying disorderly conduct behaviors in violation of a city ordinance. When officers attempted to contact the female at her apartment, she refused to answer the door. Manistique Public Safety Officer requested and obtained a search warrant. With a search warrant in hand officers attempted contact with the female. The female answered the door without any clothing, she struck one officer in the face and began to fight with all officers once she was informed she was under arrest. CO Evink assisted Manistique Public Safety, MSP and Sault Tribal Law Enforcement take the combative woman into custody. She was transported to the local hospital and a few hours later medically cleared and lodged into the Schoolcraft County Jail. Reports will be submitted for assaulting a police officer in addition to the disorderly person charges.
- **CO Justin Vinson** responded to a camping complaint he received at Dual Lake in Mackinac County. Upon inspection all sites were in violation of either camping beyond 15 consecutive nights, failing to post a camp card, or failing to post a legible and or properly filled out camp card. Citations were issued for the violations.
- **COs Mike Olesen and Justin Vinson** assisted wildlife biologist Kristie Sitar in releasing a cub bear that had been caught in a trap that was set for nuisance beaver. Upon arriving on scene, it was determined that the (cub) was traveling with its mother which was close by. The COs tried the use of audible signals to chase the sow off but were unsuccessful. Only after the use of rubber shot did the sow retreat to allow biologist Sitar to remove the young bear from the trap. A short time later both sow and yearling were observed reunited.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was patrolling Drummond Island when he observed an ORV being operated on M-134 which is a state highway. A stop was made and upon further investigation the owner was also found to be operating without an ORV license on their machine. A short time later another ORV was also observed operating on the same highway. Both operators were issued citations for operating on a state highway and a verbal warning was issued to the one owner for operating without an ORV license.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was near Detour when he observed an ORV operating on M-134. CO Olsen also observed that the operator was not wearing the required seatbelt. A stop was made, and a citation was issued for not wearing the required seatbelt and a verbal warning was issued for operating on a state highway.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** along with numerous COs and volunteers from around the state participated in the national trapping convention. COs conducted an "Interactive Crime Scene" which gave participants the opportunity to assist in a wildlife investigation and giving individuals an in depth look at the job of a Conservation Officer. Total participation was estimated at nearly 500 children.
- **CO Cole VanOosten and Sgt. Calvin Smith** were on patrol when they came across an illegal ORV trail on state land. The COs followed the trail on foot and found an active bear bait and a permanent blind that have been established well before the legal date. The investigation is ongoing for the responsible violator.

DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 8-21-2023

- **CO Steve Butzin** was on patrol in Garden Township when conducting a routine traffic stop, he received information from dispatch that an individual was near his location with several outstanding felony warrants, further the subject recently has fled and evaded arrest

from other area law enforcement. CO Butzin concluded the traffic stop and searched the area briefly before locating the wanted individual. CO Butzin was familiar with the wanted subject from several prior dealings with the individual. CO Butzin contacted the individual and informed her of her outstanding warrants. When the officer told the individual she was under arrest she took off running from the officer on foot through a nearby farm field. The officer was able to catch up and successfully deploy his conducted electrical weapon (TASER). The individual was taken into custody without further incident and lodged in the Delta County Jail for the outstanding warrants as well as for resisting and obstructing a police officer.

- While on routine ORV patrol, **COs Robert Freeborn and Steve Butzin** checked several ORVs on a busy weekend. The COs did encounter several violations, including riding double, having no ORV permit, and operating on state highways. Citations were issued for the above violations.
- **CO Robert Freeborn** was dispatched to a 2-vehicle personal injury accident on US2. Since all other law enforcement were tied up and not in the area, CO Freeborn was the first on scene. After assessing the injuries of the occupants, it was determined that one of the drivers sustained non-life-threatening injuries and needed immediate medical attention. Once the injured driver was made comfortable and assisted into an arriving ambulance, Officer Freeborn began to investigate the scene. It was determined that an SUV failed to yield to oncoming traffic before making a left-handed turn onto US2 and was struck by an oncoming pickup truck pulling a 5th-wheel camper. Both vehicles sustained substantial damage and were towed from the scene. While one of the drivers did sustain injuries resulting from the crash, all occupants were lucky it wasn't a more serious accident. Safety belt use by all involved was a major factor in this. This should be a reminder for motorists to slow down and look both ways before entering a roadway.
- **CO Andrea Dani** observed an ORV operated by an individual with no helmet nor ORV license on a public road in Alger County. CO Dani stopped the ORV and enforcement action was taken.
- **COs Brandon Maki and Andrea Dani** were on patrol on Au Train Lake when the officers observed a vessel with expired registration. The officers approached the vessel and found an occupant to be fishing without a fishing license. Enforcement action was taken.
- **CO Michael Evink** assisted the Mackinac County Sheriff's department with a Parole Absconder who chose to jump into Lake Huron from the Starline Ferry Dock. CO Evink jumped on a Mackinac County Patrol boat and assisted in taking the absconder into custody who had just been picked up by a boat from The Mackinac Bridge Authority. The absconder was transported to shore, checked out by EMS, and lodged by the Mackinac County Sheriff's Department.
- **CO Mike Evink** responded to a suicidal female complaint where the suspect stated she was going to walk into Lake Michigan. Officers on the ground searched the area she was supposed to be in. CO Evink used his department-issued Sea-Doo to patrol the shallow waters in the area. With a good description from dispatch, CO Evink located the woman staring directly into the water. CO Evink held his position in the water until officers on the shore were able to make contact with the woman. She was safely taken into protective custody without incident.
- **COs Andrea Dani and Brandon Maki** were launching their patrol boat on AuTrain lake when CO Maki observed a pontoon boat not far from shore with multiple occupants. CO Maki used his binoculars and could clearly see two individuals actively fishing as they casted multiple times. COs launched their boat and contacted the occupants of the vessel. It was discovered that one of the individuals fishing had not purchased a license. CO Maki issued a citation for fishing without a license and had an educational conversation with the operator of the pontoon who was not pleased his friend was receiving a citation. COs cleared the stop and found another individual fishing without a license nearby. CO Dani issued a citation for fishing without a license and gave a warning for failing to display a proper registration.
- **Sgt. Zitnik and CO Brandon Maki** worked at the DNR Pocket Park during the U.P. State Fair in Escanaba. COs spoke with many children and families and answered multiple questions about recreating in the outdoors.
- **CO Justin Vinson** responded to a road end access complaint. After investigating the complaint, it was determined that both the complainant and suspect were in violation. Both parties were instructed to remove their property or citations would be issued.
- **CO Justin Vinson** responded to a complaint of buoys on Big Manistique Lake. CO Vinson was able to locate the owners of the water ski course, who were informed that without a permit the buoys were in violation. A verbal warning was given.
- **COs Justin Vinson and Cole VanOosten** led a hunters education field day in Newberry. Fifteen ambitious youth hunters attended and learned valuable hunters' safety tips as well as got to handle and shoot a variety of firearms.
- **CO Cole VanOosten** received a complaint of litter on state land. Upon discovering an extremely large trash pile including thirteen bags of garbage on an otherwise scenic trail, CO VanOosten began looking for evidence of who dumped it. CO VanOosten found a license plate as well as numerous other documents with a suspect's name on it. CO VanOosten was able to contact the responsible party who met him at the dump site and admitted to dumping the large pile of trash. The garbage was picked up and a citation was issued for littering.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was on patrol in Chippewa County when a call came out of an active shooter / hostage situation where a US Marshall had been shot. CO Olesen responded to the scene, equipped his department issued tactical equipment and held perimeter of the house until tactical teams arrived on scene, the suspect was later found deceased inside the residence.
- **CO Mike Olesen and Sgt. Smith** assisted MSP in the execution of a search warrant for an extremely large illegal marijuana grow operation. COs searched the property to ensure there were no outside marijuana grows.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was on patrol in Chippewa County when an ORV was observed operating on a state highway. CO Olesen made a stop on the ORV, and the driver was cited for operating on a state highway.

DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 9-4-2023

- **COs Robert Freeborn and Steve Butzin** patrolled a local hot spot for the early goose & teal waterfowl hunters. The COs set up on the lake well before shooting hours and observed several watercraft operate without navigation lights. Later that morning, the boats and hunters observed operating without proper lights were checked. There were several additional violations encountered such as unlawful blinds, no state waterfowl license, operating without navigation lights, and operating without a valid watercraft registration. Several citations were issued.
- **CO Brandon Maki** was patrolling southbound on US 41 when a vehicle passed him at an alarmingly high rate of speed. CO Maki followed the vehicle which continued rapidly passing other vehicles. When CO Maki got behind the vehicle after all the passing, he paced the car at 85 MPH in a 55 MPH zone. CO Maki initiated a traffic stop, upon contact the driver stated she was only speeding when she passed the last vehicle. CO Maki informed her that she had passed him, along with several other vehicles and he had followed her for some time before the traffic stop. The driver then stated that she believed the speed limit was 75 MPH. CO Maki informed her of multiple large white signs she had passed that stated the speed limit was 55 MPH. CO Maki issued a citation for speeding and cleared the scene.
- **CO Andrea Dani** was on patrol in Alger County when she observed a dirt bike travelling down the shoulder of M-67. CO Dani stopped the dirt bike and the operator was issued a citation for operating an ORV on a public highway.
- **CO Andrea Dani** observed multiple ORVs on a county road in Alger County. Two of the ORVs in the group did not have ORV licenses visible. CO Dani conducted a traffic stop on the ORVs and enforcement action was taken.
- On a very busy Labor Day Sunday, **COs Andrea Dani, Rob Freeborn, Steve Butzin, Mike Evink, Brandon Maki, and Sgt. Mark Zitnik** performed a group patrol in Grand Marais and surrounding area focusing on illegal ORV operation. Throughout the day, COs issued 17 citations for violations ranging from operating on a public highway, no ORV registration, operating without a helmet and no seatbelts. COs spoke with multiple residents of Grand Marais who were grateful for their presence.
- **COs Andrea Dani, Brandon Maki, and Sgt. Mark Zitnik** left their ORV patrol when dispatched to a wildfire nearby. COs met with the complainants who spotted smoke from their boat while on South Gemini Lake. The complainants gave directions to where they believed the fire may be. COs trekked through the swamp and located a duff fire caused by a lightning strike. COs attempted to put the fire out while directing fire crews to the location. Once more personnel were on scene the fire was contained.
- **CO Michael Evink** assisted **CO Brandon Maki** with a bear depredation complaint in Munising. A pesky hungry black bear was helping himself to local chickens. The bear did have the ability to destroy a well latched coop door and avoid a half sheet of plywood with spikes designed to deter him. He was however, frightened off when the landowner fired several rounds to scare it off.

DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 9-18-2023

- **CO Steve Butzin** received a complaint in Fairbanks Township of several campers at a state park that had been left unattended for over a week. CO Butzin responded to the location and discovered that the individuals had been staying at the site for over a week without paying. There was a large quantity of garbage and debris at the site. CO Butzin conducted several interviews and ultimately discovered that the responsible party was currently at a residence in Manistique. **CO Robert Freeborn** was near Manistique and was able to respond to the location and contact the suspect who admitted that she had not paid for her entire stay. CO Robert Freeborn advised that she was 4 days over her stay and her campsite was a disaster. A citation was issued for failing to pay camping fees, arrangements have been made to have the site cleaned.
- While on patrol checking bear hunters on the opening day of hound season, **CO Robert Freeborn** and his ride-along contacted a vehicle that was traveling on a 2-track that was going to check a bear bait. After talking with the hunter for several minutes, it was determined that he had a rifle in the back seat that was loaded. A citation was issued for transporting a loaded firearm in a vehicle.
- **COs Robert Freeborn and Steve Butzin** were on routine patrol when they observed a vehicle on-coming in their lane on US2. As the COs approached closer, it was determined that a vehicle was attempting to pass vehicles in a passing lane and traveled across both westbound passing lanes, across the double yellow line, and into the path of opposing vehicles. A traffic stop was conducted on the vehicle and the impatient careless driver was issued a citation for improper passing.
- **COs Michael Evink and Robert Freeborn** conducted a Hunters Safety Field Day in Manistique. 31 new hunters passed the test and can enjoy the privilege that goes with membership.
- **COs Michael Evink and Steven Butzin** were conducting an ORV patrol in the Garden area when two vehicles were observed on the state shoreline of Lake Michigan. Contact was made and a ticket was written for having the vehicles on the beach.
- **Sgt. Mark Zitnik and COs Andrea Dani and Brandon Maki** were patrolling Northbound on M77 when they observed multiple ORVs coming to a stop on a side road. The operator of a four-wheeler was also not wearing a helmet, COs stopped the group of ORVs and discovered that the operator who wasn't wearing a helmet, had a purple sticker imitating the appearance of a trail sticker. A side by side which was operated by the father of the group also had no trail sticker and was not wearing a seatbelt. CO Maki issued two citations for no ORV sticker and one citation for no helmet. The side-by-side operator went back to grab a helmet before the four-wheeler operator cleared the scene.
- **CO Brandon Maki** was on patrol near Grand Sable Lake when he observed a four-wheeler operating with an extra passenger. CO Maki stopped the four-wheeler and informed the operator that four-wheelers are generally for one occupant only unless manufactured otherwise. The operator claimed that it was manufactured with a double seat and the suspension was built for a second occupant. CO

Maki pointed to the sticker on the machine that indicated no passengers, and advised it was not manufactured that way. CO Maki issued a citation for transporting passengers when ORV wasn't designed to do so.

- **CO Brandon Maki** was on patrol in Grand Marais when he observed a side by side operating without a trail sticker. CO Maki followed the ORV and initiated a stop. When asked about the trail sticker the operator stated he had it in his pocket. CO Maki asked why it wasn't on the machine and he replied that his machine was muddy. CO Maki observed the ORV sticker and saw that it was purchased in May of 2023. CO Maki advised the operator he had ample time to get the sticker on the machine between May and September and issued a citation for failing to display his decal.
- **Sgt. Mark Zitnik and CO Andrea Dani** were on patrol in Alger County when CO Dani signaled to make a left-hand turn off of M-28 and observed the vehicle behind them exit the roadway on their right and pass them. Two additional vehicles following that vehicle were unable to properly react to the maneuver and subsequently also passed on the right of the patrol truck off the main roadway. CO Dani stopped the last vehicle first and dropped Sgt Zitnik while she pursued and stopped the other vehicles. CO Dani stopped the first and second vehicle simultaneously. The operator of the first vehicle was cited and the others were warned for passing on the right via exiting the roadway.
- **COs Brandon Maki and Andrea Dani** attended a depredation training in Gaylord, MI. The officers and other Wildlife Division staff learned how different species kill and what type of sign to look for. They also learned how to differentiate between animals that had been killed versus those that died naturally and were later fed upon.
- **CO Justin Vinson** checked several small game hunters on the opening day of small game season. One hunter was observed hunting without orange. With no other violations present, CO Vinson educated the young subject about the importance of wearing hunters' orange and a verbal warning was given.
- **COs Mike Olesen and Justin Vinson** worked an area with known violations related to bear hunting. The COs contacted two hunters who received citations for operating an ORV in a closed area, no helmet on ORV and for hunting over a bear bait that was started before the legal baiting period.
- **Sgt. Calvin Smith** attended a Maritime Security Meeting at Lake State Superior University. Several agencies attended with several tabletop exercises performed on various marine events on the St. Mary's River.
- **Sgt. Calvin Smith** assisted Sault Police Department with the removal of a snowmobile from an island on the St. Mary's River.
- **CO Mike Olesen** patrolled the Tahquamenon River Mouth, Lower Falls and Andrus Lake campgrounds over the Labor Day holiday weekend, CO Olesen reported no major incidents.

DISTRICT 2 BI-WEEKLY REPORT 10-1-2023

- While getting gas at a local gas station, **CO Robert Freeborn** observed a subject from a previous incident involving failing to pay at a campground. When talking with the subject, it was determined that she was claiming they were still cleaning up the gear left behind. Upon further investigation, it was also determined that the vehicle she was operating did not have a correct valid license plate. A citation was issued for the invalid license plate.
- While on patrol, **CO Robert Freeborn** observed what appeared to be a juvenile operating a 4-wheeler on US-2. CO Freeborn made an enforcement stop on the ORV and determined that the operator was indeed underage and only 13 years old. CO Freeborn followed the subject back to their residence a short distance away. CO Freeborn talked to the father of the juvenile who admitted to allowing her to operate without supervision or a safety card. A citation was issued to the father for allowing a minor to operate an ORV along with a discussion of how dangerous the operation on a major highway was and how tragically the outcome could have been.
- **CO Robert Freeborn** assisted D4 in salmon patrols. Several citations were issued for fishing without a license, retaining foul hooked fish as well as various illegal gear citations.
- **CO Robert Freeborn** received a complaint regarding a bear guide guiding on CFA land. This investigation is still on going.
- **COs Brandon Maki and Andrea Dani** presented at the Chatham MSU Farm Agripalooza. Students were taught about a day in the life of a Conservation Officer in Michigan. The officers also showed the students various basic survival equipment that they should take on hunts and hikes to properly navigate and endure the elements should they need to.
- **CO Steve Butzin** was on patrol in Garden Township when he encountered several hunters that he initially believed to be small game hunting. After contacting the hunters, it was discovered that they were hunting whitetail deer during a closed season. The hunters read in the digest that early antlerless season was September 16th and 17th but failed to read the rest of the information pertaining to this hunt, that it only takes place in certain areas of the lower peninsula and on private lands. Further investigation found a total of 6 firearms that were either uncased or loaded while in their motor vehicle. The hunters were educated on how to properly locate information on hunting seasons in the digest. Citation was issued for the possession of the loaded or uncased firearms in the motor vehicle, and one hunter was arrested and lodged in the Delta County Jail for an outstanding misdemeanor warrant.
- **COs Michael Evink, Robert Freeborn, and Steven Butzin** participated in the mandated intox9000 Breathalyzer training in Marquette.
- **COs Robert Freeborn and Michael Evink** presented to the local chapter of the Manistique Rotary. A wide-ranging number of topics were discussed.
- **CO Michael Evink** participated in Advanced Marine Enforcement Training. The training is instructed by DNR Great Lakes Enforcement Unit personnel. Topics of the course include the operation of the Division great lakes vessels, Search patterns, and great lakes navigation.

- **CO Brandon Maki** was called to handle a complaint of an individual who took a collar off a bear hound while it was actively hunting. This incident is currently under investigation.
- **CO Brandon Maki** received a complaint of individuals possibly night hunting. CO Maki followed up with the complainant and searched the location for evidence.
- **CO Justin Vinson** was assisting Tahquamenon Falls State Park with patrol in the area due to increased attendance for the parks annual harvest festival. CO Vinson observed a side-by-side ATV operating on M-123 east of the Lower Falls Campground. A citation was issued for operating on state highway.
- **CO Justin Vinson** received a complaint from a local guide that one of his hunters had accidentally shot two bears the night before and had just found the second bear that morning. CO Vinson responded to the area and met with the two individuals. CO Vinson inspected both bears and quickly determined them to be very small cubs. When the suspect was questioned about shooting both bears, the suspect said he believed he missed the first one and then 5 minutes later another bear showed up and he shot that one as well. A report is being submitted to the Mackinac County Prosecutor's Office requesting charges of overlimit of bear and taking cub bears.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was on patrol in Chippewa County, checking locations for the upcoming waterfowl opener when he observed a four-wheeler being operated on a county road with the driver not wearing a safety helmet. CO Olesen conducted a stop on the ATV and contacted the operator. During the stop it was also determined that the operator had failed to license his ORV. The operator was cited into the Chippewa County court for operating an ATV without proper safety equipment and a verbal warning was given for failing to license the ORV.
- **CO Mike Olesen** was on patrol in Chippewa County when he observed an ORV operating on a state highway. CO Olesen stopped and contacted the operator about the violation. When contacted it was also determined that the operator was not wearing proper safety equipment. While on that stop 2 more ORVs approached and were also contacted for operating on a state highway. All the operators of the ORVs were cited for the violations.
- **Sgt. Calvin Smith** met with five volunteers from AMERICORP who are currently working on updating trails in the Tahquamenon State Park. Sgt. Smith gave a small presentation on the job duties of a conservation officer and answered several questions on their day-to-day duties.

Marketing & Outreach Division

Jon Spieles, Chief of Marketing & Outreach Division (MOD)

- Off-road vehicle licenses and permits: Printing process for 2024 ORV licenses and ORV trail permits is under way with DTMB. This provides plenty of time to have the print job and sticker testing completed before the new license year begins March 1, 2024.
- Campground Reservation System Analytics: Work is underway to add Google Analytics to the state park and harbor reservation system. The upgrade will provide insights into how users are interacting with our digital assets and marketing campaigns.
- DNR/Detroit Tigers Partnership: The DNR's Detroit Tigers Hunting and Fishing Night partnership game took place September 27. Despite a rain delay it was a success, with 250 tickets sold, benefitting Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger and We Fixin' to Fish (a Detroit nonprofit that teaches people "the joy of fishing"). The game also featured multiple promotions for the DNR's Hunt Fish mobile app.
- DNR/Convention and Visitor Bureau Partnership: The DNR partnership with statewide convention and visitors' bureaus is up and running with fall social media ads now in place for fishing/trails campaigns.
- Salmon in the Classroom: The program is in high gear with multiple staff involved with weir tours, classroom aquarium set ups, egg takes, and new teacher orientations.
- Nature Awaits: The program welcoming every 4th grade student to visit a state park is now in the pilot program stage at visitor centers around the state. We have a program manager hired as of October 1, a reservation system under development, and a great set of activities running for school field trips. The webpage for the program is already live and a direct mailbox has been established DNR-NatureAwaits@michigan.gov.
- The Wardens TV Show: The show has been picked up by Animal Planet and renamed "Wardens of the North". This will bring the show to basic cable and make it available to even more people throughout the state and the world.
- Outdoor Jamboree at Lake Hudson State Recreation Area: MOD partnered with the National Wild Turkey Federation and Pheasants Forever to hold the Outdoor Jamboree at the Lake Hudson Recreation Area on September 10 attracting more than 550 participants.
- Hunters of Color Event: MOD hosted the 2nd annual Hunters of Color event on Belle Isle on September 23 with over 100 participants.

- Echo Point Shooting Range: Additional sound abatement improvements were completed at Echo Point Shooting Range at the Allegan State Game Area and the range has reopened to the public.
- New Shooting Range Improvements: Design contracts have been awarded for improvement and expansion projects at Island Lake, Bald Mountain, Ortonville, and Pontiac Lake Shooting Ranges.
- Roscommon County Shooting Range: Timber sale and building demolition contracts were awarded for the new shooting range in Roscommon County.

Parks & Recreation Division

Eric Cowing, Eastern UP District Supervisor

Brimley State Park/Detour Harbor/Lime Island

- Lime Island AST Cleaning & Hazardous Material Assessment: Received preliminary cost estimates from professional which was well above available funds. It was determined to put the project on hold for the time being, to strategize the path forward with this project.
- Lime Island Harbor Upgrade Project: At last check, this project is complete but has not been closed out.
- Brimley Utility Improvement (waterline/storm water replacement): 90% design meeting was in mid-May. Final design is anticipated for this fall, with potential bidding late fall/early winter, with potential construction starting after Labor Day 2024.
- Brimley Restroom/Shower Building Project: Contractor continues to address punch list items.
- Lime Island Cultural Resource Plan Project: A consultant has been chosen. The consultant team will be tentatively spending the first week of October on the Island to complete field work.
- Brimley Underground Primary Electric/Transformer Replacement: This is a design build project that had a pre-bid walkthrough held on September 11. Bids are due back on September 27.
- All units have lost a couple state workers due to college or went down to parttime. All state workers will be done for the season on October 14.
- DeTour/Lime Seasonal Ranger: Held interview, but no candidate was selected to fill the position. Position will post again in the spring.
- Brimley PI Ranger Position: Hired Kelly Edwards who started at the end of August.
- Brimley: Total occupancy to date is slightly above the last two years (2021 & 2022).
- DeTour State Harbor: Transient nights are down by 100 nights to date, compared to 2022.
- Lime Island Recreation Area: Cabin rentals are comparable to 2022 to date.
- DeTour & Munuscong State Forest Campgrounds (SFCG): DeTour SFCG was up 100 camp nights over last year to date and Munuscong SFCG is about the same as last year to date.
- Brimley State Park hosted the annual Harvest Festival weekend on September 23-24. As normal, the campground was full with campers taking part in a pancake breakfast, scavenger hunt, candy bar ningo, chili cook-off and of course trick-or-treating.
- DeTour staff provided transportation & lodging for the Brighton MCCC crew to visit Lime Island Recreation Area to treat the coal dock for poison ivy and other vegetation. The hope is this will enhance the nesting habitat of the Common Tern.
- DeTour and Brimley staff are starting on fall projects such as trail work, building maintenance and equipment maintenance.
- A new well has been drilled at DeTour SFCG. The handpump will be installed the last week in September and DeTour staff will form and pour the ADA pad.
- Corey Butcher (Unit Supervisor) & Kelly Edwards (Brimley Ranger) attended the two day Snowmobile Grant Sponsor Training at Jay's Sporting Goods in Gaylord.

Straits State Park

- Straits upper toilet shower buildings have temporary doors still in place and punch list items yet to be completed.
- Mackinac Island Harbor toilet shower building completed for use with some extra add on and punch list items yet to be completed.
- Campsite improvements have been ongoing in campground.
- Father Marquette lift station replacement project was awarded. Contractor has not started work yet.

- Straits lost a state worker at the end of June and went the summer down a staff member.
- Mackinac Island Harbor was short staffed again this entire summer.
- No events. September bridge crossing events were not held this year due to bridge maintenance. This caused us to be down some campsites the weekend that would have been for Tractors.
- Campground was full most of the summer with Tuesdays and Wednesdays having a few openings.
- Upper campground opened July 20 and was filled from that point on.
- SFCG was up over last year but seemed to drop off considerably after Labor Day.

Tahquamenon Falls State Park

- Lower Falls Concession Store Remodel/Replacement Project: The project is nearing final completion. A few “punch list” items still need to be completed such as concrete crack repairs and installation of site furnishings.
- Lower Falls Boat Concession/Island Redevelopment Project: Project is completed and fully open for public use.
- Whitefish Point State Harbor Phase 1 Improvements: This project is in design with the project team looking at baseline improvements that allow the site to meet ADA guidelines and allow for the new docks to be adjustable as lake levels change. We are hopeful that construction funding will be available in FY25.
- ARPA Projects: The Hemlock toilet shower building replacement will start on October 9th, 2023. All other projects continue in the design phase.
- The park hosted its annual Harvest Festival on September 30th. The event was again a huge success, the campgrounds were 100% full and plenty of family’s showed up for trick or treating, campsite decorations, and hay wagon rides with Smokey the Bear.
- Unseasonably warm temperatures and fall leaf colors nearing their peak have attracted large numbers of visitors to the park.

Newberry Field Office

- Indian Lake State Park BAS dredged 9-11-23 to 9-18-23. First time summer dredge. Went very well, rented a Marooka 2200VDR to haul spoils out of the lake.
- Cleaned up Indian Lake State Park service yard in preparation for the boat launch dredge.
- Getting prepared to dredge Farmers Dock BAS.
- Poured concrete pads around new wells at Canoe and Kingston Lake SFCGs.
- Water samples pulled at SFCGs.
- 2 state workers returned to college in August. Remaining state workers will be done for the season on 10-14-23.
- Was a busy summer in the SFCG’s, everything has slowed way down since Labor Day.

Indian Lake and Palms Book

- New wells have been drilled for Kingston and Canoe Lake State Campgrounds.
- Effluent testing first round has been conducted at the Indian lake Southshore Campground.
- Topographical Survey has been completed at Indian Lake Southshore.
- Consultants are working on capacity analysis at Palms Book State Park as well as preliminary concepts for new parking lot and raft designs.
- New frame and canopy are scheduled for installed on the raft in mid-October.
- Shingle replacement has been completed at Seul Choix giftshop.
- Design concepts are moving forward for new well pit at Seul Choix.
- Waiver form LARA has been granted for shingle replacement on the Keepers house at Seul Choix.
- Indian lake Southshore boat launch channel was dredged.
- State workers are departing for the season.
- Indian Lakes boat ramp planks are settling and need to be reset.
- Getting several complaints from the residents around Ross Lake that the boat ramp is filling in with muck.

Fayette Historic State Park

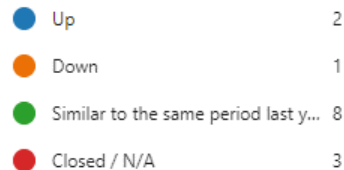
- Furnace Complex South Casting House Wall: Project is nearing 90% design to stabilize the casting house wall.
- Visitor Center ADA Upgrades: Project is in early stages of design to make entrance, restrooms, parking and visitor center accessible.

- Town Hall Floor Joist Replacements: This project is in design to stabilize the floor and make joist repairs to the Town Hall.
- Drain field Repairs: Design phase for replacement of five drain fields within the park.
- The park will host its annual Harvest Festival on October 7^h.
- Park Supervisor Randy Brown took a promotional opportunity and last day was July 22nd. Lead Ranger Aaron Thill is currently working out of class as the Supervisor as we move toward filling position permanently.

Doug Rich, Western UP District Supervisor

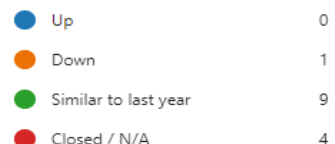
Camping

Baraga FO	Worked with the National Guard hauling and loading gravel at Craig Lake for road improvements
Baraga State Park	Camping has been consistent this period with the last couple of seasons. The campground was full on all three nights of the Labor Day holiday weekend. State Forest campgrounds have also been very busy.
Fort Wilkins Historic SP	Last year was a busy for us, this year is similar if not busier.



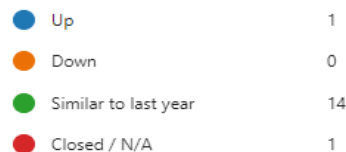
Overnight Lodging

Baraga State Park	Mini cabin use has been consistent with prior years.
Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew installed lattice skirting on the tiny house deck and ramp at Lake Gogebic. They replaced the roof at Wells SP's St. Martin Cabin.
McLain State Park	Lodging seems to be down compared to last year's numbers.



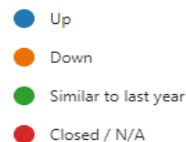
Boating Access Sites and Harbors

Baraga State Park	Lake trout fishing has been good on Keweenaw Bay and other area fishing has also been reporting successful catches, so BAS sites have been busy.
Little Presque Isle State Forest Recreation Area	The Van Riper Unit, including Little Presque Isle State Forest, hosted the Michigan Army National Guard for its September Training Weekend. During this weekend, the Harlow Lake Boating Access Site has additional aggregate added, was graded, and compacted. Along with this improvement to the site, there were 2 additional parking areas added to the site.



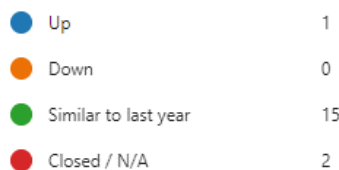
Trails

Baraga Field Office	Bill Nichols trail culvert installation, ditching and gravelling.
Escanaba Field office	Design continues for improvements/expansion at Days River Pathway, as well as design for Genes Pond Pathway
Baraga State Park	There have been a lot of ORV's in the campground. The non-motorized trail connecting the park to the village is getting good feedback and quite a bit of use. People are using the ORV staging area's vehicle parking for this trail.
Little Presque Isle State Forest Recreation Area	During August and September, a contract was awarded for trail improvements throughout the Little Presque Isle State Forest trail system and some parking areas. Work can begin as early as this fall and is expected to be completed prior to the end of September 2024.
Bewabic State Park	Brushed Lake Mary Plains pathway, it was a pretty big job.
Craig Lake State Park	With the late spring snow, staff still has one long section of trail to finish clearing yet this fall to help better direct visitors throughout the trail system and put the ranger assigned to Craig Lake State Park in a better position for clearing this coming spring.



Day Use

Bond Falls Scenic Site	As we were fully staffed this season, having staff present meant more revenue was able to be collected versus guests paying on the honor system and self-registration envelopes.
Menominee River SR	We had our first design meeting for ADA improvement project at the Piers Gorge Unit in the MRSRA
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park	Hosted NRCS archeology training early Sept. Then hosted a historic window and plastering workshop for PRD staff. Workshop photo to the right.



Special Events, Volunteer Projects, Accomplishments, Challenges or Personnel News

Baraga State Park	We have had a fantastic crew of STW's, MRS, hosts and staff this season. Even though we are short staffed here at the end of the season, everyone is pulling together to keep all of the facilities up to our expectations for safety, cleanliness, and hospitality. It has been another high visitation and revenue year for Baraga State Park!
Bond Falls Scenic Site	We had a great staff this year. They did a very good job in maintaining the site, collecting revenue, explaining the recreation passport and area attractions to visitors.
Menominee River State Recreation Area	Ranger position still vacant.
Van Riper State Park	Van Riper State Park just completed both weekends of its fall Harvest Festivals. The weekend of the 23rd brought a total of 425 trick or treaters to the park! This number only includes the kids, not any accompanying adults! The staff did a wonderful job managing the events and the visitors thoroughly enjoy this each season.
Bewabic State Park	Dallas Blair has accepted the Commissioned ranger position at Bewabic State Park! We are very excited about that!
Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew	The Lake Gogebic Field Construction Crew assisted with the Michigan Cares 4 Tourism event at the Porcupine Mountains in September.
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park	The National Guard poured a new 90' sidewalk, garage apron and painted the historic mechanic's shop. They also reroofed the fire barn building. Michigan Cares for Tourism was hosted on September 11-12th. 150 volunteers completed 17 different projects at Presque Isle, Lake of the Clouds, the historic service area, and the ski hill. Seven buildings were painted, a yurt reskinned, 60 cubic yards of ADA gravel applied to three trails, fence rails replaced, picnic tables repaired, and 24 benches were built.



Design, Construction, Capital Outlay and ARPA Projects

Baraga State Park	Plans for the playground are progressing. The equipment has been purchased, funding for the surfacing and installation is being sought and further planning for the community build, including partnering with the MIARNG, is in progress.
Menominee River State Recreation Area	Initial meeting on ADA improvement at Piers Gorge
Van Riper State Park	The last of the paving along the roadway to the rustic campground, boat launch and Cully Gage Cabin is being completed today within Van Riper State Park. The paving projects is a direct result of a culvert failure in the spring due to heavy rain.
Copper Harbor / Eagle Harbor / Lac La Belle	Eagle Harbor Marina expansion project is nearing completion. Recent photos attached
Little Presque Isle State Forest Recreation Area	As mentioned before under the trails section, a contract was awarded for trail work and improvements throughout the Little Presque Isle State Forest beginning this fall and is expected to be completed prior to the end of September 2024. Little Presque Isle also received some improvements to the entrance road into the Point and the Songbird parking area with help from the Michigan Army National Guard during their September training weekend.
Bewabic State Park	Continued progress on both wastewater and paving projects at Bewabic SP.
Craig Lake State Park	Craig Lake State Park hosted the Michigan Army National Guard for both its August and September training weekends. The roadway into Craig Lake State Park saw about a mile of aggregate which was graded and compacted and the replacement of 2 culverts to help with water diversion off of the roadway.
Fort Wilkins Historic State Park	Upcoming ARPA project are all in the planning stage. Nearing 50% review for the 2024 portion of the project.
Lake Gogebic State Park	Study and design continue for electrical, water and sewage upgrades at Lake Gogebic State Park.
Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park	Porkies - Multiple ARPA Projects are underway and in different phases.



Parks & Recreation Division – UP Trails Section

Ron Yesney, UP Trails Section Supervisor

■ *Peter Costa, Eastern UP*

Project Names	Description	Trail Use	Anticipated Completion	Q4 Update
Haywire Grade - 11 Bridges	Engineering and replace 11 bridges	ORV/Snowmobile	Unknown	Onsite inspection of the bridges with USFS and Engineer complete. Engineer recommends replacing one bridge and re-decking the other 10 at a wider width to give more room for grooming operations. Engineer to provide the plans to USFS by early August for their approval.
Trail 8 - 3 Bridges	Engineer and replace 3 bridges	Snowmobile	2025	The Bear Trap Crossing may be delayed in construction due to the bridge delivery date being in December, the Ionia Crossing should be completed late summer early fall. The Melstrand crossing has not been awarded due to lack of funds. Should be able to award after Oct. 1.
Bissel Creek Culvert	Engineer culvert replacement		Completed	Project completed, and final inspections and paperwork submittal is currently in process.
20 th Street Culvert	Replace concrete culverts	Multi-Use	2023	Project awarded; project start date early September.
Headquarters Lake Equestrian Signs	Signs and reroute needed	Equestrian	Ongoing	Local volunteers are working on completing the signing and the reroute.
Millecoquins River Bridge	Snowmobile bridge footing replacement	Snowmobile	Ongoing	Funding acquired and the contract is begin awarded. Construction should begin early fall.

■ *Rob Katona, Central UP*

Project Names	Description	Trail Use	Anticipated Completion	Q4 Update
ORV Route Grading Alger, Delta, Marquette, Menominee, and Dickinson Counties	Multiple projects for grading and smoothing ORV routes with multiple grades planned in high use areas to help prevent rough routes	Rail Trails	Summer 2023	All work has been completed.
Sturgeon River Bridge	Bridge rehab snowmobile Trail 2 in Dickinson County on State owned Rail-Trail	Rail Trails	October 2023	Finishing the decking and pier rip rap by November. Project will be completed in time for snowmobile season.
Nahma Grade Multi-use Trail	Design and construction 3.7 mile multi-use Rail-Trail in Delta County work includes clearing, surfacing and culvert/bridge installation	Rail Trails	TBD	Minor construction projects have been completed and the two large arch culverts will be completed by November 10 th , so it will be open for the snowmobile season.
Clowry Grade Bridges #2, #3 & #6	Design and rehab/construction of multiple bridges on this designated ORV/snowmobile multi-use Rail-Trail in Marquette County	Rail Trails	November 2023	Bridges #2 and #3 projects have been completed. Need additional funding for bridge #6.
Clowry Grade Bridges #1, #4, #5 & #7	Design and rehab/construction of multiple bridges on this designated ORV/snowmobile multi-use Rail-Trail in Marquette County	Rail Trails	TBD	Still waiting on MDOT, no new updates.
Clowry ORV Improvements	Continue filling low areas and culvert replacement on the Clowry Grade ORV C & CL Routes	Rail Trails	October 2023	Project has been completed.
Little Presque Isle Rec Area Improvements	Trail repairs, parking improvements and boardwalk/bridge repairs throughout 42 sites at LPI recreation area and Wetmore Pond	Non-Motorized & Mountain Bike	November 2023	Contract has been awarded. Work will begin mid-October.
Days River Single Track Trail Construction	Approximately 10 miles of single-track trail construction designed for mountain bike use	Non-Motorized & Mountain Bike	2024	Proposal has been approved. Still working on environmental and EGLE permitting.
Tyoga Pathway Bridges	Replace one bridge and replace or rehab second bridge both spanning the Laughing Whitefish River	Non-Motorized	TBD	No updates; waiting on MDOT.
LPI Songbird Trail and Harlow Creek Bridges	Replace two popular pedestrian bridges on LPI songbird trail & pathway to cabin #6 & north trail system	Non-Motorized	TBD	No updates; waiting on MDOT.

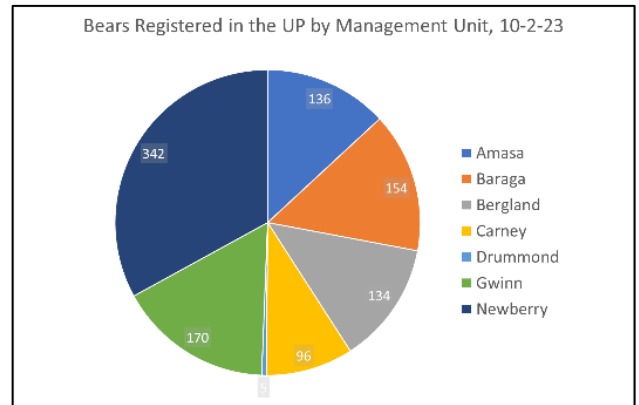
Genes Pond Pathway	Construction of 1.75-mile accessible pathway with scenic overlooks adjacent to state forest campground located near Ralph in Dickinson County	Non-Motorized	2024	Environmental, EGLE and SHPO have been approved. Looking at advertising lake winter/spring.
Laughing Whitefish Falls Bridge	New pedestrian bridge construction on NCT over Laughing Whitefish River at the Laughing Whitefish Falls Natural Area	Non-Motorized	TBD	No updates; waiting on MDOT.
Norway-Carney ORV/Snowmobile Connector Culverts	New ORV route/ snow-mobile trail development with several stream crossings requiring new culvert installation. New trail will connect the Norway ORV trail with Carney Lake Rd providing an east-west connection across Dickinson County	ORV/Snowmobile	September 2023	All work has been completed. Clubs are finishing up signage.
Days River ORV Route Grading and Gravel	Replace culvert, grade, shape, and fill Days River ORV Route in Delta County	ORV	September 2022	Project completed.
Marquette County ORV Routes Improvements	Repair large holes replace culverts and surfacing on multiple ORV routes in western Marquette County	ORV	September 2022	All work has been completed.
Forest Islands Repairs and Restoration	Repair damaged board walks and damage in low wet areas on the Forest Islands ORV Trail/Route in Menominee and Delta Counties	ORV	Summer 2023	Main project has been completed, but we are using balance of funding to make trailhead improvements. Design has started.
Felch Grade Surface Improvements II	Gravel capping on the Felch Grade in Menominee and Dickinson Counties	ORV	June 2023	All work has been completed.
Bass Lake Restoration	Perform reroutes around eroded areas.	ORV	September 2023	Contract work has been awarded. Work will occur later in October and early November.
Gwinn-Arnold Improvements and Restoration III	ORV G route Marquette County filling, gravel, and culvert work	ORV	September 2023	All work has been completed.
Delta-Menominee ORV Routes Improvements	Minor bridge railing and decking repairs replace culverts and surfacing work	ORV	September 2023	All work has been completed.
Central U.P. ORV Route Dust Control	Perform dust control at multiple sites on ORV routes to prevent dust caused by ORV traffic in residential areas and other areas meeting criteria	ORV	June 2023	Work has been completed.
Proposal: Hiawatha NF ORV Routes Proposal	Nearly 100 miles of ORV routes proposed to be designated that would provide connectivity and looped riding across Marquette, Delta, Alger and Schoolcraft Counties	ORV	2024	Waiting on USFS.
Proposal: Norway Rock Motorcycle Trail	New single-track construction in Dickinson County adjacent to the Norway ORV trail	ORV	N/A	WLD denied no further progress will occur without their support.
Proposal: Moose Mountain Reroute Snowmobile Trail 8 Three Lakes	Trail/bridge improvements and reroutes around difficult to groom areas. Logging operation on SCTC property to offset trail reroute costs	Snowmobile	Fall 2023	No updates.
Proposal: Days River Nature Trail	Designate and improve non-motorized pathway located along the Days River near Little Bay DeNoc	Non-Motorized Pathway	2023	Work has been completed.
Proposal: Westwood Pathway	Designate and improve non-motorized pathway located on State owned property adjacent to Ishpeming DNR FO and Westwood High School	Non-Motorized Pathway	Summer 2022	No new updates.
Proposal: Negaunee-Eagle Mills-Gwinn-Little Lake ORV Route	ORV Designate existing snowmobile trails that are already heavily used by ORVs. Designation will allow funding for maintenance and provide direction for community connectivity	ORV	Proposal submitted Summer/Fall 2022	Need to review trail expansion with EGLE. Will enter a proposal pending EGLE recommendation and IOHT approval.
Proposal: Little Lake – Chatham RR grade ORV Route	ORV Designate segments of existing RR grade and county roads to provide ORV connectivity between Chatham and Little Lake and beyond	ORV	Proposal submitted Summer/Fall 2022	Working on title analysis.

Dave Lemmien, Wildlife Division UP Supervisor

Hunting Season Updates

Bear Season Update

- As of 10-2-23, 1038 black bears have been registered in the UP (this year's license quota was 5,406). A breakdown by BMU is illustrated in the attached chart.
- Across the UP, bear harvest numbers are up from the same time period the year prior.
- In 2022, 1,368 bears were registered across the UP, and 1,350 bears were registered in 2021. Hunting success typically drops significantly in October, but given that seasons run until October 26th, we are on pace to slightly beat the last two year's harvest.
- Despite it being a high mast year, hunters report that bear baits are still being hit reliably in most parts of the UP.
- Weights of harvested bears are variable as usual, with averages between 120-200 lbs., and a small number of 400-500+ lb. bears being reported.



Grouse and Woodcock Season

- Early observations from hunters indicate average grouse numbers throughout most of the UP, lower in areas of less suitable habitat.
- Early reports from hunters suggest that warm temperatures and full foliage have made it more difficult to take birds.
- Drumming surveys were re-started this year, and results will take a few years to provide any true pattern. However, there are indications that the UP may have been at the bottom of the population cycle and will be trending back up in coming years.
- Hunters report that resident woodcock are plentiful, and occupying dense, young aspen.

Deer Seasons

- Deer season is underway again, with the Liberty Hunt and Early Antlerless Firearm (Lower Peninsula only) being completed, and Archery season getting underway.
- As of October 2nd, 11,363 deer have been registered statewide (5,797 antlered, and 5,566 antlerless). For context, 303,086 deer were registered across all seasons in 2022.
- 354 deer have been registered in the UP (260 antlered and 94 antlerless). For context, 22,313 deer were registered across all seasons in 2022. Given that archery season has just started, it should be no surprise that the majority of those deer were taken during the liberty hunt.
- Highest numbers so far have come from the south central UP, especially Menominee and Delta counties (102 and 62 deer registered respectively).

Summer Waterfowl Banding Results

- Canada Geese
 - Geese banding stations were set up in Marquette, Escanaba, Sault Ste. Marie, and Baraga in July.
 - Goose numbers were comparable to previous years, and a total of 308 new geese were banded (our quota was 300), with 90 recaptures.
- Wood Ducks and Mallards
 - Duck banding stations were set up in the Escanaba, Marquette, and Sault Ste. Marie areas in late July and early August.
 - Banding began in mid-August, and went well into September, which was unusually late for this effort.
 - The late trapping effort was a result of poor capture numbers compared to previous years. We are not sure why capture numbers were so low, as staff reported seeing plenty of ducks, and we utilized proven trapping techniques that have provided success in the past. Some staff suggested that natural food sources were abundant this year, so ducks may have had less interest in baited traps.

- In total, the UP Region met our quota for wood ducks (100 birds), with 104 new ducks banded (most of which were banded in Marquette) and 4 recaptures. We fell well short of our quota for mallards (100 birds), with only 42 ducks banded across the region, and no recaptures.

Habitat Management

- A preliminary project to restore Oak-Pine barrens was initiated in the Escanaba State Forest this summer. This project is intended to evaluate the effectiveness of restoration techniques recommended for this rare natural community type. To date, 30 acres of midstory treatment using a mulcher have been completed.
- A project to test a control technique for invasive narrow-leaved cattail was also initiated in the Portage Marsh Wildlife Management Area, just south of Escanaba in Delta County. This project involves the use of a roller chopper pulled by a Marsh Master tracked amphibious vehicle to create wildlife openings in dense cattail monocultures within the marsh. To date, 60 acres of openings have been created. Over the next several years, we will evaluate the effectiveness of these treatments, as compared to, or in combination with, other cattail control approaches.
- The Escanaba unit also replanted 51 acres of wildlife openings to legumes, mowed 25 acres of additional wildlife openings, and mowed and maintained 23 miles of outdoor recreation trails.